

## **Sporting events, the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation and human rights**

**Jayne Caudwell, Bournemouth University, UK.**

### **Introduction**

As a number of commentators have pointed out (Friman and Reich, 2007; Lee, 2007; Van Duyne and Spencer, 2011), the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation is not a contemporary phenomenon; it has a long history,<sup>1</sup> which demonstrates significant tensions surrounding how we define commercial sex, and how we protect the human rights of women involved. In many ways, we can view the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation in simple terms: male demand for, and female supply of, sexual acts. However, this demand-supply dynamic is too simplistic. Dense webs of control, coercion and criminality, as well as consent, frame the specificities of, for instance, whose body parts are inserted into whose bodily orifices, and how much is paid and received for these so-called acts of sex.

In this chapter, I explore the possibilities of using a human rights framework to understand sexual exploitation, sex work and sporting events. Human rights perspectives are increasingly emerging as useful ways to interrogate a range of global social injustices. However, defining sexual exploitation and taking a human rights approach is not straightforward, and at the start of the chapter, I consider the tensions by outlining how feminists have shaped existing human rights legislation.

In terms of the context, Hayes (2010) highlights that:

International concern about world sporting events and sex trafficking first emerged in the lead-up to the 2006 World Cup. The governments of numerous countries, the European Parliament, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and the media all expressed fear that the World Cup would be plagued with sex trafficking. (p. 1105)

Prior to the FIFA World Cup 2006, authorities and the media circulated a predicted figure for trafficked women and children for sexual exploitation of

40,000 (Milivojevic and Pickering, 2008). In the end, this estimate 'proved to be largely unfounded' (Tavella, 2007, p. 196). However, the public outcry did make visible the potential links between international sporting events and human trafficking (The Future Group, 2007), and Tavella (2007) cites the significance of four Germany-based information campaigns in raising awareness of the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation: (1) "Final Whistle - Stop Forced Prostitution"; (2) "Red Card for Sexual Exploitation and Forced Prostitution"; (3) "Stop Forced Prostitution"; and (4) "Action Against Forced Prostitution" (p. 210).

In addition to a focus on the FIFA World Cup 2006, commentators seeking to address the sexual exploitation of women have discussed Athens Olympics (2004) (Hayes, 2010; The Future Group, 2007), Beijing Olympics (2008) (Hayes, 2010; Tavella, 2007), South Africa FIFA World Cup (2010) (Bonthuys, 2010; Hayes, 2010, Richter *et al.*, 2010 and 2012; Tavella, 2007), Vancouver Winter Olympics (Bourgeois, 2009; Deering *et al.* 2013; Hayes, 2010), London Olympics (2012) (Ward, 2012), Sochi Winter Olympics (2014); Brazil FIFA World Cup (2014) as well as the USA Super Bowl (Finkel and Finkel, 2015). As one research participant stressed, international sporting events are emerging concerns (cited in Hayes 2010):

"Trafficking is a trap. And an event like the World Cup - or the Olympics - is the bait. Pushed by poverty, pulled by hopeful dreams of life in the West, and exploited by opportunists, women suspend disbelief and their better judgment and gamble on a better life".  
Jennifer Roemhildt (executive director of Greek NGO)(p. 1106)

Despite these existing commentaries, Finkel and Finkel (2015) argue that '[q]uantifying human trafficking for sexual exploitation at large global sporting events has proven to be elusive given the clandestine nature of the industry' (p. 17). Taking stock of this statement, this chapter serves as a call for further critical engagement by sport and leisure scholars with major sporting events and the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation. To this end, in the first part of the chapter I focus on defining sexual exploitation and sex work to show how they are understood within human rights instruments. Specifically, I consider

feminist debates that helped inform relevant human rights international law, especially laws surrounding human trafficking.

Second, I provide a vivid illustration of the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation through a discussion of the emergence of the Balkans region of Europe as a source, and transition zone, for the acquisition and movement of women. Through this case study, I demonstrate the conditions and mechanisms of supply of, and demand for, women for sexual exploitation. The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the consequential shifts to new regimes of political power changed the established socio-cultural and economic status quo (Friman and Reich, 2007; Scheinost, 2011). For the mid 1990s, the World Bank database of World Development Indicators states that poverty rates in Eastern Europe were above 20% in many countries (Kligman Limoncelli, 2005). Women, in particular, were affected by the large-scale transformations. Munro (2008) identifies the 'feminization of poverty' (p. 242), as well as the increasing acceptance of the sex trade by previously socialist regimes, as contributory factors to the exploitation of trafficked women. It is worth bearing in mind that Europe is experiencing another seismic shift in terms of the consequences of conflict, war, migration and poverty.

Finally, I return to the limited existing sport-related literature to elucidate the state of current knowledge of sexual exploitation, sex work and international sporting events. In doing so, I highlight the possibilities of adopting a human rights framework for future feminist research.

### **Sexual exploitation, prostitution and sex work**

As will become apparent, defining sexual exploitation is complicated and feminists are often divided when it comes to establishing the boundaries between prostitution, sex work, sexual exploitation, and women's sexual agency. One way to generate a meaningful concept of sexual exploitation is to visit the relevant feminist positions that have informed human rights legislation, which are radical feminism and sex work feminism. Both positions foreground choice,

consent and harm. As such, they rest on the importance of women's freedom and dignity. However, they start from fundamentally different propositions.

