

The social construction of risk
in child trafficking discourses:

A study of melodramatic tactics
in child trafficking narratives

by

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Philosophy) at the University of Central Lancashire

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ABSTRACT

Child trafficking is a term used to define situations where children are forced, coerced or tricked to migrate for the purpose of their future exploitation. The issue of child trafficking is a well established UK policy concern initially emerging in the seventeenth century. The issue re-appeared in the late nineteenth century influenced by the social purity movement. This generated an infamous media exposé which led to parliamentary debates and legislative changes. Child trafficking resurfaced as a UK policy concern periodically in the twentieth century as children were once again forced to migrate. At the start of the twenty-first century child trafficking is back on the UK national policy agenda following pressure exerted by international anti-trafficking networks and Non Government Organisations.

This study examines the social construction of risk in current and historical child trafficking UK policy discourses. Interviews with key informants in the ports safeguarding sector are discussed, together with an analysis of policy documents and primary historical sources. The construction of risk in these child trafficking discourses appear in a specific format which is explained by drawing on the conceptual lens of *melodramatic tactics*. This analysis reveals how narratives of child trafficking tend to have a stereotypical tragic child victim, who is forcibly separated from their family, and in need of protection from dangerous criminals who aim to deceive and exploit them. The employment of these melodramatic tactics is a central feature of current UK child trafficking policy discourses. Research studies which situate migrant children as competent social actors illuminate accounts of triumph, and these contrast with the outrage-driven protest drama which has current and enduring appeal in UK child trafficking policy discourses. The implications of these findings are discussed in the context of current UK child trafficking policy and recommendations about future research with children on the move are also proposed.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFRUCA	Africans United against Child Abuse
BASW	British Association of Social Workers
BSA	British Sociological Association
BVA	British Vigilance Association
CEOP	Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre
DFES	Department for Education and Skills
DOH	Department of Health
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
ECM	Every Child Matters
FAFO	Norwegian multi-disciplinary research foundation
IBSTP	First International Bureau for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons
IDMG	Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group
IGO	International Governmental Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ILPA	Immigration Law Practitioners Association
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
JCWI	Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Boards
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
NVA	National Vigilance Association
OHCR	Office of the High Commission for Human Rights
SARF	Social Amplification of Risk Framework
SCF	Save the Children
SEE	South Eastern Europe
SOCA	Serious and Organised Crime Agency
TAN	Transnational Advocacy Network
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children
UCLAN	University of Central Lancashire
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

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INTRODUCTION

This study was funded through a bursary of the University of Central Lancashire.

Background and context of this study

Every few years concerned politicians and activists raise public awareness and draw attention to different forms of child abuse and exploitation. Often considered a relatively novel form of exploitation and abuse of children, child trafficking is seen as new business for social work and law enforcement agencies, and for governments. This study examines the ways in which child trafficking has attracted political attention and discusses how UK policies have been shaped and informed. The key aims of this study are firstly to establish what existing research and debates about child trafficking say. Secondly to identify what factors have been influential in shaping the direction of UK child trafficking policies. Thirdly to ascertain the extent to which policy and practice have been informed and shaped by the agencies and organisations in the anti-trafficking sector. Finally in this study the intention is to examine the construction of risk in UK child trafficking policy and practice discourses.

Child trafficking became an international focus in the early twenty-first century amidst wider concerns advanced by International Governmental Organisations (IGOs hereafter) including the International Labour Organisation (ILO hereafter) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM hereafter). The ILO describe child trafficking as a: “*distinct and egregious violation of children’s rights...a growing problem that affects millions of children*” (ILO 2002a p. xi). These IGOs have raised international political awareness about the issue of child labour, and the increases in unaccompanied and refugee children from parts of Africa, South Eastern Europe, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and other war torn and conflict ridden countries across the globe (IOM 2001; ILO 2002a). In addition IGOs have consistently estimated that globally there are

1.2¹ million children trafficked annually (ILO 2002b; UN 2008), however, the figures are based on estimates, best guesses, probabilities and suggestions, and the claims are disputed (Steinfatt Baker and Beesey 2002; Steinfatt 2003).

The IOM along with the ILO and other international IGOs argue that child trafficking is a financially lucrative activity which is driven by international organised crime. Child trafficking is often characterised as a significant and yet hidden child welfare concern, involving an international trade in children, who are vulnerable to harm and exploitation. This harm might happen to children prior to their departure, whilst *en route* or when they have arrived in destination countries (IOM 2001; ILO 2002a; UNICEF 2005). The demands of the international sex and labour markets are also suggested as being key drivers for the perceived increase in child trafficking (IOM 2002; ILO 2002a). This study questions these and other perceptions about the issue of child trafficking.

Child trafficking in the UK: policy context

Professionals, public officials, politicians and certain government agencies and organisations, frequently claim that child trafficking is a serious child protection issue for the UK. In the consultation on proposals for a UK Action Plan to tackle trafficking in human beings it states that:

“Ensuring we have a solid understanding of the problem is essential in order to ensure that we make the best use of our available resources” (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2006 p.3).

¹ The estimate of 1.2 million children annually trafficked remains static although there are frequent claims that it is a growing international issue, see for example Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon’s the UN President’s message to the UN General Assembly at the Commemoration of the International day of remembrance of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. New York 25th March 2008 URL <http://www.un.org/events/slaveryremembrance/gapresident.shtml> (Accessed 22nd July 2010)

Despite the development of UK policy responses and the publication of *The UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007) and practice guidance: *Working together to safeguard children who may have been trafficked* (HM Government 2007) the research literature on the issue of child trafficking in the UK is sparse. This study aims to contribute to the research in this sensitive and topical policy issue which has received very limited academic attention to date.

Child trafficking or *spiriting* as it was then known, was a UK policy issue in the seventeenth century (Wareing 2002). It re-emerged in the late nineteenth century amidst concerns expressed by the social purity movement that there was an international *white slave trade* in girls and women for prostitution (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978). Child trafficking continued to attract international and domestic policy interest at various points in the twentieth century. In the twenty-first century the issue was again exposed in the UK, this time in Non Government Organisation (NGOs hereafter) reports about unaccompanied minors going missing from Local Authority care homes in West Sussex (ECPAT² 2001). This influenced the *Paladin Child* study (Metropolitan Police Authority 2004). In this multi-agency study of child migration at Heathrow airport a number of safeguarding issues relevant to migrant³ children coming to the UK were identified and the report made a series of policy and practice recommendations. *Paladin Child* also drew attention to the sensationalised nature of media reports which exaggerated the issues of child trafficking and concluded that there was no evidence of the organised exploitation of children coming into the UK (Metropolitan Police 2004). This was contrary to the claims made by NGOs and by some politicians.

² UK NGO: End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes. URL http://www.ecpat.org.uk/how_we_work.html (Accessed 16th March 2010).

³ In this study I use the term *migrant children* to define children who migrate. This includes children who are defined as unaccompanied minors; separated children and refugee and asylum-seeking children. All of these groups are perceived to be at risk or vulnerable to being trafficked. Halvorsen (2002) Separated children seeking asylum: the most vulnerable of all *Forced Migration Review*, 12, pp.34- 36.

Non Government Organisations and child trafficking in the UK

There are a handful of publications which explore the issue of child trafficking, each of these reports draw attention to the lack of data, and the lack of knowledge specifically within the social work profession, (ECPAT 2001; ECPAT 2004; ECPAT 2007). Such reports highlight the undiscovered nature of, and also estimate the extent of child trafficking in the UK. There have to date been limited analysis of the roles of NGOs and their anti-trafficking activities which focus on children and, with the exception of Buckland (2008), who critically discusses the language in UK policies and discourses on trafficking in human beings, there has been little academic attention paid to the development of UK child trafficking policies. During the course of this research study, which began in October 2004, a number of key documents were published by the UK government, and the issue of child trafficking was also highlighted through press reports, in both the broadsheet and tabloid press. A feature of the UK NGO publications is a reliance on press reports as evidence of the phenomenon of child trafficking. In the UK there has been a sustained political interest in tackling child trafficking since the beginning of the twenty-first century which has yet to be critically discussed.

There is predominance in the UK and internationally of NGO publications which are designed to raise public awareness of, and secure political interest in the phenomenon of child trafficking. There is a tendency in these publications to express concerns about child trafficking in the UK in polemical terms, which draw public and political attention to the issue. For example ECPAT (2004) claimed that what was known about the incidence of child trafficking was: “*the tip of the iceberg*” (ECPAT 2004 p.11). The report also argued that social workers were ill-equipped to identify or support children who had been trafficked, as they lacked training, information and resources. The limited provisions for trafficked children were also highlighted, although the veracity of these claims was disputed as Simon Kurs reports in *The Guardian*⁴:

“Britain's only safe house for illegally trafficked girls has closed its doors ... while specialist care services often feel squeezed what is striking in this case is that the house had been

⁴ ‘Closed Shop’ URL <http://society.guardian.co.uk/children/story/0,,1234205,00.html> (Accessed 20th March 2007).

open for less than two months, and not a single child had been referred there (The Guardian 9th June 2004).

Policy initiatives related to migrant children have previously been criticised as protecting the integrity of the UK immigration system, rather than promoting the rights of migrant children (Crawley 2006; Cunningham and Tomlinson 2005). This has also been applied to the issue of child trafficking, in relation to the lack of resources and understanding of how to deal with trafficked children coming to the UK. NGOs such as ECPAT and the NSPCC⁵ who advance these perspectives are key stakeholders in the UK child trafficking policy-making process. These organisations are also the recipients of government funding to support their anti-trafficking efforts and this suggests a conflict of interests and agendas.

UK child safeguarding policy and child abuse tragedies

UK child safeguarding policies are based on assumptions that risk management approaches protect vulnerable children from abuse by parents/carers (Parton 1998). Policy changes following child deaths are often intended to prevent another such tragedy. In the aftermath of such tragedies there are strong official and public responses. Blame and responsibility need a target and, in the wake of such cases, social work and other health and welfare professions come in for significant criticism (Parton 2004). However the key issues which would strengthen the protection of vulnerable children re-emerge in public inquiries, without effective resolution (Reder, Duncan and Gray 1993).

As the tragic story of her death emerged, Victoria Climbié⁶ gained status and notoriety both in the media and child welfare discourses; as tragic victim of abuse; and as a beacon of hope that her death would effect some lasting changes on the much maligned UK child protection system.

⁵ The National Society for the prevention of cruelty to children. A UK children's charity with statutory powers. The NSPCC promotes children's rights, undertakes research and campaigns around the safeguarding of children at risk of abuse. http://www.nspcc.org.uk/whatwedo/whatwedohubpage_wda33342.html (Accessed 18th March 2010).

⁶ Victoria Climbié was from the Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa killed by her aunt and her partner in London in 2001. URL <http://www.victoria-climbié-inquiry.org.uk/> (Accessed 22nd June 2009).

Whilst it is generally acknowledged that Laming (2003) provided a blueprint for the improvement of child protection services (UK Government 2003a), the wider media publicity given to Victoria Climbié's tragic and untimely end heightened public sensitivity to a central and yet marginalised aspect. Victoria Climbié was a migrant child from West Africa, who was not legally entitled to be in the UK. Laming (2003) makes some reference to her status but did not specifically address this issue. Whilst her nationality and background were acknowledged, the many wider aspects of race and culture are minimised in the inquiry (Parton 2004). In his comparative analysis of the inquiries into the deaths of Maria Colwell in 1971 and Victoria Climbié in 2001, Parton (2004) makes various points about the failure of child protection systems and the cultural aspects of the Climbié inquiry, arguing that changes implemented in child protection services, following the public inquiries into the events surrounding the deaths of these children have failed to adequately protect children.

The failure of the risk assessment and management approaches adopted by social workers and other professionals came in for significant criticism in Lord Laming's inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié (Laming 2003). Following her death the UK Government (2003a) published *Keeping Children Safe: The Government's response to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report and Joint Chief Inspectors' Report Safeguarding Children*. This identified the various measures which were proposed to safeguard children. The UK government intended to strengthen child welfare legislation in order to prevent such a tragedy happening again (UK Government 2003a). The new legislation proposed was underpinned by the UK national strategy: *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* (HM Government 2004) (ECM hereafter). The *Children Act* (UK Government 2004) which followed reorganised and refocused the way in which professionals work together to safeguard children. This led to the implementation of changes to the management and accountability structures in local authorities, and a greater emphasis on collaboration between agencies including the introduction of record holding and electronic information systems. These measures however have been criticised more recently as still inadequate (Laming 2009).

Increasingly child care policies and practices in the UK draw on risk assessment approaches to determine the welfare and protection needs of children and families, (May-Chahal and Coleman 2003). This position is adopted and promoted within a wider culture of risk management which characterises social work practice (Shaw and Shaw 2001; Garrett 2003; Parton 2004; Johnson and Petrie 2004; France and Utting 2005; Webb 2006; Parton 2010). This is well illustrated in the employment of assessment tools and approaches used in child care social work, which focus on the assessment of risk to children, within the context of their family, for example the *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need* and *A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* (Rose cited in Horwath 2001; Aldgate 2010). Assessment work in child care social work practice, often in the absence of certainties, relies on professional judgement and sound decision making. Public enquiries suggest that decision making in complex cases is influenced by a number of factors (May-Chahal and Coleman 2003) including moral judgements, the rule of optimism, cultural relativism, refusal of dissonant information and intuitive reasoning. There are a number of other potential factors which influence child protection practice which includes external pressure; fear that a child may die; miscommunication; assumptions; misinterpretation; balance of information gathered from various sources; not including children; avoidance/ignorance of warning signs; not referring families on; reluctance on behalf of professionals to deal with aggression and poor recording (Cleaver *et al.* cited in May-Chahal and Coleman 2003).

Reflective discussion: The development of the research focus

In the initial stages of this study I decided to focus my research on the way in which decisions are made to safeguard migrant children coming into the UK. My own background as a social worker informed my view that it would be important in ports safeguarding work to recognise, and account for, a different set of factors in assessing risks to, and/or the needs of migrant children coming to the UK. In child care social work practice with children and families, assessments rely on information being supplied by parents and carers, clearly this would not always be possible with newly arrived children particularly if they are unaccompanied on their

journey or at their point of entry. As such safeguarding children at ports of entry would be a different practice. Instead assessments and interventions take place in a busy transitory environment when children arrive into the country, and when very limited information would be available about their background and factors which have led them to be coming to the UK. This is further complicated by the demands of the UK border agencies who seek to prioritise the issue of the legality of children's entry to the UK, an emphasis which is at odds with the task and role of social workers with unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children (Cemlyn and Briskman 2003; Kohli and Mather 2003; Mitchell 2003). Ultimately whilst this study examines and discusses ports safeguarding work with migrant children, it is the continuity in emphasizing the risks and dangers in the policy and practice discourses which sustained my interest and became a focus of my analysis.

Initially, the study of ports safeguarding multi-agency practice was designed using ethnographic methods. Ethnographic research has the potential to provide rich sources of data through non-participant observation (Mason 2002). In the study I originally proposed to explore the way in which agencies worked together, made decisions and practiced the safeguarding of migrant children coming into the UK. There are various tools and strategies which are dawn on in this type of work which are specifically designed to assess and determine the extent to which such children present as "a risk"; or "at risk" including the use of trafficking and age assessments toolkits. Arguably these approaches are largely influenced by the UK Home Office agenda and the anti-migration stance characteristic of UK and EU policy approaches. In the early stages of the design of this study I proposed that an ethnographic non-participant observation study of this safeguarding work in ports would be undertaken to examine how safeguarding decisions are made in the context within which ports safeguarding work is carried out as this is very different than the context in field work teams. I proposed that such a study might have usefully informed practice in developing future ports safeguarding work. This method however was ruled out as permission to undertake such as study was not granted, despite my best attempts to secure this, key agencies working at UK ports of entry declined to participate in the research. I had however managed to secure a number of interviews with key informants in the ports safeguarding sector and so I used this method of data collection.

As outlined earlier my interest in the subject of child trafficking was stimulated on the one hand by UK policy developments and by the findings of NGO studies and the polemic about the extent of child trafficking. Despite the development of policies to address the issues anti-trafficking NGO's remain critical of the UK government activity and sustain such criticism in press releases, in professional social work literature and through their own publications. During the initial stages of this study I undertook networking activity in order to generate potential key informants who would participate in the research interviews. This approach led me to correspond with an academic researcher who has been commissioned by an international feminist/human rights organisation to conduct research about trafficking in women. I discussed my plans to carry out as part of my study some research about the history of child trafficking policy making (the initial literature searches I carried out produced only one research article of note (Wareing 2002) which discussed the passage of legislation to punish "spirifers" or child stealers which was first proposed in 1571).In further correspondence the academic advised that she had consulted with the committee overseeing the research she was conducting and they had made the following comments about my proposed research focus:

"we don't want any unnecessary academic debate, we want something sensationalist that will shock society into action" (Anonymous, field notes 2005)

I was puzzled by the response because it was so critical and dismissive of academic research. My own view following Crotty (2003) is that research should be informed by theory and should use clear methods. Why then would this organisation be dismissive of academic research which might have the potential to contribute to our understanding of the issue of child trafficking? The answer in part is that NGO's are action focussed and are driven by ideas about the effects of social problems and their resolution, but less as apparent in this case with the causes of social issues as having structural explanations as they appear to be primarily interested in research which corroborates their own agencies views, strategies and policy prescriptions. Once the interviews were undertaken, and policy and historical document collated I was faced with the task of analysing data from these different sources. The approach I settled on was to compare the child trafficking discourses between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries. There are certain

benefits to using historical sources in this way, and an appreciation of the past can help to illuminate our understanding of issues in the present (Davey-Smith, Dorling and Shaw 2001). The background reading which I had undertaken alongside the data collection included Doezema (2001) who compared the discourses about trafficking in women in the late nineteenth century and twentieth century. Doezema (2001) made some useful observations about the similarities in language and policy responses which I considered important in understanding how victims and criminals are constructed. For example Doezema (2001) drew commonalities between the ways in which the 'sex slave' of the nineteenth century had become the 'trafficking survivor' at the start of the twenty-first century. In addition the role of NGO's and transnational advocacy networks came in for significant criticism in Doezema's work, and as far as I could ascertain at the time no such critiques had been developed in respect of the NGO's working in the child trafficking arena, nor the way in which child trafficking discourses have developed.

In this study I examined the historical records related to the exposure of child trafficking in the late nineteenth century and compared these with discourses which have emerged in the early twenty-first century. My rationale for this approach was based on the similarities evident in these two different contexts. In the nineteenth century, industrial capitalist expansion, together with technological developments promoted opportunities for international travel by women and children at a pace which had not previously been possible. This era also saw the development of feminist transnational advocacy networks that raised international awareness of social problems including the issue of the forced migrations of women and children, especially girls for prostitution in continental Europe. During this era the ideology of childhood promoted by social reformers was that of a safe and protected childhood, which valued the innocence and purity of children.

A similar picture is apparent in the twenty-first century with the increasing globalisation of economies and technological advances in travel and communication which promote global migrations. Globalisation has led to demands for cheap labour and the increased speed and efficiency in travel and communication have once again pushed and pulled women and children into migratory flows. Meanwhile international children's rights activists and advocates, together with international human rights organisations have campaigned to end child labour and argued

for the prevention of child migration in an effort to end the exploitation of children in destination countries.

This approach to analyses of the discourses from two specific contexts drew on grounded theory methodology which allows for the analyses of data from different sources. At this stage in the research I returned to the literature and framed my analysis in terms of how risk was constructed in the discourses in these two periods. The grounded theory method involves coding the data, and identifying themes and concepts which emerge. In this study the data coding was restricted to the stories of “child trafficking “which were evident in the interview data. In this sense then the use of grounded theory was limited. A story was defined as narrative which explains who and what is involved in child trafficking. The stories of child trafficking in the policy documents and the historical records were also isolated for further analysis. The themes in the stories of child trafficking apparent in all the data sources, suggested there was a great deal of continuity in past and present responses to the phenomenon. As was the case in the past, today there is much uncertainty in estimation and incidence of trafficking and there was a tendency to draw on extreme examples of their practice experience to illustrate what they believed was a typical child trafficking case. I was particularly interested in these illustrations and drew on Taylor and White (2000) whose work suggested that health and social care professionals use extreme cases for a variety of reasons. The stories respondents told of child trafficking which emerged in this analysis told of the abandonment and forced separation of children from their family. In these stories children were constructed as victims, whilst adults were either villains who exploited them or rescuers who protected them. These stories were expressed with outrage at injustice particularly, as it was argued, the view that criminals escaped punishment. These children in these stories were depicted as being at risk from strangers in their wider environment.

By contrasting and comparing the stories of child trafficking evident in the interview narratives and in the policy and historical documents, I was able to identify narrative qualities of the stories of child trafficking, and specifically the performative aspects. It seemed quite clear to me that there were strong similarities between the current anti- trafficking rhetoric in policy making and the rhetoric of the late nineteenth century social purity campaigners who exposed the white slave trade in girls from Britain to continental Europe.

Ports safeguarding multi-agency practice

Many children, for a variety of reasons travel with strangers, extended family members or other children. Victoria Climbié was one of many children who came to the UK from across the newly enlarged European Union, from Africa and from Asia. Whilst children arriving are variously defined as unaccompanied, separated, trafficked, asylum seeker, refugee, etc... the sole feature they have in common is that they are migrants. The journeys and travel arrangements for children coming to the UK vary enormously and depend on a broad range of factors in countries of origin and the nature of their migration; being forced through the outbreak of war, armed conflict or natural disasters. All of these factors have some bearing on how children travel and how they enter the UK (Ayotte 2001). The plans and arrangements for migrant children come under the scrutiny of the Home Office and Border Agency who manage the UK's increasingly restrictive entry systems and regulations. There are known tensions in multi-agency safeguarding work with children and families (Frost and Robinson 2007) and specifically so in relation to safeguarding work with children at UK ports of entry. The safeguarding of children coming into the UK is a relatively new area of work and although there are studies related to the way in which port authorities work with adult economic migrants (Duval and Jordan 2003) to date there has been limited research and analysis of the way in which UK port authorities and officials work with children at ports and assess their need for protection.

In terms of preventing trafficking and identifying potential cases of child trafficking the initial interventions used are conducted at ports of entry to the UK and carried out by the immigration and port authorities, in conjunction with the police and social services now operating under the *Working Together to Safeguard Children who may have been Trafficked* guidance (HM Government 2007). At the time of the field work for this study being undertaken (2004-2007) this guidance was announced as part of *The UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007). In this study interviews were conducted with key informants whose work includes the safeguarding and welfare of migrant children. The way in which the risk is constructed by those involved in ports safeguarding work with migrant children is a central focus of this study.

Child trafficking: Policy and practice discourses

The phenomenon of child trafficking has been previously characterised as a moral panic (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994). Moral panic theories explain the social amplification of risk which is embedded in media representations of child trafficking. Risk theories however provide a wider focus for examining how risks are constructed and amplified in child trafficking policy and practice discourses. According to Lupton (1999) discourse is a “*body of knowledge and associated practices, a ...way of giving meaning to reality via words*” (Lupton 1999, p.14). Discourse is also defined as the language used by professions, the product of historically received wisdom and ideas (Jack 1997). Discourses stereotype and advocate generalised solutions, and make some actions possible, whilst others are precluded. For example in the child care field and policy context the *child abuse discourse* eclipses a child welfare discourse, which, if articulated would shift the emphasis towards prevention and support strategies and would necessarily include a political commitment to providing more widely available resources, a focus on partnerships with families, and importantly children’s empowerment (Jack 1997).

Rhetoric in child trafficking discourses

Various topics generate rhetoric more than others and in recent years the topic of child trafficking has been the subject of such rhetoric. In my research the study of discourse is confined to the policy and practice rhetoric associated with child trafficking. Rhetoric in this study is understood as: “*the art of using language so as to persuade or influence others*” (Oxford English Dictionary 2010). This study explores how ‘stories’ about child trafficking are generated and sustained in current UK policy discourses. This analysis reveals the social construction of risk in child trafficking policy discourses and draws on a range of theoretical perspectives which bring an alternative and interpretative dimension to our knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon.

Stories of child trafficking and the exploitation it encompasses have re-emerged in the media, and inevitably in policy arenas over and over again since the end of the late nineteenth century. The way in which child protection concerns are presented by the media can be understood as a media template. These media templates are used to clarify one perspective over another and perform as rhetorical devices which influence how journalists and the public understand news stories (Kitzenger 2000).

In this study I discuss the origins, expression and transmission between the policy and practice discourses which have currency in current UK policy-making towards child trafficking; Child trafficking discourses, as I will demonstrate, are grounded in a number of assumptions which are generalised and simplistic in their explanations about the role of families, the idea of childhood and critically, migration. The news media reporting on the issue of child trafficking, like other child welfare and protection concerns, invariably adopts the *significant, hidden and harmful* character, and these features are also explicit in professional concern expressed in the social work field, for example in the publication *Community Care* and other associated professional child care social work literature. Children are frequently presented in these discourses as the victims of traffickers. Parents do not take responsibility or protect their children in these discourses; indeed parents are readily implicated in the abuse and exploitation of children. In this study I discuss the various strategies associated with the promotion of child trafficking as a *significant, hidden and harmful* child welfare concern, and demonstrate this influence in the shape and direction of child trafficking policies and associated practice guidance.

Child trafficking is invariably presented by the anti-trafficking lobby as *significant, hidden and harmful*, requiring urgent national and international cooperation and action. Child trafficking as *significant, hidden and harmful* is also articulated in the criminal justice perspectives which dominate the UK policy direction. The best approach to tackling child trafficking is thus inevitably and uncritically expressed in the *prevention, protection and prosecution* policy rhetoric. This current child trafficking policy, campaigning and media rhetoric minimises explanations about the conditions which influence migratory decisions. The rhetoric does not readily acknowledge the impact of increasingly restrictive border regimes on the migrations of

children. Instead the rhetoric draws on assumptions about children, childhood and families based on western ideological traditions. These assumptions, embedded in child trafficking policies do not ascribe children with agency in migration decision making processes. Ultimately the constructions of risk in child trafficking policy discourses prescribe the way in which the issue is talked about and, importantly, responded to politically.

The social construction of risk in child trafficking policy discourses

Current discourses explaining the phenomenon of child trafficking fall into three broad areas:

Better life syndrome

In this discourse parents, carers and families sell or trade children or they allow them to travel to improve their life opportunities. This is referred to as the *better life syndrome* (AFRUCA 2003). This was arguably the case for Victoria Climbié who arrived in the UK after travelling from the Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa, and then through mainland Europe. The *better life syndrome* discourse marginalises opportunities for the analysis and articulation of the contextual factors within which migratory decisions are made, for example in situations of extreme poverty, war or invasion. This discourse also foregrounds the culpability of parents, or in Victoria Climbié's case her 'auntie', and the inadequate protection or wilful abuse children experience.

*Exploitation thesis*⁷

This discourse situates children as vulnerable and easy to exploit. Children in this discourse are therefore at risk throughout the migratory processes if they are not with their immediate families or carers who might protect them. They are unaccompanied and at risk of being exploited by criminals, traffickers, pimps, agents, facilitators or other individuals. This exploitation takes on

⁷ De Sas Kropiwnicki (2005) From Structural Hierarchies to Social Relationships: Accounting for power and positioning in the decision-making of adolescent prostitutes in Cape Town, South Africa. Unpublished paper presented at Childhoods: Children and Youth in Emerging and Transforming Societies International Conference. University of Oslo, Norway June 28th – July 3rd 2005. De Sas Kropiwnicki discusses the influence which the exploitation thesis has in policy and practice related to child prostitution.

many forms; children may be forced to work in slave-like conditions, where their basic human rights are denied. Various tactics, it is thought, are used by the traffickers to maintain a powerful hold over children to keep them in exploitative conditions. Children are perceived as being easy to dupe, trick, deceive, force, coerce or threaten. Children may be told for example that they are coming to the UK for an education, only to arrive here and be forced to work in exploitative situations. This discourse features in both media reports about child trafficking and in policy documents; it simplifies the complex and inculcates the perceived dependency and naïvety of children uncritically.

Global crime

The UN Protocol (UN 2000) is the most commonly used definition of trafficking and has a broad international criminal justice perspective. The emphasis is on globalisation within the context of international organised crime. More commonly known as the *Palermo Protocol* (UN 2000) this was the internationally agreed outcome of campaigning against the global commercial sexual exploitation of women and girls in the last two decades of the twentieth century. In this *global crime* discourse the international trade in humans flourishes as a result of political and ethnic conflicts. The breakdown of civil society in areas of armed conflict and occupation facilitates the expansion of criminal networks, which trade in arms, drugs, people and any other contraband. This *global crime* explanation with its emphasis on the international trade in women and children for exploitation within the commercial sex industry is woven deeply into the media and policy discourses about child trafficking.

In a study of crime reporting Altheide (2006) illustrates how the government and police security mantra dominates how crime is framed and describes this as a *discourse of fear*. The *discourse of fear* is politically motivated and constructed through news and media accounts, and is influential in determining what people think about issues, and how they are packaged and presented. News reports are associated with victim narratives: “*that make crime, danger and fear very relevant to everyday life experiences*” (Altheide 2006 p.434). These and other risk discourses have been influential in informing and shaping professional opinion, practice and policy-making associated with child trafficking in the UK.

Chapter outline

Chapter one reviews the existing child trafficking research literature. It starts by looking at the definitions of trafficking. There is limited research on the issue in the UK and this position is also apparent in the international research literature. Questions arising from the lack of research and the context of existing studies are discussed. The literature demonstrates that to date, the focus has been attempting to quantify the issue and demanding greater protection measures for children coming to the UK. There are methodological issues about these studies which are discussed in some detail. There are previous studies relevant to this research on child trafficking that adopt socio-historical approaches. These studies challenge contemporary understanding and responses to a number of child welfare concerns and illustrate how these issues are socially constructed.

Chapter two outlines the methodological approach used in this study and discusses the relative strengths and weaknesses of the data sampling and collection strategies and analytical methods employed. The ethical considerations in researching sensitive issues are examined in relation to how they informed the methods used. In this chapter the methods and theoretical perspectives which informed the approaches used in this study of child trafficking, and the way in which this research is distinguished from existing research studies of the topic are discussed.

Chapter three examines the origins of policies associated with child trafficking, and discusses this in relation to the wider context of child welfare concerns in late nineteenth century Britain. The roles of the various nineteenth century campaigning and purity organisations that were active at that time are also explored. This chapter illustrates, through analysis of primary sources the ways in which the campaigning organisations publicised trafficking, and how the ideologies and agendas of various reform and purity organisations converged for a time about this issue to advocate for protective legislation. There are two particular cases which were highly influential in informing and shaping UK policy direction related to child trafficking in the late nineteenth century; *The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon* and the case of Adeline Tanner. The media reporting of child trafficking in the late nineteenth century also discussed in this chapter, further

illustrates how immigration concerns became a central feature during that period. There are commonalities between the way in which child trafficking was reported during this earlier period and in the current context.

Chapter four presents a critical perspective of current UK policies associated with child trafficking and discusses key areas of policy concern as they relate to the safeguarding of migrant children in the UK in the early twenty-first century. The development of legislation and policy guidance has been shaped by the agendas of anti-trafficking campaigning organisations and influential government departments. The current focus of policy-making eclipses wider issues about structural inequalities which make child migration a rational and sustainable livelihood option for children (and their families) across the globe and in doing so foregrounds a victim/criminal perspective.

The themes found in the analysis of the interviews conducted with key informants in the ports safeguarding sector are discussed in chapter five together with an exploration of the ways in which risk is constructed and amplified in these narratives. Respondents expressed concern about the roles and responsibilities of partner agencies, and illustrated how they define and respond to the issue of child trafficking, and how their work in this area has influenced UK policy-making. The analysis of these interview themes suggests that speculation and estimation about the causes, extent and impact of child trafficking are promoted over and above structural/economic explanations.

Chapter six examines theories of risk, and risk discourses, and their application and explanatory potential in this study. Applied here, this approach to analysis elicits the concepts of risk which are articulated in the stories of child trafficking found in interview narratives, policy documents and historical accounts of child trafficking. This analysis reveals commonalities in the narrative strategies used to 'story' child trafficking. Hadley's (1995) work on melodramatic tactics is applied to discuss the themes and performative aspects of the stories of child trafficking in the data.

Chapter seven summarises the key issues raised in this study of the social construction of risk in child trafficking discourses. In addition to discussing the strengths and weaknesses of this study, some critical observations are made about the implications of the findings in terms of the development and direction of UK policy-making. A number of recommendations for future research in this area are also proposed. Whilst there are limited empirical studies in the area of child trafficking, there are studies which illustrate how children make decisions about migration, and what role familial and social networks play in supporting these migratory activities. In a number of recent studies children who migrate have shared their experiences, which have highlighted their capacities to plan and forecast for their future (Hashim 2005). For many children, decisions to migrate are to improve their life opportunities and contribute economically to their family and community (Busza, Castle and Diarra 2004). Migration is a means to an end, and can be for many a positive and life changing experience. There is an absence of these perspectives in UK trafficking policy discourses, and current practice interventions with migrant children. Effectively preventing child trafficking has led to reactive risk management measures which stereotype and marginalise migrant children who come to the UK.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Child trafficking: significant, hidden and harmful

In this chapter I present the findings of a review of child trafficking research. Established critiques have highlighted the methodological shortcomings and definitional inconsistencies in research on trafficking in human beings and in this review I apply these to child trafficking research. Current UK research is limited and there is a dominance of NGO studies of the topic. There are certain groups of children who are said to be vulnerable to child trafficking and because of the various ways in which children travel and conduct their journeys a clearer understanding of the migrations of children is required. This review finds that what is actually known about child trafficking is very limited in terms of the extent and nature of the problem. It is assumed that child trafficking is widespread and the dangers and risks are extensive. The hidden and covert nature of child trafficking is a recurrent theme in the existing published reports and studies. In effect, child trafficking in these publications is characterised as significant, hidden and harmful. Examples of child trafficking events which have been explained using moral panic theory are discussed along with a number of studies from socio-historical and social constructionist perspectives. These approaches provide a much needed temporal and critical lens to understanding the contemporary issue of child trafficking and policy responses in the UK.

Defining child trafficking

The literal meaning of ‘trafficking’ is: “*to have dealings of an illicit or secret character*” (Oxford English Dictionary 2010). It is argued that this does not adequately cover the experience of the victim when applied to human beings, and especially women and children (Kelly 2002). Trafficking in human beings is invariably viewed as gender violence and as a human rights abuse (Wijers 2004; ECPAT/UNICEF 2007), and, critically, related to immigration (Herzfeld *et al.* 2006). It has been described as a ‘ruthless trade’ (Everts 2003), as a threat to human security (Clark 2003; Fukuda-Parr 2003), and as an issue about organized crime, terrorism and state security (Pratt 2004). Trafficking is said to pose global health risks (Bertone 2004; Beyrer 2004; Zimmerman *et al.* 2003), and is a direct consequence of global structural inequalities. ‘Child trafficking’ is best understood as modern day child slave trade (UNICEF 2003; Dottridge; 2004; Van den Anker 2004), with children being the commodities (Rafferty 2007), and the victims (Burgoyne and Darwin 2006). These positions frequently advanced by anti-trafficking and campaigning organisations, have valuable political currency and wide international appeal.

It has previously been argued that there is a lack of definitional clarity between various forms of irregular migration and confusion between trafficking and smuggling (Derluyn and Broerkaert 2005). Greater clarity is needed to understand trafficking in human beings in order to identify and support victims and also to inform research methodologies and policies (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). Bertone (2004), however, argues that a dialogue on the issue is necessary, as it would:

“...desensationalise how trafficking has come to be portrayed in the media and by some well meaning activists and academics” (Bertone 2004 p.10-11).

The Palermo Protocol

The most widely adopted definition of trafficking is contained within the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* supplementing the *UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (Article 3a UN 2000). Often referred to as the *Palermo Protocol*, trafficking in persons is defined within this as:

“...the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of 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 purposes of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others, forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery” UN (2000).

Adoption of the *Palermo Protocol* requires states to cooperate with international anti-trafficking activities and places a responsibility on governments to develop national policy responses to trafficking (UNDOC 2007). The *Palermo Protocol* creates a global language in terms of defining trafficking, assisting victims and preventing trafficking (Raymond 2002). The protocol also provides the lens through which the issue is currently viewed and interpreted.

There are also some key issues regarding the definitions of trafficking in relation to children that have been previously applied specifically to trafficking in women and trafficking in human beings. Firstly, there are many different types of migrations and yet the trafficking definition accounts only for those which have been ‘forced’ or ‘coerced’ in some way for the purpose of exploitation (Sharma 2004). Secondly, the definition supports a wider political agenda of migration control, and particularly the migrations of women into the sex industry (Doezema 2002). Thirdly, the incidence of child trafficking is unknown and as so many different situations might constitute ‘trafficking’ the numbers of victims are unreliable at best (Laczko and Gramenga 2003). Fourthly, there are some issues raised by the age of consent and its application in child trafficking situations (Dottridge 2004). Consent issues for children (under 18) are

different from those applicable to adults involved in trafficking. Finally the definition is unhelpful in terms of the actual experiences of migrants as children's migratory movements are more complex than the definition suggests (Bastia 2005).

Forced, coerced or exploited

The definition covers a wide range of potential trafficking events including sexual exploitation and many types of forced labour. Children are trafficked for these and many other reasons including the trafficking of child soldiers (Valentine 2003; Rosen 2005). The underpinning perception here is that the trafficked person is forced or coerced into exploitative circumstances to which they would not have readily agreed (Kelly 2002). Bastia (2005) argues that the definition of victims is framed around eligibility for protection and support in host countries, and this is not always available or accessible.

Female commercial sexual exploitation

The definition found in the *Palermo Protocol* was developed in response to the issue of the international trafficking in women for commercial sexual exploitation (Chapkis 2003). It is generally assumed that the phenomenon of child trafficking grew alongside the global sex industry, is related to the demands made in this market, and should be addressed through gender violence perspectives (Corner 2002; Raymond 2002). However, victims are not easily identifiable or eligible for protection and, as Bastia (2005) points out, support is an option and not compulsory under the *Palermo Protocol*. In effect, whilst countries might have adopted the *Palermo Protocol* this does not guarantee support or protection to migrants who are returned to their country of origin on the basis that their migrations were thought to be illegal. This also applies to the situations of children who are thought to have been trafficked and are returned to their countries of origin. The definition of trafficking in the *Palermo Protocol* has been used to shore up strategies to enforce restrictive migration policies which seek to exclude female migrant sex workers, and, as such, policy responses are ideologically driven rather than support orientated (Doezema 2002; Doezema 2004). This critique also applies to situations which are perceived to be child trafficking in a context of increasingly visible child migration and the

heightened public and political attention to the various forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children, as has been the case in the UK in recent years.

Estimates of trafficking

In quantifying and determining the extent of human trafficking Laczko and Gramenga (2003) argue that this is problematic as it covers so many different events and actualities with countries tending to mix data on trafficking, smuggling and irregular forms of migration. According to Chapkis (2003), in human trafficking situations the agencies working in the area often count all migrants whom they support as trafficked. This also applies to quantifying the trafficking in children and poses problems for international governments and cross regional programmes in their efforts to tackle trafficking and target resources.

Age and children's consent

Within the *Palermo Protocol* definition, children aged eighteen or under are not viewed as able to give consent due to the special protection they are afforded under the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UN 1989) and the *United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography* (OHCR 2002; OHCR 2007). There is an explicit focus on victims and those who are vulnerable to trafficking because of their lack of ability to consent. Children are deemed as unable to give consent because of their age/maturity (Terre Des Hommes 2004). Consent issues emphasise children's age and their maturity/experience and are problematic as the majority of older children elect to migrate. Coercion is differentially experienced between children of different age groups. Notwithstanding these distinctions, children (under 18) who migrate, and are subsequently found to have been exploited or abused could be defined as trafficked under the terms of the *Palermo Protocol* (Terre Des Hommes 2004).

International child trafficking reports

In 2000 the international child welfare network Social Alert published a situation overview report: *“On the tracks of stolen childhood”*. This was a comparative analysis which used data gathered through NGO reports and internet searches. Broadly speaking, the report found, through survey questionnaires to NGO members of their networks, that trafficking in children is a consequence of poverty and the exploitation of traditional kinship and family placement practices. The study reports that the demands for cheap labour, along with poor education systems and children’s own desires to migrate are the main explanations for the perceived increase in child trafficking (Social Alert 2000).

Internationally child trafficking research has become a high profile activity involving governments and stakeholders including IGOs. At an international level child trafficking research has primarily been located in the context of research on trafficking in women for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation (Kelly 2002). Research evidence often has its origins in data from cross regional situation overviews in destination countries (Council of Europe 2004; Council of Europe 2005). A broad overview of key publication follows, together with some established critical observations. The international publications include mainly programme reports and awareness-raising publications focussed on specific countries, regions, or on trans-national or trans-regional efforts to address child trafficking, and provide familiar perspectives on the issue of child trafficking.

Since the EU accession there have been growing concerns about child trafficking across and through Europe, and this has prompted EU governments to develop regional counter trafficking strategies. In the European context rapid assessment studies have been generated through the regional task force on trafficking (IOM 2003a; IOM 2003b; ILO 2003a; ILO 2003b; ILO 2003c; ILO 2003d; and ILO 2003e). Drawing on data from returnees, and key informants in countries of origin and destination, these studies are designed to quantify the numbers of trafficked children across the region and are the results of regional anti-trafficking collaboration programmes which are influenced by EU immigration and security agendas. Evidence of child trafficking is generated through these programmes and yet the methodologies and evidence basis for the

claims about child trafficking are fraught with the same difficulties and tensions as the research on trafficking in women. Steinfatt *et al.* (2002) carried out a study which used well documented quantitative methods⁸. This study identified significantly lower numbers of children trafficked for sexual exploitation than reported by the local agencies and NGO campaigning reports (Steinfatt *et al.* 2002).

The international campaigning material frequently emphasises the volume and growth of child trafficking. UNICEF (2003), for example, reported an increase from 700,000 in 1997 to 1.2 million in 2003. The collation of data and the quantification of individuals trafficked, globally, regionally and nationally is, in fact, a key area of contention in the international trafficking research literature. Steinfatt (2003), for example, discusses the dubious origins of the figures of 80,000 -100,000 trafficked persons in South- East Asia, which were presented by ILO-IPEC and attributed to UNICEF. The sources cited by ILO-IPEC were found not to contain these figures, nor were the origins of the data identified in a more detailed examination of UNICEF publications from 1994-1998:

“...the number simply appears in print, apparently out of nowhere, with no study to justify and support its existence” (Sophea cited in Steinfatt 2003 p.4).

These IGO reports tend to advance the criminalisation paradigm in respect of child trafficking, often they characterise children as victims of criminals and organised crime. This is frequently related to other issues such as child pornography, child sex tourism markets and child prostitution in these reports. Others focus on the potential risks of trafficking and the vulnerability of girls to this form of exploitation (IOM 2003c; Raboteg-Saric and Marinovic 2005). The risks involved in migration and the protection of girls and young women who are vulnerable to being trafficked into the commercial sex industry are highlighted in these studies,

⁸ In order to address the possible bias in relation to estimating the age of children in trafficking research, Steinfatt *et al.* (2002) suggest that asking the research target for their animal year may generate more accuracy in age approximation. In many cultures chronological age is not used and birth dates are aligned with the animal year the child was born in. This approach recognized cultural differences in understanding age, and draws attention to the internationally determined age of childhood as being under 18. This is important as it distinguishes between children and adults, whose needs and experiences differ, and also in terms of the different policies applicable to potential trafficking scenarios.

which call for improvement in youth education regarding the risks of migrating abroad to work. These perspectives inform the arguments for increasing the protection of unaccompanied migrant children within a human rights framework.

IGO reports of child trafficking tend to emphasise the exploitation and suffering that children experience. The conditions of poverty, gender inequalities and violence are all said to contribute to vulnerability to being trafficked for sexual purposes, whilst law enforcement and immigration officials are reported to treat the girls as women and not children, which impacts on access and eligibility for support and protection. In relation to the return of children found to have been trafficked, these reports often suggest that there is a lack of safeguarding measures which increases vulnerability to being trafficked and then re-trafficked upon return. The recruitment of children is, in these scenarios, described as forced, coerced, or threatened, and children are said to have been deceived or lied to about the situation they are going to. Instead of the work, education or economic remuneration they are promised, children are abused and exploited.

In a notable and less polemical early study, Ayotte, commissioned by Save the Children (2001), undertook research into the reasons that motivate children to travel to Europe. Push factors such as war, conflict and endemic poverty were found to have been behind children's migrations. The study aimed to inform practice and policy-making and to contribute to the wider political processes, social policies and legislation regarding separated children. The study investigated the means by which children leave home, who is involved, and the transport and costs. Children were reluctant to discuss these issues in the research interviews, and were probably told to keep quiet or were not involved in the migratory arrangements (Ayotte 2001). The research gathered case histories of children from 28 different countries. 28 children (12.8 per cent) in the study reported some form of trafficking. Interviews recorded what type of exploitation children experienced and roles the trafficker played. The report concludes that the bulk of existing information on children's situations in countries of destination is anecdotal and there are: *a diversity of reasons for children being separated from parents and uprooted from country and culture*" (Ayotte 2001 p.9).

The education of parents who arrange or are tricked into allowing their children to travel to the UK was also the subject of a report on an international workshop in Laos; Nigeria entitled: *“Denouncing the Better Life Syndrome”*, (AFRUCA 2003). This sought to examine the myths of child trafficking and was conducted by AFRUCA with the support of the NSPCC. Similarly, Terre Des Hommes (2003) in relation to trafficking in Nepalese girls to India and the trafficking in Albanian children to Greece (2005), suggest that parents in countries of origin where livelihood opportunities are constrained by structural economic conditions are motivated by the economic benefits of sending their children to live abroad. The complicity of the family and poor economic conditions are explanations for child trafficking that are often evident in IGO reports although ‘solutions’ to trafficking rarely provide any serious consideration to measures that might help address the global imbalance between wealth and poverty that can influence migratory patterns. Dessy and Pallage (2003) suggest that the fight against trafficking needs a combination of legislation and other poverty alleviation measures, arguing that:

“...there is no evidence that better law enforcement alone can end poverty, the primary determinant of the vulnerability of children to trafficking” (Dessy and Pallage 2003, p 4).

In relation to this, Dessy and Pallage (2003) propose a theoretical economic model based on the increase of family income which would reduce the need for children to undertake economic migration. This economic theory could be accused of underestimating the cultural aspects of migration, kinship obligations and duties, and the importance of child migration as a long term sustainability strategy. It also assumes parents view children and childhood in a homogenous way. This approach to preventing trafficking does not fully allow for children migrating of their own volition to improve their opportunities, promoting instead an economic investment approach in countries of origin. These are investments to be delivered through international development programmes which may be subject to the whims of sponsoring organisations and changes in policy, as has been the case in relation to the prevention of trafficking in women (Doezema 2001; Doezema 2002; Kapur 2004; Sharma 2004). However, the advantage of such an approach is that it does acknowledge the very real and pressing push factors that can influence migratory decisions. It also diverts attention away from strategies based on immigration control and

surveillance and policing, providing a progressive, if somewhat idealistic solution to the problem.

Whilst it is largely quantitative research trajectories that are found in the international anti-trafficking campaigning studies and literature, there are critiques which do adopt structural perspectives in relation to female economic migration and women in the global sex industry. Kapur (2004) has argued in relation to the trafficking of women in the sex and other industries that migration controls do little to improve the situation of the migrant woman. In relation to the situation in Canada, the security and immigration policy agendas predominate at the expense of the exploited migrants (Sharma 2004). The problematisation of migration in trafficking discourses does not acknowledge the social organisation of displacement and subsequent migration, nor does it explain why some mobility is differentiated, some celebrated and others negatively perceived (Sharma 2004 p.54).

Sharma's study is situated from the standpoint of the undocumented migrants, who, she argues, have well-versed demands in relation to economic mobility, migration and access to labour markets:

“Rather than calling for an end to trafficking or smuggling, taking the standpoint of migrants compels us to deal with the reality that such illicit movements are the only ones available to the majority of the world's displaced people” (Sharma 2004 p.54).

Sharma highlights the contested roles and motivation of campaigners, and argues that the aim of these campaigning and rescuing activities is largely to restrict the movement of people as: *“it is assumed that migration is something that is inherently damaging”* (Sharma 2004 p.54). This critique is also relevant in the sense that the migration of children is perceived as problematic and risky. Children are considered too young and vulnerable to make migratory decisions, their migrations are heavily regulated and policies are located within the context of wider immigration agendas (Terre Des Hommes 2004). Children travelling unaccompanied continue to present a range of potentially conflicting policy and practice responses in relation to the securitisation of borders at one level, and their rights and entitlements to international protection at another. The

role of NGOs in anti-trafficking programmes also raises ethical concerns as they are undertaking the work of governments which reduces or conceals the level of government accountability (Vandekerckhove 2003). NGOs, their roles, and their relationships with government sponsors are an important area in need of further analysis in respect of the issue of child trafficking. In the UK context there has to date been limited critical attention paid to the contribution of NGOs to child trafficking policy-making.

UK research, publications and critiques: child trafficking

Although trafficking is a current issue in UK child safeguarding work and a global problem which involves children being taken away from their parents and potentially exploited, there is very little research in the UK on this issue (Corby 2006). This gap is identified and discussed in a review of the literature on trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation published by the Home Office, (Dowling *et al.* 2007). In their review Dowling *et al.* suggest that a number of factors feed the demand for child trafficking for labour exploitation: cultural beliefs regarding, for example, the acceptability of child labour; poverty in countries of origin and parents wanting a better life for their children; children being perceived as commodities; lack of education; discrimination; political conflict; and inadequate or ineffective legislation. They also highlight wider structural explanations which focus on immigration policies, limited opportunities and the wars and environmental events which drive trafficking. These factors often tend to be minimalised in policy discourses of child trafficking where the emphasis tends to be placed upon the dangers of the trafficking event with limited acknowledgement of ‘the danger’ migrants might be fleeing from. Dowling *et al.* are critical of the lack of conceptual clarity in relation to the terms ‘coercion’ and ‘deception’ contained within the UN trafficking definition. They argue that international consistency in defining trafficking could improve the support for trafficked people, quantify the problem, and promote informed policies. Dowling *et al.* also report that both accompanied children (those entering the UK with a parent or carer) and unaccompanied children (those who enter without a parent or carer) are vulnerable, and highlight factors which are said to promote an acceptance of certain cultural practices:

“...parents may be aware of the true purpose, whilst children remain unaware. The acceptability of such practices, particularly in some African cultures can hinder detection of African children trafficked as domestic servants to families in the UK” (Dowling et al. 2007, p.14).

The review found that there was a lack of clarity in relation to which agencies were tasked with the identification of victims and a corresponding lack of information on indicators of trafficking in immigration, health and law enforcement agencies. The key issue here is that indicators come from actual or, more often, suspected cases of girls thought to have been trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. The review authors point to a lack of knowledge on the incidence of trafficking and on those who traffic children, finding little research to identify perpetrator characteristics. There are also difficulties in immigration authorities identifying child trafficking because of the problems in distinguishing trafficked children from others. There is a lack of knowledge about the traffickers’ methods, the different roles traffickers assume in the trafficking processes, or the planning of trafficking activities (Dowling et al. 2007).

