

Performing Concern, Exercising Power? Celebrities and the Anti-Human Trafficking Movement

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Paper presented at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association
San Francisco, CA

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“Celebrity involvement may amplify the story—it’s all we can do ...[to] inspire you to get involved”
- George Clooney, *Half the Sky (Part 1)*

At the 2018 Golden Globes, women donned black gowns, while men in black tuxedos sported pins that read “Time’s Up.” Together, these fashion choices responded to the cascade of sexual harassment and assault allegations against numerous powerful men in Hollywood over the past year, and to the regularity of this violence for women in all areas of society. Yet this celebrity action was not confined to fashion statements. By the time the Golden Globes aired, “Time’s Up” had raised millions of dollars to fund legal services for individuals challenging workplace sexual harassment, and numerous celebrities brought as their dates activists who have organized marginalized women for many years, such as Tarana Burke, who started the #metoo movement, and Ai-jen Poo, the director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. These women received prominent introductions and opportunities to speak about their work at the Golden Globes, and many of the celebrities in attendance took every opportunity to draw attention to their efforts.

Certainly, celebrities—persons well known for their artistic, athletic, or other endeavors— are not the first group to promote gender equality and work to eradicate gender-based violence. As scholars have documented, global attention to and activism regarding this issue has escalated since at least the mid-1970s, as various women’s movement organizations, elected officials, NGOs, grassroots activists and others worked together-- often across considerable racial, socio-economic, and cultural/national differences-- to raise public awareness, offer services, and change public policy (Htun and Weldon 2015, 2010, Weldon 2006, 2011). Yet the 2018 Golden Globes indicated that when celebrities take up an issue, the public and political response to their efforts may differ significantly in scope and speed: it quickly drew national and international attention, raised money for direct services, and even shone a light on

efforts of women like Burke and Poo, who have been working on these issues for many years. Are celebrities, then, the “secret” to illuminating issues, experiences, and populations that have been invisible to, deprioritized, or ignored by political leaders and the general public? While this is indeed a speculative and subjective question, I pose it to interrogate celebrities’ political power—how this operates and its benefits, disadvantages, and potential outcomes, particularly for addressing issues of sex and gender-based vulnerability to violence.

To explore this question, this paper¹ considers celebrities’ efforts to raise awareness about human trafficking, an allegedly massive but hidden problem in the U.S. and internationally. Even as they are unelected and have no direct experience with the issue, celebrities have long been involved with the anti-trafficking movement, speaking publicly, influencing legislators, and devoting significant financial resources to this cause (Haynes 2014). My research project thus asks the following questions. Empirically, how and to what extent do celebrities “illuminate” the issue of human trafficking? Interpretively, what does the “light” of celebrity miss, distort, and/or reflect about this issue? And what can we learn from all of this about celebrities’ power and engagement in politics more broadly?

My (initial) answers to these questions are based on findings drawn from a dataset I created to capture and quantify celebrities’ anti-human trafficking activism from 2000, when the contemporary anti-trafficking movement came to prominence, to 2016 (the end of the Obama Administration). After situating these activities theoretically and historically, within broader literatures about celebrities and politics and human trafficking, I briefly describe my qualitative-interpretive methods of data collection and analysis. Next, I show that, empirically, celebrities

¹ Dear Reader: this paper is a rough introduction to an eventual book, where I will discuss in more detail many of the methods, theoretical/historical frames, findings, etc. that I cover here. I welcome any suggestions about how to organize and elaborate this project!

tend to illuminate human trafficking to the broader public through highly visible, media-friendly activities, namely, fundraisers, campaigns, and documentaries. Yet while these activities may indeed draw attention to human trafficking, a deeper interpretive analysis indicates the limits of celebrities' bright light: while their actions provide a melodramatic narrative of human trafficking that grabs attention, they also narrowly define its forms, victims, and causes, while minimizing the structural factors that perpetuate it. The remainder of the paper considers what this performance indicates about how we understand and address gender-based vulnerability to violence and celebrities' political power and accountability more broadly.

Contextualizing Celebrities' Anti-Trafficking Activism

Given their visibility and large fan bases, celebrities are well-positioned to draw attention to various issues. In the US, celebrities' political activism can be traced to the 1960s, when the Hollywood studio system was declining in the wake of the Red Scare. This led many actors who were formerly constrained by studio contracts to become "free agents," while the mounting social turmoil in the nation set the stage for them to become politically active. Many embraced this opportunity enthusiastically, such as Jane Fonda, who visited Vietnam to voice her opposition to the war, and Charlton Heston and Paul Newman, who debated nuclear disarmament on national television (Demaine 2009, Gamson 1994). Since then, celebrities have entered the American political realm en masse and made direct appeals to the broader public's political consciousness (Marks and Fischer 2002, Demaine 2009), beginning with Bob Geldof's 1985 recording of "Do They Know It's Christmas" and the related Live Aid concerts in 1985. From here, as scholars have documented, celebrities have variously advocated for conservation and LGBT rights (Meyer and Gamson 1995); promoted engagement in electoral politics, including both Democratic and Republican electoral campaigns and get-out-the-vote efforts

(Payne, Hanlon, and Twomey 2007, Nolan and Brookes 2013); testified before Congressional committees (Demaine 2009); and participated in international diplomacy (Choi and Berger 2010), development (Biccum 2011, Brockington 2014), and humanitarian aid (Repo and Yrjölä 2011).

What explains celebrities' political ascendance, given that they often have little direct knowledge of or experience with the issues they take on? The answer to this question rests, in part, on the relationship between celebrities, fans, and fantasies. Put simply, celebrity is not an inherent quality but a production: individuals become famous—celebrated—when they are admired by large groups of people (fans) for their artistic, athletic, or other endeavors (or lack thereof, as the Kardashians' popularity indicates). Yet individual feats of artistry or athleticism are not enough to sustain fame; celebrities must *continually* be seen and recognized for their work. As a result, celebrity is not an inherent quality or condition but a process (Drake and Higgins 2012); it must be created, produced, and maintained through a combination of texts (e.g. television shows), producers (e.g. publicists), and audiences (those who encounter and use their images) (Gamson 1994, Rojek 2001).