Early radical feminists are renowned for ideologies that view sex and sexuality as universal axes of male power, male domination and the oppression of women (e.g. Dworkin, 1981; Dworkin and MacKinnon, 1988; MacKinnon, 1989). Within this framing, sex and sexuality are largely void of choice and consent for women, and they are the cause of harm to women. Early radical feminists' unflinching critiques of pornography, prostitution, rape and violence are often remembered for asserting the general statement that 'all men are rapists'.<sup>2</sup> Marking (2005) writes: 'Dworkin might not have actually said "all men are rapists" but she did have the slogan Dead Men Don't Rape above her desk' (§12). Undoubtedly controversial, such sentiments were adopted by subsequent radical feminists and are viewed as axiomatic to an analysis of the global economy of sexual exploitation.

The title of Sheila Jeffreys' (2009) book—*The Industrial Vagina*—signals her focus on the relentless subordination of women through the sex trade. She asserts that sexuality is used globally to dominate and oppress women, and that this arrangement is normalised vis-à-vis prostitution. For Barry (1995), all forms of sexual relations, especially prostitution, are sexual exploitation. This is because radical feminists position 'patriarchy' as an absolute and obdurate political system whereby all women live within what they see as a 'class condition' that 'is so pervasive that it actually invokes consent, collusion or some form of cooperation from the oppressed' (p. 23).

Within the radical feminist approach, it is not uncommon for women's condition to be reduced to 'cunt' (Millet, 1975, p. 56) and for men to be diminished to their penis/phallus: a "symbol of terror" (in Marker, 2005, §10). Clearly, approaches such as this, which encourage reductionism, essentialism and universalism are dubious, not least because they fall short of a nuanced account of the problematic, which is, in this case, what constitutes sexual exploitation?

In response to the radical feminist agenda, specifically strident anti-pornography feminism, a pro-sex, sex-positive feminism emerged (cf. Vance, 1984). This approach questioned the assumption that all men cause harm to all women and that all women are oppressed by sex and sexuality. Sex work feminists, working with the international sex workers rights movement, concentrated on the reframing of 'prostitution' within the rhetorics of labour and workers' rights. This stance translates into an aim to:

[A]dvance the position of sex workers by shifting political (and feminist) debate away from an abstract consideration of exploitation, morality and ethics and towards a concrete consideration of the health and safety of workers, their wages, working conditions and power relations with employers and clients. (Sullivan, 2003, p. 70)

The move to the economic and employment conditions of women who are embroiled in the sex trade attempts to couple their circumstances with the existing civil, occupational and human rights offered to citizens and workers generally. Within this remit, endeavours to combat exploitation are possible under international law, which is 'designed to protect the rights of all workers' (ibid, p. 71).

There's insufficient space in this chapter to fully explore the intricacies of radical feminism versus sex work feminism, or to offer more than this simplified duality suggests. Suffice to state, that the two approaches do not share a common notion of sexual exploitation. Radicals believe it is the prevailing, hegemonic structures of patriarchy that determine the fleshy and embodied experiences of heterosexual sex as exploitive of women. They believe that an exploitation-free sex trade is not possible and they rally for abolition. Sex work feminists acknowledge, more broadly, women's agency and their agented sexual subjectivity. They support women's right to sell their sexual services within fair and just infrastructures of employment. They highlight the value of regulation of the sex trade.

In her analysis of the United Nations (2000) *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*,<sup>3</sup> Sullivan (2003)

demonstrates the contributions of both radical feminism and sex work feminism to the eventual composition of the Protocol. Notably, these significant feminist debates (late 1980s-mid 1990s) paralleled the emergence of the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation from the Balkans region of Europe.

The radical campaign, reflected in the advocacies of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW),<sup>4</sup> returned to the content of the 1949 UN *Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others*. CATW developed, and presented for authorisation, anti-trafficking policy in the form of the *Convention Against Sexual Exploitation*. However, in opposition, the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women<sup>5</sup> (GAATW), adopting a sex work perspective, argued for the recognition of the differences between women's 'free' and 'forced' sexual labour. In 1995, at the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, these conflicting positions resulted in the GAATW rejecting the CATW proposal. Despite the lack of consensus, both parties affirmed:

[T]he need for a new international agreement specifically addressed to trafficking. There was also agreement that this should target the particular needs of women because they are the main victims of trafficking. (Sullivan, 2003, p. 81)

In sum, feminist debates during this period (1970s-2000s) over what constitutes sexual exploitation did serve to underpin international law. Under Section 1, Article 3a, of the 2000 Trafficking Protocol, trafficking is defined thus:

[T]he 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.<sup>6</sup>

Sexual exploitation is clearly an abuse of power by parties intent on, predominantly, economic gain (profit). This gain is achieved by taking advantage of immiseration, penury and women's vulnerability, by fostering cultures of fear

and violence, and by unsolicited access to women's bodies for acts of sex. Such exploitation means that women are denied their humanity and dignity as well as their right to consensual sex, and the freedom to choose with whom they have sexual intercourse.<sup>7</sup>

Despite an increasing focus on the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation, legitimate research-based information did not emerge until after the Palermo Protocol (IOM, 2006). It is worth noting that '[i]n 1994, trafficking was defined very differently and without specific reference to exploitation' (IOM, 2005, p. 12). That said, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has collected relevant data since 1999 (i.e. Counter-Trafficking Module Database: CMT). This database and similar sources provide quantitative material that is useful in determining the magnitude of both trafficking and the sex trade. More often than not, it remains difficult to discern the differences between women's informed consent to sex work and women's forced sexual 'labour'. In an attempt to sketch the scale of the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation I draw from this statistical evidence. However, it is the qualitative, anecdotal evidence that is more meaningful in terms of elucidating conditions of exploitation.