The authors highlight the impact of trafficking on children’s health, development and survival related to their journeys and abuse they may experience. They suggest in terms of support that unaccompanied minors teams appear to be able to offer the specialist services that trafficked children are said to need. The need for policy and practice guidance is highlighted in order that more accurate information and intelligence can be collated and used to identify trafficking situations. They suggest that future research should be developed to determine trends in general. The authors found *“no distinctive age trend for those trafficked for labour exploitation”* (Dowling et al. 2007, p.11). Finally, they maintain that their findings are only indicative, emphasising the anecdotal nature of the existing evidence base.

Health and child trafficking

The health needs of trafficked children have been raised as issues which require resources and policy attention (Beyrer and Stachowiak 2003; Beyrer 2004). The impact of trafficking on health was examined by Zimmerman *et al.* (2003) who reported on a European study into the health needs of trafficked women and adolescents, and identified a set of common standards for working with trafficked women and adolescents. The aims of the study were to highlight the health risks and consequences of trafficking in women, and to provide information on trafficked victims health needs for use by agencies and policy makers. The multi-country primary research study reported on findings from interviews with women and adolescent girls who had formerly been victims of trafficking, and were currently receiving support. There were 28 interview respondents, accessed through support agencies; five children were included in the sample, aged between thirteen and seventeen.

The interviews focussed on seven thematic areas: provision of, and access to, services; health; work; personal and social life; detention; travel; home and return to country of origin. The research recommends improvements to the health provision for those who have been trafficked, and the inclusion of health information in anti-trafficking programmes. The health risks and consequences were found to be similar to those experienced by other marginalized groups. They also found that there were different impacts on women's health depending on what stage of the trafficking process they are in pre-departure; in transit; or in the destination country. As well as physical, emotional and psychological health problems, the sexual abuse and restrictions on women's freedom and limited access to services were identified. The sexual reproductive health of women and their social and economic well-being and legal security were identified as health concerns in this study. Occupational health risks were also evident, particularly from those involved in the commercial sex industry. This is not entirely surprising given that this sector is one of the most risky for women (Sanders 2005). The health information available to, and accessible by, those participating in the study was also limited (Zimmerman *et al.* 2003).

In the study Zimmerman *et al.* (2003) argue that there are many barriers to providing health services to trafficked women in destination countries where contact is likely to be made through outreach or mobile services aimed at women in sex work, or those working in other labour sectors that employ trafficked women. These challenges include meeting women's multi-dimensional service needs; accessing women in safe and appropriate ways; overcoming language and cultural barriers; gaining trust and offering support; and developing strategies to address women's lack of security and frequent mobility. The emphasis in their research study was on women but the findings are also relevant to children who have to negotiate access to health provision through adults. Potentially, children are more vulnerable to health risks because of this additional barrier.

The commercial sexual exploitation of children

References to child trafficking have been identified in reviews of literature on child prostitution in the UK (Cusick 2002). Chase and Statham (2004) also found little evidence of child trafficking in their review of UK research on the commercial sexual exploitation of children:

“...there is limited available data on the scale of the problems and limited protocols or mechanisms in place to support those at risk” (Chase and Statham 2004, p.2).

They identify problems with collecting data in the area, and argue that the known data are likely to be underestimated given the lack of data collection systems and processes at local authority levels, and the use of figures which do not include children who go missing from social services. Chase and Statham (2004) describe how children who have been trafficked often face deportation if they seek help as they have no legal right to remain in the UK unless they are able to claim asylum. Children are left unprotected as available resources cannot offer “*round the clock*” supervision (Chase and Statham 2004 p.31).

Mannion (2004) acknowledges that children are trafficked for purposes other than commercial sexual exploitation and refers to the root causes in terms of the global impact of western capitalist free market ideology. There is a lack of reliable data and research in the area and

studies which do exist are not suitable for comparative analysis across countries or areas. Mannion (2004) then goes on to outline the global trends in the commercial sexual exploitation of children and argues that the issue of child trafficking is focussed around supply and demand factors in relation to the commercial sex industry, with poverty at the core. In relation to the implications for social work professionals there is a need for greater awareness of the global dimension of the problem of child trafficking and increased knowledge of the local legislative context in order to advocate for victims, together with a call for increasing resources to deal with the issue (Mannion 2004).

Vulnerability of migrant children and child trafficking

It is generally assumed that unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children are vulnerable to trafficking (Crawley 2006; Halvorsen 2002). Although it is not possible to ascertain from the limited studies of child trafficking how children experience trafficking events, a number of studies of unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children have emerged in recent years which have some relevance. These have discussed the way in which asylum-seeking and unaccompanied children come to the UK and access, or are excluded from, welfare and support (Cemlyn and Briskman 2003; Kohli and Mather 2003; Mitchell 2003; Bhabba 2004; Nandy 2005; Bhabba and Zard 2006; Kohli 2006a; Kohli 2006b; Giner 2007; Hopkins and Hill 2008). In relation to the ECM agenda and migrant children, the needs of such children are not being addressed and government priorities to secure borders and discourage illegal immigration override the safeguarding requirements (Crawley 2006). A number of policy measures to protect trafficked children are advocated, including permanent protection as refugees, and their removal from the immigration system until a decision has been reached about their future. In terms of support for trafficked children, reunification with families in children's countries of origin is proposed, where this is deemed safe and in a child's best interests, together with a reflection period to allow children time to decide what is their next step (Crawley 2006).

In terms of the return and repatriation of children, as the Refugee Council point out, it is not always in the best interests of children and may actually cause greater problems. They also

advocate a number of protection measures which include: reflection periods; access to the asylum system; right to remain; redress through the criminal justice system; and similarly argue for guarantees that children are not punished or prosecuted under immigration law. This is by no means guaranteed under the current arrangements (Refugee Council 2005a). Policy conflicts and tensions in relation to child trafficking, and immigration concerns override children's rights to protection, and the current strategy: "*undermines the principle that every child matters*" (Crawley 2006 p.52). There is a need for greater sophistication of identification systems, and immigration officers who form the first line of contact with children coming into the UK are not adequately trained in identification of trafficking victims:

"...it is dangerous to expect them to combine the full range of knowledge and skills required for specialist child protection work" (Crawley 2006 p.53).

Crawley's analysis suggests that health and welfare professional practices will be imbued with an overwhelming concern for immigration control. They are not 'welfare workers' and a concern for human well-being is not the primary focus of their professional culture. The Home Office sphere of responsibility over refugee and asylum-seeking children has been the subject of much criticism and has been accused of prioritizing immigration controls over the welfare of children, (Cunningham and Tomlinson 2005; Cunningham and Cunningham 2007).

In one notable study of the pre-flight experiences of asylum-seeking children, Thomas *et al.* (2004) analysed retrospective case files, legal statements, social services records and interviews with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC). This study aimed to identify why children come to the UK and what experiences they had before they left their country of origin. The sample was made up of 59 males and 41 females. The data gathering methods were ranked according to the quality and breadth of information they contained. Legal statements were ranked first. The records from social services were ranked second by the project steering group. Data from the children included in the study was ranked as third, as this was often sketchy, and interviews with children did not produce detailed information.

In the study the authors identified that ten per cent of the total sample of one hundred children, were trafficked; however, they did not offer any clarification towards explaining how this had been established or how they had defined child trafficking. The majority of children in the wider sample had experienced abuse or some form of violence in the pre-departure stage of their migration. Only a minority of children in this study were reported to have been trafficked for prostitution or domestic slavery. Three children in this sample were exploited in the UK before coming to the attention of social services. This supports my earlier points about the way in which the definition lacks clarity and leads to a confused and distorted perception of what child trafficking is. Moreover, the findings of this study contrast with the perception of child trafficking as involving immeasurable numbers of children which is often advanced in the IGO and NGO anti-trafficking publications. In relation to data bias the report acknowledges that children may give inconsistent accounts, and they may have been told to present themselves in a particular way to officials. There are a number of reasons for the silence and the secrecy which characterise asylum-seeking children's entry to the UK, which might be about protecting themselves or others (Kohli 2006a Kohli 2006b). More recently Hopkins and Hill (2008) in a study of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children's pre-flight experiences found that trafficking and smuggling were minimal in the accounts of these children. Many had been brought to the country by agents. Trafficking is thus only one potential explanation for many events.

UK NGO publications: child trafficking

The majority of UK publications on the subject of child trafficking are found within the NGO sector, and are best described as campaigning or awareness raising reports. AFRUCA and ECPAT have been active in the anti-trafficking campaigns in the UK. AFRUCA (Africans United against Child Abuse) is a national children's charity which was established in 2001 following the high profile deaths of African children in the UK: Victoria Climbié⁹ and Damilola

⁹ Victoria Climbié was from the Côte d'Ivoire in West Africa killed by her aunt and her partner in London in 2001. URL <http://www.victoria-climbié-inquiry.org.uk/> (Accessed 22nd June 2009).

Taylor¹⁰. The organisation advocates on behalf of African children, targeting policy makers and service providers, and promoting the needs of African children. Claiming to be at the forefront of the anti-trafficking lobby, AFRUCA has drawn attention to the issue through engagement with policy makers, NGOs and the African community (AFRUCA 2009).

Established in 1994 the UK NGO ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) is a coalition of other UK charities: Anti-Slavery International, Jubilee Campaign, NSPCC, Save the Children UK, The Children's Society, UNICEF UK, and World Vision UK. The members provide advice on campaigns and collaborate on joint projects. ECPAT describe themselves as a children's rights organisation who campaign against the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the UK and internationally (ECPAT 2009a, 2009b 2009c). ECPAT Publications tend to concentrate on the 'risks' associated with trafficking. The focus of ECPAT's campaigning is on demand factors such as the protection of commercially sexually exploited children and the prevention of sex tourism. ECPAT have published four primary studies on the issue of child trafficking since 2001.

The inclusion and involvement of stakeholders in policy-making under New Labour has been well established and this has provided opportunities for NGOs to advocate and campaign around the issue of child trafficking in government networks and Inter-Departmental Government groups (IDMG hereafter) and to publicise their concerns more directly through the mass media. Both ECPAT and AFRUCA contributed to: *Tackling Human Trafficking-Consultation on Proposals for a UK Action Plan* (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2006) and as such it is important to include an analysis of the work of these organisations in this review.

In 2002 AFRUCA/NSPCC published a seminar report "*Trafficking of African children to the UK: Myth or reality*" The report included an overview of the experience of West Sussex social services in developing new identification systems to identify child trafficking. These were largely based on the profiles of girls who had gone missing from Local Authority care who later

¹⁰ Damilola Taylor was a Nigerian boy who was killed in London in 2000. URL <http://www.damilolataylortrust.com/home.html> (Accessed 22nd June 2009).

were found, largely by chance, to have been involved in commercial sex work in Italy. The publication also includes a report from the police regarding the death of child ‘Adam’¹¹ who it is believed was a victim of ritual murder. It contains a presentation by Anti-Slavery (UK), who discussed the commercialisation of traditional family placement practices in West and Central Africa. The report concludes with a number of recommendations: safeguarding systems for children entering the UK; greater partnership between the African community and anti-trafficking groups; joint international work in countries of origin; more research into child trafficking for purposes other than sexual exploitation; and rolling out models of good practice. However, the focus was still on the demand factors such as the commercial exploitation children could potentially experience.

“What the Professionals Know” (ECPAT 2001) follows a familiar pattern of NGO studies which interpret a lack of evidence of the phenomena as a ‘negative’, rather than a positive thing. The lack of evidence leads to a heightened concern rather than a relaxation. The methods employed in this research are not critically assessed, and this raises the question about the purpose of the research. To this effect the report aims to:

“...get from fiction to fact on the trafficking of children, as past research on trafficking has often centred on the trafficking of women, rather than children” (ECPAT 2001 p.3).

In this report, there is a brief outline of the sampling of participants, but little in the way of explaining how they were accessed. The main body of the report focuses on a discussion of the findings of the interviews conducted, and two case studies. The report discusses the disappearances of African and Chinese children from West Sussex social services between 1995 and 2001. According to ECPAT (2001), 66 children went missing during this time period: 48 females aged between 13 and 22, and 18 males between the ages of 14 and 17. The whereabouts of these children and young adults was not known, although it is assumed that some of the

¹¹ Adam was the name given to an African boy whose headless torso was found in the river Thames in London in 2001. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/1788452.stm> (accessed 22nd June 2009).

African girls were being taken from the UK to Italy where they were commercially sexually exploited. The report also outlines the ‘at risk’ profile developed and implemented by West Sussex following these disappearances. The author, Carron Somerset, then goes on to provide a detailed overview of the sex work environment in Soho (London), whilst also stating that children are unlikely to be found in this area which is well regulated and monitored by the Metropolitan Police. Children coming into the UK are vulnerable to other forms of exploitation, and these are touched upon, but the centrality of sexual exploitation as a motivation for trafficking children is reiterated throughout the report.

The report makes a number of claims and suppositions based on the interviews with key informants, and draws reference and support for the claims made through the extensive use of news media reports. The use of newspaper reports is problematic as they are clearly not able to be substantiated, nor are they simply reporting on child trafficking. Media reports on the exposure of sexual slavery, women involved in sex work, police breaking up child pornography rings, reports from outside the UK and international news, are included and referred to indiscriminately and uncritically throughout the study. Many of these reports have no evidence base other than being media reports. In relation to the findings and evidence of child trafficking in the UK ECPAT (2001) makes claims which are based on anecdotes and estimates which cannot be verified. The study, which aimed to: “...*get from fiction to fact on the trafficking of children*” (ECPAT 2001 p.3), thus has limited value in informing approaches to researching or understanding the issue of child trafficking. The problems with similar NGO studies have been well articulated in terms of methodological rigour, and the implications associated with the uncritical use of data have been highlighted in relation to the development of policy and legislative responses to trafficking in humans (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). Nonetheless, ECPAT continue to publish reports on child trafficking in the UK.

In their next publication: “*Cause for Concern?*” (ECPAT 2004), social workers in several London Boroughs were interviewed to gauge their knowledge and understanding of the issues of child trafficking. The study was designed around the premise that social work and other child welfare professionals who come into contact with victims of child trafficking are unable to identify them through lack of knowledge of the issue (ECPAT 2004). As well as trying to assess

the numbers of child trafficking through the use of retrospective case samples, agencies contacted were sent a copy of ECPAT's (2001) *"What the Professionals Know"*.

Not surprisingly, ECPAT (2004) found that professionals knew very little about child trafficking. The bias in the approach used in the study is evident in relation to priming subjects of the nature and purpose of the research, in addition to the promotion of ECPAT's explicit campaigning and awareness raising objectives which inform their research agenda. The hidden and covert nature of the phenomenon, together with very limited evidence of child trafficking, led the author, Carron Somerset, to suggest that the little that was known about child trafficking represented the: *"tip of the iceberg"* (ECPAT 2004 p.11). The depiction of the phenomenon of child trafficking as a *tip of the iceberg* inculcates a sense of widespread and unknowable risk, emphasizing the hidden dangers which lurk beneath the surface; a familiar theme in child trafficking NGO publications. The lack of evidence of child trafficking is taken to mean that things must be worse than they seem.

In 2007, ECPAT published *"Missing Out?"*. In this study the aim was to gain an understanding of the levels of awareness of child trafficking issues among social services, and identify cases of suspected child trafficking dealt with by social workers. It was also intended to examine the reporting procedures in cases of child trafficking and explore the multi-agency aspects in place to meet the needs of trafficked children. Again, ECPAT (2007) used a retrospective case study approach and presented a series of vignettes to social workers, which describe characteristics of a possible child trafficking scenario. In *"Missing Out?"* interviews were conducted in local authorities across three discrete geographical areas in the UK, each with a regional airport and a population within which unaccompanied children could be incorporated as a hidden group. The title of the report itself conveys a powerful message about the premise and contention of the research: to reinforce the notion that the problem is far more prevalent than is thought. This specifically locates the issue as child abuse and exploitation in ethnic minority communities. The assumption appears to be that communities with ethnic minority populations are locations where children are concealed from public or official scrutiny, and thus vulnerable to exploitation. Again the theme of secrecy and the hidden nature of child trafficking are made explicit.

There are three scenarios in the vignettes used in the study. In scenario one, the child thinks she is coming to stay with an aunt to attend school, but she is made to work in the house, is abused and runs away. In the second scenario an unaccompanied child claims asylum and subsequently disappears from foster care. In the third scenario an eastern European young woman is found selling personal services in a sauna, where she is threatened by the owner. Each scenario was presented by ECPAT as representing typical characteristics of a trafficking case.

In relation to the use of these scenarios and the extrapolation of estimates, each scenario could actually indicate a wider set of explanations and issues which are not necessarily child trafficking. For example, the young woman selling personal services in a sauna could be said to be experiencing harassment or abuse in the workplace, but this does not necessarily indicate trafficking. Similarly, the disappearance of an unaccompanied child from foster care might have a number of potential explanations; nonetheless, participants were invited to discuss particular cases which had the characteristics identified. The ambiguity of the scenarios used in the vignettes raises general questions about the validity of the ECPAT (2004) and ECPAT (2007) studies. Vignette studies have been used in cross-cultural research with social work students (Christopherson 1998) and the findings illustrated the very different perceptions of situations which could be described as child abuse. Estimates of the number of potentially trafficked children provided in *“Missing Out?”* are derived using these dubious methods. Whilst the report accepts that the findings should be interpreted as indicative, it nonetheless concludes in a dramatic and striking manner: *“The results of this investigation present a disturbing picture of child slavery and child trafficking”* (ECPAT 2007 p.7).

The report suggests that the high levels of missing children should be investigated through a national enquiry and argues that currently in policy and practice, precedence is put on immigration status over and above the child’s best interests. ECPAT (2007) question the effectiveness of the current political activity in regard to the UK Government’s *Every Child Matters* policy agenda and highlight how the UK government is isolated in the context of international anti-trafficking efforts. They also argue for the immediate implementation of child protection procedures in suspected cases of child trafficking, advocating a policy of: *“not waiting for conclusive evidence”* (ECPAT 2007 p.6).

The purpose of ECPAT's studies has clearly been to raise awareness about child trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation in the UK and to identify what social workers and other key professionals know about the issue. ECPAT's (2004) and (2007) estimates of the numbers of children potentially trafficked are derived from social workers reporting cases of when migrant children disappear from foster care or other local authority provision. There may be a host of reasons for these disappearances, but these other possibilities are not explored or discussed. The focus of ECPAT's work is on ending child trafficking and exploitation of children within the commercial sex industry, and the reports are largely framed within this context. Moreover, the ECPAT studies, whilst emphasising the lack of data which they argue is due to the hidden nature of the exploitation, also promote the view that the known incidence of child trafficking is only a poor reflection of the real size of the issue. As is often the case in the IGO anti-trafficking arenas, domestic NGO reports also locate child trafficking within the context of commercial sexual exploitation.

Paladin Child

Despite the methodological shortcomings discussed in the previous section, the influence of the NGO reports on child trafficking should not be underestimated. The voices of leading NGOs shape and frame not only broader perceptions of the issue, but policy as well. For example, the claims made in AFRUCA/NSPCC (2002) and ECPAT (2001; 2004) that girls were being trafficked, influenced the development of a police led multi-agency study of child migration at London's Heathrow airport (Metropolitan Police 2004). Although the project was also influenced by the recognition of the increasing numbers of unaccompanied children seeking asylum, arriving from international areas of war and conflict, the role of the NGOs in shaping the project was significant.

The Paladin project gathered data on Non-EU passport holding children (under 18) travelling without a parent, legal guardian, or older sibling and not part of a recognised group (Metropolitan Police 2004). The project, designed to scope the issue of child migration, identified children who were vulnerable and gathered intelligence to inform the development of

UK ports child safeguarding processes and systems. The project team identified children brought to the UK with relatives or unrelated sponsors. The children were deemed to have had inadequate arrangements made for their well-being during the migration process, leaving them vulnerable or at risk. The Paladin team used existing or developed new referral systems to initiate support services. In total, of the 1783 children studied in the project over a three month period, 551 were assessed for further enquiries. At the conclusion of the study 14 children were not able to be traced, and police enquiries continue to investigate these disappearances. At the time of the Paladin research, immigration and ports staff did not have specialist training in child development or welfare, and so the recommendations of the report included the formation of a child safeguarding team to be based at the airport in order to provide assessment and identification opportunities when children arrive in the UK (Metropolitan Police 2004).

Crucially, according to the findings of the study, child trafficking is not a significant safeguarding issue; it is one of a whole set of child welfare issues which UK ports authorities are presented with. In terms of being able to quantify the numbers of children trafficked the report states that: “...*this study has not identified any widespread exploitation of migrant children in the UK*” (Metropolitan Police 2004 p.8). The report also suggested that the media has played a role in exaggerating the issues of exploitation of children, implying that the media portrayal of trafficking has been “...*based on a handful of case studies*” (Metropolitan Police 2004 p.4).

This is significant, in that it confirms many of the points I have made in this chapter concerning the reliability and validity of much of the research undertaken into the phenomenon. This review demonstrates that most of the current knowledge is derived from unsubstantiated sources, newspaper reports and NGO awareness raising publications. The claims that child trafficking is part of organised crime networks is not substantiated with evidence (see for instance Dowling, *et al.* 2007; Metropolitan Police 2004) and this raises questions regarding the social construction of the phenomenon.

Child migration and trafficking: international studies

The NGO Terre Des Hommes (2003) study regarding the trafficking of Albanian children to Greece, for exploitation and begging, drew on feedback from locally based organisations working with children in Albania and Greece. It highlights re-trafficking risks experienced by Albanian children aged 0-15 found in orphanages in Greece and Italy. In this study, trafficking is seen as a problem related to ethnicity; that is, Roma children who are reported to have come from conditions of poverty and from dysfunctional families, and who are socially excluded in countries of origin and destination. This kind of campaigning publication is an example of the way in which research studies into child trafficking tend to draw on case studies of victims and third party accounts from key informants. The 'findings' then feature as support or evidence for broad, largely unsubstantiated claims made about child trafficking. Meanwhile anti-trafficking programmes that are advocated tend to focus on preventing migration, and are based on assumptions that children should not migrate and should be protected by their families in their countries of origin. Such interpretations, however, sometimes fail to acknowledge poor socio-economic environments found in many countries.

There has been a recent emergence of international research which examines the relationship between child labour migrants and their ability to migrate within highly regulated migration systems. A small and important body of qualitative and interpretivist literature has begun to make a wider contribution to child trafficking research. For example, Bastia (2005), Delruyn and Broerkaert (2005), De Lange (2005) and Gozdiak *et al.* (2003). These studies take grounded positions which accept the standpoint of the migrant being an active social agent, and they raise some important research questions related to: the role of parents and families in child migrations; the capacity of children to consent to migrate; the constructions of child migration; the existence of traditional and cultural child migrations; the structural conditions in countries of origin; and the direction of migration policies and legislation in destination countries. These studies also illustrate that there are tensions between the conceptualisation of child trafficking from a rights and/or abuse perspective and a structural inequalities perspective. For example, in regard to the role of parents, campaigning publications refer to the complicity of parents in child trafficking scenarios. This has been critically explored by Manzo (2005) in the context of West Africa. She

draws on a number of studies which challenge the rhetoric that parents are selling their children into slavery. This study suggests that monetary exchanges are seen as a down payment on future, freely offered labour; cash payments are not always made as the impetus is driven by the hope of a better life; and parents expecting much more for their children than a life of slavery. Children too have some part to play in the dynamics of trafficking not solely related to their status as victims. The consent issue is also raised by Manzo (2005) who argues that children are agreeable to labour and promises of material goods in exchange, especially in a context of widespread poverty, as: “...*stories of hope and images of the good life can be hard to resist*” (Manzo 2005 p.398).

Gozdiak *et al.* (2006) conducted interviews with individuals working with children identified as trafficked in the US. In this study, they report that children were thought to have been driven by their own migratory ambitions, with decisions being made within situations of poverty. The study also reports that children remain attached to their relatives, and few reported familial abuse. In relation to the journeys, some children said it was the worst part. The authors also raised issues about workers not asking about the child’s migratory experience in case they are required under legislation to hand this information over to the trafficker’s defence team, thus compromising the interests of the child. This lack of information can make the process of support difficult. The study also suggests that children may not want to remain in care of social services as this would impact on their own goals and ambitions, and further that these ambitions were in conflict with the education legislation related to school attendance. In terms of self perceptions, children did not see themselves as victims; and only a small number of children were described as having clinical symptoms of depressive disorders. This is in contrast to the NGO claims about the damaging effects of trafficking on children’s health and well-being. In regard to the relationships children forged with social workers, whilst these took some time to develop, once established, children viewed social workers as stand-in parents. In terms of the social work role this involved working across official law enforcement, justice, immigration, social security, public assistance, and legal services. Conflicts between the priorities and agendas of the public protection agencies are also discussed (Gozdiak *et al.* 2006).

A small number of ethnographic studies have focussed on unaccompanied children's entry to destination countries. In a study in Belgium, Delruyn and Broerkaert (2005) conducted interviews with children during the interception process at the port and analysed data from the case files. They maintain that many children travelling to the UK were doing so to meet another family member and were migrating primarily to improve their life opportunities. As highlighted earlier, the control and surveillance agenda of immigration officials predominates at the expense of a welfare approach. Delruyn and Broerkaert (2005) suggest that there is a need for appropriate training on how to deal with intercepted unaccompanied minors in a respectful way. In terms of language and communication they point out that their study found the failure to use interpreters or translators made communication with children difficult, and this extends from research to practice in this field. They suggest that social workers could play a greater part in the interception processes in relation to supporting and advocating on behalf of children and in relation to being available for the children who felt they needed to talk to someone and tell them about their experiences. In Norway, Engebriksen (2003) interviewed immigration officials and other informants and also identified disparities between the way in which the national child welfare legislation was applied in practice in relation to child migrants and their rights. These studies also highlight how a broad and complex range of migratory patterns and situations are inappropriately constructed as trafficking events or episodes in both policy and practice.

In another ethnographic study of teenage labour migration, Bastia (2005) used a biographical approach and collected the life stories of Bolivian migrants living in Argentina as well as from returnees. This study also conducted surveys in Cochabamba in Bolivia to establish migration trends, surveying approximately a quarter of the community. The study was designed to investigate: reasons for wanting to migrate; the modes of recruitment; the working conditions and the consequences of child trafficking. Bastia (2005) argues that child trafficking should be seen within the wider context of labour migration (p.57) and with regard to traditional and cultural practices.

Parents who entrusted their children were often not aware of the circumstances of the placement or the exploitation children experienced:

“Poorer families in the Andes entrust their daughters to better off families to help with domestic work in exchange for education...common in families who have formed a fictitious relative bond called compadrazgo...parents ...often do so in good faith, thinking that they are providing the child with better opportunities ...they do not seem to be aware of the situations of vulnerability they are placing their child in or the extremely exploitative working conditions these children often have to endure” (Bastia 2005 p.61).

Whilst there is some support for the anti-trafficking campaigning stance around parent’s roles in the child trafficking process, Bastia’s other findings stand in contrast to the predominant view regarding the impact of child trafficking. In the case studies she discussed the ‘trafficking’ later became adult economic migration:

“It is often argued that being trafficked can prejudice children’s long term interests, for example by restricting their educational potential, but the cases considered here contradict the general assumption that being a victim of trafficking necessarily entails negative long term consequences” (Bastia 2005 p.65).

Parents may be duped and educational campaigns might help warn them about the dangers of migration. On the other hand educational campaigns do little to address the socio-economic realities in countries that may be gripped by war and poverty. In an unpublished ethnographic study De Lange (2005) discusses the historical pattern of rural to rural child migrant labour in Burkina Faso, a country which has high rates of poverty and child economic migration. De Lange (2005) reported on the experiences of children who had been recruited either directly by farmers or by intermediaries to work and live in neighbouring countries to undertake agricultural work, growing courgettes and other local crops. The children in the sample were those who had secured employment in a neighbouring country without discussing their plans with their parents. De Lange (2005) interviewed returning children and their parents, who were accessed for the study through discussion with local community members. Whilst children described exploitative

conditions, they also described the new skills they had learned and the effect of this upon their return. The migration was often seen by parents and the returning children as *rites de passage*¹². The study was conducted with boys aged between nine and thirteen. The research site was identified as being one where there was limited NGO activity and children were accessed by the researcher through other community respondents. De Lange (2005) explains that it was important to examine the phenomenon: “...without the interference of anti-trafficking programmes” (De Lange 2005 p.6).

The cultural and financial experiences were considered by boys and girls to be important *rites de passage* in another study in Mali of child economic migration. Busza, Castle and Diarra (2004) found that only four children in their sample of 1000 could be classified as genuinely trafficked. Busza *et al.* (2004) found, as in De Lange (2005) that children’s own aspirations motivated them to migrate abroad for work. This study also demonstrated how children’s migrations were facilitated by intermediaries and extended family members, who often advocated around payment issues and offered support during their migrations in general. Legal and assistance measures delivered by anti-trafficking programmes operated against the wishes of children in the study, who were returned home only to set out on migrations again a few days later, presumably at more expense (Busza *et al.* 2004).

These research studies, which have been conducted outside of the anti-trafficking campaigning environment, set out to incorporate the voices of children who described a range of experiences, motivations and expectations which challenge and contradict the rhetoric generally found in the NGO publications. They maintain that the wider structural and labour conditions should be addressed as it is within these conditions that migrant children and young people are exploited. These studies also aim criticism at governments and international programmes and policies that have been designed to respond to the issue with increasingly strict migration systems and prevention and returns programmes.

¹² Any of the rites of separation, transition, and incorporation that mark an individual's social existence from birth to death as he passes from one stage of life to another; ritual that marks the end of one phase and the start of another (Oxford English Dictionary 2010).

The UK media and child trafficking

This review finds that there are similarities in the perceptions found in the NGO UK campaigning literature and in materials published by the international anti-trafficking networks. News reporting on child trafficking in the UK also appears with some frequency. Successful anti-trafficking operations are well publicised. The media also publicises UK NGO studies of child trafficking and again these tend to characterise children as vulnerable, innocent, naïve and exploitable. Advocates call for legislative change to provide effective identification and protection systems, and argue that the size of the problem is underestimated. The quantitative statistics generated in research studies are in effect ‘guesstimates’, yet, despite this, child trafficking in the UK remains a high profile policy and media issue. There are claims that there is an organised traffic in children to meet the demand for cheap exploitable labour, especially within the commercial sex industry, and to facilitate entitlement to access to UK welfare resources (ECPAT 2007). Based on the existing research evidence analysed here, the focus has been on raising awareness of the vulnerability of unaccompanied minors to trafficking by organised criminal gangs for exploitation especially, but not solely for commercial sexual exploitation. Earlier in this chapter, I drew attention to the critics of the media publicity which surround the issue of human trafficking (Bertone 2004) and child trafficking (Metropolitan Police Authority 2004). The perception of child trafficking which is advanced in the UK media has only recently been subject to critical scrutiny (Buckland 2008).

In this example from *The Daily Mail* the size of the issue, the illegality of the entry and the organised crime elements of the international trade in children are explicit and associated with widespread benefit fraud:

“VICTIMS OF THE CHILD TRADERS”

“It’s the latest immigration scandal: thousands of young children smuggled into Britain by ruthless gangs, who use them to milk the benefits system of billions” (Daily Mail Saturday June 4th 2005).

Another report by Clare Dyer (legal correspondent) published in *The Guardian* also emphasises the potential financial gains which child trafficking is alleged to generate and emphasises the sensational/religious/moral aspects of the case:

“MIRACLE BABY WAS VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING JUDGE SAYS”

“A "miracle baby" allegedly born to an infertile mother through the power of prayer was a victim of child trafficking motivated by financial greed, a high court judge ruled yesterday. Mr. Justice Ryder said urgent efforts should be made to track down the real parents of the one-year-old boy, one of many children who a self-styled archbishop claims were born through divine intervention to women unable to conceive” (The Guardian¹³ Saturday November 13th 2004).

These portrayals are at best distorted and at worst inaccurate but they do resonate with the public, leading to heightened and exaggerated levels of concern about the potential risks and dangers to children coming into the UK. Similar reports are evident in social work professional publications, for example in *Community Care*. The exposure of child trafficking here is strongly aligned with wider societal concerns about the commercial sexual exploitation of children and organised immigration crime. In an early report (*Community Care* 2002)¹⁴ Rachel Downey draws on ECPAT (2001) and other NGO sources. Downey discusses the exploitative outcomes and presents the situation in the UK as a ‘battle’. The article frames child trafficking within the context of the commercial sexual exploitation of women and illustrates a typical scenario of child trafficking:

“Most are tricked into coming. The West African victims are often initiated into cults and magic ceremonies are used to tie them to traffickers. "Curses" are placed on them and the only way for the curse to be lifted is for them to repay the cost of the journey out of Africa”

¹³ Miracle baby was victim of trafficking, judge says. URL <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2004/nov/13/childprotection.society> (Accessed 18th February 2010).

¹⁴ Trade in Misery. URL <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2002/01/31/34905/Trade-in-misery.htm> (Accessed 18th February 2010).

The article then associates the trafficking of children with other organised crimes and highlights how difficult it can be to prosecute traffickers as children are too frightened to give evidence and do not tell the truth. The lack of evidence is acknowledged, but anecdote is uncritically accepted:

“Detailed statistics on the number of trafficked children coming into the UK are unavailable. But agencies provide anecdotal evidence that it does occur and that there is no sign of it abating. So what are care agencies doing to protect these extremely vulnerable young people - and is it enough?”

In a later report in Community Care (2004)¹⁵ the *Paladin Child* Project is discussed. The report acknowledges that the project based at Heathrow airport “*did not discover significant numbers of children being trafficked*” and then goes on to quote ECPAT as saying that if these figures were multiplied it could mean 50 children a year being trafficked. In addition to this vague extrapolation, ECPAT are also reported as questioning the ability of social workers to identify trafficking cases: “*Do they know what to look for when they get to the house*”. The lack of police powers and the potential that EU expansion will lead to increases in child trafficking are also emphasised in this article. The way in which cases of child trafficking are reported and publicised in the UK media is an area in need of further enquiry, primarily because the news is based on NGO campaigning publications and official reports which draw on dubious evidence.

Extrapolation and reproduction of quantitative statistics

There is a tendency in the NGO publications to draw, sometimes indiscriminately, on media reports. ECPAT (2001) is a good example of this in the UK context. These reports have sought to quantify how many children are trafficked by extrapolating statistics from case study materials provided in interviews. Extrapolation and generalisation of these findings are based on the explicit view that child trafficking is a hidden problem of indeterminate proportion. As I have illustrated, these reports have little contribution in informing theories of child trafficking,

¹⁵ Community Care: URL <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2004/05/20/44823/Trafficking-probe-at-Heathrow-leaves-12-children-unaccounted.htm> (Accessed 18th February 2010).

reproducing instead a well established rhetoric of child trafficking as *significant, hidden and harmful*. The quantitative findings of ECPAT and other studies reported in this literature review are often described as underestimates. The lack of verifiability of quantitative data has been subjected to critical scrutiny. The figures become established and are then used uncritically. It has been argued that it is difficult to estimate the extent of trafficking as it is a secretive activity which is kept out of the public gaze and so people in these situations constitute a:

“...hidden population is a group of individuals for whom the size and boundaries are unknown, and for whom no sampling frame exists” (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005 p.18).

The illegality and stigma associated with trafficking may lead individuals involved to give misleading or incorrect information to maintain their privacy, and the issue is embedded in a number of highly politicized areas: prostitution; labour market protection, and immigration (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). This should not however necessarily lead us to conclude that there is a ‘massive’ ‘hidden’ population. As Steinfatt (2003) illustrates, NGOs and international agencies often use estimates which have no basis in fact.

In the UK context the Home Office and police communication strategies with regard to publicising successful operations mean that stories of child trafficking appear with some frequency in the UK media, orientating public and political attention towards a range of associated social and policy issues, including immigration and child safeguarding. The veracity of the claims made by NGOs, advocates and politicians is insecure, and yet they have gained official credibility; resulting in legislative change.

Beyond gender violence perspectives

This review also finds that much child trafficking research is included in wider studies related to the commercial sexual exploitation of women which are grounded in gender violence based theories. The location of child trafficking in these studies has been criticised and there is a need for further analysis which goes beyond these gender violence perspectives. It is suggested that these perspectives have led to a limited way of talking about child trafficking which focuses on

exploitative and abusive practice and the involvement of organised crime. This leads to characterisation of it as an issue about which ‘something must be done’ (Sharma 2004; Manzo 2005; Buckland 2008). The construction of the characterisations and representations of child trafficking in UK policy discourses is an under explored area.

Summary of current research

The hidden nature and the lack of reliable data on the extent of child trafficking raises issues in relation to the question of defining child trafficking. Definitions of child trafficking are unclear in the literature. It is also argued that the application of the *Palermo Protocol* definition serves the interests of immigration and state priorities of the West/global North, prioritising as it does the movement of goods, whilst simultaneously restricting the movement of people through increased border security and regulation of migration (Sharma 2004). This critique also applies to children coming to the UK, which is barely articulated in the UK child trafficking literature. Instead, the definition of child trafficking is wide enough to ensure that a migrant child coming to the UK could be labelled as ‘trafficked’ at any stage of their journey, entry or stay in the UK.

There is a domination of NGO campaigning and awareness raising approaches in studies of child trafficking which are problematic in relation to data sampling, interpretation and extrapolation of data, the use of media reports, and the focus on tightening immigration systems. The international and national research demonstrates how data, statistics and figures used in the trafficking literature are at best estimates. This suggests that similar methodological shortcomings and flaws of the domestic child trafficking research agenda are replicated at an international level.

This review illustrates that NGOs play a significant role in maintaining political awareness of the issues. In some cases this awareness raising has the potential to exclude wider explanations whereby the global structural inequality displaces people, including children. Humanitarian agencies and activists in the child trafficking sector, from global and national perspectives frequently claim that child trafficking is a growing issue and yet there is lack of research based evidence to substantiate these claims.

Social work professionals and the agencies they work in are described in the UK NGO publications as having limited knowledge of the issues associated with child trafficking (ECPAT 2001; ECPAT 2004; ECPAT 2007). There is a lack of primary studies with children who may have been trafficked, and studies of unaccompanied and other vulnerable groups of children have identified very small numbers who have been trafficked (Thomas *et al.* 2003; Hopkins and Hill 2008). What also emerges from this review of the existing UK literature on child trafficking is a lack of evidence of child trafficking, a definitional problem, a spotlight on trafficking and sex work or sexual exploitation, and thus a limited way of talking about child trafficking. As Sharma (2004) argues, the casting of the victim (the trafficked person) into opposition with the criminal (the trafficker) is flawed and does not recognise the complexities of the relationships between the various parties or the wider context.

The concerns expressed in IGO reports are often similar to those found in UK NGO studies, in relation to the apparent global increases in incidences of child trafficking. They tend to emphasise the harm and exploitation in the reports evidenced through the use of case examples of children who have been liberated from exploitative circumstances. They frequently make appeals to the international community to improve welfare and protection measures. They call for the implementation and enforcement of legal instruments to bring traffickers to account, and for the development and improvement of prevention programmes. Protecting children and increasing restrictions on international child migration are well established themes of the international anti-trafficking agendas and extend to include: unaccompanied and separated children in migrations; orphaned children; those displaced by war or conflict; street children; and those who escape from violent, neglectful or abusive families.

Dottridge (2004) suggests that studies of wider groups of children may provide a clearer picture of what constitutes child trafficking, and might broaden our understanding of the context within which child trafficking occurs. NGO anti-trafficking prevention programmes which promote the message that migration is dangerous are ineffective. Return to the country of origin is not always in the child's best interests. A children's rights perspective provides a broad framework for promoting safe migration as an approach to preventing the exploitation of children. Dottridge

(2004) maintains that anti-trafficking programmes need to focus on the context of the exploitation, rather than restricting child migration. There are changes over time in the situations of children who are migrated for exploitation. The issue of consent is problematic as there is a view from the international anti-trafficking community that children cannot give consent in a trafficking situation. This stance, however, simplifies the relationship between the child and the person who is enabling and facilitating their journey, and precludes the examination of children's role and agency in making migratory decisions (Dottridge 2004).

Critical research: stories of child trafficking

There have been several previous attempts to develop theory about the issue of child trafficking. For example, in relation to child trafficking in the 1980s for organ transplants, NGOs working in the trafficking area claim that this form of trafficking is occurring although no evidence to substantiate the media and news reports was found (Fasting *et al.* 1998). Scheper-Hughes (1996) argues that the story-telling associated with the trading of children for their organs can be understood by examining the context within which these stories emerge, and are drawn upon to explain a variety of events. The stories of child trafficking for body organs emerged alongside other conditions, for example in environments of war or conflict when bodies of family members or loved ones are not traceable, or are dismembered or disfigured. Castaneda (2002) discusses the child organ stealing stories in relation to risk rumours and technological advances. The stories or folk tales of child trafficking for body parts have also been discussed in terms of community resistance. Samper (2002) examined the role of the media, government agencies and officials and the collective community in the generation of rumours about trafficking in children for their body parts and argues:

“...because the baby parts rumour gives voice, form, and substance to unarticulated anxieties and suspicions, it has led to violent action in an effort to protect children” (Samper 2002 p.11).

Child trafficking for body parts stories were transmitted and amplified by the press and politicians as a stance against the US political and economic hegemony and concerns about the international adoption of South American children in the last quarter of the twentieth century. These body parts stories draw on deep rooted fears and concerns. They make attention grabbing news headlines which arouse public interest and community action (Samper 2002).

Moral panic theory and child trafficking

“A means of orchestrating consent by actively intervening in the space of public opinion and social consciousness through the use of highly emotive and rhetorical language which has the effect of requiring that something be done about it” (McRobbie and Thornton 1995 p.562).

Moral panics theory was originally used to explain the crisis in policing of young people (Cohen 1972) and has been applied to many social issues in the intervening period (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994; Critcher 2003). The social amplification of risk is a central and enduring feature of moral panic theory despite critiques that the moral panic research might have less relevance and applicability in terms of explaining social issues because of media communication and technological advances (McRobbie and Thornton 1995). More recently, greater theoretical alignment between moral panic and risk theories have been advocated, (Ungar 2001; Critcher 2003; Critcher 2006).

Moral panic theory has been applied to the subject of child trafficking. Drawing on media accounts Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) applied a discussion of moral panic theory to a child trafficking event as it emerged in Orleans in France in May 1969. The story was not true, it had arisen as a result of a number of other issues, which they trace to the publication of a fictional work called *Sex Slavery*. This depicted kidnapping and abduction in the changing rooms of a clothes store. The story then appeared in a French magazine; the rumours of a ‘*white slave trade*’ in girls spread a week later. Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) also found that the opening of a new clothes shop which had dungeon-like fitting rooms contributed to the rumour. The story was given no credibility and yet the rumour continued to gather currency. At the beginning of June

1969 national newspapers, political groups and organisations began to denounce the rumours and despite allegations of a cover-up, bribery and corruption, within two months the rumour had all but disappeared (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994).

Moral panic theory as applied to child trafficking in the UK raises important issues as certain groups gain prestige and status, and have ‘vested interests’ in exposing and exaggerating levels of concern about particular issues. In the UK the NGOs which are party to national and international governmental anti-trafficking activities could be said to have a vested interest in terms of advancing their agendas and they have been criticised in this review for the way in which they advocate these measures based on singular cases. The veracity of NGO claims about child trafficking and trafficking in women has also come under scrutiny in terms of the NGO positions in political forums and their accountability and governance (Vandekerckhove 2003).

Childhood sociological perspectives

At the outset of my study I was interested in the stories of child trafficking which were found in the existing literature; for example, the explanations of child trafficking based on ideas about children from poor families being sold by their poverty stricken parents into abuse and exploitation. As Manzo (2005) argues these explanations are simplistic, they deny agency and promote misguided policies. Ethnographic approaches to research provide a broader cultural context for understanding childhood and children’s agency (Nieuwenhuys 1996; Manzo 2005). These perspectives have also informed research on child labour in developing countries (Boyden 1990; White 1999; Boyden and Levinson 2000) and on child work and migration (Iverson 2002; Liebel 2004; Hashim 2005; Hashim *et al.* 2006) and children as policy subjects in the UK (Mayall 2006). In childhood sociological perspectives it is argued that children who do engage in social action are often seen as being un-childlike. This can lead to tensions in policy responses (Aitken 2001; James and James 2001). UK policy-making related to children does not always reflect the very different realities of children’s lives (James and James 2004; Mayall 2006). This perspective has recently been applied in relation to UK policy-making in respect of asylum-seeking children (Giner 2007).

Fass (2005) has illustrated how the migrations of children are enduring welfare concerns, and advocates for socio-historical perspectives in studies about children in global migrations. Socio-historical perspectives are advanced more broadly by researchers in health, welfare and policy-making (Davey-Smith *et al.* 2004). In child welfare research more specifically, studies based on this approach identify links and associations between discourses and rhetoric across long time periods whilst also demonstrating the influence and repetition of arguments related to policy-making (Hendrick 2005). This is illustrated in the way in which the language of illegal migration has been reproduced and repositioned over decades. The rhetoric in immigration policy-making in the UK context is best described as a: “*chronicle of a crisis foretold*” (Geddes, 2003 p.327). Research from socio-historical perspectives has also previously examined the social constructions of child prostitution (Piper 1999; Brown 2004) whilst others have explored the roles of activists and social purity organisations in the controversial media exposés of trafficking and prostitution in children in the late nineteenth century (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978; Mulpetre 2001; and Mulpetre 2005). These studies draw on primary historical sources from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is argued in these studies that constructions that are politically and ideologically motivated eclipse alternative explanations and encourage one type of intervention over another (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978).

In a study of street children, Luiz de Moura (2002) argues that it is specific elements in the discourses which construct the subject of street children. These approaches to the study of street children have challenged the stereotypical constructions which inform policy-making on reunification with families (Feeny 2005) and contributed to the development of health and support services for those children whose homes are the streets (Panter-Brick 2005). Other studies adopting this approach include Rahikainen (2001) in a study of the relationship between child labour historically and contextually, Olson (2000) in terms of debates about young carers and Smart (1999) in relation to the construction of child sexual abuse during the nineteenth century which influenced policy and the development of welfare services.

These approaches have illustrated the relevance of historically situated perspectives which inform how social issues related to children have been understood and responded to politically across time. It is these socio-historical perspectives which influence the study which follows which examines the rhetoric within child trafficking discourses in the UK. This study illustrates that influential and pervasive rhetorical discourses inform and shape our current understanding of the phenomenon. Drawing on primary materials including historical records, policy documents and analysis of interview narratives, this study exposes some of the assumptions which underpin the constructions of risk in child trafficking policy discourses.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this study, I examine and explore the social construction of child trafficking. This qualitative study is distinct from the existing quantitative studies which are designed to contribute towards child trafficking policy-making. Given the critical observations I made in the literature review about existing child trafficking research, it is important that the methods I used are made explicit in this study. In addition to undertaking key informant interviews, I identified and analysed primary sources which included: historical records from the nineteenth century associated with child trafficking; contemporary and historical newspaper reports; and current UK policy documents. In this chapter, I discuss my epistemological and theoretical perspective, and the methodology, strategies and techniques I employed to collate and analyse the data. I also present further detail about the participant sampling approach used, as there are ethical considerations which shaped and influenced the methods of data collation and analysis.

Epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and methods

Researchers should design their studies using methods and approaches which fit with their own understanding of the world (Crotty 2003). In this study I drew on the ‘scaffold’ approach to undertaking social research. There are four distinct and interrelated features of social research: epistemology, the researcher’s theory of knowledge; the researcher’s theoretical perspective or philosophical stance; the methodology; and finally the methods or techniques which are employed to collate and analyse data (Crotty 2003). My epistemology is constructionist: *“human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as we construct or make it”* (Schwandt 2000, p. 197). In constructionist terms, meaning is not discovered as there is no objective truth; instead, meaning comes into existence as a result of engagement with the world. My understanding of constructionist enquiry follows the meaning advanced by Berger and Luckmann: *“the social*

construction of reality” (Crotty 2003, p.60). This approach to research questions assumptions about the world and is focussed on the social practices people engage in, and their interactions with each other. Constructionism takes a critical stance towards taken-for-granted-knowledge: all knowledge is derived from looking at the world from one perspective or another; all knowledge serves some interests rather than others. A constructionist perspective also allows us to see how truth claims are historically and culturally varied, and should therefore be regarded only as currently accepted ways of understanding (Burr 2003).

My theoretical perspective is interpretative and the study is designed to broaden our understanding of the issue of child trafficking. This perspective is distinct from the positivist trajectories which characterise existing research studies of child trafficking. These have largely been designed to measure incidence and to quantify the problems to inform policy responses. Interpretative research approaches are criticised as being unreliable, impressionistic and not objective. However, positivist approaches are only one of a number of ways of telling stories about the world, and there is no data generated which is value free (Denzin and Lincoln, 2004). My methodology draws on grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and this, in particular, informed the processes of data collection and the identification and analysis of the themes which emerged in the data. In this study, I used multiple methods of data collection. I conducted interviews with key informants and analysed these, along with documents related to the development of child trafficking policies and practice guidance published in the UK between 2000 and 2007. I also collated and analysed primary source materials. These included: the records of the First International Bureau for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons (1885); records of the Lords Select Committee (1881); campaigning materials of the Social Purity movement (1880- 899); and newspaper reports from the period (1869-1918).

The social construction of child trafficking: conceptual lens

In existing campaigning and research literature on child trafficking there are many references to risks related to: the age and vulnerability of children; the environmental conditions which promote many forms of child migration; the roles of parents who do not account for the dangers

which their child will encounter; and governments, agencies and individuals who are at best inept, at worst corrupt. In the previous chapter, I discussed how the UK government has produced very little evidence to support the claims that children are being brought into the UK for exploitation, and yet they have pressed ahead with a raft of legislation and policy guidance. It is not clear to what extent the NGO studies and anti-trafficking campaigns have shaped the direction of policy-making, practice response or working guidance, and this suggests the need for a methodologically and critically informed approach to examining policy and practice. The longevity of the international attention given to the issue suggests the need for a broad interdisciplinary theoretical framework which provides a lens on the social processes and dynamics involved in the production of knowledge of child trafficking; and it is crucial that the lens is critical. As the study progressed, it became clear that risk theories were entirely relevant to understanding how the issue of child trafficking was socially constructed, particularly in how risk was presented.

My approach was informed by existing critiques from the sociology of childhood perspectives (James and James 2004), which locate children as active social agents. The social construction of child trafficking is an unexplored and yet relevant research topic given the high policy priority placed on protecting children in their country of origin, during transit, and in returning them to their countries of origin (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007). Since 2000 various immigration led policy measures have been initiated in order to protect children and prevent trafficking. In much of the trafficking literature it is suggested that children are sold or traded by their parents into situations where they are then exploited. This understanding has been criticised (see for example Manzo, 2005 in the context of West Africa). It is argued by others (Bastia 2005; Delruyn and Broerkaert 2005; De Lange 2005) that this is a simplistic explanation, and I was keen to understand how policies could address this trade between parents and others, primarily because such a trade would be essentially a private matter, and therefore one which it would be difficult to legislate for; and secondly because of the international aspect which adds another dimension to a private local arrangement.

