

Challenging Notions of the Ideal Victim: Identifying and Stereotyping Human Trafficking in the Midwest

By
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Abstract

Human trafficking, defined as commercial sex or labor induced by force, fraud, or coercion, has become a global concern, with various stakeholders taking different political and ideological stances in their opposition to this exploitation. The US Midwest is no outlier in these anti-trafficking efforts, as legislators, frontline workers, and activists increasingly seek to eliminate sex and labor trafficking through policy and practice. This dissertation project uses the qualitative interviews of 54 service providers in the US Midwest who work with vulnerable, exploited, or trafficked persons to understand the climate of anti-trafficking efforts—the interpersonal challenges frontline workers face with their trafficked clients, the structural barriers to their workplace practices, and the potential solutions to reduce violence and trauma in their communities. Taking a theoretical perspective informed by critical trafficking studies and street-level bureaucracy theory, I begin with an exploration of the various definitions frontline workers use to make meaning of their clients’ experiences with sex and labor trafficking. Next, I move to an analysis of the role of the carceral state in anti-trafficking efforts; namely, the reliance on practices of detention, incarceration, and deportation in anti-trafficking efforts. I shift to address the ways emotional labor complicates and rewards service providers with respect to the intense, affective connections they have with their exploited or trafficked clients. Finally, I propose three policy recommendations for thinking about the future of a Midwestern anti-trafficking agenda.

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Chapter 1: “Oh, Trafficking? That Happens Here?” Human Trafficking and Frontline Work in the US Midwest

In October 2017, the Kansas Department for Children and Families released data regarding youth in their custody, revealing a troubling trend. Beginning in 2011, as the number of youth under DCF care increased from 5,000 to 7,000 minors, the number of children reported as missing or runaway grew from 69 to 86 youths. While these numbers are relatively low and reflective of national trends, Kansas lawmakers and youth advocates took these statistics seriously. According to the *Wichita Eagle*, Republican state representative Linda Gallagher raised the issue of human trafficking in relation to these missing children: “The possibility that some of these children could be ending up being trafficked and therefore going from one bad situation to an even worse situation, that’s just a real concern” (Shorman and Woodall 2017, n. pag).

Two months later, in December 2017, Missouri Attorney General Josh Hawley spoke at a local event for pastors and faith leaders in the Kansas City metro area. Though his presentation was part of a broader “Pastors and Pews” outreach event, Hawley shifted the conversation toward human trafficking in the Midwest. As reported by the *Kansas City Star*, Hawley argued that sex trafficking was a direct consequence of women’s sexual liberation in the 1960s:

We have a human trafficking crisis in our state and in this city and in our country because people are willing to purchase women, young women, and treat them like commodities. There is a market for it. Why is there? Because our culture has completely lost its way. The sexual revolution has led to exploitation of women on a scale that we would never have imagined, never have imagined. [...] We must [...] deliver a message to our culture that the false gospel of “anything goes” ends in this road of slavery. It ends in the slavery and the exploitation of the most vulnerable among us. It ends in the slavery and exploitation of young women. (Lowry 2018, n. pag)

Both of these stories broke while I was deep in the data analysis of this dissertation project, reading and rereading transcription data, looking for the definitions of human trafficking

and the scope of workplace practices that shaped the daily labor of service providers engaged in Midwestern anti-trafficking efforts. I cannot say I was surprised by the themes embedded in these articles—the dysfunction of state agencies designed to help vulnerable persons, the connection of human trafficking to larger social and moral concerns—because my participants had already offered similar opinions and anecdotes during our interviews.

As a juvenile justice worker explained, her experiences with foster care and child protective services in her state were consistently lacking:

It would be nice if we had a better relationship with our DCF and [the state’s foster care system] because right now, all that they see us as is that holding place that calls them up and say, “Hey, you need to get this kid out of here by five o’clock today.” It’s almost like they don’t want that relationship. And I think a lot of it is they’re understaffed, and they’ve got such huge caseloads the way it is, and the state has closed down so many therapeutic foster homes. I’ve never seen anything like it. [...] I understand that there’s money tied into it. I understand that. And that [in our state], we have a money problem. But we’re telling kids, “You have to stay in a dangerous environment.” Or we’re telling the community, “You’ve gotta do something with these kids,” when the community’s saying, “But we don’t have any other resources.” (interview 12/1/16)

While none of my interviewees were as explicit as Hawley, a detective offered an example of the commodification of commercial sex in his description of a human trafficking sting in his community:

And then the stigma that goes with this whole idea. One, the stigma of, “Hey, it’s just a hand job. Come on. Can’t a guy go get a hand job? [...] It’s not hurting anybody.” And so you deal with that stigma in our culture, it’s like, “Hey, it’s two consenting adults.” Until we would sit down with some of these johns, going, “Did you realize, would your spouse go out and do hand jobs for a living? Do you think they really wanna do that?” [...] People don’t wanna go do this for a living, or they wanna work 10 hours a day? Just to serve you? I mean, talk about a consumer mentality. (interview 12/5/16)

I start here to offer a brief glimpse into the discourse of human trafficking in the Midwest, which is reported publicly through elected officials and echoed privately by individual stakeholders. Human trafficking *does* happen in the Midwest, as these examples demonstrate, and the larger stereotypes that influence anti-trafficking efforts across the globe also appear in

this specific geographic context. While the rhetorical frameworks may be similar to national and international discussions, I argue the unique political environment of the Midwest—specifically, the complicated relationship between defunded social welfare systems, conservative anti-trafficking ideologies, and carceral punishment systems—make it a necessary case study to include in the field of human trafficking scholarship.

In the following sections, I will first explain how I conceptualize human trafficking for this project, taking a cue from international policy and US legislation. I then introduce my qualitative research agenda, taking particular care to explain the role of place and why the US Midwest is such a useful case study for larger anti-trafficking scholarship. Next, I summarize the two major theoretical frameworks—critical trafficking studies and street-level bureaucracy theory—that shape how I understand the role of service providers and anti-human trafficking efforts. Throughout the dissertation, I will use the terms “street-level bureaucrat,” “frontline worker,” and “service provider” interchangeably to discuss my participants. In the context of my qualitative research, few participants self-identified as frontline workers—and none described themselves as street-level bureaucrats—so I retained their language of “service providers” to reflect how they described themselves, while including the first two terms to reference the academic research on this work (Lipsky 2010; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003; 2012). Finally, I describe my three dissertation chapters, which each explore a different facet of anti-trafficking frontline work from a critical trafficking studies perspective, and my conclusion, which offers a set of substantive recommendations for thinking about new practices to affirm survivors and address the root causes of exploitation and trafficking.

Conceptualizing Human Trafficking

For this project, I define human trafficking as *the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit someone for labor or commercial sex*. This includes those under the age of 18 engaged in commercial sexual exchanges, more commonly referred to as domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST). My definition is an abridged version of the explanation given in the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA). In Chapter 1, I describe the facets of the TVPA in greater detail, as this legal definition holds a great deal of power in the larger discourse of describing sex and labor trafficking.

I use the TVPA-inspired definition primarily because of my own case study's location in the US Midwest. However, it is critically important to address the parallel construction of trafficking in the UN Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. Similarly passed in 2000, this international definition is slightly more expansive. It maintains the central framework of force, fraud, or coercion, but it includes organ trafficking as a potential harm alongside sex and labor trafficking. Additionally, it explicitly states that an individual's consent is irrelevant if any force, fraud, or coercion was used to induce their commercial sex, labor, or organ donation.

Centering Place in Human Trafficking Research

For my dissertation, I set out to understand how service providers do the actual *work* of anti-human trafficking work in two Midwestern states. I was particularly interested in the practical aspects of identifying and engaging with clients, managing caseloads, and determining which individuals to prioritize and which to exclude from service provision (Baldwin et al. 2011; Brennan 2014a; Durgana 2013; Farrell et. al 2016; Farrell, Owens, and McDevitt 2014; Macias Konstantopoulos et al. 2013; Miller et al. 2007). Anti-human trafficking efforts sometimes explicitly and often implicitly perpetuate a particular understanding of what it means

to be trafficked, who can be considered a victim, and, conversely, who is cast aside as a criminal actor (Chapkis 2003; Majic 2014; Plambech 2014; Srikantiah 2007). As such, I wanted to uncover the stereotypes and norms that undergird service provision for trafficked persons in the Midwest, as these perceptions of identity can serve as a gatekeeping tool of sorts. When faced with a client whose experiences do not align with the dominant, stereotypical image of human trafficking, street-level bureaucrats can take the effort to ask more questions and dig deeper into their clients' experiences—or, if they do not have the time, money, or other resources, may go with their initial judgments of how trafficking manifests and potentially leave a trafficked client without recourse or assistance.

In each of the states I studied, human trafficking has become a bipartisan priority issue through a range of legislative endeavors, task force projects, non-profit agendas, and public awareness campaigns. Simultaneously, the social service sectors in these states have been bombarded with varying degrees of defunding practices, particularly in the education and foster care systems. Given this interplay between increasing caseloads of trafficked persons and decreasing material supports for clients, I found these geographic regions to be incredibly important sites to host a case study and build on scholarship that centers the role of place in policy and equity issues (Feiock et al. 2010; Lewis and Ramakrishnan 2007; Marschall, Rigby, and Jenkins 2011; Stellern and Phipps 2012; Soss, Fording, and Schram 2011).

Research on sex and labor trafficking tend to geographically cluster in urban cores or border states (Center for Court Innovation 2013; Dank et al. 2014; Macias Konstantopoulous et al. 2013; Miller et al. 2007; Marcus et al. 2014; Owens et al. 2014; Zhang et al. 2014). Rural and Midwestern geographies remain understudied in comparison (Cole and Sprang 2015; Heil and Nichols 2015; Moser 2015; Ozalp 2009; Williamson and Prior 2009). I see this research as a

direct attempt to broaden understandings of human trafficking beyond the geographic spaces that take up so much of the cultural imaginary and scholarly focus on human trafficking.

This focus on two states also facilitates a micro-level case study approach. As Weitzer (2015) argues, in order to combat the methodological problems¹ of macro-level human trafficking research, scholars should shift to researching specific, smaller regions:

Micro-level studies have the potential to (a) produce more reliable numbers on victimization (in a universe smaller than nationwide); (b) identify context-specific structural catalysts of migration, smuggling, trafficking, and slavery; and (c) generate richer insights regarding actors' lived experiences. (232)

In the context of my own research, I am less interested in generating quantifiable numbers of trafficked persons and their perpetrators and more invested in uncovering the stereotypes and norms that shape how Midwestern frontline workers think about trafficking broadly. I see this case study as offering a deeper insight into service providers' rationale for their anti-trafficking efforts *and* identifying which potential risk factors may be more prevalent—and subsequently more important to prevent against—in Midwestern communities.

Additionally, micro-level research may also lead to better outcomes for survivors. Weitzer (2015) writes, “When findings pinpoint specific hot spots of victimization, they can be utilized by the authorities to locate perpetrators and disrupt trafficking rings and by service providers to aid victims in such locations” (239). Instead of using dominant narratives or faulty statistical estimates, case studies of specific regions can provide deeper insights into where

¹ Merry (2016) describes the terrain of quantifying human trafficking as a “swap of competing ideas and categories” (124). Attempts to measure or estimate trafficked persons must negotiate the organizational, ideological, and political differences in how to define trafficking, as well as the hidden populations of survivors who are challenging to locate. Gallagher (2017) advocates against using quantification practices until they are more refined: “We don’t yet have universally accepted diagnostic criteria or credible tools of measurement—which means that universal, reliable calculation of the size of the problem, while an important goal to strive for, is not yet possible” (91).

trafficking occurs and what responses are least invasive, misguided, or traumatic. For example, if a case study reveals that human trafficking in one community looks less like the stereotype of forced sex work (Srikantiah 2007; Hill 2016), then perhaps law enforcement officers could direct their efforts away from the surveillance and sting operations of spaces of commercial—illegal but consensual—sex. Taking this cue, I return to the importance of place in my conclusion, advocating for context-specific policies to address exploitation and trafficking. Even with anti-trafficking legislation at the state level and service provision standards at the organizational level, frontline workers within and across states may have different interpretations of policy and varied levels of resources to meet the needs of trafficked persons in their county, jurisdiction, or office. A major, urban city on a state border may be able to mobilize a team of law enforcement agents to investigate a trafficking case and offer multiple locations for shelter services. However, a rural town in a less population dense county could face the challenges of more limited resources scattered across larger regions; for example, the closest secure housing for trafficked persons may be two hours away in some rural communities, and local organizations must find the time and funding to drive a trafficked client to access these services.

My *Methodological Appendix* details the two phases of my research, including a survey and semi-structured interviews. Upon conclusion gathering my data across these two methods, I had 722 survey participants and 42 interviews with 54 total service providers, providing a broad scope of perspectives on vulnerability, exploitation, and trafficking in the Midwest. To interpret and analyze their responses, I used critical trafficking studies and street-level bureaucracy theory.

Linking Theoretical Frames: From Trafficking to Street-Level Bureaucracies

Critical Trafficking Studies

While anti-human trafficking service provision is ostensibly about survivors' material conditions—assisting those who have experienced trauma and had their rights compromised—these efforts are also shaped by broader social discourses about trafficking. Frontline workers encounter trafficked clients in a climate where human trafficking is often sensationalized, stereotyped, and conceptualized differently across fields of scholarship and public policy (Chapkis 2003; Chuang 2014; Kinney 2006; Musto 2009; Todres 2009). Thus, critical trafficking studies provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding and pushing against these norms that frame service providers' actions with trafficked persons.

Musto (2013) coined the phrase critical trafficking studies to describe a field of scholarship that seeks to dismantle and disrupt the dominant frames of defining human trafficking. She writes, “What is ‘critical’ about critical trafficking studies is its theoretical consideration of that which is elided, concealed, and obfuscated in dominant scholarly treatment of the issue” (261). Critical trafficking scholars interrogate the focus on human trafficking as almost exclusively sex trafficking of young women with heightened attention to the violence enacted upon these victims (Brennan 2014a; Chapkis 2003; Kempadoo 2015; Lutnick 2016; Skilbrei and Tveit 2008; Srikantiah 2007; Tickin 2008), while labor trafficking and other forms of exploitation are left underrepresented or poorly defined (Brennan 2014b; Howard 2014). Critical trafficking studies demonstrate how these definitions of human trafficking are shaped by cultural norms, political ideologies, and organizational missions. Even though legislation establishes terminology for human trafficking, they are not deployed neutrally (Chapkis 2003; Kempadoo 2015). As seen in Chapter 1, frontline workers use a range of definitions when

engaged in anti-trafficking work that may utilize legislative understandings pulled directly from the text of a policy or moral perceptions rooted in social constructions.

A major concern with the dominant anti-trafficking discourse is its reliance on very descriptive retellings of violence and trauma, what Chapkis (2003) describes as the “gothic portrayals” of sex trafficking (930). These narratives detail extreme sexual violations in graphic, attention-grabbing terms, creating an assumption that all forms of human trafficking look identically violent and traumatic. As Bernstein (2007) describes with respect to anti-sex trafficking and anti-sex work activism, “reputable accounts by sex-worker activists and by researchers, including those based in the third world, suggest that the scenarios of overt abduction, treachery, and coercion that abolitionists depict are the exception rather than the norm” (131). Even if empirical data support a critical trafficking studies understanding of diverse, nuanced understandings of exploitation in global contexts, the somewhat reductive, dominant narrative persists in the public discourse and influences frontline workers engaged in anti-trafficking efforts. This frame also generates outrage and moral concern for a particular form of human trafficking—what may be legally considered aggravated human trafficking for sexual exploitation—“while leaving in place policies that continue to punish the majority of ‘ordinary’ abused and exploited migrants” (Chapkis 2003, 930). In emphasizing the exceptions to the rule—the most extreme trafficking cases—other, less salacious forms of trafficking slip through the cracks or get reinterpreted as the criminalized acts of smuggling or undocumented immigration (Chuang 2014; FitzGerald 2010; Peters 2013).

In addition to these tropes of extreme violence, dominant anti-trafficking narratives mobilize race in stereotypical ways, perpetuating problematic connections between criminality and communities of color (Bumiller 2008; Crenshaw 2012; Soss and Weaver 2017). As I discuss

in much greater detail in Chapter 2, human trafficking is often framed as a problem between men of color exploiting young women (Baker 2014; Small 2012). Race is complicated with respect to survivors, who may be constructed as white women (Baker 2014; Small 2012) or women of color from outside of the US (Kempadoo 2015; Srikantiah 2007). This binary framework restricts the discourse in such a way that survivors who cannot fit into these racialized categories are underrepresented and subsequently may not be able to access—or be explicitly excluded from—services and assistance (Howard 2014; Lutnick 2016).

Critical trafficking studies also addresses the role of law enforcement and criminal justice processes in the dominant human trafficking discourse. Hill (2016) describes this as the master narrative of trafficking: a singular focus on using apparatuses, such as law enforcement raids and sting operations, for identifying and rescuing young female victims of sex trafficking. This narrative “tell[s] a moral story that excites a desire to resolve a conflict between good and evil by establishing audience expectations that the police will stop the traffickers and save the girl(s)” (Hill 2016, 41). The master narrative is, at its core, a traditional “good guys versus bad guys” tale, reinterpreted through the lens of trafficking. In many cases, the assumption of trafficking is enough to validate deploying this narrative, leading to a continued conflation of sex work and sex trafficking.

This reliance on normative tropes—the police officer as savior, the ostensibly-trafficked sex worker in need of rescue—actually masks the violence, disruption, and trauma that can come from these criminal justice interventions (Bernstein 2012; Schwarz, Kennedy, and Britton 2017). As I discuss specifically in Chapters 1 and 2, sex work and sex trafficking are often conflated, though I use a critical trafficking studies approach to explicitly mobilize them as two different phenomena in my research. In Hill’s (2016) article, she discusses how this conflation

disproportionately targets sex workers—some of whom are migrants at risk of deportation—who are assumed to be victims of exploitation and trafficking. When their status as sex workers are revealed, they are immediately categorized as criminal actors and subject to the punitive force of the carceral state. I include Hill (2016) not to risk equating sex work with sex trafficking but to highlight the damages of this conflation beyond the rhetoric of commercial sex. As she continues, “Sex workers fear raids, experience trauma during raids and endure myriad harms in the aftermath of raids, which can include interrogation, detention, prosecution and deportation” (Hill 2016, 42). This sentiment is echoed in Musto’s (2013) critique of the “detention to prosecution pipeline” for youth suspected of being domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) survivors, which reconsiders the common practice of arresting and detaining youth engaged in survival sex. State interventions, particularly interventions rooted in the carceral power of law enforcement, can carry consequences, even if the ultimate goal fits into the master narrative’s concept of saving and rescuing.

As a researcher in women, gender, and sexuality studies, I am drawn to critical trafficking studies because of its critique of carceral feminism. Bernstein (2010) describes this as a “commitment to heteronormative family values, crime control, and the putative rescue and restoration of victims” (57) to address human trafficking. Feminist advocates are deeply embedded in anti-trafficking efforts both domestically and abroad, but those who agitate for a law and order approach (Bernstein 2007) are using mechanisms of the state—often violent mechanisms—to achieve their goals of ending exploitation. This juxtaposition between feminist anti-violence efforts and state-sanctioned practices that perpetuate marginalization and inequality is of critical concern for critical trafficking studies as a field and, as Chapter 2 demonstrates, my larger research project.

Street-Level Bureaucracy Theory

Service providers engaged in anti-trafficking work must use their judgment—informed by organizational practices, individual moral codes, and the aforementioned dominant human trafficking discourse—to determine whether or not they are engaging with a trafficked person. Street-level bureaucracy theory (SLBT) provides a framework for understanding these processes with respect to direct, frontline engagement with clients. I am taking Maynard-Moody and Portillo's (2010) formulation of street-level bureaucracy as a theory for its "coherent set of observations and principles that have led to a wide range of empirical studies and have been confirmed and generalized" (254). SLBT interrogates the role of service providers in disseminating resources, engaging with clients, and mobilizing policy at the frontlines. Lipsky (2010) defines street-level bureaucrats as "public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work" (3). These workers come from a range of sectors but are all intimately engaged with clients in direct, personal engagement. Conversely, managers and administrators do not have the same interpersonal encounters with citizens, as they are generally more distanced from direct work, responsible for overseeing daily operations, filing paperwork, or interacting with higher-level organizational stakeholders.

One of the most critical contributions of SLBT is the concept of discretion. Lipsky (2010) defines discretion as frontline workers' freedom "in determining the nature, amount, and quality of benefits and sanctions provided by their agencies" (13). Later scholars of SLBT have offered their own nuances on discretion. For example, Feldman (1992) describes it as "the legitimate right to make choices based on one's authoritative assessment of a situation" (164). Dubois (2014) sees discretion as "the leeway of officials in the enforcement of rules or implementation

of programs” (39). Contrary to the negative connotations of bureaucracy, frontline workers are not procedurally, robotically disseminating or withholding services. Rather, they are actively making meaning of their work, the clients they encounter, and their own identity as a frontline worker through the tools at their disposal. These discretionary practices accumulate to constitute organizational policy (Lipsky 2010).

Importantly, discretion is not reckless or random—it is “decision-making within a structure of rules” (Feldman 1992, 164). Additionally, its value can change on a case-by-case basis. Brodtkin (1997) states “discretion is axiomatically neither good nor bad but contingent on contextual conditions” (4). If a frontline worker is pressed for time, faced with limited resources, or simply finds a client’s appeals unconvincing, their discretionary latitude may facilitate a negative response for a client. This response could shift toward a positive result if one of these factors changed, such as an extra 30 minutes to spend on a client’s case. Street-level bureaucrats use their knowledge of rules and procedures in tandem with their discretionary practices—the stereotypes they have accumulated about their client base, the scripts they have acquired through years of service, the moral codes built into their organizational infrastructure or inherent to their own belief systems, the in-person social cues provided by their client—to try to understand their clients’ experiences or identities and subsequently deliver services. Discretion is inherent to frontline work, given the need for timely judgments in the face of overwhelming caseloads and limited budgets, so managerial attempts to restrict these decision-making practices can only displace it. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) describe discretion as putty: “squeezed by oversight and rules but never eliminated” (10). Eliminating discretion in one facet of work only displaces it to another sector or form of decision-making.

In more recent scholarship on SLBT, discretion has been pushed and reframed as a more agential process of meaning making. For example, Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2012) use the term “agency” in their analysis of frontline workers’ decisions on justice and equity. This subtle shift to terminology helps in “depicting workers as state centered and culture centered in rendering their judgments” (S18). In this formulation, judgments are not simply contingent upon the discretionary practices of frontline work contained to that particular organization but also their contextual knowledge of social scripts and positioning that simply come from interacting with the world at large. Accordingly, they have a degree of latitude in their judgments outside of the standards set by their workplace or organizational standards. As Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2012) explain further, “Thus, expressions of street-level agency most frequently conserve established cultural beliefs about worthy and unworthy, or safe and unsafe, people [...]” (S21). These beliefs may not be explicitly part of any organizational framework or policy structure, but, because of agency, street-level bureaucrats may still use cultural norms to make judgments within the parameters of their work.

Street-Level Bureaucracies in Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Though the literature connecting critical trafficking studies to SLBT is sparse (Hoag 2010; Loyens and Maesschalck 2014), as I will address below, these two fields of research are incredibly compatible. First, anti-trafficking service provision is a responsibility primarily held by traditional frontline workers. Lipsky (2010) identifies the following professions as street-level bureaucrats: “teachers, police officers and other law enforcement personnel, social workers, judges, public lawyers and other court officers, health workers, and many other public employees who grant access to government programs and provide services within them” (3). Subsequent scholarship within SLBT has explored the role of police officers (Maynard-Moody and Musheno

2003; 2012; Epp, Maynard-Moody, and Haider-Markel 2014), social service providers (Harrits and Møller 2014; Soss, Fording, and Schram 2011), and medical providers (Chiarello 2015; Lara-Millán 2014). Additionally, many scholars have addressed the role of frontline work within particular sectors that are tangentially related to human trafficking, such as domestic violence advocacy (Hetling 2011; Lindhorst and Padgett 2005), immigration advocacy (Graham 2002; Payan 2012), and public health (Garrow and Grusky 2012; McCann 2009). Human trafficking is a natural fit within SLBT's focus on service providers' engagement with clients facing violence, trauma, or exploitation.

Additionally, street-level bureaucrats are well-documented in scholarship on human trafficking as direct service providers for exploited or trafficked persons, particularly those in the law enforcement (Bernstein 2007; Farrell et. al 2016; Farrell, Owens, and McDevitt 2014; Hill 2016; Peters 2013) and medical sectors (Baldwin et al. 2011; Lederer and Wetzel 2014; Macias Konstantopoulos et al. 2013; Miller et al. 2007; Patel, Ahn, and Burke 2013; Stoklosa et al. 2017). Social service providers also play a critical role (Brennan 2014a; Durgana 2013; Musto 2008; Peters 2014; Shih 2016), and many work in collaborative frameworks with members of other street-level bureaucracies (Musto 2010; 2016). While these projects engage the role of frontline workers—and often talk about discretion and judgments, two key components of SLBT—they do not use SLBT explicitly to analyze their anti-trafficking efforts.

My research seeks to bridge these two fields of study, building upon a limited body of scholarship. To date, Loyens and Maesschalck (2014) offer perhaps the clearest published connection between critical trafficking studies and SLBT. They use the case study of specific Belgian police departments tasked with investigating human trafficking to explore how officers engage with the public in their frontline work. Their findings of these street-level bureaucrats'

discretionary practices align with critical trafficking studies frameworks that complicate the idea of “saving” survivors from exploitation (Hill 2016) and the clean lines between victims and criminals (Majic 2014). As they write with respect to police officers’ workplace practices, “the egalitarian sense of mission to save exploitation victims was particularly strong. This can be illustrated by cases in which detectives wanted to continue the investigation, even when the public prosecutor had already instructed them to stop the investigation” (153). However, this internal sense of completing a case to closure faced challenges of survivors who did not see themselves as truly victimized, who refused to offer statements against perpetrators, or who committed crimes, like drug use or lying to police authorities, in the process of their identification.

Hoag (2010) provides another example to connect SLBT to human trafficking, though his case study is more loosely connected through its focus on vulnerable and exploited migrants. He offers an ethnography of South African immigration offices, exploring the relationship between service providers’ emotional responses to clients’ identities and subsequent service provision. He describes how frontline workers in these immigration offices often make judgments based on the affect they feel in a particular encounter as well as the larger, structural norms that create stigmas and stereotypes: “Of course, officials also act inconsistently for reasons more within their control. Mood and other physio-emotional issues can be factors, as can insidious ones such as racism, sexism, or xenophobia” (9). Hoag goes further, stating that “asylum seekers were regularly typecast by officials into categories of ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ based on their place of origin” (10). While he is talking about migrants and asylum seekers—groups that may face trafficking and exploitation but are not always judged or legally counted as trafficked persons—he connects questions of deservingness that are critical in both SLBT and critical

trafficking studies. Frontline workers have the power to identify their clients as “deserving” or “undeserving” of specific resources (Bruch, Ferree, and Soss 2010; Soss 2005; Soss, Fording, and Schram 2011), and trafficked persons’ deservingness is often tied to their identity as a victim rather than a criminal actor or somehow complicit in their own exploitation (Chapkis 2003; Srikantiah 2007). In sum, SLBT matters to critical analyses of anti-trafficking work because of the continued reliance on frontline workers to be first responders in cases of exploitation and trafficking. Service providers may be trained and prepared to encounter a “typical” client—or even a challenging client—but they may not have received adequate or appropriate knowledge about folding the needs of trafficked persons into their caseloads. They may be using inconsistent definitions of trafficking that exclude certain forms of violence or marginalize specific populations based on identity markers. If these street-level bureaucrats have received appropriate training and know how to ethically identify trafficked persons, they could be unable to fully follow through on providing assistance because of time and resource constraints. Particularly with the emotional complexity of anti-trafficking work, as addressed in deeper detail in Chapter 3, it is important to think about questions of discretion, worker agency, and burnout with respect to anti-trafficking work.

