CONSTRUCTIVISM AND TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS:
THE ROLE OF NON-STATE ACTORS IN THE GLOBAL
ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOVEMENT

A Project

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Department of Government
Abstract of

CONSTRUCTIVISM AND TRANSNATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS:
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Statement of Problem
Due to the complex and underground nature of human trafficking, there is often a stark contrast between the understanding of individuals drafting and enforcing policy, and the reality of what victims actually face. This project applies a Constructivist lens to the issue of human trafficking and aims to examine how non-state actors like those belonging to Transnational Advocacy Networks play an important role in effectively bridging gaps in understanding and addressing the needs of victims.

Sources of Data
To support the case of Constructivism’s applicability to human trafficking, this project uses a combination of case studies that exhibit Constructivist tenets and first-hand information I obtained during my internship with Opening Doors’ Survivors of Human Trafficking program. Consistent with the nature of human trafficking, the case studies examined have human rights emphases, and include challenges facing international anti-
trafficking efforts. My personal experience provides insight into local efforts of anti-trafficking activists.

Conclusions Reached

The literature and my experience during my internship demonstrate the value of utilizing Constructivist framework to approach human trafficking. On-going information sharing among non-state actors and those with enforcement power is key in developing and implementing effective anti-trafficking policy. However, a great deal of division exists among activists based on their interpretation of what approaches are best suited to prevent the problem and rehabilitate victims. This has resulted in an active albeit extremely fragmented anti-trafficking Transnational Advocacy Network.

_______________________, Committee Chair
Nancy D. Lapp, Ph. D.

__________________________
Date
DEDICATION

In memory of the late Opening Doors, Inc. Executive Director, David Blicker. I was fortunate enough to work closely with this amazing humanitarian during my internship where his supportive leadership, humility and gentle spirit were constant sources of inspiration. I am grateful to him for his mentorship, genuine interest in my ideas and making me feel like a vital member of his team. He will be greatly missed.
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I would also like to express my gratitude to Tanya Shannon, former Program Director of Opening Doors’ Survivors of Human Trafficking program. I appreciate her mentorship and confidence in me to educate multiple groups in the Sacramento and surrounding communities about human trafficking. I also thank her for being so receptive to my feedback and allowing me to utilize my expertise to help strengthen the organization.
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Chapter 1

Project Introduction

Human trafficking is a human rights issue with global and local implications. It is not isolated to developing countries stricken by poverty and desperation. As experts learn more about this complicated phenomenon, its prevalence in developed countries like the United States (U.S.) becomes shockingly apparent. Even the capital city of Sacramento, California has been identified as a hub for human trafficking. It is very likely that most of the general public have come across a victim in their daily lives without even realizing it. During my internship with the Opening Doors, Inc. (ODI) and their Survivors of Human Trafficking (SOT) program I was given the opportunity to observe the issue first-hand, including the strong collaborative efforts of anti-trafficking activists, the lack of awareness among the general public and the unique challenges foreign born and domestic trafficking victims endure in the U.S.

One of the biggest challenges of addressing human trafficking is its complexity. Victims and traffickers often do not fit the stereotypical images provided in mainstream media where strangers in dark alleys pull unsuspecting teenagers into vans, where they are transported to undisclosed locations and chained to beds. Although such instances do occur, traffickers often know their victims and the restraints used to keep victims captive may be more psychological than physical. Many of the foreign-born victims served by ODI were trafficked by family members. Domestic minor sex trafficking victims are often trafficked by men they believe are their boyfriends. Over 90% of domestic minors
in the commercial sex industry are runaways from the foster care system who enter into prostitution between the ages of 12 to 14 (Shared Hope International, 2009).

Because ODI works with foreign born victims, I will be focusing primarily on that population. Victims are not easily identifiable and fear for their safety or the safety of their families, so accurate statistics are extremely difficult to obtain. ODI serves both labor and sex trafficking victims, so I attempted to provide information and examples of both. The FBI has also identified a rise in human trafficking among gangs and organized criminal networks, and that the illicit practice now ranks only second to drug trafficking (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2011)

The underground nature of human trafficking and the fear victims experience reduce the likeliness that victims will seek assistance through law enforcement or other official government agencies, but rather through other service agencies like domestic violence shelters and health clinics. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like ODI have played a valuable role in raising awareness, identifying victims, providing services for victims, and collecting data. They have been instrumental in shaping policy at international, domestic and local levels of legislation, and have been vital partners to law enforcement as laws and practices are being developed.

Traditional international relations (IR) theories view NGOs and other non-state actors as insignificant to international political matters or merely vehicles of predetermined state interests. Constructivism recognizes that interests are not fixed, and that non-state actors have the ability to have mutually constitutive influence on states and their interests. Although NGOs lack traditional forms of material power, Constructivism
identifies information sharing as a tangible commodity that can be used to change societal norms and practices.

Because of its unique approach, I found Constructivism to be the most appropriate IR theory to examine anti-trafficking efforts. I also wish to acknowledge the invaluable contributions Feminist theorists have made to the field of by examining how the deeply rooted gender roles and negative stereotypes toward women fuel sex trafficking and other exploitations of women and girls (one notable example is Kathleen Barry’s 1984 book, *Female Sexual Slavery*). I use the Constructivist framework provided by Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink in their book *Activists Beyond Borders* to examine Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) and how NGO participation and framing information have been key elements in multiple activist movements. I was able to directly relate Constructivism to my internship responsibilities during my time as community education and outreach intern for ODI’s SOT program. Information sharing and framing were critical aspects of my job, and was applicable to everything from material creation, delivering community presentations, and informal communication exchanges at outreach events. I have also witnessed successful collaboration efforts between NGOs and law enforcement that appear to be leading toward positive changes to current policies and practices. However, as I will explain further in the following sections, the actuality of non-state actors maintaining enough influence over policymakers to carry policies to fruition is extremely time consuming and often unsuccessful. Implementing policies that can adapt to new information and be sensitive to ongoing challenges is even more difficult.
Chapter 2
Organization and Internship Description

About Opening Doors, Inc.

ODI launched its SOT program in 2007 after a refugee client brought a woman into the office who turned out to be a human trafficking victim. The woman’s traffickers allowed her to leave the house only two hours per week: one to go grocery shopping for them, and one to attend church every Sunday. They took for granted that because she spoke a foreign language and was not familiar with American culture, she would not make any friends. However, due to the diverse population in Sacramento, she met and was befriended by a former refugee while attending church. After hearing about the frightening situation this woman was experiencing, including broken promises of prosperity, death threats to her family back in her home country, long days of work without pay or breaks, and the level of control exhibited over her, the refugee brought her new friend to ODI because the organization had helped her in the past through its refugee resettlement program.

Until then ODI had never encountered a human trafficking victim before and were unequipped to help the woman when she initially came in. At the time there were not any local resources or services in the Sacramento area and little was known about human trafficking. Because mainstream portrayals mostly associated the issue with developing countries, human trafficking was (and in many ways, still is) not thought of as a local issue.
ODI’s SOT Program provides comprehensive case management and support services for human trafficking victims within the Sacramento region. The program has served clients from all over the world, including Mexico, El Salvador, England, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Fiji, Thailand, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Kenya. ODI is a founding member of the Sacramento Rescue and Restore (R&R) Victims of Human Trafficking Coalition in which ODI is closely partnered with Women Escaping a Violent Environment (WEAVE), My Sister’s House (MSH), Sacramento Employment Training Agency (SETA), and many other NGOs and governmental agencies in an effort to serve the best interests of their current and potential clientele.

Although ODI was initially founded by the Sacramento Interfaith Service Bureau as a small refugee resettlement agency in 1993 and continues to have strong relationships with Sacramento faith-based community organizations, it does not operate with any particular religious principles when assisting victims in their recovery. Instead, ODI asks the victims which community (or communities) they most closely identify with, whether it be cultural, religious, LGBT or otherwise. ODI then connects victims with the appropriate community group(s), in addition to counseling and other vital resources they receive, so they feel a sense of belonging and comfort as they take steps towards their recovery. Empowering victims to have input in rebuilding their lives is a critical element in their transition from victim to survivor.

Although ODI has focused a large majority of its time and resources on victim services, community outreach and education are essential elements in addressing the illicit crime of human trafficking. Beyond just generally informing the public about a
crime that many have little or no knowledge about, ODI also has the ability to change misconceptions and potentially elicit empathy for victims. Misleading images in the media glamorizing prostitution or giving the impression that traffickers are strangers lurking in the shadows waiting to snatch young women out of suburbia produces challenges for organizations like ODI to overcome when presenting on the issue.

As FBI human trafficking taskforce members and other subject matter experts attested during the “Human Trafficking: Law Enforcement Responds” conference at Sacramento State (multiple presentations, February 9, 2012) traffickers are typically not strangers, but rather are individuals familiar to the victim. Many victims are trafficked by their own family, organized family groups, job recruiters, prominent members of the community or romantic partners whom they believe love them. However, this does not mean the stereotypical traffickers and victims portrayed in the media are completely inaccurate – only that they represent a very small percentage of cases.

In reality, victims come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Although some are poor, uneducated, ethnic minorities (both U.S. and foreign born); there are also many educated, highly skilled men and women who are trafficked across borders with the genuine belief they are traveling to a legitimate job where they can utilize their skills (Ingles, 2012; Kloer, 2010; Pyle, 2002). Some recent examples involve the trafficking of female nurses from the Philippines in California, U.S. and Oslo, Switzerland (Ingles, 2012; Kloer, 2010). In both cases traffickers used threats to the victims and their families to administer fear and control. Victims worked as nurses but were forced to surrender their paychecks over to traffickers.
Although sex trafficking has received more attention in recent years, labor trafficking has been markedly absent from mainstream media. The news coverage or documentaries that are available have primarily focused on labor trafficking in developing countries, with very few examples of its occurrence in the U.S. To proactively address this gap, ODI conducted outreach to Mexican migrant communities during 2011’s peak harvest season. Due to its close proximity, many of ODI’s clients are from Mexico. According to the 2011 TIP’s country profile for the U.S., labor trafficking is more common among foreign born victims and sex trafficking is identified more frequently among domestic victims. However, due to the underground nature and frequent movement often involved in sex trafficking cases, this figure may change as more cases arise.

My Role

My primary role during my time with Opening Doors was doing community outreach and delivering educational presentations to the public about human trafficking, for which I partnered with Sacramento City College, California State University, Sacramento (CSUS – a.k.a. Sacramento State) and University of California Davis (UC Davis) student organizations, and community organizations (including faith-based groups) in the Sacramento area and surrounding areas. The former is an important target group because it gives ODI the opportunity to educate young people on what has been called “modern day slavery” and help recruit potential interns for the organization; the latter is key for both spreading general awareness, but also building community relationships and identifying possible donors. I also attended a number of tabling events
at Sacramento State and networking events in the Sacramento community to promote internship opportunities and connect with community members interested in helping with anti-trafficking efforts.

My presentations were critical for ODI because they provided information to the general public as well as key professional groups, and created opportunities for collaboration. My previous marketing experience and knowledge about human trafficking helped me learn the material quickly and provide new ideas on how to frame the sensitive issue being covered. Conversations I had after my presentations and during community events resulted in future presentation and partnership opportunities, which demonstrates the value of person-to-person exchanges of information.

I utilized my past marketing experience to help ODI be more recognizable in the community by creating program outreach materials and stressing the need for consistent, professional materials when presenting to the community. I created the first official outreach materials for the SOT program, which allowed me (and other employees and interns) to professionally present information about the program and the organization during community outreach events and presentations (See Appendix A).

**Connection to International Relations Theory**

The field of international relations has primarily focused on the roles of and interactions between states in the international system. However, as social networking and other advancements in communications technology continue to connect people from all parts of the globe with an ease and speed that was never before possible, it is impossible to address certain issues without looking at social constructs, mutually
constitutive ideas and norms to better understand complex issues such as human trafficking that operate outside of traditional state controls. Constructivism provides a valuable framework to examine the complex network of activists that fight against the illicit trade of human beings and the partnership of service organizations needed to assist its victims.

I will be exploring the applicability of Constructivism to human trafficking efforts by examining other transnational social movements where non-state actors (and in many case grassroots NGOs) played critical roles in disseminating information, garnering public support, providing services to victims, shaping policy and applying pressure to slow-moving government entities to act. From my work within ODI, I have witnessed challenges similar to those faced by activists addressing other social issues, including the global women’s movement. As communication technology has allowed increased partnerships among organizations all over the world, my work with ODI has given me valuable insight to the new avenues of advocacy and movement towards what some call a global civil society (Warkentin & Mingst, 2000), which I explain in more detail below.

Constructivism offers a unique lens for the analysis of social movements because it treats NGOs and other non-state actors as independent actors that have the ability to shape or be mutually constitutive with state interests. Although unequipped with material sources of power like military might and policy-making ability, NGOs are able to use information as a commodity to spread awareness and pressure actors with decision-making capabilities to change polices. When addressing a controversial topic like human trafficking, national governments may be reluctant to admit the problem exists in their
country because doing so would force them to admit their country’s role in the global crime, and their shortcomings in matters of national security and failure to offer adequate protections for their own citizens. To overcome such obstacles, activists play a vital role in providing statistics and sharing information to legitimize the issue and hold policy makers accountable. It is for these reasons I attempt to apply a Constructivism framework to the issue of human trafficking and the contributions activists have made to international anti-trafficking efforts.
Chapter 3

Literature Review

Constructivism

In “Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” Constructivist Alexander Wendt (1992) argues that Neorealists’ belief that interests are unchangeable and dictated by exogenous factors such as anarchy is unrealistic, and that Neoliberal regime theory suffers because although despite its attention to ideas, it still views interests as predetermined, therefore failing to realistically allow for real change and explain complex learning. In “Collective Identity Formation and the International State,” Wendt (1994) disputes Olsen’s claim that self-interest is predetermined for actors and causes of cooperation are exogenous, and instead argues that causes are endogenous. Wendt’s Corporate Identity analogy claims that states act collectively based on socially constructed ideas and a single identity.