Celebrities' power, then, comes in part from their capacity to offer a fantasy-- to do "the impossible" over and over again. As Aida Hozic writes, power is, fundamentally, the ability to "organize fantasies" (Hozic 2001, 13), and this makes "Hollywood" (as both a location and a catch-all name for the entertainment industry) profoundly political; it is one of the greatest forces behind the production and consumption of fantasies—of ideals and fears—in the US and internationally. Celebrities, particularly those in the entertainment sector, embody this power as they enact fantasies through television shows and movies, which reach vast audiences; their ability to sing beautifully or act in ways that make us cry, among other feats, sets them apart

from the rest of us. Therefore, even as they may not be super-heroes, crusaders, or moral leaders “in real life,” their performances, supported and promoted by Hollywood, draw vast numbers of fans who may believe, to some degree, that they have the power to change the world. It is not surprising, then, that people not only believe that Angelina Jolie and Le Bron James care about particular issues, they also believe that they can do something about them.

Celebrities are thus a fantasy-generating and largely commercial phenomenon that is coordinated and produced by a wide-ranging media industry and consumed by audiences. And while this has long been the case, an array of intersecting socio-cultural and political-economic conditions have further facilitated and sustained their contemporary political ascendance. One of these conditions is the changing “media-scape,” as indicated by the introduction of the internet, cell phone technologies, the proliferation of cable channels, and increasingly plentiful tablet/laptop computers (van Elteren 2013). Within this media-scape, *social* media use has also grown through the development of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, among other popular platforms, all of which provide an alternative to and competition for the more traditional corporate media. In fact, “the number of social networking site users has grown from 33% of the online population in 2008 to 69% of the online population in 2012” (Smith 2013, 7). This media-scape ensures 24-7 access to current events/news *and* other people, thereby facilitating what Douglas Kellner calls the rise of the media spectacle, where “competition for the audience’s attention is ever more intense” and the corporate media is increasingly compelled to attract maximal audiences for as much time as possible until the next spectacle emerges (Kellner 2009, 716).

Celebrities, with their penchant for dramatization and their large fan-bases, provide the perfect draw for audiences in this media-scape. As a result, the corporate media increased its

“infotainment” output, providing evermore celebrity news and gossip to attract viewers. Celebrities themselves are also prolific (social) media users, and as they mobilize their considerable resources and communications talents to draw audiences to their various Twitter feeds, etc., the public has become closer to and more knowledgeable about them *and* the causes they care about (Brockington and Henson 2014, Biccum 2011). Therefore, even when when they *are not* on television or the basketball court (or whatever other space from which they engage their fans), celebrities can capture attention for various issues and present themselves as concerned spokespeople through charismatic performances, their skilled use of communication technologies, and constant access to vast networks of adoring fans (Demaine 2009).

Alongside a changing media-scape, political participation patterns have also changed. As I have written elsewhere, “many scholars, following the lead of Robert Putnam, argue that civic participation peaked in the 1960s and has decreased ever since (Putnam 1995). Recent empirical research suggests that ordinary Americans’ knowledge about politics, trust in political institutions, and voting participation have declined significantly...” (Majic 2011, 821). Of course, many scholars also argue that participation has not declined but *shifted* from “duty-based” activities, such as voting and military service to more “engaged” forms of citizenship, such as boycotts (Dalton 2008). As well, the organization of political engagement has witnessed a growth in advocacy groups (Skocpol 2003, Strolovitch 2007), nonprofits (Majic 2014, Berry and Arons 2003), and philanthropic activity, as more and more millionaires and billionaires step in to ameliorate public problems (Goss 2016). Consequently, the political process is more elite-dominated: not only do the wealthy contribute record amounts to political campaigns, but political authority is increasingly delegated to private actors in global governance (Partzsch 2017).

Corporate and other powerful actors, including celebrities, are now more able than ever to use their resources and media expertise to convince the public that they have the answers to the problems they face (Bang 2007, Hart and Tindall 2009, Brockington 2014). And elected officials have not ignored this development, using celebrity associations to promote themselves (Street 2004). They are often as star-struck as the general population, and they know that bringing a celebrity to speak at an event or testify before a legislative body will engage their constituents. Therefore, even as celebrities are not democratically elected, their high profiles and fan-bases position them to promote political engagement by directing public attention to various issues, shaping how the public understands them and, at times, influencing policy developments. In effect, celebrities are now enlisted in causes and movements to “reinvigorate the masses” (Marks and Fischer 2002, 380), becoming part of the political landscape to the extent that, as Steele and Shores (2014) so trenchantly observe, state authority is now shared with celebrities, who are able to capture public and political attention in ways that politicians cannot.

In this elite-driven media-scape and political environment, celebrities have taken on various roles in politics, using their status to make political interventions or pursue causes (Street 2004). In so doing, they are acting as “norm entrepreneurs”-- individuals interested in challenging and changing norms, which are broadly defined as beliefs about appropriate behavior for persons with a given identity (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). There are many ways in which celebrities can work as norm entrepreneurs, including testifying before Congress, appearing at protests, or becoming official spokespeople for particular organizations, among other examples. What sets celebrities’ norm entrepreneurship apart is their use of their *fame* to challenge and change norms (Partzsch 2017). In one example, as Alexandra Budabin (2015) shows in her study of Mia Farrow’s activism regarding the Beijing Olympics, celebrities engage

in norm entrepreneurship to draw attention to an issue (human rights abuses), secure an organizational platform, build state support, and shape policy.

In addition to their fame, celebrities also draw from their considerable financial and social resources to further their norm entrepreneurship through philanthropy. Since their fortunes may not be as great as well-known philanthropists like Warren Buffet, they often use their fame and media reach to draw *others'* resources to their causes and related fundraising efforts. This form of philanthropy often comes in the form of “celanthropy,” whereby the celebrities are involved in humanitarian and charitable causes that might have formerly been the job of the state (Littler 2015). These celanthropic activities often promote market-based solutions to social problems, such as Project RED, which was founded in 2006 by Bono and Bobby Shriver and used chic consumerism “to get businesses and people involved in the fight against AIDS”.² Although critics argue that this initiative masked the social, racial and environmental trade and production relations that underpin poverty, inequality and disease, particularly in Africa (Richey and Ponte 2008), it was popular because it used celebrities and consumerism to “solve” a social problem.

