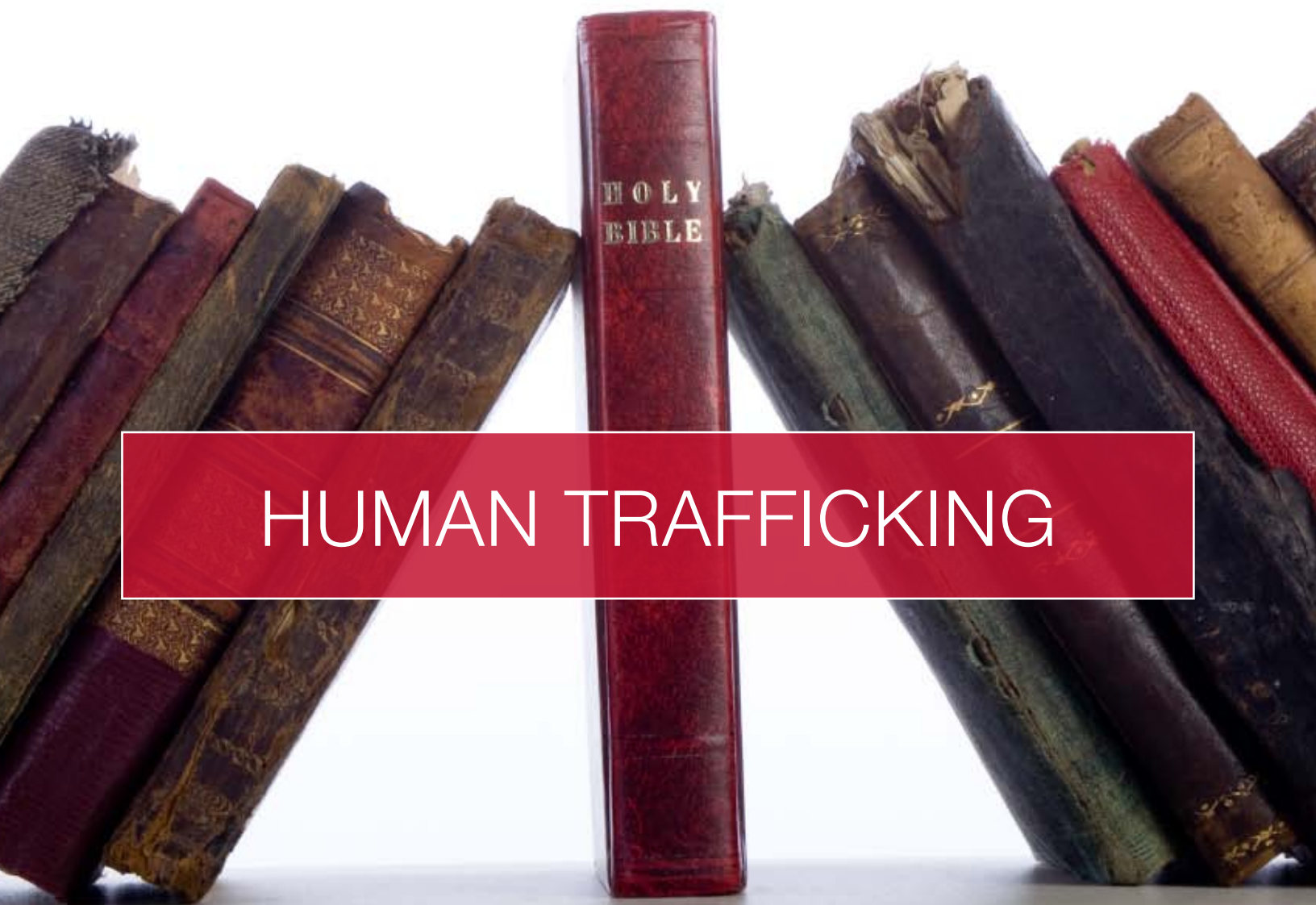


PARENT / TEACHER LESSON PLANS



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING



### Summary

In this lesson, students view a video and read an account of two women who were victims of trafficking. Students are invited to look at the prostitution problem from a Christian perspective and to clearly define what the problem is. The activity concludes by writing a letter to their MP.

## Essential Question

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*How can Christian clearly define the problems associated with prostitution to our elected representatives?*

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This question is intended to get students to do something proactive in response to the societal problems associated with prostitution. Further, it provides opportunities for students to think about their own attitudes towards the sins that contribute to the terrible sex industry.