Media templates

The media play an important role in defining social problems and, as discussed in the literature review, have also been instrumental in exposing child trafficking. In particular, the media focus on child protection tragedies and events, and discourses of the incompetence of social workers are constructed by the media when public services are under attack (Aldridge 1994; Ayre 2001). In a discussion of media representations related to the ‘Cleveland scandal’, Kitzinger (2000) suggests that the media representations over time form media templates. Media templates are key events which are used to explain current events, and have a single primary meaning. These templates are constructed and reproduced by both media experts and lay persons. Media templates operate in a number of ways: through simplification and distortion, they allow minimal opportunity for alternative readings, and they are powerful but hidden. In order to identify these templates events should be examined at every level of the communication process (Kitzinger 2000, p.77). It is also valuable to examine how cases are referenced in retrospect. This perspective also influenced the way in which I collated and analysed the primary sources used in this study. The historical records included newspaper and campaigning materials which were used to raise awareness of the issue of child trafficking in the late nineteenth century. The media exposé of child trafficking in the nineteenth century might be better understood as a media template.

Moral panic theory

Moral panic theory also offers some useful conceptual insights. It has been used to explain the processes involved in the generation and amplification of concerns about many social issues and problems and the ways in which they are constructed by the media, experts and claims makers. Various issues such as AIDS, paedophilia, child sexual abuse, pornography and ‘video nasties’ have all been discussed using moral panic theories (Crichton 2003).

In the literature review I demonstrated that child trafficking had been discussed as a ‘moral panic’ (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994). In their analysis, Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) illustrated the way in which the issue had been amplified by the local media, and how published

works of fiction had contributed to the panic. This perspective provided some useful pointers for developing this study, which includes an examination of the media exposure of child trafficking in the late nineteenth century and more recently in the twenty-first century.

Alongside other labelling and deviance theories, moral panic theory also provides explanations for the ways in which events or situations are constructed as threats which undermine the social order in some way (Thompson 1998). In his discussion of the various theories of moral panic, Thompson identifies a number of common features: there is a campaign or a crusade over a period of time; the issues appeal to those who are concerned in some way about social breakdown; there is a lack of clarity in moral guidelines; politicians and the media are found to be at the head of public debates; and, finally, the real causes of the problems which give rise to a moral panic remain unaddressed, (Thompson 1998). Factors of central importance in understanding an issue as a moral panic are that concerns about behaviour are met with increasing hostility, and the issue becomes publicly visible. The issue is represented in disproportionate terms in that the groups who agitate and push social concerns up the political and public agenda do so by constructing the issue as good versus evil, and heighten sensitivity by focusing on the worst case scenario as if it were representative (Thompson 1998).

Moral panic theory has also previously been drawn on to explain the way in which the 'white slave trade' appeared on the nineteenth and twentieth century policy agendas in the UK (Derks 2000; Doezema 2001; Doezema 2002) and in the Netherlands (De Vries 2005). Doezema (2001), for example, compares discourses of 'white slavery' which emerged at the end of the nineteenth century with the current campaigning on trafficking, and reports on the similarities in the moral agendas of these organisations and their aims in respect of abolishing prostitution and restricting the migration of females. The narratives of these nineteenth century discourses have been highly influential in characterising prostitution and the *white slave trade*. Methods used by the reform campaigners of the late nineteenth century had a strong influence on feminist politics and campaigning, particularly those used by the reformer Josephine Butler and her supporters including the infamous editor of *The Pall Mall Gazette*, William Stead (Walkowitz 1992).

The value of moral panic theory as a way of explaining how social problems and public concerns are expressed is challenged however, because of the increased production and dissemination of the mass media during the latter half of the twentieth century, and the difficulties, therefore, in drawing on media accounts (McRobbie and Thornton 1995). The continuing applicability and validity of moral panic theory as an integrated analytical apparatus was highlighted in a recent special edition of the *British Journal of Criminology*. In the forward to this, Ben-Yehuda (2009) illustrates how social and cultural phenomena continue to be explained using moral panic theories, and draws attention to the commonalities between studies which have begun to link moral panic theory and risk theories. In his analysis of a number of cases, Critcher (2003) focuses on issues related to children and childhood, and argues that moral panics may be usefully thought of as discourses about risk, whilst commonalities between risk society theory (Beck 1992) and moral panic theory have also been identified (Ungar 2001).

Risk theories

In social constructionist terms risk is a product of cultural and historical perception, and the way in which these risks are constructed is important as risk has become commonplace in both expert and popular discourses (Lupton 1999). Public debates about risk rarely include children, and risks are defined by adults and managed by them on children's behalf (Scott *et al.* 1998; Harden *et al.* 2000).

Cultural theories of risk emerged through anthropological theory and research, and were developed from studies of how social groups construct and understand their beliefs and practices, particularly taboos. This perspective is best illustrated in the work of Mary Douglas who studied cultural practices and traditions in tribal communities. Douglas argued that these practices and traditions were formed along two key areas: pollution and danger. This led to theorising about these practices which were intended to reduce environmental risks, and to support spiritual and religious/cultural belief systems. The risks were addressed through symbolic practices within social groups in everyday activities, for example when preparing food, eating, and defecating. These practices were largely symbolic rituals designed to reduce the risk of infection and

disease, maintain group cohesion and consistency, and to reproduce the belief systems (Douglas 1966).

More recent risk theories suggest that globalisation and changes to political and social landscapes have resulted in a lack of personal and social stability which leads to the pervasiveness of risk in modern life; this shapes how social problems are constructed. Risk society theory was originally developed to explain how politicians and governments respond to catastrophes and crises (Beck 1992). Risk discourses have become a central and enduring tool used to shape our understanding of self, and society has become increasingly dominated by discourses of risk. The literature on risk in the social sciences arena illustrates the relationships and tensions between culture and individual perception and responses, and establishes how these have developed or changed historically. These perspectives also illustrate how social processes involve and construct expert knowledge whilst incorporating the views of non-experts (Taylor-Gooby and Zinn 2006).

Public and political knowledge about social problems, particularly related to children and childhood, are increasingly shaped and constructed around ideas about 'risk'. This has been widely discussed in relation to child welfare and the political ideologies which inform child care policies and practice (Parton 1996; Parton 1998). In terms of children and their welfare, policy-making draws on these social anxieties (Scott, Jackson and Backett-Milburn 1998), whilst risk management approaches dominate the way in which social workers and managers practice (Shaw and Shaw 2001). The employment of risk management strategies in child welfare agencies have gained support and currency over recent years and were advocated in the wake of the death of Victoria Climbié (Johnson and Petrie 2004). The literature on risk provides both conceptual and theoretical potential in understanding the social constructions of child trafficking discourses. As widespread references to risk emerged in the interview data, I drew on risk theory to provide an analytical model which was applied to the policy discourses and interview data. In order to determine the extent to which risk is evident in discourse, there are some key questions which should be addressed:

- What statements are used to construct certain kinds of knowledge about risk at a particular historical moment and socio-cultural setting?
- What rules prescribe certain ways of talking about risk and exclude other ways?
- What types of subject are constructed through risk discourses?
- How does knowledge about risk acquire authority and a sense of embodying the ‘truth’?
- What practices are used in institutions and by individuals for dealing with the subject of risk discourses?
- How do new discourses on risk emerge, supplanting other discourses, and what are the effects of this for risk knowledge and subjects of risk? (Hall 1997 adapted and cited in Lupton 1999 p.32)

I applied these questions to the data generated in this study. I examined the way in which interview participants discussed and defined child trafficking, and the many references made to risks in the interview narratives. Narrative analyses emphasise individual stories in qualitative research with human subjects (Taylor and White 2000), and I also drew on these approaches to analyse the stories of child trafficking which emerged in the various data sources. Narratives can be seen as performances in the local production of stories and can illustrate what devices are used to persuade the reader of the importance of a particular state of affairs (Elliot 2005).

Ethical considerations

The British Sociological Association (BSA hereafter) (2004) statement of ethical principles for research was drawn on to inform the study, and to ensure, wherever possible, that participants were not subjected to any harm by their participation. The BSA (2004) outline in their statement the responsibilities researchers have towards participants:

“...to ensure that the physical, social and psychological well-being of research participants is not adversely affected by the research. They should strive to protect the rights of those they study, their interests, sensitivities and privacy” (BSA 2004, p.2).

Ethical approval for the study was provided by the University of Central Lancashire Research Ethics Committee (UCLAN hereafter) and the principles of the BSA (2002) guided the way in which potential informants were recruited into the study particularly in relation to the issue of gaining informed consent:

“...participation in sociological research should be based on the freely given informed consent of those studied. This implies a responsibility on the sociologist to explain in appropriate detail, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research is about, who is undertaking and financing it, why it is being undertaken, and how it is to be disseminated and used” (BSA 2002, p3).

Potential participants were provided with written information on the research project (Appendix 1). A consent form was provided following the initial contact (Appendix 2), and participants were invited to discuss any issues regarding consent further. Gregory (2003) maintains that in regard to ethically informed research, consent must be: *“fully informed and voluntary”* (p.37). Gaining informed consent is seen as a process, rather than a single event, where stages in research determine when consent must be negotiated. The issue of informed consent formed an initial part of the early discussions with prospective informants, with regard to either their giving consent directly to participation, or, in some cases, having to seek permissions through their organisational systems. Where prospective participants were governed by local guidance and policy, additional information was provided to illustrate further details about the aims and purpose of the study.

The information provided to participants outlined the possibility that research findings would be published. Prior to the start of the interview, consent was discussed and participants submitted signed consent forms. During the interviews, respondents were able to renegotiate consent. For example, if they stated that they did not want what they had said to be used in published work. I

complied by removing certain sections from the interviews when I analysed the interview data. Participants were also offered, through the consent process, the opportunity to withhold their names. This was considered to be essential in gaining informed consent, as the network of agencies involved in the safeguarding of migrant children in the UK remains fairly small. Also, as snowball sampling (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981) was used to access participants, it was clear that some informants knew each other and may have wished to anonymise their contribution. Data gathered during the interviews was anonymised and then stored securely on password protected systems, following the UCLAN code of conduct contained within their ethical principles statement (UCLAN 2007).

All interviews were digitally recorded and written consent to this was gained prior to any recording being made. It was necessary to revisit consent prior to the start of the interviews to generate some discussion about what the consent covered, and to ensure that participants were fully informed before the interviews were recorded. I made a point of clearly stating when the interview had begun and ended. In a number of interviews discussions began prior to this during the introductions. In some cases, discussions continued after the interview had finished and the recording device was switched off. This 'off the record' data was not attributed to any particular participant in the discussion of the findings, as consent, as stated above, began when I stated that the interview had begun, and ended when I declared that the interview was over and switched off the recording device.

At the completion of interviews, it was agreed with participants that a copy of their transcribed interview would be sent to them prior to any data being published. I provided participants with a typed interview transcript at the end of the field work period. In providing this post-interview transcript, the key aim was to ensure accuracy and agreement about what was said during the interview, and to provide participants with an additional opportunity to review and reflect on the interview and what they had said, giving them an opportunity to exclude or amend any data they did not want to be used in published work. In addition, because the policy context associated with child trafficking was in a state of transition, it was essential that the interview content was reviewed alongside changes or developments in policy and legislation, and participants were offered the opportunity to add or amend the transcript in this respect.

Additional requirements for anonymity

Other issues related to consent included the possibility that participants would illustrate their work with case studies or examples of situations or trafficking events they had been involved in, and it was important to consider the potential impact on children of their situations being divulged in a research study. The question of protecting third party information in social research has been discussed by Lounsbury *et al.* (2007) and this guided the way in which participants were informed about the collation of data on cases they may have been involved in which were discussed in the interviews. It was not possible or practical for the informants to gather consent from children whose situations they wished to discuss, but it was still important to protect the anonymity of service users who were referred to in the case studies, and individual participants agreed to anonymise these contributions as part of the consent process. Save the Children (SCF hereafter) (2003) have produced guidance in this area, primarily aimed at media reporting, but there are some helpful points which translate into a research situation, including anonymising data about children, and not specifying the locations of children. The emphasis on anonymity in the SCF guidance is related to the potential identification of children who might be at risk of re-trafficking or threats from those who have been implicated in the trafficking events. There are very few studies and research publications into the issue of child trafficking in the UK, and a small study sample of participants involved in the sector might have meant that children were identifiable. The anonymity of case study materials provided an added safeguard to protect the confidentiality of children who have been made known to agencies working in the field.

Research strategy

At the outset of the project, my knowledge of the issue of child trafficking was fairly limited and so I participated in a number of networking activities. There are a number of research hubs which are hosted by international research groups and I joined these mainly in order to search out relevant literature and discover what issues were being discussed between experts, academics and policy makers. I was provided with the opportunity to attend an expert workshop in

December 2004 in Belgium which was hosted by the Norwegian research institute FAFO¹⁶. My involvement in this workshop was limited to observing and making notes on the presentations, and discussing informally with other participants their research and findings. A range of views were expressed in this forum and it became clear that participants did not all agree on how to define child trafficking or how to develop research strategies and effective prevention programmes. For some participants, the issues were firmly about gender violence, and child trafficking was discussed in the same way as trafficking in women. A pronounced view was that children on the move were vulnerable and should be protected.

One participant had undertaken a study of child labour migrants and had found that their experiences, whilst exploitative, also had some positive outcomes (see De Lange 2005 in the previous chapter). The children and the parents in this study described the skills they had learned whilst undertaking agricultural work, which they had then brought back to their communities once their ‘contract’ with their employer was over. This suggested to me that it was problematic talking about child labour migration as child trafficking, and that cultural differences in relation to childhood could not be ignored, indeed they were a central feature. I was intrigued by the different views about child trafficking I observed at this workshop, and this was to inform and shape the development of my research significantly.

As unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children coming to the UK are perceived as being vulnerable to trafficking, I also felt that it was necessary to gain a greater understanding of these issues, and, therefore, I participated in conferences hosted by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI hereafter) and the Refugee Council. The Refugee Council was particularly fruitful in terms of generating potential informants.

In this study, it was clear to me that interviews would be an ideal way for me to gather data from participants who would have views and experiences about their work and about the role they played in the safeguarding of children who are vulnerable to, or at risk of, trafficking. I

¹⁶ “FAFO is an independent and multidisciplinary research foundation focusing on social welfare and trade policy, labor and living conditions, public health, migration and integration, and transnational security and development issues. FAFO works within both a domestic Norwegian and larger international context”. URL <http://www.faf.no/indexenglish.htm> (Accessed 16th February 2010).

conducted sixteen semi-structured interviews with key informants, together with documentary analysis of policy and campaigning documents and a review of child trafficking literature. My approach to data collation and analysis was informed by grounded theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1967). This qualitative approach combines data collation and analysis as an ongoing process throughout the fieldwork period. This approach lends itself to the collation and analysis of data from a variety of sources. The use of multiple data sources is also advocated for evaluating policy measures and changes (Kaskutas *et al.* 2000), which again, was a central feature of this study.

Snowball sampling

“The method yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest” (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981, p.141).

I used snowball sampling to gain access to the target community. At the outset of this research study, policy-making in the area was just emerging and new posts and agencies were being established. Only a small number of agencies were working with trafficked children, in welfare provision, child protection, law enforcement, and legal services. It was felt that a good approach would be for participants to be referred into the study by people who knew these individuals and could promote access to them. Sensitive topics are those which are emotive and arouse feelings of fear or amazement, for example, research about sex or death, and research into sensitive topics may have some impact on the participants. When undertaking sensitive research, threats to the participants need to be minimised, managed or mitigated without compromising the research or limiting its scope (Lee 1993). Mindful that child trafficking is a sensitive topic, I needed to identify an appropriate sampling method which would enable my access to participants. This was a small and relatively exclusive community, and, as such, the design of the study had to account for this sensitivity.

Snowball sampling can also be useful for studying sensitive issues and phenomena which are not well researched (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981). Because of the relatively small number of individuals working in the sector, this sampling method was appropriate. Snowball sampling techniques are used to recruit hard-to-reach samples, and participants assist in the process of obtaining a research study sample. The target community constituted a hard-to-reach sample in the sense that directly recruiting them without an introduction from a gatekeeper would be difficult as they are small exclusive communities. Snowball sampling was therefore deemed to be an effective strategy and facilitated access to some of the key informants in the anti-trafficking sector. Whilst preliminary literature searches generated a number of potential participants and possible informants, my approach to participant sampling in this research relied heavily on contacts being made, and my convincing the potential participants to take part in the study. I had informed myself of the key issues related to child trafficking, and found out a little about the work of the person, or at least the work of the organisation, I contacted.

Another strategy employed was to contact directly individuals named in the various campaigning and research literature. This strategy generated a number of informants, but it was only when I had a named contact that I could refer to that I was given access to the various informants. I was not however, able to access a small number of key informants who I thought would be essential to the study and, despite my best attempts to secure interviews, these did not happen. I was surprised that agencies that were campaigning about the issue did not respond or declined to participate, and it was very frustrating in terms of the length of time it took to secure interviews.

All of these approaches are termed 'snowballing' (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981) as they recruit from one contact knowing another. This sampling approach ensured that the informants had some experience of working in, or policy development in relation to, child trafficking. Coupled with my approach to targeting specific individuals, the sample was eventually sixteen, and informants came from a wide range of backgrounds. A small number of informants came from the same agency/organisation, but they had different roles and responsibilities related to child trafficking, and so it was appropriate that they were invited to participate.

Access to respondents was problematic as child trafficking is a sensitive policy and research area, being an immigration and child protection issue, which are two politically charged areas. My own background as a social worker, and previous experience in interviewing were drawn on throughout the study in relation to the interpersonal skills required in order to secure participation. It was essential that I was able to discuss the issues and the purpose of the research with potential participants, not only to gain their confidence, but also to ensure that their consent was fully informed. Fontana and Frey (2000) suggest that there are a number of ways in which researchers need to think about interviews, and understanding the language and culture of the participants is crucial. Establishing credibility as a researcher and gaining the trust and commitment of interviewees are also important considerations.

In this study, participants were defined as hard-to-reach, as access to them was negotiated through other gatekeepers. In effect, certain informants would not have otherwise been included in the study, as I was not able to access them directly and their recruitment required a referral from another named informant. Accessing those contacts in the practitioner fields was somewhat easier than accessing those in the policy-making fields, in that information was publicly available and accessible, but still required negotiation with third parties and reliance on my ability to be perceived as credible enough to secure an interview. Identifying the relevant individual in an agency was difficult in some cases as the person I identified as a potential informant no longer worked for the agency. In some cases, despite telephone messages being left, calls were not returned, nor e-mails responded to, and so, to a certain extent, the sample was made up of those informants who I was able to gain access to and where consent and agreement to interview was made. Once initial contact was made with potential informants and interview dates agreed, I collated where possible, publicly available information about the agency and the position of the respondent in the organisation. The sample, generated by both speculative and targeted approaches, therefore provides a snapshot of various policy and practitioner perspectives, and yet is broad enough for the purposes of qualitative analysis.

Contacts

Two types of contacts were established using snowball sampling techniques: primary and secondary contacts. A primary contact was defined as: a named person in an organisation or agency who was contacted to participate in the research study. Secondary contacts were defined as: a person who was contacted by referral from a primary contact. The initial criterion for inclusion in the study was that participants were involved in either delivering or managing services for trafficked children, or in policy-making. However, there were very limited numbers of agencies whose work had this as a primary focus, and so the criterion was widened to include agencies who worked with unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children and young people. These groups of children are generally viewed as vulnerable as they are separated from their parents or caregivers, and have moved from their country of origin (Halvorson 2002; Bhabha 2004). In effect the participants in the study all had some involvement in safeguarding migrant children in either policy development, research, legal advocacy, law enforcement, or social work.

I made contact with thirty-seven individuals. In three cases it became evident that the potential informants did not meet the criteria for inclusion in the study and were not approached for interviews. Of those thirty-four contacts, eighteen did not lead to interviews. Various reasons were provided, including that they declined to participate following their receipt of further information or they declined as their work focussed on other areas. Others agreed in principle but did not respond to repeated requests for appointments.

Primary and secondary contacts

I differentiated between the two contact types in order to analyse the differences in samples they each generated, and to illustrate how many interviews each type of contact generated.

Table 1 to show types of contacts generating interviews:

<i>Type of contact</i>	<i>No. of contacts made</i>	<i>Contacts interviewed</i>	<i>No. of interviews</i>
Primary contacts	22	Primary	7
Secondary contacts	15	Secondary	9
Total contacts made	37	Total number of interviews	16

Twenty-two primary contacts were made and this led directly to seven interviews. The twenty-two primary contacts were made by undertaking desk-based research, attending conferences and identifying potential participants in a range of relevant agencies. Secondary contact types were generated through referral from the primary contacts and generated fifteen secondary contacts between them, which led to a further nine interviews.

Interviews with key informants

Key informants are those who are closely involved in a particular area of policy-making. In-depth semi-structured or unstructured interviews are useful in key informant studies as they present opportunities for securing the participation of those who may be reluctant to speak 'on the record'. They produce rich data and generate unique insights. Interviewing people at different levels of the system is also advocated to generate data from distinct vantage points. It is the

quality of the exchange between the informant and the interviewer and the analysis which is important in these studies, not the number of interviews (Kaskutas *et al.* 2000).

Qualitative interviews are able to draw on the social experiences or processes that the researcher is interested in exploring. Interviews also allow for deep exploration, and are undertaken by researchers whose positions recognise that people's experiences and interactions are: "*meaningful properties of the social reality*" (Mason 2002 p.63). My own experience, skills and knowledge as a former social worker, and a programme manager in children's services, prepared me for the interviews with practitioners at various levels in the agencies, but I had limited experience of the language of national policy-making and the cultures in such networks. I drew on interviewing skills which I was able to adapt from my experience as a social worker and telephone helpline counsellor to facilitate discussions and ask open questions in the interviews. This approach enabled respondents to provide extended narratives, and, consequently, I made very little verbal contribution in the majority of the resulting interviews beyond prompts and questions. Being a student was helpful in some ways as I was able to ask naïve questions about policy and practice, but a hindrance in others as the title 'student' can often be viewed as 'trainee', regardless of its status in academia. It was sometimes useful to have an academic status in the field, as, in some interviews, I was perceived as an expert in, or at least knowledgeable about, child trafficking and the associated practice and policy issues. This was apparent in the interviews with social work practitioners and with police and policy informants. On reflection, I did little to dissuade this perception primarily to ensure that I was seen as credible.

Interview participants

The thirty-four contacts made yielded in total sixteen participants who consented to be interviewed during the fieldwork period October 2004-June 2007. Ten agency groups were identified, and the participants were grouped to reflect the primary focus of their work. The participants recruited and interviewed in this study are illustrated in the table below:

Table 2 to show participant interviews generated in each agency group:

Agency type	No. of contacts in each agency group	No. in each agency interviewed
Law enforcement	4	3
Social work children's services	3	3
Asylum/refugee (NGO)	4	4
Children's (NGO)	4	2
Government Agency	2	1
Government Department	8	1
Academic	5	1
Anti-trafficking (NGO)	2	0
Independent Consultant	1	0
Legal services	1	1
Total	34	16

Records were maintained for each contact made and I produced information sheets about the agencies and the participants I interviewed. These records included information about the individual and details of any published materials or work the agency had undertaken which related to child trafficking.

Interview schedule, recording, and transcription

An interview schedule was produced as a guide and reference point to generate discussion during the interviews. It was not possible, nor was it planned, that each question would be asked in the order listed on the schedule (Appendix 3). In some cases it was less necessary to refer to the schedule, as respondents directed the interview towards areas they wished to discuss, using information and examples of their work they believed to be relevant. Interviews lasted for up to one-and-a-half hours. Interview questions were supplemented throughout the interviews to encourage participant's discussion of specific issues, case study examples, and additional material they believed was relevant or important to their role or organisation.

In this study, all interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. The interview recordings were transcribed in one of two ways. The first two interviews were fully transcribed by the researcher; the remaining fourteen interviews were transcribed by professional transcribing services. The transcription services were required to comply with data protection guidance to protect the anonymity of the participants. In grounded theory methodology, Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocate that the initial interviews are transcribed in full to provide a wide range of data to analyse. I elected to transcribe the first two interviews myself in order to identify the main themes in the content, and to decide which particular avenues to pursue further.

Interview location

Thirteen informants were based in the South East, one in the Midlands, and two in the north of England. Fifteen interviews took place in the informant's place of work, during their working hours; one interview took place in the informant's home. Interviewing in a person's own home can affect the dynamics and power relations according to Elwood and Martin (2000) and I was initially cautious about agreeing to interview the respondent who wanted this arrangement; however, pragmatic and time constraints were the dominant motivators in the decision about where to interview participants. The interviews which took place in work locations tended to take place in offices and apart from one or two exceptions were uninterrupted. On reflection the interview which was conducted in the respondent's home was as formal as those which took place in the respondent's place of work. Although, I did get the impression that the interview had been squeezed into the respondent's busy domestic schedule as there were a series of interruptions and competing demands for the participant's attention from other members of the household.

Categorising respondents

The informants were categorised according to the type of agency they worked in, and this information was stored separately from the participant's information in order to ensure the anonymity of data sources. The small sample and the fact that the network of participants knew each other made it necessary to revisit the question of coding respondents, and so, during the

data analysis stages of the research, participants were coded differently. This was in order to present the findings by drawing on participant responses, whilst not compromising the anonymity guaranteed in the consent process. The participants were coded into six discrete occupational/professional groups in order that the data that each respondent volunteered in the interviews could be discussed in the findings. The six professional groups are: Social Work with children and young people; Police child protection; Policy; Campaigning; Legal Services and Academic.

Conducting the interviews

It was not crucial that I understood the content of the interviews at the time in terms of the technical information provided by informants, but it was important that I was informed about the current policy activity in this area in order that I was a credible interviewer, albeit a student. In some interviews I was invited to offer an opinion or view, and in certain circumstances during the interviews I was hard pressed not to empathise with the feelings which were being expressed. For example, issues about multi-agency tensions between social work, NGOs and law enforcement agencies had been explicit from the outset, and so I had begun to anticipate that these issues would always be sensitive as illustrated in this brief extract between myself and the respondent from an NGO working with asylum seekers:

JLW *“In terms of the kind of co-working and collaborative working with Social Services and the Police, what kind of issues are there during that kind of collaboration?”*

INF *“Don’t get me on that I might be here for a long time” (CAMP 1 June 2006).*

In another example, the informant was in a difficult position and had not been successful in making a referral to social services. The only recourse available to the informant would be to take out a Police Protection Order (PPO) to initiate a safeguarding response from social services (in this situation accommodation under Section 20 of The Children Act 1989 and assessment of need under Section 17 of The Children Act 1989). The informant was resistant to take this course of action which would require authorisation further up the organisation’s chain of command, and

felt that this was the duty of social services, not law enforcement agencies. In this interview extract the informant described how frustrating it was trying to refer cases to social services:

“...our main priority is the safety of the child so if I can get a child accommodated by Social Services and put into the system, I’ll do that, if I think it’s necessary, I’ll fight tooth and nail to do that... there are times when I’m pretty disgusted with the reception I get from Social Services... maybe I’m being over cautious but I don’t think you can be when you’ve got a child’s welfare at stake... it is a constant battle... I don’t hold much weight with letters of confirmation of referrals, sorry, assessments” (PCP 3 October 2006).

I was troubled by the experiences being described and the powerlessness the respondents felt in such circumstances. During interviews where multi-agency working was raised, I generally clarified with the informant my own understanding of the assessment guidelines, and the timescales within which these are conducted, to encourage further discussion about the tensions in this area.

In other cases, I asked informants to clarify certain points related to policy and guidance. In the example which follows, I was trying to understand what sort of financial support would be available to a young pregnant woman who was seeking asylum in the UK, and had recently contacted the agency for support with her essential needs. I queried this because my own understanding was that pregnant women were entitled to various maternity grants; this was not the case for those who are seeking asylum:

JLW “So a pregnant woman would still only get Section 4, there’s no claim for child benefit?”

INF “No, no asylum seeker or failed asylum seeker will get child benefit... the Home Office is saying that the £35 a week is intended not to provide for clothing, that can be attained from second hand and charity shops” (SWCYP 3 February 2006).

In another interview, I was invited to discuss my views on the involvement of the NGO sector in delivering jointly with a government agency - a proposed new service - and I drew on my own

previous experience of working in, and supervising the delivery of, such a service. This conflicted with other discussions of this proposed service with respondents in this small informant network who had requested that I should not discuss or write about the service until it had been officially announced.

Finally, there were instances when respondents discussed issues but stated that these were ‘off the record’ data, which were not recorded or reported in this study in order to safeguard informant anonymity and maintain ethical research procedures. It is fair to say, however, that these informal conversations influenced my understanding of the issue of child trafficking, and prompted me to think deeply about the substance of the data which were being generated, and ways in which I could analyse them.

Interview sample grouping

Participants came from nine agencies/professions/groups which were merged into six categories focussed on the participant’s profession/main focus of their work illustrated in table 3 below:

Table 3 to show participant grouping:

Agency group	Total participants
Social Work	6
Law enforcement	3
Policy	3
Campaigning	2
Legal services provision	1
Academic research and teaching	1
Total	16

This was developed to group together respondents who were in the same profession which would allow for some comparison. By grouping the participants in this way (see table 4 below) I was also able to analyse and present the interview data without compromising the anonymity guaranteed in the consent process.

Table 4 to show participant grouping by professional role:

Participant Code	Professional role
SWCYP 1	Team manager of a children initial assessment team.
SWCYP 2	Team manager of an unaccompanied minors team
SWCYP 3	Deputy manager of refugee support project
SWCYP 4	Team manager of multi-agency child safeguarding team
SWCYP 5	Social worker with refugee and asylum-seeking children
SWCYP 6	Project worker asylum-seeking children and young people
PCP 1	Senior Police officer
PCP 2	Police officer
PCP 3	Police officer
POL 1	Government policy lead
POL 2	Chief executive Government agency
POL 3	BME Policy advisor Children's NGO
CAMP	Head of children's services
CAMP	Information officer
LEGAL	Barrister
ACADEMIC	Academic researcher

Social Work

In this group all of the participants worked in or managed social work agencies or teams in both the NGO and statutory sectors, and their professional role was focussed on the delivery of social work provision to children and young people. Participants in this group were grouped as Social Work with Children and Young People (SWCYP).

Law Enforcement

Participants in this group were all mainly involved in child protection work. Two participants were based at a UK port of entry; another was a senior police child protection policing officer, heading up a command. These participants were grouped as Police Child Protection (PCP).

Policy

Participants in this group were all focussed on leading, developing or advising on UK policy issues associated with the welfare and protection of children, and grouped as Policy (POL).

Campaigning

The participants in this group worked in UK based NGOs and their work was largely focussed on campaigning around the protection and well-being of children coming to the UK. The participants made a contribution to policy-making as the organisations they were based in were members of national government-led strategic groups. These policy informing activities were part of the roles of the two informants in this group; therefore they were grouped as campaigning organisations as this played the greater part of their individual work (CAMP).

Legal services

This participant was a barrister experienced in providing legal advocacy for asylum-seeking and refugee children in the UK (LEGAL).

Academic research and teaching

This participant had conducted and published primary research with child migrants in various parts of the world (ACADEMIC).

Saturation

Data saturation is the point where no new data emerges from interviews, or when data does not lead to new theoretical insights (Charmaz 2007). I stopped interviewing at the stage when there was no new data emerging and I had been referred back to individuals who I had interviewed earlier, or to materials, publications or information I was already aware of. I had begun to notice in the transcripts how informants talked about Victoria Climbié. Reference to the public inquiry (Laming 2003) and the circumstances surrounding her death emerged over and over again in the interview data. In the following extract, the informant drew on the case of Victoria Climbié. By the time I had interviewed this informant, I had moved away from the core network of policymakers and practitioners who were involved in delivering services or developing policy, and this last informant had less involvement in policy and practice about child trafficking:

“...it was in remembrance of Victoria Climbié ...who was actually privately fostered but I must make it clear that Victoria Climbié was very much a visible child...And we failed her ... it’s not about blame but we did fail her, she died and she was visible, the problem we have in terms of safeguarding and protecting and why we’re so passionate about private fostering is that all the children are hidden” (POL 3 Nov 2006).

The interview had focussed on policies related to private fostering, which, whilst having some relevance to child trafficking, was not specific enough for me to broaden the research focus and extend the sample to interview further potential informants. However, the way in which this final informant invoked Victoria Climbié’s name in the first line of the extract as: *“in remembrance of”*, appeared to me to encapsulate the earlier invocations by participants, and, therefore, was a factor that influenced my decision to cease interviewing further informants.

Interview analysis

The grounded theory method suggests research is about discovery and verification through the testing of theories which emerge in the data, and the further application of these theories. Whilst this study draws on grounded theory, in term of the approach to data collection methods, the analysis actually drew more explicitly on methods borrowed from narrative analysis. Rather than coding the transcribed interview data which Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommended, I made the pragmatic decision to focus my analysis on the occurrence and content of the stories of child trafficking in the interview transcripts. The first two interviews of this research study were conducted in July and August 2005 (SWCYP 1 and PCP 1). These were fully transcribed in order to revise, if necessary, the way in which I gathered and analysed data generated in subsequent interviews. Glaser and Strauss (1967) recommend that initial interviews are fully transcribed and analysis begins at this stage as it enables the researcher to familiarise themselves early on in the research with key themes, and provides opportunities to explore these later. It was clear from my analysis of these early interviews that the sample of potential informants was limited, and this helped to shape my approach to analysing the data further by considering what sort of questions I would ask in further interviews, and of the data I had collated in general. By beginning the analysis at this stage, I was also able to make decisions about the inclusion of participants into the sample, and ensure that those who agreed to be interviewed had relevant experience or knowledge of policy and/or practice in the area of child trafficking.

. In undertaking the analysis of the interviews, I asked some key questions of the data generated:

- How do informants define child trafficking?
- How are children's relationships with parents/others discussed?
- What examples/case studies do informants use to illustrate a child trafficking situation?
- What wider explanations are used to account for the issue of child trafficking?
- How are feelings about child trafficking expressed?
- How did informants explain who was involved in trafficking?

The themes which emerged in the interviews suggested that risk was an overwhelming feature and was discussed in a number of ways. This led me to analyse in more detail the way in which respondents talked about risk in the stories of child trafficking. In chapter five I discuss the themes which emerged in the interview data and present examples of interview extracts and quotations made by informants. The quotations from the interview transcripts reproduced in this thesis are presented using italics in order to clearly distinguish between my analysis and what respondents said.

Literature review

I undertook a preliminary review of the literature and collated and categorised the data from these searches at the start of the research study in October 2004 (Appendix 4). This early search produced published research, policy documents and grey literature. The grey literature category included commentaries and campaigning publications from a range of NGOs and Human Rights activists. The inclusion criterion was refined to include only published research studies on UK child trafficking, and key word literature searches were later carried out on two separate dates. In addition to the key word data base searches, ongoing iterative searches were made of key social work, social policy and social science journals between 2000 and 2007 for relevant studies. I extended the searches to include published research studies from other countries and I faced difficulties in identifying relevant publications. Therefore, only a small number of the search results are included and discussed in the literature review.

Policy documents

Sutton (1999) suggests that: “...*policy and policy implementation are best understood as a chaos of purposes and accidents*” (Sutton 1999, p.5). Whilst there have been some critiques of policies related to child trafficking, these have tended to focus on the lack of policy responses and the gaps which have left children vulnerable to trafficking, exceptions include Buckland’s (2008) critique which focuses on the language which inform UK policy-making, and Sharma (2004) who is critical of the way in which NGOs work with trafficked victims. In this study, I explore the development of UK child trafficking policies following Sutton (1999) who argues that a

linear model to explain the policy process is inadequate. Instead, a number of factors interplay to facilitate the development of policies. To analyse the policy processes, I used a framework which would enable me to understand who was involved in influencing and shaping child trafficking policies (see table 5 below).

Table 5 to show the framework for examining UK child trafficking policy-making:

Policy process framework
Emergence of research
Roles and influence of research and scientific communities
Timing
Wider political agendas
Crisis response
Dominant discourse
Change agent

(Based on Sutton 1999)

I used this as a basic framework for examining UK policies associated with child trafficking as it covered a wide range of contextual factors which influence and steer the policy-making process. Searches were conducted for Government policy and other formal documents on official websites. During the study period a number of national policy documents and strategies were published. The documents included in the study cover a range of social policy agendas, and are informed by both national and international frameworks. See table 6 below to show policy documents published between 2000 and 2007.

Table 6 to show policy documents published between 2000 and 2007:

Date	Publication
2000	Home Office publishes "Setting the Boundaries" report on consultation regarding the law on sex offences.
2000	UK signs Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
2000	UK signs Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (Ratified 9th February 2006).
2002	National Plan for Safeguarding Children from Commercial Sexual Exploitation published.
2003	Lord Laming (2003) The Victoria Climbié Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Lord Laming. Cmnd. 5370.
2003	UK Government (2003) Keeping Children Safe: The Government's response to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report and Joint Chief Inspectors' Report Safeguarding Children.
2003	UK Government Sexual Offences Act (2003).
2003	Every Child Matters Cmnd. 5860.
2004	The Children Act (2004).
2004	UK Government (2004) Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004.
2004	UK Government (2004) One Step Ahead: A 21st Century Strategy to Defeat Organised Crime. Cm 6167.
2005	UK Government (2005) Controlling Our Borders: Making Migration Work for Britain. Five Year Strategy for Asylum and Immigration.
2005	The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005.
2006	Joint Committee on Human Rights. Inquiry of the Human Rights of People Trafficked into the UK.
2007	UK signs Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.
2007	Home Office and Scottish Executive (2007) publish UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking.
2007	HM Government (2007) publishes Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked.

Historical records

In this study I drew on a number of historical records. This approach has been used in previous studies of social problems and illustrates the change and, importantly, the continuities in discourses about social policy issues (Davey-Smith *et al.* 2004). Specifically, as highlighted in the literature review, this approach has been adopted in studies about child welfare and protection issues (Smart 1999; Rahikainen 2001; Hendrick 2005). In addition to providing an historical perspective of social issues, the use of primary sources highlights continuity and changes over time. This study is unique in this sense as no studies to date have compared contemporary and historical discourses of risk associated with child trafficking. There are a small number of studies which have drawn on official records of the Government committee of inquiry and the records of the First International Bureau for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons (IBSTP hereafter) and other social purity organisations and campaigners (Petrie 1971; Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978; Mulpetre 2001; Mulpetre 2005). In these studies it is argued that the issue of child trafficking has a long association with UK campaigning activity around the sexual regulation of girls and tackling the issue of child prostitution. In this study, I located the archived records of the IBSTP and identified documents which related to the campaigning work of this organisation. These included minutes of the executive committee. I also conducted searches at the Public Records Office, The Women's Library and identified Home Office records which related to the Government committee of inquiry into the trade in girls which was established in 1881.

Campaigning and media publications

The Pall Mall Gazette, July 1885 was identified as relevant media material as *The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon* series has been discussed previously (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978; Walkowitz 1992; Mulpetre 2001 and Mulpetre 2005). I drew on two publications which were the campaigning organs of the social purity movement in the late nineteenth century, *The Shield* (1880-1882) and a later publication *The Storm Bell* (1898-1899). I also conducted iterative searches of *The Times* (1869-1918). These publications provide a general overview of how the

media have historically been utilised to raise public and political awareness of the issue of child trafficking from the late nineteenth century onwards. I also examined a sample of contemporary campaigning materials (ECPAT 2001; ECPAT 2004; ECPAT 2007) as these were, and remain, key sources for the wider dissemination of concerns about child trafficking.

Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the methods and theories which informed my research and approach to collating and analysing data. This study of the social construction of child trafficking differs from existing research approaches to the issue and it has been developed in order to contribute to the current policy debates. I draw on risk theories in my analyses as these go some way towards explaining the way in which child trafficking has emerged and the way in which campaigning organisations involved in the sector protest and express concern about child exploitation in general. The use of historical sources is a unique feature of this study which sets it apart from the existing research literature about child trafficking in the UK. In the chapters which follow I discuss my findings and analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

CHILD TRAFFICKING IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Introduction

A number of historians have drawn attention to the extent to which historical analysis can help inform our understanding of current policy debates (Davey-Smith *et al.* 2001; Fass 2005). This is certainly the case with regards to child trafficking. Thus the characterisation of child trafficking today and its continued association with child prostitution has parallels with the way the two were linked and embedded in legislation and policy in the late nineteenth century. Continuities can also be identified in the way the issue was discussed in the media. As is the case today, reports of ‘trafficking’ tended to adopt sensationalist exaggerated tones. In addition, like today, little attempt was made on the part of commentators to acknowledge the structural causes (or push factors) that underpinned trafficking. The experiences of Mary Ann Harris are a case in point. Published in *The Times* (see below) on December 1st 1869, this report tells the story of a mother -a widow- who made an arrangement with a Swedish musician allowing her child to travel with him and learn to be a musician for an agreed period of four years:

TRAFFIC IN CHILDREN.—At Wolverhampton, some days ago, a girl of eight years, who had learnt to play a brass instrument, and was travelling with a man who is supposed to be a Swede, named France Wolff, appealed for protection to two gentlemen, who at once took her to the Union. There it transpired that her home was Exeter, that she was the daughter of a widow, who had been prevailed upon by Wolff to let him have the child at four years of age. Since that time the girl had not seen her mother, but wandered about the country, with Wolff, who she stated at one time had as many as four girls with him. The clerk to the Guardians communicated with Exeter, and yesterday a letter was read to the Board which the child's mother had written. The poor woman wrote by the name of Mary Harris, said that she was a widow and in service, and expressed herself as "truly thankful that she had heard of her child at last." She had placed her case in the hands of the Exeter police, but had not before had any tidings for two years. At that time Wolff sent her a document to sign, "promising to give her 26*l.* for the child, but she refused till she knew if the child was well treated." Wolff, however, neither took the child to her nor would he pay her railway fare to the place where he and the child were at the time. She begged the Guardians to allow the child to remain in the workhouse "till she could raise money enough to get her restored." In proof that Wolff had "no right to the child," she enclosed the document he had wished her to sign. It runs as follows:—"I, Mary Harris (widow), do hereby agree to give my only daughter, Mary Ann Harris, to France Wolff, to take her as his own child, and to learn his profession, from January the 1st, 1867, until January the 1st, 1877, after which time my child shall have her free will to stay or leave the said France Wolff; and in case of no fresh agreement on both parties, France Wolff will be compelled to give my daughter Mary Ann Harris, necessary and respectable clothing, and 26 pounds English money, which the said France Wolff will have to pay her for own benefit. Witness ——. Signed by my own hand, ——. Signed this first day of January, 1867. France Wolff, professor of music, singing, and dancing." It is easy to understand how destitute mothers may be imposed upon by such sham agreements, and children thereby become hopeless outcasts. Of course, in this case the child remains for a time in care of the Wolverhampton Guardians.—*Manchester Guardian.*

The Times December 1st 1869.

The mother had refused to sign a financial agreement until she was sure her child was being looked after, but the musician had not maintained contact with the mother or made it possible for her to continue to see her child. The story constructs the widowed mother, Mary Ann Harris, as helpless and ignorant, based on the view that such an exchange was likely to damage the child. The report describes how the child had to go into the workhouse as an alternative to working with the musician, as her mother was in service and could not afford to keep her. The limited options available, which would have had some influence on the mother's decision to make such

an exchange, remain unacknowledged in the report. The report concludes by stating that: “*destitute mothers may be imposed upon by sham agreements and children thereby become hopeless outcasts*” (*The Times* December 1st 1869 p.4). The failure to acknowledge ‘push factors’, along with the moralistic tones of the report, are features of commentary and policy debates about child trafficking today.

Child trafficking in late nineteenth century Britain

Child trafficking initially emerged onto the policy agenda in late nineteenth century Britain, although concerns about the sale and exploitation of children had been raised in England in the middle of the seventeenth century. Through agitation and lobbying, legislation was made, but not enacted (Wareing 2002). Context and history inform and shape our ideas about what is appropriate and acceptable in relation to children and childhood (Smart 1999). In the context of late nineteenth century Britain, working class children were economic actors, contributing to the household through work in the home and through paid labour. Political interest shifted towards the family in the late nineteenth century, exposing to a concerned social reform movement that families could, in fact, be dangerous places for children who were innocent and in need of protection (Hendrick 2005). Reformers in the late nineteenth century became focused on the mind and body dualism which extended their sphere of interest from the protection of working and labouring children, to wider issues about the fitness of the nation, and the threat to society of uncivilised children. Increased intervention in the family, and the regulation and monitoring of children through legislative processes and welfare policies were also apparent during this period (Hendrick 2005). The social reformers were also influenced by the puritan and evangelical movements, and this led to a series of interrelated moral concerns so that in nineteenth century Britain:

“...*the ideal of a protected childhood was established as the moral and social standard to be maintained by families and communities*” (Brown 2004 p.346).

The social purity movement

Britain in the mid-nineteenth century saw social reformers focused on improving society for the most poor and vulnerable people, actively campaigning for improvements to welfare provision through demonstrations and public meetings. A small but powerful group of these reformers were driven by a wider ideological agenda, grounded in beliefs about social purity (Bristow 1978). The purity movements were behind a particular form of political protest, peculiar to the nineteenth century. The methods of the campaigning organisations were somewhat unconventional by today's standards, but in many ways the purity agenda was influential in informing policy-making in respect of children (Hendrick 2005; Piper 1999).

Social purity was a euphemism for sexual purity, and the social purity movement advanced sexual myths which achieved political notoriety and credibility (Morgan 2007). These organisations garnered public and political support in their campaigns through the polemical nature of their speeches, pamphleting and organised meetings. They campaigned for regulations which would make prostitution illegal and for a raise in the age of consent to protect girls from being taken abroad for prostitution. In relation to the concerns about trafficking, the purity campaigners were well positioned to amplify and promote public and political awareness through their campaigning tactics and networking activities. Social purity groups included the Social Purity Alliance (1873), the Association for the Improvement in Public Morals (1879), the Moral Reform Union (1881), the Church of England Purity Society (1883), the interdenominational White Cross Army (1883), and the Nonconformist Gospel Purity Alliance (1884) (Morgan 2007). Women played a dominant role within the social purity movement, including the outspoken feminist campaigner Josephine Butler. Their agenda was dominated by moral concerns:

“...a loose national network of powerful religious lobby-groups that sought to reinforce Christian norms of sexuality, marriage and family life through a series of demands for enhanced moral legislation issued from the pulpit and the press” (Morgan 2007 p.151).

The formal launching of the social purity movement is attributed to the notorious newspaper editor William Stead (Morgan 2007). William Thomas Stead (1849–1912), was the son of a Congregational minister and the infamous editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Stead's sensationalist depictions of juvenile prostitution were published in July 1885 as "*The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon*". The social purity organisations led the anti-trafficking agenda, and they were accompanied by the early feminist campaigner Josephine Butler who utilised her privileged social position to raise the issues through her political networks. Stead was able to campaign through his editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette* (Petrie 1971; Bristow 1978). The revelations in *The Maiden Tribute* series forced the government to increase the age of consent for girls and restrict 'white slavery' and juvenile prostitution when they passed the Criminal Law Amendment Act in 1885. The publication of the series was the high point of Stead's journalist career, although he was denounced for '*peddling pornography*'. A violation of the law in obtaining material for the *Maiden Tribute* series led to his imprisonment for three months (Oxford DNB 2010).

Josephine Butler and prostitution

Prostitution was a focus of political concern in the 1870s and legislation had led to the forced detention and medical examination of prostitutes in a number of garrison towns. Prostitutes were blamed for the spread of contagious diseases (Walkowitz 1985). This legislation was contested by those who wanted to abolish the practices of incarcerating and forcing prostitutes to undergo intrusive examinations for venereal diseases (sexually transmitted infections or STI's) and medical treatment. The abolitionists campaigned for a change in social attitudes towards female sexuality and gender roles. The campaigns against the Contagious Diseases Acts (1864; 1866; 1869) were spearheaded by Josephine Butler, the prominent and outspoken campaigner for reform. Butler played an important role in the social purity movement in terms of her wide public appeal and notoriety as a campaigner and advocate for women's rights (Petrie 1971). Butler's stance on prostitution, and her association of this with the *white slave trade*, was that prostitution was always exploitative, and within the existing regulations and legislation was a 'double standard' of what was acceptable for men and women (Petrie 1971). The Contagious Diseases Acts conveyed, according to Butler, a double standard of morality; punishing women

who engaged in prostitution, whilst simultaneously protecting the men who were their clients. Butler used the term *white slavery* to refer to prostitution and the migration of women for prostitution. The purity campaigners constructed a *white slave trade* script to refer to prostitution as being forced and as having devastating social and moral implications for those entrapped into the trade. As such, it came to be associated with procuring white girls and women against their will for enforced prostitution (Petrie 1971). By all accounts, Butler was a captivating spokesperson on behalf of women and girls who were damaged by their prostitution. Butler worked alongside the social purity campaigners to gain political support for increasing the age of consent and played a key role in supporting and publicising the issue of child trafficking. Butler called for an increase in the age of consent to close the loophole which encouraged the trade in under age English girls to continental Europe where the age of consent was eighteen (Petrie 1971).

In nineteenth century Britain the social purity movement utilised their national and international networks to inform their supporters of the evidence of *the white slave trade* and prostitution. Both Butler and the purity movement drew on *white slavery* in their campaigning although they came from ideologically opposing positions. Butler used her international networks to circulate a pamphlet warning of the dangers to girls travelling abroad for work and ending up in prostitution, and pointed the finger of responsibility at the corrupt police abroad and the flawed legislation in England. Butler's campaigns for the repeal of the legislation which enforced prostitutes to undergo examinations was at odds with the purity movement who sought the abolition of prostitution, nonetheless, they aligned their objectives with the campaign to increase the age of consent for girls (Bristow 1978). Again, in the current context, the concerns about child trafficking and the extreme features of high profile cases are disseminated through international networks and anti-trafficking organisations. These international networks have a long history, and activists purposefully frame issues in terms of right and wrong, and use moral leverage in their campaigns (Keck and Sikkink 1998).

The myth of the white slave trade

The social purity movement was galvanised by the discovery of the international *white slave trade*, and their campaigning materials of the period provided many accounts of the exploitation and rescue of girls and women travelling. In one of the milder accounts, published in 1882, *The Shield* reports a third party account of the rescue of a “*decently dressed*” English girl who was “*apparently a domestic servant*” travelling to Dieppe. The other passengers on the ship warned the girl and protected her during the journey, advising the police once they reached Dieppe of the intentions of the “*suspicious gang of foreigners*” whom the girl had been travelling with (*The Shield* August 12th 1882).

From the perspectives of the social purity groups, the exposure of prostitution and the international trade in girls was perceived as potentially undermining the sanctity of the family, and as a threat to the health of the nation. The purity campaigners’ main objective was to end the trafficking in girls and women who would, they argued, be ruined by the corruption of their innocence, their loss of status as virtuous females, and socio-economic marginalisation. The purity groups and organisations played a significant role in lobbying for legislative change to protect children from abuse and exploitation, but it was prostitution and the *white slave trade* which really interested them (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978; Mulpetre 2005). Campaigning to end trafficking and prostitution coexisted alongside the ideological objectives of the social purity movement to moralise the fallen and punish the evil: “*with outrage the governing emotion*” (Bristow 1978 p.93). The influence of the social purity movement is apparent in other late nineteenth century welfare reforms, and led to wider attempts to control and regulate working class families and children, especially the sexual protection and regulation of female children (Piper 1999; Hendrick 2005).