Altogether, a combination of fame, fantasy, and socio-political factors have brought us to a point where, as Marks and Fischer (2002) write, we are in the era of the celebrity activist. On the one hand, this “bright light” of celebrity is beneficial: in an era of declining and fragmented political engagement, celebrities’ high profiles bring issues to the public’s attention (Demaine 2009), and they also provide “information shortcuts” for average citizens (Frizzell 2011). On the other hand, scholars have documented that celebrities often lack the training and knowledge

² See <http://www.red.org/en/about>. When customers purchase select products from various partner companies, such as Apple or Starbucks, a portion of the sale “goes towards the fight against AIDS.” To date, according to red.org, “We’ve raised over \$300 million to date through the sale of (RED) products.”

about the issues they address, and they tend to over-simplify issues (Dieter and Kumar 2008, Demaine 2009). Moreover, they often detract attention from the local activists who are more familiar with and committed to the issues on the ground (Meyer and Gamson 1995, Cooper 2007). As well, celebrities are rarely accountable for the solutions to social problems that they propose (Haynes 2014). With this in mind, the remainder of this discussion considers their engagement regarding a particularly high-profile issue: human trafficking.

Anti-Trafficking Politics

According to the UN's Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children (2000), human trafficking is defined as

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or 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 purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, 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 (United Nations 2014)

But as the following discussion indicates, even though this term is common place in media and popular culture, it remains highly imprecise and contested (Lee 2011). Not only is human trafficking often confused and conflated with activities such as smuggling and migration, but a confluence of political alliances and a lack of reliable data has meant that popular and political discourse predominantly emphasizes *sex* trafficking.

Contemporary attention to human trafficking can be traced to at least the end of the Cold War, when fears of migration, opening borders, organized crime, state sovereignty, and what “loomed” behind the Iron Curtain linked trafficking to emergent and irregular migration patterns (Milivojevic and Pickering 2013). At this time, the place of economic globalization increased alongside technological developments and growing numbers of people, notably women

(and girls), moved for work (Larner 2000). In fact, at this time the number of global migrants increased from an estimated 76 million in 1960 to 154 million in 1990 (and 175 million by 2000) (Lee 2011). Although there are many reasons to migrate for work in many sectors, media attention turned to stories of Latin American, Eastern European, and Asian women who moved and were coerced (i.e. trafficked) to work in brothels in Western Europe and the US, among other locations (Gozdziak and Collett 2005, Soderlund 2005). Often, these women left their homes in search of economic opportunities, but they did so in the context of growing racism and anti-(im)migrant sentiments that fueled international efforts to tighten borders and expand punishment and policing (Kempadoo 2005, Andreas and Greenhill 2010, Lee 2011). As a result, it was not uncommon for these women (and others) to engage the services of traffickers and smugglers, who frequently lied about the terms and conditions of their future employment (Sharma 2003).

While public and political concern about human trafficking has a long history in the United States, dating back to the “white slavery” panics of the Progressive Era (Baker 2013), human trafficking became a significant issue for gender equality advocates and elected officials in the 1990s, in the context of the growing global movement to end gender violence and promote women’s human rights and gender equality. As Laurel Weldon meticulously documents, women from the global North and South engaged in transformative work to create a “broadened concept of “violence against women” that included a wide range of problems from poverty to female genital mutilation to rape” (Weldon 2006, 63). Included in this understanding of violence was human trafficking, a highly gendered crime that, by most estimates, affects women and girls (Zimmerman 2005). And as world leaders and international organizations came to understand women’s individual empowerment as the key to economic development and growth (Krook and

True 2012), women’s rights advocates argued that violence against women was a key factor impeding women’s social, political, and economic well-being and mobility (Weldon 2011). Gender equality, then, required the eradication of violence against women in order to promote global economic growth. Soon international financial bodies took on the cause, such as the IMF (Katrin Elborgh-Woytek 2013), the World Bank (where this is now part of the organization’s Millennium Development Goals), major philanthropic organizations such as the Gates Foundation (Gates Foundation 2014), and meetings of world business and government leaders, such as the Davos conference (CBS 2013).

In this context, human trafficking came to represent the “dark side” of economic globalization and a threat to women’s rights and human rights internationally (Lee 2011). It is not surprising, then, that by 2000, a diverse social movement had coalesced to fight human trafficking; however, the focus, debates, and divisions in this movement were quickly (and disproportionately) oriented around *sex* trafficking (Baker 2013). An extensive body of scholarship documents the reasons for this focus, and so I will only review them briefly here. First, the gendered nature of human trafficking, in light of the broader movement against violence against women, contributed to the focus on sex trafficking (Zimmerman 2005). Due to the often clandestine nature of human trafficking and the related challenges for studying it, “the full scope of human trafficking in the United States is unknown” (White House 2013, 18). However, most existing research indicates that even as a growing number of men and boys are found to be victims of human trafficking, the majority of human trafficking victims world-wide are women and girls (UNODC 2016).³ And so, as Everett and Charlton (2014) note, “Although

³ There are many methodological challenges for collecting global data about human trafficking, which I will discuss in a longer draft of this paper. As the UNODC notes (UNODC 2009, 10-11), the range and quality of data varies greatly, so that “as with offenders, the profile of victims is

sex trafficking is *not* numerically the most common form of human trafficking, it has received the most publicity, partly because the primary victims are women and girls” (71). As a result, these victims came to hold a somewhat archetypal position in discussions of human trafficking: as female (and presumably poor and foreign) victims of sexual violence, they embodied the anxieties and concerns that global economic shifts that the gender equality movement brought to the attention of the public and political leaders since the 1970s.

In addition to victims’ gender, the focus on sex trafficking is also linked to feminist debates about sex *work* (the voluntary exchange of sexual services for cash or other trade) and to panics about sexual predation and violence more broadly. Regarding sex work, it goes without saying that feminist activists have long been divided about this issue, most notably since the sex worker rights movement emerged in the US in the 1970s and sex workers and feminists clashed about whether this activity embodied the subordination and enslavement of women in society (Jeness 1993, Chateauvert 2013). As Lorna Bracewell documents, these so-called sex wars were also linked to activism against gender based violence (described above) that “encompassed a large brace of concerns, including rape, incest, domestic violence, sexual harassment, child abuse, and forced prostitution.” In short, many feminists in this movement objected to pornography (and prostitution) because it “played a central role in sanctioning and perpetuating these other forms of gender-based violence and subordination” (Bracewell 2016, 25). By the 1990s, the (re)discovery of the fact that women were being trafficked for sex was, for some feminists, the worst evidence that sex work furthered violence against women.

highly influenced by local laws and priorities, which often focus on child victims and victims of sexual exploitation (usually women).”