## Summary

In this lesson, students view a video and read an account of two women who were victims of trafficking. Students are invited to look at the prostitution problem from a Christian perspective and to clearly define what the problem is. The activity concludes by writing a letter to their MP.

## Engage

- Preview all material to ensure age-appropriateness and classroom suitability.
- Distribute *Handout 1 – Introduction to Human Trafficking*. Review the three ways that people are trafficked and the several ways that traffickees are controlled.
- Show the students the video “How Pimps Recruit”. It is from Hope from the Sold and available at <http://hopeforthesold.com/video/> (Harmony’s story). It is also on Youtube at <https://youtu.be/un8iVJAwx8I>
- While students are watching, they should use what they learned from *Handout 1* and make notes on:
  - How the speaker was trafficked (force, fraud, coercion)
  - How the speaker was controlled
- Distribute *Handout 2 – Labour Trafficking article*. Read the article and make notes on
  - How the person was trafficked (force, fraud, coercion)
  - How the person was controlled
- Discuss the similarities and differences between the story where Harmony was trafficked for sexual purposes and the nanny was trafficked for labour purposes.

## Exploring what the Bible says

- Distribute *Handout 3 – Christian Perspective* and *Handout 4 – Defining the Prostitution Problem*.
- Read through and discuss with students each of the sections of *Handout 3*. As you read and discuss, complete the organizer in *Handout 4*. This process will allow the students to come to a

fuller and more complete understanding of the problems posed by prostitution.

- Students can independently or in small groups complete the Bible study activity in *Handout 4*.

## Task – Letter to your MP

- Write a persuasive letter to your MP that addresses MP from a biblical perspective or from a public health and safety perspective.
- Note that ARPA's EasyMail system has several pre-formatted letters on prostitution that can be used to provide assistance on this topic.

## Encourage

- Research how Bill 96 from Ontario is a reason to be thankful and encouraged in the struggle to see that prostitution is seen as an immoral activity both in the provision and purchasing of prostitution activities.



# Respectfully Submitted



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## POLICY REPORT for Parliamentarians

Courtesy of the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) Canada

### Background

In their landmark decision *Canada (AG) v Bedford*<sup>1</sup> released December 2013, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down Canada's three prostitution laws. The Court reasoned that the existing prohibitions (operating a bawdy house, profiting from prostitution, and communicating for the purpose of prostitution) violated the Charter right to security of the person of some prostitutes. The Supreme Court gave Parliament one year to pass new legislation.

Bill C-36, the Conservative government's response to the *Bedford* decision, was modeled after a legislative scheme known as the "Nordic Model". The new law, passed in 2014, criminalizes the purchase of 'sexual services' but decriminalizes those working in prostitution. This model is based on the assumption that systems of human trafficking and prostitution are driven by demand, and thus it targets the buyers rather than those who are prostituted. The objective is two-fold: the abolition of prostitution, and the empowerment of the women who have been exploited.

Sweden was the first country to criminalize the demand while decriminalizing the supply. It's basic economics: target the demand and the supply will dwindle. With the sex trade, as it was with the slave trade, demand creates supply. Because people want to buy sex, others will provide it. But if the criminal law targets buyers, demand is reduced and those providing the supply (pimps and traffickers) need to give up or go elsewhere. The Swedish government had initially considered criminalization (of the prostituted person) but, after careful study, they concluded:

[I]t is not reasonable also to criminalize the one who, at least in most cases, is the weaker part who is exploited by others who want to satisfy their own sexual drive. It is also important to encourage the prostituted persons to seek assistance to get away from prostitution, that they do not feel they risk any form of sanction because they have been active as prostituted persons.<sup>2</sup>

### Importance of Exit Strategies

The Nordic model views prostitutes as victims of a crime rather than criminals. The motivation is to remove the stigma and make it easier for prostitutes to leave the trade. Although the end goal is commendable, it does not justify the generalization that prostitution *per se* denotes victimhood. As those individuals who advanced the court challenges against Canada's previous laws exemplify, there are people who choose to enter the sex trade, profit from it, and do what they can to advance it. Be that as it may, it is important that legislation that properly criminalizes the demand for sex also has a parallel system through which those who wish to escape the sex trade are given the tools and support necessary to reintegrate into society.

