Students Analyze the Complex Network of Global Crimes

by Gaia Croston

The issues of small arms, human trafficking, transnational gangs, drugs and terrorism are by no means breaking news. These matters, however, remain prevalent. The causes of and solutions to these problems were the focus of this year’s Youth Town Meeting, opening up opportunities for discussion, analysis, true understanding, and positive involvement.

The United Nation’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights says, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person,” and furthermore, “All human beings, should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood” (Articles 1-3). What this tells residents of our modern, globalized world is that the responsibility of every individual, regardless of background, is to look after his or her fellow human beings and to protect their human rights. Now more than ever, we possess the resources necessary to aid our less fortunate neighbors: mediums of television, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs, make it easier than ever to find the truth and discover solutions.

The first speaker at the Youth Town Meeting’s Opening Plenary was San Diego City Councilman Tony Young, who reflected on his work with gangs in the city. Solving this problem is arduous work, but it has the potential to benefit many citizens. Young has the experience to say that gang members act like terrorists in their community. “They will terrorize if you let them,” he declared, but that’s no admittance of defeat. Rather, he informs us that San Diego’s numerous initiatives to combat gangs’ influence, including gun buyback programs, curfews, and security in housing complexes, have combined to create auspicious results: in 2005, the city had about 50 murders, but by 2010 that number dropped to less than 30 (Davis, UT). In other words, though there is no easy answer to the problem of gangs, a multi-faceted, resilient approach puts a community on the way to improvement.

What follows were words from William Canny, director of emergency operations for Catholic Relief Services (CRS), whose speech was marked by the theme, “Trafficking does not exist in isolation.” Canny explained that human trafficking, contrary to popular belief, has recently experienced a resurgence. Victims of this crime are often sold by their poor families into a cycle of poverty, violence, and police arrest due to their alien status, which usually leads them back to their captors. Canny dubbed the issue “magic, yet almost predictable,” but not unsolvable with the practice of awareness, prevention, protection, and reintegration (including alternative income sources). CRS and other relief groups expect an upturn.

Edward Laurence, who spoke next, co-founded the International Action Network on Small Arms. He tells the audience that one must focus on the tools, not just the causes, of violence; “killing,” he says, “has become very, very impersonal,” and the distance between aggressor and victim becomes greater every day. Small arms are a global problem because standards of control vary between countries, and what one country dispenses to a neighboring state can disrupt society and steal the lives of innocents. After conflicts such as the Cold War or civil war in Sudan, guns often diffuse into the lives of civilians. While this topic is complex, the security of innocent civilians can only increase with direct, joint solutions.

Jonathan White, of the Drug Enforcement Association, emphasized a comprehensive, cooperative approach. He claims that no one nation is entirely to blame for the issue of the drug trade, and so “No one nation is exempt from the moral responsibility” of fighting the spread of drugs. Addiction can lead to the downfall of both individuals and nations, and the drug trade often finances or accompanies many of the other categories of organized crime. In the years to come, it will be the duty of world powers to collaborate in order to control drug production and use. Such a widespread problem cannot be tackled without fostering relationships and friendships between nations.

Lastly, Meriam Palma from Mindanao Peoples Caucus discussed hostilities in the Philippines between Christians and Muslims, which have affected Palma’s own youth. She illuminated the dangers of cultural prejudice, confessing to her own youthful bias against Muslims and explaining that such misinformed beliefs are only natural in a climate of political and cultural conflict. With education and interaction, though, she realized her error in assuming the worst of Muslims; in reality, many such conflicts are driven by individuals with personal interests and no legitimate ideological (Continued on page 4)
YTM Briefing Sessions

Mindanao’s Youth Working for Peace- Film Premiere
Jóvenes de Mindanao Trabajan por la Paz - Estreno
Presenters: Holly Cramer, Jakhal Mulay, Meriam Palma, Joseph Ramirez
Moderators: Sebastien Akermann (CHHS), Marcela Bucardo (OLP)

Do What You’ve Always Done, Get What You’ve Always Wanted
Haz lo que siempre has hecho, consigue lo que siempre has obtenido
Presenters: Scott Silverman, executive director, Second Chance
Moderator: Andi Zhong (LJHS)

Guns, Drugs and Money: Welcome to the Southwest Border
Armas, drogas, y dinero: Bienvenido a la Frontera del Sudoeste
Presenter: El Trigo-Valdez, criminal intelligence analyst, San Diego County Sheriff’s Dept.
Moderator: Alexander Dey (CETYS), and Arianna Gomez (ORHS)

International Adoptions- Child Trafficking in Disguise
Adopciones internacionales: Tráfico de niños en disfraz
Presenter: Carmen Keown, program officer, Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition
Moderators: Ambar Avalos (OLP) and Carlos Nava (CETYS)

My Life in the World of Organized Crime
Mi vida en el mundo del crimen organizado
Presenter: Francisco Mendoza, employment training specialist, Second Chance
Moderators: Amanda Jurige (OLP)

Organized Crime and International Justice
Crimen Organizado y la Justicia Internacional
Presenters: Octavio Rodriguez, program coordinator, Trans-Border Institute
Moderators: Marian Dorst (LJHS) and Adia Sykes (OLP)

Threats to Human Security: It’s Not Just a Matter of Crime
Amenazas contra la Seguridad Humana: No es sólo una cuestión de delincuencia
Presenter: Antonio Masotti, regional representative for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, UNODC
Moderators: Katie Arhis (OLP) and Elena Bellarta (PHHS)

A Marriage Made in Hell: Terrorism and Organized Crime
Un matrimonio hecho en el Infierno: Terrorismo y el crimen organizado
Presenters: Dipak Gupta, professor, San Diego State University
Moderator: Alex Mori (CETYS) and Aly Barrett (FP)

Human Trafficking: A Global Problem
Tráfico de humanos: Un problema global
Presenter: Anthony Rios, special agent, Department of Homeland Security
Moderators: Skylar Economy (LJHS) and Sara Linnen (FP)

Trafficking in Our Own Backyard
Tráfico en nuestro propio Patio
Presenters: Jason King, sergeant, San Diego County Sheriff’s Department
Moderators: Luz Elena Alemán (CETYS) and Olivia Johnson (TPHS)

Youth Confronts Drugs in Nepal
La Juventud enfrenta a las drogas en Nepal
Presenters: Dee Aker, deputy director, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice
Chris Groth, interim program officer, Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice
Kanchan Jha, founder and executive president, Sano Paila
Moderators: Joshua Clapper (Bishops)

Reducing Armed Violence: It’s the Guns
Reduciendo la violencia armada: Son las pistolas
Presenters: Edward Laurance, professor, Monterey Institute of International Studies
co-founder, International Action Network on Small Arms
Moderator: Zachary Velasquez (ORHS)

Is There Really Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking?
¿Existe realmente justicia para las víctimas del tráfico de humanos?
Presenter: Lilia Velasquez, attorney, private practice
Moderators: Rishika Daryanani (HTHI) and Olivia Williams (TPHS)

Understanding the Drug Threat
Entendiendo la Amenaza de las Drogas
Presenter: Jonathan White, resident agent, Drug Enforcement Agency
Moderator: Domenica Berman (CETYS)

Human Trafficking: Global Trends, Local Solutions
Tráfico de Humanos: Tendencias globales, soluciones locales
Presenter: William Canny, director of emergency operations, Catholic Relief Services
Moderator: Nina Churin (LJCD)

“I hope you have a legacy of sobriety and service, and not medicated indifference”
Jonathan White, resident agent of the Drug Enforcement Agency, challenging the delegates on their future choices
The Speakers

Human Trafficking

Arms Trade

Gangs

Terrorism

International Justice

Dee Aker, deputy director of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice at San Diego State University, is a psychological anthropologist and conflict resolution professional with 30 years of experience working with international communities and individuals in transitions. At the JPJ, Aker created and directs the Women PeaceMakers Pro- gram, WorldLink-Program and the Nepal Peacebuilding Initiative. Currently her work in Nepal specializes in programs for youth, women and criminal justice; she assists in ensuring their rights as stakeholders and responsible actors in the creation of the new republic.

Kenny Biggs is housing services manager for Second Chance, a San Diego-based organization, and a facilitator and mentor for an at-risk youth who are on probation. Through the GAME (Gang Awareness Mentoring Education) Program, Biggs educates youth on the prevention of gang violence andaddEventListenering abuse; he is a facilitator for relief prevention classes and a life skills mentor for recently released adults participating in Second Chance’s REIP (Reentry Education Employment Program).

