



Brandeis University

The Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism

Hidden in Plain Sight: The news media's role in exposing human trafficking

A panel discussion about how the news media have helped expose and explain modern slavery—and how to do better.

Presented by the United States Mission to the United Nations, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Schuster Institute for Investigative Journalism at Brandeis University.

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Transcript

Note: Due to technical difficulties with recording equipment, opening remarks by Ambassador Rick Barton and some by Florence Graves are not included in this transcript.

Florence Graves: ...through this project, one of our panelists, Ben Skinner, who has been a Senior Fellow at the Institute, will be able to continue his fine reporting uncovering stories that desperately need to be told. There is a reason that he is going to be able to continue to do his fine reporting and all of this is thanks to Elaine and Gerry Schuster, who are with us today. As Ambassador Barton noted, their generosity and Elaine's vision made the Institute possible and we are deeply grateful. That with the launch of this project at the Schuster Institute they are making a profound statement about the important role that journalism can play and actually should play in this issue. Elaine of course is no stranger to the UN; last year President Obama appointed her to be a public representative to the UN General Assembly where one of her major concerns has been the horrific crime of human trafficking and slavery. Please join me in thanking them for their work in global justice. (Applause)

And now it is also my honor in introducing Luis CdeBaca—Ambassador at Large and head of the U.S. State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. (Applause) I have more to say about him in one second. Like Elaine Schuster, Luis CdeBaca was appointed by President Obama and I bet that that was one of the easiest decisions President Obama ever made. (Laughter) And that's because, given his selection by the President, it is clear that the President wanted someone who could head his TIP office, his Trafficking in Persons office, who could bring a deep and nuanced understanding of and experience with the issue. Ambassador CdeBaca probably knows more about human trafficking than anyone else the President could even have considered. He is one of the Justice Department's most decorated leaders; while at the Department of Justice in the United States Ambassador CdeBaca earned the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award for his service as lead trial counsel in the largest slavery prosecution in United States history. On Monday his office released the 10th annual Trafficking in Persons or what we call for short, TIP [Trafficking in Persons] report, and for the first time the State Department ranked the anti-slavery efforts of the United States alongside those of other nations around the world. We are so pleased that he is here to tell us more about his findings in

the TIP report and the wonderful work that the State Department is doing. Please join me in welcoming Ambassador Luis CdeBaca. (Applause)

Ambassador Luis CdeBaca: Good afternoon and thank you Florence Graves and Ambassador Barton. I am delighted to be here today with all of you to discuss this critical challenge that faces us in the modern era. I think it is long overdue that we have this kind of conversation with representatives from the UN, from civil society, from the media, etc. on how we harness everybody's energy and everybody's voice in this fight. I would like to thank the U.S. Mission to the UN, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Schuster Institute. I am very happy that Elaine and Jerry Schuster were able to join us today. The passion for doing the right and to leverage, not only the access, but the responsibility that comes from it, is something that inspires all of us. And it is what allows people like me, people like our distinguished center panelist, Chair Antonio Costa from UNODC, [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime], it is what allows us to do our jobs as we try to bring together so many of the different actors for a pretty easy and simple proposition—one would think—that there should be no more slavery in the world. It is easy and simple, but we are almost at year 400 of having said that: the first person, an Angolan man, brought to the United States in 1619 when this was a colony of Great Britain. Folks, throughout the years fighting for their freedom, struggling for the ideal of freedom, and only in the last 150 years obtaining the promise of that and it is a promise in the United States that we take very seriously and we have to deliver on every day. And that is what this week is about.

It's been a whirlwind of a week starting with the release of the annual Trafficking in Persons report in Washington. The tenth anniversary, I'm very proud of the tenth anniversary, but that means that 380 years went without this kind of diagnostic here on the continent. The tenth anniversary of the Trafficking in Persons report with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the heroes from our report. This year's heroes came from around the world and they have gone above and beyond to tackle the problem of slavery in their countries and elsewhere. Since then we have been on Capitol Hill, now here at the United Nations, and in a few minutes, I will be going to JFK to go to Vienna at the OSCE [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe] Conference on Domestic Workers. One of the things that is reflected in this report this year is the problem of domestic servants—it is very interesting that after spending ten years making the argument that and having argued that, at the Vienna negotiations that resulted in the Palermo Protocol, that this should not be simply thought of as trafficking in women and children, but should be trafficking in persons because so many men and boys are also enslaved.

One of the things that might shock people to see from our report is our characterization of what we call the feminization of trafficking. It may stand as a little tension to what you hear from us, we're not backing off on the notion that this should be a gender neutral fight and this should be a fight that protects men and boys as well as women and girls. Another of the things we have seen is the assumptions about trafficking are turned on their head. There's been an assumption that women are victims of sex trafficking and men are victims of labor trafficking. The reality is not that.

Now, the assumption that women are victims of sexual abuse in trafficking situations continues to hold. Whether it's in a field, a farm, a factory, a brothel, a strip club, or as a domestic servant, women who are enslaved are routinely subjected to ongoing sexual slavery. Whether that's the thing that the employer makes their money off of, such as in the "sex industry" or whether it's an adjunct to what they're doing, the specter of sexual abuse, the twin demons of slavery and rape go hand in hand, and that is something that we have seen and that we feel is important to call out especially as we

see more and more domestic servant issues. So, I think it is appropriately fitting that the OSCE is having their conference on domestic servant issues this week following on the heels of the agreement at the ILO, [International Labour Organization] in the last few weeks for the first time. By this time next year when the ILO meets again there will be an international convention guaranteeing the rights of domestic servants for the first time in history. (Applause)

That doesn't happen by itself; in fact domestic servants are the people who have the least access to power. I certainly don't want to soft pedal the horrors of people who are subjected to sex trafficking in strip clubs, brothels, etc., but they know people, other women might help them escape, clients might even help them escape, we have certainly seen that in the United States. A domestic servant who is in a foreign land and only knows the family for whom they work and never leaves the household, those people don't have someone with whom they can try to confide in. And so it becomes critical for them to have people who would work on their behalf and that's one of the things we see this year with a lot of our trafficking heroes, and I'm going to just very briefly call their names and perhaps they can stand up and wave when I do, but so many of them have worked, not just on sex trafficking, but on servant issues as well. People like Aminetou Mint Moctar from Mauritania (Applause), Natalya Abdullaeva of Uzbekistan, (Applause), Linda Al-Kalash from Morocco, (Applause), Christine Sabiyumva from Burundi, (Applause), Irén Adamné Dunai from Hungary, (Applause), and Brother Xavier Plassat from Brazil. (Applause) These are folks who certainly can put on a suit and tie and go to an event like this and be part of the discourse, but they are also people who can be out there where the slaves really are. They are the people who hold them when they cry; they are the people who are their voice within government. They are the people who are knocking down the doors and bringing them to freedom.