The issues of *white slavery* and prostitution were well embedded on the social purity agenda, and the efforts of the purity campaigners to suppress trafficking coincided with their wish to abolish what they saw as the evils of prostitution (Bristow 1978). A similar picture has emerged in relation to the way in which NGOs currently raise awareness of trafficking in women (Doezema 2001). The fears about *white slavery* contributed to existing social anxieties about the sexual

threats and dangers to girls who were no longer under the control of their families. The danger, however, was not just current, and was presented as a potential danger in the future when girls and women were left unprotected by their family. These familial narratives characterise the concerns as they were publicly expressed through the purity campaigns. Their concerns also related to the sexual exploitation and abuse that captive victims were said to be subjected to and commentators have argued that this depiction resembles the way in which the issue of trafficking is publicised in the twenty-first century:

“Then as now, the paradigmatic image is that of a young and naïve innocent lured or deceived by evil traffickers into a life of sordid horror from which escape is nearly impossible” (Doezema 2001 p.24).

The ‘*white slave*’ provided a global focus on the issue of prostitution, involving as it did the crossing of international borders. Across Europe at the time, prostitutes were seen as being in need of rescue, although their involvement in the campaigning activities was neglected: *“They had no voice -and no face- in the movement that was fighting on their behalf”* (De Vries 2005 p.45). As highlighted in the literature review, the way in which NGOs currently advocate and pursue their anti-trafficking agenda has come under sharp criticism as many of the women who are being ‘rescued’ are in fact economic migrants. NGO intervention does little to promote the needs of these women who are instead labelled as ‘trafficked’ and returned to their countries of origin. Similarly so in relation to the immigration role which NGOs play in the anti-trafficking arena (Sharma 2004). The way in which NGOs campaign and advocate for children thought to be trafficked is also relevant here, as children are represented by NGOs whose anti-trafficking agenda is framed around beliefs about the potential dangers to children of their being trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation.

In her analyses, Doezeema (2001) argues that the *white slave trade* was a myth, and that trends in travel and communication conspired to give legitimacy to the claims made by the social purists. Not unlike today, these sensationalised claims seemed to strike a chord with the media and the public. The opportunities for women to migrate were made possible by improved and publicly accessible transport. These migrations widened public concerns about prostitution and gave

currency to the international *myth of white slavery* (Doezema 2002). Certainly, some women began to migrate for work, sometimes as prostitutes, this was seen to pose a threat to the family, which would be undermined by the loss of mothers, daughters and sisters, potentially to prostitution abroad (Doezema 2002). This is supported by other critiques, including De Vries (2005) who analysed the debates around at the time of the Dutch campaigns on *white slavery* in the early twentieth century, and Derks (2000) who discusses how the construction of the *white slave* has re-emerged as the ‘trafficking survivor’ in the late twentieth century.

The *white slave* garnered public sympathy and support in a way which the prostitutes could never hope to do. This was largely because the depiction of girls and women as slaves reinforced ideas about sexual innocence and purity, whereas the prostitute, who was voluntarily engaged in the sale of sex, was complicit and knowing. Additionally, prostitutes were seen as dangerous vectors of disease, contributing to increases in sexually transmitted infection, and undermining the sanctity of relationships between husbands and their wives. De Vries (2005) argues that otherness and whiteness were also important features in the *white slave trade* script, serving to reinforce notions about threats from less civilised societies, and the corresponding beliefs about the superiority of ‘whiteness’. The threat in this sense of the *white slave trade* also came from its depiction of sexuality which played on fears grounded in racialised beliefs about sexual relations between foreign men and white women (De Vries 2005).

The ‘discovery’ of child trafficking: corruption, compliance and controversy

Alfred Stace Dyer (1849–1926), a moral reformer, was also a supporter of Josephine Butler. Brought up a Congregationalist, Dyer became an evangelical Quaker in his early twenties and was a lecturer for a peace organization, *The International Arbitration Society*, later becoming its secretary. In 1877 Dyer joined the *Working Men's National League for the Abolition of the State Regulation of Vice* after attending one of Butler’s public speeches. In 1879, he founded a monthly journal: *The Sentinel*, and played a part in Butler's moral crusade through his exposure of the state-regulated brothels in mainland Europe. Dyer also assisted William Stead in the establishment of the *National Vigilance Association* (Oxford DNB 2009).

In the early 1880's, Dyer was approached by a Quaker associate who had been told a story about the forced prostitution of an English girl, by an acquaintance who had disclosed to him that in a recent business trip to Belgium he had met an English girl who had been tricked into moving abroad, only to find herself forced into prostitution. Dyer had, upon hearing the story, interviewed the girl's parents and the businessman acquaintance of his Quaker associate. Josephine Butler put Dyer in touch with two associates who helped to track the girl down to a syphilis ward in a hospital. One of these associates met with a local publican nearby who told him that he had been offered for sale a twelve year old English girl who, when he had met her, had claimed she was not allowed to leave her room and was kept a virtual prisoner (Bristow 1978).

The police officer who led the investigation by Scotland Yard believed that there was no need to pursue the case further, but associates of Josephine Butler initiated an inquiry within the Foreign Office. Butler continued to agitate, and reported her concerns, and details of other cases she was aware of, to the Home Secretary who commissioned Thomas Snagge, a London barrister, to undertake an inquiry into the matter of girls being taken and forced into prostitution in Belgium. At the same time, a Treasury solicitor was appointed to act on behalf of English girls in these situations in Belgium. Butler also made a deposition to the Belgian authorities which was leaked to the press and there followed the trial and conviction of the corrupt Belgian police and brothel owners who had been involved in the trade. This was reported back to Dyer who had received reports on similar cases and had been active in sending these accounts to the newspapers, warning wealthier families that officials on the continent were corrupt and implicated in the traffic, as were respectable family servants such as governesses. Dyer, in his reports to the press, had called for funds to establish a committee to protect girls from the outrage, but his requests were met with hostility by the press, and his further investigations in Brussels were resisted by officials (Bristow 1978).

A Foreign Office employee was dispatched to undertake research, but found no evidence to substantiate the claims being made that children were being kept as sex slaves in Belgian brothels. Dyer, however, went on to publish accounts of his own inquiries which prompted

Scotland Yard to conduct their own investigations, and they toured brothels accompanied by the Belgian police. One of these allegedly corrupt Belgian police officers contacted Josephine Butler following the investigation and reported that children who had been in the brothels had been hidden or sent away during the tour by the Scotland Yard officers, and that the Belgian police who had conducted the tour were in league with the brothel owners and had given orders to restrict access to Dyer, and to Scotland Yard. Such were the heightened levels of public and political concern, that a House of Lords Select Committee was tasked with investigating the allegations (Bristow 1978).

The curious case of Adeline Tanner

There was a case which gave credibility to the purity campaigns, as it appeared that an under-age girl had been found after being made to work against her will in a brothel. The case of the girl allegedly sold into the *white slave trade*, Adeline Tanner, persuaded Josephine Butler to intervene and add support to the social purity campaigners in their fight against the traffic in girls and women. In my research I analysed the documents related to the case of Adeline Tanner, and various accounts of her experiences, which were reported to the Lords Select Committee in 1881. This analysis demonstrates inconsistencies and contradictions between those involved in her case. Nonetheless, Adeline's case was influential, confirming to the purity campaigners the extent of the traffic, and their campaigning continued and was instituted with the establishment of the *First International Bureau for the Suppression of Trafficking in Women and Girls* (IBSTP hereafter) in 1885, and its parent organisation the *National Vigilance Association*.

The Lords Select Committee

Inspector Greenham of Scotland Yard had found very little evidence to suggest that girls were being forced into prostitution abroad, and submitted his reports as evidence to the Lords Select Committee in 1881. The investigations found limited evidence of an organised trade in girls because the brothel tour had been led by corrupt officials: "*Inspector Greenham had undertaken what was in fact a carefully laundered tour of regulated houses* (Bristow 1978 p.89). In reference to the thirty-three girls and women under twenty-one in brothels visited by Greenham, Bristow (1978) suggests that: "*...the Lords concluded that most of the British inmates abroad were professionals before they embarked*" (Bristow 1978 p.90). So, whilst the social purity campaigners were advocating for greater regulation and protection of women and girls from the traffickers, the official line was that these women and girls were prostitutes before they went abroad and so no force or abduction had taken place. Instead, it was likely that the girls and women had been expecting better conditions than they experienced in foreign brothels (Bristow 1978).

During this period Alfred Dyer was conducting one of a number of unofficial investigations into the '*white slave trade*' when he discovered Adeline Tanner who, allegedly, had been tricked into travelling to Europe and had subsequently been forced into prostitution. Adeline, however, was said to have suffered from a congenital abnormality which made it virtually impossible for her to have sexual intercourse and so the brothel owners were also accused of having forced her to undergo corrective surgery. Adeline was subsequently rescued by Dyer, (Bristow 1978, p.93). Adeline told how she was drugged and held captive in a brothel. When Dyer rescued Adeline, details of her case were reported to the Foreign Secretary, this being facilitated by Josephine Butler (Petrie 1971). In a written statement¹⁷ which is included in the reports of the case amongst the papers submitted to the Lords Select Committee, Adeline states:

¹⁷ Correspondence Regarding the Immoral Traffic in English Girls in Belgium 1881. Lords Select Committee 1881 HO 45/9546/95343. Public Records at the National Archives. Kew. London.

“...not only was all liberty taken from me, but I was the helpless victim of every outrage and brutality that heartless profligates in their unrestrained and unnatural lust chose to inflict upon me”

The records of the Lords Select Committee also include correspondence¹⁸ from Benjamin Scott, an obstetrician who had examined Adeline Tanner:

“I discovered no signs of syphilitic infection...She is well formed and uninjured by any operation which may have been performed on her”

Inspector Greenham¹⁹ had interviewed Adeline during his tour of European brothels and made a different assessment. After reading Adeline’s evidence, Greenham reported that he had not been advised of any tales of torture when he interviewed her in April 1880 in hospital. Greenham had also found Adeline to be quite simple and uneducated and questioned the accuracy of her evidence in his submission to the Lords Select Committee as it: *“...materially differs from a statement she made to me on 3rd April last”*. In the police investigations and prosecutions which followed, Alfred Dyer was required to bring Adeline to the police to travel in safe custody to Brussels to assist in the prosecutions case.

It seems that Dyer was reluctant to cooperate with the Police. On the 3rd December 1880 in a letter²⁰ from the Director of Criminal Investigations at Great Scotland Yard, Dyer’s conduct in this matter is criticised. Despite Dyer claiming to have carried out investigations and having information which may help with criminal prosecutions, he had not assisted the police:

“Chief Inspector Greenham informed you yesterday by my order that criminal proceedings had been instituted in Belgium against thirteen persons for diverse offences connected with the alleged presence of English minors in houses of ill fame within their

¹⁸ Correspondence Regarding the Immoral Traffic in English Girls in Belgium 1881. Lords Select Committee 1881 HO 45/9546/95343. Public Records at the National Archives. Kew. London.

¹⁹ Correspondence Regarding the Immoral Traffic in English Girls in Belgium 1881. Lords Select Committee 1881 HO 45/9546/95343. Public Records at the National Archives. Kew. London.

²⁰ Correspondence Regarding the Immoral Traffic in English Girls in Belgium 1881. Lords Select Committee 1881 HO 45/9546/95343. Public Records at the National Archives. Kew. London.

jurisdiction. He acquainted you that the evidence of certain females who had inhabited the houses in question was essential for the furtherance of the ends of justice, & the deterrent punishment of the guilty... It was within my knowledge that the addresses of two of these persons-Adelaine²¹ Tanner and Ellen Newland were known to you. Although not mindful of the reluctance you have shown on more than one occasion in the past year to assist the police by the results of your researches & the information within your reach, to assist the police in their constant and sincere desire to do all that can possibly be done, to prevent the alleged evil if it does exist & to bring it's perpetrators within the power of the law”

The Director of Criminal Investigations, in his letter, goes on to express concern that Dyer, who was at the forefront of exposing the trafficking, would not assist the police and had allegedly defamed the police as corrupt:

“I was sanguine that you, as a gentleman prominently engaged in the public exposition of the alleged state of affairs, would not decline to assist public justice, by withholding the addresses of the witnesses mentioned. I regret to have it reported to me that I was mistaken, and that not only do you (illegible word) refuse to comply with this just and lawful request, but you further think it consistent with your profession to state ‘I know what unmitigated blackguards the officers of the law are ’”

It is not clear why Dyer was reluctant to cooperate with the police investigations, or why he prevented the police from seeing Adeline Tanner in the conduct of their enquiry, especially as it seemed to be a very clear case which exposed the international trade in English girls. Certainly, it seems unlikely that he was concerned with preserving the girl's reputation and anonymity, given that he seemed to have done all he could to publicise the case. What is clear is the conflict between the accounts of Adeline, Alfred Dyer, Inspector Greenham, and Benjamin Scott. In relation to the operations Adeline had allegedly undergone, the medical officer, Scott, found no signs of infection or deformity, whilst Greenham argued that Adeline's statement was not consistent and he did not recall the tales of torture which she was now alleging. Dyer's reluctance to cooperate with the police may have been fostered in part by the purity campaigner's wider beliefs that the police were corrupt and protected the interest of the brothel owners above those of the victims of the trade, which had been evidenced earlier in the Belgian context. But, nonetheless, it is peculiar that Dyer resisted the intervention of the police, and even more fascinating that a senior police officer should challenge this so forcefully.

²¹ Adeline or Adelaine Tanner both spellings appear in the correspondence.

The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon

Notwithstanding the inconsistencies and controversy which surrounded Adeline Tanner's case, the exposure in the early 1880s of child prostitution in London and the international trade in girls to Belgium led to the imprisonment of Belgian officials, including the Chief of Police. It also influenced William Stead and his supporters, including Josephine Butler, to undertake an investigation which was published as *The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon* serialised in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in July 1885. This was hugely influential in popularising the causes of child trafficking, representing a skilled and successfully orchestrated expose on the issue. The first two pages of the article which launched the series published on 6th July 1885 are reproduced below:

THE PALL MALL GAZETTE

An Evening Newspaper and Review.

No. 6336.—VOL. XLII.

MONDAY, JULY 6, 1885.

Price One Penny.

"WE BID YOU BE OF HOPE."

THE Report of our Secret Commission will be read to-day with a shuddering horror that will thrill throughout the world. After this awful picture of the crimes at present committed as it were under the very ægis of the law has been fully unfolded before the eyes of the public, we need not doubt that the House of Commons will find time to raise the age during which English girls are protected from inexpiable wrong. The evidence which we shall publish this week leaves no room for doubt—first, as to the reality of the crimes against which the Amendment Bill is directed, and, secondly, as to the efficacy of the protection extended by raising the age of consent. When the report is published, the case for the bill will be complete, and we do not believe that members on the eve of a general election will refuse to consider the bill protecting the daughters of the poor, which even the House of Lords has in three consecutive years declared to be imperatively necessary.

This, however, is but one, and that one of the smallest, of the considerations which justify the publication of the Report. The good it will do is manifest. These revelations, which we begin to publish to-day, cannot fail to touch the heart and rouse the conscience of the English people. Terrible as is the exposure, the very horror of it is an inspiration. It speaks not of leaden despair, but with a joyful promise of better things to come. *Wir heissen euch hoffen!* "We bid you be of hope," CARLYLE'S last message to his country, the rhythmic word with which GOETHE closes his modern psalm—that is what we have to repeat to-day, for assuredly these horrors, like others against which the conscience of mankind has revolted, are not eternal. "Am I my sister's keeper?" that paraphrase of the excuse of CAIN, will not dull the fierce smart of pain which will be felt by every decent man who learns the kind of atrocities which are being perpetrated in cool blood in the very shadow of our churches and within a stone's throw of our courts. It is a veritable slave trade that is going on around us; but, as it takes place in the heart of London, it is a scandal—an outrage on public morality—even to allude to it. We have kept silence far too long. There are a few devoted workers who have been labouring for years endeavouring to save those who might well address GORDON'S homely reproach to the "majority of us: "While you are eating and drinking and resting on good beds, we, and those with me, are watching by night and by day"—working against this great wrong—happy, indeed, if they escaped obloquy and abuse for endeavouring to remind us of our duty. No longer will good men be able with easy conscience to join in that indignant "Hush!" by which the evildoers have hitherto silenced every attempt to make articulate the smothered wail that rises unceasing from the woeful under-world. There is now an end to that conspiracy of silence by which, after every inquiry, "the door was each time quickly closed upon" the question, as the stone lid used to be shut down, in the "Campo Santo of Naples, upon the mass of human corpses that lay festering beneath." That "stone lid" is raised now, never again, we may hope, to be closed until something has been done. Under the ruthless compulsion of publicity even those but indifferent honest will do more good than many of the most virtuous when the evil could be hidden out of sight.

That much may be done, we have good ground for hoping, if only because so little has hitherto been attempted. A dull despair has unnerved the hearts of those who face this monstrous evil, and good men have sorrowfully turned to other fields where their exertions might expect a better return. But the magnitude of this misery ought to lead to the redoubling, not to the benumbing of our exertions. No one can say how much suffering and wrong is irremediable until the whole of the moral and religious forces of the country are brought to bear upon it. Yet, in dealing with this subject, the forces upon which we rely in dealing with other evils are almost all paralysed. The Home, the School, the Church, the Press are silent. The law is actually accessory to crime. Parents culpably neglect even to warn their children of the existence of dangers of which many learn the first time when they have become their prey. The Press, which reports verbatim all the scabrous details of the divorce courts, recoils in pious horror from the duty of shedding a flood of light upon these dark places, which indeed are full of the habitations of cruelty. But the failure of the

Churches is, perhaps, the most conspicuous and the most complete. CHRIST'S mission was to restore man to a semblance of the Divine. The Child-Prostitute of our day is the image into which, with the tacit acquiescence of those who call themselves by His name, men have moulded the form once fashioned in the likeness of GOD.

If Chivalry is extinct and Christianity is effete, there is still another great enthusiasm to which we may with confidence appeal. The future belongs to the combined forces of Democracy and Socialism, which when united are irresistible. Divided on many points they will combine in protesting against the continued immolation of the daughters of the people as a sacrifice to the vices of the rich. Of the two, it is Socialism which will find the most powerful stimulus in this revelation of the extent to which under our present social system the wealthy are able to exercise all the worst abuses of power which disgraced the feudalism of the Middle Ages. Wealth is power, Poverty is weakness. The abuse of power leads directly to its destruction, and in all the annals of crime can there be found a more shameful abuse of the power of wealth than that by which in this nineteenth century of Christian civilization princes and dukes, and ministers and judges, and the rich of all classes, are purchasing for damnation, temporal if not eternal, the as yet uncorrupted daughters of the poor? It will be said they assent to their corruption. So did the female serfs from whom the seigneur exacted the *jus prima noctis*. And do not the wealthy think that the assent wrung by wealth from poverty to their own undoing will avert the vengeance and the doom?

If people can only be got to think seriously about this matter progress will be made in the right direction. Evils once as universal and apparently inevitable as prostitution have disappeared. Vices almost universal are now regarded with shuddering horror by the least moral of men. Slavery has gone. A slave trader is treated as *hostis humani generis*. Piracy has disappeared. Intestine war is now almost unknown. Torture has been abolished. May we not hope, therefore, that if we try to do our duty to our sisters and to ourselves, we may greatly reduce even although we never entirely extirpate, the plague of prostitution? For let us remember that—

Every hope which rises and grows broad
In the world's heart, by ordered impulse streams
From the great heart of GOD.

And if that ideal seems too blinding bright for human eyes, we can at least do much to save the innocent victims who unwillingly are swept into the maelstrom of vice. And who is there among us bearing the name of man who will dare to sit down any longer with folded hands in the presence of so great a wrong?

THE MAIDEN TRIBUTE OF MODERN BABYLON.—I.

THE REPORT OF OUR SECRET COMMISSION.

IN ancient times, if we may believe the myths of Hellas, Athens, after a disastrous campaign, was compelled by her conqueror to send once every nine years a tribute to Crete of seven youths and seven maidens. The doomed fourteen, who were selected by lot amid the lamentations of the citizens, returned no more. The vessel that bore them to Crete unfurled black sails as the symbol of despair, and on arrival her passengers were flung into the famous Labyrinth of Dædalus, there to wander about blindly until such time as they were devoured by the Minotaur, a frightful monster, half man, half bull, the foul product of an unnatural lust. "The labyrinth was as large as a town and had countless courts and galleries. "Those who entered it could never find their way out again. If they hurried from one to another of the numberless rooms looking for the entrance door, it was all in vain. They only became more hopelessly "lost in the bewildering labyrinth, until at last they were devoured by the Minotaur." Twice at each ninth year the Athenians paid the maiden tribute to King Minos, lamenting sorely the dire necessity of bowing to his iron law. When the third tribute came to be exacted, the distress of the city of the Violet Crown was insupportable. From the King's palace to the peasant's hamlet, everywhere were heard cries and groans and the choking sob of despair, until the whole air seemed to vibrate with the sorrow of an unutterable anguish. Then it was that the hero Theseus volunteered to be offered up among those who drew the black balls from the brazen urn of destiny, and the story of his self-sacrifice, his victory, and his triumphant return, is among the most familiar of the tales which since the childhood of the world have kindly

the imagination and fired the heart of the human race. The labyrinth was cunningly wrought like a house, says Ovid, with many rooms and winding passages, that so the shameful creature of lust whose abode it was to be should be far removed from sight.

Destinat hunc Minos thalamis removere pudorem,
Multiplicique domo, cæcisque includere tectis.
Dædalus ingenio fabricæ celesterrimus artis
Ponit opus : turbatque notas, et lumina flexum
Ducit in errorem variarum ambrage viarum.

And what happened to the victims—the young men and maidens—who were there interned, no one could surely tell. Some say that they were done to death; others that they lived in servile employments to old age. But in this alone do all the stories agree, that those who were once caught in the coils could never retrace their steps, so “inextricable” were the paths, so “blind” the footsteps, so “innumerable” the ways of wrong-doing. On the Athenian wall of the porch of the cathedral at Lucca there is a slightly traced piece of sculpture, representing the Cretan labyrinth, “out of which,” says the legend written in straggling letters at the side, “nobody could get who was inside.”—

Hic quem credicus edit Dædalus est laberinthus
De quo nullus vadere quivit qui fuit intus.

The fact that the Athenians should have taken so bitterly to heart the paltry maiden tribute that once in nine years they had to pay to the Minotaur seems incredible, almost inconceivable. This very night in London, and every night, year in and year out, not seven maidens only, but many times seven, selected almost as much by chance as those who in the Athenian market-place drew lots as to which should be flung into the Cretan labyrinth, will be offered up as the Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon. Maidens they were when this morning dawned, but to-night their ruin will be accomplished, and to-morrow they will find themselves within the portals of the maze of London brothel-dom. Within that labyrinth wander, like lost souls, the vast host of London prostitutes, whose numbers no man can compute, but who are probably not much below 50,000 strong. Many, no doubt, who venture but a little way within the maze make their escape. But multitudes are swept irresistibly on and on to be destroyed in due season, to give place to others, who also will share their doom. The maw of the London Minotaur is insatiable, and none that go into the secret recesses of his lair return again. After some years' dolorous wandering in this palace of despair—for “hope of rest to solace there is none, nor e'en of milder pang,” save the poisonous anodyne of drink—most of those ensnared to-night will perish, some of them in horrible torture. Yet, so far from this great city being convulsed with woe, London cares for none of these things, and the cultured man of the world, the heir of all the ages, the ultimate product of a long series of civilizations and religions, will shrug his shoulders in scorn at the folly of any one who ventures in public print to raise even the mildest protest against a horror a thousand times more horrible than that which, in the youth of the world, haunted like a nightmare the imagination of mankind. Nevertheless, I have not yet lost faith in the heart and conscience of the English folk, the sturdy innate chivalry and right thinking of our own people; and although I am no vain dreamer of Utopian peoples solely by Sir Galahads and vestal virgins, I am not without hope that there may be some check placed upon this vast traffic of maidens, unwitting or unwilling, which is nightly evied in London by the vices of the rich upon the necessities of the poor. London's lust traffics up many thousands of women, who are literally killed as I made away with—living sacrifices slain in the service of vice. That may be inevitable, and with that I have nothing to do. But I do ask that those doomed to the house of evil fame shall not be trapped into it unwillingly, and that none shall be beguiled into the chamber of death before they are of an age to read the inscription above the portal—“All hope abandon ye who enter here.” If the daughters of the people must be served up as dainty morsels to minister to the passion of the rich, let them at least attain an age when they can understand the nature of the sacrifice which they are asked to make. And if we must cast maidens—not seven, but seven times seven—rightly into the jaws of vice, let us at least see to it that they assent to their own immolation, and are not unwilling sacrifices purchased by robbery and fraud. That is surely not too much to ask from the dissolute rich. Even considerations of self-interest might lead our rulers to assent to so modest a demand. For the hour of Democracy has struck, and there is no wrong which a man resents like this. If it has not been resented hitherto, it is not because it was not felt. The Roman Republic was founded by the rape of Lucrece, but Lucrece was a member of one of the governing families. A similar offence placed Spain under the domination of the Moors, but there again the victim of Royal licence was the daughter of a Count. But the fathers and brothers whose daughters and sisters are purchased like slaves, not for labour, but for lust, are now at last enrolled among the governing classes—a circumstance full of hope for the nation, but by no means without menace for a class. Many of the French Revolutionists were dissolute enough, but nothing gave such an edge to the guillotine as the memory of the Parc aux Cerfs; and even in our time the horrors that attended the suppression of the Commune were largely due to the despair of the *femme vengeresse*. Hence, unless the levying of the maiden-tribute in London is shorn of its worst abuses—at present, as I shall show, flourishing unchecked—resentment, which might be appeased by reform,

may hereafter be the virus of a social revolution. It is the one explosive which is strong enough to wreck the Throne.

LIBERTY FOR VICE, REPRESSION FOR CRIME.

To avoid all misapprehension as to the object with which I propose to set forth the ghastly and criminal features of this infernal traffic, I wish to say emphatically at the outset that, however strongly I may feel as to the imperative importance of morality and chastity, I do not ask for any police interference with the liberty of vice. I ask only for the repression of crime. Sexual immorality, however evil it may be in itself or in its consequences, must be dealt with not by the policeman but by the teacher, so long as the persons contracting are of full age, are perfectly free agents, and in their sin are guilty of no outrage on public morals. Let us by all means apply the sacred principles of free trade to trade in vice, and regulate the relations of the sexes by the higgling of the market and the liberty of private contract. Whatever may be my belief as to the reality and the importance of a transcendental theory of purity in the relations between man and woman, that is an affair for the moralist, not for the legislator. So far from demanding any increased power for the police, I would rather incline to say to the police, “Hands off,” when they interfere arbitrarily with the ordinary operations of the market of vice. But the more freely we permit to adults absolute liberty to dispose of their persons in accordance with the principles of private contract and free trade, the more stringent must be our precautions against the innumerable crimes which spring from vice, as vice itself springs from the impure imaginings of the heart of man. These crimes flourish on every side, unnoticed and unchecked—if, indeed, they are not absolutely encouraged by the law, as they are certainly practised by some legislators and winked at by many administrators of the law. To extirpate vice by Act of Parliament is impossible; but because we must leave vice free that is no reason why we should acquiesce helplessly in the perpetration of crime. And that crime of the most ruthless and abominable description is constantly and systematically practised in London without let or hindrance, I am in a position to prove from my own personal knowledge—a knowledge purchased at a cost of which I prefer not to speak. Those crimes may be roughly classified as follows:—

- I. The sale and purchase and violation of children.
- II. The procurement of virgins.
- III. The entrapping and ruin of women.
- IV. The international slave trade in girls.
- V. Atrocities, brutalities, and unnatural crimes.

That is what I call sexual criminality, as opposed to sexual immorality. It flourishes in all its branches on every side to an extent of which even those specially engaged in rescue work have but little idea. Those who are constantly engaged in its practice naturally deny its existence. But I speak of that which I do know, not from hearsay or rumour, but of my own personal knowledge.

HOW THE FACTS WERE VERIFIED.

When the Criminal Law Amendment Bill was talked out just before the defeat of the Ministry it became necessary to rouse public attention to the necessity for legislation on this painful subject. I undertook an investigation into the facts. The evidence taken before the House of Lords' Committee in 1882 was useful, but the facts were not up to date: members said things had changed since then, and the need for legislation had passed. It was necessary to bring the information up to date, and that duty—albeit with some reluctance—I resolutely undertook. For four weeks, aided by two or three coadjutors of whose devotion and self-sacrifice, combined with a rare instinct for investigation and a singular personal fearlessness, I cannot speak too highly, I have been exploring the London Inferno. It has been a strange and unexampled experience. For a month I have oscillated between the nobles and the meanest of mankind, the saviours and the destroyers of their race, spending hours alternately in brothels and hospitals, in the streets and in refuges, in the company of procuresses and of bishops. London beneath the glare of its innumerable lamps became, not like Paris in 1793—a naphtha-lighted city of Dis—but a resurrected and magnified City of the Plain, with all the vices of Gomorrah, during the vengeance of long-suffering Heaven. It seemed a strange, inverted world, that in which I lived those terrible weeks—the world of the streets and of the brothel. It was the same, yet not the same, as the world of business and the world of politics. I heard of much the same people in the house of ill-fame as those of whom you hear in caucuses, in law courts, and on 'Change. But all were judged by a different standard, and their relative importance was altogether changed. It was as if the position of our world had suddenly been altered, and as you saw most of the planets and fixed stars in different combinations, and of altogether different magnitudes, so that at first it was difficult to recognize them. For the house of evil fame has its own ethics, and the best man in the world—the first of Englishmen, in the estimation of the bawd—is often one of whom society knows nothing and cares less. To hear statesmen reckoned up from the standpoint of the brothel is at first almost as novel and perplexing an experience as it is to hear judges and Queen's Counsel praised or blamed, not for their judicial acumen and legal lore, but for their addiction to unnatural crimes or their familiarity with obscene literature. After

As part of his “*Secret Commission of Inquiry*” Stead had procured, in bizarre circumstances, a girl aged thirteen, with the assistance of Rebecca Jarrett. The girl, Eliza Armstrong, was sold by her mother for five pounds to Jarrett, a reformed former procuress of children who worked for Josephine Butler. Stead had wanted to prove that it was possible to conduct such a transaction, to support claims of a trade in girls for prostitution. However, involvement in the purchase of Eliza Armstrong was to have severe consequences for Stead. Following the publication of the *Maiden Tribute* series, both Stead and Jarrett were charged, convicted and imprisoned for their part in the purchase of Eliza Armstrong along with two other women involved in the sale, one of whom had physically examined Eliza to confirm her virginity (Petrie 1971; Bristow 1978).

Violated innocents

The series characterised the trade in girls for sexual purposes as violated innocents, at the mercy of ruthless villains. Girls were procured to satisfy the cravings of evil sexual deviants from the aristocratic and upper classes, and the debauched foreigners whose intentions were to deflower virgins. As Gorham (1978) suggests this symbolisation and characterisation of the issue of child trafficking, much like the conceptions of trafficking today is based on these criminal /victim binaries. The *Maiden Tribute* series stereotyped girls as naïve and vulnerable, tragic and ruined. The brothel owners and the clients were characterised as evil deviants, whilst the parents who sold their children were ignorant and feckless. It was also portrayed as a class issue which was described in terms of the callousness of the wealthy aristocrats and the vulnerability of the poor working class virgin maidens, who were exploited and then cast aside: “...*the daughters of the poor*”.

Sensation and degradation

The first edition of the *Maiden Tribute* series sold out and crowds of people gathered to wait for the second edition (Walkowitz 1992). Stead, whilst preferring not to elaborate in too much detail about how he came by the “*personal knowledge*” which informed the series, does provide some information on his secret investigations, and describes his experiences of visiting brothels and

hospitals over a four week period: “*I have been exploring the London Inferno*” (Pall Mall Gazette July 1885 p.2).

The narratives of the *Maiden Tribute* series have been criticised by Gorham (1978) and others (Chesney 1970; Pearsall 1969) as providing the foundations for the way in which popular journalistic inquiry has developed;

“...attracting intense interest at the time and subsequently serving as a model for that personalized and sensationalized form of modern muckraking that has become a permanent feature of modern journalism” (Gorham 1978 p.354).

Alarmist and riddled with references to Gothic and mythical narratives invoking torture, entrapment and violation of the innocents, the series was an instant sensation, and a major journalistic coup (Gorham 1978). According to Mulpetre (2001) the *Maiden Tribute* series can be understood as:

“...a work of voyeuristic impulse, or the journalistic hijacking and sensationalising of Josephine Butler’s campaign against white slavery” (Mulpetre 2001 p.1).

Pearsall argues that Stead was using the weapons of pornography to right a wrong and *The Maiden Tribute* series was: “...the death knell of responsible journalism in its embellishment of the facts” (Pearsall 1969: p. 373). In the *Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon* series Stead:

“...set off a perfect hurricane of public excitement and the governments hand was forced...the fact that these articles did a valuable service, and were attacked with ranting hypocrisy, does not make them accurate documentation” (Chesney 1970 p.344).

Other newspapers at the time and during Stead and Jarrett’s trial were critical of Stead’s methods and his exposé (Bristow 1978; Walkowitz 1992) and the MP for Whitehaven asked the Home secretary if Stead could be prosecuted under the obscenity laws (Pearsall 1969; 1983 p. 374). There can be little doubt that the *Maiden Tribute* series popularised the cause of the anti-trafficking campaigners, and contributed to heightened levels of societal concerns.

The evil trade

The huge demonstration to end the *evil trade* which took place the day after the first article of the *Maiden Tribute* series was published, reportedly attracted a quarter of a million people (Bristow 1978). The revelations of child prostitution and the trade in girls threatened Victorian society's rigid moral and social codes which segregated society by class and gender (Gorham 1978). According to Bristow (1978):

“When the ‘Maiden Tribute’ bombshell hit in 1885, it did not fall on virgin ground. The expanded social purity movement was available to create turmoil” (Bristow 1978 p.93).

There is of course evidence that a trade in women and girls existed, although not to the extent which it was constructed in the *Maiden Tribute* series:

“While a few were innocent victims, most seem to have been professionals who did not know they would be kept in more severe circumstances than prevailed in the world of the English vice” (Bristow 1978 p.88).

Melodramatic tactics

When the trade in girls for the purposes of prostitution was exposed by Stead in the *Maiden Tribute* series, he drew on the popular melodramatic genre to illustrate the depravity and morally corrupt nature of the trade and those involved in it. Walkowitz (1992) examines the narratives of the *Maiden Tribute* series and illustrates the use of melodramatic tactics which, she argues were used to heighten public and political sensitivity to the issue of child prostitution and *white slavery*. The melodramatic themes are evident as the stealing of girls was constructed as the deception and corruption of the innocents, and a stereotypical tragic victim who had been tricked by false promises of marriage or work.

Sexual regulation

Those involved in the purity movements were not only driven by their ideological beliefs about the family, female sexuality and childhood, they sought to simultaneously regulate the sexual lives of working class girls, whilst maintaining their own class position and privilege. In this sense the campaigning agenda of the purity organisations, and the impact of the exposure by Stead, eclipsed other explanations for the problems of child prostitution and the relatively new issue of child trafficking. Gorham (1978) maintains that the limited opportunities available to working class girls were such that prostitution at home or abroad was a viable proposition. The agenda which drove the rescue and campaigning work of the various purity organisations was concerned with individual moral reform not a radical overhaul of the economic structure. The alleviation of poverty and destitution which featured in the backgrounds of *the evil trade* was not a focus of the puritans. Their enthusiasm to reform the fallen victims coupled with their desire to expose the exploitation of children, meant that the puritans had a confused and distorted perception of the problem of child trafficking. The legislative response which followed publication of the *Maiden Tribute* series was to increase the age of consent from thirteen to sixteen. This response was to a certain extent symbolic as the child welfare movement in general had been exercising their political muscle to lobby for an increase during that period (Gorham 1978).

Class tensions

The *Maiden Tribute* series also highlighted the underlying conflicts and tensions surrounding the idea of childhood in the late nineteenth century. The social puritans built their anti-trafficking campaigns on a set of pre-existing concerns about the family, children and childhood, which emerged during the industrial revolution. Impoverished working class children were not afforded the relative luxury available to middle class children, and the former often contributed to the family's income and household through their work, or labour. Indeed the servants of the middle class women who were involved in social reform were often female children from the working classes. The domestic work of these girls was essential to the smooth running of middle class homes. It is no surprise then that the purity campaigners and reformers sought to play their moral

cards. It served their individual purposes and normative aspirations to maintain their class position, and thus the existing social structures:

“Had they allowed themselves to see that many young girls engaged in prostitution not as passive, sexually innocent victims but because their choices were so limited, the reformers would have been forced to recognise that the causes of juvenile prostitution were to be found in an exploitative economic structure” (Gorham 1978 p.355).

This argument is also proposed by Walkowitz (1980) who examined the way in which prostitution in nineteenth century Britain evolved from a part time and informal activity to bolster the income of girls and young women, to becoming constructed as a significant social problem, which was addressed through intrusive and punitive regulation.

Social purity campaigns

The purity campaigners’ ongoing investigations, searches for victims of the trade and protests against the trade have been theorised as a moral panic (Bristow 1978, Gorham 1978;Walkowitz 1992). This certainly appears to be the case as the following discussion of the records and publications produced by the purity campaigner’s suggests.

*The First International Bureau for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons*²²

References to the traffic in girls from the UK to continental Europe are found in the formal documents and records of the first *International Bureau for the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons* (IBSTP). Established in 1899 the IBSTP incorporated the *Minors Protection Society* and the *Society for the Suppression of Vice and the Belgian Traffic*. This latter society had been formed in 1885 shortly after the *Maiden Tribute* series was published. Both William Stead and

²² London Metropolitan University, Women's Library: Records of the National Vigilance Association 1874-1971.

Josephine Butler were members of the first executive committee of the *Society for the Suppression of Vice and the Belgian Traffic*.

The executive committee received reports from the preventative committee. The preventative committee were tasked with addressing the suggestions made in the *Maiden Tribute* series to consider the emigration of girls. In 1886 they agreed to the translation of warning notices into French, German and Flemish in an attempt to warn girls and young women of the dangers of travelling abroad. The minutes of the executive also record that a kidnapping case in Paris was felt to be beyond their remit. On 17th August 1886 the committee decided not to translate warning cards into Dutch. A case of drugging a girl aged fifteen had also been withdrawn: “*it might be held by the magistrate that she was capable of taking care of herself*”. The proposed agenda for a conference for all the officers and active members of the London Association was also discussed and the first agenda item proposed for the conference was to increase the age of consent from 16 (as in the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885) to 21. They also proposed the whipping of boy offenders for assault on a girl under the age of 13, and to allow flogging in cases of rape, as well as the award of costs to victims and punishment with hard labour.

In a report of the foreign committee of the IBSTP in July 1887, suggestions were made that the police should send back young men and women coming to Britain who were in danger, in their opinion. They also suggested that girls should not be allowed to land without permission from their parents or guardian, or if the police suspected prostitution. In July 1887 the executive committee received a report from Mr Coote, a member of the IBSTP who had been sent to investigate suspected trafficking in Rotterdam. He reported back at the executive meeting on 26th July 1887, that girls were recruited to sing in “*dens of infamy*”. In his report Coote describes the way in which girls were propositioned by the brothel owners:

“*...if you are cheeky to the gentlemen you will get lots of presents... you must ask them to give you champagne, and to buy you gloves and cigarettes if girls refused, they were sent adrift penniless*”.

In 1888 two suspected cases of trafficking were reported to the executive committee but subsequently found to be mistakes. At this meeting the executive began to share concerns regarding so called ‘pantomime children’ with regard to their being exposed to indecent literature during the course of their employment. The interests of the IBSTP extended to other such ‘lesser’ evils, arguably because there had been a failure to find much concrete evidence of trafficking. The executive committee heard accounts which were invariably anecdotal in nature and without foundation, often they made recommendations that travelling girls and women should be warned of the dangers and risks their journeys held. Like today, a lack of evidence was seen as proof rather than a source of relief. Hence the committee continued to campaign and make recommendations. On the 26th March 1889 the executive committee of the IBSTP heard a report of English girls being trafficked to Buenos Aries, and agreed that warning cards should continue to be distributed on the steamers. The introduction and distribution of warning cards was a popular recommendation as was the establishment of welcoming committees at ports of entry.

Social purity campaigning materials

The Shield (1880a; 1880b; 1880c) was a purity publication of that era which illustrates the purity movement’s characterisation of the sale and sexual exploitation of females. In March (1880a) *The Shield* reports on the *International White Slave Trade*. In November (1880b) again on the theme of *white slavery*, the explicit intention of the article entitled *Public Opinion: The White Slave Trade*, is to inform its readers that there is a need for publicity and action against the trade. In December (1880c), it reports on the trial of the Belgian brothel keepers. Polemical language and outrage characterise the reports in *The Shield*. *The Storm Bell*, (1898 1899) another purity campaigning publication, picks up on the theme of the *white slave trade* almost twenty years later. For example on 1st May 1898 it published the case of an Austrian girl “*of unusual beauty*” who was entrapped by answering a job advertisement. Minna Drescher was a nursery governess and was kept in the brothel until she escaped with the help of “*a young man of high rank*”:

“The young magnate, not wishing to commit himself by appealing to public authorities for her release resorted to the following plan. His carriage stopped one night at midnight under

the windows of Madame Benko's house and the young girl hearing a whistle, silently opened her window and leapt into the street, dressed only in the flimsy garments supplied by the keepers of the house, the only clothes allowed to those slaves. She was unhurt. The young Count drove her rapidly to his castle, whence she returned to Vienna...She had not been many days in Vienna, when she was suddenly arrested by the police and accused of theft. Madam Benko on finding her victim flown at once informed the Budapest "police of morals!" who telegraphed to the same detestable class of functionaries at Vienna giving a description of the girl; and she was quickly traced. She was then taken before the magistrate, where she at once confessed that she was guilty of the "theft" of which she was accused; namely of having escaped with the only clothes she had to wear, which had been supplied to her by her infamous jailer. An advocate pleaded for her, but all she could obtain was that, under the circumstances, the full penalty should not be imposed. She was therefore condemned to a month in prison" (The Storm Bell 1st May 1898 p.54).

The desperate nature of Minna's entrapment and her helplessness in her situation, are conveyed in this report, along with a heroic rescue which depicts Minna fleeing through the night from her captors, barely dressed. Minna was then whisked away to the safety of her rescuers' castle. However, the debauched brothel keeper and the corrupt police victimise Minna further by imprisoning her for theft. It is only the intervention of an advocate that reduced her punishment. What was needed to address this outrage was a war against white slavery (The Storm Bell 1st May 1898 Issue 5 p. 54).

An organised slave trade: whoremongers and sinners

In response to rumours that the slave dealers were making moves to legally protect their interests *The Storm Bell* states:

"This boldness in wickedness does not at all surprise us familiar as we have been for many years with the downward tendencies and the blinding of moral vision, and searing of conscience, produced by the attitude of Governments towards this deadly sin and crime. The slave dealers and State accredited whoremongers have become a recognised class in society, and now fight for their rights as any other merchants and professional men and women may do" (The Storm Bell 1st May 1898 p.54).

There are parallels here with more recent NGO literature which seeks to illuminate the ‘true’ and ‘extensive’ nature of trafficking to a naïve and unsuspecting public. The article’s author alerts readers who may not realise that such a trade exists:

“Probably few of my reader are aware how vast this traffic is, how highly organised and with what cunning, and audacity it is carried on throughout the world” (The Storm Bell 1st May 1898 p.54).

Drawing on a class conflict perspective the author alludes to the wealth accumulated by those who engage in the trade;

“Some of the great merchants and speculators become millionaires...who amass untold wealth by the kidnapping, seduction, buying and selling, and exploiting of the daughters of the people of all races and nations” (The Storm Bell 1st May 1898 p.54).

Again, this links with current stories of organised trafficking networks and the profit to be made from trading in vulnerable people. The article goes on to argue that that it hoped justice would be served by those empowered to legislate and protect the nation’s women and girls and punish the criminals.

The National Vigilance Association²³

The National Vigilance Association (NVA hereafter) was the vehicle for the purity campaigners to continue in their efforts to popularize concern about trafficking well into the twentieth century. The NVA was invariably at the forefront of campaigns and once again the basis of their evidence does appear to be somewhat flimsy. Throughout its existence, the NVA focused on trafficking and the protection of females from enforced prostitution. The NVA existed until 1953, when it became The British Vigilance Association (BVA). In the 1950s they supported greater regulation and monitoring of *au pairs* from Europe and, agitated about girls coming over

²³ London Metropolitan University, Women’s Library: British National Committee for the Suppression of the White Slave Trade 1928-1970.

from Ireland. In the minutes of a meeting of the committee of 29th October 1954, it is reported that the committee had been advised of concerns about trafficking and exploitation of girls coming to Glasgow which had been reported in the *Glasgow Evening Citizen*. It is noted in the minutes that upon further enquiry the newspaper failed to substantiate its source of information. Another report in the minutes of this meeting from a member of the committee states:

“The Manager of the Blackpool Labour Exchange admitted that there was a seasonal influx of domestic servants from Eire, but that in his view the situation did not call for special action”.

At the same meeting a Miss Mitchell of the *International Catholic Girls Society*, reported on her recent visit to Ireland. She was questioned by the committee as to whether or not it was possible to prevent girls under a certain age from arriving in England without work, her response was that:

“...if the liberty of one section of the community were to be curtailed...the door would be opened for other encroachments on people’s liberty...against the constitution of the country”.

Miss Mitchell had met with the Director for Social Services in Ireland, and her interview with him reports that they were aware of the issue of girls coming to England, but what could they do? Parents played a key role in their children’s migratory choices. Even if there was parental control: *“they would prefer to show an independent spirit and cut away from control”* and only a small percentage went astray. It was also pointed out that: *“everyone tended to forget the hundreds of thousands of girls who came over each year and made good”.*

Throughout its existence, the underlying purity concerns of the NVA informed their rescue and protection agenda in respect of girls and women. This was translated into a range of activities delivered through their networks and included: establishing welcome committees at ports of entry; the development of awareness raising materials; and the translation of leaflets. The cross fertilisation of ideas between international purity groups and the issue of trafficking are well evidenced and explicitly so in the *myth of the white slave trade* (Bristow 1978). The influence of

social purity organisations was also in part facilitated by the development of Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs hereafter) during the early feminist movements in the UK and America, which saw a cross fertilization of concerns and highlighted the similarities in their respective campaigning agendas and methods (Keck and Sikkink 1998).

The traffic in children: The Times 1869-1918

Despite the absence of any extensive evidence of trafficking, the following analysis of contemporary articles again of this period illustrates that the social purity movement was successful in popularising its cause and generating significant levels of concern. An examination of a randomly selected sample of *The Times* between 1869-1918 reveals a number of wider social concerns about the international trade in children.

The traffic in Italian children

In the late 1870s the immigration and exploitation of Italian children in England began to be reported. The issues had been raised as a parliamentary question in April 1877 (*The Times* April 7th 1877 p.7). Her Majesty's government responded to this advocating a diplomatic approach with legislation if necessary to support the Italian government's efforts to address the "*nefarious trade*". An article published in *The Times* on October 6th 1877, with the headline: *Traffic in Italian Children* discusses the activities of the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs who had induced the Home Office to write to local authorities and instruct them to make certain that the practice of trafficking in Italian children was dealt with:

"he enjoins them to keep the most strict supervision in order to repress the traffic complained of and in order to prevent the children victims of the crass ignorance and blind avarice of their parents, and of the evil arts and cupidity of the wicked speculators, from being spirited out of this country" (p.11).

In a letter published some thirteen years later in *The Times* in 1890, W.H. Wilkins discusses the traffic in Italian children and their employment as ‘vagrants’ in Britain. William Henry Wilkins (1860–1905), was a biographer who grew up in Somerset and was educated at Cambridge. After graduating Wilkins was a private secretary to the earl of Dunraven (Oxford DNB 2010). In *The Times* letter Wilkins describes the traffic as: “*A serious social evil*”. This also is the title of a chapter in his book, *The Alien Invasion* (Wilkins 1892) where he further discusses the social evils of unchecked inward immigration of: “*the destitute and worthless of other countries*” (Wilkins 1892 p.9). Many of the recommendations made in this work were later incorporated in the Aliens Act 1905. Wilkins was also at one time a secretary of the *Association for Preventing the Immigration of Destitute Aliens* and his letter to *The Times* conveys the sentiments of this organisation which was founded in protest against the inward immigration of Polish and Russian Jews (National Education Network 2010).

The parents of these children, who were brought to England, are described in Wilkins’ letter to *The Times* as poor peasants living in Southern Italy. They were, it was alleged, persuaded with very little money to allow their children to be taken abroad with the agreement that they will be clothed and fed. However, according to Wilkins this was not the innocent transaction it appeared to be:

“often it is a mere traffic and they sell their children into what is a veritable slavery, without troubling about their future and glad to be relieved of the responsibility and expense of their maintenance and education... the children are imported here simply for the purpose of following one or the other of the vagrant professions in the streets of London and throughout the country” (The Times August 23rd 1890, p8).

As for those who procure and exploit the children, Wilkins suggests that:

“The traffic is most lucrative, and the gains the padroni²⁴ make out of these children are very large- so much so, indeed that after a few years they are able to retire to Italy and live as country gentleman afterwards”.

²⁴ *Padroni*; gangmaster, procurer of children, those who conducted the trade in children and set them to work.

The children who are victims in this evil system had a tendency, according to Wilkins, to grow up to be feckless, ignorant and inevitably fall into bad ways, girls particularly:

“The effect of this evil system upon its victims is necessarily bad. They do not go to school, they become very idle, and begin early to drink, smoke and take to all kinds of vices...Some remain in England, but many go over to Italy and bring over children themselves”.

Wilkins goes on to discuss the work of the Italian Benevolent Society who had returned “a great many... but as a rule they come back again”. Even the appointment of an Italian school board officer had been unsuccessful in getting the children into school, as the school was based in Hatton Garden (London), a favoured location of the *padroni* and children were moved out to the suburbs. The wider implications for the community are also implied in the letter:

“The money goes to swell the ill gotten gains of the parents and the padroni, and to encourage and foster a system fraught with evil consequences not only to the recipients, but to the community at large”.

In Italy, according to Wilkins, children were engaged in circus and street performing, which was outlawed. Those ill-treating children, (defined as those under the age of eighteen) in these vagrant professions were liable to a seven year prison sentence in Italy. In England there were no legal provisions to remove children at ports of entry as in America. There was a need for energetic measures against the masters and the parents and the English public should stop giving them money. There are modern day parallels to these kinds of arguments, and Wilkins clearly had a vested interest in tightening immigration controls, and along with the social puritans used this as a vehicle to promote border restrictions. This provides another historical example of how (like today) concerns about trafficking can be used to justify other ends.

Traffic in children reports 1914-1918

In 1914 under the headline: *Trafficking in Children*, *The Times* reports on a meeting of the *Women's Freedom League* who had heard a presentation by a former police woman about the trafficking in children in Germany (July 3rd p.5):

Replying to questions Sister Arendt said, judging from the reports of Dr. Barnardo's Homes, the Salvation Army; and the newspapers, she thought the traffic in children in England was as great as in Germany and other countries.

