

# Stop Trafficking !

Anti Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

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This issue highlights the complexities of modern day slavery and challenges those working against it to avoid oversimplifying solutions.

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## Data Analysis: Pro & Con

### How 'Big Data' Battles Human Trafficking

The non-profit *Polaris* manages the *National Human Trafficking Resource Center's* hotline (1-888-373-7888). In the beginning those servicing the hotline had to navigate between a caller's location on Google Maps, a Word document detailing 215 protocols for handling specific situations, and a list of nearly 3,000 resources – including shelters, legal services and local law enforcement agencies. For victims calling for help, time is of the essence and such a hotline system was cumbersome and limited. (See pg. 2 'Google' for new developments for the hotline.)

In 2012 that changed when *Polaris* founders met representatives of *Palantir Technologies*, a data analysis firm whose clients include the CIA, the U.S. military, and major banks. Soon a partnership developed and *Palantir* created software that provided a single dashboard for *Polaris* call specialists to use.

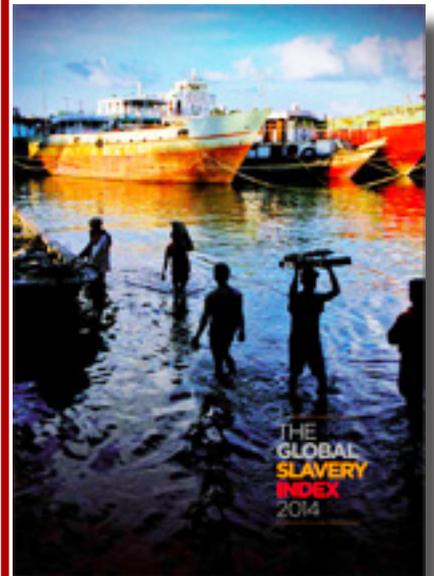
The dashboard aggregates data according to the geographical location of the caller with relevant information – age, immigration status, language needs, shelter requirements – that help the specialist deliver assistance specific to a victim's situation instantaneously. *Palantir's* team of civil liberty and privacy engineers constructed con-

Data continued on pg. 2

### 'Global Slavery Index'

The second edition of the *Global Slavery Index* (GSI) analyzed modern slavery in 167 countries. The Index was produced by the *Walk Free Foundation*, a global human rights organization founded by Australian philanthropists Andrew and Nicola Forrester. An internal research team in consultation with an international, independent Advisory Group developed the methodology.

For 2014, the 10 countries with the highest estimated prevalence of modern slavery by population are:



Mauritania, Uzbekistan, Haiti, Qatar, India, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Syria and the Central African Republic. These countries have diverse politi-

GSI continued on pg. 3



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### Data *cont. from pg. 1*

trols that limit access to victim data by only certain parties.

The Web has become both a dangerous outlet where traffickers exploit vulnerable people and an archive of information that activists and officials can use to disrupt predatory networks. Social media is a tool used to lure and sell victims. Partnerships between anti-trafficking organizations and tech giants like Facebook and Google work to counter traffickers.

Data collected allows law enforcement to analyze trends and locations of exploitation. For instance, by identifying truck stops that have become hot spots for forced prostitution, advocates know where to advertize the hotline, instruct truck stop operators on how to spot the warning signs of trafficking, and urge them to increase security.

For labor trafficking, big data helps identify destinations of demand, hot-spots in the recruitment pipeline, and high-risk industries like hospitality and traveling sales.

Much of the information being studied is open-source, meaning it is Internet data available to the public such as Craigslist ads, Google Search trends, and exchanges on social media. Launched by the Defense Department in February 2014, the Memex program at the *Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency* (DARPA) enables anti-trafficking groups and law enforcement agencies to use sophisticated search tools to cull publicly available information embedded in escort ads and other online content that could be connected to sex exploitation and analyze it for trends and insights.

The DARPA program manager explained, "For example, is this a

*mom-and-pop massage parlor? Or is this an organization that has a lot of people and locations that is moving people around? A nail salon that processes numerous \$100 charges after 11 p.m. would warrant alert."*

Financial data is of extreme value to law enforcement and victim advocates. It can corroborate survivors' stories. It can help investigators go after not only the trafficker who interacted with the victim, but also up the chain of command to bigger players operating complex networks.