Constructivists claim that social identities are not fixed, but evolve over time and are malleable even during interactions, regardless of whether those interactions are cooperative or conflictual, and that a state’s concern for the well-being of another state will play an important part in how they choose to act (Wendt, 1994; Hopf, 1998).

Unlike other IR theories, Constructivism claims that state identities are not predetermined by abstract concepts such as anarchy, but rather are complicated and variable depending on a state’s perception of itself, other states’ perceptions of it, and the state’s perception of other states (Hopf, 1998) and these in turn drive interests. Beyond the issues that lie in states misinterpreting one another’s capabilities and intentions,
Constructivism acknowledges that socially accepted concepts are extremely difficult to change; that once a perception is held it becomes accepted as fact (Hopf, 1998; Wendt, 1992). If states are able to reproduce social practices that demonstrate an understanding of commonly held interests among them, parties are more likely to cooperate (Hopf, 1998).

Constructivism claims that norms and practices provide context for actions, and because state (and individual) perceptions vary depending on accepted norms and practices, anarchy does not exist in the abstract, all-powerful form that invisibly dictates state actions as Neorealists claim, but rather is a variable concept that may very well exist on a continuum (Wendt 1992; Hopf, 1998). In addition to taking a different approach to state interests, Constructivism claims that non-state actors and structures within states are mutually constitutive rather than viewing the flow of influence stemming exclusively from state interests (Hopf, 1998). Constructivism also offers unique contributions to the field by looking at unconventional sources of power, like those demonstrated by social activists who utilize information sharing and strategic framing of an issue to impact policy (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001).

Constructivism does not discount traditional material power, but instead adds to it by considering the power of exchanging ideas and putting them into practice (Burchill, 2009; Hopf, 1998; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001; Wendt, 1992; Wendt, 1994). Although Constructivism claims that interests are not set, Hopf (1998) finds predictability and order to be essential in building trust between actors: consistency reduces confusion and establishes legitimacy of actions. Constructivists deny that the theory has an idealistic,
overly optimistic view of world change but rather aims to study the conditions under which change occurs (Hopf 1998; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001; Wendt, 1995).

**Constructivism and Non-state Actors**

The increasingly democratic nature of world politics has allowed non-state actors to become key players in national and international initiatives. Finnemore and Sikkink (2001) claim that the impacts of globalization require IR theorists to take a closer look at how international pressure and domestic structures influence one another and supports the idea of Constructivism’s attempts to move towards a mid-level theory. Democratic governance holds political leaders to a more extensive list of checks and balances because public transparency has become the new expectation of statesmen. The perceptions of other states as well as the world’s citizens are becoming increasingly significant to the political process.

In her book *National Interests in International Society*, Finnemore looks at the influence international organizations have on states, claiming that organizations garner independent influence, and are able to pressure and help develop states and their interests (Finnemore, 1996, as cited in Checkel, 1998). Finnemore (1996) views moral entrepreneurs as agents of international movements that motivate change. Finnemore and Sikkink (2001) highlight the contributions of social activists and the impact of emotions in persuasive speech: these two concepts proved to be of great importance to the destruction of the Multilateral Treaty on Investment (MAI) and the success of the global anti-landmine movement (both of which will be discussed below). Constructivism best
explains the formation and effectiveness of transnational advocacy networks like those that oppose human trafficking.

**Transnational Advocacy Networks**

In their 1999 book *Activists Beyond Borders*, Keck and Sikkink (1998) provide a clear framework for a Constructivist analysis of the role of non-state actors in humanitarian movements by examining the power of information sharing among members of transnational advocacy networks (TANs). Keck and Sikkink (1998) define a network as a collection of organizations and individuals that voluntarily participate in the mutually constitutive exchange of information and services. The organizations that make up transnational advocacy networks are made up of a wide range of different groups varying from domestic, regional and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international intergovernmental organizations (IGOs); domestic social movements; foundations; the media; consumer, religious and trade organizations and intellectuals, to parts of executive and parliamentary branches of governments (Keck & Sikkink, 1998, p. 9). Although networks may contain any combination of the above-referenced organizations, NGOs are always present in advocacy networks (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Because many NGOs work directly with victims, they have a unique and more intimate knowledge of an issue and its challenges than law enforcement and government officials would have. NGOs play a critical role to a movement by introducing new concepts, and by pressuring government and other actors with legitimate forms of power to implement policy changes (Aronowitz, 2009; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Diehl, 2005; Karns & Mingst, 2010).
Other scholars have similarly identified activist networks as key actors in contemporary international relations. In their 2000 article “International Institutions, the State, and Global Civil Society in the Age of the World Wide Web,” Craig Warkentin and Karen Mingst built on Ronnie Lipshutz’s concept of a global civil society, where political interaction is shaped by the exchange of knowledge over networks made up of decentralized actors. NGOs are considered extremely significant actors. This article shifts attention away from the traditional state-based institutions and statesmen as the primary actors interacting in the exclusivity of high level diplomacy. Instead it examines the evolution of political decision making where non-state actors like local NGOs become innovative leaders heading a new, instantaneous kind of democracy made possible with the new means of communication provided by technological advancements such as the internet.

Unlike traditional hierarchal organizational structures, the usual bureaucratic barriers do not exist in TANs, so participating organizations can share information more freely. This is especially important when addressing human rights issues where the “value” being measured is not easily quantifiable and information is not made readily available. Furthermore, there may be negative implications for government entities involved in perpetrating abuses or covering up evidence of their existence. Transnational advocacy networks operate among specialists in different countries that share a specific interest area and take on the responsibility of advocating for the rights of others (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Taking on an issue for individuals or groups without any easily identifiable personal gain for oneself challenges the traditional rational interpretation of
interests, where actors are self-interested when making decisions (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Hopf, 1998).

**The Power of Information**

Part of raising awareness and applying pressure to government entities is having information to back up claims of injustice. Because transnational advocacy networks are compiled of numerous organizations stemming from multiple locations, framing an issue effectively gives order to a movement and helps advocates organize efforts and distribute materials with a consistent message. The ability to gather and disseminate reliable information quickly is essential for advocacy networks because they do not have traditional modes of material power. Instead, the information they share among themselves and with government actors is considered their strongest commodity (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Keck and Sikkink (1998) conceptualize framing as “conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimize and motivate collective action” (p. 3). International women’s movement activists experienced challenges garnering support with their “discrimination” and “development” frames, so for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights they re-framed women’s rights as a matter of human rights. This expanded their collaboration efforts to human rights groups and successfully addressed previous challenges by shifting focus to “promoting change by reporting facts” (p. 183). This shift refocused women’s rights NGOs toward data collection so activists would be able to legitimize the scope of
their claims to reluctant governments and an international audience, and inspire activism (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

Warkentin and Mingst (2000) demonstrate how effectively framing an issue and sharing information among non-state actors can impact international movements in their comparative case study of activists’ role in hampering the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) and implementing the successful International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). Despite objections from developing countries, the United States (U.S.) and European Union (EU) utilized the recently established World Trade Organization (WTO) to begin discussions in 1995 regarding a wide-reaching multilateral agreement on investment (MAI). An international campaign against the MAI erupted when working documents were prematurely released. This caused a wave of transnational activism that ultimately resulted in the failure of the MAI.

Warkentin and Mingst (2000) also describe how transnational activism inspired and maintained an international campaign to ban the use of landmines. Following the end of Cold War the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was no longer limited to the neutrality they were required to maintain during the war, so the ICRC used its unique position as an organization that upheld humanitarian law to launch the ICBL. The ICBL was ground-breaking because it was the very first public awareness campaign to use a humanitarian frame to promote their cause, and tailored outreach materials separately to appeal to experts as well as the general public.

There were key differences between the two cases. First, the MAI negotiations were held privately and conducted only among OECD members despite the fact that the
implications of the final agreement would have major impacts on developing countries that were not invited to the talks. This exclusivity of the negotiations and some of its provisions benefiting rich countries added to the outrage when drafts of the MAI were leaked. Second, the ease in which NGOs were able to disseminate information through new modes of communication technology allowed groups with different agendas that existed in all different parts of the world to congregate over a shared mission while allowing them the freedom to frame the issue to fit their own agendas and individual area needs. Third, there were high economic stakes involved and there was a lack of cohesion among the original parties involved, so when the international public was rallying against the MAI, it added to the existing roadblocks that were already being faced before the document leaks. NGOs translated complex policy language into lay terminology and shifted focus from economic concerns to human rights to broaden their appeal to a large, diverse audience. Activists opposing the MAI strategically reframed the negotiations into a humanitarian campaign to elicit sympathy for victims and garner support for their positions (Warkentin & Mingst, 2000).

The ICBL had some of the same elements but was very different in nature from the MAI negotiations. Again, communication technology assisted the network in sharing information with NGOs around the world while allowing them the opportunity to tailor the message as needed. However, unlike the MAI, the issue at the center of the ICBL was non-threatening to governments because it did not pose any substantial financial or moral conflicts for states to support the ban of landmines. Their manufacture was not a huge source of revenue and they had been proven to be highly ineffective as weapons of
war, as they often detonated after fighting had ceased and over 80% of victims were civilians. NGOs rallied around the plights of the innocent victims to demonstrate the use of landmines was senseless and brutal. However, the topic did infringe on security issues because it was an international campaign seeking to change the contents of individual states’ military arsenals (Warkentin & Mingst, 2000).

As they did with the MAI, NGOs re-framed the ICBL; this time from a security matter to a humanitarian one. They heavily utilized emotive imagery to assist in the framing of the issue, showing the devastating injuries children sustained as a result of landmine accidents. The United Nations Association (UNA)-USA’s Adopt a Minefield Program gave members of the public the opportunity to “adopt” a particular area containing landmines and to raise funds to remove the mines, giving donors a personal connection to the issue and the local residents impacted. This successful reframing of the issue into a humanitarian one rather than one of security demonstrated a key Constructivist tenet of using a societal norm, which in this case was sympathy for innocent recipients of bodily harm, to garner support for their movement (Warkentin & Mingst, 2000).

Unlike the MAI, the ICBL did not face the issue of divided leadership, and actually enjoyed major support from government leaders. One of these leaders was Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy who used his position to not only further the campaign to end the use of landmines but also to ensure that Canadian government would consult NGOs on a regular basis when discussing matters of foreign policy. In addition to Axworthy, other influential figures such as UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali and
Pope John Paul II lent their support to the ICBL, giving the movement additional legitimacy. Also instrumental were Britain and France’s support, because both countries held significant roles in world governance as members of the UN Security Council and were both manufacturers of landmines, so they faced some financial losses from the success of the campaign. In examining these two issues, Warkentin and Mingst (2000) showed the changing nature of politics, including the necessity for cohesion among leadership (whether they are statesmen or NGOs) and the importance of framing an issue to garner support. Framing emotionally charged issues like banning landmines and human trafficking is crucial, but each have their own unique set of challenges (Warkentin & Mingst, 2000).

The ICBL was able to generate sympathy by utilizing disturbing images of mutilated innocent children. Even though approximately human trafficking results in the victimization of millions of innocent children (UNODC, 2009; United States Department of State, 2011), the graphic nature of human trafficking (especially sex trafficking) and some negative stereotypes of victims have posed challenges to the framing of anti-trafficking efforts. Describing the details of the sexual and physical abuse some trafficking victims face is often too much for some people to hear. Anti-trafficking advocates face the challenge overcoming victim-blaming mentalities, similar to what many domestic violence victims face. Uninformed members of the public have a difficult time understanding why victims do not “just leave,” especially in cases where constant physical restraint or violence is not present.
Despite these challenges, some faith-based groups have made numerous contributions to assist victims. However, sometimes faith-based groups may sabotage their own efforts with rigidities associated with religious doctrine.

**Faith-based Groups**

Because humanitarian work is motivated by moral motivations rather than the economic or security concerns of other networks, faith-based groups have frequently played an active role in advocacy networks. Congregations often encourage their members to give back to their communities and many participate in missions involving charitable work overseas. Some might argue that part of the motivations for churches to engage in such activities would be to recruit new members to their religion, where faith-based groups could potentially assume material gains with successful recruitment. Despite this possibility for material gain, faith-based groups claim to be motivated by altruistic principles.

This was evidenced by the numerous faith-based groups involved with the abolitionist efforts of the early nineteenth century to end black slavery in the U.S. (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Batstone, 2010), the anti-prostitution efforts of Charles Critterton (Wilson, 1933) and the fight against the transatlantic “white slave” trade or what would currently be referred to as sex trafficking (Bell, 1910). Christian activists applied a religious frame to these issues, and claimed they were motivated to act in attempt to save the souls of victims. Abolitionists claimed that when a human being is enslaved, they are being prevented the opportunity to achieve salvation (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Efforts to
help prostitutes were framed as saving women from lives of sin and “sexual vice” (Bell, 1910).