A response to these claims is made an article the following day (July 4th p.10) which denies that child trafficking is a problem, and discusses the reduction in baby farming since the introduction of legislation in the UK. On 4th September 1918, *Trafficking in Children: Large Profit on One baby* was the headline of the report of a case of a baby being sold to a widow - Mrs. Malster - who felt lonely after the loss of her son in the war. Mrs. Malster, who had paid £45 for the child, had responded to an advertisement which offered the child for adoption (*The Times* 1918 p.3).

Summary

The discussion in this chapter is based on a number of findings from primary historical records and, earlier studies which suggest that the issue of child trafficking as it appeared in late nineteenth century Britain was blown out of proportion, amplified through various political and social channels of communication and in certain instances carved out by the reformers. There were clearly vested interests in terms of regulating children (especially females) and, as discussed, restricting their movement. The methods of communication of these purity groups included: public demonstrations; pamphleting; and local, regional and international networking; alongside political lobbying. The narratives and discourses about child trafficking as evidenced in the influences on policy development in the late nineteenth century, are best characterised as stories about the virginity of girls and the defence of their innocence and purity.

The legacy of Stead's exposé in the *Maiden Tribute* series and the purity campaigns against trafficking is also found in the construction of a stereotypical tragic victim who is vulnerable, innocent and easily duped. The criminal/victim discourses exclude or at least minimise other ways of talking about the issue. In the seventeenth century the practice of selling or indenturing children raised concerns (Wareing 2002), but it was the impact of the media exposé towards the end of the nineteenth century, orchestrated by social purity campaigners, which led to vociferous and public calls for protective legislation (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978). Stead, in *The Maiden Tribute* series, made sweeping claims and judgements to raise public awareness and influence legislation about the alleged trade in children. Child prostitution and the *white slave trade* were characterised as child trafficking in the *Maiden Tribute* series, and this exposé catapulted the issue onto the policy agenda. Walkowitz (1992) discusses the way in which the narratives of the purity and social reformers of that era included underlying sexual content. Sexual exploitation and innocence defiled characterise the *Maiden Tribute* series. Walkowitz (1992) also argues that Stead's portrayal and his use of the melodramatic format had deeper and lasting consequences. The format of Stead's exposé draws on underlying themes which were popular in the melodramatic genre found in late Victorian theatre and public entertainment. Butler, Stead and social purity groups used such melodramatic tactics in their campaigning (Hadley 1995). Translated into a campaigning agenda, these tactics were drawn upon to advocate for protective legislation as the potential threat of children of being trafficked is always with us, and is caused by evil depraved child molesters (Walkowitz 1992).

Melodramatic tactics are evidenced in the social purity campaigning activities, serialised style and pseudo-factual-story-telling to convey to an unsuspecting public the tragic situations of victims through emotional appeals and righteous indignation. They also have, in some narratives a class dimension where the aristocracy is the enemy, as it is they who defile the innocent working class girls. This was a popularised late nineteenth century protest format, and peculiar to social purity groups in this period (Walkowitz 1992). These tactics are evident in the campaigning publications, *The Shield* and *The Storm Bell*, although less so in the reports of *The Times* which tended towards the immigration and economic exploitation aspects. This suggests that the approach to publicising the sexual element of the trade in children was largely the work of the purity campaigners rather than an overall method. Melodramatic tactics according to

Hadley (1995) are characterised by portrayals of six key themes common to the genre of melodrama: familial narratives of dispersal and reunion; visual rendering of bodily torture and criminal conduct; atmospheric menace and providential plotting; expressions of highly charged emotions; and a tendency to personify absolutes like good and evil. The concept of melodramatic tactics has further analytical value as applied to contemporary policy and legislation about the issue of child trafficking. The development of current UK policy is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

UK CHILD TRAFFICKING POLICY: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the development of UK child trafficking policies. The emergence of child trafficking as a current UK policy issue is traced to the start of the twenty-first century. I examine the context and direction of policy-making on this sensitive topic and in doing so highlight the ongoing tensions and conflicts between the UK immigration and the child safeguarding policy agendas. I apply a development²⁵ policy perspective following Sutton (1999). This analysis elicits a range of factors focussing on NGO involvement in the child trafficking policy-making processes. By using this policy analysis framework, it is possible to delineate the various processes and influences which go some way towards explaining the construction of risk in UK policy responses to child trafficking. I draw on Lupton (1999) to discuss the risk discourses evident in UK child trafficking policy-making.

²⁵ The Oxford English Dictionary defines development as “The economic advancement of a region or people, especially one currently under-developed” http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50062558?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=Development&first=1&max_to_show=10 (Accessed 24th February 2010). Pieterse (1998) argues that development is no longer simply viewed as GDP growth, and human development is seen as a more appropriate goal and measure of development. My Paradigm or Yours? Alternative Development, Post-Development, Reflexive Development. *Development and Change*, Volume 29, Number 2, April 1998, pp. 343-373(31).

UK Child trafficking policy 2000-2007: analytical framework

Manzo (2005) argues that child trafficking is a development issue, although, as discussed in the literature review, it has been largely framed as a human rights issue. A development policy perspective makes explicit the wider context and factors, and allows analysis of the roles played by both state and non-state actors. There is no one superior method of analysing policies (Kaskutas *et al.* 2000), and approaches are influenced by a range of theories and perspectives, including, for example, anthropology, international relations and management theory (Sutton 1999). Development policies are those which focus on issues in ‘developing countries’ i.e. those whose economic, cultural and industrial development is characterised as under-developed (eg Africa; South America) in contrast to developed countries (eg. The United States of America; Western Europe). Along with governments and their agencies, there is a wealth of knowledge available to governments from non-state actors (Sutton, 1999). In non-priority issues (i.e. those not involving currency or defence) non-state actors are often invited to participate in policy-making. Their role, however, is subject to criticism:

“...the claims, counter claims and changing claims of experts serve principally to reinforce and widen their belief that what they, the experts have to say really matters and solely by virtue of their expertise” (Sutton 1999 p.28).

These non-state actors can also be understood as epistemic communities and have a powerful influence in policy-making forums, having forged associations with policy makers (Sutton 1999). In this analysis of child trafficking policy-making, the UK NGO and other non-government stakeholders who play a role in the policy formation process are understood as epistemic communities. There are various epistemic communities who claim expertise on the subject of child trafficking, and, according to Sutton (1999), in order to be effective and influential there needs to be some levels of consensus between these different groups. Policy-making is also influenced by the extent of policy space available, and the strong pressures to adopt a particular strategy might mean that decision-makers do not have much room to consider policy options. In this policy analysis, I use a framework for examining UK child trafficking policy-making based on Sutton (1999) (see table 7 below). I discussed earlier in the literature

review how NGOs play a significant role in influencing UK child trafficking policy-making, and in the previous chapter on the history of child trafficking policy-making I illustrated that there is a long established and vested interest in child trafficking from certain campaigning groups, individuals and organisations.

Table 7 to show policy process framework:

Policy process framework
Emergence
Roles and influence of research and scientific communities (epistemic communities)
Timing
Wider political agendas
Crisis response
Dominant discourse
Change agent

I used this as a basic framework for examining current UK policies associated with child trafficking as it covered a wide range of contextual factors which influence and steer the policy-making process. This framework delineates processes involved in policy-making and illustrates how a number of factors contribute to policy development. The linear model (mainstream, common sense or rational) conceptualises policy-making as a problem-solving process. This is however, far from the reality, and the broad range of conditions and influences on policy-making suggest that policy-making is not a linear process and is best characterised as: “...a chaos of purposes and accidents” (Clay and Schaffer cited in Sutton 1999 p.32). Policy makers do not consider options that would lead to radical change, policy changes are instead denoted by small steps. There are also ‘*escape hatches*’ in the policy-making process when the policy decisions appear to be an obvious choice under the circumstances, relieving the policy makers of responsibility. In addition there are dominant narratives which often preclude other potential options (Sutton 1999).

Development policy perspectives applied in this analysis identify who was involved in informing child trafficking policies between specific time frames during which there was policy activity. This began in 2000 when the UK government signed the *Palermo Protocol* (UN 2000), and culminated in 2007 when *Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked* was published (HM Government 2007). Crucial to this study, policy-making processes involved consultation with non-government stakeholders and the use of research studies produced by NGOs. The policy documents analysed in this study related to the issue of child trafficking and covered cross-cutting social policy issues relevant to the topic, including child safeguarding, immigration, national security and terrorism.

UK Child trafficking policy development 2000-2007

The Palermo Protocol and the UK child trafficking policy framework

The *Palermo Protocol* (UN 2000) and the *EU Convention on Trafficking in Human Beings* (Council of Europe 2005) oblige governments to develop legislation to protect victims, prosecute traffickers and take measures to prevent trafficking. The *Palermo Protocol* identifies various activities involved in trafficking in human beings. These include; threat, the use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, the abuse of power, the deception of the position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits. The *Palermo Protocol* is comprehensive in that it defines trafficking activities, recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring and receipt, and draws attention to what exploitation shall include Clark (2003). Although it does not explicitly define what exploitation is, certain practices should be considered as exploitative:

“... 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” (UN 2000 Article 3a).

As discussed in the literature review, the *Palermo Protocol* was developed in order to address some of the concerns raised through the international anti-trafficking movement. National and

international feminist and human rights organisations argued that traffickers were able to act with impunity as there was insufficient international legislation, and inadequate measures to prosecute traffickers. This, it was argued, led to situations whereby victims of traffickers were, once identified or rescued, being treated by destination countries as illegal immigrants, denied leave to stay in these countries, and returned to their countries of origin. The testimony of victims against traffickers was lost, owing to these return measures, and traffickers continued to operate (Raymond 2003).

Several critics have challenged the international consensus of the *Palermo Protocol*. The current focus on a criminal justice approach and sexual morality serve different political agendas which are not about protecting human rights (Sharma 2004). Individualising trafficking obscures and detracts attention from wider structural factors. A human rights framework should start with acknowledging and addressing the push as well as the pull factors that influence migration, and hold states accountable for how they treat nationals and non-nationals. As Kapur (2004) argues the criminal justice approach and the emphasis on sexual morality serve different political agendas which are not about protecting human rights. Anti-trafficking instruments should not create or exacerbate situations that cause or contribute to trafficking, and must avoid stigmatising or marginalising rights in the process of dealing with the issues (Wijers 2004).

The age span of childhood contained in the *Palermo Protocol* reflects the internationally agreed age of childhood as in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UN 1989): “ ‘Child’ shall mean any person under eighteen years of age” (UN 2000 Article 3c). Trafficked children under the age of eighteen are offered special protection owing to their status, and are deemed unable to consent because of their age. When it comes to trafficking in children, the *Palermo Protocol* allows for a wider interpretation so that none of the actions which constitute trafficking as defined in Article 3a have to be included, so long as the intention is to exploit the child:

“*The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article*” (UN 2000 Article 3c).

Since the year 2000 the *Palermo Protocol* has drawn global attention to the issue of human trafficking, especially in women and children, and this has led to the development of policies associated with child trafficking in the UK and elsewhere. The UK policy agenda has been influenced by the campaigning agendas of anti-trafficking activists who focus on the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation.

The emergence of child trafficking as a policy issue

Setting the boundaries

In 2000, the UK Home Office published *Setting the Boundaries*. This document included responses to consultations which had been undertaken as part of the government's review of sex offences. *The Sexual Offences Act* (UK Government 2003b) which followed criminalised trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation into the UK (Section 57), within the UK, (Section 58) and from the UK (Section 59), with the maximum penalty on conviction of up to 14 years imprisonment. Concerns expressed in the consultations on *Setting the Boundaries* towards trafficking in children for commercial sexual exploitation informed *The Sexual Offences Act* (UK Government 2003b). Consultation responses were focused on tackling issues which were related to the trafficking in girls and women for the international sex industry, whilst also addressing the problem of child prostitution in the UK. *The Sexual Offences Act* (UK Government 2003b) criminalised any commercial sexual exploitation of children, defined as being under the age of eighteen. This paved the way for changes in how children involved in commercial sexual activity were responded to by UK law enforcement and support agencies in order to protect them from being further exploited in this way. A broad spectrum of UK NGOs and statutory agencies contributed to the *Setting the Boundaries* consultation. They raised concerns that children were being forced or coerced into commercial sexual activity in the UK, and criminalised for their involvement rather than being seen as victims of sexual abuse (Home Office 2000). Amongst these agencies were groups and organisations whose aims were similar, and whose views were that trafficking for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation was a top priority and a

pressing and vital area of child abuse that was being ignored. NGOs argued in the consultations that children are trafficked into the UK to be exploited in the commercial sex industry. The review heard evidence from a small number of case studies and reports submitted by NGOs. There was also concern expressed by both national and international anti-trafficking activists and campaigners that children were being moved within the UK for this purpose. Their arguments suggested that even though children aged 16 are able to give sexual consent, they are not deemed as being able to give their consent to being involved in commercial sexual activity, and their movement for the purposes of involvement in commercial sex work was thus exploitative, abusive and damaging in the long term (Home Office 2000).

National Plan for Safeguarding Children from Commercial Sexual Exploitation

In 2002, the UK Department of Health (DOH hereafter) published the *National Plan for Safeguarding Children from Commercial Sexual Exploitation*. This plan drew together existing work in this area in the UK and outlined a range of measures which had already been discussed in *Setting The Boundaries*, designed to protect children and punish offenders. The development of the plan was a collaborative effort which brought together representatives from the voluntary sector including the NSPCC, NCH, Voluntary Organisations' Consultancy Service, Barnardos, ECPAT and the Children's Society together with representatives from the Association of Directors of Social Services, the Association of Chief Police Officers and policy makers from across various government departments. Significantly, there is very limited reference to research in the plan with evidence about international figures on incidence being put forward by various NGOs. The *National Plan for Safeguarding Children from Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (DOH 2002) made some limited reference to trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation but the emphasis was on the sexual exploitation of children in the UK. Nonetheless it was an important document as it formalised the UK government's position on the issue of the commercial sexual exploitation of children and raised public and political awareness of the phenomenon of trafficking in children for this purpose.

UK Action plan on Trafficking in Human beings

The UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007) was initially published as a consultation document (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2006). The view that trafficking in children has been arranged by family members was expressed by the campaigning work of NGOs in the anti-trafficking sector who responded to the consultation. In their consultation response, ECPAT, the UK's leading child trafficking NGO state:

"...in many instances family members or trusted elders may be involved in the trafficking chain and children are inextricably bound by familial obligation" (ECPAT 2006 p.8).

They also suggested that various strategies are used which control children, including threats of violence to them or their families and the use of debt bondage to enforce repayment of debts incurred for the journey and entry to the UK. These strategies are used by traffickers to control children, it was argued, even if they are in the care of local authorities. It was also suggested that the return and repatriation is not always in the best interests of children, and may actually cause greater problems (ECPAT 2006 p.8).

AFRUCA's consultation response drew on the views of stakeholders from the African community in the UK, and highlighted the contextual issues related to the way in which a private fostering arrangement may be viewed as exploitative in the UK. The difficulty in addressing culturally embedded beliefs, which may be understood as familial/kinship, social obligations and reciprocity for making provision of a child coming to the UK from Africa were also highlighted. AFRUCA claimed that addressing this may be challenging:

"...it is difficult to convey to them that a child is being exploited and that their activity is wrong and against the law" (AFRUCA 2006 p.13).

In their consultation response to the proposals, AFRUCA also argued that the former victims they have come across in their work have been exploited by people they know. Children in these circumstances are known to others in their community who either do not recognise this form of exploitation as trafficking, or who do not feel able to take any action. In addition, contributors expressed views that parents are complicit as they see the potential benefits to their children of accessing the education and increased life opportunities in the UK. AFRUCA's contribution also suggested that certain practices of child-rearing are reliant on wealthier members of the family, including the wider extended family supporting poorer family members through child placement arrangements. Views expressed in the contribution further illustrated the way in which people believed that traditional child placement arrangements have been commercialised, and that some individuals may actively seek to bring children to the UK to provide, for example, domestic help particularly with child care which is expensive in London.

The *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007) draws together existing legislation and policies which cover a number of contentious and interrelated areas: sexual offences; immigration; and child protection, and adopts a well established position foregrounding the potential risk and vulnerability of children who come to the UK. In turn the UK is constructed as a dangerous place for migrant children of all descriptions. Significantly it is new communities (i.e. immigrant communities) who are identified as the ones who carry out the exploitation and abuse of children which characterises child trafficking. It these communities who are the focus of preventative work (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007).

The *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007) focuses on immigration control, arguably at the expense of securing the best interests of children. This is particularly the case in relation to the returns policy. The plan appears congruent with the UK's approach to domestic child welfare, epitomised in the Children Act (1989) which stipulates that a child's best interests are served within the family, largely, it seems, because the recourse to be adopted is to return children to their country of origin, and to their families wherever possible. This response is open to criticism, not least because whilst safeguarding measures for returning children are acknowledged as important they remain underdeveloped.

Further, it is immigration agencies and not those concerned with the welfare of children who undertake returns of children who may have been trafficked, by enforcing immigration legislation. The capacity of these agencies to assess the safety of the situation children are being returned to is questionable. The Home Office's record on child welfare has been the subject of criticism (Cunningham and Cunningham 2007; Giner 2007) and a number of commentators have questioned its ability to protect the welfare of vulnerable children. As it stands, so long as the child's country of origin is deemed safe by the Home Office, children are returned. Sometimes returns are supported by the IOM or other local NGOs. However, returns are made without the safeguarding and welfare provisions available to children in the UK within the *Every Child Matters* strategy (Crawley 2006).

It is suggested within the *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* that children and/or their parents incur financial debts, which they are duty bound to repay once they arrive in the UK. Anti-trafficking activists argue that children remain hidden and in exploitative conditions as they are fearful of being punished by their traffickers, to whom they owe a debt. The agents or facilitators who bring children in to the UK fund these trips, and children are required to repay these fees, which it is argued in no way reflects the real or actual costs of their journeys (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007). However, this would, arguably, not be the case if children or their parents were able to manage their own travel arrangements through legal channels; but for the vast majority this is not possible and it is likely that illegal channels will continue to be carved out. It is these conditions which pose risks to children who have to travel through clandestine routes, adopt false identities and face exposure to immigration or law enforcement authorities which will probably result in their being returned whilst their travel debts remain unpaid.

On the surface, the *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* and the preceding consultation appear to be considered responses to a complex social problem, with the intention being that children travelling to the UK are afforded protection and support. However, the wider context of immigration policies is clearly illustrated in the less generous attitude towards the welfare of migrant children coming to the UK, as discussed by Crawley (2006) in a report for the

ILPA which highlights a number of areas where migrant children are disadvantaged in policy terms.

The *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* outlines the way in which children are bribed or threatened into silence about their journeys and circumstances by their traffickers. This is a very simplistic way of understanding the relationship between children and those who facilitate their entries and journeys to the UK, and whilst there is some very limited evidence from a handful of case studies, other research has demonstrated that there are a number of ways in which children are pressed into silence about their situations, and the reasons for this silence appear to be more complex than policies propose (Kohli 2006; Kohli 2007). Kohli's research with social workers found various reasons for the silence in the accounts of unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children travelling to the UK. Children had been provided with stories of their journey to give to authorities enquiring about them, by their parents and travel facilitators, which ostensibly were about keeping the children safe, which may mean that they are silent to protect themselves rather than, or as well as others (Kohli 2006).

Buckland (2008) makes some critical observations about the *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Being*, and the dominance of the victim trope in media coverage and in policymaking. Buckland argues that policies are ill-informed about the realities of immigration. Concerns about trafficking:

"...have been driven by the emotive language with which it is described; the language of victims, or survival and of heroic rescue" (Buckland 2008 p.47).

Epistemic communities: NGOs, UK government agencies and child trafficking policies

The role of NGOs in the anti-trafficking sector draws on well established processes used by international advocacy networks to maintain a political lobbying presence (Keck and Sikkink 1998). ECPAT are particularly well positioned as the only dedicated agency in the UK, making a contribution to the consultation on *The UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* (ECPAT 2006) and to the consultation on *Safeguarding Children who May have been Trafficked* (HM Government 2007 p.2) (SCWMHBT hereafter). As discussed in the previous section, AFRUCA are also active in this area, and also made contributions to the consultations. More recently, AFRUCA have established links with the British Association of Social Workers (BASW hereafter) to promote greater awareness of the issue amongst social work and safeguarding professions (AFRUCA 2007). ECPAT and UNICEF (2007) have all challenged the government on a set of issues which they feel are not addressed in the *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings*. For instance, they have argued that the UNCRC (UN 1989) is undermined by the reservations the UK government has until recently upheld in relation to immigration, and by not appointing guardians for children who may be trafficked. They also criticise the government for not having a national Rapporteur, which is advocated in the *Palermo Protocol* (UN 2000). The UK government's position is that the IDMG serves this purpose, but ECPAT and UNICEF (2007) argue that this is not adequate and identify it as a significant gap.

The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations

The situations of migrant children in private fostering arrangements have also become part of the campaigning agenda of the anti-trafficking NGOs, and this has led to widespread calls for change in the regulation of private fostering from the British Association of Fostering and Adoption (BAAF hereafter) and other campaigning groups, individuals and organisations (BAAF 2004; Bostock 2004; Chase and Statham 2004; BAAF 2005; AFRUCA 2006; Crawley 2006; ECPAT 2006). *The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations* (UK Government 2005a) increased the regulatory role of local authorities in respect of private fostering arrangements. The regulations require local authorities to monitor private fostering arrangements if they are to exceed 28 days. The DfES minimum standards (DfES 2005) require

those involved in establishing a private fostering arrangement to register with the local authority, who in turn are required to visit the premises and, where possible, the people with parental responsibility, collate information and undertake checks on other members of the private carers' household. Time scales for undertaking these checks were introduced, along with a requirement that changes to arrangements be notified, and monitored through the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB hereafter) procedures (UK Government 2005a). BAAF (2005) in their consultation response on the new private fostering regulation, called for much tighter control and regulation, arguing that such placements should be subject to the same assessment and regulation as in the public foster care sector. This position, however, was not adopted, and the regulations, whilst going some way towards addressing concerns expressed by NGOs, do not enforce a duty on local authorities to manage or regulate private fostering in the same way as public care systems for looking after indigenous children. The new regulations have been subject to criticism by anti-trafficking agencies and BAAF who suggest that migrant children are potentially at risk of trafficking in private fostering placements. Of the 1,530 children known to be living under privately fostering arrangement in England, 1,310 (66 percent) were born in the United Kingdom (DfCSF 2009). The numbers of children in private fostering arrangements are also well below the Department of Health (2001) and BAAF (2010) estimates of around 10,000. Needless to say BAAF, ECPAT and other anti-trafficking groups question the accuracy of the official statistics.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre

In 2005 the *Child Exploitation and Online Protection* centre (CEOP hereafter) was established as part of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA hereafter). The Serious Organised Crime Agency is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body which is sponsored by, but operationally independent from, the Home Office. SOCA is an intelligence-led agency with law enforcement powers and harm reduction responsibilities. Harm, in this context, is the damage caused to people and communities by serious organised crime. SOCA has an explicit agenda to improve the coordination and collection of intelligence on sexual offences by predatory paedophiles (SOCA 2009). CEOP has been instrumental in anti-trafficking activity for the purposes of sexual exploitation along with UK NGOs. Indeed, the NSPCC, ECPAT and CEOP have all seen an expansion in their roles to tackle trafficking, which was outlined in the *UK*

Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007). ECPAT were awarded a capacity building grant to expand training given to agencies and professionals. The NSPCC staff a new national telephone helpline for professionals jointly with CEOP intelligence officers (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007 p.75). This example illustrates the increased status and prestige for NGOs concerned about trafficking that has stemmed from heightened levels of anxiety that now surround the issue.

Timing of UK child trafficking policy developments

Every Child Matters and migrant children

The UK government acknowledged that services to protect vulnerable children needed to be improved (HM Government 2004) and this was to be part of a new agenda for children: *Every Child Matters* (ECM hereafter) (HM Government 2004). In addition to the changes in management and accountability of services, the ECM agenda aims to streamline assessment processes and widen access to services for children who require support and protection (Churchill 2007). The changing focus of delivery, through integrated teams in community settings, is designed to promote access to support at an early stage of difficulty. The ECM outcome agenda also widens the scope of responsibility for child safeguarding to a greater range of agencies that come into contact with children. This has inevitably led to the need for improved communication between agencies and organisations tasked with safeguarding children, new systems for the identification of children they come into contact with, and a duty to draw up a local plan for all children and young people in the area (HM Government 2004). In short the objective of the ECM strategy is to move beyond protecting vulnerable children, and minimising risks to them, seeking also to extend opportunities for each child to achieve their full potential. The outcomes which underpin the ECM agenda are: be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well-being (HM Government 2004). The outcome-focussed agenda was promoted as being available for all children in the UK, and this therefore includes children coming to the UK from other countries.

The ECM agenda, however, has been the subject of policy critiques related to the application of Section 9 of the *Asylum and Immigration Act* (2004) to destitute families with children who had failed in their appeals for asylum. The impact of this punitive policy left families without recourse to state support and under threat of having their children removed into the care of local authorities (Cunningham and Tomlinson 2005). The pilot programme failed to increase removals as intended, but it did force families to disappear, further isolating them from the informal support networks available to them (Cunningham and Cunningham 2007; Giner 2007). This policy was a fairly typical example of the way in which recent asylum and immigration legislation has sought to remove access to welfare, irrespective of the impact upon the individual families concerned.

A number of policy measures have been advocated to protect trafficked children, including permanent protection as refugees and for them to be taken out of the immigration system until a decision has been reached about their future. In terms of support for trafficked children, this includes reunification with families in countries of origin where this is deemed safe and in a child's best interests, and also a reflection period to allow children time to decide what their next step is (Crawley 2006). Children have different capacities to testify or give evidence regarding their trafficking situation or experience, and not all children are able or should be expected to do so, especially in order to gain status to remain (Crawley 2006). In this respect the UK government also entered reservations to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC hereafter) specifically in relation to immigration. *The Children Act* (2004) Section 11, whilst extending the duty to safeguard children to a wider set of agencies, continued to exclude immigration services from this requirement until it was removed in December 2008 after years of campaigning, though of course this has had little practical impact on the treatment of asylum-seeking children. Whilst in practice agencies work together to safeguard children, the overriding agenda for one of the key partners is to maintain the integrity of the asylum and immigration systems, not the best interests of the child (Giner 2007). The national agenda should ensure that there is effective monitoring and registration of unaccompanied minors around ports of entry, and speedy access to social services, with appropriate care packages put in place, and such cases should only be dealt with through multi-agency approaches. The general duty to listen

to children, and promote their voices in the policy and practice arenas, remains limited and marginalised, again in favour of maintaining the UK immigration policy agenda (Crawley 2006).

Safeguarding children

“An eight-year-old girl died of hypothermia and neglect after being tied in a black binbag and forced to eat and sleep in the bath, the Old Bailey heard yesterday” (Audrey Gillan: The Guardian Tuesday November 21st 2000)²⁶.

The emphasis on safeguarding children was influenced by the death of Victoria Climbié and the high profile public inquiry which followed (Laming 2003). Victoria Climbié, had come to the UK with her aunt from the Côte d’Ivoire with the knowledge of her parents. Victoria was subsequently killed by her aunt, Marie Therese Kouao, and her aunt’s partner, Carl Manning. Despite being known to a number of health and housing agencies and social services in London, Victoria was not protected and suffered horrific abuse in the last few weeks of her life. The events leading to Victoria Climbié’s death were documented in Lord Laming’s extensive report, drawing on witness testimony from officials and managers in the agencies which Victoria and her aunt came into contact with during her time in the UK. Lord Laming made 108 recommendations which were designed to address the systemic gaps in child protection and welfare services, recognising the changing roles and responsibilities and the increasing number of agencies involved in protecting vulnerable children (Laming 2003).

Later that year the UK government published *Keeping Children Safe: The Government’s response to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report and Joint Chief Inspectors’ Report: Safeguarding Children* (UK Government 2003a). In this report, the government outlined problems with child protection systems and their proposals to put in place a new system which requires those working with children to work together more effectively to reduce the risks of harm. *Keeping Children Safe* highlighted the specific difficulties around assessments which

²⁶Girl 'tied in binliner died of cold and neglect' URL <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2000/nov/21/audreygillan> (Accessed 23rd March 2010).

meant that if no assessment was undertaken then no provision was made, and children were left vulnerable. In order to secure assessments referring agencies would often describe cases as ‘child protection’, and difficulties emerged when social workers did not make this assessment, or had only limited access to the resources to implement support services which would address child welfare concerns.

In *Keeping Children Safe* the UK government provided a timetabled action plan for implementing the recommendations of the Laming inquiry, which it accepted. The government sought to prioritise the safeguarding of children and identified a number of steps it would take to standardise local and national responses: common assessment protocols and procedures; clearer guidance, which would determine how children should be safeguarded and protected; their needs for support identified at an earlier stage; and training for agencies working in this area. Measures to standardise and regulate private fostering through the introduction of local monitoring procedures were outlined in the report, as were proposals to train immigration officers in safeguarding vulnerable children who come to the UK. Many of these proposals were included in the *Children Act 2004*.

Child abuse inquiries and the death of Victoria Climbié

The tragic death of Victoria Climbié, it is argued, was precipitated by a failure of public agencies to identify and protect her (Reder and Duncan 2004; Parton 2004; Johnson and Petrie 2004). The public inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié fitted in with other ideological agendas that were driving forward legislative reforms through the *Every Child Matters* policy agenda. The inquiry also highlighted wider issues related to safeguarding migrant children. The public inquiry did not fully engage with the issues of Victoria Climbié’s migration to the UK, instead referring to customary practices which led to her parents agreeing for her to come to the UK (Parton 2004).

As has been the case in other child abuse inquiries, the people who were abusing Victoria Climbié went to great lengths to avoid welfare intervention which would expose her situation and their abuse (Reder and Duncan 2004). Nonetheless, child abuse tragedies have influenced

and shaped policy changes. Parton (2004) makes some relevant points in his comparison of the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié and the inquiry, some thirty years earlier, into the death of Maria Colwell. Ostensibly the issues related to the deaths of both children were attributed to failures by agencies, and their systems to protect children. The influence which these two, and other inquiries, have had on child welfare policies, and the failure of systems to protect, are part of the problem (Parton 2004).

There were a number of issues in the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié in relation to her identity and nationality, and the fact that a number of local authority and NHS services did not realise they were dealing with the same child (Parton 2004). The inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié also raised issues around who had parental responsibility²⁷, her entry to the UK, lack of permanent address, not having a school place or being on the register of GP. In effect, agencies did not know they were seeing the same child:

“...it was only after Victoria’s death that her real identity became known...it emerged that Marie-Therese Kouao was not her real mother but a ‘great aunt’ and that her parents lived in the Ivory Coast” (Parton 2004. p.84).

Globalisation was also significant in relation to the race and ethnicity of the social workers on the Brent team with whom Victoria Climbié came into contact, many of whom were trained abroad and employed on temporary contracts. However, complex rather than simple explanations account for the way in which social workers and other health and welfare professionals understand race, culture and ethnicity in assessments and the provision of resources. It is also important that social workers are able to challenge decisions and assessments made by other professionals, and managerialism and risk management agendas preclude this in practice (Parton 2004).

²⁷ Parental responsibility is a legal concept first used in the *Children Act* (1989) and arguably one of the most important principles as it determines who has responsibility for a child. Although contested and ambiguous this principle shifted responsibility for children onto parents (Thomas 2002 cited in Hendrick 2005). The issue of who had parental responsibility for Victoria was not clear and was not resolved in the inquiry (Parton 2004).

Wider issues related to the protection of black African children in the UK have been highlighted in a recent research review by Bernard and Gupta (2008) who argue that there are a number of tensions in social work practice with African families including: reconciling different beliefs and behaviours in child-rearing practices; valuing parenting practices of these families in the initial engagement process; and the need to take a strengths-based perspective. There is limited emphasis in current UK child trafficking policy positions related to valuing diverse parenting practices as the overriding concerns are about the potential of these families to abuse and exploit children who are not biological members of these families.

Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked

Children entering the UK as unaccompanied minors automatically come under the scrutiny of the state within the existing legislative framework of the *Children Act* (UK Government 1989), which promotes a duty on local authorities, to assess need (Section 17) and to provide appropriate services (Section 20). In some instances where there is some evidence or suspicion of potential harm to children arriving, child safeguarding measures are implemented (Section 47). These welfare and protection measures are delivered through multi-agency approaches involving social services, police, health providers and NGOs and informed by the *Working Together* guidance (DCSF 2006). In relation to child trafficking this was supplemented by specific guidance: *Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked* (HM Government 2007).

The guidance provides professionals working across social care, education, immigration, and health and law enforcement with information on child trafficking and advice for safeguarding children whom they believe may have been trafficked. Prior to publication the guidance was also issued for consultation. In the foreword to the consultation, child trafficking is described as an *organised crime* and a *grave concern* to *all* professionals who are charged with the responsibility for the care and protection of children:

“Many describe it as modern day slavery, where victims are coerced, deceived or forced into the control of others who seek to profit from their exploitation and suffering” (HM Government 2007).

Safeguarding Children who may have been Trafficked (HM Government 2007), sets out the framework for the local arrangements to be developed by LSCBs who have, since the implementation of the *Children Act* (2004), been responsible for the welfare of all children in local authority areas. The guidance requires LSCBs to include the issue of child trafficking within their general duties to coordinate the child welfare and protection work undertaken in their respective geographical areas. This may include early identification and the introduction of local protocols, together with formal notification systems. LSCBs are already required to maintain close links with their local communities, and the new guidance suggests that local strategies should now include awareness-raising of and publicity about the issue of child trafficking, which may also serve to promote the services available to victims. Local responses to child trafficking should also form part of the LSCB Children and Young People’s plans, including the provision of additional training, and access to advice on dealing with child trafficking cases. The role of the police in risk profiling is highlighted in the guidance, along with the development of procedures for safeguarding, which should include child trafficking protocols, to ensure the child’s safety and welfare, as well as to enable law enforcement and intelligence gathering on coercers (HM Government 2007).

A key difficulty for LSCBs is in the identification of child trafficking in their geographical area. In policy terms, it is also stated that children may not know that they are being exploited in this way, or be fearful of the consequences of their situations being reported to safeguarding agencies. In the guidance it is suggested that children remain hidden from the agencies designed to protect them. The guidance is designed to expand the avenues for the identification of children who may have been trafficked, by alerting safeguarding agencies to the variety of situations and circumstances children may find themselves in.

Wider political agendas: Border control and national security

UK immigration and asylum policies situate trafficking in human beings as an organised immigration crime. In effect the crime of trafficking not only exploits vulnerable people, but also exploits the UK's resources, and abuses the UK asylum and immigration systems. The *UK Action Plan on Human Trafficking* (Home Office and Scottish Executive 2007) is thus located within the wider context of the UK immigration and organised crime policy agendas which identify illegal immigration and organised immigration crime as key strategic threats to the security of the UK. *The Home Office Strategy to Defeat Organised Crime* (Home Office 2004 Cm 6167) drew attention to the financial 'costs' imposed by illegal immigration and trafficking:

“Organised immigration crime may be responsible for costs of ... £3 billion at least, not including the social and political risks it poses” (Home Office 2004 p.9).

The strategy goes on to discuss the threats to social and community cohesion, the impact on taxpayers and the way in which organised immigration crime is undermining international stability and governance. The concerns expressed also illustrate the way in which migration from developing countries will potentially increase as international travel becomes more accessible. Improvements in technology and intelligence systems are singled out as key measures to be used to disrupt organised crime particularly in relation to tackling the identity fraud which is associated with immigration crime: *“the use of biometric identifiers, will ... remove from the criminal the opportunity to steal or create identities”* (Home Office 2004 p.11).

The asylum and immigration strategy *Controlling our Borders* (UK Government 2005b Cmnd. 6472), details the way in which tackling human trafficking is a priority for the SOCA and proposes greater controls to be implemented both within the UK and in countries of origin. Whilst recognising the importance of migration to the UK economy, and the duty of the UK to protect those fleeing violence, this strategy clearly concentrates on outlining proposals to address abuses of the immigration and asylum systems. It is explicit within this strategy that only those legally entitled to be here will be permitted to enter, and only if there are effective return plans in place for those whose entry is temporarily agreed. More specifically measures will be monitored

with enforcement systems intended to ensure that returns are made. These include: increasing visa requirements and pre-entry controls designed to address the threats associated with illegal immigration and terrorism; introducing the fingerprinting of visa applicants, and health screening. These measures supplement existing activities which already enforce penalties against airlines and carriers designed to prevent smuggling and trafficking. Regulations on the employment of foreign workers were also proposed to combat illegal working by foreigners. This strategy singles out the use of new technologies to drive forward policy actions, differentiates between EU and non EU controls, and proposes increased information sharing across the region. The approach is underpinned by a political desire to improve the way in which the UK manages asylum and immigration, and efforts focus on removing those who are not entitled to be here. *Controlling our Borders* is also couched in terms again related to the financial impact of illegal immigration on UK citizens:

“It is unfair on those who respect the rules, as well as the UK tax payer, if those who should not be here are able to stay” (Home Office 2005b p.29).

This kind of approach is also evident in immigration legislation associated with trafficking in humans. Legal measures are largely designed to increase border regulations and enforce restrictive entry requirements for those who wish to come to the UK. *The Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc...) Act* (UK Government 2004) criminalised the facilitation of entry to the UK for the purposes or intention of exploitation, whether or not this exploitation takes place in the UK (Section 1) or outside it (Section 2). Exploitation includes labour exploitation (Section 4a) or the trade in human organs (Section 4b). *The Asylum and Immigration Act* (2004) also stipulates that those who facilitate entry knowing that there is intent to exploit services or benefits are culpable (Section 4c), and extends the definition of trafficking to include trafficking for non sexual forms of exploitation. The intent of the legislation is to: *“catch all those involved in trafficking offences”* (p.2) and it has the potential to be used to convict persons involved throughout the various processes of trafficking, such as recruiters or those who transport, harbour or receive victims. It can also be applied even if the exploitation which it believes is intended has not yet taken place.

Crisis response: UK and EU immigration policies

Immigration control has been a long standing political issue in Britain. There are well developed critiques of migration policies in the UK and their failure to address migration flows. Globally, social inequalities and political agendas which maintain illegal flows are key factors (Castles 2004). The UK policy position on trafficking in human beings adopts the rhetoric of globalization, which locates human trafficking within a wider set of international political issues about migration, political and economic stability and social cohesion (Lindstrom 2003; Koser 2006). The events in Europe over the past twenty years, beginning with the end of the ‘cold war’, irrevocably changed the geography of the region and ultimately led to ethnic conflict and mass displacement. These events also impacted on children whose families and communities were disrupted and in some cases extinguished, in the violence between previously peaceful states. International NGOs along with human rights advocates have maintained these issues high on international political agendas.

Seeking asylum in the UK, particularly, has become more difficult as consecutive polices have restricted access to the UK. In Western Europe, a number of factors have influenced the development of policies towards economic migrants and those migrations which are enforced through environmental or political situations (Black 2003; Salt 2005; Koser 2006). A general and pervasive strengthening of EU borders is also highlighted by Apap and Carrera (2004) in response to: “*security threats*” (p.400). Measures in recent years have been introduced as part of the policy direction which includes the positioning of officials in countries of origin to prevent migrations at source. This practice was evident in a study of migrant children coming to the UK through Belgium who were detained on behalf of the UK government by Belgian immigration authorities (Delruyn and Broerkaert 2005). For those who manage to enter the EU, additional barriers have effectively closed off access to the UK to non-EU migrants.

The concerns about illegal immigration to the UK relate directly to political fears that welfare resources which UK citizens are entitled to will be drained by migrants, particularly those who make no official financial contribution to the country, such as those claiming asylum (Jordan Strath and Triandafyllidou 2003). The rights of citizenship are differentiated in the EU (Jileva

2002; Morris 2002; Morisson 2001; Morrisens and Sainsbury 2005; Sainsbury 2006 and Morris 2007). Managing migration, quite literally, means excluding the low skilled from developing countries from entering the UK, whilst simultaneously encouraging and facilitating the entry of those who are highly skilled and able to make a contribution to the economy. This situation exacerbates poor economic conditions in countries of origin, effectively creaming off the most useful for the maintenance of the UK and EU economies, whilst marginalising and excluding the poorest, and arguably the most vulnerable people (Harris 2002). Migrants are poorly served by welfare states across Europe where there are systems to exclude entitlement to states resources. The enlargement of the EU has resulted in a crisis for the EU, in relation to the distribution of and accessibility to, the benefits of EU membership, which inevitably leaves economic migrants in a less fortunate position in terms of entitlement to welfare than those who are citizens. These changes have led to a greater political focus on issues associated with migration, and particularly illegal immigration. There is in the UK an overemphasis in policy rhetoric of the threat to community cohesion, and to society, of allowing immigration to go unchecked, and a corresponding minimisation of the way in which migrants to the UK contribute to both the economy and to society (Salt 2003).

The UK and EU policy positions on immigration and asylum seekers are aimed at preventing asylum seekers and other irregular immigrants from disrupting or impacting on already stretched welfare states, and the UK along with other EU states have taken a hard line, implementing measures which detain asylum seekers and other migrants who cannot use legal migration routes, i.e. as economic migrants, or as asylum seekers under international conventions. In an analysis of the impact of migration on society and policies in Europe, Salt (2005) argues that:

“...migration flows are extremely varied. People come for different reasons, stay for different periods and fulfil different roles. Simultaneously, thousands of people each year return to their country of origin or migrate elsewhere” (Salt 2005 p.5).

UK immigration policies continue to be driven by concerns about demands by migrants on existing public services, including health, education and housing. Salt (2005) discusses the various ways in which migrants access existing services or generate their own provision through

for example the use of private education and the ways in which migrant communities contribute to existing local and national economies through consumption and labour market contributions. This understanding of migration recognises its value in both economic and social terms; however there are other concerns which are associated with migration. Jordan *et al.* (2003) have noted changes in the European context and the increased emphasis that has been placed on security measures, following the attacks on the World Trade Centre on 11th September 2001. Likewise, in the post 9/11 environment, trafficking and the organised crime which it feeds is described in apocalyptic terms and as an international security threat: “*capable of undermining domestic stability*” (Pratt 2004 p.55).

International migration

War and conflict which displaces children from their origins has not been confined to Europe, however, and countries and regions in Africa and the Middle East have faced similar catastrophic consequences of invasion, international occupation by allied forces, terrorism and civil war. For example, it is necessary to look no further than the war in Afghanistan, and conflict in Iraq. In short, global conditions have a massive and irreversible impact, which affect the lives of children who, along with adults, seek to restore some sense of order to their lives. For families disrupted in these ways migration is perhaps the only way they can guarantee survival. The greater restrictions on international migration from these countries impact on children in substantially different ways than adults, as their needs for support and protection are recognised as being more acute. The very real dangers which children uprooted face has been a growing concern as they have become more publicly visible in Europe, and in the UK. Concerns expressed through international advocacy and refugee organisations have led to a range of international activities to offer special protection to children, distinguished from that available to adults. In the case of separated children, various international organisations have called for governments to extend support to children who enter Western Europe and to provide developmental and emergency aid to countries of origin (Ruxton 2003; SCF 2003 ; SCF 2004;).

UK immigration policy rhetoric

The position of immigrants to the UK is precarious as migration is increasingly constructed as illegal, including those who come to the UK to seek asylum. Immigrants are not viewed as citizens with entitlements. Migrants, who are asylum seekers, have limited entitlements, and are restricted according to the determination of their claim, and the reliance by the Home Office on their having appropriate and relevant paperwork. For minors who are seeking asylum, the situation differs according to whether children arrive in the UK accompanied, or unaccompanied. Fell and Heyes (2007) illustrate how immigration systems and processes mitigate against entry, and how asylum seekers' entitlements to the same rights as the resident UK population are differentiated and unequal. They use international comparative studies and examine the way in which failed asylum seekers are treated; having limited access to public funds, and having to rely on informal support networks and charitable groups, whilst living under the threat of deportation. Despite the political rhetoric of "*floods and invasions*" which characterises policy discourses, migrants are a small percentage of the UK population (Geddes 2003 p.331). There are key themes in UK policy debates about irregular migration, human trafficking and people smuggling:

"...the contentious politics of irregular migration in the UK linked to broader debates about migration in the UK can best be understood as 'a crisis foretold' in that it draws deeply from underlying and more deep rooted concerns about immigration and an associated rich repertoire of contentious social and political action that has developed for more than 40 years" (Geddes 2003 p.327).

Geddes (2003) argues that the UK government's rhetoric around irregular migration, trafficking and smuggling draws on well established contentious repertoires, which single out the irregularity of migrations to the UK, obscuring, or at least minimizing the reasons why people worldwide are forced to leave their countries of origin. Despite the fact that: "*most children move and travel in order to flee conflict*" (Sutton and Smith 2005, p.23) the EU are tightening border controls at the expense of promoting rights, and this security-led agenda also promotes a greater emphasis on finding solutions to the problems outside of the EU (Sutton and Smith 2005).

In discussing the underlying themes of irregular migration, human trafficking and people smuggling Geddes argues that there is an enduring resonance in: “*the powerful image of the ‘bogus asylum seeker’*” (Geddes 2003 p.331). This approach is underpinned by the belief that people are coming to the UK as economic migrants or benefit cheats, not as refugees protected by international conventions, and it lends support to a policy direction which appears to be ending the right of asylum rather than tackling the fundamental causes of trafficking. According to Geddes (2003), the UK does not want to be seen as a ‘soft touch’ losing control of migration.

The way in which illegal immigration is framed as a ‘race’ issue is to give the impression of a strong state by advocating greater controls over air and sea ports. This approach also detracts from issues related to labour markets and population changes which make it essential for migrant workers to fill gaps in the labour market. There is thus a conflict between the orientation of the government towards openness in terms of labour migration, and the political rhetoric about illegal immigration. Employer and business demands for a cheap and flexible labour force provide economic incentives to those who can ensure a supply of foreign low waged workers (Geddes, 2006).

In relation to the way in which the UK manages migration, Salt (2005) argues that there is a lack of understanding of patterns of migration, specifically in relation the fact that migration is not always permanent. In many countries, migrations provide short, medium and long term solutions to economic and structural conditions, by creating ways in which families and communities can sustain themselves in situations of poverty. Indeed, for many people across the globe, migration is preferred as a sustainability strategy as it allows people to remit some of their income to families in countries of origin to alleviate the impact of poverty. In this respect, it may be the only recourse open to them, and, for some states where migration flows are less restrictive remittances make up a substantial proportion of national income (Harris 2002).

Dominant discourses: the exploitation of children and immigration threats

There is little doubt that some children are brought illegally into the UK and exploited, but the evidence in this respect is limited, and in no way corresponds to the huge publicity directed at the issue, which is largely generated by the relatively small but active anti-trafficking lobby in this country. The Home Office commissioned literature review on trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation suggests there is only limited and anecdotal evidence to determine who is involved in trafficking (Dowling *et al.* 2007).

Another critical issue relates to the perceived role of parents who sell or trade their children into slavery through their ignorance or naïvety. This presentation of parents as gullible and inept draws, again, on deep rooted assumptions about the ability of parents to protect the welfare of their children, and is context free. In situations of extreme poverty, threat of, or actual, violence, parents may take steps to protect their children by agreeing to their migration as an immediate solution or as a longer term survival strategy (Manzo 2005). In other situations, parents may actively seek out ways of sending their children to other countries, whilst children in extreme conditions are also able to make these choices independently (Busza *et al.* 2004; De Lange 2005). It is therefore questionable as to whether returns of children are actually in their best interest and the *UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings* and the *Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked* guidance are relatively sparse in highlighting these wider issues, arguably as they do not fit in with wider immigration policy measures or agendas.

There are another set of issues in current policy approaches towards tackling trafficking which are related to the way in which children and childhood are constructed. Childhood is constructed as a place and space of innocence and freedom from responsibility (Mayall 2000; Mayall 2006), and this simplistic and idealised attitude is found at the base of policy responses in respect of child trafficking, and is largely related to age. Anti-trafficking and immigration agencies have expressed concerns that children are being brought into the UK under false identities, and are older than they appear. In recent years, when children's age is uncertain, the Home Office have adopted age assessment practices and increasingly dispute the given ages of children who seek entry. If those who present are age disputed and subsequently found to be under the age of 18,

this should not be an issue as children under the age of 18 are entitled to protection; but policies towards the return of asylum-seekers and refugees are increasingly targeted at children under 18. Children may not be assessed as vulnerable as it is considered that their migration into the UK is for economic reasons; as such there is a perceived risk of their becoming a drain on welfare resources (Fell and Heyes 2007).

Risk discourses

In constructionist perspectives, the ways in which risks are constructed and acted upon are crucial factors. Experts do not acknowledge the situated and localised nature of the risks they define, and often represent them as universal and objective truths (Lupton 1999). Risk, understood as being about perception and cultural understanding, requires a different approach. Risk discourse analysis (Lupton 1999, adapted from Hall 1997), as discussed in the methodology chapter, illustrates the various ways in which risks are articulated in UK child trafficking policy-making discourses. These questions are now applied to the development of child trafficking policy-making in the UK:

What statements are used to construct certain kinds of knowledge about risk at a particular historical moment and socio-cultural setting?

What rules prescribe certain ways of talking about risk and exclude other ways?

What types of subject are constructed through risk discourses?

How does knowledge about risk acquire authority, a sense of embodying the 'truth' about it?

What practices are used in institutions and by individuals for dealing with the subject of risk discourses?

How do new discourses on risk emerge, supplanting other discourses, and what are the effects of this for risk knowledge and subjects of risk?

Risk discourses and UK child trafficking policies

What statements are used to construct certain kinds of knowledge about risk at a particular historical moment and socio-cultural setting?

As discussed in this chapter many of the references to risks found in NGO consultations about child trafficking are uncritically reproduced in policy documents and guidance. Statements about the *hidden harm* and the potentially *significant numbers* of children thought to be at risk of trafficking are also commonplace in the policy discourses. The true scale of the issue is unknown but commentators and politicians have argued that it is potentially enormous. For example in October 2004 during a parliamentary debate on the subject of child trafficking, Mr. John Bercow the MP for Buckingham suggested that parliamentary attention had been “*woefully inadequate to the scale of the challenge that we face*” (John Bercow cited in Hansard 21st October 2004 c.1116). Bercow illustrates the dangers parents are exposing their children to, and argued that it was the responsibility of migrants already in Britain to do everything within their power to prevent such migrations in future:

“The high profile cases of Victoria Climbié, who was trafficked to the UK by her aunt in order to commit benefit fraud... is the tip of the iceberg.....Parents must be made aware that they are not sending their children to a better life when they put them in the hands of traffickers. New communities in Britain can help by sending the messages to their contacts in the developing world about the grim prospect that awaits the victims of trafficking” (John Bercow cited in Hansard 21st October 2004 c.1117).

In Sharma’s (2004) critique of anti-trafficking campaigns and the role of NGOs she examines the feminist discourses and demonstrates how these shape the representation of female migrations with a criminalised discourse:

“...when moral panics of illegal migration, border control, and heightened criminality of migrants are deconstructed, a serious disjuncture emerges between women’s accounts of migration and the dominant rhetoric of trafficking” (p.55).

