

Invisible Victims: American Indian Women and Adolescent Involvement in the Domestic Sex Trade [Abstract]

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This article addresses constructions of victimhood and the invisibility of American Indian women and adolescents in the sex trade. Although sex trafficking as social problem has generated a great deal of media and policy attention on both nationally and internationally, much of this response highlights the sex-trafficking of female adolescents abroad. The media's skewed international portrayal of this issue ignores the saliency of the problem, especially considering that in the United States, 83 percent of the sex-trafficking incidents in 2008–2010 involved victims who are US citizens. Moreover, the United States has failed to recognize the disproportionate increase in the sex trafficking of American Indian women and adolescents; reservation communities in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and Minnesota have reported higher rates of American Indian women and adolescents being recruited into the sex trade. Focusing on how historical context, social context, and social institutions are instrumental in framing narratives of victimhood, this article employs theories from both criminology and victimology in order to effectively deconstruct the factors that continue to determine victimhood.

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