

Sex in the City:

**An examination of local government influence over the Sex Industry in
Memphis, TN.**

Britney Barthol

Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies

Summer 2017

Advisor: Shaolu Yu

Abstract:

The Sex Industry engulfs various forms of sex work including but not limited to the sale of sex and pornography. The management of the various aspects of the Sex Industry relies on regulations established by government officials on the national, state, and local level. In the past forty seven years, the Sex Industry has undergone a drastic shift in terms of public outlook and government involvement. Individuals involved in the sale of sex went from being actively criminalized and dehumanized by local government officials, to being painted as victims of an industry that seeks to strip them of their autonomy by focusing specifically on cases involving minor related sex work and the practice of sex trafficking. This shift was made possible through clandestine efforts on the part of local, state, and national government officials who manipulated the Sex Industry in order to further their own political agendas. In Memphis, TN, efforts to control the Sex Industry arose in the early 1970s as city leaders sought justification for their plans of city reconstruction. As the century came to a close, individual groups in Memphis, primarily religious organizations, began to call for programs that worked to rehabilitate women involved in the sex industry, thus ushering in the modern era of victimization of sex workers and demonization of their employers and clients. This mindset later gave way to harsher anti-immigration policies, with the belief that this with curb sex trafficking, while reigniting the fear of “modern day slavery.”

Key Words: Sex Industry, Sex Trafficking, White Slavery, Anti-Immigration, Memphis, TN.

I. Introduction

In 1974 the Geisha Bath House opened for business on 1348 Madison Street, Memphis TN. This was the first bathhouse to arrive in the Memphis area, and it was this lack of familiarity with the concept of bathhouses in general that left many Memphians feeling skeptical about the true nature of the business. This skepticism led a few members of the notorious Memphis city Vice squad to conduct undercover operations at the bathhouse in order to search for signs of anything out of the ordinary. After one Vice squad member was asked if he would like any sexual services to accompany his massage appointment, the city began the process to shut down the bathhouse and force the owner and the employees out of the city entirely. Local newspapers such as the Commercial Appeal and Press Scimitar eagerly pounced on this story, using it to fuel their anti-sex industry propaganda, going as far to say that the bathhouse “pander[ed] to the lowest instincts of humanity...[and was] a sordid, despicable business...[and that] there are more useful ways to earn a living than in this freakish way.”¹

Such a harsh view of the sex industry was not uncommon to the people living in Memphis in the 1970s, for local politicians and media outlets depicted sex workers as individuals undeserving of community sympathy and the reason why Memphis was not as prosperous as cities such as Nashville and Atlanta. The people of Memphis were conditioned to scorn the sex industry, forcing the individuals involved to take on the role of the scapegoat in their own city. This toxic mindset remained in mainstream Memphis culture until the early 1990s when religious and feminist groups presented a new view of the sex industry, one which depicted sex workers as victims to a system that sought only to exploit their bodies. Suddenly mainstream

¹ “Washed Up.” *Commercial Appeal*. 23 June 1974. Print.

media transformed the sex industry so that the sex workers were no longer considered to be criminals, rather it was their bosses, their clients, or the individuals who forced them into “sex slavery” who were deserving of public scorn.² This movement gained national attention during the George W. Bush administration, thus ushering in an era of stricter immigration regulations, which allowed for any individual who was suspected of conducting business in sex trafficking to be barred from entering into the United States without any proof of their involvement.

From this fear of sex trafficking, the “white slavery” mindset, which first appeared during the Victorian Era only to resurge in the 1920s, came to the forefront once again as people learned that white women were also targeted by pimps and sex traffickers alike.³ This in itself reveals why the movement to “humanize” sex workers first began. In Memphis, in the 1970s, a majority of the individuals involved in the sex industry were black women⁴, with more white women entering the industry as the years progressed⁵. Modern day organizations meant to rehabilitate former sex workers feature primarily white women in the advertisements for their programs, a depiction that would not have been made should the advertisements been created in the early to mid-1970s.

This shift in the outlook on the sex industry would not have occurred so rapidly had it not been for government level support. The sex industry allows the government to introduce their policies, whether it be a policy meant to conceal sex workers from the public eye or a policy

² Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

³ Weitzer, Ronald. "The Movement to Criminalize Sex Work in the United States." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 61-84. Web.

⁴ BeVier, Thomas. "Health Department VD Check Up is Safety Ritual for Prostitutes." *Commercial Appeal*. 14 March 1974. Print.

⁵ Snyder, Howard N. "Arrests in the United States, 1990-2010." *Bureau of Justice Statistics*(2012): n. pag. Web

meant to halt immigration, in a way that appears approachable and reasonable to an average voter. The local government is highly responsive to the general agenda of voters in the Memphis area, and based upon that knowledge, they shape their stances on sex work in a way that appeals to the public, but also allows them to introduce their desired policies. This essay will explore how in Memphis, from 1970 to present day, the government, on both a city and national level, has manipulated the sex industry to promote their ideals of city reconstruction, anti-immigration, and modern day slavery.

II. Data and Methods

In order to gain holistic insight into the sex industry within Memphis, a majority of the data used in this paper comes from archival research, focusing primarily on articles published between 1970-2017 in local newspapers such as *The Commercial Appeal* and *Press Scimitar*. This decision was made, for local newspaper articles often reflect the common opinion of what was occurring in the sex industry in this era, by offering multiple updates after every major city change. Each newspaper article was first organized by subject matter and then organized chronologically in order to examine how each facet of the sex industry in Memphis transformed over time.

To facilitate the findings in local newspapers, this paper also explores the themes presented in modern literature on the sex industry that addresses ideas of government policy alongside social response to the sex industry. The information gained from modern literature was then compared to the themes that emerged in Memphis newspapers, and from this information, this project was formed.

III. Understanding the Industry

Gender Theory

A popular debate amongst criminologists rests in the division between the study of male convicted crimes and female convicted crimes. On average, men are more likely to be convicted of a crime than women, thus most research relating to understanding why an individual would commit a certain crime has been directed to men only.⁶ In the case of sex work, an industry in which most of the individuals are women, no distinct gender theories have been made, under the notion that strong crime theories should be able to be applicable to both men and women. For this reason, the sex industry is examined through three main schools of thought: The Gender Strain Theory (GST), the Cycle of Violence Hypotheses, and the Gendered Pathway Theory (Feminist Theory.)⁷

The Gender Strain Theory (GST) examines the methods an individual chooses to cope with after a triggering event, such as physical or verbal abuse, in order to predict the likelihood of the individual engaging in illegal activity. GST is best explained by the ways in which “experiencing strain [an event that puts the individual in emotional distress] leads to negative emotions, which in turn can lead to delinquency and crime when an individual hasn’t learned how to deal with negative emotions or strain in a positive manner.”⁸ The coping method a young adult chooses is based off of the support and comfort that they feel in their day to day lives. If a

⁶ Reynolds, Kelli. "Juvenile Prostitution: An Exploration in Gendered Theory." *Virtual Commons- Bridge Water State University* (2016)

⁷ Reynolds, Kelli. "Juvenile Prostitution: An Exploration in Gendered Theory." *Virtual Commons- Bridge Water State University* (2016)

⁸ Reynolds, Kelli. "Juvenile Prostitution: An Exploration in Gendered Theory." *Virtual Commons- Bridge Water State University* (2016), pg. 26.

young adult is surrounded by a group of adults and/or peers who seek to both validate the experience of the individual while offering constructive and beneficial assistance, the individual is more likely to develop positive coping methods.