Dissertation Outline

I begin in Chapter 1, *Human Trafficking and Meaning Making: The Role of Definitions in Anti-Trafficking Efforts*, by exploring how service providers define and categorize human trafficking. Definitions serve a powerful role in frontline work, setting the parameters for which client populations can receive assistance within a specific sector. When adding anti-trafficking service provision to an organization’s mission, frontline workers are in the challenging position of identifying those individuals whose exploitation qualifies as trafficking—and thus opens them

up for a (limited) range of services—and those who may be somehow complicit in a criminalized act, such as undocumented migration or commercial sex and unintelligible as a survivor. I follow two different ways my interview participants use definitions in their work: legal tools or normative judgments. As the names imply, legal tools use an explicit phrasing from state or federal-level trafficking policy, while normative judgments are morally or socially constructed. When frontline workers are confronted with an encounter where their definitions fail to function, I argue they are experiencing a moment of friction, which demonstrates the inapplicability of these frameworks across all experiences of exploitation and trafficking.

Chapter 2, *Anti-Trafficking Efforts and the Carceral State: Punishment and Justice*, explicitly address the role of carceral logics and punitive anti-trafficking responses in the Midwest. Service providers offered examples of a complicated relationship with the carceral state. In the face of a domestic anti-trafficking agenda that emphasizes prosecution—and underfunded or simply nonexistent resources for exploited or trafficked persons—frontline workers often had to negotiate within systems of detention and incarceration to access secure or stable housing for their clients. Additionally, when conceptualizing justice and closure, a successfully prosecuted criminal case was considered the optimal conclusion for a survivor. Clients' negative responses to these engagements with the carceral state, such as running away in the middle of an investigation or avoiding disclosure under fear of deportation, revealed the ambivalence of relying on law enforcement-centered strategies to address the violence and trauma of trafficking.

I center service providers' affective responses in Chapter 3, *Emotional Labor, Stress, and Solutions in Frontline Anti-Trafficking Work*. Human trafficking work is highly emotional, as service providers are working with clients whose trauma and negative experiences may be

greater than their average client base. Additionally, if these clients have been identified unwillingly—thinking of sex workers mischaracterized as sex trafficking survivors in a police-led bust, for example—they may not want to comply with routine service provision. These aspects are complicated even further by growing caseloads and restricted service accessibility. Frontline workers describe a range of practices they use to generate a desired emotional state in themselves and their clients, the extenuating circumstances that potentially inhibit these performances, and the solutions they mobilize to maintain a degree of emotional equilibrium and avoid burnout.

Finally, I conclude in *Prevention and Policy: Anti-Trafficking Futures* by thinking forward to a proactive, not reactive, anti-trafficking agenda. I connect my qualitative research data to research in both critical trafficking studies and women of color anti-violence scholarship to argue for three major recommendations. Anti-trafficking efforts must move beyond the act of generating awareness, build (or in the Midwest, reinvest in) social safety net programs, and advocate from a feminist, anti-racist perspective. While these solutions are informed by the regional context of my interviewees, they can also be applied broadly across the US and globally, taking extenuating contextual factors and community-specific needs into account. I believe that anti-trafficking advocates and scholars—myself included—must think creatively about anti-trafficking futures that tackle the root causes of violence and exploitation, and these three recommendations offer a starting point for that work.

Overall, my goals in this research are twofold. First, if we as a society are going to keep increasing anti-human trafficking legislation and policy, we must think critically about the relationships between said policy and the frontline workers tasked with its interpretation and implementation (Berg 2015; Chuang 2014; Musto 2016; Peters 2014). Legislation does not exist

in a vacuum, and failing to account for the practical manifestations of policy creates potential complications for service providers to be good allies for survivors. Second, the social constructions and assumptions about human trafficking that are embedded in policy and practice have very real consequences on the lives and livelihoods of trafficked persons. Allowing these dominant tropes and misconceptions to proliferate only does a disservice to survivors and can perpetuate the criminalization and stigmatization of marginalized communities.

Chapter 2: Human Trafficking and Meaning Making: The Role of Definitions in Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Human trafficking is an increasingly visible humanitarian concern across the globe, with a range of stakeholders invested in stopping the exploitation and violence of trafficking. In the United States, this spike in engagement is generally credited with the passage of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act in 2000, the foundational piece of domestic legislation addressing sex and labor trafficking. With subsequent reauthorizations, human trafficking is now a policy priority at the state and federal levels. Beyond the legislative sphere, non-profits and advocacy groups are taking an anti-trafficking stance in their service provision and outreach efforts. Local communities have invested in task forces, working groups, and volunteer organizations to address trafficking at the grassroots level. Some anti-trafficking activists cite the small but growing number of federal prosecutions (US Department of State 2017) as a sign that these efforts are successful. Others point to the growing number of specific organizations dedicated to assisting survivors, ostensibly a “rescue” industry for trafficked persons (Agustín 2007). In the face of this anti-trafficking landscape—where everyone from police officers (Musto 2016) to truck drivers (Baker 2013) to faith leaders (Bernstein 2007) are part of stopping the problem—the definitions that establish the concept of human trafficking remain slippery, challenging to quantify (Merry 2016), and contested between sectors and among stakeholders.

In the current climate of anti-trafficking efforts, frontline workers are frequently called upon as the first responders for exploited or trafficked persons: police officers following up on a tip from a human trafficking hotline; domestic violence advocates securing safe housing for a trafficked client; or immigration lawyers working with undocumented survivors in need of a visa. Through their encounters with these street-level bureaucrats, individuals may be identified

as trafficked persons and thus processed accordingly, ideally receiving services that can address their expressed needs, such as medical care, legal assistance, or emergency housing. Service providers in the legal, medical, non-profit, social service, and foster care sectors must manage their preexisting caseloads and job duties alongside the complex needs of their trafficked clients. Even with the aforementioned legislation that offer definitions of sex and labor trafficking, frontline workers are shaped by their organizational affiliation—for example, as a police officer, a case manager, a nurse—as well as their own understandings of human trafficking, which is shaped by public discourse and longstanding social stigmas (Srikantiah 2007; Majic 2014).

This chapter explores the importance of the encounter between service providers and trafficked persons, using qualitative interview data with Midwestern frontline workers. Given the direct, interpersonal intimacy between street-level bureaucrats and their clients, frontline workers are in a unique position in the larger context of anti-trafficking efforts. The standard practice of applying definitions to clients as a strategy to open or restrict access to resource can actually be a gatekeeping tool, inadvertently excluding exploited or trafficked persons from service provision. In the course of our interviews, as participants described their workplace practices of engaging and assisting trafficked clients, they offered a range of definitions that shaped their understanding of sex and labor trafficking. These definitions can be grouped into two thematic areas: legal tools and normative judgments. My interview participants offered narratives that showed both the efficacy of these definitions and the moments of friction when these definitions failed to fully make meaning of their work. The encounter—between an exploited or trafficked client and a service provider—can crystalize a definition’s importance or highlight the need for a different understanding of trafficking.

Definitions in Frontline Work

As addressed in the introduction to this dissertation, definitions play a critically important role in street-level bureaucracies—they determine the parameters of a frontline workers' caseload and their role as a service provider. However, definitions can also be used to attempt to solve the problem of limited resources for clients and limited time for frontline workers to disseminate services, effectively determining “who gets help and whose needs are ignored” (Maynard-Moody and Portillo 2010, 260). Lipsky (2010) writes, “Street-level bureaucracies can also formally or informally ration services by refusing to take certain kinds of cases” (102). Frontline workers may be able to point to a specific policy or organizational practice to restrict services, or they may use their discretion to determine a specific client's needs simply cannot be met within their street-level bureaucracy.

In her study of welfare case managers, Brodtkin (1997) explains that limited resources compound the reliance on strict definitions:

Given the limited availability of resources, caseworkers had little incentive, in fact a disincentive, to elicit information about client needs. Identifying needs could open the door to “trouble,” that is, claims to services that would be difficult, even impossible, to meet. The bureaucratic routines developed to avoid such claims virtually reversed the rationale of a client needs assessment. Rather than discovering and responding to client service needs, caseworkers tended to define client needs to fit the available slots, avoid eliciting service claims, and pressure clients to accept the bureaucratic construction of welfare rights and obligations. (15)

Brodtkin describes a process in which clients are defined through the ease with which they could be served within a street-level bureaucracy, not through their expressed desires or needs for assistance. Thus, client deservingness is ascertained by their ability to fit what specific organizations can provide with the resources they can immediately access, which may be increasingly limited in the face of austerity measures and budget cuts. Clients who may require more work—more collaboration with other street-level bureaucracies that have appropriate and

available resources, more emotional labor to discover what unspoken needs remain unmet—are categorized as beyond the defined population to serve.

Within SLBT, scholars have interrogated the multiple ways that frontline workers can access and mobilize definitions in their work. One place where service providers find definitions is in the specific policies or organizational practices related to their sector of work (Dubois 2014; Lipsky 2010; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). Frontline workers can draw from the codified legislation that establishes their client base, such as teachers who have state and federal policy that determines who can be a student or case managers who have specific legal requirements for welfare recipients. Policies can set the parameters for definitions; as Moynihan and Soss (2014) point out, “A policy, however, is not a tabula rasa that implementing actors can write on in any way they like. Policies define parameters for discretionary action; they structure decisions and frame choice sets” (328). According to Lipsky (2010), “Rules and regulations provide only a measure of guidance in determining eligibility” (60). In more formal contexts or situations where resources may be restricted, service providers may lean more on these definitions, even when they are not the only factor in determining how to make meaning of their clients.

Because frontline workers have discretionary powers in their work, they are not restricted to these formal or legal definitions. As Lipsky (2010) writes, their own judgments, perceptions, and moral claims can also be used to define the client populations they serve:

People come to street-level bureaucracies as unique individuals with different life experiences, personalities, and current circumstances. In their encounters with bureaucracies they are transformed into clients, identifiably located in a very small number of categories, treated as if, and treating themselves as if, they fit standardized definitions of units consigned to specific bureaucratic slots. The processing of *people* into *clients*, assigning them to categories for treatment by bureaucrats, and treating them in terms of those categories, is a social process. Client characteristics do not exist outside of the process that gives rise to them. (59)

Through the encounter, frontline workers find ways to fit individuals into the role required of them as they move through the street-level bureaucracy and receive services. The role of client may reflect how a frontline worker interprets policy or understands their client's identity, often contingent upon broader social norms (Portillo and Rudes 2014). Creating the category of client, as Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) explain, is a decision-making process that “decide[s] who is a good or bad person, who has rights and who is disenfranchised, and what community actions are tolerated or punished” (24). Values of worth, ability to succeed, and political efficacy are all tied into this constructed client position.

Using welfare departments as an example, Hasenfeld (2000) describes these practices as moral work: “every action taken on behalf of clients not only represents some form of concrete service, such as counseling a family or determining eligibility for welfare, but also confers a moral judgment about their social worth, the causation of their predicament, and the desired outcome” (329). Service dissemination may appear to be value-neutral, especially when it is couched in the formal language of policy and regulatory practices, but these material effects also come with messages about how frontline workers categorize and assess clients. In some contexts, as Dubois (2014) explains, these moral judgments may not undercut formal policy and instead serve to support organizational agendas: “Individual stereotypes and discretionary interpretations of norms do not necessarily contradict the rationales of official policy and may also serve its goals” (39). If, for example, a teacher has to work with his school district's “zero tolerance” policy for violence, his discretionary punishment of a fight that increases punitive action for a student of color—an interpretation of norms rooted in racial stereotypes—does not explicitly contradict a policy rationale that seeks to regulate students' behaviors and respond to any form of violence with punitive action.

As Soss (2005) highlights in his study of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients, these definitions create categories that may actually be arbitrary when looking at the lived experiences and identities of clients. He argues these clients “actually come from overlapping populations that experience a diversity of vulnerabilities and needs. [...] [C]ategorical eligibility requirements cleave the citizenry into parts, organizing target groups around a handful of allegedly distinctive traits” (313). With respect to anti-trafficking service provision, this cleavage may divide clients with incredibly similar needs on the basis of a perceived fit with an organizational or individual understanding of human trafficking. For example, exploited persons *and* trafficked persons may both need access to emergency shelter. If an eligibility requirement to access this housing service is dependent upon the construction of trafficking—a process contingent upon a frontline worker’s judgment—then individuals in need of services who cannot be interpreted as trafficked may be left without assistance or recourse. Frontline workers can exercise agency in the discretionary ways they stretch these interpretations to accommodate clients they deem deserving, or they may hew closely to a strict interpretation of the rules to close off access.

Defining Human Trafficking

The major piece of federal legislation used to address human trafficking is the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. Subsequently reauthorized in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2013, this legislation is now generally referred to as the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). The TVPA is the foundational domestic human trafficking legislation used in the United States, and state-level policies build upon its framework. The TVPA defines severe forms of trafficking in persons as:

(A) sex trafficking in which a 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; or

(B) 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. (US Department of State n.d., n. pag)

States use this general framework when crafting their own policies, which can sometimes be more expansive or punitive than the federal definition. Regardless, the phrasing of “force, fraud, or coercion” operates as a shorthand of sorts for when defining human trafficking from a legal perspective.

Within the broad realm of anti-human trafficking advocacy and activism, individual organizations or actors may use different terminology when talking about trafficked persons. For example, the image of a perfect victim serves as a powerful lens through which frontline workers defined trafficked persons according to their adherence to this trope (Brennan 2014a; Chapkis 2003; Hill 2016; Goździak 2016; Lutnick 2016; Musto 2013). Srikantiah (2007) calls this the iconic victim: a young woman escaping sex trafficking who, upon her rescue, is passive and compliant with law enforcement officers as they pursue prosecution. This stereotype is unsurprisingly influenced by broader racial stereotypes and an anti-trafficking history that privileges the moral panic around the exploitation and degradation of white women through “white slavery” (Doezema 1999; Donovan 2005; Spencer and Broad 2012). Depending upon her racial identity, she can be “saved” through state interventions (usually if she is a white, formerly middle-class woman who can fit into normative narratives of respectability and recovery) *or* deported² (especially if she is an undocumented immigrant of color).

² It is important to note that Srikantiah’s (2007) findings are operating under the assumption that the ideal victim stereotype is the same across all service providers, sectors of work, and geographic regions within the United States. This underlying assumption—that the ideal victim stereotype might look different in more diverse communities—should (and hopefully will) be tested in future research.

Majic (2014) uses the binary of the “victim-criminal” in a similar way, demonstrating how identity shapes the way individuals engaged in commercial sex are deemed worthy of rescue or targeted for incarceration or prosecution themselves. In Majic’s description of these limited frames, a woman selling sex on a street corner might be first read as a prostitute, a stereotype that assumes a degree of agency and carries a carceral punishment of fines and potential jail time. However, if a police officer has been trained to identify trafficked people, they might have to grapple with the competing stereotype of the sex trafficking victim.

Additionally, the conflation of sex work and sex trafficking complicates the legal definition of trafficking. Taking a cue from the feminist sex wars of the 1980s (Bernstein 2012; Galusca 2012; Limoncelli 2009), some anti-trafficking scholars and activists see all forms of commercial sex as inherently exploitative and coercive (Farley 2004; Hughes 2000; Jeffreys 2009; Miriam 2005). MacKinnon (2011) describes this abolitionist position:

Slavery is internationally defined as the exercise of powers of ownership over a person. When pimps sell you for sex to johns who buy you, and you want to leave but cannot, you are a sex slave by international legal definition whether you have ever been beaten or crossed a border. That women who are pimped are exercising “agency” as independent entrepreneurs is a fantasy of privilege. (291)

MacKinnon concisely addresses the three major components of an abolitionist definition: human trafficking is primarily the sex trafficking of women; women are almost exclusively exploited by men serving as purchasers of sex or market facilitators; and women can never fully express agency in commercial sexual exchanges because of extenuating circumstances, including poverty and power dynamics between the genders, that creates the conditions for coercion and trafficking. This perspective dovetails with politically conservative and faith-based morality arguments that see sexual exchanges outside of the boundaries of heterosexual as damaging and in need of regulation or restriction (Bernstein 2007; 2012; Gulati 2011; Zimmerman 2013). Thus,

anti-trafficking abolitionists, while mobilizing under sometimes vastly different ideologies, define sex work as a form of trafficking to be eradicated, and sex workers as a population who can be served by anti-trafficking service provision.

With respect to anti-trafficking work, the application of definitions can have major material consequences for clients whose exploitation or trauma is not defined as trafficking. According to Hoyle, Bosworth, and Dempsey (2011), “a victim’s failure to experience or frame her experience in terms of a typical trafficking narrative may deny her the status of an ‘ideal victim’ and the credibility that attaches to it” (322). This credibility can take the form of access to resources and legibility as a survivor in legal mechanisms. As Farrell, McDevitt, and Fahy (2008) explain further, “Definitional disagreements often have serious consequences for potential victims, such as determining whether or not they will receive benefits which allow them to receive medical, cash assistance and to stay in the country lawfully for some time” (105).

While definitions allow service providers to identify trafficked persons worthy of services and assistance, they can also cause real damage as a gatekeeping tool. As Chiarello (2015) notes in her study of pharmacists and prescription drug misuse, “At issue is who decides what counts as legitimate” (90). When faced with new social concerns, discrepant understandings of problems, or issues without legal or organizational precedent, frontline workers may be the first to qualify or provide judgment on a particular issue in their workplace, creating a new standard or narrative that then gets passed to other street-level bureaucrats. For Chiarello’s (2015) pharmacists, they are judging on whether or not a patient is in legitimate need of medical care under a doctor’s supervision or in illegitimate need of illegal drugs for misuse or reselling. This framework holds for trafficked persons who may be deemed in legitimate need of services or in illegitimate need of carceral interventions. If individuals seeking services are

interpreted as a criminal actor—for example, an undocumented person who entered the country illegally or a sex worker who could be arrested for prostitution³—they may face a host of punishments⁴ instead of finding their needs met.

For this project, I set out to broadly understand how frontline workers in the Midwest conduct anti-trafficking work and describe their encounters with exploited or trafficked persons. I was interested in both the practical aspects of the work—the material conditions of street-level bureaucracies—as well as the various discourses service providers used to talk about their experiences. Given the competing ideologies and range of stakeholders present in anti-trafficking work, I expected to see variations in the definitions service providers used across and within sectors.

Analyzing Definitions and Judgments of Human Trafficking

As more fully addressed in the *Methodological Appendix*, I conducted interviews from February 2016 to July 2017 with 54 service providers in the legal/law enforcement, medical, non-profit, social service, and foster care sectors. For this particular chapter, I wanted to narrow my analysis to definitions and perceptions of sex and labor trafficking. Thus, I used a hybrid methodology, starting with predetermined codes but adding relevant codes through open coding (Bradley et. al 2007). I began with three categories of open codes based on the TVPA definition of human trafficking. As my analysis progressed, I added more refined codes to reflect the practices of meaning making addressed by my interviewees—legal tools, normative judgments, and moments of friction. Table 1 summarizes these codes and their definitions:

³ Across the dissertation, I use the term “prostitution” when referring to the criminal statute of engaging in commercial sex work. When talking about individuals engaged in commercial sex, I will use the term “sex workers.”

⁴ For more on the pattern of arresting, incarcerating, and deporting trafficked persons and sex workers, see Bernstein (2010; 2012; 2014), Grant (2014), Goździak (2016), and Rivers-Moore (2014). Chapter Two will more thoroughly address these issues.

Table 1: Code Book for Definition-Focused Analysis

Code	Description
Legal tool	Definition informed by legislation and statutes to determine who is a trafficked person and who is not
Normative judgment	Definition informed by ideological beliefs and socially constructed norms about identity, victimhood, and agency to determine who is a trafficked person and who is not
Moment of friction	Failure of definition to determine who is a trafficked person and who is not; conflict and/or tension between legislation/statutes and ideological beliefs/socially constructed norms; does not account for lived experiences of client
Labor trafficking	Labor or services induced by force, fraud, or coercion; involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery
Sex trafficking	Commercial sex acts induced by force, fraud, or coercion
Domestic minor sex trafficking	Commercial sex acts performed by an individual under the age of 18

Making Meaning of Human Trafficking

In the following sections, I analyze the two major ways that frontline workers operationalize definitions in their work with exploited or trafficked persons. Service providers can make meaning of their clients through:

- 1) *legal tools*: understandings informed by legislation and statutes to determine who is a trafficked person and who is not;
- 2) *normative judgments*: moral beliefs and socially constructed norms about identity, victimhood, and agency to determine who is a trafficked person and who is not.

When frontline workers use definitions as legal tools, they are perhaps most explicitly following the claim that street-level bureaucrats create and implement policy. Conversely, normative judgments highlight how the discretionary latitude of street-level work creates the conditions for stereotypical assessment to take priority (Lipsky 2010). In sum, legal tools are definitions that lead with or prioritize a legal understanding of human trafficking while normative judgments are definitions that lead with or prioritize a moral classification of human trafficking. Service

providers described encounters where their use of legal tools or normative judgments worked, where these definitions met the conditions of representing their clients' experiences to some degree. Table 2 summarizes these findings into generalized categories.

Table 2: Categories of Human Trafficking Definitions

Legal Tools		Normative Judgments	
Legislation	Federal human trafficking legislation	Social Constructions	Exclusive to sex trafficking of young women
	State-level human trafficking legislation		
Statutes	Criminal acts	Moral Judgments	Conflation with sex work
	Fiscal regulations		Age gaps in relationships
			Networks of movement and mobile patterns
			Structural vulnerabilities

However, there were also encounters where these conditions could not be met, which I call *moments of friction*. As Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) explain, these conditions are an unavoidable part of street-level work: “When law, policy, and rules are ill-matched to workers’ views of fairness and appropriate action, street-level work smolders with conflict over what is the right decision and what is the right thing to do” (9). Moments of friction emerged when service providers attempted to use a legal tool to make meaning of a client’s experience but could not reconcile this definition with the normative judgments they brought to their understandings of human trafficking. When these legal tools and normative judgments were placed in conflict, the ease with which frontline workers could process clients into trafficked persons broke down and revealed the challenges of defining human trafficking, even for those involved in anti-trafficking work.

While these are the thematic areas that emerged during qualitative analysis, it is important to note that these are not prescriptive or fixed categories. As Chiarello (2015) describes her qualitative analysis in a similarly binary framework, “Keep in mind that separating

these orientations is a heuristic exercise that more clearly reveals the dimensions of each, but in [...] lived experience these orientations overlap in ways that are difficult to tease apart” (98-9). Service providers do not exclusively rely upon one method in their work. Because of the inherent meaning making in frontline work, they can use definitions as legal tools for one client, while relying upon a normative judgment for another. They may change their methods of operationalizing definitions over time, especially as they gain expertise working with trafficked clients. They may encounter clients who require them to use both legal tools and normative judgments to make meaning of their work. In fact, as many of the examples listed below demonstrate, these definitions can appear to be overlapping and mutually reinforcing. Even with these entanglements, these definitions point to specific ways that service providers make meaning of their work with respect to their clients’ identities and need—or lack of need—for services or interventions.

Categories of Legal Tools

Federal and State-Level Human Trafficking Legislation

Human trafficking legislation exists at both the state and federal levels in the United States, and service providers—particularly those with some connection to the legal system—can access these statutory definitions in their work. In many cases, this legal definition is a requirement of the work they do. Even though these definitions require a service provider’s interpretation, many interviewees described these legal tools as limiting discretion or agency. As one immigration lawyer explained, “My direct services really are limited to that legal representation. And so as far as that goes, it’s a little more specific, cause I do have to go by the legal definitions” (interview 2/17/16).

Many frontline workers made explicit or implicit reference to the phrasing of the TVPA when defining human trafficking. For example, a law enforcement officer stated, “I mean, [...] some kid being trafficked or even an adult being trafficked [...] with coercion or fraud or force, we don’t want that,” echoing the language of force, fraud, or coercion found across the TVPA and state-level legislation (interview 12/5/16). A legal staffer used similar terminology: “You know, the force aspect is [...] what we’re concentrating on. It becomes a little bit more difficult if it’s just coercion, without force or fraud [...], but more often than not, there’s some level of force involved” (interview 10/6/16).

The age limit established in the TVPA and state-level policies—making all commercial sex with individuals under the age of 18 legally defined as sex trafficking—was explicitly mentioned in many definitions of trafficking. One victim services coordinator explained how the definition of domestic minor sex trafficking addressed consent:

We overlook it [consent], we overlook it for human trafficking. [...] Consent isn’t even a necessity unless you’re under the age of 18. Then it falls under the statute, that under the age of 18, then you don’t even have to prove [...] that there was any threat, fraud, or coercion. (interview 2/15/17)

Unlike those over the age of 18, minors do not have to prove force, fraud, or coercion occurred while being trafficked. A state-level government worker referenced this age limit with respect to a state-level policy change, describing how a recent statute in her state decriminalized prostitution for minors, making it so that youth engaged in commercial sex and subsequently arrested could not get charged for the higher crime of prostitution (interview 3/23/16). While the trauma of arrest is still present, this change made state and federal level policy definitions consistent.

A law enforcement officer in the same state addressed this parallel policy in describing how the legal definition affected a sting operation in his department:

And especially with the way [state] and federal statutes are written is we had [...] two more under-aged girls that showed up at vice things. So we actually had a location set up when we're doing a weeklong prostitution sting there, where we had men posing as johns to call [...] prostitutes and also females posing as prostitutes [...]. They were getting calls, and we were calling the people and twice we had 17-year-old girls and they can't actually consent to that. So the people that brought them actually got charged with human trafficking. (interview 9/22/16)

Because minors can never consent to commercial sex under these statutes, these young women were identified and defined as victims of trafficking. The individuals who brought them to the sting operation were defined as traffickers in this context, demonstrating how this process also works to mark those who are considered legally accountable in the exploitation of others.

Criminal Acts

Additionally, frontline workers used the definitions of criminal acts in an oppositional framework, defining human trafficking against commercial sex, production of child pornography, drug-related crimes, and workplace safety requirements. Importantly, this is not a moment of friction. In these instances, street-level bureaucrats did not see a discrepancy between the legal definitions they were mobilizing and the lived experiences of their clients. Rather, they saw statutory distinctions between criminal acts and human trafficking as a tool to help determine what crime, if any, had occurred. One of the major differences frontline workers described was a difference in responsibility—human trafficking involved victims who were not complicit in their victimization, while criminal acts involve parties knowingly breaking a law. This distinction is problematic, as it erases the reality that some survivors of trafficking have committed crimes that do not negate their exploitation (Chapkis 2003; Musto 2009; Srikantiah 2007). For example, another law enforcement officer described the difference between the sex trafficking survivors and individuals engaged in commercial sex he encountered in his work:

You know, we want to get all of them out of that life, but frankly we don't have the ability and the tools for [...] when you have a 25 or 30-year-old woman that's

consciously making this decision. You know, a lot of times our only option is [...] the criminal process and hoping that [...] the courts can make you do something [...] along that line. (interview 9/7/16)

Here, the criminalized act of prostitution is legally defined through age and agency against trafficking, where age is relevant and agency may be compromised. If an individual is acting with some kind of consciousness about their decision to engage in commercial sex—and if they are not legally considered to be a minor—then they are engaged in a criminal practice that can only be deterred through court proceedings and potential punishments.

These other criminal definitions can be used as a gateway to discovering a trafficking case. One law enforcement officer explained how human trafficking emerged through investigating different criminal acts:

And how we discover it is a lot of times by other investigations and narcotic investigations or we just happen to look into it. We'll make a call and a disturbance call or a suspicious party call and that will lead—if you know the right questions, if you know how to dig into it, you kind of pull the trigger on getting the investigation going pretty easy. (interview 10/26/16).

