

- Slide 1
 - Hello everyone, thank you for coming and listening to all of these wonderful presentations! I'm going to talk a bit about my thesis, which is titled: Bad Neighbor: Tracing U.S. Benevolent Governance, Neo-Colonialism, and Anti-Trafficking Initiatives in Latin America and the Latinx Diaspora. Super corny lolsssssss
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 - To begin, this is a quick roadmap to my presentation. I am going to speak a bit to my methodology, definitions of human trafficking as they pertain to this thesis. I will also speak to the Institutional, Ideological, and Interpersonal effects of human trafficking discourses through speaking about my empirical chapters which discuss race and rescue, and racialized policing. Finally I will end the presentation with thoughts moving forward.
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 - I thought this tweet perfectly encapsulates what has grounded my methodology. Just to say it out loud, *read tweet*
 - In ethnography, and much of the literature I read, there is a focus on the individual marginalized subject. In reflecting on my privileges and through looking at the work of critical trafficking scholars, I decided I did not want my thesis to be focused on the trafficked Latina migrant as my subject of examination. I felt as though it would reproduce uneven power dynamics.
 - Instead, I decided to pursue my thesis with the framework of “researching up” - that is to say, I wanted to research the institutions at the helm of dominant trafficking policy and ideology.
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 - My ethnography begins with my internship at Polaris Project, an anti-trafficking organization which I will speak to in a later slide
 - I worked for their Sex Trafficking from Latin America initiative, however due to a confidentiality agreement I signed, most of my research is primarily made up of external documents produced by Polaris, such as their reports and publications. And interviews and statements put out by their CEO, Bradley Myles
 - In addition to my internship at Polaris, I attended two events centered around sex trafficking. One was a human trafficking training on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Sex Trafficking held by Day One and the Smithfield Rhode Island Police Department
 - While the other was held in Flushing, New York by the Flushing Quaker Friends and Flushing Interfaith Council which was a discussion on ending human trafficking which invited sex workers and social services providers to speak.

- And as I stated previously most of my thesis critically examined institutions, such as anti-trafficking NGOS, and the popular carceral and punitive ideology they impose
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 - So you might be wondering exactly what is “sex trafficking”. Well, while there is the standard definition placed forth by the UN Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, which is on this slide.
 - However, definitions of human trafficking are as unreliable as the statistics. In the context of migration from Latin America into the United States which is defined through the transportation, transport, harboring or receipt of persons, definitions of trafficking become murky in order to fit dominant trafficking ideology.
 - To quote Wendy Chapkis, a scholar critical to my thesis, “In some accounts, all undocumented migrants assisted in their transit across national borders are counted as having been trafficked. In others, “trafficking” refers exclusively to victims of sexual slavery. In some instances, all migrant sexworkers are defined as trafficking victims regardless of consent and conditions of labor”.
 - So I argue that you can begin to see how these murky definitions of sex trafficking assist anti-trafficking NGOS in the formation of dominant trafficking ideology in migration, particularly in the context of female migration.
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 - Which comes to my next slide, which is about Polaris. To the left is Katherine Chon, the middle is Derek Ellerman and to the right is current CEO Bradley Myles.
 - Polaris was founded in 2002 by two Brown University students, Derek Ellerman and Katherine Chon. The most salient aspect of Polaris, is how they were founded on principle on the policing and surveillance of migrant sex worker bodies. Chon and Ellerman came up with the creating Polaris after conducting a raid on a South Korean massage parlor with other brown university students, an attempt to “rescue” the Asian women employed at the parlor, a fact that they have wiped clean from the organizations’ past. Polaris, for which they named for the North Star, which holds significance as the North Star helped Harriet Tubman guide slaves from the U.S. South northward along the Underground Railroad. Myles joined the organization a year after the founding and was promoted to CEO after Chon left the organization to pursue a career at the Department of Health and Human Services.
 - Just a sidenote: Myles is also the husband of Chon and I absolutely believe that he received the title of CEO due to his marital status with Chon.

