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**"FOR GOD'S SAKE DO SOMETHING:" WHITE-SLAVERY NARRATIVES AND
MORAL PANIC IN TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY AMERICAN CITIES**

VOLUME I

By

Amy R. Lagler

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ABSTRACT

"FOR GOD'S SAKE DO SOMETHING": WHITE SLAVERY NARRATIVES AND MORAL PANIC IN TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY AMERICAN CITIES

By

Amy R. Lagler

From roughly 1907 to 1915, a moral panic over the issue of white slavery swept through the United States, fueled by the dissemination of white-slavery narratives out of epicenters like Chicago which purportedly detailed how thousands of young innocent girls were being forced into prostitution by diabolical procurers. Historians who have analyzed this phenomenon have either accepted the narratives of white slavery as truthful, although exaggerated, accounts of how some women entered prostitution or have approached the multiple narratives as a uniform text which functioned to patrol gender boundaries and scare women out of the public realm. This dissertation will revise this previous historiography by tracking the institutional and discursive history of white slavery as it developed in the United States during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and by demonstrating that far from being an accurate representation of how women entered prostitution, the stories of sexual trafficking were wielded by a range of social actors for avowedly political purposes.

In refuting the traditional portrayal of white-slavery reformers as conservative, antifeminist reactionaries who were creating stories designed to push women out of the public sphere, this dissertation will investigate how a diverse group of white-slavery activists used the white-slavery discourse to patrol a variety of boundaries and pursue a variety of political agendas, some of which were explicitly feminist or progressive. As this

dissertation will demonstrate, urban reformers across the country wielded the white-slavery discourse to patrol the boundaries of white masculinity, criticize the capitalist system and push for economic reform, and challenge traditional gender boundaries by crafting narratives which called for woman suffrage, advocated expanded professional opportunities for women, and justified the excursion of middle-class women into an ever widening realm of both public space and the public sphere.

In many instances, this white-slavery activism resulted in real improvements in the city and the lives of some urban women. Unfortunately, activism which harnessed the white-slavery discourse also made for a politics rife with contradictions and repressive consequences, not all of which were unintended on the part of the reformers. My dissertation will explicate this by revealing how the construction and sanctioning of the white-slavery narratives resulted in the increased surveillance of working-class women, increased the number of immigrants facing deportation, and criminalized individuals engaging in consensual sexual relationships outside of marriage. Narratives of white slavery, purportedly aimed at making the city a safer place, ultimately increased the perils many urban residents faced. As this dissertation will reveal, however, the "victims" of white slavery were not always the passive objects of reformers' imagination and reforming agendas. Instead, working-class women, particularly those charged with crimes like prostitution, crafted their own white-slavery narratives in sometimes successful efforts to avoid prosecution and imprisonment for their crimes.

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Introduction

The municipal courtroom in Chicago was crowded on the opening day of Panzy Williams' pandering trial in January of 1907. When her case was called, the lead prosecutorial witness, a girl named Agnes, was led into court by a physician. She was so thin and frail that she was unable to reach the stand on her own. Her face seemed "care worn" and she wore a "languid expression" which "suggested that she had passed through some terrible crisis." That is, at least, how Clifford Roe, the Assistant U.S. State's Attorney in Chicago and the chief prosecutor in the case, remembered it when he described the scene in his book, Panders and their White Slaves, three years later.¹

On the stand, Agnes reportedly testified that she was a twenty-year-old office worker and high school graduate who lived with her parents on the north side of Chicago. She claimed she had fallen into the hands of the white slavers, as men and women who allegedly procured girls for prostitution were then called, after agreeing to go to a dance hall one Saturday night with a female co-worker from her office.² It was there that she met John, a man with whom she danced the two-step and waltzes throughout the evening. She confessed that she was getting sort of "mashed" on him after he "jollied" her with compliments about how good looking she was and that she had agreed, twice, to go with him to get something to drink.³ On the second trip to the cafe Agnes noticed that her lemonade had a "peculiar taste" but John assured her that the drink was not intoxicating and was "just like the red lemonade you get at the circus."⁴ Immediately after finishing the lemonade, however, Agnes began to feel a little peculiar.

¹Clifford G. Roe, Panders and Their White Slaves (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), 11.

²*Ibid.*

³*Ibid.*, 12-13.

⁴*Ibid.*, 13.

According to Roe, Agnes testified that the lemonade made her exceptionally dizzy and she passed out. When she came to in total darkness she reported that she felt "weak and tired" and was startled to find herself clutching "bedclothing." She alleged that she could not remember anything about how she came to be in the room or the bed. Eventually, a "dark negress" dressed like a servant entered the room and tried to reassure her that she would "like it here" but refused to tell her exactly where "here" was. Agnes allegedly remained in the room for two days recovering but was still unsure of where she had been taken. Believing that she might be in a hospital she asked for her parents and for her clothes but was told by the "negress" that the "madam" had all her clothes locked up. Hearing this, Agnes began to grow frightened and asked to see the madam. A "stout blond woman" soon entered the room wearing a kimono, sporting expensive jewelry.⁵

Agnes pleaded with the woman to release her, explaining that her parents were undoubtedly distressed by her absence as she had never been away from home overnight but the madam refused to release her. Instead she reportedly told Agnes that she would not be allowed to leave the house until she paid back the debt she owed the house for the costs they had incurred taking care of her and the money that had been paid to the young man who brought Agnes to the house for "his trouble and expense." It was only, however, when she told Agnes to get dressed and handed her a short red satin dress and silk stockings that Agnes began to realize that "something awful had happened" and that she was "in a terrible place." In spite of this realization she stated that she had no choice but to cooperate with the madam's plans for her.⁶

Exactly what those plans entailed, Clifford Roe left to the reader's imagination, noting only that Agnes had testified that she really did not want to "tell the terrible things

⁵Ibid., 13-14.

⁶Ibid., 14-15.

that happened to me" and drifted off, "lost in thought," for several minutes.⁷ She was, however, clearly reviewing the events in her mind as Roe reported that:

The muscles in her face began to twitch with emotion, her lips quivered and her hands trembled. She was struggling to keep back the tears that rolled down her cheeks.⁸

Under Roe's questioning, Agnes did relate the specific events which transpired during her alleged captivity in the house to the judge but the experience left her "exhausted" and ready to faint.⁹ She also reportedly testified that she had been unable to escape or call for help. Her efforts to write letters home were thwarted and her attempt to tell her story to the first man who entered her room backfired after she discovered that he was a "ringer" who had been sent there to see if she would tell potential customers that she was being held against her will. When she did, she was whipped.¹⁰ All the girls in the house, Agnes allegedly testified, were "cowed into submission" and whipped in a similar manner until "they become overpowered and their spirits broken, because they find that they are forced into a life from which they cannot escape."¹¹ Agnes was eventually able to get a letter to her parents who came to the house in search of her but the madam denied knowing anything about her and Agnes, for her part, claimed she had been too frightened to call out to them. It was only when they returned with a policeman that Agnes "mustered up the courage" to run into their arms.¹²

Agnes' testimony, which culminated with her identification of Panzy Williams as the white slaver who had forced her into a life of prostitution against her will, was followed by additional testimony against Williams including the testimony of Agnes' mother who, Roe reported, told the story of how she and her husband had found her

⁷Ibid., 15.

⁸Ibid., 16.

⁹Ibid., 15.

¹⁰Ibid., 16.

¹¹Ibid., 17.

¹²Ibid., 17-18.

daughter with "groans of sorrow and sobs of joy."¹³ Roe also noted that Williams, whom he referred to as a "dealer in misery," sat "bland, cold, and shameless" through the proceedings and issued a "full denial" of the "facts" of Agnes' testimony when she took the stand in her own defense.¹⁴ Williams testified that Agnes had come to the house of her "own free will" and was neither drunk nor unconscious when she arrived at the brothel. She also claimed that Agnes had run up a debt once in the house and that it was customary for houses like hers to hold the girl's street clothing to prevent them from running off and leaving their debts unpaid.¹⁵ Following Williams' testimony, her lawyer presented his closing statements which suggested that "the story of Agnes is a myth" and that she had either concocted the story about her imprisonment to "gloss over her shame and right herself with family and friends" after becoming a prostitute of her own accord or was simply a "notoriety seeker" who was "telling a horrible tale in order that she may be the central figure of sympathy and the head-liner in the newspapers."¹⁶ These arguments were, by Roe's account, well received in the courtroom and he claimed that he knew by the judge's demeanor and the murmuring he could hear around him that he was fighting an uphill battle to get Williams convicted.¹⁷

His closing statements did the trick. Re-iterating his own faith in Agnes' testimony, Roe hammered away at the illegality of the "customary" practice of debt-bondage being practiced by Williams and refuted the allegations that Agnes was a notoriety seeker by arguing that the natural sweetness and virtue of womanhood would never allow a woman like Agnes to willingly parade her shame in public for her own benefit.¹⁸ Roe also reportedly galvanized the courtroom by stating:

¹³Ibid., 18-19.

¹⁴Ibid., 19.

¹⁵Ibid., 19-20.

¹⁶Ibid., 20-21.

¹⁷Ibid., 22.

¹⁸Ibid., 22-24.

If, as counsel has intimated, other women are doing the same thing, as this defendant has done, if they are dragging girls into houses through a systematic slavery, if a system of indebtedness holds girls in all these houses, then as an officer of this court, I pledge myself here and now to investigate this matter to the very end, to ferret out the inner recesses of this underground world. If girls are sold as this girl has been, it is slavery, and I shall pursue it to the very end, and if it be a system of slavery, I shall drag it from its hiding place to the light of the day.¹⁹

According to Roe, Panzy Williams was found guilty on January 31st, 1907.²⁰

In 1910, when Roe wrote his narrative on his successful prosecution of Williams, he claimed that he had, in fact, made good on the promise he issued during his closing arguments. The Williams trial, he claimed, aroused his suspicions that there was a well-defined slave traffic in girls being carried out in cities like Chicago, suspicions which prompted him to undertake an investigation into the trafficking. Never one for humility, Roe argued that it was as a result of this investigation that he had, "practically single handed," launched the larger battle against white slavery in the years following 1907.²¹ Roe's claims that he initiated the white-slavery crusade were more than a little disingenuous. As even he recognized, urban reformers had been engaged in battling what they perceived was the widespread trafficking in girls for at least a decade prior to the Williams' trial.²² In fact, urban reformers had been agitating against what was initially

¹⁹Ibid., 25.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., 35.

²²Roe acknowledged that missionaries in Chicago's red-light district had been waging their own battle against vice for at least a decade but he refused to see their activities as precursors to his own. Instead he painted them as impotent spectators in the fight against vice who were forced to listen helplessly as girls were whipped and held in captivity by brothel owners. Roe also claimed that they were "dazed" by his revelations about white slavery and slow to arouse to "an appreciation of the truth." Not surprisingly, the missionaries tell a different story. See, Roe, *Panders*, 32-35; Clifford Roe, "Warfare Against the White Slave Traffic," in *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls*, ed. Ernest Bell (G.S. Ball, 1910), 139; Ernest Bell, "The Story of the Midnight Mission," in *Fighting the Traffic*, 412; "The Midnight Mission, Chicago," in Ernest Bell Archives, Box 1, file 1-12.

known as the trafficking in girls since the 1870s. Roe was, however, correct in asserting that he played a pivotal role in turning this relatively low-keyed and sporadic agitation into the full blown moral panic over white slavery which swept across the United States from roughly 1907 to 1915.

The moral panic over white slavery was marked by an extraordinary proliferation of white-slavery narratives through both "official" and popular mediums, all of which claimed that thousands of young innocent girls were being trapped, lured, drugged, or duped into entering a forced life of brothel prostitution. The white-slavery authors, including Roe, justified their creative endeavors by arguing that their stories were meant to serve as "exposes" of the traffic. As Roe stated, the trafficking was flourishing thanks to the "veil of mystery" which shielded it from public view.²³ In spite of Roe's claims that the public and reformers were unwilling to discuss to a subject which was so "revolting" and "ugly," the narratives were, in fact, incredibly popular with reformers and were well-received by the public. As one American writer noted in 1913, a "wave of sex hysteria and sex discussion seems to have invaded this country" and much of it was centered on the plight of the white slaves.²⁴

It was an invasion that bombarded urban residents in northeastern, midwestern, southern, and western cities with the "facts" of white slavery from every imaginable venue and, given the popularity of the white-slavery stories, people welcomed it. Reginald Kauffman's novel on white slavery, The House of Bondage, went through sixteen printings in the two years after it was published in 1910 and Elizabeth Robbins' novel on the same topic titled My Little Sister went through four editions after it was published in 1913. Urban moviegoers also helped contribute to the popularity of the tales. When the movie "Traffic in Souls" opened in New York, the owners of Weber's Theater were forced to

²³Roe, Panders, 7.

²⁴"Sex O'Clock in America," Current Opinion (Aug. 1913): 113-114.

turn away 1,000 people and had to add a fourth daily showing to accommodate the crowd.²⁵ The narratives seem to have struck a collective nerve. As Brand Whitlock, one-time mayor of Toledo noted, the white-slavery story had made the rounds on two continents and "had been somehow psychologically timed to meet the hysteria which the pulpit, the press, and the legislatures had displayed, as had the people, in one of those strange moral movements which now and then seize upon the public mind, and, in effect, make the whole population into a mob."²⁶

While the narratives were clearly popular the question as to whether or not they were true remained open to debate. Whitlock, for his part, argued strongly that the narratives, far from being based in reality, were actually the creation of "trained smut hunters" and obsessed reformers who were "victims of their own psychic lasciviousness."²⁷ According to Whitlock, all the narratives were based on the same general story in which:

some poor girl had been abducted, borne off to a brothel, ruined by men employed for that purpose, turned over to aged satyrs, and never heard of more. Of course there were variations; sometimes the girl was lured away in a motor car, sometimes by a request for assistance to some lady who had fainted, sometimes by other ruses. The story was always told vehemently, but on the authority of some inaccessible third person, to doubt or question whom was to be suspected of sympathy with the outrage. But however high the station, or unimpeachable the character of the informants, anyone who had the slightest knowledge of the rules of evidence, unless he were especially credulous, would have reason to doubt the tales.²⁸

²⁵F.C.S., "Introduction," in Reginald Kauffman, The House of Bondage (1910; repr., Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Gregg Press, 1968); Mark Sullivan, Our Times: The United States 1900-1925 Vol. IV (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), 134-135; " 'Traffic in Souls' Makes Hit," The Moving Picture World, 6 December 1913, 1157.

²⁶Brand Whitlock, Forty Years of It (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1913), 277-278.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 270, 279.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 273. For more on Whitlock's views see "Editorials," The Survey, 28 February 1914, 682-683; "The Futility of the White Slave Agitation as Brand Whitlock Sees It," Current Opinion (April 1914): 287-288; "The Girl That's Down" in Brand Whitlock, The Fall Guy (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1912), 213-230.

Whitlock claimed that he had tried to track down the truth of the issue by approaching a social worker who was "most heroically concerned" with the crusade, asking him to relate a story of white slavery, and then attempting to find corroborating proof to back up his tale. Although the reformer told a compelling story of how he had single-handedly rescued a missing seventeen-year-old girl from a brothel where she was being imprisoned, Whitlock could find no facts or evidence to back it up. As he noted, the story was designed to defy investigation for the reformer could not divulge the girl's name (to protect the family), could not divulge the house where she was abducted (for white slavers had broken into a respectable family's home to use for a front while they were on vacation) and could not identify the brothel she was held in (for it had been forced out of business). Whitlock, as mayor of Toledo, instructed his Director of Public Safety to look into the matter. After weeks of investigation by detectives, inspectors for the federal government, and two clergymen, the Director of Public Safety concluded that the social worker's tale was groundless.²⁹

To the vast majority of Whitlock's contemporaries, however, the white-slavery narratives were not groundless tales told by some inaccessible third person. Instead, the stories were frequently accepted as factual portrayals presented by governmental bodies, knowledgeable reformers, and prosecutors like Roe whose position with the U.S. State's Attorney's office and the fact that he successfully prosecuted hundreds of people accused of procuring in Chicago in the years following the Williams trial made him a highly authoritative source.³⁰ Roe, to be sure, made the most out of the credibility these

²⁹Ibid., 276.

³⁰All of the white-slavery authors claimed to be telling to the truth with their narratives, even when they were clearly fictional accounts. For instance, Reginald Kauffman, in his novel House of Bondage included a "Caveat Emptor" before his text in which he states that in his fictional portrayal "it is the truth only that I have told" and appended the report of the Rockefeller Grand Jury convened in New York in 1910 to investigate white slavery

experiences conferred upon him, stressing, for instance, that the "facts" he was laying out "thoroughly and honestly," had been "thrust" upon him in the court room. He also made sure that those who edited or introduced his texts gave him an introduction which conveyed his credentials as a preeminent white-slavery crusader. In one instance, this took the form of an "Editor's note" which stated that the "Honourable Clifford G. Roe" was a former assistant State's Attorney, a member of the National Vigilance Committee for the United States, and the current president of the American Alliance for the Suppression and Prevention of the White Slave Traffic. In another text, Roe included multiple "introductions" to one of his white-slavery texts, undoubtedly unable to choose between one which credited him as being the "William Lloyd Garrison" of the white-slavery crusade and another which called him the "best informed man in North America on the question" of white slavery.³¹ For all of his credentials and his experience prosecuting procurers, however, Roe's white-slavery narratives were not necessarily accurate portrayals of what actually occurred, even with regard to his own courtroom prosecutions.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of court records from Roe's prosecutions of white slavers have been destroyed, as have Roe's investigative notes, a situation which makes it impossible, at this time, to fully verify or disprove what he presents as truthful representations of his first-hand experiences in and out of the courtroom.³² Prior to their

to his text. The sensationalized movie "Traffic in Souls," similarly, claimed to be based on Rockefeller's Grand Jury evidence, quite a stretch considering that the film itself contradicts the Grand Jury's findings and portrays the leader of the white-slave ring as a reformer who bore a strong resemblance to John Rockefeller Jr. himself. See Kauffman, 467-480; Robert C. Allen, "Traffic in Souls" *Sight and Sound* 44 (Winter 1974-75): 50-52; Janet Stieger, Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 135-138.