However, despite the altruistic principles associated with religion that motivates faith-based groups’ involvement in humanitarian movements, the efficacy of faith-based actors’ efforts has been hampered by other qualities: rigidity to particular religious customs, and negative views towards people of other faiths who are unwilling to convert and follow such customs. An example of this would be the Christian missionaries who began the first anti-footbinding campaigns in 1883 and 1895 (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). These campaigns were extremely sanctimonious in nature and were discriminatory in membership and hiring practices to women with bound feet, which alienated a large percentage of the very population they were trying to reach. They also sought to focus their efforts exclusively on Chinese Christians, which dramatically limited their scope because less than one percent of the population was Christian. Missionaries’ refusal to deal with the large majority of individuals impacted by the practice was counterproductive and demonstrated their unwillingness to acknowledge the serious role footbinding had played in the Chinese culture for centuries. Families believed their daughters would not find husbands if their feet were not bound because it was considered a sign of wealth and beauty; an ideal standard to which all women were held (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

A similar issue arose when the Church of Scotland and other Christian groups took on the campaign to eradicate the practice of female circumcision among the small Kikuyu population in Kenya. Reframed as female genital mutilation (FGM), unlike male
circumcision, FGM poses serious health risks to girls, but just as Chinese families saw footbinding as necessary part of a young women’s life to become suitable for marriage, female circumcision was viewed as essential for girls to undergo. It was believed that girls’ ability to withstand the pain of having their clitorises removed (often without any anesthesia) would make them strong and prepare them to be mothers. The campaign focused its energy on the Kikuyu’s small cultural group rather than the broader populations in Kenya practicing FGM because the Kikuyu were viewed as more amenable to the message being put forth by the missionaries. Once again, missionaries discriminated against girls that had undergone FGM and would revoke the membership of families who required their girls to have the procedure (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

In both the footbinding and FGM campaigns attempted by Christian activists, the aggressive, rigid approach based on the idea that their beliefs were better than the native population they sought to persuade, and their disregard for local culture and its long-standing traditions, resulted in strong local opposition as well as outside criticism (in the case of the Kikuyu), and ultimately resulted in the overall failure of both campaigns (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). However, other activists using more collaborative approaches later took on both issues with a higher rate of success. These success stories will be discussed further below.

Local Knowledge/Grassroots

As demonstrated with the challenges faced by the faith-based advocates fighting against Chinese footbinding and female genital mutilation (FGM), it is essential to have advocates who are native to the areas of concern, especially when humanitarian concerns
involve practices embedded in culture and tradition. It is also important for outside advocates (faith-based or otherwise) to avoid forcing unwelcome religious or cultural ideals, because they will likely be faced with opposition (Burchill, 2009; Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Merry, 2009). With the complex issue of human trafficking, where crimes are being committed across borders, having organizations that have native understanding of local cultures and laws plays an important part of re-framing the issue to be most effectively addressed.

Respecting local cultural values without forcing an outside agenda proved to be paramount in the campaign to end footbinding in China. Although early efforts driven by missionaries with rigid religious principles were unsuccessful, Mrs. Little’s Natural Foot Society took an entirely different approach and ended up being highly effective. Instead of focusing only on Chinese Christians who made up less than one percent of Chinese society, Mrs. Little focused on non-Christian women and established collaborative meetings that were non-threatening social affairs to help build positive relationships among participants (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). The campaign began in 1895 and focused on gaining support from elite Chinese women and influential members of Chinese society. Even though the campaign was started by outsiders, Chinese women adopted it as their own and fought for it enthusiastically. Following the valiant efforts of Chinese women and Mrs. Little’s team of activists, a cultural tradition that had existed for centuries was completely eradicated by 1919 (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

As previously mentioned, governments may be reluctant to admit what role they play in humanitarian abuses, in which cases grassroots organizations are necessary to
connect with those outside the violating country to bring attention to the issue (Merry, 2009). Just as the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo brought international attention including forensic scientists to provide evidence for the cases of kidnappings and torture in Argentina (Keck & Sikkink, 1998), women’s rights groups from around the world banded together at a series of world conferences beginning in 1975 to rally around issues identified as violence against women. In the case of the Plaza de Mayo groups, they had to reach outside of their country for assistance because the Argentinian government was denying that human rights abuses had occurred. With the international women’s conferences, it was a matter of activists from all over the world uniting on an issue that had wide reaching impacts. Armed with the new connections and knowledge gained at the conferences, NGOs were able to return to their respective areas with new conventions and global initiatives to strengthen the legitimacy of their efforts.

**How Transnational Advocacy Networks Function**

**Information Politics.** Because advocacy networks lack traditional forms of power, they strategically frame information to appeal to government organizations with traditional forms of power. As referenced above, swift and accurate information distribution, which Keck and Sikkink (1998) identify as Information Politics, is of tremendous importance to advocacy networks. Communication technology allows NGOs from all over the world to collaborate on any given issue virtually instantaneously, so much of the information being shared among groups may be informal through phone conversations or e-mails (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Warkentin & Mingst, 2000).
Although fast and convenient, unofficial channels of communication that exist in advocacy networks sometimes pose a challenge to the accuracy and tone of the message being conveyed. Although the rapid exchange of information worked extremely well in both the movement to terminate the MAI negotiations and towards stopping the manufacturing of landmines for the ICBL, in the case of the MAI, some critics raised concerns that the information disseminated was partial and taken out of context, and was in many instances hypothetical instead of factual (Warkentin & Mingst, 2000). When information is passed from group to group, the message may change, and Keck and Sikkink note that sometimes individuals directly impacted by an issue may lose control of the stories being told and message being portrayed on their behalf (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

A very recent example of this is the “Kony 2012” campaign orchestrated by the US-based NGO Invisible Children (IC) to apply pressure on the U.S. and other governments to track down and capture Lord’s Resistance Army’s (LRA) war criminal Joseph Kony. IC raised awareness of Kony’s widespread kidnappings of Ugandan children, whom he forced to be sex slaves and child soldiers for the LRA, by circulating a video through social networking via the internet (among other things) (March 5, 2012 http://youtu.be/Y4MnpzG5Sqc). The campaign called on people to plaster their respective cities with posters with Kony’s name and image on April 20, 2012. Although the campaign garnered international media attention and supporters, it was heavily criticized for glossing over important information, over-simplifying the issues and promoting military violence. One of the directors, Jason Russell, was also negatively
critiqued for devoting a significant portion of the film to his own son and his own accomplishments rather than focusing entirely on the plight of the victims impacted (Kagumire, 2012; Al Jazeera English, 2012).

One of the largest criticisms was aimed at the framing of the video. Critics claimed that it reinforced the stereotype of a white man swooping in to save poor Africans and that IC gave themselves too much credit for the progress achieved in the area of victim services and rebuilding Uganda without acknowledging the many NGOs and other Uganda efforts that have been serving victims for many years (Ochen, 2012). When victims of Kony were shown the video shortly after the film was released worldwide, they were outraged and insulted by this outsider who had not consulted with them before releasing the video and his poor (and seemingly inaccurate) depiction of the current situation in Uganda (Kagumire, 2012; Al Jazeera English, 2012).

Both the ICBL and Kony 2012 movements used emotive visuals to further their campaigns, and appeal to the public and policy makers. However, due to the sensitive nature of human trafficking, advocates must first consider the emotional state of the victims before exposing them to any kind of press (World Health Organization [WHO], 2003). Journalists often aggressively pursue first-hand interviews with human trafficking victims, because it humanizes the issue and would likely gain sympathy from viewers (and would make for a “good story”). But due to the trauma and shame experienced in both commercial and labor trafficking, victims are often reluctant to share their stories or if they do, it may be years into their recovery (WHO, 2003).
Media outlets have played an important role in activist’s movements by helping share information; however, sloppy journalism has contributed to victim trauma. Furthermore, when the faces and locations of victims interviewed are not properly concealed, traffickers have been able to locate and re-abduct victims (WHO, 2003). Service organizations (including ODI) get around such issues by sharing slightly modified versions of victims’ stories, by purchasing or using free emotive images available online rather than images of actual victims in their outreach materials, or by using actors to portray victims in videos.

**Symbolic Politics.** Activist networks use symbolism to help frame an issue as a less direct form of information sharing. This may be done by using an anniversary of a tragedy to raise awareness, as indigenous rights advocates did by bringing attention to a number of challenges faced by indigenous people during the 500th anniversary of Columbus’s expedition to America in 1992 (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). The wearing of t-shirts or posting of posters of Joseph Kony could also be seen as symbolism towards incarcerating him (www.kony2012.com). On a more local level, members of a UC Davis campus student organization demonstrated against human trafficking by standing with their mouths duct-taped, holding signs with a fact or story about human trafficking to represent human trafficking victims who were unable to speak for themselves.

**Leverage Politics.** Keck and Sikkink (1998) measure an advocacy network’s effectiveness by its influence on policy. Unlike the “target actors” they wish to influence, like government entities or private actors like TNCs, NGOs do not have the ability to directly make decisions impacting policy. Instead, they use Information and Symbolic
Politics to build their case on any given issue, in hopes of persuading the necessary actors to change policies in what Keck and Sikkink (1998) call Leverage Politics. This can be done by highlighting the material benefits of such changes, such as the money saved by withdrawing military support from a region. NGOs may also attempt to gain leverage over target actors by using moral appeals, considered the “mobilization of shame” which may include the use of the media (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

Public shaming has proven to be an effective tool for activists campaigning against child labor trafficking. Following the release of the documentaries “The Dark Side of Chocolate” (2011) and “Chocolate’s Child Slaves” (2012), major chocolate companies criticized in the films for receiving cocoa products harvested by child slave labor publicly announced plans to enact anti-slavery policies and to guarantee completely slave-free products by 2020 (“Ferrero sets date to end cocoa slavery,” 2012). Both films partnered with NGOs for information and to find first-hand accounts from child laborers. Many of the victims were trafficked across country borders against their will and were unaware of where the cocoa they were forced to harvest went or even what the end product was (“Ferrero sets date to end cocoa slavery,” 2012; Mistrati & Romano, 2010).

**Accountability Politics.** Although the goal of leverage politics is to influence target actors to make changes to policies, it sometimes may merely result in rhetoric. Even though the chocolate companies pledged anti-slavery practices, until it actually happens, their promises are only words. Some critics are wary of the far off goal of 2020, which gives the company eight years to implement changes. Activist organizations like Stop the Traffik are cautiously optimistic about these pledges and promise to follow the
companies’ progress and hold them accountable if they fail to follow through on their commitments. This monitoring and keeping the pressure on actors to follow through on policy change rhetoric represents what Keck and Sikkink (1998) consider Accountability Politics.

The activist network seeking to end human trafficking exhibits many of the elements of activism and Information Politics.

**Human Trafficking**

Housed within the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) defines a human trafficking as:

...sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. (TVPA, 2000, 114 STAT. 1470)

The U.S. Department of State and anti-trafficking organizations use slightly different versions of the Actions, Means and Purpose (AMP) model (also referred to as the Process, Means and Goal model) as a guide to determine whether a case legally qualifies as a human trafficking situation. Service agencies must be able to prove force, fraud or coercion was used against a victim (unless it is a commercial sex trafficking case where the victim is a minor) to be able to label a case human trafficking. For a situation to be
considered human trafficking, it must involve at least one criterion from each of the three columns below.

(The model below is based on a table used by SAGE and taken directly from an ODI presentation.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruiting</td>
<td>Force</td>
<td>Commercial Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harboring</td>
<td>Fraud</td>
<td>Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporting</td>
<td>Coercion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obtaining</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

The model is a helpful tool for anti-trafficking service agencies but is also extremely useful as a visual representation of the human trafficking definition that can be utilized during presentations. Victims must meet these criteria and be willing to cooperate with law enforcement’s investigative efforts to be eligible for benefits and services made available through the TVPA via anti-trafficking service organizations like ODI. Benefits include eligibility for temporary status documentation for foreign-born victims, public health benefits, housing and legal assistance.

Human trafficking has been identified as a form of modern day slavery (Aronowitz, 2009; Batstone, 2010; UNODC, 2009; United States Department of State, 2011). While many Americans associate the end of slavery with the American Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation freeing black slaves in the U.S., slavery has
continued to exist around the world. Although not officially condoned by governments, slavery exists underground, and the popularity of human trafficking rings has increased among criminal networks (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2011). This makes connecting with victims extremely difficult and data collection a sizable challenge (Black, 2010).

Due to the underground nature of human trafficking, exact statistics are nearly impossible to achieve, so estimations are used. There are an estimated 27 million people enslaved around the world and 600,000 to 800,000 are trafficked across national borders. Of those trafficked across borders, 18,000 to 20,000 are trafficked into the U.S. each year (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2011; U.S. Department of State, 2011).