Once identified, data can help punish offenders. Survivors are often unwilling to testify, fearing humiliation, deportation or retaliation against their families. While prosecutors may not be able to convict suspects specifically of trafficking, they can tie them to related financial crimes, which carry heavy punishments.

In 2013 Manhattan District Attorney Vance achieved the conviction of a father and son team who ferried women between Manhattan and Pennsylvania, presenting at trial financial evidence related to the sham entertainment business the pair used to conceal their operation. Women involved in the case spoke favorably in court about the offenders, who were acquitted of sex trafficking charges.

*"This is the challenge of these cases, because the women actually believed they were receiving love and affection; they just had no normal human understanding of what love and affection is,"* Vance said.

But the pair was also charged with promoting prostitution and money laundering, and ended up in prison. *"It achieved a just outcome, if not the perfect outcome. If we didn't have all that electronic data, if we hadn't done all the work we did that enabled us to put the case in court without [the women's] direct testimony, we would have had no case at all,"* said Vance.

A challenge remains in the data-centric approach to fighting human trafficking however. As methods to

crack down on traffickers evolve, so do the trafficker' methods of exploitation evolve. These are adaptive adversaries, so as investigative tactics change, traffickers change their tactics as well.

(<http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2015/01/14/how-big-data-is-being-used-in-the-fight-against-human-trafficking>)

### Google Offers Hotline Help

According to the U.S. *Trafficking In Persons Report*, there may be more than 20 million trafficking victims in the world, but only about 40,000 victims are identified annually. Victims may be unfamiliar with support agencies or organizations in their area or unaware there is help available at all.

To connect victims of human trafficking to the organizations that can help them, *Google* launched a feature that displays human trafficking hotline numbers when users type relevant keywords in search. (e.g., 'boyfriend pimps me out'). These hotlines can make life-changing connections to a myriad of services at the moment victims need them. Confidential hotlines assure victims receive anonymity and protection so as to stay safe.

*Google* launched this search feature for the U.S., Japan and South Korea in July 2014 and recently made it available in nine more countries in 14 different languages.

This search feature was made possible because of the work the following organizations do to fight human trafficking: Polaris (US), Lighthouse Support Center for Human Trafficking Victims (Japan), Dasi Hamkke Center (South Korea), Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation (Taiwan), La Strada (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Moldova, Poland and Ukraine), The A21 Campaign (Greece), ASTRA Anti-Trafficking Action (Serbia), and International Organization for Migration (Turkey).

Since the launch, this feature has already helped the National Human Trafficking Resource Center to identify at least 25 human trafficking cases in the U.S. *Google* hopes that many more human trafficking victims and potential victims will be able to discover the help that they need when they need it. (<http://googlepublicpolicy.blogspot.com/2015/01/update-helping-human-trafficking-and.html>)



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**GSI** *cont. from pg. 1*

cal systems and range from low to high income economies.

According to the GSI, the 10 countries with the largest estimated numbers of people in modern slavery are: India, China, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Thailand. Taken together, these 10 countries account for 71% of the total estimate of 35.8 million people living in modern slavery.

The vulnerability of individuals to enslavement within countries was investigated by analyzing five dimensions, including state policy on modern slavery, human rights, human development, state stability, and levels of discrimination. A strong link exists between the instability of a country and the vulnerability of its population to modern slavery. Antislavery policies have little impact when a country's rule of law has broken down due to civil war, or ethnic or religious conflict. High levels of prejudice and discrimination make the crime of modern slavery easier to commit against the 'outside' population.

To view findings, data and methodology, or to download the GSI Report, go to the GSI website: <http://www.globallslaveryindex.org/>

### Keeping Count: the Trouble with the 'Global Slavery Index'

Rankings such as the Global Slavery Index operate on the logic that naming and shaming countries will prompt meaningful action. The trouble with this potentially admirable effort is that the data on which these tables rely is usually second-hand and often of seriously poor quality.

One example — Benin is ranked by the index as one of the 10 states most seriously affected by slavery anywhere in the world. It is considered by the US Tip report to have a 'serious' trafficking problem and has in the past hovered above the bottom tier of US rankings. Both the index and the US report claim that this is because so many Beninese children find themselves trafficked into situations of slavery, usually in domestic service, but also sometimes in small-scale mines or quarries.

