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Overlooking Men and Boys in Forced Criminality at the Border: A Content Analysis of Human Trafficking Training and Awareness Materials

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OVERLOOKING MEN AND BOYS IN FORCED CRIMINALITY AT THE BORDER

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAINING AND AWARENESS MATERIALS

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Executive Summary

In the Post 9/11 era, where American security is intimately linked to a militarized border management system designed to protect the United States and its territories from threats of terrorism, illegal drugs, and illegal immigration, the media continues to perpetuate the 'Latino Threat Narrative'. The images and information offered to us for consumption help us construct an understanding of events, people, and places. This paper explores how the 'Latino Threat Narrative' and inherent gender biases shape how the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) understands vulnerability and identifies human trafficking victims, particularly men and boys from Mexico and Central America who are victims of forced criminality. Drawing on current literature and by conducting a content analysis of human trafficking training and awareness materials made publicly available on the website of the Department of Homeland Security, this paper seeks to explain how and why men and boys are looked upon with suspicion as criminals and are overlooked as victims of human trafficking and forced criminality. It concludes by offering recommendations for improving the reporting procedures, as well as best practices for raising awareness.

Introduction

Human migration is one of the most controversial topics in the United States at the moment and is the focus of many studies, books, news reports, and films. It is a highly complex subject with many avenues available for exploration and it may be analyzed from several different angles. This paper will focus on human trafficking as a form of forced migration. Human trafficking is only one aspect of forced migration and honing in on the gender dynamics of it will help to understand it in a specific and nuanced manner. Trafficking means exploiting vulnerability and to understand that is essential in understanding this paper. This paper will examine the particular issue of vulnerability as it relates to migrant men and boys and the intersection of forced criminality[1], human trafficking, and drug trafficking through two theoretical frameworks: criminality and security. There are two interconnected issues which limit

[1] One distinct, yet often under-identified, characteristic of human trafficking is forced criminality. Traffickers may force adults and children to commit crimes in the course of their victimization, including theft, illicit drug production and transport, prostitution, terrorism, and murder (The Use of Forced Criminality: Victims Behind the Crime, 2014).

our ability to recognize men and boys as trafficked persons. Firstly, gendered assumptions that construct women and girls as likely victims, especially of sexual exploitation. Secondly, a failure to understand forced participation in criminal activities, such as drug trafficking, as a form of human trafficking.

This paper seeks to discover if, and to what extent, men and boys are acknowledged and represented by the Department of Homeland Security in online human trafficking training and awareness materials. This paper will examine thirty-seven materials from the DHS in the form of a content analysis. Included will be twelve videos, eleven information sheets, seven pamphlets, four information cards, two "toolkits", and one infographic. These thirty-seven are the total numbers of materials found on the DHS website and they are important because the DHS is the primary enforcer of human trafficking investigations. It is important to analyze these materials through a gendered lens in order to discover if, and to what extent, men and boys are acknowledged and represented by the DHS.

As will be demonstrated below, the existing research suggests that men who are victims of forced criminality are underrepresented in literature and the response from The Department of Homeland Security to identify and protect these men is not adequate. Human trafficking awareness campaigns focus most often on sexual exploitation of women and girls and, to a lesser extent, labor exploitation of both sexes. However, forced criminality rarely appears in training and awareness materials. As such, this paper presents a content analysis of online governmental training and awareness materials to highlight the way the Department of Homeland Security overlooks this vulnerable population. I hypothesize that the focus on women and girls in human trafficking training and awareness materials is a result of the cultural and gender biases that influence people and cause them to regard men, especially Latino men, as a threat to the state.

Security and Gender in Historical and Political Context

The border between the United States and Mexico is a relatively new concept in the American imagination. It only came into existence when Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821, although the border was not finalized until five years after the Mexican war ended in 1848. In 1985, President Ronald Reagan declared undocumented migration to be “a threat to national security” and warned Americans that “terrorists and subversives are just two days driving time from the border crossing at Harlingen, Texas.” Although the Latino Threat Narrative (Chavez, 2008) was already part of the national discourse thanks to media coverage and its use by politicians, the language used by the U.S. president began a new era of villainizing the Mexican immigrant and, in effect, terrorizing the American population with alarmist proclamations.

In his book “The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and the Nation,” Leo Chavez introduces us to the term *media spectacle*. He describes it as an object meant for the eyes of the public and is deemed unusual or notable. He explains how our continuous consumption of media images informs us about the goings-on around us while simultaneously helping us construct and give meaning to events, people, and places that we observe (Chavez, 2008: 5). Furthermore, he notes that the Foucauldian concept of governmentality has infiltrated systems of knowledge where the media spectacle has become a technique to control the actions of populations (Chavez, 2008: 25). Lastly, he posits that "through its coverage of events, the media produces knowledge about, and helps construct, those considered legitimate members of society, as well as those viewed as less legitimate, marginalized, and stigmatized Others" (Chavez, 2008).