California’s culturally diversity and large immigrant population allows foreign born traffickers and their victims to blend in. It is not uncommon for someone living in California to come into contact with someone who does not speak English. California also provides multiple transportation routes with a network of highways and numerous airports. California’s state capital, Sacramento, has been identified as one of the stops along a route used by traffickers to move domestic commercial sex trafficking victims. The route spans three states and begins in Los Angeles (CA), up through Modesto, Stockton, Sacramento, Portland (Oregon), Seattle (Washington), then transports victims back into California down through San Francisco and Oakland. ODI refers to this route in its presentations and is reaffirmed by law enforcement consultant, and former Lieutenant and lead of the San Jose Police Department’s Human Trafficking Task Force, John Vanek.
Challenges Facing Anti-trafficking Efforts

**Socially constructed negative stereotypes.** One sizable challenge to combatting human trafficking is the overwhelmingly gendered element of human trafficking, as an estimated 80% of those trafficked are women and girls (Shifman, 2003; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2009, p. 11). Consistent with Constructivist conception of socially constructed ideas, many would argue that human trafficking (especially sex trafficking) has continued to be a problem because of women’s socially accepted subordinate and objectifiable position in society (Merry, 2009; Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Shifman, 2003). Throughout history, women have systematically been denied equal access to education and have continued to be kept in inferior societal positions, ranging from issues of reproductive rights, to voting, equal pay in the workplace, and culturally accepted brutality such as honor killings that still continue to this day in both developing and developed countries (Carter, 2012; Grabe & Bucy, 2009; Kelley & Kelley, 2012; Merry, 2009; National Women’s Law Center [NWLC], 2012; Sayah, 2012). If women are seen as less valuable than men, then it is easier to treat them as a commodity, as something that can be traded and mistreated. As many activists involved in the international women’s movement argued, issues like domestic violence that begin in the private sphere spill out into the public sphere because it socializes men, women and children into viewing violence as acceptable behavior (Diehl, 2005; Merry, 2009; Souad, 2004).

**Xenophobia.** Negative cultural stereotypes and anti-immigrant sentiments that exist in some countries create socially accepted subordinate position for both male and
female foreign-born trafficking victims. One of the major fears facing foreign-born trafficking victims is deportation and in cases where they were smuggled into the country, that fear is a valid one. In the U.S., if a victim is referred to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) before being properly identified as a trafficking victim, they face the certainty of deportation. The trafficker of one of ODI’s clients routinely showed the victim news coverage of angry, anti-immigration commentary and presented it as a blanketing sentiment to make her believe she would be treated hostilely if she tried to escape. During one of my interactions with a victim, she kept mentioning her constant anxiety of being deported, despite the fact that she was actually significantly far along in the process in getting her temporary Visa. This is an individual who had been free for over one year, was able to enroll in school and begin building a new life for herself, and she was still paralyzed with the fear of being deported.

**Poverty.** Globalization has made moving across borders for work more commonplace, so it is not unusual that men and women living in dire poverty would go to great lengths to find employment (Aronowitz, 2009; Batstone, 2010; MTV EXIT, 2011; United States Department of State, 2011). Poor children are especially vulnerable because poor families send their children to find work, or may even sell them or rent them out in desperation of not having enough money to feed them (Aronowitz, 2009; Merry, 2009). Some women interviewed have admitted they knew there was a possibility they would be trafficked if they moved, but because they had no options in the town or village in which they lived, they were willing to take that risk to find some source of income to help feed their families (Merry, 2009; Shifman, 2003). Moving across borders
also puts individuals in an especially vulnerable position because they will often be unfamiliar with the language or culture of their destination country (United States Department of State, 2011; UNODC, 2009).

The International Women’s Movement

There were (and still remain) divisions among activists in the global women’s movements, but similar to the MAI and ICBL campaigns, women’s rights advocates came together during the global women’s movement to discuss a broad range of issues. They took these ideas back to their respective countries and tailored their approaches to address the issues at hand; except in the case of the women’s movement, most vital exchanges took place at international conferences over two decades rather than online forums. As Ellen Dorsey discusses in her chapter on the global women’s movement (Diehl, 2005), women came together for a series of global conferences beginning in Mexico City in 1975, Nairobi in 1985, Vienna in 1993, swiftly followed by conferences in Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing from 1994 to 1995.

The conferences varied in their focuses: Vienna focused on rape and held workshops to address trafficking in women (Keck & Sikkink, 1998), while Cairo focused on reproductive rights, and Copenhagen discussed feminization of poverty and social development (Diehl, 2005). These conferences resulted in working groups and key international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which is sometimes referred to as the “International Bill of Rights” for women, and the Beijing Platform for Action where 189 countries agreed to make significant changes toward gender equality (Diehl, 2005).
Although individual national governments varied in speed of enacting legislation and implementing subsequent efforts to enforce said legislation, non-state actors like NGOs and activists stepped in to fill the need for services that governments failed to provide. They built strong coalitions in their home countries while continuing to network with transnational agencies to raise public awareness and pressure governments into fulfilling their promises, and consulting with relevant NGOs in the process (Diehl, 2005).

Part of the success of the women’s movement can be attributed to the reframing of its central purpose from a developmental issue to a matter of human rights (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Merry, 2009). Until that change, women’s rights and human rights were treated separately, but by the movement rallying around violence against women as a human rights issue, it framed violence against women as a violation of fundamental human rights. This change also fostered increased coordination and networking among women’s and human rights groups, which resulted in major human rights groups like Amnesty International absorbing women’s issues into its broader human rights campaign (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Although some argued that certain issues were watered down to fit a vaguer global agenda, bringing gendered issues into the global agenda under the human rights umbrella demonstrated how private issues like domestic violence and hidden issues like human trafficking have wider societal implications.

**The Anti-trafficking Movement**

Human trafficking differs from slavery in that it is not exclusive to any particular group and its illegality makes identifying the underground practices and “trade” routes extremely difficult to identify. Also, the fact that individuals are sometimes transported
across national borders requires a level of coordination among nations to properly address
the problem on an international level, as well as understanding the unique challenges
faced by individual countries at national and local levels.

Non-state actors have been working to abolish slavery since the early 1800’s
(Gallagher, 2001; Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Wilson, 1933), and although individual
countries passed national legislation banning the practice and the United Nations ratified
the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1966 denouncing slavery
(Article 8), the issue of human trafficking was not collectively addressed on an
international level until it was discussed during the aforementioned series of global
women’s conferences in the latter part of the twentieth century. The workshops
conducted during those conferences were followed by the creation of the UN Palermo
Protocol in 2000 and resulted in subsequent national legislative actions.

Human trafficking efforts face many of the same challenges the international
women’s movement faced decades ago, included differing agendas, differences in
However, based on the actions taken at global, national and local levels during the past
decade following the ratification of the Palermo Protocol in 2000, there does appear to be
an anti-human trafficking TAN, albeit an extremely fragmented one.

NGOs have been instrumental in both legislation and victim services, but as with
other TANs, it has been difficult to quantify the direct impacts NGOs and other non-state
actors have had on anti-trafficking efforts. In the U.S., there is an array of prominent
statewide anti-trafficking organizations (e.g. Standing Against Global Exploitation
(SAGE) in San Francisco and Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) in Los Angeles) and national anti-trafficking organizations (Polaris Project, Not For Sale, Girls Educational & Mentor Service), but they appear to all have slightly different agendas. Those that are federally funded are obligated to operate around the federal definitions and guidelines, but those operating with private funding are more loosely associated with other efforts. Differences exist in everything from identifying victims, to taking a faith-based or secular approach to assisting victims, to how organizations and the government can best prevent and combat trafficking, some of which will be discussed in the following sections.

The role of Information Politics. Information Politics is of key importance to the anti-trafficking movement, because information sharing is a primary source of power for the NGOs involved. Non-state actors have been instrumental in spreading awareness about anti-human trafficking efforts. A network of NGOs collaborates with each other, the FBI, other law enforcement agencies, and politicians to educate and share information. In addition some celebrities have taken up the cause and spoken out on behalf of the anti-trafficking movement. One example is the “Real Men Don’t Buy Girls” campaign started by actors Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore to combat child sex trafficking. Others have lent support to existing foundations, like Emma Thompson’s work with the Helen Barber Foundation and Ashley Judd’s involvement with anti-trafficking efforts following the firsthand exposure to the issue she experienced during her travels as UN Goodwill Ambassador (Schmitt, 2010).
Human trafficking has also garnered more attention in mainstream media in the last decade. Movies like *Human Trafficking* (2005) and *Taken* (2011) have made the disturbing issue a more open topic for discussion. Although some of the content in these movies has received criticism for being unrealistic and unrepresentative of the broader issue, they have been credited for bringing attention to the issue. Some American journalists like Lisa Ling have done a number of featured stories on trafficking that offer more diverse accounts that more accurately represent the societal roots and challenge of the issue. In her 2005 documentary, “China’s Lost Girls,” Ling covered how China’s one child policy has resulted in mass killings and infanticide of infant girls, and the growing unbalanced ratio between men to women, which is being blamed for the recent increase in bride trafficking. She also did a segment for her “Our America” show in October of 2011 entitled “3AM Girls” about young girls being forced into prostitution in the U.S.

On a global scale, the MTV enterprise has launched two anti-trafficking campaigns: MTV EXIT in 2004 and MTV Against Our Will in 2001, which utilize popular musicians to help educate their young adult audiences of the horrors of human trafficking and hold benefit concerts to raise funds for organizations helping victims (Batstone, 2010; http://www.againstourwill.org; http://mtvexit.org/en). Despite the popularization of the issue, its complex and graphic nature still makes it a difficult one for activists to frame because including disturbing details of the violent crime is unavoidable.

**The role of Leverage Politics.** Keck and Sikkink (1998) measure an advocacy network’s effectiveness by the influence they are able to gain with policymakers that results in subsequent policy changes. Despite division over the causes of or best
approaches to human trafficking, transnational non-state actors had active advisory roles in shaping the language used in the 2000 Palermo Protocol, an international effort that inspired numerous subsequent national legislative efforts (UNODC, 2009; Gallagher, 2001). Some claimed that the participating governments’ real motivations for collaboration were concerns over sovereignty and security, and that human rights was merely a rhetorical cover. Trafficking would be considered a security issue because it violates national migration laws. Even so, these discussions were groundbreaking because in addition to being the first attempt to create an international law addressing organized crime, the negotiations included an unprecedented number of NGOs and IGOs. Such collaboration had not occurred before on matters regarding security (Gallagher, 2001). The information they provided was cited as being a significant educational contribution to the members of the ad-hoc committee involved in drafting the protocols. Various committee members admitted their lack of knowledge about human trafficking before exposure to NGO materials and testimonies about the gravity of the issue during negotiation meetings (Gallagher, 2001).

**The role of Accountability Politics.** Even if TANs are successful in gaining the support of policy makers and that support translates into policy changes, activists must continue to apply pressure to ensure governments follow through on their promises. After the chocolate company Ferrero announced that it would be joining other major chocolate manufacturers, Nestle and Hershey, in pledging to guarantee slave-free chocolate by 2020, activists were cautiously optimistic. NGO Stop the Traffik said it would be following Ferrero’s progress over the next eight years (“Ferrero sets date to end
cocoa slavery,” 2012). This is an example of what Keck and Sikkink call Accountability Politics.

Although divisions among activists have hampered the anti-trafficking TAN’s effectiveness, there has been progress in implementing laws and practices. Although national laws and awareness efforts have been unevenly implemented, the passage of the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in 2000 following the Palermo Protocol created a standardized measurement system by which international efforts can be routinely monitored through the annual publication of the Trafficking In Persons (TIP) report. The report provides country profiles for 184 countries and has a three tier ranking system based on country efforts to address human trafficking. NGOs are active contributors for data collection and testimonials compiled for the annual TIP report.

The U.S. TIP report is the only global report that is published on a yearly basis. The UNODC has also produced reports on human trafficking, but not consistently or as frequently as the U.S. TIP report. However, in 2010 the UN General Assembly mandated that the UNODC Global Report be published every two years beginning in 2012, and like the U.S. TIP report, the UNODC consults with NGOs to collect data and testimonials. One could argue that the U.S. TIP report is biased because it is published by the U.S., especially because the U.S. chose to leave its own country statistics off the report until 2010, but the U.S. Department of State cites that its data collection is collaborative and includes information from a number of different sources including U.S. embassies, government officials, NGOs and IOs, research trips, and even tips submitted by the public to a designated tip email address. (http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-
NGO’s contributions to the annual TIP report helps hold governments accountable by providing information that would not otherwise be available to government or law enforcement entities.

**Divisions within the anti-trafficking movement.** Unlike the united efforts of the activists involved in the MAI and ICBL campaigns, the movement to address human trafficking has remained divided. In addition to its graphic nature and anti-immigrant sentiments, the division over views on prostitution has challenged the international human trafficking movement’s cohesiveness. As Mingst acknowledges in her chapter on non-state actors (Karns & Mingst, 2010) unlike the extremely diverse members of the international women’s movement coalescing around the umbrella issue of violence against women, the human trafficking movement has thus far been unsuccessful at finding common ground to rally activists around. Anti-trafficking activists’ lack of consensus on the interpretation of the issue and how to address it have resulted in contradictory efforts and competition among organizations for political influence (Karns & Mingst, 2010).

Some conflicts are political, such as anti-immigrant sentiment detracting from efforts to assist foreign born victims of trafficking. This is especially true regarding foreign born labor trafficking victims that may have initially entered the country illegally. The resentment towards illegal immigrants has caused some government officials and organizations sponsored by conservative politicians to down play or blatantly deny the existence of foreign born trafficking in the U.S. Although sex trafficking victims tend to receive more sympathy than labor trafficking victims, there are still questions of choice.
If a victim is not under constant physical restraint, or does not face other challenges the public might view as “typical” for a trafficking victim, some have a difficult time understanding why victims cannot escape their captors.