³¹J.G. Shearer, "Introduction," and B.S. Steadwell, "Introduction," both in Horrors of the White Slave Trade: The Mighty Crusade to Protect the Purity of Our Homes, ed. Clifford Roe (1911), 18-19.

³²According to Philip J. Costello, an archivist at the Cook County Circuit Court Archives, these records were destroyed in the 1970s.

destruction, however, Roe's investigative and court notes were analyzed by Walter Reckless, an associate professor of sociology at Vanderbilt University. In 1933, Reckless examined 77 white slavery court records in Chicago and compared them to the literary tales of Clifford Roe in Panders and Their White Slaves, including his portrayal of Agnes and the prosecution of Panzy Williams, which, as we have seen, Roe presented as a factual accounting of a court case that he himself had prosecuted, complete with first-hand testimony from the white slave herself. The comparison is instructive.

According to the actual police and court records in this case, Agnes was not an office worker and she was not an American. She was not at a dance, nor was she drugged, and she makes no mention of whippings or of being guarded by a dark "Negress". Instead, she was a young Swedish immigrant who did not speak English who slept with a "colored man" in exchange for \$5.00 and a place to stay for the night. She did end up in a brothel but the woman who ran it was African American, not white, and she was not imprisoned against her will. Far from being guarded and enslaved, when the madam discovered in the newspapers that the girl had been reported missing by her uncle, she asked Agnes if she wanted to return home and when Agnes said yes she drove the girl back to her uncle's house. Agnes, however, changed her mind about wanting to go home and returned to a saloon to solicit African-American men for a place to stay. It was during one of these encounters that she was arrested.³³ As a result of this analysis Reckless concluded that the white slavery narratives, propagated by rumor, repetition, and the literary manipulation of factual evidence, were more myth than reality.³⁴

As Reckless pointed out, the public was frequently stirred into action on the basis of rumor "more easily than by dull and undramatic fact" and that is undoubtedly what Roe

³³Walter Reckless, Vice in Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1933; repr., Montclair: Patterson Smith Publishing Corp., 1969), 36-40.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 32-55.

was attempting to do.³⁵ Roe certainly had a vested interest in propagating the white-slavery stories as he was in the process of building a career, and a public name, as the nation's foremost authority on white slavery. After resigning from his position as assistant United States District Attorney, a tenure notable primarily for his work prosecuting white slavers, Roe was retained by leading reformist groups in the city of Chicago to lead a new movement against white slavery under the slogan "Protect the Girls."³⁶ He was also extremely active in national vigilance organizations and investigations, serving as an advisor to John D. Rockefeller's investigations in New York, as President of the American Alliance for the Suppression and Prevention of the White Slave Traffic, and as a member of the National Vigilance Committee. The crusade against white slavery was the pinnacle of Roe's career, a fact testified to by his obituaries which heralded him as the "leader" of the national fight against white slavery.³⁷ Obviously, Reckless, who was himself engaged in his own political project of elevating his sociological "science" above the methods of moral reformers like Roe, is also not an objective observer. He does, however, point to the need for a critical interrogation of all historical sources related to white slavery, no matter how "authoritative" the authors may seem.

Historians like Ruth Rosen have, of course, recognized that narratives on prostitution cannot be taken at face value. Arguing that prostitution emerged as a "symbol of an age" during the Progressive era, Rosen stresses that the stories that progressives crafted about prostitution were a means for them to express their anxieties about the changing nature of American society. As a result, their portrayals of prostitution and the prostitutes themselves were frequently misrepresented or distorted by reformers who constructed their prostitution narratives as jeremiads against everything from the

³⁵Ibid., 35.

³⁶ "Open War on Vice to Protect Girls," Chicago Sunday Tribune, 26 September 1909, 1.

³⁷ "C.G. Roe is Dead; Leader of White Slavery Fight," Chicago Tribune 28 June 1934;

"Clifford Roe Dead; Led Fight on Vice," New York Times 29 June 1934.

breakdown of traditional values and the commercialization of society to the changing nature of immigration, the growth of a youth culture centered around new forms of leisure, and the seemingly low morals of young, working-class women.³⁸ Through her analysis of prostitution, Rosen attempts to sort out the truth from the fiction in the Progressive era debates over the "social evil" by undertaking a thorough investigation of her own, one which approaches prostitution as a rational, career choice by individual women.³⁹ Rosen's analysis was a pathbreaking attempt to explore both the nature of prostitution and the devastating effects that prostitution reform had on individual prostitutes' lives. It remains, eighteen years later, the definitive analysis of prostitution during the Progressive Era.

Unfortunately, Rosen's analysis has also given rise to a new orthodoxy on white slavery, one which does not go far enough in debunking the myth of the white slave.⁴⁰ In her chapter "White Slavery: Myth or Reality?", Rosen argues that white slavery was a real phenomenon, although she believes it probably accounted for less than 10% of the prostitute population.⁴¹ While Rosen does open this chapter by acknowledging that

³⁸Ruth Rosen, The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 38-50. For other authors who approach prostitution from this perspective see Joel Best, Controlling Vice: Regulating Brothel Prostitution in St. Paul, 1865-1883 (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1998), 155, footnote # 19 and 161, footnote # 70, Jacqueline Barnhart, Fair but Frail: Prostitution in San Francisco 1849-1900 (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986), 67-71, Francesco Cordasco and Thomas Monroe Pitkin, The White Slave Trade and the Immigrants: A Chapter in American Social History (Detroit: Blaine Ethridge Books, 1981), Timothy Gilfoyle, City of Eros: New York City, prostitution, and the commercialization of sex, 1790-1920 (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1992), 259-265, and Roy Lubove, "The Progressive and the Prostitute," in Prostitution, vol. 9 of History of Women in the United States: Historical Articles on Women's Lives and Activities, ed. Nancy Cott (New York: K.G. Saur, 1993): 248-270.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 137-178.

⁴⁰Rosen is cited as the "best analysis" of white slavery by Gilfoyle in City of Eros. See 406, footnote # 24. Rosen is also cited by Barnhart, Fair but Frail, 115, footnote #32 and Nicki Roberts, Whores in History (London: HarperCollins Publishing, 1992), 264.

⁴¹Rosen, 133. While 10% is a moderate figure, given the estimate of 60% put forth by

reformers sometimes exaggerated for political purposes and that entrepreneurs sensationalized the white-slavery tales to make money, she remains firm in her belief that "a careful review of the evidence documents a real traffic in women."⁴² Her evidence is heavily drawn from both reformers' narratives and more "official" sources, including vice commission reports, the opinions of federal and state authorities, the tales of prosecutors like Roe, evidence from police commissioners such as Theodore Bingham of New York, and government publications such as the Reports of the Immigration Commission, Importation and Harboring of Women for Immoral Purposes. As we have seen in the case

many vice reformers, it is still a problematic conclusion. There is, in the first place, the issue of how Rosen arrived at her "less than 10%" figure. In her chapter on white slavery, she wields numbers from different studies and vice reports from New York, Chicago, Bridgeport, and Kansas and arrives at what she considers a conservative 7.5 percent figure for women who listed white slavery as the reason for their entry into prostitution. This is, however, contradicted in the following chapter on the causes of prostitution where Rosen calculates, using most of the same sources, that only 2.8% cited white slavery as the cause. Rosen accounts for this discrepancy by arguing that her second calculations were based more heavily on studies which allowed women to list *all* the causes which contributed to their becoming prostitutes. Women who were offered the wider set of choices were, according to Rosen's calculations, most likely to pick "own choice" and "economic need" as reasons for their current occupation. Rosen does not, however, list the options given to the 7.8% of women who choose white slavery as the cause in her first calculations so it is difficult to compare the two groups of responses. If, however, their options were confined to "naturally bad," "ignorance," or "easy money," they may have opted for the cause which would elicit the most sympathy from the investigator. As Rosen herself concedes, prostitutes were known for lying to the investigators and the investigators themselves "probably interfered with the collection of data," sometimes directing the women being interviewed on which choice to pick. Rosen does not analyze how the options offered as causes or the direction of the interviewers shaped the prostitutes responses and determined whether or not they presented themselves as white slaves to the authorities. See Rosen, 134, 138, 146. For another historian who argues that women and girls being questioned by reformers constructed the stories to conform with what they thought the investigator wanted to hear. See Ruth Alexander, The Girl Problem: Female Sexual Delinquency in New York, 1900-1930 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 29-31.

⁴²Ibid., 114-116.

of Roe's narratives, however, there are problems with approaching these "official" sources as objective documents which contain the "truth" of white slavery.⁴³

There is, in the first place, a problem with assuming that there are any historical accounts of white slavery which are either politically neutral or wholly devoid of self-serving motives on the part of the author.⁴⁴ The narratives of Women's Christian Temperance Union missionary Charlton Edholm on the alleged sexual enslavement of Chinese girls, which Rosen relies on, are, for instance, little more than unsubstantiated allegations passed down through a grapevine of reformers. They were also highly sensational and included inflammatory accounts of slave auctions and charges that the Chinese girls were being surgically altered to make them more valuable as sex slaves.⁴⁵

⁴³Rosen includes Reckless' text in her bibliography but does not apply his insights to her analysis of white slavery. Instead, she utilizes Roe's narratives, including the white-slavery stories in Panders and their White Slaves, as clear evidence that white slavery existed.

⁴⁴This is true of a variety of sources used by Rosen, including the white-slavery narratives crafted by New York reformers like George Kibbe Turner, who was attempting to overthrow Tammany Hall and those constructed by Stanley Finch, Chief of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, whose public pronouncements on the widespread dangers represented by traffickers was geared toward pressuring the government to provide appropriations for his agencies white-slavery investigations. See George Kibbe Turner, "Daughters of the Poor: a Plain Story of the Development of New York City as a Leading Center of the White Slave Trade of the World, Under Tammany Hall," McClure's Magazine 34 (Nov. 1909): 45-61 and Stanley Finch, The White Slave Traffic: Address by Stanley W. Finch, Chief of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, before World's Purity Congress, Louisville, KY., May 7, 1912 (Washington D.C.: International Reform Bureau, n.d.), 1-3. White-slavery narratives were also utilized by reformers as a means to raise money and pay their own salaries. See, for instance, the ways in which Chicago's Midnight Mission used the issue to raise money to raise money detailed in the letters in Ernest Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-1; "Minutes of the Director's Meeting of the Midnight Mission for Oct. 11, 1909," Bell Archives, Box 4, file 4-9; Letter from Victor Lawson to Ernest Bell dated Oct. 18, 1909, Bell Archives, Box 1, file 1-11; Letter from Ernest Bell to Victor Lawson, dated Oct. 20, 1909, Bell Archives, Box 1, file 1-11. For other examples of reformers using the narratives to raise money see, Illinois Vigilance Association, The Vigil no. 10, 1 and J.C. Westenberg letter to Ernest Bell dated Oct. 23, 1911, Bell Archives, Box 5, folder 5-2.

⁴⁵Rosen, 122; M.C.G. Edholm, "A Stain on the Flag," Californian Illustrated 1 (February 1892): 165-166.

The narratives were also not without their political purposes. Edholm's expose and her argument that sexual slavery existed "wherever the Chinese have obtained a foothold," were extremely popular among opponents of the Chinese who were actively seeking to eliminate the Chinese presence in the United States.⁴⁶

In addition, it is problematic to approach the different white-slavery narratives constructed by the reformers and other governmental investigation as independent sources which provide discreet proof that white slavery existed. Reformers and officials constantly relied on each other for information, a situation which resulted in so much evidentiary plagiarism that it is extremely difficult to sort out mere repetition from corroborating evidence. For instance, the Immigrant Commission, which Rosen argues conducted an "extensive and well-researched" investigation into the importation of white slaves into the United States, actually based much of its evidence on the findings of other reformers, including Clifford Roe.⁴⁷ Vice commissions convened on the state level showed a similar tendency to back up their claims that white slavery existed with evidence culled from other reports. The Syracuse vice report, for instance, did not find any local instances of white

⁴⁶Edholm, 159. Edholm also argued that prior to the restriction of Chinese immigration women and children were being sold in Chinatowns all over the country. An editorial which follows Edholm's article makes the connection between her allegations and the anti-Chinese movement even clearer. Citing Edholm's "shocking story", the editorial argues "It is unquestionable true that the influence of the Chinese upon the American nation is bad, unhealthy in every way" and calls for more repressive legislation aimed at these dealers in slaves. See, "Questions of the Day," Californian Illustrated 1 (February 1892): 223. The connections between the narratives on Chinese sexual slavery and the anti-Chinese movement will be more fully discussed in chapter one.

⁴⁷Rosen, 199, footnote #25; U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigrant Commission. Importation and Harboring of Women For Immoral Purposes (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 59, footnote e. The investigations undertaken by the Bureau of Immigration were also not without their political motives and their white-slavery findings were frequently coupled with calls for the further restriction of the immigration of Asians and Eastern Europeans. See Janet Mickish, "Legal Control of Socio-Sexual Relationships: Creation of the Mann White Slave Traffic Act of 1910," (Ph.D. diss., Carbondale: Southern Illinois University, 1980), 190-193.

slavery but still asserted that the phenomenon existed and borrowed heavily from the Chicago vice commission report to make their case. They also relied heavily on the opinions and writings of other white-slavery reformers like Clifford Roe, whom they cited for evidence that the majority of women were tricked or trapped into prostitution.⁴⁸ Similarly, the Vice Commission Report issued in Portland, Oregon found no evidence of white slavery in spite of conducting a very thorough local investigation but maintained that women were being turned into white slaves, drawing all their evidence from cases in Chicago.⁴⁹

The "official" investigations were further compromised by the fact that in addition to borrowing each other's conclusions and evidence, a number of the investigations borrowed each other's investigators. There really were, as Whitlock had alleged, a cadre of "trained smut hunters," undertaking inquests across the country.⁵⁰ George Kneeland, Director of Investigations of the American Vigilance Association, made quite a career out of conducting surveys in different cities around the country, including Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Syracuse.⁵¹ The Syracuse report was, in fact,

⁴⁸Moral Survey Committee of Syracuse, The Social Evil in Syracuse (Syracuse: 1913), reprinted in Prostitution in America: Three Investigations, 1902-1914 (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 27.

⁴⁹Report of the Portland Vice Commission to the Mayor and City Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, January 1913 (Portland: Henry Russell Talbot, 1913), 213-215. The importance of both Roe's narratives and events in Chicago to the white-slavery crusade during the moral panic years will be explored in chapter two.

⁵⁰Whitlock, Forty Years of It, 270.

⁵¹George Kneeland, Commercialized Prostitution in New York (New York: The Century Co., 1913); Vice Commission of Chicago, The Social Evil in Chicago: A Study of Existing Conditions (Chicago: Gunthorp-Warren, 1911); The Vice Commission of Philadelphia: A Report on Existing Conditions (Philadelphia: The Vice Commission of Philadelphia, 1913); Winthrop Lane, "Under Cover of Respectability," in Howard Kelly (ed.), The Double Shame of Baltimore: Her Unpublished Vice Report and Her Utter Indifference (N.p., 1916), 10.

10; Moral Survey Committee of Syracuse, 2. Kneeland was also the director of field investigation for New York's Committee of 14. See, Survey, 6 May 1911. For Kneeland's promotion to Director of Investigation for the American Vigilance Association see The

"conducted under the executive officers of the American Vigilance Association" who supplied five investigators to conduct the field work.⁵² This cross-fertilization was furthered by the tendency of cities to loan out their officials to assist other urban investigations. When John D. Rockefeller wanted to hire someone to look into the dangers faced by immigrant women in New York, for instance, he hired Clifford Roe from Chicago.⁵³

The special investigators hired by the Bureau of Immigration were also veteran white-slave sleuths. Marcus Braun, for instance, carried out numerous investigations for the Bureau. Following surveys into European white slavery in 1903 and 1905, Braun undertook investigations into whether or not the traffic in women was occurring in the United States. In 1908 he was responsible for further inquiries on the white slave traffic in Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Denver, Salt Lake City, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Pittsburgh and was then sent back to Europe to follow up on his previous findings.⁵⁴ Even though the Commissioner-General attached a note to this report saying he felt some of Braun's findings were based on erroneous assumptions, Braun continued to act as a special investigator for the Immigrant Commission in future investigations.⁵⁵ All of Braun's reports alleged that there were hoards of immigrant women in the United States who had been imported for immoral purposes and widespread trafficking which trapped innocent girls and women and forced them into prostitution. Relying on the same investigator repeatedly over a two-year period turned up the same

Survey, 30 March 1912.

⁵²Moral Survey Committee of Syracuse, 7, 11. The American Vigilance Association urged all states and cities undertaking investigations to read Kneeland's reports so they could get a sense of what needed to be covered to get "satisfactory results." See "Department of Investigation," *Vigilance* 26, no. 4 (April 1913), 19.