The events of September 11, 2001 sparked a new era in how the U.S., and other nations around the world, approach national security. On January 25, 2002, President George Bush

released a statement from the White House titled *Securing America's Borders Fact Sheet: Border Security*. In it, he stated "America requires a border management system that keeps pace with expanding trade while protecting the United States and its territories from threats of terrorist attack, illegal immigration, illegal drugs, and other contraband" (Bush, 2002). It is at this time the U.S./Mexico border concretely becomes a place that intertwines perceived and imagined fears of "the other" and it is also when policymakers and media personalities really begin to talk about the southern border region of the United States as a place where terrorists might take advantage in order to access the United States to do harm to the American "way of life".

The meaning of security traditionally has focused on the state because the fundamental purpose is to protect citizens (Axworthy, 2001). However, there has been a shift in the discourse in recent decades to include not only states' rights and national sovereignty, but also human rights and protections. The concept of human security is not new, but we are living in a time when it is re-emerging due to globalization and it reflects a growing recognition that the protection of people must be a principle concern. This discourse is also beginning to have an effect on global governance (Axworthy, 2001).

Examining human security through the lens of gender allows us to re-conceptualize and re-theorize how "human security can and should be attentive to gender relations as well as in using the human security framework to better understand how violence is related to people's lives and livelihoods in gendered ways" (Tripp et al., 2013). Under the scope of gender, this paper will also incorporate the notion of masculinities. The feminist movement in the 1970's challenged all assumptions about the gender system and raised a series of problems about men (Connell, 2015). Culture and institutions define masculinities, and they may construct multiple

masculinities that construct the ways in which we perceive men and their actions. It may be seen in the lives of individuals, but they also have an existence beyond the individual (Connell, 2015).

Theoretical Frameworks

1.) Border Security and Human Security

In order to frame the discussion around a transnational phenomenon such as human trafficking, it is necessary to talk about border security and human security. Michael Wermuth and Jack Riley from the RAND Corporation addressed the Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border, Maritime and Global Counterterrorism on March 8, 2007 and stated that "while issues of security from terrorist attacks is certainly a major concern that drives many border security considerations, there are other critical, "daily" issues involving criminal activities, including trafficking in drugs, the smuggling of weapons and other illegal contraband, and human trafficking" (Wermuth & Riley, 2007). They also mention that there are several entities in the Department of Homeland Security that take on the responsibilities for territorial security, including Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The ways in which we imagine the border, the militarization of the border, and the entities that execute border security operations merge together to form the first angle from which this paper analyzes human trafficking as a form of forced migration.

The second type of security that guides this research is human security. The human security approach was developed by the United Nations Development Programme in 1994 (Gomez & Gasper, 2013). This approach broadens the scope of security analysis and policy from territorial security to the security of people (Gomez and Gasper, 2013). The term human security is basically the ability to live life without fear and freedom from want. However, in a broader

sense, it encompasses more than freedom from violence and crime. It includes the security of all the things that make a person's livelihood, such as economic opportunities, availability of food and clean water, environmental stability, and the level of access to healthcare (Gomez and Gasper, 2013). This lens provides the other element of security that helps to make clear the angles of analysis and objectives of this paper

2.) Criminality

This paper will also utilize the concept of criminality to guide this discussion. Understanding criminality is to understand that it is not simply the breaking of laws or regulations. The key to understanding criminality is that it is the fundamental attributes of all criminal behaviors rather than specific criminal acts (Crime and Criminality, 2017). Furthermore, all criminal behaviors involve the use of force, fraud, or stealth to obtain material resources and it is a style of strategic behavior characterized by self-centeredness, indifference to the suffering and needs of others (Crime and Criminality, 2017). This framework allows us to understand the motivations of human trafficking perpetrators and challenges us to think about the way we view the concept of forced criminality.

Key Terms and Definitions

Although there is no universal definition for forced criminality, *Anti-Slavery International* describes it as a situation where "a trafficked person is forced to undertake a range of criminal activities by the person or persons exploiting them" (Anti-Slavery International, 2014). Human trafficking is more specifically defined, yet open to interpretation. The United

Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) defines human trafficking through the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons as:

> The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (Human Trafficking, 2017).

The UNODC also provides a definition for drug trafficking and its definition is: "A global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws" (Drug Trafficking, 2017). Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, we must understand what "vulnerability" means. It is used to refer to "those inherent, environmental or contextual factors that increase the susceptibility of an individual or group to be trafficked" (Gallagher & McAdam, 2013). When scholars refer to inherent factors of vulnerability, we are referring to all of the factors that contribute to creating economic deprivation and social conditions that limit personal agency thereby facilitating traffickers in their endeavors to exploit. These factors include, but are not limited to: social inequality, gender-based violence, discrimination, and poverty. It is worthwhile to mention that these factors do not affect one vulnerable individual in the same way they might affect another and its impact is likewise disproportionate (Gallagher & McAdam, 2013). In the current literature, gender and age are generally the two primary factors that are taken into consideration when exploring vulnerability. The topic of sexual exploitation of young women and children is the more popular choice of research studies.