Now today we have an opportunity to strengthen the movement against this crime. We've seen progress and there are certainly a lot of good things reported in this year's report. Almost 50,000 victims liberated last year worldwide: that's great. But there are also estimates of between 12.3, that's the ILO number, and 27 million slaves in the world. So 50,000 victims is a stunning amount compared to where we were ten years ago, but it's also stunning when you look at how many more victims are out there waiting and wondering if anyone's going to hear their cry. I think that today's emphasis on the media and the role that people can play is one of the solutions to that because we have to hear their cry. A lot of people, I don't think, necessarily understand or remember how it was not simply a political fight that ended chattel slavery in the United States; it was when people met slaves and saw them as human. Not all of them have the chance to meet them in person. In the case of a pair of sisters who had been apprehended and journeyed south in a ship called the Pearl, and they were going to be sold to a brothel in New Orleans and the community in the 1840s, the abolitionist community was just getting started and they came together around those girls to try and keep them from being sold to that brothel. And two of the people that met them were from the Beecher family and Harriet Beecher Stowe was so moved that she then wrote a book. And through the book Uncle Tom's Cabin, which looks fairly anachronistic to us today, through that book people met slaves for the first time.

They read about them, they understood that they were human, so to Annie Besant's path breaking article, "White Slavery in London," in 1880 brought people's attention for the first time to the Match Girls. It's interesting because the term "white slavery" became a euphemism very quickly for prostitutes being moved across international borders. But her article was about child slavery, girls that were supposed to be dipping the matches in the phosphorous in factories in London and that stuff would blow up and disfigure them, that stuff would cripple them. Six to eight-year old girls, because a journalist found them and wrote about them, people started seeing them as human. An angry boss tried to

get them to recant the story, tried to rebuke the article and they refused, and people started a movement against child labor.

In 1960, Edward R. Murrow—I don't think people necessarily remember just how powerful it was when we just had three networks, for an entire hour to be spent on the plight of farm workers—but "Harvest of Shame" in 1960 shocked all of us into better labor conditions and better protections. One of the things that is in that, is that there is a grower in Florida, and these are fields that are two generations later, now being farmed by Guatemalan and Mexican workers often in the same conditions, but the grower in Florida basically told Murrow: "We used to own them and now we just rent them." So I think that there is something there that we see the lasting power of reporting. In the mid 1990s, it was Dan Rather's follow-up piece to "Harvest of Shame" as he looked at the 35th anniversary as an opportunity to do something, he focused on a farm labor contractor named Miguel Flores. I was also focused on Miguel Flores at the time and not long after Dan Rather's piece aired, I was able to finally catch up with him and he's still in Federal prison. One of the things that the piece that Dan Rather did on 48 hours, by updating the Murrow piece, it called people's attention to the fact that this had not gone away. And that was one of the things that enabled us to get protections for immigrant workers, that was one of the things that was able for us to get the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, again the power of the microphone, the power of the camera, the power of reporting.

Here in New York, Tony DeStefano of *Newsday* did a series of stories in the late 1990s coming out of the cases that were being done, whether it was the deaf Mexicans who were pedaling trinkets on the streets under our very noses here in Manhattan, or whether it was on Long Island domestic servants being held captive by their wealthy and sometimes even diplomat employers. The articles Tony did were critically important in getting people in the New York political sphere to start to pay attention and now New York has one of the most powerful state laws as a result. So we see whether it's a Skinner, a McGraw, Noy, Guy Jacobson, the power of the work is one of the things that drives us and it drives our ability to then go out and do this work. And that progress, and I will leave you with good news: the progress is there. It's very easy to start thinking this will never change.

Christina Bain from Harvard gave me a book the other day from 1910 and it actually says how amazing is it that we now have an international instrument that we can use to go after these people to make sure that the nations of the world will not tolerate slavery anymore and it is written basically, "Okay, over, done, we've won." 100 years later we are still poised on the precipice of success, but we are getting there. If you would have told many of us ten years ago that Bosnia Herzegovina would become a Tier 1 country on the United States annual ranking, given the situation there during the Balkans War, given the fact that they were on Tier 3 for so long, I think people would have laughed. But through structures, governmental responses, with the help of the international community, and political will, they got there. And the ranking is not for the rankings' sake; the ranking reflects what it is that the government of Bosnia Herzegovina has done. As far as the government is concerned this year's report is notable because the United States' government is included as we look to see whether or not countries have met the minimum standards against trafficking in persons. That was a bit of a controversial decision, but it was the right decision when Hillary Clinton decided last year after hearing all of the equities she basically closed her folder and said "Alright, we're going to do it." And she was right; her instincts were right. And I've thought a lot about that over the past year as I've been the one who had to go out and do the work, it's not always easy to look at yourself, but people in America deserve the same analysis that people in other countries do. These minimum standards, if countries do these things, they actually are fighting trafficking and slavery.

And so, asking "is the United States doing these things?" it's not just a matter of fairness to the other countries in the world, it is also a matter of justice for people in America who need to know that the American government is going to take their plight as seriously as we do people who are enslaved in other countries.

One other thing that the Secretary has raised and that I think we are starting to see the results from, but it will play out over the next few years, is that this the responsibility of everyone, this is not something that we can outsource to NGOs, this is not something that we can outsource to governments, this is all our individual responsibilities. Who picked the cotton in my shirt today? Who picked the beans in my coffee today? Is the cellphone that just rang (Laughter) where did the tantalum and the coltan and the gold that allows that cellphone to operate at low heat, where did that come from? Well I tell you it probably came from the East Congo and it probably came from someone who was enslaved to mine it. We can't say that it is, and it's the not being able to say that it is or isn't [that] is one of the problems. It's not enough anymore to simply say that guy is a trafficker and we're going to catch him. The questions need to be asked: how do we start changing how businesses look at their supply chain? How do we start changing how men view women, instead of as commodities that they can rent for sex, the things that drive the demand that traffickers meet with force and violence. So I think that's one of the things that we are looking at: how do we look for a slavery-free world, slavery-free as far as what those other people are doing and also slavery-free as far as what I'm doing and what I need to do to stop it? The news media, an independent voice—hopefully the voice of the victim—hopefully with enough responsible standards that it is not an extra form of exploitation.

When I was at the Justice Department, trust me, there were plenty of times when I had to keep explaining to people: no you can't come on a ride-along as we rescue these women because the last thing they need when we are taking them out and they don't know if they can trust us, is to have a camera in their face blaring their identity all around the world. On the other hand, working with survivors who do want to tell their story and not saying no, don't go anywhere near those people, but instead making sure that reporters who are reporting on this understand the trauma that the victims have gone through. That the victims understand what the reporters need to do. So striking that balance is critically important, and I think that that is something we are going to hear a little bit about today, is how do you report on this both objectively or with a point of view, but also regardless of what the hook is, how do you do it in a way that doesn't add to the exploitation?

The medical community always says, "First do no harm." I want to do harm. I want to harm the people that would harm others. When someone has decided that they are going to deny the freedom of another person they should lose theirs, and so this is an issue of prosecution, this is an issue of law enforcement. But unlike so many other parts of the human rights dialogue this is an issue where law enforcement has to be harnessed for the human rights goal. Article IV of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not execute itself. The Emancipation Proclamation, I guess is not something that you go out and hit somebody with, the Emancipation Proclamation does not execute itself. Nor does the Palermo Protocol, as important as it has been, the Palermo Protocol changed my career as far as a prosecutor and it enabled me and others to go out and make a difference. And yet it does not do it alone and so that is one of the things that I think we need to go out and think about not just from law enforcement, using law enforcement to enforce human rights norms but also to use everyone: law enforcements, non-governmental organizations, and the media. How do we all take that norm, march out and make it something living. So I appreciate your time today, we've got just a fantastic panel, and

let's think about what we came here to do today. We are in a place that is actually letting us talk about how we are going to end slavery, how cool is that? (Applause) Lynn just asked if I'd take a question.