An attorney offered a similar example, using the legal definition of a standard 40-hour workweek to understand labor trafficking:

Well sometimes you just come up on a case where you come along, and just as part of the evidence there are [...] eight guys living in an apartment and they speak [...] an indigenous dialect (laughs). You know, I don't know if they're being trafficked or not, but it certainly appears to have some risk there. I mean, if they're all working 80 hours a week somewhere. (interview 11/3/16)

Against legal norms for salaried work, this excessively lengthy workweek could be the gateway to discovering and building a trafficking case.

Fiscal Regulations

Interestingly, two service providers introduced fiscal regulations as a way to supplement using definitions as legal tools. Both an attorney and a law enforcement officer described how to

treat trafficking as a financial crime, albeit for two different purposes. According to the attorney, building a paper trail of financial and electronic records can be a way to circumvent an uncooperative victim of trafficking in an investigative process (interview 9/8/16). The law enforcement officer used the methods of a tax evasion investigation to support a labor trafficking case:

So [...] when we did our bust on that case, [...] we actually had [State] Department of Revenue. They were with us when we did the bust. [...] We never had to take the case that way because it pled out, but we were looking also for all the tax records, which was part of the questions we had early on. Well, the suspect questions were, “So when did you file your taxes? You know, we just found X amount of money. Did you pay taxes on all that cash? [...] And [...] what were the rules with your employees? [...] Is there a signed contract? Where are the W-2s?” So those are questions we’re trying to add in to the investigation to make sure we’re not missing a component, a key. [...] Harder to prove the labor trafficking, but that’s why you go to W-2s, contracts, those kinda things. (interview 12/5/16)

By looping in his state’s Department of Revenue, this law enforcement officer was able to tap into a new set of definitions as legal tools to use if his labor trafficking definitions fell short.

Categories of Normative Judgments

Exclusive to Sex Trafficking of Young Women

Some of the same stereotypes that scholars of critical trafficking studies attempt to dismantle—human trafficking as sex trafficking of young women (Srikanitah 2007)—appeared when using definitions as normative judgments. For example, across all interviews, human trafficking was almost exclusively described as sex trafficking, with the majority of participants indicating more expertise and encounters with sex trafficking survivors as opposed to labor trafficking survivors. Human trafficking was also described as feminized; as one law enforcement officer questioned, “Have you gotten into kind of the model of what the kid is that is usually getting trafficked? Usually it is girls” (interview 9/22/16). As anti-trafficking scholars have thoughtfully addressed (Howard 2014; Lutnick 2016), human trafficking is not only

experienced by young women. However, the rhetorical framing of trafficking as violence against women has led to activism and advocacy solely focused on the effects of exploitation on specifically gendered groups (Bumiller 2008; Suchland 2015).

Conflation with Sex Work

Some interviewees, especially those whose organizations were not bound to particular legal requirements for service provision, did not see any distinction between sex work and sex trafficking, even though they are legally two separate phenomena in the US. One crisis pregnancy staffer stated, “I’ve had someone who was an exotic dancer. And so, I consider that to be being trafficked” (interview 7/25/16). Even though stripping is a legally regulated industry, it is folded into her definition of human trafficking because of the contested morality of sex work. A domestic violence advocate relayed an anecdote about another organization’s leader describing human trafficking in terms of commercial sex:

But then I think often what happens with human trafficking, like that Executive Director who said, “You being hit in the face by your pimp with the butt of your gun.” [...] There’s some of that [...] American Puritan culture around sex, the sale of sex, worthiness, who deserves services. (interview 9/23/16)

While she said she did not use this particular definition in her work, she saw this at play in how others in her community defined human trafficking as violent, taboo sex work controlled by another individual.

These examples are not surprising, given the larger practice of conflating sex work and sex trafficking in anti-trafficking efforts (Jackson 2016; Musto 2009; Peters 2013). Here, these normative judgments work against a legal framework that criminalizes certain forms of sex work, complicating the lines between victims and criminals. Organizations may use a moral definition of sex trafficking to extend services to sex workers, but those same individuals may

face arrests and fines within the criminal justice system because of the illegality of commercial sex in the majority of US jurisdictions.

Age Gaps in Relationships

Another common normative judgment that appeared with respect to sex trafficking was the power dynamics that exist between older men and younger women in romantic relationships. While these power dynamics could be interpreted as legally coercive—or even folded into the age requirement of the TVPA—I categorized these definitions as normative judgments because of the notable absence of *any* statutory language. It was not a legal understanding of coercion or DMST per the TVPA but rather a moral understanding of impropriety in relationships that guided this definition. For example, a state-level government worker described a common trope of trafficking as having a much older, controlling boyfriend (interview 3/23/16). These power dynamics were generally attributed to relationships where one member was legally a minor, and a dramatic age gap between partners seemed to create risk and suspicion of trafficking. As an immigration lawyer explained while discussing a case of suspected trafficking, “There was another case which came in [...] where people, two men were bringing an underage girl from [...] Colorado to North Carolina” (interview 8/12/16). A law enforcement officer provided an example of human trafficking with a young woman with patterns of running away in his community:

And she was constantly associated with people that were older than her. Here we’re talking 18 to 20 years of age, and it wasn’t always just males, sometimes females that she was associated with. And eventually, last summer, she ended up running off again, and they found her in [City], [State], and she was tied up in some human trafficking thing up there. (interview 11/16/16)

Using a similar moral claim, a juvenile justice worker described an encounter between her staff, a potential DMST youth, and herself:

And here they were with an older gentleman—whether it’s a male or a female—it instantly spikes in us, “Okay where were they taking you? What were you gonna do when you got there? What have you done along the way to be able to eat? What have you done to get food and clothing and everything?” You know we’re trying to ask those questions to ascertain, is this a victim of human trafficking? (interview 12/1/16)

While these three examples show how the age gap overlaps with some of the categories identified below—trafficking as mobile and trafficking as a survival strategy—they centrally hinge on the initial factor of a minor being discovered with an older person. Sexual exploitation is implicit and trafficking is assumed to have inevitably occurred when youth are found in these partnerships.

Networks of Movement and Mobile Patterns

While human trafficking was generally defined in terms that focused on smaller, interpersonal relationships—the aforementioned older partners, as well as market facilitators and family members—a few frontline workers used normative judgments that constructed trafficking as exploitation involving groups of controlled individuals. While some research indicates that trafficking networks are far less common than interpersonal exploitation (Molland 2012; Schloenhardt 1999; Snajdr 2013; Tripp and McMahon-Howard 2016; Zhang 2011; Zhang and Chin 2002), these service providers drew upon images of trafficking rings of multiple women controlled by one (typically male) individual. For example, many interviewees frequently described massage parlors as trafficking rings, with groups of women forced to live and work in the same location, monitored by one or two massage parlor owners. According to a victim services coordinator, “Because human trafficking, if in fact it’s a true [...] trafficked victim, there may be five to 10 girls that are affected by the actions of that perpetrator” (interview 2/15/17). This concept of a “true” case of human trafficking supports a normative judgment of trafficking as contingent on the presence of a group or network. The implicit assumption is that

certain forms of exploitation cannot be considered trafficking and, by extension, that survivors whose experiences are contained to more interpersonal forms of violence are somehow not as legitimate as those survivors who were part of trafficking rings or networks.

Mobility and movement were critical components for many normative judgments. Even though human trafficking legislation recognizes the transportation of victims, movement is not a required facet to prove trafficking occurred—force, fraud, or coercion remains paramount. Someone can be legally considered trafficked under this rubric and never move from place to place. However, many frontline workers described their experiences with human trafficking as inherently involving movement. For example, one law enforcement officer explained that he had not seen many human trafficking cases in his community because all of the crimes his jurisdiction identified had been locally contained: “In the last few years, our child sex abuse cases have been [...] on the rise. That’s not really human trafficking because most of it, [...] if not all of it is all local based” (interview 8/10/16). While there is certainly a difference between some cases of abuse and trafficking, the locality of the parties involved should not be a factor in determining between the two. Interestingly, this sheriff did have experience with human trafficking in an earlier case that involved movement, as a trafficker was apprehended while transporting a minor through his county. This particular case, while not emblematic of all forms of human trafficking, seemed to function as a baseline against which he measured other instances of potential trafficking.

Service providers made references to roadways and major highway systems that intersect in the Midwest as facilitating trafficking. One foster care worker was concerned about the lack of human trafficking calls from regions near a particular highway in her scope of services, stating, “I don’t get those phone calls in [nearby counties] in particular. [...] I don’t get those calls from

[City] and [...] they're off [the highway] too. I mean the places where you would think that you should be seeing a lot of that issue, I just don't get" (interview 11/17/16). An attorney offered a similar, movement-based definition:

[Town] is a very small town where, we're right on the interstate but there's such a short spurt of interstate, we don't see nearly as much as some of the other communities. I think that if there were—you know we're talking about 8/10ths of a mile [...] on the interstate and in the 8/10ths of a mile, we were able to catch one human trafficker. What that tells me is that any county that has more than 8/10ths of a mile there, it's very possible that there are human traffickers [...] going through our state. (interview 8/10/16)

In these normative judgments, human trafficking is something transitory and temporary, occurring to those individuals passing through particular communities. Roadways set up specific paths for frontline workers to pay attention to in their anti-trafficking efforts.

Structural Vulnerabilities

A smaller subset of normative judgments defined human trafficking from a structural perspective. Namely, certain broader structural inequities facilitated the climate for exploitative survival strategies, such as poverty, family instability, and housing insecurity. Regardless of whether or not any legal trafficking had occurred—or whether clients described their experiences in the language of trafficking—service providers were compelled to offer assistance and resources in the face of these larger needs. For example, one foster care worker explained, “A lot of what we see is kids on the run and sex being expected, or some type of sexual act being expected in return for a place to stay or something to eat” (interview 11/17/16). Similarly, a youth services worker spoke about the exploitation she saw in her work with LGBTQ+ youth. Some of her clients with housing insecurities were responding to a lack of accessible shelter beds, both in terms of quantity and friendliness towards queer youth, by exchanging sex for housing:

I know our young gay male population is engaging in survival sex. I know they are. It's a part of the culture, unfortunately. My females, I'm not really sure. I have a feeling they probably are engaging in some sort of either survival sex or just unhealthy relationships to be able to have a place to stay. And our trans population is definitely engaging in either prostitution or survival sex. So I think that is an underserved population. (interview 12/7/16)

Because of a structural concern—here, an anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment in her region that made fundraising for queer youth-specific services limited and thus perpetuated a climate of limited resources—this frontline worker identified a survival strategy that led to exploitation and trafficking. As Lutnick (2016) discussed in her study of DMST service provision, “Young people stop trading sex when the reasons why they started are addressed through other means” (42). If more housing were available for LGBTQ+ youth, then these youth would not have to engage in commercial sex for basic needs, a form of DMST.

Moments of Friction

Across interviews, frontline workers also revealed they encountered challenges when definitions failed—when clients' lived experiences could not be neatly processed into organizational categories of victim, survivor, or criminal. The ease with which service providers could use legal tools faltered when those definitions came into tension, sometimes direct opposition, with the normative judgments providers made about human trafficking. These failures resulted in a subset of definitions that I define as moments of friction—when the definitions cannot expand or contract enough to be used effectively by service providers. For example, service providers addressed a major moment of friction embedded in using legal tools as definitions: the strict statutory standard by state or federal policy may not fit with the client base that comes to them seeking services. A law enforcement investigator discussed how, even with the legal definition of a trafficking violation, sometimes victims might fall outside that scope, even if they have been trafficked. Thus, it is subsequently harder to move forward with a

criminal case because it means this client might not be legible as a survivor from a criminal justice perspective (interview 9/27/16).

Even if an individual has been subject to force, fraud, or coercion, other aspects of their identity—and the normative judgments associated with those aspects—can complicate their legal perception as a victim. As an anti-trafficking advocate explained, undocumented persons are particularly vulnerable when their citizenship status is considered more criminally relevant than the exploitation they faced:

In the labor trafficking, one especially gets [...], “Well, we just thought they were [...] undocumented.” [...] They often are forced into committing other crimes in order to survive, in order to appease their trafficker or whatever, and so they get caught for that crime. And [...] then they [police officers] just don’t look any farther. (interview 12/9/16)

In this example, the force, fraud, and coercion of trafficking are ostensibly trumped by the legal definitions of undocumented citizenship—a deportable crime—and unspecified criminal acts. The normative judgment that undocumented persons are criminals, that the illegality of their migration translates to their personal character and deservingness of assistance, bubbles beneath the surface. Even though individuals’ experiences and identities are often far more complex than the definitions assigned to human trafficking, these stigmatized, criminalized components effectively shut down any sense of recourse or justice within the legal realm.

Conversely, the definition may also be too narrow for other clients. A legal staffer described how the specificity of statutes created challenges when working with client referrals:

Probably one of the biggest challenges right now is that a lot of the [...] a lot of the activism pressure on human trafficking is to [...] identify all commercial sex activity as human trafficking. And legally, that’s not correct. Legally, there has to be some, if there’s an adult involved, there has to be some force, fraud, or coercion in order for that to be considered human trafficking. And so unfortunately, some of the times, people come here and they’ve been involved in adult commercial sex trafficking or [...] commercial sex activities. And they have some legal need and they want to be considered a human trafficking victim and, [...] at least at the laws stand now, [...] that is not correct. And if we were to try to present their case to law enforcement on a federal level, they would not

recognize that as human trafficking. Because the federal government allows for the possibility that an adult can choose to participate in a commercial sex activity. [...] In my opinion, the most difficult thing is you have somebody who does need help, but they really don't fit the definition of what the [organization] is set up to do. (interview 10/6/16)

Here, the normative judgment that conflates of sex work and sex trafficking—which the federal TVPA does not create space for within its text—actually ends up creating unique challenges for this particular legal staffer. Individuals may come to him with real legal concerns, such as custody or child support issues, but he cannot offer them free legal services because they do not fit the TVPA's definition of force, fraud, or coercion.

While the slippage between sex work and sex trafficking may seem nebulous or rooted exclusively in discourse, this legal staffer addressed the real, material effects of this conflated definition on individuals in need of legal services. Stated plainly, these survivors are harmed by these definitions. Both feminist and anti-trafficking activists are notoriously, contentiously embroiled in sex work debates (Grant 2014; Kempadoo 2015; MacKinnon 2011): whether individuals can ever consent to engage in commercial sexual activities, whether all commercial sex is inherently exploitative, whether sex workers deserve protections under the law. If organizations define sex work as sex trafficking knowing its instability against legal tools, this moment of friction disproportionately affects clients. In this example, the legal staffer engaged in the normative practice of frontline workers who use definitions as gatekeeping tools, even when he expressed ambivalence about this practice. He added, “We try to direct them to somebody else that might be able to help them. [...] We don't have [...] unlimited [...] resources, and we do have enough victims that need actual legal assistance. But we can't take away from them to provide legal assistance to everybody” (interview 10/6/16). Services are rationed (Lipsky 2010)

here, even though these clients are defined in other organizational contexts that primarily use normative judgments as valid survivors who qualify for assistance.

Other frontline workers discussed definitions in ways that—potentially inadvertently—created a hierarchy of legally defined trafficking. As one law enforcement officer described, the trafficking he investigated in his community looked different from the idea of trafficking as an extreme form of slavery:

Like I said, [...] we've been working a case on and off for the last, since 2008 [...]. You know, probably the closest where there's trafficking and some kiddie porn, and I think trafficking and [...] these young girls. You know, not to the extent of, "This is my slave, I'll sell her to you," [...] but to the extent of Mom being severely addicted to drugs [...] and having no problem letting an adult male into the room [...] with some methamphetamine [...] and have his way with her daughter. (interview 12/8/16)

He brought up multiple forms of trafficking that could fit into legal statutes: trafficking of minors who may also be in child pornography; trafficking of an individual for unknown purposes but named here as slavery; and trafficking of a minor by a family member. None of these definitions are inherently better or worse than the others. However, this interviewee qualified the trafficking he defined in his community against what he considered the more legally relevant definition of trafficking as slavery. Using this definition as a baseline for what constitutes trafficking has ramifications for survivors whose experiences, while still exploitative and traumatic, cannot compare to total enslavement.

Much like frontline workers described when using legal tools, normative judgments could also be used to complicate notions of identity and victimhood, creating an environment where individuals could be misrecognized as criminal actors instead of trafficked persons. Instead of having limited paths to legal justice, this misrecognition frequently complicated access to services—as a domestic violence advocate explained, "If [...] the local community is defining those folks as prostitutes, or illegal immigrants, [...] or both, or drug users, or crazy, [...] all of

those things affect, I think, the way that our programs are able to serve them” (interview 9/23/16). These stigmatized identities used by members of her community created a more challenging environment to fund and disseminate services to trafficking survivors. A law enforcement officer provided a similar example of public perception complicating anti-trafficking work with DMST victims:

I think society has a problem seeing that, having somebody so young, because they sit there and think, “[...] I have a 15 year old at home. [...] And she’s not that disrespectful.” [...] And they start judging the victim very harshly and unfairly. And they hold the victim to a different standard and not understand where the victim came from and why the victim is in that situation and why the victim is forced to make those decisions. You know, they usually look at it as, “Oh they’re making those decisions, they’re making money [...].” Because they’re blinded, [...] they don’t see what she, the life that the victim has [...] lived, so that’s hard. (interview 12/5/16)

Here, community members’ ideas about identity—what it means to be a teenager—are complicated by the lived reality of DMST youth. Instead of having an empathetic approach that attempts to account for the challenges in these youths’ lives, this law enforcement officer describes the tension that emerges when community members use generalizations and stereotypes to mischaracterize these experiences of trafficking.

Conclusion

Frontline workers who encounter trafficked persons in the scope of their work use definitions as legal tools and as normative judgments to make meaning of their clients’ experiences. When clients fit with statutory definitions or dominant social constructions, they are processed as trafficking survivors and routed to services and assistance. If their narratives hew closely to a legal definition or normative judgment—whichever is used in an encounter to qualify victimhood and credibility—then survivors may be added to a frontline worker’s caseload and directed to housing, mental health services, job training, or legal pathways to citizenship. As I will explore in the next chapter, this path is not without challenges—for example, trafficked

persons may be required to take part in potentially retraumatizing criminal investigations or retell their exploitation for multiple audiences—but it is a path that can often only be accessed with a particular definition.

Those survivors whose experiences cannot fit neatly into these definitions cause moments of friction and challenge frontline workers' ability to disseminate services. These challenges are not just theoretical. Individuals in need of legal assistance, medical care, or social service programs may be parsed out of service provision through the arbitrary designation of the trafficked label. Additionally, in the face of increasingly underfunded street-level bureaucracies, frontline workers may have to resort to using definitions as rationing tools, drawing the line between whose exploitation can be addressed within the system as it currently stands and whose simply require more resources and time than are available. Survivors may be appropriately defined but, as later chapters will address, have no “next step” in their communities to resources beyond identification.

Frontline work determines how trafficked persons are identified, judged, and directed to services. We must, therefore, account for the ways that definitions expand and constrict service provision. This is not to say that we need to categorize every form of violence and exploitation as trafficking, as in the case of anti-sex work activists who take a prohibitive stance against all forms of commercial sex and frequently conflate sex work with sex trafficking. Nor is it to say that we need more narrow definitions of trafficking that would draw tighter borders around those deemed worthy or unworthy of the trafficking label. Instead, we must confront the reality that survivors of trauma, violence, and trafficking may all need a range of services, from mental health care to jobs training to housing assistance to subsidized childcare. Meeting these needs may need to come before the categorization and classification that currently precludes anti-

trafficking work. Providing adequate funding for these services will not get rid of the role of judgment in frontline workers' practices—and SLBT tells us that discretion never disappears, only bubbles up in new ways (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003)—but accessible services for a range of needs and experiences may not need the same gatekeeping. If frontline workers in already resource-strapped organizations are going to be tasked with anti-trafficking efforts, it is impossible to believe they can manage their caseloads without a more expansive range of resources for the various traumas their clients may name in their encounters.

Chapter 3: Anti-Trafficking Efforts and the Carceral State: Punishment and Justice

In June 2017, the US State Department published its 17th iteration of the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, which analyzes and ranks countries according to their adherence to the TVPA's minimum standards of eliminating trafficking. Recent years have used a guiding emphasis in framing their findings; for example, 2015's TIP report focused on global labor markets and supply chains. The 2017 report centers on prosecution, the "responsibility of governments to criminalize human trafficking and hold offenders accountable" (n. pag). In his opening letter, then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson describes the report's goal "to assist governments in identifying threats so law enforcement agencies around the world can respond effectively and gain insight into where human trafficking remains most severe" (2017, n. pag).

Ambassador-at-Large Susan Coppedge's introduction also foregrounds prosecution, what she calls "an essential component of the 3P paradigm of prosecution, protection, and prevention" (2017, n. pag). She later writes, "A victim-centered and trauma-informed approach requires, first and foremost, that the criminal justice system not penalize victims of human trafficking when they are forced to commit crimes as a direct result of their exploitation" (2017, n. pag). There is no mention of what prevention or protection looks like in this paradigm, no example of what victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches⁵ can do beyond the criminal justice system.

Ambassador-at-Large Coppedge provides an anecdote of one trafficking survivor's path to

⁵ The terms "victim-centered" and "survivor-centered" are often used to describe anti-trafficking efforts without much glossing of the phrasing. Generally, if a process is considered victim or survivor-centered, it means that a trafficked person's needs and feelings are acknowledged and prioritized throughout the range of post-identification services (Farrell, Owens, and McDevitt 2014; Musto 2013). "Trauma-informed" is often used by individuals within the social welfare community with respect to a practice of care—anti-trafficking or otherwise—that "responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices" and "seeks to actively resist re-traumatization" (SAMHSA 2015, n. pag).

justice, but it is centered on a successful criminal prosecution and restitution paid. While this certainly describes a form of justice, it is focused on closure through carceral means, only one example of what justice could look like in anti-trafficking efforts.

The 2017 TIP report is only one example of the power of prosecution in shaping and impacting anti-human trafficking efforts in the United States. While the Three Ps framework establishes a more holistic approach to balance prosecution with protections for survivors and preventive strategies to eliminate trafficking at the root, criminal justice strategies often take precedent (Baker 2013; Chuang 2014; Merry 2016; Musto 2016). Even as some advocates engaged in frontline service provision seek to disrupt and dismantle these practices (Musto 2008), it is hard to deny the effects of centering a criminal justice approach, such as using quantitative measures of prosecutions to establish anti-trafficking success (Brunovskis and Skilbrei 2016; Farrell et. al 2016) or making access to services contingent upon cooperation with an investigation or trial (Berg 2015; Peters 2013; Todres 2009).

This chapter seeks to show the complicated relationship between service providers engaged in anti-trafficking work and carceral logic, or “a punishment mindset” (Kaba and Meiners 2014). As anti-trafficking efforts are increasingly equated with practices of incarceration, detention, deportation, and judicial prosecution, service providers must work within systems that prioritize justice only through these mechanisms. Across a broad range of sectors, service providers articulated how carceral logic focused on punitive ends shaped their work and their trafficked clients’ experiences. Even when described as negative presence for their clients, interviewees indicated that criminal justice practices are the primary means of achieving justice and closure in anti-trafficking efforts. Assistance and redress can often only be accessed through formal verification or informal validation from law enforcement officers,

limiting the avenues to support for survivors whose experiences are not legible through this lens. In the face of the predominance of carceral logic and its limitations for addressing trafficked persons' needs, anti-trafficking advocates and stakeholders must call for a renewed focus on alternative forms of justice outside of criminal justice models.

Feminist Interventions and the Carceral State

Anti-human trafficking policy and practice is deeply influenced by the larger history of feminism and women's groups using punitive measures of the state to address interpersonal violence. Gottschalk (2008) summarizes the historical precedent of feminist reforms becoming ingratiated into state-affiliated projects of control:

The women's reform movements and waves of feminist agitation that have appeared off and on since the nineteenth century in the United States helped to construct institutions and establish practices that bolstered stridently conservative tendencies in penal policy. The contemporary women's movement in the United States is no exception. Its commitment to greater gender equality by reducing rape and domestic violence got funneled through a specific political and institutional context and was transformed in the process. The result was a more punitive environment that contributed to the construction of a carceral state that warehouses a disproportionate number of blacks and other minorities (and a rapidly increasing number of women). (241)

By turning to institutions and government systems, issues of gender equity and violence against women became wrapped up in larger projects of arresting perpetrators, identifying victims through surveillance, and managing those identified through bureaucratic mechanisms (Bumiller 2008; Crenshaw 2012; Kandaswamy 2010; Richie 2000; Spade 2013). As Brown (1992) writes, these institutional bodies may replicate larger, gendered power imbalances in their efforts to ameliorate violence against women: "Beneath a thin exterior of transformed/reformed gender identity and concern for women, the state bears all the familiar elements of male dominance" (28).

Anti-rape and anti-domestic violence advocacy are considered the cornerstone of modern anti-violence against women movements within the United States, with the 1994 passage of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) serving as the landmark legislative victory for feminist advocates. VAWA created the federal Office on Violence Against Women, increased legal penalties against domestic violence, and offered funding to support shelter services and law enforcement. Kandaswamy (2010) explains that, through this funding and programmatic implementation, VAWA established “domestic violence not just as a problem of national significance but also as one that could be understood within the nationalist language of individual responsibility, family values, and crime control” (258). Domestic violence, in this context, is a problem that law enforcement can identify, prosecutors can take to court, and case managers can buffer against through mandated therapy, housing, and job training programs. However, not all anti-violence advocates responded affirmatively to VAWA’s law and order approach. For example, Crenshaw (2012) identifies contention surrounding VAWA’s “embrace of mandatory arrest policies along with federal support to encourage local police departments to process domestic assault complaints aggressively,” responses that some advocates challenged for promoting a pro-policing stance that “would likely result in higher fatalities and an increase in arrests for women of color” (1452-3).

One major effect of these feminist interventions is the positioning of violence as a universalized experience—the “it can happen to anyone” frame. This construction was not implemented maliciously but rather, as Richie (2000) explains, “part of a strategic attempt by early activists to avoid individualizing the problem of domestic and sexual violence, to focus on the social dimensions of the problem of gender violence, and to resist the stigmatization of race and class commonly associated with mainstream responses to social problems” (1134). However,

in their attempts to demonstrate the universality of violence across race, class, faith, and educational attainment, feminist activists inadvertently placed white women's interests at the forefront of the movement (Bumiller 2008; Crenshaw 2012; Kandaswamy 2010). Richie (2000) asserts that "when the national dialogue on violence against women became legitimized and institutionalized, the notion that 'It could happen to anyone' meant that 'It could happen to those in power'" (1135).

This individualization also reframes violence against women as a specific problem faced by unique women, as opposed to an effect of structural oppression and inequality. Kandaswamy (2010) argues the "increasing emphasis on criminalization redefined domestic violence as an individual crime rather than as a symptom of patriarchal oppression." Shifting away from a systemic analysis of violence facilitates the use of law enforcement practices to address crimes on a case-by-case basis, "replacing an analysis of domestic violence as a political problem with the idea that perpetrators were criminals and women innocent victims in need of protection" (261). By casting rape and assault as an individual issue—contained to identifiable victims and their perpetrators—the systemic effects of racism, classism, and patriarchal domination remain unquestioned and left to proliferate.

