

Hit & Run: The impact of anti trafficking policy and practice on Sex Worker's Human Rights in Thailand, Sex Worker's Research on Anti trafficking in Thailand, Empower University Press, Thailand, 2012.

Hit and Run is a combination of expert testimonies from sex and entertainment workers and a critique of the current anti-trafficking policies in Thailand. In this report, researchers present a number of anti trafficking laws and a critical analysis of how anti trafficking policy and especially practice are detrimental to meaningful solutions to reducing exploitation of people working in the sex industry. The narrative it aims to advance is that women currently working in the entertainment industry are continually mislabeled as trafficking victims, and because of this, have their rights continually violated through the coercive use of raids, forced medical procedures, and detention all in the name of rescue and rehabilitation.

The report begins with a message that research was conducted by and with sex workers lending credibility to the viewpoints. These researchers first and foremost assert that the current entertainment industry as well as sex work associated with it in Thailand is largely a form of employment that is undertaken with agency and not the product of trafficking as sensationalized media would have the world believe. The women in this industry find the claims of trafficking grossly overestimated. The subsequent misuse of raids, detention, and rehabilitation allowed by anti trafficking laws do not solve issues of exploitation as they criminalize women instead of addressing the problems through labor courts.

In addition to powerful testimonies, researchers engage with the many clauses and sections of anti trafficking policies and highlight how those very laws have been manipulated and improperly practiced to the detriment of sex workers who are not in fact trafficked but in actuality exercising agency in sex work. Of particular importance to the authors are highlighting how laws have been misused to violate people's human rights in the name and agenda of abolishing prostitution. Anti-trafficking laws are used to give police authorities unconditional power to raid, coerce, and detain women.

A common experience that runs throughout the book is one where a club is raided, women are confused and scared, and then subsequently told that they are illegal, that they are underage, and that they are trafficked. Despite claiming otherwise, authorities detain them because they are believed to be underage, because they are witnesses to prostitution activity, or because they don't have proper identification. These women are considered 'rescued' and made to stay in shelters for months at a time unable to contact family and unable to earn any wages during their detention.

The book is divided into 6 chapters. The first provides an overview of migration to Thailand and the modern context of sex work in the entertainment industry. It is based primarily on sex worker testimony and descriptive statistics. Chapter 2 details the various national and international laws that impact migrant workers. It argues that these laws are increasingly punitive and reduce workers agency. Chapter 3 examines problems in the definition of trafficking and how this ambiguity has far reaching effects on the protections and penalties afforded to migrants. Chapter 4 elaborates on the technical aspects of specific anti trafficking policies. Chapter 5 is the heart of the report, extensively discussing about the gap between policies and practices. In short anti trafficking laws have been used to stigmatize sex work, and thus making it more vulnerable to exploitation, as well as violating numerous human rights of these migrant women. Chapter 6 concludes the report by calling to attention the violations incurred. Human rights treaties, Thai national laws, and international anti trafficking

standards have all been continuously violated in the name of abolishing sex work and reducing estimations of trafficking in Thailand.