Prostituted women need support and help (see chart on right). A compassionate society must be ready to give assistance in shelter, addiction counseling, job training and health care. Why is ending prostitution the right path for Canada? The evidence of violence, trauma, psychological suffering and oppression outlined next stands as a testimony to the destructive nature of the sex trade.

#### Response to "What Do You Need?" Asked of 100 Canadian Prostitutes

Leave prostitution	95%
Home or safe place	66%
Job training	67%
Drug/alcohol treatment	82%
Health care	41%
Peer support	41%
Individual counseling	58%
Self-defence training	49%
Legal assistance	33% <sup>3</sup>

# Prostitution

Updated: Fall 2016

## Prostitution and Human Trafficking

The connection between prostitution and human trafficking is hard to overstate.<sup>11</sup> In Western Europe, the trafficking of women and girls into the sex trade has been one of the most rapidly expanding criminal activities of the past two decades.<sup>12</sup> The legalization or even toleration of prostitution has historically led to an increased number of women and children being trafficked into the commercial sex trade.<sup>13</sup> One study, testing the theory that legalized prostitution could reduce trafficking by making it a safer, more attractive job for domestic sex workers, found the opposite was true: countries that legalized prostitution experienced higher inflows of trafficking.<sup>14</sup> In a chilling example of this effect, another study in the Netherlands reported that in the first 5 years of legalizing prostitution, the number of child prostitutes in the country increased 300% from 4,000 to 15,000.<sup>15</sup> Canada cannot risk a similar situation. Legalization undermines the protection of vulnerable women and children.

### Prostitution in Canada

Age range of prostitutes	13-49 <sup>4</sup>
Percentage younger than age 18 at entry	54% <sup>5</sup>
Percentage of pimp-controlled prostitution	80%-95% <sup>6</sup>
Mortality rate of girls and women in prostitution	40x national average <sup>7</sup>
Number of women trafficked into Canada for sexual exploitation	600 per year <sup>8</sup>
Sexual exploitation accounts for percentage of the world's human trafficking	79% <sup>9</sup>
Reduction in Swedish prostitution within 5 years of abolition	67% <sup>10</sup>

## Prostitution and Violence Against Women

Prostitution as an institution is violence against women. Decriminalizing prostitution will not, as some suggest, create an equal playing field for female entrepreneurs who wish to engage in a business of sexual services. The horrible reality is that the vast majority of prostituted women are controlled by pimps and suffer incredible harm, as the chart to the right

### Clinical Findings Regarding Violence in All Types of Prostitution<sup>16</sup>

Experienced sexual harassment that would be legally actionable in another job setting	95%
Percentage of individuals who want to escape, but have no other option for survival	85-95%
Have experienced verbal abuse and social contempt	80-90%
Have been homeless at some point	75%
Have been physically assaulted	70-95%
Percentage of 854 respondents that met criteria for PTSD	68%
Sexually assaulted as children	65-95%
Raped in prostitution	60-75%

confirms. Prostitution is intrinsically exploitative. Legalizing or decriminalizing a practice that is inherently harmful and dangerous does not reduce the harm, danger or exploitation. Dr. Melissa Farley argues that, if prostitution is violence, it doesn't make sense to legalize or decriminalize it. Farley writes, "Decriminalizing or legalizing prostitution would normalize and regulate practices which are human rights violations, and which in any other context would be legally actionable (sexual harassment, physical assault, rape, captivity, economic coercion) or emotionally damaging (verbal abuse)."<sup>17</sup> This is not speculation. Health and safety codes in Victoria, Australia, where prostitution has been legalized, show that women in legal prostitution should expect to face various forms of physical assault and rape.<sup>18</sup> *In what other occupation would those kinds of working conditions be tolerated to any degree?* Women deserve much better.

The sex industry is reprehensible because it denies the inestimable value of individual human beings who are made in the image of God, reducing a beautiful and unique person to a commercial object. The act of prostitution itself goes against God's plan for loving, faithful marital sex; the exploitation and abuse in the industry denies the humanity of the vulnerable. The Bible shows us how God would have us respond. Consider these prescriptions:

He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner, giving him food and clothing. Love the foreigner, therefore, for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt." Deuteronomy 10:18-19

"Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow." Isaiah 1:17

Canada is called to take action on this issue; it is our duty to care for the vulnerable and bring justice to the oppressors.