Figures fluctuate for the totals of trafficked people. This is largely due to the dependency on estimates. Kelly (2005) drawing from the 2003 UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), states that their highest estimate of 4 million persons per year globally was adopted by IOM, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the United Nations (UN). In comparison, Reiger (2007) suggests that between 700,000 and 2 million people are trafficked annually, and Friman and Reich (2007) claim that the range is 600,000 to 800,000. Reiger (2007), Friman and Reich (2007) draw from the same source and yet their figures differ. This is indicative of how estimates vary. Roby and Bergquist (2014) highlight further the numerical discrepancies:

Kevin Bales, co-founder of Free the Slaves, estimating that there are 27 million slaves worldwide, compared to the International Labor Organization's estimate of 2.4 million in 2009. Both estimates are in stark contrast to global law enforcement data from the 2012 United States'

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report which documented 7,705 prosecutions, 4,746 convictions, and 46,570 identified victims. (p. 3)

Clearly, we must approach much of the quantitative data with caution. However, despite the incongruences, recent figures confirm that women and girls are disproportionately involved. They account for 75% of trafficked peoples and that the majority (58%) of this proportion is trafficked for sexual exploitation (UNODC, 2012). Specific to Europe, the most recent study (European Parliament, 2014) affirms that the majority of trafficking of women is for sexual exploitation; one estimate claims that trafficked women make up 60%-90% of prostitutes found in the sex trades of member states.

In her critique of the sex trade, Jeffreys (2009) highlights profit figures as well as numbers of trafficked women and girls. For example, taking values from the 1998 International Labour Organization (ILO) report, she demonstrates the worth of the trade to the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia: '2-14 per cent of economies' (4), and Korea: '4.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), more than forestry, fishing and agriculture combined' (4). In 2003, profits accrued from the global sex trade were estimated at \$US 7-10 billion, annually (Rieger, 2007). In 2008, this figure had risen to \$US 31 billion, annually (Jeffreys, 2009). Recently, in a statement concerning global trafficking, John Ashe (UN General Assembly President) put the annual profit for human trafficking at \$36 billion. He stressed that 'it ranks as the world's third most profitable crime after illicit drug and arms trafficking' (14th July, 2014).

Profit figures are important in exposing the enormity of exploitation. As with the statistics for the numbers of people trafficked, there are no definitive values and prudence is required when making comparisons between figures that incorporate different components of trafficking (e.g. slavery, servitude or removal of organs), and amalgamate aspects of sex work and sexual exploitation. Nevertheless, the quantitative evidence for both proliferation and profit are substantive.

### **European Case Study: The Balkans**



I focus on the Balkans region to offer further research material concerning the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation. I do this to demonstrate how large-scale changes in political, economic and social conditions increased the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation across Europe. Currently (mid 2010s), on-going conflict, war and poverty in regions bordering Europe has led to significant upheavals. As a consequence, there are ever-increasing migrations of peoples that require careful attention in terms of human trafficking, and the trafficking of women (and children) for sexual exploitation.

Perhaps more compelling than the global quantitative figures are the qualitative findings; there are countless stories related to the Balkans:

Halyna is 18 years old and sees no opportunities in her hometown. Sonya tells her about her good time as a waitress in London, and introduces Halyna to some men who are able to arrange documents and travel. ... As soon as she arrives, she is picked up and taken to a flat. The man tells her that her travel debts have to be repaid and he confiscates her documents. After repeated beatings, she is forced to work as a prostitute. (in Morawska, 2007, p. 92)

Maria, 24, was trafficked from the Balkans to London by a neighbour when she was a child. Despite claiming asylum almost a decade ago, the government had never responded, leaving her unable to work legitimately and forcing her back into prostitution to survive. (in Townsend, 2011)

Interviewer: "Did you ever have sex with someone or perform some sexual act because you were afraid something bad would happen?"  
Woman: "All the time". (in Zimmerman, 2007, p. 295)

The two traffickers and their friends raped me. (ibid, p. 295)

I was working as a bartender. A person approached me with an offer: he'd pay me to bring him girls. A lot of village girls came to the club. I judged them by their appearance, age, attitude, and I gave them money, clothes, gifts, took them to restaurants. You sleep with her once so you can get under her skin, and then you give her to the man. (in Petrunov, 2014, p. 169)

In eastern and central Europe, the post-1989 transition from socialism/communism to democracy produced significant ripple effects throughout the Balkans. The repercussions of regime change caused numerous consequences that often coalesced to initiate and advance the trafficking of women for sexual

exploitation. For many Balkan States, the emergent turmoil proved uncontrollable given political, and judicial, disarray. State and societal institutions became fragile in the aftermath of transition. In many cases, pre-existing state rule of law failed to apprehend the substantial shifts from long-standing economic and social stasis. For example, with the introduction of democracy, Albania is often cited (A'mula, 2011; Hysi, 2007; Bekteshi, Gjermeni and Van Hook, 2012) as having experienced large-scale, rapid migration and wide spread poverty. Hysi (2007) highlights that pre-1990s Albania was an isolated country with a rising population. In 1991, according to Bekteshi *et al.* (2012), 20,000 Albanians left the country. Between 1991-2002, an estimated 25% of the population emigrated (Hysi, 2007). This out flow of people reflects push factors such as economic uncertainty, negative growth in Gross National Product (GDP), increasing unemployment and poverty, especially in rural areas where post-socialist state policy no longer supported agricultural communities (Kligman and Limoncelli, 2005). In 1998, 'half of Albanians lived in extreme poverty' (Hysi, 2007, p. 100). Pull factors are also instrumental and include employment opportunities as well as an imagined better life—in the west—under established capitalism and the conspicuous trappings of consumer culture. Given these political, economic and social parameters, it is relatively easy to deduce the conditions that led to the following:

