Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing criminal industries in the world. Victims not only include women, but also men and children. Theorists defined a polarity between men and women, postulating all women are oppressed, terrorized, and made vulnerable by systemic male violence, threats of violence, and a culture that objectifies and demeans them; and that all men benefit under this system, whether they rape or not. The defining narrative of rape culture is that a rape happens when a woman is randomly attacked by a stranger hiding in the bushes. And this happens. But it's not the only way it happens, and that narrative can obscure the many other spaces where rape occurs.

Society portrays that rape can be perpetrated against women and girls by men and boys. Simultaneously no one ever discusses male rape victims. Male victims exist in greater numbers than female rape victims. For example, when a teen-aged boy is raped by an adult woman (trusted female teacher) many people shrug it off. Statistics show that the number of males that are raped in the United States is approximately 240,000, while 300,000 men are raped in prison by inmates, and the number of males raped outside of prison are unknown because none want to speak up because of fear of humiliation. What we as a society ought to ask is how people should address and stop this sexual violence.

A Mother's Story

Here’s an example of a victim of sex trafficking in the United States: Jamie Cheeman is a mother of a seventeen-year-old who got sold into sex trafficking after going to college. She talks about how it can happen to anyone. “It started off with an introduction to a party.” A party is a normal thing for college kids; no one ever thinks something bad will happen to them there. It took no time at all for Jamie to lose touch with her daughter Danielle.

Sex trafficking not only affects the victim but also the family. Jamie told a story about how it almost killed everyone in their family not knowing what was happening to their daughter. After two long years, Danielle got out of sex trafficking and was able to see her family again. Now her mother, Jamie, goes around and spreads awareness about sex trafficking and lets people know that it can happen to anyone.

Fallacies of the Hague Adoption Convention

Human trafficking is the illegal movement of people with the purpose of using them for labor or sexual acts. Human trafficking isn’t just an issue in other countries; it happens in the United States as well. Human trafficking can occur under the false pretense of adoption due to weak enforcement policies. Article 4 of the Hague Adoption Convention says that consent for adoption must be given freely and that it can’t be induced by any sort of payment or compensation. The issue with this is that parents may be offered a large sum of money to sell their children to an orphanage; this is a violation of Article 4. Another violation that may occur is when parents are not informed of their violation rights. In one case, a mother was tricked into giving up her child, only to find out that she could no longer see her child. There are only two United States entities that check adoption organizations for credibility. Perhaps this leads to a neglect of policies. The main weakness of the Hague Adoption Convention is methods of enforcement only apply to countries that have the Hague Adoption Convention ratified. Countries such as Russia have not ratified the Hague Adoption Convention and leads to illegitimate adoptions. Also, it should be noted that the Hague Adoption Convention’s policies does little to ensure enforcement for matters overseas. While it may sound insignificant, if the United States were to redefine legitimate practices of human adoptions as human trafficking, it would close the gap in enforcement. Also, if the aforementioned were defined as such, trafficking-related legislation and civil enforcement would be able to reprimand offenders.

Statistics

A common social misconception is that men rarely get raped. This graph shows the number of male victims are more common than we think.

Citations


How can Sexual Violence be Reduced?

- Although the concept of rape culture is used in feminist academia, there is disagreement over what defines a rape culture and what degree a given society meets the criteria to be considered a rape culture. When people hear the word rape they automatically think of a man sexually abusing a woman. But in actuality it also happens to men and young children. Rapes are rape because they want to, not because they have to. Rape is about exerting authority and power over another person. There are different organizations that become a voice for people who don’t have the courage to speak up.

Organizations

- Take Back the Night
- The Laura Kate Winterbottom March (LKW)
- Men’s March Against Sexual Assault

Trauma from Trafficking

Human trafficking is illegal in the United States, especially sex trafficking. Women all around the United States are taken advantage of due to economic issues. They are sold to the highest bidder and from there, their life ends. The only thing they have to worry about is sex. They are sexually abused (which leads to depression), they develop trust issues, and they are left with scarred memories. Some women can’t live life after being a sex slave. They may be forced to have sex multiple times a day until they are physically incapable of continuing to do so. Women trafficking violates woman’s justice and needs to be taken much more seriously.