William Canny is the director of emergency operations at Calithrive Relief Services (CRS). Working with a network of emergency technical advisors based in Baltimore, MD, and overseas, he supervises a team that responds to disasters and helps communities to prepare for potential catastrophes. Prior to his current position, Canny was CRS’ country representative in Haiti, where he was responsible for overseeing programs and church partner relations in the poorest country in the hemisphere. From 1998-2004, he was secretary general of the International Catholic Migration Commission, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Holly Cramer is a recent graduate of La Jolla High School and the first social media intern for the WorldLink-Program at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice. So far, she has edited the documentary “Mindanao’s Youths Working for Peace.” Cramer decided to defer college for one year to do volunteer projects in Mexico, Peru and Cambodia. While in high school, she was actively involved in Model United Nations and Youth and Government. Cramer has also interned for the San Diego Asian Film Foundation and produced her own short film.

Chris Groth is an intern program officer at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (JPJ), where he provides support for the Nepal Peacebuilding Initiative. He was the graduate intern at the JPJ’s Human Trafficking Program and is working with JPJ team to Nepal to conduct participatory seminars on negotiation training and security issues. Groth received an M.A. in international relations from the University of San Diego (USD) and has degrees in social science and sociology from the University of California, Irvine.

Dipak K. Gupta, born in India, is theFreel J. Hansen Professor of World Peace and a professor in the Department of Politi- cal Science at San Diego State University, where he is also director of the International Security and Conflict Resolution program, a multidisciplinary program for undergraduates. Gupta earned his Ph.D. in economic and social develop- ment from the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs of the University of Pittsburgh. He has been a visiting scholar at the Terrorism Prevention Branch at the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention in Vienna, Austria.

Juan Jacobs is supervisory special agent with Homeland Security Investigations in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), where he supervises the Human Smuggling/Human Trafficking Group. He began his federal law enforcement career with the U.S. Customs Service in 1991 as a customs inspector at various ports of entry in San Diego and Imperial Counties, and later with the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) San Diego Field Division as an investigative gang consultant for ASTIS Criminal Intelligence Unit. He has led and assisted in a variety of cases related to the smuggling and trafficking of persons along the southwest border and beyond. Agent Jacobs is also an instructor of the International Human Trafficking course with the California POAST (Police Of- ficers Standards and Training).

Scott Silverman is the founder and executive director of Second Chance, a human services agency in San Diego that is committed to breaking the cycle of unemployment, poverty and homeless- ness by offering job readiness training, employment services, assistance, mental health counseling, case management and afford- able housing referrals to people who want to change their lives. Over the past 15 years, Second Chance has assisted more than 24,000 economically disadvantaged and homeless persons in San Diego gain employment and leave poverty, gang affiliations and crime. Silverman is the author of Tell Me No, I Dare You: A Guide for Living a Hero Life.

Antonio Mazzitelli, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Representative in Central and West Africa, is a consultant to the United Nations on the develop- ment of the Arms Trade Treaty. He has written and edited four books on conventional weapons proliferation and is a leading expert on the global problem of small arms and light weapons proliferation and misuse.

Anthony Rios is a special agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, San Diego Field Division. A graduate of the University of California, Irvine with a B.A. in political science, Agent Rios began his career in 1998 with the U.S. Customs Service and was stationed in the Atlanta District Office. He graduated from UCSD with a degree in ethnic studies.

Katutubo-American from three different nations – Igorot, Lipsan, and Mon, Laurance is the author and co-founder of the documentary “Mindanao’s Youth Working for Peace.” He is an investigative gang consultant for ASTIS Con- flict and does volunteer work with youth centers throughout the San Diego region, providing feedback and reinforcement to youth who are at high-risk for gang involvement and criminal activity.

Jullah Mulay, featured in the documentary film “Mindanao’s Youths Working for Peace,” is program staff in the Ame- rican Domain Pro- tection Program of the Mindanao Peoples’ Caucus on the southern island of Mindanao in the Philippines. He has a B.S. in international relations from Mindanao State University-Manila City and is studying for a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Mindanao-Davao City. Mulay volunteers with the organization Kapanganaggo, Inc., a Muslim organization, and is an active advocate for greater understanding and mutual respect between various cultures and faiths.

Lila Velasquez, L.L.M., J.D., is an attorney in private practice. She is a certified specialist in immigration and nationality law, and for the last eight years has focused on defending women’s rights, particularly victims of domestic violence, refugee women and victims of trafficking for forced prostitution. She was recently part of a delegation of lawyers that traveled to Guatemala to learn about the complexities of human trafficking in Southeast Asia.

Jonathon White is the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) resident agent in charge of the San Ysidro Resident Of- fice, San Diego Field Division. He has 20 years of experience in the investigation of large-scale drug-related crime, both in the U.S. and internationally, including with narcotics and money-laundering organizations. His duties include intelligence analysis, extradition and mutual legal assistance, and efficiency and quality assurance. White has a degree in political science from the University of California, San Diego.

Edward Laurance is a full professor at the Monterey Institute of International Studies since 1992. He is co-founder of the International Action Network on Small Arms, the largest transnational nongovernmental organization dealing with small arms, and is a consultant to the United Nations on the develop- ment of the Arms Trade Treaty. He is the editor or author of four books on conventional weapons proliferation and is a leading expert on the global problem of small arms and light weapons proliferation and misuse.

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Letter From the Editor

Dear Reader,

Imagine a day when students from across our city and across the border are brought closer to a different reality, which is in this case, the reality of what thousands of young people like ourselves experience every day somewhere across the world. While thousands of children are battling for their lives, young people are forced to live in small arms trade, the stories and first-hand eyewitness accounts that were shared on January 21, 2011 proved to be a learning experience that brought us further from our trees and closer to someone else’s. That is pretty powerful.

This newspaper is an extended version of our day at USD. It’s about the experts who educated us and the people they fight for. Take “La Plama” Lilia Velasquez, (pictured on this page) an attorney who defends victims of human trafficking. Listening to her share the difficulties of defending trafficking victims begs the question, simply, is there justice for these victims? That is a question that is hard to resolve, but it’s important. And it’s the reason why we’re interested in hearing these stories.

The pursuit of justice drives Tony Young, the president of the San Diego City Council to start a campaign for adults to trade in their weapons so that their children can grow up in a safe environment. The pursuit of justice drives Carmen Kcomt, mother of the Bilateral Safety Corridor. In addition to investigating international adoptions so that infants and youth are not brought up under oppressive conditions. Justice, something that can be extremely elusive, is why many of the expert contributors are drawn to WorldLink. There is some kind of justice in knowing that students can know what is happening around the world, no matter how disenchanting these stories may be.

I would like to thank the speakers because they’re working for the community with small arms and big hearts. They’re working for the girls that turn to or are coerced into prostitution and for the people who are imprisoned in trading and protecting our futures. They’re working towards reaching justice, and as you will read (see an Interview with San Diego Police Detective Hunter, page 15) it’s not easy.

This year’s theme was namely “Crimes Without Borders: Threats to Human Security” but what separates this paper from the first-hand expert accounts that were shared in January is that this newspaper is a sounding board for student journalists. Year after year, students leave with somewhat of a “reality check” about the topics of the day. And I have to say, almost each article that was sent in was followed up with an affirmation that we are now closer to these topics, surprised by the extent of the reality, and more aware of what is occurring. I’m excited to get to share student voices with you because I want that feeling of awareness and interest to stay.

This paper also includes some new features, which is our effort to make you, the reader, involved in learning more about the extent of the reality, to human security. These include the personal account by a victim of human trafficking, Malaki, and how he’s breaking childhood, on page 26. There is also a series of statistics, on page 7, that add a sense of enormity to these issues. Some book titles, on page 12, will hopefully inspire you to learn about these topics in full (My favorite is “Fighting Crime with Community Policing” by Brynna Hall). I was moved by Marissa’s article “Fighting Crime with Community Policing” (page 11) it’s not easy.

In Summary

The Race for Justice
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts

by Brynna Hall

La Plama. That’s what they call Lilia Velasquez. The flame of justice that burns for the silent victims around the world. Human trafficking is the fastest growing illegal trade in the world. For most people it seems as though the crime and those involved are miles away and completely unrelated to us. Unfortunately, that isn’t true. Human trafficking victims are invisible and everywhere. Lilia Velasquez (LL.M., J.D.) is an attorney working internationally for these victims, trying to get them the justice they deserve. She has traveled around the world, from Colombia to California, in an attempt to right the wrongs that have been committed. But what you see when you meet Lilia Velasquez is red.

Decided in fir red from head to toe, flaming red like the flame of justice, Lilia commands a room with a power that can only be described as blazing. “I’m not going to get on my soapbox and talk at you. I want a dialogue. So, please… The first thing we need to know or define is what is justice?” She asked the room at large, all slightly in awe of her presence. “Can there be full justice…?” According to Velasquez, who has witnessed almost all there is to see about human trafficking, when victims are seldom discovered and often too terrified to testify against their traffickers, the answer is no.