In the case of this paper, the GST is applied to young women entering into minor sex work due to a lack of mental care and assistance after bearing the weight of an outside strain. In most instances this is due to the belief that “females are more likely to internalize their stressors and strain, as they often lack proper coping mechanisms. These self-destructive behaviors may be attributed to their experiences such as running away, small property crimes and eventually prostitution.”⁹

In close relation to the GST, stands the *Cycle of Violence Hypotheses (CVH)* which states that it is not the way one acts in times of distress that affects whether or not one engages in illegal activity, rather it is the belief that minors who are subjected to traumatic experiences, whether it be mental or physical abuse or a family tragedy, are more likely to develop criminal tendencies. An important note in this hypotheses is that not all minors who experience trauma at an early age will go on to commit crimes. This hypotheses was created after researches noted through several personal interviews with convicted minors that a majority of the individuals described at least one trauma they had undergone earlier in their life. One study notes that “while abuse, neglect and maltreatment [do] not always lead to juvenile or adult criminality and arrests, the likelihood of arrest for these groups is 59% for juveniles, and 28% for adults.”¹⁰

⁹ Reynolds, Kelli. "Juvenile Prostitution: An Exploration in Gendered Theory." Virtual Commons- Bridge Water State University (2016), pg. 29.

¹⁰ Reynolds, Kelli. "Juvenile Prostitution: An Exploration in Gendered Theory." Virtual Commons- Bridge Water State University (2016), pg. 32.

Combining the above two concepts, the *Gendered Pathway Theories (or Feminist Pathway Theories)* argue that young women engage in illegal activity to both trauma and their reaction to it. Unlike the GST and the CVH, the Gendered Pathway Theories look at traumas related specifically to the growth and development of young women, for it argues the importance of understanding the overall feminine experience which is necessary in understanding why young women react in a certain manner when faced with high levels of trauma. The Gendered Pathway Theory argues that “delinquency and criminality do not occur simply because of one factor or another. Instead, it argues that female delinquency and criminality occur based off of a myriad of traumas, mental health issues, poverty, and disadvantage.”¹¹ This theory seeks to take on a holistic approach to understanding the mindset of young women by particularly focusing on the traumas they endure and the outlets they seek.

While the Gendered Pathway Theory and Cycle of Violence Hypotheses closely examine the individual in relation to the trauma they undergo, the Gendered Strain Theory is more often times applied to the study of young women involved in the sex industry for it closely examines their responses to trauma. By understanding the way an individual responds to trauma, researchers gain a better perspective of the reasoning behind why young women choose to enter into the sex industry.

¹¹ Reynolds, Kelli. "Juvenile Prostitution: An Exploration in Gendered Theory." Virtual Commons-Bridge Water State University (2016), pg. 34.

Foreign Sex Trade

Starting in the 1990's the foreign sex industry was used by feminist and religious groups to bring forth attention to rising rates of sex trafficking (or sex slavery) on a global scale¹². This initiative to address international sex slavery was driven by the belief that foreign sex traffickers would in some form attempt to coerce American women into playing an un-consenting role in the sex industry.

This mindset lead to the demonization of third world countries, while ushering in a new era of the white savior epidemic¹³. What this mindset ignores, is that the United States often employs the same approaches and techniques used by other countries in relation to the sex industry. For instance, in South Korea in the mid-1970s, the South Korean government began an initiative to regulate the number of STD cases within military towns. This governmental policy was brought to life after the United States pressured the South Korean government into forcing women believed to be involved in the sex industry to endure STD testing, a process that ignored their rights to privacy and left many women feeling violated. This process was not unique to military towns in South Korea, but was used all throughout the United States, notably in Memphis starting in 1972.¹⁴ Thus, the United States often uses foreign stances on the sex

¹² Kempadoo, Kamala , Jyoti Sanghera, and Bandanna Pattanaik. *Trafficking and prostitution reconsidered: new perspectives on migrations, sex work, and human rights*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2012.

¹³ Collins, Michael. "Corker hears stories of teens sent into sex trade." *The Commercial Appeal*. May 22, 2016. <http://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/government/2016/05/22/corker-hears-stories-of-teens-sent-into-sex-trade/90542578/>

¹⁴ BeVier, Thomas. "Health Department VD Check Up is Safety Ritual for Prostitutes." *Commercial Appeal*. 14 March 1974. Print.

industry in order to conceal their own clandestine efforts against the sex industry that greatly mirror those used in the foreign countries they claim to distrust.¹⁵

Regulation of the Sex Industry

There exists three main political approaches to the sex industry that a governmental body may choose to take.¹⁶ Each approach highlights the agenda set by certain countries, alongside the impression they would like to leave on other countries.

The Prohibitionist Approach

The prohibitionist approach focuses heavily on the criminalization of sex workers and pimps, while asserting the innocence of the clientele.¹⁷ Those who follow this approach wish to rid their area of sex work and believes that the best way to do so is to attack the people who work the industry. In practice, this process sees to it that women believed to be engaging in sex work are immediately arrested by an area's vice squad, and then asked to give information about their "pimp." This methodology assumes that there exists a set number of individuals involved in the sex industry, and that once a certain quota is met, the sex industry will exist no more. What this ignores however is that the sex industry is constantly growing and changing. History shows that mass roundups of sex workers may cause the industry to do more underground business ventures, but it does not slow the industry down. For every sex worker or pimp arrested, another person will take their place.

¹⁵ Kempadoo, Kamala , Jyoti Sanghera, and Bandanna Pattanaik. *Trafficking and prostitution reconsidered: new perspectives on migrations, sex work, and human rights*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2012.

¹⁶ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

¹⁷ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

The Regulationist Approach

The Regulationist approach to the sex industry focuses on putting legislative measures in place that will in turn regulate the commerce of the industry.¹⁸ This approach operates under the belief that the sex industry will not cease to be, thus instead of fighting heavily against it, the government should acknowledge it and develop it so that the individuals involved in the industry are well taken care of. The benefits to a regulating and legalizing the sex industry would be that individuals who are victims of assault on the job could more readily report their abuse to law enforcement without fear of arrest. A legalization process would also allow sex workers to gain independence from their pimps and clients, thus giving the sex worker more of an upper hand. This process of regulation and legalization also holds the potential to decrease the number of cases of sex trafficking each year, for regulatory measures could keep the sex trafficking industry from being profitable.

The Abolitionist Approach

The abolitionist approach came about in the mid-1990s and is currently the leading stance on the sex industry, especially within the United States. This approach paints the sex worker as a victim of a harmful industry while pushing forth the idea that pimps, sex traffickers, and clients deserve to be punished before the law¹⁹. This approach emerged as whispers of sex trafficking, particularly sex trafficking of white women, began to circulate in mainstream media. Religious organizations and feminists groups alike began to preach their belief that the sex industry is

¹⁸ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

¹⁹ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

inherently flawed in a way that no sex worker, can truly benefit from the system²⁰. Thus these two very separate groups pushed forward the belief that the sex industry is dehumanizing and that the leaders in charge should be held accountable for their role in “coercing” the sex workers to first join the industry. This approach decidedly silences the voices of woman who genuinely enjoy their line of work and wish to grow their own sector within the industry. The process of victimizing each sex worker can be damaging mindset for those who feel called to participate in the sex industry, but can serve as a comfort for others.