The conception of forced criminality fits the ways that Organized Criminal Networks

(OCN) move young men over the U.S/Mexico border. Many male migrants have been taken by cartels and threatened with death if they refused to comply with their demands to smuggle narcotics into the United States (UNODC, 2012). The cartels know many routes to get these young men into U.S. territory and are able to adapt and find new paths if need be, so they are comfortable with moving migrants across the border and using means of coercion in order to force compliance. Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua (also known as the countries of the "Northern Triangle"), along with Mexico, have a history of migration to the United States as long as the existence of the United States itself (UNODC, 2012). Economic hardships and the hope for better opportunities have played a part in many migrants' decision to make the journey. Therefore, there has always been an element of vulnerability associated with migrating from there to here because of scrupulous characters looking for exploitive opportunities along the way. However, in modern times, the risks have multiplied exponentially due to advanced technologies and the meteoric rise of the drug business. With limited economic opportunities, many people turn to manufacturing and moving drugs to consumers with large appetites in the United States. It is easy to see how people in poorer, less stable countries are susceptible to exploitation, but one can imagine that the introduction of the lucrative drug trafficking business provides more opportunity for exploitation by drug cartels of unwilling local populations and migrants (UNODC, 2012).

Additionally, some of the least connected migrants who never imagined that they would turn to drug trafficking do so as a last resort in order to pay a *coyote* to assist them in crossing the border (Lintner, 2003). Again, the lack of personal agency must be considered when attempting to understand these decisions. It is helpful to remember that once these disconnected migrants have made it to the border, generally, they have been brutalized and have experienced extreme

hardship from environmental conditions and they lack basic necessities. Once they arrive in the border region, they face languishing in border towns dependent upon the support of strangers and their own tenacity to survive or they have to decide if they are willing to risk making the dangerous trek across the desert alone or seek out a *coyote* (Lintner, 2003). But, moreover, it is exactly because many migrants do not have a support system to help them along the way, and because of the other factors of vulnerability mentioned previously, they become prime targets for drug traffickers to force them into participating in criminal activities.

My analysis of the intersection of all these elements - gender, security, vulnerability, and forced criminality - is important because we are living in a time of mass migration facilitated by globalization that generates many human trafficking victims. This research also fills a void in the field of migration studies. It addresses a very particular issue that has very rarely been addressed by scholars in their work on migration issues and can therefore help to start a new conversation. It is my desire to inspire my readers to reconsider how they think about human trafficking and instill in them a sense of compassion for victims of human rights violations.

Literature Review

This literature review begins by providing the historical background and contemporary understanding of the concept of security. In general, this paper is centered around human trafficking as a form of forced migration, yet this paper pays special attention to the context of the U.S./Mexico border region, so it is important to have some basic knowledge of this context in order to properly understand this paper. Next, it moves into a presentation of studies conducted on gender and human trafficking and the concept of vulnerability because these are the primary two angles from which this subject is being analyzed. After that, it gives the governmental approach to understanding and addressing human trafficking because the aim of this paper is to

comprehensively investigate this subject and it is important to be aware of the approaches of both academics and government entities. Additionally, it is important to include an examination of the DHS precisely because it is the primary enforcer of human trafficking regulations and primary investigative entity into violations of these regulations. Finally, it ends with defining and contextualizing sexual exploitation and forced criminality because they are key factors of human trafficking and it is crucial to know exactly what they mean and how they drive traffickers to exploit.

Security

In Jeffrey Clymer's book "America's Culture of Terrorism", he gives an account of the 1886 Haymarket bombing in Chicago. This was an event that began a new era of terrorism tactics and how we perceive terrorism. The invention of dynamite just twenty years prior provided the tool with which so-called anarchists could cause destruction on a large scale and elicit fear. A local clergyman named Lyman Abbott was eerily prescient when he stated, just a few months before the bombing, that dynamite had armed radicals so that they "could entirely rearrange the social order in one spectacular blast by destroying in one hour the products of a century's industry" (Clymer, 2003). The result of this event was paranoia. No one knew who had ignited the bomb, but the media labeled whomever it was as a "terrorist" and as a "radical". They printed graphic images of the aftermath repeatedly so as to ingrain it into the minds of the audience. By doing this, they created instant histories. It allowed the viewer of the images to feel as though they had been at the scene and had experienced the atrocity themselves. This also creates absent witnesses. Clymer argues that this event is the defining moment that has shaped our own twenty-first century, mass-mediated discourse of terrorism (Clymer, 2003).

Professor David Altheide explains this idea further in his book "Terrorism and the Politics of Fear". He explains that mass-media focuses on crime and victimization in order to lead the discourse about violence in America and the media carefully decontextualizes crime stories and emphasizes the victim perspective (Altheide, 2006). He theorizes that politicians and state-controlled agencies cooperate with news companies to promote insecurity and reliance on formal agents of social control, such as the police force, the court systems, and the military (Altheide, 2006).

Furthermore, it is crucial to understand that when news sources report a crime or an act of terrorism, they repeatedly use words that are associated with those events. This is how discourse is guided. The way that news sources select, organize, and present information guides the audience to prefer a certain type of information (Altheide, 2006). Altheide notes through his research that linking terrorism and fear has promoted pervasive communications, symbolic awareness, and expectation that danger is a central feature of everyday life. The attacks on September 11th, 2001 are the best example of how government officials used mass-media to merge sorrow, suffering, and pain with fear and vengeance. This is how politics of fear is constructed. The media's use of powerful images and language can be likened to that of propaganda. It spreads a message about stereotypical outside threats and "evil others". This creates a space between "us" and "them" that is vital in keeping support of vengeance alive in the context of 9/11, and it is particularly relevant for the use of victims and victimization in that same context. Tracking this discourse shows that fear pervades our popular culture and is influencing how we view events and experiences (Altheide, 2006).