This is also, arguably, the case in UK child trafficking policies, which prioritise the prevention of child migrations in the first place and, if they do enter the UK, enforcing their return to their country of origin. In relation to the causes of child trafficking, the policy approaches are overly reliant on simplistic demand/supply explanations of child trafficking which are particularly associated with trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation and, as a result, draw heavily on the language of child protection where children are constructed as witless victims. This position obscures the need for a more detailed analysis of children's experiences: the ways in which children arrive into the UK, closer examination of the relationships between children and the people who bring them; and the variety of factors which promote children's migrations. UK policy approaches to date towards migrant children coming without or with their families reflect a desire to protect and sustain a rigid asylum and immigration system, a position which has also been adopted in respect of the issue of child trafficking. These measures are ostensibly designed to stop independent migrations because of the potential risks of trafficking and future exploitation. Child migration is therefore understood as a problem because children are separated from their parents, families and communities, this distance between and separateness from origins is perceived in policy terms as being laden with risks and vulnerabilities.

What rules prescribe certain ways of talking about risk and exclude other ways?

According to Sutton (1999) narratives have strong cultural and historical roots; they simplify, clarify and narrow the alternatives and responses. The transmission of these narratives through policy networks is evident in certain types of programmes. Methods of data collection and analysis also become associated with particular narratives. Narratives gain the status of *conventional wisdom* having a beginning, middle and end, outlining a specific course of events. They gain currency and status although their validity is questioned (Sutton 1999). This is the case in terms of UK child trafficking policies which have been informed by dubious and unsubstantiated research evidence and by the campaigning activities of NGOs who advance a particular set of child trafficking narratives. In the UK child trafficking policy discourses are underpinned with *harm prevention* and *risk management* narratives. More recently, in welfare policies generally the *victim* has become a high priority whilst certain highly valued ideologies of

childhood persist in wider policy discourses. The values and priorities of the policy discourses in terms of child trafficking are emphasised in the narratives of home and family and loss and betrayal. The crisis narratives evident in child trafficking policy-making discourses also convey a need for urgent and immediate action: *something must be done*.

What types of subject are constructed through risk discourses?

As with many other forms of child abuse which provoke public and political reaction, anti-trafficking campaigning groups have argued for national child protection strategies (ECPAT 2001; ECPAT 2004; AFRUCA 2006; Baillet 2006, ECPAT 2006; ECPAT 2007). Bell (2002), argues that child protection issues arouse strong feelings, protests and public demands for political action, in terms of the perceived risks to children posed by paedophiles, whilst Ost (2002) has made some observations on the perceived societal threat which characterises debates about the effects of child pornography. It is clear in the policy discourses that the migration of children poses individual risks to children and wider risks in terms of the UK's border security, and in terms of their vulnerability to being sexually exploited. Critically, child trafficking has come to be understood as being about wider societal and particularly sexual threats to children and more specifically about: *"innocent and helpless victims"* (Buckland 2008). This way of talking about child trafficking minimises structural explanations and promotes individual ones. In relation to trafficking in women and children the domination of a *"victim trope"* together with the positioning of men as either predators, abusers, exploiters or crime bosses, legitimates restrictive and punitive policies, again an approach which underestimates the structural factors which lead to migrations (Buckland 2008, p. 43).

How does knowledge about risk acquire authority, a sense of embodying the 'truth' about it?

The risk discourses are advanced by leading national and international NGOs who claim expertise and authority in the anti-trafficking arena. The fact that this expertise comes from isolated cases of child trafficking does not detract from their potency. International attention on the trafficking in women for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation has led to the

development of policies associated with child trafficking in the UK and elsewhere. The UK policy agenda has been strongly influenced by these anti-trafficking campaigns. Children defined as those under the age of 18 are not deemed as being able to consent, and so any involvement in the sex industry is considered to be exploitative. Given that the concerns related to trafficking emerged in this context it comes as little surprise that the child trafficking guidance for LSCBs (HM Government 2007) uses language associated with the sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children. The involvement of children in prostitution in the UK is, however, not a new policy issue, (Gorham 1978; Brown 2004) and policy attention towards child trafficking has been influenced by both this concern and by wider governmental priorities associated with immigration and national border security (Crawley 2006).

What practices are used in institutions and by individuals for dealing with the subject of risk discourses?

The UK Government's responses to the needs of migrant children have been widely criticised by various commentators who take issue with the way in which such children are excluded from accessing their entitlements as refugees. In some situations, agencies working in this sector have argued that the use of policies and procedures by local authorities to discharge their responsibilities for asylum-seeking and unaccompanied children is discriminatory and an abuse of human rights. A key example here is demonstrated in the ruling made in relation to the situation of unaccompanied children in the London Borough of Hillingdon who were refused services once they reached the age of eighteen. The judicial review found that Hillingdon council had a duty to provide care leaving services, and they had knowingly interpreted their duties in order to exclude the children in their care from services they were actually entitled to under the *Children Act* (1989) (Refugee Council 2005b).

The emphasis in policy and practice related to the protection of children who may have been trafficked is on restricting their migrations and regulating their movements. Risk assessment approaches have been introduced along with increased surveillance and monitoring of children at UK ports of entry. There has also been an expansion of UK border control into mainland Europe and this is perceived as an effective way of dealing with the issue outside of the UK. Promoting a

victim led policy agenda has been a key anti-trafficking strategy. The polemical nature of the anti-trafficking campaigning has heightened public and political sensitivity to child trafficking as a serious child safeguarding issue which government, and particularly social work agencies, are ill- equipped to deal with. The experts (NGOs) advocate on behalf of these children and focus attention to the issues by aligning the migrations of children with wider concerns about the perceived risks of commercial sexual exploitation. They call for specialist interventions which address the unique nature of this abuse. In their submission to the Home Affairs Committee: *The Trade in Human Beings-Human Trafficking in the UK*, the NSPCC discuss evidence from their work with sexually exploited children, and argue that there is a lack of recognition of the trauma and abuse which these children have experienced: “*due to the lack of capacity within front-line Children's Services teams*” (Home Affairs Committee 2008a). Again, there is a recurrent theme that social workers do not know what they are dealing with, together with this emphasis on trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

How do new discourses on risk emerge, supplanting other discourses and what are the effects of this for risk knowledge and subjects of risk?

Children coming to the UK do so for a variety of reasons, including escaping violence or the threat of violence, whereby they are entitled, under international convention (UNHCR 1951), to claim asylum. Research and academic debate on child labour in developing countries (Boyden 1990; White 1999; Boyden and Levinson 2000) and on child work and migration (Iverson 2002; Liebel 2004; Hashim 2005; Hashim 2006) challenges some of the assumptions which frame children's migratory movements as pathological. Instead, these positions demonstrate that children make considered choices and decisions about their opportunities and aspirations, and the potential benefits to them of international migration. It is not the case, then, that all children coming to the UK are trafficked or in need of rescue or protection.

Recently the unilateral discourse about the extent of child trafficking has been challenged. In another submission to the Home Affairs Committee-*The Trade in Human Beings:Human Trafficking in the UK*, the chief executive of the Child Exploitation and Online protection centre (CEOP) stated that:

“The scale of the problem is very, very difficult to define and whilst I do not want to offend any of my colleagues from other organisations, especially the international ones, what we see very often are guesstimates of the scale and range of this offence. That is not to say that the numbers are not significant and I would not want to trivialise this in any way but the truth is we simply do not know from a UK perspective” (Home Affairs Committee 2008b).

Nonetheless despite this acknowledgement, the *grim prospects* awaiting children who come here for a better life is a theme which is explicit in child trafficking policy discourses. As shown in the previous chapter, this has historically been a common theme in debates about trafficking, and there are strong parallels between nineteenth century tirades against the phenomenon and those that emerged following the death of Victoria Climbié.

Summary

Risk assessment, threat management and harm reduction narratives characterise UK child trafficking policy-making discourses. There are various modes of transmission of these narratives including through policy consultation processes. Discourses affect the policy process in a number of ways: they simplify the complex; serve the interest of one group over another; define the issue; provide the framework in which alternatives are considered; influence the options chosen and impact on the process of implementation (Sutton 1999 p.13). Discourse analysis here, then, draws attention to the use of language in policy-making and the way in which issues are framed so that the obviousness of policy is explicit. In this respect discourse analysis approaches to studying child trafficking policy-making illustrates how policy decisions are depoliticised.

The issue of child trafficking emerged as a problem to be addressed through policy changes during the consultation on the *Sex Offences Act - Setting the Boundaries* (Home Office 2000) NGOs contributed to the consultations drawing on single case examples which exposed trafficking in children for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. A similar and increased emphasis on this form of exploitation was also apparent in the NGO contributions to

the consultations on the *UK Action Plan on Trafficking Human Beings* (Home Office 2006). During this period the high profile death of Victoria Climbié and public enquiry (Laming 2003) drew attention to the failure of current systems to protect children. The UK government responded with a new piece of primary legislation, *The Children Act* (2004), which sought to streamline existing child protection systems and introduced a national safeguarding agenda, whilst simultaneously promoting a new agenda for children in the *Every Child Matters* strategy. The greater protection of children in private fostering was also a key policy development during this period, and, again anti-trafficking and other child welfare NGOs made a significant contribution to the debates for the protection of privately fostered children. As discussed *The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations* (2005) are criticised as not being as robust as the regulations are for local authority managed foster care.

These policies were all developed within a wider political context of increased border control and national security, and so various policy and legislative measures were enacted in order to address the perceived threat of immigration and international terrorism. Additionally, the economic threats to the UK of unchecked immigration were emphasised. The immigration context of policy-making has come in for sharp criticism from anti-trafficking organisations and agencies, and there are widely expressed concerns that these responses do not address the trafficking in children because of the hidden nature of the crime and the exploitation children are said to experience. The discourses which surround the development of child trafficking policies in the UK are characterised by perceptions of the potential exploitation of migrant children, particularly for commercial sexual exploitation. The vulnerability of migrant children, their victimhood and perceived risks in their migrations are thus enduring feature of UK child trafficking policy discourses. There have been some notable exceptions in the dominant discourse from individuals and state actors who challenge the view that child trafficking is a massive and hidden social problem, and, whilst these do bring some measured observations to policy debates, they remain minimised.

Critiques have argued that policies are constructed to promote UK national priorities and give the impression of a strong state, and one which is anti-immigration. What is clear from this analysis of policy responses in the UK context is that they are designed around several key assumptions.

Child migration is understood to be a negative event. There is little acknowledgement in the policy discourses that children make decisions to migrate. Policies instead draw on underlying fears about the safety of children coming to the UK. The UK is constructed as a dangerous place in this regard. The environmental risk and threat stemming from the amplified concerns expressed in the NGO literature, adds weight to the prevailing anti-immigration/terrorist policy rhetoric.

The issue of child trafficking in policy terms is constructed as being a child protection concern. Threats to the social order in this respect stem from the concerns about immigration and security. According to Altheide (2006), a discourse of fear is politically motivated and constructed through news and media accounts. Security perspectives dominate as deviance and violations are said to be threatening the social order. These discourses of fear found in the mass media shape public agendas and influence how people think about certain issues as well as how they are packaged and presented (Altheide 2006). Conveyed within these discourses of fear is a sense of disorder or things being out of control. In this analysis of child trafficking policy-making the discourse of fear is constructed by and transmitted through policy and campaigning networks as well as the media.

In this analysis of policy the narrative of child trafficking or the stories of child trafficking which emerged were transmitted between the state and non-state actors in the child trafficking policy networks. The policy networks included: several government departments; external government regulated agencies and NGOs; formal charitable and voluntary sector organisations; campaigning and community and faith organisations. In the chapter which follows I discuss the interviews with key informants in the ports safeguarding sector. Many of these informants are active in anti-trafficking networks and have been instrumental in advancing concerns about child trafficking in the UK.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERVIEW THEMES AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter I illustrate the way in which the interview data was coded and categorised for the purpose of analysis. Along with variations in the definition of trafficking, there were key themes which emerged in the analysis of interviews with key informants in the study: uncertainty in estimating the incidence of child trafficking; establishing credibility of the agency; criticising others; prejudicial perspectives and finally constructing risk. I discuss these themes and draw on extracts from the interviews to illustrate the range of perspectives. I also make some critical observations about the way in which interviewees discussed who they think is involved in child trafficking and how they construct the ‘victims’ and ‘criminals’ who they perceive to be involved in trafficking scenarios. This analysis demonstrates that there was a great deal of speculation advanced in the interviews about what constitutes child trafficking, and how the phenomenon should be addressed through policy and practice.

Questioning the data

The published literature, policy and campaigning documents claim that children are trafficked by both individuals and criminal gangs. *The Palermo Protocol* (UN 2000) and the UK legislation (Sexual Offences Act 2003; Asylum and Immigration Act 2004) explicitly state that anyone involved in just one of the many trafficking processes, could be charged with a trafficking offence. This might for example include the prosecution of an agent who brings a child into the UK illegally or by legal means, or an individual who provides accommodation to a child who has been brought into the UK, if the child is subsequently found to have been exploited. UK policy responses have clearly been developed based on the premise put forward by NGOs and government sources that there are organised criminal networks that trade in human beings, including children, despite the very limited UK based evidence to support this position in respect

of child trafficking (Dowling *et al.*2007). It was evident in the analysis of the initial interviews that there were conflicting and ambiguous views about child trafficking and explanations for it. Similarly, there were a number of competing definitions; I therefore decided to focus on these explanations and definitions in the interview analysis.

There are various explanations as to why children are trafficked and in the previous chapters I drew attention to the way in which structural factors are often minimised in policy discourses. The way in which participants explained the causes of child trafficking in the UK were also a focus of my analysis. In the analysis of the initial interviews it was clear that there were very different variations of a so-called 'typical' child trafficking scenario. For this reason, I became particularly interested in what respondents described as a child trafficking case and so I went on to analyse further the case examples used by respondents in subsequent interviews.

As with many child welfare issues, emotions run high, and many of the international publications have illustrated the strong feelings that professionals and activists have about the abuse and exploitation trafficked children are said to experience. There are many examples in the NGO and policy documents and materials of child trafficking cases of the child being portrayed as tragic victims, who needs assistance to escape their situation and specialist support to help them recover from their ordeal. As discussed earlier, in the literature review, case examples have been found to have been recycled from other unsubstantiated secondary sources (Steinfatt 2003). In several reports by NGOs and in the other grey literature the same story appears over and over again: of children, often girls, who have been duped and tricked by their traffickers, and found themselves in situations of commercial sexual exploitation. The international campaigning agendas of children and human rights NGOs have explicitly used polemical emotional language as a strategic tool to raise public and political awareness of the issue of human trafficking (Bertone 2004; Sharma 2004; Buckland 2008). A similar theme is evident in the published UK grey literature, policy documents and in campaigning literature associated with child trafficking, as discussed in the history and policy chapters earlier. In the interview analysis I paid close attention to the feelings expressed by respondents and the patterns found in these expressions.

The role of parents in child trafficking policy documents also suggests that there are strong opinions about how parents are complicit in the trafficking events and it was thus important to further explore participants' views about children's relationships with parents. Finally there are a number of explanations for child trafficking and in addition to parents; criminal gangs and migrant communities are often alleged to be involved in organising child trafficking. I therefore focused my analysis on who participants talked about as being involved in the trade in children.

Interview data: Initial research questions

I developed a number of questions in response to the issues outlined above:

- How do respondents define child trafficking?
- How are children's relationships with parents/others discussed?
- What case studies do respondents use to illustrate a child trafficking situation?
- What wider explanations are used to account for the issue of child trafficking?
- How are feelings about child trafficking expressed?
- How did respondents explain who was involved in trafficking?

These initial questions provided a focus for further analysis and generated various themes:

Reasons and explanations for child trafficking: multi-agency perspectives on the causes of child trafficking in the UK

- Cultural differences and inadequate parenting practice
- Problematic UK migration and child safeguarding policies
- Organised crime
- Organised sexual/labour exploitation
- Multi-agency policy and practice issues
- International migration and economic drivers

The data generated in the interviews about reasons and explanations were then unified using the following unifying categories.

Reasons and explanations for child trafficking multi-agency perspectives

- Abandonment and forced separation from family
- Constructing victims, villains and rescuers
- Outrage
- Environmental risks
- Stranger danger

Interview themes

These reasons were also apparent in the case studies which respondents used in interviews to provide examples of case experiences and practice examples. There were expressions of concern about familial relationships, and about the extent to which child trafficking was hidden from professionals, and thus potentially massive. I explored further in the analysis how informants expressed their emotions about child trafficking, issues related to multi-agency work and the stories of child trafficking which emerged in the interview narratives. I grouped together these themes (see table 8 below) in this analysis of child trafficking interview narratives as: uncertainty in estimation and speculation; establishing the credibility of the agency; criticising others; prejudicial perspectives, and constructing risk.

Table 8 to show themes and corresponding groups:

<i>Theme:</i>	<i>Corresponding groups</i>
<i>Uncertainty in estimation and incidence</i>	Problematic and unhelpful definitions and statistics
	We know it is a concern we just do not know how much of one it is
	We just do not know how many but it is better to do something rather than nothing
	We know that they are whisked away from under our noses
	We do not know where to look so we are looking anywhere and everywhere
<i>Establishing credibility of the agency</i>	We are doing better than others
	We know more than others about this issue
	We take credit for our achievements
	We have got our house in order
<i>Criticising others</i>	Parents are to blame
	Risks, rights and responsibilities of migrant children
	Organised immigration and /or benefit crime
	Risk to and vulnerability of migrant children
	Apportioning blame and taking responsibility
	Global perspectives
<i>Prejudicial perspectives</i>	Atrocity tales
	The worst case scenario
	The tip of the iceberg
	In remembrance of Victoria Climbié
<i>Constructing risk</i>	Talk about cases and other agency performance and activity
	Case examples illustrating potentially catastrophic consequences
	Extrapolation and generalisation
	Constructing victims and rescuers
	Amplifying risk and predicting danger

I begin my discussion of themes by elaborating on the way in which child trafficking was defined by the interview participants. The central themes (as above) are then discussed together with extracts from the interview narratives. The interview extracts include the coding of the interview participants as previously laid out in the methodology chapter repeated in table 9 below:

Table 9 to show participants professional role:

Participant	Professional role
SWCYP 1	Team manager of a children and young people's initial assessment team SSD
SWCYP 2	Team manager of an unaccompanied minors team SSD
SWCYP 3	Deputy manager of refugee support project NGO
SWCYP 4	Team manager of multi-agency child safeguarding team SSD
SWCYP 5	Social worker with refugee and asylum-seeking children NGO
SWCYP 6	Project worker asylum-seeking children and young people NGO
PCP 1	Senior Police officer
PCP 2	Police officer
PCP 3	Police officer
POL 1	Government policy lead
POL 2	Chief executive Government agency
POL 3	BME Policy advisor Children's NGO
CAMP 1	Head of children's services NGO
CAMP 2	Information officer NGO
LEG	Barrister
ACADEMIC	Academic researcher

Defining child trafficking

As discussed in the review of the literature on child trafficking, a key difficulty identified was the lack of definitional clarity which, it has been argued, affects policy-making and the development of effective support services for the victims of trafficking (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). The lack of clarity in defining the issue has also been the subject of discussion in UK NGO publications, and has been used to argue that there are gaps in service provision as practitioners do not know what they are dealing with (ECPAT 2004; ECPAT 2007). This led me to question closely how informants in this study defined the issue of child trafficking. In early interviews it became clear that there were many variations in the way in which informants understood and interpreted the *Palermo Protocol* (UN 2000) definition, with informants

explaining their understanding of child trafficking in different ways related to both the official definition and practice experience. It was therefore clear to me that questioning how informants defined the issue was essential in subsequent interviews.

Child trafficking was defined in different ways by all of the participants. For some the official definition was problematic. Although they drew on the official definition found in national and international legislation, it did not always reflect the reality of the work they undertook. For example, in an early interview the respondent drew on practice experience which suggested that the safeguarding and welfare of migrant children is not necessarily about addressing a potential child trafficking scenario, which other agencies often assume is the case. As the interviews progressed it became clear that the official definition was not always an accurate explanation of a child's situation. The variations in the definition of child trafficking were located across a wide spectrum which ranged from it being defined, for example, as a criminal activity, an international child slave trade, or an abuse of traditional child-rearing practices. Not all respondents found the official definition helpful in their work. Indeed respondents from the police group and the legal services groups argued that the official definition had not helped the prosecutions and convictions secured. The academic participant found the definition unhelpful, primarily because it grouped women and children together and this did not highlight the differences between these two groups. The NGOs were largely supportive of the official definition as it had formalised an international response to an international crime, and had provided a basis for policy development. The social work professionals were more pragmatic about their views of the definition, as, by and large, it made very little difference to their day to day work, their interventions being mainly informed by the *Children Act 1989*, (Section 47, Section 20, Section 17). That said, one agency did draw on the *Child Abduction Act 1984* to prevent adults having contact with children, and where orders for no contact were breached, arrests and convictions were made. Other legislation was also drawn on to secure arrests and convictions including the *Asylum and Immigration Act (2004)*, *Asylum and Immigration Act 1971*, and the *Sexual Offences Act 2003*. One law enforcement respondent referred generally to employment legislation which could be potentially useful in preventing the employment of children.

The responses towards the official definition of trafficking clearly highlighted conflicts between the legally accepted and internationally agreed definition laid out in the *Palermo Protocol* and the way in which UK policies are designed and implemented. They also illustrate ambiguities in relation to the issue of consent. In the *Palermo Protocol* children are seen as not being able to consent, owing to their age (under the internationally agreed UN definition of a child being under the age of eighteen) and their relative vulnerability. In the majority of responses age was a determining factor for legal intervention, and views about the age of children and issues of consent were inconsistent in the interview responses. The lack of definitional clarity surrounding child trafficking also led me to question further what child trafficking actually was, what purpose a legal definition had, and what had informed and shaped child trafficking policy responses and influenced practice.

Uncertainty in estimation and incidence

In relation to wider explanations of the causes and factors which lead to child trafficking, respondents expressed the view that child trafficking was an inevitable consequence of globalisation, easier travel, the perceived growth of, and relative ease of inward migration to the UK, and as a result of the demand for cheap exploitable labour. This response, which came from a participant involved in policy-making, alludes to the various ways in which traffickers operate:

“So the whole nature of who are the traffickers I think varies, very much, you know from criminal gangs probably in the Balkans, you know exporting women in a chain of criminal contacts to you know the agent who delivers a single child and then goes back again” (POL 1 August 2006).

The international movement of children was seen as being in the domain of criminal networks and required a national organised response which could address the threats. Again, this response was put forward by a respondent involved in policy-making:

“the volume market is human trafficking....as it relates to organised criminality and how they profit by trafficking human beings from one area to another” (POL 2 August 2006).

The implication of this, expressed by the same respondent, was that crimes were being committed which were going unpunished and this situation had to change to deter criminals and protect children, and it was felt that these were child protection and immigration issues which the police were not equipped to deal with in a vacuum.

Whilst it was established that it is difficult to estimate the incidence of child trafficking, participants believed it was an issue of growing concern. This was illustrated in discussions of how vulnerability and risk were identified and responded to, and the examples of short timescales that agencies had to respond to potential cases of child trafficking. Many of the respondents argued that the lack of evidence should not preclude action. The different and sometimes conflicting roles and responsibilities of anti-trafficking NGOs, the Police, Social Services and the UK immigration authorities were acknowledged by some interviewees, together with concerns that inadequate protection had potentially dire consequences for inestimable numbers of migrant children.

There was a belief amongst some of the respondents that there was a high and increasing incidence of child trafficking in the UK. The perception was discussed by some of them in relation to the increased visibility and detection of safeguarding issues for children coming into the UK from the EU and parts of the world where countries are in conflict or have been damaged by environmental events. For others, economic incentives were highlighted as reasons for the perceived increase in trafficking: *“I think there has been an increase in child trafficking because it’s very profitable”* (Legal September 2006). However, not all respondents shared this opinion. According to this academic: *“a lot of people say there’s an increase in international trafficking, there isn’t very good evidence on that”* (Academic August 2006). Another key reason for the lack of evidence was the belief put forward by respondents across the agencies that it was

difficult for officials to identify children that have been trafficked: *“we still find that there is uncertainty about the identification of children who are trafficked”* (CAMP 2 July 2006). This was also related to the lack of knowledge at the point of identification and assessment of children’s situations when they disembark at UK ports of entry:

“...we can't actually put our hand up to sort of say all these children are trafficked children because although we probably suspect, we don't actually know” (PCP 2 September 2006).

Identifying and safeguarding children who arrive in the UK was perceived as problematic as children, it was believed, went missing shortly after arrival. These disappearances, it was alleged, occurred within a very short timescale which was repeatedly referred to across the agencies: *“within twenty four hours or forty eight hours”* (PCP 1 August 2005; CAMP 1 June 2006; POL 2 August 2006; Legal September 2006). It was suggested that it is within these short timescales that the traffickers move children away from official view. It was also argued that even when they are placed in local authority care, the children are still vulnerable to being contacted by their traffickers, removed and then exploited. These claims are also repeatedly made in media publications on the issue of child trafficking.

The subterfuge deception and secrecy of the traffickers and their methods was of grave concern. It was acknowledged by participants that the evidence base for the claims about the trafficking of migrant children was generally poor, and that this was in part explained as a result of the way in which those coming into the UK deceive port authorities:

“...there’s no evidence at the ports, from the people that we have talked to, that Vietnamese children are coming through in numbers but we were still finding them here, so one of the issues is, is it a fact that children come through, are pretending to be Chinese, pretending to be Taiwanese whatever, we don’t understand enough about that, why do they do that?” (POL 2 August 2006).

Other respondents though were sceptical about the organised crime aspect and suggested from practice experience that there was limited evidence of child trafficking, particularly the organised crime element. The following comments were made by one of the social work interviewees:

“...most people would not be surprised that there might be children being trafficked around the country and we’re at pains to point out that it’s relatively few in number and there are individual features which means that they’re individual cases, there’s no links between the cases that have happened, and involved a number of individuals...we’re cautious in terms of seeing it as an orchestrated organised movement of children” (SWCYP 4 March 2006).

The lack of convictions for trafficking offences also raised concern, and an example was provided by this policy informant who related a recent experience of asking a conference audience of around 220 policing agencies in the UK, about convictions for child trafficking: *“no-one in the room has been involved in a case where a person has been identified and held to account”* (POL 2 August 2006).

The evidence of child trafficking reported by the informants drew on anecdotes which were framed in a particular way in these comments below: *“we hear cases in source countries”* (POL 3 August 2006). What these statements illustrate is how agencies and politicians seem to rely on hearsay and anecdotal ‘stories’ as evidence of child trafficking: *“what we’re told is often what the agents have rehearsed with them”* (SWCYP 2 January 2006)

There were also views expressed that many more cases of child trafficking existed which were not made known to agencies, as the financial incentives were so lucrative, and the risks of being charged and prosecuted for a trafficking offence were also thought to be limited, along with a perception of imminent risk and danger. There were exceptions to these views, which highlighted the lack of evidence of child trafficking, and the need for improved knowledge and systems to identify vulnerable children, and to provide effective support and protection. This

respondent's view however was explicit across all the professional groups in the sample: *"we get anecdotal evidence largely... we don't know enough about it"* (POL 2 August 2006).

It was also suggested by this social work respondent, who was based in a UK port of entry, that the evidence base and lack of data was used by other agencies to meet their own agendas: *"and portray the figures in whatever way meet their need"* (SWCYP 6 October 2006). This was confirmed in other statements on this issue of how child trafficking research was of questionable integrity and data came from unverified or dubious sources:

"There are a lot of reports coming through from really reliable, reputable NGOs and when you try and dig down into the provenance of it, there are issues about who said what where" (POL 2 August 2006).

There were some tensions between the different professional groups' responses in relation to the controlling emphasis adopted by the police and policy makers and those with a vested interest i.e. NGOs, and those responses from social work professionals who appear to have a more balanced and pragmatic perspective. However it was not that clear cut. For example, in this response this particular social work informant was based in an NGO organisation at a UK port of entry and argued that the size of the issue was problematic, as was the capacity to deal with it: *"because it's too huge a subject and the authorities are still playing catch up"* (SWCYP 6 October 2006). This informant appeared to be overwhelmed by their perception of the enormity of the issue and the difficulties in identification as trafficked children are hidden: *"this whole issue of trafficking is such a huge thing, and spread across the UK"* (SWCYP 6 October 2006). The agencies and policy makers, it was explained, were being outwitted by the organised criminal gangs.

Establishing credibility of the agency

Whilst the acknowledgement that child trafficking was inestimable was a recurrent theme in the interviews, respondents went to significant lengths to promote their own agencies, and the work they were involved in, positively. In addition to discussing case experiences and practice examples, they referred to their research and pro-active approach as a way of demonstrating how seriously they took the issue. Taylor and White (2000) argue that there are competing versions that professionals put forward which support their own position and undermine others claims (p.6). This was evident in the interview narratives in relation to multi-agency working, for example, the way in which some respondents, particularly the police and NGO participants, criticised social services whilst promoting their own actions as beneficial and decisive. In this extract the police respondent draws on experience of developing measures to tackle trafficking crimes in response to the recommendations by Lord Laming in the public inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié:

“When there are public enquiries and things, we as the police take things very seriously, we are very sort of can do, that’s the type of people we are, we get on and do things, whereas other agencies do a bit of sort of handwringing, and let the dust settle” (PCP 1 August 2005).

There was also a feeling at the policy-making level that there were difficulties in trying to ensure that practice reflected policy direction and focus, and that national strategies were ‘out of touch’ with the day to day reality of anti-trafficking work:

“I’ve only had this portfolio for a matter of months, what I can say is and having been a practitioner in a number of areas, there was a gap between the practical application, tactically on the ground and the policy that was supposed to join up with it” (POL 2 August 2006).

This particular informant went on to describe a range of initiatives which had been generated since taking up their current post, and, although acknowledging that other stakeholders were important in the fight against trafficking, in the interview the informant claimed responsibility

for the implementation of an ambitious and proactive policing agenda that had been driven forward under this type leadership:

“...lets accept that we’ll all know a little bit and if this group isn’t about telling everyone else what to do, its about helping the police service raise their level of performance, so we give a better service” (POL 2 August 2006).

Working together at policy level was broadly welcomed by campaigning organisations and these respondents saw themselves as key players in the anti-trafficking policy arenas, as this example demonstrates:

“...a lot of agencies come to us for advice and information which we’re happy to provide and in fact we’re happy to bring them together so that there is coordination and joint focus in terms of what policy advice needs to be given to the Government” (CAMP 2 July 2006).

The proactive approach by the police to publicising their anti-trafficking activities came in for some criticism however, largely because they had dominated the agenda in this particular instance:

“I know the police have done presentations around the country ... they’ve just owned the success because they couldn’t have done it without us... we felt that should have been a joint presentation, we did work quite well together but in the end we felt a bit let down by the police in that case” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

In the particular case which the respondent was referring to the police had gone on to develop their investigation further without consulting other agencies. In this respondent’s view better outcomes all around could have been achieved; however they had not been given the opportunity to contribute and work on the case:

“I thought we could only go with the police and that was the whole idea. Then we discovered the police went three times without informing us. Which meant it was very difficult for us to prepare the way for that young lady to return home” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

When discussing their roles and responsibilities, interview respondents often felt that they were doing better than others. For some interviewees, this was because they were at the front line and were seeing vulnerable children and potential cases on a regular basis. For others, it was because they were taking the issue seriously and working at policy levels to move the anti-trafficking agenda forward. Credibility is important in establishing a story and ensuring that the listener is engaged. Accounts are made plausible and authentic through the use of devices which add credibility; often these are taken as unchallengeable as they are perceived as being based on scientific facts or established evidence. ‘Active voicing’ further lends support to the way in which facts are delivered as being unquestionable. Extreme case formulation is also a strategy used by speakers to maximize impact and add a sense of crisis and catastrophe to accounts (Taylor and White 2000). In the narratives about children being trafficked this extreme case formulation was evident in the way in which respondents discussed the case of Victoria Climbié as a ‘worst case scenario’, how they promoted this as a typical sort of case, and implied that this was as a potential outcome for other cases of suspected child trafficking which they have come across in their work. Taylor and White (2000) argue that when professionals talk about each other they establish expectations and maintain disciplinary boundaries (p.136). They discuss how in the health and welfare sphere, workers frequently comment upon incompetent responses by professionals to what are ostensibly clear cut cases and routine occurrences (p.137). Such critical interpretations were also apparent in these interview narratives, where, for example, respondents criticised other professionals involved in ports safeguarding work.

There certainly appeared to be a sense that respondents gained credibility by using extreme cases to demonstrate their claims. In some cases their comments seemed to be more about promoting their own position as experts and specialists on the subjects they took great credit for ‘achievements’ and foregrounded these in their discussions with me. Gaining credibility was also evident in the use of emotive language. Respondents made their feelings about child trafficking

explicit: *“I think you know, obviously it's a very emotive issue isn't it?”* (POL 1 August 2006). Whilst this informant suggests that: *“you know, kids are commodities, horrible isn't it?”* (PCP 3 October 2006). This was also related to the use of extreme cases, when a child may die and social workers who have failed to protect would be culpable:

“...you will be criticised if you haven't picked up on the nine thousandth piece of guidance that came round that said don't forget to look for whatever because if an awful thing happened, if a child dies or is seriously injured it's the Social Worker who will get blamed” (CAMP 1 June 2006).

The same respondent expressed concerns about the length of time it took to develop policy and guidance, and the potential that children were at risk and unprotected in the meantime: *“my fear is that whilst this carries on, you know there are children going missing every day”* (CAMP 1 June 2006). This fear was repeated by another respondent who related an anecdotal story about a child in an ‘irregular’ arrangement, who was identified by a school teacher. The potential that this child might have been trafficked appeared to dawn on the respondent as the story unfolded:

“She'd never heard about trafficking, think about that, oh God yeah, it could have been, it could, and it was ... something certainly suspicious” (POL 1 August 2006).

Other informants expressed concern about the temporary nature of immigration status for migrant children and the probability that for some children who had been in the UK most of their childhood, their stay in the UK would be curtailed when they reached eighteen. The prospects for children in these situations were gloomy: *“that's a horrendous thing ...if you've got kids as young as five and six in the system”* (SWCYP 1 July 2005).

The emotions expressed in the following extract were more broadly reflected in the team which this informant managed, and relate to the case of a child who had been under the care of the team and was now going to be deported. This young person had been detained prior to being deported without the knowledge or involvement of the social workers responsible. The social workers felt

helpless to stop the planned deportation and were critical of the way in which the immigration authorities rode roughshod over their concerns for his well-being on return:

“... we were absolutely terrified for him, we managed to see him whilst he was in custody and take him clothes and so on and I asked immigration what would happen to him when he was returned to X and they said he would be handed over to their immigration and they’ll see him as a traitor having sought asylum and he will be beaten up or even murdered so we were going through all these agonies over our child and then he was released” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

Returning children to uncertain and potentially dangerous circumstances also aroused concern in this response: *“if they fail, we’ll send them back, which is very worrying and has more than a whiff of injustice”* (SWCYP 3 February 2006). Not being able to protect children caused respondents to feel anxious and worried about their work, and the possible consequences of not acting to safeguard:

“...social services were saying well you know well can’t he sort of stay there tonight and come and see us tomorrow? You know, God forbid if anything happened to that child that night, if I’m the last one to see him” (PCP 3 October 2006).

Later on this respondent went on to describe the struggle to get an assessment agreed, and the feelings of frustration and anxiety this aroused in regard to how serious cases were missed, and the possible impact of this way of working:

“I’m finding it very difficult, having done this for the last two and a half years, finding it very difficult to, you know to sort of keep fighting and fighting and fighting and the danger is that maybe I’ll get as complacent as what I feel that some of the boroughs are being” (PCP 3 October 2006).

In other responses the informants were concerned that the lack of cooperation between agencies left children at risk, and they described how that felt: *“I don’t know what I could have done about that, I’m not happy”* (PCP 2 September 2006). Similarly the processes and systems other agencies used were expressed in emotional terms:

“...they haven’t investigated something that one would think they might have because there hasn’t been any documentary, written evidence to suggest that anything untoward’s happened...you know... that to me is ludicrous” (SWCYP 6 October 2006).

In this respondent’s view there was inequity in how children were treated by other agencies: *“it varies and that’s the sadness”* (CAMP 1 June 2006). This respondent expressed frustration at the barriers to accessing support services for service users: *“a lot of my work is convincing social services you know the child’s in danger”* (CAMP 1 July 2006). There was a pronounced view from the police and NGO respondents that social services do not make proper assessments, and are failing to protect vulnerable migrant children: *“they’re not being treated the same as the indigenous population and that’s a resource problem”* (PCP 2 September 2006). These responses implied resourcing problems at local authority levels. This was articulated in various ways. In the quotation above, the suggestion is that social services are overly cautious about accepting evidence of trafficking. However, according to another police respondent, children who were accepted and assessed as in need or at risk were not looked after appropriately by the carers appointed by the local authority, and private foster carers were described as the worst.

In regard to the organisational coordination and sharing of information, this NGO campaigning respondent was sceptical that services were able to communicate effectively in the protection processes:

“even within the Social Work teams, they don’t necessarily have that kind of coordination amongst themselves and communication to be able to know what happens to their end result” (CAMP 1 July 2006).

This participant made reference to social services undertaking assessments, and was critical of the way in which social services were not willing to address child protection concerns raised by

the referring agencies, illustrating the very different assessments made by the key professionals involved in safeguarding migrant children.

In addition to not recognising the signs of trafficking, social workers were criticised for what were perceived as basic failings, as the comment below shows in relation to identifying and responding to suspicious household arrangements: *“they don't really query why people have got the other kids in their houses”* (Legal September 2006). This conveys a very simplistic view of assessments and the role of social workers. From a social services perspective, they will only accommodate or implement safeguarding procedures if there is an assessed risk. Although this is standard practice, sometimes it means that other partners in safeguarding work with migrant children are left feeling that their concerns are not taken seriously, or ignored:

“...sometimes we're dealing with trafficking and Social Services have been dealing with a child...they haven't recognised that they need the resources and the will to treat these children the same as they would any other child...there's not enough done and when the dangers are identified to them they avoid the issues” (PCP 2 September 2006).

This respondent described the referral process as a battle to get the other safeguarding partners to recognise that children need protection. In this instance, it was between the police and social services: *“I will fight tooth and nail to get them accommodated and supported by social services”* (PCP 3 October 2006).

The way in which respondents promoted their agenda and discussed their roles was often in contrast to the way in which other agencies were described. Ineptitude, lack of professional approach, limited resources and downright incompetence were the gist of the criticisms applied to other agencies involved in ports safeguarding work. There was acknowledgement from within social services that some cases would not require assessment, and a corresponding recognition that this caused friction between the immigration services, police and social services departments:

“...they may present us with information having interviewed children and adults, but particularly children and they sort of say, well they're definitely hiding something, they were very nervous, they were cagey... Immigration get upset with us - when we don't get involved” (SWCYP 1 July 2005).

Respondents also discussed blame and responsibility, in the context of multi-agency working, and suggested that other agencies were failing to protect children. The response below was made by a social work respondent in relation to the co-operation received by a police officer, and it serves to illustrate the divisions which exist between agencies and their understanding of each other's role. The social worker seemed genuinely surprised to come across a ‘good’ ‘understanding’ police officer: *“the custody sergeant was a good guy, he was listening to us”* (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

Criticising others

Children, it was believed, were vulnerable to being trafficked and exploited because of events and situations in their own backgrounds, and owing to family breakdown or neglect:

“...children who are abandoned by families or with family breakdown ...poverty and the lack of parental care leaves them really exposed” (CAMP 1 July 2006).

Parenting practices which left migrant children vulnerable also came in for heavy criticism from the agencies involved in ports safeguarding work:

“It seems more from family to family, you know auntie had an orphan child and can't look after her anymore” (CAMP 1 July 2006).

The separation of children from families in countries of origin was perceived negatively, as was the lack of familial connections in the UK. As a consequence, familial relationships of migrant children with UK based extended family members were viewed with some suspicion: *“there is a*

kind of family connection but nothing else concrete you know” (SWCYP 6 October 2006). This was a theme running throughout the responses, and raised concerns for participants who believed that this left children travelling to the UK in vulnerable situations. The relatives may be part of an extended family network, but effectively they are strangers who children barely know. These concerns about lack of familial connections extended to those people bringing children into the UK, who are believed to use threats to retain power and control over them. This policy maker suggests for example that: *“the victim is so heavily influenced by the perpetrator”* (POL 2 August 2006) and it was believed that children were purposefully kept away from official scrutiny:

“...the traffickers have a strong hold on them they threaten the child with violence against their families back home...they (children) have also been taught to distrust authorities” (CAMP 2 July 2006).

Informants argued that they could not be sure that the people who were supposed to be providing care for the child were safe to do so. For this informant, this was related to the poor plans parents had made for their children, which left them vulnerable. They felt that children:

“...are brought to the UK by adults who are not their parents, where there are unclear and potentially unsafe plans for that child” (SWCYP1 July 2005).

This one dimensional and possibly inaccurate interpretation ignores the complexity of the situation and context and the potentially traumatic nature of the decisions which parents make. Another respondent referred to one case which seemed to suggest parents showed a casual disregard towards separating from their children *“little girl from Kenya was brought over by relatives passing through her village”* (SWCYP 2 January 2006). This same respondent was of the view that children had very little control or influence on the decision for them to come to the UK, and their departure was shrouded in secrecy:

“...some of the kids they won't have known where they were coming, and they won't have come out of their choice but someone known to their family or otherwise will just get them up in the night and say you're going and they don't know what it's about really” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

Again, this is interpreted negatively and as cruel. Yet this kind of behaviour is perfectly understandable in a context where secrecy is paramount.

For some respondents the lack of documentation was a situation orchestrated by those who brought children into the UK. Children, it was suggested, were told to destroy their travel and identification documents, or these were retained by the agent who brought them into the UK as a way of gaining power over the children, being part of a wider strategy to gain their compliance and exploit them. Children, it is argued, are told:

“...you know if you're found out, you'll be deported and then we'll get you when you go back home and get your family” (SWCYP 6 October 2006).

In terms of the power relations between children and adults, this was also related to the issue of consent and the perception that children were instructed by their parents to do as they were told:

“...they may have gone along with things which an adult wouldn't have gone along with because the parent had told them to” (Legal September 2006).

Indeed in general respondents views were that children had no say in the plans, and regardless of their age they were exploited, as no consent had been secured for the migration and/or promise of work or education. For others, the act of migration was wrong regardless of whether the child had agreed or not: *“it's irrespective of whether they were coerced or forced into it”* (CAMP 2 July 2006). Those who were involved in trafficking were, it was also believed, part of organised crime networks who engineered immigration and/or benefit crime.

The child-rearing cultures and practices of black and ethnic minority communities were also discussed by respondents in the wider context of migration to the UK: *“we’ve got a whole set of new people here whipping, beating, drugging kids”* (PCP 1 August 2005). This was also evident in the way in which in traditional practices and spiritual beliefs of other cultural groups were portrayed:

“...often girls who’ve been involved, who were brought here who have been subjected to the voodoo...parents will pay for them to go to voodoo to make sure the child is obedient” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

A number of black and ethnic minority groups were identified as being of particular concern in relation to the exploitation of children. Practitioners and professionals drew on cultural differences and practices forming their opinions about certain ethnic communities in the UK, based on their experience. In some cases making sweeping generalized statements based upon what can only be described as suspect cultural stereotypes: *“African nationals that are here, are the worst abusers”* (PCP 3 October 2006). In the extract which follows, the informant makes broad worryingly generalised statements about migrants from four different communities, intimating that each has a tendency to condone child trafficking. It occurs he stated:

“...particularly amongst Nigerian well to do immigrant families, who then bring another child over...Vietnamese children being used to tend cannabis farms but basically a house that’s sort of blacked out, watering the plants, nail bars, restaurants, Chinese restaurants, Indian restaurants” (POL 1 August 2001).

There were also views expressed that child trafficking was perceived to be increasing because it was financially lucrative, there was a demand for domestic servants which was rationalised as a cultural phenomenon: *“there’s a real demand from certain cultures to have servants”* (LEGAL September 2006). This was also related to wider views about benefit fraud: *“another reason for trafficking...yeah, so you can claim for all these children”* (POL 1 August 2006). Many respondents believed that children were the victims of exploitation by their family members, including their parents, and extended family or kinship networks. The parents were culpable, as

they gain economically from their children's labour and/or migration: *"you could say they've sold their child"* (POL 1 August 2006). It was suggested that children are treated differently in 'other' cultures, and they are not afforded protection available to children in Western cultures because they are not seen as individuals but as part of a wider family, kinship or community system: *"I suppose they're different cultures, children's rights are seen differently"* (POL 3 November 2006). Although this was couched in cultural terms the prejudice underpinning these views is explicit: *"you know in the African culture, children don't have separate identities"* (LEGAL September 2006).

There were also responses which indicated that informants believed that parents had limited capacity to ensure that their children would be safe when they came to the UK:

"...she came to England thinking that she was going to sell ice creams in London but in fact she was too young to get a work permit. If the parents had been functioning ...they would have known that you can't just go and work legally when you're 15" (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

Evidence suggests that few parents or children who arrive in the UK seeking refuge know anything about this country. Indeed, most do not realise that the UK is their destination which is determined by agents. It also exhibits a one dimensional view of the phenomenon and ignores the pressures and dangers parents may be under. The aim of the parent may be to get a child to a place of safety as soon as possible, and to castigate them for not confirming the destination country and employment laws is remarkable.

The children whose situations caused concern were those who it was believed were being exploited in the communities they live in, by members of their own community: *"older members of their community have groomed them and exploited them for serious crime"* (SWCYP 2 January 2006). Whilst for other respondents there were concerns that children were going into situations which may be unsuitable or potentially risky, and there was a perceived difference between how UK born and migrant children may be safeguarded in their own communities:

“they are in a family that no-one has actually assessed as being suitable to foster them...people from these communities are adopting children, in a way that we couldn't do as residents in this country” (PCP 1 August 2005).

Some circumstances were viewed as more risky than others for children, principally because it was very difficult to identify where children were placed as the arrangements were made privately, between parents and carers, and largely outside of the jurisdiction of the state and welfare/safeguarding agencies: *“the thing with private fostering is it's very much an underground activity”* (POL 3 November 2006).

For a small number of informants there was a belief that parents had sought to protect their children, however, there was some scepticism about the motivation and the methods parents had adopted in this respect:

“I think sometimes they think it's in the child's best interests to keep them safe but sometimes it is to ensure that the child does what's said because they're hoping the child might be able to send money back to them” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

In the following response, there is a cynical edge which questions the motivation of caregivers and a view that some care arrangements were largely about securing financial support from state agencies, rather than about ensuring the well being of children coming to the UK to live with distant relatives:

“We don't know whether that person has got any relationship with them and what their motivations are for this wonderful act of human kindness” (SWCYP 1 July 2005).

Care arrangements made between parents in countries of origin and the UK were generally viewed with suspicion, and it was believed that children in these circumstances needed protection and support. This was also discussed in relation to the lack of adequate services and procedures available to support children who arrived without parents and without English

language skills. Again, it was believed that, to a certain extent, these cultural and language differences left children in vulnerable situations, and agencies were at a loss as to know how to support them: *“we didn’t really know what do with them”* (SWCYP 2 January 2006). There were views expressed that parents had made serious misjudgements when they allowed their child to travel without ensuring adequate safeguards were in place to ensure the well being of their child once they arrived in the UK: *“how can they be stupid to send a child that far away?”* (LEGAL September 2006). Again, there is very little understanding here of the complex factors that may contribute to a family’s decision to be separated from their children. The comments seem strikingly simplistic, coming as they do from an individual who is directly involved in shaping policy and providing services. For this respondent the control that the people who brought children into the UK had extended to sexual exploitation: *“Traffickers utilise various forms of control and these include the sex life of the child”* (CAMP 1 July 2006). Other informants also alluded to sexual exploitation as a driver for child trafficking:

“You know, prostitution is still a growing problem, isn’t it? So it’s hardly surprising that people will find... criminals will find a means of supplying a market” (POL 1 August 2006).

Implicit in this view is that that separated children became vulnerable in this way. Similarly, for the policy respondent, cited below, children in their countries of origin had a limited set of choices which left them vulnerable to sexual and other forms of exploitation:

“Work all day to get twenty five cents in a dump where you’re going to get infected by some kind of broken glass or sell yourself for four, five US dollars a night, to some European travelling sex offender” (POL 2 August 2006).

This was, however not always the case. For example, the following informant made reference to the moral panic associated with the issue of child trafficking generated by the press, and went on to explain:

“...it’s about cheap domestic help as well, and less about there’s thousands of children being trafficked through Heathrow to go into prostitution, I think it’s a bit simpler than that” (SWCYP 1 July 2005).

There was also recognition amongst some informants that for some cultures, the placement of children with more affluent members of the family was an acceptable traditional practice:

“...its quite a normal thing to bring a poor member of the family, extended family in to the richer end of the family, where they’ve a better life, it’s a sort of cultural extension I think” (POL 1 August 2006).

However, the responses suggest that such family placement practices were frequently viewed with mistrust and suspicion, and not the sort of parenting which the UK accepted lightly. This informant drew attention to the ways in which different cultural groups supported children with their claims for asylum, implying that the ‘stories’ used to justify asylum claims were fabricated to claim legal status for the child, who would then be exploited by their own family or kinship network:

“For instance Somali nationals who present themselves with children, invariably they’re extended family, relatives and they’ll say that’s its my cousin’s children, its my father’s sister’s brother’s children and so we’re looking at extended family there...if you get say the Vietnamese nationals, you’re looking at again possible extended family” (PCP 3 October 2006).

There was to some extent a ‘romanticisation of home’²⁸, with informants describing separation of children from their ‘home’ and their parents negatively. The general view seemed to be that children should be brought up at home by their biological parents. In the case of trafficked children, this should be in their country of origin. It was acknowledged by other informants that ‘home’ might not be the safest place for children, and they may have left difficult or dangerous

²⁸ This was also evident in study of female economic migration in Canada see Sharma (2004) *Travel Agency: A Critique of Anti-Trafficking Campaigns. Refuge. Volume 21 Number 3, pp.53-65.*

homes, which they should not return to. In general, however, respondents believed that it was in children's 'best interests' that they were returned to their countries of origin: *"we believe they should be returned to live in their country of origin and not in the UK"* (SWCYP 1 July 2005). This was actively supported, particularly where countries of origin were deemed to be safe: *it might be better for them to go back and try and contribute to their own country...and we do try to encourage this"* (SWCYP 2 January 2006). There was another notable exception to this. As the following comments illustrate, there was a view that parents had not protected their children sufficiently as they had sent them to the other side of the world without ensuring that the arrangements made for them were safe: *"I would be quite wary of quite how much protection they're getting at home"* (LEGAL September 2006).

In relation to how the government might decide to use information and intelligence to effect returns of children, this respondent was against certain forms of repatriation of children:

"If the Government were to en-masse repatriate Vietnamese children when they came in I would personally object to that and I would do that vocally. I think that would be the wrong thing and if we're genuine about being child welfare, that's from beginning to the end, not just the bits we like" (POL 2 August 2006).

This respondent was suggesting, in effect that even migrant children, in policy terms at least, should have recourse to the same support as indigenous children in the UK. However, the damage and potential vulnerability associated with the separation of children from their parents was an overriding concern for many of the practitioners in the sample, and return of children was an aspiration which many of the informants expressed support for.