The Implications of the Approaches

One key factor to consider when looking at the aforementioned political approaches to the sex industry, is what the sex industry means to a particular area. Oftentimes, individuals view measures taken against or for the sex industry at face context, ignoring the political implications of the source²¹. This means that when a governmental power chooses an approach to follow in order to address the sex industry, citizens look at this decision by what was originally stated. Confusion then follows, for the sex industry may not appear to have undergone any drastic changes in an area, thus a mistrust of law begins.

This mistrust of the law encourages some to believe that law is of no importance in the regulation of the sex industry, as noted by one scholar who states, “[I] dispute the usual assumption that these laws make reality on-the-ground very, very different. On the contrary, if someone were to come to Earth from Mars, they would look at commercial sex in the USA, which mostly has meant criminalizing laws, and look at it in New Zealand or the U.K. or

²⁰ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

²¹ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

Germany²², and not seeing much difference at all. The endless debating about legal systems to control prostitution is bizarrely irrelevant, except for its symbolic value.”²³ What this line of thought ignores is that the while national government may issue forth a law dictating how the sex industry should be viewed according to their standards, it is ultimately local government officials that hold the final say. Local government has the power to manipulate a law in such a way that they themselves, and on occasion the people they serve, receive the best standard of living possible. This clash between national government standards and local government morale, shape the way a law is portrayed, especially in regards to the sex industry. If one “[takes] law at face value [one] offers a limited understanding of modern legal power and thus underestimates its role in authorizing and shaping contemporary power relations...and...by failing to appreciate the specificity of modern legal power, there is a concomitant failure to appreciate law’s (albeit circumscribed) potential to transform.”²⁴

Oftentimes, the laws that are instilled are created with loopholes in their writing that allows local government to manipulate the law. This is done in order for the national government to perform clandestine government ventures in order to avoid public critique. The sex industry serves a prime example of this manner of thinking, as noted in the legal systems of Sweden and the Netherlands. In Sweden in particular, “decriminalization [of the sex industry] premised on exiting may actually signal a wider range of control mechanisms and forms of professional intervention which are even more pervasive than the previous system of fines. Thus, increased protection promised by reforms results in the increased policing of many women’s

²² New Zealand, the U.K. and Germany have more relaxed laws regarding the sex industry.

²³ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

²⁴ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

lives.”²⁵ This idea of “policing women’s lives”²⁶ highlights just how the government gains more control through laws which on the surface appear to be ill performed.

The Sex Industry and United States Law

While European countries have begun the process to “legalize” sex work within their borders, the United States has moved in an opposite direction. The powerful religious strongholds and rising feminist groups in the United States have in recent years worked to demonize the sex industry with the intention to see it stop for good. Those objecting the industry are actively voicing their belief that an abolitionist approach should be applied to laws concerning sex work. This strong resistance to sex work may seem curious, for in recent years there has been a movement on social media to both normalize and accept the sex industry, however these movements do not share the numbers that those arguing for the abolitionist approach do. One study notes how “although some observers have documented a growing ‘mainstreaming’ or ‘normalization’ of the sex industry- especially regarding pornography and stripping, where there has been some spillover into mainstream media coupled with sheer abundance on the internet-prostitution remains beyond the pale in the United States. Indeed, prostitution is being increasingly demonized, marginalized, and criminalized as a result of the efforts of a robust moral crusade.”²⁷ The crusade initially targeted sex trafficking²⁸ but then expanded its targets to prostitution, pornography, stripping, and all other types of commercial

²⁵ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

²⁶ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

²⁷ The abolitionist movement is often considered to be a moral crusade where supporters are ‘saving’ women from the sex industry.

²⁸ The abolitionist movement first begun after claims of the sex trafficking of white women began to reach public audiences. Sex trafficking was happening well before the 1990s, but the urge to call for its end did not come until white America realized they could also be potentially at risk.

sex.”²⁹ By expanding their crusade to sex work and pornography, abolitionist devotees are working to expel all sources of the sex industry from mainstream culture so that there may be no confusion about what should be allowed. In cases such as this, there stands a strong push to cover all of the sex industry under one umbrella, thus ignoring the many intricate facets that exist within the industry itself. As has already been mentioned, some individuals thoroughly enjoy being a sex worker and to claim that their line of work is unnatural or unbecoming, is to dehumanize the very individuals that abolitionist groups claim that they seek to ‘save.’

One point of interest about the abolitionist group is the presence of the feminist sector within in the group. Rather than praising sex workers who enjoy their line of work, they instead seek to undermine their accomplishments for they “argue that the sex industry should be eliminated because of its objectification of and oppressive treatment of women, considered to be inherent in sex for sale.”³⁰ For the feminists in the abolition movement, as long as the sex industry exists, the exploitation of women at the hands of men will also exist, thus it would be best for all women should the industry be eradicated completely. This testament ignores the true meaning behind the typical feminist approach which calls for support of your fellow woman in all lines of work, which includes the sex industry.

As the 1990s continued on to the early 2000s, the movement to end the sex industry began to gain more and more public support, so much so that it caught the attention of the Bush Administration which moved quickly in enacting laws meant to curb the rate of sex trafficking, pornography and the general sale of sex. Activists were able to progress their cause so quickly,

²⁹ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

³⁰ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

for it lacked a strong sense of opposition and “on the few occasions when the movement’s claims were challenged in public forums, those who voiced opposition [to the abolitionist take on the sex industry] were either ignored or denounced as apologists for pimps and traffickers.”³¹ By pairing any dissenters of their views on the sex industry with individuals they had already established as criminals, the abolitionist party was able to give their demands directly to President Bush, whose cabinet quickly enacted their wishes. Soon large corporations and businesses that relied on government funding were forced to choose between their maintaining their own private views and morals or giving into the government’s push to eradicate the sex industry. Corporations were forced to make this choice for “activists successfully pressed the US government to adopt a policy denying funding to organizations that were not sufficiently committed to eradicating prostitution. Today, to be eligible for United States funding, and foreign NGO working on the trafficking front must declare its opposition to prostitution and especially legal prostitution.”³² This power moves allows the movement in the United States to go unchallenged by silencing the voices of even foreign companies.

