

The Journey of Recovering from Gender-Based Violence: *The Ecstasy of Triumph and the Agony of Defeat*

Anonymous January 4, 2011 - Norway

This chapter examines the plight of a survivor of gender-based violence (GBV) and the circumstances of women and children of the Asia Pacific region affected by the presence of the military. "A," is an Asian American woman who had been subjected to gender-based violence as a young child in Okinawa in the early 1970's by a Caucasian middle-aged male during the height of the Vietnam War. She writes of her experience in overcoming significant challenges in her life caused by childhood violence. She describes her institutionalization and pathway to recovery, and her tragic vulnerability to further gender-based violence years later briefly under prostitution. She finally lands in her current role as an advocate and consultant to help other women toward empowerment and to steer decision-making bodies on relevant U.N. resolutions.

Today "A" works as an advocate and adviser, to raise international awareness of the devastating consequences of military gender-based violence. She aims to focus especially on Far East Asia so that such atrocities will no longer be repeated and amelioration will be possible for the survivors of ethnic minority groups through tools such as United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, 1820 and CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women). "A" reflects on the challenges of bringing her identity into the open despite substantial personal risks and compromises. "A"'s account describes the issues of the human need for intimacy, the transformative powers of spiritual love or agape, personal systems to recovery, and background information on gender-based violence including militarized prostitution. "A" wishes that all survivors' endeavors will contribute toward knowledge banks for state-level decision makers, military personnel, health professionals and for the public. Last but not least, she hopes that this chapter can encourage others toward survival and triumphing over violence.

The Story of "A"

Since the moment I had decided to come out and tell my story of gender-based violence (GBV) as a child, my intention was to help provide a voice and heal the wounds of the women and children who survived GBV in Far East Asia and other regions of the world. I wanted to stand as a voice for these women because I felt society lacked advocacy. Like many oppressed groups in the world, I feel that many Far Eastern women are still conditioned to be subservient to the opposite sex. Many believe that their main mission in life is to be considered eligible and attractive for their future husbands and partners. I wished to expose gender-based violence through grass-roots level engagement, and create awareness of the problem by approaching government and military representatives. My goals are to initiate pro-active and positive resolutions concerning these issues, to empower survivors, and to prevent such traumas from happening again by steering public policies and legislation at high levels.

I am deeply disappointed with some of the military decision-making bodies globally because of their lack of proper accountability and acknowledgement in a gross number of cases concerning gender based violence. Suzuyo Takazato and her colleagues in Okinawa conducted a report of postwar U.S. military crimes against women in Okinawa from 1945 to 1997, and

presented it at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.¹ The report included a list of cases of gender-based crimes committed by the U.S. military in Japan over the years, including the rape of a 12-year-old school girl by three U.S. servicemen in 1995. This specific case caused a huge public outcry in Okinawa and initiated changes in prosecuting military crimes.

Takazato and other compassionate Okinawan activists and scholars have drawn on the works of Dr. Margo Okazawa-Rey² and Dr. Chalmers Johnson,³ both experts on the Status of Force Agreement (SOFA). These scholars have shown much concern about the plight of women and children in Far East Asia who do not have a voice. These individuals and countless other professionals were great sources of inspiration for me to carry out my activities, such as writing this story despite significant counter pressures from various parties.

Although things in Okinawa have improved since 1995, I feel there is substantial room for improvement in the cases of hundreds of thousands woman and children in Far East Asia who survived GBV. Other territories globally such as East Africa have also suffered from the impact of violence, including those from militarized prostitution. In 2004, Kai Eide of Norway, then leader of NATO, and Permanent Representative of the U.S., Ambassador Nicholas Burns, publicly announced a "Zero Tolerance" mandate and mobilization against prostitution and sexual trafficking for all of their members.⁴ The U.S. commander, General Leon LaPorte, who led about 33,000 U.S. military personnel and 5,000 U.S. civilians in the Republic of Korea, publicized a "Zero Tolerance" mandate after the broadcast of a disturbing documentary by Fox News. This film exposed the broad spectrum of sexual activities available in South Korea near Camp Casey that catered to U.S. military men.⁵

Many of the women's rights researchers and activists against military gender-based violence, such as Dorothy Mackey of STAAAMP (Survivors Take Action Against Abuse by Military Personnel), are still not convinced of the efficacy of these public mandates to deliver justice. Mackey informed me that her caseload had not decreased. Over 4,300 women have contacted her about being raped or assaulted while in service; and in the vast majority of cases, the perpetrators escaped punitive action while the survivors were left humiliated and threatened for speaking out about the attacks.⁶

¹ Takazato, Suzuyo, Miyagi, Harumi, Fancis, Carolyn and Oshiro, Nana, "Post-War U.S. Military Crimes Against Women in Okinawa," 1998. Takazato has worked and written about Okinawan women's plight under prostitution and was Municipal Councilor of Naha.

² Dr. Okazawa Rey has worked on themes of U.S. militarism and sexual violence against women. She is co-founder and member of the East Asia-US-Puerto Rico Women's Network against Militarism. <http://www.fielding.edu/hod/faculty/okazawa-rey.htm>

³ Johnson, Chalmers, "Three Rapes: The Status of Forces Agreement and Okinawa , JPRI Working Paper No. 97, January 2004, Japan Policy Research Institute, California, USA. <http://www.jpri.org/publications/workingpapers/wp97.html>. (Chalmers is president and co-founder of the Japan Policy Research Institute, an organization promoting public education about Japan and Asia.)