⁵³Steiger, 121-122. Roe, in turn, borrowed detectives from the Citizen's Association and the Chicago Law and Order League and gathered evidence from mission workers, such as Ernest Bell, who were active in the fight against white slavery. See Roe, *Panders*, 33-36.

⁵⁴For information on Braun's investigations see Mickish, 160-194.

⁵⁵Mickish, 171.

clues and the same conclusions in report after report. Tellingly, a new batch of investigators for the Bureau of Immigration found they were unable to corroborate these findings with their own research less than a year later. These investigators found that when they tried to pursue stories regarding the traffic in women they were either proven false or they received no response from the parties that alleged they had evidence to prove them.⁵⁶

The ways in which the white-slavery narratives borrowed their definitions, facts, figures, and stories from each other and the ways in which the investigations employed the same investigators who repeatedly found the same conditions everywhere they looked, makes it difficult to assess whose proof is whose. In effect, the evidence begins to take on a circular quality which is, to the historian attempting to sort it out, dizzying in its effects. To be certain, however, the cross-fertilization of official publications, the vice reports, the reformer's tracts, and the investigations themselves makes the use of them as distinct sources which buttress each other's proof extremely misleading. It implies that different groups and authorities found similar conditions and came to similar conclusions when, in fact, it was frequently the same individuals discovering the same conditions and coming to their usual conclusions.

Rosen's analysis of white slavery runs into trouble because she does not apply her insights into how antiprostitution narratives were being shaped by a range of factors, many of which had more to do with the anxieties of the reformers than with prostitution itself, to her analysis of white slavery. As a result, her analysis fails to fully reveal the ways in which the sources she cites as offering credible proof as to the existence of white slavery are all sources which were actively constructing, not merely documenting, the phenomenon of white slavery. This is undoubtedly due, in part, to the fact that Rosen roots her analysis of white slavery in the work of Kathleen Barry, whose text Female Sexual Slavery argues that all women, as a group, experience sexual abuse that is so pervasive that it amounts to

⁵⁶Ibid., 189-191

sexual slavery.⁵⁷ Barry's analysis, rooted as it is in a transhistorical, universalizing conceptualization of all unequal sexual relations as rape and sexual slavery, is ill-suited as a framework for a nuanced, contextualized, historical assessment of prostitution and the phenomenon of white slavery.⁵⁸ Using Barry as her guiding force leads Rosen to not only merely accept the existence of white slavery but also to argue, as Barry does, that doubting the reality of white-slavery narratives results from "a tendency to deny the historical and current reality of male violence against women."⁵⁹

This association of white-slavery skepticism with an antifeminist agenda which seeks to deny the reality of male violence against women is not necessarily borne out by the sources. Walter Reckless, for instance, both argued that white slavery was a myth and stressed that women were abused, some brutally, by pimps, panders, and their lovers, a phenomena which he discusses under the heading "Man's Inhumanity to Woman: A Patriarchal Pattern." Ascribing the abuse to "the patriarchal pattern according to which wife beating was a male prerogative", Reckless' conclusions can hardly be read as an antifeminist denial of male violence against women.⁶⁰ They are, instead, quite in keeping with Barry's own arguments that patriarchal societies condone violence against women.

In addition, all of the contemporaries who questioned the veracity of white slavery were not conservative antifeminists, as Barry argues, or, as Rosen argues, politicians, police, liquor interests, and property owners who benefited from the traffic.⁶¹ Instead,

⁵⁷Kathleen Barry, Female Sexual Slavery (New York: Avon Books, 1979). See also Kathleen Barry, The Prostitution of Sexuality (New York: New York University Press, 1995).

⁵⁸For a critical assessment of feminist's readings of prostitution which present transhistorical, totalizing views of female sexuality and deny women's sexual autonomy and sexual agency see Shannon Bell, "Writing the Prostitute Body: Feminist Reproductions," Reading, Writing, and Rewriting the Prostitute Body (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994): 73-98.

⁵⁹Rosen, 114.

⁶⁰Reckless, 42 and 48.

⁶¹Barry, Female Sexual Slavery, 1-10; Rosen, 115-116.

there were those who were suspicious of the reformers and their efforts to "protect" the female victims of prostitution because they could see the negative consequences of the reform effort. Brand Whitlock's disdain for white-slavery crusaders and his skepticism regarding their stories was, for instance, firmly grounded in his assessments of the impact of the white-slavery reforms on both society and the putative "victims" themselves, the prostitutes. Arguing that the new raids and the new laws designed to stop white slavery had turned a "horde" of agents, detectives, and inspectors "loose on the land," Whitlock warned that this endangered both men, who could now be charged with a felony for traveling with a woman, and prostitutes, who Whitlock saw as being the real victims of the white-slavery scare.⁶² Whitlock argued that the laws passed to suppress white slavery:

have not only failed, they have not only stimulated and intensified the evil, but they themselves have created a white slavery worse than that of the preposterous tales and sentimental twaddle that circulate among the neurotic, a white slavery worse than any even imagined by the most romanticistic of the dime novelists or by the most superheated of the professional reformers. Every one of these laws has been devised, written and enacted in the identical spirit with which the Puritans in Massachusetts branded the red letter on the scarlet woman. Every one of them is an element of that brutal and amazing conspiracy by which society makes of the girl who once "goes wrong," to use the lightest of our animadversion, a pariah more abhorred and shunned than if she were a rotting leper on the cliffs of Molokai.⁶³

According to Whitlock, it was the white-slavery panic itself which turned the prostitutes into victims by shackling them with the heavy chains of "Puritan conscience."⁶⁴ The ways in which these assessments of the effects of the white-slavery agitation mirrors those put forth by Rosen, almost seventy years later, is striking. When Rosen argues that the anti-prostitution crusade had the unintended consequences of worsening the plight of the prostitutes by throwing them out on the street where they were more vulnerable and of converting them into a group of criminal outcasts, she is echoing the conclusions that

⁶²Whitlock, *Forty Years of It*, 279.

⁶³Ibid., 288-289.

⁶⁴Ibid., 290.

Whitlock and other white slavery skeptics were drawing in the immediate wake of the reforms.⁶⁵

Whitlock could also hardly be considered an antifeminist but, as he recognized, to question the stories was "to make oneself *particeps criminis*, a sort of accessory after the fact."⁶⁶ On the issue of prostitution reform, Whitlock advocated de-criminalization, stressing that since society seemed unable to do anything for prostitutes it should stop doing things to them and leave them alone.⁶⁷ He also advocated woman suffrage, calling the feminist movement a "marvelous phenomena" which would bring about a single standard of morals and should be the means by which women gained economic independence.⁶⁸ Critics of the white slavery narrative, then and now, are not necessarily denying the historical legacy of male violence against women, or putting forth an antifeminist agenda. In fact, it is the disbelief in the narratives themselves which led Whitlock and others to ask the questions about where the narratives came from, why they arose when they did, and what their consequences were. This is the first step toward analyzing white-slavery narratives as a discourse which was constructed and circulated as a means to create knowledge, consolidate and challenge existing power relations, and effect change in the material world.⁶⁹

⁶⁵Rosen, 169-178.

⁶⁶Whitlock, Forty Years of It, 278.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 290-291.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 294.

⁶⁹This dissertation's approach to the discourse on white slavery is heavily influenced by the theories of Michel Foucault which argue that discourse, as a set of practices and ideas, is a means to wield social power and create knowledge. It also presumes that discourses are highly protean and contradictory, which allows for their manipulation by a range of social actors pursuing a diverse set of political agendas. The use of the term narrative in this dissertation refers to the specific texts crafted by reformers which both drew from and were part of the larger discourse on white slavery. See Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, vol. 1 (New York: Vintage, 1978).

Scholars have, however, failed to build on this first step. Even those who have attempted to read the narratives for their cultural meanings have portrayed the stories of white slavery as simple portrayals or reflections of middle-class anxieties. In so doing they have painted the white-slavery panic as a masculine, conservative attempt to turn back the clock to a simpler time, emphasize women's passivity, reinforce older gender boundaries, and avoid looking at socioeconomic issues. Mark Connelly, for instance, argues in his text The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era that the plotlines of the white-slavery narratives were "strikingly uniform," portraying a chaste, native-born American country girl who falls victim to an evil, foreign procurer after she leaves her idyllic rural home for the evil, dangerous city. Because he has only focused on the narratives which fit this description he reads the white-slavery scare as primarily "an allegory of the passing and debasing of rural farms" which conveys American's fears of urbanization and industrial change.⁷⁰

Similarly, Mary Linehan argues that the white-slave narrative (singular) was created by predominantly male, reactionary reformers who felt threatened by industrial transformations and who "retreated behind the white slave metaphor where a powerless, innocent, country girl could symbolize them and their struggle against modernity." According to Linehan, they were also not really interested in reform and only "wrote white slave narratives to express their anger and frustration."⁷¹ Intent on forcing the white-slavery reformers into the reactionary pigeonhole she has allotted for them, Linehan is incapable of seeing how her analysis misses the multiplicity of white-slavery narratives and is thus unable to grasp the ways in which reformers from across the political spectrum used them as weapons in a wide range of crusades, reactionary and progressive. Not all

⁷⁰Mark Connelly, "Seventy Thousand Innocent Girls a Year: The White-Slavery Scare," in The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 114-135

⁷¹Mary Linehan, "Vicious Circle: Prostitution, reform and public policy in Chicago, 1830-1930," (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1991), 177-178.

public actors are, of course, equally powerful and it is frequently the male, reactionary viewpoint which gets inscribed in legislation but to approach the white-slavery narratives only from this perspective distorts the contested nature of the white-slavery discourse itself and overlooks a great deal of progressive agitation which was, in one way or another, rooted in the white-slavery panic.⁷²

Unfortunately, the only full-length assessment of the white-slavery narratives which approaches them as cultural myths, Frederick Grittner's White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law, re-creates the problems inherent in Connelly and Linehan's analyses.⁷³ Frederick Grittner, avoiding what he terms the "false dichotomy of myth and reality" that shaped early historical writing on the topic of white slavery, approaches the phenomenon as a cultural myth which holds more importance for "its symbolic explanations of sexuality, morality, gender roles, and prostitution, than for its accurate description of common deviant practices."⁷⁴ His assessment reads the narratives, however, only for what they can tell us about gender and asserts the white-slavery panic was fundamentally a boundary crisis involving women, sexuality and the family provoked by an increase in divorce, a loosening of sexual morality, and the increasing personal freedom of women.⁷⁵ Drawing on the analysis of John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, which argues that the Progressive crusades for sexual order blamed the "enslavement" of young white girls on alien procurers and constricted the roles available to white women, Grittner reads the purpose of the myth of white slavery as one which "told young women to

⁷²For an analysis which reads narratives of sexual danger for their contradictory results, highlights the contested nature of the debates and stresses the uneven power of the different discursive interventions see Judith Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

⁷³Frederick K. Grittner, White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990).

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 128-129.

beware the city, the immigrant, her sexuality, and ultimately, her freedom."⁷⁶ In keeping with these arguments, Grittner defines the myth of white slavery as "the enslavement of white women or girls by means of coercion, trick, or drugs by a non-white or non-Anglo-Saxon man for purposes of sexual exploitation" and the reformers who created the myth as white, male, and middle class.⁷⁷

As in the case of Connelly and Linehan's analyses, this conceptualization fails to capture the complicated nature of the struggle against white slavery in a number of ways. In the first place, Grittner limits his gender analysis of the narratives to what they have to say about women, overlooking the ways in which they were also cautionary tales for men. He also fails to recognize that the category of "women" was split by race, age, and class, a crucial oversight given that the narratives did not construct all groups of women as equally vulnerable to white slavers.⁷⁸ While in theory white slavers could snatch any woman, according to the majority of the reformer's tracts, male and female, they did not. As Judith Walkowitz argues, the social purity movement, of which the campaign against white slavery was a part, "generated practices and narratives that empowered and disabled women of different classes in complicated ways."⁷⁹ Failing to read for race, class and age, Grittner is unable to explicate this.

In addition, Grittner argues that the crusade against white slavery did not begin until the twentieth century, an assertion which leads him to underestimate both the discursive and institutional connections between the twentieth-century moral panic over the issue and the earlier nineteenth-century crusade against the trafficking in both "yellow"

⁷⁶John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row, Pub., 1988), 221; Grittner, 8-9; Grittner acknowledges his debt to D'Emilio and Freedman's analysis in his preface.

⁷⁷Grittner, 5 and 29.

⁷⁸For an analysis which discusses the fractured nature of the category "women" see Denise Riley, *"Am I That Name": Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

⁷⁹Walkowitz, *The City of Dreadful Delight*, 133.

and "white" slaves.⁸⁰ This is a particularly damaging oversight because it obscures the early role of women in constructing the white-slavery discourse and leads Grittner to underestimate the popularity of the discourse to a range of reformers, both male and female, some of whom utilized the narratives to challenge, rather than shore up, the exclusion of women from the public realm. This was true in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and reformers such as Jane Addams and Maude Miner, women whom Grittner claims did not focus on white slavery, did wield white slavery narratives in their push for the abolition of prostitution.⁸¹ In effect, Grittner midjudges both the diversity contained within the discourse and the range of authors who crafted white-slavery texts.

Previous scholarship on the white-slavery narratives, in other words, distorts both the complexity of the white-slavery narratives themselves and seriously underestimates their discordant, multivocal nature. This is unfortunate as the white-slavery narratives are full of cultural meaning. As Judith Walkowitz argues in her analysis of late-Victorian London, sensationalized narratives of sexual danger, like those constructed around white slavery, "highlighted and managed the boundary disputes paradigmatic of metropolitan life."⁸² They were "public fantasies" which, when analyzed carefully, can shed light on the cultural dynamics and social struggles that informed their construction and can reveal the contested nexus of class, race, gender, age, and sexuality as it emerged on the urban landscape.⁸³ This dissertation aims at reading these "public fantasies" in this light.

It will do so by following the lead of other historians who have sought to utilize discursive analysis to investigate how cultural meanings are produced, articulated, and

⁸⁰Grittner, 42-52. Connelly, similarly, focus only on the twentieth-century narratives which emerged after the outbreak of the moral panic. See Connelly, 114.

⁸¹Grittner, 128; Jane Addams, *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1912), 27; Maude Miner, "White Slave Traffic" in *Slavery of Prostitution: a Plea for Emancipation* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1916), 88-124. The W.C.T.U. involvement in crafting these narratives will be discussed in chapter two.

⁸²Walkowitz, *The City of Dreadful Delight*, 80.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 2.

contested within a historically specific material context.⁸⁴ It will approach the narratives of white slavery as a mutable discourse which was produced by individuals who sought empowerment through the manipulation of public discourse and who crafted interventions into a range of issues in American cities at the turn of the century in an effort to have their voices heard and their visions implemented. It will, further, contextualize the discursive interventions in their material context and will analyze the effects these interventions had on everything from definitions of masculinity, the battle for woman suffrage, the gendered nature of the public sphere, and the push for a living wage. In analyzing these interventions and the narratives of urban, sexual danger they produced, this dissertation hopes to shed light on some of the social struggles which reverberated through urban America at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In turn-of-the-century American cities there were plenty of social struggles to go around and a plethora of boundaries, both real and imagined, that seemed to need policing. White slavery had a lot of things going for it as a "public fantasy" which contributed to the rise of a full blown white-slavery panic in the years from 1907-1915. It was, in the first place, sensational in and of itself. Even those who tried to wield it only in a "factual" manner found that that was easier said than done. Second, it really was an incredibly pliant discourse. By changing the details of who the white slaves were, what made them vulnerable, who the white slavers were, and where they found their white slaves, reformers transformed the story of white slavery into a number of different tales of sexual danger which were then harnessed to a number of different initiatives for reforming the city and

⁸⁴The theoretical underpinnings of this dissertation are heavily indebted to Judith Walkowitz and her analyses of the social purity movement in Britain as well as the narrative of sexual danger surrounding white slavery and Jack the Ripper. See Walkowitz, The City of Dreadful Delight, "Jack the Ripper and the Myth of Male Violence," Feminist Studies 8, no. 3 (Fall 1982): 543-574, "Male Vice and Female Virtue: Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain," History Workshop Journal 13 (Spring 1982): 77-93, and her contributions to "Patrolling the Borders: Feminist Historiography and the New Historicism," Radical History Review 48 (1989): 23-43.

its residents. There were as many different tales of white slaves and white slavers as there were authors of white-slavery stories. To be sure, there were certain regularities in the stories, certain methods which were commonly used to trap girls or certain places they were vulnerable, but there was enough diversity even in these details to make the discourse exceptionally malleable. As such it became an exceptionally popular "public fantasy" at a time when there was a range of competing social actors looking for a way to re-organize the city according to their own vision.

When Ernest Bell closed his book Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or War on the White Slave Trade with the plea "For God's Sake Do Something" in 1910 he probably could not imagine how many "somethings" people would actually try to do.⁸⁵ Reformers of all stripes and in all parts of the country used white-slavery narratives like Bell's to pursue a variety of political agendas. Contrary to Linehan's arguments, reformers who used the white-slavery narratives were not merely venting their anger. They had real plans for reforming the city, the capitalist system, the working class, immigration policies, and sexual practices. In addition, these initiatives were not predominantly reactionary, anti-feminist efforts to scare women out of the public realm and force them back into the private sphere. Instead, many of the reforms pursued were explicitly aimed at expanding middle-class woman's opportunities and increasing the wages paid to working-class women. In keeping with the broad vision of reform, the reformers who utilized the white-slavery narratives aimed at a wide array of targets. Everyone and everything, from white, middle-class men and immigrants to public spaces and capitalist practices were scrutinized and patrolled through recourse to these narratives of sexual danger. These interventions had serious consequences for the groups being targeted.