Research from Florence, Italy's *European University Institute* (EUI) strongly contradicts this assessment. Simona Morganti of the EUI spent years working in shelters for rescued children and interviewed dozens of current and former teenage migrant domestic workers. In contrast to the common narrative that depicts these girls as victims of kidnap or slavery, she found that in the vast majority of cases, girls had decided independently to migrate for work. All did so because they saw this work as a path to a better life, a way to put together the money necessary to marry or set themselves up in a business. Though they admitted that work was hard, and though some shared stories of abuse, none wanted to 'go home', preferring instead to find a better domestic employer to help them fulfill their ambitions.

Neil Howard of the EUI found similar stories in his research. He worked with teenage boys who were said to be victims of trafficking and apparently forced from Benin to the artisanal quarries of Abeokuta, in Nigeria. Again, the reality

differed from the narrative. The adolescent boys interviewed willingly migrate to the quarries as part of a highly structured migrant network providing labor for the Beninese expatriate community that runs the quarry economy. Boys work hard, but none of what they do is forced and never is it any more taxing than the ordinary farm work, which is legal for them to do at home. Almost all of those interviewed defined what they do as the best option they have for making the money necessary to set themselves up in life.

Helga Konrad, former special representative for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe on human trafficking, said everybody ends up 'cutting and pasting', citing each other's publications in a merry-go-round that doesn't actually center on genuine empirical data.

The consequences of this are serious. For one thing, countries like Benin are tarred with the brush of slavery when arguably this is inappropriate. For another, the diplomatic pressure that powerful states bring to bear as a result of the TIP report or the GSI can often lead governments such as Benin's to criminalize the work or migration that forms a key part of the economic strategies of the poor.

Perhaps most seriously of all, however, is the fact that the kind of sensationalist reporting that underlies and accompanies league tables around slavery or trafficking distracts attention from more important discussions over the global economic forces that create and sustain poverty and exploitation. It is clear, for instance, that U.S. cotton subsidies do great harm to Benin's national budget and to Beninese cotton farmers. It is also clear that this contributes to Beninese youth labor migration. Yet who wants to discuss agricultural policy, when it's far sexier to think about evil slavers, and failing African governments?

(<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/jan/13/slavery-global-index-reports>)



## Awareness

### 2015 Critique: 'Global Slavery Index'

*"The anti-trafficking community has remained uncritical of Walk Free's methodology, yet poor information often leads to damaging decisions."*

So states Australian critic, Anne Gallagher, an independent scholar and legal adviser to the U.N. and the Association of South East Asian Nations. She has been involved in anti-trafficking for 20 years. An excerpt from her critique follows.

*"Why does all of this matter? Put simply, by failing to challenge or even gently interrogate the underlying structures that perpetuate and reward exploitation, the GSI embodies and perpetuates a comforting belief that slavery is all about bad individuals doing bad things to good people. At the root of this belief is an unshakable faith in us being able to eliminate slavery without fundamentally changing how our societies and economies are organized and without a radical shift in the distribution and exercise of political and economic power, including a global economy dependent on exploiting poor people's labor to maintain growth and a global migration system that entrenches vulnerability."*

(For her full text, see: <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2014/nov/28/global-slavery-index-walk-free-human-trafficking-anne-gallagher>)

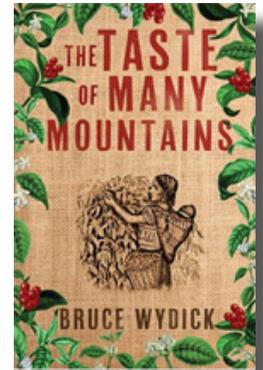
### 'Taste of Many Mountains': Is It Fair Trade?

Bruce Wydick's novel, *'Taste of Many Mountains,'* targets young people living in an age of globalization who want to make a meaningful difference in the world, both to themselves and to the people they seek to help. Wydick wrote the book as a novel so as to draw a much wider audience into issues of development and globalization.

Published in 2014, the book is based on the true story of a research group at U.C. Berkeley and the Univ. of San Francisco who received a grant from USAID to study the impact of fair trade coffee in Central America.