Gender

Samuel Vincent Jones, a professor and lawyer at John Marshall Law School, conducted a media content analysis of a special segment of CNN's *Larry King Live* about human trafficking that aired on April 4, 2010 in order to see if men and boys would be included in the discussion and to assess how often the words 'men' or 'boys' would be mentioned. He discovered that they were omitted from the analysis and discussion altogether. The segment focused solely on women and girls as victims of sexual slavery (Jones, 2010). The point is that another story is told by what is not said. The omission of men and boys as victims of forced criminality in this example highlights the commonality that men are perceived as aggressors, and therefore, cannot or simply are not victims of such things like sexual slavery or forced labor.

Jones further explains that boys account for at least half of all certified child victims of forced labor and, in some countries, constitute up to 90% of child prostitutes (Jones, 2010). Contemporary media tends to frame females as victims in the national discourse, while "male vulnerability is consistently obscured by modern-day expressions of male dominance and invulnerability perpetuated under the guise of masculinity" (Jones, 2010). Although this example does not analyze the intersection of human trafficking with drug trafficking, I believe the same perception of men as being invulnerable or as victims of sex trafficking rings true for those who are forced into drug trafficking as a form of forced labor.

There is other research available that attempts to explain how young, male migrants are especially vulnerable. Eliza Galos, a data analyst for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a study that used multi-level logistic regression as her method. Galos used a total sample of Central and Eastern Mediterranean migrants to build a demographic profile and found that men comprise the most at-risk group because they have little education, generally travel alone, pay an exorbitant amount of money, spend more time in transit, and are oftentimes

fleeing conflict (Galos, 2016). This makes sense because someone who is alone outside of their community for a long period of time and is in need of basic necessities would likely make a good target, especially if that person is a young, strong man who is valuable to traffickers because of their ability to transport drugs across rough and desolate terrain.

Rochelle Davis, an Assistant Professor at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) at Georgetown University, is a member of an analytical team that conducted a qualitative study between 2013 and 2015 that explored the vulnerability of men in the Syrian conflict. She points out that the statistics are not being examined properly. Children account for half of refugees and the other half is divided in two by adult women and men somewhat equally (Davis, 2017).

One of the many examples of studies that I found focusing solely on women and sexual exploitation is one that was conducted in Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez in Mexico by a team of researchers from the University of California, San Diego. I chose this study because it is representative of the majority of the literature that I found regarding vulnerability and sexual exploitation. I believe it depicts where the most attention has been focused and, again, highlights my assumption that women and girls in the sex trafficking business are more of an interest to scholars, which gives me the sense that they view women and girls as more vulnerable. This study presents two types of mobility that were found to shape participants' vulnerability: 1) involuntary migration based on deception by potential romantic partners or friends who introduced participants to the sex trade and 2) migration leading to residential instability and consequent exposure to the sex industry (Rocha-Jimenez et al., 2017).

However, the media and non-governmental associations often only refer to women and children and ignore the fact that the figure is the same for men. (Davis, 2017). Davis refers to

research that found men are fleeing the conflict at roughly the same rate as women, but neighboring states, like Jordan and Lebanon, will not allow single men to enter their territory alone due to a fear that they could be a threat because they are able-bodied and have the willingness to fight should they choose to do so (Davis, 2017). This study correlates directly to my own research and the parallels are striking. I believe that U.S. authorities have the same perception of young, male migrants who flee conflict or find themselves trapped in a human trafficking situation, and it is reflected in much of the training and awareness materials used at the federal, state, and local levels, although this essay is only examining federal materials.

Vulnerability

The same is true about the definition of trafficking as it is for vulnerability; there is no universal definition. On November 15, 2000, the United Nations adopted the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol, as a supplementation to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The United States signed it then but did not ratify it until November 3, 2005. The problem is that each nation state has the ability to discern what it considers to be suppression, punishment, and trafficking. Furthermore, each nation state is able to decide to what extent it will adopt provisions in their respective jurisdictions (Allain, 2014).

Also, in 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was adopted by the United States to combat human trafficking "especially into the sex trade, slavery, and involuntary servitude". Many states criminalize human trafficking; however, few address the issues of domestic minor trafficking. Some victims are treated as criminals or delinquents under state laws, while being dismissed by local law enforcement officials (Coleman, 2016). It was not until

the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2005 which brought attention to this specific problem (Coleman, 2016).

Among moral theorists, there are two broad responses that are used to define what constitutes vulnerability. The first is the capacity to suffer that is inherent to being human. The second "emphasizes the fundamentally social or relational character of vulnerability" …and, "it focuses on the contingent susceptibility of particular persons or groups to specific kinds of harm or threat by others" (Mackenzie et al., 2014). Goodin reckons that one is vulnerable when their safety and interests are threatened, and that vulnerability is relational (Goodin, 1985). Additionally, although anyone can be susceptible to these human security threats, some people are more susceptible to them due to diminished capacity to protect themselves. This response takes into consideration the inequalities of power, dependency, capacity, or need that renders some people vulnerable to harm or exploitation by others (Mackenzie et al., 2014).