In many instances, the interventions resulted in real improvements in the city. Businessmen were pressured to pay a living wage, immigrant and working-class women

⁸⁵Ernest Bell, "For God's Sake Do Something," in Fighting the Traffic, 472-476.

were afforded a means of protection against exploiters, and middle-class women increased their power and position within the urban landscape. Unfortunately, these interventions, rooted as they were in the white-slavery discourse, made for a politics rife with contradictions and unintended consequences. As other scholars have demonstrated, narratives of sexual danger can follow a logic unforeseen by their initiators in ways which subvert their original intentions and result in regressive legislation and policing.⁸⁶ In other instances the logic which led to repressive policies was implicit in the initiatives themselves. The white-slavery narratives were no exception to either of these phenomena. Their construction and sanctioning resulted in a host of repressive laws on the state and federal level, increased the surveillance of working-class women, authorized the policing of working-class subcultures, increased the number of immigrants facing deportation, and criminalized non-marital, "deviant" sexuality. These narratives of white slavery, purportedly aimed at making the city safer for some, ultimately made it a more dangerous place for others.

Chapters one and two will contextualize the growth and dissemination of narratives on the traffic in girls in America during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Chapter one will trace the growth of concern over the traffic in Chinese women, which came to be known as "yellow slavery," as it emerged in the nineteenth-century debates over Chinese immigration in California during the 1870s and the development of narratives on "white slavery" on the East Coast and in the Midwest during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Chapter two will analyze the outbreak of a moral panic over white slavery in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Chapter three will begin a thematic analysis of the white-slavery discourse by assessing how the narratives were used by reformers to police the boundaries of

⁸⁶These theoretical insights are drawn from Judith Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Female Virtue."

masculinity. Specifically, this chapter will analyze how the construction of the foreign or non-white procurer in the narratives served as a cautionary tale to middle-class white men as to the consequences which would result if they failed to live up to prevailing standards of white manhood and will interrogate how some white-slavery reformers turned the battle against the trafficking in girls into a crusade to save the nation's boys from the dangers of white slavery. Chapter four will investigate how the white-slavery narratives were used by a variety of reformers as a means to criticize and police the upper classes and capitalists. In addition to interrogating the relationship between "wage slavery" and "white slavery" and the ways in which anti-prostitution forces handled the question of wages throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this chapter will assess how the discourse on white slavery was used by reformers to push for minimum wage legislation.

Chapter five will address how the white-slavery narratives were used by middle-class women eager to expand their access to political rights, public space, and career opportunities. Specifically, this chapter will analyze how different groups of middle-class women constructed a class-specific portrait of urban female vulnerability which authorized new public and governmental roles for themselves while simultaneously policing and restricting working-class women's access to public space. Chapter six will analyze the ways in which working-class women accused of crimes, particularly prostitution, harnessed the narratives of white slavery to their efforts to avoid prosecution by the state and will also take some tentative steps toward assessing the impact of the white-slavery panic on the subjectivity of women who defined themselves as white slaves. By way of conclusion this dissertation will trace the waning influence of white-slavery narratives in the years immediately prior to W.W. I.

Chapter 1

"Yellow Slaves" and "White Slaves:" Narratives on Sexual Trafficking in the Nineteenth Century

In April 1876, the Senate of the State of California convened a committee of seven **Senators** to take testimony in an effort to determine whether or not the "presence of the **Chinese** element" was detrimental to the state and to the nation. There was, however, never really any question as to what their findings would be.¹ As one historian has argued, the **committee** had chosen their witnesses and framed their lines of questioning to assure that **no** pro-Chinese testimony would go on record.² Their conclusions, issued in the form of a "**Memorial**" to the United States Congress and an "Address" to the American people were **unequivocal**: the Chinese presence in America was both detrimental to the state and a **danger** to the entire country. The immigration of the Chinese onto American shores, they **claimed**, had to be stopped. Their reasoning and their "evidence" focused on a variety of "**unsavory**" Chinese characteristics but one of their strongest allegations centered on their **argument** that the Chinese were human traffickers who were importing enslaved Chinese **women** into the United States to work as prostitutes.

The narratives on the trafficking in Chinese girls which emerged in the context of **the** anti-Chinese movement in California during the 1870s are an appropriate starting point **for** an analysis of the American discourse on female trafficking and white slavery. The **reformers** who crafted them were, in the first place, the first to pursue their political

¹ **Special Committee on Chinese Immigration, Chinese Immigration. The Social, Moral and Political Effect of Chinese Immigration. Testimony** (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1876), 1. Hereafter referred to as Special Committee, **Testimony**.
² **Roger Daniels, Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850** (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 45.

objectives by arguing that women were being trafficked and forced into a life of sexual slavery on American soil. As a result, they provide the earliest proof that narratives on female trafficking, like other narratives on prostitution, cannot necessarily be accepted as accurate representations of historical reality. The narratives crafted by the anti-Chinese forces are also illustrative of the ways in which the discourse on female trafficking drew from existing American discourses, particularly those on African-American slavery, as a means to portray the Chinese as dangerous slave traffickers who were reintroducing slavery into the United States.

The narratives on Chinese trafficking are also representative of the ways in which the discourse on female sexual slavery could serve a diverse political constituency and functioned to patrol a number of boundaries, only some of which were related to gender. Initially designed to serve the cause of exclusion, the narratives on enslaved Chinese prostitutes were also adapted by other individuals, not all of whom were opponents of the Chinese. Female missionaries, for instance, used the narratives to carve out a larger public and political role for themselves in ways which call into question the traditional reading of the narratives on female trafficking as primarily a means to push women out of the public sphere. As historians have noted, the narratives also proved useful to Chinese women who took advantage of missionaries efforts to "rescue" them from prostitution to improve their conditions and escape abusive situations.³

Ultimately, the narratives on "yellow slavery" were both an important precursor to and an integral part of the larger battle against "white slavery" which was emerging on the East coast and in the Midwest in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Like the struggle against Chinese prostitution on the West coast, the crusade against the traffic in girls in the East was part of a larger movement to reform American society by eliminating what

³ Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1932* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 51-56, 96.

reformers perceived was a grave threat to the nation's health. The threat in this case, however, was prostitution itself. Concerned that municipalities in the East were leaning toward legalizing prostitution by instituting systems of regulation, social purity reformers waged a spirited battle in the late nineteenth century against the "social evil." A major component of their crusade was the construction and propagation of narratives on enslaved prostitutes and while the initial impetus for taking up the issue of white slavery came from Britain, rather than the West coast, the battles against both "yellow" and "white" slavery eventually merged into a widespread campaign against both evils in the closing years of the nineteenth century. This nineteenth-century movement was itself an important precursor, both discursively and institutionally, to the moral panic over white slavery which spread throughout the country during the first decade of the twentieth century.

The Exclusionists and the Narratives of Yellow Slavery

By the time the California State Senate convened their committee in 1876 to give its recommendations on Chinese immigration, the state was already the recognized center of a widespread anti-Chinese movement whose goals included halting any additional Chinese immigration and forcing the Chinese already in the United States to return to China.⁴ The effort to stop the Chinese from immigrating had, in fact, begun almost immediately after Chinese immigrants began arriving on the West coast in the wake of the

⁴Most of the anti-Chinese forces believed that stopping the immigration was only the first step in cleansing the United States of the Chinese menace. The California Senate Committee thought ending immigration would bring about the repatriation of all the Chinese to China, arguing that the combination of exclusionary laws and the anti-Chinese agitation against the Chinese in California would "compel the departure" of the Chinese. See, Special Committee on Chinese Immigration, Chinese Immigration. The Social, Moral and Political Effect of Chinese Immigration. Policy and Means of Exclusion (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1877), 8. Hereafter referred to as Special Committee, Policy.

discovery of gold in California in 1849, part of a larger anti-Chinese movement that included the passage of ordinances aimed at persecuting them where they lived and worked, and violent fatal attacks on their communities.⁵ By 1876, however, the stakes were higher. In the first place, the number of Chinese arriving in the United States was growing and western states like California were finding themselves incapable of stopping the flow of these "undesirable" immigrants. From 1850 to 1880, the Chinese population in America increased fifteenfold, from 7,520 to 105,465. By 1870, they comprised 8.6 percent of California's total population.⁶ California's legislators were clearly anxious to stem what they perceived as the growing tide of Asian immigrants settling in their state and began passing restrictive legislation as early as 1855. Their efforts, however, proved futile as the state Supreme Court struck each of the laws down ruling they were unconstitutional and infringed on the federal prerogative to regulate immigration.⁷

These rulings convinced California's legislature of the necessity of forcing the federal government and the U.S. Congress to create and pass legislation excluding the Chinese from the United States and, with this goal in mind, they undertook a propaganda campaign to convince the federal government and the rest of the country that the Chinese were a menace to the nation. The California Senate committee, convened in 1876, was a

⁵For a thorough description of the anti-Chinese movement see Daniels, 29-66.

⁶Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 216. For a general description of the nature of Chinese immigration see Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1998) and Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1991).

⁷The California legislature had tried to prevent Chinese immigration in 1855 by instituting a tax of \$50 on immigrants to the state who, like the Chinese, were ineligible for naturalization. It was declared unconstitutional by the state Supreme Court. They tried again with two different bills in 1858, both of which were unconstitutional, and again in 1870 when they passed a bill stipulating that immigrants from China and Japan had to either post a bond or convince a Commissioner of Immigration that they were of "good character." This too was struck down, on the grounds that regulating immigration was a federal prerogative. See Daniels, 35-39.

major part of this campaign and was designed to construct and disseminate a discourse on the "yellow peril" that would convince the American public and legislators from across the country that the Chinese presence in the United States was eroding American institutions and undermining American civilization. For three months the Senators took testimony from sixty witnesses from Sacramento and San Francisco. Seemingly everyone and anyone who had anything negative to say about the Chinese were called to testify as to what they knew or, more often, what they had heard about Chinese immigration and how the Chinese lived and worked in California. With witnesses chosen for their sympathy toward exclusion and questions designed to construct the Chinese as a dangerous foreign presence it is not surprising that the resulting picture of the Chinese was anything but flattering.⁸

In constructing Chinese immigration as dangerous to the country, the Senators built on a number of stereotypes and negative portrayals of the Chinese that had been circulating in the anti-Chinese movement for years. They argued, for instance, that the Chinese immigrants were criminals who were "virtually pariahs-the dregs of the population" in China who would, through their dishonesty and lawlessness, undermine the rule of law which supposedly prevailed in America.⁹ They also stressed that the Chinese were incapable of assimilating. Arguing that the safety of American institutions rested on the "homogeneity, culture, and moral character of our people," the Senators stated that any hope that the Chinese would eventually assimilate had been dispelled by the fact that after living in California for a quarter of a century, the Chinese were as "separate, distinct

⁸ According to the final report issued by the Senate an unarmed invasion of Chinese was ready to overwhelm the entire Pacific Coast and turn it into a "colony of China." To help convey the magnitude of the threat, the Senate attached a number of anti-Chinese documents to their final report, one of which portrayed "900,000" Chinese marching toward the United States and another titled a "Map of the Chinese Invasion of California," which showed the numbers of Chinese in each county in 1873. Anticipating that the approximately 100,000 Chinese in America would soon be 900,000 was, however, only part of the Senators' plans to convince Congress and the American public that their way of life, and the country itself, was in danger. See Special Committee, *Policy*, 48-49.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

from, and antagonistic to our people in thinking, mode of life, in tastes and principles, and are as far from assimilation as when they first arrived."¹⁰ Given the post Civil War context, however, the most potent argument in the committee's discursive arsenal was the construction of the Chinese as either slaves or masters who were undermining American institutions and American freedom by reintroducing slavery onto American soil. In particular, they alleged that the Chinese were engaging in the organized trafficking of unwilling Chinese women for the purposes of prostitution and were creating a system of female sexual slavery in America that made African slavery appear as a "beneficent captivity."¹¹

The emergence of concerns over Chinese prostitution within the anti-Chinese discourse is not surprising given the high percentage of Chinese women who were working as prostitutes during the last half of the nineteenth century in California and other western states. The numbers of Chinese female immigrants in the United States was itself small. Out of a Chinese population of over 63,000 in 1870, only 5,000 were female.¹² Most of these women were serving as prostitutes to the larger Chinese bachelor community. Historian Judy Yung estimates that in 1860, 85-97% of all Chinese women in the United States were prostitutes. The percentage was, however, declining rapidly. By 1880, Yung argues, only 21-50% of Chinese women in the country were still engaged in prostitution.¹³ In spite of this decline, enslaved Chinese prostitutes were still a favorite

¹⁰ Ibid., 14-15. Similarly, they argued that the Chinese had never desired to become citizens or adapt to the educational system. They failed to note that both of these avenues of assimilation were closed to the Chinese who were ineligible for naturalization and were prevented from attending California's schools. See Special Committee, *Policy*, 7.

¹¹ Ibid., 5.

¹² See Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 237.

¹³ Yung, 29. In explaining the high percentage of prostitutes among the first waves of Chinese female immigrants, historians have stressed a combination of race, class, and gender factors. Echoing arguments put forth by Hirata, Judy Yung posits that the demand of American capitalists for a large mobile labor force of single men combined with Chinese cultural values and American immigration policies created a large Chinese bachelor

target of opponents of the Chinese undoubtedly because it was one area in which the federal government had proven themselves willing to restrict Chinese immigration. In 1875 the United States Congress passed the Page Law which aimed, in large part, at halting the importation of involuntary prostitutes from Asia.¹⁴ It was an effective piece of legislation from the standpoint of the exclusionists for it made it difficult for all Chinese women to gain entry into the United States regardless of whether or not they were prostitutes. In the six years following the passage of the law, the number of Chinese women entering the country declined 69% compared to the prior seven-year period.¹⁵ Even with the importation of enslaved Chinese prostitutes effectively checked, however, the allegations that the Chinese were continuing to both traffic in and enslave Chinese women remained an effective allegation for the anti-Chinese movement throughout the nineteenth century. In large part this was due to the ways in which the specter of slavery continued to haunt the nation in the years following the Civil War.¹⁶

The discourse on slavery was deeply intertwined with the anti-Chinese movement in, as is often the case, highly contradictory ways. The Chinese men were, first of all, continually cast as "coolies," unfree laborers who worked for such low wages that they threatened the livelihood of the white, working class.¹⁷ They were also, as Ronald Takaki

community. This male community, who were cast adrift from their wives at home and, given the rabidly anti-Chinese sentiment and anti-miscegenation laws, were unable to forge new unions with single white women, created a large profitable market for prostitutes. See Hirata, 4-8 and Yung, 29-30.

¹⁴ The law also forbade the entry of contract laborers and criminals. .

¹⁵ Yung, 32-33.

¹⁶ For an analysis of how the post-Civil War context and the issue of slavery shaped the anti-Chinese movement see Stuart Creighton Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese, 1785-1882* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

¹⁷ For the ways in which the Senate committee linked the Chinese immigration to the destruction of white, working-class manhood and American civilization see Special Committee, *Policy*, 41-47. For additional descriptions of the ways in which white laborers and the anti-Chinese movement focused on the economic threat that the Chinese represented to white, working-class families see Daniels, 52-53. For an analysis of both

has argued, racialized with characteristics typically applied to African Americans in ways which portrayed them as slaves and as enemies to a free labor society.¹⁸ The Senate Committee certainly perpetuated and built on these constructions of Chinese males as slave laborers. They argued, in fact, that all the Chinese were in a state of servitude even where no actual slavery existed, stating that even where the labor the Chinese performed was not involuntary, the "unalterable structure of their intellectual being" made them "voluntary slaves."¹⁹ Chinese slavery was, according to the Senators, both lacking the "beneficial influence" present in Southern black slavery and more subversive to American institutions than slavery in the South had ever been.²⁰ If, however, the California Senators were constructing the Chinese as slaves by both contract and nature, they were also equally interested in disseminating the idea that these slaves were also masters, masters engaged in trafficking Chinese women into lives of sexual slavery.

In what would become an enduring image of Chinese prostitution in America during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Senators argued that Chinese women were forced to become sexual slaves, victims of a patriarchal culture in China which encouraged their parents to sell them to slave traders and an organized system of traffickers who shipped them to America and sold them to the highest bidder. Under the title "Human Slavery," the Senator's final report stated:

the working conditions and wages of Chinese immigrants and the ways in which white employers used them against both the African-American and the white working class see Takaki, *Strangers*, 79-99.

¹⁸ Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 217.

¹⁹ Special Committee, *Policy*, 7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 47. One of the documents attached to this report pictured a portrait of a Chinese immigrant carrying laundry baskets over his shoulders over the caption "The new System of Slavery Introduced" alongside a portrait of a well-dressed African-American man above the caption "The Old System of Slavery Abolished." Two African-American children are pictured behind the African-American man walking toward a school building.