It was evident, in this response from this social work practitioner, that arrangements and circumstances once assessed were often deemed as suitable, and children were then allowed to go with the adult who had brought them, or with the person who had arrived to claim care of the child:

“Sometimes we end up reuniting children with the adult they were with in the first place, but that's having done a significant amount of checks and satisfied ourselves that the child is safe and that the parent or the adult checks out” (SWCYP 1 July 2005).

Previous research, as identified in the literature review in this study, includes views about parents selling/trading children, and beliefs that children are the victims of both their parents' actions and of traffickers who take advantage of their vulnerability and exploit them (Dowling *et al.* 2007). The literature and published materials also allude to the role of professionals who work in safeguarding, arguing that they should be more attuned to the identification of vulnerable migrant children (ECPAT 2004; ECPAT 2007). Campaigning organisations have also claimed that children are missed because those charged with safeguarding them have not picked up on some of the indicators which would potentially be a trafficking scenario (ECPAT 2001; ECPAT 2004; ECPAT 2007). In addition, the *Palermo Protocol* (UN 2000), which provides the strategic framework for states to develop national plans to address child trafficking, stipulates that children cannot give consent because of their age and capacity.

There are a range of theories about whether or not the potential risk of harm to children can be recognised (Thom, Sales and Pearce 2007) and attention being paid to the relationships and attachments between children and their caregivers may give some indication of their quality (Rose 2001). The emphasis on attachment in parent child relationships is central to assessing need and or potential harm, as detailed in UK practice guidance; *The Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families* (DoH 2000). Indeed, the assessment of risk to children has become a defining feature of child welfare policy (Garrett 2003; Parton 2004; Johnson and Petrie 2004; France and Utting 2005; Parton 2010), and of child care social work practice in the UK (Corby 2006). More recently, social work assessments and interventions have been discussed in relation to refugee, asylum-seeking or otherwise unaccompanied or separated migrant children (Kohli 2006a; Kohli 2006b). There are also several debates about the differences in parent/child relationships between cultures where a range of childrearing strategies are employed. These include: parenting by extended family members and the wider community; and circumstances and situations where children are reared outside of their countries of origin (Owusu-Bempah

2007). In this critique of attachment theory Owusu-Bempah (2007) discusses children's relationships in terms of socio-genealogical connectedness. From this perspective, it is argued that it is important that children retain and sustain relationships with their countries of origin, cultures and communities, since this encourages and facilitates the stability and security required for successful adaptation and development throughout childhood. The emphasis in terms of attachment is on the context, environment and community, rather than purely on interpersonal relationships within the family (Owusu-Bempah 2007). However, the insights provided by this perspective and others who have conducted research work with migrant children, did not seem to have informed the policy makers or practitioners included in this study. Many of the respondents appear to have a limited understanding of the family and of attachment. Apportioning blame to parents and the extended family and community was a recurrent pattern in the interviews and taking responsibility for safeguarding migrant children was an important and accepted role for the respondents in this study. The global nature of child trafficking was alluded to throughout the responses and whilst these perspectives tended to draw on received ideas about the conditions in children's countries of origin, the problems of migration to the UK, was a central feature in the responses. Being separated from their parents left migrant children coming to the UK vulnerable and they were not treated equally, and this was explained as being related to the cultural and class differences of separated migrant children:

"...these are children and because they're black, because they're from different countries, because they can't speak the language, because they haven't got parents here to hop up and down, trying to say that these should be treated the same way as a white British child who've got very well off middle-class parents ... they should be treated exactly the same but they're not" (CAMP 1 June 2006).

In the example which follows the respondent describes a case which involved children coming into the UK in an irregular manner. Whilst there remains a lack of clarity about the situation illustrated in this response, the implication is that not all circumstances require further involvement of social services:

“It may be likely it’s about an arrangement to allow children to be in this country, whatever the reason for that is, whether it’s that their parents are already here or that there’s an issue about somebody who’s not supposed to be here but getting his child here with him” (SWCYP 4 March 2006).

Analysis of the respondents’ explanations for the causes of child trafficking suggests some key themes. In the first place parents are seen to be blamed for child trafficking situations. Secondly, the rights and responsibilities of migrant children were occasionally alluded to, however, professionals in the ports safeguarding sectors promoted a policy and practice response which was very much aligned with a crime reduction approach. Tackling child trafficking was set against a context of organised immigration and/or benefit crime. The risk to and vulnerability of migrant children, it was believed, could be controlled and mitigated by addressing child trafficking from a criminal justice perspective rather than a rights focussed one. Thirdly to some degree, global perspectives were evident in this analysis, within the context of the global and economic factors promoting illegal migration. Again, though children’s capacity was negated or minimised, their status as victims in need of protection was predominant. Finally, the blame apportioned to parents was repeatedly applied to other agencies working in ports safeguarding and contributed to the failure to protect vulnerable children.

Prejudicial perspectives

‘Atrocity tales’ emerged in the analysis of interviews. Taylor and White (2000) discuss the way in which health and social care professionals, as well as service users, bolster their credibility and add moral worthiness to their claims through the use of ‘atrocity tales’. In this analysis the stories about child trafficking presented the respondents in a rescuer role, characterised children as innocent victims, whilst parents or organised criminal gangs were constructed as the villains. There were three quite similar ‘atrocity tales’ which emerged though the analysis of interviews: *The worst case scenario*; *the tip of the iceberg* and *in remembrance of Victoria Climbié*. The ‘atrocity tales’ appeared across the data and were related to the way in which interview

respondents discussed the work of their own and other agencies, and in how they talked about cases of child trafficking.

There were a number of other ways in which interview participants storied child trafficking, and various themes emerged in these. In the early interviews, informants talked about children's relationships with parents and other caregivers or other adults in their lives, and made a number of statements about the different child-rearing cultures which were potentially abusive, or at least contrasted with the way in which acceptable standards of child-rearing are understood in the UK context. I explored further the way in which informants expressed their views about parenting and child-rearing. I did this by isolating the stories of child trafficking which featured in the interviews transcripts and focusing on the characterisations and perceptions respondents had of families and children's relationships with parents, carers and professionals.

Informants were asked to provide anonymised case examples of child trafficking cases they had come across. Informants used extreme examples of the conditions which some children live in and the very limited choices they subsequently had, to ensure their survival. These desperate situations were reasons believed to be behind children's desire to leave: *"escaping the socio-economic deprivation some of them live in, if you're living on the dump"* (POL 2 August 2006).

The vulnerability of children was highlighted in interviews in relation to how they are able to be controlled by the adults who have brought them into the UK, or those who they are living with in the UK. There was a belief amongst respondents that children are told what to say. These views were expressed by some informants using language and terminology usually associated with the preparation of children for sexual abuse subsequently carried out. Within the responses there was explicit reference made to the way in which children were 'groomed' and 'silenced' by those intent on exploiting them sexually and for other purposes. Children in this trafficking sense are believed to have been groomed so they do not disclose what is happening to them. According to this informant: *"It's very easy to seduce and groom these children into, you know, not disclosing"* (POL 1 August 2006).

In the following extract, the informant also uses the term ‘grooming’ to explain the behaviour of an individual, who was suspected of having involvement of bringing children into the UK for exploitation. Suspicions were raised mainly because he did not present the minors when they first arrived in the UK:

“We had a lot of African girls-at one time nearly always through this contact and we were very suspicious about him. He has a family, has teenagers, and his wife, and he quite often has them staying there for a while before he told us about them. I think that was part of grooming them so they got confident in him, and we would try to prevent the girls from seeing him” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

‘Grooming’ was further used by this participant to describe how children that the team works with become involved in illegal and exploitative activities. In this view the ‘grooming’ is thought to be carried out by members of the children’s own community:

“Sometimes it’s quite clear that older members of their community have groomed them and exploited them for serious crime” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

In relation to the identification of vulnerable children and the prevention of trafficking another respondent used ‘grooming’ to describe the way in which children are prepared for their entry to the UK by those who facilitate their journeys:

“I mean it’s very difficult to stop victims of trafficking, because they’re so carefully groomed and, and may not even know they’re being trafficked at the time they’re going through the port” (SWCYP 6 October 2006).

For this respondent, multi-agency work was challenging, and this left children and young people at risk. This example illustrates how a complex case was used to demonstrate a lack of unity in approaches, and the exasperation of the respondent:

“...we had a Chinese girl who was seven months pregnant, no antenatal care whatsoever, absolutely saying she’d been trafficked and abused sexually for a year I think...she had had pregnancy complications and that was the first time she came in touch with the medical services, she was very prepared to give information to the Police, very willing to do that but she needed to be discharged from hospital, we don’t treat pregnant women in hospital and no Social Services would pick her up at all” (CAMP 1 June 2006).

This informant in the police group used an example of another recent child death to bring home to the social worker the severity of the situation that the child being referred was in:

“I actually said to a social worker yesterday, this is a typical Toni Ann Byfield²⁹ case and she turned around and said whose he?” (PCP 3 October 2006).

The respondent was incredulous that a social worker did not know who Toni Ann Byfield was, as her death had resulted in a high media profile, and had led to criticism of social services. In this extract the informant articulated a bleak outlook resulting from not intervening to safeguard and protect children:

“...but I try to look at the bigger picture and see myself standing in a Coroner’s Court trying to justify why I didn’t do what I felt necessary at the time and what I should have done” (PCP 3 October 2006).

²⁹ Toni Ann Byfield was fatally shot in 2003 whilst in the care of her father, a placement which had been agreed by the local authority. BBC (2006) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/5241180.stm> (Accessed 28th August 2008).

Respondents also drew attention in the interviews to the case of Victoria Climbié and the subsequent public inquiry into her death (Laming 2003):

“...if you look at the Climbié case, she was trafficked into the UK, but she would never have known it because she was coming to stay with somebody they supposedly knew” (SWCYP 6 October 2006).

Different views about whether or not Victoria Climbié was a trafficked child (that is, for Benefit Fraud) were evident as was a belief that she should not have been here, she was not with her ‘real’ family: *“Victoria Climbié came to relatives of relatives, you know”* (SWCYP 6 October 2006) Her case was used to explain how children still come to the UK with people other than their biological parents: *“are they that child's parents as per Victoria Climbié?”* (PCP 2 September 2006). The informants frequently drew on the case of Victoria Climbié to illustrate that they had concerns about children they came across in their work, who they believed were at risk of ending up dead, or exploited. One respondent in the police group was adamant that all unaccompanied, asylum-seeking and refugee children were at considerable risk, and went so far as to invoke her name when trying to make referrals to social services. This informant expressed grave concerns that by not protecting certain children there were huge risks which might result in a criminal conviction for neglect of duty to safeguard and protect: *“Victoria Climbié...I do mention her name sometimes...the Social Workers do take offence at that”* (PCP 3 October 2006). Whilst this was the most extreme example of how the case and subsequent death of Victoria Climbié was used, her name re-appeared time and again in the interview data. The following respondents drew on the example of the case of Victoria Climbié to illustrate the tragic nature of her death, which it was argued, was in the context of her being brought into the UK illegally for the purpose of exploiting the benefits system:

“Victoria Climbié is an example. You know she was not sexually exploited, she was maltreated, she shouldn't have been here and, the people that were looking after her shouldn't have been looking after her, but no-one's has really made that assessment” (PCP 1 August 2005)

Respondents also acknowledged the way in which she was failed by the systems which should have protected her: *“Victoria Climbié was privately fostered ...very much a visible child...and we failed her”* (POL 3 November 2006). The responsibility for her death was also referred to in terms of agencies failing to communicate: *“various agencies ...were holding her case and did not have that communication”* (CAMP 2 July 2006). It was stated by the following respondent that children in private arrangements are hidden from official gaze and this made their situations risky. Such concerns lay behind the motivation of agencies who lobby for notifications of private fostering and formal registration systems: *“all the children are hidden”* (POL 3 November 2006).

There were other associations made between high profile cases and child abuse. For example, as one respondent stated:

“...it links to other issues you know ... Adam³⁰ you know and all that sort of witchcrafty stuff and you know whether children have been forcibly brought into the country or moved out of the country you know sort of possession led abuse” (POL 1 July 2006).

There was therefore thought to be an unknown but probable risk to migrant children from strangers in the community. Secrecy characterises the stories of how children are duped and exploited. Armed with ideas of justice and rescue, professionals in these agencies seek to prevent another tragedy. They highlight the most extreme examples as typical cases and challenge ‘others’ to take the issue as seriously as they do. In this narrative, the tragedy of children such as Climbié must never happen again and agencies must do their utmost to prevent this. Children are victims and must be rescued before it is too late. In this narrative the rescuers are action-focussed whilst the victims are helpless and vulnerable. Urgent responses are said to be needed if the criminals are to be stopped and justice done.

³⁰ Boy Adam was the case of a child whose decapitated body was found in the River Thames in 2001 and was widely reported and publicised as a ritual murder. BBC (2002) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/2272165.stm> (Accessed 28th August 2008).

Constructing risk

“...and traffickers because they have everything going for them, you know they have the compliance of the people being trafficked” (SWCYP 6 October 2006).

In the interview narratives respondents talked about failings in the system and emphasised that there was the potential for catastrophic consequences. It was also clear that estimations and speculations about child trafficking incidence were generalised and lacked any clear reference or evidence base. What was implicit in these narratives was a sense of threat and danger in the wider environment, a risk to children, and a threat to the UK in the form of organised criminal gangs and inestimable numbers of vulnerable and exploitable children. The way in which respondents constructed the risks in these narratives is explored further below.

There was a belief that children and their parents are deceived or tricked by traffickers and promised that they will have better financial and life opportunities in the UK. It was suggested by the following informant that parents allowed their children to leave with strangers as they were persuaded by the potential financial incentives (that is, when children would be able to send their families remittances):

“...an agent who will come to the village in a poor area of Africa say and say...we can help your child find a better life blah blah blah, you send them with us, we'll take them to the UK and they can go to school and go to university and then they'll be able to send you all the money back and look after you” (POL 1 August 2006).

Informants viewed the situations of children as being precarious, as they must repay loans made to their parents by the people who have facilitated their journeys. In this way, it was argued that children become vulnerable to being exploited, as they are dependent upon the people who brought them to the UK, or the people who they live with. This financial obligation placed upon children who come to the UK, under a range of circumstances, to send money back to their families once they are established was perceived as a burden on the children to be successful:

“...they're hoping the child might be able to send back some money... It's quite unrealistic of their families to expect them to come here and be shining successes here when they know nothing about our cultures” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

The criminal gangs, it was believed, were well informed, ahead of the game and used a variety of strategies to avoid the law. Clever planning was utilised along with the employment of new technologies to facilitate the trade and exploitation of children: *“bringing them in at times when staff numbers are low”* (POL 1 August 2006).

The use of technology to improve the identification of children coming into the UK had been agreed through a working group, which included government and non-government agencies who were concerned that children were falling through the safety net as there were no identification systems in place to record basic demographics and identifiers. There was support among the responses for new technology to be used in the identification and surveillance of risk. Increasing numbers of children coming into the UK was seen as a risk particularly as there was no way of recording their entry until very recently. It was of concern to some respondents that unless systems were in place vulnerable children would never be identified: *“unless you register them ... take some sort of biometric data how do you know where they are?”* (PCP 1 August 2005). Whilst for this respondent the use of new technology to identify children was essential to affording them protection:

“...we will put digital cameras onto the ground...if a child comes in we will capture their image on photograph on day one....allow us to use biometric identification ... if they turn up at Lunar House³¹ in two days, we can say is it the same child that came in? Yes, it is” (POL 2 August 2006).

³¹ Lunar House is an office of the UK Border and Immigration Authority. Requests for leave to remain in the UK are made here by unaccompanied and asylum-seeking children. URL <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/contact/contactspage/asylumscreeningunit/> (Accessed 28th March 2010).

It was believed that the lack of evidence for numbers of children was not restricted to the UK context, this was a global issue. In this sense the cross-cutting work and strategic management was essential in order to understand child trafficking: *“for the first time ever”* (POL 2 August 2006).

The way in which respondents constructed those involved in trafficking as criminals also illustrates how respondents viewed themselves and others: *“we’re the good guys and they’re the bad guys”* (POL 1 August 2006). For many respondents, there was a clear distinction between who was on the side of ‘rights’ and ‘justice’. Traffickers, criminals, smugglers and agents were depicted as the ‘baddies’, parents who failed to make adequate plans for their children, and families who exploited their kin were seen in a similar way. The perceived economic incentives associated with trafficking together with the targeting of vulnerable children make it a heinous crime. This respondent explained how the team worked with children to gain their trust in cases where the children and young people they worked with were suspicious of the motives of the police:

“...we say in this country the police are good people who will help you and if you’re in trouble you go to them and you see them and they will act in your interests, even though you’re an asylum seeker, yes although you’ve come to another country they are there to protect you and some of them say ‘in our country police only good if you pay’ and I say in this country if you do you lose job” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

In these responses there were views that children needed to be persuaded of the good and honourable intentions of the welfare and law enforcement agencies, quickly, before there was an opportunity for them to be taken by traffickers or others who would exploit or harm them. There were a number of notable exceptions to this which came from the social work professional group, where it was stated that the presenting situation at the time of referral usually became clear after a thorough assessment and a series of checks had been completed as to the arrangements made for children who were being referred.

The difficulty in distinguishing between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ was somewhat more complex, as this practitioner noted. Here the discussion was centred on potential that service users might present themselves at the agency, with the person who is exploiting them:

“All the advisors are warned to be aware of situations where there are relationships where they feel uncomfortable, people who seem to be cowed by somebody else, they seem to controlling but I suppose it’s also difficult because so many of the people we deal with are traumatised to some degree anyway” (SWCYP 3 February 2006).

At least one other respondent agreed that there were a number of possible explanations for the lack of clarity and volunteering of information by those who are claiming that they are here to look after the child. They believed that a lack of clarity or overt openness may not necessarily be a valid reason for a child protection investigation. For example, the person presenting with the child may not want to attract attention from state agencies because of their own legal status:

“It may be about protecting their own status...and from a child protection point of view it isn't an issue if they're in the UK illegally” (SWCYP 1 July 2005).

Even though children may have been led to believe that they were being smuggled into the country for non-exploitative purposes, there were views that because they were children and under the age of 18 they were actually trafficked:

“...they may believe that they’re being smuggled in, but because of the exploitation that will take place, they are trafficked....” (POL 2 August 2006).

For this respondent the focus of the service provided by their agency was very clear in relation to child welfare, and whilst there was a policing emphasis in terms of prosecuting criminals, protecting the child victim was the priority:

“...we are genuinely committed to identifying those children who’ve been exploited, who are vulnerable and safeguarding them” (POL 2 August 2006).

The general impression given by this interviewee, and many of the others, was that potential risk to all migrant children cannot be underestimated, that trafficking is happening everyday and something must be done. To this end, there was a feeling that their protests and campaigns are necessary in order to make people sit up and listen. The narratives drew on tales of action and advocacy for the rights of children everywhere, and they were thus framed within a wider narrative of a global protest and campaign against child exploitation and abuse.

Within the responses there was a view that what was known about the issue of child trafficking was so limited because protection systems relied on disclosures being made by children, which they were unlikely to make for fear of reprisals and threats made by the traffickers. For some respondents, children are told to tell lies, or someone involved in their journey tells lies, to avoid authorities and attract as little official attention as possible. Children may arrive on legal documents, and their entry arouses no concerns or safeguarding issues, but it should. This informant’s views on this were related to the issues surrounding migrant children’s status and entitlement to be in the UK:

“...they are coming in as unaccompanied minors-legitimately. Now the paperwork is legitimate, they might have, someone, might have told lies along the route; the fact that there might be no intention for them to return, so they came in with a two week return ticket saying they will come and stay with auntie” (PCP 1 August 2005).

There were, however, problems in relation to how the NGO and welfare agencies were demanding that the victims’ voices should be heard. In the child trafficking context, according to this respondent, victims were silenced and so it was futile to rely on listening to them as a prosecution strategy: *“we need not to listen to the victim because we’ll never prosecute anybody”* (POL 2 August 2006).

Children were deemed to be at risk from predatory individuals and organised gangs, whilst families were also implicated. Certainly the responses given by those interviewed emphasised the breadth of the risks in the environment which needed to be addressed. It was suggested that the issue of child trafficking was wider than it was presented and was caused by a range of factors, beyond the control of informants. It was clear that the way in which informants talked about the issue was in terms of risk. As illustrated, the risks said to be posed by trafficking were amplified by informants in all groups, except for the Academic, and SWCYP 4 who challenged the view that there was evidence of child trafficking increasing and questioned UK policy responses which were largely about reducing migration, securing the nation's resources, and idealizing specific family forms. Whilst these themes were very occasionally evident in other narratives, there was an overriding concentration of risk in the stories about child trafficking within the networks of agencies involved in this study.

Finally a number of informants discussed the role of the media in promoting the issue and they spoke enthusiastically about how it made it more public and generated political attention:

“...the whole profile has risen enormously, there's been a lot in the press, front page stuff in both the tabloids and the broadsheets you know... and there's a lot of interest in Parliament, a lot of parliamentary questions being asked” (POL 1 August 2006).

This respondent acknowledged the ‘newsworthiness’ of the stories of those trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation, noting the attraction of these cases to the popular press: *“with the sort of sexual exploitation of teenage girls, it, rings all the bells for the nasty tabloids”* (POL 1 August 2006).

Publicising and promoting anti-trafficking activity was a priority for the police agencies and NGOs participating in this study, and these are heavily involved in shaping and informing policies. Social services agencies were less inclined to promote or publicise their work owing to the confidential and sensitive nature of the interventions such as individual assessments or child protection investigations.

Summary

This analysis suggests that there is concern amongst the informants in this study about children who are brought into the UK by people who are possibly not relatives, and a feeling that this lack of a familial association left children vulnerable. Children, it was believed, were kept away from official scrutiny by those who brought them into the UK, as this may disrupt the plan to exploit them. Parents, it was thought, had not made adequate arrangements for the care or well-being of their children once they arrived in the UK and again this left them vulnerable to exploitation by people in their own communities. Children, it was believed, are coerced, tricked and forced in some way into silence so that those charged with looking after them, could then exploit them.

In elaborating on the potential harm that separated children may experience, informants drew on their beliefs about children and childrearing, and about the way in which different cultures provide for their children. Parents, carers and those individuals who accompany migrant children into the UK are viewed with suspicion and mistrust, and the motivation of those claiming to be looking after and caring for migrant children coming to the UK was seen as questionable. Furthermore, it was apparent that parents were considered to be complicit in the dynamics of the exploitation associated with child trafficking, through ignorance, stupidity, or plain callousness. The vulnerability of children separated and the overall primacy and desire for family reunion had dramatic qualities and references, particularly around the potential that families, parents and kinship groups are implicated in this form of exploitation. This respondent for example juxtaposed distal children with modern technology clearly based on the assumption that it would be unusual for a young migrant child to have a mobile telephone in his/her possession: *“Nine year old child from the Congo, why have they got a mobile phone?”* (POL 1 August 2006).

Whilst it was recognised that there may be genuine reasons for children coming to the UK, the motivations of virtually all of those involved in the process were questioned, leading to a great deal of speculation that such situations were potentially exploitative. It also led respondents to speculate about the size of the issue, and the levels of organised crime which facilitated this. For many respondents there was a clear distinction between who was on the side of ‘rights’ and ‘justice’. Traffickers, criminals, smugglers and agents were depicted as the ‘baddies’, as were

parents who were thought to have failed to make adequate plans for their children. Wider family networks, it was believed, exploited their kin and were seen in a similar way. In addition to these ‘baddies’ and ‘goodies’ a number of other responses discussed blame and responsibility, in the context of multi-agency working suggesting also that rival agencies were failing to protect children.

Informants defined child trafficking in a variety of ways, and there was a lack of consensus in terms of a ‘typical’ child trafficking case. The way in which informants discussed children’s relationships with parents and carers also raised further questions as it was believed that children were powerless and had very little say in plans for the to travel to the UK. Moreover, it was clear that parents were culpable by not making safe plans for their children. It was also evident that informants had specific views about what constituted a ‘real’ family, and it was believed that parents had made arrangements which left their children exposed to the risk of being exploited.

The ways in which children are raised by non-UK cultures was of concern to a number of informants, as they tended to view other patterns of child-rearing as potentially exploitative and harmful. Informants drew on worst case scenarios to illustrate child trafficking cases, with both policy makers and practitioners making reference to the death of Victoria Climbié. It was clear, however, that these scenarios were not always definitive child trafficking cases. The wider structural factors which promote child migration were sometimes recognised by some of the informants as important in terms of understanding that children were leaving situations of extreme poverty, but there were equally firm views about the criminal and global organisation of child trafficking, and the threats which criminal gangs posed to the UK. This was articulated in the interviews where respondents described the abuse and exploitation of UK immigration and asylum/refugee systems. Informants used emotive language and expressed grave concerns about the potential harms migrant children were at risk of, including sexual and labour exploitation, and rationalised the use of new technologies to monitor children’s entry to the UK, as a way of addressing these risks, and safeguarding them. Throughout the interviews it was evident that although there was a lack of evidence, informants maintained that children were hidden victims and that potentially for some informants what was known about child trafficking in the UK was merely the tip of the iceberg.

The stories of child trafficking in these narratives include a victim and a criminal, and these are variously described and defined. There are statements about the roles and responsibilities of other professionals, the complex nature of assessments and the identification and protection of vulnerable migrant children. Interview respondents used a range of narrative strategies to support their claims about ‘child trafficking’. These strategies included making disproportionate claims about the size and frequency of the issue and tenuous correlations between what causes child trafficking and what are its effects. Moreover, respondents drew on melodramatic tactics (Hadley 1995). These were previously discussed in chapter three where they were used to describe the campaigns and protests about child prostitution and the *white slave trade*. The use of melodramatic tactics validated and gave credibility to the claims of the social purity movement in the late nineteenth century.

Hadley (1995) suggests that the key characteristics of melodramatic tactics are: A tendency to personify absolutes of good and evil; familial narratives of dispersal and reunion; expressions of highly charged emotions; atmospheric menace; providential plotting; and visual rendering of torture and criminality. The way in which melodramatic tactics emerged in this study was in the interviewee’s use of ‘atrocious tales’; the ways in which they romanticised home; foregrounded the sexual threat and stranger danger; and made demands that something must be done, portraying the anti-trafficking agenda as a battle between good and evil.

In the UK, political and public sensitivity about the issues related to child protection and safeguarding in general have had a significant and lasting impact on the implementation of child welfare legislation (Hendrick 2005). In some quarters, these policy responses are criticised as ‘knee jerk’ reactions which do little to improve existing systems or promote the welfare of vulnerable children (Reder and Duncan 2004). Theorists have argued that the emotive issues associated with the abuse and exploitation of children have been utilised by policy makers to advocate for restrictive and regulatory policies related to children, and, in doing so have legitimated greater state intervention in families, and increased surveillance and regulation of children and childhood (James and James 2004).

In terms of safeguarding work, at UK ports it is highly likely to be targeted at children coming from cultures whose experiences of parenting and family life will be substantially different and sometimes at odds with accepted child-rearing practices in the UK. This, clearly, has implications in terms of the identification and assessment of risk of child trafficking. Ports safeguarding work, however, as highlighted in this chapter, is very much influenced by these construction of risk, and draws on well established fears about terrorism, UK security threats, concern about inward migration, and the immigration and asylum systems. Concerns about roaming paedophiles, sex offenders, and child prostitution in general added greater urgency and immediacy to the narratives of risk and danger evident in this study. These concerns convey and amplify powerful messages, including increasing restrictions on the inward migration of children and appear in both policy and practice discourses. In the chapter which follows I discuss further the applicability of melodramatic tactics theory and the social construction of 'risk' in child trafficking discourses.

CHAPTER SIX

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RISK IN CHILD TRAFFICKING DISCOURSES

Introduction

In this chapter I begin with an overview of theories of risk, and their application, and potential in explaining the findings of this study of child trafficking. Risk was articulated in the stories of child trafficking found in the interview narratives and policy documents and there were commonalities in terms of the narrative strategies which were used to 'story' child trafficking. Hadley's (1995) work on melodramatic tactics is also applied here as it provides a conceptual lens for understanding these constructions of risk in child trafficking narratives. The theory of melodramatic tactics was discussed in chapter three, and I make some critical observations about the way in which risk in contemporary discourses continues to emphasise extreme cases as commonplace and typical.

The social construction of risk: theoretical perspectives on risk amplification

This research began with an examination of the literature on child trafficking and illustrated that both historically and contemporaneously the phenomenon has been described as a moral panic. In chapter two I suggested that risk discourse might offer a more insightful perspective to our understanding of the way in which child trafficking has been constructed as a social problem. Primarily, this is because the issue of child trafficking was a policy issue in the late nineteenth century following a very high profile media exposé orchestrated by the social purity movement and, as discussed the phenomenon continues to attract political and public attention. Although the activities of the nineteenth century social puritans and current anti-trafficking activities might be explained as a moral panic (Cohen 1972) or as a moral crusade (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994), these does not fully account for the way in which the risks have been constructed and reconstructed across the historically different contexts which have been discussed in this study.

It is important, according to Lupton (1999), to understand how risk is constructed, as in social constructionist terms risk is a product of cultural and historical perception. Hutter (2006) argues that risk has become: “*A news lens through which to view the world*” (p.202). Risk perspectives illustrate how social processes involve and construct expert knowledge whilst incorporating the views of non-experts. These approaches illustrate the relationships and tensions between culture, individual perception and response. They also establish how these have developed or changed historically (Taylor-Gooby and Zinn 2006). Whilst theories of risk have been developed in relation to scientific and environmental hazards they do offer some useful explanatory potential in relation to the way in which risk is constructed in UK child trafficking policy and practice discourses. In this sense then, the construction of risk in discourses is a complex interaction between the various parties who seek to evidence their claims to engage wider audiences. This is achieved through the vehicle of the media and educational/awareness raising campaigns and through the emphasis on, and inclusion of ‘expert’ and ‘specialist’ knowledge.

Risk discourses have become a central and enduring tool used to shape our understanding of self and society. Originally developed to explain how politicians and government respond to environmental catastrophes; *risk society theory* (Beck 1992) explains how society is increasingly dominated by these risk discourses. There is a lack of personal and social stability which leads to the pervasion of risk in modern life, which in turn shapes how social problems are constructed. This analysis suggests that the way in which the direction of child trafficking policy has developed draws on wider risks constructed more broadly to shape and regulate social lives. Public debates about risk exclude children and risk is both defined and managed on children’s behalf (Harden 2000). This has been the case so far in terms of child trafficking policy which is informed by anti-trafficking organisations and policy makers, who claim to ostensibly act in children’s best interests and articulate the needs of children for protection and support on their behalf.

Risk amplification theory suggests that risks are communicated in complex ways. The social amplification of risk depends on complex processes including public concern, fears about risks and attention from the media and social/political groups (Rajeev Gowda 2003). Risk amplification research has developed a cross-disciplinary model for identifying the processes

involved in risk perception and responses (Pidgeon *et al.* 2003). Theorists distinguish between risk amplification – when hazards assessed by experts as low risk become a socio-political focus – and risk attenuation, when hazards assessed by experts as high risk receive less public/political attention. The social amplification of risk framework (SARF) explains the political agenda setting processes which are involved in policy-making (Rajeev Gowda 2003). In this way, it has been argued; politicians catch on to public opinion and promote policy options which are designed to be tough on crime. The social amplification of risk theory thus has some potential in terms of explaining the way in which risks discourses associated with child trafficking are conveyed between official agencies, the media and campaigning organisations.

The risk discourses in this study were amplified through the mechanisms of the anti-trafficking networks, whose statements (many of which appeared to be based on anecdotal evidence) were found to have been replicated and embellished across contexts. For example it was commonly stated that children who are at risk of trafficking go missing in a very short timeframe following their arrival and that there are criminal gangs waiting to exploit them. This narrative has gained political currency, and emerged in this research in interviews with anti-trafficking campaigners, policy makers, social workers and the police. In most cases these participants have made a contribution to policy-making forums. Much of the evidence cited to support such claims has, however, been gleaned from questionable second hand case studies. The recurrence of these themes and patterns in the interview and policy narratives suggests that these are not assessments based on evidence and research, and indeed maybe nothing more than hearsay or generalisation from a specific singular case example which has been amplified across professional and policy-making networks and forums.

I was particularly interested in how risk was illustrated in the interview narratives of child trafficking, as it appeared that there were patterns which emerged in the early stages of analysis. I examined the storytelling elements of the narratives as it was evident from the in depth analysis of the initial interviews that there were many ‘stories’ of child trafficking. These ‘stories’ contained to greater or lesser extent melodramatic themes and certain tactics were used by respondents to draw attention to specific and important features of the stories. The melodramatic quality which characterises child trafficking discourses is a central feature in my analysis. In this

thesis I argue that the construction of risks in child trafficking discourses can be explained by drawing on Hadley's theory of melodramatic tactics (1995). As well as highlighting the more sensationalist aspects of the issue i.e. the exploitation and harm, the construction of risk in this way prioritises certain interventions over others. Potential child trafficking scenarios gain status and determine interventions which might ordinarily be intrusive and disruptive to families. The means are therefore justified by the ends. In policy and practice children arriving into the UK attract suspicion and interest from immigration and child safeguarding officials. It is not viewed as essential to have proof or evidence of child trafficking. The fact that families come into the UK as asylum seekers or refugees and children come in to the UK unaccompanied is enough to arouse the interest of officials. In their efforts to stop trafficking, advocates and anti-trafficking campaigners have thus legitimised policy, and practice is focussed on all groups of migrant children. The risk is also amplified and extended across groups of children, and as illustrated the story gathers momentum and credibility through the use and application of extreme examples to prove a case.

There are a range of explanations which are used to explain child trafficking which draw on social, economic and political reasons, for example, poverty in countries of origin, war, and environmental disasters. All of these also act as push factors for international child migration (Van den Anker 2004). Other explanations for child trafficking focus on the role of organised criminal networks and the purposeful exploitation of traditional child migration activities (Social Alert 2000; UNCIEF 2003; UNICEF 2005). There are also claims that international human trafficking is about the supply of cheap exploitable labour in response to demands from employers (Rafferty 2007). The supply and demand argument has also informed gender violence theories of human trafficking (Raymond 2002). These dominate the existing discourse on the trafficking in women, particularly those women involved in the commercial sex industries (Doezema 2002; Sharma 2004). All of these explanations have contributed to how the issue of child trafficking is understood. Stories of child trafficking in the discourses analysed in this study are constructed so as to evoke outrage and action. These narratives or stories of child trafficking are also used to justify coercive and intrusive policy and practice responses. The stories this analysis reveals about child trafficking are often uncritically accepted because those who

advance them are considered as ‘experts’ who are able to both define the problem and the response.

Atrocity tales in child trafficking narratives

The way in which health and social welfare professionals conceptualise and understand their work is characterised by uncertainty according to Taylor and White (2000) and this impacts on the way in which problems are articulated and responded to. This uncertainty and ambiguity characterises well the environment within which risk assessments are made about child trafficking cases. In the case of child trafficking risk assessments are conducted in ambiguous and uncertain situations, and approaches adopted are informed by criminal justice agendas. Gaining credibility and expertise by promoting their position as being informed and responsive, interviewees in my study were critical and dismissive, in many cases, of the agencies they worked with, and similarly so about families who did not protect or sought to harm and exploit their own or other migrant children.

The character constructions of those thought to be involved in trafficking were clearly demarcated as victims, criminals and rescuers and there was a tendency to highlight extreme cases: as we saw in the previous chapter, the death of Victoria Climbié was frequently cited as a specific example of failure and potential future consequence. There were specific ideologies of childhood, children and parenting in the stories of child trafficking which illustrated narrowly focussed perceptions of children’s roles in their families. Informants amplified risk in the interviews by using extreme case examples to illustrate a ‘typical’ child trafficking scenario whilst also inferring that there are inestimable numbers of migrant children who remain vulnerable to, or at risk of, being exploited through trafficking. In the narratives interviewees ‘talk’ about cases and the performance and activity of other agencies might be best thought of as ‘atrocity tales’. Taylor and White (2000) in their work on narratives in health and social care discuss the way in which interviewees sometimes articulate claims by inculcating immediacy to their accounts, and bolster their own credibility by drawing on ‘atrocity tales’. They seek to imbue a sense of crisis, catastrophe and incompetence.

Rhetorical claims in child trafficking risk discourses

In the introduction to this thesis I suggested that there were three inter-related rhetorical claims which characterise child trafficking policy and practice discourses: *Victims of the better life syndrome*; *the exploitation thesis* and *global crime*. In chapter four I argued that these had been influenced and shaped by the perceptions of risks to migrant children, and particularly separated migrant children, are said to be exposed to during their migratory processes including, the mode of leaving, journey, arrival and settlement. In light of the primacy given to ‘risk’ factors by interview participants, the references made to risks in the case study narratives has comprised an important part of my research. A fourth type of narrative emerged in this analysis defined as *the worst case scenario*. In the case examples which the respondents in my study drew on, they illustrated how the practice of others has potentially catastrophic consequences. They depicted for example other agencies’ work as inferior to their own practice. Moreover they articulated a *worst case scenario* perspective. There was also an extrapolation of potential danger, and a corresponding generalisation of potential threats to the extent that it is believed that all migrant children are vulnerable and at risk of being trafficked. Analysis of the interview narratives is suggestive of another sort of atrocity tale in which what is known about the issue is only the *tip of the iceberg*. There was an emphasis in the narratives that the danger was real and present but obscured from official views and statistics. *Significant, hidden and harmful* characterises the perception of the problem of child trafficking in these narratives.

Not all interviewees used the same sort of risk language. The different professional groups expressed their concerns about child trafficking in different ways. For example, child trafficking was depicted as a threat to the individual, and to the family and the wider community. Although ‘the family’ was characterised as being a safe place, this was generally understood to be ‘the family’ in the child’s country of origin. ‘The family’ in these narratives is also romanticised, in this sense ‘home’ is in a child’s country of origin, and little recognition is given to the potential ‘risks’ and ‘dangers’ that may be associated with a ‘home’ that may be characterised by war, oppression or environmental catastrophe. Conversely, families in the UK were also seen as dangerous places for some children particularly if social workers had not assessed them properly.

This was often thought to be the case, according to the non-social work professionals involved in this study. I draw on interview narratives previously discussed in the last chapter and on other extracts to illustrate further how risk was constructed.

Taken together, the analysis and comparison of data which emerged in these different data sources enabled me to group together more coherently what interviewees talked about and how the ideas of risk expressed in narratives ultimately emerged as a set of interrelated 'risk discourses' with a melodramatic quality. In this analysis, melodrama characterises the content and performative elements of the interviews, respondents using various tactics to evidence and support their stories; claiming expertise and amplifying concern, situating themselves and their agencies in stories of child trafficking as heroes and rescuers; and the work they do as a battle between good and evil. According to Soni (2006) the way in which suffering is seen determines how it is responded to, and there are some clear implications of the employment of these melodramatic tactics in relation to current child trafficking policy.

Victims of the better life syndrome

Families were criticised, especially when parents expected their children to be economically active. The context of the family was variously portrayed as being either the best place for a child to be, or potentially the most dangerous. However, the overriding feature of the narratives about family in the interviews was of a westernised ideological family, which exists in a biological and spatial context. The separation or distancing between children and their biological parents was seen as a *cause for concern* and alternative 'family' forms were perceived to be less important or valid. Within the sample of responses, narratives of the potential risks to children who were separated, and the reunion of children as being a desired outcome were explicit. It was widely believed that the best place for children is at home with their parents, in their own environments. Children coming to the UK for a *better life* were not going to be assured of safety and protection as those who exploited them were able to deceive authorities. If children were not directly economically exploited (either for their labour or sexually), they would be used as pawns in organised benefits fraud rings.

The exploitation thesis³²

In relation to the identification of vulnerable children and the prevention of trafficking, the language of sexual exploitation and in particular the notion of *grooming* was used to describe the way in which children are prepared for their entry and future by those who facilitate their journeys: “...they’re so carefully groomed and, and may not even know they’re being trafficked” (SWCYP 6 October 2006). In this type of narrative children owing to their immaturity are thought to be easy to control: “it’s very easy to seduce and groom these children into, you know not disclosing” (POL 1 August 2006). The grooming of children for their compliance and silence was a recurrent theme in the interviews and professionals made efforts to prevent contact between children and people who they perceived as dangerous:

“ I think that was part of grooming them so they got confident in him, and we would try to prevent the girls from seeing him, in the end we developed a safe house for a while” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

Grooming was further used by this participant to explain how children become involved in illegal and exploitative activities. Grooming in this sense was also applied to the way in which children were perceived to be vulnerable to being involved in criminal activities: “*older members of their community have groomed them and exploited them for serious crime*” (SWCYP 2 January 2006). This particular narrative also explains the risk to children in relation to their perceived vulnerability to sexual exploitation in a market economy which values youth: “*sixteen year old girls would be more marketable than a twenty five year old*” (POL 1 August 2006). The focus on ‘risks’ and ‘dangers’ continued when respondents discussed the ‘vulnerability’ children faced whilst under the protective gaze of the authorities:

³² De Sas Kropiwnicki (2005) From Structural Hierarchies to Social Relationships: Accounting for power and positioning in the decision-making of adolescent prostitutes in Cape Town, South Africa. Unpublished paper presented at Childhoods: Children and Youth in Emerging and Transforming Societies International Conference. University of Oslo, Norway June 28th – July 3rd 2005. De Sas Kropiwnicki discusses the influence which the exploitation thesis has in policy and practice related to child prostitution.

“...even though they’re in care, they’re still compelled because of the debts that they need to repay the traffickers...she doesn’t want to give any information about them, she’s scared for one because she still owes them all this money supposedly for getting her here” (SWCYP 5 July 2006)

The exploitation thesis was well embedded in the interview narratives, and there was very little distance between the ways in which agencies constructed children as victims of trafficking crimes:

“...children, no matter whether coercion has been involved or not, whether informed consent has been given by the parents or even themselves or not, because they are under eighteen if they are then brought into the country and used in some way then they have been trafficked” (CAMP 1 June 2006)

This narrative is imbued with beliefs about various practices of child-rearing which in a UK context are thought to be inappropriate at best, and illegal and damaging at worst. This extract was used earlier and conveys a particularly prejudicial view about the parenting practices of non-UK cultures: *“we’ve got a whole new set of people here beating, whipping, drugging kids”* (PCP 1 August 2005). The abuse and exploitation associated with child trafficking in this type of narrative are said to have unique features, which, according to some of the interviewees, neither current policy nor practice address. This it was stated must be tackled by specialist provision and experts in the field. ‘Traffickers’ were *criminals* and *responsible* for the exploitation of children and for silencing the. The risk extends from situations when children are living in families, to when children are looked after in formal care settings.

Global crime

Within the global crime narrative, emphasis is placed on the links between child trafficking and existing crime networks. Those who discussed child trafficking in this context focused upon how the issue of child trafficking emerged and led to police involvement in wider areas of work, or *new business*. Within this narrative the focus is on associations made between the commercial sex industry and child trafficking and how globalisation has enabled a link to develop between the two. References are frequently made to the international sex industry and made with regard to known centres of the sex industry which it was perceived should be more effectively monitored by the authorities: *“I think they should be in Soho ...it is just such an underworld that has never ever been penetrated”* (CAMP 1 June 2006). In this narrative the emphasis was placed on the need to investigate the sex industry, which was depicted as an *underworld*. Speculation that children are involved in this as victims of commercial sexual exploitation was commonplace. This has clear parallels with the claims made in the nineteenth century campaigning of the social purity movement. This reference to the *underworld* was also evident in an earlier interview with a social worker:

“they're not allowed to work and their self esteem and confidence go down and they're frightened of being returned, they're living in this sort of underworld and then they're very vulnerable to exploitation” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

This global crime narrative extends the association of child trafficking into other areas of public concern. The technological and communication benefits of the Internet are said to have heightened concerns and had dubious and dangerous consequences for children: *“sex tourism and internet abuse and trafficking aren't that far apart”* (POL 1 August 2006).

A *tough on crime* approach was emphasised in this narrative and not just in relation to the trafficking of children. Dissatisfaction, for example, was expressed in relation to *corruption* and *bogus asylum claims*. This police officer speculated about the ‘illegal’ activities of some professionals in the legal sector: *“...legal professions and the lawyers and legal advisors who are actually making a lot of money out of advising people”* (PCP 1 August 2005). Much of the

evidence suggests that child trafficking is a consequence of wider environmental and socio-economic factors, yet the policy focus is orientated towards controlling migration and regulating the sex industry, and, to an equally important extent, to protecting the integrity of the UK welfare state, and to improving *community safety*. The responsibilities of agencies and organisations in terms of safeguarding children are informed by risk management approaches which effectively direct and regulate the way in which migrant families are assessed, and judgments made about their capacity to care for children.

The worst case scenario

The *worst case scenario* narrative has two interrelated features. Firstly the incidence of child trafficking is perceived to be an unknown and thus immeasurable and probably a massive issue; what is known about child trafficking is only the *tip of the iceberg*. Secondly the *significant hidden* and *harmful* nature of this form of exploitation and abuse cannot be ignored and as such this perception must be made public if the problem is to be properly addressed. As discussed in the literature review at the start of this study this view characterises the way in which NGOs depict child trafficking. This was also evident in the UK child trafficking policy discourses examined in this study.

In the *worst case scenario* narratives child trafficking was believed to be a significant child abuse issue, and the growth was related to the perceived increase in migration: “*Migration’s massive isn’t it?*” (POL 1 August 2006). The potential threats and security issues which have arisen in recent years which needed to be addressed to tackle the problem of child trafficking was by enforcing greater restrictions on inward migration to the UK: “*The more you tighten the borders and boundaries the more difficult it is*” (PCP 1 August 2005). In this narrative, respondents expressed concerns about the potential that all migrant children were at risk: “*I consider that every child that comes in here is trafficked*” (PCP 3 October 2006). There is, in this narrative, much uncertainty about the magnitude of the issue: “*we’ve no idea of the number of cases that potentially could be sinister, that we haven’t identified*” (SWCYP 6 November 2006). As such children would not be protected from exploitation and this could have tragic and

immeasurable consequences for the child and their family. There were further concerns that the increasing numbers of children perceived to be coming to the UK had put pressure on existing safeguarding systems, and this had massive resource implications. There was a perception that huge numbers of children were potentially at risk of exploitation by people who were supposed to be caring for them, and because children were coming to the UK without adequate safeguarding arrangements made for them by their parents. The *worst case scenario* narrative also emphasizes and legitimises the way in which agencies protect and safeguard children believed to be at risk of trafficking:

“...they shouldn't be receiving any phone calls, they shouldn't be making any phone calls and we'll stop them for doing that because that can be, inconsistent from keeping them safe, they won't be going off on their own, they'll be one to one monitored” (SWCYP 1 July 2005).

This type of narrative draws on the most extreme examples which interview respondents also used to evidence their position, and validate their knowledge. They *claimed expertise* based on cases which they were aware of, and on cases they had heard of. This was evident in for example the way in which interview respondents discussed the public inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié. The *worst case scenario* also typifies policy discourses in relation to *harm prevention*. This is explicit in the practical application of increasingly stringent monitoring and surveillance of ports and children's entry to the UK. The criminals were identified as *new communities* and certain *dangerous families*.

The *worst case scenario* narrative presents a pessimistic, doom-laden picture, which conveys the impression that child trafficking is too big to tackle. In the absence of radical intervention/change, children would continue to be trafficked once in the country and would go missing however hard agencies tried to safeguard them. Again the extract below was referred to earlier and provides a good example of the way in which concerns about children coming into the UK are amplified and how surveillance and monitoring measures are legitimised. The disappearance of those who arrive into the UK was an unknown quantity: *“I'm sure there are people who slip through the net, but how many? I don't know”* (SWCYP 6 September 2006).

The *worst case scenario* narrative is also embedded with themes about fear, and threat from strangers and others. These *strangers* are perceived to pose risks to children and there is a potential for exploitation by ‘*others*’. ‘*Othering*’ is when there is distancing of one’s own norms and values from others who pose a threat, or risk, and claiming a superior position and different values (Altheide 2006). Explicit differences or similarities are distinguished as in: *stranger danger*. In this type of narrative the poor evidence base, whilst acknowledged, was rationalised in relation to the hidden nature of children’s entry to the UK and the risks therefore of exploitation. The lack of resources and subsequent tragic cases of child trafficking in the *worst case scenario* narrative is compounded by the ineptitude of social workers. This is explicit in this extract previously cited which situates the exploitation within the context of the family: “*they don't really query why people have got the other kids in their houses*” (Legal September 2006).

The attribution of blame and responsibility was a common theme in many of the interviews, and social services in particular were subjected to harsh criticism from the non-social work respondents:

“*...sometimes we're dealing with trafficking and Social Services have been dealing with a child, they haven't recognised that they need the resources and the will to treat these children the same as they would any other child*” (PCP 2 September 2006).

For this and other non social work interviewees the agencies who are designated to safeguard the victims of trafficking frequently failed children, and worse still, evaded their responsibilities: “*there's not enough done and when the dangers are identified to them they avoid the issues*” (PCP 2 September 2006). Dramatic references were made when respondents expressed their concerns about the implications of not protecting such children and the potential harm that children might suffer. Children were depicted as *tragic victims*, parents and carers were constructed as *neglectful* and *abusive*, whilst traffickers it was believed were *evil villains* who exploited children’s vulnerability. Respondents expressed their views in somewhat emotional terms, and there was a strong perception amongst most that the issue of child trafficking was a growing problem in the UK, which needed urgent policy attention and better joined up working

and policy-making. Concern expressed in this narrative is also extended from a single incidence of trafficking to situations for example where migrant children work underage. This social worker for example speculates on the various forms of exploitation:

“...the agents are working illegally they're part of organised crime and I think they are ready and waiting to watch these children with a view to exploiting them for money and it's going to take all sorts of forms of exploitation....., sexual exploitation, drugs trading, some in cannabis factories or it could just be for benefit fraud or working underage in a café” (SWCYP 2 January 2006).

Children were deemed to be *vulnerable to trafficking* when they arrived into the UK unaccompanied and there was a very short timescale when agencies would be able to intervene and protect them from potential labour or sexual exploitation, *immediate action* is required. This again is rationalised in the narratives because expert evidence suggests that children *disappear* more quickly than agencies can respond. In the *worst case scenario* narrative children are depicted as *innocent victims*, parents and carers are constructed as inept and ignorant at best or as neglectful and abusive. In this narrative the social worker depicts a *frightened and distrustful victim* who has been taken against his or her will: *“they threaten the child with violence against their families ...they have also been taught to distrust authorities”* (CAMP 2 July 2006).

The *worst case scenario* narratives of child trafficking depict children as vulnerable and in need of protection and in doing so legitimate intrusive and invasive state interventions such as X-rays for children in age assessment processes, and detention in ports and holding centres. Such measures have had little success in preventing or identifying child trafficking, and have been justly criticised as being at odds with children's rights and entitlements.

The tip of the iceberg

There were beliefs that the issue of child trafficking was a growing problem in the UK, which needed urgent policy attention and better joined up working and policy-making. Existing measures only *scratched the surface* of the issue. In this type of narrative child trafficking was a problem of *immense proportions* which the UK had so far failed to address adequately and thus what was known about it by agencies was considered to be *the tip of the iceberg*. The narrative also blames other authorities who have a responsibility to safeguard children. In relation to the way in which other agencies are ill-prepared to work with migrant children both immigration and social services come in for criticism:

“The immigration service has no real mechanism for dealing with that, because no one has trained them in child protection, no one’s taught them what to look for, and they don’t have a child protection strategy. The local social services are only going to deal with the local kids, and again that’s one of the problems there’s no national social services remit, they just deal in their parochial areas” (PCP 1 July 2005).