## Other options: Legalization/Decriminalization?

Dr. Melissa Farley explains the meaning of legalization and decriminalization: “Legal prostitution and decriminalized prostitution are both state-sanctioned prostitution, but there are differences between them. In legalized prostitution, the state assumes the role of pimp, collecting taxes and regulating the practice of prostitution. Decriminalized prostitution is a radical removal of any and all laws regarding prostitution (including laws against pimping, pandering, purchasing, and procuring) so that the buying and selling of people in prostitution is considered the legal equivalent of buying candy.”<sup>19</sup>

*Researchers have found that legalized prostitution produces a “prostitution culture” with increases to illegal and legal prostitution, the presence of organized crime, the demand for child prostitution, and the trafficking of women for the purpose of prostitution. State sponsored prostitution provides a legal welcome to pimps, traffickers, and johns.<sup>23</sup>*

A number of governments have attempted legalization and regulation of prostitution, including the Netherlands, the state of Nevada, and Victoria, Australia. In these districts, even with all the government regulations, organized crime’s influence and control of the sex trade grows,<sup>20</sup> and drug trafficking, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and child prostitution are rampant.<sup>21</sup> In size alone, the illegal industries outstrip the legal industries, and have been proven to be harder to control than before legalization.<sup>22</sup> The simple reality is that legalization and decriminalization benefit the pimps, traffickers and johns and commoditize the female body as a thing for men to rent for their pleasure or for “businessmen” to rent out for use. Legalized or decriminalized prostitution degrades the community. Legalizing or decriminalizing prostitution is fundamentally immoral.

## Nordic Model in Sweden

A decade after implementing their new prostitution law, the Swedish government commissioned a special inquiry to investigate the effects of the law on the prostitution industry, with encouraging results.

### Reducing Street Prostitution

The inquiry found that street prostitution had been fully halved since the law was introduced.<sup>23</sup> This is a remarkable finding, derived from independent, comparative research and consultation with police services, social services, and relevant NGOs.<sup>24</sup> These findings are further supported by a 2014 report released by a Swedish NGO that found that street prostitution had been halved since 1995.<sup>25</sup> Critics of the law suggested prostitution had merely moved underground, into more dangerous locations. However, the 2010 inquiry directly investigated these claims and found no evidence that this was actually occurring.<sup>26</sup>

### Overall Numbers in Relation to Nordic Countries

Although there was a substantial increase in prostitution in surrounding Nordic countries in the decade after Sweden enacted its new law, Sweden, which is economically and culturally similar to the other countries, did not experience similar growth.<sup>27</sup> After Norway introduced a similar law in 2009, it also experienced an immediate and dramatic drop in street prostitution.<sup>28</sup>

### Discouraging Demand

The available data suggests the Nordic model has been successful in discouraging the demand for commercial sex. The number of Swedish men who purchase sex, according to one study, has decreased from 13% in 1996 to 8% in 2008. A number of the men studied identified the ban as the reason they stopped purchasing sex.<sup>29</sup>

### Human Trafficking

Sweden has also seen success in the battle against human trafficking. The buying and selling of women and children, indivisible from the commercial sex industry, is one of the main targets of the Nordic model. Less human trafficking occurs in Sweden, since their new law passed, than in surrounding comparable countries.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, police wiretaps have revealed that human trafficking organizations view Sweden as a bad market for commercial sex due to low demand and higher risk for the traffickers.<sup>31</sup> Survivors of human trafficking have also confirmed that this attitude was prevalent among their handlers.<sup>32</sup> The evidence speaks clearly – the Nordic model successfully deters the gross and egregious crime of buying and selling women and children.

## Normative Changes

Finally, the Swedish prostitution law plays a role in shaping attitudes toward the commercial sex industry. Legislation functions as a moral and normative guide. In 1996, when the preliminary work for the legislation was being done, 67% of the Swedish population thought that prostitution should not be criminalized. By 1999, 76% thought that prohibiting the purchase of sex was the right way forward. Since the implementation of the law, three separate surveys showed that public support for the ban was above 70%.<sup>33</sup> An educational public discourse and increased awareness of the violent and exploitative nature of prostitution, stimulated by the legislative changes, made a significant, positive difference on the normative views of Swedish citizens.

## Survivor Testimonies

Statistics and studies can only tell one part of any story – policy makers cannot forget that they are dealing with individual human beings, so often traumatized, abused, and ignored. These individuals must have a voice. Will Canada listen?