- Polaris runs on a 10\$ million dollar profit and receives 2.5million \$ in funding from the government in order to run the National Human Trafficking Hotline and the BeFree texting service. - Philanthrocapitalism is a pillar in which dominant trafficking ideology is able to take shape - due to these millions of dollars of funding which fund initiatives and awareness campaigns, not actual social services organizations or shelters.
- In addition Polaris works intimately with the Department of Homeland Security, underwhich ICE is hosted.
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 - So while Bradley Myles might state a cute statement that the border wall is not a solution to human trafficking (read some parts of the slide). His colleagues and peers
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 - Promote and incite violent anti-immigrant rhetoric under the guise of combatting sex trafficking
 - The above quote is from Operation Underground Railroad CEO Timothy Ballard speaking at an ending human trafficking talk at the Trump White House, in which he states that the wall is absolutely necessary to stop sex trafficking due to some exaggerated tale hes spun from rescuing this kidnapped Central American girl.
 - Ballard was an analyst for ICE under the DHS. And the irony is not lost on me that this man chose to name his NGO Underground Railroad as he frees these Central American “sex slaves”, all the while supporting violent anti-immigrant rhetoric.
 - However this is not suprising. Anti-trafficking discourses are the avenue in which a coalition of actors: governments, border officials, NGOS are able to enact rhetoric of tightening borders and protecting national security under the guise of combatting trafficking.
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 - I wont spend a lot of time discussing my human trafficking training held by Day One and the Smithfield Police Department, as my next slide is much more salient and uplifting, however I want to leave you all with choice quotations I took down during the presentation. These quotations reflect greater thoughts represented by dominant trafficking ideology
 - In an Interaction between Smithfield Police Officer and a Sojourner House intern
 - “Obviously no one wants to do this work ” referring to sex Work
 - Police officer responds “Who in the world would want to do this work”

- And then the Day One director referring to the older Asian women who work at the massage parlors in RI: Massage parlor women do not think of themselves as trafficking victims, they tell law enforcement through interpreters that they don't consider themselves to be trafficked. However they do not know the situation that they are in, do not know that they are being trafficked and these are obviously scripted responses.
- So I will leave you with that

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- In discussing the ending human trafficking roundtable in Flushing, New York in which I had participated as an observer. I would like to highlight the work of Maya Morena, an undocumented Honduran sex worker
- What drives Maya to do her work is a desire to be free from the systems that have caused her violence, and her family who sheltered her and restricted her freedom due to fears of Maya's deportation. In a conversation with Maya, these systems - the government, anti-trafficking NGOs and the police state - do not want her to exist. She stated that she has no choice in pursuing her activism in this field.
- Maya was detained by ICE and placed at a detention center when she crossed the border at age 7 with the help of smugglers. She was booked and fingerprinted and held in a detention center until they were able to locate her family - at age 7. While ICE and immigration courts were able to locate her family and get her out of the detention center, Maya was told she was a victim of human trafficking, however typical of the response of the police state, nothing was done
- This is a pattern that reoccurs often in Maya's life, she is told that she is a victim of human trafficking by DV shelters, law enforcement officials, anti-trafficking NGOs, yet she has never been provided with any followup or services. She also notes that many of these organizations receive millions of dollars in government funding to combat trafficking, and yet when she spoke to officials in shelters, many of them do not know what trafficking is - and merge the definition of trafficking into other social ailments such as domestic violence - in addition to merging sex work and trafficking
- I wanted to highlight Maya because she is a budding activist in the sex worker activist sphere. She recently started this work 2 months ago at a teach in held by massage parlor and migrant sex worker organization Red Canary - in order to combat Councilman Peter Koo's panel on the rampant sex trafficking epidemic gripping Flushing.
- In speaking with Maya, I was inspired by her brilliance, what took me years of reading trafficking scholarship and attending classes at this colonial institution - Maya just got it. She speaks to the interpersonal effects on dominant trafficking ideology. She is at the intersection of police violence and the trafficking state

- And while I did not want to examine the subject of the Latinx migrant herself, my chapter which spoke to Maya's work served as an uplifting sentiment that the trafficking sphere is not all shit - there are people who are actively combating the carceral and punitive paradigms prevalent in the system.
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 - Which brings me to my next slide, which is a thank you. I especially want to thank Professor Shih, who without her I would not have been able to do any of this work. She believed in me and Professor Shih is brilliant and commands a room. I have been in countless trafficking events and have name dropped her - everyone EVERYONE knows who she is and is excited at the aspect of being in the same room as her. Professor Shih has taught me so much during these years and I am continuously in awe of her compassion, kindness and intelligence. She is so humble, so so humble even though she has NO REASON to be - as her work and CV speak for itself. I have never encountered someone like Professor Shih - she makes space for everyone in her discipline and