⁴ Likestillingsombud, Likestillings-og diskrimineringsombud, "Stat og Styling," Likestillingsbarometeret, 2004. page 11. Also see NATO speech <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040708a.htm>

⁵ Fox News documentary in 2002 focused on alleged prostitution in South Korea for U.S. military personnel - web citations <http://english.yna.co.kr/Engnews/20050131/301900000020050131090556E6.html> and also <http://www.humantrafficking.com/humantrafficking/client/view.aspx?ResourceID=3695>; General Leon LaPorte's statement can be found on <http://usinfo.state.gov/gi/Archive/2004/Sep/24-624561.html>

⁶ Mackey, Dorothy, STAAAMP, paper, <http://www.womenagainstrape.net/Latest%20News/MackeyPaper.htm> Also see <http://www.peaceworkmagazine.org/pwork/0405/040506.htm> for views regarding whitewashing.

Without the sincere support and engagement by the military, “Zero Tolerance” mandates may become no more than paper-tigers that could fall by the wayside to deaf ears and closed hearts. After a meeting with Lieutenant Colonel Houdijk of the Civil-Military Co-operation Center of Excellence in Netherlands and Gender Adviser Marian Feddema back in 2006, I was very pleased that their department was facilitating seminars addressing GBV in conflict zones worldwide and the role the military ought to take.⁷ Their impassioned concern about the fate of survivors of such tragedies is highly commendable. I hope other military forces around the world, including those of U.S.A., would observe these standards of integrity and openness and implement them in their programs.

Many survivors, including myself, hope the “Zero Tolerance” mandates and resolutions such as United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820⁸ would lead to efficient adjudication of GBV to augment the International Criminal Court and other national and international judicial institutions. We hope that CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)⁹ could be re-vitalized to help catalyze aspects of UNSCR 1325 and 1820. Furthermore, the U.N. Security Council’s unanimous decision on December 17, 2010 to name and shame individuals and parties to armed conflict that are “credibly suspected” of committing rape or other forms of sexual violence is a welcome move. One can only hope that further initiatives can be taken to warn perpetrators of the consequences of GBV.¹⁰

Okinawa.

It was during winter in early 1970’s, about two years after Okinawa’s reversion to Japanese rule from U.S. occupation, that a Caucasian man stopped me outside of a bookstore near the U.S. Kadena Air Base. He looked American, in his late 40’s or 50’s, and was wearing civilian clothes. Although I could not clearly identify him as military personnel, it was likely because most of the Western foreigners in Okinawa were U.S. servicemen preparing for the Vietnam War. I had very little experience in dealing with the opposite sex, due to my father’s hostility toward boys who attempted to approach me for friendship as a young girl to ‘protect’ me; I remember him being angry most of the time. I felt hypnotized by this strange Caucasian man at the bookstore that fatal day, and took a ride in his car.

Without going through very painful details, I can say that this perpetrator carried on with most sexual activities, including oral sex on me, with the exception of full vaginal intercourse. He also told me openly, and without remorse, about his sexual relations with his own daughter

⁷ Met with CIMIC in Netherlands in April, 2006 for conference, “Gender and Civil Military Relations; Moving towards Inclusion?”

⁸ PeaceWomen descriptions of UNSCR1325 and 1820
http://www.peacewomen.org/themes_theme.php?id=15&subtheme=true,
http://www.peacewomen.org/themes_theme.php?id=16&subtheme=true

⁹ PeaceWomen description of CEDAW and UNSCR1325
http://www.peacewomen.org/portal_initiative_initiative.php?id=389

¹⁰ According to PeaceWomen, http://www.peacewomen.org/news_article.php?id=2661&type=news. The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously on Dec. 17, 2010 to name and shame individuals and parties to armed conflict that are “credibly suspected” of committing rape or other forms of sexual violence. The council said it intends to use the list, to be compiled by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, “for more focused United Nations engagement with those parties,” including imposing targeted sanctions.

and other young girls. I was in shock and paralyzed by fear. I could not and did not fight back because of shock, and completely disengaged myself physically. I felt that I had left my body during the assaults. There was no education about gender-based violence and pedophilia at the schools I attended, whether military sponsored or Christian-based. I recall no attempts to alert or educate children and parents about what to do in cases of assault.

The sexual assaults continued for several days, as the perpetrator drove me off to some remote areas in Okinawa. In the mornings, he would wait for me to come out of my house en route to school. My anguish finally ended the day my family left Okinawa due to the cessation of lucrative army contracts for my father as the Vietnam War ended. On our last encounter, the perpetrator paid me \$5.00 after days of sexual assault following me out of my home. I was traumatized, felt putrid and denigrated. I realize now that this man had wickedly and unfairly subjugated me to prostitution at age twelve.