This focus on sex trafficking also aligned with and was fueled by broader panics about sexual predation that had also been brewing since at least the 1970s. As Roger Lancaster (2011, 2017) documents, the growth of the victims' rights movement and increased reporting in the media about crime and racial antagonisms shifted societal anxieties to "special monsters" like "sexual psychopaths" and predators. Through popular shows such as *To Catch a Predator* and related news reports, sexual "stranger danger" emerged in public and political discourse as especially horrific disease meriting state attention, more so than poverty or other social ills (Lancaster 2011, Fischel 2016, Lancaster 2017). The human trafficker was the worst predatory offender, and catching him aligned with a growing neoconservative moral imperative to "rescue" women and root out transnational organized crime networks, particularly from the global south, where "dark, menacing criminals" would threaten homes, families and ways of life (Milivojevic and Pickering 2013).

Among anti-trafficking advocates in this context, the most vocal and powerful were those who were located in the US, focused on sex trafficking, and conceptualized and promoted carceral solutions—those that expand and employ the formal institutions of the state's criminal justice systems alongside other governmental programs capable of surveillance to maintain order in society (Hinton 2016). These so-called "abolitionists" included a "coalition of strange bedfellows" (Bernstein 2010, 65) that quickly formed between feminists opposing prostitution, right-wing religious groups, and a number of powerful conservative political leaders. Led in large part by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, they framed human trafficking in terms of individual responsibility, prosecution, and punishment (Kinney, 2006). Focusing mainly on sex trafficking, these advocates argued that male clients, traffickers, and other facilitators trick and lure women and girls into prostitution. According to these advocates, women should be

diverted from the criminal justice system and offered social services that help them exit the sex industry, while the (male) pimps, traffickers, and clients must be punished to end their “demand” for commercial sexual services and other forced labor.

In contrast, groups such as the Global Alliance Against Trafficked Women understood human trafficking broadly, as a problem caused by structural factors such as gender inequality, anti-immigration sentiments, and economic inequality. Here they argued that by focusing mainly on sex trafficking and predatory male traffickers, women are cast as passive victims for rescue, whereas men are active agents who have power and profit from their engagement in the sex trades or other labor (Agustin, 2007). Moreover, focusing on punishing men’s “demand” for sex sidelines (sex) workers’ needs and demands for housing, living wages, and education (among others) (Gira Grant 2014, 42-43). As well, focusing on sex trafficking and male demand reinforced racialized, colonial and anti-immigration sentiments: men who purchase sexual services or act as traffickers were often framed as “brutal Eastern Europeans” or “rapacious Africans” (Doezema 2010, 1), while women are described as “passive migrant objects” (Agustin 2007, 23) or as “exotic” and ignorant (Kempadoo 1998, 10). These advocates proposed instead a human rights framework for addressing human trafficking that grants all migrant workers, including sex workers, autonomy and labor rights (Zheng 2010).

While activists in both of these camps were and remain equally concerned with and opposed to forced labor, gender and sexual violence, and other forms of exploitation, the abolitionists’ commitments to abolishing sex work, enforcing a particular view of sexual morality, and being tough on crime helped them advance an agenda that largely emphasized sex trafficking (Bernstein 2010, Peters 2015, Musto 2013). Internationally, abolitionist efforts influenced the passage of the UN Palermo Protocol, noted above, which every region and

governance structure in the world has assimilated their legislation. As Gillian Wylie (2016) shows, this Protocol indicates a number of concessions to abolitionists by singling out women and children (in the title) as especially vulnerable to human trafficking, and by defining exploitation as including (somewhat tautologically) “the exploitation of prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation.” And in the US, the events of September 11, 2001, which ushered in the “War on Terror,” further supported abolitionists’ preferred law and order approaches to human trafficking. At this time, as Lila Abu Lughud (2013) documents, stories of the alleged horrors of life for women in Muslim countries swept the public sphere and excused all kinds of humanitarian and military interventions. In line with this, the Bush Administration adopted anti-trafficking as a key humanitarian initiative in the post 9/11 period (Sonderlund 2005), with President Bush declaring it a “special evil” (Chang 2013, 56). Following the Palermo Protocol, Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000 (which has been subsequently reauthorized as part of the Violence Against Women Act). This law also distinguishes between sex trafficking and labor trafficking, and while space constraints prohibit a comprehensive review of this Act here, it aligns with trends towards carceral state expansion by directing money to law enforcement in order to find, prosecute, and punish traffickers, and also, to a lesser extent, rescue and assist victims (Peters 2015).

Amidst this growing political attention to human trafficking, celebrities have taken up the cause. To date, scholars have provided an overview of this engagement (Haynes 2014), and they have also considered how celebrities portray human trafficking and its victims (Baker 2014). However, there remains no comprehensive accounting of celebrities’ activity, and so the remainder of this paper provides this in order to ask questions about human trafficking, gendered vulnerability to violence, and celebrities’ role and power in the polity more broadly.

Methods⁴

The proceeding discussion draws from a data set of celebrity activities to raise awareness about human trafficking, which I created with help from two research assistants, Beth Stone and MG Robinson. They collected data about celebrities' anti-trafficking activities through online searches using Google and the database Looktothestars.com, which collects data about celebrities' charitable activities. Since the US has claimed leadership on monitoring and fighting human trafficking (Kelley and Simmons 2015, Wilson and O'Brien 2016), we focused our searches on US-based celebrities. Stone and Robinson began by first reading Dina Haynes article (2014), which provides the most comprehensive overview of celebrities' activity regarding human trafficking since 2000. From there, they "snowballed" their searches to capture these *and other* (ideally, all) incidents of celebrity engagement with the issue of human trafficking. So, for example, Haynes writes about Ricky Martin's testimony before Congress regarding human trafficking; the assistants found this material, and then other examples of Martin's anti-human trafficking activities that were *not* listed in her article. To search beyond the examples in the Haynes article, the assistants employed a number of strategies. One was to review materials available online from major anti-trafficking campaigns (e.g. MTV's Exit campaign, Rock Against Trafficking, etc.) to find the celebrities involved. Another strategy involved finding a celebrity on one platform (for example, Demi Moore on *CNN*), and then look for others on that same platform (*CNN* had a series with a number of other celebrities). As well, they also created a list of organizations doing anti-trafficking work and searched their websites, etc. to find celebrity endorsements or related activities.