Katie Rhoades, a survivor of prostitution and domestic trafficking from the United States, testified that she did not trust the police. She was prostituted in areas where selling sex was criminalized. Katie shared, “The police were seen to us as far worse than the pimps. We were more scared of them [than] the pimps and tricks. The main reason I did not go for help sooner was because I would have been arrested or further victimized by the police.”<sup>34</sup>

When asked about how the Nordic model would have affected her, Katie responded, “What it would have done is taken the power away from my pimp... I did not go for help... because I would have been arrested... If those dynamics [were] gone... I think I would have fled earlier.”<sup>35</sup>

Rebecca Mott, also a prostitution survivor who successfully exited the trade, says this:

*“I had walked into prostitution.... but I was 14, and had lived with mental and sexual violence since before I had words. ... I survived prostitution by killing all my emotions. I made myself into a robot, I painted on the Happy Hooker smile and learnt to fake orgasms – and hope I would be killed. It seemed the only escape that I could imagine... In all cases, we must know that the creators and source of this hate and violence to the prostituted is male demand, and those who supply and profiteer from that demand. **That is why I and other exited women fully back the Nordic Approach** as a first step to full human rights and dignity for all the prostituted.*

These are chilling stories, but they are all too often the reality for prostituted women. The Nordic model has helped women like these, and it can help exploited Canadians. The need to leave the trade is real. In Sweden, the Prostitution Unit has seen a large increase in the number of clients contacting them for help since 2000.<sup>36</sup> Canada must continue working to ensure that vulnerable Canadians are offered a way out.

## Palermo Protocol

The purpose of the Nordic model is directly in line with the recommendations set out in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (also known as the Palermo Protocol), which Canada ratified in 2002. A milestone in international anti-human trafficking law, the Palermo Protocol calls on member states to:

“adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or cultural measures, including through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking”.<sup>37</sup>

Bill C-36 fulfils Canada’s obligation to discourage the demand for human trafficking. Any step toward legalization or decriminalization would be harmful and regressive.

*“What it would have done is taken the power away from my pimp... I did not go for help because I would have been arrested... If those dynamics [were] gone... **I think I would have fled earlier.**”*

- Katie Rhoades, Survivor



## Conclusion and Recommendations

In order for Bill C-36 to be effective, it must be enforced. Canada should learn from Sweden's experience on this front. In the period immediately following the passage of the law, police had concerns about issues of proof and their ability to enforce the law, and did not put it into practice. Initially, it appeared to be a failure. However, after the passage of Sweden's sex trafficking law in 2002, the prosecution of sex purchasing skyrocketed, and the law began to have its desired effect on attitudes toward prostitution.<sup>38</sup> One of the reasons for the increase is the fact that for Swedish police, testimony from men who have purchased sex is considered invaluable in the investigation of human trafficking rings. The criminal ban on buying sex can combat human trafficking in more ways than one: it both deters demand for commercial sex and is a source of information in the prosecution of human traffickers.

In addition to effective law enforcement, the second component of an effective prostitution law is adequate exit support services for prostituted women. Parliament must ensure that support services are advertised and made available to exploited women. If those who need it most are not aware of the help that exists, they will not take advantage of it. Our country's support for the vulnerable among us must be visible.

Prostitution exploits vulnerable people. It is a grave injustice and an immoral trade. Parliamentarians have been given the responsibility to protect the vulnerable in our society and Bill C-36 was a strong step in the right direction for Canada. For that, ARPA Canada is grateful. It is Parliament's moral imperative to protect this legislation, strengthen it, and stand firm in the event of future opposition.

Respectfully Submitted,

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# Introduction to Human Trafficking

- Sex Trafficking: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; and
- Labor Trafficking: the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

## How Victims are Trafficked

Many victims of trafficking, particularly women and children, are exploited for purposes of prostitution and pornography. However, trafficking also takes place in diverse labor contexts, such as domestic servitude, small businesses, factories, and agricultural work. Traffickers use force, fraud and coercion to compel women, men, and children to engage in these activities. Here are three ways how a person can be trafficked.

- Force can involve the use of physical restraint or serious physical harm. Physical violence, including rape, beatings, and physical confinement, is often employed as a means to control victims, especially during the early stages of victimization, when the trafficker breaks down the victim's resistance.
- Fraud involves false promises regarding employment, wages, working conditions, or other matters. For example, individuals might travel to another country under the promise of well-paying work at a farm or factory only to find themselves manipulated into forced labor. Others might reply to advertisements promising modeling, nanny, or service industry jobs overseas, but be forced into prostitution once they arrive at their destination.