These people, the victims, men, women, and children, are coerced into sexual slavery or forced labor, with some women averaging up to twenty men a day. Their humanity is stripped away and any hope they have that some day will be better than today is repeatedly ripped down. Slavery, by definition, means the state of being bound by some external power, but in present-day human trafficking, slavery does not always consist of physical chains. Instead these are often emotional and psychological chains, creating an alternate reality in which these people are powerless, and hopeless, and completely out of chances, so that even if they get the chance to leave, they often don’t.

There are expected to be 20,000 victims arriving in the U.S by the year, and no more than 275 are discovered and offered the government’s help. That's little more than a percent. The fact is that justice is not serving for the victims of human trafficking because we do not know where they are. How do we repair the harm that has been done and give these individuals a second chance at life when they have been told time and time again how they’ll be harmed if they ever go to the police? Women and children make up 80% of trafficking victims, and half of the entire number are said to be less than 18 years of age. The United States government is said to be assisting in the alleviation of some of the pain that the trafficking victims and the torture they go through by giving visas to victims. But, when the victims of trafficking are said to get fewer visas than victims of domestic violence, and other serious crimes against their personal security, how can they really be making a difference? All things considered, ending human security seems daunting. Even Velasquez admits that the movement toward the finish line seems slow. So how do we stop this terrible breach in human security? “The first step,” Velasquez said, “is always to learn.” She spoke of her inspirational meetings with teens and youth from California to Cambodia who were taking steps in the right direction toward ending human trafficking. She experienced young men and women who had put their lives on hold to go to Cambodia, a country where their own security would be put at risk, to tell the victims of these awful crimes that it is not their fault, and assert the fact that they are human, a fact that has been denied them for so long.

Velasquez states that the youth of America can make a difference by getting involved in any way that they can. Here in San Diego we have three of the foremost shelters for the victims of human trafficking and domestic violence, ACTION Network, San Diego Youth & Community Service, and the Bilateral Safety Corridor Coalition, three shelters that are combating the dangers and troubles that the crime of human trafficking is forcing upon America, and the world. According to Velasquez, what the victims need most of all, to start their rehabilitation, is to be reminded that they are human, a fact that they have been stripped of for so long. Velasquez toils throughout her career to re-humanize men and women who have lost all hope for any sort of a life. She takes their hands and encourages them to empower themselves, because in the end, it is only yourself who can make a difference in your own mind. But, a warm hand and a gentle push in the right direction, like Velasquez and all of the youth in California and around Cambodia working toward the end of human trafficking, is constantly providing is another step toward the end. The involvement of more and more willing volunteers is only going to bring us all to the finish line faster, and the race begins…” now.

Over 750 student delegates and guest speakers listen to opening plenary highlights

“ Enslave the liberty of but one being and the liberties of the world are but in peril.”

William Lloyd Garrison
International adoptions do not ensure a child's security. In fact, countries around the world—a 25% increase in the last decade alone.”

**Welcome to the Southwest Border by Marissa Wong**

High Tech High International

Welcome to the Southwest Border. Daily, countless lives are lost in bloody gang battles for control over Narco Plazas, the drug smuggling hubs of Mexico. Here, the largest criminal industry in the world, human trafficking, is at full force. Money laundering, cross-border kidnappings and weapons trafficking are just a few of the methods used in this region.

Facts, “Ninety percent of the weapons used in Narco Plazas are from the United States,” says Edna Trigo-Valdez, a Criminal Intelligence Analyst in the Borderpatrol’s Juvenile Sheriff’s Department. At the briefing entitled “Guns, Drugs, and Money: Welcome to the Southwest Border,” Valdez explained the relationship between United States and Mexico’s gangs and, most importantly, how their connections affect everyone on both sides of the border.

Not only does the United States experience gang violence, but American citizens are affected as well. “Ninety percent of the weapons used in Narco Plazas are from the United States,” says Edna Trigo-Valdez, a Criminal Intelligence Analyst in the Borderpatrol’s Juvenile Sheriff’s Department. At the briefing entitled “Guns, Drugs, and Money: Welcome to the Southwest Border,” Valdez explained the relationship between United States and Mexico’s gangs and, most importantly, how their connections affect everyone on both sides of the border.

While he is the executive director of this organization, Silverman spoke about his own life before Second Chance and the process of getting the organization running. Years ago, Silverman volunteered at St. Vincent de Paul, a soup kitchen that distributes food to the less fortunate. While volunteering there, he noticed he was seeing the same people week after week. One Sunday, he was asked one of the people he was serving, “What are you doing here? Why do I see you here every week?” The man’s response was straightforward: he was unable to get a job. After a long conversation, Silverman realized he couldn’t help him find employment and a few months later, the man was hired. When he went back to work, Silverman told his employees that he was unable to help these people find jobs, but rather that the newly employed man would. Week after week, people were drawn to these lessons and Silverman felt compelled to create a nonprofit for this purpose.

Silverman’s book focuses on the difficulty some people have when asking for help, “One of the hardest things to learn is how to ask for help. If we’re not working together, we are working alone. If we’re not working alone, we are working against each other. It is far better to work together.” As an example of the potential of doing this, he recalls being able to sell a record amount of books on the day of his book signing at a local store.

Through all of the stories and experiences he shared, Silverman taught the students in his briefing sessions about the important details that can make or break an opportunity. “It’s always important to ask if you need help, have a positive attitude, help those in need, and, of course, have a good handshake. Above all else, every person, no matter what his or her background holds, deserves a second chance.

“International adoptions do not ensure a child’s security. In fact, countries around the world—a 25% increase in the last decade alone.”

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**False Promises by Kaitlyn Greer**

The San Diego MET High School

International adoptions do not ensure a child’s security. In fact, the hidden side to international adoptions is grim, children, expecting security and comfort, are coerced into forced labor and sex. That is why human trafficking and understanding how some are forced to get by with little or no food for long periods of time, but maltreatment is only one of the many daily struggles that these children are forced to live through. Among the middle class, age is often the determining factor that whether or not they are going to be able to survive with the best of sanitary conditions and unsafe political climates. According to the World Health Organization, “In low income countries—nearly a third of all deaths are in children under 14."
A continued overview of the speakers and briefings of the 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting

In Summary
Gangs & International Justice

By Rhoda Sabatch
San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts

Emotions ran high as Kenny Biggs and Francisco Mendoza, former gang members and current employees for Second Chance, revealed their hard histories growing up with gang members with knowledge about the gravity and extent of organized crime. “A lot of people think of organized crime and right away they think of murders or drugs, but being in organized crime can also happen in a street gang. When it comes down, you got to have power, guns, and money, because it’s a business.” Biggs explained. Today, fear of gang violence is prevalent all throughout the United States. There are at least 10,000 gangs in the United States, totaling over half a million members.

Kenny Biggs spoke of his challenging life, from growing up in a gang, realizing who he had become and changing in order to help those who have been exposed to a gang-affiliated neighborhood. “In every gang, automatically you grew up in the neighborhood; you were part of a gang. It’s just how much you participated in it.” Biggs explains. At the age of nine, he had already been initiated into a crew and had sold marijuana and other drugs. By age 16, he had become the leader, doing much of the gang’s “dirty work.”

Over time, small arms became available to gangs, and selling drugs meant easy money. Biggs shared how the gang world permeated his life and affected his loved ones. His oldest son was killed in an isolated drive-by shooting by an opposing gang member. At the age of 37, his son was stabbed, his daughter was involved with gangs and permeated his life and affected his loved ones. His oldest son was killed.

Francisco Mendoza said, “Life kind of distorts your identity. We forget who we really are. We’re not just human beings having a spiritual experience, but rather we’re spiritual beings and we’re having a human experience. What are you going to bring when you step into your life? Are you going to bring chaos or destruction or are you going to bring something positive and productive that’s going to benefit the world? What are you going to do with the world you inherited?” Biggs left us with this advice: “L Zay people become slaves. Hard workers become leaders.” With this, students left the briefing with a new understanding of gang lifestyles and awareness of the community around them.

Sealing the Gap
by Carissa Dieli
Academy of Our Lady of Peace

Peace and happiness seem like natural born rights that every human being is entitled to. Unfortunately, they are not all that easy to acquire, as proven by one look at the drug wars in Mexico. Organized crime can be a huge detriment to peace and security. One cannot tackle each crime individually because drug production and drug trafficking do not exist in isolation. They are part of a larger network that links human traffickers, arms traffickers, money launderers and instigators of violence. Octavio Rodriguez discussed the root of these crimes in the panel “Organized Crime and International Justice. Before coming to the U.S., Rodriguez, a native of Aguascalientes, Mexico, worked as Chief of Public Law Academy and was also a Legal Advisor for Governmental Offices in Mexico regarding human rights and communal rural property. Now he works as the Project Coordinator at the University of San Diego’s Justice in Mexico Project of the Trans-Border Institute.