The Chinese have, through certain guilds or companies, established a peculiar, but revolting, kind of slavery upon the Pacific Coast. Hundreds of Chinese women are bought and sold at prices ranging from three hundred to eight hundred dollars. These women are compelled to live as prostitutes for the pecuniary profit of their owners; they are under constant and unceasing surveillance; they are cruelly beaten if they fail to make money for their owners; and they are left to starve and die uncared for when they become sick or unprofitable.²¹

According to the Committee, the trafficking and slavery was being carried out by an organization which was "all-powerful" against the municipal and State governments of California.²² Editing together all the inflammatory comments the committee had managed to gather on the nature of this enslavement during three months of testimony, the committee appeared to offer incontrovertible proof to back up their claims. They had, of course, edited out any testimony which challenged their allegations. The testimony of a Minister to China, who responded "No" to the question of whether or not women were shipped here against their will and "Yes" to the question of whether or not they were shipped with their consent, was not included.²³ Nor was the testimony of Chin Fong Chow, president of the Yan-Wo Company, who had testified that Chinese women who came to America did so by making their own arrangements.²⁴

What remained was the testimony of reverends, police clerks, police officers, and Chinese men with connections to the police departments, all of whom appear as discreet witnesses testifying from their own knowledge about separate incidents. Rev. Otis Gibson, a clergyman of the Methodist church, testified that the Chinese women were "as a general thing" held as slaves and that the traffic in women was run by an organized company called Hip-ye-tong, a view seconded by Rev. Loomis, of the Presbyterian church, who

²¹ Ibid., 20.

²² Ibid., 20-21.

²³ Special Committee, *Testimony*, 13.

²⁴ Ibid., 98. This testimony is also, obviously, not unbiased and was being put forth in an effort to counteract the dominant portrait being crafted by the Committee. The exclusion of dissenting voice from the final report is, however, telling.

stated that the women engaged in prostitution were slaves who were anxious to leave the life. Others, particularly police officers from San Francisco and Sacramento, concurred, testifying that they knew either from first-hand experience or hearsay that women were being bought, sold, and held in brothel slavery in both cities.²⁵ Sacramento Police Officer Charles P. O'Neil even suspected that he may have even been an unknowing participant in a sale, testifying that he had been called in to witness the exchange of \$450 between a woman and a man. As the contract he witnessed was in Chinese, he could not understand it but, he said, the woman told him, before committing suicide, that her boss had sold her for \$450 to a man she did not like.²⁶ If O'Neil had, however, only suspicions, others produced more definitive evidence. Alfred Clark, the Clerk to the Chief of Police in San Francisco, for instance, supplied more than hearsay and impressionistic accounts. He supplied documentary proof.

When Alfred Clark appeared before the Senate Committee on April 17, 1876 he submitted what he termed a "bill of sale of a Chinawoman" written in Chinese and a translation of the document. The translation read:

An agreement to assist the woman Ah Ho, because coming from China to San Francisco she became indebted to her mistress for passage. Ah Ho herself asks Mr. Yee Kwan to advance for her six hundred and thirty dollars, for which Ah Ho distinctly agrees to give her body to Mr. Yee for service of prostitution for a term of four years. There shall be no interest on the money. Ah Ho shall receive no wages. At the expiration of four years, Ah Ho shall be her own master. Mr Yee Kwan shall not hinder or trouble her. If Ah Ho runs away before time is out, her mistress shall find her and return her, and whatever expense is incurred in finding and returning her, Ah Ho shall pay. On this day of agreement Ah Ho, with her own hands, has received from Mr. Yee Kwan six hundred and thirty dollars. If Ah Ho shall be sick at any time for more than ten days, she shall make up by an extra month of service for every ten day's sickness. Now this agreement has proof-this paper received by Ah Ho is witness.

Tung Chee²⁷

²⁵ Special Committee, Policy, 20-25.

²⁶ Ibid., 115.

²⁷ Special Committee, Testimony, 63.

When he was recalled for further testimony he presented an additional contract which he said he had found searching through office papers and gave additional details on the organization of the traffic in women, backing up Gibson's allegations that it was controlled by an independent company called the Hip-ye-tong. While he testified that he was not sure what their involvement was in importing the women, he stated that their books, captured during a raid, showed they controlled one hundred and seventy women.²⁸ The Senate was so impressed with Clark's testimony that not only did they recall him to testify twice in their original hearings, they also reprinted his testimony and the contract for Ah Ho in their final report.²⁹ It was a crucial part of the larger construction of the Chinese as slave-traders and traffickers in women that the Senators hoped would convince Congress and the country that they were a "unarmed invasion" that was threatening to undermine American institutions and destroy American civilization.³⁰

Missionaries and the Chinese "slave girls"

The Chinese had few defenders in California during the latter half of the nineteenth century but there were some exceptions and among the most vocal were the missionaries working among the Chinese in cities like San Francisco.³¹ Rev. Otis Gibson, head of the Chinese Mission for the Methodist Episcopal Church in San Francisco, was one of these defenders and has been dubbed the "the paladin of the pro-Chinese forces" by one

²⁸ Special Committee, *Testimony*, 69-70.

²⁹ For more of Clark's testimony see Special Committee, *Testimony*, 63-64, 69-70, 91-92. For the excerpts of his testimony reprinted in the final report see Special Committee, *Policy*, 22-23.

³⁰ Special Committee, *Policy*, 43.

³¹ For a description of the pro-Chinese forces, including their ambivalence with regard to the Chinese themselves, see Daniels, 48-52.

historian.³² He earned the title for his constant efforts to act as a countervailing force to the mainstream anti-Chinese movement and their arguments that Chinese immigration represented a special danger to the United States. During his testimony in front of the Congressional Joint Commission of Investigation on the subject of Chinese immigration in 1876, for instance, Gibson argued that immigration from Asia represented no special threat to the country.³³ Instead he stressed that European immigrants, who were eligible to become citizens and vote, were a greater danger to U.S. institutions.³⁴ He also stressed that the Chinese did well when compared to the European immigrants on a number of levels, including immorality, vice, pauperism, and criminality and argued that "The Chinese excite less riots, commit fewer assaults and murders than almost any other foreign element among us."³⁵ These arguments and others concerning his belief that the Chinese did not depress wages in California made him a controversial witness at the Congressional Hearing. There was no question as to how the anti-Chinese forces felt about him. He was burned in effigy at an "Anti-Coolie Mass Meeting" following his testimony.³⁶

Gibson's testimony and his defense of the Chinese is interesting for while he defended the Chinese against many of the allegations made against them, arguing for instance that the Chinese men in America were not slaves and stressing that they came here voluntarily, he did not refute the idea that the Chinese women in America were victims of large-scale trafficking.³⁷ Instead, he was an active agent in constructing the discourse on the trafficking in women that was being used by the anti-Chinese forces. As

³² Daniels, 51.

³³ This U.S. Congressional Joint Commission of Investigation was convened after the California Senate Committee hearings. For a description of the proceedings see Daniels, 46-47.

³⁴ Testimony quoted in Rev. O. Gibson, The Chinese in America (Cincinnati: Hitchcock and Walden, 1877), 388.

³⁵ Ibid., 392-395.

³⁶ Ibid., 381.

³⁷ For Gibson's arguments regarding the voluntary nature of Chinese male immigration and labor see, Gibson, 396-397.

his testimony in front of both the California Senate Committee and at the U.S.

Congressional Hearings indicates, he believed that Chinese women were being trafficked and held in a system of sexual slavery and he provided a great deal of evidence for the anti-Chinese hearings, including the written contracts and their translations.³⁸

Given his opposition to exclusionary legislation, Gibson was obviously not propagating the image of the enslaved Chinese prostitute to help the anti-Chinese forces achieve their goals. Instead, he had his own reasons for constructing his narratives on the sexual enslavement of Chinese girls that had nothing to do with patrolling the boundaries of immigration. Gibson helped create and perpetuate the image of the enslaved Chinese prostitute as a means to increase the public prominence of his mission, which was making a name for itself as a protector of slave girls who had "escaped" from their bondage.³⁹

Gibson, having heard that other California Missions were providing asylum for Chinese women who had allegedly fled from their sexual captivity, resolved in 1870 to connect a "Female Department" to his Methodist Mission in San Francisco to work toward elevating the Chinese women on the Coast. As he relates it, the four rooms set

³⁸See Special Committee, Testimony, 25-35, Special Committee, Policy, 21, and Gibson, 388-403. Gibson states in his text that he procured and translated both of the documents Alfred Clark introduced himself, an allegation backed up by a police officer in San Francisco who testified that he had had bills of sale translated by Gibson. See Gibson, 139-140; Special Committee, Policy, 24. Gibson also claimed he was responsible for the raids on the Hip Yee Tong Society that allegedly resulted in the seizure of the books which Clark alleged proved they controlled one hundred and seventy women. See Gibson, 140-142, Special Committee, Testimony, 69-70. For more on Gibson's opinions on the trafficking, including his claim that over nine-tenths of all Chinese women in the United States had been "sold into a hopeless bondage worse than death" see Gibson, 134-138, 144-145. Gibson also drew on the spectre of African-American slavery to describe the plight of these women, arguing that he had heard "dark hints" about the fact that the girls were being taken to a place called the "Queen's Room" where they were being "critically examined after the fashion of African slave-dealers not many year ago." See Gibson, 138.

³⁹Reverend Loomis, who also provided testimony as to the enslavement of Chinese girls to the California Senate Committee was similarly involved in rescuing these "slaves." See Special Committee, Policy, 21-22 for his testimony and Gibson, 201 for the involvement of his Mission in the rescue work.

aside in the Mission for the work of this Female Department lay empty for a year. Even their effort to establish a day school for girls was unsuccessful.⁴⁰ The "heathen women" did not, apparently, want the kind of salvation being offered at the mission and they also did not want their children educated by the mission. Things began to turn around for this ineffective Female Department, however, in 1871 when they found themselves acting as the protector for a Chinese girl whom Gibson claimed was so desperate to escape her life as a prostitute that she had thrown herself into the bay. Her suicide attempt was foiled by a "colored man with a long boat hook" who pulled her out of the icy water and turned her over to the police.⁴¹

At the police station, Gibson alleged, Jin Ho refused to speak with anyone except a "Jesus man" and Alfred Clark, the Senate committee's other star witness on Chinese prostitution called for Gibson. Upon arriving at the police station Gibson claimed he met Jin Ho, whom he described as a "poor wretched, stupid, forlorn looking woman--an apology for a human being" and whom repeatedly stated that she did not want to go back to her life as a prostitute.⁴² After speaking with her for a few minutes Gibson convinced her to accompany him back to his Mission House, an act which apparently rejuvenated both Jin Ho, whom Gibson claimed was unrecognizable to all who knew her in six months time, and the "Female Department" of Gibson's mission which converted itself into an "Asylum" for Chinese prostitutes.⁴³ When they began opening their doors to women seeking to "escape" their lives as prostitutes, Gibson's the mission found its niche. Gibson estimates that between the years 1874-1877, between 20 and 26 women were regularly housed at the Asylum.⁴⁴

⁴⁰Gibson, 202.

⁴¹Ibid., 205.

⁴²Ibid., 204.

⁴³Ibid., 205.

⁴⁴Ibid., 213.

Gibson's Methodist Mission in San Francisco, as even he recognized, was not the first California mission to act as an asylum for runaway Chinese prostitutes. Instead, it was a popular activity for missionaries, particularly female missionaries, who used the tales of enslaved Chinese girls to claim an expanded role for themselves within their churches and to justify their transgressions into "dangerous" public arenas. They did so by constructing themselves as the appropriate ones to both rescue and care for young, Chinese prostitutes. Caring for the Chinese women who made their way to the mission was, from the beginning, perceived as women's work and the earliest asylums founded to house them were led by women. The Presbyterian Mission, for instance, established the "San Francisco Ladies Protective and Relief Society" in the 1860s to care for Chinese women who had reportedly escaped from their servitude. The various Methodist Mission Homes, including Gibson's, soon followed suit, organizing "Women's Missionary Societies" and "Female Departments" to minister to the "heathen women" in the region.⁴⁵

The female missionaries were not, however, content to wait for the women needing their help to come to them. Instead, they took their ministering to the street and began visiting the Chinese women and girls where they lived, including the brothels and vice districts in Chinatown.⁴⁶ This exposure convinced the women missionaries that there were other women and girls who would like to "escape" their conditions but didn't know how to do it or where to go.⁴⁷ It also convinced them that they needed to turn their authority to minister to the "heathen" women and care for the Chinese girls who made it to their homes into a heroic crusade to emancipate the Chinese slave girls themselves. As Peggy Pascoe has noted, Protestant women in San Francisco were, by the 1880s, engaging in more "aggressive 'rescue' work" on behalf of the Chinese prostitutes as part of a larger

⁴⁵Ibid, 200-222. For greater description of the activities of these missionary women see Charlton Edholm, "A Stain on the Flag," Californian Illustrated Vol. 1, no. 3 (Feb. 1892): 159-170.

⁴⁶Edholm, "A Stain," 167.

⁴⁷Gibson, 201-202.

effort to enhance their "female moral authority."⁴⁸ Their actions also expanded their access to public and official spaces in the city by justifying their presence in some of the most "dangerous" vice districts in the city and another predominantly male realm, the court house.⁴⁹

Through their efforts to "rescue" the slave girls of California's Chinatowns, women missionaries created new roles for themselves as heroic public actors and skillful investigators. Donaldina Cameron is undoubtedly the quintessential example of the ways in which this was accomplished. Cameron, Superintendent of the Chinese Mission Home in San Francisco, was not the first to initiate rescues of California's Chinese prostitutes but, as Superintendent of the Chinese Mission Home from 1900-1934, she perfected the methods both for rescuing these women and for immortalizing her own exploits. In addition to staging widely publicized photographs portraying the rescue of Chinese prostitutes by Cameron and hatchet-wielding policemen, narratives on Cameron's activities glorified her as an extraordinary investigator who possessed incredible daring and who staged unbelievable rescues, some of which involved her risking life and limb by undertaking rescues in the worst parts of town, traversing Chinatown over rooftops, and physically wrestling male Chinese "highbinders" whose job it was to "protect" the girls from abduction by missionaries.⁵⁰ Cameron, it was said, was an expert detective and valuable ally to the police, whose "intuitive" and "secret" information was never wrong and whose ability to detect secret trapdoors foiled many an effort to hide the prostitutes from their would-be rescuers.⁵¹ Her reputation was well known by contemporaries and

⁴⁸Pascoe, 95-96.

⁴⁹For an assessment of this activism which reads it in a particularly conservative light see, Mary Ryan, Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 120-123.

⁵⁰Narratives on the exploits of Cameron and Culbertson also stressed that they risked life and limb to effect the rescues of the Chinese girls. See Edholm, 167 and Carol Green Wilson, Chinatown Quest (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1931), 49-61.

⁵¹Wilson, 3, 17, 33, 41, 50, 121, 209. See also "Everyroof in Chinatown," 49-61. For

her narratives, in the form of her reports to the Mission Board, were published throughout the country.⁵² Propagating sensational tales of their heroic rescues of prostitutes was a highly effective strategy for female missionaries seeking to carve out new roles for themselves as public actors on the city's streets.

It was also an effective way to gain access to another typically male bastion of public power, the court house. Female missionaries in California repeatedly entered the court room in an effort to secure guardianship over the girls that they had reportedly rescued from their enslavers.⁵³ Their presence was not always welcomed or encouraged. When Miss Culbertson, Cameron's predecessor at the Mission Home, petitioned for guardianship of a young Chinese girl whom she alleged was being groomed for a life of sexual slavery she was accompanied in court by large numbers of women from the Occidental Board, which oversaw the Mission Home. One of the women present noted that "It has been the custom of lawyers who take up these cases to make the affair so unpleasant that no lady would care to appear in court." The lawyers, she stated, asked Culbertson "indecent and insulting questions" in an effort to blemish the reputation of the female missionaries and make them too uncomfortable to appear in this public arena. "This plan," she argued, "will not work now" for the women were "determined to see this matter through." Imagining that the fate of "little girls" hung in the balance, these women resisted all efforts to keep them out of previously masculine preserves.⁵⁴

Culbertson, Cameron and other white missionary women were not the only females using the narratives as a means to improve their positions and change their

information on, and examples of, the staged photographs see Pascoe, 96-99.

⁵²See, for instance, Edward Janney, *The White Slave Traffic in America* (New York: National Vigilance Committee, 1911), 45-49. Cameron's biographer also alleges that she undertook rescues in cities as far off as Chicago. See Wilson, 199-205.

⁵³For details of the involvement of Cameron and the Mission Home with the courts see Wilson, "Friends at Court," 62-82.

⁵⁴Edholm, 169.

futures.⁵⁵ Instead, the Chinese prostitutes were themselves using the narratives as a means of empowerment. As Peggy Pascoe has argued, case files of the Chinese women at the Presbyterian Mission Home in San Francisco suggest that the Chinese women who sought refuge there did not actually perceive themselves as sexual slaves. Barring serious abuse, many did not seek "asylum" at the Missions as primarily a means to escape sexual slavery and many did not even perceive themselves as being enslaved. Instead they perceived prostitution as a means to make a financial start in America or as a way to find a husband. According to Pascoe, they sought out the assistance of the missionaries only when they were subjected to what they considered extreme abuse or when they perceived that their other "avenues of escape" were "cut off."⁵⁶ Not all of the Chinese prostitutes who found themselves on the receiving end of the missionaries assistance, however, were happy about receiving it. Gibson's efforts to assist these women, for instance, involved helping the police "round up" and arrest Chinese prostitutes who were then put in jail over their "howling" protests.⁵⁷ Despite the fact that the general crusade against Chinese prostitution resulted in the rounding up and imprisonment of women who were not looking to be rescued, the establishment of the Mission Homes and their efforts to "rescue" Chinese women were clearly a boon for a number of individual women and children who used the services and protection they offered to avoid arranged marriages or escape abusive situations. As Pascoe points out, by the late nineteenth century, proportionately more children than prostitutes were being housed in the Presbyterian Mission Home. In spite of this, and the fact that the numbers of Chinese prostitutes was declining dramatically, the Mission workers continued to utilize the narratives on Chinese sexual slavery into the

⁵⁵Pascoe also notes that other groups of Chinese women were empowered through the narratives as a result of the policy of the Missions to use "native helpers" as assistants. See Pascoe, 112-145.