As of right now, the opposition to sex industry party reigns supreme in United States political spheres, and is able to do so by presenting a cycle of fear to the public. This cycle of fear is characterized by the idea of ‘white slavery’ and the dangers that follow the sex trafficking industry. By instilling this fear into the public, the abolitionist movement may progress unchecked, for the public will continue to drive it forward in an attempt to save their families from impending sexual slavery. The main technique they use to spread this fear is the

³¹ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

³² Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

introduction of obscure figures that estimate thousands of women, primarily minors, in the United States are sold into sexual slavery each year. The numbers released to the public however, are often times inaccurate, due to a lack of research and data on the subject. Those who are in opposition to the abolitionist movement have previously attempted to address these discrepancies to no avail for “when the numbers are challenged, officials respond that numbers are not important.”³³ Yet, the government continues to cite high numbers as justification for spending huge amounts of money funding abolitionist organizations that are conducting ‘research’ on the problem and on enforcement efforts to identify and rescue victims in the United States and abroad, efforts that have thus far paid few dividends relative to its expenditures.”³⁴

The reason why the government chooses to fund abolitionist’s organizations, is because through them, the government may covertly attend to its own agenda of anti-immigration. By stressing the rise of sex trafficking, the government may push for tighter border control which would allow them from blocking immigrants from entering into the United States. On this basis, the government is able to bar anyone entrance into the United States if they are thought to be involved in the sex industry, without any sort of solid evidence.³⁵ In this way, the government and the abolitionist party work together in order to promote their own agendas.

³³ This response is often used by the abolitionist movement to secure their approach to the sex industry. It is common for individuals to argue that the number of people who are in sex slavery does not matter, for even just one person is reason enough to fight for its end.

³⁴ Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.

³⁵ Kempadoo, Kamala , Jyoti Sanghera, and Bandanna Pattanaik. *Trafficking and prostitution reconsidered: new perspectives on migrations, sex work, and human rights*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2012.

IV. The Sex Industry in Memphis

All of the aforementioned information on the sex industry directly applies to cases found in Memphis, TN. Due to its location on the Mississippi River, Memphis has a long, deep history of sex work that correlates to the early days of the cotton trade alongside Memphis' history as a relatively poor area. The sex industry has undergone many challenges and changes all of which that have been prompted by government influence. In the following sections, I will highlight the ways in which city and national government policies have manipulated the sex industry in Memphis along the lines of city reconstruction, anti-immigration, and the fear of 'modern day slavery.'

History of Memphis Sex Industry

The sex industry in Memphis is often times directly correlated to religious movements that are popularized in a certain era. For instance, the yellow fever epidemic of the late 1870s led city leaders to humanize sex workers, calling one brothel owner in particular, Annie Cook, the Mary Magdalene of Memphis due to her willingness to convert her brothel into a makeshift hospital after many health officials fled the city upon outbreak of the epidemic. Due to this service to the city, the sex workers were seen as being cleansed before the eyes of the public, however this mindset did not stay for long, as sex work began to go on as usual.

Starting in the progressive era in Memphis in the 1920s, the people of Memphis began to look on the sex industry with disdain, viewing it as a sinful institution that needed to be eradicated from city limits. This mindset continued and grew in Memphis until it culminated in a direct attack against the sex industry in 1970. Interestingly, the attack against the sex industry began during an era in which microaggressions directed towards black Memphians ran rampant

in city revitalization projects. This was seen in the deconstruction of black neighborhoods and the introduction of policies against black Memphians that forced them to pay higher rent costs for their homes in areas that contractors wanted to construct businesses that appealed to a white, middle class audience. This mindset inspired many facets of city reconstruction, notably the sex industry which during the 1970s and 1980s was made up of primarily black women.

City Reconstruction

Memphis in the early 1970s was characterized by what many newspaper articles saw to be a large mass of sex workers conducting business on the street. Their primary place to engage with their clientele were the various bars that stood in downtown Memphis. Many newspapers argued that the sex workers were ruining the image of Memphis³⁶ and were thus to blame for the city's low tourist rate. This idea took head in 1975 when City Council Chairman Bob Love began a direct attack on the city's sex industry. His attack began when he stated in a *Commercial Appeal* article that "pimps, prostitutes, and 'riff-raff' are contributing to the deterioration of downtown Memphis."³⁷ This statement is important for in it he is pushing the blame for downtown Memphis' low tourist rate on the sex industry, rather than on the poor marketing choices made on the governmental level. By attacking the sex industry, Love was saving face of local city government while also creating a scape goat to push all of the city's key problems on.

At this time, many individuals living in Memphis already had a harsh view of sex workers as particularly noted in newspaper articles which discuss how "something must be done about the prostitutes, who are so brazen and contemptuous of the law that they boldly and openly solicit

³⁶ During the early 1970s, Memphis was attempting to prove that it was a city that could compete with the likes of Atlanta and Nashville. This proved to be especially important after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., for his death gave Memphis a poor image.

³⁷ Jordan, Thomas. "Council Chief Says Pimps, Prostitutes Ruining Downtown." 16 April 1975. Print.

customers by flagging down cars, stopping men on the sidewalk, or even knocking on hotel doors.”³⁸ This description paints the picture of a city that is being overrun by the sex industry much to the disgust of many Memphians. The articles of this era shift all of their attention to the sex workers themselves with minimal focus on their ‘pimps’ and no focus on their clientele. Rather than addressing why the sex industry is thriving in Memphis, city officials, notably Robert Love, see a very physical issue before them. The pimps and the clients do not actively display themselves in the public eye, but during this era, in order for a sex worker to make money, they had to actively take to the streets to find new clients. As the industry began to be more profitable, more women began to join the industry with the intention to make quick money. This led to a large number of women working in the sex industry in Memphis in very public settings. Since their presence was a given in downtown, when Bob Love asserted that “I think its high time that we impress upon not only the Police Department but also the City Courts that we have to get rid of the riff-raff downtown. I walked down Main Street the other day and got propositioned four times”³⁹ people were quick to agree with him.

Thus in 1975, Love began a crusade against the sex industry, and found that many were willing to align themselves with his stance. The mayor of Memphis at the time, J. Wyeth Chandler, is even quoted saying that “I totally agree [with Love’s stance on the sex industry in Memphis]...the police do their job and bring them (the prostitutes) into court, and we know that this activity downtown was a major cause of the abandonment of the Peabody.”⁴⁰ In this statement, Mayor Chandler is once again pushing forth the notion that is the sex workers and the sex workers alone that caused Memphis to not be as popular as it contemporaries. This is noted when Mayor

³⁸ “Banish the Prostitutes!” *Press Scimitar*. 17 April 1975. Print.

³⁹ “Banish the Prostitutes!” *Press Scimitar*. 17 April 1975. Print.

⁴⁰ “Banish the Prostitutes!” *Press Scimitar*. 17 April 1975. Print.

Chandler states “and we know that...”⁴¹ for this statement forces the reader to seem sympathetic to his cause. By saying “we” Mayor Chandler is creating a sense of community between him and the people of Memphis. He is sponsoring Love’s crusade against the sex industry not for himself but for his city. Thus, he makes it appear as if all Memphians who wish to see their city prosper should also devote themselves to this cause.

This call for action against the sex industry came about at very interesting time in Memphis. In 1975, city wide elections were fast approaching and some began to speculate that this campaign against the sex industry which rose seemingly out of the blue, was a ploy by Chairman Love and Mayor Chandler to secure their positions in city government. One judge echoes this testament when he stated that Chairman Love’s campaign was an example of “self-serving politics” and wondered “what Mr. Love is running for.” The *Commercial Appeal* then pushes forward this statement by saying “come to think of it-this being an election year-candidates for city office couldn’t find a better campaign slogan than: ‘Rid downtown of prostitutes and pimps!’”⁴²

Methods of City Reconstruction

In order to secure his seat in city government, Chairman Love had to do more than just discuss his stance of the sex industry, thus he began to issue out movements meant to curb the rampant amount of sex work in Memphis. The first of these movements occurred in 1972 and called for those arrested for prostitution during the weekend to go to a government sanctioned health facility and to receive testing for STDs. Before a sex worker could be released, they had to

⁴¹ “Banish the Prostitutes!” *Press Scimitar*. 17 April 1975. Print.