Rodriguez highlighted the prevalence of drug production, consumption and trafficking in Mexico. Though some say marijuana is Mexico’s “main drug,” the country produced a whopping 38 metric tons of cannabis in 2008 alone. As the production increases, so does the consumption. Marijuana, heroin and cocaine consumption levels continue to rise within Mexico’s borders. Rodriguez started his audience when he explained that, since 2006, there have been approximately 30,000 drug-related deaths in Mexico. In 2010 alone, there were 12,000. This loss is not all due to overdozes, fatal bashes or deaths after prolonged use. The 12,000 lives lost were in large part due to the increasing violence that is spreading throughout Mexico due to the drug wars. The violence has expanded from the border towns and cities into more central areas of the country. Rural drug cartels fight for regional control as the government tries and fails to stop the drug trafficking. Armed to the teeth and funded by the Mexican government, these criminals cannot be beaten simply with weapons. There is a substantial gap between the government and the people of Mexico. Unfortunately, organized crime fills this gap and “provides to the people what the government does not.” The country needs to focus on economic development and education in an attempt to lessen the gap, and therefore lessen the room for and tolerance of organized crime. Corruption and abuse of power must come to a screeching halt. With distrust of the government in the hearts of many Mexicans, the gap continues to widen. We in the United States may be tempted to look the other way, believing that this is their problem, not ours. The truth of the matter, however, is that it is quickly becoming our problem too. The corruption and violence taking place in Mexico is steadily finding its way into the United States. Cooperation between the governments is vital, as is the implementation of these methods Rodriguez recommended in his session, from extradition to police cooperation. Most of all, we citizens must be conscious of the fact that the issues of organized crime affect everyone, and that none of us have the luxury of ignoring the problem.

By the Numbers
by Alyanna Cardozo
San Diego MET High School

27 million people are victims of modern day slavery across the world. - Kevin Bales of Free the Slaves.

5,750 people in Los Angeles County were killed in gang violence in the last 10 years - Bill Bratton, Los Angelos Police Dept. Chief.

1 billion US dollars is the estimated amount of revenue generated from the illegal trade of small arms each year. - Center for Defense Information.

50 percent of transnational victims who are children. - U.S. Department of Justice, Report to Congress from Attorney General John Ashcroft.

42 - the number of states in which the Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13 gang operates in. - The Federal Bureau of Investigation, January 2008.

321.6 billion US dollars were generated in 2005 through illicit global drug trade. - United Nations Report.

“Who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.” Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.
In Summary

UNODC, Terrorism & Violence

p.7

A continued overview of the speakers and briefings of the 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting


Antonio Mazzitelli captivated the audience during his session, “Threats to Human Security: It’s Not Just a Matter of Crime” with compelling narratives on drug and small arms trafficking, organized crime and terrorism based on his experiences working for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). In his presentation he explored the different issues that must be addressed on a step-by-step basis to halt organized crime and its related illegal activities can be stopped.

With respect to terrorism, Mazzitelli commented that events such as September 11 could be avoided in the future if the United States and the international community strengthened the rule of law, effectively analyzed the domestic and foreign issues and took the initiative to preemptively begin the process of prevention and treatment in “at-risk” areas.

In his discussion of human trafficking, Mazzitelli used the U.S. and Mexico as his main example, citing statistics that as many as 17,000 individuals are trafficked yearly, with 80 percent of those illegal immigrants being Mexican nationals. Mazzitelli also described the issue of the “Coyotes”, those who are paid to help immigrants cross the border, and their impacts.

The largest portion of Mazzitelli’s session focused on drugs, explaining how there has been an increase in the production, trafficking and overall consumption of drugs, including cannabis, methamphetamine, cocaine, opium and heroin. Because drug trafficking falls under the greater umbrella of organized crime, organizations like the UNODC and other international organizations, like the European Union, are increasing their efforts to combat the problem through collaborative policies.

Mazzitelli further utilized extensive statistics to illustrate the various increases in drug-related crimes; for example, since 1998 North America consumed 288 tons of cocaine, while Europe consumed 61 tons. In 2008, only 10 years later, the North American total decreased to 196 tons, but Europe’s total consumption rose to more than 124 tons. Of note, the 2008 statistic as South American cocaine consumption was 95 tons. Mazzitelli also discussed what he calls “plata o plomo” (loosely translated as “money or bullets”), a phenomena that describes the relationship that the state or actor has to drug trafficking. For example, the cocaine trafficking between Colombia and the United States is an example of the “plata o plomo” aspect, because many individuals die throughout the process of transport between the two states.

Other examples of “plata o plomo” include Houthi, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, the U.S. and Canada, who have all seen an increased number of drug production and trafficking-related deaths.

Mazzitelli finally concluded that the UNODC believes that in order to end illegal drug trafficking, something must be done about the consumers themselves. Since drug consumption is a health-related problem, one way to target this is through the use of education, whether it’s for increased awareness of decreased drug dependency and overall healthier living standards. Mazzitelli is optimistic that should the international community adopt these steps to success, drug trafficking and other forms of organized crime can and will be combated to the benefit of all.

The Complexities of Terrorism by Alyanna Cardozo, San Diego MET High School

Dipti Gupta, a distinguished professor at San Diego State University, is an established scholar in the field of terrorism and political violence research. On January 21, 2011, Gupta was warmly welcomed as a guest speaker at WorldLink’s 14th Annual Youth Town Meeting. He delved into what soon became an engrossing topic: terrorism. Many are familiar with the term, but Gupta shed new light on the matter that encouraged students to look at it from a different perspective.

While some may use the term “terrorist” to describe any act of violence inflicted on a community, Gupta asked delegates to assess the reasons behind the violence. A criminal uses violence to achieve goals that will benefit that individual. However, he said that those who aim to do something for a community, often for a minority group that is being treated unfairly, may also be described as terrorists.

In such situations, the individual sees violence as the only method of making their voices heard. Depending on the context, what one group may refer to as a “terrorist,” another may see as a “freedom fighter.”

To clarify that criminals and terrorists are not at completely opposite ends of the scale, Gupta provided an audience with a few common examples of individuals involved in acts of terrorism.

“Terrorism,” Gupta told his audience that the term alone can be dangerous, as criminals and terrorists can both be perpetrators of violence.

As the session continued, Gupta admitted to his audience that he became an expert in the field of terrorism in part because he was once a terrorist himself. He was able to get out of the group before causing any harm, but the experience had impacted his life; he knows firsthand how terrorist groups work and the distinctions that must be made in dealing with them.

Governments must understand that if they want to develop public policies to deal with terrorism and organized crime, they cannot conflated the two. This is understood, there might be a chance to thwart terrorist attacks and impede criminal actions before it is too late.

Today’s generation of youth has been endowed with the great desire to get involved. They want to be a part of the solution to global issues, so Gupta knew that the next question was inevitable: What can the youth do to help prevent crime and stop terrorism? A straight answer would be terrible, but Gupta provided a better answer: Perhaps the youth can help prevent youth from being indoctrinated by extremists. “Terrorism,” Gupta said, “just like crime, has been with us from our earliest recorded time. Therefore, there is nothing that is brand new about this. We have to live with it and manage its threats.”

We must learn to live with it by dealing with it, not merely accepting it. This biggest step to dealing with it is that the youth have the power to take. Young people can help teach about the destructive consequences of terrorism, how it destroys innocent lives and scar communities. It may seem like a small step, but with enough people advocating that violence is not the way to solve world problems, the world will be much better place. Together, youth undoubtedly have the capability, will and influence to make a difference. The time is start to now.

A Little Step for Nepal, A Giant Leap for Mankind by Gaia Croston, Francis Parker School

One of the number one questions that teenagers ask at meeting like this is “What can we do to make a difference?” Generally, the answer is to take initiative: take a problem you see and try to fix it. For anyone who questions the power of youth, there is no better inspiration than the story that follows, of a few youths who saw a problem - drug production and addiction in Nepal - and set out to solve it.

Birganj, Nepal, may not be a household name, but the Nepalese know it as the district with the largest drug production in the country. Located in the fertile Terai region and connected to India by an open, chaotic border crossing, Birganj is an important participant in the drug trade that traffics marijuana and opium both domestically and internationally. The region of the “Golden Crescent” and the “Golden Triangle” surrounding Nepal are also heavily involved with the drug trade. Nepal’s recent transition from monarchical to democratic has left an unstable political, economic and social system in its wake, a reality which has compounded the nation’s drug problem. In Birganj, the main moneymaker is tourism, there are few good roads, and the people live with little economic or physical security, and seemingly no future.