⁵⁶Pascoe, 96.

⁵⁷See Ryan, 116-117 and Gibson, 146-155.

twentieth century, undoubtedly because they were a powerful weapon in the struggle to expand white women's access to public arenas.⁵⁸

To be sure, there was not a clean fit between the narratives on the traffic in women crafted by missionaries and those constructed by anti-Chinese exclusionists. Take, for instance, the narratives of Otis Gibson. Gibson's general advocacy of the Chinese and his position as the head of the Methodist Episcopal Chinese Mission in San Francisco, led to discursive innovations and arguments which would not find their way into the vitriolic anti-Chinese narratives being propagated by others, no matter how fond they were of Gibson's contracts and translations. Gibson was, for instance, prone to arguing that the anti-Chinese forces were involved in the traffic itself. Stating that he could barely describe the "deep disgust and utter abhorrence" all decent people should feel against the white men "who have enriched themselves by aiding and abetting this abominable traffic" he argued that some of these men had become "very loud-mouthed in denouncing Chinese immigration, and exposing Chinese villainies, while they themselves are parties to, and profit by this woman traffic, the sum of all Chinese villainies."⁵⁹ Gibson also recognized, as most did not, that a number of the Chinese girls "sold" in America were being purchased as "secondary wives" who lived with their new husbands in "strictly family relations."⁶⁰ While still considering this part of the traffic in women, Gibson did allow that this was "such an improvement upon general and promiscuous intercourse," he was "inclined to approve the practice as the lesser evil."⁶¹ In addition, Gibson tried to propose solutions to the problem of the Chinese traffic in girls, which did not involve eliminating

⁵⁸Pascoe, 97-98.

⁵⁹Gibson, 138.

⁶⁰Rev. Loomis also recognized this, arguing in his testimony in front of the California Senate Committee that many of the women were "sold" into marriage as wives or secondary wives with legitimate children. The senators were not fond of this line of testimony and immediately switched the topic back to the enslaved prostitutes. See Special Committee, *Policy*, 22.

⁶¹Gibson, 138.

the Chinese presence in America. Instead, he stressed that the problem of Chinese prostitution and the enslavement of Chinese girls would disappear if the municipal government would move to suppress the entire system of prostitution, Chinese and white. Arguing that "To wage a war against Chinese prostitution while granting immunity to all others is as absurd as it is unjust," Gibson attempted to shift the blame for the traffic in women from the Chinese to the municipal government and their system of regulation.⁶²

Ultimately Gibson and the other advocates of Chinese immigration found themselves unable to stem the tide of anti-Chinese sentiment. In 1882, the United States Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, barring the immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years and denying naturalized citizenship to Chinese immigrants already here.⁶³ The passage of the law, however, did not signal the end to anti-Chinese hostilities or signal the demise of the narratives on enslaved Asian prostitutes. Instead, the discourse continued to thrive in the West, in part due to the fact that the exclusionary legislation, until it was extended indefinitely in 1904, required renewal every ten years.⁶⁴ The narratives, as Peggy

⁶²Ibid., 157. Other advocates for the Chinese proposed other solutions for dealing with the prostitution issue. George Seward, for instance, accepted the conclusions drawn by Gibson that Chinese prostitution was a unique system of slavery but argued that all that was needed to stop it was to stop the importation of Chinese prostitutes. As such, he advocated firming up the enforcement of the Page Law, the 1875 federal law which was designed to stop the immigration of unfree laborers from Asia, including prostitutes and contract laborers. Seward, like Gibson, also criticized efforts to suppress Chinese prostitution while leaving white prostitution unchecked but, in propagating the stories of enslaved Chinese women, including reprinting the "bills of sale" translated by Gibson, Seward, like the other pro-Chinese advocates, helped perpetuate a powerful anti-Chinese discourse even as he sought to construct his own pro-Chinese discursive intervention. See George Seward, Chinese Immigration in its Social and Economical Aspects (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881), 261-286. The California Senate Committee summarily dismissed these arguments, arguing first that eradicating prostitution was an impossibility and stressing that efforts to stop the importation of prostitutes had failed. They argued the latter point by ignoring the passage of the Page Law, focusing instead on the 1870 law which was overturned in Federal Courts. See Special Committee, Policy, 34-35.

⁶³Takaki, Strangers, 111.

⁶⁴For a description of this, and other, exclusionary laws aimed at the Chinese see Chan, 54-55.

Pascoe notes, also remained popular among missionary women even though the actual numbers of Chinese prostitutes was undergoing a sharp decline and their missions were increasingly devoted to helping other groups of Chinese women.⁶⁵ The discourse was also malleable enough to adapt to changing conditions. In the absence of any discernible immigration of Chinese women from China, for instance, foes of the Chinese crafted new charges to levy at the traffickers, including their allegations that the traffickers inability to import new slave girls had forced them to resort to kidnapping respectable Chinese women from California's Chinatowns and forcing them into a life of prostitution.⁶⁶ Moreover, the discourse on what would ultimately be known as "yellow slavery" found fertile soil on the East coast and in the Midwest during the final years of the nineteenth century when it was picked up by social purity reformers who had placed the issue of sexual trafficking of innocent girls at the center of their crusade against prostitution.

The Traffic in "White Slaves"

Ten years after the United States Congress received the Memorial from the California Senate Committee detailing the traffic in Chinese girls, they received another one, this time from the East Coast, alleging that Canadian girls were similarly being imported into the United States across the country's northern border to work in brothels in cities like Chicago. The authors of the second Memorial, members of the New York Committee for the Prevention of State Regulation of Vice, claimed to have received their information regarding the trafficking from an anonymous source in Quebec and stressed

⁶⁵Pascoe, 205. For the decline in the number of Chinese prostitutes see Yung, 71-72.

⁶⁶For the allegations that traffickers had turned to kidnapping to fill their need for prostitutes see Hirata, 12-13. The discourse was also easily adapted to apply to new groups of Asian immigrants, including the Japanese, when they began arriving in the United States in the late nineteenth century, discursive innovations which will be discussed in chapter three.

that the "evidence" indicated that there was widespread "wholesale trading" of girls taking place. Arguing that the telegram proved that the United States was involved in the "international traffic of girls for immoral purposes," the memorialists called on the U.S. Congress to investigate, and abolish, the trafficking.⁶⁷

If the New York Committee for the Prevention of the State Regulation of Vice was aware of the concerns over the west coast traffic in Chinese girls, a possibility given the coverage of the topic by the *New York Times*, they did not mention it in their 1886 Memorial.⁶⁸ While they would, in time, become concerned with the plight of these "yellow slaves," the discourse on the trafficking in girls which emerged within the social purity movement in the United States was, in 1886, largely a British import. The impetus for the formation of the New York Committee for the Prevention of State Regulation of Vice was itself of British origin. In the summer of 1876, Rev. J.P. Gledstone and Mr. H.J. Wilson, members of the International Federation for the Abolition of State Regulation of Vice, visited New York from England to urge the foundation of an American society committed to fighting the regulation of prostitution in the United States.⁶⁹ While American cities did not, with rare exception, have systems of regulation for prostitution which would inspect prostitutes for disease, register them, and issue health certificates, the system was, in one form or another, in use throughout Europe and there was concern in America and

⁶⁷"The International Traffic in Girls," *The Philanthropist* 1, no. 6 (June 1886), 5.

⁶⁸The *New York Times* followed the issue of Chinese immigration closely, particularly after Chinese laborers started arriving on the East Coast after 1870, when they were brought into Boston to act as strikebreakers at a shoe factory. This coverage included disseminating news of the organized traffic in women by the Hip Yee Tong society, detailing efforts of individual Chinese men to sell their wives, and describing the murders and abductions which they alleged followed in the wake of this trafficking. See "The Chinese in California," *New York Times*, 31 July 1873; *New York Times*, 11 Feb. 1879; *New York Times*, 17 March 1869. For details on the importation of Chinese into North Adams, Massachusetts in 1870 as strikebreakers and the resulting outcry see Takaki, *Iron Cages*, 232-240.

⁶⁹"Nineteenth Annual Report," *The Philanthropist* X, no. 3 (March 1895), 1.

England, that American cities would turn their policies of toleration into systems of regulation. It was not an unfounded fear. Many in America, including police and medical professionals, hoped that implementing systems of regulation in America's burgeoning cities would keep the police graft that usually accompanied vice in check and prevent the spread of disease.⁷⁰ Regulation gained a major advocate when William Sanger proposed it in his definitive study The History of Prostitution in 1858 and with support growing, proposals for regulation began popping up in cities across the country.⁷¹ The police department in New York officially requested permission to implement such a system in 1867 but the bill never made it to the state legislature after Susan B. Anthony got wind of the plan and threatened its author that she would take the issue to the women of New York if he pursued the matter.⁷² The victory against regulation in New York was, however, short-lived. In 1870, St. Louis implemented a plan of regulation and other cities seemed poised to follow suit. Over the next four decades, plans would be proposed in Chicago, Washington D.C., Baltimore, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Pennsylvania, and Pittsburgh.⁷³

Social purity groups were, in most cases, successful in fighting back the proposals but the plans continued to re-surface. Plans for regulation in New York, for instance, appeared in 1868, 1871, 1875, and 1877.⁷⁴ There was, for the anti-regulationists, no

⁷⁰David Pivar, Purity Crusade: Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900 (Westport: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973), 28-30.

⁷¹William Sanger, The History of Prostitution (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1858), 452, 456, 575, 670.

⁷²Pivar, 51.

⁷³For a general discussion of these plans for regulation see Pivar, 50-77. For more in-depth discussion of the efforts of American cities to regulate prostitution see, John Burnham, "Medical Inspection of Prostitution in America in the Nineteenth Century: The St. Louis Experiment and Its Sequel," Bulletin of the History of Medicine 45, no. 3 (May-June 1971): 203-218 and Joel Best, Controlling Vice: Regulating Brothel Prostitution in St. Paul (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998).

⁷⁴Pivar, 52.

definitive victory in sight and the movement itself, as David Pivar has argued, was too decentered to launch a major, national campaign against the regulationists.⁷⁵ By 1880, however, these forces had coalesced into a more centralized movement of social purity forces which was committed not just to ending regulation but to the broader goal of abolishing prostitution. At the forefront of this movement was the New York Committee for the Prevention of State Regulation of Vice who, for the first ten years of their existence, concentrated on lobbying against regulation schemes and sought to influence newspaper coverage and medical opinions of the efficacy of the plans.⁷⁶

In 1886, events in Britain convinced them to change their tactics. British reformers, who had successfully lobbied for the suspension of regulatory laws in England in 1883, had turned their attention to the issue of the traffic in girls.⁷⁷ At the forefront of this battle was their effort to pass the Criminal Law Amendment Act which would raise the age of consent for girls from 13 to 16, a primary demand of social purity forces in both Britain and the United States.⁷⁸ The effort to pass this legislation in Britain was an uphill battle and one which seemed, in 1885, deadlocked. The Criminal Law Amendment remained where it had been for years, stalled in Parliament.⁷⁹ The campaign against prostitution and the traffic in girls needed, as William Stead put it, its own "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to jump-start the crusade.⁸⁰

⁷⁵Ibid., 64.

⁷⁶Ibid., 87-88.

⁷⁷Judith Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 96. For an insightful analysis of the British campaign to repeal the regulatory acts see Judith Walkowitz, Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, class, and the state (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980). The laws were repealed in 1886.

⁷⁸For an analysis of the battle to raise the age of consent in the United States and the consequences of the legislation see Mary Odem, Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).

⁷⁹Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 82.

⁸⁰Ibid., 96.

Stead, editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, was ready to be the new "Mrs. Stowe."⁸¹ In a four-part series titled "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon," published in the summer of 1885, Stead described, in explosively dramatic detail, the findings of his firsthand investigation into the traffic in girls in London, which included his assertions that he had purchased a young virgin to demonstrate how easily it could be accomplished. As historians have noted, the uproar in England produced by Stead's allegations was overwhelming. Crowds rioted, social purity groups and local vigilance committees were formed, and the Criminal Law Amendment Act was finally passed.⁸² The effects of Stead's activism was not confined to England. His expose also sent shockwaves into the American struggle against regulated prostitution.⁸³

Less than six months after Stead demonstrated the political possibilities inherent in popularizing the new crusade against the traffic in girls through the crafting and disseminating of narratives describing its horror, the New York Committee adopted his tactic as their new battle plan.⁸⁴ In January of 1886 they began publishing a monthly

⁸¹For an analysis of this analogy see Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 96.

⁸²*Ibid.*, 82-83, 102-106. For a thorough analysis of this British campaign against white slavery and Stead's "Maiden Tribute," which focuses on discourse and the material and cultural consequences of the campaign, see Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 81-134

⁸³Stead boasted that pamphlets reprinting the scandal had seen large sales in America. See, Raymond Schults, Crusader in Babylon: W.T. Stead and the Pall Mall Gazette (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1972), 157. Walkowitz also argues that Stead's crusade became an international event, noting that contemporaries alleged there were over one and a half million unauthorized reprints of "Maiden Tribute." See Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 82.

⁸⁴There is evidence that narratives which utilized the basic story line developed in the discourse over the traffic in girls existed in America prior to Stead's revelations. See John McCabe, Lights and Shadows of New York (Philadelphia: National Publishing Company, 1872), 579-600, 663-664, 821; W.A. Muhlenberg, The Woman and Her Accusers: A Plea for the Midnight Mission (New York: Pliny F. Smith, 1871), 67-69. See also the stories detailed in Joanne Meyerowitz, Women Adrift: Independent Wage Earners in Chicago, 1880-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 43-68.

Most of these early narratives did not argue for an organized system of trafficking. Instead, they blamed individuals for procuring the girls into sexual slavery. See Osgood Bradbury, Female Depravity; or, the House of Death (New York: Robert M. Dewitt,

magazine titled The Philanthropist, aimed at promoting social purity, suppressing vice, and preventing regulation by popularizing their cause.⁸⁵ Their debt to their British counterparts and to the crusade launched by Stead was clear in the first issue. In addition to detailing the activities in Great Britain with regard to the repeal of regulatory acts, they printed the address Josephine Butler gave in defense of Stead, who was under arrest for procuring the young girl for his "Maiden Tribute" expose.⁸⁶ As one historian has noted, Stead's expose broke the silence that surrounded issues of prostitution in prior decades and opened up new possibilities for reformers seeking ways to awaken the moral indignation of the public. For the tactic to work in the United States, however, the social purity forces needed to construct their own expose of white slavery closer to home.⁸⁷

The Americanization of the British white-slavery narratives proceeded on a number of fronts.⁸⁸ On the one hand, the members of the New York Committee downplayed issues which had been central in Stead's narratives, including those related to

1857); Osgood Bradbury, Emily, the Beautiful Seamstress; -or- The Danger of the First Step. A Story of Life in New York (Boston: George H. Williams, 1853).

⁸⁵The New York Committee had previously published a monthly Bulletin which was intended to keep European abolitionists up to date on American antiregulationist activities. See Pivar, 84.

⁸⁶See The Philanthropist 1, no. 1 (January 1886), 8. On Stead's arrest and trial see Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 106-115. Stead was found guilty of abduction and sentenced to three months in prison. Aaron Powell also gave Stead credit for starting the white slave crusade in the next two issues and at the 10th Annual Meeting of the NY Committee for the Prevention of State Regulation of Vice. See The Philanthropist 1, no. 2 (February 1886) and The Philanthropist 1, no. 3 (March 1886), 2. For a British investigation into the traffic in women which pre-dates Stead's see Alfred Dyer, The European Slave Trade in English Girls (London: Dyer, 1880).

⁸⁷Pivar, 136-137.

⁸⁸The idea that the British narratives were "Americanized" is drawn from Frederick Grittner, White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990), 39-40. As noted in the introduction, Grittner, while acknowledging that an Americanization of the white-slavery narratives did take place, underestimates the nineteenth-century roots of the twentieth-century concern over white slavery. For a further discussion of this see the introduction.

class, and sought to read Stead's actions through a decidedly American lens.⁸⁹ As many of the members of the New York Committee were former abolitionists they, like the members of the anti-Chinese movement, were quick to adopt analogies which compared "white slavery" with African-American slavery and, like Stead, compared themselves, and him, to familiar abolitionist figures.⁹⁰ When, for instance, Aaron Powell, an editor of The Philanthropist, sought to justify Stead's actions, which he described as rash but necessary, he dubbed Stead the "John Brown" of the white slaves.⁹¹

American social purity reformers also developed and spread narratives which stressed that white slavery was occurring on American soil, a tactic which ultimately included adapting the narratives on "yellow slavery" already circulating in the United States. As we have seen, the initial efforts to "expose" the trafficking of girls in the United States aimed at getting the federal government to look into the anonymous allegations that Canadian girls were being lured into the country on the promise of good jobs only to find themselves imprisoned in American brothels.⁹² These stories were, however, soon eclipsed by the more sensational claims that American girls were themselves in danger of being snared by procurers.⁹³ By the end of 1886, the social purity press was running

⁸⁹Stead's class analysis and the ways in which it was altered by the American context will be discussed in chapter four.