In 2001, the Albanian Council of Ministers reported that approximately 100,000 Albanian women and girls had been trafficked abroad during the 1990s, and official police statistics noted over 18,200 persons rescued from trafficking in 2000 and 2001. (Hysi, 2007, p. 98)

In the 1990s, processes of democratization, liberalism and capitalism operated alongside poverty and migration. Porous national boundaries, labour market restructuring, social inequality and cultural traditions surrounding gender—deep-seated patriarchy (A'mula, 2011)—combined to make Albania one of the key sources of trafficked women to western Europe (Kligman and Limoncelli, 2005):

By 1997, the trafficking of women for the purposes of sexual exploitation in London was almost totally monopolized by Albanian gangs who also

played major roles in other European countries. (Bekteshi *et al.* 2012, p. 485)

Additionally, the Kosovo War compounded circumstances through additional instability (Bekteshi *et al.* 2012). More specifically, 60,000 Kosovo ethnic Albanian refugees entered Albania in 1999. Notably, refugee status and poverty are often inextricable and this contributes additional layers of vulnerability. Also, during conflict and post-conflict, traffickers are able to use pre-existing arms and drug trafficking routes (Kligman and Limoncelli, 2005). Under these conditions, and as the qualitative accounts above intimate, Albanian women were at a high risk of being lured into sexual exploitation.

Many Balkan States were affected by post-1989 political turbulence, economic upheaval, social and cultural contestations, and ensuing civil war. Crimes against humanity accompanied the often-violent fragmentation of Yugoslavia (1980s-1990s), the Bosnia War (1992-1995) and the Kosovo War (1998-1999). Sexual exploitation of women and girls was a feature of the Bosnia War crimes tribunals. Post war, a significant number of soldiers were charged and imprisoned for raping women and girls (cf. Dewey, 2012). Peacekeepers, and other corrupt authorities, were found guilty of the trafficking of women and girls (Agathangelou and Ling, 2003; Murray, 2003). Of note, and as Kligman and Limoncelli (2005) conclude, wars and militarisation facilitate the trafficking of women. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vandenberg documents the impunity granted culpable Peacekeeping personnel (2011).

Writing about the general conditions in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Long (2007) illustrates how traditional cultural practices involving gift exchange become reframed by internal conflict and economic incentive. She argues that historically women and girls play a role in family/matrimonial interpersonal transactions, which help form community alliances. However, with a new political regime and civil war, these exchanges re-form in extremely exploitative ways. In terms of trafficking for sexual exploitation, she identifies young women from rural, uneducated families seeking migration as a high-risk group. Maljević, (2011), also commenting on Bosnia and Herzegovina, pinpoints the emergence

of new forms of crime and the spread of organized crime post independence (1992) and post war (1995), as well as corrupt law-enforcement authorities (e.g., police, customs and judiciary), as conducive to the escalation of trafficked women for sexual exploitation.

Literature concerned with trafficking from Bulgaria repeats many of the features identified for Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Gounev *et al.* (2011) start by arguing that the sex trade was virtually absent from Bulgaria pre-1990. However, through organized crime, coercion, deceit, fraud and violent entrepreneurs, it developed into a highly lucrative business, and alongside an emerging tourism and leisure industry. The large-scale export of women meant that Bulgarian women were the 5th highest European group of women trafficked for sexual exploitation (UNODC 2009, cited in Gounev *et al.* 2011).

Quoting Eurostat (2012) data, Petrunov (2014) acknowledges that Bulgaria is the poorest country in the EU, with the lowest GDP per capita. Unemployment in 2011 was at 11.2% and one-quarter of 15-29 year olds are unemployed and/or lacking education. Within this socio-economic milieu, young women are massively susceptible. Additionally, it is noted that traditional family structures disintegrated (Friman and Reich, 2007). This can leave young women more exposed. At the same time, dysfunctional family relations can exacerbate vulnerability. There is evidence that many women trafficked for sexual exploitation have histories of familial abuse – sexual, physical and psychological, and domestic violence. For example, a report commissioned by the Poppy Project found that: ‘Forty (34%) of the 118 women sampled disclosed having experienced sexual abuse or rape prior to being trafficked’ (Stephen-Smith, 2008).

The Balkans was a key source for trafficked women, constituting one third of European figures (UNODC, 2010). Its geographical location means the region is a nexus point, linking east and west Europe, which makes it a fertile source and transition zone for the procurement and movement of trafficked women. Maljević (2011) makes the point that many women are sold more than once as

they move from east to west. An estimated 24% are sold 3 times or more, and almost one in four are re-sold during their transition to a final destination.