I desperately wanted to relieve myself of this 'sordid' money and, in great sadness and bewilderment I was determined to transform it into something beautiful. I therefore decided to buy my mother an expensive beauty cream from the PX as a present. The sales woman did not know how I obtained the funds to buy this cream, but she was charmed and impressed by my gesture to buy my mother a gift that would make her feel beautiful. My mother was very happy to have received this gift. She does not know to this day, the circumstances under which this present was purchased. Later in life, I vowed that my life task would include securing the means and funds to assist women and children who had been in my situation in order to show them what sacred and divine feminine beauty really is.

I felt fetid, dirty and vehemently violated immediately after the incident. I would wash my hands endlessly, over and over at school and at home. It was not until college, nearly eight years later, that I told my parents about the incident. I was deeply disappointed with their response which was to "forget about such things and think about something more positive". They strongly discouraged me from speaking out about my experience. I found it odd that my father, who vehemently opposed sex or anything of bodily nature, did nothing to help me through this or to investigate the perpetrator. My parents did not contact the police or school authorities; not for my sake, or even for the sake of other children who could have been assaulted by the same perpetrator. I suppressed all anguish, fear and remorse for decades before my major psychotic breakdown from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Some decades after the childhood sexual assault, I decided to consult with therapists to explore the dynamics between my father and I, which could have made me especially vulnerable to predatory adult figures. I hope parents will realize that by not letting their children talk about sexual violence or seek proper medical treatment they are contributing toward denial and neglect. I believe early professional and competent intervention is crucial for the child to create a healing bond with their parents. For me, it was too late; a proper intervention did not take place, and years later, I was temporarily hospitalized.

Adulthood.

I had graduated from my undergraduate university studies in the top five percent and acquired a Master of Business Administration degree in marketing in the United States. I later worked abroad as a consultant in the pharmaceutical industry in Europe and was quite

accomplished in dance, painting and photography, with works displayed in galleries. However, after a series of unhappy relationships that triggered profound depression, I suffered a psychotic breakdown which led me to temporary hospitalization in the U.S.A.. I unfortunately lost the ability to read during this time as a consequence of severe PTSD. I could not hold my concentration long enough to comprehend complex information, nor sustain enough physical stamina for routine daily activities. This meant that my career and ordinary life would be put on hold until I could resume normal activities.

I continuously suffered from suicidal urges, panic attacks, and grief, which resembled a drowning sensation. I was prescribed an assortment of medication, including lithium, Depacote, Klonopin, and others. These medications did not provide me with any recognizable relief from my suffering; I experienced depression, excruciating, immobilizing pain, and side effects from the medication caused intolerable numbness of the entire left side of my body. I received very little humane contact and supportive counseling or dialogue. Perhaps I was not eligible for quality health care through the Social Security system in the USA. The lack of quality treatment for victims of childhood sexual abuse was significant to those on public assistance.

My parents insisted that I return to their hometown to recover, which I did unwillingly, knowing about their religious beliefs. Their faith-based philosophies placed emphasis on prayer for recovery, as opposed to finding urgent professional care and quality counseling. Their efforts were not at all conducive to my recovery. I fled abruptly to preserve what I felt was left of my identity and sanity. I wished proper medical intervention could have convinced them about my critical need for professional help even on marginalized societal levels.

The economic consequences of being institutionalized in the U.S. were very trying. I was hospitalized temporarily in a ward and desperately needed financial support when I came out. Disability services in the U.S. system appallingly lacked coverage for basic needs such as medical supplies, clothing, and rent. To alleviate some of the pressure, I resorted to working as a shop assistant for \$5.00 per hour; but this did not go far. I was still in a desperate emotional state and physically disabled, but could not afford quality counseling.

Then I found work as a nude model for artists for \$10 an hour, and worked afterward as an exotic dancer, although it was emotionally and psychologically intolerable. I ultimately landed on the streets under prostitution, in a bewildering attempt to find “reality” and/or work. Sadly, I was still highly agitated because I could not read and suffered from severe PTSD. I seemed to have fit some research patterns where child-hood gender-based violence had led to adult prostitution.¹¹

The health-care scheme and general social care system in the U.S. failed to intervene and help me recover humanely from gender-based violence. It also failed to assist me in finding financial sustainability. And I felt that my own parents, whom I looked up to as a child, failed to show or provide critical care and understanding when they were most needed. Perhaps this was caused by their ignorance and fears about sexual violence, and their cultural background that provided very little education on this subject.

¹¹ Example of discussion, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4144/is_200406/ai_n9446520, <http://www.sasian.org/pdf/adsurcxa.pdf> by Health Canada and another one from Norway, www.childcentre.info/research/summarymossige.doc.

Aftermath and Survival.

Recalling the period that I had spent on the streets is insufferable due to its confoundingly retraumatizing effect. Time has passed, and I feel I am no longer the same person that had been subjugated to such malaise. I see the past as a vacant and dead shell, never to rise again, similar to the discarded skin of a snake. I refuse to identify or to align myself with that person, who was subjugated to so much violence and sadness.

My intention is not to judge the people who had decided to pay me for my sexual labor as good or evil. I cannot evaluate whether the men who used me for their own sexual gratification are evil without knowing their own potential history of abuse. However, I can say my childhood abuser, who regularly abused his daughter, myself and other young girls, and remunerated me as a 12-year old with \$5.00, was evil and should have been prosecuted. But it is very unlikely that he was.