The US Government Approach: Awareness Materials

The Department of State's *Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons* has recognized that men and boys are quite often the victims of forced labor and human trafficking, yet they often go unidentified and remain in precarious situations. If they are able to escape a trafficking situation, they often find themselves neglected by governments and care providers. "Instead of being treated as exploited individuals, they are at greater risk of being penalized or fined for offenses — such as crossing a border illegally — or facing charges and imprisonment for crimes committed as a result of being trafficked" ("Assisting Male Survivors", 2017). The office also recognizes that immigration officers, police, and labor inspectors generally retain a bias towards men and boys as less vulnerable to human trafficking or they view the subject of

human trafficking as the sexual exploitation of women and girls ("Assisting Male Survivors, 2017).

All of these examples highlight the problem I am addressing in this research paper; men and boys who are victims of human trafficking and forced labor oftentimes go unidentified, and are unfairly treated as criminals rather than as victims of exploitation. Although the Department of Homeland Security acknowledges this problem and calls for fairer treatment and more equal access to resources, there seems to be shortcomings at every level in executing these recommendations. The scant amount of literature on this topic and this demographic indicates that there is a need for this type of research in order to bring more awareness to this problem and to provide a more well-rounded interpretation of the concept of vulnerability so that more inclusive recommendations may be suggested and implemented.

Defining Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation

Traffickers prey upon the most vulnerable people who have little or no social safety net. They look for victims who are vulnerable because of their illegal immigration status, limited English proficiency, and those who may be in vulnerable situations due to economic hardship, political instability, and natural disasters. Additionally, human trafficking consists of two main components: sexual exploitation and forced labor. The two are intertwined because sexual exploitation is a form of forced labor.

Sex trafficking victims are deceived and forced into engaging in commercial sex acts for the gain of the people who are exploiting them and they may be men, women, or children. They are generally too afraid to report the crime because of a myriad of reasons. Oftentimes, victims

are afraid of their traffickers because they have been threatened with injury or death. Moreover, many victims fear being detained and prosecuted for involuntarily violating immigration laws. Sex trafficking is different from prostitution. The distinction is that those who engage in prostitution are exercising agency, whereas those who are forced into sex work against their will lack agency (The Lancet, 2003). Moreover, sex trafficking is different from assault in that sex trafficking involves recruiting, harboring, transporting, or providing a person to engage in commercial sex, while sexual assault does not. However, a sex trafficking victim may also be a victim of sexual assault (Blue Campaign, 2017).

Forced Criminality

In *Violence and Migration on the Arizona-Sonora Border*, Jeremy Slack and Scott Whiteford explain that "the drug war has had an impact on the profitability of drug trafficking and has caused the cartels to diversify their income generating activities with robberies and kidnappings" (Slack and Whiteford, 2011). They continue by discussing how the migration process creates vulnerability, a point that reinforces my analysis of the relationship between the two phenomena, and they present a scenario that exemplifies the encounters some migrants have during their journeys. They explain that there are times when an individual is offered a sum of money by a drug cartel as payment if they are willing to transport narcotics across the border and they are more apt to choose this option rather than struggle to scrounge up a large sum of money to pay a coyote. They conclude by remarking that this choice is the result of structural violence, and the lack of personal agency and limited choices within a structurally controlled atmosphere causes these migrants to engage with a violent system. (Slack and Whiteford, 2011).

In an interview with NPR, two migrants by the names of Rodolfo and José, recount their experience of being victims of forced criminality and vulnerability. They classified themselves

as economic migrants on their way to the United States for better work opportunities. When they reached the town of Ojinaga, Mexico to rest and recuperate, they were accosted by a group of heavily armed men belonging to *La Linea*, a drug cartel based in Juarez. They were beaten severely and were told they would be killed if they refused to smuggle drugs for the cartel (Burnett, 2011). In other words, this criminal organization used force, intimidation, and coercion to pull these two men into an illicit activity against their will. Because they are migrants in an unstable situation they are already vulnerable, but, by being able-bodied, young men, they were made more vulnerable to being targeted for forced criminality.

Ultimately, Rodolfo and José were captured by border control. When they expressed that they "were made to do it by the cartel", the agents questioned the validity of their claim and refused to believe them. The agents only believed them after they took them to where they had hidden the bags of drugs. Fortunately, they were still where they had left them. The argument that they were forced to commit this act is one that has been used in court rooms several times by defendants and has been proven to be true some times and untrue other times. Regardless, those who work in the justice system have grown highly skeptical of those who make this claim. One federal prosecutor in California told a jury in a cocaine smuggling case, "Why don't we send a memo…and say, 'Dear drug traffickers, when you hire someone to drive a load, tell them that they were forced to do it" (Burnett, 2011). With few laws in place and little belief in them, these young men are trapped in a system that does not care enough about them (Burnett, 2011).

Methodology

I chose content analysis as my method for examining cultural and gender biases because it allows for the systematic evaluation of texts in order to produce valid inferences (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Hsieh and Shannon describe it best when they say "content analysis goes beyond merely counting words to examining language intensely for the purpose of classifying large amounts of text into an efficient number of categories that represent similar meanings" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Data

The research site is completely digital. All sources of information can be found online and are available to the public. The following is a table that includes all of the materials that were used in this content analysis and what type each one is.