Additionally, the reliance on the state to be the arbiter of justice and punishment introduces a larger concern with the power of these regulatory mechanisms over the lives of women identified as victims or survivors. According to Bumiller (2008), "Becoming a 'battered woman' [...] means being subject to official regulations of welfare, housing policies, and courts and experiencing the intense informal authority of counselors, program managers, and staffs of social service agencies" (130). In order to gain access to particular resources, women who have experienced the violence of rape, sexual assault, or domestic violence may have to comply with

law enforcement processes or work alongside a case manager. For example, Kandaswamy (2010) describes the role of the shelter system—a necessity for women who may be facing housing insecurity or homelessness when leaving an abusive partner—to manage women’s productivity within capitalism: “Increasingly, the goal of shelters has moved beyond providing safety for battered women and toward reintegrating battered women into society as good citizens and workers through programs such as job training and life skills classes, eerily echoing welfare reform’s objective of moving recipients from welfare to work” (260). In the shift away from a structural understanding of violence, women are considered successful survivors when they have complied with administrative powers and individually relearned how “to protect themselves from future violence as well as to seek help from professionals who can guide them through the process of psychological recovery” (Bumiller 2008, 64)—even when the systemic factors that perpetuate violence against women remain in place.

This is not to say that those on the receiving end of these mechanisms do not understand the ways they too are subjected to surveillance and regulation. For some, state interference may be more livable than the trauma they experienced interpersonally. As Brown (1992) explains, “Given a choice between rationalized, procedural un-freedom, on one hand, and arbitrary deprivation, discrimination, and violence, on the other, some, perhaps even most, women might opt to inhabit a bureaucratized domain over a ‘state of nature’ suffused with male dominance” (10). They may feel more equipped to handle or exercise resistance to the more routinized forms of bureaucratic control, such as a case manager who requires them to enroll in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) or General Educational Development (GED) courses.

Additionally, some may openly recognize that surveillance and regulation is part of the bargain that comes from negotiating with the state for resources and legibility. Bumiller (2008) provides multiple anecdotes from women involved in domestic violence programs who assert their agency within these systems:

Yet in all situations women are not “fooled” by the rhetoric of the helping professions; they understand their contact with the system as part of their process of victimization. They are also acutely aware that in order to make gains within that system it is mandatory that they assume the role of a victim and follow the designated path to recovery. (129-30)

These women offer a complex articulation of their own agency within the context of service provision. They are not surprised by the level of control their case managers assert over the direction of their involvement in anti-domestic violence programming, especially those survivors who had previously engaged with other social service sectors, like welfare or child protective services. They comply with organizational practices in ways that fit with concepts of appropriate victimhood to access the resources that are directly tied to moving through these domestic violence programs, like secure shelter.

Critiquing Carceral Systems

From a critical perspective, engaging with the state through these carceral-influenced modes of justice means engaging with systems that support social structures that disempower marginalized people and communities. For example, Dilts (2017) problematizes the effects of justice garnered from the legal system:

The mode of justice offered by the white supremacist and hetero-patriarchal state is focused on verdicts, outcomes, states of affairs, and distributions as its measures of success. Even those theories of justice that focus on procedure and processes, especially in criminal proceedings, nevertheless point to stable outcomes as benchmarks of evaluation, and in doing so, insist that justice is something that can be “served.” (190)

If the state is itself an oppressive force, than these quantitative processes within the criminal justice inherently—and potentially inadvertently—also provide a measure of validation for the

racism and heterosexism that fuels crime control in the US. Spade (2013) also draws attention to the ways that “punishment-based solutions [...] are often inaccessible to victims of violence, who may be afraid to call the police because they, their family, or their community are more likely to be harmed by the police than helped” (1037-8). Police officers are not neutral members of some communities, especially those that face increased surveillance and violence when engaging with the law enforcement sector, and thus cannot be positioned as a solution across all spaces and contexts.

Additionally, carceral practices often mobilize a conceptualization of identity—both of survivors and perpetrators—reliant upon larger stereotypes of victimhood and criminality. For example, in her discussion of how feminist activists constructed battered women who could be served under VAWA, Kandaswamy (2010) explains, “To make the law compassionate toward women who were vulnerable to abuse without changing its fundamental principles, however, these advocates had to constitute domestic violence victims as an exceptional category of deserving women that the state was obligated to protect” (266). Deservingness as a category is tied to larger norms of respectability connected to race and class (Soss 2005; Crenshaw 2012). With respect to anti-violence projects, a deserving victim is an innocent victim, and innocence is often afforded to white women more generously than their counterparts of color. Bumiller (2008) writes that “when victims are from criminalized communities (due to poverty, immigrant status, ethnicity, or race) their status as a victim may in many cases become the functional equivalent of being a perpetrator in the eyes of the law” (14). Because law enforcement approaches to anti-violence efforts require a victim *and* a criminal in order to be legible within its framework, survivors whose identities trouble the notion of ideal victimhood—because, perhaps, they are

undocumented or receiving government assistance—their claims to justice are complicated or even negated.

Perpetrators are almost exclusively generalized as men of color (Bumiller 2008; Crenshaw 2012), contributing to their stigmatization and serving to justify the disproportionate numbers of incarcerated men of color (Alexander 2010). Soss and Weaver (2017) explain that “as people and places coded as black or brown come to signify criminality, criminal stigma becomes a wellspring of racial stigma that envelops individuals regardless of their actual transgressions or adherence to rules” (30.17). Men of color are simply assumed to be criminal actors, regardless of the lived experiences of violence that contradict this social construction. As Bumiller (2008) describes, in presenting the role of the media in larger narratives of sexual violence, “Reports of the most horrific cases generate excessive fears among women about the potential threat of violence from dangerous (usually dark-skinned) strangers. Yet these fears do not conform to the social realities of American life, where women are much more likely to encounter sexual violence from known perpetrators” (19). More women face violence at the hands of an intimate partner, such as a significant other or family member, yet the tropes of criminality perpetuate a “stranger danger” myth with powerful racial overtones.

Anti-Human Trafficking Interventions

“White Slave Panics”

At the turn of the 20th century, anti-human trafficking efforts appeared across the US and Europe under the guise of “white slavery.” Goode and Ben-Yehuda (2009) describe the white slavery panic within the US as a myth that combined norms of gender, class, and national identity:

Concern about the “white slave traffic” expressed the early twentieth-century fear that naïve, vulnerable, young women from rural areas and small towns could visit cities and get

snatched up and forced onto the street by evil, cunning “Orientals.” In the white slavery scenario, the victim was always a Caucasian and her victimizer, usually a Chinese immigrant. [...] This panic also commonly entailed the fear of engulfment of the American wage earner by Asian “Yellow Peril” “hordes,” and represented an assertion of the cultural and racial superiority of native-born Anglo-Saxons over Asians. (17)

In this stereotypical narrative, the individual-level exploitation of innocent white women at the hands of male immigrants of color was extrapolated to larger concerns of demographic shifts, expanded citizenship, and women’s increased mobility and participation in the public labor force (Keire 2001; Soderlund 2005). Doezema (1999) is careful to point out that white slavery was not a monolithic term but acknowledges one of the core tenets of the myth: “‘White slavery’ came to mean the procurement, by force, deceit, or drugs, of a white woman or girl against her will, for prostitution” (25).

Anti-human trafficking efforts are historically enmeshed with carceral logic. During the white slavery panic, policies that perpetuate the regulation and punishment of certain behaviors were seen as the primary points for anti-trafficking interventions (Boris and Berg 2014; Diffie 2005; Doezema 1999). As Gottschalk (2008) writes of domestic anti-white slavery efforts, “The moral crusades over such issues as ‘white slavery’ [...] that regularly convulsed the country were a backhanded way of building the criminal justice apparatus by fits and starts” (240). Anti-white slavery practices involved police surveillance, sting operations, arrests, court hearings, and criminal statutes and legislation. While these were nominally implemented to stop the exploitation of women, its effects were carceral and regulatory of deviant female behavior (Bernstein 2007). For example, the 1910 Mann Act, ostensibly designed to prohibit the movement of “white slaves” across state lines, was often mobilized to arrest sex workers (Bernstein 2007; Doezema 1999; Grittner 1990). Donovan and Barnes-Brus (2011) describe how

anti-vice policing practices under penal codes to punish “pimps and procurers” more frequently identified and charged women engaged in commercial sex.

Additionally, as Doezema (1999) explains, the racial implications of the white slavery panics socially constructed of men of color as traffickers and perpetrators, drawing connections between race and criminality that persist today:

The “white slave” had as her necessary opposite the “non-white slaver.” “Non-whiteness” was usually literally represented, but also figuratively, with “otherness” from the social group conducting the campaign serving as a marker of “non-whiteness.” The very name “white slavery” is racist, implying as it does that slavery of white women was of a different, and worse, sort than “black” slavery.” (30)

Immigrants and members of minority communities, such as Jewish men, were positioned as the responsible parties for this exploitation (Bristow 1982; Doezema 1999; Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009; Grittner 1990). Thus, anti-white slavery efforts were not only regulatory for the white women whose deviant behavior was monitored but also men of color whose race marked them as othered.

Post-2000 Anti-Trafficking Policy and Practice

In the historical presentation of US-based anti-trafficking efforts, the passage of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) has been credited as the next major turning point in the anti-trafficking movement. The TVPA is considered the foundational piece of anti-trafficking legislation and, as Baker (2013) explains, emphasizes the first P of prosecution: “The order of the three Ps reflects the priorities of the Act. The focus and the vast majority of the Act’s funding is directed toward criminalization, prosecution, and punishment” (17). Chuang (2014) believes this emphasis was compounded by a growing rhetorical shift to call trafficking modern-day slavery, language seen within the TVPA and discourse surrounding its implementation: “Slavery imagery entrenches a long-standing impulse

to distill the complex phenomenon of trafficking into a simple narrative of a crime perpetrated by evil, often foreign, criminal organizations and individuals, best solved through aggressive investigation and prosecution, coupled with policing of the border” (636). Suchland (2015) echoes this sentiment, arguing that the shift to prioritizing prosecution divorces human trafficking from the structural, economic inequalities that perpetuate vulnerabilities: “In casting human trafficking as an aberration from local and global economies, the juridical definition of the victim of trafficking sets the limits of acceptable precarity for the losers of globalization as well” (7). If human trafficking is rhetorically positioned as a criminal act that follows specific guidelines—exploitation of an individual by an easily identified perpetrator or network of bad actors—then it makes sense to see these prosecutorial approaches codified into law.

While the TVPA sets the federal standards for human trafficking, individual states can use its framework—and its prioritization of criminal justice practices—for their own more localized policies. For example, the Polaris Project, a national anti-trafficking non-profit organization, annually measured individual states’ legislation according to 10 categories, seven of which explicitly focused on criminal definitions or tools for law enforcement to use during investigations (Polaris Project 2014). One remaining category focused on victim assistance, a facet of protective services, while two categories addressed training for law enforcement officers and mandated public postings of human trafficking hotlines. Prevention did not appear in any of the 10 categories. While some of this may be a problem of measurement, as Polaris Project used more codes that focused on the criminal justice side of anti-trafficking efforts, it is important to note that the leading anti-trafficking non-profit in the US presented a prosecution-focused analysis of state-level policies. I do not see this as an indictment of the Polaris Project’s mission

but, rather, an example of the power of prosecution in shaping anti-trafficking policy and organizational priorities.

In addition to the connections embedded in policy, the history of using punitive measures of the state to address interpersonal violence has deeply influenced anti-trafficking activist priorities. Much like anti-domestic violence and anti-rape work, which feminist activists addressed at the grassroots level before it transformed into a legislated, criminally defined phenomenon (Bumiller 2008; 2013; Gottschalk 2006; Kandaswamy 2010; Richie 2000), human trafficking activism, especially the initial efforts to create the TVPA, similarly looked toward a carceral approach to ending this injustice. As Bernstein (2007; 2010; 2012) has carefully addressed, some domestic anti-trafficking efforts have united more politically progressive feminist activists with evangelical groups and conservative politicians under the shared goals of legislating—here, prosecuting and punishing—sex trafficking out of existence. She defines this feminist impulse as carceral feminism, “the commitment of abolitionist feminist activists to a law and order agenda and [...] a drift from the welfare state to the carceral state as the enforcement apparatus for feminist goals” (2007, 143).

Building upon Bernstein’s framework, Musto (2010) creates the concept of carceral protectionism, “a specific brand of anti-trafficking protection—one which melds the logics of law enforcement and human rights and where social justice for trafficked persons is imagined along interconnected, co-constitutive humanitarian, carceral and professional pathways” (385). In attempts to create holistic, uninterrupted care for identified survivors of trafficking, law enforcement agents and social service providers are increasingly working in partnerships, as opposed to siloed anti-trafficking efforts. However, Musto (2010) argues that this multi-sector approach to human trafficking hinges on a continued centering of criminal justice practices,

where “trafficked persons’ protection is deployed to support rather than upend the criminal justice system” (387). Upon identification, trafficked persons are subject to a host of interventions, such as therapeutic services or case management, but this initial identification often depends on whether or not an individual is legible as a trafficked person from a law enforcement perspective. If they are interpreted as a sex worker⁶ or undocumented person—both of which are criminalized positions in the United States—they may not be routed through systems of carceral protectionism and instead face incarceration, detention, or deportation.

One major effect of carceral logic upon anti-trafficking efforts is the rhetorical framing of law enforcement—or the range of service providers working in tandem with them—as operating from an unquestionably charitable motive, even when the intent behind their acts may be more complex. Bernstein (2012) argues this framing erases the power of structures that perpetuate violence and exploitation in favor of positioning individual officers against criminal perpetrators:

[T]he masculinist institutions of big business, the state, and the police are reconfigured as allies and saviors, rather than the enemies of migrant sex workers, and the responsibility for trafficking is shifted from structural factors and dominant institutions onto individual (often racially coded) criminal men. (244-5)

Hill (2016) describes this as the master narrative of trafficking, which focuses on a sensationalized moment of rescue—in her example, a visual depiction of a brothel raid in UK newspapers—over the material consequences on sex workers or trafficked persons. She writes, “Police raids and public awareness campaigns share the pedagogical function of explaining and exhibiting the key actors in the crime of human trafficking” (44). The efforts of law enforcement

⁶ As I mention in Chapter 1, sex workers are in a double bind within many anti-trafficking frameworks. They may be engaged in commercial sex and face intensified scrutiny from state agents who use an abolitionist approach to interpret all sex work as sex trafficking. Conversely, if they are compelled to engage in commercial sex under force, fraud, or coercion, but these factors are ignored *because* of the criminal label attached to sex work in the United States, they may be excluded from victim services or means to justice.

officers to rescue exploited women are taken at face value, while the long-term consequences of arrests and deportation are downplayed, leaving the public image of police in heroic positions.

In contrast to state actors, who are often described as agential figures in the act of rescue, survivors are often positioned as passive victims in need of saving. For example, Srikantiah (2007) deconstructs the trope of the iconic victim:

(1) the victim is a woman or girl trafficked for sex; (2) law enforcement assesses her to be a good witness; (3) she cooperates fully with law enforcement investigations; and (4) she is rescued instead of escaping from the trafficking enterprise. These attributes, taken together, contemplate a victim of sex trafficking who passively waits for rescue by law enforcement, and upon rescue, presents herself as a good witness who cooperates with all law enforcement requests. (187)

Within the iconic victim trope, survivors can only exercise their agency during a criminal justice investigation and prosecution process, and only if they can provide a narrative that conforms fully to the social constructions of a victim who is wholly blameless. Majic (2014) has described this as the “victim-criminal” binary, which establishes limited frameworks for how individuals’ actions, such as engaging in commercial sex, are morally construed to be entirely exploitative or entirely agential.

While it is important to note that Srikantiah (2007) and Majic (2014) are describing stereotypical frameworks, not the step-by-step practices of classifying survivors, these norms of victimhood do affect both survivors’ experiences and service providers’ perceptions. As addressed earlier, these notions of victimhood are embedded within the criminal justice system writ large (Bumiller 2008; Crenshaw 2012; Soss and Weaver 2017) and may impact whether or not their case gets selected to go to trial, their T-visa application gets processed, or their perpetrator is constrained by the parameters of a protective order. Chapkis (2003) argues these stereotypes can also be upheld in anti-trafficking policies: “Protections offered to the innocent help to reinforce the suggestion that the punishments meted out to the ‘guilty’ are justified”

(925). Trafficked persons may not be identified as innocent because their identity complicates their status as a victim, and those labeled guilty may also have faced victimization through similar systems of violence and exploitation (Bernstein 2012; Marcus et al. 2014).

In particular, race, gender, sexual orientation, and citizenship status complicate a survivor's ability to be read into the role of iconic victimhood. Stereotypical depictions of human trafficking rely on a binary framework that shows young women in danger of being exploited by men of color (Baker 2014; Small 2012), harkening back to the racial implications of the white slavery panic (Doezema 1999; Goode and Ben-Yehuda 2009) that construct perpetrators as racial or ethnic others. Male survivors, as well as LGBTQ+ survivors, are often underrepresented in the dominant trafficking narrative, even though research shows these two populations face a range of exploitation within the context of sex and labor trafficking (Howard 2014; Lutnick 2016). Additionally, undocumented victims of trafficking are in a particularly precarious position—while the TVPA creates the space for T-visas, special paths to citizenship for identified survivors, their initial irregular migration into the US may lead to their exclusive classification as a criminal or their unwillingness to disclose their trafficking for fear of deportation (Berg 2015; Chapkis 2003; Kinney 2006; Plambech 2014).

With respect to victims, race plays a complicated role: they may be white women in jeopardy (Baker 2014; Small 2012) or at-risk women of color in “developing nations” (Kempadoo 2015). Srikantiah (2007) unpacks the construction of women of color as inherently vulnerable to exploitation:

The victim mythology begins with the source countries. Iconic victims originate from cultures in Asia, Latin America, or Africa stereotyped as suppressing the individuality of women and girls and rendering them simple prey for manipulation by clever traffickers. The iconic victim concept is thus consistent with stereotypes of foreign women and women of color as meek, helpless, and belonging to repressive male dominant cultures. (201-2)

This problematic conception of race and national identity perpetuates the stereotypical norm that trafficking victims of color do not occupy positions of agency. Kempadoo (2015) goes even further to articulate the connections between dominant anti-trafficking stereotypes and white supremacist-inflected activist efforts, explaining that “the non-Western/migrant/sex working ‘victim’ becomes the ground for competing abolitionist, feminist, and humanitarian claims pushed aside by not only the depoliticized neoliberal master narratives but also the racialized, neoimperialist gaze” (18). She argues the current framings of human trafficking as an issue abroad to be solved by white Westerners facilitate the denigration of people of color while lauding and morally elevating white rescuers.

By framing human trafficking as a criminal justice problem with prosecution-based solutions, anti-trafficking efforts become focused on deterrence enforced by state actors, such as law enforcement officers and social service providers, and empowered by carceral logic. Legislation and public discourse may attempt to present a survivor-centered agenda, but, as Chapkis (2003) explains, it still “serves as a soft glove covering a still punishing fist” (924). Ironically, the same structures that perpetuate inequities and violence—such as class and race disparities in prisoners under mass incarceration or the isolation and prolonged detention of undocumented citizens facing deportation—become the solution to address the inequities and violence of human trafficking. Protection is then contingent upon a survivor’s legibility within *and* cooperation with the criminal justice system. Prevention, thinking upstream to the root causes that could reduce exploitation or trafficking, is limited by the reactive approach of prosecution-focused efforts.

Finding Carceral Logics in Qualitative Data

Upon transcription and deidentification of my 42 interviews, I used a qualitative coding schema to analyze my data with ATLAS.ti software. I followed what Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) describe as a two-pronged process of open and focused coding, which I describe in more detail in my *Methodological Appendix*. Because I conducted this particular analysis after Chapter 1 was completed, I was able to move from the open coding stage of identifying broad thematic areas directly to the period of focused coding. As they explain this process, “In focused coding, the fieldworker subjects fieldnotes to fine-grained, line-by-line analysis on the basis of topics that have been identified as being of particular interest. Here, the ethnographer uses a smaller set of promising ideas and categories” (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 2011, 172). I used this same strategy with my transcripts. During my analysis focused on legal tools and normative judgments, I was closely reading my transcripts and made note of any particular mentions of the carceral state broadly—arrests, deportation, and detention were immediately apparent, based on their consistent mentions throughout the interview.

Once I concluded my final analysis for my first chapter, I immediately shifted to the focused coding process by first creating a new codebook. Based on the aforementioned scholarship on human trafficking and carceral logic, as well as my initial findings from the fine-grained analysis of Chapter 1, I created a 24-code schema to capture this relationship between anti-trafficking efforts and broader carceral processes.

Table 3: Codebook for Carceral-Focused Analysis

Code	Description
Arrest	Taking an individual into law enforcement custody
Courts/agents of the court	US court system, lawyers, judges
Deportation	Removing a non-citizen from the United States
Detention	Holding an individual in custody for any amount of time; individual may be held formally in a criminal justice setting or in other settings, such as a homeless shelter or safe house
Domestic minor sex	Commercial sex acts performed by individuals under the age of 18

trafficking	
Fines	Money paid to account for crimes
Identification	Processes and actions used to label someone
Incarceration	Imprisonment in a state or federal jail/penitentiary
Investigation/building a case	Formal and informal mechanisms of researching, investigating, or asking questions about a particular instance or case of exploitation or violence
Justice	Formal and informal mechanisms of achieving some kind of recourse for a criminal act or other form of exploitation or violence
Labor trafficking	Goods, services, and work induced by force, fraud, or coercion
Legislation/statute	Laws, policies, or statutes used to define criminal acts and punishments
Market facilitators	Pimps, johns, madams
Police	Police officers at any level
Prosecution	Court case to charge and try an individual for a criminal act
Punishment	Formal and informal mechanisms of punishing criminal acts or perpetrators
Sex trafficking	Commercial sex acts induced by force, fraud, or coercion
Sex work/prostitution	Commercial sex acts
Shame	Affective responses of guilt, humiliation, or embarrassment to criminal acts or other forms of exploitation or violence
Smuggling	Third-party illegal movement of individuals across borders
Traffickers	Individuals who use fraud, force, or coercion to exploit individuals in sex or labor trafficking
Undocumented migration	Illegal movement across borders; differs from smuggling because this refers to individual actors without use of third parties

Across this coding schema, I grouped my findings into three major thematic groups that organically emerged from the data: carceral protectionism, the punishment mindset, and the limits to justice in their work. In the following sections, I describe the ways my interviewees discussed using carceral practices in their anti-trafficking work, interpreting punitive practices as modes of accountability and closure, and encountering limits to carceral forms of justice.

Carceral Influences in Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Service providers regularly discussed the presence of the criminal justice system across all levels of assistance, from initially identifying trafficked persons to more protective measures of sheltering them and helping them with the next steps of therapy, stable employment, and participation in potential prosecutions. Many service providers indicated they first connected to trafficked persons in need of services through referrals from police officers or members of the

court system. An attorney explained, “That’s how a lot of those [cases] come in, just by contact out just in the world sometimes. It’s not necessarily someone who calls and says, ‘Hey, I’m being trafficked’” (interview 11/3/16). Similarly, a sheriff described discovering a potential trafficking case “by accident. I had another officer signed to another call. He was out working this call looking, for a suspicious vehicle. And he just happens onto this other vehicle in this neighborhood” (interview 11/16/16). In both of these cases, police officers are engaged in the frontline work of discovering trafficked persons, sometimes inadvertently, and directing them to services in the community.

A foster care worker offered an example of a more explicit referral—a request to complete a human trafficking assessment on a suspected youth survivor—directly from a judge, a member of the court system: “Almost, well, every assessment that a judge has ordered, which has been almost all of the assessments we’ve completed in a year and a half [...], it’s because the kid was on the run, and the judge ordered the human trafficking assessment. But the law enforcement officer that picked them up did not” (interview 11/17/16). Her example points to a moment of failure, when the law enforcement officers tasked with the identification of trafficked persons cannot complete the first step of the process that should lead to assistance and justice. However, the judge, a fellow member of the criminal justice system, is present to pick up where the law enforcement officers left off.

Carceral Protectionism

As addressed earlier, carceral protectionism is “enforcement with a protective bent or carcerality inflected with care,” (Musto 2016, 4) promoted through “schemes that emphasize law enforcement rescue, therapy, and intensive multi-professional case management” (Musto 2010, 390). This process blurs the boundaries between the Ps of protection and prosecution, as it asks

carceral actors, like police officers, to serve in the protective capacity of rescue *and* service providers outside of the criminal justice system to center law enforcement practices, like detention or interrogation, in their own modes of assisting trafficked persons. Musto (2016) conceives of carceral protectionism as a process that extends the reach of the carceral state beyond the exclusive purview of law enforcement:

Carceral protectionism is a state-oriented framework, and as such, all trafficking victims or potential victims are routed primarily through the carceral *enforcement apparatus* in order to be officially recognized by the state. In the past, trafficked persons interfaced with the enforcement apparatus expressly through interactions with law-enforcement officials, including local police officers and federal agents charged with enforcing local, state, or national antitrafficking laws. [...] However, the law-enforcement apparatus is broader than the name suggests, and the actors that play a role in supporting the carceral state extend beyond sworn officers and specific law-enforcement agencies. Nonstate actors such as victim advocates, social workers, service providers, and technology advocates may be consulted before, during, or directly following police raids to assist in the identification and protection of potential victims. (20)

Given this scope that implicates a range of service providers, I am persuaded to place carceral protectionism—though it does offer resources to trafficked persons that are inherent to the P of protection—within the larger network of carceral practices that make up a prosecution-focused approach to anti-trafficking efforts.

Carceral protectionism appeared prominently in service providers' explanations of workplace practices used to promote the safety or protection of trafficked persons. Arresting or detaining trafficked persons could be perceived as an act done for their own good. As one anti-trafficking advocate explained, in her work with the local police department, "They're arresting teenagers involved in commercial sex. And even though that is the law, I mean, they have the right to arrest them. The detective [...] doesn't arrest them anymore. He might detain them for their own safety, he might, but he doesn't charge them" (interview 12/9/16). Individuals engaged in commercial sex under the age of 18 years old fall under the legal rubric of sex trafficking, but

this definition does not foreclose their possibility of being arrested and subsequently forced to engage with the carceral system. Per this advocate's explanation, the practice of detention is not related to a misidentification of these youth as criminal sex workers, a misunderstanding that could be potentially ameliorated with better identification training (Farrell, McDevitt, and Fahy 2010; Farrell, Owens, and McDevitt 2014), but rather a tool that officers can mobilize at their discretion to protect survivors. What is left out of this analysis is the question of how arrests and detention may be unsafe for some trafficked persons, including those who have criminal records, those whose identities make them targeted for increased surveillance, and those with previous negative experiences with the carceral state.

Over half of the interviewed service providers discussed the reliance on jails and detention facilities as safe temporary or emergency housing for identified trafficked persons, especially those under the age of 18. A legal aid attorney explained that this was a common occurrence for the exploited and trafficked youth she served: "The cases that we've identified are situations where youth are running consistently from placement. And so when they do come back into custody, many times they're sitting in detention until a foster home, or secure facility, or group home can be identified for them" (interview 9/13/16). Another attorney described a similar situation with an undocumented minor: "[The child welfare system] actually didn't have a place to take her, so they held her in the juvenile detention center, even though she didn't do anything wrong. But they just literally had no place to take her" (interview 11/29/16). In both of these examples, detention is positioned as the last or only resort for trafficked youth, but still necessary to keep them safe. Implicitly, the use of carceral facilities as emergency housing points to the ways that, under carceral protectionist frameworks, service providers outside the law

enforcement sector must collaborate and negotiate with law enforcement officers to gain access to resources for clients.