The above discussions testify to the political, economic and social elements that precipitate the supply of women for sexual exploitation. It would be remiss to omit the qualification that Balkan States have attempted to prevent and combat trafficking of women. Indicators suggest there are some successes; although conviction rates for traffickers remain low (Mertus and Bertone, 2011). Critical commentators argue that existing political and legal action is insufficient. They claim that trafficking for sexual exploitation and the human rights of women are not a priority in crime prevention (Van Duyne and Spencer, 2011). Furthermore, when it comes to protecting and assisting trafficked women, witness protection efforts are dire (A'mula, 2011; Lindstrom, 2011), and there is a noticeable lack of cooperation between nation states (Konevska, 2011).

Understanding why, how, where and when women are trafficked for sexual exploitation is important, however, preoccupation with supply mechanisms forgets the fundamental operating principal of demand. As Hughes *et al.* (2004) highlight, most attention has been on countries of origin and the cessation of supply. Some commentators view this as reflecting western hegemony, which serves to pathologise the east and frame the women involved as illegal immigrants, thus adding to western (nationalistic) rhetorics of human security (Aradau, 2004). The prevention campaigns to stop trafficking are usually aimed at women and girls. These campaigns, as well as media representations of trafficked women, promote particular articulations of 'victimhood', which fuel stereotypes of east Europe, and women from the east (Davydova, 2013). Hughes *et al.* (2004) conclude: 'there have been few campaigns or efforts aimed at reducing the demand for victims' (p. 2). And, there's limited informed knowledge of the numbers of men who purchase sex, and why they purchase sex.

Farley, Bindel and Golding's (2009) London-based study attempts to redress the lack of research on 'men who buy sex'. Some of the reasons given by the men who took part in their research include:

“[M]en pay for women because he can have whatever and whoever he wants. Lots of men go to prostitutes so they can do things to them that real women would not put up with”.

“We’re living in the age of instant coffee, instant food. This is instant sex”.

“Prostitution is like being able to masturbate without doing any of the work”.

When asked if they were aware of women who had been trafficked, over half (55%) of the men interviewed ‘believed that a majority of women in prostitution were lured, tricked or trafficked’ (p. 16). This figure corresponds with previous research in Scotland and USA, and Farley *et al.* (2009) conclude: ‘most men who buy sex are aware of and have witnessed exploitation, coercion and trafficking but this does not affect their decision to buy sex’ (p. 16).

Clearly, the conditions of supply of, and demand for, commercial sex generate gross mistreatment of women and the violation of their human rights (Lee, 2007; Munro, 2008). European States have failed to successfully apprehend the cumbersome, clandestine and corrupt nature of supply. The UK remains a primary destination. The trafficking of women for sexual exploitation into the UK continues apace; in a 2013 report entitled ‘Capital Exploits’ (Bindel, *et al.*, 2013), Romanian women and girls are identified as the current trafficked group exploited by traffickers for profit. Past and present quantitative and qualitative findings attest that ‘trafficking into the UK occurs on a scale that merits serious attention by authorities’ (Markovska and Moore, 2011: 222).

### **Sporting events and the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation**

The small amount of existing research and literature on sporting events and the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation reiterates the points I have made above. These points are:

1. Sexual exploitation is difficult to define and separate from consensual, commercial sex work. And yet, robust evidence testifies to the injustices, exploitation, and harm of human trafficking and the global sex trade.
2. There are identifiable conditions of supply and demand that make countries either a source, transition zone or destination for the

acquisition and movement of women. Sporting events, it is acknowledged, provide certain conditions at specific times.

Civil unrest, regional conflict and international war as well as increasing global and localised poverty negatively impact on women's lives causing conditions of immiseration, penury and vulnerability. Major sporting events add an additional factor to debate because they 'create circumstances that can be exploited by human traffickers' (Tavella, 2007, p. 198) and 'risk providing a venue for the exploitation of the world's most vulnerable persons' (p. 217).

Existing studies that have focused on the FIFA men's World Cups (2006 and 2010) have discussed the prevalence of moral panics surrounding prostitution, including a negative focus on women sex workers, immigration policy, and attempts to suppress sex work (Milivojevic and Pickering, 2008), as well as the negative impact of public outcry on public health services and action concerning HIV transmission (Richter *et al.*, 2010 and 2012). Deering *et al.*, (2012), applying a public health perspective to Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, argued that the event served to promote police harassment and the displacement of local sex workers. This meant that local women were criminalised and their established safe spaces of sex work were jeopardised. Ward (2011), writing about London 2012, called for a rational debate that recognises abhorrent and abusive treatment and the denial of the human rights of women. But, she warned against an abolitionist agenda, which would increase harm of and violence against women, and decrease the sexual health of sex workers.

In terms of sport events and 'human trafficking for sex as well as forced sexual exploitation', Finkel and Finkel (2015, p. 17), Hayes (2010) and Tavella (2007) offer the few critical accounts available. This work is seated in their concerns with public health, legality and human rights respectively. Also, there are reports commissioned by NGOs and religious charities that tend towards resolution, which can deny the rights of sex workers. Noticeably, there is little in-depth academic research from within feminist sport and leisure studies.