⁴ The book version of this project will feature a longer and more detailed methods section, which I have drafted parts of elsewhere.

To date, my database includes the celebrities' names, gender, race/ethnicity, their type of celebrity (actor, etc.), a description of their activity (e.g. "appeared in campaign for Department of Homeland Security"), the year of the activity, and their trafficking focus (e.g. sex trafficking). I worked inductively to categorize the range and types of celebrities' anti-trafficking awareness activities. Here the following terms are important to note. 1) I use "categories" as a broad umbrella term that covers different types of celebrity activity, and these are summarized in Table 1, below. For example, "DOC" describes "documentaries." 2) I use the term "activities" to describe the unique examples within the broader categories. For example, the documentary *Call and Response* is a unique example of a "DOC." And 3) I use the term "instances" to describe each time a celebrity participates in a specific activity. For example, George Clooney's appearance in *Half the Sky* is one instance; when the same celebrity participates in more than one documentary, each documentary she participates in is counted as one incidence.

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

I am also in the process of conducting interviews with key informants to understand celebrities' motivations for engaging in anti-trafficking activism, including representatives from celebrity philanthropic advisory firms (e.g. The Global Philanthropy Group, Artemis Agency). I am trying (so far, unsuccessfully) to secure interviews the ten most active celebrities regarding human trafficking.

My analysis below [and in the larger book project] focuses on the materials (news coverage, awareness campaign materials, documentaries, etc.) from nine anti-trafficking activities that are the most popular with celebrities (defined as those activities featuring/supported by 10 or more celebrities), and these are described in more detail below. I use these activities as texts for examining my questions about human trafficking (how we

understand its forms, victims, causes, and solutions) and the roles and power of celebrities in political life more broadly (for examples of similarly oriented research, see Marshall 2006, Cramer 2016).

Specifically, for this examination, I use interpretive methods of analysis (IMA), which place human actors' meaning-making practices at the center of the examination (IPIA 2015) and take language and other texts/artifacts seriously to focus on problems of meaning "that bear on action as well as understanding," while appreciating that multiple interpretations are possible (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2006, xii, Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012). To implement my IMA, I am using ATLAS.ti software to code materials from these activities regarding the following: a) type of trafficking (the extent to which the material is focused predominantly on sex trafficking, labor trafficking, or both), b) victims (how they are portrayed in terms of sex, gender, race, ethnicity, immigration and economic status, physical/mental capacities, etc.), c) causes (whether celebrities explain that human trafficking is caused by criminal individuals, poverty, economic displacement, or other factors), and d) solutions to human trafficking (crime control-oriented, structurally-oriented, private sector-focused, etc.)

My larger goal in this project is to discern the broader lessons this activism teaches us about human trafficking and about celebrities' political power. While human trafficking is estimated to be a major issue that impacts millions of people, it is also "invisible" in many ways described previously. Therefore, while celebrities may bring attention to this issue, one must look at how they do this *and* at the meaning and implications of their actions for victims and policy, and for how we think of celebrities' roles and power in politics. In the final section of the paper, I introduce and draw from political performance theory to consider these questions.

Empirical Findings: Celebrities Oppose and Define Human Trafficking⁵

From 2000-2016, I found that at least 285 unique celebrities from a range of fields (acting, music, sports, etc.) have engaged in at least one incidence of anti-human trafficking activity. The majority of these celebrities are women (153) and white (113 of 153), followed by white men (89 of 132 total men). Among all of the celebrities, actors were the most prominently engaged with the issue (162 actors had at least one instance of activity), followed by musicians (66 instances). Of these celebrities, the following stand out for the duration and volume of their anti-trafficking work: Darryl Hannah, Ashely Judd, Ashton Kutcher, Ricky Martin, Demi Moore, Julia Ormond, Jada Pinkett Smith, Mira Sorvino, Emma Thompson, and Natalie Grant.

Celebrities also favor certain *types* of media-friendly anti-trafficking activities. Among the categories of anti-trafficking awareness activity that I identified in Table 1, fundraisers, awareness campaigns, documentaries, and signing letters (to Amnesty International) attracted the most celebrities. Within these four types of activities, the following are the most popular (I define this as featuring 10 or more celebrities):

- *Call and Response* (2008), “a feature documentary that seeks to raise awareness about the 27 million slaves in the world today.” The film includes performances by critically acclaimed artists and testimony from various political figures, academics, and celebrities.
- *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women* (2012). In this documentary, reporter Nicholas Kristof travels with A-list celebrity advocates to cover sex trafficking, as well as gender based violence, education, inter-generational prostitution, maternal mortality, and economic empowerment in selected countries (www.halfthesky.com)

⁵ The material in this section will be expanded as a stand-alone chapter.

- *A Path Appears* (2015). In this documentary, Nicholas Kristof, with his wife, Sheryl WuDunn, uncovers “the harshest forms of gender-based oppression and human rights violations, as well as the effective solutions being implemented to combat them” (www.apathappears.org).
- The annual (since 2008) Freedom from Slavery Awards gala benefiting CAST-LA (Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking, Los Angeles), which serves trafficking survivors and advocates for policy change.
- Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore’s “Real Men Don’t Buy Girls” campaign (2011), a series of YouTube videos featuring various prominent male celebrities performing a domestic task incorrectly. The campaign encourages men to “Take a stand against child sex slavery.”
- The International Labour Organization’s “End Slavery Now!” campaign (2012). Celebrities are featured in photos holding signs saying “End Slavery Now” to raise “awareness of the 20 million women, men and children worldwide who are trapped in forced labour” (<http://www.iloartworks.org/forced-labour/end-slavery-now/>).
- Shoerevolt.com, the “virtual [shoe] boutique that raises awareness of sex trafficking and donates 100 percent of its net profits to support anti-trafficking initiatives.”
- The (now defunct) Somaly Mam Foundation, a nonprofit organization “dedicated to the eradication of slavery and the empowerment of its survivors, based on the vision and life’s work of Cambodian survivor Somaly Mam” (<http://www.somaly.org>)
- The 2015 letter to Amnesty International, authored by the Coalition Against Trafficking Women. Celebrities signed this letter, which opposed Amnesty’s support for decriminalizing prostitution.