As part of the grant Wydick and colleagues assigned a small platoon of graduate students from the two universities to the task of following a bag of fair-trade coffee beans all the way from peasant coffee growers in the western highlands of Guatemala, to a processor, a fair-trade exporter, to a roaster in Oakland, all the way to a café in San Francisco, calculating the profit made at every stage of the journey.

The student characters in the novel each come with very different views on poverty and globalization issues. Following the path of the coffee beans, the students encounter a series of events that cause them to engage in a meaningful dialogue that leads them to consider the role and responsibility of people in the rich world to the poor in the developing world. In this dialogue, there are vivid discussions between the characters about issues such as sweatshops, microfinance, and global free trade in which intelligent students from different perspectives struggle with these issues. (<http://www.acrosstwoworlds.net/>)



#### Book Review

*"What actually works to reduce poverty in poor countries?"*

*Wydick, a distinguished development economist uses the unusual format of a well-written, emotion-packed novel, weaving together careful history and sophisticated economics, to show the ordinary reader what works and what does not. Gripping, enlightening, and very readable. A must read."*

Ron Sider, author of  
'Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger'

#### Fair Trade Coffee: Economists' Critique

The fair-trade system, overseen by the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) and its U.S. certification affiliate, Fair Trade USA, operates in the following way. Growers belonging to a selected group of overseas producer cooperatives are paid a minimum price of \$1.40 per pound (in the case of Arabica beans) for all coffee that is able to be sold through fair-trade channels. This minimum price creates what economists

Fair Trade *cont. pg. 5*

*"Because of who my father is [Warren Buffett], I've been able to occupy some seats I never expected to sit in... Philanthropy has become... what I would call 'conscience laundering'—feeling better about accumulating more than any one person could possibly need to live on by sprinkling a little around as an act of charity.*

*"But this just keeps the existing structure of inequality in place... Nearly every time someone feels better by doing good, on the other side of the world (or street), someone else is further locked into a system that will not allow the true flourishing of his or her nature...*

*"As long as most folks are patting themselves on the back for charitable acts, we've got a perpetual poverty machine."*

Peter Buffett 2013 (<http://qz.com/201778/warren-buffetts-son-philanthropy-disguises-itself-as-a-fix-when-its-a-part-of-the-problem/>)



## Awareness

### Fair Trade *cont. from pg. 4*

call a “price floor” for fair-trade growers. If the market price rises higher than the price floor (as it has today, at nearly \$2.00 per pound), then growers just receive the market price, along with a premium of \$0.20 that is sent back for investment in the producer cooperative and the local community. In order to receive this price, growers must pay to become certified, join a democratically managed cooperative, agree to standards for pesticide and chemical fertilizer use, and pay “fair wages” to coffee laborers.

All of this is well-intentioned and sounds wonderful. However, studies by researchers indicate that fair-trade coffee has small to negligible effects on coffee growers, especially the poorest ones. The lack of impact stems from the ill-conceived design of the fair-trade system. Consensus among development economists indicates fair-trade coffee to be one of the least effective means for reducing poverty in developing countries.

### ‘10 Reasons Fair Trade Coffee Doesn’t Work’

Bruce Wydick, professor of economics and international studies at the Univ. of San Francisco, performed research that puts the success of fair trade coffee production into question. Excerpts from Wydick’s article ‘10 Reasons’ follow:

#### **1. The flawed design of the system undermines its own benefits.**

Research showed when the world price of coffee falls (and the advantages of selling through fair-trade channels increase), more borrowers choose to obtain fair-trade certifica-

tion. But this reduces the fraction of coffee that their cooperatives can sell at the fair-trade price. Examining 13 years of data from cooperatives in Guatemala, on average, the economic benefits of participating in the fair-trade system are offset by the price the growers have to pay for fair-trade certification, so that the long-term benefit over time from fair trade was essentially zero.

#### **2. Fair trade attracts bad beans.**

Every crop contains some beans that are of higher quality than others. If the market price for the low-quality beans is below \$1.40 and the market price of high-quality beans is above \$1.40, then the fair-trade system incentivizes growers to dump their bad beans into fair-trade channels.