⁹⁰On the abolitionist roots of the New York Committee see Pivar, 67-73, 83-88.

⁹¹The Philanthropist 1, no. 1 (January 1886), 8.

⁹²"The International Traffic in Girls;" "Traffic in Young Girls," The Philanthropist 1, no. 5 (May 1886); The Philanthropist 1, no. 8 (August 1886), 1; "Criminal Vice," The Philanthropist 1, no. 9 (September 1886), 5.

⁹³The concern over the international traffic in Canadian girls into America never totally disappeared from the larger American battle against white slavery, in part because of the connections between the Canadian and American white-slavery reformers. Interestingly, later Canadian white-slavery reformers credited the Americans with starting them on their crusade, in spite of the fact that the first evidence of the traffic was provided by Canadian sources. In the twentieth century, the Canadian reformers relied heavily on and collaborated with American white-slavery forces. See J.G. Shearer, "Segregation and Toleration of Vice in Canada," The Philanthropist 25, no. 5 (May, 1911), Shearer's Canada's War on the White Slave Traffic (Toronto: Department of Temperance and Moral

articles which stressed that Canadian girls were not the only victims of the traffickers. Instead, articles bearing titles like "Traffic in Young Girls," alleged that "There seems to be an organized agency, by which, from rural districts and other cities, honest girls are lured to Chicago with expectation of work, and are then lost forever to friends, honor and hope," forcibly detained in places of infamy where they were subjected to "added tortures." City girls were also imagined to be in danger of being "picked up and sent off to dens of vice elsewhere."⁹⁴ There was, these authors claimed, compelling evidence that there was a "regular systematic trade" in girls being conducted in urban cities in the Midwest and on the East coast.⁹⁵ This evidence, however, did little to stir up the widespread public outcry that reformers had hoped for and, as 1886 drew to a close, the social purity forces in the United States were still looking for their own "Maiden Tribute." Their search came to an end with the "discovery" of white slavery in the lumber camps of Michigan and the "liberation" of a white slave who was known in the newspapers by the name of Minnie Pine in January of 1887. Her story, and the allegations that girls like her were being imprisoned for the purposes of prostitution in lumbercamps throughout the Midwest would, ultimately, become the springboard from which social purity groups, including the New York Committee and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, launched their nineteenth-century crusade against white slavery.

Reform of the Methodist Church, n.d) which was published sometime after 1910, and Shearer, "Introduction," in Horrors of the White Slave Trade: The Mighty Crusade to Protect the Purity of Our Homes, (ed.) Clifford Roe (1911), 19-26. For an analysis of the white-slavery panic in Canada see Carolyn Strange, Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995). Strange, like the U.S. historians of white slavery, argues the movement against white slavery in Canada was a twentieth century phenomena. Given the influence of Stead and the Criminal Law Amendment Act in Canada, which Strange notes, and the references in The Philanthropist to Canadian concerns over the traffic in the 19th century it is probable that the Canadian panic in the second decade of the twentieth century also had 19th century precursors. See Strange, 97-98.

⁹⁴"Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 1, no. 11 (November 1886), 6.

⁹⁵"The Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 2, no. 2 (February, 1887), 4-5.

The saga of Minnie Pine appeared in the Detroit Free Press as part of a larger propaganda effort to push a bill which increased the penalty for keeping a disorderly house through the Michigan Legislature. The article detailed the entrapment of innocent girls in "Hellish Dens" on the Michigan and Wisconsin border based on the story of one girl who was reportedly dubbed "Minnie Pine" by her captors.⁹⁶ Minnie was one of nine women arrested during a raid of a Michigan lumber camp in Menominee County all of whom had been sentenced to one year in prison and sent to the Detroit House of Correction. Unlike the other women, however, Minnie got her sentence commuted and was eventually pardoned after she convinced her jailers, newspaper reporters, legislators, and judges that she was an innocent victim of sexual traffickers who had forced her into a life of shame.⁹⁷

According to the story Minnie told authorities, she came from a respectable family in a small Eastern city where her father had been the chief of police. Exactly which city she hailed from is unclear, as she alternately told authorities she was from Elmira, N.Y. and Troy, PA.⁹⁸ She was, she claimed, an orphan who had been deserted by her husband in Chicago. Unable to find a job with wages sufficient to support her she wrote home for money, which she alleged had been left to her by her parents, but before it arrived she claimed that she had fallen prey to the offers of William Gaines, who promised her a job at a lumber camp hotel where she could make \$14.00 a week plus "extras." After accepting his offer she alleged that she was shipped to a lumber camp in Marinette, Wisconsin where she found herself enslaved in a fenced-in shanty, guarded by 13 savage bull dogs. Stating

⁹⁶"It Is Needed: The Breen Law Aims at One of the Worst Outrages on Earth," Detroit Free Press, 24 January 1887, 1. There were clearly prior investigations or, at least allegations into the lumber camps as the forementioned article "Traffic in Girls," published in the The Philanthropist in November of 1886, refers to the enslavement of girls in the "low dives of the northern pineries." The author of the article does not, however, provide any details as to what exactly was happening in the pineries or where the information was from.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸"Michigan Aroused at Last," New York World 26 January 1887, 7.

that she was a "virtuous woman" when she arrived at the camp, she claimed she was held down by two of the other women currently under arrest and forced to submit to her captors. All her efforts to escape met with abuse or were thwarted by the authorities in nearby cities who, she reported, were being bought off by the den keepers. Eventually, Minnie reported, she was released from the den as a result of a raid but, cast adrift without any money, she sought shelter with her captors in another lumber camp in Menominee, Michigan. Once there, she asserted, she was promptly re-enslaved and kept as a prisoner until the raid that led to her arrest.⁹⁹

Based on the inconsistencies of Minnie's story and her incredible claim that she sought shelter with her rapists and abusers in Michigan after escaping them in Wisconsin it is highly probable that Minnie was crafting her own white-slavery narrative as a means to get out of jail following her conviction on prostitution charges. As we shall see, this remained a viable avenue of escape for women charged with prostitution throughout the moral panic years.¹⁰⁰ It worked for Minnie.¹⁰¹ With the aid of a Michigan judge who found her tale believable, Minnie had her sentence commuted and was released from prison. As far as the judge was concerned, Minnie's fate, while unfortunate, was an isolated one. Conditions in the lumber camps had, he claimed, improved substantially since the raid that "rescued" Minnie and he told reporters in January of 1887 that the worst was over.¹⁰² The allegations and the investigations into the lumber camps in Michigan and Wisconsin were, however, just beginning. Once unleashed, the discourse on the trafficking

⁹⁹"It is Needed," 24 January 1887.

¹⁰⁰This phenomenon will be discussed in chapter six.

¹⁰¹It is unclear whether two other women, who followed Minnie's example and claimed they had been held as prostitutes against their will were also released. See "It is Needed," 24 January 1887 and "Michigan Aroused at Last," 26 January 1887, 7. The vice operators Minnie charged with abducting her, denied the story. William Gaines had disappeared from Chicago but an interview with a man who worked for him resulted in allegations that Minnie went to the den knowing what she would do there. Women were not, he asserted, kept prisoner. See "Michigan Aroused at Last," 26 January 1887.

¹⁰²"Iniquitous Trade in Girls," *The Philanthropist* 2, no. 2 (February 1887), 6.

of girls in the pineries found fertile soil among social purity reformers, particularly among W.C.T.U. missionaries.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union investigations

The New York Committee had long believed that the W.C.T.U. could be an ally in the war against the traffic in girls and had encouraged them to join the crusade to memorialize Congress requesting an investigation in 1886.¹⁰³ They certainly did not envision how good an ally the W.C.T.U. would become in this particular crusade. Nor did they envision that it would be the W.C.T.U., not the United States Congress, who would undertake the investigations to expose the horrors of the traffic.¹⁰⁴ W.C.T.U. members, at least in Michigan, were keeping abreast of the situation from the beginning. The Ann Arbor, Michigan chapter of the W.C.T.U., for instance, recorded in their minutes that part of their meeting on January 25, 1887 was devoted to reading an article from the *Evening Journal* "relating to the lives of young girls who are enticed into the lumber camps in the Northern parts of Wisconsin and Michigan."¹⁰⁵ Other W.C.T.U. members were doing more than reading other's accounts; some, like Bessie Cushman, were writing their own

¹⁰³"The Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 1, no. 6 (June 1886), 4.

¹⁰⁴With the exception of their involvement in the battle to raise the age of consent, the WCTU's involvement with social purity work has not been subject to any thoroughgoing historical assessments. Most full length treatments of the group deal with the issue in a few pages or, at most, a chapter. For an analysis of their involvement in the age of consent issue see Odem, 8-37. For an analysis which briefly touches on but does not fully develop the role of the WCTU in anti-prostitution and white-slavery reform see Ruth Bordin, Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981). Ian Tyrrel's analysis of the role of social purity in the WCTU is perhaps the most thorough assessment. See Ian Tyrrel, Woman's World Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

¹⁰⁵"Minutes for Jan. 25, 1887," Secretary's Book 1883-1889, Ann Arbor WCTU, 180-181.

accounts with the hope that they could turn the pinery horrors into "Another Maiden Tribute" and spark a larger crusade against the "female slave trade."¹⁰⁶ In writing "Another Maiden Tribute," Cushman was clearly issuing a call to arms, summoning a legion of missionaries to invade the lumber camps bearing Bibles and, for extreme cases, copies of the revised Michigan statutes.¹⁰⁷ The Michigan W.C.T.U. responded to Cushman's battle cry by forming a "Department of work for Lumbermen's Employees" and began soliciting funds to undertake missionary work in the camps.¹⁰⁸

It was not, however, until the end of 1887 that the allegations that young girls were being sexually enslaved in lumbercamps once again made headline news in Midwestern and Eastern cities and, like the tale of Minnie Pine, these stories were being propagated not by W.C.T.U. missionaries but were, instead, the work of newspaper

¹⁰⁶Bessie V. Cushman M.D., "Another Maiden Tribute," The Union Signal, 17 February 1887, 8-9; Pivar, 136.

¹⁰⁷Cushman, 8-9. "Another Maiden Tribute" portrays a married couple discussing the newspaper allegations, reading aloud the first-person narratives of how the girls were cunningly lured to the dens by advertisements promising employment. "Mary" is particularly dismayed by the stories, which include a horrific description of how one girl was shot, pursued by dogs, and forced to sleep in a swamp during an unsuccessful escape attempt but her husband, "John" is already on to the market reports. They are both relieved when, a few days later, John comes across the denials made by the employee of the accused den keeper. Cushman used the story to criticize Americans who were only concerned for only those things in which they have a "moneyed interest" and who would believe the denials of a "scullion" and reject the evidence gathered by legislators and other authorities.

Historians disagree on the stylistic nature of Cushman's article and, consequently, whether or not it was in keeping with Stead's first "Maiden Tribute." Frederick Grittner disagrees with Pivar's statements that "Another Maiden Tribute" was written in an abolitionist rhetorical style in keeping with the sensational Stead narratives, arguing that Cushman's article sought to avoid sensationalism and was a "reasoned" exposition of the problems. Cushman's narrative may not have achieved Stead's level of sensationalism but it is difficult to see how Grittner assessed its stylistic content and narrative form as being devoid of melodrama and sensationalism. See Pivar, 136; Grittner, 44 and 55 note #20. For another analysis of Stead, one which argues that he merged the genres of melodrama and pornography, see Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 96-102.

¹⁰⁸"Department of Work for Lumbermen's Employes (sic)," The Union Signal, 3 September 1887, 12.

reporters searching for scandalous exposes to sell their papers.¹⁰⁹ This next round of investigations began in November of 1887 when a reporter with the Chicago Tribune went to Marinette after hearing allegations that innocent girls were being abducted and enslaved in lumbercamps there. His investigation stalled, however, when he discovered that the den keepers had voluntarily closed up shop rather than face the raids they feared were coming.¹¹⁰ Fortunately, a reporter for the New York World had already spent a week in the camps, posing as a lumberman, before the dens closed and was able and willing to provide all the sensational details to the readers of the New York World of how he had unearthed a system of "white slavery" which he claimed was responsible for the kidnapping and defiling of hundreds of little girls under 16.¹¹¹

According to the reporter, the young girls were subjected to "revolting cruelty" in the camps where they were trapped in fenced-in stockades and guarded by vicious bulldogs. All of the girls, he claimed, were clad in scanty dresses and had their heads shaved so they looked like convicts. He also related tales of how they were forced to dance while men whipped their stockinged legs and were raped and hung naked by their thumbs. In spite of his allegation that the girls had their hair shaven off, he also claimed that their owners dragged them through the woods by their hair and regularly beat them to

¹⁰⁹Frederick Grittner, as part of his argument that the battle against white slavery did not begin until the twentieth century, argues that Cushman's article was an isolated incident and that the concern over trafficking in the lumbercamps was ephemeral. This misreading of the nineteenth-century sources, which obscures the nineteenth-century roots of the white-slavery panic, fails to investigate how the crusade against the trafficking was carried on by both urban newspapers and the W.C.T.U. in the years following the publication of Cushman's article. Pivar also fails to investigate the role of reporters and the mainstream media in propagating the battle against white slavery in the lumbercamps and incorrectly assumes that the investigations undertaken in the latter months of 1887 were conducted by W.C.T.U. missionaries instead of newspaper reporters. See Grittner, 44 and Pivar, 136.

¹¹⁰"Marinette's Foul Dens," Chicago Tribune, 1 November 1887, 1. See also "The Marinette Dives," Chicago Tribune, 2 November 1887, 2.

¹¹¹"Minotaurs of the Pineries," New York World, 4 November 1887.

death.¹¹² Their life was so brutal, the reporter asserted, that they rarely lived more than a year.¹¹³ They were not, apparently, the only ones to meet a gruesome fate in the pineries. The Chicago Tribune reporter who had been sent to investigate the Wisconsin lumber camps had turned up missing and it was feared he had been murdered in one of the dens.¹¹⁴

The outcry in the wake of the allegations by the New York World was immediate, at least on an official level. Just as the story of Minnie Pine had prompted the passage of legislation in Michigan, the graphic stories of the white slaves in Marinette spurred Wisconsin's Governor Rusk to send a secret agent of his own out to investigate. He also issued assurances to the public that he would close the dens even if he had to call out the military to do it.¹¹⁵ With the crusade against the lumbercamps once again headline news, the W.C.T.U. once again entered the fray and were prepared, this time, to take an active role in rooting out the evil. Initially they focused their efforts on convincing the public that the stories being run in the newspapers were true. Frances Willard, for instance, attempted to reinforce the battle to save the girls she was also now calling "white slaves" by having the narratives authorized by believable public officials.¹¹⁶ For this, she appealed to Judge Grant, whose involvement in the Minnie Pine case made him an authoritative source.¹¹⁷ Asked by Willard to comment on the stories published in the New York World detailing the horrors of the dens, Grant stated that while the statements were "somewhat

¹¹²Ibid.; "Wisconsin's White Slaves," New York World, 7 November 1887, 6.

¹¹³"Wisconsin's White Slaves," 7 November 1887.

¹¹⁴"Was He Killed in the Pineries?," New York World, 6 November 1887, 1.

¹¹⁵"Closing Wisconsin Dives," New York World, 8 November 1887, 6.

¹¹⁶Willard refers to the "white slave women" in "To the W.C.T. Unions of the Northern Peninsula, Michigan," Union Signal, 5 January 1888, 5.

¹¹⁷For Grant's early involvement in the battle against the Michigan lumbercamps see, "Iniquitous Trade in Girls."

exaggerated" he was confident that the keepers of the dens were capable of such actions and that girls were being "abducted and induced" to enter the dens on false pretenses.¹¹⁸

Willard also called for missionaries to step up their activity on behalf of the girls trapped in northern lumbercamps. In a letter addressed to the W.C.T.U. Unions in Northern Michigan, Willard argued that the "unspeakable abominations" being disclosed by the newspapers on the lives of white slaves in the lumbercamps had "never been exceeded in any age or nation" and urged that Christians and philanthropic people "lay aside every other effort they are making until these breathing holes of perdition are sealed up and the incarnate fiends who have opened them are incarcerated under a life sentence in the penitentiary."¹¹⁹

As 1887 drew to a close, however, it was clear that few were willing to "lay aside" their other efforts to devote themselves to sealing up the lumbercamp brothels and imprisoning their keepers, a fact which had, by the middle of the following year, convinced the W.C.T.U. to change their tactics. No longer willing to leave the investigations into the white-slavery horrors in the pineries to newspaper reporters, the W.C.T.U. deputized one of their own missionaries, Dr. Kate Bushnell, to undertake a four-month investigation into conditions in the Wisconsin lumber camps. Bushnell, an evangelist with the social purity department of the National W.C.T.U., was no stranger to the problems of prostitution or rescue work.¹²⁰ In 1886 she was running the newly opened rooms for fallen women established by the W.C.T.U. in Chicago and was speaking on behalf of the women in that

¹¹⁸"The Pinery Horrors," Union Signal, 26 January 1888.

¹¹⁹"To the W.C.T.U. Unions of the Northern Peninsula, Michigan." This letter was reprinted in The Philanthropist 3, no. 2 (February 1888), 1.