Based on my coding of these examples, I find that celebrities' anti-trafficking activity illuminates human trafficking's forms, victims, causes, and solutions in a particular way. First, even as the extent of human trafficking is unknown, celebrities have no trouble casting human trafficking as a massive problem on a global scale. *Call and Response* claims there are 27 million slaves, and an interviewee declares on screen that "17,000 people are brought into the US to be slaves every year." In *Half the Sky*, Somaly Mam, a former Cambodian trafficking victim-turned-anti-trafficking advocate, calls sex trafficking a "worldwide" problem. Shoerevolt.com declares that "it's estimated that 200,000 American children - primarily girls - are at high risk for sex trafficking each year." And *A Path Appears* states that there are "100,000 -300,000 victims of sex trafficking in a year." Although none of these materials cited the sources of these statistics, and indeed many of these statistics have been questioned (McNeill 2014), they were repeated often through these celebrity projects.

Second, celebrities tend to emphasize sex trafficking over other labor trafficking, and they focus mainly on women and girls (who are predominantly Asian/South Asian) as victims. This characterization of victims is particularly apparent in the documentaries, which feature large amounts of footage of girls and women in Cambodia, Thailand, and India. For example, *Call and Response* features extensive grainy footage of what one could surmise is a brothel somewhere in Asia, where the children featured in the footage presumably sell sexual services. And in *Half the Sky*, actor Meg Ryan joins Nicholas Kristof as they visit AFESIP (the French acronym for Acting for Women in Distressing Situations) in Cambodia, which rescues girls from forced prostitution.

And third, in terms of causes, celebrities tended to blame immoral, racialized individuals, families, and cultures for human trafficking. Across the examples provided above, slogans such as "Real Men Don't Buy Girls" indicate that individual men either facilitate the sale of sex or

purchase it. When these men are shown in these films, campaigns, etc. (and often, they are not), they are either white or their race/ethnicity is somewhat ambiguous or obscured. Additionally, in *A Path Appears*, men, in their capacities as pimps and buyers of sexual services from girls, are cast as the “bad people” who cause this problem; at the same time, this documentary also provides stories of mothers who, through their drug addiction and/or child neglect, left their young girls vulnerable to predatory pimps. As well, to show how the broader cultures in which the victims live are to blame for human trafficking, in *Call and Response*, actor Ashley Judd describes the gang rape of women and girls, by men, in the brothels in India as a “distinctly Indian form of torture.” In this documentary, Julia Ormond also shared that it is “a big thing in parts of Asia” for (male) clients to demand that the girls who sell them sexual services are “HIV-free.” Although celebrities do at times mention how poverty and running away/homelessness (among other structural factors) enhance vulnerabilities to human trafficking, these are not mentioned as often as men, families, and cultures.

To solve human trafficking (and sex trafficking more specifically), celebrities commonly endorse individual action (e.g. victims escape human trafficking on their own) and NGOs/nonprofits, like the Somaly Mam Foundation and CAST-LA. They also favor criminal justice approaches. For example, in *A Path Appears*, Kristof and actor Malin Akerman visit the Cooke County Sheriff’s department, which they praise for pioneering a “national johns day,” where the police specifically target purchasers of sexual services through a false craigslist ad. The documentary shows Kristof on the raid, where multiple men are arrested in a hotel room. After this, Akerman declares that the john targeting is “inspiring,” stating that “the more men we can involve [in the fight against prostitution], the better.” Celebrities do not tend to mention

private sector reforms, decriminalizing prostitution, and other non-carceral approaches to solving human trafficking in these most popular examples.

Broad Strokes: Interpreting Celebrities' human trafficking

What, then, can we learn about celebrities' role and powers in politics from their anti-trafficking activism? This question is worth considering because it draws attention to the ways in which those with great power and visibility (celebrities) speak and advocate for those with little power and visibility (the trafficking victim). From an interpretive perspective, which considers how people make sense of their actions and worlds, it is difficult to answer this question because celebrities are not directly accessible to researchers and the public. While developments in media technologies have collapsed the distance between celebrities and ordinary life (Bystrom 2011), to the point that "intimacy at a distance" now characterizes the relationship between celebrities and their fan-like audiences (van Elteren 2013), celebrities are in fact shielded from researchers and the general public by legions of publicists, managers, corporate sponsors, and consultants, among others. As a result, it is difficult to ask them about their actions (and what they mean to them).

Given this, to better understand and interpret celebrities' roles in addressing issues like human trafficking and their power in political life, it may be useful to interpret their political activities as performances. Generally speaking, the term "performance" describes a particularly involved, dramatized act such as an oral narrative (Langellier 1999). While we may think of performances as confined to theater and television, and thus not relevant to the study of politics, Shirin Rai argues that, in fact, "performance matters in and to politics" (Rai 2014, 1179). Here she defines a political performance as that which seeks "to communicate to an audience meaning-making related to state institutions, policies, and discourses" (Rai 2014, 1180). Rai suggests a framework that maps the elements of this performance on two axes: its markers (body,

space/place, words/script/speech, and performative labor) and its effects (its authenticity, modes of representation, liminality, resistance to claims-making, and audience). Furthermore, political performances are contextual—they are embedded in cultural histories, daily norms, etc.; they may be situated in buildings or other public spaces; and they also may challenge or affirm dominant narratives and/or be scripted to mobilize political traction, among other functions.

Understanding *anyone's* political actions as performance is thus important because it draws our attention to the dynamics and nature of political representation. Put simply, a political performance is a claim to represent a population, policy solution, or a myriad of other positions. In an era of declining participation in electoral politics, we need to consider political representation (and representatives) expansively, as a variety of *non-elected* political actors, including academics, advocates, lobbyists, *and* celebrities (among others) offer political performances through which they construct and advance claims on behalf of others (Saward 2006, 2009, 2010). These political performances are thus *performative*—they constitute identities and experiences within and through various discursive and institutional forces (Langellier 1999). Since these performances present competing world views in an effort to represent and transform the world (Rai 2011), studying them highlights how power relationships are created and exploited through representation (Saward 2006). An analysis of performance thus considers questions of subjectivity (who is acting?), location (where?), audience (who is watching?), commodification (who is in control?), conventionality (how are meanings produced?), and politics (what positions are being reinforced or contested?) (Drake and Higgins 2012). In effect, studying political performance is critical for our readings of politics itself, and for understanding the interactions between celebrities and politics more specifically (Drake and Higgins 2012, Rai 2014).