As the bad beans are drawn into the fair-trade market (what economics calls “adverse selection”), potential buyers eschew buying the coffee for fear of being stuck with the low-quality beans. This phenomenon has limited the market for fair-trade coffee.

#### **3. Fair trade imposes significant costs on impoverished growers.**

The UC study estimates that fair-trade certification costs about \$0.03 per pound. This doesn’t sound like much, but in some years it is greater than any price benefit brought by the higher fair-trade price. Moreover, while restrictions on growing practices might seem to meet worthy environmental and social objectives, UW economists find that costs to growers imposed by these restrictions on fertilizers and other inputs add to the production costs of impoverished growers, diminish yields, and mitigate the benefits of free trade. If coffee drinkers want to improve the environment, they should pay for it themselves, not impose added costs on impoverished coffee growers.

#### **4. Fair trade doesn’t help the poorest growers.**

In a study in Costa Rica, economists at Harvard found the modest benefits generated from fair trade to be concentrated among the most skilled coffee growers. They found no positive impact on coffee laborers, no positive impact on children’s education, and negative impacts on the education of unskilled coffee workers’ children.

#### **5. Relatively little fair-trade coffee originates from the poorest countries.**

The poorest coffee-growing countries are in Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania. Fair-trade exports from these countries represent less than 10% of coffee marketed through fair trade, while the share of fair-trade coffee from middle-income countries such as Mexico, Brazil, and Columbia is many times higher. Effective poverty interventions should be targeted at the poorest, but are not.

#### **6. Purported benefits of the fair-trade system lack transparency.**

Although fair trade pays a \$0.20 premium over the world coffee price to growers for “social and economic investments at the community and organizational level,” how this money is actually spent in the home country is vague at best.

Fair Trade *cont. pg. 6*

#### **Wydick’s prioritized listing of methods that overcome poverty:**

- Providing fresh water to rural villages.
  - Improving children’s health through deworming campaigns.
  - Providing mosquito nets to mitigate malaria infection.
  - Sponsoring a child overseas.
  - Providing clean-burning stoves to mitigate indoor air pollution and deforestation.
  - **Promoting fair-trade coffee.**
  - Providing laptop computers to school children in poor countries.
- ([www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/february/popular-strategies-helping-the-poor.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/february/popular-strategies-helping-the-poor.html))



## Awareness

### Fair Trade *cont. from pg. 5*

Studies found that many of these funds are invested in coffee cooperatives' buildings and salaries, not in schools. Thus researchers failed to uncover positive impacts from fair trade on local education.

#### **7. The fair-trade system is inefficient at transferring coffee consumers' goodwill to producers.**

An experiment run by the author's graduate students in San Francisco, found the median coffee drinker is willing to pay a premium of 50 cents for a cup of fair-trade coffee. However, even in the best-case scenario for fair trade, when world prices are at their lowest, the maximum amount a fair-trade grower would receive from that same cup of coffee is only one third of a cent.

#### **8. Direct trade is probably more efficient and sustainable than fair trade.**

Under direct trade, a coffee buyer contracts directly with specific growers overseas to offer a higher coffee price, often in exchange for a higher-quality product and a long-term relationship. Although direct trade is certainly not a panacea, greater real value is created in the system, making it a more efficient means of transmitting resources from coffee drinkers to coffee growers.

#### **9. We should encourage less coffee production, not more.**

Efforts to help coffee growers by paying them more for their coffee all stimulate more coffee production, which is precisely the wrong way to help coffee growers. It is lower world-wide coffee production that brings the most benefit to each grower, by raising coffee prices. Thus the best approach-

es to helping coffee growers involve helping people move away from coffee production. Interventions in coffee communities like microfinance, cash grants to start new enterprises, and internationally sponsoring the children of coffee growers to help these children obtain more and better education help coffee growers worldwide because they reduce the world supply of coffee. This benefits everyone, because as coffee growers and their children move to other occupations, all world producers benefit from higher coffee prices. Artificially stimulating more coffee production keeps coffee growers poor.