Others divisions are considered academic as Sally Engle Merry discusses in *Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective*. She notes that while activists largely agree that gender, race and class inequality result in the illicit trade of women for use in the commercial sex industry, two prominent views exist on the issue, and each side has very different ideas and solutions: abolitionists and reformists (Merry, 2009).

Abolitionists view all forms of prostitution as illegitimate and exploitative, claiming the practice is a degradation of women’s basic dignity, which stems from unequal societal constructs on gender (Merry, 2009) including men’s desire to dominate women. Considering that approximately 80% of human trafficking victims are women and girls, it is hard to ignore the gendered element of the issue (U.S. Department of State, 2011). Reformists, on the other hand, oppose *forced* prostitution, but feel that *voluntary* prostitution should be treated like any other job. These activists seek to legalize prostitution and regulate it, claiming that if prostitutes were given legitimacy in their trade they would have more control over what services they were willing to provide and take better precautions to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Numerous prominent human rights NGOs including Amnesty International and Save the Children, share this view and claim that many women enter trafficking situations with full knowledge that they will be sold for sex, as demonstrated by a study conducted in Thailand where 74% of women who
were trafficked had already been working in the sex trade, and had entered it willingly (Merry, 2009).

Merry argues that reformists ignore that when a woman living in dire poverty enters into the sex trade to avoid starvation, she is not making the choice freely because it appears to be her *only* option. Merry also contends that even if a woman “chooses” to be a prostitute, the humiliation, and psychological and physical harm women face far outweighs any monetary benefits they receive (Merry, 2009; Shifman, 2003). Abolitionists also argue giving prostitutes more control over their services will not eliminate the demand for violent and degrading acts, and that an underground element will still exist to meet such requests (Merry, 2009).

Human trafficking, especially sex trafficking, was discussed at workshops held in 1994 in Copenhagen during the series of global women’s conferences (Diehl, 2005; Keck & Sikkink, 1998). In addition to the division between abolitionist and reformist viewpoints, women from the Global South were concerned that Western feminists would attempt to lead efforts from the Global North without input from developing countries, again demonstrating the importance of collaboration and concerns over locals losing control of their own stories (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Barry, 1984).
Chapter 4

Analytical Section

During my internship at Opening Doors, I witnessed the reality of the conflicts and challenges faced by small, grassroots organizations that have an intimate knowledge of the issue and its victims. Despite their expertise, they are forced to contend with deeply rooted societal constructs that challenge awareness efforts, even with the support of traditional power like the FBI and lawmakers.

The following analysis attempts to relate the literature I have discussed above to my firsthand experience with local anti-trafficking efforts. Constructivist helps explain the mutually constitutive nature of actors within the anti-human trafficking movement, the challenges activists face, and how ODI’s SOT program has utilized the power of information. I also apply a Constructivist lens to my role as education and outreach intern to help explain why it was crucial to the organization’s mission and larger efforts of addressing human trafficking. I organize my observations under what Keck and Sikkink identify as Information and Leverage Politics, which appear to be the most relevant to the topic of human trafficking and most frequently utilized by activists attempting to combat the global phenomenon.

Constructivist Contributions—Establishing Norms and Social Practices

Only Constructivism can adequately explain ODI’s emphasis on establishing norms and changing social practices. Activists at ODI have intuitively recognized that interests are not fixed. Norms about human trafficking can change, and NGOs can play a significant role in changing norms and promoting “compliance.” Although ODI is not
purposely structured around Constructivism, the work ODI does independently and through its collaboration with other organizations reflects Constructivist tenets. The organization works to establish norms and social practices by sharing information at outreach events and educational presentations; both of which the SOT Program Director and I accomplished together and separately during my internship.

Keck and Sikkink note that activists see the benefit of exchanging information and promoting their cause by collaborating with other like-minded organizations. Similarly, ODI had to coordinate with a number of other organizations to gather resources to help that first victim. Due to the lack of knowledge about human trafficking in Sacramento (and in general) and complexity of the issue it quickly became clear that no single agency would be able to effectively help victims. Responding to a need, ODI started the SOT program and helped found the Rescue & Restore (R&R) Program with partnering organizations WEAVE, My Sister’s House, SETA; and the R&R Coalition consisting of a broader collaboration with other local service and community organizations, government agencies, as well as law enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). They reached out to two existing organizations in California: Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE) in San Francisco and Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) in Los Angeles. R&R continues to partner with SAGE for training assistance.

Collaboration and information sharing efforts have not been limited to local or domestic groups. ODI has collaborated with NGOs working in Cambodia, where they have been addressing human trafficking since the 1950s. According to the SOT program
director, ODI also trained the South Korean government delegation, which included an NGO representative to help them set up a framework in their country as they try to develop their own national legislation to address human trafficking. Although ODI clients originate from all corners of the globe, the organization has yet to serve anyone from Cambodia or South Korea.

More frequently, ODI’s international collaborative efforts involve the processing needs of ODI’s foreign-born clientele. As one way of gaining control, traffickers often seize victims’ legal identification documents and tell their victims they will face deportation if they attempt to escape (Aronowitz, 2009; Batstone; 2010; MTV EXIT, 2011; Polaris Project, 2010). Once a victim is referred to an organization like ODI and is confirmed to be a human trafficking victim, the organization must request copies of the victim’s documents from the foreign consulates of their country of origin. ODI works with foreign consulates on a regular basis primarily to obtain documentation for victims, but ODI has also attended a number of outreach events with the Mexican consulate. Most challenges and delays ODI has had with foreign consulates have been bureaucratic. However, some have been caused by lack of cooperation and denial by country representatives that any of their citizens would be trafficking victims or that their country had any role in human trafficking.

It is not uncommon for a government to deny affiliation or responsibility for actions that may shine an unfavorable light on its country in the international community. This was evidenced in Keck and Sikkink’s (1998) examples of the mass murders in Mexico and kidnappings in Argentina. Sometimes shaming countries into compliance
with global initiatives and conventions may result in signatures and rhetorical support, and even national policy changes, but as evidenced in the aftermath of the international women’s movement, it took an array of non-state actors to provide services, collect data, and keep pressure on governments to live up to their promises (Diehl, 2005; Merry, 2009).

The foreign-born aspect of ODI’s work also differs from other typical human rights abuses, as activists are not fighting for the rights of their own citizens or traveling to foreign lands to assist the vulnerable individuals unprotected by their own governments. ODI advocates for the rights of foreign countries’ citizens who are being transported into the U.S. by legal and illegal means, and are being victimized in the U.S. by U.S. citizens and foreign-born perpetrators. The FBI agent assigned to the Northern California region (CEHA conference, April 5, 2012) stated that law enforcement bodies are further challenged in their pursuit of foreign-born traffickers because the perpetrators often flee back to their country of origin to avoid prosecution.

Information Politics

The importance of framing. As ICBL (Warkentin & Mingst, 2000) and women’s rights activists (Keck & Sikkink, 1998) demonstrated, the ability to frame their causes as human rights violations were critical to the success of their campaigns. ODI has been instrumental in providing information on the local implications of human trafficking in the Sacramento area. Their continued partnership with R&R, new collaborations with law enforcement, and the data collection assistance they are providing for a new study accessing the Sacramento area’s level of awareness about human
trafficking helps brings validity and local knowledge to the issue. ODI activists’ understanding of local culture and the diversity of our city and state helps them frame information so local Sacramento residents can further understand and be able to connect to the issue.

Making audiences feel connected to the issue of human trafficking is an essential element in ODI’s presentations. In addition to misconceptions the public may have about victims’ appearances, ODI also has to contend with the inevitable anti-immigration sentiments facing our foreign born clients. This is especially true during election seasons, where the on-going battle against illegal immigration from Mexico becomes a political talking point. Even though approximately 60% of ODI’s clientele enter the U.S. with legal documentation (typically with temporary student or work visas), the organization also offers assistance to individuals who are victimized after entering the U.S. illegally. According to provisions outlined in the TVPA, regardless of the legality of one’s entry, if an individual becomes a victim of trafficking, their illegal immigration status will be forgiven and they will be offered the same services available to those who entered the country legally.

Framing is of utmost importance when addressing this element of the issue, and I made a point to proactively address it in all of my speeches. ODI presentations sometime include a slide delineating the difference between smuggling and trafficking, but merely providing that information would be insufficient. This is where the impact of emotions in persuasive speech is especially important (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001). To counter potentially negative reactions to the idea of helping illegal immigrants, as well as biases
against some sex workers, ODI must use emotive appeals to help humanize victims with personal stories and frame the issue as a crime that involves violations to basic human rights. In addition to learning the presentation material, I was trained to use numerous anecdotes and examples to help personalize human trafficking. This requires a careful balance between painting too explicit of a picture, which runs the risk of turning people off and causing them to disengage from the rest of the information being presented; and giving examples that are too generic and impersonal, which over simplifies the issue and will fail to elicit empathy from listeners.

Similar to the divisions the movement has experienced on an international level, some challenges have resulted from differences of opinion on how to most appropriately serve victims based on rigid religious principles. Some faith-based organizations prefer to work exclusively with organizations that share the same faith approach. Some religious anti-trafficking organizations have been reluctant to partner with ODI and R&R because of their neutral stance towards religion. I witnessed this preference firsthand at a faith-based conference I attended during my internship, where one pastor mentioned he was working with a faith-based anti-trafficking organization that helped place domestic sex trafficking victims with “good Christian families.” This might pose a challenge if a victim were of a different religion, not religious, or a member of a community that some Christians might take issue with, such as victim who might be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT).

To counter religious biases, ODI emphasizes its religious roots and continued relationship in the community. Although not a faith-based organization itself, ODI was
initially sponsored by the Interfaith Service Bureau and until October 2011, received most of its funding for its SOT program from United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). ODI has developed good working relationships with many churches in the Sacramento area and one in particular has helped the organization by donating space every Tuesday evening for ODI’s Refugee Health and Employment Attainment Program (RHEAP) other program, which is designed to help refugees and human trafficking victims improve their English skills and learn healthy eating habits. ODI chose to be neutral in its religious beliefs because it does not want to possibly alienate any clients or make them feel any possibility of discrimination if they do not agree with certain religious principles. As Keck and Sikkink (1998) noted, while missionaries driven by rigid religious principles faced challenges when advocating against foot binding, groups with a more respectful approach lacking religious overtones like Mrs. Little’s Natural Foot Society are more likely to be accepted by communities with different beliefs than their own. Such acceptance enables advocates to share ideas rather than forcing their beliefs onto another group, and increases the likelihood for long-term, sustainable changes.

For individuals with rigid religious beliefs, ODI’s neutrality may be more significant than its previous religious affiliations and on-going relationships in Sacramento area’s faith communities. This information may not make the difference of them wanting to work with ODI, but acknowledging a respect of religion will most likely lessen the possibility of completely alienating a religious group or organization. It is impossible to please everyone, but it is important to maintain a reputation in the
community of being respectful of religious beliefs. As previously mentioned, human trafficking is a complex issue so it is important for agencies like ODI to avoid closing off possibilities for partnership. Faith-based groups differ widely in the views and approaches so the level of a group’s involvement with ODI is determined on a case-by-case basis.

ODI’s neutral approach allows victims the ability to focus on their own personal recovery without feeling pressured to convert or adhere to religious principles they might be uncomfortable with to receive services. ODI’s main concern is that victims feel safe and that they take an active role in their own recovery, so ODI tries to connect clients with services and groups with which they most closely identify and feel the most comfortable. In my presentations I highlighted ODI’s neutral approach as a benefit because it respects a victim’s beliefs. I remind audiences that as victims emerge from a trafficking situation where their voice and freedom were taken away by their traffickers, it is essential to their journey towards self-sufficiency that they feel their personal identity is respected and that they are empowered to contribute to their healing process. I introduced the idea to emphasize this benefit in our presentations (to faith-based and the general public) and since then it has been utilized by the program director and other ODI employees.

There is no single formula for finding balance between what may be too graphic or how much you need to evoke sympathy from an audience, because that will vary from group to group. As I helped transition two new individuals into delivering presentations, I emphasized the importance of observing presentations and simply becoming more
comfortable with material as they present, but a lot of it requires figuring things out as you go along. While ensuring the accuracy of statistics and information can be systematic, framing and gauging audiences requires an individual to be able to think on their feet and adapt to audiences as needed.

My background in communications, my comfort level with public speaking, and my previous domestic violence and sexual assault peer counselor training has helped me tremendously with this process. Understanding victim mentality and the similarities trafficking victims share with domestic violence and sexual assault victims helped me translate that knowledge into my presentations on human trafficking. Appearing confident in both presenting information and fielding audience questions provided legitimacy for me, and by association, for ODI and their expertise on issue I was presenting. At each presentation, I was able to assess the audience as I presented and based on their reactions I modified how much time I spent on particular information and what stories would be most effective. My eye contact and engagement with the audience helped in this assessment.

**Outreach material development.** Just as framing is critical in the verbiage used during presentations, it is also important part of formulating informational materials. At a typical ODI presentation, an impassioned audience member can find out about volunteer opportunities, sign-up for ODI’s bi-monthly email newsletter, and leave with an information packet including SOT program information, what signs to look for that might indicate human trafficking, hotline numbers and other resources. The SOT brochure is a recent accomplishment that I was able to help make possible. With my
marketing and publication background I was able to create ODI’s first official SOT brochure and since then ODI has compiled a collection of human trafficking information they had distributed before but not in any uniformed or consolidated format. I also created a “presentation checklist” that helps ensure presenters leave with all the necessary materials.