Understanding celebrities' anti-trafficking work as a political performance offers insights about their political roles. Applying Rai's framework, they are engaged in a political performance within the context of the contemporary anti-trafficking movement, and this performance is marked by their bodies in various spaces-- on the set of a documentary film, at a fundraiser, in an awareness campaign, in Congress, or any other space denoted by their activities. Across the 14 categories of celebrity activity captured in my database, the celebrities here play various roles, including that of witness (e.g. at a brothel with Nicholas Kristof), activist (e.g. protesting Amnesty or Backpage.com), expert (e.g. Jada Pinkett Smith's testimony for Congress), publicist (e.g. as the face of the ILO's awareness campaign), fundraiser (e.g. attending the CAST-LA annual gala), and international advocate (e.g. serving as UN Ambassadors). In all of this, as celebrities variously expose and oppose the horrors of human trafficking, they are engaged in political representation by constructing and advancing claims on behalf of others, including human trafficking victims, concerned citizens, and others working to eradicate human trafficking. Celebrities' work is thus performative: as my findings indicate, their anti-trafficking efforts constitute human trafficking's forms (sex trafficking), victims (women and girls), causes (bad men, families, and cultures), and solutions (individual, criminal justice, and NGOs) for the audience, which includes their fans, legislators, other activists, and NGO leaders, among others.

Yet analyzing celebrities anti-trafficking work as political performance requires more than simply identifying the elements and claims of this performance; as Rai indicates, it also calls on us to consider its potential implications and effects—its power—by examining its modes of representation, authenticity, implications, and capacity to disrupt (or reinforce) conventional understandings of an issue/population. In an effort to do this, the remainder of this discussion

will focus on three potential implications/effects, the first of which is *celebrities power to represent* human trafficking and those vulnerable thereto.

As the brief review of the most popular celebrity anti-trafficking activities listed above indicates, celebrities represent human trafficking's forms, victims, causes, and solutions in particular ways. By focusing largely on sex trafficking, where girls and women are victims and predatory men, families, and cultures are the causes, this performance offers what Carol Vance terms a melodramatic characterization of human trafficking—a compelling narrative of “sexual danger, drama, sensation, furious action, wild applause, and ... clearly identifiable victims, villains and heroes” (Vance 2011, 904). For celebrities, who are always aware of their audience, this characterization is clearly appealing: it is shocking, grabs attention, and brings to light a form of violence that has been hidden from the vast majority of the public.

Is this performance authentic? Will this representation of the problem mobilize support for addressing this problem? The answer to these questions are hard to find. Conducting research about human trafficking is methodologically challenging, but since 2000, a growing body of studies challenge the celebrity narrative. For one, while the extent of human trafficking remains unknown, by many estimates trafficking in domestic labor, agricultural work, and garment production is far more common than sex trafficking (ILO 2012). As well, research indicates that while girls and women may constitute the majority of trafficking victims, when trafficking is studied beyond the sex industry, it appears that men, boys, and transgender individuals are a large and growing portion of those who fit the definition of human trafficking (Marcus and Curtis 2016, Marcus et al. 2014, Ditmore, Maternick, and Zapert 2012, Gozdziaik and Collett 2005). Moreover, human trafficking is not simply caused by a predatory man, a “bad” family, or a corrupt culture. In fact, many individuals who may be categorized as trafficking victims are in

this position because of structural factors, such as unemployment, or migration for labor in the face of war, anti-immigrant sentiments, and/or displacement by environmental disasters (Agustín 2007, Andrijasevic 2007, Chapkis 2003, Kempadoo, Sanghera, and Pattanaik 2012, Milivojevic and Pickering 2013, Saunders 2000, Sharma 2003). It therefore seems that the solutions to human trafficking must involve more than simply ending men's demand for prostitution and donating to NGOs.

Of course, celebrities are not entirely ignorant of how structural factors facilitate human trafficking. In *Call and Response*, for example, Julia Ormond notes that trafficking is a product of economic globalization, which has allowed businesses to move for cheap labor that lowers the price of goods for Western consumers. Human trafficking is “the dark underside of globalization,” she says, “and we’ve been enjoying the benefits.” Yet these moments are few and far between—a function of, at times, celebrities’ lack of expertise about the issue, and their work through mediums such as public awareness campaigns, documentary series, or fundraiser appearances (among others) that require quick, (social) media friendly messaging. As a result, we must view and interrogate their performances and, hence, power, with great care: while they may use their fame, notoriety, and media savvy to draw attention to important public issues (Lindenberg, Joly, and Stapel 2011), they also, often, lack expertise and sensationalize and misrepresent issues in order to draw attention to them.

At this point, you may be thinking, “of course celebrities dramatize issues! And what does this matter? Even if they make inaccurate claims, human trafficking exists and at least they are drawing attention to it.” While this is certainly a valid response, it raises a second implication (the flipside) of this celebrity performance that is worth interrogating: *epistemic violence* —that is, violence in knowledge production (Spivak 1988). To illustrate this potential violence,

celebrities' support for Somaly Mam, her Foundation, and her NGO, AFESIP, is instructive. Mam came to prominence through Kristof's reporting in the *New York Times*, which encouraged (predominantly white) celebrities and other prominent people from the global north to draw attention and resources to Mam, and to sex trafficked girls in Cambodia. In fact, "The foundation's annual fundraising galas [were] star-studded, red-carpet events featuring supermodels, Hollywood actors, Silicon Valley financiers, and high-profile journalists, including Kristof and news anchor Katie Couric" (Joseph 2014). In addition to discussing her story in many of his columns in the *Times*, Kristof also prominently featured Mam in *Half the Sky*, where he and the actor Meg Ryan traveled to Cambodia to meet with her and tell the story of Long Pross, a young girl who Mam allegedly rescued from a Cambodian brothel. To the viewers, Pross offered a harrowing story of great violence: according to Mam, a brothel owner gouged Pross's eye out with a piece of metal (Kristof 2009). In *Half the Sky*, Pross was a prominent member of AFESIP, conducting HIV/AIDS awareness work and helping other girls leave brothels. Such stories brought attention to sex trafficking and helped raise funds through the Somaly Mam Foundation (nearly \$3 million by 2012).