- Coercion can involve threats of serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; any scheme, plan or pattern intended to cause a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against any person; or the abuse or threatened abuse of the legal process.

Victims of trafficking are often subjected to debt bondage or peonage in which traffickers demand labor as a means repayment for a real or alleged debt, yet they do not reasonably apply a victim's wages toward the payment of the debt, or limit or define the nature and length of the debtor's services.

Traffickers may charge victims fees for transportation, boarding, food, and other incidentals; interest, fines for missing daily work quotas, and charges for "bad behavior" may be added. Debt bondage traps a victim in a cycle of debt that he or she can never pay down, and it can be part of a larger scheme of psychological cruelty.

## How Traffickers Control their Victims

Traffickers use various techniques to control their victims and keep them enslaved. Some traffickers hold their victims under lock and key. However, the more frequent practice is to use less obvious techniques such as the following:

- Isolation from the public by limiting contact with outsiders and making sure that any contact is monitored or superficial in nature;
- Isolation from family members and friends;
- Confiscation or control of drivers license, identification or passports.
- Use or threat of violence toward victims or their family members;
- The threat of shaming victims by exposing humiliating circumstances to their families;
- Telling victims they will be imprisoned or deported for immigration violations if they contact authorities;
- Debt bondage through enormous financial obligations or an undefined or increasing debt; and
- Control of the victim's money: e.g., holding their money for "safe-keeping."

*This material is taken from Protect Now and can be retrieved from <http://protectnow.org/human-trafficking/definition/> and <http://protectnow.org/human-trafficking/signs/>.*



## Handout 2 – Labour Trafficking article from National Post

# Man found guilty in Vancouver nanny human trafficking case; woman forced to work 16-hour days

Jonathan Hayward / The Canadian Press, June 27, 2013,  
10:02 AM EDT

VANCOUVER — A B.C. Supreme Court jury found a Vancouver man guilty of human trafficking Wednesday night, which Franco Yiu Kwan Orr's lawyer says is a first in Canada.

Orr was also found guilty of employing a foreign national, specifically his Filipino nanny Leticia Sarmiento, illegally and making a misrepresentation that could induce an error in the administration of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

However, the jury acquitted his partner, Oi Ling Nicole Huen, of human trafficking and employing a foreign national illegally.

"My clients are in shock, frankly, they're stunned," said defence lawyer Nicholas Preovolos outside of court, noting the jury apparently believed the allegations against Orr but not Huen.

"It's odd, and it's frustrating for them."

The Crown declined to comment on the verdict.

Sarmiento, 40, had worked for Orr and Huen, taking care of their three children since 2007, first in Hong Kong and then, starting in September 2008, in Canada.

During the trial, Sarmiento testified that she was told by the couple that her working conditions would be the same as in Hong Kong, where she had two days off a week and regular

hours, and that she would become a permanent resident in Canada after two years.

Sarmiento said that unlike in Canada, she was also allowed to socialize with other people, had her own cell phone to make frequent calls to the Philippines and took the children under her care out of the home on her own.

But she said all that changed when she arrived in Canada, where she was forced to work 16-hour days, seven days a week and also clean the house.

“When they see that the (other) nannies are talking to me, Mr. Orr would approach me and he would tell me there’s no need for you to talk to the nannies,” she said, describing her past experiences visiting a local community centre.

In June of 2010, Sarmiento called 911 and told responding police officers she needed help, testifying she called the police after an altercation over the type of milk she fed one of the children turned physical when Huen pushed her.

She packed her things under the watch of police officers and was then taken to a women’s shelter, the trial heard, but the six-month work visa she travelled to Canada on had long-since expired.

She now works as a cleaner.

During cross-examination, Preovolos pointed to inconsistencies between her testimony at a preliminary inquiry and trial, and in one case noted she said she was never left alone in the house but then remembered being left alone once.

“I struggle to understand how it is that the jury was able to find beyond a reasonable doubt that her evidence was reliable,” he said outside court.

Orr is expected to return to court July 10 to set a sentencing hearing and will remain on bail.