Agency	Website	Type of Material
DHS	Myths and Misconceptions	Information Sheet
DHS	Human Trafficking Indicators	Information Sheet
DHS	What is Human Trafficking	Information Sheet
DHS	What is the Blue Campaign	Information Sheet
DHS	Human Trafficking 101	Information Sheet
DHS	Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts	Information Sheet
DHS	Acquisition Workforce	Information Sheet
DHS	Immigration Relief	Information Sheet
DHS	Human Trafficking	Information Sheet

DHS	Human Trafficking & Smuggling	Information Sheet
DHS	Hidden in Plain Sight	Information Sheet
DHS	General Awareness	Video
DHS	Child Servitude	Video
DHS	Rest Area	Video
DHS	Motor Coach	Video
DHS	Medical Clinic	Video
DHS	Truck Stop	Video
DHS	School Recruitment	Video
DHS	Entrapment	Video
DHS	Foster Care	Video
DHS	Take A Second Look	Video
DHS	Human Trafficking PSA	Video
DHS	Operation Dark Night	Video
DHS	The Blue Campaign	Pamphlet
DHS	Victim Identification for Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Health Professionals	Pamphlet
DHS	Victim Support for Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Health Professionals	Pamphlet
DHS	Victim Identification for NGO's, Faith-Based and Community Groups	Pamphlet
DHS	Victim Support for NGO's, Faith-Based and Community Groups	Pamphlet
DHS	What Can You Do	Pamphlet
DHS	Continued Presence	Pamphlet
DHS	Human Trafficking is Happening Now	Card

DHS	Be Alert, Be Strong, Be Free	Card
DHS	Human Trafficking Indicators	Card
DHS	Tips for First Responders	Card
DHS	Student Advocate Toolkit	Toolkit
DHS	Hospitality Toolkit	Toolkit
DHS	What is Human Trafficking	Infographic

Sample and Code Development

Some limitations bound this content analysis in terms of scope and accessibility. The number of materials available from various agencies was abundant, therefore, I chose to exam only the Department of Homeland Security because it is the primary enforcer of immigration and anti-human trafficking laws. I examined all of the thirsty-seven training and awareness materials available on the DHS website regarding human trafficking. These materials were produced to assist law enforcement officers, first responders, and ordinary citizens in identifying victims of human trafficking. I did not attempt to collect any training materials meant for internal use by employees of these agencies due to the difficulty of obtaining them and the fact that I may not receive all materials which would make the results inconclusive. The time frame for the collection process spanned from October 2017 to April 2018, however, only the most up-to-date information was used. Lastly, all materials were in English, thus this content analysis does not include any comparisons between the materials I examined and ones available in other languages.

As I read and re-read each document and watched each video I identified nine *a priori* and *emergent* codes. An *a priori* code is one that is drawn directly from the policies, e.g. focus

on women and sexual exploitation. An *emergen*t code is one that the researcher creates for himself or herself when a visible emerging theme within the documents is identified. The following is the list of codes I identified:

1.) Men

2.) Women

3.) Children/Minors

4.) Victim

5.) Coercion

6.) Forced Labor

7.) Sexual Exploitation/Sexual Abuse

8.) Modern-Day Slavery

9.) Forced Criminality

Forced criminality is the only one in the list that is an *emergent* code. The other eight are *a priori* codes that I observed in the materials. Women and girls as victims of sexual exploitation are often the central focus of studies (Jones 2010, Rocha-Jimenez 2017, Allain 2014, and Coleman 2016). These sources motivated the codes for women, sexual exploitation, and modern-day slavery. Vulnerability and males as victims of forced criminality are two core concepts to understanding the issue that this paper examines and they are addressed directly in the literature (Mackenzie et al. 2014, Goodin 1985, Assisting Male Survivors 2017, Slack & Whiteford 2011, Burnett 2011, Gallagher & McAdam 2014, and Galos 2016). Children are mentioned and factored into three of the sources (Jones 2010, Davis 2017, and Rocha-Jimenez 2017). The concepts of victimhood and coercion go hand-in-hand and are found in all of the sources.

Findings and Discussion

The following chart contains the results from the content analysis of human trafficking training and awareness materials from the Department of Homeland Security. It includes the frequency the codes appeared in each materials and significant findings. This chart allows for an understanding of the way in which the DHS approaches dealing with human trafficking and the way in which it acknowledges and represents victims of human trafficking.