It is inhumane for those who take part in prostitution to expect pleasure from women and girls who experienced gross child sexual abuse, and neglect by parents, medical professionals and by society in general. Do those who purchase sex believe that further subjugation of these women and children would bring about pleasure or enjoyment from them? Can it be conscionable that people can buy and enjoy sex from tortured individuals or those in grief? What can possibly constitute *pleasure* to a human being who sexually assaults another person undergoing emotional trauma? It is akin to taking pleasure in listening to a chorus formed by dying concentration camp detainees, forced to sing songs glorifying their captors, or subjugating a group of amputees in a prison-camp to perform a dance for their torturers who systematically de-limbed them.

In Search of Healing.

The search to heal myself led me to my current activities in helping others through their ordeals. I have begun planning through segments of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820, rehabilitation and reintegration programs for trafficked women that would encourage holistic approaches centered on dignity, self-sufficiency, and empowerment.¹² I have contributed toward projects on exit strategies from trafficking, in both conflict and peace zones, and on those concerning Article 19 freedom of expression¹³ to support women's rights. I expect to continue to create empowerment programs that help women actively reintegrate into society via work in gender-equal, non-sex industry careers and educational paths.

¹² I drafted a plan, via assistance from colleagues for rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors of prostitution/trafficking entitled, "Mission and Objectives for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Ex-Trafficked, Ex-Prostituted Women - Proposed Idea for a Day Seminar" during early 2007 in Oslo.

¹³ **Article 19 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights:** everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

One of the greatest challenges lies in creating a paradigm shift in the minds and hearts of the public and individuals in the ministries of labor and in corporate sectors globally, who falsely believe that survivors of gender-based violence cannot succeed in non-sex industry careers. I aim to approach legislative bodies to steer them toward implementing effective de-stigmatization programs centered on human dignity.

In the early 1990's, I felt that I was not given the right type of healing support from my own family or from medico-social professionals in the U.S.A.. I could not tolerate the debilitating side effects of the medication I was prescribed and decided to stop all drugs. I made it a mission to dialog with various agencies to explore less painful, holistic, and more sustainable ways to recover. As a strong supporter of visual arts and dance, I looked into both traditional trauma management methods and more creative ones, including psychotherapy, meditation, art and music therapy as options. In hindsight, I realize that many of the therapists I sought to seek relief from in the past were not deeply versed in trauma management for gender-based violence.

Orthodox medical practitioners and professionals should embrace survivors' individual expressions in recovering processes.¹⁴ I found great compassion and nurturing from my advocacy work and interacting with fellow survivors who had experienced trauma and stigmatization. I urge medico-social professionals in the field not to judge individual as 'bad patients' and non-compliant if he/she chooses unorthodox methods and approaches to healing.

Currently, I am speaking with media and international NGOs in the hopes of creating effective programs and campaigns against stigmatization under the umbrella of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and allied ones, which could contain similar strategies as those in HIV and AIDS programs. In Norway and other countries, various government offices are starting to look into the impact of stigmatization of women in conflict affected areas who had gone through GBV, but there is still far more work required to achieve real non-marginalization.¹⁵ We also need to consider specific needs of diaspora women who ultimately wish to return to their home countries, and the complex challenges they face such as security risks, economic sustenance problems, and barriers against political inclusion.

Lack of programs to help individuals who had gone through GBV in conflict-affected areas can present barriers against successful reintegration and peace-building in their communities. Much work is required to combat purchased sex for instance, which is often driven by armed conflict-instigated impoverishment. In Norway, efforts have been made to study dynamics behind purchased sex, in both civilian and military contexts. Norway began to criminalize the purchase of sex last year in 2009, following Swedish referendums. The United Kingdom has also considered Scandinavian laws regarding prostitution. It is relevant to analyze laws on prostitution in developed countries, as the demand-side for purchased sex mostly lies in these regions, where as the supply-side is often from war-torn areas of the world made vulnerable through debilitating impoverishment.

¹⁴ Part of my research includes discussions on 'patient-therapist' relationships that may be obstructive to healing. I have had informal dialogues and interviews with former hospitalized women who have spoken about concerns on the power relationship with their doctors and therapists.

¹⁵ Agencies like ROSA in Norway are trying to achieve positive results via rehabilitation for trafficked women. I have had some discussions with the Ligestillingsombud in Oslo as well. However, the legal and practical issues to help these women are still a developing area for many, especially in fights against redescription.

My conversations with various therapists, including those from the Support Center Against Incest in Oslo, seem to indicate importantly that a significant percentage of the perpetrators of gender-based violence have themselves been abused during childhood.¹⁷ Perhaps some thought-provoking and inspirational campaigns on GBV, the realities of prostitution/trafficking, pedophilia, and surviving as child-soldiers can contribute toward sustainable rebuilding of war-affected areas. Such analysis could add to the National Action Plans of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 globally.

Post Healing – Reflections on Love and Agape.

I was asked recently if I still believed in passion. I believe quite strongly in love and in its great transformative powers. Many people tragically assume that survivors of GBV have lost faith in love or are not capable of giving and receiving tremendous amounts of passion. I believe that these are unfortunate and false biases that the general public may hold about marginalized people, physically or emotionally. I believe strongly in the magical and divinely transformative powers of agape, including its ability to heal society from GBV.

