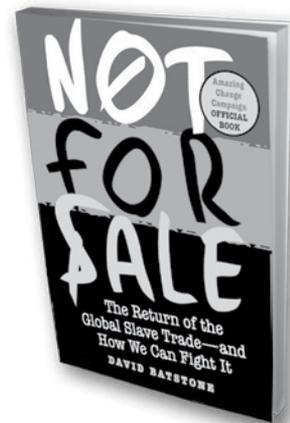


Finding Slavery in My Own Backyard

By David Batstone

Excerpted from the Introduction of the book, Not for Sale



Twenty-seven million slaves exist in our world today. Girls and boys, women and men of all ages are forced to toil in the rug loom sheds of Nepal, sell their bodies in the brothels of Rome, break rocks in the quarries of Pakistan, and fight wars in the jungles of Africa.

Go behind the facade in any major town or city in the world today and you are likely to find a thriving commerce in human beings. You may even find slavery in your own backyard.

For several years, my wife and I dined regularly at an Indian Restaurant near our home in the San Francisco Bay Area. Unbeknownst to us, the staff at Pasand Madras Indian Cuisine who cooked our curries, delivered them to our table, and washed our dishes were slaves.

“Defeating human trafficking is a great moral calling of our time.”

*Condoleezza Rice,
U.S. Secretary of State*

It took a tragic accident to expose the slave trafficking ring. A young woman found her roommates, seventeen year old Chanti Prattipati and her fifteen year old sister Lalitha,

unconscious in a Berkeley apartment. Carbon monoxide emitted from a blocked heating vent had poisoned them. The roommate called their landlord, Lakireddy Reddy, the owner of the Pasand restaurant where the girls worked. Reddy owned several restaurants and more than a thousand apartment units in northern California.

When Reddy arrived at the girls' apartment, he declined to take them to a hospital. Instead, he and a few friends carried the girls out of the apartment in a rolled up carpet and put them into a waiting van. When Reddy and his cronies tried to force the roommate into the van as well, she put up a fierce fight.

A local resident, Marcia Poole, happened to be passing by in her car at that moment and witnessed a bizarre scene: several men toting a sagging roll of carpet, with a human leg hanging out the side. She slowed down her car to take a closer look and was horrified to watch the men attempt to force a young girl into their van. Poole jumped out of her car and did everything in her power to stop the men. Unable to do so, she stopped another passing motorist and implored him to dial 911 and report a kidnapping in progress. The police arrived in time to arrest the abductors.

Chanti Prattipata never regained consciousness; she was pronounced dead at a local hospital. A subsequent investigation revealed that Reddy and several members of his family had used fake visas and false identities to traffic perhaps hundreds of adults and children into the United States from India. In many cases Reddy secured visas under the guise that the applicants were highly skilled technology professionals who would be placed in a software company. In fact, they ended up working as waiters, cooks, and dishwashers at the Pasand restaurant or at other businesses that Reddy owned. He forced the laborers to work long hours for minimal wages, money that they returned to him as rent to live in one of his apartments. Reddy threatened to turn them in to the authorities as illegal aliens if they tried to escape.

The Reddy case is not an anomaly. Nearly two hundred thousand live enslaved at this moment

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Ted Hadlock/International Justice Mission

in the United States, and an additional 17,500 new victims are trafficked across our borders each year. Over thirty thousand more slaves are transported through the United States on their way to other international destinations. Attorneys from the U.S. Department of Justice have prosecuted slave trade activity in ninety-one cities across the United States and in nearly every state of the nation.'

Like the slaves who came to America's shores two



Ted Haddock/
International Justice Mission

Cambodian National Police use bolt cutters to cut the lock during the raid of a brothel

hundred years ago, today's slaves are not free to pursue their own destinies. They are coerced to perform work for the personal gain of those who subjugate them. If they try to escape the clutches of their masters, modern slaves risk personal violence or reprisals to their families. 🌐

Ted Haddock/International Justice Mission



The Invisible Slave Next Door

By David Batstone

Excerpted from the Introduction of the book, Not for Sale

Kim Meston wishes that she had not been so invisible to her New England community. In a rural town near Worcester, Massachusetts, the minister of the local church used her as his domestic sex slave for five years without raising the slightest suspicion in the community.

Kim's parents were Tibetan exiles living in a refugee camp in southern India. When Kim was in her teens, her sister's husband introduced the family to a church minister visiting from the United States. The reverend offered to bring Kim to America where he would provide a formal education and opportunities for a better life. "He told my parents that he would treat me as his own daughter," Kim recounts.

Her brother-in-law lobbied the family persuasively to let Kim go. He even offered to accompany her to Delhi, where he could help her secure a visa to travel to the United States. In the ultimate betrayal, the brother-in-law made his own financial arrangement with the minister to traffic Kim.