Finkel and Finkel (2015) conclude that 'the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation almost certainly exists, but to what extent is the big question' (p. 17). Whilst predictions and estimates for Olympics and FIFA World Cups 'may be exaggerated', the lack of actual figures 'does not indicate that concerns about sex trafficking are unwarranted, or that countries hosting world sporting events should ignore sex trafficking' (Hayes, 2010, p. 1146). Remaining mindful of the argument that '[w]ithout further study it would be irresponsible to dismiss a possible connection between trafficking and international sporting events' (Tavella, 2007), this chapter makes a call for more sport and leisure feminist research of the issue. It is apparent that public health and human rights scholars working within the realms of sex work and sexual exploitation have turned the spotlight on sporting events. Despite sport and leisure scholars' critical engagement with many aspects of sporting events, there is a noticeable lack of in-depth research on the sexual exploitation of women.

### **In conclusion**

Abolition, regulation, criminalisation and decriminalization of the sex trade remain thorny resolutions and a proposed alternative remedy is the implementation of human rights instruments (Lindstrom, 2007; Munro, 2008). As is evident, comprehensive human rights legislation exists to protect and promote the human rights of women who are trafficked for sexual exploitation. However, and as an exemplar, the UK Government has a poor record when it comes to the retrenchment of trafficking of women and restoring the human rights of trafficked women. Stepnitz (2009) claims that '...governmental responses to trafficking as a crime and as a human rights violation have been overshadowed by the perception of trafficking as an immigration problem' (p. 9). The recent CEDAW<sup>8</sup> Shadow Report (Women's Resource Centre, 2013) confirms this claim. Specific to Article 6 of CEDAW,<sup>9</sup> the report concludes that the UK Government fails because it 'remains focused on immigration and border control in its strategy to combat trafficking, at the expense of the women it claims it is trying to protect' (p. 10).



There are numerous cases of sexually exploited trafficked women coming to the attention of UK authorities. The treatment of these cases confirms that trafficked women are often discredited and dismissed (Markovska and Moore, 2011) and/or judged in terms of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' (Munro, 2008). Generally, women involved in the sex trade are stigmatized and viewed negatively by enforcement authorities. For numerous reasons, including how they are treated (e.g., lack of interpreters) they find the UK judicial system intimidating (Bindel *et al*, 2013). Many are rapidly deported, which often leads to a cycle of re-trafficking and repeated sexual exploitation (Morawska, 2007). They frequently withdraw from legal proceedings and/or disappear; few find refuge and justice (Stephen-Smith, 2008).

To reiterate, the UK Governmental commitment to CEDAW is heavily criticized. Similarly, the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group (2010) concluded that the UK does not comply with *European Convention on Action Against Trafficking*. Trafficked women are often denied a period of stay, access to sexual health care and psychological support services. As a spokeswoman from the Poppy Project comments:

"In many ways it feels to me like domestic violence used to feel – these women are victims, but they're not being seen as victims. When they're freed from violence or exploitation, they're immediately thrown into another whole set of difficulties." (in Moorhead, 2012: ¶7)

In terms of sporting events, it is possible for national Governments to affect both the supply of, and demand for women for sexual exploitation. However, as commentators have made the point, Governmental involvement is poor when it comes to 'mitigating the increase in sex trafficking that is believed to accompany world sporting events' (Hayes, 2010, p. 1107). This leaves sport governing bodies (including the International Olympics Committee) to deal with human rights violations, and recently we have witnessed some progress. In March 2016, FIFA advertised for a Human Rights Manager (see: <http://www.globalsportsjobs.com/job/959077/human-rights-manager-w-m/>). Only time will tell if this traditionally patriarchal sport organization will

include the trafficking of women (and children) for sexual exploitation on its remit of human rights violations.

In the meantime, a sport and leisure feminist manifesto to address sexual exploitation during major sporting events might look like this:

1. Drawing from human rights instruments and feminist debate, further define the boundaries between sex work and sexual exploitation so that a working definition of sexual exploitation is determined. (e.g., theory informing practice)
2. Drawing from existing empirical material (secondary research) establish the extent of trafficking for sexual exploitation, and concomitant abuses of human rights during major sporting events.
3. Conduct original, ethically informed research based on the above processes. This research might overlap with research at major sporting events with sex workers.
4. Work on the ground with existing relevant groups to aid an understanding of the nature of major sporting events. Establish links to enable action research.
5. Mobilise all of the above to lobby sport governing bodies to recognise and address—in policy—human rights violations vis-à-vis the trafficking of women (and children) for sexual exploitation.

### **Bibliography**

Agathangelou, A. M. and Ling, L.H. M. (2003) Desire Industries: Sex Trafficking, UN Peacekeeping, and the Neo-Liberal World Order. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, X(1): 133-148

A'mula, S. (2011) *Overcoming a Legacy of Patriarchy: Gender Balance, Rights-based Policies and the fight against the Trafficking of Women in Post-Communist Albania*, Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Sarajevo – University of Bologna,

Aradau, C. (2003) The Perverse Politics of Four-Letter Words. *Journal of International Studies*, 33(2): 251-277

Ashe, J (2014) *Human trafficking has no place in modern world, General Assembly President says*. Available online at:  
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48271#.VVRja1y4n0E>  
[accessed 14 May, 2015]