In such circumstances, the farmers in Birganj began to view drug production as a much more lucrative field than food production. Even though farmers only earn a small fraction of the finished product’s value, many growers switched to opium and/or marihuana in order to make a better living. What resulted were untold consequences in the community: one third of the drug users in the area were now under the age of 15 and 19, countless children were falling victim to drug dependency, and even the police were afraid to confront the farmers, who often carried weapons.

This is where Kanchan Jha, a young Nepalese man, comes in. Kanchan founded a local non-profit organization called Sano Paila (“A Little Step”) in 2006. Sano Paila is made up of thirty youths who saw a problem - drug production and addiction in Nepal - and set out to solve it. They are young, passionate and dedicated to eradicating drug production and trafficking.

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It’s easier to be the ignorant and say I don’t know about the problem. But once you know, once you’ve seen it in their eyes, then you have a responsibility to do something.” Craig Kielburger, founder, Free the Children
Small Arms, Big Troubles
by Maria Jose Zepeda
IMAN

Edward Laurence has been a Full Professor at Monterey Institute of International Studies since 1992. He served as a consultant in the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs and is thefounder of the IANSA, the International Action Network on Small Arms. IANSA advocates for small arms control by raising awareness among policymakers and facilitating the collaboration of various Non-Governmental Organizations seeking to reduce arms violence. Edward Laurence sees the importance of working with young adults so that they understand the ramifications of small arms.

Small arms are easy to carry, easy to trafﬁc and available to anyone. From revolvers, to rifles, to light machine guns, to drug trafﬁcking, most between the ages of 14 and 25. The FBI an estimated 22,000 deaths since 2007 were linked to drug-related murders.”

And the realities add in up to 200,000 civilian peace-time deaths. Given the current state of small arms violence worldwide, change that begins with the youth is an increasingly pressing issue. And the realities add gravity, as Edward Laurence points out, to the fact that youth involvement and activism is so necessary.

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When a student asked: “What can the youth help to reduce small arms?“ he answered “You all know people.” That simple statement has enormous implications: many teenagers know at least one person that has joined a gang and tried to shoot a weapon at someone. Because of this, many teenagers have opportunities to educate their peers about the dangers of small arms. “A great start would be telling that person that guns will lead to their death.”

When we all know people. That fact is abundantly empowering. A desire for change and a platform with which to see it through are two key factors in achieving peace, and the student delegates at the Youth Town Meeting are powerful evidence that both of these dynamics are driving forces in this generation. All that remains is the final ingredient – action. Stories such as that of Edward Laurence are inspiring and galvanizing, and will certainly lead students to a greater enthusiasm and understanding of the ways that they can effect concrete change, in circles as small as school communities and as broad as the world of policymakers.
Malaki Hendrix is a human trafficking survivor. He was a guest speaker in November 2010 for a WorldLink Youth Forum on Human Trafficking. The following is an excerpt of his story.

As my mind comes awake, so does my body. I feel the flicker of tiny legs as flies use my face as a landing strip. My ears become aware of their buzzing as well as the bustling and scrapping sounds of my tiny world coming to life. We are the most important to you,” Page said as he directed the students to the whiteboard. One by one he went through the items on their lists and asked the students to imagine their lives without these essentials. Family? Gone. Friends? Gone. Security? Don’t even think about it. He explained that this is the life of a human trafficking victim; these fundamental elements we take for granted are stripped away, all at once. As William Cañey of Catholic Relief Services explained earlier that morning, human trafficking is a “violation to the human dignity and human rights of those directly involved.” It is the act of stripping away basic human rights by means of force, fraud, and coercion.

Such unthinkable acts are prevalent in San Ysidro, the biggest land port of entry in the world, and thus a gateway for many of these wrongdoings. Twenty minutes from the city of San Diego and five minutes from the Mexican border, San Ysidro is especially susceptible to violence and the dangers of human trafficking. As Special Agent Juan Jacobo presented real case studies and photos from our area, suddenly these crimes hit a little closer to home. “A lot of people don’t understand that it’s actually happening in our country. It’s actually in our backyard,” moderator Skylar Economy remarked.

“Are you going to bring chaos and destruction or are you going to bring something positive and productive that’s going to benefit the world?”

Francisco Mendoza, employment training specialist at Second Chance, prompting YTM delegates to consider how they want to live.
Bienvenidos a la frontera del sur. Cada día, incontables vidas se pierden en batallas de pandillas por control de las Narco Plazas, los centros del tráfico de drogas en el mundo. Aquí, la industria criminal más grande del mundo de armar y matar de humanos existe en toda su fuerza. El lobo de esta es una sociedad, un negocio internacional y el tráfico de armas es uno de los más temibles en la región. De hecho, “el noventa por ciento de las armas usadas en la Narco Plazas son de los EEUU”, dice Edna-Trigo-Valdez, analista de inteligencia criminal para el departamento del Jefe de Comunicación. Durante su presentación “Armas, Drogas y Dinero: Bienvenidos a la Frontera Sudoeste” en la 14ta Junta Regional Juvenil, Valdez explicó la relación entre las pandillas de los EEUU y México, y las consecuencias de esas conexiones en ambos lados de la frontera.

Los pandilleros en los EEUU también están involucrados en la violencia en otros países. En Texas, Nevada y Arizona, y otros estados donde las leyes contra las armas son menos estrictas, la compra y venta de armas es distribuida por mayores, diándole una ganancia triple a los pandilleros. Sin embargo, el tráfico de armas es solo una de las conexiones entre los EEUU y México en términos del crimen en la frontera. Por otro lado, los carteles de drogas batallan fermosamente para cumplir con la demanda de los clientes en los EEUU. Redes de pandillas son más poderosas que nunca. Con el aumento de ejecuciones desde la inauguración del Presidente Calderón, el tráfico en las Narco Plazas es más fácilmente. A pesar del trabajo de organizaciones como el Community Shield, la Iniciativa de Mérida y otras fuerzas, los miembros de la sociedad se den cuenta de esto, este crimen continuará y probablemente se hará peor.

La palabra “prostitución” frecuentemente es asociada con la idea de que alguien es “usado”, “usurado”, “víctima” y “de baja clase.” Raramente es asociada con la palabra “victima”. A menudo, la sociedad no ve a los que están involucrados en la prostitución como esclavos sexuales, y son menos como a seres humanos. En realidad, la mayoría de los que son prostituidos son víctimas de tráfico de humanos, el desempeño forzado de personas. Jocelyn King, Secretario con San Diego County Sheriff’s Department y el administrador de la fuerza especial anti-tráfico en San Diego, lo llama “el crimen del futuro.” El problema con este crimen es que a menudo se sigue una mala manipulación. Los individuos llamados “pimp” son los que trafican y explotan a las víctimas. Traen a donde sea para encontrar a sus próximos empleados forzándolos: concertos, fiestas, citas, Facebook, y hasta escuelas. “El problema en cuestión de explotación sexual,” dice King, “es que la persona puede ser vendida con ganancias una y otra vez, a comparación de las drogas, que solo pueden ser vendidas una vez.”

Los traficantes atapan a sus víctimas a medio de la fuerza física, amenaza y manipulación emocional, a veces atrapando a una joven como una figura paternal o como novio. Por medio de estos rollos, las víctimas comienzan a desarrollar un sentido de pertenencia. Una vez vendido, las víctimas viven en un infierno. Trabajan en las calles 24 horas al día, siete días a la semana mientras que los traficantes se quedan con todo el dinero. Si las víctimas son arrestadas por ofrecer el servicio, frecuentemente dicen mentiras para proteger al traficante. “Las prostitutas son controladas y manipuladas y hacer creer que van a vivir un sueño,” dice King. “Les han dicho menti- ras y metido ideas a la cabeza.”

Esta es una idea falsa. “Cuando pensamos en prostitutas, pensamos de la película Pretty Woman,”, explica King. “Es lo mas lejos de la verdad!” Una vez que estas niñas están en esta red, son amarradas, diciéndoles que el hoy, los traficantes las encuentran y se deshacen de sus familias. A la misma vez, las manipulan para creer que no tienen valor y que sí son, no encuentran ningún tipo de vida en la sociedad, que nunca encontraron. “Esta es una joven, una niña, que la ba han viendo cientos de veces, dice King. “Y no se tienen auto-estima.” Por esta razón, muchas víctimas no quieren dejar o tratar a sus traficantes. En el caso de que logren escaparse del mundo de la prostitución, frecuentemente regresan porque creen que no tiene otra opción. Como consecuencia, no encuentran otro trabajo y en algunos casos, hacen del abuso sexual y físico.