Preovolos said the maximum sentence on the human-trafficking charge is life and five years each for the two remaining charges but he’ll ask the judge to impose a conditional sentence.

His client is 50-years old, has three daughters under the age of 10, has never been in trouble with the law, is a respectable citizen and is not a danger to the public, he added.

Preovolos said his client will likely ask him to explore whether there are grounds for an appeal.

“There’s never been a conviction, I believe, on the human-trafficking offence in Canada,” said Preovolos, adding he, too, was surprised and disappointed by the verdict.

The original article is available at <<http://nationalpost.com/news/canada/man-found-guilty-in-vancouver-nanny-human-trafficking-case-woman-forced-to-work-16-hour-days/wcm/58cfe8fb-dadc-4d6c-8200-2077a1acdc63>>

*Important Update: Mr. Orr was convicted of human trafficking but on appeal was only found guilty of illegally employing a foreign national.*

# Handout 3 – Christian Perspective on Human Trafficking

## Human Trafficking is one of the major social justice issues of our time.

There are millions of men and women, boys and girls who are victims of this crime today. Despite this, many people aren't aware that it is going on. Many activists say that one of the most important ways to deal with this problem is to educate ourselves about it. So, what exactly is human trafficking?

### What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, harbouring and/or exercising control over the movements of a person in order to exploit that person, typically through sexual exploitation or forced labour. It is often described as a modern form of slavery. This happens most commonly to women and children, but men also fall victim to these crimes. Men most commonly are forced to work without pay. It is generally women and young girls who are forced into prostitution. However, these are generalizations. Victims are commonly 'recruited' by traffickers with the promise and hope of reward. Sometimes traffickers spoil young girls with all kinds of gifts, only to trap them by forcing them to pay back their 'debt'. Some victims move to Western countries hoping for a better future, only to come under the control of traffickers. It is hard for victims to leave because they are afraid they or their families will be injured or even killed if they attempt to escape. When victims are trafficked to a country with a different language they feel, and are, even more isolated. Human trafficking is a big and growing problem. The UN estimates that this industry generates \$32 billion for its perpetrators. What is even more troubling is that the industry is growing. Over the past two decades, the trafficking of women and girls was the fastest growing criminal activity in Western Europe. This trend has direct links to the legalization of prostitution. In the 5 years after prostitution was legalized in the Netherlands, the number of child prostitutes increased by 300%! Women who are victimized in the sex trade are

under the complete control of their pimps. They are constantly abused, mistreated, and are forced to live in horrible conditions.

## Human trafficking in Canada?!

When people think of human trafficking and the sex trade, they often think of Eastern Europe and South-East Asia. Although issues with human trafficking are deep and serious in these regions, Canada is also a part of this industry. Canada is both a destination and transit country. This means that people are trafficked to and from Canada! Human trafficking occurs most commonly in larger urban areas for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Since the government and RCMP have started gathering information and looking more closely for cases of human trafficking, incidents have been uncovered all over the country. It is easy to find news stories about human trafficking across Canada.

In many of these cases, victims were kept in subdivisions and regular homes. It can be hard to tell which people are victims of trafficking because they are forced to act 'normal' and can face serious consequences if they even hint that something is wrong. This knowledge is chilling and emphasizes the need for urgent action.

## Deeper Issues

Perhaps the biggest issue is the high demand for human slaves. Our culture is driven by self-seeking and self-gratifying behaviour. Greed drives the trade of forced labour. Lust drives the sex trade. It is no surprise that the places with a high demand for prostitutes will be the most lucrative for the traffickers. The desire for money leads some to coerce others into slave labour. The desire for sex drives men to treat women and children as objects of their pleasure. These desires are so strong that the value of human life is totally disregarded. Some countries have legalized prostitution in hopes that it could serve as a solution to many of

these problems, but as we pointed out earlier, this backfired in the case of the "Red Light District" in Amsterdam.

## Biblical Perspective

What does the Bible say about all this? We confess in the Heidelberg Catechism that we are inclined to hate God and our neighbour (Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 5). Humanity is depraved. God gave us His holy law as a guide to our actions. We can confess with David in Psalm 19, that the law of the LORD is perfect. Indulging in pornography and other lustful acts crosses the good and perfect boundaries God has set for us as His creatures. Yet it seems as if these sins are now acceptable, considered normal, and even celebrated in our society. We must not forget the reality that people's enslavement to sin and lust causes the enslavement of young women to pimps and traffickers. To deal with the problem of human trafficking, it will be necessary to control our own desires, greed, and lust. God is the only good master. He knows what is good for us because He created us. Through Christ we are no longer slaves to sin but slaves to righteousness (Romans 6).