One juvenile justice staffer juxtaposed the safety of detention with the fairness of holding youth in criminal facilities when they have committed no crimes. In her experiences, trafficked youth were detained in her juvenile justice facility for exceedingly lengthy stays, up to 90 days in some instances. When contrasted with an average stay of seven to eight days, she saw this as an injustice:

Twice this year, we've had victims of human trafficking who were in here for more than 60 days because they were victims of human trafficking, not because they committed a crime but because they were victims of human trafficking. That's wrong that a victim is being locked up and punished, and yet the perp is not. And that's a huge problem. And so when we're talking 60 to 90 days of that youth's life, I mean, yes, we're trying to help them work on some of those issues so that they don't go back and get back in that same situation, but that's not what a juvenile detention center is for. You know, we're to just be a short-term lock-up place for kids who have committed a crime. [...] Everybody that I talk to always says, "Well, at least they're locked up and safe." Well, yes, they're safe, but is it fair to lock them up? And so the last one that we had, she actually got lucky and got to go to [a human trafficking shelter], but she was here 92 days, so I don't know if that's lucky or not. You know, it just, it just seems so unfair what we're doing with human-trafficked kids. (interview 12/1/16)

While this quote offers layers of meaning—the differences between justice and fairness, the lack of legal repercussions for traffickers themselves, the role of short-term versus long-term care—I want to focus on what this reveals about carceral protectionism. Namely, the tools of detention facilities may not necessarily be the best tools for working with exploited or trafficked persons, as they are designed with a criminal perpetrator in mind. But under a system of anti-trafficking efforts inextricably linked to the criminal justice system, these tools may be all some service providers can access in their communities to provide a base level of services to their clients.

A victim services coordinator provided a complex narrative, positioning detention and incarceration as a net positive for a trafficked person who had begun exploiting others under the

direction of her trafficker. Her legal status as both a victim and a criminal, trafficked and trafficker, opened her up to prosecution and jail time. My interviewee described the material benefits of prison:

And it's like, "You should never charge the victim." Well, she has more benefits and in fact, in that particular case, had additional benefits by going to [prison] than she would have had had we not filed charges. Because at least in [prison], they provided her with GED training, she actually was able to complete her GED, and when she was released, she had a halfway house to go to while she integrated back into society. [...] Well, if she began to recruit, even whether it be under oppression, she was recruiting other girls, so she should be held accountable [...]. And I know that's not the same view as a lot of other victim advocates, but I just see that [...] the prison system gives a better jumpstart for integration into society than our victim programs do. (interview 2/15/17)

In this particular quote, the prison system is presented as the solution to the issue of accountability for traffickers and resources for trafficked persons. This advocate identifies two long-term needs of trafficked persons that are echoed in other research: educational attainment and stable housing (Brennan 2014a; Clawson and Dutch 2008; Lutnick 2016; Musto 2016). However, instead of arguing for an expansion of these resources outside the carceral state, she instead sees how trafficked persons fit into the criminal justice system as it currently stands. While this situation is unique to the complication of a trafficked person who may also be legally considered a trafficker, this framing of the carceral state as the status quo, the sole space for receiving resources, was referenced by about one-fourth of my interviewees.

As these examples demonstrate, carceral protectionism influences the practices and strategies of service providers attempting to work with trafficked clients. Importantly, these frontline workers do not uniformly see the carceral state as wholly good or bad, acknowledging the limitations that emerge in models that trace all paths of protection back to law enforcement. Rather, my interviewees raise important questions of justice and safety—when thinking about arresting or detaining trafficked persons, from what are we keeping them safe?

The Punishment Mindset

In addition to their descriptions of assisting exploited or trafficked persons, service providers also expressed their opinions on how to punish traffickers and what steps should be taken in punitive anti-trafficking efforts. I see these opinions as an extension of what Kaba calls the punishment mindset. As she explains, this mindset assumes the necessity of punitive, legal responses to inappropriate, illegal, or violent activities across behaviors and circumstances:

Stop assuming that “safety” means imprisonment. It means more punishment. Start like getting the punishment mindset shifted in your mind so that when you see somebody who is other than you, that your fear factor that is like conditioned by all the messages you’ve gotten your entire life about who to be afraid of, like challenge that within yourself for real, and stop being at every point demagogued into locking up people, putting up walls, creating new borders. End that within yourself, and try to change people in your own circles’ ideas about who should—and stop—especially if you’re liberal and progressive—stop calling for people to be locked up every day. Oh, so-and-so’s a war criminal and they should go to prison! Listen. Everybody shouldn’t be going to prison. That’s the point. Stop playing into those ideas that every time something happens, your first inclination is to think about the prosecution and court system as the way to solve that problem. We all do it instinctively. (Intercepted 2017, n. pag)

Kaba uses the example of incarcerating Goldman Sachs employees to illustrate her argument, as jail time was leveraged as the solution to their unethical and illegal banking practices. With respect to human trafficking, the punishment mindset manifests when carceral practices—for example, arrests, detention, and prosecution administered by members of the criminal justice sector—are presented as the first, or even only, solution to a case of exploitation or trafficking.

Some interviewees explicitly named law enforcement officials as the primary, necessary actors in anti-human trafficking efforts. A legal staffer stated, “We need a law enforcement response to human trafficking because, ultimately, it’s a crime of greed and it’s a tremendously profitable crime. [...] Unlike drugs that you sell once, a human being you can sell again and again and again” (interview 10/6/16). A child welfare employee explained that individuals who may suspect human trafficking—she described the gut instinct she felt when seeing a much older

man with a younger woman in designer clothing—should first call the police and resist intervening themselves (interview 3/23/16).

Others described the importance of increased legislation and policy to target traffickers and market facilitators. One foster care worker described the policy changes she would like to see go into effect to more robustly address the role of market facilitators:

I actually would love to see something done for the pimps, too. I know they're working on stricter laws and guidelines for them, which I appreciate so very much that that's happening. And I just saw something last week, and I was like, "Oh thank goodness. Finally we're going to have some harsher laws." I think more needs to be done on that side of the fence as well. You know, where we're not just going in and rescuing people. That's awesome and great and I want that 100 percent, but I do think there needs to be some serious, "Let's go after these people and shut some things down." (interview 5/24/17)

Though this interviewee conflates sex work with sex trafficking—which thus equates pimps with traffickers, though the legal differences and criminal responses between the two may not be identical (Grant 2014; Kempadoo 2015; MacKinnon 2011)—she does identify an aspect of the punishment mindset to increase the punitive response to those identified as exploiters or traffickers.

Another component to the punishment mindset is the narrative it provides about justice and closure. If punishment is the ultimate goal of a criminal justice process, then it is also the conclusion of the story. The "bad guy" is locked up, removed from society through incarceration or deportation, and the particular situation of violence or exploitation is resolved. A successfully punished perpetrator is the logical and desired outcome in a system of carceral logic (Dilts 2017). In this vein, service providers, particularly those who worked closely with members of the criminal justice system, used a successfully prosecuted human trafficking case as a marker of closure and justice for both themselves and the trafficked clients they served. For example, a youth services worker concluded her example of a domestic minor sex trafficking case she

worked on with, “The two guys [identified as traffickers] were, in fact, found guilty and went to prison, yay” (interview 10/27/16). A criminal investigator provided a similar example, saying that the ultimate success of a case would be moving from an investigation to trial to conviction. He thought this process served justice from both law enforcement and victim standpoints because of the closure of a successfully prosecuted case. If he put himself in the shoes of a victim, he would want to know what went wrong if a case did not get successfully prosecuted (interview 9/27/16).

A smaller subset of service providers, about one-fourth of my participants, talked about punitive practices with respect to survivors themselves. This characterization seemed to connect to interviewees’ ideas of accountability and cooperation with criminal justice investigations. For example, an attorney explained that, when faced with uncooperative individuals in trafficking cases, custody could be like a narcotic. Being locked up in jail, in her own words, was a good thing for survivors. Specifically, the practices of visitation within the jail facility could illuminate post-detention support systems: if the person calling on the survivor when they are in jail is their pimp, then that is a bad situation. But if socially stable family members like a mom, a sister, or a grandmother is coming and contacting them, then she knows those people can be relied upon to be stable networks of support for people exiting jail. (interview 9/8/16). This attorney focused on what this period of custody could do for her investigation and how it could move a survivor to be more willing to cooperate with a future prosecution. Moving a trafficking case through the court system was taken as a given, which can be attributed to her role within the legal system but also highlights how the punishment mindset assumes the necessity of prosecutorial practices.

An anti-violence advocate provided an anecdote from the law enforcement officers with whom she worked:

And I know some of our strike force, our drug strike force guys, have told me in the past, they'll go from house to house because they do a lot of raids, and they'll see the same girl at several houses. And, you know, he told me, "I know what they're doing. I know." He says, "A lot of times I'll arrest her, not because she did anything, but just to get her out of there. Just so I can get her out of there for 24 hours." (interview 9/28/16)

In this example, being arrested and subsequently detained is offered as a break from a situation of potential sex work, drug use, or sex trafficking. Again, the potential traumatization that could come from an arrest, even one that is presented with the best of intentions, is left out of the narrative.

Interviewees outside of the law enforcement sector often mentioned the use of methods common to criminal justice practices. For example, a youth services worker who worked in an anti-sexual violence organization described using interrogation strategies to get information about a situation of human trafficking from an identified survivor:

The cops told me, "Really, you have to interrogate them because the population, [...] working with the very street smart person who's probably been picked up on a criminal charge" type of deal. [...] If you don't know how to do any interrogation, you're probably not going to get anything at all. When I was a [law enforcement] agent, I did interrogation with my offenders and especially sexual abuse offenders and stuff like this, so there's a certain way someone can really tell me. So I go and interview her and had a probably two-hour interview. She would never admit, and I don't believe in interrogating our kids, but there's a real soft interrogation. You can question and kind of get there without the whole TV thing. (interview 8/4/16)

This particular youth services worker brings expertise as a law enforcement officer to her work, so it is somewhat unsurprising that she would be able to draw upon those methods and practices in her work outside of this sector. At the same time, even a "soft interrogation" could pose harm to a survivor, especially if they have had encounters with these carceral-influenced methods before. Within the context of the punishment mindset, these techniques reveal the implicit assumption that trafficked persons must be interrogated in order to gather information for a

future criminal case, leaving out the very real possibility that survivors may not want to engage in a prosecution or punish their traffickers.

Limits to Justice

While many interviewees provided examples and anecdotes that showed the power and importance of the carceral state in their experiences with trafficking, they also critiqued carceral logics or offered more expansive ideas of justice. Service providers were often explicit in their anger or disappointment in a system that, in their own words, treated victimized or exploited persons like criminals. A youth services worker provided an example of a trafficked youth she served during her tenure:

We had a young lady that did not speak any English. She was being trafficked from here to Honduras and back. And because the system didn't really know what to do with her, they didn't have an emergency placement for her, they placed her in the juvenile detention center. Appalling. That is not ever where she should have been as a victim. And, again, it was, I think it was lack of resources and lack of knowledge. After the fact, of course, everyone realizes, "Oh my gosh, what did we do? We shouldn't have done that." But at the time, it was an emergency situation. You need to find a place for this child. And it just wasn't handled correctly, let's just put it that way. (interview 10/27/16).

Similarly, an immigration lawyer provided one of the most challenging examples of the limitations provided by the carceral state. In her experiences with undocumented migrants, those who were identified as trafficked persons had to undergo a certification process to be deemed qualified for particular legal remedies, like T-visas and temporary housing:

Once the certification determination is made, then the ones who haven't been certified are not allowed to stay [in shelters] anymore, which is really troubling because the certification process by the FBI and US Attorney's Office is to determine who will be the best witnesses in the case. [...] They want to convict the people who have been the organizers of this, so they want to have the best witnesses possible. But that usually ends up being the best educated, the ones who speak some English, the ones who are put together better and can explain what happened. [...] I'm not trying to denigrate what's happened to them, but sometimes they end up being the people who have been less traumatized. The ones who are totally incoherent and traumatized by this whole situation are not going to be your best witnesses if they're just up there on the stand crying and carrying on. They're not gonna be able to tell the logical story of what happened. And so

I think that that system is inevitable that it's gonna happen that way, but I think it loses out on the people who may even need the support services more. Because often, then they're just put back, given back to immigration to be deported. Or they just say, "Oh, well you were here for two weeks, now you know go and have a good life. We don't need you as a witness anymore." [...] So I think that system of having this money, government money flowing for people who are certified really ends up helping the people who are then certified as witnesses. Which is good, because they want to keep those people happy and with housing and with work permits. They want to keep them happy so that they'll still testify against these criminals that have been trafficking. But then there's kind of the fall out people. [...] And I'm like, I mean something's wrong. There's something wrong with this way of handling this. (interview 11/1/16)

This quote brings up a number of complicated issues that carceral logics introduce to anti-human trafficking service provision; namely, if criminal justice practices are the exclusive or prioritized models of justice, there will inevitably be a group of survivors who cannot access justice through this path. This is not because they do not meet the legal threshold for victimization, nor is it because they do not wish to comply with building a case. Instead, it is because they cannot perform as the best witness possible for the case by telling their story in a cogent, linear manner. Because this process of certification is bound up in the practices of carceral protectionism—where tangible, material resources like shelter and work permits are connected to compliance with a case—this exclusion is particularly egregious. Participation in a criminal investigation and prosecution may be the only way survivors can access very necessary supports.

Many service providers addressed the complications of following a prosecutorial model of justice when faced with traumatized survivors. A legal staffer explained how human trafficking investigations challenged the normative investigative process:

Law enforcement, we sort of get locked into the "who/what/where/how" type issues. And then this one, you have an individual that has been sort of broken and you have to help that individual in a way that you don't, in law enforcement, that you're not normally used to. You're not normally used to the whole handholding, giving the victim as much as time as they need before they'll tell you the truth. And many times, the victims don't tell you the whole story that first time you talk to them. You know, it takes time to get the whole story out of them. And so, if you're not of the mindset that that is what's likely going to happen, I think you risk the possibility of not really understanding what

happened to the individual and not necessarily presenting that individual's case in a good manner. [...] You have to allow the victims an opportunity to reach a level of stability in their life so that they are able to be the good witnesses that you need. (interview 10/6/16)

These complications mirror Farrell, Owens, and McDevitt's (2014) research on prosecutorial challenges in human trafficking cases. Victim testimony is crucial, but the paths by which survivors disclose "with regard to providing accurate and consistent accounts of their experience contribute to the perception that they are not 'legitimate'" (162). The justice system offers a limited window of legitimacy, confined to those victims who can serve as good witnesses, and law enforcement officers involved in trafficking cases must work even harder to facilitate a survivor's ability to disclose as much information as possible to meet the norms of an adequate level of testimony.

Other service providers offered examples of uncooperative survivors who, for a variety of reasons, refused to participate in prosecutorial practices. In these anecdotes, the limits to justice are flipped—frontline workers' own expectations about taking a case from initial investigation to court to final hearing are skewed when trafficked people resist continued involvement in a prosecution. As a detective explained, "It's just getting them to court to testify is the hard part. [...] We haven't been able to get our victims to court. It's always been a struggle, last minute, trying to run around, search, find them, use resources" (interview 12/5/16). Some survivors do not want to be involved in a criminal case; others feel a sense of loyalty to the person identified as a trafficker and do not want to implicate that individual through their testimony. An attorney described the conclusion of the human trafficking case she had worked in her community, where the identified survivor did not comply with the needs of the investigation:

She had refused all services from us. We attempted to get her down here to testify because we needed, well, we wanted her to testify. We didn't need her testimony, we wanted her testimony because it created the full picture regardless of what she said. And wouldn't do it, wouldn't do it. [...] She could not in her mind justify helping the state.

Even if her testimony was going to be the same, whether it was the state or defense that called her, in her mind, would be helping the state and then she would have been betraying her pimp, so to speak. (interview 8/10/16)

Running away to avoid taking part in a prosecution was a somewhat common occurrence addressed by interviewees. A detective who investigated a human trafficking case at a massage parlor described how one key witness “within a few, like a week or so of us doing our search warrant at the business, [...] took off back to California” (interview 9/22/16). The pressure to testify can sometimes outweigh the potential benefits—both the material effects of carceral protectionism or the more nebulous feelings of justice served. As a human trafficking advocate explained in her experiences with one identified survivor, her client’s fear of change led her to leave her organization without testifying in an upcoming case:

She fell back into what she knew. All the changes that were coming up, as far as with law enforcement and having to testify, and then having to leave something that she knew so well was really scary to her. And so she decided to go back. Whether she went back to her pimp or back to living the life on the street, I’m not sure. But I was really sad because I knew she had so much potential to get out there if we could just get over this scary hump. (interview 10/6/16)

From her perspective as a service provider, this advocate described a situation where the stress of engaging with the carceral state can be more challenging for individual survivors than the situations of exploitation or trafficking they were leaving. This is a powerfully important finding, as escape and rescue have become valorized concepts within the anti-trafficking movement (Agustín 2007; Brennan 2014a; Hill 2016). Post-rescue life brings a host of new concerns, and this reliance on the carceral state makes compliance in a criminal justice an undesirable inevitability for some trafficked persons.

Beyond Carceral Logics

In contrast to examples above that demonstrate the challenges and limitations of the carceral state in anti-trafficking efforts, some service providers offered examples of approaches

to justice that felt more holistic or at least expanded beyond the immediate purview of the carceral state. One attorney acknowledged that incarceration might not be the best solution for all cases: “Success is not getting convictions all the time, obviously. [...] It’s about making sure there’s a just result. A lot of times we deal with a lot of mental health with the defendant, and then to jail or prison. That doesn’t help. It’s more helpful to get them services they need” (interview 8/10/16). A victim services coordinator offered the suggestion that the federal government should play a bigger role in addressing survivors’ needs: “I think they really need to invest in an infrastructure that can really provide a long-term integration program back into society” (interview 2/15/17).

Taking these service providers’ words into consideration, I want to begin thinking beyond carceral logics in anti-trafficking conceptions of justice and punishment. I am persuaded by Musto’s (2016) realization that anti-trafficking frameworks may not actually be the most effective mode of assisting trafficked persons, especially in their current carceral-influenced iterations. While observing a sting operation ostensibly set up to identify domestic minor sex trafficking survivors and direct them to services, she noticed the practices of the operation were actually policing and arresting adult women engaged in commercial sex:

Suffice it to say that after the operation I was compelled to question my own commitment to antitrafficking as a framework with the capacity for reform and the ability to deliver justice to those who experience its effects most directly. And as counterintuitive as it may seem, coming to this realization made me more fully aware of the daunting and arguably impossible task of requiring actors directly affiliated with the carceral state, including but not limited to local police officers, to step up as protectors of victims of sex trafficking, all the while continuing to enforce laws related to commercial sex. [...] And as long as the public and different private and nonprofit interest groups demand more investment in law enforcement as the primary system of first response, more arrests or recovery efforts or police training alone will not necessarily produce lasting change. (151-2)

Musto is asking us to challenge the now-routine impulse to see human trafficking as a criminal justice problem first. While it may be viscerally satisfying to see identified traffickers arrested and successfully prosecuted (Dilts 2017; Intercepted 2017)—and while these modes of justice offer the cleanest, most linear path towards closure for survivors—these carceral solutions are themselves a form of violence that do not stop the structural, systemic inequalities that perpetuate exploitation and trafficking. If we as anti-human trafficking advocates and scholars want to take seriously ending sex and labor trafficking in our communities and globally, we must commit to a transformative vision of the future that looks beyond the carceral state for justice and accountability.

Chapter 4: Emotional Labor, Stress, and Solutions in Frontline Anti-Trafficking Work

So I'll specifically talk about one youth, and I have permission to talk about her story. She has been with us since she was 17. [...] Her mom said she didn't want to deal with her anymore. [...] She was getting to be too much for her, she couldn't handle her. [...] And it's a horrible story, but I won't get too much into it. But her mother married this man, and they all got family name tattoos, even her, and then she was raped about a month later by him. [...] And oh, it's such a horrible story. It's one of the only ones that makes me emotional. [crying] Because I don't get emotional very often. I'm sorry. [...] She's like, "I'm too stupid to graduate. I'm too stupid to get a job." And these were not her words. These are words that someone fed her her whole life, and so we just really worked on relationship building with her. [...] I was her case manager when she first came on, which is why I'm so emotionally involved with her. But I saw her three times a week. (interview with youth services worker, interview 12/7/16)

We had a young girl that came in here for family-planning services, had been coming in for years. I know her well. She came in one day and was in my office, and I could tell that something was wrong with her. And she started crying, and she was very upset. And I was like, "Okay, what's wrong?" Well, it came down to it in some of the questions we were asking. She had an eating disorder. And she needed help. Like, she was in my office. It makes me almost cry. She was in my office, and she was here needing my help. And I couldn't get it to her (interview with public health worker, interview 6/6/17)

During the course of my fieldwork, I heard many stories such as these, where frontline workers disclosed deeply affecting, emotionally charged experiences with vulnerable, exploited, or trafficked persons. As a researcher, I was continually surprised to be the recipient of these stories. I had only known my interviewees for a brief series of scheduling emails or a check-in phone call, yet they were sharing intimate examples of the emotional labor of their work. While I was incredibly grateful for my participants' willingness to generate trust so quickly and disclose such complicated, deeply personal anecdotes, these stories were often difficult to hear. I would drive back from a fieldwork interview or return to my hotel room feeling drained, angry, or sad after a particularly emotional exchange. The stereotypical perception of street-level bureaucrats as unthinking automatons was nonexistent across my experiences gathering data with frontline workers.

I did not go into my fieldwork imagining I would be writing a chapter about emotions in anti-trafficking work. However, as I began to hear the same stories from service providers—of deep emotional responses to their clients, overwhelming caseloads, and self-care strategies—this topic emerged as increasingly important to address. In this chapter, I investigate the relationship between anti-human trafficking work within street-level bureaucracies and emotional labor. Service providers discussed the importance of emotional labor in their work with exploited or trafficked persons in generating trust and goodwill with survivors. However, the intimacy of this work did create the threat of secondary traumatization for frontline workers, especially those in street-level bureaucracies with already documented high levels of burnout. In an attempt to buffer against this known concern, many service providers discussed the ways they attempted to manage the size of their caseloads or invested deeply in self-care strategies.

As frontline workers are being asked to take on more anti-trafficking efforts, it is critically important to understand the emotional impact of this work. When faced with stressors—like defunded programs, increased hours for staffers, and larger caseloads—the affective components of anti-trafficking work might be more taxing. Additionally, trafficked persons deserve services that acknowledge and respect their trauma. Service providers facing burnout or overloaded with case management may not be able to be the proactive first responders they are positioned to be in anti-trafficking policy and practices.

The Foundations of Emotional Labor

In her foundational text *The Emotional Heart*, Hochschild (2012) defines emotional labor as “the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has *exchange value*” (7). She uses the case study of flight attendants to understand how their performance of specific emotions—maternal care for

the general passenger, stern discipline for those who refuse to follow appropriate airline behaviors, flirtatiousness with male frequent fliers—conjure a particular interpersonal response from the passengers they are charged with managing. These emotions may not align with how they truly feel in a particular moment, but this sometimes false feeling is required to maintain organizational standards of friendliness and essentially sell themselves as a commodity, part of the overall flight experience.

In Hochschild's conceptualization of emotional labor, jobs that require this form of labor have three common characteristics:

First, they require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public. Second, they require the worker to produce an emotional state in another person—gratitude or fear, for example. Third, they allow the employer, through training and supervision, to exercise a degree of control over the emotional activities of employees. (147)

This rubric captures a range of sectors, from bill collectors who have to produce negative emotions to induce overdue payments to doctors who must maintain a level of professional distance while still appearing concerned about a patient's health. Some professions may not have as extreme a level of control and supervision as others. For example, a salesperson on a retail floor may be observed by a manager who encourages a bigger performance of trustworthiness to generate a sale. Conversely, a lawyer in her own firm has more flexibility over which emotional responses she can perform in front of her clients but has professional standards from her training as a representative of the legal system to shape her emotional norms.

Since Hochschild's initial definition, other scholars have offered their own nuanced interpretations of emotional labor. For example, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) use a behavioral understanding of emotional labor as “displaying the appropriate emotion” to “decoupl[e] the experience of emotion from the expression of emotion” (90). Morris and Feldman (1996) see it as “the effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during

interpersonal transaction” (987). Mastracci, Guy, and Newman (2012) describe emotional labor as “the effort within oneself to conjure appropriate feelings or subdue inappropriate ones, and the effort to induce particular feelings in another person or stifle other feelings” (28). Across all of these definitions, the idea that emotional labor involves both the performance and the feeling of affective responses remains constant. People may behave in a way that runs completely counter to their internal feelings about a client, a situation, or a workplace practice, or they may reveal an emotional response that does not mesh with their organizational standards. Both circumstances provide examples of emotional labor. Thus, in my analysis, I am interested in exploring the *external*, forward-facing emotions—and the practices that facilitate this performance—and the *internal*, context-specific emotions felt by frontline workers.

Emotional Labor in Street-Level Bureaucracies

Despite the stereotypical image of a street-level bureaucrat as an automaton, robotically distributing services according to routine policies, frontline work is inherently tangled up with personal feelings and responses (Kelly 1994; Harrits and Møller 2013; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003; 2012; Shannon and Page 2014). As Lipsky (2010) explains, “policy delivered by street-level bureaucrats is most often immediate and personal. They usually make decisions on the spot (although sometimes they try not to) and their determinations are focused entirely on the individual” (8). Service providers often encounter clients in physically close quarters, sitting behind a desk at a social service office, or pulling over a driver for a speeding ticket. Rules and standard operating procedures may falter or cease to have any meaningful effect in response to body language and emotional cues. Frontline workers “must deal with clients’ personal reactions to their decisions, however they cope with their implications” (Lipsky 2010, 9). Conversely, clients also have personal reactions to their encounters with street-level bureaucrats, especially

when they negatively reflect upon a client's identity or unfairly stereotype them: "Since a person's self-concept is substantially a function of the response of others who are important to the person, interactions with street-level bureaucrats have psychological as well as material implications" (Lipsky 2010, 66). Clients may be able to access particular services after their engagement with a street-level bureaucracy, but they may also have internalized implicit or explicit messages about their self-worth and political efficacy (Soss 2005).

In order to perform their job effectively, as Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2012) write, frontline workers must balance the positive or negative emotions associated with their work with the discretion they use to judge decisions and the policies undergirding their organizational standards:

Whether fleetingly, as a cop during a traffic stop, or over years, as a social worker with a homeless client, street-level workers deal with individual attributes and circumstances and must continually confront—and deal with the emotional demands of—the inevitable mismatch between prescribed practice and everyday living people and problems. Sometimes these mismatches are slight and can be easily overlooked; other times the mismatches are striking and call out for response. [...] Even confronting the mismatch between the needs of the individual and the dictates of rules and choosing to narrowly conform to standard practice is an expression of agency and an act of meting juridical justice. (S19)

Because frontline work is characterized by discretion, frontline workers have a range of practices to deploy in the case of this mismatch, dependent upon the circumstances of the encounter with the client and the parameters of their own organization's standards. Hsieh, Jin, and Guy (2012) describe this as an "interactive responsiveness" involving different emotional registers, "one of which requires authentic expression of the worker's emotional state, while another requires workers to behave in ways that they may not actually feel, such as when they must seem nicer-than-nice or, conversely, tougher-than-tough" (39). For example, the cop during a traffic stop may encounter a driver in emotional distress. She may be annoyed or even angered at the

driver's display, but she uses her discretion to choose a response to deescalate the situation. The cop regulates her own emotions to calm down the driver, using her softer demeanor to induce a more compliant response.

Additionally, street-level bureaucrats have the discretionary power to bend the rules, which can enhance an external performance or reveal the depth of internally felt emotions. As Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) explain, "by selectively breaking rules, one effectively steps 'out of role' to communicate the nature and depth of one's (actual or apparent) personal convictions" (95). Taking the example of the traffic stop, perhaps the officer in question pulls over an acquaintance. Instead of following the rules—running the license and registration, writing a ticket—she steps out of role to express concern for her friend's safety while driving in such a manner. This deeper emotional reaction is more intimate and informal than the traditional officer's performance of regulating the rules of the road. Regardless of how she actually feels about this situation, her performance could very well induce the same effect of safer driving as a ticket would.