Lynn Sherr: (Inaudible), a couple of months ago, I had the great good fortune of doing an interview with Ambassador CdeBaca in Washington for the *Daily Beast*. One of the things you said at the time was, I asked you "What would constitute success?" And your answer was, "To see a lot more cases." You said, "When we get more cases it looks as if the trafficking problem is getting worse, what that actually means is that we are responding to it better." My question for you and we will get into detail in the panel, my question for you now Mr. Ambassador is: In this 24/7, very strange media world we are now living in, give us a grade, how is the press in this country doing in terms of covering this?

CdeBaca: A grade... well I didn't go to Yale Law school because if I did I could just say pass/fail, (Laughter) you know I think that just like if you gave the federal prosecutors and the state prosecutors and the police in the United States a grade, you'd have a very strange bell curve, with some people with 'A-pluses' and a lot of people with 'absent.' I think that that is one of the things where we don't even have that participation grade that we can give to most people. And I think that once we start getting the laws in place, once we start getting to the point where this is the understanding, then the grade will come.

One place, and it is unfortunate because a lot of other things are happening there, one place that I do see the media really dropping the ball, and have for about a decade, is Arizona, because the term 'human trafficking' in articles written in Arizona, and this is nothing to do with the recent law in Arizona, I was complaining about this five years ago, if you look at an article in Arizona about 'human trafficking,' they mean alien smuggling. If you look at an article that is written in Kansas City or Naples, Florida or New York and you see 'human trafficking,' they mean slavery. It begs the question to whether it is actually a good term or not. I think the other thing though is as more victims are more recognizable, the media will do a better job because it strikes closer to home. If you look at the coverage of the Shaniya Davis case, which was exploitative, and yet the understanding of what was happening to that little girl was a much greater understanding on the part of the reporters than undifferentiated foreign victims. So it is the getting close to home, I think that when we get to that that is when we are going to go from a pass/fail to an A.

Sherr: So where are we now just to get it straight?

CdeBaca: I think Lynn Sherr gets an A, and a lot of other people— (technical difficulties)

Sherr: Thank you very much, have a safe trip Ambassador CdeBaca. (Applause) Thank you so much; we are indeed going to get to specifics with a most distinguished panel. Just before I introduce them and there will be time at the end for questions from all of you [the audience] as well... I just want to mention the Schuster Institute, which takes this terribly seriously, has given me a few points to make, which I think are important enough that I just want to get them out there, which is that unfortunately, and I'll stand up for the news media in many, many areas, but this one is a little tricky. Members of the news media do not always report thoroughly and accurately on the realities, laws, and perceptions of human trafficking and modern day slavery. The coverage, as you all know, it can be sensationalized, it can be downplayed, it can be biased, taken out of context. Words as the Ambassador mentioned are terribly important: trafficking, slavery, victims of slavery may be called 'workers,' 'whores,' or worse; enslaved people can be said to be

found in 'slave-like conditions,' and it goes on and on. So we have lots and lots to discuss here. I'm going to get back to a lot of these points but let's hear from our very, very wonderful panel. Let me introduce them first and then we can start off with some questions.

To my right, the UN Under-Secretary-General Antonio Maria Costa, from Italy, the Executive Director from UNODC, the Office on Drugs and Crime, and this is of course the big player in the game. And let me just say before I get to the questions, happy birthday Mr. Secretary.

Under-Secretary-General Antonio Maria Costa: How did you know my secret? (Laughter)

Sherr: I know many things about you, but I only tell that much. Let me introduce the rest of the panel and then I want to come back with you [Costa] for a question.

Noy Thrupkaew, down at the end. Noy is an Open Society Fellow, the author of a series in *The Nation* called the "Crusade against Sex Trafficking." She is using her Open Society Fellowship to investigate trafficking for the purposes of labor and forced prostitution. Next to her, Guy Jacobson. Guy is a filmmaker and a global activist who was recently honored with the U.S. State Department's prestigious Global Hero Award for his efforts fighting child sex trafficking. His latest film, which is called *RedLight*, will premiere in New York City on June 21st, and where is that going to be Guy?

Guy Jacobson: If you want more information, I'd be happy to answer questions later.

The film premieres here in New York on June 21st and I've been working on it for five years filming actually inside operating brothels with espionage equipment and with contracts on our lives. It is a very, I think, fascinating film to see what really is happening and let me know if you want to come and I'll be here to invite you.

Sherr: To my left, Benjamin Skinner, Schuster Institute Senior Fellow and author of *A Crime So Monstrous: Face-to-face with Modern-Day Slavery*, he traveled the world to document slavery on four continents for that book. And next to him we have Mike McGraw who earned the IRE, which is the investigative reporter's group, and RFK Awards with his team for "Human Trafficking in America" a *Kansas City Star* series on modern slavery. So welcome to all of you, let's get right to it. (Applause)

Sherr: May I start with the birthday boy? And I won't say it again I promise, no more. Give us some specifics if you could, what is the press doing right; what is the press doing wrong?

Costa: To begin with, we should not only be talking about press. I believe that the subject and discussion today is media, which is far broader than just the printing press, but I will come back to that. The starting point I will use is a sentence I heard from Luis just a minute ago: "We have to hear the cry." Luis was referring to the victims. We have victim samples of here, and I guess media is important indeed to be the loudspeaker for the victims, but I think there is something more to be done. I believe that media needs to be able to mobilize society at large. This is not happening.

Let me just give you a sort of analogy: an analogy I would have in mind would be the fight against tobacco smoking. Yes, there have been regulatory changes and yes, there have been plenty of suits against manufacturers, advertising, if you wish, labels and packages and so forth, but what is changing the tobacco consumption habits in North America and

Europe and slowly further east and some developing countries is the kind of consciousness of society at large that tobacco is wrong. Tobacco intake in whatever form is wrong, it damages the individual and those who are with individuals and so forth. So it is not a question of policing so much as to whether there is smoking or not in buildings or in social gatherings of any sort, it is more in terms of this consciousness. We don't have anything of that sort in the area we are dealing with against the crime we are talking about. That is what I would like the media to do, to help us do.

When I say media again, I don't only mean newspapers or the reporting or the columnists, or even the investigators, or investigative journalists. I definitely have in mind Hollywood. Whether it is the Hollywood of feature films, we were honored here at the United Nations a couple of years ago to premiere an important film, *Trade* with Kevin Kline; there have before been predecessors, like *Human Trafficking* with Mira Sorvino. All of those sorts of mass representations of the drama are part of an exercise which I consider crucial, then there are the documentaries, the forthcoming *RedLight* with Guy Jacobson, we are looking forward to that. We ourselves sponsored a new one coming out more or less at the same time, no actually coming out in mid-September, with Robert Bilheimer. These sorts of documentaries are those that make people aware of what is going on, yes they are loudspeakers for the victims, but they also create this gut problem for people who feel uncomfortable when they see what is going on which may be a sort of stereotype due to the medium being used the television or movie industry, but still they create a sense of anguish which then motivates all of us, also society at large because unless we reach the households, unless we reach the families, unless we reach the individuals and then through programs in schools and such society will not develop the programs that are needed to deal with the problem.