- Barry, K. (1995) *The Prostitution of Sexuality*. New York: New York University Press
- Bekteshi, V., Gjermeni, E. and Van Hook, M. (2012) Modern day slavery: sex trafficking in Albania, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 32(7/8): 480-494
- Bindel, J., Breslin, R. and Brown, L. (2013) *Capital Exploits: A Study of Prostitution and Trafficking in London*. London: Eaves Putting Women First
- Bonthuys, E. (2010) The 2010 Football World Cup and the regulation of sex work in South Africa. Paper presented at Sociology, Anthropology and Development Seminar, University of Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Bourgeois, R. (2009) Deceptive Inclusion: The 2010 Vancouver Olympics and Violence Against First Nation People, *Canadian Woman Studies*, 27(2,3): 39-44
- Davydova, D. (2013) Criminal networks, unfortunate circumstances, or migratory projects? *Cultural Dynamics*, 25(2): 229-243
- Deering, K.N., Chettiar, J., Chan, K., Taylor, M., Montaner, J.S.G. and Shannon, K. (2012) Sex work and the public health impacts of the 2010 Olympic Games, *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, 88(4): 301-303
- Dewey, S. (2012) Rethinking Survival Sex and Trafficking in Conflict and Post-Conflict Zones: The Case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, *Journal of Transnational Women's and Gender Studies*, 10: 15-31
- Dworkin, A. (1981) *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*. London: Women's Press
- Dworkin, A and MacKinnon, C. (1988) *Pornography and civil rights: a new day for women's equality*. Minneapolis: Organizing Against Pornography.
- European Parliament (2014) *Sexual Exploitation and Prostitution and its Impact on Gender Equity*. Directorate General for Internal Policies: Policy Department C: Citizens Rights and Constitutional Affairs.
- Farley, M., Bindel, J. and Golding, J.M. (2009) *Men Who Buy Sex: Who They Buy and What They Know*, London: Eaves Putting Women First
- Finkel, R. and Finkel, M.L. (2015) The 'dirty downside' of global sporting events: focus on human trafficking for sexual exploitation. *Public Health*, 129: 17-22
- French, M. (1977) *The Women's Room*. New York: Jove Books
- Friman, H.R., and Reich, S. (Eds)(2007) *Human Trafficking, Human Security, and the Balkans*. Pittsburgh, UPP

The Future Group (2007) *Faster, Higher, Stronger: Preventing Human Trafficking at the 2010 Olympics*. The Future Group: Calgary, Canada

Gounev, P., Bezlov, T., and Petrunov, G. (2011) Market Regulation and Criminal Structures in the Bulgarian Commercial Sex Market, in in P.C. Van Duyne and J. Spencer (2011) *Flesh and Money: Trafficking in Human Beings*. Netherlands: WLP pp. 153-180

Hayes, V. (2010) Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation at World Sporting Events. *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, 85(3): 1105-1146.

Hysi, V. (2007) Human Trafficking and Democratic Transition in Albania, in H.R. Friman and S. Reich (2007) *Human Trafficking, Human Security, and the Balkans*. Pittsburgh, UPP, pp. 96-118

Hughes, D.M., Carlson, E.M and Carlson, O.M. (2004) *Best Practice to Address the Demand Side of Sex Trafficking*, University of Rhode Island

IOM International Organization for Migration (2006) *Human Trafficking: Data Collection, Current Trends and Institutional Approaches*, 11th Metropolis Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, October 5

IOM International Organization for Migration (2005) Data and Research on Human Trafficking: A Global Survey. Offprint of the *Special Issue of International Migration*, 43(1/2): 1-339

Jeffreys, S. (2009) *The Industrial Vagina: The Political Economy of the Global Sex Trade*. London: Routledge

Jeffreys, S. (1997) *The Idea of Prostitution*. Melbourne: Spinifex

Kelly, L. (2005) "You Can Find Anything You Want": A Critical Reflection on Research on Trafficking in Persons within and into Europe, in IOM International Organization for Migration (2005) Data and Research on Human Trafficking: A Global Survey. *Special Issue of International Migration*, 43(1/2): 235-266

Kligman, G. and Limoncelli, S. (2005) Trafficking Women after Socialism: To, Through, and From Eastern Europe, *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, 12(1): 118-140

Lee, M. (Ed)(2007) *Human Trafficking*. Devon: Willan Publishers

Lindstrom, N. (2007) Transnational Responses to Human Trafficking: The Politics of Anti-Trafficking in the Balkans, in H.R. Friman and S. Reich (2007) *Human Trafficking, Human Security, and the Balkans*. Pittsburgh, UPP, pp. 61-80