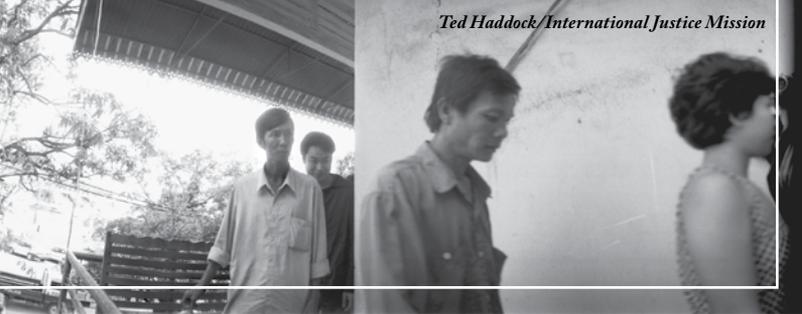
At the age of sixteen, Kim began a double life in America. Everything would have appeared normal to the casual observer—she attended the local high school, ran on the track team, and attended church on Sundays. The minister even had a wife and a stepdaughter living in his home. But behind closed

doors, she became the household servant, doing nearly all the cooking, housecleaning, ironing, and even tending the church grounds. Moreover, the minister sexually abused Kim frequently over a five year period.

The minister threatened to have Kim's Tibetan family back in India thrown into jail if Kim told her school friends a word about her treatment. So she suffered in silence, and no one in the community thought to ask how she might be faring. They simply assumed the best intentions of the minister and his family. "His deception was well constructed," notes Kim. "The minister was a pillar in the community, and I was viewed as the poor child from the third world who was the lucky beneficiary of his generosity."

Finally, at the age of twenty one, Kim escaped her tormentor. She initially planned to run away and never turn back. But she received news from her family in India that the minister had trafficked two of her cousins into the United States to take her place inside his home. Kim mustered the courage to take her case to the local police. The minister was arrested, convicted, and sent to jail.

The minister threatened to have Kim's Tibetan family back in India thrown into jail if Kim told her school friends a word about her treatment.



Arrested perpetrators file into the Phnom Penh courthouse to be booked and jailed.

Today Kim owns a retail store in the Boston area and volunteers her time to prevent more vulnerable women from falling into sexual exploitation and enslavement.

Elements of Kim's experience are disturbingly common in the modern slave trade. She was a young girl in a transient environment (a refugee camp). A trafficker (the minister) conspired with someone close to the family (her sister's husband) to extract her from the community and take control of her life. She was trafficked to another country where she did not understand the culture or the laws, and her family would be harmed if she

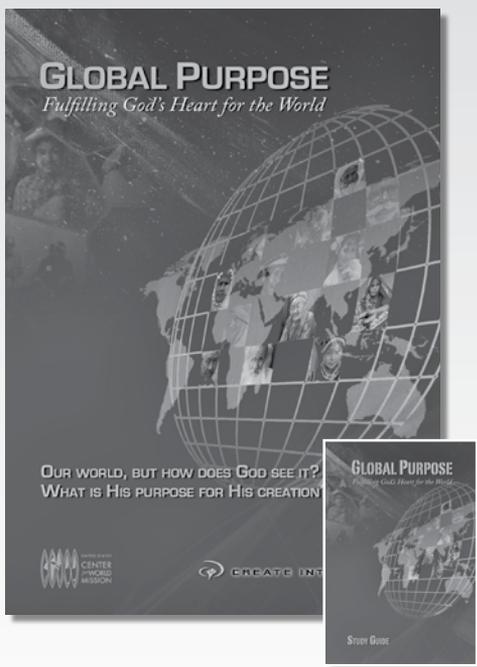
The slaveholder used her sexually and exploited her labor. Once she escaped, the slaveholder went out and quickly found two more girls to replace her.

did not fully cooperate. The slaveholder used her sexually and exploited her labor. Once she escaped, the slaveholder went out and quickly found two more girls to replace her.

To write this book, I conducted hundreds of interviews with young girls from Cambodia, Thailand, Peru, India, Uganda, South Africa, and eastern Europe. I encountered this essential story line time and time again. Of those individuals extracted out of impoverished countries and trafficked across international borders, 80 percent are female and 50 percent are children. They are taken to unfamiliar destinations where, in the absence of legal protection and family networks, they can be kept in slavery. The consistency of the story line in fact suggests overarching mechanisms of a global industry.

Like any other commercial market, the slave trade is driven by the dynamics of supply and demand. Criminal agents make handsome profits off unpaid labor: it is cheaper to produce goods or, in the case of sex slavery or domestic servitude, to offer valued human services. Due to these financial advantages, slaveholders can compete successfully in almost any market. The profit margins will rise as high as the demand will bear. 🌐

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