I have found that regardless of the multiple ways to access information on the internet, now that laptops and smartphones have become commonplace, people who are genuinely interested in ODI want to leave the presentation with something in hand. This is especially important for older audiences who may not be as comfortable with accessing information online. Having accurate, professional looking materials adds legitimacy to ODI’s efforts and gives the organization the ability to share information quickly.

**Interests are not fixed.** Although the TVPA provided legal provisions for the U.S. to help victims, a clear structure of how to do so was not clearly defined; so many anti-trafficking agencies had to start from scratch. ODI’s SOT program director experienced this first hand when she attended a national conference with anti-trafficking activists from around the U.S., and when the audience was asked if anyone felt like they were “making it up as they go along,” there was a unanimous show of hands.

Being able to modify approaches as new information becomes available has been a core element to the anti-trafficking movement. Similar to women’s rights NGOs involved during and after the international women’s conferences, anti-trafficking NGOs helped develop the language used in the Palermo Protocol based on their expertise, and then grassroots organizations within the U.S. took information that stemmed from those
international efforts and the national efforts of the U.S. TVPA, and customized it to their specific cities and regions. Conversely, the local, regional and national conferences ODI has attended allowed the organization to share best practices with other organizations from around the country, which may in turn lead to changes in national efforts. The complex nature of the issue, including the very fundamental aspect of identifying victims and traffickers, has required on-going assessments to understand patterns such as trafficking routes and possible businesses to proactively target.

Informal information exchanges. While some new information is introduced through traditional channels such as updated policies and laws, informal information exchanges among anti-trafficking network members occurs much more frequently and these exchanges often uncover a need for such policy changes. During my six months with ODI, I met with the SOT program director on a regular basis to discuss new statistics and new ideas. Some new information came through discovering updates to formal reports such as the TIP and 2011 FBI Gang Assessment, but many came from informal exchanges with colleagues or observations made at conferences. Due to the emerging nature of the anti-trafficking movement, a lot of information is exchanged through informal channels such as emails, conversations during or after conferences, phone conversations and witnessing speeches from law enforcement or activists. As Warkentin and Mingst cited in their 2000 study, the downside of the ease in which communication technology allows information to be shared is the possibility that it may be premature or hypothetical.
During my experience with ODI, they have taken extreme precaution in verifying information (from both formal and informal sources) before using it in presentations. They are fully aware that presenting incorrect information can severely damage ODI’s credibility. Part of this awareness comes from challenges they have experienced when third parties, like members of the media, have misrepresented information from ODI. Third parties cannot be controlled, so it is especially important for organizations to ensure the accuracy of the information they personally present and distribute.

Maintaining credibility; to be considered legitimate experts in the field, is critical when faced with false information from competing sources as well. I have seen presentations about human trafficking by individuals not affiliated with ODI or R&R with incorrect information, and have found conflicting statistics in some of my initial research on human trafficking stats. The issue this causes for legitimate organizations like ODI is the perception that all anti-trafficking organizations are affiliated, when in fact there are a number of activists that operate independently with varying levels of expertise.

These discrepancies point back to the importance of ensuring stats are strongly supported with accurate citations, so those presenting and receiving information can easily verify it for themselves. The downside of the aforementioned informal communication exchanges that often occurs between actors is that such citation and verification is sometimes extremely difficult or just not possible. This unfortunately leaves information about the anti-trafficking movement especially vulnerable to misinterpretation.
During my internship with ODI I frequently witnessed informal exchanges of key information between actors. For example, at a panel discussion with the former Lieutenant John Vanek, he provided a useful frame illustrating the importance of educating the general public about human trafficking. Organizations must try to target specific audiences that will be most useful to their mission. For ODI, that means service providers, law enforcement, medical personnel, health inspectors and other professionals that are likely to come into regular contact with human trafficking victims. However, ODI also does a number of presentations and tabling events for groups that would be considered “the general public” such as student clubs, community groups, churches and rotary clubs. Vanek identified that without a strong awareness among the general public, prosecuting traffickers would be extremely difficult.

If the twelve individuals selected to be on a jury for a trafficking case lack understanding of the issue of human trafficking, the challenges victims face, and the tactics used by traffickers to manipulate and control their victims, the jurors will most likely not convict offenders. The trauma trafficking victims experience materializes in different ways, and victims may be emotionally detached or even combative with authorities. Traffickers are very charming, so when victims do not act the way jurors expect victims to behave (e.g. crying, emotional), or if conditions of their trafficking do not involve stereotypical means of entrapment they might see in the media (e.g. locked in a room, drugged, routinely physically abused), jurors may actually be more sympathetic to the trafficker (“Human Trafficking: Law Enforcement Responds” conference, FBI taskforce testimony, February 9, 2012). This valuable example helped me emphasize the
legal ramification resulting from lack of community awareness in my presentations, and enabled me to better frame and respond to questions regarding the lack of convictions.

**Leverage Politics**

**Challenges to the anti-trafficking movement.** While trying to administer the “three P’s” of the original TVPA, officials discovered victims are extremely difficult to identify. As referenced above, human trafficking is a legal term, so even if victims feel they are being mistreated, many do not recognize they are victims or that the U.S. government provides protection for them. This is especially the case with foreign-born human trafficking victims because they are unfamiliar with U.S. culture and may not speak English fluently or at all.

In addition to facing force, fraud or coercion from their traffickers, foreign-born victims are fearful of law enforcement for fear of deportation or incarceration (ODI PPT, Polaris). Domestic trafficking victims do not face deportation but they are often conditioned by their traffickers or influenced by prior negative experiences with law enforcement to view police officers as the enemy (“Human Trafficking: Law Enforcement Responds” conference, FBI taskforce testimony, February 9, 2012). For these reasons, victims are more likely to go to social service or religious organizations for help (Ren & Baker 8). This appears to be accurate from my experience at ODI, as most of its clients are referrals from such organizations.

Despite the fact that the U.S. government passed the TVPA over six years prior to the creation of ODI’s SOT program and R&R, services and information were scarce when ODI encountered their first trafficking victim, and continue to be a challenge. Even
law enforcement bodies were unfamiliar with human trafficking and the protections offered to victims under TVPA. This was exemplified when the director of ODI’s SOT program was detained at the airport following a family reunification arranged for one of ODI’s clients and her children at the Mexican border. Despite successfully crossing the border with the client’s children when accompanied by FBI agents, the director was detained by airport security when she attempted to fly back to Sacramento with the human trafficking victim and her young children. U.S. customs agents accused her of smuggling because they were unfamiliar with human trafficking and at first thought the legal documents she carried for the victim and her children were fraudulent. One of ODI clients also faced challenges in a courtroom where the judge was completely unaware of human trafficking legal definitions and laws. Both incidents occurred eight years after the TVPA passed. These situations are two examples of the need for swift and accurate exchanges of information, and the communications failures that can occur even when countries have adopted domestic legislation.

The need for partnership between law enforcement and anti-trafficking NGOs is a crucial element in identifying victims and addressing the challenges they face. NGOs have a unique perspective because of the nature of their organizations and their experience has helped educate law enforcement and influence policy. The importance of their role was legitimized by the addition of the “fourth P” in TVPA.

As U.S. anti-trafficking laws continue to develop and advocates pressure law enforcement to give more attention to the issue, both groups face the challenge of what aspects of trafficking should receive the most focus. Keck and Sikkink note that
transnational advocacy networks (TANs) are typically successful in organizing around issues “involving bodily harm to vulnerable individuals, especially when there is a clear causal chain (or story) assigning responsibility” (emphasis added) (Keck & Sikkink, 1998, p. 27). Partially due to the wide variety of perpetrators and the diversity of background of victims, human trafficking severely lacks a clear causal chain that would typically allow activists to focus their efforts. They can point to the inconsistent resources provided by the government and apply pressure, but identifying specifically which resources and outreach efforts need to be increased is not always clear.

ODI faces these challenges as they attempt to organize a campaign that will result in effective outreach efforts. They are hoping to bring attention to massage parlors, which have been previously identified as a source of underground prostitution involving foreign-born victims of trafficking. The lack of regulatory and enforcement bodies in the massage industry makes such businesses particularly attractive to traffickers.

ODI and R&R’s first goal is to simply get human trafficking on the agenda for local lawmakers and law enforcement. With the suffering economy continuing to result in cutbacks to public services, law enforcement has limited resources, so unless they are instructed to prioritize investigating suspected massage parlors for illicit services, they will continue to defer anti-trafficking efforts to the FBI agents designated to address the issue (which, as previously mentioned, consists of one agent for all foreign-born cases in the northern California region).

Because of this competition for priority among limited law enforcement resources, anti-trafficking advocates are examining other ways they might effectively
approach massage parlors. One such alternative is working with code enforcement
groups such as the California Environmental Health Association (CEHA) to crack down
on businesses that are violating business operating codes. According to clause 6-8.34 of
California’s Massage Parlor Business Requirements, massage parlors are required to
operate within certain business hours: 7:00am to 10:00pm. Any parlor operating outside
of those hours are in violation, and a consistent sign of illicit activities at suspected
massage parlors is late night activity. If these requirements were enforced, it would not
only financially impact these businesses by requiring them to pay fines for their
violations, it would also give code enforcement officers the opportunity to potentially
identify other violations that may warrant law enforcement involvement (CEHA
conference, April 5, 2012)

**The power of information sharing.** Due to the fact that governments are often
slow to act against and may even contribute to human rights abuses within their country,
non-state actors like NGOs may need to reach out to other countries for assistance to
circumvent the obstacles they face in reaching resolutions at home. Keck and Sikkink
(1998) describe what they call a “boomerang pattern” where domestic NGOs and other
non-state actors use transnational advocacy partners outside of their own country in hopes
of encouraging foreign governments to apply pressure to the government of the country
where the violations are occurring.

However, the issue of human trafficking exists outside of the boomerang pattern’s
scope because blockages exist in multiple aspects of society, many outside of
conventional government jurisdiction. As demonstrated by the challenges that continue
to exist in the U.S. ten years after the national legislative efforts of the TVPA, even in countries actively addressing the issue, the complexity of human trafficking and the divisions among activists have appeared to hamper significant progress from occurring.

The challenges anti-trafficking activists face in the U.S. differs from the scenarios to which Keck and Sikkink utilize their boomerang model to explain. Unlike the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, organizations like ODI are not using NGO networks to reach out to foreign governments for assistance. Typically the countries involved in those efforts are developing countries appealing to developed countries (like the U.S.) for assistance. When addressing human trafficking in the U.S., advocates battle numerous unique challenges within their own country, including the reality of biases and misperceptions most individuals possess regarding human trafficking victims.

Also different is the fact that U.S. anti-trafficking NGOs like ODI advocate for individuals who were born elsewhere and became victims after being brought into the U.S. These organizations are designed to help outsiders instead of attempting to protect U.S. citizens or traveling overseas to help citizens who are disenfranchised in their own countries. Due to the current global hegemonic position of the U.S., its access to resources and it presumed superior (however inconsistent) stance on human rights, advocates’ best resource is to work their way within the network of advocates and subsequently contribute to the existing laws and resources available in the U.S. Despite the challenges U.S. anti-trafficking activists face, the provisions included in the TVPA are the benchmark upon which many other nations base their efforts.
By informing the public and government entities about human trafficking, anti-trafficking activists have helped change laws and policies. During the Palermo Protocol negotiations, NGOs were credited with ensuring the definition of trafficking extended beyond sexual exploitation to cover the multiple types of human trafficking (such as labor trafficking), and framing human trafficking as a violation of human rights. They accomplished the latter by incorporating references to international humanitarian laws and making the protection of victim’s rights the protocol’s primary goal (Gallagher, 2001).

Just as NGOs played a vital informative role in the negotiations leading up to the ratification of the Palermo Protocol, NGO involvement has been crucial to the development of laws and practices in the U.S. following the enactment of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in 2000. When the legislation was initially created, it had three overarching goals: Prevention of trafficking, Protection of victims, and Prosecution of traffickers (United States Department of State, 2011; John Vanek Chico State presentation, March 7, 2012).

Law enforcement faced a number of challenges with such expectations, which mostly centered around lack of information and understanding of the unique challenges victims face. Human trafficking is not a crime where victims easily identify themselves as victims (self-identify) because of psychological or physical restraints, and if they were to seek assistance, they would most likely not know to use the legal term “human trafficking” to describe their situation. Furthermore, many foreign born victims come from countries where members of law enforcement are corrupt and may even be involved
in trafficking, so victims are often extremely distrustful of police. In addition, many foreign born victims do not speak English and fear deportation. However, this is not always the case. Victims and perpetrators come from a wide array of backgrounds, so it is impossible for law enforcement to easily profile traffickers or their potential victims.