A police officer working on trafficking cases in the United Kingdom once asked about my perspectives on intimacy and trust. I feel that the divine and sacred aspects of passion and agape define who I am, my work, and my relationship to the opposite sex. My work and personal identity are defined by surmounting violence as a child and as an adult, and witnessing other survivors' triumphs and failures. I find that my views of love and passion are in significant contrast to those who believe they could attain happiness and empowerment by gaining financially from selling sex. I feel that agape is beyond financial remuneration; and its transformative abilities are powerful gifts that could heal individuals or groups from their traumas at soul level. I believe that true compassion *is* divine and transcending.

Being an Invisible Witness and the Risks of "Coming Out" in Society.

The risks and consequences of "coming out" as a survivor/witness to prostitution and trafficking are numerous. They include: stigmatization and ostracization from colleagues, relatives or spouses, draconian exclusion from employment, threats of physical violence and harassment by those opposed to negative testimonials against the sex industry, and by unsympathetic individuals in the community. Feminized financial re-marginalization occurs often in those who are able to exit prostitution/trafficking. Survivors even in Europe have been known to hire bodyguards for protection. Forced abandonment by husbands and relatives due to external pressures from other members of the family is a reality for many women, especially in traditional settings.¹⁸ The offspring of prostituted/trafficked women are at risk for serious stigmatization by unsympathetic peers at schools.

I realize that there are various political opinions regarding prostitution, but I personally feel that my experiences with childhood and adult gender-based violence were violent acts

¹⁷ Library research at SMI – Stottesenter mot Incest in Oslo, 2006. Also study on <http://bjp.rcpsych.org/cgi/content/full/179/6/482> and <http://bjp.rcpsych.org/cgi/content/full/179/6/495>. published in "The British Journal of Psychiatry" (2001) 179: 482-494.

¹⁸ Interviews during 2006 and 2007 with Odile Poulsen, survivor of trafficking and prostitution in Denmark and with other women survivors.

against my humanity and my person. It grieves me to bear the memories even today. I feel that the collective suffering of women who have shared similar experiences may be devalued by sharing stories indiscriminately with the wider public, including pro-prostitution supporters who may not understand the history of abuse that many women have endured.

Supporters for prostitution may seem less reluctant to be publicly identifiable, and at times are backed by various industries and political factions. Meanwhile, those who have experienced gender-based violence in their past may find it difficult to be publicly visible. I am one of the more invisible witnesses and survivors, and find it difficult to surmise how democracy works when only *visible witnesses* are being heard and taken into account by legislators. One can assume that the hardship of survivors without voices can be multiplied manifold in war-affected, traditionally patriarchal countries hostile to women's rights.

Ironically, I seldom hear about efforts to regulate the purchasers of sex in countries that wish to somehow monitor prostitution. Many who are opposed to the criminalization of prostitution talk about regulating the sex industry to make it safer. However, if society deems that the selling and purchase of sex are substantial risks, it would only seem natural and necessary to regulate *both* the users and providers of purchased sex. The burden of regulation such as the need for identification and background information lies mainly on sellers of sexual acts, which are mostly women - while their users most often remain anonymous. Patrons of purchased sex – mostly men - are rarely held accountable or monitored to ensure the well-being of women.

To illustrate my point, consumers of prescription pharmaceuticals, alcohol, weapons, and other risky substances are often monitored and regulated for public protection. It seems only natural to promote regulation or monitoring of those who purchase sex, unless law makers themselves are adverse to such identification. This may be the case if those purchasing sex hold decision making posts in society. Aid in the forms of financial support and protection for survivors of GBV, including prostitution and trafficking, should be provided if they choose to publicly "come out" to testify. Feminized impoverishment and re-marginalization are realities for many ex-prostituted and trafficked women¹⁹, and can lead to failure of ending sexual enslavement unless there is holistic collaboration amongst governments and decision makers.

The Military and Prostitution.

Following World War II, the military presence created a generation of women subjected to prostitution throughout Far East Asia. Sandra Pollock and Brenda Stoltzfus's work, *Let the Good Times Roll, Prostitution and the US Military in Asia*, examine the collusion and sanctioning of the U.S. military and local entrepreneurs supporting the machinery of brothels, which mainly served the U.S. military throughout the Asia Pacific. From 1952 to early 1970's, during the Vietnam War, many of the restaurants, bars, and watering-holes in Okinawa were given "A" signs by the Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board. These signs denoted appropriate establishments for the GI's. In many such places, the GI's could meet their potential pick of women.²⁰ This sign system stopped in 1972, when Okinawa was given back to Japan.

¹⁹ Discussions with European Women's Lobby, Brussels, 2006.

²⁰ Pollock, Sandra and Stoltzfus, Brenda , *Let the Good Times Roll, Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia*, New York Press, 1992, page 250.

