
This book's contributors are leaders in reshaping and pushing the boundaries of traditional psychological theories to deliver healing frameworks, perspectives, and interventions to human trafficking victims, survivors, and providers. The editors offer the full gamut of views to inform the psychological perspective, with chapters covering the crucial historical, social, clinical, organizational, and developmental issues that concern human trafficking, making it a gem of a book to teach and train all students interested in engaging this population.

— **Paola M. Contreras**, Associate Professor, William James College, Newton, MA; Member of the APA's Task Force on the Trafficking of Women and Girls

Providing psychological services those who've experienced human trafficking is complex, especially since their needs are great and constantly changing. This is one of the most useful books for every psychologist to have on their reference shelf, precisely because it deals with human trafficking from a variety of theoretical frameworks in organizational, social, forensic, and clinical psychology.

— **Lenore E. Walker, EdD**, Professor Emerita, Nova Southeastern University College of Psychology, Davie, FL; Coauthor of *Handbook of Sex Trafficking: Feminist Transnational Perspectives*

An essential read for anyone who cares about human trafficking. Reaching out to researchers, practitioners, educators, policy makers, and activists, Dryjanska, Hopper, and Stoklosa have assembled an impressive roster of experts from diverse fields of psychology to bring new perspectives on a wealth of topics from prevention to intervention. Absorbing this book enriched my understanding of trafficking and made me want to get back to work with survivors.

— **Mary Crawford, PhD**, Professor Emerita, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT; Author of *Sex Trafficking in South Asia*

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INTRODUCTION

Psychological Perspectives on Human Trafficking

LAURA DRYJANSKA, ELIZABETH K. HOPPER, AND HANNI STOKLOSA

German philosopher Rudolph Goclenius, who first put the term “psychology” in writing, once said, “Add pride to the world, contributing your part unconditionally.” We offer this volume in that spirit of contribution as a joint effort to introduce and explore the topic of human trafficking through the lens of psychology.

The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons (2000), also known as the Palermo Protocol, was the first legally binding instrument with an internationally recognized definition of human trafficking. Article 3 defines *trafficking* as

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (p. 213)

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Psychological Perspectives on Human Trafficking: Theory, Research, Prevention, and Intervention, by L. Dryjanska, E. K. Hopper, and H. Stoklosa (Editors)

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Although the protocol emphasizes the role of force, threat, or coercion in trafficking generally, it clarifies that these elements do not need to be present in trafficking children. While estimates of trafficking are fraught due to methodological and practical issues, estimates indicate that 27.6 million people are trafficked globally (International Labour Organization, 2022).

The essence of the crime of trafficking is controlling one human being for the profit of another. Over the last century, psychology has been advancing our understanding of, and response to, other forms of interpersonal violence, including domestic violence and child abuse. As a result, society has cultivated a more sophisticated understanding of the causes and impacts of interpersonal violence, generated improved strategies to mitigate interpersonal violence, and developed more efficacious interventions and treatments. Our hope is that this volume advances psychology's conversation about and solutions toward ending human trafficking.

This book synthesizes current psychological scholarship and translates theory into practice. Throughout, this volume emphasizes social determinants of human trafficking such as poverty, race, and gender. This book acknowledges the limited empirical research on the subject in terms of the exploitation of boys and men, as well as transgender, gender nonconfirming, and intersex people in human trafficking. The authors also address the lack of literature on labor trafficking and immigrant groups that are impacted. Psychological frameworks may vary by cultural contexts, and it is important to acknowledge the value of cross-cultural sharing of information, perspectives, and potential solutions (Darley & Dölemeyer, 2020).

While this volume addresses the issue of human trafficking through a variety of psychological perspectives, not all areas of psychology are included, and the potential contribution of other areas of psychology (e.g., school psychology, forensic psychology, cognitive psychology, health psychology) should be explored. Further, we do not thoroughly explore all areas of human trafficking, such as the psychology of forced marriage, forced criminality, or organ trafficking. Our language choices in this book are intentional. As much as possible, we use person-centered language. We reserve the term *victim* to refer to those currently experiencing the crime of trafficking and those actively engaged in the criminal justice system (e.g., as a "victim witness"). We use the term *survivor* to recognize the challenge of facing difficult or traumatic circumstances often involved in trafficking. However, we recognize the right of each person to choose language that best fits their perception of their own experience and identity. Furthermore, we do not use the term *prostitution*, given its legal repercussions, but rather refer to engagement in commercial sex acts. Given the conflation with chattel slavery, where possible the authors avoid the term "modern-day slavery."

The editors of the volume embody cooperation between different subfields of psychology as well as multidisciplinary collaboration. Alongside authors who specialize in diverse areas of psychology and are involved in antitrafficking theory, research, policy, and practice, we hope to stimulate a reflection on the role of psychology when it comes to labor and sex trafficking. In addition to contributions from each of the authors, the editors wish to thank Dr. Nancy M. Sidun for her foreword, which sets the stage for the volume, as well as the reviewers for providing helpful comments and suggestions.

In Chapter 1, Elizabeth K. Hopper presents overarching theoretical perspectives on the psychology of human trafficking, explaining how a socioecological framework can be used to develop primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention initiatives to combat human trafficking. This chapter frames the text as a whole by exploring societal, community, relational, and individual factors associated with human trafficking and discussing various approaches to moderate risk and promote resilience.