⁴² “Banish the Prostitutes!” *Press Scimitar*. 17 April 1975. Print.

be clear of any signs of STDs. On average, it took a week for the all of the STD tests to be returned, thus for one week intervals, there was a slightly less amount of sex workers working the downtown area. If a sex worker was found positive for an STD, then they must stay at the facility until they are clear of the disease. In this way, the police department began to feel as if they had a slight handle on the overall situation. The *Commercial Appeal* describes the scene by stating “the Monday morning ritual [began] with a parade of prostitutes into the health department through the back door. The number varies from 10 to 30 depending on how aggressive the Vice detectives were [during] the weekend. The women arrive still wearing the trappings of their trade-velvet hot pants, silvery slacks, winsome halters, blond and red wigs, knee-high boots, and scads of makeup. Almost all are black and the average age is about 20.”⁴³ This account paints the picture of a group of women that heavily stand out from the norms that the paper and those reading it wish to push forward. By describing the way that the sex workers dressed, the writer of the article is allowing the average reader a glimpse into a world that they only see pieces of. In this moment, the writer is controlling the scene, thus he is able to give a very distinct, general vibe of the sex workers.

⁴³ BeVier, Thomas. “Health Department VD Check Up is Safety Ritual for Prostitutes.” *Commercial Appeal*. 14 March 1974. Print.

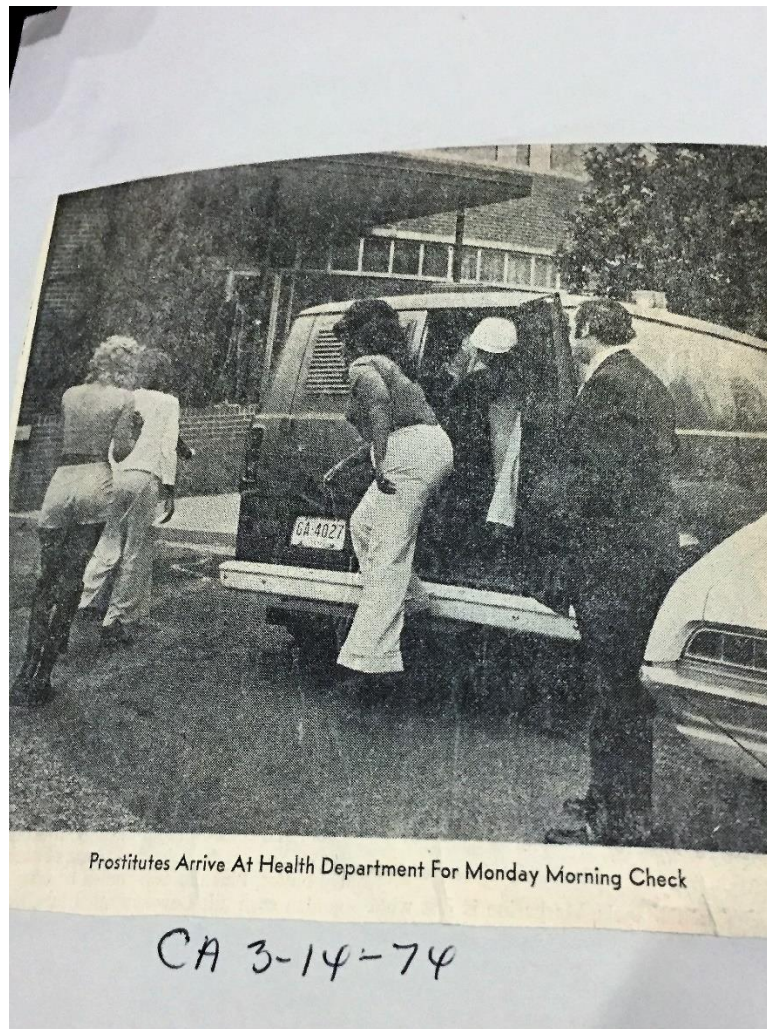


Fig. 1. Image from the *Commercial Appeal* of Sex Workers Arriving at the Health Department. March 14, 1974

The way in which he describes what the women were wearing takes on the tone a tabloid might adopt to discuss the stylings of a celebrity, because for the vast majority of readers, sex workers function on a plane which they are heavily unfamiliar with, thus these small details are important for crafting the setup of the sex workers' daily lives.

In the statement issued describing the sex workers, the author of the article makes a point to address that a majority of the women were young and black. By stating the race of the women

charged by the Vice squad, the author is hinting towards a great racial divide within the sex industry in Memphis, a divide that will become blurred in the 1980s, and especially in the 1990s. During this era of Memphis history, a majority of the people who lived downtown were black, and thus a majority of the individuals working the sex industry in the downtown area were also black. This campaign against the sex industry can thus be viewed as not only a direct attack against sexual expression, but also an indirect attack against black community members downtown. Chairman Love's claims that he wanted to clean up the city by eradicating the sex industry can be viewed as Chairman Love also pushing black individuals out of what was considered prime tourist locations. Due to the atmosphere created by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, for Love to directly organize movements to force out the black community would have resulted in more racial strife, that would have negatively affected the new positive image of Memphis that city council members were attempting to push forward. Thus, by attacking the sex industry, Love found an indirect way to force black communities from downtown under the guise of bettering Memphis' public perception.

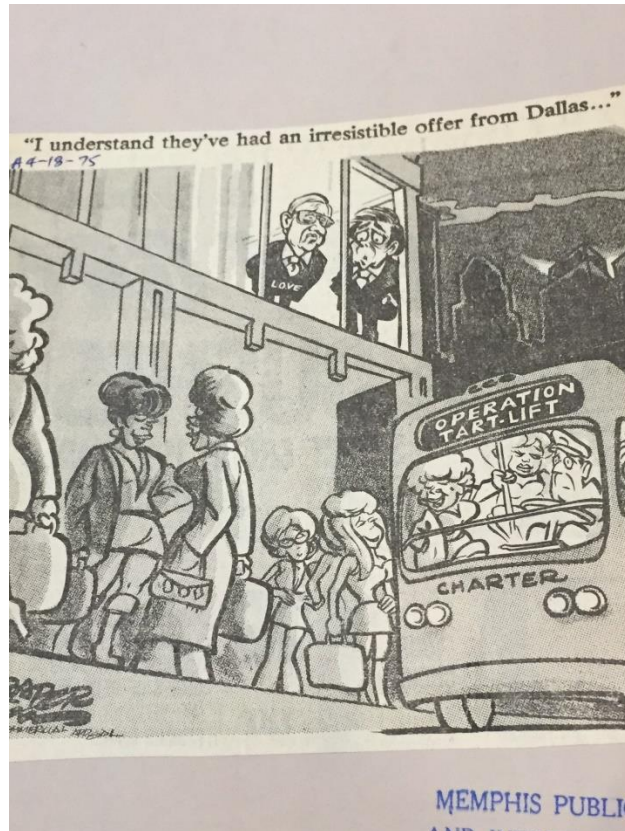
One important piece from this article occurs in the form of a statement given by one of the female workers, Mrs. Clara Elam, at the health department who notes how "when [she] first started this job, [she] had pretty definite views about prostitution... [Her] ideas were about what you'd expect. [She's] changed [her] ideas. [She] don't think you can stop prostitution. [She] thinks that it ought to be legalized so you could control it."⁴⁴ Such a testament was very rare to find during this era which sought to criminalize sex workers every time the opportunity presented itself. What is truly powerful about this testimony is that it is derived from an individual who has close hands