Code	Frequency	Significant findings
Modern-Day Slavery	Occurred in 32% of the documents and videos.	Used as a definition.
Sexual Exploitation	Occurred in 84% of the documents and videos.	The term sexual exploitation was found in the majority of materials. It was often the central focus.
Men	Occurred in 68% of the documents and videos.	24% of the materials explicitly stated, depicted, or referred to men as perpetrators of human trafficking crimes, primarily in regards to sex trafficking.
Women	Occurred in 71% of the documents and videos.	22% of the materials explicitly stated, depicted or referred to women as victims of human trafficking, primarily in regards to sex trafficking. 16% depicted them as perpetrators.
Children/Minors	Occurred in 78% of the documents and videos.	Any person under the age of 18 cannot give consent and this is important for the distinction between prostitution and trafficking.
Victimhood	Occurred in 100% of the documents and videos.	The term “victim” was used in every material along with the concept of victimhood.
Coercion	Occurred in 89% of the documents and videos.	The term “coercion” was used in the majority of the materials and is a key

		component in the definition of human trafficking.
Forced Labor	Occurred in 78% of the documents and videos.	The term "forced labor" was found in the majority of materials
Forced Criminality	Occurred in 3% of the documents and videos.	The term forced criminality was never used in any of the materials. However, one document did use a definition similar to the definition for forced criminality.

Trafficking as Modern-Day Slavery

Human trafficking is referred to as a form of *modern-day slavery* in 32% of the materials that I reviewed from the Department of Homeland Security. In all of these materials, the words *modern-day slavery* were explicitly used as a definition for what human trafficking is and encompassed sexual exploitation and forced labor. This is interesting because some words carry multiple meanings that can sometimes differ in nuanced ways. If one were to ask various people who are not familiar with the subject how they would define modern-day slavery the responses would most likely be different from person to person. I believe some of the documents/videos on the Department of Homeland Security website include the term *modern-day slavery* because the authors want to emphasize that anyone who is forced to participate in commercial sex acts or any form of labor against their will has no freedom of movement or choice. Coercion is used against victims to force compliance and maintain control. Essentially, victims are enslaved.

Sexual Exploitation

The term sexual exploitation was mentioned in 84% of the materials. Sexual exploitation is one of the two primary motivations for human trafficking. The second is labor exploitation. After analyzing all of the materials I discovered that sexual exploitation was explicitly

mentioned as one of the reasons why people are trafficked. Sexual exploitation is described as heinous and a violation of human rights. Some of the words used in the materials include sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual assault, and forced prostitution. I believe it was important to include this as one of my codes to help me analyze these documents because it allows me to expand the discussion on one of the primary motivations for the research on sexual exploitation in the academic field.

The following is a list of emergent themes discovered after reading and watching all of the materials. These are behaviors of traffickers and their victims that DHS expects to find in cases of human trafficking and lists as indicators of a human trafficking situation.

Emergent themes

1.) Instant Love — where the trafficker showers the would-be victim with praise, affection, and adoration
2.) Willingness to Pay – where the trafficker offers to finance a trip for the would-be victim to meet someplace away from the comfort and safety of their home
3.) Job Promises — where the trafficker offers the would-be victim a job that sounds too good to be true, such the exciting prospect of breaking into modeling or acting. Recruitment may also take place in public spaces, like bars, malls, school campuses, and transportation hubs. Victims are often lured with the same tactics used by traffickers online.

Forced Labor

The term forced labor appeared in 78% of the material. Most of the materials liken sexual exploitation to forced labor because they are both “hidden” crimes, meaning that these crimes

occur in homes and businesses all over the United States and the world. Words that were used to refer to forced labor were debt bondage, modern-day slavery, and the term forced labor was often explicitly used. Forced labor is any work or service which people are forced to perform against their will, under the threat of punishment, and for little or no compensation. Victims are regularly found working in all sectors of industry, including; domestic work, agricultural work, manufacturing, construction, and many more. Traffickers sometimes take victim's identification papers and travel documents, if they have them, in order to restrict their freedom of movement (What is Human Trafficking, 2017).

Moreover, sometimes victims are working to pay back a debt for helping them enter a country clandestinely and the trafficker will exaggerate the amount they owe, continuously add "interest", and deny the victim verification for how much money they have collected from them. This is known as debt bondage (Jordan, 2011). Some of the materials provide indicators to be wary of in order to identify possible trafficking victims, including signs of fatigue, sleep deprivation, malnourishment, untreated illnesses, injuries, bruises, and poor hygiene. Additionally, they instruct the public to look for evidence of emotional abuse, verbal threats, and acceptance of demeaning behavior (Student Toolkit, 2017). All of this signifies to me that the Department of Homeland Security is trying to convey the message that there are many indicators that can easily be missed if one is not paying attention.

Most interestingly, I did not find any evidence that suggests the Department of Homeland Security views forced participation in drug trafficking as a form of forced criminality or that young male migrants who are forced to move drugs into the U.S. by organized criminal organizations are victims of human trafficking.

Victimhood and Coercion

In each document and video, I found that the word victim was used frequently when referring to persons who had been trafficked for labor and sexual exploitation. This communicates to me that the political and social construction of victimhood has permeated the minds of policymakers and law enforcers, so much so that it was the most used term that I identified in my investigation. In one pamphlet, from the Department of Homeland's *Blue Campaign* titled "Victim Support for Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Healthcare Professionals", the term is used thirty-three times. It has become essential to make a clear distinction between the perpetrators of crime and the people they harm. In a sense, the notion of innocence has become necessitous for recognition as a victim.