But I've a more ambitious program than that. I think we should mobilize the artists, we were able to and indeed we appointed Ross Bleckner, an illustrious New York-based painter to start, not only in his own inspiration and his own new faith, but to start a sort of new movement among artists. Painters I have seen just now arrive from Latin America, painting is an abstract representation of how a victim—a woman being transported in a container from somewhere to somewhere—feels. I mean those are important development that help media to play a role that, to answer your question, it is not playing, or, for that matter, novelists or others. Finally, and I am closing, sorry to be a bit more long than I anticipated, the Internet. I don't think we are using the Internet to mobilize, an instrument which is key if you want to reach the young people, and the young people are part of the problem. In terms of demand or in terms of their ability, you know, how they construct their own life, which eventually will be part of the society we have in mind. So you ask me sort of a specific question: how do you feel about the role of media? Well, the performance while I don't think at this point in time is either an A or a B, perhaps more a C or even less than that, but the potential is definitely there if we do good at mobilizing the media as a multiplier as a loudspeaker. I think we can get a very significant impact on their part. Thank you. (Applause)

Sherr: I think we'll all agree that the reporters here at this table have done an extraordinarily good job at exposing the truths that we are talking about. Let's hear a little bit about each of their projects. Mike if you want to kick it off, very briefly tell us what your series found and what were the obstacles in getting to the truth as you did it?

Mike McGraw: When my editor came to myself and my team members, Laura Bauer and Mark Morris, to talk about doing a piece on human trafficking, my first thought was "Well, why are we writing about a coastal phenomena or a border issue?" And it wasn't long before I realized, very quickly, that it had come full force to the middle of the

country. Mark Morris, our courthouse reporter, was on to a story about the indictment of 12 traffickers who had come to Kansas City to put up thousands of people who were then distributed around the country to clean hotel rooms for something like a dollar a day or less. Hundreds of those people or more ended up being human trafficking victims, the case is still being prosecuted, the GLS [Giant Labor Solutions] case in Kansas City and it amazed me to what degree it had come to the middle of the country. These people were Filipinos, people from the Dominican Republic, and interestingly most of them came here completely legally with a visa called the H2-B visa that the U.S. Department of Labor helps administer. So, we operated a visa system that was virtually a welcome mat for human traffickers, which also amazed me.

The other thing that kind of came together for that series was that we quickly realized that Kansas City is, of all places, the home of the two federal agencies that deport undocumented workers back home. One is run by the U.S. Marshal's service and one is run by ICE, [Immigration and Customs Enforcement]. And when we began to look closely at those two airlines, that the U.S. was not only deporting human trafficking victims, in most cases probably unintentionally, but we were deporting them on airlines where they were mistreated and abused. In some cases, the U.S. Marshal's services would actually sedate some people against the policies of ICE because they couldn't even agree on whose custody these people were in when they were deported. And we quickly found that it is a very, very difficult problem to deal with if we can't solve the immigration problem to begin with. There is so much noise from the immigration debate that you can hardly get to human trafficking. And it is a huge problem.

Sherr: Just briefly, obstacles put in the way. What were the hardest parts about getting this story told?

McGraw: The hardest part was trying to find victims who would talk to us, and who we would not harm by talking to them. Because most often their traffickers were still at large and we had to be very, very careful, and we worked very closely with NGOs to insure that we did not do more harm to those victims. And I think it is fair to say that we did not in those cases. The other problem, as always for all reporters, is data. There are no good numbers on this problem. And the numbers that we have had have been questioned over and over again by the GAO [Government Accountability Office] and others. The numbers the U.S. often comes up with are put together by intelligence agencies, so they are put together behind a wall and later they are questioned. Data is a huge problem for this issue. We live in a country that claims to have over 14,000 victims brought into the U.S. every year who are human trafficking victims, yet Congress has put together a visa plan that would only give 5,000 visas. If we found every one of them we wouldn't have enough visas. So data is a huge problem.

Sherr: Let me turn now to Ben Skinner. Ben, what is the difference in reporting the story—you were around the world for your book—what is the difference in reporting the story here in this country as opposed to in other countries? Can you explain that at all?

E. Benjamin Skinner: I think one critical difference is you tend to immediately have more faith in law enforcement in this country than in other countries, although that isn't necessarily the right assumption. As Ambassador CdeBaca was talking about, he spent many years as a federal prosecutor in the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, and many of those years he was actually going out and training cops about what human trafficking was. And so I think the primary challenge here and internationally is precisely as Mike was saying, it's doing no harm. The role

of a journalist first of all is to seek truth and tell it, but then very closely following on that, particularly when you are dealing with victims that are still very much alive, it's to not further their (inaudible).

My motto when I was writing the book, a friend of mine, Samantha Power wrote a book, *A Problem from Hell*, which was a magisterial work on genocide, and when I met my first victim of human trafficking I realized, and when I met my first victim who was still in jeopardy, I realized that the real difference between Samantha's work and her subject and my work and my subject were that the preponderance of her victims were dead whereas the preponderance of my victims were still very much alive but may soon be dead unless I do my job, report well and don't put them in any more jeopardy in the process.

Sherr: And I wonder if you came up with any rules, anything you could share with potentially another journalist to say, how do you deal with someone in that very delicate situation. How do you address them, is there a different way you interview them than you would somebody in a different situation?

Skinner: Pro-forma I always set out one rule when I was talking to victims and that is that they set the rules and that they do so in an informed manner and they understand what the implications of talking to me are. I had a general, now this is, my bar is a little bit lower than say Guy's or a photographer's because I'm not taking pictures and as a general rule with my editors I always, including my book editor and magazines, I insisted on not showing victim's faces. This was particularly true for child sex trafficking victims, victims of child rape, as in this country most credible news organizations won't show a child rape victim full face to camera. One would hope that that same principle would be true for foreign victims as well.

Sherr: Guy, let me turn to you now. The Secretary talked about expanding this to other forms of the media which you certainly have done with your film. I guess the question for you and maybe it's different with a Ross Bleckner who comes into it as an artist and you're as a filmmaker, but at what point do you cross the line between being a journalist and being an advocate? The assumption from the Ambassador certainly was that we should all be advocates, this is a bad thing and we all agree on it, and therefore we should all be hitting it like that but is there a line in terms of journalism?

Jacobson: To put things in perspective, because I think that will make sense to answer, I will tell you how I got involved in this issue because I struggle with that line exactly. About eight years ago I was on a sabbatical and I was traveling around the world for two years, and one of the places that I was, was Cambodia and I was walking in a street surrounded in the middle of the day by about fifteen little girls, five-, six-, year-old girls who were very aggressively soliciting me for prostitution. One of the girls told me in broken English, "I yum yum very good, I no money today, mama-san boxing me." She will get beaten up by the madam in the brothels. I gave them some money, I walked away and I said you know I have to do something about it and I started researching it and was horrified to find out that what I had seen in Cambodia did not only happen in Cambodia and it wasn't an isolated case; it is in every city, big or small, in every country in the world. And people that I spoke with, and I don't consider myself to be the most ignorant person in the world—definitely bottom one-thousand but I'm not the biggest idiot—and I surely did not know that when you find that there are over 2.5 million kids that are victims in a year, and the numbers and the ages, and I said, "What can I do as a journalist?"