⁴⁴ BeVier, Thomas. "Health Department VD Check Up is Safety Ritual for Prostitutes." *Commercial Appeal*. 14 March 1974. Print.

on experience with the industry itself, rather than government officials who are molding the industry into a tool they may use to secure their positions of power.

The idea that Memphis city officials like Love were using sex work as a means to push forward their political power manifested in spring of 1975 when Chairman Love called for city judges to issue maximum sentences and fines for individuals arrested for sex work. Prior to this call for action, judges often gave sex workers light sentences and fines, for they believed that the system of prosecuting sex workers would never bring about the end of the sex industry, for when 3 girls were imprisoned, 5 more took their place. This angered Chairman Love beyond all belief, for he did not have the time needed to completely alter the face of the sex industry, rather he needed a quick fix that he could use to show the public that he was doing something in the name of bettering the city.

While this tactic might have appealed to public voters, it did not appeal to county judges who felt insulted by Love's claims that they were inefficient at their positions. One such judge, Judge Ray W. Churchill, was quoted saying "I don't know what Mr. Love is running for...I



“I understand they’ve had an irresistible offer from Dallas...” *Commercial Appeal*. 18 April 1975. Political Cartoon in Print.

sometimes think they (the City Council) are trying to out legislate the State Legislature, which should handle prostitution business.”⁴⁵ This quote demonstrates the overall lack of union between the government of Memphis and the state government of Tennessee, thus highlighting the way that local politics play a role in shaping a city’s outlook. Such an outlook continued to be popular in Memphis throughout the 1970s and 1980s as individuals ardently supported the demonization of all things related to the sex industry.

⁴⁵ “City Judges Cite Roadblocks in Tighter Control of Prostitution.” *Press Scimitar*. 16 April 1975. Print.

The Fear of Sex- From ‘White Slavery’ to ‘Modern Slavery’

Almost twenty years following the crusade against the sex industry lead by Chairman Love, a new national movement arose that completely altered the view on the sex industry. Almost without warning, stories began to emerge of young women being either recruited or forced to enter into the sex industry, a process which has now been dubbed the modern sex trade, or sex trafficking. It was during this era that sex workers began to be viewed as victims of the system rather than criminals themselves. People began to question the true nature of a sex worker and whether or not they were morally correct in their previously held poor assumptions of sex workers and the sex industry in general. As the movement progressed, individuals who were forced into sex trafficking began to be labeled as victims of a damaged system, a label which soon made its way to commercial sex workers as well.

The Young Women in the Sex Industry

The involvement of minors within the sex industry was not a new concept when widespread panic over sex trafficking took hold in the 1990s. In Memphis, young women between the ages of 13-17 were commonly known to be a part of the industry, with their ‘pimps’ oftentimes being the ones to pick them up from their school. Rather than lead a strong crusade against minors selling sex to adults, multiple newspapers ran stories about the lives of young sex workers. One article in particular follows the daily schedule of 16 year old girl who had been involved in the sex industry since she was 13 years old. In the article, the girl recounts how “she was approached by a man as she left school one day who asked if I ‘wanted to make a little extra money.’ I was kind of grown for my age anyway and I said ‘sure.’ ...At first I was a little scared, but since I wasn’t no virgin anyway, I figured it wouldn’t be that bad...I’ve been doing it since I was 13 and don’t plan

to stop any time soon. It's better than wearing raggedy clothes and never having money."⁴⁶ In this case, the decision to enter into the sex industry at a young age was entirely the decision of the then 13 year old girl. In the article she discusses how she came from a poor background and that sex work allows her to buy herself nice things, and that despite the fact that she mostly works nights, she turns in at midnight in order to focus on her studies so that she may maintain her B average. If we apply the Gender Strain Theory (GST) to her case, one could say that her desire for a higher standard of living in the face of poverty drove her to be willing to join the sex industry at such a young age. Rather than using the money she earns to meet a basic need or support an addiction, this young girl spends her money on nice clothes, a typical choice for most teenagers around her age who have money from their part time job. There is no sense of remorse or guilt in her story, yet articles published around this time argue that this could be caused by her own youthful ignorance. In response to this testimony from this girl, an article was published that raised the question "Are they [middle school and high school aged girls] not victims, if only of their own ignorance?,"⁴⁷ thus marking the first time in which the possibility that sex workers could indeed be the victim rather than the criminal emerged in mainstream Memphis culture. For the individual who raised this question, their argument for the victimization of young sex workers rested in the belief that while participating in the sex industry, these young women "surrender that most attractive quality of youth, innocence."⁴⁸ By making this point, the author of this article makes it appear as though the only reason why the government officials should pay attention to young sex workers is to protect their innocence, which in turn raises the idea that once a girl has sex, she loses a fundamental part of herself. This mentality is what drove the abolitionist movements to rise

⁴⁶ Norment, Lynn. "Pimps Find That Some School Girls are Easy Targets for Their Line." *Commercial Appeal*. Memphis. 9 March 1976. Print.

⁴⁷ "High School Prostitutes." *Commercial Appeal*. Memphis. 11 March 1976. Print

⁴⁸ "High School Prostitutes." *Commercial Appeal*. Memphis. 11 March 1976. Print

in the early 1990s. They saw themselves as protecting women, primarily young women from this loss of innocence, a decision that is oftentimes not theirs to make. These abolitionist movements did not arise however until it was revealed that young, white women were also engaging in the sex industry. It was not until white minors began to be recruited into the industry that gender theories began to be applied to female minors in the juvenile system as well. Scholars wanted to know the reasoning behind why white females would willingly submit themselves to an occupation they had openly discriminated against in the 1970s and 1980s, an occupation that had previously been populated by young black women. This idea of minors entering into the sex industry due to their own “ignorance” of the industry is what made many individuals fearful that their own daughters would be recruited, thus a wave of fear of white slavery was born. Scholars began to release information about how “Pimps recruit young, vulnerable U.S. women in malls and clubs by befriending and creating emotional and drug or alcohol dependencies to entrap them. Pimps are also adept at preying upon women’s vulnerabilities. Coercion and violence are also used.”⁴⁹ As this information became widespread due to increased media coverage (brought on once again due to the rise of young white women in the system) more people began to seek active ways to ‘rescue’ the young women, and eventually all women, in the sex industry.