#### **10. Fair-trade coffee fails to address the root of poverty issues.**

Core poverty issues in developing countries suggest thoughtful, strategic interventions are needed in areas such as health, education, infrastructure, entrepreneurial activity, and governance. If these core issues can be effectively addressed, a new array of occupational choices will open to the poor, allowing them to lift themselves out of rural poverty. Instead of providing credible evidence of impact in any of these key areas, fair-trade coffee incentivizes production of more coffee.

The most damaging aspect of the fair-trade coffee system may be that it misleads well-meaning coffee consumers into believing that by buying fair-trade coffee they are doing something meaningful and helpful for the poor, while the best evidence suggests that other types of programs are far more effective. ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bruce-wydick/10-reasons-fair-trade-coffee-doesnt-work\\_b\\_5651663.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/bruce-wydick/10-reasons-fair-trade-coffee-doesnt-work_b_5651663.html))

## African Soccer: Conduit for Child Trafficking to Europe?

Ghanaian soccer academies have been accused of exploiting talent and promoting trafficking in search of profit. Or is it the quest for social mobility in a time of economic liberalization that drives young soccer players into the industry?

Soccer administrators, academics and human rights activists have recently drawn



attention to some unsavory activities taking place in West African soccer academies. Analysts are concerned that the academy system has become a vehicle for neo-colonial exploitation that fuels human trafficking. They argue that European clubs and speculators take ownership or executive control of African-based academies to sidestep certain regulations, such as the ban on the international transfer of minors, in order to sign African talent at an early age and then profit from their subsequent sale to rich, typically European, clubs. Some commentators, including FIFA President Sepp Blatter, have gone as far as to label this situation a modern day slave trade. Meanwhile UEFA President Michel Platini has suggested this transfer process is tantamount to child trafficking.

It is true that a dynamic relationship exists between capitalism, colonial pasts and some current practices in the soccer industry. However James Esson argues for a more critical reflection of events taking in place in West African soccer, based on field research in Ghana, one of the top five exporters of African soccer players. (See pg. 7)



## Awareness

### Role of West African Soccer Academies

Dr. James Esson, Professor of Human Geography and Lecturer at Loughborough University in the U.K., writes his opinion about West African soccer. Excerpts follow.

Some scholars of African soccer have highlighted how soccer academies have been a constant in post-independent Ghana. Like in other parts of the world, these Ghanaian academies take a variety of forms, ranging from well-funded establishments affiliated with professional clubs to amateur, neighborhood teams set up on an informal basis and lacking qualified staff or proper infrastructure. Researchers have drawn attention to the transfer practices of professional teams and a handful of other high profile, corporately sponsored academies. It is here that debates over neo-colonial exploitation tend to emerge. Less well-documented are the changes taking place at smaller academies associated with amateur youth soccer or, as it is colloquially known in Ghana, 'Colts soccer' (under 12, 14 and 17 years of age).

According to the Ghanaian Football Association (GFA) approximately 700 clubs in 12 regional zones are in the national 'Colts' league. In Accra alone there are 240 clubs, and combined they boast a registration list of more than 20,000 players. There is genuine concern among administrators that this growth is unsustainable due to shortages in referees and playing sites.

This increase in academies is driven by unemployed and precariously employed youth in their twenties and early thirties who see themselves as entrepreneurs. They view owning a Colts team as a window of opportunity to be self-sufficient and economically active. They take financial risks and invest in Colts soccer in the hope of making a profit.

Somewhat ironically, this situation is linked to the international transfer regulations introduced by FIFA in 2001. FIFA attempted to limit the international migration of minors by deterring rich—i.e. European—clubs from signing talented young players based in the Global South. A ruling was made stipulating that clubs involved in the training and education of players between the ages of 12 and 23 must receive financial compensation from the buying club. This compensation can range from hundreds to millions of US dollars.

The 2001 FIFA regulations thus give the labor and investment spent training a youth player monetary value. The player is a human resource and a potential source of capital when transferred or sold to another club. This has resulted in intense financial speculation and increased trading of young Ghanaian players by academy owners, searching for a star to sell at a profit to a foreign club. Soccer academies no longer exist to create players for Ghanaian leagues, but to groom and export players to foreign clubs.