- Long, (2007) Trafficking Exchanges and Economic Responses: Reflection from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, in H.R. Friman and S. Reich (2007) *Human Trafficking, Human Security, and the Balkans*. Pittsburgh, UPP, pp. 20-39
- Marking, H. (2005) *The real legacy of Andrea Dworkin* (15.04.05) Available online at:<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/apr/15/gender.politicsphilosophyandsociety> [accessed 9 May, 2015]
- MacKinnon, C. (1989) *Toward A Feminist Theory of the State*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Maljević, A. (2011) Trafficking Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in P.C. Van Duyne and J. Spencer (2011) *Flesh and Money: Trafficking in Human Beings*. Netherlands: WLP, pp. 135-152
- Markovska, A., and Moore, C. (2011) Stilettos and Steel-Caps: Legislation of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation, and its Enforcement in the UK and The Ukraine, in P.C. Van Duyne and J. Spencer (2011) *Flesh and Money: Trafficking in Human Beings*. Netherlands: WLP, pp. 205-237
- Mertus, J. and Bertone, A. (2007) Combating Trafficking: International Efforts and their Ramifications, in H.R. Friman and S. Reich (2007) *Human Trafficking, Human Security, and the Balkans*. Pittsburgh, UPP, pp. 40-60
- Millet, K. (1975) *The Prostitution Papers*. St Albans: Paladin
- Milivojevic, S. and Pickering, S. (2008) Football and Sex: the 2006 FIFA World Cup and Sex Trafficking. *TEMIDA*, 21-47 DOI: 10.2298/TEM0802021M
- Moorhead, J (2012) *Nowhere to Turn: Britain's Sex Slaves*. Available online at: <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2012/mar/19/nowhere-to-turn-britains-sex-slaves> [accessed 19 May, 2015]
- Morawska, E. (2007) Trafficking into and from Eastern Europe, in M, Lee (2007) *Human Trafficking*. Devon: Willan Publishers, pp. 92-115
- Munro, V. E. (2008) Of Rights and Rhetoric: Discourses of Degradation and Exploitation in the Context of Sex Trafficking, *Journal of Law and Society*, 35(2): 240-264
- Murray, J. (2003) Who will Police the Peace-Builders? *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, 34: 475
- Petrunov, G. (2014) Human Trafficking in Eastern Europe: The Case of Bulgaria. *The Annals of the American Academy*, 653(1): 162-182
- Reiger, A. (2007) Missing the Mark: Why the Trafficking Victims Protection Act Fails to Protect Sex Trafficking Victims in the United States, *Harvard Journal of Law and Gender*, 30: 231-256

Ritcher, M., Luchters, S., Ndlovu, D., Temmerman, M. and Chersich, M.F. (2012) Female sex work and international sport events - no major changes in demand or supply of paid sex during the 2010 Soccer World Cup: a cross-sectional study, *BMC Public Health*, 12:763

Ritcher, M., Chersich, M.F., Scorgie, F., Luchters, S., Temmerman, M. and Steen, R. (2010) Sex work and the 2010 FIFA World Cup: time for public health imperatives to prevail, *Globalization and Health*, 6(1): 1-6

Roby and Bergquist (2014) Editorial, *International Social Work*, 57(1): 3-6

Scheinost, M. (2011) Transnational Crime and Cross-border Trafficking in Human Beings in the Czech Republic, in P.C. Van Duyne and J. Spencer (2011) *Flesh and Money: Trafficking in Human Beings*. Netherlands: WLP, pp. 113-134

Stephen-Smith, S. (2008) *Routes in, Routes out: Quantifying the Gendered Experience of Trafficking to the UK*, London: POPPY Project

Stepnitz, A. (2009) *Of Human Bondage: Trafficking in Women and Contemporary Slavery in the UK*, London: Eaves Putting Women First

Sullivan, B. (2003) Trafficking in Women, *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 5(1): 67-91

Tavella, A.M. (2007) Sex Trafficking and the 2006 World Cup in Germany: Concerns, Actions and Implications for Future International Sporting Events. *Northwestern Journal of International Human Rights*, 6(1): 196-217

The Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group (2010) *Wrong Kind of Victim?* London: ATMG

Townsend, M. (2011) *Sex-trafficked women's charity Poppy Project in danger as funding withdrawn*. Available online at: <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2011/apr/17/prostitution-human-trafficking> [accessed 19 May, 2015]

UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012) *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. Vienna: UN

UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2010) *Factsheet on Human Trafficking*, Vienna: UN

Vandenberg, M. (2011) Peacekeeping and Rule Breaking: United Nations Anti-Trafficking Policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in P.C. Van Duyne and J. Spencer (2011) *Flesh and Money: Trafficking in Human Beings*. Netherlands: WLP, pp. 81-118

Van Duyne, P.C. and Spencer, J. (Eds)(2011) *Flesh and Money: Trafficking in Human Beings*. Netherlands: WLP

Vance, C. (1984) *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*. London: Routledge

Ward, H. (2011) The Safety of Migrant Local Sex Workers: Preparing for London 2012, *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, 87: 368-369

Women's Resource Centre (2013) *Women's Equality in the UK: CEDAW Shadow Report*. London: Women's Resource Centre

Zimmerman, C. (2007) *Trafficking in women: The health of women in post-trafficking services in Europe who were trafficked into prostitution or sexually abused as domestic labourers*. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of London, Department of Public Health and Policy.

---

<sup>1</sup> This history includes, but is not limited to, slavery and the so-called white slave trade. In recent history, anti-trafficking international agreements include 1910 White Slavery Convention, 1919 Covenant of the League of Nations, and the 1921 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic of Women and Children.

<sup>2</sup> A pronunciation of this statement is evident in Marilyn French's novel *The Women's Room* (1997), when the character Val comments: "Whatever they may be in public life, whatever their relations with men, in their relations with women, all men are rapists, and that's all they are. They rape us with their eyes, their laws, and their codes." (p. 476)

<sup>3</sup> Also known as the Palermo Protocol because it was devised in Palermo, Italy on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2000. By 2002, 105 countries had signed the Trafficking Protocol. At the end of 2014, 166 parties had ratified the Protocol.

<sup>4</sup> Founded in 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Founded in 1994.

<sup>6</sup> Entered into force December 2003.

<sup>7</sup> We might argue that sexual intercourse is, for many, a deeply human/humanistic experience and links with universal human rights pertaining to dignity and respect.

<sup>8</sup> Convention on the Eliminate all forms of Discrimination Against Women: 1981.

<sup>9</sup> Trafficking and sexual exploitation of women.