Certainly, there is nothing wrong with rich, predominantly white American celebrities raising money for and awareness about a foundation that helps girls who are victims of trafficking in Cambodia, especially given the United States' involvement in (and destruction of) the region, which has no doubt heightened vulnerabilities to sex trafficking and other forced labor. Yet problems arise when these celebrity efforts are misguided, as the Somaly Mam case illustrates. Mam was forced to step down from her foundation after the journalist Simon Marks revealed in *Newsweek* that Mam had fabricated much of her personal story of sex trafficking and coached the girls at AFESIP to lie about their backgrounds. In fact, Long Pross was never

trafficked to a brothel and enslaved, and her eye was disfigured from a tumor removal surgery (Marks 2014).

This example is not meant to detract from the real issues of sexual and other violence faced by women and girls in Cambodia, and the good work of many NGOs in this region (and elsewhere). Instead, I offer it to signal the possibilities for epistemic violence when celebrities (and others) lack full knowledge about the issues and causes to which they draw attention and resources. Given the vast amount of unreported sexual violence, as signaled most recently by the #metoo movement, Mam's story potentially undermines many victims' stories. Victims' capacity to report experiences of sexual violence, be believed, and obtain services and justice in the global north remains extremely limited. But this is additionally challenging for women and girls in the Global South, where legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and the fallouts from wars and environmental disasters further limit the resources available for victims to come forward and find help. And because Mam's story was ultimately false, it directed resources—in this case, millions of dollars—away from potentially more worthy service providers.

Celebrities' power to represent and issue and population and, potentially, cause epistemic violence, thus raises a third potential implication of their political activity: *accountability*. Although it is difficult to determine the extent to which celebrities' influence policy and other responses to any social problem, they are highly visible and can direct attention and resources to causes in ways that many other advocates and elected officials cannot. But because they are unelected, celebrities often are not responsible for the inaccurate information they present and the policy solutions they propose (Haynes 2014).

The Somaly Mam case illustrates celebrities' lack of accountability. After Mam was exposed as a fraud, Kristof— a celebrity journalist-- only offered a tepid apology for promoting

her work, barely confirming or denying the veracity of her claims and his reporting failures as a journalist (Kristof 2014b, a). Indicating his white male privilege, he continues to hold a prominent role on the *Times* opinion page. As for Mam, while she was forced to step down from her Foundation, she ultimately re-branded as “The New Somaly Mam Fund”, which maintains the support of celebrities such as Susan Sarandon and works through the organization “Together 1 Heart” (<http://www.together1heart.org>) to fight sex trafficking in Cambodia. While it is impossible to say that elected officials or non-celebrity advocates would have been held accountable to a greater degree for making similarly fraudulent claims, the Mam case does indicate that celebrities’ may continue their work and advocacy without many consequences.

Next Steps

As celebrities become increasingly visible in politics (especially in the wake of the 2016 presidential election!), it is essential to consider how their performances sustain the systems of cultural and economic production and consumption that support their ascension in the American and global polity. And so, in these final pages, I offer some thoughts about how I plan to develop this project as a book length manuscript. Missing from this paper is a discussion of celebrity feminism, and going forward, I plan to consider this in more depth somewhere and somehow (are celebrities the “new” feminist allies, especially in the wake of the 2018 Golden Globes?).

Below, I offer an evolving rough outline of the book version, and I would appreciate any insights about how to develop and organize it further.

Introduction

This chapter would be a shorter version of this paper that sets up the problem (human trafficking, and gender-based violence more broadly) and questions (how do celebrities respond, etc). Specifically, this chapter will

- Discuss the general historical arc of
 - o celebrities’ political ascendance and reasons for this

- human trafficking as a social problem and the anti-trafficking movement
- Situate celebrities in this context as highly visible figures speaking for a very invisible issue
 - Outline briefly how I study celebrities and anti-trafficking activism
- Provide chapter outlines

Chapter 1: thinking about celebrities anti-human trafficking activism

- Review political performance and representation theory as broad frame
- Review the general literature about norm entrepreneurship, social movement activism, philanthropy, and celebrity feminism as possible roles celebrities perform in politics
- Turn to literature about human trafficking and discusses what scholars have found about how activists—including celebrities—represent human trafficking’s forms, victims, causes and solutions to date

Chapter 2: celebrities’ anti-trafficking activism 2000-2016

Presents findings from data set, including

- Broad overview of the who, where, when, why, and how of celebrity anti-trafficking activism
- Most popular examples of this activism
- Roles played by celebrities in their activism (philanthropist, activist, etc)

Chapters 3-5 ish: cases

These chapters would consider elements of celebrities’ political performances—how they represent human trafficking, the potential dangers of this (epistemic violence), and accountability--- in difference cases.

Example case chapter: documentaries are very popular with celebrities, so in one chapter, I would look at the elements of their political performance (representation, etc) across documentaries.

Example case chapter: fundraising and philanthropic work is also popular, so in another chapter, I would look at the aforementioned elements of their performances in key examples here.

Conclusion

- Something about what this all means about celebrities’ power in politics?

Methodological appendix: describes research methods in more detail

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TABLE 1**CATEGORIES OF CELEBRITY ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITY***

| | |
|-------------|---|
| AMNESTY | Signed letter opposing Amnesty's support for decriminalizing prostitution |
| CAMPAIGN | Involved in awareness campaign |
| DOC | documentary |
| DONATION | Made donation to organization, etc |
| EVENT | Attended event |
| FNDRSR | Participated in fundraiser |
| FOUND ORG | Founded organization |
| INTERVIEW | Interviewed about human trafficking |
| LEGISLATIVE | Does legislative-related work (e.g. congressional testimony) |
| MISC | miscellaneous |
| MUSIC | Musical performance related to anti-trafficking cause |
| PANEL/FORUM | Participated on panel/forum about human trafficking |
| PROTEST | Attended anti-trafficking protest |
| PSA | Appeared in public service announcement |
| RESEARCH | Part of human trafficking research project |
| TECH | Part of anti-trafficking technology initiative |
| THEATER/ART | Trafficking-related art exhibit or theater performance |
| UN AMBSDR | UN Ambassador |
| WITNESS | Witnessed human trafficking/victims |

*some of these categories could be combined, I'm sure.