Chapter 2, by Thema Bryant and Dominique A. Malebranche, explores human trafficking among marginalized communities, using the theoretical orientation of liberation psychology that allows for an intersectional, justice-oriented framework. The authors focus on racism or ethnic bias, classism or caste systems, sexism or patriarchy, and heterosexism, highlighting the role of abolitionist psychologists—liberation psychologists who actively work to abolish human trafficking in practice, research, consultation, or advocacy.

Given the relative overemphasis on sex trafficking in comparison with labor trafficking in the field, Lujain Alhajji, JoNell Efantis Potter, and Vanessa Padilla concentrate an exclusive chapter (Chapter 3) on the latter form of exploitation. The authors define labor trafficking and describe its occurrence within specific industries, including agriculture and animal husbandry; domestic work; hospitality, restaurant, and food services; illicit massage, health, and beauty businesses; fisheries, traveling sales crews; and bars, strip clubs, and cantinas. They discuss indicators of labor trafficking and screening tools that may be helpful to psychologists and other professionals who come into contact with potential persons impacted by trafficking, especially considering the fact that many victims do not self-identify as such.

The volume then moves on to explore human trafficking from the perspective of diverse subfields of psychology, beginning with a chapter on developmental psychology and child trafficking by Cassandra Ma. In Chapter 4, Ma demonstrates how different developmental periods in childhood relate to vulnerability and impacts, taking into account various forms of exploitation such as child labor, child soldiers, child sex trafficking, and child marriage.

In Chapter 5, Barbara G. Friedman discusses human trafficking through the lenses of media psychology, exploring the issue of how the news frames human trafficking and highlighting the potential role of psychologists as experts who can influence public perception through framing media coverage of the topic. In particular, psychologists can offer context that frames the issue in terms of broader themes, moving the issue of trafficking beyond the immediate event or individual parties. In this way, they can place it into broader societal context, reducing victim blaming and promoting more active engagement from the general public in addressing the issue.

Social psychology may provide useful insights on human trafficking in terms of the social self-concept, cognitive processes, and biases when perceiving others, including people who have been impacted by human trafficking, as well as perpetrators. Chapter 6, by Laura Dryjanska, demonstrates that social psychology has much to offer in terms of understanding how trafficking survivors process information, perceive themselves and are perceived by others. In particular, the substantial body of research unveils some of the mechanisms behind cognitive processes and decision making in general.

Next, in Chapter 7, Maura J. Mills, Leanne M. Torte, Robert Blanton, Burcu B. Keskin, Gregory J. Bott, and Nickolas K. Freeman discuss how industrial and organizational psychology can play a critical role in prediction and prevention of human trafficking, as well as in training employees to recognize signs of human trafficking in their workplaces. On a broader scale, it can also help improve understanding of some of the ways in which organizations can respond to trafficking both proactively and reactively in regard to tangential issues such as supply chain considerations as well as data collection and analysis.

A volume on psychology of human trafficking would not be complete without chapters written by clinical psychologists. Hopper and Kelly Kinnish explore clinical psychological perspectives on the traumatic nature of human trafficking and its impacts on survivors' biological, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral functioning (Chapter 8). Trauma and violence impacts are typically compounded by conditions of coercive control and emotional and relational harm, resulting in significant symptoms of posttraumatic stress and complex trauma symptoms; depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation; substance use problems; and other deleterious mental health outcomes discussed in this chapter.

Furthermore, in Chapter 9, Kinnish and Hopper discuss current approaches to clinical intervention with trafficking survivors, emphasizing evidence-based treatments targeting some of the primary mental health impacts of trafficking, as well as addressing adjunctive treatments and promising practices. The authors address engagement and the therapeutic alliance, trauma-informed psychological assessment and treatment planning, and a variety of treatment

approaches, including individual, group, and family interventions. They also highlight recommendations for further development in trauma-informed intervention with human trafficking survivors.

In Chapter 10, Jessa Dillow Crisp and Becca C. Johnson utilize the lens of positive psychology to demonstrate how the inner resilience and strength of individuals impacted by human trafficking can be supported and cultivated by multidisciplinary individuals and systems that interact with each survivor, fostering greater external and internal stability. Opportunities to facilitate resilience and posttraumatic growth are described as key factors in helping those who have experienced trafficking to move beyond victimization into a place of surviving and then thriving, by accomplishing individualized goals and nurturing a desired future identity.

Finally, in line with the social-ecological model introduced in the first chapter, this volume's final chapter, by Jessica Wozniak and Deidre Hussey, features a multidisciplinary approach to supporting and treating survivors of human trafficking. As members of a multidisciplinary team, psychologists can help improve methods for identifying trafficking survivors and can promote the development and utilization of evidence-based services and programs for human trafficking survivors through practice, consultation, training and education, research and program evaluation, and policy and prevention promotion.

The primary goal of this book is to use a variety of applied psychological frameworks—including developmental, social, industrial and organizational, clinical, and positive psychology, as well as multidisciplinary approaches—to better understand human trafficking and its impacts, guiding strategies for change. It is intended to be a resource not only for psychologists, social workers, and mental health clinicians but also for a broader audience of practitioners, researchers, administrators, and advocates to enrich psychological perspectives on human trafficking, enhancing trauma-informed multidisciplinary responses to human trafficking and those who are impacted.

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