Disconnection and Burnout

As the examples above demonstrate, frontline workers engaged in emotional labor must face the potential disconnection between how they should respond based on their workplace role and how they feel as an individual. In order to avoid damaging their concepts of a true emotional self—which can emerge when their performance of what their work role dictates is taken personally as a representation of their internal feelings—"a worker has to develop the ability to 'depersonalize' situations" (Hochschild 2012, 132). This is different from refusing to perform any emotional labor, the "go into robot" phenomenon some workers use to resist workplace norms when faced with particularly challenging, disrespectful, and rude interpersonal exchanges

(Hochschild 2012, 129). Depersonalization can serve as a coping mechanism, as it “provides some level of buffering against repeated exposure to contradictory expectations” (Schaible and Gecas 2010, 333). Taking a cynical stance, reminding oneself that they are not their workplace role, or avoiding the internalization of criticism from clients can all potentially ameliorate the emotional challenges that arise when frontline workers identify too closely with their job or organization.

In extreme cases, the disconnection between external emotional performance and internal affective response can result in burnout. As Schaible and Gecas (2010) explain in their study of police officers’ emotional labor, “As a consequence of this emotional labor resulting from dissonance between values and behaviors, individuals are likely to suffer a host of consequences including alienation, burnout, and inauthenticity” (319). Performing emotional labor that runs counter to core beliefs and tenets, even when that labor supports an overall organizational mission, can be damaging to the service provider’s own ideas of their worth within the workplace. For example, the aforementioned social worker with a homeless client could have an internal belief system rooted in self-reliance and independence. His continued encounters with this client struggling to maintain stable housing could produce negative feelings, especially if he is asked to be more generous with resources than he feels he should be, given his own moral code.

Burnout is “characterized by the inability to disengage from work, coupled with feelings of overwhelming pressure, hopelessness and apathy, and the inability to maintain a professional perspective” (Hsieh, Jin, and Guy 2012, 41). Frontline workers are particularly susceptible to burnout, given their intimacy with clients. As Guy, Newman, and Mastracci (2008) explain, “Burnout is an issue of primary concern in occupations that involve lots of face-to-face contact—

in other words, those with heavy emotional labor demands. The majority of street-level public service jobs can be characterized as high-touch and as requiring emotional labor” (104). Service providers are often physically present to see the reactions and body language of their clients, and must modulate their own responses accordingly. Given the stakes of some street-level bureaucracies, especially those sectors that deal with interpersonal violence, service providers may also take on the trauma their clients face. Even though they are dealing with these experiences secondhand, such as through their client’s retellings of the situation, frontline workers can and do internalize the emotional responses as if they experienced this violence or trauma personally: “Burnout may occur from performing emotionally intense work without dealing with the vicarious trauma that accompanies it” (Mastracci, Guy, and Newman 2012, 36).

Identity and Emotional Labor

Emotional labor is traditionally gendered and stereotypically considered women’s work. As Guy, Newman, and Mastracci (2008) explain, “Too often dismissed as ‘nurturant’ or ‘supportive,’ emotion work has traditionally been thought to be something that women do naturally” (8). Because women are assumed to be caretakers—and their social roles constructed accordingly (West and Zimmerman 1987)—the practices of emotional labor are almost taken for granted as inherently feminine acts. This is complicated further by other identity positions, such as race and class. Mirchandani (2003) challenges the conceptualization of emotional labor as “unidimensional,” exclusively about the differences between men and women, by taking an intersectional approach to understand how women of color navigate emotional labor. She argues the code-switching women of color operationalize when navigating the tensions between their own identity and the identity of their clients or customers is itself a form of emotional labor: “The work of recognizing, managing and participating in these shifting relations of difference

requires emotion work which is done in conjunction with the work of managing one's own feelings, making others feel a certain way and defining one's work" (729). If emotional labor is about inducing a specific feeling in others, women of color face the increased burden of performing according to their work-specific role while simultaneously acting in such a manner to address implicit or explicit racial biases.

One major gendered aspect of emotional labor is what Hochschild (2012) describes as the secret work of niceness:

Niceness is a necessary and important lubricant to any civil exchange, and men make themselves nice, too. It keeps the social wheels turning. [...] Beyond the smaller niceties are the larger ones of doing a favor, offering a service. Finally, there is the moral or spiritual sense of being seriously nice, in which we embrace the needs of another person as more important than our own. (167-8)

As Hochschild states herself, men are not exempt from performing these niceties, but women are socially constructed to be more accommodating of these behaviors in both the public and private spheres. DeVault (1999) describes this as "the ideal of the soothing and supportive housewife," a powerful trope that shapes how private, often unnoticed emotional labor is expected within households, even those that are not organized with a male breadwinner at their core (56).

Emotional labor extends this norm to the public workspace, per Hochschild's (2012) framing: "As traditionally more accomplished managers of feeling in private life, women more than men have put emotional labor on the market, and they know more about its personal costs" (11).

With this framing in mind, emotional labor is often perceived to be relegated to female-dominated street-level bureaucracies, like teaching, nursing, or victim advocacy, as opposed to more stereotypically masculine sectors like policing. However, even when some street-level bureaucracies are more masculine or feminine spaces, emotional labor is required for a wide

range of frontline roles. According to Mastracci, Guy, and Newman (2012), this expectation transcends the gender of the service provider:

Jobs that score high in terms of emotional labor demands are about evenly split between women's jobs and men's jobs. Gendered jobs—for example, police work versus social work—develop norms and display rules that create their own emotion cultures. While men's jobs tend to emphasize impassive toughness, women's emphasize communication skills. (106)

While these emotional displays are different, they are still aspects of the labor. Regulating one's emotions and performing accordingly to elicit a particular response from clients does not disappear in a more traditionally masculine space but simply shifts to a required emotional display that aligns with traditional masculine norms.

Frontline Work in Times of Crisis

While all sectors of frontline work engage some level of emotional labor, Mastracci, Guy, and Newman (2012) introduce the specialized role of crisis responders within street-level bureaucracies. As they explain, “crisis response is purposefully *not* representative of all public service” (7). Not every sector of work engages clients in emergency need or extreme emotional distress. However, many frontline workers do “encounter citizens when their lives have been turned upside down by storms, wrecks, fires, floods, earthquakes, crimes, or explosions. During these interactions, emotions are on the razor's edge. Split-second decisions are a must. The work is cognitive, often physical, and always emotional” (22). Firefighters, law enforcement officers, domestic violence advocates, victim advocates, and EMTs are all examples of crisis responders.

I would argue that anti-human trafficking advocacy—whether it is through a standalone trafficking-specific position or duties folded into a preexisting frontline worker's job description—also at times fits into this framing. Some exploited or trafficked persons are encountering frontline workers after a potentially fraught, emotionally complex experience of

violence and trauma. While all clients are “nonvoluntary. [...] because street-level bureaucracies often supply essential services which citizens cannot obtain elsewhere” (Lipsky 2010, 54), trafficked clients may have been identified through an arrest or a sting operation, placed in services to avoid punishment or carceral processes. Their encounters with service providers may be completely undesired, and their emotional responses to interventions could reflect this lack of willingness to cooperate or participate in services.

Conversely, the potential long-term aspects of frontline work with trafficked persons complicate the temporal aspects of crisis response. While police officers or victim advocates may only need to produce a short burst of emotional labor when, for example, immediately identifying a survivor of trafficking, they could also be asked to serve as a point of contact for that particular survivor throughout the duration of an investigation. As Hochschild (2012) explains, “there are other jobs that call for longer and deeper relationships with clients. Psychiatrists, social workers, and ministers, for example, are expected to feel concern, to empathize, and yet to avoid ‘too much’ liking or disliking” (150). When engaging in emotional labor beyond an initial encounter—a fairly common aspect of frontline work (Lipsky 2010)—street-level bureaucrats who strongly connect with a client may have to work even harder to establish organizationally appropriate boundaries, especially as the client/worker relationship gains deeper levels of intimacy and familiarity. Morris and Feldman (1996) acknowledge the complexity of long-term service provision, using an example from the healthcare sector: “Thus, it is much more ‘labor’ for a nurse to display emotional neutrality when a long-term patient whom he or she likes is dying. When mismatches between genuinely felt and organizationally required emotions exist, then, greater control, skill, and attentive action will be needed” (992). Extending this to anti-trafficking efforts, it is harder for a foster care worker who has managed his

trafficked client's case for a few months, guiding this youth towards a stable placement with a family who understands the trauma of trafficking, to display emotional neutrality when the placement fails and the trafficked youth reenters the child protective system. This emotional mismatch is understandable, as it is disingenuous to believe that frontline workers who engage with their clients over extended periods of time should *not* have some kind of response, but it is also arguably more common for street-level bureaucrats outside of the instantaneous aspects of crisis provision.

Coding Emotional Labor in Frontline Work

As with my previous chapters, I used the same data set of 42 interviews with 54 service providers who work in the legal/law enforcement, medical, non-profit, social service, and foster care sectors. My *Methodological Appendix* offers more information on the context and process behind these interviews. For this particular analysis, I used Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011)'s process of open and focused coding as I did in Chapter Two but shifting my thematic area of focus to emotional labor. I created a 16-code schema using the themes developed in aforementioned scholarship on emotional labor (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993; DeVault 1993; Guy, Newman, and Mastracci 2008; Hochschild 2012; Mastracci, Guy, and Newman 2012; Mirchandani 2003) and its specific use by frontline workers (Kelly 1994; Harrits and Møller 2013; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003; 2012; Shannon and Page 2014).

Table 4: Codebook for Emotional Labor Analysis

Code	Definition
Burnout/ Secondary Trauma	Exhaustion and inability to continue working further; taking on client's trauma
Caseload	Clients, cases, investigations
Client's Compliance with Services	Description of a client's compliance with the services offered or provided within the workplace
Client's Emotional Display	Description of a client's emotions and their accordance with the situations and norms
Collaboration	Working with fellow frontline workers inside/outside the

	organization
Depersonalization/Disconnection	Distancing oneself from clients' emotions or experiences; not taking one's work home
Empathizing	Relating to another individual's feelings, emotions, or experiences
Funding	Internal or external sources of money for workplace services and/or practices
Gendered Labor	Practices that are stereotypically gendered to be feminine or maternal
Gifts/Emotional Support/Resources	Providing material supports, or intangible emotional supports; can be free/extraneous to services or within service requirements
Listening	Listening to another individual's feelings, emotions, or experiences
Personal Emotional Display	Regulating and/or modifying one's own emotions in accordance with the situation and norms
Self-Care	Practices to nurture and take care of oneself (not including therapeutic services)
Taking on Less Work	Removing responsibilities to one's workload
Taking on More Work	Adding more responsibilities to one's workload
Therapeutic Services	Mental health services

These codes represent what I believe to be the core issues of emotional labor: the practices that make up the actual work of emotional labor and the affective responses and reactions of both street-level bureaucrats and the clients they serve.

Upon concluding my analysis, I took a holistic view of my results and grouped them into three larger categories: emotional labor practices, workplace stressors, and solutions. I define emotional labor practices as the performances and actions that should induce an appropriate emotional response from clients. Workplace stressors are the extenuating circumstances that inhibit a frontline worker's ability to perform emotional labor. Lastly, solutions are practices and behaviors that service providers brought up as ways to manage their work and provide opportunities to perform emotional labor according to their organizational standards and avoid burnout.

I attempted to place specific codes in certain categories, but this exercise proved exceedingly difficult because codes were not exclusive to one category. What might be a stressor for one person, like taking on more work to manage caseloads, was a solution for another. Conversely, some identified solutions in one sector of frontline work, like listening closely to clients, which were actually a standard part of general emotional labor practices in other sectors. Because of this, the following findings are organized by major thematic area, and examples of the codes appear across all three sections.

Emotional Labor Practices in Anti-Human Trafficking Work

Empathizing and Listening

Frontline workers often used empathizing and listening in tandem to connect with clients and thus encourage—or more explicitly direct—them towards accessing particular services. Empathizing involved street-level bureaucrats attempting to relate to their clients on an emotional level while listening, as the code implies, simply meant actively listening to their clients. Interviewees often articulated how they used these two skills to nimbly and flexibly work through their clients’ emotional needs and responses. One sheriff used empathy rooted in his long-term relationships with potential trafficking survivors in his community. He was presented with rumors regarding young women in his community being filmed engaging in sex with older men—a rumor he took seriously enough to investigate—and used his preexisting relationships to generate a comfortable environment for disclosure:

Let’s take, for example, some of the allegations we’ve heard when we’ve actually investigated about the young girls. [...] I’ve talked to a couple of the young girls that their names came up that I’ve known since they were, you know, [...] little, little, little. [...] These girls feel comfortable about talking to me just about anything. You know, they’ll come in and have a soda and we’ll talk about [...] get your grades up, stuff. It was kind of interesting, I spoke to one of em, cause her name had came up. And I talked to her as Old [Name], not necessarily the sheriff but as Old [Name]. [...] “Hey, I’d been hearing this had been happening, do you know anything about this?” And you could see

the embarrassment already on her face. “Oh, no, no. I didn’t see anything.” But you could, I mean, you could tell by looking at her face. (interview 12/8/16)

Instead of using an interrogation tactic, which is within his discretionary power, this sheriff approached the situation as more of a heart-to-heart with a young member of his community. The rapport they had already developed based on his interest in her personal life, such as improving her grades, created the environment for him to use an empathetic strategy to get information about a situation of sexual exploitation. As he explained later in the interview, because he was attuned to her embarrassed reaction, he was able to reassure this young women of his status as a trusted individual with whom she could share information: “You know, we’re not gonna be judgmental. I’m not gonna sit there and look at you any differently than I did before.”

A juvenile justice worker described how the empathy she fostered amongst staffers assisted in their ability to connect with the youth in custody, many of whom faced emotional challenges and lashed out in ways that were difficult to manage:

I feel that our staff really care about the kids. There isn’t a kid in here that our staff wouldn’t be able to tell you what that kid’s up to, what’s going on with them. [...] Outside of every youth’s room door, everyday, every staff has to put something positive that they witnessed the youth doing. And those kids cannot wait to get to see what somebody wrote about them. [...] And so one of the kids, oh man, he had a really rough eight hours on Sunday. [...] But one of the comments somebody wrote was, “You really have a good arm when you throw your shoe. Maybe we can make that basketball.” And that kid just laughed and laughed and said, “You know, I really do need to take a look at how am I doing things.” But it helped that staff member and that youth break some ice that they didn’t have broken before. And so it’s just really trying to get that communication and that mentorship with our kids and the staff. Because they build that rapport, and it’s a healthy rapport. (interview 12/1/16)

Using empathy to cultivate this rapport and sense of familiarity allows frontline workers to more easily access emotional reserves to diffuse intense situations. Instead of responding with punishments or matching the youth’s violence, this staffer offers a humorous comment to help put things in perspective. While those more punitive actions may still be within their scope of

discretion, they clash with the empathetic environment and focus on listening to clients' needs that this juvenile justice worker strove to maintain in her organization.

Emotional Support and Resources

Across sectors, frontline workers named a range of practices they used to provide emotional support for their clients. For example, one anti-trafficking advocate described how she would work with a client who wished to go through the judicial system and address their trafficker through legal means: "Is this something that they want to press charges? So I would go with them to the law enforcement interview. I would sit with them through all the court proceedings and kind of be there to hold their hand if they had any questions" (interview 10/6/16). For a client who may be reticent or ambivalent about encountering the law enforcement sector, as addressed in Chapter 2, having this presence could be incredibly affirming and make them more likely to follow a criminal investigation from start to finish. Similarly, a youth services worker described how a coworker responded to a client's anxiety: "She's a teenager, and we're in court, and right before getting ready for court [...], she has to throw up. So my advocate is in there, holding her hair back and helping her clean up so she can go in and tell her story in court" (interview 8/4/16). In the face of a moment that could deter a client from moving forward with court proceedings, this advocate provided a highly intimate level of care. Holding someone's hair back while they are getting ill is not in the description of an advocate, but this small action becomes an integral part of the emotional support received by this specific client.

With respect to trafficked clients, many service providers acknowledged the importance of these supportive practices in engaging clients who may feel stigmatized or targeted because of the violence and lack of agency they faced while being exploited. One public health nurse

explained the importance of being empathetic and non-judgmental during a routine protocol questionnaire:

I think the hard part is trying to ask them without making them feel like they've done something wrong or making them feel like we're going to put them in more harm. Because I know that that's a big issue with the trafficking. If they are getting trafficked and they've been in it for a while, then they, you know, they condition them to not believe us and not trust us and whatever the reason is. So it's hard, I think for me is coming up with ways to ask them things in getting the answers that I need without making them feel like, you know, picking them apart. I think that's hard. (interview 7/11/17)

From her perspective, this level of emotional support and empathy may not need to be employed for all patients, but trafficked people could potentially respond better to her creative interpretation of the standardized question protocol. While this is arguably more challenging than her encounters with other, less vulnerable patients, this nurse may actually benefit by avoiding the retraumatization of her trafficked client and building trust that could lead to longer-term engagement.

An anti-trafficking advocate talked about the specific feeling of comfort she and her coworkers attempted to create when trafficked youth entered her organization for the first time:

And I think even just some of the environmental things that happen here, as far as, you know, being a welcoming place for them to come into. They're always offered a snack and a drink. [...] We'll run through the drive-thru and get something to eat if they haven't eaten or whatever. They're always given the option of having a fresh start bag if they need clothing and hygiene and things like that. So I think right from the time they walk into either our doors or the hospital or wherever that first point of contact is, it's just, how do we, you know, first start with meeting those basic needs and kind of build that trust and help them see that we're on your side from the minute you walk in the door. (interview 6/30/17)

While meeting an individual's basic needs might seem small in comparison to the larger services a trafficked client may require, this action—which aligns with practices from other anti-violence sectors, such as domestic violence advocacy—indicates a degree of care and emotional intelligence about the situation. Trafficked persons may not want to immediately dive into the

trauma they faced; they may simply wish to have something to eat or change into different clothing. This advocate believes these initial emotional labor practices could lead to longer-term trust with service providers and continued accessing of her organization's resources.

Personal Emotional Responses

Service providers also discussed feelings of personal closeness and emotional responses that reflected this intimacy with their clients. For example, a small sample of interviewees expressed some variation of the idea that—if it were legal and not compromising organizational and ethical boundaries—they would take clients home with them when faced with resource shortages or limited placements. A lawyer provided an anecdote about a trafficked client, a young, undocumented mother of twins who needed a shelter option that would allow her to stay with her babies. Because of these highly specific circumstances, the lawyer and her coworker struggled with finding a stable housing option. At one point, as she explained, she felt as though her only option was to open her own home to clients:

I said, "Here's the deal. I can't take her home with me, and that's kind of where we're at right now." [...] [My coworker] was still here at the time, and she's like, "I'm gonna take her home with me!" And I said, "No, no we're not gonna do that because we both have to keep our licenses to practice law, and this is crossing that line [...]. You can't do that." (interview 11/29/16)

As this quote shows, when faced with the ever-present resource limitations that are inherent to street-level bureaucracies, some service providers have a personal emotional response that runs counter to organizational standards and norms. Even though they do not follow through on their feelings, the fact that they still discuss these emotional reactions demonstrates the care for clients and intimacy of frontline work.

Workplace Stressors

Caseloads and Resources

Lining up with the SLBT scholarship (Brodkin 1997; Lipsky 2010; Portillo and Maynard-Moody 2010), frontline workers often discussed the standard issues of caseload management and limited funding or resource options when talking about stressful aspects of their jobs. When these factors are compounded with the added layer of anti-trafficking efforts, such as identifying survivors or directing them to trafficking-specific services, these typical workplace stressors become more challenging. While this is certainly not unique to anti-trafficking service provision—for example, domestic violence advocates are tasked with identifying survivors of interpersonal violence and directing them to appropriate shelter or therapeutic services—the issues emerge when human trafficking is grafted onto an organization’s mission without a corresponding reconfiguration of caseloads or resources. To put it another way, when anti-trafficking efforts are added to an already overburdened frontline worker’s daily practices, stressors obviously increase.

As one lawyer explained in her work alongside medical providers in a public hospital, human trafficking questionnaires and protocols take time, a limited resource for frontline workers regardless of the client population they serve: “I know we’re swamped in here, but we need to take 30 seconds and ask these questions and make sure. You know, in particular, when we’re seeing folks who are coming in who are exhibiting these warning signs, we need to take 30 seconds and ask these questions” (interview 11/29/16). While this seems like a minor addition to a frontline worker’s battery of intake processes, 30 second per client can add up over a workday, increasing the time they spend with each client covering introductory questions and potentially decrease the amount of time they can dedicate to each case. At the time of our interview, this lawyer was facing reticence from emergency department staffers who resisted the

implementation of another identification protocol—not because they did not want to assist trafficked persons but because their caseloads simply could not handle another questionnaire.

Finding emergency housing placements, especially for trafficked persons, was consistently referenced as a major issue. An administrator in youth services saw this as a missing resource that could greatly improve her community’s response to trafficked youth:

As far as resources go, you know, something that we always struggle with, and this doesn’t necessarily have to do with just human trafficking. [...] But we’re always struggling when kids very first come into the court system, and it’s an emergency situation, finding placement for them right away. I don’t know that that is necessarily unique to our community. [...] We really rely on DCF and the police department to come together and work on where that child can reside until such time they can get into court for the hearing. I mean, 72 hours, they have 72 hours before that child even gets in front of a judge. [...] And so, 72 hours where they can kinda be in limbo. (interview 10/27/16)

As addressed in Chapter 2, this limited resource was often “solved” by using jail and detention facilities as a temporary safe, secure housing option, which conjured feelings of ambivalence amongst my interviewees. While carceral-inflected resources, like beds in youth detention facilities, are certainly available for frontline workers to access to manage their caseloads, they may not actually be the most affirming resources for trafficked persons.

An administrator at a domestic violence shelter drew attention to the ethical concerns with adding an anti-trafficking component to her existing frontline workload without an equivalent increasing in funding and community resources:

It’s not that I don’t want to ask the question, but once I ask the question, then I have to do something with that information. And if I don’t have the financial resources, if my community isn’t equipped to be able to help this family in the best ways that they can, it might actually be more detrimental for me to ask the question than to not ask the question to begin with. And I’m not saying that that’s an internal conversation that people are having where they’re like, “Oh, don’t ask. Don’t say anything.” But I think that that is a valid resistance to that. “What the heck do you want me to do when I find out this is going on?” Right? (interview 10/5/16)

The impulse—or institutional pressure—to provide services to trafficked persons must be balanced with a corresponding increase in accessible services to avoid retraumatization or unhelpful interactions with street-level bureaucracies (Schwarz et al. 2016). Frontline workers cannot offer services that simply do not exist, and it increases stressors for both clients and service providers when these expectations cannot be met.

Clients' Compliance with Services

Service providers also identified a major stressor in a client's failure to comply with appropriate services. If emotional labor is about inducing specific responses from clients (Hochschild 2012; Mastracci, Guy, and Newman 2012; Morris and Feldman 1996), then failure to acquire that response—here, willing compliance in anti-trafficking services—can be challenging. After encountering a client and engaging in emotional labor practices to direct them toward the next step of service provision, frontline workers often expressed sadness or disappointment when clients did not respond as expected by opting out of service provision or refusing resources. For example, a detective described a typical process for trafficked persons moving through the legal system. From his perspective in law enforcement, an appropriate client response is moving from being identified to testifying against a trafficker in a court process:

And then whenever they come in and disclose to us, then the court process starts. And then now they start seeing, you know, where this person may go to prison for 30 years or so. That starts influencing them, and then people around the victim start influencing them. You know, "This is our friend, you're putting him away for life. It was your decision. You wanted to do that. They were just helping you out." So then our victims don't wanna testify and then our victims run away. And then we can't find our victims anymore, so getting them to court is hard. [...] It's been my experience, [...] once they get to the comfort, they're gonna tell you what happened pretty bluntly, at least that they have with us. And they get to court and they testify pretty bluntly. It's just getting them to court to testify is the hard part. [...] It's always been a struggle, last minute, trying to run around, search, find them, use resources. (interview 12/5/16)

While his retelling of the scenario is empathetic, this detective does acknowledge the challenges that arise when clients change their minds about being actively involved in a court case.

Unsurprisingly, as the details emerge about their testimony and its effects on people with whom they may still feel connected, some trafficked persons do not want to comply further, even though it is the appropriate next step within the criminal justice system. To combat their reticence, this detective had to use additional time and effort to find them and bring them back into compliance with appropriate services.

A victim services coordinator saw the lack of client compliance as a unique part of working within the anti-trafficking sector. Specifically, the lack of longer-term or wrap-around programs led sex trafficking survivors to return to commercial sex, even though they had been removed from this sector of labor previously under the auspices of a trafficking rescue:

We send them to a domestic violence shelter that has a six or 12-week program and then, sorry, you need to be on your own in those weeks. And you're talking women who maybe disclosed at 26 but have been in what they call "the life" or "the game" since they were 12, 13, and 14. [...] And then you tell them after leaving a domestic violence shelter, "Good luck with your life." And you've got an advocate that is doing her or his best to try and advocate on behalf of the victim, but the resources to really sustain them are just not there. [...] It's a vicious cycle because then the law enforcement are saying, "You know, we rescued her three months ago and now she's back out." Well, she's back out because the six-week program has ended or the, or the 12-week program has ended. [...] And then they still don't have a GED, they still don't have an education, they still have no life skills, and you say, "Go out and make a living." At what? Minimum wage? Minimum wage? With nothing to make a deposit for a home. [...]. This is gonna sound really bold, but how do you tell a woman to go work at Burger King for minimum wage when she can go do a blow job for \$40? [...] So the return to the game or the return to the life isn't a matter of choice, it's a matter of survival. (interview 2/15/17)

Per this coordinator's framing of the situation, her clients' return to selling sex is still a stressor—especially for other service providers who may not have her same level of experience or insights—but she sees it as an inevitability for anti-trafficking programs. Because of her workplace expertise, she can almost expect this inappropriate response regardless of her

emotional labor because of the structural factors that perpetuate economic instability in her clients' lives. This coordinator still has to do the labor of advocating for these identified survivors and directing them to appropriate services, knowing that larger, oppressive social systems are in place to exacerbate the poverty and financial insecurity that may drive some people to seek out commercial sex work.

Personal Emotional Responses

Additionally, when faced with a particularly intense or emotionally fraught encounter with clients, frontline workers who could not manage their reactions in the moment described the stress and negative feelings that emerged from this failure. When asked about which aspects of her job were most challenging, a foster care worker described the difficulties in regulating her emotions when reading case files of extremely traumatic circumstances:

Probably the hardest part for me, you know, they always say your greatest strength is your greatest weakness, and I am super tender-hearted. But seeing the cases that come in are the hardest for me. In fact, there's one that I'm pretty sure has like scarred me for life. She was nine years old and trafficked and just, like, I had to quit reading her file because I was just bawling my eyes out. And then my boss was like, "You have to stop reading all these files," because we had 80 kids on the list yesterday that were needing a bed. And so when you get those cases coming across, just hearing their stories and what they've gone through, I mean, at nine years old. I can't imagine ever, ever having to go through what she went through. And so, [...] that to me is the most heart wrenching part of it because you just, you feel helpless. And not hopeless, but you definitely feel like that challenge to want to try to find good homes. (interview 5/24/17)

The emotional skill set needed to do this kind of work—being “tender-hearted,” empathetic, open to listening to clients' experiences without judgment—can also work against service providers. While this foster care worker was getting drawn deeper into the case files of trafficked youth, her workload was piling up, creating more stress when she returned to a larger caseload. Additionally, because she was so invested in these clients' stories of exploitation, she placed more pressure on herself to find them placements and housing. In an overburdened foster care

system, her connection to these clients and personal investment in their success may not be enough to overcome the reality of limited resources. Luckily, her boss took a proactive role, reminding her of the need to regulate her emotions in a way that would allow her to return to the task at hand without the negative feelings of hopelessness that emerge from this kind of labor.