The Pan-Pan Girls of Japan, who served the U.S. armed forces occupying the country after WWII, exemplify the Japanese government and military complicity in recruiting local women to service their American conquerors.²¹ The dispensability of women and misogynistic attitudes were practiced by the military and further exemplified by the estimated 200,000 Korean and Japanese Comfort Women, who were recruited to serve the Japanese Imperial Army.²²

Military presence often meant that prostitution significantly supported local economies, although it came with its repercussions such as disease, rapes, raids, unwanted pregnancies, and abandoned women and orphans. Various researchers have studied the case, estimating that at the end of the Vietnam War around 300,000 South Vietnamese women were prostituted. During the height of US military presence, estimates showed that the total number of Filipina women and girls engaged in sex-based industries ranged from between 300,000 and 600,000. It is also estimated that more than 60,000 women and children were employed in bars, nightclubs, and massage parlours around the Subic Bay and Clark Naval bases alone.²³ Employer regulation of the women meant that there would always be a steady supply available for their customers. Even North Korea, known for its highly unstable political situation and disproportionately high investment in the military, has an alarming percentage (75%+) of women refugees becoming sexual slaves to traffickers in Far East Asia including China.²⁴ Militarized prostitution has evolved into a modern tourist industry that attracts foreign investments globally, especially from peace zones.

The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), a congressional code of military criminal law applicable to all U.S. military members worldwide, reflects some of the problems of its members taking part in prostitution. The establishment of a U.S. zero-tolerance policy for prostitution was established during October 2005. When then U.S. President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13387, he amended the Manual for Courts-Martial to specifically address “patronizing a prostitute” as a violation of Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Currently, U.S. military personnel would have committed an offense if they have “compelled, induced, enticed, or procured [a] person to engage in an act of sexual intercourse in exchange for monetary or other compensation.”²⁵ But how successful is the enforcement of this

²¹ Some photographs can be seen on the site http://library.osu.edu/sites/rarebooks/japan/2_4_photos.html which were taken by anthropologist John W. Bennett in occupied Japan, 1948-1951. Some were made in the 1960's during his term at Waseda University with comments on the photos by him.

²² Conference proceedings, Columbia University, Kovner, Sarah, (organizer), Moon, Katherine, (chair) Wellesley College, “Briefing from Association of Asian Studies – March, 2003 Session 31: Conquerors and Concubines: The U.S. Military in Japan, 1945–1953”, Association of Asian Studies, Michigan – Japan Session, March 27-30, 2003, <http://www.aasianst.org/absts/2003abst/Japan/sessions.htm#31>; and estimation on figures by Yoshiaki Yoshimi on Sturdevant, Stotzfus, op cit, page 253. (Finally, additional info on http://www.religioustolerance.org/sla_japa.htm and <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Japan/IC30Dh01.html>, <http://online.sfsu.edu/~soh/cw-links.htm>)

²³ Figures compiled by Sian Jones (now at Amnesty) “Command and control: the economies of militarized prostitution”, *Peace News*, 2442, March-May, 2001. <http://www.peacenews.info/issues/2442/244224.html>. (She refers to Cynthia Enloe’s book, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women’s Lives*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2000.) Jones stated as per our conversation that the figures could be sourced to Enloe.

²⁴ Conversation with Tim Peters, director/founder of ‘Ton a Month Club’ supporting refugees of North Korea, Oslo, 2006. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, *Lives for Sale, Personal Accounts of Women Fleeing North Korea into China*, Washington.D.C., 2009.

²⁵ <http://www.okinawa.usmc.mil/public%20affairs%20info/archive%20news%20pages/2006/060202-hiring.html> and www.beverlylahaveinstitute.org/articledisplay.asp? discusses proposed changes in UCMJ regarding prostitution. Also see http://www.equalitynow.org/english/actions/action_2302_en.html

mandate in various parts of the world that hosts U.S. army personnel, or are subject to its occupation?

The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), an agreement arranged between the U.S.A. and governments that host their foreign military bases, is not always updated to enforce the “Zero Tolerance” initiative on sex trafficking and prostitution. Some critics believe the Rest and Relaxation Agreements established between the U.S. and the Japanese, Philippine, and South Korean governments sanctioned militarised prostitution.²⁶ Jean Enriquez, of the Coalition Against Trafficking of Women in Asia Pacific, believes the existing format of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) sustains demand for prostitution.²⁷ This chapter will not explore the issues and challenges of such mandates in detail, but such a study is necessary to enable a paradigm shift to reduce gender-based violence crimes against women and children in territories with significant military presence.

Creating Justice?

It is virtually impossible to accept military personnel as protectors when they manifest themselves to be perpetrators of gender-based violence. Globally, the military should look more candidly into its own history of gender-based violence and its prosecution records to increase integrity, respect, and honor for women. Many fear that the U.S.A.’s conscious exclusion from the International Criminal Court (I.C.C.) at the Hague make effective prosecution of gender-based violence crimes arduous. The U.S. A. SOFA agreements guarantee exclusive criminal jurisdiction for U.S. service members in host countries.²⁸ This exclusivity may provide leeway for its members to avoid prosecution for crimes committed abroad.