Since I have a film production company, it occurred to me that the people that I speak with actually don't know, like I didn't, the magnitude of the problem, the ages, the locations, and I said, "How do I expose it in a way that doesn't risk the victims and really deal with it in an honest way?" With a film those things can be very difficult. We spoke about Hollywood, that exactly is what I wanted to avoid when we did those three films, I didn't want to do the, you know, Tom Cruise wearing a suit, he's coming with the police, he's killing all of the bad people, he's saving all of the kids, there is peace in the Middle East, we sing a few John Lennon songs and the world is a better place. (Laughter) Because that is not exactly what happened. And Tom Cruise wasn't interested. (Laughter)

So, in order to tell this story in a really honest way and to hopefully get people attached emotionally, I decided to tell the story from the point of view of the victims. So, we did a feature film that was named *Holly*, that we actually opened here with UNODC at the UN about four years ago, and this documentary and the struggle is, and I guess in this particular issue, actually what I found out was that if I tell actually the story both in the feature film with actors and in this documentary, the real story...I don't need to, there is nothing more that needs to be done—it is such a horrendous crime against humanity. Just out of curiosity, can I see by a show of hands, which ones of you think that five-year-olds should be working in a brothel and getting raped? (Pause) Because me and my baseball bat would be happy to have that conversation outside. I mean you know what I'm saying? If you expose this issue in an honest way, I think you already become an advocate because everybody that will be exposed to it should and can see very clearly that needs to be stopped, what can be done, and how to go about it.

And that's what we try to do in the film, both expose the issue honestly, go at it very sensitively so not to harm anybody, especially in the documentary. And just [to] understand how we were, we went to shoot the film in Cambodia and about three days after we arrived, I get a call on my cell phone from the INTERPOL and they said you guys are insane you are in the most dangerous place in the world to do a movie about human trafficking, you are all going to die, get the hell out of Cambodia. Actually they used another four-letter word, but I'll keep my... the INTERPOL have a foul mouth, I obviously will not. (Laughter) I'm Israeli so I don't listen obviously, so I said "no." And they said, "No, no, no you don't understand, we know from our informants there are already contracts on your lives by the Chinese mafia, the Vietnamese mafia, and Cambodian mafia; they are going to kill you." Stupidly enough, we did not leave, and we hired an entire army of body guards. To make a movie about this subject matter, I had forty bodyguards with automatic machine guns. So, understand that that is another kind of obstacle in this issue, and then you are thinking of people, like the amazing people here that are on the TIP report with NGOs on the ground and I am trying to make a movie and I had an army. We had more firepower than the local mafia and the local government, so probably the question [is]: why I'm not the king of Cambodia (Laughter).

But this is really such a difficult thing to do to expose the story honestly, and we used for the film, that is opening this Monday, we shot inside brothels with espionage equipment, cameras in buttons and glasses, can you imagine if anybody would know what we were really doing what would have happened to us in like one minute? That's another obstacle, really not only to not expose the victims and be really honest with the story, but you are getting into something that is organized crime either—depends on the estimates, either the third-largest organized crime in the world, human trafficking and money wise, according to some, already the biggest money makers for them. So, while we want obviously, and everyone in this room thinks this is a crime against humanity, we need to stop it, organized crime has a slightly different perspective. I don't know why we aren't invited to tea and biscuits, so those are some additional

obstacles that usually people will not think about and by the way I feel like [inaudible] there with two-hundred people, I didn't realize that as well.

Sherr: Let me turn now to Noy. In your project you dealt with prostitution as well. Did you feel that same issue, no problem crossing over the line, were there times when, I'm not suggesting you reported on the good side of trafficking, but when there government efforts or whatever that were good that you could report on that side as well?

Noy Thrupkaew: I should explain what I did exactly; I wrote basically a profile of an organization, a Christian evangelical organization that partners with local law enforcement inside of South Asia and Southeast Asia in order to initiate what's colloquially called "brothel raids," or what is technically police interventions to remove trafficking victims and prosecute their traffickers. It seems like a noteworthy and laudable practice and indeed it has definitely helped some trafficking victims. However, there is a certain amount of collateral damage and fallout from these operations that can occur and basically I was writing about the ways in which trafficking victims and their would-be rescuers were misunderstanding each other often to rather complicated results. And that would result in the development of policies and practices that were little informed by the experiences and voices of trafficking victims themselves. So basically, I talked about the evolution of this organization's practices, I think for the better, but mostly I began to interrogate the ways in which counter-trafficking efforts became an expression of unspoken state mandates, so the ways in which shelters could become a way to [inaudible] or rehabilitate the unsightly and the ways in which people were convinced of their freedom of movement by being detained in shelters and they were being rehabilitated through forced psycho-social services. So basically, I've been sort of a critic of counter-trafficking, but I definitely have seen a number of good practices and really noteworthy practices as well which is going to be the focus of some of my upcoming research.

Sherr: And we're going to open up questions from you all in just one minute, let me just get back to Noy for a second. While you were doing your research, what was the biggest problem and what advice would you have for another journalist going into the same kind of work?

Thrupkaew: Basically as Mike was talking about, access to people who would tell their stories was a significant issue, as was the profound lack of data or prevalence of very ideological skewed data or data with questionable methodology behind the procurement of said data. I would urge journalists to consider what Mike and Ben have said about doing no harm, but I actually think we can go quite a bit further. As I was conducting some of my research and working with social service providers I became kind of interested in the way that I felt that journalism itself could be what I call an extractive industry in which we mine the psyches of the traumatized... for what? Salacious details or details to provide a sense of self-righteousness in a viewer or a reader, and that is just not good enough for me.

I became sort of interested in the way that journalists could be more victim-centered in their approaches and to write stories in which the three-dimensionality of a person could be there for other readers to see. I would urge reporters to not only think about the moment of dramatic epiphany of rescue and raid and rehabilitation but to think of what happens in life happily ever after. What is that all about and what has brought people the shores, or the exploitative environments that they are in? I guess it's a story not only of the deprivation and exploitation but of the resilience and I would also urge reporters to start looking at stories that are in their backyards. This is not just stories of exploitation of innocent girls in countries far away; it's the story of who is picking our tomatoes? Who is making our clothes? And the

kind of anxiety that can result in employing someone or exploiting them to care for our children and clean our homes at the expense of their own children and their own homes. (Applause)

Sherr: Sound advice indeed, I would add before I give you a chance Ben, that I hope a lot of editors get the same advice, because I think it is one thing for a reporter to be out there, and it's another to come in and say to your editor I've got this story and then you get the answer, "Gee we've done trafficking," as if one story covers it all. So I think when you all make your handbook of 'how to's, I think it needs to go to the editors as well. One more from Ben and then we are going to the audience.