Thus far, I have explained that victims of human trafficking are lured into sexual and labor exploitation by means of deception or force and made to tolerate maltreatment by way of threats of physical violence and psychological manipulation. This is otherwise known as coercion (Fact Sheet: Human Trafficking). This term or the description of it appeared in each document and video as well. Coercion is a fundamental instrument used to commit the crime of human trafficking (Baldwin et al., 2015). Traffickers degrade and verbally abuse their captors as a tactic to maintain subservience. This treatment causes terrible psychological stress to victims that reduces their sense of self-worth and their urge to seek help. The problem is further exacerbated when threats of physical harm are actually carried out against them. The trafficker is able to maintain control over their victims by deteriorating their psyche in this way (Baldwin et al., 2015). This is one of the reasons it is difficult for law enforcers to obtain accurate statements from victims because they are traumatized by their experiences and the fear of retribution compels them to remain silent. Not only that, but the trauma causes them to misremember events

and details in the event they are willing to speak out. Some of the documents instruct the public to be observant of signs of coercion, such as looking to others for permission to speak or perform a task, bruises, anxiousness, irritability, and agitation (Human Trafficking 101, 2016).

Gender

43% of the materials were careful to state that human trafficking can happen to anyone regardless of gender. When the terms *men* and *women* appeared in the text they were often found together in a sentence saying that both are susceptible to trafficking and can be of any race or age. 12% of the materials simply referred to trafficked persons as 'victim' so as to avoid using gender identifiers. I theorize that both of these findings indicate that DHS does not want to appear biased toward one gender over the other and depict an overall gender-neutral approach. However, some interesting data emerged concerning males as perpetrators and females as victims. 24% of the materials depicted males as perpetrators of human trafficking, especially in the form of sexual exploitation. In the *Hospitality Toolkit* of the Department of Homeland Security's Blue Campaign under the heading — General Indicators — it says, "you may have contact with individuals who appear to be with a significantly older "*boyfriend*" or in the company of older *males*." However, it goes on to say, "a group of girls appears to be traveling with an older female or male" and "a group of males or females with identical tattoos in similar locations. This may indicate "branding" by a trafficker". The last two quoted lines indicate that the authors who crafted this document and those who approved it want to convey that they understand women may be responsible for playing a part in human trafficking by recruiting girls and boys. 16% of the materials depicted women as perpetrators and 22% of them indicated that women are victims. Although I think it is important to mention that, oftentimes, the older females referred to in these documents and videos often act as recruiters, and they do so under

duress and the threat of punishment by someone who is exploiting them. Examples of this can be found in the videos titled “Truck Stop”, “School Recruitment”, “Entrapment”, and “Foster Care”.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The topic of human trafficking has gained quite a bit of popularity in the field of migration-related studies in the past two decades and much has been contributed to the field in that time. It was my intention to contribute to the literature with this paper by exploring gender biases and the concept of forced criminality in human trafficking. I did so by conducting a content analysis of human trafficking training and awareness materials from the website of the Department of Homeland Security. I have come to the conclusion that, despite the victim-centered approach the DHS claims to have toward human trafficking, male migrants are indeed overlooked as victims who are targeted for forced criminality in the transnational drug trafficking business between Mexican and the United States. I came to this conclusion due to the fact that none of the materials broached the subject of drug trafficking and human trafficking together. They made no mention of drug cartels or drug trafficking at all. The only time drugs appeared in the texts was when it was explained that traffickers sometimes keep girls compliant by providing them with drugs then fueling their addiction. I argue that this oversight is due in part to the media reliance on a ‘Latino Threat Narrative’ which shapes the perception of Latino immigrants as criminals and causes governmental entities like DHS to regard them as a threat to the state. It is my opinion that this perception is reflected in the results from the content analysis I conducted.

Although forty-three percent of the materials attempted to present a gender-neutral outlook on the subject by stating that both men and women could potentially be victims of human trafficking, only one document made a notable statement by saying that men were

particularly vulnerable to being trafficked. What is more is that twenty-two of the materials provided visual representations of victims as women and twenty-four percent of them made inferences to men as perpetrators. Although sixteen percent of the materials depicted women as perpetrators, they were portrayed as victims of forced criminality by men who forced them to recruit other young women into prostitution.

All of the materials I analyzed from the DHS website instructed the reader to contact U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), a branch of the DHS that handles investigations into human trafficking, to report suspected instances of human trafficking. This is not the only function ICE performs. In collaboration with other federal law enforcement entities, such as Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS), it is responsible for immigration enforcement, investigating illegal movement of good, and preventing terrorism (What We Do – ICE, 2018). Although terrorism was not a central theme of this paper or to the content analysis, it is important to note that terrorism remains a top priority for DHS, CBP, and USCIS and is present in their mission statements and "about us" sections.

Although the DHS claims to have a victim-centered approach, only two of the documents I analyzed stated in clear terms that victims of forced criminality would be given protected status during the investigation into their claims. This presents a dilemma for some victims because they do not have legal status and it is risky for them or others to contact ICE because they may be interrogated, detained and deported. In my opinion, there is currently not a more effective way help victims in these situations, even though it could lead to a whole slew of unintended consequences for the victim. I recommend that there be a task force created to perform a complete review of ICE procedures and a compliance office be created to ensure that

investigations are conducted thoroughly and fairly if DHS wants to truly have a victim-centered approach to dealing with human trafficking.

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