Chalmers Johnson argues that the power and presence of U.S. military bases worldwide is growing. He described future plans that may include consolidation of bases in Iraq into four to six permanent mega bases. Considering the significance and power of such bases (over 700 are said to exist internationally²⁹), educational efforts about gender equality and respect for women could thwart larger catastrophes from occurring, as in the rape and murder of a young Iraqi woman and her family in 2007 by several U.S. soldiers, resulting in a 110-year sentencing of one of the perpetrators.³⁰

One way to look at the problems in adjudicating military gender-based is to compare and contrast civilian versus military laws that govern such violence, including human trafficking, country by country. The national laws can be compared to international guidelines in the Palermo Protocol³¹ and to other international anti-trafficking human rights laws that countries have signed. Laws against GBV have been referenced by NATO, the International Criminal

²⁶ Jones, Sian, op cit.

²⁷ Enriquez, Jean, *Coalition Against Trafficking of Women*, Enriquez, Jean, “Filipinas in Prostitution around U.S. Military Bases in Korea, A Recurring Nightmare”, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women – Asia Pacific. http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=16941&AA_EX_Session=b7a056d363b9a80572bce9c54c933d64

²⁸ Conversation with PRIO Peace Research Center of Oslo, Norway, 2007.

²⁹ Johnson, Chalmers, “America’s Empire of Bases”, Common Dreams.Org News center, January 15, 2004, <http://www.commondreams.org/views04/0115-08.htm>

³⁰ BBC’s coverage http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6930845.stm

³¹ The Coalition Against Trafficking of Women and Ilvi Joe-Cannon have written background information on the Palermo Protocol on “Primer on the Male Demand for Prostitution”, CATW, 2006, pages 4-5.

Court and the United Nations including via UNSCR 1325, 1820. Legal inconsistencies and hegemonies must be addressed to erase all biases and impunity against observing laws, including evaluation of SOFA and UCMJ rules established by the U.S.A.. UNSCR 1325 and 1820 could require reporting and obligatory compliancy amongst all state members, which is beyond what is currently required.

The heavy burden of proving GBV still lies universally on survivors who often fear that their cases have little chance of being heard in courts. Language difficulties, lack of familiarity with legal procedures, general intimidation tactics, stigmatization, and humiliation all act as barriers against reporting crimes. The patriarchal nature of the military and of war can create difficulties for journalists reporting in-depth on rape, prostitution and sex trafficking in conflict zones. The issues surrounding violence against women may not be prioritized due to journalists' and media agencies' political, cultural and strategic directions or biases; they may indirectly support religious, political and military parties' objections to such investigations. The press should be morally obliged to provide critical information to support witnesses and survivors who seek justice in courts.

The process of seeking justice for extraordinarily evil crimes requires better victimology and penology review, and the active engagement of survivors' voices. This would enable focused sanctions through which perpetrators could be brought more effectively toward accountability³². The recent move by the UN Security of 'naming and shaming' perpetrators could be a positive one.

Educating the Public.

I have engaged in numerous discussions with photojournalists about the 'invisible' impact of war on women and children. Jenny Lo, curator at the Green Rice Gallery in California, revealed that many of the children and their mothers depicted in her photography exhibitions were survivors of human trafficking during the Vietnam War, which left devastating consequences for multiple generations.³³ Asian American children with Western fathers were often abandoned and experienced rampant stigmatization and discrimination. At worst, many of them resorted to begging and child prostitution whose impact can be seen to this day. Dr. Katherine Moon, expert on U.S. militarized prostitution and professor in the department of political science at Wellesley College, estimated that in 1992 approximately 50,000 Asian American children were abandoned by U.S. service men in the Philippines.³⁴

To the heads of states, war and defense ministries, and other decision-makers, 50,000 women may seem insignificant. These decision makers ought to be made ethically obliged to redress the tragic results that their wars have created, and install acute programs for survivors of GBV. Damages to the women's reproductive health systems, trafficking and prostitution as consequences of destitution, stigmatization, mental anguish and denigration extend generationally, and are all consequences that should be addressed. It would raise the

³² Drumbl, Mark, A., "Atrocity, Punishment, and International Law," Cambridge University Press, 2007, page 4. Drumbl discusses extreme evil and challenges on providing justice.

³³ Telephone conversation with Jenny Lo, Green Rice Gallery, San Jose, California, 2007.

³⁴ Moon, Katherine, "U.S. Military Prostitution in Asia", article from Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S./Korea Relations, Columbia University Press, 1997. <http://www.ciaonet.org/book/moon/Moon01.html>

consciousness of the general public and decision makers who abetted armed conflicts to observe their impact in larger, mainstream museums and galleries globally. These exhibits could be called the secondary or “invisible wounds” that war inflicts on women and children. The Red Cross of Norway, for instance, had supported such an exhibit entitled “Women and War” at the Maihaugen center in Lillehammer, which effectively illustrated the situation through photography.³⁵

Conclusion.

The degenerative conditions for women and children in conflict occur everywhere in the world, including Asia, Balkans, Africa and in the Middle East. This creates an environment rife for rape, sexual slavery, and other forms of GBV. I hope that this story can create some positive impact and enhance the life-quality for survivors. The women’s and children’s stories could set new golden-standards for professionals and state-level decision makers in reintegration programs that are meaningful for each individual. The International Criminal Court and other justice systems globally, should understand that the lack of recognition and prosecution of GBV are obstacles to healing that compound the grief and suffering of survivors and witnesses.