The legislation and policy being developed at the time the interviews took place, it was thought by some respondents would address this by ensuring that there were appropriate systems in place to both identify potential trafficking scenarios, and risky individuals who may be involved in trafficking children. The policy measures respondents alluded to were in regard to immigration measures which were under development to prevent children from entering the UK, or returning them to their countries of origin.

Significant hidden and harmful

Children were deemed to be at risk because organised criminal networks were actively grooming children and silencing them into compliance using a number of strategies. There were views that children were *innocent victims* and concerns that the harm was hidden away from public and official views. The risks associated with this view of child trafficking, as a secretive criminal

activity, were that more children were vulnerable than is actually known, and the harm is potentially massive. Many of the stories of ‘child trafficking’ in the interview narratives contained elements of secrecy and economic exploitation which are also characteristic of the melodramatic plot. The way in which children are described as hidden and the crime of child trafficking being perceived as being shrouded in secrecy, was ultimately because the perpetrators of these crimes intend to exploit (sometimes their own) children. The exploitation extends to other potential victims as the issue receives increased attention and scrutiny from officials. A generalisation of concern about other potential risks is apparent as this example illustrates:

“...straight away we got drawn into a whole range of safeguarding issues: not just trafficking or migration; travelling sex offenders; false marriage, female genital mutilation; child abduction, all these are issues in and around child protection because it’s all about children travelling” (PCP 1 July 2005).

The dimensions of risk are not confined to children migrating but extended into other issues and this adds further danger and potential harm as does the association with sexual exploitation. For the greater part in this narrative, the environment was constructed as dangerous place for children travelling. The family was perceived as a dangerous place and the UK itself was a risky place. It was believed children should be deterred from travelling as a protection measure. Furthermore it was the clear that policy discourses and interview narratives suggest an organised aspect to the crime of child trafficking and this inevitably leads to greater emphasis in policy terms on protecting borders. The use of advanced technologies to do this was also justified and reinforced. This analysis also demonstrates how child trafficking is constructed firstly as a primal crime i.e. a crime against children which should not go unpunished, and secondly as a social crime, i.e. as a crime against society which required a tightening of immigration and welfare systems.

Melodramatic tactics in child trafficking discourses

Melodrama

The Melodramatic genre is defined as: “*a dramatic piece characterized by exaggerated characters and a sensational plot intended to appeal to the emotions*” (Oxford English Dictionary 2010). Derived from the combination of music and drama which featured in stage productions in the nineteenth century, melodrama was intended for a popular, unified audience with shared values and morals. Melodrama did not fit the traditional literary, cultural or artistic genres of the nineteenth century, and became associated with ‘popular’ and ‘sensational’. The term ‘melodrama’ however was not well regarded and was the most insulting label which could be applied to stage productions. The musical element was used to give dramatic effect but dwindled, and eventually disappeared (Smith 1973).

Melodramatic tactics

Hadley (1995) drew on the literary theory of melodrama to analyse how certain groups and individuals portrayed social issues through the nineteenth century. As discussed earlier melodramatic tactics according to Hadley (1995) are characterised by portrayals of six key themes common to the genre of melodrama ; Familial narratives of dispersal and reunion; visual rendering of bodily torture and criminal conduct; atmospheric menace and providential plotting; expressions of highly charged emotions; a tendency to personify absolutes like good and evil; and providential plotting. The melodramatic mode contributed to the shaping of public opinion in late Victorian period and was a primary way in which social reformers challenged the government position on the age of consent and prostitution. As (Hadley 1995, p.195) has shown in the campaigning for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, Josephine Butler used melodramatic tactics which were a: “*hybrid of hierarchical and populist*”. Melodrama has its origins in storytelling, and is of a specific nature; it relies on audience reaction; employs emotive language and is at its most persuasive when applied to universal themes: purity and danger, especially from a stranger; loss or separation from home and family and some suggestion of betrayal and injustice to an innocent (Hadley 1995). Today it is more often found in the soap

opera genre, and in language of the popular press. It is also evident in other news media. Melodrama characterises the expose serialized in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1885 (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978; Walkowitz 1992; Hadley 1995). Melodramatic narratives in Stead's *Maiden Tribute* series in 1885 constructed: "*virtuous heroines sold into sexual slavery by the despotically mercenary drives of villainous pimps*" (Hadley 1995, p.211).

In melodrama there are three connected elements:

"...secrecy, economic speculation and physical/sexual exploitation...estranged patriarchal families, wrenched apart by the mercenary evil doing of a villainous family member who has succumbed to the dissolute pleasures associated with secret market transactions" (Hadley 1995 p.199).

The story of child trafficking emerging in my analysis of child trafficking narratives clearly suggests that the conceptual lens of melodramatic tactics has some explanatory relevance. Of course the concept should not be used uncritically, as Sadoff (1998) suggests, Hadley's application and discussion of the melodramatic mode obscures other significant historical forces of change in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, such as industrialisation and imperialism. Despite this critique, the characteristics of melodrama and the employment of melodramatic tactics do provide analytical concepts for explaining the narrative strategies employed by the respondents and evidenced in the interview data.

Melodramatic plot

There are three forms of melodramatic plot; triumph, defeat and protest. In 'triumph' the story is presented simply in a way which inspires courage in the audience. The essence of the plot in defeat is that: "*human miseries are most affecting when they encompass sympathetic innocents who have done nothing to deserve them*" (Smith 1973 p.56). Underneath the essential form of protest in melodrama is an agenda which is designed to: "*stimulate political awareness, question established values, expose injustice, champion reform, fuel arguments ...and sometimes incite*

direct support for bloody revolution” (Smith 1973 p.72). A common strategy in the melodrama of protest is the attempt to amplify concern through the creation of a ‘blameless victim’:

“to pinpoint a contemporary evil they set up a blameless hero as the victim of the system, and then subject him to such inhuman persecution that the audience explodes with indignation and demands the immediate repeal of laws which perpetuate such cruelties” (Smith 1973, p.75).

It is protest which best characterises the melodramatic elements of the narratives of child trafficking, as Smith (1973, p.72) points out, it: *“arouses righteous anger at the world’s injustices unmitigated by the thought that we may also be to blame”* (Smith 1973, p.72). There were similar melodramatic themes in current child trafficking policy, and NGO campaigning materials. This was explicit in the interview narratives which exposed the damage done to children by trafficking. There was only a limited acknowledgement of the ‘harms’ and ‘risks’ associated with intractable problems of war, oppression and poverty that are characteristic features of the countries children originate from. The campaigning elements of the narratives were evident in terms of how interviewees described their role and the way in which their agencies perceived that they were protecting children coming into the UK. Demands were made along the lines of *something must be done* to address this situation. Respondents claimed that they were *fighting battles* with not only evil depraved criminals but also with other agencies and organisations that let the side down and exposed vulnerable children to greater risks. The complexities of child migration seemed to be little understood and did not appear as important or relevant in the narratives; what was important was tackling the criminal activities of (criminalised) *others*. Global structural factors which influence migratory flows were avoided, minimised in the narratives.

The emphasis in the narratives was on tackling the crimes of exploitation and protecting, indeed rescuing, children from the clutches of criminal gangs. The wider context within which these narratives are situated is also important. In Hadley’s analysis she highlights the ways in which the melodramatic tactics employed by the social puritans in late nineteenth century Britain allowed them to sidestep the ‘normal’ mechanism of Parliamentary debate and scrutiny:

“Indeed Butler’s melodramatic tactics aimed to bring about genuine alterations in national law and policy in a manner that to some observers might have seemed evasive of conventional legislative procedure, such as parliamentary debate” (Hadley 1995, p.201).

In my study of narratives of child trafficking, respondents described the negative impact of children’s separation from their families and parents. The examples used by respondents to illustrate cases incorporated visual rendering of bodily torture and criminal conduct. This was particularly evident when the participants made reference to the high profile death of Victoria Climbié and other extreme case examples. The explanations respondents used to explain the causes of the issue of child trafficking also illustrated the atmospheric menace in relation to the dangerous environment children travelled in and to. There were also references to providential plotting which were suggestive of planning and scheming by criminal gangs and methods and approaches which agencies used to address these. The respondents expressed their feelings about child trafficking articulating highly charged emotions. Finally, in examining who respondents thought was involved in child trafficking, there was a tendency to personify absolutes like good and evil.

The child trafficking narratives in my own research were loaded with expressions of excess emotions linked in some ways to the understanding of child trafficking as a crime. The narratives were constructed using language usually associated with the sexual exploitation of children and particular the notion of *grooming*. In policy discourses and interview narratives, child trafficking crimes against children were simplistically constructed as being committed against innocent children by evil villains, with outrage at this exploitation being a key way in which the crime of child trafficking was portrayed. The narrative strategies which underpin the melodrama of child trafficking seem to be structured in a way which support and sustain the involvement of networks of a range of NGO agencies in the policy-making arena, whose agenda is driven by outrage at injustices to children, especially exploitation and abuse. See below table 10 which illustrates the melodramatic tactics together with example narratives extracted from the interviews.

Table 10 to show melodramatic tactic characteristics, and example statements made by key informants:

<i>Familial narratives of dispersal and reunion</i>	<i>Visual rendering of bodily torture and criminal conduct</i>	<i>Atmospheric menace</i>	<i>Expressions of highly charged emotions</i>	<i>Tendency to personify absolutes like good and evil</i>	<i>Providential plotting</i>
<i>all things being equal, we believe they should be returned to live in their country of origin and not in the UK (SWCYP 1)</i>	<i>I don't think you can compare somebody who's willingly gone into sex work at seventeen, to somebody who is twenty five that has been bound and gagged and chained to a bed (ACADEMIC)</i>	<i>but all the kids that are travelling in unless you register them, unless you take some sort of biometric data, how do you know where they are? (PCP 1)</i>	<i>those are the ones that I worry about the most really, I mean they're big time, you know it just feel its so distressing (CAMP 1)</i>	<i>we've got a whole set of new people here whipping, beating, drugging kids and our crimes stats show it (PCP 1)</i>	<i>what we're told is often what the agents have rehearsed with them... we hear the same story over and over again (SWCYP 2)</i>
<i>they're not necessarily with their legal guardian or with their parents ...that needs to be recognised as a potential area of concern (CAMP 2)</i>	<i>all that sort of witchcrafty stuff and you know whether children have been forcibly brought into the country or moved out of the country you know...of possession led abuse (POL 1)</i>	<i>but essentially they're using similar routes and criminal methods, you know people are hidden in lorries (SWCYP 3)</i>	<i>how can they be stupid to send a child that far away? (LEGAL)</i>	<i>but trafficking is sinister... you have to be able to say that this is something that involves a victim (SWCYP 6)</i>	<i>... and they start to cry ...its really difficult with the kids, it's the adults we should go for, them we should put on the, the little chair (PCP 3)</i>
<i>if they're with their parent it doesn't mean that they're not vulnerable (PCP 2)</i>	<i>she's only just starting to realise that hang on a minute she was exploited all this time and so she still doesn't want to talk to the Police (SWCYP 5)</i>	<i>it will help them to uncover geographical and other patterns which may indicate a trafficking network (POL 2)</i>	<i>You know God forbid if anything happened to that child that night, if I'm the last one to see him (PCP 3)</i>	<i>I think that suspicious adults keep away from our kids because we're so intrusive (SWCYP 2)</i>	<i>but there is a big trade in, in you know domestic service (LEGAL)</i>

Summary

In the context of child trafficking policy the way in which risks are identified and communicated is by drawing on specific strategies. There is an *amplification of concern* which is facilitated and generated by the activities of NGOs, policy makers, and practitioners through the publication and dissemination of case studies and ‘expert’ knowledge. The concerns are expressed in the context of child prostitution, child labour exploitation and immigration threats. This contextualization adds dimension to how child trafficking is both perceived and publicised.

It is clear that interview respondents used a number of strategies to articulate and convey their understanding of the potential risks children were exposed to. For example they highlighted the vulnerability of migrant children coming into the UK unaccompanied and extended this concern to children coming in with family members who might pose a risk. The emphasis in the case examples respondents used to discuss child trafficking stories and their experiences was overwhelmingly focused on the dangers children were exposed to by their migration and from adults who might exploit and/or abuse them. There was also limited acknowledgement in the stories of child trafficking as told by respondents that wider structural conditions might be relevant factors in explaining children’s migrations to the UK. There was a corresponding lack of recognition that non-British cultural practices and traditions of child care might not be abusive or exploitative.

The narratives or stories of child trafficking followed a pattern in that they exposed or predicted a potential harm to children. The harm children experience is said to be from their family who fail to protect them, or from strangers who seek to exploit and/or abuse them. In a similar way adults posing a threat to children were storied as evil or wicked. The narratives told of suffering and tragedy, leaving little space for acknowledging that children themselves played a role in their migrations to the UK. The narratives also exposed respondents’ roles as heroic rescuers or protectors at one end of the spectrum and as advocates for children at the other end. In many respects the interview narratives in this study draw on similar themes to those which appeared in the late nineteenth

century discourses about child prostitution; the *white slave trade* and the international trade in girls. As discussed throughout this thesis, the constructions of children in the child trafficking narratives uncovered by my research provide only a partial understanding of the phenomenon; children's accounts are absent in child trafficking policy rhetoric, outmanoeuvred by the *victim trope* (Buckland 2008).

The constructions above lend themselves to analysis drawing on Hadley (1995) who theorized that melodrama and the employment of melodramatic tactics are the principle ways in which the suffering of the 'vulnerable' are brought to wider public attention. The application of Hadley (1995) and the theory of melodramatic tactics suggest two things; firstly that melodrama provides a framework for understanding how 'child trafficking' is talked about and talked up in contemporary discourses, and, secondly, that the predominance of this mode makes invisible other ways of understanding and explaining child migration to the UK.

These modern melodramatic child trafficking narratives are also found in the media exposures of child trafficking which are designed to scandalize and shock audiences.

This is hardly surprising, given that the media tend to rely upon anti-trafficking NGOs as 'authoritative' sources of information. These melodramatic tactics are also evident in parliamentary papers, which are also informed by NGO evidence and provide campaigners with ammunition to lobby for greater protection and ultimately restrictions on the migratory movements of children to the UK. The global social inequalities which push children into migration might be occasionally articulated, although this is often to a much lesser extent in the campaign materials, and the overwhelming emphasis is on exposing and re-exposing the crime, the villains and the suffering children experience. In the concluding chapter I summarise the key issues raised in this study of the construction of risk in child trafficking discourses and make some observations about the implications of my findings in relation to policy-making and stakeholder consultations particularly the inclusion of 'research' and 'evidence' in child trafficking policy-making forums. I make some recommendations regarding the contribution of academic research with migrant

children which might better situate their experiences, so far absent in the existing discourses.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In this final chapter I summarise the key issues raised in this study and make some observations about the implications of my findings in relation to UK child trafficking policy, safeguarding practice and future research. In this study I have argued that *risk* in child trafficking discourses is constructed and transmitted through professional anti-trafficking networks. I identified themes and patterns in the way in which claims about child trafficking are made and examined these in interview narratives and in UK policy documents. I drew on Hadley's (1995) theory of melodramatic tactics to explain my findings. Following a discussion of the key issues raised by this study of child trafficking discourses and some observations about the strengths and weaknesses of this research, I conclude this chapter by outlining the potential of research trajectories which position children as legitimate and rightful migrants and acknowledge children's capacity as economic and social actors. These approaches provide a more culturally informed research knowledge base than the standpoints which hold the most currency in established discourses, sustained as they are through professional anti-trafficking networks.

Summary of key issues

In chapter one I reviewed the existing UK child trafficking research literature. The limited research on the issue in the UK is reflected in the international literature and questions arising from the lack of research and the context of existing research were discussed. The difficulties in researching the area of child trafficking have largely been defined as methodological problems owing to the 'hidden' nature of trafficking activities (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). I also discussed Steinfatt (2003); Sharma (2004) and

Buckland (2008) who argue that there are a wider set of problems which are associated with the way in which activists, politicians and researchers promote public awareness of the issues of child trafficking, and in doing so draw on dubious and unsubstantiated research findings which have emerged in the last few years. Questions also emerged regarding the way in which child protection concerns related to trafficking are framed as *significant, hidden and harmful* and I discussed problems with this framing.

There is a lack of definitional clarity which has given rise to many interpretations of events which could potentially be a child trafficking scenario, when equally such events and situations could be legitimate and be of great benefit to children and their families/communities. I also argued that perspectives which emphasise the potentially 'positive' features of the migration process are neglected and have limited currency in policy and practice. By contrast, policy and practice is influenced by ideological assumptions and beliefs about children and childhood, and specifically by the positioning of children as victims with an inability and no capacity to consent. This is explicit when activists and researchers promote public awareness of child trafficking drawing on dubious and unsubstantiated research findings. Ultimately I reject the *exploitation thesis* which dominates the anti-trafficking rhetoric. It is littered with assumptions about children's experiences and situations. Similarly the contention in the rhetoric that what is known about child trafficking is the *tip of the iceberg* is rejected, as is the *worst case scenario* narrative.

I examined the historical emergence of the discourse on child trafficking and discussed this in relation to the policy context of child welfare and protection in late nineteenth century Britain, drawing on historical records of the exposé of child trafficking of that period. As was shown, during the last decades of the nineteenth century, the international traffic in women and girls was the focus of attention by the vigilance and social purity movements, who secured alliances with both political and public figures and organisations (Petrie 1971; Gorham, 1978; Bristow 1978; Walkowitz 1992; Hadley 1995). These alliances succeeded in influencing legislative change in respect of the age of consent, and contributed to the international movement to eradicate the traffic,

conceptualized as the *white slave trade*. The employment of melodramatic tactics to promote social concerns was widespread in the late nineteenth century in relation to the *white slave trade* and its association with prostitution.

I discussed various events related to the case of Adeline Tanner; drawing on primary sources which are part of a collection of documents stored in the Home Office archives at the Public Records Office. I drew particular attention to the conflicts between the accounts of various actors involved in Adeline's case. Adeline's case and the pressure mounted by the newly allied prominent purity campaigners including, Josephine Butler directly influenced the commissioning of official investigations in Europe. Adeline's story had a strong influence on the direction of trafficking campaigns in the early 1880s, and particularly on the demands for increasing the age of consent which was being debated in parliament during that period. Josephine Butler gave the purity campaigns political and public credibility as well as providing support to William Stead, one of the principle social purity campaigners and, by no coincidence, the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. My analysis of Adeline's case demonstrates the differences in the way in which the central players understood trafficking, as well as highlighting the variations in the agendas of those involved, and illustrates how, then as now, how single extreme cases are advanced in anti- trafficking campaigning discourses.

The issue of child trafficking has been described as a moral panic, within the context of child prostitution and the *white slave trade*, which were both a focus of the *Maiden Tribute* series (Bristow 1978; Gorham 1978; Walkowitz 1992). However McRobbie and Thornton (1995) have challenged the value of moral panic theory as a way of explaining how social problems and public concerns are explained because of the exponential growth in media during the latter half of the twentieth century, and the difficulties therefore in drawing on studies of media.

The phenomenon of child trafficking as it appeared in the late nineteenth century associated the issues of child prostitution, the *white slave trade* and trafficking. These associations were promoted and amplified through the campaigning activities of the

social purity movement. Although the issue of child trafficking was one which united various reformers and puritans, this consensus was temporary as the ideological agendas of the various actors clashed on wider matters. Nevertheless, the impact of the purity campaigns regarding the issue of trafficking cannot be underestimated. By constructing child trafficking alongside child prostitution and *white slavery*, as a moral issue which should be addressed through punishment of the criminals and protection of the victims, the purity movement eclipsed explanations which focused on the underlying unequal structures and impoverishment of the working classes which were at the root of social inequalities (Gorham 1978).

Commonalities between the way in which child trafficking was constructed during this period and the way in which this issue is framed contemporaneously are also evident in the campaigning materials of both periods. The newspaper reports in *The Times* about the traffic in Italian children illustrated a growing emphasis on the dangers of unchecked migration, preventing the migration of children and castigating feckless parents. This is a theme which has re-surfaced in the twenty-first century media reports and policy discourses. The role of the media and the way in which it initially represented child trafficking is crucial to understanding how the issue emerged as a national UK policy issue in the late nineteenth century and relevant in regard to the subsequent and enduring characterisation of child trafficking. This might be best explained in the sense of a media template (Kitzenger 2000). A number of key critiques of the *Maiden Tribute* series which exposed trafficking when it was published in 1885 are unanimous in their view that the concerns publicized by the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* drew on well established ideological assumptions about the family, female sexuality and danger. The veracity of the claims made by William Stead in the *Maiden Tribute* series have also been contested (Chesney 1970; Pearsall 1969). As also discussed critics have previously highlighted the melodramatic genre which characterised the series (Walkowitz 1992; Hadley 1995).

In chapter four I discussed my analysis of current UK policies associated with child trafficking; including *The UK Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings*, sexual offences, immigration and asylum legislation and the private fostering regulations.

Current policy focuses on prevention, protection, prosecution, age assessment to determine legality of entry/status, risk assessment and family reunification. In UK policy terms immigration is seen as a problem to be managed rather than as a natural and desirable human activity. Hence, rather than removing the barriers and restrictions that prohibit child migrations which might make the routes children use much safer; solutions have tended to focus upon tightening immigration controls. Many migrations are temporary and both adults and children at some point will return to their countries of origin, having gained skills and knowledge to enable them to make a valuable contribution to their own countries and communities, and of course their families. During the time that children are here they will maintain contact with their families and communities, and will send remittances which assist their families and kinship networks in their countries of origin.

In this study I discussed how UK policies for safeguarding migrant children, including those thought to have been trafficked from other countries, are located within conflicting policy frameworks. These are designed primarily to secure UK and European borders from external threats, including illegal immigration and terrorism. In terms of the UK stance and policy towards migration, commentators argue that migration is made increasingly difficult because of entry restrictions and visa requirements, and consequently irregular routes have expanded to accommodate the migration needs of those denied legal entry (Salt 2005; Black 2003). There is a lack of evidence to support the claims of UK NGOs that what is known about child trafficking is '*the tip of the iceberg*'. The phenomenon, however, remains a government priority in relation to immigration and UK security policies which are aimed at securing and regulating EU borders, in response to a loosely defined 'organised crime element' which characterises the perspectives of security agencies towards trafficking. In addition and also an important consideration is the fact that anti-trafficking NGOs and government agencies have 'vested interests' in the debates and policy-making arenas. They have benefitted financially and seen an expansion in their roles. The NSPCC and ECPAT have been party to consultations and have been the recipients of government funding to develop preventative and awareness raising projects about child trafficking in the UK. This is also

true of CEOP. However, the consensus aspects central to the policy-making process suggest that, whilst on the surface there may be tensions between government and NGO positions on migration and child safeguarding, policy-making will be a pragmatic process rather than a radical overhaul of existing policy (Sutton 1999). The construction of risk thus emerges in a context where moral judgments about international child migration and commercial sex work predominate.

I identified a variety of themes which emerged in the analysis of the interviews in chapter five and I discussed the way in which respondents talked about their understanding of child trafficking. Analysis of the interview narratives illustrated the various strategies which participants drew on to claim expertise, knowledge and to advance dubious statistics and theories. Firstly they amplified the risks of migration and in immigration. Secondly they attributed the characteristics of victim, and a heroic or saviour role; illustrated in their references to their own research and experiences and in case studies. Thirdly they identified potential threats and labelled various groups as having power, control and motivation in the fight against trafficking; a fight depicted as being between good and evil. Fourthly there was some confusion as to who or what was to blame for the phenomenon of child trafficking which was illustrated in narratives about the family; children's communities; and traffickers. Fifthly child trafficking was described as immeasurable, almost invisible, but potentially catastrophic. Finally the analysis of interview narratives illustrates how claims about expertise and knowledge were drawn from anecdotes, hearsay, third party accounts and largely questionable statistics.

In the previous chapter I elaborated further on the way in which risk is socially constructed in policy discourses and in the analysis of interviews narratives with key informants in the ports safeguarding sector. In addition to discussing interviewees' use of atrocity tales, I drew on risk theories which specified key risk discourses. These discourses were identified as; *victims of a better life*; *the exploitation thesis*, *global crime*, *the worst case scenario* and the *tip of the iceberg*. I discussed the various ways in which these are amplified across anti-trafficking networks, drawing on a model based on Hadley (1995). This analysis illustrates the melodramatic character and quality of the interview

narratives which are performed as 'protest'. The narratives convey 'outrage' about the 'significant, hidden and harmful' characteristics of child trafficking.

I then examined how risk was socially constructed in wider child trafficking discourses. I have argued that melodramatic tactics best explain this construction. Melodramatic tactics have historical precursors, as I have illustrated throughout this thesis and there are commonalities in the language of the late nineteenth century purity organisations and their activities and the way in which child trafficking is explained and defined in current policy-making discourses, particularly, although not uniquely, in NGO networks. The conceptual lens of melodramatic tactics describes the data which emerged in the interviews and in the analysis of policy documents. Whilst risk theories have valuable potential for understanding the way in which discourses convey concerns about children vulnerable to trafficking, melodramatic tactics as a conceptual lens best explains the explicit strategies which interview respondents drew on to articulate and amplify their concerns. The stories of concern and risk which characterise child trafficking discourses are amplified through the various NGO and policy-making networks. These stories of the *victims of a better life*, *the exploitation thesis* and *global crime* obscure tensions in policy and practice. They also reveal common themes in the advancing of concerns about child trafficking as the *worst case scenario*, *the tip of the iceberg* and *significant, hidden and harmful*.

It was evident in my analysis that participants used narrative strategies in their discussion of the issues of child trafficking, which foregrounded the victims and the exploitation children suffered at the hands of traffickers. Essentially the more sensationalist or dramatic aspects of the story predominated in the interview narratives. My analysis of the narrative strategies suggests that melodramatic tactics are utilised by policy makers, activists and practitioners to publicise child trafficking and raise awareness of its potentially tragic consequences. The conceptual framework of melodramatic tactics thus goes some way towards explaining the amplification and construction of risk in child trafficking discourses.

The exploitation thesis

Campaigning groups and organisations have previously been criticised for the way in which they portray the issue of trafficking and for their role in undermining the interests of those who they are advocating for (Vandekerckhove 2003; Sharma 2004). This critique has been reinforced by my own research findings, which stand in sharp contrast to the claims made in NGO publications. Little evidence has been found to support the claim that child trafficking is a major social issue in the UK involving countless numbers of ‘hidden’, exploited children. The *exploitation thesis* holds firm to the idea that children are vulnerable to exploitation; their limited capacity (that is, age; position in the family; community; society) leaves them unable to negotiate or exercise power. This is explicitly so in relation to the way in which the issue of child trafficking is portrayed in policy and practice discourses.

It is also right to point out the influential role played by NGO activists who define those they advocate for as: “*a passive, helpless victim awaiting rescue by a good adult*” (Montgomery 1998 p.140). In fact, a significant body of research has drawn attention to the extent to which ‘victim’ discourses fail to appreciate the complexities of issues that become categorised as ‘child protection problems’. As Montgomery (1998) argues, such discourses individuate and create a category of the pathologised other; i.e. those who fail to conform, and resist dominant values and norms. They are then subjected to increased surveillance under the guise of protection (Montgomery 1998). Again this is the case in relation to child trafficking in the UK and is evident in the criminal justice direction at the basis of UK policy-making in respect of trafficked children.

The implications of policy-making with regard to the exploitation of children have been discussed previously in terms of the use of research which is primarily designed to stop some form of exploitation (Montgomery 1998). Such research often starts from the de-facto assumption that exploitation is occurring and widespread and other interpretations of events are immediately obscured. In these studies there is pressure to examine issues

of child exploitation as a prelude to stopping it. Montgomery (1998) argues that underscoring the desire for information about children is an emphasis on stories which are about their abuse and degradation, not their every-day experiences, and this does seem to be the case here. A similar picture emerges in the portrayal of other social problems that are associated with trafficking. Like child prostitution, child trafficking is a moral issue which is set apart from the wider political economy, and focuses on the 'depraved' individual in a 'functioning' society or on 'oppressed' characters in a 'base world'.

The age of consent classifies all under 18 in an asexual category, which obscures the diversity in development of children. In a study of how adolescents frame their engagement in sex work, to gain an understanding of what sexual exploitation meant for them De Sas Kropiwnicki (2005), demonstrates how agency and power are exercised by some young female sex workers. Adolescent sex workers develop survival strategies and choices in a very constrained and limited context. They are active social agents, and their decisions are not automatically coerced ones and were not made in isolation from other factors. De Sas Kropiwnicki (2005) cautions us to be wary of the victimisation discourse which implies damage, helplessness, an inability to cope, or, and being in need of special care. There is no neat way to define children by age; it is almost always context specific; a child might be a mother in one context; i.e. a 'teenage mum' and a 'child prostitute' in another. Children have as a matter of course and of necessity, multiple identities, and 'victim' is only one of them:

"By categorizing or labelling them as victims – damaged and different- one is not doing any justice to the countless ways that they seek advise to evade maltreatment or cope with exploitation" (De Sas Kropiwnicki 2005 p.8).

As De Sas Kropiwnicki (2005) points out, child prostitution discourses are characterised as an 'exploitation thesis' This suggests that as children are under the age of 18 they cannot legally engage in sex work and thus their involvement is constructed as coercive and in violation of their rights. Similarities were evident in my research on child

trafficking and expressed in the way in which children were thought to be forced or coerced in some way into exploitative situations. Of course, the added dimension in child trafficking discourses is that parents are implicated in orchestrating the trade and failing to protect their children.

Montgomery (1998) also discusses the role of NGOs and the media interest in issues associated with children's sexuality, and draws our attention to the way in which stories of child sexual exploitation are implicitly exciting. As she illustrates, the prurient horrors illustrated in the NGO stories have been designed with the express intention of harnessing political support. This has been the case in relation to the discourse which surrounds the trafficking in women (Doezema 2003; Sharma 2004) and also evident in my own research whereby the NGO reports highlight the *worst case scenario* and specifically the *tip of the iceberg* perspectives. Explanation and understanding of the issue are substituted by sensationalism and moral outrage.

Despite the overwhelming lack of research in the UK to substantiate the claims of NGOs and policy makers, the issue of child trafficking has been the subject of policy-making since the start of the twenty-first century. More problematically, the issue of child trafficking has been variously described as a moral panic. There is in my view little doubt that this description is valid, in the sense that there is a moral agenda underpinning campaigning and policy in this area. However, in defining an event as a moral panic the issue is subject to being always typecast in this way, potentially minimising the need for informed rigorous debate. The absence of an informed and academic debate on the subject has left an opportune space for the emergence and re-emergence of stories about child trafficking which have little basis in reality.

In this thesis I have argued that the media play an important role in amplifying the risks which are associated with child trafficking in the UK, drawing attention to the role they play in sustaining a sensationalistic child trafficking discourse. As shown in chapter three, the historical records illustrate that this approach again has its roots in the nineteenth century campaigning activities and methods of the social purity organisations

of that period. By focusing debates on the melodramatic aspects of child trafficking discourses, the media, campaigners and policy makers present simplistic explanations, which demand common sense solutions. In doing so they obviate analysis and prioritising of more critical and structural issues associated with the migration and exploitation of children. Alternative perspectives about the migrations of children, however, have limited currency in current policy and practice, which is informed by speculations and assumptions about immigration and by ideological beliefs about children and childhood (Fass 2005). This is evident in the positioning of children in current UK child trafficking discourses as *victims* with no capacity to consent.

The key themes emerging in this analysis suggests that risk in child trafficking is constructed using a range of communication modes evident in the narrative strategies which *amplify concern* using rhetorical and polemical statements. Heroic deeds and adventures of children and young people who survive arduous journeys do not make good tabloid or broadsheet headlines, nor do stories which seek to draw attention to the push factors that play a part in influencing migratory decisions, the mass media being driven by competition and circulation figures, print and publicise stories which sell. . (Aldridge1994; Geddes 2003). Instead the media apply 'victim' status to children who are separated, and such characterisations have wide emotional appeal. The portrayal of children as victims also has political currency in that it serves as a powerful justification for tightening immigration controls. To an extent, it also absolves governments of responsibility for helping to alleviate/solve the real problems that contribute to child migrations - such as poverty, war and oppression. Stories of triumph overcoming adversity are also themes in the literary theory of melodrama, but have yet to gain ascendancy in the existing discourses which surround this phenomenon.

Strengths and weaknesses of this study

This thesis contributes to the knowledge base about child trafficking in the UK. There is no existing review of the literature uniquely about child trafficking in the UK. The current literature on child trafficking is incorporated into the research on women and trafficking and generally describes the exploitation and abuse of children trafficked into or through the UK from feminist, human rights and security perspectives. This study is also qualitatively different from previous research in this area, for example the lack of separation between researchers and activists in research on the subject of trafficking has previously been highlighted as a methodological issue (Sharma 2004; De Lange 2005), and a key strength of this study is that it was undertaken as an independent piece of research, divorced from the existing anti-trafficking organisations and policy networks. My findings and analysis stand in sharp contrast to current research trajectories on the topic and advance a controversial explanation for the social construction of risk in child trafficking.

I do applaud the efforts of anti-trafficking activists, who, in their work, advocate for the rights of children. They can never be complacent as long as children are harmed or their rights flouted. However as I have illustrated in this thesis, in their efforts to stop trafficking, activists contribute to a sensationalist mode and, in doing so, exaggerate the extent of its incidence, and in doing so stereotype children as victims who need support and protection. The work and efforts of these NGOs are reliant on government funding; and on their being able to quantify the problem. The difficulties in establishing any reliable quantitative statistics have been referred to throughout this study, as have the activities of NGOs and the media who expand and extrapolate them. I have criticised studies by NGOs as being poorly designed and methodologically weak. Moreover they are informed and shaped by the agendas of the agencies that conduct them, and can hardly be described as research in the academic sense.

A significant strength of this study is that it examines the links between the historical and contemporary development of UK child trafficking policies. Whilst arguments related to the employment of melodramatic tactics have been previously advanced in relation to exposures of child trafficking, there has not been until now a study which locates current UK policy in a wider historical context and examines how risk has been constructed in discourses over long time periods.

There are some limitations to this study. This was a qualitative analysis and the emphasis has been on exposing the constructed nature of language associated with child trafficking stories. I did not set out or intend to quantify the issue of child trafficking. My analysis focussed on the articulations of risk in these stories, and explained these drawing on melodramatic tactics as a conceptual lens. The application of this is not without problems and reliance on melodramatic tactics as an explanation for modes of communication has been criticised (Sadoff 1997). Melodrama has undoubtedly been used to garner political and popular support through the employment of emotive language and rhetoric that draws on emotive universal concepts; romanticisation of home; familial narratives of loss and separation; danger, risk and threat from criminals. The application of the key characteristics of melodramatic tactics in this study was focussed on interview narratives from key informants in the ports safeguarding sector. Interviewees were drawn from a relatively small sample frame and were close to the action in terms of their activity and involvement in child trafficking policy and ports safeguarding practice. It could then be the case that practitioners and policy makers distanced from this work on a daily basis might have made very different responses.

Nonetheless the conceptual framework offered by melodramatic tactics theory provides a unique contribution to emerging debates about child trafficking in the twenty-first century. In further research this conceptual framework has the potential to illuminate narrative strategies and approaches on a range of politicised social issues. This framework illustrates the different ways in which risk is amplified; it enables analysis of the use of anecdotal and third party accounts, and allows the researcher to distinguish between specialist knowledge and narratives based on more polemical foundations.

Practice recommendations

The issues discussed in this thesis illustrate that there are a number of interpretations of a child trafficking scenario. I accept that some children are no doubt exploited and harmed by those who are charged with their care, indeed my career and teaching in the field of social work has been orientated towards this area. However, guidance and policy which informs and shapes the safeguarding of trafficked children coming to the UK is based on a deficit model of parenting, with a pronounced emphasis on children being located as victims of exploitation. As long as this model persists, narrowly focussed interventions with their emphasis on repatriation; removal and return will abound.

Multi-agency practice

Most of the interviewees who took part in my research raised issues relating to the problems they experienced with working with other agencies. As was shown, respondents frequently made negative comments about other agencies, who it was felt were not performing their roles effectively. In a previous study of multi-agency child care practice, Garrett (2004) also found tensions in working together, and the tendency of the police to see themselves as the lead agency, additionally there was a blurring of the social work role. In my study some of the tensions seemed to be related to the low status police officers accorded to social workers and perceptions that social work assessments were of poor quality. Similarly social work professionals tended to criticise police and immigration officials who they perceived as having limited knowledge about assessments and lack of resources to effectively police the ports and identify children at risk. NGOs in contrast were critical of the police and social workers, who they felt did not recognise child trafficking as a pressing child protection issue or as a crime. Meanwhile, the NGOs were criticised by policy makers for contributing dubious research and evidence on the issue. These criticisms were advanced by illustrating examples of poor practice in other agencies and suggest a sense of fragmentation and isolation between agencies rather than a sense of cooperation and unity which multi-agency practice requires. Further research on the dynamics of multi-agency work in this context might identify ways in which these

tensions can be resolved and addressed in practice. Given that multi-agency child ports safeguarding work is a relatively new practice development, it appears timely that this is evaluated and assessed in terms of its value in promoting better outcomes for children.

Advancing children's rights and interests

In my own experience, working with children and families in statutory social work requires a high degree of skill and expertise, particularly in assessment. The critical issues Laming (2003) and others raise relate to the capacity and indeed the ability of professionals to assess risk, and make safeguarding and welfare decisions based on their assessments. Arguably risk management and harm reduction approaches and systems extend the scope of safeguarding children well beyond the remit and expertise found in the traditional social work role. A key aspect of social work practice is in terms of promoting children's rights and interests, and it is also important to take into account cultural differences (May-Chahal and Coleman 2003). This has been specifically discussed in relation to African children involved in the UK child protection systems (Bernard and Gupta 2008) and the way in which social work professionals work with African refugee children and their families (Okitikpi and Aymer 2007).

Risk assessment cannot be achieved by merely asking questions and ticking boxes, it is an ongoing process which depends up on the relationship between the worker and the client. The assessment of risk is also a professional judgement which is theoretically informed. Clearly there is a need for practice in this sensitive area to be theoretically and culturally informed. This necessarily involves individual assessments which draw on agreed and reliable methods and approaches. Approaches to assessment need to identify and address perceptions that non- British cultural child-rearing practices are deemed to be damaging or dangerous to the health and well-being of children. There was significant disunity on the issue between the agencies involved in ports safeguarding work with migrant children and a reluctance to accept that social work assessments are valid and/or credible. The lack of understanding in terms of what constituted a typical child trafficking

situation has led to a great deal of speculation as I have argued throughout this study. The tools and indicators which are currently used have yet to be evaluated in terms of their evidencing progress in the identification of child trafficking cases. In addition the context within which these assessments are made is significantly different than in mainstream child care social work practice, given that children and their families or those they travel with are assessed during stressful conditions, when they have recently travelled or when they are detained in transitory environments (ports of entry), or when children claim refuge.

Interpretation

The issue of interpretation work with migrant children was marginal in the interview narratives in this study. Chand (2005), in a review of studies which examine social work practice associated with the use of and role of the interpreters, argues that there is a lack of training of social workers in the use of interpreters. Humphreys, Atkar and Baldwin (1999) identified organisational discrimination and limited attention paid to the interpretation requirements of children and their families. This has an impact on communication between the agency and the family/child, and greater likelihood of mutual misunderstanding due to cultural differences. Interpreters' knowledge and understanding of child welfare issues was another variable. In my own research the issues related to interpretation were evident when respondents discussed trying to communicate with children whose first language was not English. The difficulties were expressed in terms of trying to explain to children what was happening and in trying to elicit details about their journeys and families as part of the assessment of risk or need. The use of interpreters in this context is vital and pressing if children's own experiences are to be incorporated into the assessment process as policy dictates.

A genuine human rights perspective would also ensure that migrant children who come to the attention of ports safeguarding agencies have access to interpreters. It is equally important that social work professionals should ideally either speak languages other than English, or have access to interpreters trained and experienced in working with children.

It is not acceptable that children have their stories surmised, particularly when (as was the case with respondents in my research) agencies tend to interpret a failure to communicate effectively as evidence of ‘wrongdoing’ or ‘trafficking’. I am in full support of developing student social workers’ skills in understanding inter-cultural communication. I am also in support of social workers and students being trained in the use of interpreters when undertaking assessments, and a proactive approach to drawing on the expertise of migrant communities who can best educate social work students on adequate and ‘good enough’ parenting and how to assess this. As my study illustrates, the perceptions of situations were conveyed through ideas about risk, exposed in this study as little more than rhetoric.

Child trafficking research: ‘children on the move’?

Throughout this study I discussed the difficulties in researching the area of child trafficking, owing to the ‘hidden’ nature of human trafficking activities (Tyldum and Brunovskis 2005). There are considerable difficulties in researching child trafficking as those engaged in the process of trafficking are thought to be operating illegally and there are, therefore, limited sources of information or research outside of the criminal justice perspective to assess the dynamics which interplay and result in a trafficking scenario. In the discussion related to policy-making I also illustrated how safeguarding provisions for migrant children are located within conflicting policy frameworks designed to both secure UK and European borders from external threats, including immigration and terrorism, and to facilitate ‘legal migration’ (Black 2005; Salt 2003). As such, migration is made increasingly difficult, and irregular routes expand to accommodate the migration needs of those denied legal entry. The policy emphasis is on controlling migration and the migration of children is viewed negatively. In this sense then it would be a more viable option to conduct research on or about migrant children and their experiences, rather than solely focusing on trafficked children. As this thesis has illustrated, the definition of what constitutes a child trafficking scenario is promoted from a criminal justice perspective, and thus research to date has been used to develop tools and

approaches to protect children, prevent trafficking and prosecute traffickers. Uniquely, this current study promotes a research agenda which seeks to shift the emphasis towards a children's rights perspective.

In both policy and practice terms, when it is felt that children's welfare and rights are flouted, or they are abused, there is a tendency for concern to be expressed with sensationalist rhetoric. Various topics tend to promote controversial and polemic rhetoric and in recent years 'problems' associated with children and childhood have been the subject of political rhetoric, aided and abetted by a hungry media industry. The increased surveillance and regulation of children's lives is an ongoing academic discussion which draws on sociological perspectives; these perspectives argue that *concern agendas* underpin child welfare policies and highlight the increased regulation of children's lives (Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers 1992).

Primarily research on child trafficking in the UK has been undertaken with the aim of informing policy and practice, and focussed on stopping what is considered to be a heinous crime. This has largely been conducted by anti-trafficking activists, commissioned by the UK Home Office or other government departments. Existing sampling approaches to child trafficking focus on quantification and construct specific characteristics, and these are too wide to be useful in determining incidences of child trafficking. This approach might be useful in identifying a broad range of potential scenarios which might be categorised as child trafficking, smuggling, illegal entry, and potential exploitation, but it cannot be used to estimate or quantify incidence of child trafficking with any degree of accuracy. Current approaches are thus severely limited in their conceptual framing of the issue as child exploitation which must be stopped at all costs.

The sale and exploitation of children is a global issue, and one which has been a focus of UK policy-making and research attention in times past, notably in the seventeenth century and in the late nineteenth century; and more recently during periods of conflict/war and the child migrants this has created. The journeys, experiences and

promise which migration holds for children are constructed in child trafficking discourses as: *A better life* and this is a myth according to the anti-trafficking rhetoric. A more useful emphasis might be to focus research more keenly on child migration and children's migration histories and experiences, an approach advocated by those such as Fass (2003).

Studies which focus on the migrations of children within and between international communities might help to illuminate some of the peculiarities and characteristics of traditional kinship placement practices at macro (state or national), meso (bureaucracy and administration) and micro levels (within and between communities and kinships). Studies which examine children's different experiences of migration and kinship care might also situate children in the discourse as active social agents. Prioritising a participatory research paradigm which gives priority to children's voices over and above the polemic of NGOs, policy makers and practitioners is essential, given the limited room for them in the existing *outrage-driven* discourse which is dominant. Studies of children as global migrants have already made some headway in identifying the aspirations and agency of children (Iverson 2002; De Lange 2005; Busza *et al.* 2005; Hashim 2005; Hashim 2006). They have also identified and challenged the rescue activities of NGOs as being detrimental to children. These studies highlight the role of extended family networks in supporting children's migrations. Rather than being traffickers, adults in these studies advocated for children and provided them with safe travel and accommodation options. The longer term benefits of migration to children, their families and communities have also been evidenced in these studies.

In conclusion, I have in this thesis argued that the employment of *melodramatic tactics* in the debates on child trafficking echo those of the late nineteenth century campaigns orchestrated by the social purity movements. These campaigns were instrumental in raising public and political awareness of the extent of child exploitation. It has previously been argued that the focus of these campaigns misdirected urgent attention to the unequal structures in society which left working class children with limited options and opportunities (Gorham 1978). This argument applied more widely to the way in which UK child trafficking policies have developed in the twenty-first century illustrates a

similar picture. Policy makers and campaigning organisations need an informed understanding of the many cultural child-rearing practices, and to develop policy responses which support 'global' families whatever their constitution.

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APPENDIX

1. **Key informant information sheet**
2. **Participant consent form**
3. **Interview schedule**
4. **Table of literature searches**

Appendix 1

Key Informant Information Sheet

Child Trafficking in the twenty-first century
Research into UK social policy perspectives

You are being invited to take part in a research study into child trafficking. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. If there is anything that is not clear, or if you would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact me, (details below).

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Joanne Westwood

Aims of research

The key aims of the research programme are:

- To review the available research and quantitative information on child trafficking.
- To examine and analyse the current and historical ideological features which inform national and international policies on child trafficking
- To review UK counter trafficking initiatives and evaluate their impact on child trafficking
- To develop a theory of child trafficking

The International Organisation for Migration³³ maintains that there is a lack of comprehensive data in the numbers of children trafficked. This project will seek to explore the issues which prohibit effective data collation and analysis of child trafficking. International conventions and research agendas have been influenced by concerns raised regarding the growth in the commercial sex industry, arguably at the expense of identifying and addressing the variety of exploitative outcomes children experience. This research programme will include an exploration of these issues. This research will assess counter trafficking activities as they impact on exploited and vulnerable children, comparing government responses and initiatives which are designed to address factors which promote and facilitate trafficking in order to determine their effectiveness.

³³ International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2002) "Trafficking in unaccompanied minors in the European Union"
URL http://www.iom.int/documents/publication/en/traff_unac_minors_2003_en.pdf
(accessed 12/4/05)

Project timescales

The research project began in 2004 and will be completed by October 2007. Interviews with key informants are planned to take place from July 2005-December 2006.

Your participation

You have been invited to participate in the research project because of your role in the child trafficking sector. In total 30 key informants will be invited to participate in the research. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

Interviews

Participation in a semi structured interview conducted by telephone or in person. The interview will last for up to a maximum of 90 minutes. The interview will be arranged at a time and location convenient to you, between July 2005 and December 2006. Interviews will be digitally recorded and notes will be taken. Information on your role and status in the child trafficking sector will be required. You may elect not to be personally identified in the research.

Key Informant Organisational Data Collection on child trafficking

This will be based on organisation/institution not on individual cases of trafficked children.

Consent

In order for you to participate your written consent will be required. You will be provided with a written copy of the consent form.

By signing the consent form you will:

Consent to participate in a semi structured interview, conducted by phone or in person which will last for up to a maximum of 90 minutes

Consent to the interview being digitally recorded and notes being taken and agree to ensure that information provide is accurate and reliable to the best of your knowledge

Consent to ensure that relevant consent is gained for submission of any material and that any material provided is anonymised where appropriate prior to submission to the researcher

Consent to provide relevant information regarding your role and status. You will retain the right to withdraw your consent at anytime and to refuse to answer any questions. You have the right to refuse to be named in the research

Research findings

Key Findings will be submitted for publication in relevant academic journals and literature associated with the child trafficking sector. The research element of the programme will be incorporated within the final submission of PhD theses entitled “Safeguarding Children in Transit to the UK”. Key findings may also be used by the child trafficking sector to shape policy and planning for children who are trafficked, or at risk of being trafficked.

Confidentiality

Research findings based on your participation may be attributed to you unless you clearly indicate in the consent form that you do not wish to be personally named.

Data protection

Interview data will be securely stored; this along with participant information will be kept in accordance with the University Of Central Lancashire Code Of Conduct for research, which stipulates that data will be stored for at least 10 years after completion of the project, and in accordance with the Data Protection 1998.

Research Institution

The research is being conducted by a PhD research student based in the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health, at the University of Central Lancashire.

For further details or information about this study please contact:

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Appendix 2

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Child trafficking in the twenty-first century: UK social policy perspectives.

CONSENT

- I agree to participate in a semi structured interview, conducted by telephone or in person.
- I understand that this interview will last for up to a maximum of 90 minutes
- I consent to the interview being digitally recorded and notes being taken
- I understand that the information I provide will be stored in accordance with the University of Central Lancashire code of conduct for research.
- I understand that the research will be carried out in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998
- I agree to ensure that information provide is accurate and reliable to the best of my knowledge
- I agree to ensure that relevant consent is gained for submission of any case study material and that any case study material provided is anonymised prior to submission to the researcher as appropriate.
- I agree to provide relevant information regarding my role and status

- I understand that I have the right to withdraw my consent at anytime
- I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any questions
- I understand that have the right to refuse to be named in the
research

I confirm that I have read and understood the issues and herewith provide my consent to participate in the research project: Child Trafficking in the twenty-first century: A UK Social Policy perspective. (Please initial the box to confirm your consent.)

I agree to anonymise and case study material provided during the interview in order to protect the identity of children and young people.
(Please initial the box to confirm)

I agree a to submit information about my organisation requested in the Key Informant Organisational Data Collection Form
(please initial in the box to confirm)

I consent to my name being included within the research findings
(Please initial in the box to confirm)

Signed.....

Name in full.....

Job Title.....

Address:.....

Post Code.....

Telephone Number.....

E-Mail Address.....

Appendix 3

Interview schedule

Child trafficking research

Semi structured interview questionnaire

- a. What is your definition of child trafficking?**
- b. What is your role in addressing the issues associated with “child trafficking”?**
- c. What in your view are the priorities for addressing “child trafficking”**
- d. What in your view have current policies achieved?**
- e. How long has “child trafficking” been an issue in your agency?**
- f. When did you first become aware of “child trafficking” as an issue for your agency?**
- g. What in your view has been effective in counter trafficking activities, what has been the impact, where is the evidence?**
- h. What in your view is the most effective way of supporting children who have been trafficked, and what is their evidence for this?**
- i. How have the issues of “child trafficking” changed over time, what issues have changed, where is the evidence for this, how do your agency respond to these changes?**

Appendix 4

Table 11 to show literature searches using the key words “child trafficking”:

Database name	Date of searches	Results generated	Results after removals
<i>Jstor</i>	25/06/2006	644	11
<i>EBSCOHOST</i>	25/06/2006	96	30
<i>Web of Knowledge</i>	25/06/2006	69	5
<i>Science Direct</i>	24/10/2006	24	1
<i>Ingenta Connect</i>	24/10/2006	13	1
<i>Social Care Online</i>	24/10/2006	8	5
Total		854	53