Young aspirant players are not oblivious to the financial rewards soccer provides. Ghanaian youth are not only captivated by the performances of the players who adorn their television screens; they are also aware of the wealth and lifestyles associated with professional soccer. In addition, the idea that a career in soccer is a viable livelihood strategy capable of lifting an individual and their family out of poverty has emerged in certain strata of society, especially among young, poorly educated Ghanaian males from low-income families. These youths

are acutely aware that they either currently are, or eventually will become, solely responsible for ensuring their future economic wellbeing. They are also well aware that financial support in the form of state welfare is unlikely.

There is a widespread belief that migration, preferably to Europe, offers a solution to economic marginalization, but that obtaining a visa to enter Europe is difficult. Hence the appeal for a career in soccer.

In a context where youth are frequently encouraged to be job creators rather than job seekers, the idea that the answer to economic uncertainty resides within your own body is a particularly appealing proposition. In order to turn such ambitions into realities, entering the Ghanaian soccer industry and joining soccer clubs appear as obvious next steps. The increase in the number of youth involved in Colts soccer, as well as the upsurge in the number of soccer academies, both result from the convergence in the Ghanaian soccer industry of economic liberalization with migration-based efforts at upward social mobility.

This is no trivial matter, because a generation of male youth are diverting their energies and attention to a profession that is unlikely to reward their devotion with the employment and social status they so desperately crave. As the GFA executive Herbert Adika succinctly put it, *'presently everybody wants to play soccer by force but all of us cannot be players'*.

This quote encapsulates one of my (J. Esson's) concerns with headline-grabbing, hyperbolic statements about neo-colonial exploitation, slave trades and child trafficking. These narratives often divert attention away from the broader structural conditions that funnel youth into the soccer industry in the first place.

Finding solutions to these issues requires looking beyond the soccer industry and posing questions about the state of Ghanaian society.

(<https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/james-esson/modern-slavery>)



## Advocacy

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# Disney Movies and Child Vulnerability

Kimberly Rae, author and blogger, has raised questions on her blog about the message contained in Disney movies. She writes, *“Children can be deeply affected by what they watch. They are learning all the time from the world around them, and their mental and emotional health is affected by the messages fed to them, just as their physical health is affected by the food put into their mouths. The more I study about trafficking and exploitation, the more I see fringes spread out into our culture, small things that in themselves might not seem like much, but when combined with thousands of other similar messages, they weave into a powerful force that can guide a young woman toward exploitation because of the way she learned to see herself or her world. One of those fringes is the ‘Disney princess’ concept.”*

Rae then explores messages in various films as to whether they help or hurt the ongoing fight against human exploitation. She questions, *“Does the movie ‘The Little Mermaid’ inspire girls to be stronger or more vulnerable?”* Her answer: *“More vulnerable.”*

In ‘The Little Mermaid’ Ariel, a young and impulsive teen who regularly disobeys the rules, falls in love with a guy without ever actually talking to him and is willing to risk her entire future and soul for a chance to be with him. (It’s interesting to note that very few Disney princesses have a set of two loving, aware parents.)

Ariel feels justified in going against her father’s boundaries and running away because he doesn’t understand.

This movie is a perfect story for exploiters, sending the same messages they themselves would use.

1. Your parent/s don’t understand you or what you really need.
2. It’s okay to keep secrets from your parent/s or lie if you need to (her secret cave).
3. Being in love is more important than any boundaries or rules given by adults.
4. Risk everything for the person you love (even if you’ve never actually met that person or really know anything about them—think online relationships).
5. Run away if you have to so you can be with this person.
6. If for some reason it doesn’t work out, somebody will come along and rescue you so you don’t have to face the consequences of your actions.

To a vulnerable girl who wants to believe that the thing her parental authority is saying ‘No’ to is really the freedom she longs for, this movie tells her she is the one who is right and she should follow her heart no matter where it leads her.

In an age of increasing Internet activity by our teens and pre-teens, that message is sent through sexting, FaceBook, Instagram, and a host of other social media sites our children discover. It is easier than ever to decide a stranger is the solution, the true love a girl is searching for, the freedom she wants.

Can we counteract this message? Yes. Teach children that:

1. Most parents are not as out of touch as kids might think. They remember

what it was like to feel the way teens feel, but they also have experienced enough to know that boundaries and rules are protective and good. A guardrail on the road is not to limit drivers and make their lives boring, but to keep them from driving off a cliff!