El lavado de dinero, el tráfico de armas y el secuestro interno son dos de los temas importantes para el departamento de San Diego County Sheriff. “Esto se está tornando una industria más grande, más fácilmente. A pesar del trabajo de organizaciones como el Community Shield, la Iniciativa de Mérida y otras fuerzas, los miembros de la sociedad deben de entender que estos problemas son serios.”

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The history of the Philippines has been one of oppression. First, the Spanish inhabited the Philippines, ruling over the native peoples for nearly four hundred years. After the Spanish-American War, the Philippines changed hands and was awarded to the United States as a spoil of war. The Philippines finally secured independence from the United States in 1946. Unfortunately, the young nation has been continually plagued by conflict for the past half-century.

At the heart of the conflict and at southernmost tip of the country is Mindanao, the second largest island of the Philippines. About a quarter of Mindanao's population is Muslim. However, they weren't always the minority. Muslim introductions to the people of Mindanao to Islam long before the Spanish showed up and the religion spread far and wide to most of the inhabitants.

After the Philippines became independent, Christian immigrants flooded into the country and into Mindanao. The land that the Muslims have an effect on is now called a Muslim Autonomous Region. The government in Mindanao, and for many years to come, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the central government fought one another for the religion spread far and wide to most of the inhabitants.

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The following is an edited version of an interview with Detective James Hunter of the San Diego Police Department.

James Hunter, Detective, San Diego Police Department

I think it's really interesting what you said about the girls, how they're coming from usually broken families and they don't have much guidance, so you say that these girls are deciding to go into human trafficking because it is their own volition?

C: Well, it depends. That's kind of a really broad question - how is sex trafficking still around? It seems like something very backward... why is it still happening?

C: It's not backwardness because the whole aspect of sex in general has increased - especially when the internet came around. So when you're talking about anything from a sexual basis, you can't go from a pedophile to the guy around the corner who's wanting to just hook up with a girl, the minute the internet came around everything completely exploded sexually. So the drive for this is so big that we see it everywhere and it's an easy way for the customers (or the "johns" or the "tricks", as the slang term is for it) to start bringing sex to their life privately. Nowadays, I could sit in my own house and I could jump on the internet and I would order a girl for a come as easy as I could order a pizza. And they'll come right to my house and no one will ever know what's going on. So because it is much easier and accessible, human trafficking in itself got a lot more popular.

WL: Okay so I was wondering, and this is a very general question, what are the factors that contribute to human trafficking? Is there a certain mentality in tow with each one pimp, is it fairly high. I mean it happens very often. And that's not based upon their age or the race, it's based upon the mentality of that's all they know.

WL: So exactly how do you convince them?

C: Yeah, to prove and convince them of what life’s about – of what the reality of life is really like. And unfortunately, the recession rate for the girls going back into the life, once you've pulled them out and rescued them...they're going back into it. The girls who are like 12, 13, and 14 years old, the teenage girls see the videos about these guys who are rapping about prostitution, they're rapping about pimps, they're rapping about the whole gang life period. They see the music and listen to the lyrics and they get into them. We as adults just listen to the beat – you guys take that stuff to heart sometimes, and they see that being a prostitute is glamorous to them. They believe that and then the homes see this, and they believe that it is reality. They think that that's all他们 know. They see this, and they think that's all they know. Then obviously the reality that they show on TV, that is not reality anymore, but they're absolutely immersed in it. So the mentality of that's all they know.

WL: Why is sex trafficking still around? It seems like something very backward... why is it still happening?

C: It's not because of sex trafficking. It is because of the whole aspect of sex in general has increased - especially when the internet came around. So when you're talking about anything from a sexual basis, you can't go from a pedophile to the guy around the corner who's wanting to just hook up with a girl, the minute the internet came around everything completely exploded sexually. So the drive for this is so big that we see it everywhere and it's an easy way for the customers (or the "johns" or the "tricks", as the slang term is for it) to start bringing sex to their life privately. Nowadays, I could sit in my own house and I could jump on the internet and I would order a girl for a come as easy as I could order a pizza. And they'll come right to my house and no one will ever know what's going on. So because it is much easier and accessible, human trafficking in itself got a lot more popular.

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Further Reading

Reviews by Alyanna Cardozo

Blood from Stones

By Douglas Farah

Former West African bureau chief Douglas Farah tries to find an answer to the question that law enforcement agencies have been struggling with since 9/11: How do terrorist groups pay for their activities? In his book, Blood from Stones, Farah writes about the details of a dangerous investigation that he undertook in order to find the answer to this cryptic mystery. Partially his life at risk, Farah spent time with killers and arms traffickers, who were strung out on drugs in West Africa, in order to trace the links between underground diamond trade and international terrorism. After he uncovered a business alliance between Osama Bin Laden and Charles Taylor, the infamous Ex-President who was behind the bloody conflict in Liberia, Farah began his investigation on terrorist finances. This took him on a long journey to Dulai, Pakistan and the United States. In this chilling story of profit and greed, readers experience the atrocities that Farah saw firsthand. As General Barry McCaffrey said, “This will be a required reading for the thousands of U.S. and allied law enforcement and intelligence officers prosecuting the global war on terror.” With the same hard work and dedication that is evident in Farah’s work, the world may find itself closer to ending the terrible and perilous network of terrorism.

The Small Arms Trade

By Rachel Stohl, Mathew Schroeder

There are many issues that have the potential to disrupt international peace, but the misuse of small arms is one of the most pressing security threats of them all. Because of the ease with which these weapons can now be obtained, no one can be safe from the final death they can cause. Rachel Stohl, a Senior Analyst at the Center for Defense Information in Washington DC, Matthew Schroeder, the Manager of the Arms Sales Monitoring Project at the Federation of American Scientists, and Dan Smith, a U.S. army retiree, came together and wrote a book about the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. In this book, The Small Arms Trade: A Beginner’s Guide, they provide an engaging overview of these cheap weapons, the threat they pose and different methods for mining them up. This Beginner’s Guide holds vital information for anyone who wishes to fully understand one of the biggest threats of the 21st century. It is engaging and, as the Journal of Peace Research wrote, “almost exhaustively empirical in its approach.”

Half the Sky

By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

Women have come a long way in establishing their role in the workplace. They still, however, do not hold the position that they rightfully deserve for being human beings. In Half the Sky: Turning Oppr to Opportunity for Women Worldwide, the authors from different universities talk about strategies for stopping it from happening. Towards the end of the book, authors from different universities talk about strategies for developing culturally competent youth violence programs. The book examines the steps that must be taken in order to eradicate worldwide violence. First, one must realize that to change the future, the best place to start is with the youth of society. The youth of today will be the adults of tomorrow; they are the future. In Preventing Youth Violence in a Multicultural Society, different authors focus on the connection between environmental conditions and youth violence. The chapters investigate how ethnicity and culture can affect the risk of violence. Readers will get a better understanding of the foundation of violence and prevention methods specific to different ethnic groups. It is not only important to understand the reasons behind such aggression, but also ways to stop it from happening. Towards the end of the book, authors from different universities talk about strategies for developing culturally competent youth violence programs. For societal violence to end, the youth who have overcome this negative lifestyle must teach what they know to future youth.

Preventing Youth Violence in a Multicultural Society

Edited by Nancy G. Guerra, EdD and Emilie Phillips Smith, PhD

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Blood from Stones

By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

Half the Sky

By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

The Small Arms Trade

By Rachel Stohl, Mathew Schroeder

Preventing Youth Violence in a Multicultural Society

Edited by Nancy G. Guerra, EdD and Emilie Phillips Smith, PhD
Human Trafficking

The Crime of the Future
by Tess Baker
Torrey Pines High School

The word “prostitute” is often linked to an idea of someone who is “dirty”, “cheap”, “slutty” or “low class”. Rarely is it associated with the word “victim.” Society often fails to think of prostitutes as sex slaves, and even less frequently as people. In reality, most prostitutes are actually victims of human trafficking, the harboring of people for services through force, fraud, or coercion. Jason King, sergeant with the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department and administrator for the San Diego Regional Anti-Trafficking Task Force, calls it “the crime of the future.” The problem with this crime is that no one is completely safe from it. Individuals known as pimps are those who traffic and exploit victims. They will go anywhere to find these women, girls or boys. They may be in stores, bars, movie theaters, Facebook and even schools. “The problem in sexual exploitation,” says King, “[is] the person can be sold over and over again, compared to drugs which can only be sold once.”

Pimps generally collect their victims through force, threats and emotional manipulation, sometimes acting as a father figure or posing as their boyfriend. Through these roles, they give their victims a sense of belonging. Once trafficked, these victims are forced into a living hell. They work on the streets 24 hours a day, seven days a week while their pimps earn all of their profits. If the victims are arrested for proposition, they are forced into the police to that pimp will not be exposed. “[The prostitutes] are controlled and manipulated into thinking they’ll live the dream,” says King, “They’re all brainwashed.”