Rehabilitation after Involvement in the Sex Trade

Once such organization that intended to facilitate the rescuing of women in the sex industry started in 1992, presenting a program entitled “A Way Out” which is a Memphis based program that sought to rehabilitate women who desired refuge from the sex industry. The program officially began taking in former sex workers in 1994, making it the first program in the United States to

⁴⁹ Territo, Leonard. *International sex trafficking of women & children: understanding the global epidemic*. Flushing, NY: Looseleaf Law Publications, Inc., 2015

offer assistance during the transitional period between life as a sex worker to life outside of the industry. The program has deep roots in the Christian faith and requires that all women who enter the program to go to various bible studies and accept prayer partners, and Christian accountability partners to guide them through their journey of rehabilitation.⁵⁰ The emergence of this program coincides directly with the rise of the abolitionist movement while also showcasing the major ideals for which it stands.

A majority of the testimonies on the “A Way Out” website, both written and recorded, focus heavily on the victimization of former sex workers. Although most of the women entered into the sex industry of their own free will, they cite certain instances in their life that prompted them to believe that joining the sex industry was the only opportunity available for them at that period.⁵¹ It is often stressed that the sex industry was their absolute last choice and that once in the industry, they faced daily abuse and heartbreak. By pushing forward this idea of the victim narrative, the program receives community and government level approval for it is acting in accordance to the abolitionist standards.

State Level Anti-Sex Trafficking/Modern Day Slavery Movements

The rise in the fear of “white slavery” has recently undergone a change to encompass the new fear of “modern slavery” and sex trafficking which is evident not only in programs created in Memphis specifically, but in programs pushed forward by Tennessee senators as well. Recently, Senator Bob Corker has dedicated himself to an initiative he has entitled the “End Modern Slavery

⁵⁰ "Citizens for Community Values." Citizens for Community Values. <http://ccvmemphis.org/>.

⁵¹ This testimony presented coincides directly with the General Strain Theory.

Act.” This initiative is a bipartisan plan aimed at addressing modern day slavery in developing countries, looking particularly at the sex industry.

A commercial appeal article from May 22nd of 2016 notes how this initiative seeks to “establish a nonprofit foundation dedicated to combating slavery across the globe. It also would set up a \$1.5 billion international fund that would provide grants to programs and projects outside the United States working to free victims of modern slavery and would enforce laws to punish people and companies that profit from human trafficking.”⁵² From this quote, it is evident that the focus of many government officials is not constructive reform of the sex industry in the United States, particularly in Senator Corker’s own state of Tennessee, rather the focus lays on international affairs. Part of this reasoning may lay in the belief that it is easier to get individuals from all parties to back an act which addresses an issue outside of their home, however this mindset can be incredibly damaging especially for individuals who are involved in local sex trafficking.

For instance, one major forum for sex trafficking in the United States, and Memphis especially, may be found in the website, ‘backpage.com.’ This site operates much like Craigslist where individuals may buy and sell goods and services. Unlike Craigslist however, Backpage allows the buying and selling of young girls in a sexual context. Oftentimes, the girls are recruited by individuals who offer the girls a community. The target population for these individuals are young women with low senses of self-esteem (noted by the way a girl holds herself day to day,) and young women who respond well to advances from a stranger. A sex trafficker in this setting recruits young women in public arenas such as malls or parks, and

⁵² Collins, Michael. "Corker hears stories of teens sent into sex trade." The Commercial Appeal. May 22, 2016. <http://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/government/2016/05/22/corker-hears-stories-of-teens-sent-into-sex-trade/90542578/>

begins to shower them in gifts and compliments until they have won over the girls trust. Once trust has been established, the sex trafficker convinces the young woman to meet them at a private location where she is then whisked away into the sex industry. In most cases, the young woman operates in her hometown which is how her family finds her on Backpage. Most cases of child sex trafficking occurs on Backpage or sites like it, yet the national government has made no effort to shut the site down. The company claims that it is protected under a law created in 1996 which states that a company may not be held liable for the content users post on its site. Under this law, Backpage cannot be charged for allowing the buying and selling of young girls, therefore, the sex trafficking industry may continue to thrive unchecked.⁵³

Thus, the aim of the “End Modern Slavery Act,” while beneficial to some parties, continues to perpetuate the victim narrative while leading an attack on men from “targeted” countries. The stories of the women, often young women, in countries abroad are oftentimes used as justification to bear individual's entrance into the United States due to pre-determined prejudices against people of a certain country.⁵⁴

The stories and testimonies of these young women should not be discounted, but the motives of government officials like Senator Corker should not go unquestioned. In order to address the issue of human trafficking abroad, one must look at it from the same approach that would be used to address matters in the United States. In an issue that is as delicate as this, one must ask themselves if they intend to allow the country to change and grow on their own, or if they wish to be the ones to bring about the change. The second approach is often times labeled

⁵³ *I am Jane Doe*. Mary Mazzio. February 10, 2017. Film.

⁵⁴ Weitzer, Ronald. "The Movement to Criminalize Sex Work in the United States." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 61-84. Web. <<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-6478.2010.00495.x/epdf>>.

as the idea of the United States serving as a “white savior,”⁵⁵ an approach which has been highly damaging in the past. It is important for the United States to look inwardly at their own system of human trafficking before addressing it in other countries.

Anti-Immigration in the Sex Industry

The United States government however only addresses sex trafficking within its borders in moments when it benefits them to do so. The rise in the fear of white/modern slavery has provided the national government with the tools it needs to address issues of immigration without causing public dissent or suspicion. They are able to do this due to the strength and ferocity of abolitionist movements in the United States. In exchange for constant funding, the abolitionist approach to the sex industry allows the national government to push forward anti-immigration policies in a clandestine manner.

The Unstoppable Force of the Abolitionist Movement

Beginning under the Bush administration, abolitionist groups began to receive massive funding that allowed for them to spread their message against sex trafficking, and the sex industry in general, while also instilling in people the fear of the ‘other.’ The belief that sex trafficking occurred due to foreign individuals targeting women in the United States and then forcing them into a lifetime of sex slavery was enough to catch the attention of policy makers and average U.S. citizen alike. This idea flourished for there was “a lack of counter-discourse

⁵⁵ The concept of the “white savior” refers back to a period in which countries such as the United States and select European countries believed it to be their destiny to modernize countries that deemed to be ignorant to what they considered to be the right mode of living. This manifested in the spread of Christianity, the push for cultures to do away with their unique traditions in favor of more Euro-centric ideals, and the introduction of a form of government which greatly mirrored (and was partially controlled by) the United States.

and lobbying by influential groups [against abolitionist claims.] and those who voiced...opposition [to the claims] were either ignored or denounced as apologists for pimps and traffickers.”⁵⁶ This mindset allowed abolitionist groups to reign unchallenged in the political field particularly in relation to the money the government provided to their cause. In exchange for planting the seeds of fear of immigrants, the U.S. government unquestionably accepted statistics created by abolitionists groups that advocated that such groups required more funding to help trafficked victims. These figures often varied wildly depending on the group, however as mentioned previously, dissent before the abolitionist groups is incredibly low, thus they continue to receive funding based on inaccurate figures.⁵⁷

Policies of Exclusion under the Bush Administration

Since the abolitionist groups laid down the foundation of fear and general mistrust of the ‘other’ by focusing on foreign influence over sex trafficking, the U.S. national government, specifically under the Bush administration, was able to enact a series of policies that directly challenged countries that the United States harbored pre-existing grudges with. This fear of foreign sex trafficking allowed the government to place in measures that black listed people from countries such as North Korea and Iraq (countries the U.S. does not historically have good standing with), thus denying them entrance into the United States for no reason other than the fact that they might be involved in the sex trafficking industry. This system allows for immigration police to deny entrance to any individual from a black listed country without hard

⁵⁶ Weitzer, Ronald. "The Movement to Criminalize Sex Work in the United States." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 61-84. Web.