Skinner: Very briefly I just wanted to endorse what Noy was saying there. I very quickly learned that if you do a two-minute interview with someone who has been through great trauma you are in many cases, whether or not you are protecting their identity after the fact, you are doing more harm than good. Because you are freezing them as a victim and near the end of the five year process of writing this book I began to realize that most of the people I was talking to were not victims; they were survivors. And it is a very, very critical distinction. However they get out, and however their process of survival is going, they are survivors and we need to respect that process.

Sherr: Bravo! Let's open it up to the audience for some questions and if you want to please identify yourself and if you want to direct it to somebody go ahead, otherwise we'll see who feels like a victim and wants to take the question. Questions?

Questioner: (Inaudible name) UN Private Alliance for Rural Development. The question is, I've been in many meetings in this house about human trafficking and one question I still haven't heard much of an answer to is, are we being nibbled to death by minnows or are there big fish? And if there are big fish, why haven't I heard stories about big fish? Thank you.

Sherr: By big fish I assume you mean the people responsible, the criminals. Do you want to take that Mr. Secretary?

Costa: Well actually, later on in the closing statement I will address some of the points implicitly raised by this question. There are big fish, perhaps not as big as one would think, not in terms of a senior organization being involved, organizing the trafficking into a given country, could be the U.S., a European country, anywhere else. Obviously there are organized crime interests, ramifications more in terms of facilitating, not the transaction, but the trade-off, the transportation of if you wish, the recruitment of origin through agencies or whatever. Other instruments are used to profit from the vulnerability of the victims, the point you are raising though is well taken. The Ambassador CdeBaca mentioned a certain number of victims rescued last year. I think his numbers are a bit generous, he said 45,000, we [the UN] came out a few months ago with about half that amount. Although we do not know how big the problem is, the amount of victims rescued, probably about 20,000 or so, would be about two percent in the sea of victims. That would mean that we are only able to save a fraction of the victims. Then if you look at another set of statistics, the number of people who have actually been nailed, namely arrested and then prosecuted and then convicted, you get numbers that can fit on my hand for major countries, three, four, five in many European countries. Which indeed kind of gives origin to the kind of perplexity you have—are there big fish? Are we only getting little ones? I think that the picture is very

complicated, certainly to repeat there are mafia sort of syndicate organizations, their detailing is done by a kind of local crime figures, many of them have been arrested, but we are just at the beginning of the process. Thank you.

Sherr: From any of the panel, Mike, have you dealt with some of the big fish?

McGraw: Well, we believe the Kansas City case represents one of the biggest fish ever brought down, this group of a dozen traffickers. But you've got to remember what a difficult crime this is to prosecute. The victims do not want to come forward; they've been told that their families back home can be killed. They've been told that they can be killed. This is a very difficult crime to prosecute. And even under the best of laws it is difficult to prosecute and what we're seeing in the U.S. and our story is mainly about the problems in prosecuting it in the U.S., we have cases where a lot of traffickers go down for things like harboring because they can't make that next step and show them to be traffickers so instead of getting a twenty year sentence they may get a five year sentence. They're getting prosecuted, but not for the crime they committed.

Sherr: So what you are saying is it's not a journalism problem as much as it is a law enforcement problem.

McGraw: I believe so.

Questioner: My name is Lisa (inaudible) and I am a former federal prosecutor. I didn't work in trafficking cases but I am working with an organization now called Equality Now that does, and not on the legal issues, but I actually approached the Ambassador exactly about that question because the law seems to require that the victim testify and I asked why that the victims are always afraid to testify for themselves and for their families back home and why couldn't you use something like the Witness Protection Program to put them in. And he [the Ambassador] went through an elaborate discussion with me about why that wasn't possible, and said that he is using the Mann Act which doesn't require that to prosecute many more people which I don't think they can be prosecuted for the highest level of the crime, I think they have to be prosecuted for the lowest level of the crime. Anyway, he said he would be glad to engage in a discussion further with me about that particular issue but I do think that that is a huge problem. The other thing is that with respect to a journalism issue there is a great story out there about sex tourism, there is a whole industry of sex tourism that was not mentioned and that would be great to be exposed.

Sherr: I feel as if I've seen a lot of stories on sex tourism but back to Mike's point and everybody's point, and Noy's point earlier, they are headline stories, they are sexy headline stories and then nobody follows through on them so we are probably guilty as charged on that.

Questioner: (inaudible name) Mike, I was wondering if you could talk about the T-visa, the problems with it and what you think the solutions are?

McGraw: I wish my colleague Mark Morris were here because he concentrated on the H2-B visa problem and it is a very serious problem and as he pointed out on one day of our series, the amount of fraud in this VISA program is amazing. The Department of Labor was given millions of dollars by Congress to go out and find the fraud and correct the problems. They gave the money back. I urge you to talk to Mark more about this, it's a very serious problem and people within the Labor Department will tell you it's always been a scam and will continue to be until we get serious about fixing it.

Sherr: Now let's take a question from over here, yes ma'am.

Questioner: I'm Karen McLaughlin, former director of the Massachusetts State Task Force, presently working on a national campaign. First of all I want to thank the Schuster Institute, the founders and the funders. We so appreciate what you have done here today. Knowing the work of a lot of the panel, I do want to say a big thank you from the bottom of our heart to expose these issues. To the Kansas City reporters, your team did an excellent job in working on the VISA issues and really exposing those issues of how we're working on those difficult...what's going on with this "volunteering" for prostitution and Noy, your victim-centered approach is just amazing and I thank you so much for all the quotes in all your articles from those victims we really take that to heart. I have three or four things that I would like to just have people consider and love your opinion on them.

One is we really need to be careful in this field, especially because there are so many types of victims, about victim parity and really understand that if we are taking a position or a point of view or talking about one type of victim that's really not the full scope of what we see. So, when we are talking on labor we really need to be sensitive on what's going on with the sex trafficking and the commercial sex exploitation of children and adults and all the range of these crimes because I see really as you've put it, Lynn, some headline grabbing stories about cherry picking certain kinds of victims for those headlines or for that Pulitzer, sorry to put it out there, but really that's what I see.

And the second thing I'd like to recommend is that we really go deeply; you're all people with honor with an interest in doing due diligence. We're seeing a great deal of imposters in this field right now. As we see in many humanitarian fields and after many humanitarian disasters, we need people who are going to go out there and really help us dig deeply for not only people to expose them but really be out there to find the best practices that we challenge you all to do and we are challenged to do every day.

I'd also like to offer the bland subject of public policy, we don't get enough reporting and we're not getting enough cutting-edge reporting on public policy change. Lastly, demand gets no attention because it's not considered sexy, interesting; it has no victim exposures but I just want to ask people to consider what we are doing in that regard. The end is we really need to still go back to those victims, they are really the truth seeking people that we rely on a great deal and along with them, your voices, so thank you for this time and any comments you might have.

Sherr: Thank you for your comments, and as I said nobody on this panel is guilty of doing the bad stuff. Another question from the audience, in the back. Yes go ahead sir.