Society also tends to believe that prostitutes can easily escape the industry. This is a misconception. “When we think of prostitutes, we think of the movie Pretty Woman,” explains King. “[It’s] the furthest from the truth.” Once these girls find themselves in this position, they are threatened and told that if they leave, the pimp will find them and their families and brutally harm them. In addition, these girls are constantly manipulated into thinking they are worthless and that if they leave, they won’t find anything better because this life is the absolute best life they could possibly live. “This is a girl that’s been raped hundreds of times,” says King, “and has no self esteem.” The girls have been deprived of thinking they have any worth or value. For this reason, many victims are unwilling to leave or betray the pimps and, if they do escape from the world of prostitution, they often return because they have been made to believe that there is no other option. As a consequence, they often never get any other job and in some cases may die from being continually raped or beaten.

The crime of human trafficking is predicted to only grow as the economy becomes more global. King states that, “sex trafficking is such an issue because society glamorizes it.” In Pretty Woman, a prostitute picks up a guy who pays her an enormous amount of money for a weekend. In addition, he buys her high-end designer clothes on Rodeos Drive, whisking her off to San Francisco via private jet and ultimately falls in love with her. Although this film is entertaining, it inaccurately portrays the life of a prostitute. First off, “they don’t get the money, their pimps do,” says Sergeant King. Second, “there are very few independent workers out there,” continues King, “they are controlled and manipulated.” And third, “they are victims,” says King. “They aren’t doing this because they want to.” King described one girl that they tried to rescue, but refused to comply because of the fear that her pimp may come after her and her family. He explained that they tried multiple times to get her off the streets. This crime will not stop until the societies in which it occurs change their views. “We need to change our outlook because [prostitutes] are victims,” says King. A policy that prosecutes pimps rather than the girls they traffic, a proactive approach to preventing trafficking and the societal acceptance that will facilitate reintegration into normal life are all key components to ending human trafficking, and all stem from understanding that the prostitute is almost always an unwilling victim. Until all members of society realize this fact, this crime will only continue and most likely worsen.

Human Trafficking
Global Trends, Local Solutions
Mitch Baker
Torrey Pines High School

William Godding once said that the flaw in human society can be traced back to false in human nature. The Director of Emergency Operations for Catholic Relief Services, which deals with helping impoverished countries to prepare for disaster, Mr. William Canny, explained this principle in his presentation at the WorldLink Youth Town Meeting. His current job involves collaborating with a network of technical advisors based in Baltimore and overseas and supervising a disaster response team that helps communities prepare for potential disasters. Prior to this current job, Mr. Canny was Catholic Relief Service’s country representative for Haiti where he coordinated various programs that assist impoverished countries and church partners there. From 1998 to 2004, he was Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission, which coordinator with other countries to ensure safe migration of their citizens, with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. Canny has been deeply involved in matters concerning human rights since he was a Peace Corps volunteer. Since then, he has established himself in organizations that fight for human rights, especially those that concerned with human trafficking.

In his presentation, Mr. Canny explained the mechanisms of human trafficking. He explained that poor, isolated communities are largely targeted by traffickers. Vulnerability of both communities and individuals is due to one of three issues: financial, social, and economic stagnation. The largest developmental issue is forced migration due to lack of economic opportunity. Natural disasters, violence, and the devastating low social status of women and children around the globe render communities susceptible to global human traffickers. Canny stated, “Young women or girls in economically deprived populations are most affected by human trafficking.” Women especially are viewed as a commodity rather than actual human beings. Canny, aware that this stereotype created a psychological condition, stated, “You cannot exempt to attack one side of human trafficking.” Although he recognizes that efforts are being made to both reduce and prevent human trafficking, he strongly believes that not enough is being done. Mr. Canny himself is involved in organizations that rescue victims of trafficking and strive to educate others about the dangers of trafficking. He is involved in organizations that promote safe migration and educate governments on the signs of a victim of human trafficking. He is also involved in a safe house in which escaped victims can take refuge and seek both medical and psychological treatment. Mr. Canny explained that through research, heightening awareness, the availability of alternatives, and through the reconstruction of community livelihood, the superpower of human trafficking may fall. He hopes that the youth may at least, be aware and educated about it as the first step in a long line to combat one of our most detrimental threats to human security.

Eric Holder, Attorney General of the United States

“The crime of human trafficking is predicted to only grow as the economy becomes more global.”

Human trafficking has become big business—generating billions of dollars each year through the entrapment and exploitation of millions. Almost every country in the world is affected, either as a source or destination for victims.”

“Human trafficking has become big business—generating billions of dollars each year through the entrapment and exploitation of millions. Almost every country in the world is affected, either as a source or destination for victims.” Eric Holder, Attorney General of the United States
In the first plenary of the morning, you, your peers at schools.

While I was truly inspired by his statement, I didn't under-stand how compassion could possibly make a dent in the war against illegal immigration and weapons trafficking and gang. Yet throughout the day, I realized just how wrong my preconceived notions were. Youth are often brought up to believe that to fight an evil, we must be equally as evil. We are surrounded by war, violence, and recurring destruction. The Youth Town Meeting showed its attendants that what the world really needs is compassion.

Compassion has the power and potential to be a solution to the crimes that take place along the US-Mexican border everyday. While an AK-47 can immediately eliminate a "problem" in a person's life, compassion is what picks up the pieces that remain after a round has been fired and news together the beginnings of new life.

In the war against gangs, compassion is one of the most effec-tive combatants. Edna Trigo-Velázquez, Criminal Intelligence Analyst for San Diego County, identified a gang's offer of family and respect as one of the main reasons adolescents are drawn to criminal lifestyles. To stop the flow of young children into gangs, the youth of today and tomorrow must have other means to a sense of belonging and acceptance. Otherwise, the world will continue to foster a steady stream of youth susceptible to gang. Furthermore, empowering these groups to transitions to community.

Scott Silverman, founder of the organization Second Chance, has experienced the destruction caused by gangs from an entirely different perspective. In the past fifteen years, the Second Chance program has secured employment for over 24,000 persons in the cycle of poverty, many of which are former gang members. A widely acclaimed philanthropist, Silverman, attributes his success to personally believing in each individual's ability to rehab his or her life. "If we didn't have compassion for the system, we couldn't do this," Silverman stated. "We don't always like the people we serve. But we know they are people who have a heart." Without such an understanding, Silverman feels that for those with the most heinous pasts, Second Chance could not transform lives of suffering into lives with purpose.

In Lilia Velazquez briefing, "Is There Really Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking?" students learned of the difficulties of not only finding and rescuing victims, but also keeping them out of the trafficking ring. "Fifty percent of rescue victims in India will go back to their traffickers," explained Velazquez, "because that is the only place they will be welcomed." Even those who are lucky enough to escape cannot find justice upon their return home. These victims are rejected by their own communities and families. They are placed in a world where they are misunderstood, but also a source of shame. They are viewed to be just as worthless in society as they were in the trafficking ring. For victims of trafficking to truly recreate their lives, a shift in millions of minds around the world must occur. We must accept into the hearts of communities genuine compassion.

Muzamil Palma can also join the global tragedy of profound judgments. A documentation which focuses on the war-torn communities of Mindanao, Palma's work exposes deeply rooted prejudices between Christians and Muslims and slowly builds bridges of understanding. A participant from the Instituto Nacional de Mexico Americans. Nazoceti identified with Palma's story, stating, "With compassion, we can see [the humanity in others]. We understand what makes them suffer... We need to change the picture we have of people and put ourselves in their shoes."

Other speakers included Dec Akër, deputy director of the Institute for Peace and Justice (IPJ), and Chris Groth, interim program officer at the IPJ. They experienced firsthand how invoking compassion could eliminate the production of narcotics. They worked directly with an organization founded by Kanchan Jha called Sano Paila (A Little Hope). Jha's campaign to encourage farmers to have compassion for the environment. Groth, shared, "They made the [farmers] realize the crops eventually come back to Nepal and hurt their own community." Acknowledged, comparing the compassion cultivated in Nepal to the aims of WorldLink. "The better you understand someone else's reality, the easier it is to be compassionate... That's what this day is all about," he said. The success of Sano Paila's efforts further supports Groth's statement, "The seeds are there, just we need to open the lines and tap into compassion."

We have a legacy to leave. What will your next move be?