## What is our government doing?

In 2012, the Canadian government launched the "National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking". This action plan created a law enforcement team with a mandate to specifically target human trafficking. It aims at training law enforcement officials, raising awareness in communities, and providing more support for victims. This action plan also aimed at improving coordination between Canadian and international agencies to better deal with human trafficking.

Two amendments to Canada's Criminal Code have been enacted: Bill C-268 (2010) created a new offence for child trafficking with a five-year mandatory penalty, and Bill C-310 (2012) allows



the Canadian government to prosecute Canadian citizens and permanent residents who engage in trafficking outside of Canada and also enhances the definition of exploitation in the trafficking of persons offence. Activists welcome these positive changes but more can be done to free and protect all men, women, and children from human trafficking. Should prostitution be legalized? There are many who are pushing the government to go further. Some have suggested that prostitution be legalized. They argue that if it is regulated by the government instead of pimps, sex workers would have more protection. It would give them more power in choosing their clients and working conditions. If prostitution is illegal, prostitutes are afraid to go to the police and report abuse since their livelihood will be taken away from them. However, there are also many who oppose this view.

At the end of 2013, the Supreme Court struck down Canada's anti-prostitution laws. The government's response was Bill C-36. This bill puts the focus on the buyers of the services of a prostitute. So, in effect, it is a crime to purchase, but not sell sexual services. There are serious restrictions on the advertisement of these services as well. It is intended to reduce the demand for prostitution, protect the prostitutes and also protect communities from the harm caused by prostitution.

### What can we do?

So what can we as everyday Canadians do? One of the most helpful tools to this cause is awareness. It is important to educate yourself and others about the reality of human trafficking in Canada and the world today. Increased awareness will also help in applying pressure on the government to review and introduce laws and policies which will protect men, women, and children from being bought and sold as slaves. Although this is a global issue, we, as citizens, have power to persuade

our law makers. As Christians we can bring this matter to God in prayer. Pray for the governments and law enforcement officials to do their work effectively. Pray for those who are stuck inside slavery today. Pray for past victims of trafficking who still suffer emotion and psychological pain from the abuse they endured. Pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven. If the root cause of this horrible industry is sin, then we should pray that God will change hearts and minds. We should strive to show the love and grace of Christ in our communities in the way we view women, treat other people, and glorify God. Since we live in a society with people who are not Christian, how can we fight against the lust and greed of our society? Also as Christians, especially male Christians, when we talk about the women around us, are we respecting them as image bearers of God? Do we show honour and respect for them in this regard? Do we recognize them as the weaker sex, deserving of our protection instead of our lustful desires? Are we willing to protect our female classmates in the same way you would your little sister? And when speaking with friends who might not be Christians, if the subject of pornography arises, recognize that as an opportunity to speak truth and gospel. Ask your friend if he or she knows that many females in pornography are there against their will. Ask them if they understand the link between pornography consumption and the kidnapping and forced sexual bondage of girls as young as six years old in places like Cambodia. We have a duty as Christians to speak up for those staggering towards the slaughter. As the anti-slavery hero William Wilberforce said, "Having heard all of this you may choose to look the other way...but you may never again say that you did not know." Compare this statement to what's outlined in Proverbs 24:10-12. How are the statements similar in their sentiment? How does this text and the thoughts of Mr. Wilberforce apply to human trafficking and prostitution?

# Exploring What the Bible Says

Use the following Scripture references to answer the following questions:

Psalms 68: 5-6

Proverbs 31: 8-9

Isaiah 58:5-8

Psalms 82: 3-4

Isaiah 1:16-17

Micah 6:6-8

1) What does God reveal about Himself in these texts?

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2) How do these texts relate to human trafficking, if at all?

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3) Does God command us to do anything in these texts? If so, how can we carry out these commands?

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# Defining the Prostitution Problem

	What we know about the problem	What we still need to discover about the problem
Name the key people and parties involved in this issue		
What is the actual problem that needs to be solved?		
When does this problem of prostitution make itself most visible?		

	What we know about the problem	What we still need to discover about the problem
Where does prostitution occur?		
Why is prostitution a problem?		
How did this problem manifest itself?		