

What I would like to draw your attention to is how both politicians and journalists have tiptoed around the feelings of violent sex offenders and pedophiles, by upholding their fantasy that the interactions taking place between a “customer” of human trafficking the victim are fully consensual, that she consented to prostitution out of poverty. People surviving human trafficking are victims of kidnapping, brutal beating, and rape; they are beaten into submission by the trafficker, then their bodies are sold to men who pay money for the opportunity to rape a child, adolescent, or adult. This is not sex. For men sick with pedophilia, rape is sex. When we use the language, “sex trafficking,” we as a community agree to uphold the pedophile’s fantasy that she or he consented to sell their body for money. People surviving human trafficking are not prostitutes; it is preposterous to refer to victims of kidnapping as such; they are dignified people who have been kidnapped, beaten, raped, and coerced into slavery.

I understand that people as young as 16 years old are bright, independent, capable, self-motivated, and often wise beyond their years, yet to a mother’s heart, they are still children, they are still developing, not yet adults, not yet fully grown. The human brain is not finished developing until age 21; according to Mother Nature, age 21 is the finishing line for adulthood. Legislators chose age 16 as the youngest possible year for the age of consent because children submit to survive and this is a way of life until they are able to leave home. In many states, age 18 is required for sexual consent to be acknowledged by the law. Statutory rape is violent; it is not “age-inappropriate sex,” as many men like to fantasize, it is rape, the raping of the innocence of a human being who is not an adult. It is impossible for anyone under the age of 18 to choose to prostitute themselves, because they are under the age of consent. There is no such thing as the prostitution of people under the age of consent, there is only statutory rape in exchange for money.

Human trafficking is brutal violence; when we speak of commercialized child abuse as “sex trafficking” we are pretty much agreeing that she/he consented. If a mother chooses to sell her 11 year old girl by the hour to be assaulted by a pedophile, do we agree that this child is a sex object, and that her mother consented for her, and therefore she has been prostituted? I believe the accurate language to confront the gruesome reality of this crisis of human rights occurring in our nation is “rape trafficking.” Why should we placate the fantasies of pedophiles that this 11 year old is his consensual lover?

Sometimes when a person has been treated like total crap, it makes a dent in their self-esteem, and it’s like they have indentations of lack of self-worth. Sometimes it’s really hard not to take it personally when people have gone out of their way to hurt your feelings or damage you. Sometimes it doesn’t matter how much you already know that God loves you or that other people in your life love you, because it doesn’t change the fact that it still hurts that somebody else believed you deserved to be harmed. Sometimes a person can feel totally worthless and like everything in the world is their fault simply because the emotional sensation of the dents they carry is overwhelming. Sometimes the voice of the collective ego has you convinced that no one would have your back if you stood up for yourself, because they are all in agreement that it’s all your fault; that is a lie, they know it’s not your fault and they are oppressed by the same force that you are. Even people who have given their allegiance to an unconditional victim-blaming of the female secretly deep down want you to win, to overcome the suppressed states they carry within themselves too.

I think sometimes that people don’t realize a lot of the emotional hurdles we carry are the same. Human beings are exquisitely sensitive creatures by nature, it is our intelligence, it is our magic, it is our

equipment designed to co-create with each other for the greater good of our species, it is the very quality that makes us human beings and not an object: our tenderness of feelings, our softness, our vulnerability.

I think sometimes people just absolutely hate that human beings are so fragile, so easily damaged in their emotional vulnerability, and expect them to be invincible superheros that overcome their wounds at lightspeed. It's like looking at someone who has been beaten up lying on the side of the road and expecting them to get up and run, because their bruises don't have permission to exist within your awareness. You hate the fact that the bruises exist and that they ever got damaged in the first place, you wish they didn't have any feelings to get hurt so they could get up and run, and it's terribly unrealistic, but that is how you cope with seeing someone you care about be damaged. Women can be like the Good Samaritan who poured oil and wine on the wounded stranger and took care of him, except for each other, for other women. Women believing in each other, believing in our shared strength, believing in our healing, believing in our worth, believing in the love of sisterhood, believing in our success, knowing we can rise up because we will support each other every step of the way, this is the oil and wine of the wounds of patriarchy.

Facing a betrayal of trust at the most basic standard of human decency can be excruciatingly painful. The body is wise, the spirit is wise, and your consciousness coordinates a process of moving out of denial at the pace that you are ready for. As I read through the publications of groups that discuss civil rights issues, there is no mention of human trafficking as a human rights emergency in this country, and I wonder if it's because commercialized child abuse is not a problem for male civil rights activists, because they are content with patriarchy right where it is, and they will rally for any other cause except the empowerment of females to be supported in de-authorizing the tolerance for sexual violence in this country.

Pedophilia is a mental illness which drives people to create violence and destruction at every turn, to create maximum damage to life itself; it is pedophilia that causes people to enjoy human suffering as they watch the world burn. It is pedophilia that causes sick people to delight in events such as the Gulf Oil Spill, California wildfires, and people going without access to clean drinking water. (See essay: Overall Trend of Destruction and How to Reverse It).

If you want a group to be indivisible, you need to treat all members like their basic human rights are worth fighting for. Walking down the street without getting sexually harassed or accosted or sexually assaulted is a very basic human right denied to half the population in this country. This is not a separate issue that belongs in its own category apart from regular civil rights. As much as people may want to categorize it in their minds as an issue of crime that has nothing to do with human rights, that is simply a way of objectifying the female population. The voice of the collective ego says, "That's your problem. That isn't a civil rights issue, that's crime. Actually, it is a civil rights issue, this crime happens as often as it does when the gender-bias in our society makes it so this crime is sanctioned instead of discouraged. If every man knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that he would serve a minimum of 5 years in prison for sexually assaulting his wife, friend, co-worker, neighbor, or acquaintance, he wouldn't do it, because he wouldn't be thinking that he could get away with it.

Investing your attention into the solutions instead of directing your chi into the problems is a good choice. The power of what your support with your audience, what you vote is worth your attention, this is a game-changer; the solutions are worth your attention, while other topics may be a worthless investment.