The mere passage of the TVPA did not sufficiently educate law enforcement bodies, nor did it identify and educate other key professionals, like service providers and health care workers, who might come into contact with victims on a regular basis. This was evidenced by a study conducted by Sacramento State University professors, Dr. Xin Ren and Dr. Dian Baker (2008). Ren and Baker performed a survey of relevant agencies including federal law enforcement, faith-based agencies, health care professionals and social service workers in the Sacramento region and discovered that over 100 potential victims had come into contact with these professionals without being properly identified. Of the over 100 potential victims, 90% were women; 50% would have been considered labor trafficking victims and 50% commercial sex trafficking victims. Not surprisingly, only 5% of those surveyed had received any kind of training on human trafficking. The summary of this study’s results are listed on R&R’s website. As the study’s authors note, the study’s conclusions are limited by problems such a low survey response rate. However, it still provides valuable insight into an area of study that is almost entirely void of official data for local regions.

If law enforcement and other vital service professionals do not understand what human trafficking is and are unfamiliar with the legal protections they are expected to uphold, victims will not be identified or protected. If victims are not being identified,
traffickers are not being identified and there will be no witnesses or evidence to justify any prosecution. If comprehensive understanding of human trafficking is lacking enough to inhibit protection and prosecution, prevention is impossible.

As John Vanek (S.T.O.P. Human Trafficking Awareness Week, March 7, 2012) reaffirmed in a panel discussion at Chico State University, collaboration was recognized as a necessary element for the success of the legislation and the TVPA was amended in 2008 to include Partnership (Patel, 2011). The fourth “P” encouraged law enforcement bodies to partner with NGOs so they can utilize activists’ intimate knowledge of the issue and first hand data that only grassroots organizations would be able to produce. NGOs that work directly with victims are able to close the gaps in understanding by sharing information about the challenges their victims face, as well as the challenge the agencies themselves face (Patel, 2011).

The significance of this partnership highlights how essential it is for organizations to maintain accurate records regarding the number of clients served as well as the nature of the cases they handle. Organizations need to be able to quickly access information in an organized manner in form of reporting, etc. so their expertise translates into legitimate forms of communication. The better organized and more professional an NGO is in presenting their information, the more likely they are to be taken seriously and be able to gain leverage, and have meaningful impact on policy and procedures (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).
Measuring the impact of non-governmental organizations. Unless legislators or law enforcement officials directly credit an NGO for influencing policy, it may be difficult to determine the extent of NGO influence. However, even when non-state actors are directly credited, such recognition may be viewed as merely a rhetorical cover for other motivations. As previously referenced, critics viewed the drafting of the Palermo Protocol as a security and sovereignty issue, cloaked under the guise of international concern for human rights (Gallagher, 2001). This criticism is often at least partially true because governments consider a number of factors including political climate, economic impact and public perception when deciding how and when to act on an issue.

Although ODI might not be credited with changing laws, its years of consistent results with helping victims has helped change attitudes of local law enforcement and have opened up partnership opportunities. ODI’s recent partnership with law enforcement and other community organizations to formulate a plan to investigate suspicious massage parlors may lead to policy and legal changes, but there will most likely be multiple hurdles involved before such changes can be successful.
Chapter 5

Evaluation

The numerous strengths of this organization center around its resourcefulness and innovative spirit. ODI was the first organization in the Sacramento area to serve victims of human trafficking, and was a founding member of the Sacramento Rescue and Restore (R&R) Coalition, encouraging partnership and sharing of best practices among FBI, law enforcement and local service providers that have been able to build out their existing services to help meet the need of human trafficking victims in the Sacramento area. This is especially essential as ODI’s clients are foreign born and have cultural and language barriers on top of being victims of a vicious crime. Unlike domestic victims, they face numerous legal steps to get their basic needs met and before they gain legitimacy to work legally in the U.S. so they can become self-sufficient. This partnership is also essential in cases when ODI encounters domestic trafficking victims. Because ODI is only funded to provide services to foreign-born victims, its partnership with other area organizations that are funded to help domestic trafficking victims allows a smooth transition from the initial intake to finding safety and immediate-need services for domestic victims.

ODI is also innovative for its highly intensive internship program. ODI operates on an extremely low overhead, with over 86% of its income going directly to client services. To counteract the usual constraints organizations face with limited resources, ODI gives interns a high level of responsibility and valuable hands-on experience while helping the organization keep their costs extremely low. According to the SOT Program Director, ODI’s internship program is so innovative, it has been used as a model for other
non-profits. Its small downtown office houses 20-30 people, including six full-time and four part-time staff members, and over 30 interns that typically fulfill their hours two days a week on staggered schedules, so not everyone was ever there all at the same time. Although the environment is usually hectic, the office provides computer stations for all interns scheduled (which tended to be around 10 or 12 individuals on any given day) and also allows some interns to bring in their laptop, depending on the nature of their work. Because my role required mobility, I often worked out of the office (sometimes collecting and editing information onsite at presentations) and collected information or prepared for events at home, so I usually brought my laptop with me to the office and connected to their network remotely.

Another organizational strength is ODI’s leadership being extremely open to new ideas, so it provides a unique opportunity for staff and interns with creative and sustainable ideas to make substantial contributions to the organization. As an organization responding to an immediate need, as many anti-trafficking organizations were at that time and continue to do, ODI did not initially have the capacity to invest time and effort in setting up certain administrative processes that would have helped streamline some of their activities. Because there were not any established models readily available to ODI when it began its SOT Program, ODI’s processes and procedures have continued to change and adapt as they shared best practices and exchanged information with other anti-trafficking organizations.

This leads to ODI’s weaknesses. The first challenges I noticed were largely administrative. While they require interns and employees to track their activities, some
basic tools were not available when I started my time there (e.g. official tracking sheets, a process for checking in frequently on the progress of one’s projects). This results in some confusion and mismanagement of time, as well as difficulty in holding individuals accountable to certain tasks. Although there were some team meetings with interns, there were rarely ever any official meeting notes taken, with the exception of the quarterly team retreats. Sometimes individuals had to keep track of their own work. I observed this to be detrimental and particularly frustrating for the younger, less experienced interns who needed more structure and guidance. Even for someone like myself who has been working in professional work environments for over fifteen years, it was disorienting at times.

There were also some good ideas that just did not work out for the environment, like asking interns to create business plans. Although there were some instructions on how to create one for the project(s) interns were working on, it was extremely time consuming and not very practical considering interns are only in the office fifteen hours per week. I ended up creating a simpler “to do” list that outlined my plans and progress by week and month, which seemed to be more efficient for providing updates for the SOT program director and for other staff if necessary.

ODI was aware of these shortcomings and were working to improve their processes. Shortly before I ended my internship, ODI’s SOT and Immigration Legal Services (ILS) team met and are in the process of outlining more administrative practices that will help interns stay on track and accountable with new tracking forms and weekly check-in meetings. The weekly check-in meetings will hold interns accountable to their
commitments, helping them better understand time management as well as provide a venue to highlight their accomplishments, which will help quantify their work in terms of results. This will help the organization quantify its efforts and help interns quantify their personal achievements as they seek employment after leaving ODI.

Aside from administrative challenges, I found another significant weakness to be self-promotion. To its credit, ODI focuses so much of its resources toward servicing clients that it has lacked a public relations or marketing focus, which requires particular skills and personalities to achieve. I have a marketing background, and one of the appeals in the hiring process was that I had the skills to create program materials, and because of those skills I was able to create their first SOT program brochure. I have also been able to consult on other communication related matters, such as consolidating their Facebook pages to streamline their promotional efforts. Unfortunately, beyond the creation of the program trifold, my role to help improve communicative materials was limited because of my primary responsibility was to focus on outreach.

However, because there is so much overlap with promotion and outreach, I have also provided input encouraging the establishment of regular reporting publications to be made available to the public. When I arrived at my internship I found that ODI was not in the habit of regularly reporting on its activities to a wider audience. Although they shared reports on a monthly and quarterly basis among the program partners about client cases, they were not in the habit of quantifying their efforts to a wider audience on a regular basis. They also did not have many client stories readily available in a central location. They lacked an accessible reporting system, so when information was needed,
it was a time consuming process. Being able to pull information quickly would have strengthened my presentations because I could have provided the public with firsthand information; specifically current, local statistics. Sharing ODI’s own data would emphasize the reality of the issue as a local problem and why the on-going efforts of ODI are necessary. People I encountered in my community outreach frequently asked me how many people had been trafficked in the area, but I was often unable to provide them with specific numbers.

ODI could be much more effective at quantifying their efforts, which would help demonstrate its legitimacy to a broader audience and an important component for potential investors. Although they house information on their website, ODI should at minimum produce an annual report documenting the annual efforts of the organizations’ many programs. The organization has not produced an annual report since 2008. Since I have started my internship, an official client database has been built with the intention to offer reports for the staff, but also for the public to demonstrate the number of clients ODI is serving as well as providing demographics when appropriate. This would help fill a gap in the Sacramento community, as local numbers are virtually non-existent. This would provide valuable information on foreign-born victims of human trafficking that are receiving services in the Sacramento area, and would also help address doubts that people may have regarding the credence and scope of the problem in our area.

Although I witnessed some delays regarding material creation and approvals, it was primarily due to the fact that ODI’s communications department places more priority on reviewing and finalizing grants which, as I mentioned previously, are ODI’s primary
source of income outside of its government funding. An extreme example of this is that during my internship, a new, inclusive brochure outlining ODI’s overall services (compared to a particular program, like the brochure I created for the SOT program) had been awaiting approval for over six months. As I participated in outreach events in the community with my newly created SOT brochure, the shortcomings of ODI’s poorly formatted and outdated organization brochure became glaringly apparent, especially when tabling with other R&R organizations that had more professional materials. Part of the challenge with material creation has been due to lack of interns with desktop publishing skills. However, right before my internship ended, two interns started creating materials for the refugee resettlement and internship programs. They were able to use the format of my brochure as a model to help with formatting and layout.

In addition to the appearance of some of their outreach materials, ODI (as with many other small non-profits I have worked with) does not always properly cite the information they include in their presentations and materials. As a graduate student, I have become accustomed to following stringent citation habits, so I translated this into how I addressed the information included in the community presentations I delivered for ODI. When a representative of an organization presents information (especially about a little known topic), citation provides legitimacy for the organization as well as an opportunity for individuals to easily locate the information on their own if they wish to conduct their own research. However, the confidentiality of some of the information and the informal channels through which information is obtained pose challenges to traditional citation. As I previously mentioned, information is often exchanged through
conversations and emails between services providers, FBI agents and other anti-trafficking partners, so it may not be readily available in print or electronic form for citation.

In other attempts to educate the public, ODI has occasionally utilized what Keck and Sikkink (1998) refer to as Symbolic Politics. A few of these efforts included demonstrations involving live human art displays where individuals put duct tape over their mouths and held signs with stats or stories about human trafficking to emulate the suppression of victims voices (Midtown Sacramento Second Saturday, January 8, 2011; Sacramento State, January 23-25, 2012). ODI does not have any regularly occurring events and this has often been a point of inquiry at my presentations. However, ODI partners with R&R to host a number of events every year in January, which is human trafficking awareness month. Events change from year to year, but January 2012 included a tabling event at Sac State, the documentary viewing of “The Dark Side of Chocolate,” and an art show with poetry readings from human trafficking survivors.

ODI cites lack of resources (both monetary and manpower) as the primary reason for the lack of regularly scheduled events. R&R’S designated outreach budget makes occasional partnership events more feasible; however, the conditions of R&R’s funding limit the program to awareness efforts and prohibit fundraising. Being a small organization without an event planning budget, ODI’s communications department focuses its fundraising efforts on grant writing because local events take a lot of time and sometimes have very minimal financial returns. I understand this concern because one of the Sac State student clubs I was involved with (Peace and Conflict International)
attempted to hold a fundraiser for ODI, and although promotion was not particularly extensive due to club officers’ minimal availability, the group was only able to raise $75. Every dollar counts and the contribution was definitely appreciated, but for someone who has personally been involved in the planning of large charity events in the past, I have seen months of planning and recruiting result in minimal return on investment. If ODI was able to find a community partner who was willing to do a fundraising event every January (or some other symbolic time during the year), they would be able to raise funds and awareness without extensive time and resource investment. Recurring events would also help ODI establish name recognition in the community and provide an outlet for those who are interested in volunteering with ODI but whose availability is too limited to commit to an internship, mentoring or tutoring position. This could also provide more opportunities for community education and distribution of materials.

One last observation, that in many ways impacts ODI’s other challenges, is the issue of legitimacy in the community. The highly intensive internship program that I referenced above as a strength could potentially pose a challenge to the legitimacy of the organization when its large staff of interns does outreach. Although ODI’s interns are given a substantial amount of work, in other organizations interns are often given menial tasks and perceived by society to be college students making copies and answering phones rather than highly educated, experienced individuals that are performing tasks vital to an organizations’ daily functioning. In what could be considered a societal construct, this preconceived notion of college interns may result in roadblocks to legitimate outreach and promotional efforts. This challenge is exacerbated by the fact
that human trafficking is such a complicated and misunderstood issue for which community members might not expect an intern to be qualified to address.

ODI receives requests for information tables and presentations, but interns are also involved in soliciting target organizations and churches that may be vital community partners. Usually such outreach involves calling and emailing targeted groups that cater to or come into contact with victims, such as health care workers or churches serving immigrant populations. When appealing to potential community partners (whether they are churches, community groups, or student groups) individuals tasked with outreach must present a certain level of knowledge to be taken seriously, which is often solidified with a title. I inadvertently found this out when I gave myself the title of “Education and Outreach Intern” instead of merely identifying myself as an intern of ODI’s SOT program. I was motivated to do so automatically because I had previously held so many other professional roles and I understand how much weight a title carries. Typically an intern’s role in outreach would stop at initial solicitation attempts, and the actual presentations or tabling events were then carried out by the SOT program director and other ODI staff. However, because I was delivering presentations as well, my supervisor allowed me a level of independence, and because of my extensive work and volunteer experience, trusted my judgment.