Questioner: My name is Elliott Prasse-Freeman; I'm an associate fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights. I've been looking at this stuff, actually the discourse around it for a couple of years and I'm interested in almost an erotic fascination with the trafficked victim, the female body especially the exotic, erotic and wondering kind of in connection with some of the things you guys have been talking about in the media, I don't necessarily think that people want this problem to go away—they quite like it. And I'm wondering as journalists who respond to this issue and write about it, can you talk about the process with your editors or when you're pitching a story, if this phenomenon ever occurs where that kind of context, the humanization of the victim that Noy spoke of is actually kind of not encouraged, and of course I could be delving into (inaudible) psycho-analytic and you can tell me I'm an idiot, but I was wondering if there was anything here because we see such an explosion in anti-trafficking reporting and I'm wondering why that is, where it's

coming from, where is it going, and why is it never about victims as people but only as spectacles of violence? Thank you.

Sherr: I would offer one comment which is unfortunately there aren't enough good editors in this country. That's a separate issue. Noy let me ask you because I think you've been dealing with that on a regular basis. What do you think? First of all, is he right?

Thrupkaew: Oh yes. I am so glad that you asked that question. It was kind of an obsession of mine to look at the discourse as well and I noticed the ways the victims were just posited as broken bodies or vessels that had been shattered and therefore needed to be put back together again like Humpty Dumpty. And with this kind of emptiness of the body, what happened then was they became the kind of repository for a series of I would say kind of projections about the nature of dignity, or a choice and all these other kind of anxieties and phobias that we have around sexuality and what happens when people get mingled up together with money. And so it has been something that I have spoken about more than written about but it is a huge obsession/pet peeve of mine. I really dislike the way that victims are imagined and never allowed to represent themselves because the moment they are seen as three dimensional people with their own motivations and internal economies of meaning, the less likely it is that people who would try to help them would misunderstand them and try and create policies that actually put them at a disadvantage. So, thank you so much for your question, and the way I try and counteract that is by really avoiding any kind of salacious detail. There's actually a friend of mine who works for UNESCO, [United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization], he calls it "redemptive Victorian pornography," so I tried to studiously avoid that and I tried to show the ways in which people came to the situation and the ways in which people leave the situation and what the fabric is of their lives that actually have in common with the reader. People have families; they have dreams and goals and this is just a moment in their lives, one that can affect them for a long time but there are stories of resilience and their own representation that really need to be told. It is a challenge, however, so we'll see how we all try and continue to do this.

Sherr: Thank you Noy. Before we move on in this one, Secretary has a comment on the previous question.

Costa: Yes indeed the earlier question, I'm not sure I understood you correctly but there is, or at least I got the feeling of, evidence to the complexity of the defining, defining the victims, defining the crime, defining the perpetrators. This is sort of a trouble for us, I mean the United Nations, the institution that actually brokered the international agreement, it is called the Protocol against Human Trafficking, because if you look at the issue itself, why we have need categories stated in the Protocol and related international agreements, they didn't have such legislation. You have victims of human trafficking, you have the crime of human trafficking, you have the crime of smuggling migrants, and you have other forms of crime. But in reality, life is much more complicated than that. There is a tremendous amount of gray area whereby it is very difficult, and this is one of the complexities in terms of the administration of law. The difficulty of defining whether the case is trafficking or is a case of exploitation or is a case of irregular migration and so forth. From the legal vantage point we need classification, but again the reality is much more complicated.

What actually happens in the story of victims you may talk to, leaving aside the clear-cut cases of exploitation in terms of slavery, the individual may get into a situation perhaps migrating irregularly across the Mexican border, from Western Europe from Eastern Europe and so forth, the fellow does not speak the language, the fellow has no money, no skill, becomes very rapidly sort of victim to be preyed upon by organized crime and then becomes indeed a case of organized

crime trafficking a human being. Then the victim may suffer for a number of years and then may run away, or he or she may be released because their age is beyond exploitation or so it becomes an irregular migrant who is there without paper, without this, without that, and so in the history of the individual's situation, we see the importance of categories that allow judges and prosecutors to do their work, that at the same time we see that it is very easy for lawyers to hamper the process of justice and therefore on the intrinsic gray area where unfortunately this gets entangled with other forms of crime. As I said, illegal immigration or it could be prostitution, it could be legal prostitution which seemed voluntary and so forth. The protocol, which was decided in the year 2000, identified three key areas, three key characteristics of this crime: first, the victim has to be extracted from his own environment, it may not be a house—it may be somewhere else but he has to be forced out; he has to be a victim of violence; and third it has to be exploited so there should be to complete the crime a revenue factor which is accruing to a third party, the perpetrator. Again, to prove all three of these, the coexistence of all three becomes very difficult and as a consequence the complexity of the definition and the complexity of the administration of justice in this case. Thank you.

Sherr: Just to let you know we probably only have time for about one more question and then Secretary Costa will have some closing remarks as well.

Questioner: I just want to sort of echo some of the concerns that the public has mentioned in relationship to the idea of humanizing victims of human trafficking. It seems to me that this sort of typical notion our collective understanding about what a victim should look like has incredible implications for policy. For instance, one of the civil remedies for immigrant victims is they receive a visa or some sort of remedy related to their immigration status. Only five thousand of those are given—and yet about two percent of those visas are actually granted to victims and I think that the reason is because we're all victims of the same overly generalized, inhumane version of what a victim should look like. So, the policy itself alienates the majority of persons who have actually experienced human trafficking. I'm wondering if the panel would give any sort of, if you had the opportunity to inform policy in a way that grants victims the three-dimensionality of their existence, what would you suggest the visa program should look like for these victims?

Sherr: If what you're asking the journalists to do is to be policy-makers which they may not feel comfortable doing, does any one of you want to be a policy-maker or should we throw this back to the policy people?

Questioner: If you had the opportunity to inform in a hypothetical.

Jacobson: I am happy to take that. Before I became a filmmaker I was an investment banker and I quit the law to make movies, and my Jewish mother is still think that I'm dead, (Laughter) but I'll use law in that respect. I think that with this issue because of the complexities, because it does involve victims from everywhere, in a variety of ways, it is absolutely should be much simplified and make it much easier for people to receive this visa. And I think conditioning these kind of visas on certain cooperations or certain actions or certain conditions, actually probably would discourage victims from cooperating at times and I guess it is those certain times where you say let's err to a particular direction, I think that if we grant a few extra visas for people who may have not been victimized as badly, or at all, and so on, let that be the case, let's not make it so hard and difficult and time- and effort- and money-consuming and resource consuming to actually even apply. The problem is not even how many visas because I think that while they say there is only five thousand available, what they actually grant each year is a couple of hundred. So, it's not us saying "Ooh so many people are trying to get it and don't," the problem is that the requirements to get it and how difficult it is,

especially for victims that already are afraid, that have many times not enough education or [inaudible] to even apply so I think that that's really a matter of really looking at it as a policy in a kind of fresh eyes and saying I don't really understand why we even... you know—I'll go back, so I'm Israeli, so I'll assume that I don't use this word easily—kind of the Holocaust. So, those people that are being killed here you're not letting them get into another place where they will be safe and you're sending them back, it seems to be of a similar frame of mind where we are not sensitive enough to who the victims are, what are they going through? What are their resources and abilities to do and we're focusing on procedural and administrative things that make no sense. So I think that victims in that respect should receive this visa much easier, much quicker, with much more protections. Somebody earlier mentioned the Witness Protection Program. We really need to realize who the victims are and be extremely sensitive, not only us as media, us as public, us as government, to how do we now treat those survivors to not make it even worse for them.