The burden and stigmatization of violence is still disproportionately borne by survivors and witnesses. This burden is often exacerbated by unfounded prejudices from society, ignorance, and gross lack of concern from the police, judges, the military and other decision makers globally. The parties that sanction the use of women, men and children as sexual objects often obstruct attempts at establishing justice for them. Laws and resolutions on GBV need to be enforced beyond paper-tiger status.

Genuine peace will not be attained unless the quality of life for women and children is enhanced in both war and peace zones, and not reserved only for those in developed, Western countries. The source countries for prostitution and trafficking are often those made vulnerable by war, whilst demand often comes from Westernized, or “advanced,” countries in peace zones. The sanctioning of purchased sex legitimizes the end product of GBV for women and children, and is anathema to genuine peace building.

My passion is to help heal women, children, and the witnesses of gender-based violence through ameliorative processes with all relevant sectors of society, and to remind the women of their divine beauty. I also wish to steer ‘blood monies’ used and amassed in conflict zones into programs that would return to women their inherent dignity, beauty, intelligence and power.

Gender-based violence is a weapon of mass destruction fueled by generations of grief and oppressed traumas. They will continue to fuel and perpetuate wars unless there is a paradigm shift for change in the hearts and minds of the survivors, witnesses, and perpetrators globally.

“Orare et Laborare” (prayer and work) to empower women have become my life passion.

³⁵ Catalogue of exhibit, Maihaugen, Red Cross, “Kvinner og Krig”, Norway, 2007.

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Selected Interviews and Discussants

Belgium

Petra Bender, Officer, Gender Balance and Diversity, NATO Headquarters;
 The European Parliament, various Members of Parliament focusing on women’s rights;
 European Women’s Lobby, various members of staff; Willy Fautre, Human Rights without Frontiers.

Denmark

Odile Poulsen, survivor and advocate against prostitution and human trafficking.

Finland

Elisabeth Rehn, expert and specialist on gender and human rights issues, former Minister of Defence of Finland, former UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights.

France

Janine di Giovanni, journalist and expert in conflict zone reportage; Ashley Woods, REAL Exhibition Development, and consultant to International Peace Bureau.

Germany

Dr. Norbert Vollertsen, advisor, author on Democratic People's Republic of Korea issues.

Korea

Tim Peters, "Ton A Month Club", Founder and director.

Japan

Christopher Bosquillon consultant; "Jane", survivor and advocate against rape and U.S. military sexual violence; Steven Leeper, Chairman of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation; Suzuyo Takazato, advocate on U.S. military sexual violence issues, Okinawa.

Netherlands

Lt. Colonel Houdijk, Major Feddema, Civil Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence.

Norway

AKSEPT-HIV center; Aurora Center; DIXI Ressurssenter; FOKUS Forum for Women and Development; Forum for Development and Environment; Forum Norway 1325; IKFF Internasjonal Kvinneliga for Fred og Frihet; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Likestillings-og diskrimineringsombud; Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies at Ullevål Hospital; The Norwegian Defence International Centre (NODEFIC); PRIO, Peace Research Institute; Red Cross Norway; Reform, resource centre for men; ROSA; SMI, Support Center Against Incest; University of Tromsø.

Switzerland

International Peace Bureau, Geneva.

United Kingdom

Richard Beeston, The Times Herald, diplomatic editor; Elisabeth Block, Tipping Point Film Fund; Christian Solidarity Worldwide; Dr. Peter Van Den Dungen, University of Bradford, Department of Peace Studies; Don Hinrichsen, Institute for War and Peace Reporting; Imperial War Museum, London; Houzan Mahmoud, Nadia Mahmood, OUWFI – Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq; Sarah Masters, International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA); North Korea Freedom Coalition, UK branch; Vaughan Smith, Marina Calland, The Frontline Club; Gavin Rees, Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma; Dr. Nidhi Trehan, University College of London; The Medical Foundation; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, London.

USA

Jenny Do, Green Rice Gallery, San Jose, California, Curator and artist; Pete Doktor, Honolulu, advocate on U.S. militarism and Okinawan studies; Dr. Kathy Ferguson, University of Hawaii, Director, Women's Studies Program, Manoa;

Dr. Chalmers Johnson, Professor Emeritus, University of California, San Diego, president and co-founder of the Japan Policy Research Institute

(Please also see this media reportage on U.S. military bases

http://dahr.org/multi_media/dahr_jamail_the_bases_are_loaded.php);

Dr. Beverly Kever, University of Hawaii, Professor, School of Communications,

Manoa; Dorothy Mackey, Founder of STAAAMP, Ohio, advocate on U.S. militarism issues;

Kristen McNutt, Ohio, advocate and researcher on U.S. militarism issues;

Dr. Margo Okazawa-Rey, Fielding Graduate University, California, professor and

scholar on gender and U.S. militarism issues, founder/member of East Asia-U.S. Women's Network Against Militarism; Dr. Glenn Paige, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, University of Hawaii and Board of Director for Center for Global Non-Violence, Honolulu, Hawaii; Dr. Stephen Soldz, Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, Director, Center for Research, Evaluation and Program Development; Suzanne Scholte, President, North Korea Freedom Coalition; Cora Weiss, past president International Peace Bureau, president Hague Appeal for Peace.