⁵⁷ Weitzer, Ronald. "The Movement to Criminalize Sex Work in the United States." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 61-84. Web.

evidence that the individual in question is involved in sex trafficking.⁵⁸ Under the guise of being against sex trafficking, the United States government pushed forward their anti-immigration agenda without attracting much suspicion. The issue with this however, is that the United States government is not applying its own published anti-sex trafficking stance within its own borders. Through sites like Backpage, sex trafficking is allowed to run unchecked, for it does not directly challenge U.S. authority, thus by comparing the U.S. governmental outlook on sex trafficking within U.S. borders and outside U.S. borders, it becomes evident that the primary reason why the U.S. backed the abolitionist movement was to push forward their own anti-immigration stance.⁵⁹

Implications of a Covert Anti-Immigration Policy

The strong anti-immigration stance held by the United States can prove to be severely detrimental for foreign sex trafficked individuals for if they report their status to government agencies, they run the risk of being deported, which may put their lives in greater harm. Due to this fear of deportation, many women who are truly victims of sex trafficking are unable to get the attention that they need. Oftentimes, a victim of such large scale sex trafficking may find it hard to escape from the individual or group that first brought them to the United States. For these women, there is no “A Way Out” program to help them rehabilitate into society, as far as many of them believe, due to their restricted citizenship.

This anti-immigration stance under the guise of being against sex trafficking may also prevent individuals seeking solace and refuge being prohibited from entering into the United

⁵⁸ Kempadoo, Kamala , Jyoti Sanghera, and Bandanna Pattanaik. *Trafficking and prostitution reconsidered: new perspectives on migrations, sex work, and human rights*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2012.

⁵⁹ Kempadoo, Kamala , Jyoti Sanghera, and Bandanna Pattanaik. *Trafficking and prostitution reconsidered: new perspectives on migrations, sex work, and human rights*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2012.

States due to the belief that they may be involved in the sex industry. Since little to no proof is required to label someone as a sex trafficker, the border control may bar any individual from entry without facing serious consequence. This in turn creates a paradoxical situation in which the United States appears to be actively combating the foreign sex trade, but doing nothing to address it within its own borders.

IV. CONCLUSION

As the sex industry has progressed farther into mainstream culture, three schools of thought have emerged in relation to how to best approach sex work: the abolitionist approach, the regulationist approach, and the prohibitionist approach. In Memphis in the 1970s, a prohibitionist approach to the sex industry was made popular under the guidance of Chairman Love who sought to eradicate sex work from Memphis completely. This attack against the sex industry was the city government's way of indirectly forcing black Memphians out of the downtown area in an attempt to make Memphis appear appealing to outside parties. In order to accomplish this feat, the prohibitionist approach to the sex industry was heavily stressed for it promoted the idea that sex workers, who were primarily black women in the 1970s and 1980s, were to blame for the city not prospering as much as cities such as Nashville and Atlanta. As the years progressed, Memphis adopted an abolitionist standpoint as noted in the development of sex worker rehabilitation programs and the fear of modern day slavery spread.

From this fear of white/modern day slavery, the United States pushed forward their anti-immigration agenda under the guise that it was in place to keep sex traffickers from entering into the United States. Ultimately, this stance isolates undocumented sex trafficked victims from receiving the care they need due to fear of deportation.

It is important to note, that since the sex industry is so vast and covers so many fields, no one approach should be used to address every facet. Women who willingly enter the sex industry in order to express their sexual identity in an accepting outlet or choose to embrace the natural urges of their bodies, should not be paired alongside women who were forced into the sex trade. An intersectional approach is highly necessary in order for the needs of the sex industry to be met, and those approaches need to be conducted by local organizations that understand what each individual in the sex industry needs in order to thrive.

V. Bibliography

- “High School Prostitutes.” *Commercial Appeal*. Memphis. 11 March 1976. Print
- Norment, Lynn. “Pimps Find That Some School Girls are Easy Targets for Their Line.” *Commercial Appeal*. Memphis. 9 March 1976. Print.
- Pittman Black, Kay. “MHA Battles Seizure of Young Girls by Pimps.” *Press Scimitar*. 26 August 1978. Print.
- BeVier, Thomas. “Health Department VD Check Up is Safety Ritual for Prostitutes.” *Commercial Appeal*. 14 March 1974. Print.
- “Washed Up.” *Commercial Appeal*. 23 June 1974. Print.
- Jordan, Thomas. “Council Chief Says Pimps, Prostitutes Ruining Downtown.” 16 April 1975. Print.
- “I Understand they’ve had an irresistible offer from Dallas...” *Commercial Appeal*. 18 April 1975. Political Cartoon in Print.
- “City Judges Cite Roadblocks in Tighter Control of Prostitution.” *Press Scimitar*. 16 April 1975. Print.
- “Banish the Prostitutes!” *Press Scimitar*. 17 April 1975. Print.
- “Quarantine Launched Against Prostitution.” *Commercial Appeal*. 15 February 1972. Print.
- Territo, Leonard. *International sex trafficking of women & children: understanding the global epidemic*. Flushing, NY: Looseleaf Law Publications, Inc., 2015

- Kempadoo, Kamala , Jyoti Sanghera, and Bandanna Pattanaik. *Trafficking and prostitution reconsidered: new perspectives on migrations, sex work, and human rights*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2012.
- Reynolds, Kelli. "Juvenile Prostitution: An Exploration in Gendered Theory." *Virtual Commons- Bridge Water State University* (2016): n. pag. Web.
- Scoular, Jane. "Whats Law Got To Do With it? How and Why Law Matters in the Regulation of Sex Work." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 12-39. Web.
- Brooks-Gordon, Belinda. "Bellwether Citizens: The Regulation of Male Clients of Sex Workers." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (March 2010): n. pag. Web.
- Weitzer, Ronald. "The Movement to Criminalize Sex Work in the United States." *Journal of Law and Society* 37.1 (2010): 61-84. Web.
<<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-6478.2010.00495.x/epdf>>.
- *I am Jane Doe*. Mary Mazzio. February 10, 2017. Film.
- "Citizens for Community Values." Citizens for Community Values. <http://ccvmemphis.org/>.
- Collins, Michael. "Corker hears stories of teens sent into sex trade." *The Commercial Appeal*. May 22, 2016. <http://www.commercialappeal.com/story/news/government/2016/05/22/corker-hears-stories-of-teens-sent-into-sex-trade/90542578/>
- Snyder, Howard N. "Arrests in the United States, 1990-2010." *Bureau of Justice Statistics*(2012): n. pag. Web