Sherr: It is dangerous territory I think when you start mixing journalism and policy, but, but, but it was a good question and let me just turn to Ben and then we're going to move on.

Skinner: I spend much of my life posing as a human trafficker so I'm not afraid of dangerous territory and I'll weigh in on the policy question. I think for example, in this country on the T-visa issue, the reason for the low number of identifications is largely a training issue,; it's a response issue, and it's police not being trained how to identify victims when they come up against somebody who is undocumented. If they're dealing with an undocumented worker, for example in the Postville, Iowa case, it's a classic example of an ongoing DOL [Department of Labor] investigation being stepped on by an ICE raid. That kind of thing leads to low victim identification. There is another overarching issue here which is funding. Appropriations.

And the amount of money that the United States currently spends on an annual basis to fight the trafficking in human beings is as much as they spend in one day to fight the trafficking in drugs. And that's not to minimize the relative horrors of smoking pot, (Laughter) but it is to say—which is the more monstrous crime? Is it a fifteen-year-old selling pot on the street corner, or is it a fifteen-year-old being sold for rape and destruction on a street corner? And I think as long as those questions are not being asked of our government, then you're going to get kind of piecemeal and I think vastly insufficient response on human trafficking.

Sherr: Thank you Ben. I'm going to ask Secretary Costa to make some closing remarks now with the caveat that if when he's done, we've been told we can go a tiny bit longer but not much, we might have time for another question or we might not. But let me turn it over to you [Costa] now.

Costa: Really I don't have much to add. By the way, this was an interesting panel, one of the most interesting I've attended on this subject matter. But I would like to engage those who are involved in media business or those who [inaudible] extensively regarding a question which I find very difficult, a question which I receive on a daily basis by common people, the so-called man or women of the street. I get them by e-mail, I get them during sessions, I get them traveling a so forth: "What can I do?" Not as a journalist, not as a bureaucrat, not as government official, myself as a middle-class, perhaps not, without that much money. I feel strongly about it, what can I do? How can I help?

The answer to that question, I think, comes through the media because obviously we in the national, international bureaucracy we cannot reach public opinion so frequently and so successfully as you do, but I think media can help us in

that. And let me backtrack for a second, in order to represent the problem, by referring to something which we are going to do tomorrow, tomorrow the General Assembly will discuss the session on organized crime and the globalization of organized crime and the threat posed by organized crime worldwide. We don't have in mind only trafficking of human beings, [but a] much bigger set of crimes; the threat is that organized crime poses worldwide to countries to [inaudible] nations and so forth. Actually, tomorrow we present this report; it's titled, "The Globalization of Crime." Two chapters in this report are about...human trafficking; one about human trafficking, the other about smuggling of migrants. Those and other issues there are trafficking, cyber-crime, trafficking of natural resources, rare species, hazardous waste, arms, cyber-crime and so forth.

But the key problem which I see the most interesting message in this report which is relevant for what we are discussing is about the question of the market. There are markets where all the services and the commodities elicited may be as I mentioned earlier, but certainly also for human trafficking. There is supply, there are traffickers in between, and there is a demand, in our lesson in [inaudible] we start recognizing the nature, reverse nature as it may be, of these markets and we start addressing the markets, and we limited ourselves to law enforcement...arresting here, arresting there, people are arrested in every place we think there are mafia groups and they are immediately back into action. And unless we recognize the fundamental economic view is social, cultural notion of this problem we are never going to succeed. And that is where the media can be helpful, very helpful and I will say only media is a channel of communication which reaches the masses at large and can provide, either directly or indirectly, an answer to the early question I put forward, namely, how can I help? [For the] man and woman on the street.

Therefore I welcome all these efforts including, of course, Guy you mentioned your Cambodia story, and once it is seen and broadcast and made available in the supplying countries so to speak, because there are such nations, for example Southeast Asia, definitely we hope that the vulnerability of the victims will be reduced. I mean that documentary will only be one element, I think we need much more than that, we need the media, the local media, we need television and we need Internet, and certainly if we agree that there is a market and we agree that there is a notion of supply, then whatever media is doing, in order or can do in order to reduce the vulnerability of the source, to alert people of the danger stemming from banal behavior, to warn potential victims that getting involved in some sort of advertising and some sort of marvelous job across the border where you can be a waiter, you can be a secretary and so on, a model. Alerting all of these potential victims I think will be one way of starting to address the market.

Then there is a much more substantive question that is demand, it was referred to on the panel a number of times. I think that in order to address the problem properly, and again leaving aside the law enforcement side, we need to address the question of demand for the goods and services that the victims produce and generated by the victims. This is where we all play a role. We all play a role when we buy something. The expression I've been using in the past is that there is nothing we wear, or—let me put it in the positive—anything which we wear, or we eat, or we drink, or we even enjoy somehow as an item in our households—anything which we deal with most likely was, at one point in the supply chain, tainted by the blood, if you wish, and the tears and the suffering of the victims.

So, we need to use media to engage in the campaign whereby people start becoming aware of that, I mean, people are aware of blood diamonds, period. There was a moment where the diamond industry was terribly affected and concerned with questions being asked. Where is the certification? Am I giving my wife, or girlfriend, my husband,

something which has been the cause of dramatic suffering? To a large extent the same has been done with equal success about wearing, especially furs, from rare animals. I mean nobody goes around with tiger furs and these sorts of things because of shame, because of the risk of being told something, perhaps even suffering some sort of verbal attack. Now we don't need to go to that extreme but unless we start getting involved into trying to identify the product we are using, I mean there was a moment twelve months ago, eighteen months ago when we started talking about a campaign against chocolate. Chocolate, which most of the chocolate used in this country and in Western Europe comes from one or two countries in West Africa, Ivory Coast to begin with but not only, mostly picked up by harvests, harvested by underage boys, mostly boys not girls, age ten, twelve, paid perhaps a dime a day or at most half a dollar a day. We can do something about requiring certification, requiring the [inaudible] to provide those goods at the retailers here.

The same is about exotic sex; the expression I've been using is—keep the zipper up if you want to help. But there has been a lot of, "Okay I'm having sex; she's probably a prostitute, what's the big deal, this business is as old as humanity." And wait a minute, if the person is enslaved, if the person is somehow [inaudible], there are ways in any case of making the individual aware that by his own, or her own, less likely, gesture or act can indeed feed the market, feed the beast and therefore perpetuate this crime. Or, a lot of us said earlier, by regarding domestic servants and the victims of domestic labor, there is a lot of that going on I think we at times tend to dismiss it, we may see it being guests in a house, while all of this is important, so the role of media, to close, is to motivate public opinions, that sort of a self-probing attitude can develop and through the curbing of demand we start reducing the size of this market which could be another way in building a counterpart to law enforcement, which is of course regarding trafficking. Thank you very much; I appreciate [it].

Sherr: Thank you sir, and thank you to all of you. Thank you to this extraordinary panel, and I think we should do this again because we deserve better than pass/fail and we deserve better than a 'C.' Thank you all very much.