Burnout

Ultimately, the culmination of these stressors can result in secondary traumatization or burnout (Guy, Newman, and Mastracci 2008; Hsieh, Jin, and Guy 2012; Schaible and Gecas 2010). Because my interviewees were still engaged in frontline work and had not yet burnt out in their current sector of employment, many of the examples of burnout they provided came secondhand, from a coworker or friend who had actually left their line of work because of stressors. For example, limited or nonexistent resources frequently resulted in burnout, aligning with research that shows “elevated risks of emotional exhaustion can occur in the face of low job resources” (Hsieh 2014, 395-6). An administrator in youth services explained that a nurse with whom she worked on sexual assault cases actually left her role, leaving their rural community without an official Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) because she was constantly on-call without respite: “She would end up going in on days off and in the middle of the night, you know. [...] And she said, ‘[...] I love this work, I wanna do it, but I can’t continue to be the only person that does this 24/7’” (interview 10/27/16). An administrator at a shelter for trafficked youth saw similar issues of burnout with her staff:

I think one of the challenges I see in doing a direct residential program with the youth is the burnout is high. [...] We have very high staffing ratios. Most people who’ve worked traditional residential programs will laugh, like, “You have, like, two staff on with, like, three youth. We have four maximum youth.” My staff go home exhausted. [...] Because of the interpersonal, relational dynamics that you can’t necessarily articulate but you feel viscerally. (interview 6/30/17)

Even though this administrator attempted to buffer burnout by maintaining a consistently high level of staff—a potential solution, if it decreased stressors—the intensity of working with survivors trumped the benefits of a smaller caseload.

Secondary or vicarious traumatization was discussed more directly with respect to service providers' workplace challenges. According to Mastracci, Guy, and Newman (2012), "Vicarious trauma is the term for the emotional toll of experiencing horrific events secondhand. The impact of the situation still affects workers even though they are not victims" (36). One foster care administrator spoke to the difference between burnout and trauma in her own experiences working with youth:

You have to be able to differentiate between burnout and vicarious trauma. Because burnout, you just take a vacation. You could even switch fields, and you'll feel some relief. But if it's vicarious trauma, you're not gonna get relief no matter if you take a vacation, if you switch jobs. It will still haunt you because it permeates every aspect of your life, and I don't think that there's enough talk about that issue in this field or enough institutionalized support around that issue in this field. And when you're dealing with victims of human trafficking, the things that you already see and hear in child welfare can be disturbing enough, but then you add human trafficking on top of that, it's just another layer. It's another layer with many more complications and many more nuances that are different than if a child's parent is mistreating them. (interview 11/17/16)

In her experiences, the burnout that comes from direct service provision within the foster care system is complicated by the intense trauma of trafficking. Burnout can be alleviated by switching sectors or taking on new work away from those face-to-face experiences with clients; secondary traumatization can cause long-term emotional effects beyond the workplace.

Those service providers with less direct connection to clients—because of the administrative capacities of their work or because they had been promoted to a more managerial position—still referenced burnout in our interviews. As one anti-trafficking advocate explained, the threat of emotionally intense labor kept her from taking a more traditional frontline role:

I can't deal on the individual level, so I can't do direct service. It just haunts me. I would burn out and I would just spend every day crying all day long, so that's part of it. So I have to remove myself from that level, that's one way in which I deal. And so when I deal with all of these problems and I hear all these stories, I'm still somewhat removed, so that I can function. And then God bless all the direct service providers. (interview 12/9/16)

In her role as a working group coordinator, this advocate is still engaging with clients and hearing the stories of their trauma and exploitation. But because she is serving as an intermediary between clients and services and not providing those services herself, she feels more insulated from the emotionally taxing aspects of anti-human trafficking work.

Solutions

Collaboration

Reflecting the research on emotional labor (Guy, Newman, and Mastracci 2008; Hochschild 2012; Hsieh 2014; Mastracci, Guy, and Newman 2012), many interviewees discussed the importance of collaboration to navigate the challenges of their caseloads and work through common, shared stressors. Office-wide meetings were offered as an example of a way to collaboratively mitigate the stress of their frontline work. These could be formal, routine times scheduled into a standard workweek or more informal gatherings between coworkers. Regardless of the format or structure, anything that fosters communication between coworkers was seen as a solution to workplace stressors. As Guy, Newman, and Mastracci (2008) explain, "Peer support provides an outlet for the frustrations and anguish that arise from emotion work. Familiarity with each other's work demands allow co-workers to understand and empathize with their peers in ways that friends and family cannot" (36). For example, the executive director of a crisis pregnancy center led weekly meetings amongst staff to buffer against burnout:

We are a faith-based place, so we meet every Wednesday morning for a time of, just a time to get together and share. We pray for each other. We talk about, you know, what are the requests that we have or are there clients out there that we need resources for or

can we pray for them? [...] I think that's really one of the best things that we do. [...] To avoid burnout or that kind of thing is just to, like I said, we'll have once a week for an hour to have those conversations. We have an open door, I have an open door policy. I know all of the staff. [...] They come and knock and they sit down [...] or they'll cry or they'll scream or whatever, that kind of thing. (interview 7/17/17)

This meeting time is entangled with other solutions, such as self-care strategies like the emotional release of screaming or the calming practice of prayer, but is explicitly positioned to counter burnout.

Taking on More Work

Though an increased workload is primarily associated with stress and burnout, some frontline workers actively sought out more labor in the short-term to maintain longer-term benefits for themselves, their clients, and their coworkers. One sheriff initially implemented this practice as a cost-saving measure but saw benefits in his fellow officers' performance:

And it's kind of crazy that I do this, but I actually come into work early sometimes to help my guys not have overtime. I mean, if they've worked a nine or 10-hour shift the day before, I'll come in 5:30 or 6:00, you know, early. [...] So I try to balance that out or send someone home early in the afternoon or whatever. My sergeant and I, we try to work and flip that around as much as we can so the guys aren't, you know, getting overtime. [...] In reality, what we're doing is we're trying to save money but we're sending them home too because we want them to be safe and not get burned out, have to work so many hours. (interview 11/16/16)

This workplace practice emerged not as a solution to prevent burnout but rather a strategy to navigate limited financial resources. Regardless, from this sheriff's perspective, his increased individual workload provided the added benefit of protecting his lower-level officers from the stress of multiple, long shifts. Granted, this practice could only work in an environment where, as this sheriff described, he had a fellow, senior staff member with whom to share these extra hours and he had a solid self-care plan in place to prevent his own burnout.

Thinking about how to serve exploited or trafficked persons, a public health administrator believed that she and her coworkers had to be prepared to take on more work to treat patients from a trauma-informed perspective:

So, you have to be very flexible and very able to kind of change gears at any time because [...] it may not be the client you're working with, but it could be somebody else's client, but they need help. [...] That's also why it's so important to have the resources, have everybody trained up so anybody can. [...] You don't have to call your social worker just because of this, you know, because they may have that comfort with you. They may not have it with somebody else or it may take time to get it. And if you're the one that's kind of dealing with it, it's best you deal with it all the way through and walk them all the way through it. At least I think so. (interview 5/31/17)

If a patient enters a public health clinic and forms a rapport with their intake nurse, it may actually be more helpful for that patient to stick with their initial contact, as opposed to having to rebuild their connection with another frontline worker and retell their experiences with violence. This requires staffers at all levels to be ready to take on more labor, though the benefit of that extra work may be more effective interactions with patients that would save time and generate goodwill in the long-term.

Taking on Less Work

In contrast to this, other interviewees did explicitly reference solutions to take on less work, particularly practices that would allow them to have time to themselves outside of the standard workday. One foster care worker explained the importance of setting firm limits with respect to her caseload:

I've really set that boundary of making sure that I was giving all of myself. As much as I wanted to be there and be available, that's just not realistic. And we have an emergency call number for that reason. And I remember we had this unit meeting once, and they were like, "Oh, if this happens this weekend, you know, you might get an emergency on-call. But it's okay, just call me if they don't call me first." And somebody else said, "Well, this kid may run. If he does and they didn't call me, just call me and I'll deal with it." And I was like, "Well, this kid may run and if he does, don't call me because I won't answer." Like, because I'm not. My weekends are my weekends. I will give 110% during the week. Monday through Friday, I'm generally here 8 to 9 AM. I'm here until 7 to 8

PM almost every night. [...] Because it is, it's 100%, 110% during the day. But my weekends are my time. My off-days are my time and I expect that to be respected. (interview 5/25/17)

As addressed earlier, some service providers may want to take on those calls over the weekend for a range of reasons: taking a load off coworkers, compensating for funding cuts. However, this quote proves that not every frontline worker sees this as a solution. For this foster care worker, taking on more work outside of the prescribed workweek would blur a work-life balance she strove to maintain to avoid burnout. Taking on less work does not mean avoiding the emotional labor she encountered Monday through Friday; rather, it meant acknowledging the importance of her own boundaries and honoring the on-call system set up to prevent service providers being on the clock beyond their scheduled hours.

Handing off particularly challenging cases or clients was another solution to manage emotional labor or burnout. While this did require another service provider within their organization to take on more work, interviewees often described these exchanges as mutually beneficial. For example, one detective referenced his agency's "open policy [if] there's something going on about this case, it's just rubbing me the wrong way. Even if I'm the lead, I can tap out and move on, you know, and they can remove me from the case and somebody would gladly step in and take over" (interview 12/5/16). When faced with cases that may trigger an emotional response he could not manage effectively, he could ask a fellow officer to take over without any fear of formal punishment or informal retribution. The bond he shared with fellow officers allowed him to use this policy as he saw fit to avoid secondary traumatization.

An anti-trafficking advocate described a collaborative environment in her community across multiple organizations that allowed service providers to get feedback or hand off particular elements of a client's needs:

I think one of the biggest strengths we have here is just the relationship that we have. [...] There's always somebody else to run something by or lean on or, you know, not pass things off but, [...] "Hey, can you help with this piece of this." [...] And I think that, at least as professionals, is very helpful to maybe combat some of that feeling like I'm the only one that can help this kid. (interview 6/30/17)

Again, this is contingent upon an organizational culture that fosters enough generosity amongst staffers to allow them to share pieces of their caseloads without feeling overburdened or expected to take on more than they can handle. In street-level bureaucracies that have taken the care to make collaboration a tool to counter workplace stressors, this process can be incredibly effective and alleviate the pressure for frontline workers to have to solve every problem independently.

Self-Care and Therapeutic Services

Lastly, a few service providers were also very open and direct about seeking mental health services as a form of self-care, particularly those who had these services included as an employee benefit. A youth services worker explained how her organization actually provided free therapy for employees: "We contract with a mental health provider who comes once a week for two hours and just walks around the building and checks in on everybody. If there's a difficult case, he'll come back and do some, you know, additional stuff for us" (interview 6/30/17). This wellness program takes away the barriers of time, cost, and stigma by building it into every frontline worker's weekly schedule.

One foster care worker's organization made therapy financially accessible, but it was incumbent on employees themselves to take advantage of the mental health programming: "Our agency offers, like, employee assistance [...] and I'm currently utilizing it here, even if it is just an hour for myself that I can go and talk to somebody and say anything [...] and it not be held against me" (interview 5/25/17). While this is not as regimented as a weekly all-staff visit from a

contracted therapist, it is still an incredibly useful option for frontline workers who find counseling affirming and in line with their self-care goals.

Conclusion

Emotional labor is part of frontline work that, like discretion, cannot be erased or contained. However, it is important to address the fact that some service providers are now expected to engage with trafficked persons—and may not feel emotionally equipped or professionally competent to handle those experiences. Additionally, the inclusion of trafficked persons in their client base may be even more taxing because it is not a population they thought they would encounter in their work. With this in mind, I propose two solutions that could make the emotional labor of working with vulnerable, exploited, or trafficked persons more manageable.

First, street-level bureaucracies must invest in their employees by offering benefits directly related to the challenges of engaging in emotional labor. Hsieh, Jin, and Guy (2012) offer a robust solution:

Counseling services, such as employee assistance programs (EAPs), provide a helpful intervention to help employees deal with the emotional inconsistencies of such work. Professional training and social supports from other members in the workplace, such as regularly scheduled debriefings, can also be helpful to address this downside to emotion work. Moreover, performance rewards that applaud workers who are able to cope with the demands of emotional labor can be reinforcing. (49-50)

As addressed above, many service providers discussed these solutions as already present in their workplaces. However, not all of them were able to access this full range of benefits. People respond differently to the stresses of emotional labor, and thus should have multiple outlets to combat burnout and practice self-care.

Second, anti-trafficking advocates and scholars must jointly agitate for a continued development of infrastructures and supports to specifically work with trafficked persons. A great

deal of the stressors addressed by my interviewees could be easily resolved with the development of more specific resources for exploited or trafficked persons. While collaboration filled in many of the gaps in services, it often required more work of service providers to forge connections across sectors, contact multiple organizations to resolve issues on a client-by-client basis, and reduce the amount of time they could spend with the rest of their caseload.

For example, an administrator at a domestic violence shelter concluded our interview with a discussion of the potential pros and cons of standalone anti-human trafficking resources and organizations:

I wonder, the more that I'm in this position and the more that I supervise the human trafficking program, I do wonder the feasibility of having a human trafficking program within another agency whose primary role is to provide something else. I think it's what we have, truthfully, and we have to work within the systems that we have. But, you know, in an ideal world, it would at least be something to consider. Do these programs need to stand alone? And not that they cannot work in tandem with the other many, many systems that the folks will be exposed to in their healing. But I do wonder if it makes sense, eventually, for it to be its own programmatic thing that then allows [them] to do a number of different things, which include outreach and awareness, as well as direct service to kind of be able to focus on this aspect of violence work. I don't know.
(interview 10/5/16)

A detective offered a similar response about the importance of having a specific human trafficking unit within his jurisdiction:

I think [...] the resource would be having a unit that this is all they focus on, you know. [...] Some use it as their vice unit or whatever it may be, but having the resources to having more detectives in this unit where, you know, it's a handful of us. This is all we focus on and we can get em all. [...] You know, we can get those 42 cases from the [local domestic violence shelter] and we can dig, dig, dig. [...] We might not get any more victims that come out but we might get, ok, this person's a common theme and this guy, you know, this pimp or whatever, so let's see what else we can get off him. [...] Maybe we can get him on drugs, maybe we can get him on something else, whatever it may be. So again, I don't know what resources are around in the community, but [...] if the community was to give us anything for the police department, just give us some resources to have our own unit. So we can focus on that, to deal with that problem.
(interview 12/5/16)

Given my own perspective on carceral forms of anti-trafficking justice, I believe the first spaces of infrastructure development should start outside of the law enforcement sector. Prioritizing responses in the medical, non-profit, and social service sectors is key. For example, it could prove beneficial for one emergency department to develop an anti-trafficking response within their specific hospital, connecting identified survivors who may enter for immediate medical needs to longer-term care with practitioners and specialists across their network. A foster care office in one city could build a response to assist the youth in their care in-house through the efforts of multiple case managers trained in different aspects of anti-trafficking advocacy, like mental health services or affirming housing with foster parents who understand the potential needs of a trafficked youth. If trafficked persons are assisted within the systems they are identified, they may be able to establish relationships with service providers that lead to longer-term support and success.

Chapter 5: Prevention and Policy: Midwestern Anti-Trafficking Futures

When I began my dissertation research in February 2016, I felt a general sense of where my findings would take me. I expected to see frontline workers unquestioningly utilize the one-dimensional stereotypes of trafficked persons as either wholly passive victims or criminal actors whose exploitation was somehow warranted by their own identity or behaviors (Chapkis 2003; Lutnick 2016; Srikantiah 2007). Even knowing that street-level bureaucrats are themselves multifaceted agents who use discretion to make complex judgments about service provision (Lipsky 2010; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003), I ungraciously assumed the power of the master narrative of trafficking (Hill 2016) to trump all.

I am happy to report I was not entirely correct. These expectations did not fully reflect the complexity of my findings. While the dominant stereotypes of human trafficking undergird my findings, service providers articulated a more nuanced ambivalence about utilizing these frames in their work with clients. In Chapter 1, frontline workers offered definitions of sex and labor trafficking that supported and worked against the legal and moral understandings that shape public discourse and action. Chapter 2's exploration of the role of the carceral state in anti-trafficking efforts revealed how punishment and justice can be used to empower certain survivors of trafficking at the expense of others, who are subject to increased violence and surveillance. Finally, in Chapter 3, service providers described the emotional labor of their work, often in ways that showed how their trafficked clients challenged and affirmed their practices within street-level bureaucracies.

In sum, what these three chapters demonstrate is that service providers will use what frames of understanding are present to make meaning of exploitation, trafficking, and crime, but their use of these frames does not indicate a wholehearted agreement or belief in them. Frontline

workers may use stereotypes to interpellate their client as a trafficked person, an undocumented migrant, a sex worker, or an at-risk individual, but these classifications are contextual and may only represent what identification tools are present in their toolkit at that moment. If a more complicated understanding of human trafficking is introduced in policy and media— an understanding that perhaps looks more like the experiences these frontline workers see in their client populations—then a shift in identifying and classifying clients could occur. Because of this, I see frontline work as a truly transformative space for reconceptualizing anti-trafficking efforts at the level of client-based encounters and interventions.

Research Limitations

This project is not without limitations. First, as I address in my *Methodological Appendix*, I did not collect a range of demographic data on the sampled frontline workers. For both the survey and semi-structured interview participants, I only asked for their job title and regional scope of services, demographic factors that could easily be generalized and thus limit the potential to identify my participants. I believe my participants were so willing to share information and disclose their experiences with trafficking because of this level of confidentiality, but this also restricted the levels of analyses I could perform with respect to my data. In particular, I cannot make certain arguments about identity within frontline encounters and emotional labor because I simply do not know how my participants identified with respect to their gender and race. Research shows that race and gender play a role in how street-level bureaucrats stereotype their clients (Lara-Millán 2014; Portillo and Rudes 2014; Prokos and Padavic 2002) and how emotional labor is expected of certain frontline workers (Erickson and Grove 2008; Hochschild 2012; Mirchandani 2003). In my future research, I want to think carefully about how to gather this demographic data without compromising my participants’

privacy, as I believe there could be useful findings regarding the interplay between a frontline worker's identity and the identity of their trafficked client.

Additionally, my sample of participants may not be wholly representative of the frontline workers who actually engage with exploited or trafficked persons. During the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Initiative (ASHTI) pilot project at the University of Kansas and my own dissertation research, I constantly heard from potential participants that they did not wish to be interviewed because they did not work with trafficked persons. I do not wish to doubt their experiences, but I wonder if some of this came from a misperception about human trafficking—harkening back to Chapter 1, that trafficking is only sexual exploitation or only takes the form of extreme violations like enslavement. I attempted to work around this issue by telling potential participants that I was just as interested in those frontline workers who had not encountered trafficked clients, that vulnerability, exploitation, and risk are central concerns to my project. While this framing worked for some individuals—even leading to interviews where they described their experiences with trafficking, when they initially did not believe they could speak to it—other key frontline workers self-selected out of the research process.

Thinking Through Anti-Trafficking Ideologies and Efforts

Throughout this research, I found my stance on anti-human trafficking efforts developing and refining. Like Musto (2016), I entered this work with some belief in the framework of anti-trafficking advocacy, even with my own personal qualms about the practices of incarceration and detention that seemed inevitable in a system that included and prioritized law enforcement interventions. Again, like Musto, I leave this dissertation with the firm belief that we cannot continue in our efforts—as academics, activists, and advocates—using the same models of identification and assistance. We risk solidifying the continual conflation of sex work with sex

trafficking to the point where labor trafficking is an afterthought, if it is even considered, in street-level bureaucracies; encouraging the increased presence of law enforcement officers in the lives of vulnerable populations; and burdening frontline workers with emotionally complex caseloads they may not have the time, funding, or social support to successfully manage.

During one of my last interviews—a vibrant group of six service providers who collaborated within an anti-trafficking network—I was genuinely shocked to hear my own perspectives echoed back, albeit far less cynically. When discussing the unique challenges of anti-trafficking work, the group engaged immediately:

Advocate: [...] And I always tell people, helping fight trafficking doesn't have to have a trafficking label on it. [...] You know, be a mentor, be a foster parent, be a Sunday School teacher, whatever. You know, like you were saying, just look at the kids that are around you and figure out how you connect with them. But that's a hard sell.

Youth Services Worker: And one thing that I remember you saying too, I've heard you say it a couple times in presentations and I love it. You know, even if you're the one who's not the foster parent, cause [...] that's not where you fit, but you're the one that once a week will take a casserole over to that family because you know they've got four foster kids in their house or [...] they're a respite or whatever. You're that neighbor that's gonna help support them in what they're doing and the kids see that, too. And so that, again, teaching communities to really, you know, where is it that you fit? [...] And what can you plug into?

Advocate: There's not small pieces. [...] I mean it, it all adds up in helping people understand that. [...] You don't have to go open a program or, you know, whatever.

Youth Services Worker: Right.

Advocate: Go take your neighbors a pizza. [*table laughs*] Just be nice. (interview 6/30/17)

Combatting human trafficking does not require every concerned citizen or frontline worker to work under the umbrella of sex or labor trafficking. It simply needs individual actors to work towards a more equitable world in whatever ways they see most appropriate for their skill sets

and personal affinities. These small actions can be context-specific and contingent on what needs should be met within individual communities.

Additionally, if we think about trafficking as one part of a continuum of violence, these practices may also alleviate the trauma individuals face in situations of exploitation that do not meet the legal criteria for trafficking. In short, doing anti-trafficking work from this perspective means engaging in community-level practices to address poverty, housing insecurity, and limited access to social systems. Knowing that prosecutorial modes of justice will continue to proliferate—and also that trafficking-specific services may be needed for some survivors' own needs—I feel a responsibility to advocate from a preventive angle to discover ways to create change within smaller community spaces that can more precisely target the issues that are most relevant for vulnerable, exploited, or trafficked populations.

With that perspective guiding the remaining space of this conclusion, I want to end with three possible recommendations to shape future anti-trafficking efforts in the Midwest. These are the ideas that stuck with me as I moved through my interview data, and I envision these as paths for my own research agenda beyond the dissertation. Because they are rooted in the qualitative responses of my interview participants, I also believe they are possible to implement as policy or general practice at the community-level—they are precisely the solutions these frontline workers articulated themselves. Focusing on more macro-level practices, I argue for approaches that move beyond awareness, build and support a more robust social safety net, and work towards a feminist, anti-racist, anti-trafficking agenda.

Moving Beyond Awareness

Within anti-human trafficking efforts, awareness is centrally positioned as a silver bullet to stop trafficking, a buzzword employed by advocacy groups, a light illuminating the

exploitation and violence hidden in our societies. Even with its presence in national campaigns, curricula, and fundraisers, awareness is often simply meeting the bare minimum standard for education or knowledge. As Haynes (2014) writes in her research on the phenomenon of celebrity ambassadors in anti-trafficking efforts, “A large part of the responsibility rests with a public content to learn only a minimum about an issue—the elevator pitch—when seeking ‘awareness’” (38). Often, this “elevator pitch” is reliant upon the same social constructions of trafficked persons as young female survivors of sexual exploitation (Baker 2013; Small 2012; Srikantiah 2007). O’Brien (2013) explains, “Victims of trafficking emerge from this mix as those deemed most worthy of public sympathy and government protection, yet in garnering this sympathy for a very specific type of victim, awareness campaigns can undermine these protection efforts” (316). As addressed in Chapter 1, if the definitions that emerge from generating awareness are overly simplistic and fail to encapsulate the range of experiences with trafficking, then frontline workers may discretionarily—or inadvertently—exclude some clients from much-needed services.

With respect to anti-trafficking efforts in the Midwest, my interview participants demonstrated a general awareness of human trafficking—especially sex trafficking—often to the point of feeling comfortable and confident identifying a survivor. However, upon identification, these same frontline workers felt unmoored going beyond that first step. In one of my earliest interviews, a staff attorney and administrator at a non-profit organization described the challenges of anti-trafficking work in their community. Namely, they struggled with the limitations of programming, some offered through their state’s anti-trafficking office and some through local organizations. Though these frontline workers were located in a fairly rural county,

there seemed to be enough trafficking-specific resources to promote a seemingly endless cycle of training and awareness programs:

Administrator: All I keep saying is there's gotta be a ton of grant money out for it because people are doing it all the time and they're putting on these seminars all the time. And so, someone's getting paid to do it and trying to drag people in on this, someone's getting money to do it. [...] I get frustrated because I go and it's the same stuff over and over again. [laughs] And it's like, ok, I get it. [...]

Staff Attorney: And it's not only the same group that's putting on the same thing over and over.

Administrator: Oh, it's tons of it.

Staff Attorney: All the groups.

Administrator: And every time I go, I keep thinking of that. [...] I'll read the syllabus and I'll go, "Think this one might be it?" And so I'll send someone and go, "Ok, did you learn anything?" So far we've not had any hopeful learning.

Staff Attorney: Like, yeah, at all. [...]

Administrator: Junk. Over and over again. [...] I call it junk because I'm just irritated, because I wanna know what to do.

Staff Attorney: Well, and the people that have attended [...] that repeatedly probably can identify it. [...]

Administrator: It's not the lay public, you know, it's the same thing over and over again. And it's a good time to network, it's a good time to have coffee, and it's like, we talk about this. [...] I just feel like we're not getting anything done. (interview 8/12/16)

This administrator spoke bluntly about her feelings on these programs, going so far as to call it junk. Her frustration was palpable during our interview, and understandably so. Multiple staffers at her non-profit office were fully prepared to identify a client's potential exploitation but unsure what to do after identification. Turning away clients or being unable to offer assistance did not feel like appropriate responses, especially after learning about the violence and trauma they experienced, but this non-profit primarily offered legal assistance. They could only meet so

many of their clients' needs in-house and did not know the best practices to move forward with a trafficked client without retraumatizing them.

As this quote demonstrates, highly-trained professionals in street-level bureaucracies are increasing their capacity for identification but not for next steps: for example, where to direct a trafficked client to specific resources like secure housing or mental health services; whether to loop in or keep out law enforcement officers; how to conduct an interview or questionnaire without retraumatizing a survivor. I address the ethical concerns of identification in Chapter 3, and it is important to acknowledge again here. If frontline workers are being trained on how to identify trafficked persons but not given the infrastructure to support their needs, is this awareness training providing a service or creating a new conflict for service providers? Expanding their caseloads to identify trafficked persons without a comparable development of resources can only create more stressors and emotionally fraught encounters.

At a policy level, moving beyond awareness requires first a redistribution of state-level trafficking resources and reconfiguration of training curricula. While I do not wish to completely eliminate awareness-generating programs focused on initial identification of trafficked persons, there needs to be some kind of support for a second level of programming focused on developing plans and strategies for assisting survivors. As my research revealed, Midwestern states are fairly successful with a “Human Trafficking 101” program focused on awareness of the potential markers of trafficking—and there needs to be a “Human Trafficking 102” to help frontline workers determine what next steps are appropriate and ethical in their communities. I envision this as taking the form of a series of meetings or programs with the ultimate goal of creating a service provision plan, bringing together key stakeholders in a region or county to brainstorm and workshop what resources they can provide and what gaps need to be filled. As the

administrator above stated, the current awareness-generating meetings already have a networking capacity, and the energy in these spaces needs to be harnessed and directed to a tangible plan of action.

Upon developing these strategies, service providers need the actual services to support their trafficked clients' needs. This means a reinvestment in the social service system, as I detail in the next policy proposal. In order to be able to move from awareness and identification to the more tangible practice of appropriate service provision, frontline workers must be able to access certain resources embedded within social safety net programs.