2. Actions have consequences, good or bad. Some of them are very bad.
3. It is best to spend time with a man and know his character before entrusting one’s heart, not to assume that if he’s good-looking, his heart must be good too.

Our culture is very separate right now – children can have accounts online that parents know nothing of, secret places that can become danger zones of vulnerability. Parents must teach children that parents are to have access to anything children do online, with firewalls to protect their innocence. Many kids get introduced to pornography at a young age by just asking curious questions online, such as “What is sex?”

Watch ‘The Little Mermaid’ with children and then sit down together and talk about it afterward. Use it as an opportunity to help children avoid Ariel’s path. (<http://www.kimberlyrae.com/disney-princesses-and-exploitation-ariel/>)



Action

## CEDAW: Treaty for Women's Equality

Women's rights are human rights and therefore advancing women's equality is fundamental to America's national security interests and should be a cornerstone of our foreign policy. Countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women have full and equal rights and opportunities.

The U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was ratified in 1979 and took effect in 1981. Yet, the U.S. remains one of only seven countries (including Iran, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Palau, and Tonga) of the 194 countries of the world that has not ratified CEDAW. Ratification would give the U.S. greater clout to help women worldwide win basic rights. CEDAW helps:

- Reduce sex trafficking & domestic violence;
- Provide access to education & vocational training;
- Ensure the right to vote;
- End forced marriage and child marriage and ensure inheritance rights;
- Help mothers and families by providing access to maternal health care;
- Ensure the right to work and own a business and/or property.

While American women enjoy opportunities and status not available to most of the world's women, few would dispute that more progress is needed. CEDAW would provide an opportunity for national dialogue on how to address persistent gaps in women's full equality, particularly regarding closing the pay gap, reducing domestic violence and stopping trafficking. Ratifying CEDAW does not automatically result in changes to U.S. law or additional costs.

It is up to each country to determine how to bring its policies in line to eliminate discrimination against women and girls.

The Obama Administration strongly supports ratification of CEDAW. The treaty has been favorably voted out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee twice with bipartisan support (in 1994 and 2002). However, CEDAW has never been brought to the Senate floor for a vote. Ratification requires two-thirds of the Senate to stand together for women's equality and has no additional financial cost. (<http://www.womenstreaty.org/index.php/about-cedaw>)

## Opposition to the Ratification of CEDAW

Over a hundred organizations support ratification of CEDAW including Amnesty International, the League of Women Voters, and AARP. The main opposition comes from conservative groups and the religious right, who are concerned that CEDAW will challenge the laws and culture of the U.S.

In arguments against CEDAW, *Concerned Women for America* cite that ratification of the treaty will:

- negate family law and undermine traditional family values by redefining the family;
- force the U.S. to pay men and women the same for "work of equal value" thus going against our free-market system;

### Informative Web Sites: (Each contains information related to human trafficking)

#### **Google & HT & Big Data**

<http://venturebeat.com/2014/03/19/how-google-uses-data-to-combat-human-trafficking/>

#### **'Global Slavery Index'**

<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/jan/15/letters-slavery-index-welcomes-criticism>

- ensure access to abortion services and contraception;
- create a possible 'back door' ERA for feminists;
- allow same-sex marriage;
- legalize prostitution;
- promote gender re-education;
- negate parental rights;
- undermine sovereignty of the U.S.

For these reasons, conservative politicians have actively fought against ratification of CEDAW and thwarted any attempt to introduce a vote before the full Senate. Backed by the religious right, they state that CEDAW is at best unnecessary. At worst, it will subject the U.S. to the whims of the 23-member CEDAW Committee, which reviews the reports of ongoing compliance efforts submitted by ratifying nations every four years.

*Concerned Women for America* state, "This, in essence, places the welfare and well being of American women and families at the mercy of 23 individuals, among whom the United States might not even have a voice." (<http://womensissues.about.com/od/feminismequalrights/a/CEDAWUS.htm>)

**Stop Trafficking!** is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address to access back issues of *Stop Trafficking!*

[www.stopenslavement.org/archives.htm](http://www.stopenslavement.org/archives.htm)

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