Closing Plenary by Gaia Groston
High Tech High International

This year was the 14th annual WorldLink Youth Town Meeting hosted by the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. After attending the briefing sessions held at the San Diego Convention Center, the closing was given by two exceptional speakers, Lilia “La Flama” Velazquez and Antonio Mazzitelli. Lilia “La Flama” Velazquez is an attorney in private practice and an ambassador for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Mazzitelli is the regional representative for the Mexico, Central America, and Caribbean region for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

One speaker focused on their expertise concerning the threats to humanity. The other focused working for justice in other countries. Both were very vocal about the idea that youth are the answer to helping those in need. In addition, they both strongly encouraged the audience to find a way to contribute to their communities, whether it is by volunteering in your community or going to volunteer at a private school.

Lilia “La Flama” Velazquez has spent 30 years defending women and children victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. At the Youth Town Meeting, her focus was centered on the question of how to help the victims of trafficking. For victims of human trafficking, the question is very realistic to the students that the only way to bring justice to all is to “identify the criminal, prosecute the criminal and convict the criminal.” Velazquez ended her talk by saying, “You can never reverse or undo the harm you do to the victims. It will be permanent.” Velazquez noted by finding what is morally and legally right, you can vindicate the victim. She concluded her talk by ending the problem, in the end, we how really existent they are.

Velazquez’ focus during her closing speech was on the problems and solutions to human trafficking. She told her listeners about how she took her daughter to Cambodia to show her how much corruption resides there. Velazquez informed the students about how the country struggles with human trafficking and how the victims who are found are usually permanently reintegrated back into society because many suffer from extreme trauma. She gave an example of a teenager from Cambodia. She and another girl around the age of 12 had been rescued from Cambodia and were on their way to speak about their ordeal at the University of North East Florida. On October 20, 2010, the survivor, said, "I lost my voice, I lost my choice. I lost my life. Velazquez warned us to know that we, as a country with many privileges and resources, and as mature youth, have the power to change something. This young girl is considered a success story because of her determination to continue on her journey of healing.

The main problem with human trafficking, "is the matter where it takes place," is the fact that the victims struggle to cooperate with those trying to convict their abusers. The fear of exposing their traffickers while others fear the person who initially trafficked them while other victims don’t cooperate because they are scared to come forward due to their status as illegal immigrants. There are an estimated 20,000 victims brought to the US per year that have been trafficked or sold into labor.

In 2008, the Trafficking Victims Act was passed. This gave those who came forward immunity to receive a green card. Velazquez also pointed out to the students that 5,000 visas are given out per year. The rate of abuse, basically, 273 victims of trafficking have received a visa, with 100,000 victims actually trafficked. So the question still remains, “Is there really justice for victims of human trafficking?”

The second speaker during the closing panel, Antonio Mazzitelli, has spent the last 21 years with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as the regional representative for the México, Central America and Caribbean region. Mazzitelli opened with a brief history of his life which enabled the students to connect with his story. He shared that his time in the UNODC, 80 percent of the population knows someone who has either been killed or robbed. Mazzitelli’s own wife was robbed and her father was killed by a criminal. The second example took place in West Africa, where Mazzitelli spoke about his reaction to finding out that there was no prison. He was told by judges that they would rather let the violent criminals be free because of the fear that they instilled in the people all around the region. The third example he spoke about was his current job in México with the UNODC. He spoke about the severity of corruption and said that many people choose to stay indoors during the night so as to not risk a run in with criminals. In México, 90,000 people have lost their lives in situations related to organized crime and 25,000 people between the ages of 18 and 25 have died due to government corruption. Relating everything back to his own life story, Mazzitelli said that the crime rates matter to him because, in his small hometown of only 10,000 people, 150 people were mercilessly killed in merely one year.

Mazzitelli closed by making it clear to all the students that they should not give up on their dreams. He said that following the rules is one of the ways to make sure that you do not allow others to ruin your dreams of winning unless we respect the rules." This comment rings true in many situations, including in his examples of the countries that are faced with an immense amount of corruption due to governments running through fear. Corruption could have been avoided if the people not only respected the rules but worked within them as well. Clearly, the best way to fight corruption is to only involve crime but also certain levels of organized chaos.

Throughout all the briefing sessions and opening and closing panels, it was clear that this year’s Youth Town Meeting was about the importance of the integral and open space as a source. Many terms left talking about all of the inspirational and eye opening information given to them by the professional and challenging speakers. They said that they did not want to listen or leave and they were disappointed that they could not stay longer. But don’t worry! Next year there will be another intriguing topic to learn about during one of the most memorable events the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice holds all year.
Trafficking in San Diego: An Interview (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

these victims as true victims and become ready to put the money aside to pay for these social services to—until that happens, we’ll never be able to rescue these girls the way that we should, the way that we could properly rescue them.

WL: For this logic—usually it’s just lengthened time in jail, but this one issue came up in our discussions here at USD: is there ever justice for these victims? I know it’s a little reassuring to know that the “john” is in jail, but do you think there is ever justice for these victims?

C: The only justice that you can say that you’re going to get for these victims is the sentencing of their pimps. That’s why there’s so much push for legislation right now to increase those sentences on the state side, because the sentences are so minimal right now. The one thing that’s good for Law Enforcement and victims is that in the state of California, pimping is mandatory state pris-on. There are very few felony crimes that are mandatory prison. So even though the sentences aren’t that big, for pimping of an adult it’s 3-6 years prison time. For pimping of a minor it’s 3-8 years prison time. And so the thing is that a lot of times what happens if you’re on good behavior while you’ve been sentenced, you could basically do 50% of that time. So if I put a pimp in prison and he was sentenced to do 8 years, he could end up doing only 4 years. And what happens is that it takes these victims multiple years to recover from those crimes. So a lot of times what happens is people will be trying to recover or she’s just beginning to turn her life around, the pimp that ruined her into life is walking out of prison already. The whole aspect of finding justice for these girls is to—make the punishment match the crime. And right now for state law, I just don’t personally believe that the punishment matches the crime.

WL: What motivates you personally to investigate these crimes?

C: I used to be just like everybody else in this nation, when I saw the girl that was working that’s all I saw, I didn’t realize what it was. I just thought the girl was out here trying to make money and she’s generating radio calls for me and I just wanted her off the street and away from me. I didn’t look at the whole story. Well then when I walked through the door in VICE, I was educated on this whole aspect of pimping and then I got my first case. It was a 16 year old girl who was not from a broken home, she was a straight “A” student in school, she had a part time job, and she had an excellent family, but she was manipulated and brainwashed into this life. Once she was into it, the pimp mentally and physically destroyed this girl, and when I was able to pull her out and help her, she trusted in me and believed in me and she accepted my help. She moved on and 3 years later I got a phone call from her saying “Hey Detective Hunter, thank you very much for everything you did for me, I’ve got a little boy now, I’ve got a job, I’m working, I’ve got my own place, and I’m just calling to say thank you” and that is what motivates me to do this job. And I’ll be honest with you, I don’t know any other detective that isn’t going to give you the same answer. When you have the opportunity to actually rescue one of these poor girls, that’s what it does for you.

Participating Schools

Academy of Our Lady of Peace

Bishop’s School

Cathedral Catholic High School

Catholic University of California del Rosarito

Crawford High School - IRC Program

Del Dios Middle School

Escondido High School

Francis Parker School

High Tech High International

Hoover High School

Instituto Mexico Americano Noroeste

John Muir High School

Second Chance

La Jolla Country Day School

La Jolla High School

MAAC Community Charter School

Mueller Charter Leadership Academy

Oaty Ranch High School

Outside the Lens

Pacific Academy

Patrick Henry High School

Preparatoria CETYS Universidad, Tijuana

Preparatoria Federal Lazaro Cardenas

San Diego Early/Middle College

San Dieguito Academy

School for Creative and Performing Arts

Sierra Vista/GRF

Torrey Pines High School

West Hills High School

Thank you teachers and students for all your hard work. We hope to see you next year!

Thank You, Donors!

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Would you like to support youth involvement in global affairs?

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Internships are available in the Summer, Fall and Spring semesters.

For more information, contact the WorldLink Program Office at (619) 260-7568, or go to http://peace.sandiego.edu/worldlink

“My goal was to spend my senior year in high school doing something meaningful and good for my future. I applied for the full position believing that I would be able to accomplish everything I set out to do. Little did I know that this internship would affect me in more ways than one. Not only was I able to do something extremely meaningful, but I was able to further my education on global affairs, grow as a person, and learn so much from the other students my age on their thoughts about global injustices.

It was no longer just about me – it was about what I could do with others so we could achieve our goals. Beyond learning about global issues, we worked together and completed projects we designed. This internship was even more than I could have dreamed of and it enabled me to prepare for the future ahead of me.”

-Katie Athis, senior

2010-2011 Intern

High School Internships

Students: Looking for something meaningful to do? Do you have an interest in global affairs? Do you want to spread your interest to other people your age? If so, apply to become a research intern for WorldLink!

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14 Years of Including the Voices of Youth!