My theory about the importance of titles was proven numerous times when I was out in the field, as I was often introduced to crowds as an ODI staff member, even though I had identified myself as the “Education and Outreach Intern.” On multiple occasions I was introduced with titles such as “Director of Outreach” and “Outreach Manager” – not
because I had been deceitful when I identified myself, but because people expected
someone with the expertise necessary to present information on such a serious topic, who
ODI trusted to independently represent them in the community, to be more than an intern.
Fortunately, I did have expertise in the field beyond my training at ODI, so in addition to
my internship role I could reference my graduate school research. This and the
confidence in the information I presented provided more legitimacy when I spoke and
also helped me politely restate my correct title without completely shattering the
audiences’ expectations of hearing a qualified speaker. I would usually do so after
providing some background information on myself.

Aside from my somewhat unique internship role and interns performing
preliminary outreach, the SOT program relies heavily on social work interns to perform
critical tasks for clients, like calling for benefits and requesting documentation. From my
experience, encouraging interns to carry a title emphasizing their role in the organization
may help with outreach efforts, including those involving direct client services.

In related observation, the frequent turn-around of ODI’s volunteer staff also
takes away from ODI’s efficiency because as with any new job, it takes a considerable
amount of time for new interns to become familiar with their new role, so they may not
be as effective in the first month or two. This is further exacerbated by the fact that
although interns are often excellent students and academically very strong candidates,
many lack work experience. As a result, basic functions that might ordinarily come
naturally to more experienced workers like using office equipment, answering phones,
greeting visitors, and even dressing and acting professionally may require training or
guidance. Interns are given an orientation packet when they begin their time at ODI, but I have seen inconsistent levels of training, which in some cases has resulted in unnecessary delays and rework.

A recommendation I would make to resolve some of these issues would be to have a mandatory, intensive one or two day orientation where all basic rules are reviewed. This might be separated out by the first day covering basic office etiquette and ODI process and procedures, and the second day could be specific to the particular program the intern is involved with. The challenge to such a solution is that although interns tend to start in waves, they start on a rolling basis, so this would need to occur multiple times. This challenge could be addressed by providing more printed resources included in the welcome packet, using images or screenshots to help illustrate the topic being covered, and ensuring staff members remain accessible to the interns they manage. The latter could be partly achieved by having scheduled, recurring meetings.

Due to the high turn-around of interns, maintaining some forms of consistency is very important to ensure professionalism, especially in transitional periods when interns are finishing their internships and new interns are beginning. This might be achieved by having designated voicemails and email boxes for different programs. Currently, there is a general email posted on ODI’s website (info@openingdoorsinc.com) and under “Who We Are” you can find a list of staff phone extensions but no other emails are listed. When students begin their internship with ODI they are assigned a generic email (e.g. my email was ODI10@openingdoorsinc.org) but do not have an extension. For a specific area that deals with frequent public interaction and reciprocal correspondence, having a
consistent voicemail and email would provide consistency and help with transitions. I
pushed for an outreach voicemail for this reason, and I also recommended that a
designated outreach email be created. This would allow ODI to grant access to
whichever staff members and interns are currently managing outreach and would
decrease confusion if a community member tries to reach an intern that is no longer with
ODI.

Despite these caveats, as referenced above in my analysis I was able to create the
SOT brochure and make improvements to their outreach presentations, and was able to
solidify sources and update some statistics as I came across new information. Providing
clean, professional looking materials with quantifiable results and reliable citations
creates legitimacy for an organization, and as a small, grassroots organization that is
attempting to tackle an issue that is only recently being recognized within the U.S. and in
the Northern California region, this legitimacy is badly needed.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

Project Benefits and Strengths

**Increased understanding.** My internship gave me valuable insight into a field of study that is continually evolving and provided me with a better understanding of the challenges advocates experience when legislative efforts do not translate into sustainable policy. In my short time with ODI I witnessed the unique advantage service organizations have over law enforcement bodies in understanding the complexities of issues like human trafficking, and also the disadvantages victims may experience when faced with this information gap in legal proceedings and wrongfully facing deportation when not accurately identified as a trafficking victim. I witnessed the maintenance and evolution of the local anti-trafficking network that rose to the occasion to meet the needs of a population yet to be fully understood. The power of information and importance of framing was a constant in almost everything I did: whether it was delivering presentations, creating outreach materials, or sharing ideas among mutually constitutive actors.

I was intrigued to see the literature play out in many scenarios, but I was even more interested to see the behind-the-scenes nuances unique to Sacramento area and its surrounding communities that do not exist in any formal literature. My experience put into perspective the sizeable challenges advocates experience that rarely ever get formerly covered beyond generalizations, mostly because of confidentiality and political reasons. Individuals interested in anti-trafficking efforts are often unaware that certain
actors act detrimentally to anti-trafficking because of their own biases or own personal organizational goals, NGOs compete with law enforcement’s pre-designated priorities, and that sometimes the organizations that enjoy the greatest name recognition in communities are not the most qualified or legitimate, while those with experience and expertise remain only known within anti-trafficking networks.

**Evidence of constructivist tenets.** Human trafficking is not an easily packaged concept. It is complicated, graphic and for many, difficult to understand or even believe, and the division among activists prevents the mobilization of a united movement. While most IR theories would not be able to capture the complexity of this human rights abuse, Constructivism provides a frame to explain the changing landscape of political influence. Communication technology has dramatically changed the ability of NGOs to coordinate efforts and influence wider audiences, and this ability has fostered the fairly recent phenomenon of TANs. As I witnessed in my internship, this easy spread of information can significantly contribute to the advancement of an advocate’s cause, but the informal channels information is being exchanged over makes it increasingly difficult for lay persons to delineate between reliable and unreliable information.

I learned about and witnessed the wide scope of mutually constituting actors as ODI exchanged information and shared best practices with local groups and law enforcement, and the FBI, foreign consulates, the South Korean government and NGOs from Cambodia and South Korea. I was also fortunate enough to intern for an organization that was open to my ideas and I was subsequently able to make my own
contributions by creating outreach materials, and by introducing new information and applying different frames to the presentations I delivered.

**Project Limitations**

**Findings based on single primary case study.** My experience with ODI and R&R provides numerous valuable insights into the anti-trafficking efforts of the Sacramento area and, more broadly, of California. However, the conclusions that can be drawn from this paper are limited. My primary case study is based on my personal experience within a local NGO for a period of seven months.

As I have mentioned numerous times in this paper, one of the challenges of effectively addressing human trafficking is its complexity, so some of the challenges ODI and Sacramento activists experience may not occur in other U.S. cities or other countries around the world. Sacramento exists within a state and country rich with resources and where citizens and activists have the legal right to speak out against injustice (however challenging that may be at times). An NGO operating in a developing country with a more repressive political system that lacks in resources (monetary or otherwise) would have a whole host of unique challenges advocates at ODI do not face.

The racial demographic of an area is also an important factor to consider. The racial diversity of Sacramento’s population is unique, even though U.S. society is relatively heterogeneous compared to other countries. Sacramento is so diverse that TIME actually identified it as the most diverse city in the U.S. in 2002, and also one where people of different races come more easily than other large cities with extremely diverse populations (Stodghill & Bower, 2002). Other cities may be
considered diverse because large percentages of their overall population is compiled of different racial groups, but in reality be vastly segregated. These dynamics would cause different challenges than Sacramento because racial tensions may be higher and certain communities may be more difficult to penetrate. Although both of these issues exist in Sacramento, it is to a lesser degree than other diverse cities. Conversely, although foreign-born traffickers and victims easily blend into racially and culturally diverse areas, this would not occur in cities with more homogeneous populations.

**Scope of project is somewhat broad.** Another limitation of this study is that it attempts to analyze labor and sex trafficking together. Because ODI serves both populations, my presentations focused on general human trafficking, although I attended events that focused on more specific areas within the broader issue. Although the two issues have similarities, they are also very different and both have even narrower issues within each depending on the gender, age, culture and sexual orientation of the victims, the industry in which they are being forced to work. Also, there are significant differences that exist between domestic and foreign-born victims. The depth of those differences within this very complex issue would be much more effectively communicated through separate analyses.

**Findings**

Due to the complex and underground nature of human trafficking Constructivism is the best IR theory to explain influence of non-state actors in TANs, and how they have the ability to make genuine impact on policies addressing human rights abuses. My experience with ODI heightened my awareness of anti-trafficking efforts and I now have
an understanding of victims’ needs and challenges that politicians and law enforcement would never possess without interaction with service organizations. This is not even a testament to poor police work or misinformed electorate. The function of victim service agencies is drastically different than that of law enforcement and law makers. NGO’s primary goal is focused on caring for victims while law enforcement is worried about burden of proof and catching a perpetrator. These differences make the partnership among the groups especially important.

Continued partnership through domestic and international networks is also essential if activists have any reasonable chance of accomplishing Accountability Politics. As Keck and Sikkink (1998) noted, even in the information sharing stage, victims can lose track of their own stories. Original causes can be even further diluted between initial Information and Leverage Politics, and even more so during Accountability Politics, if a cause is able to reach that stage. Just as law enforcement has very different functions and understandings than NGOs, lawmakers also have vastly different goals. When causes reach the policy stage, lawmakers are concerned with legal verbiage and personal political implications, so even if activists and law enforcement are heavily involved, the final product may not even closely resemble the initial effort, depending on the convictions of those supporting (or fighting) the legislation.

With an emotionally sensitive issue like human trafficking, the emotional state of victims must be considered when pursuing perpetrators and drafting policies. The trauma victims experience often makes the legal process intimidating because trafficking victims
are often in constant fear of their traffickers or (for foreign-born victims) of being deported based on traffickers’ continuous threats.

I continue to support ODI and R&R efforts following the end of my internship. During the summer early fall of 2012, CSUS professor Dr. Dian Baker conducted another survey of Sacramento area social service providers, medical personnel and health inspectors in attempts to measure human trafficking awareness. Similar to her aforementioned 2008 study (referenced in the literature review), Dr. Baker worked with a research team to distribute, collect and record data from surveys designed to test the awareness and responses of workers likely to come into contact with victims. I was able to experience the process of this study first-hand because I was invited to participate and was subsequently assigned team leader to follow up on surveys, manage the team’s communication regarding the project, and compile the results for Dr. Baker. I look forward to the final results of the project and the implications it might have on anti-trafficking efforts in the Sacramento area.
Appendix A: SOT Program Brochure (Not to scale. Actual brochure is 8.5” x 11’’)

Can you recognize victims of human trafficking in your everyday life?

Every dollar makes a difference! You can make a donation online by visiting www.openingsdoorson.org and clicking on DONATE NOW!

Contact Number:
Opening Doors, Inc.
9:00am-4:30pm
916.492.2591

If you encounter a victim in imminent danger, please dial 9-1-1 for local law enforcement.

Survivors of human trafficking are in desperate need of your support. Many more victims have yet to be identified and without the support of the entire community, they will continue to fall through the cracks.

Know who to call: The community has various resources to serve victims of human trafficking. Familiarize yourself with these resources so if you ever come into contact with a potential victim, you know where to direct them.

How will my dollars help survivors of human trafficking?

- Safety: Your monetary donations will help provide safe housing and basic necessities.
- Self-Sufficiency: Help survivors build their skill set with the goal of education and giving them the ability to travel independently on public transportation.
- Transparency: Regularly update community members on the need for help.

Can you identify the signs of human trafficking?
**About Opening Doors’ SOT Program**

Opening Doors’ Survivors of Human Trafficking Program (SOT) creates a network of support with our clients, assisting them in establishing their new lives, and ensuring self-sufficiency while respecting their cultural identity and individual goals.

Opening Doors’ SOT Program serves victims of human trafficking directly through well-developed and comprehensive case management and support services within the regions of northeastern California and northern Nevada.

**How to Identify Victims**

**Conditions:**
- Looks as if some or all workers have been living in the same place they are working.
- Living quarters have peculiar security precautions including barbed wire, guarded compounds, bars on outside of windows, or opaque boarded-up windows.
- Health and safety conditions are very poor.

**Individuals:**
- Communication is restricted or controlled.
- Exhibit signs of fear, anxiety, depression, submission, tension, and/or nervousness.
- Are not in control of their own identification documents (ID or passport).
- Owe a large debt to their employers.
- Are unpaid or paid very little, or paid only through tips in their work environment.
- Have numerous inconsistencies in their stories.
- Are performing odd tasks at odd hours (e.g., washing a car at 10:00 pm at night in the cold).

**How You Can Help**

**Schedule a presentation:**
A representative from ODI will come talk to your friends, school, workplace or community organization about human trafficking and can tailor a presentation to meet your particular interests or profession.

- If you are in certain fields like healthcare you may be coming into contact with victims on a regular basis and not even realize it.

**Hold a fundraising party or collection drive:**
Help raise funds or collect supplies for ODI while raising awareness.

- Contact ODI or visit our website to find out specific donation needs.

Please see the back panel of this trifold to see some examples of where your dollars go!
References