Building a More Robust Social Safety Net

Anti-trafficking scholars have consistently argued that more robust social welfare programs, such as poverty alleviation services, housing assistance, and education and jobs training, create the circumstances for less vulnerability and risk, as well as offer supports to trafficked persons who have left situations of violence and trauma (Brennan 2014a; Clawson and Dutch 2008; Lutnick 2016; Musto 2016). As Berg (2015) summarizes, "Crumbling social safety nets (including foster care systems), labour policies that degrade wages and conditions in jobs across all industries, and repressive immigration law are policy areas that should be of interest to those concerned with exploitation in sex industries" (152). Though these structural elements are not *explicitly* about human trafficking, they create the material conditions for exploitation. Because anti-trafficking legislation in the US tends to use a criminal justice focus (Chuang 2014), the importance of fostering social safety nets to buffer against trafficking (Todres 2011) or assist those exploited persons who face economic insecurity and constrained labor choices (Brennan 2014a) is almost divorced from the larger anti-trafficking policy discourse.

With respect to the Midwest, the defunding of the social welfare state has created a climate where street-level bureaucracies are facing increased budget cuts as their responsibility to trafficked clients also increases. In the face of limited budgets and growing caseloads, a few interviewees did explicitly acknowledge the role of the political and ideological climate in their workplace. A foster care worker stated the budget cuts in her state directly affected the ability for street-level bureaucracies to provide services. She used the example of a policy change regarding juvenile justice that was ostensibly positioned to be a less punitive strategy for rehabilitating youth offenders:

Funds are cut constantly and it's always battling that and it's putting more on social services and then cutting the funding. Like when they put in place to remove juvenile justice, and that wasn't a thing, you were either incarcerated or you weren't. And that's the only way that you could, as a juvenile, be a part of that system. And so they were like, you know, "We did this because we believe that those juvenile offenders need to have that community wrap-around, and community mental health. Community services need to wrap around that [...]. Oh, by the way, we're going to cut four percent across the board." That doesn't make sense, and that's a unique thing, I think. And I don't doubt other states deal with that but here [...] you see it. [...] Don't want to get into a political rant, but that is definitely a unique battle I find. (interview 5/25/17)

This contradiction demonstrates the challenges of working within a political environment that does not acknowledge the discrepancies between requiring more responsibility of frontline workers and decreasing their funding to provide said responsibilities. Again, while this policy change could have a positive impact on vulnerable youth within the juvenile justice sector, it does not have teeth without the resources to back it up.

In order to prevent human trafficking from occurring and provide services to identified survivors, the social safety net—accessible healthcare, foster care, education, housing assistance, nutrition programs, paths to citizenship—cannot continue to be underfunded at its current rate or shifted to the responsibility of private citizens or philanthropic donors. This is a bigger ask, as it requires the cooperation of legislators at the state and federal level, which is particularly ironic

given the number of anti-trafficking elected officials who simultaneously advocate for and implement policies that defund these critical sectors of service. However, it is the necessary ask, especially if these sectors of frontline work continue to be the primary site for anti-trafficking identification and assistance.

While this is unquestionably more difficult than my first policy recommendation, I believe anti-trafficking researchers can play a unique role in advocating for better funding through our empirical scholarship. If we are conducting methodologically rigorous research, our findings can speak to the importance of adequate funding streams for service provision across a range of sectors. Knowing the data challenges within the field of human trafficking studies (Gallagher 2017; Merry 2016; Weitzer 2015), it is imperative to conduct robust projects with the potential for replication, but we also should not shy away from asking questions about funding, resources, and service provision. We also need to publish these findings in forums for policymakers and advocates who can work alongside us and access different professional spaces.

In my own dissertation research, I implemented this strategy by publishing a white paper summarizing the survey findings and reporting the challenges frontline workers expressed regarding the funding of social safety nets (Schwarz 2017). I distributed this document to all survey participants via email, and it remains accessible on an open access research platform, so individuals without academic access to databases can read these findings. I do not wish to be overly optimistic or position this as a simple solution, especially as funding social welfare programs becomes an increasingly politicized issue, but I offer these practices as a way to begin agitating for change from a perspective grounded in our research.

Working Towards a Feminist, Anti-Racist, Anti-Trafficking Agenda

As a scholar in women, gender, and sexuality studies, I want to offer a final recommendation that reflects my own ideological commitment to anti-trafficking practices. In my introduction, I briefly discuss the importance of critical trafficking studies for its critique of carceral feminism (Bernstein 2007; 2010). While I understand the role of feminist action that engages the state, I remain skeptical of anti-violence efforts that replicate patterns of incarceration, detention, and surveillance, as well as those that reify particular norms of criminality that marginalize poor communities and communities of color (Bumiller 2008; Crenshaw 2012; Kandaswamy 2010; Richie 2000; Soss and Weaver 2017).

I want to take a cue from women of color scholarship and activism in the anti-violence sector (Crenshaw 2012; Richie 2000; 2015) to understand how we can work outside of carceral feminism within the anti-trafficking field. Richie (2015) offers what I envision as the clearest path forward for imagining anti-trafficking advocacy from a feminist, anti-racist perspective in the US:

First, oppression is interlocked. You can only account for the experiences of violence if you understand all of the ways that different kinds of violence reinforce each other. That is the analysis of intersectionality. [...] We have to not just listen, hear, study, and write differently; we have to *do* things differently. So these are not rhetorical questions when I say, “Where are we on questions of trafficking, or Palestine, or immigration?” We have to do something about these issues. We have to engage with a different set of issues. That is praxis. We have to engage because we understand that these are examples of violence. We have to do it because if we are committed to ending violence we have to see violence that is intersecting along all of the spheres of people’s identities. (266-7)

Though Richie is speaking from her experiences in the field of sexual assault, domestic violence, and incarceration, she is demonstrating how to connect seemingly disparate threads of anti-violence efforts. To end violence, including human trafficking, we have to think about the interconnected oppressions that exist locally and globally. State-based solutions that perpetuate vulnerability and exploitation within other communities or populations of survivors, such as the

carceral mechanisms described in Chapter 2, are not equitable solutions. Instead of exacerbating the disproportionate distribution of state violence along lines of race, class, and gender, anti-trafficking efforts rooted in praxis that, as Szörényi (2014) writes, defines the problem of trafficking as “as an uneven distribution of precarity, in which those living in certain regions are forced to operate at a higher level of daily risk and exposure than those in others” (33). In the US, those levels of risk and exposure are higher for communities facing poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia, as well as increased interactions with and surveillance by police.

While this ideological framework of trafficking was not a dominant theme in my interviews, one anti-trafficking advocate provided an explicit, direct reference to the links between different forms of violence and oppression:

Your passion doesn't have to be human trafficking. If you have a passion about homelessness or poverty or sexism or any other “ism,” fight that. Because when you fight that, you fight trafficking. Cause all of these things are interconnected and all of these play into each other and if you affect one, you will affect the others. So you don't have to have my passion. Find your own and work towards justice in that realm. And so, if all of these realms can come together and recognize how oppression underlies all of it, and then we can together address oppression, I think we'll make a little bit faster progress. I wouldn't go so far as to say we'll change the world right away, but I think eventually [...] that could help us along the path much faster than each of us doing, “I'm doing anti-trafficking work,” and, “I'm doing anti-homeless work,” and, “I'm doing anti-drug work,” and, “I'm doing, you know, whatever it is.” You know. [...] It's all of that. Drugs, crime, poverty, sexism, racism, it's all underlying oppression. (interview 12/9/16)

In her conceptualization of anti-trafficking efforts, this advocate deliberately connects her work to other social justice practices to end housing insecurity, addiction, and social inequalities.

Much like the earlier quote from the group interview with six service providers, she expands the scope of anti-trafficking work to connect to other social justice projects to create a more equitable world. Though the harms may manifest in different outcomes—the experiences of racist discrimination, drug and alcohol abuse, and financial instability, for example, are all

unique manifestations of injustice—these forms of violence and marginalization are rooted in oppression.

Thus, I see anti-human trafficking work as inextricably connected to feminist, anti-racist, projects.⁷ Taking a structural approach to think through possible solutions to exploitation and trafficking requires us to account for all of the systems that marginalize individuals and make them vulnerable to violence. While this may not be the angle that all anti-trafficking advocates and scholars want to take in their own ideological stance, this is the position from which I feel most comfortable arguing for change. Anti-trafficking efforts that continue to perpetuate social exclusion, that mobilize specific racial tropes in their categorization of victimhood and criminality, that (perhaps unintentionally) cause more violence and harm will not result in long-term, sustainable, systemic change.

Anti-Trafficking Futures

As I approached this conclusion chapter, I was concerned with the practical applicability of my research. Knowing that anti-human trafficking advocates encompass a range of conflicting ideologies and ideas for how to address exploitation, I struggled with how to articulate my perspectives in a way that would not isolate those scholars, policymakers, and frontline workers who approached trafficking from a different viewpoint. To make sense of this, I returned to the core of ASHTI's mission, first implemented during our pilot project: "in order to combat trafficking in a cost effective and sustainable way, trafficking projects and policies need to address the problem at the source, before a person is trafficked" (ASHTI 2014, n. pag).

⁷ I also see anti-capitalist and anti-colonial projects, as well as prison abolition efforts, as part of anti-trafficking work broadly. However, I cannot give justice to these sectors of important anti-oppression work with such a cursory mention. In future work, I hope to engage these perspectives further, especially since they have a rich academic history in critical trafficking studies and critical prison studies (Davis 2003; FitzGerald 2010; Gilmore 2000; Kempadoo 2015; Musto 2013).

Prevention is the key to bring together these disparate voices and move toward a future-oriented project of stopping exploitation at its roots.

Interviewees themselves identified prevention as both necessary to ending systems of violence and trafficking. As one foster care worker directly stated, “I think we spend a lot of money on the after care of it, when we could spend that money on the prevention just as easy” (interview 5/24/17). An anti-trafficking advocate explained that this preventive shift could disrupt the current model of anti-trafficking efforts occurring through a rescue after the trauma has already occurred: “Getting people to understand how important prevention is is a challenge. It’s a hard sell, because if we’re doing it right, you don’t see the Cinderella story” (interview 6/30/17). Without the proof of a narrative of survival and restoration, anti-trafficking prevention is seen as less glamorous when compared with the excitement of a rescue operation.

While perhaps not as thrilling as the dominant narrative of rescue and recovery, I do think these final recommendations for policy and practice can be a site of unity, as they strive towards facilitating prevention. I emphasize strive here, as there is no magic fix to mobilize new anti-trafficking training programs or miraculously increase funding for frontline service provision overnight, especially for those sectors facing increasingly dire budget cuts across the Midwest. The process of agitating for new trafficking policies, specifically those that resist carceral frameworks, prioritize client agency over a cleanly closed case, and require more financial support from local governments, is a necessary project for anti-trafficking advocates, scholars, and activists. If we seek to stop violence before it has occurred, we have to first take a step back to analyze the practices and norms that led us to this point—and then move beyond these frames to create a future without the trauma of exploitation and trafficking.

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Methodological Appendix

Overview of Research Process and Methods

This research is an extension of the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Initiative (ASHTI) at the University of Kansas, which began its pilot project in October 2013. ASHTI launched a qualitative study of service providers in Kansas City, MO-KS, conducting semi-structured interviews with 36 frontline workers over 12 months. Outside of the pilot project, ASHTI collected 16 interviews (five in Kansas City, MO-KS and 11 in other regions in Kansas and Missouri) through a cross-listed graduate course in qualitative research methodologies (POLS 708/WGSS 802) in the Spring 2016 semester. Across both of these projects, ASHTI used a semi-structured interview protocol to address the issues frontline workers may be facing in their anti-trafficking efforts and service provision, and I utilized the same approach in my own dissertation research project.

As addressed throughout my dissertation, I used a micro-level case study approach (Weitzer 2015) to uncover the nuances and challenges of anti-human trafficking work in two Midwestern states. While there is a growing body of literature on human trafficking in Midwestern and rural communities (Cole and Sprang 2015; Heil and Nichols 2015; Moser 2015; Ozalp 2009; Schwarz and Britton 2015; Williamson and Prior 2009), this region is generally considered a space where human trafficking does not occur. Focusing my research in this geographic area allowed me to gauge both the scope of human trafficking as a widespread humanitarian concern and the dominance of particular human trafficking norms and discourses.

Case Study Location

In order to maintain confidentiality, I do not reveal the names of the states where I conducted my research. While I believe this level of protection was necessary to conduct my

research—as these two states are small enough that providing the state name could lead to some participants being identifiable—I also lost the ability to make arguments about specific, state-level policies regarding exploitation and trafficking. Each state has slightly different approaches for defining and punishing sex and labor trafficking. Given the differences across each state’s policies, if I made reference to this legislation, readers would be able to identify these locations with ease (for example, searching for all states that use a particular punishment for domestic minor sex trafficking or a specific definition for traffickers).

With these caveats in place, I selected these two Midwestern states for some shared commonalities in state budgeting and differences in anti-trafficking climate. During the time I was conducting my research, both states were engaged in some degree of defunding their social service and education sectors. At the same time, both were also increasing their anti-trafficking efforts through state-level policies, work groups, and task forces. Both states have major city centers, suburban spaces, and rural communities, offering an interesting regional comparison both within and across states. A major difference between these two states is the historical focus on human trafficking—one state took pride in itself as a leader in anti-trafficking efforts while the other was attempting to implement some collaborative teams for the first time.

Defining the Sample: “Traditional” Street-Level Bureaucracy

I used an organizational perspective to understand exploitation and human trafficking in my research. For larger ethical reasons, I did not seek to interview trafficked persons themselves, who may have had to tell and retell their stories of trauma for law enforcement officers, case managers, and public audiences. Asking them to share their experiences for a project more focused on the minutiae of service provision practices did not feel appropriate to me. As a scholar who seeks to work outside of the sensationalized, exploitative frameworks of some

trafficking discourses, I did not want to create an environment where I replicated those same patterns in my research methodologies. At the same time, I also recognized that some survivors work in a frontline context, especially those involved in survivor-led advocacy. Thus, I did expect to find some participants who had experience with violence or trafficking—but I wanted to speak to them primarily about their relationship to street-level bureaucracies and service provision.

Overall, in this project I was interested in understanding the systems and processes in which trafficked persons are identified and directed to appropriate services. Individuals within street-level bureaucracies are key to address these questions, as they are the workers involved in the practices of identification and service provision with exploited or trafficked persons. Based on the pilot project's sampling structure, I selected the medical, legal/law enforcement, non-profit, social service, and foster care sectors as the organizations that would most likely have the frontline workers who engage with vulnerable, exploited, or trafficked persons.

In the course of this research, I set out to interview individuals who fit into the traditional model of street-level bureaucracy because of their proximity to those seeking services and their inherent discretion in disseminating services. As my project progressed, I found that the lines between frontline workers and managerial/administrative workers were blurrier than expected. Some surveys sent to frontline workers were forwarded to managerial/administrative workers due to their expertise with exploitation and trafficking; other organizations did not have strict boundaries between the work of lower-level and higher-level employees. For example, one foster care worker served in an administrative role but indicated she engaged in direct client services—on top of her preexisting responsibilities—“to keep her skills sharp” (interview 11/17/16). Smaller organizations, especially those in rural communities with limited resources in a

geographic region, often had smaller staff sizes and, subsequently, all employees engaged in direct encounters with citizen, regardless of their role within a traditional street-level bureaucracy. For example, one law enforcement officer in a rural jurisdiction stated that more complex crimes were generally covered by the sheriff or other senior officer, regardless of who discovered the case or had the time to work it (interview 12/8/16). In sum, even if an interviewees' official job title was more supervisory, they were actually performing aspects of frontline work in their daily practices and are thus represented here.

Additionally, many interviewees described how budget cuts, funding concerns, and small staff sizes affect their workloads and workplace practices. While none of the interviewees explicitly stated that these issues caused them to shift their role, many did state that they took over projects, practices, or direct service work to help ease the burden on lower-level or part-time staff. With all of these factors taken into consideration, I believe this project reflects the complexities of current frontline work; namely, that the increasingly defunded social welfare state often requires a flexible workforce that can cross between the normative roles of “traditional” street-level bureaucrats and more managerial roles. Anti-trafficking advocacy and assistance may be added to the caseload of administrators because of their previous expertise or their ability to take on more face-to-face work compared to their fellow frontline staffers.

Survey Phase

The ASHTI team—myself, Dr. Hannah Britton, fellow graduate research assistants Ryan Daugherty, Sierra Watt, and Marcus Williamson, and undergraduate research assistant Madeline Caywood—launched a survey in late July 2016 to address vulnerability, exploitation, and trafficking across the two selected Midwestern states. Online surveys were sent using Qualtrics to 3,605 service providers across the legal, medical, non-profit, social service, and foster care

sectors. Additionally, 297 paper surveys were distributed to medical service providers specifically in hospital case management departments, as they were more easily accessible outside of digital communication. Surveys were active until September 2016.

These surveys were nearly identical thematically, except for one question on risk factors that, due to an oversight, was incorrectly written for the paper survey respondents. Additionally, paper survey respondents were not asked a segment of concluding qualitative questions that were present in the online survey because of the issues with confidentiality when returning surveys through the US Postal Service. In order to account for the formatting differences in online versus paper surveys, the structure slightly varied between the two surveys. We also used sector-specific language, which accounted for minor differences in question wording—for example, medical surveys used the language of “patients” while the other sectors used “clients.”

Regardless, across both online and paper formats, the survey begins with providing a definition of human trafficking taken from the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA), as addressed in my introduction. From this definition, service providers move through three potential wings of the survey: questions for those frontline workers who have not encountered human trafficking, those who have encountered labor trafficking, and those who have encountered sex trafficking. Across each wing, participants are asked questions about trafficking “red flags,” the more material or physical identification markers of trafficking; risk factors, the structural inequalities that can perpetuate vulnerability and trafficking; and community resources that can buffer against or even prevent trafficking. Those individuals who have seen labor or sex trafficking were asked a series of questions about their estimated number of trafficking cases, their satisfaction with how the case was handled organizationally, and the resources or organizations they accessed to address the specificities of the case. Online survey

participants were offered the opportunity to provide their contact information for a follow-up interview, as well as an optional set of qualitative questions that provided an open-ended space for more detailed responses. We beta tested these questions with a set of key stakeholders representative of the aforementioned sectors: one lawyer, one educator, one victim services coordinator, two anti-trafficking advocates, three medical provides, and four social workers, as well as seven scholars specializing in survey methods and human trafficking research. The ASHTI team made revisions according to the beta testers' feedback to guarantee the legibility of these questions for frontline workers invested in these efforts.

To generate the survey sample, the ASHTI team used online scans of service providers' websites and databases. Some organizations were called or emailed in order to access accurate contact information. Additionally, with respect to the foster care sector, we used key administrators in two major foster care organizations to distribute a survey link on ASHTI's behalf, as their distribution gave another layer of professional validity and trust to our survey. In total, out of the sample of 3,902 service providers who received the Qualtrics survey, 667 respondents answered, 77 of which agreed to be contacted for a follow-up interview. From the 297 mail surveys, 55 respondents answered and returned their mail surveys to ASHTI. In Table 5 below, I provide the response rate for the survey.

Table 5: Survey Response Rate

Sector	Surveys Received	Surveys Distributed	Response Rate
Medical	171	771	22.2%
Legal/Law Enforcement	149	1,073	13.9%
Non-Profit	90	316	28.5%
Social Service	42	142	29.6%
Foster Care	270	1,600	16.9%
Total Across All Sectors	722	3,902	18.5%

In the next section, I describe the contact process for the 77 participants who were interested in a follow-up interview.

Semi-Structured Interview Phase

Interviews were conducted in two phases between February 2016 and February 2017, resulting in 42 total interviews with 54 participants. First, from February to August 2016, I conducted interviews with 11 service providers across seven organizations in a pre-survey phase to test my qualitative interview protocol on a narrow subset of service providers with expertise in rural regions. Two of these participants were located through an Internet scan specifically targeted at statewide service providers with connections to rural communities; one of these participants was located through an Internet scan targeted at rural service providers from one region; and three of these interviewees were located through snowball sampling methods. The remaining five interviewees happened to be present at their organization when I arrived for a scheduled interview and joined the interview upon invitation of the original interviewee.

Next, from September 2016 to July 2017, I conducted interviews with 43 frontline workers across 36 organizations. 34 of these had participated in an online survey. As stated above, if respondents who took the survey indicated they wished to take part in a follow-up interview, I contacted them and scheduled an interview. I removed one interviewee from this list because of their inability to communicate further based on legal troubles, as well as seven interviewees from faith-based organizations who indicated in their survey responses that they did not have much frontline contact with clients. ASHTI graduate research assistant Ryan Daughtery and political science graduate student Luke Herrington contacted those participants for a separate ASHTI project on faith-based responses to human trafficking in the Midwest. Eight interviewees were found via snowball sampling. Similar to the pre-survey phase, one interviewee joined upon invitation. During this phase of the semi-structured interviews in April 2017, ASHTI released our survey findings in a self-published white paper (Schwarz 2017). I met with 16 interviewees

after this publication date. While I cannot guarantee they read this white paper, it is important to note for my methodology, as this could have affected their responses.

All interviewees gave their informed consent for the interviews, per the IRB approval of the research project. Interviews lasted 20 to 95 minutes, with the majority of the interviews being conducted at an office location or place of work. Two interviews were conducted in public. Additionally, the majority of the interviews were with one representative of an organization. Seven of the 42 interviews were with groups of two to six individuals.

Conducting the Interview

I asked interviewees questions from a semi-structured interview protocol informed by narrative theories of qualitative research. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) describe narratives as “the embodiment of the storyteller’s interpretation” (26). Just as frontline work is contingent upon social scripts and norms, narratives demonstrate how participants make meaning of their work within a particular cultural and social context (Portillo 2012). With respect to this project, service providers described the meaning of their anti-trafficking efforts within the context of their organization and their perceptions of human trafficking.

The interview began with open-ended questions about frontline workers’ general experiences with sex and/or labor trafficking. I then asked a series of question about the more traditional aspects of street-level bureaucracies, such as managing caseloads and coping with workplace challenges. The questions returned to human trafficking, specifically asking about collaboration across multiple sectors engaged in anti-trafficking work and regional differences that may be unique to Midwestern communities. The interview concluded with a set of narrative questions, asking participants to describe encounters with clients—trafficked or not—that they would describe as successful and unsuccessful. This open-ended structure afforded service

provides the space to provide examples and anecdotes of encounters with clients who they perceived to be exploited or trafficked.

Data Analysis Strategy and Privacy

I used simple statistical measurements within Microsoft Excel to generate counts of responses to questions for my analysis of the survey data published in the ASHTI white paper (Schwarz 2017). Interviews were transcribed by myself and two IRB-approved transcribers, undergraduate research assistants Madeline Caywood and Sean Coffey. For the transcriptions I did not work on personally, I listened to the interview audio while going through the document to check its accuracy. Upon transcription, I de-identified all interviews myself to remove personal and location-based information about my interviewees.

I then coded the text of the survey transcripts using a qualitative coding schema unique to each chapter's focus and Atlas.TI coding software. Instead of exclusively using open coding or predetermined codes, I used a hybrid methodology combining both coding practices. Bradley et al. (2007) describe this integrated approach as one that “employs both inductive (ground up) development of codes, as well as a deductive organizing framework for code types (start list)” (p. 1763). Each chapter goes into more specific detail about the processes I used to generate each codebook, but, generally, I followed a pattern of reading each transcript once for content and initial coding, followed by a more focused, fine-grained analysis for the second round (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 2011).

I refer to quoted interviewees with a generalized job title (ex. law enforcement officer, immigration advocate, etc.). This is to guarantee and maintain confidentiality. The anti-trafficking community in the sampled Midwestern states is small, with many individuals working in coalition across state lines. Many interviewees knew each other well and worked on cases

together, frequently referencing each other in the interview text. In order to avoid revealing my interviewees' identity, I am only using gendered pronouns and job titles to further protect their privacy. All quotes in the dissertation are edited lightly for grammar and clarity but otherwise presented verbatim. I use bracketed ellipses ([...]) to indicate moments when I cut words from the quoted passage, often used in the case of lengthier segments to keep the quoted material focused on the topic in the text. In the case of interviewees who consented to the interview but could not be audio recorded—for legal or personal reasons—my own transcription notes are used. These notes consist of me rereading the handwritten notes I took during the interview verbatim.

These privacy practices of de-identification and generalized references are reflective of the human subjects approval I received from the University of Kansas Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Study #00004033. All data were stored securely on a KU-housed server and backup server that required password protection. In order to conform with the sharing policies for grant-funded research funded by the National Science Foundation, I created de-identified transcripts and keys for all semi-structured interviews that will be placed online in an accessible data repository at Syracuse University. I also created a Microsoft Excel sheet of all data from the survey without any identifiable markers attached.

Demographic Results

The following tables provide demographic information for my survey participants and semi-structured interviewees. Because all survey questions were optional, the numbers below may not add up to 722. Importantly, I did not collect any demographic data on race, age, gender, sexual orientation, level of income or education, or any other standard identity markers. This was to maintain confidentiality but, as stated above, does limit the analyses I can conduct using what

demographic data I did collect. Across the survey, frontline workers were allowed to self-identify their geographic region of work, as seen in Table 6. For those interview participants who did not take the survey and indicate their geographic region, I used my judgment to sort them into a regional category based on how similar frontline workers responded.

Table 6: Location Demographics

Region	Number of Survey Responses	Number of Interview Participants
Rural	205	17
Suburban	89	13
Urban	136	16
Multiple	65	8

Though the number of respondents vary between the two groups, the order of participants are identical when placed into an ascending ranking order—first, with the highest number of participants, are rural regions, followed by urban, suburban, and lastly responses that noted more than one region.

For the remaining tables, I focus on my semi-structured interviews, as I exclusively used that data in this dissertation. For more information on the survey itself, I direct readers to the ASHTI white paper (Schwarz 2017).

For my interview demographics, I conducted my own analysis, using street-level bureaucracy theory, to determine whether or not my respondents were traditional frontline workers per Lipsky’s (2010) framework—of meeting directly with clients to provide services—or administrators who took on service provision in special circumstances. Table 7 breaks down these roles.

Table 7: Interview Role Demographics by Sector

Sector	Street-Level Bureaucracy (SLB) Role
Legal/Law Enforcement (n=19)	“Traditional” SLB (n=12) Manager/Administrator (n=7)
Medical (n=10)	“Traditional” SLB (n=5) Manager/Administrator (n=5)

Social Service (n=7)	“Traditional” SLB (n=4) Manager/Administrator (n=3)
Non-Profit (n=13)	“Traditional” SLB (n=7) Manager/Administrator (n=6)
Foster Care (n=5)	“Traditional” SLB (n=4) Manager/Administrator (n=1)
All Sectors (n=54)	“Traditional” SLB (n=32) Manager/Administrator (n=22)

Slightly over half of my interview sample represents normative street-level bureaucrats, which demonstrates how much frontline work is performed by those in more senior roles. As addressed earlier, these managers and administrative officials offered a range of perspectives on why they were continuing to engage in direct client service provision.

Table 8 provides an overview of the generalized job titles represented by my interview participants. I offer this to show the scope and range of work afforded in my qualitative data.

Table 8: Interview Job Titles by Sector

Sector	Participant Job Titles
Legal/Law Enforcement	Law Enforcement Officer (includes Sheriff, Police Chief, and Detective) Immigration Lawyer Legal Staffer Attorney (includes state-level officials, Legal Aid, and non-profit lawyers) Juvenile Justice Worker
Medical	Crisis Pregnancy Center (CPC) Staff Crisis Pregnancy Center Administrator Public Health Nurse Public Health Administrator
Social Service	Victim Services Coordinator Government Worker Youth Services Worker Youth Services Administrator
Non-Profit	Non-Profit Administrator Anti-Trafficking Advocate Domestic Violence/Anti-Violence Advocate Domestic Violence Administrator
Foster Care	Case Manager Foster Care Administrator

In the case of frontline workers whose jobs encompassed a range of activities, I selected the job title that represented the majority of their work (for example, domestic violence advocates who also wrote grants and reports for donors in addition to their case management duties).