¹²⁰"The Horrors of the Wisconsin Lumber Camps," The Philanthropist 3, no. 11 (November 1888), 8. In 1888, the purity department had been renamed "The White Cross and White Shield Department," one in a long line of name changes this department underwent. See Elizabeth Putnam Gordon, Women Torch-Bearers: The Story of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (Evanston: National Woman's Christian Temperance Union Publishing House, 1924), 299.

city during 1887.¹²¹ With her background among Chicago's prostitutes, her medical degree, and her clearly outspoken nature, she was an impressive choice to undertake an investigation which other W.C.T.U. reformers described as taking one's life in one's hands.¹²²

Throughout the summer of 1888, Bushnell did just that, visiting "59 or 60" northern dens, both the "ordinary sort and the stockaded dens" and interviewing 577 of the "degraded women" she found in them.¹²³ The summer months, she noted, were slow ones for the northern vice industry but she still managed to unearth convincing evidence of the existence of a system through which unwilling women were forced into a life of literal slavery.¹²⁴ When Bushnell reported her findings at the National Convention of the W.C.T.U. in 1888 in New York, she was aware that prior allegations that the trafficking was occurring had been challenged by non-believers and she was at pains to stress that she had amassed "reliable" and "abundant evidence" based on "well authenticated" cases.¹²⁵ In constructing this "authentic" portrayal of what American white slavery was really all about, Bushnell did not merely replicate the facts as they had been circulating in the newspapers over the previous months. Instead, she recast parts of the discourse while reinscribing others. She maintained, for instance, that the old allegations that women were lured on the promise of honest employment were correct but revised some of the prevailing ideas about how the system operated, who was vulnerable, and how they were

¹²¹The Philanthropist 1, no. 3 (March 1886), 1; The Philanthropist 2, no. 4 (March 1887), 8.

¹²²Michigan WCTU member Emma Obenauer cautioned in 1888 that anyone investigating the lumbercamp dens risked being killed if their mission was discovered. See "The Lumber Dens," Detroit Free Press, 11 June 1888.

¹²³"The Horrors of the Wisconsin Lumber Camps." This article excerpted, at length, her speech in front of the WCTU National Convention.

¹²⁴"The Wisconsin Lumber Dens," The Philanthropist 3, no. 12 (December 1888), 1-3. This article was excerpted from Bushnell's official report to the Wisconsin W.C.T.U.

¹²⁵"The Horrors of the Wisconsin Lumber Camps," 8.

held in slavery. In the process she created a new image of American white slavery which left a strong legacy for twentieth century reformers.

Bushnell acknowledged that her findings were not in keeping with some of the more inflammatory details advanced by prior stories of the life in the dens which had been printed in the newspapers. She noted, for instance, that those descriptions had overstated the amount of force applied to keep the girls in the dens but insisted that it was still impossible for them to escape in large part due to the collusion of authorities. The idea that authorities were guilty of protecting the traffic was not a new allegation but Bushnell's assertions that public officials were conniving to aid "the enslavement of young girls" in Northern Wisconsin took the charges to new heights.¹²⁶ Claiming that she had abundant evidence to back up her statements, Bushnell even alleged that the chief of police in one city was entrapping young women and sending them north.¹²⁷ In other instances, Bushnell alleged, local officials returned girls attempting to escape to the dens.¹²⁸ Physicians, Bushnell noted with dismay, were also culpable. Stating "I hang my head in shame in making this accusation against members of my own profession," Bushnell argued doctors not only tolerated but encouraged vice because it increased their practice. As a result of this official and medical sanction, Bushnell charged, contagious disease acts, modeled on British forerunners, were in effect in almost all of the northern towns and cities. She could not, however, advance the actual wording of the health certificates in her possession as it was "too indecent for public print."¹²⁹

In addition to implicating government officials in the traffic, Bushnell constructed a portrait of the traffic in girls which suggested that even broader forces in American life

¹²⁶For earlier instances where the authorities were implicated in the white-slave trade see, "The Traffic in Young Girls," The Philanthropist 1, no. 11 (November 1886), 6 and The Philanthropist 2, no. 2 (February, 1887), 4-5.

¹²⁷"The Horrors of the Wisconsin Lumber Camps."

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹"The Wisconsin Lumber Dens," 2.

were responsible for the evil trade. Whereas prior narratives had primarily blamed individuals, Bushnell put forth the idea that the traffic itself was being controlled by what the editors termed "trade capitalists" who had as their object the "amassing of fortunes by the degradation of women."¹³⁰ White slavery, she stated, was a viable business because it was being run by a "systematic organization of men of business intelligence" who knew how to take advantage of loopholes in the existing laws to avoid prosecution and who were assisted by procurers who operated in a variety of venues to hunt down inmates for the dens.¹³¹ Although Bushnell stated that it was difficult for her to gather a great deal of information on these procurers, she was able to amass "bits of history" on seven or eight of them. This information included the history of one procurer who had been educated in the ministry and took advantage of his training and his natural ability to hold evangelistic meetings to better gain influence over "young innocent girls and to carry them north to Wisconsin dens."¹³²

Bushnell's construction of the individuals and forces responsible for perpetuating the traffic in girls did not just blame American capitalists, officials, and procurers. Bushnell also placed the blame on the den keepers themselves who, she alleged, were all foreigners. In what would become a long-lasting, powerful image of those who enslaved innocent girls, Bushnell asserted:

When we see the condition of things in which the foreigner of the North-because all the den keepers without exception are either foreigners or of foreign extraction, and have not long been in this country-when those foreigners of the North work as they do for the enslavement of our American girls, and nearly all of these girls, so far as I know, are American born and bred, what shall we say of the condition of things?"¹³³

¹³⁰Bushnell later corrected this description by stating that she had not said "trade" capitalists but had, instead, blamed "male" capitalists, a "misprint" which will be discussed later in this chapter.

¹³¹"The Wisconsin Lumber Dens," 1.

¹³²*Ibid.*, 2.

¹³³"The Horrors of the Wisconsin Lumber Camps."

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Bushnell's portrayal of those responsible for white slavery and the nativity of the victims was increasingly challenged by other authors but her allegation that the den keepers were foreigners became a dominant, enduring image in the white-slavery discourse.¹³⁴

If Bushnell was convinced that all the girls were Americans she was less certain as to whether or not they were all "innocent." To be sure she believed that some of the girls were, in fact, perfectly innocent but she was also concerned with the tendency of the law and the public to differentiate between "previously chaste" girls and those whose previous character was not so unblemished. Noting that the Wisconsin law only provided for the felony conviction of the procurer if the woman was of "previous chaste character," Bushnell stressed that men in the business of trafficking knew how to take advantage of this loophole by preying on girls whom they could argue had committed some previous offense whether or not their allegations were true. Bushnell argued that with rare exception, all the girls should be considered victims because they had all been misled by procurers who promised them industry, not sexual, employment in the north.¹³⁵

She claimed that what these girls found was a life of "literal" slavery from which there was no escape.¹³⁶ Although Bushnell acknowledged that some of the incidents of force had been overstated in the press, Bushnell did cite cases of serious abuse and imprisonment, stressing that inmates were subjected to cruel treatment, whippings, and an occasional "wholesale thrashing." She also related tales of daring escape attempts, including one in which a girl carrying a heavy ball that was attached to an ankle chain

¹³⁴The editors of The Philanthropist, picking up on Bushnell's allegations, asserted that foreign brothel keepers were just doing what they were used to doing at home under the system of regulation being practiced in Europe. See "Foreign Regulation and American Womanhood," The Philanthropist 3, no. 11 (November 1888). The construction of the foreign white slaver will be investigated further in chapter three.

¹³⁵"The Wisconsin Lumber Dens," 1-3.

¹³⁶*Ibid.*, 3. Bushnell defined this literal slavery as women being "compelled to acquire property for others and not for themselves," in addition to stressing they were unable to escape their condition.

paced a train to avoid her pursuers only to be caught and dragged back into the den. She stressed, however, that the girls were held by more than force, citing both the connivance of officials and a system of debt slavery by which the girl was kept in perpetual obligation to the den keeper for fines and the costs incurred by the procurer who brought them north.¹³⁷ In casting the women as slaves, Bushnell also drew on the familiar analogy of African-American slavery claiming that in many of the northern villages "a Social Purity member is as much a subject of hatred, even on the part of many professing Christianity, as is an abolitionist in the South."¹³⁸

While Bushnell was conducting her investigations into the Wisconsin lumbercamps, other W.C.T.U. missionaries in Michigan kept the issue in the public arena. At a well attended meeting in the Detroit Opera House in June of 1888, for instance, W.C.T.U. dignitaries from across the country, including the President of the Central W.C.T.U., the President of the Western W.C.T.U. and Frances Willard herself met to discuss the trafficking.¹³⁹ While Willard did not speak at the meeting, a letter she had written was read aloud and presents compelling evidence of both the growing importance both she and the W.C.T.U. placed on the crusade against the traffic in girls and the sensational nature of the discourse they were constructing. Stressing that the battle was just beginning, Willard wrote:

no pen or voice has as yet done more than to feebly hint at the horrors of the white slave pens in Northern Michigan. Barbarous tribes have never treated women as they being treated there. The facts, if known, would raise a revolt throughout Christendom. I thank God that rich, cultured aristocratic, but at the same time

¹³⁷Ibid. These images, and the allegations that the den keepers were foreigners, appeared in Bushnell's speech to the WCTU published in The Philanthropist. Bushnell undoubtedly tailored her evidence from the official report to make for a sensational, compelling speech. A comparison between the speech and the report would make for an interesting analysis of how Bushnell crafted her discourse to different venues. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate either one.

¹³⁸Ibid.

¹³⁹"The Lumber Dens," 11 June 1888.

generous, chivalric, Christian Detroit is going on the war-path for the sake of the friendless girlhood, upon whose writhing face demoniac greed grinds with its hobnailed heel. God bless every voice that pleads, every purse, and every heart that prays for the white girl slaves of the north woods.¹⁴⁰

The Opera house meeting also indicates that the crusade against white slavery in the lumbercamps was spreading to other women's groups. The Equal Suffrage Association and the Working Woman's Home both had representatives at the Opera House meeting which resulted in the passage of resolutions against the traffic and a memorial to Michigan's Governor Luce urging that the laws against houses of ill-fame be enforced in the Upper Peninsula.¹⁴¹

The developing outcry against the white-slave trade in the lumber camps did not however, convince all the skeptics that such things were really occurring and when Bushnell finally issued her report she was forced to both clarify and defend the results of her investigations. Following the publication of excerpts from her speech at the W.C.T.U. National Convention in The Philanthropist, she sent in a correction saying that when she said she could "give innumerable instances of perfectly innocent girls entrapped," she really meant to say (and what she thought she said) was that she could give a number of cases of this sort and stated "*I do not* know 'innumerable cases' of that sort."¹⁴² A month later she issued another correction, stating that where the article said she blamed "trade" capitalists for controlling the traffic she had really said that it was being controlled by "*male*" capitalists, stressing that the business was being run by men.¹⁴³

In issuing these corrections Bushnell sought to exercise some control over the discourse she was crafting. The first instance was clearly an issue of credibility but the

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹Ibid. The Equal Suffrage Association was represented by its Secretary, Mrs. C.E. Fox and the the Working Woman's Home was represented Mrs. J.B. Mulliken. Details of the Opera House meeting were reprinted in an article titled "The Michigan Lumber Dens," in The Philanthropist 3, no. 7 (July 1888), 8.

¹⁴²The Philanthropist 3, no. 12 (December 1888), 5.

¹⁴³The Philanthropist 4, no. 1 (January 1889), 5.

second had deeper implications. Most of the stories regarding the traffic in girls prior to Bushnell's had blamed women for the procuring of girls. The allegations that trafficking was taking place between Chicago and New Jersey in 1886, for instance, blamed a well known woman for the procuring of girls.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, the initial stories on the trade in girls across the Canadian border which served as proof in the New York Committee's Memorial to Congress, stated that it was a female procuress recruiting the girls.¹⁴⁵ The narratives penned by the newspaper reporters on the Marinette lumber camps also featured female procurers, some prominently.¹⁴⁶ Tellingly, this was not the case when the discursive interventions were being composed by women. As evidenced by the article published in The Woman's Tribune, a letter from a Southern W.C.T.U. missionary on the traffic in women, and Emma Obenauer's address at the Michigan Opera House, women missionaries either left the gender of the procurer unstated or, more frequently, provided examples which featured men as the procurers.¹⁴⁷ While it is unclear who substituted the word "trade" for the word "male" in Bushnell's statements on which group of capitalists were responsible for the trade in the sections reprinted in The Philanthropist, Bushnell was concerned to correct the error.

As in the case of women missionaries in California, Bushnell and other female reformers who were engaged in rescue work among girls, justified their activities by reference to their own moral authority as women. Given that their own activism was based on this ideology of female moral purity, the W.C.T.U. reformers contested the narratives that charged women with procuring by eliminating these stories and replacing them with

¹⁴⁴"The Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 2, no. 2 (February 1887), 4-5.

¹⁴⁵"The International Traffic in Girls."

¹⁴⁶See, for instance, "Marinette's Foul Dens," 1 Nov 1887, 1 in which the reporter framed his narrative around the return of Mrs. Cassidy, an alleged Marinette procuress, to that city from Chicago.

¹⁴⁷See "The Traffic in Young Girls," The Philanthropist 1, no 11 (November, 1886), 6; "The Trade in Girls," The Philanthropist 2, no. 8 (August 1887), 4; "The Lumber Dens," 11 June 1888.

ones where men, foreign or not, figured prominently. The issue of who the procurers were was an important, contested, detail in the white-slavery narratives throughout the period and into the white-slavery panic as women reformers repeatedly sought to beat back the male-authored portrayals of women as the hunters of little girls.¹⁴⁸

In addition to having to re-construct her narratives in the pages of The Philanthropist, Bushnell also faced the bigger challenge of convincing the public and the legislators that her stories were true. In January of 1889, when Bushnell went to Wisconsin to urge the state legislature to repress the lumber dens she received a less than hospitable reception. One state official, employed to investigate her allegations, so insulted her that he was placed under arrest, charged with the use of obscene language. Bushnell was, eventually, allowed to address the legislature but the Senate committee formed to investigate Bushnell's charges called her statements exaggerated.¹⁴⁹ In spite of the skepticism on the part of authorities, social purity reformers continued to develop stories of sexual slavery in the lumbercamps as weapons in their crusade against prostitution.¹⁵⁰ They also continued to add new narratives to their arsenal.

¹⁴⁸This will be discussed more fully in chapter five.

¹⁴⁹The Philanthropist 4, no. 2 (February 1889), 4-5. This prompted the editors of The Philanthropist to accuse the legislators of slurring Bushnell and of producing a misleading, superficial report. See, The Philanthropist 4, no. 3 (March 1889), 5. Others engaged in the crusade faced more than slander. A pastor in Wisconsin was brought to trial after implicating an ex-chief of police, charges on which he was exonerated after a trial, and Emily Nason's rescue home in Northern Michigan was blown up. See The Philanthropist 4, no. 4 (April 1889), 4, and The Philanthropist 10, no. 5 (May 1895), 5. Reformers blamed the skepticism surrounding Bushnell's stories on legislators who were profiting from the vice trade and, therefore, had no incentive to repress it. See The Philanthropist 5, no. 10 (October 1890), 1.

¹⁵⁰See, for instance, The Philanthropist 4, no. 12 (December 1888), 1; "Wisconsin Horrors: Described by One of the Victims," The Philanthropist 3, no. 6 (June 1889), 2-3; Chicago Tribune, 6 November 1892, 2; "Notes and Comments," The Philanthropist 7, no. 12 (December 1892), 1; "Chicago Girls for the Wisconsin Lumber Dens," The Philanthropist 8, no. 1 (January 1893), 6; "Escaped from a Minnesota Stockade," The Philanthropist 8, no. 3 (March 1893), 8; "Slavery of Young Girls in the Michigan Lumber Camps," The Philanthropist 9, no. 6 (June 1894), 5; "The Sacrifice of Girlhood in the

Beyond the Lumber Camps

While Bushnell was investigating the lumber camps, other social purity reformers on the East coast and in the Midwest were busy discovering other American instances of the nefarious traffic in girls. The concern with the importation of foreign white slaves into the country continued unabated as reports of the dangers faced by immigrant girls coming in from Canada were joined by stories stressing the vulnerability of other groups of immigrant women from Germany and France some of whom, it was feared, were disappearing right under the noses of inspectors at Castle Gardens, the precursor to Ellis Island.¹⁵¹ The disappearance of American girls, likewise, remained a constant concern to reformers who claimed they were being drawn from little towns in states such as Connecticut into New York by female procuresses who fed them drugged champagne.¹⁵² There were so many girls purportedly missing in Chicago that one newspaper there suggested that they begin printing an "agony column" to list them all.¹⁵³

Events like the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 provided Midwestern reformers with a unique opportunity to formulate Americanized white-slavery narratives for it raised concerns that the influx of both single girls looking for work at the Exposition and male tourists looking for something to do after the Exposition would lead to an upsurge in prostitution in the city. In this context, reformers claimed that brothel keepers, concerned about meeting demand, were planning to "inveigle 25,000 country girls into their haunts of infamy for their trade during the World's Fair" and called on groups like the

Lumber Camp Dens of Michigan," *The Philanthropist* 9, no. 12 (December 1894), 5.

¹⁵¹"Boyhood and Girlhood Perils," *The Philanthropist* 3, no. 6 (June 1888), 4. See also *The Philanthropist* 3, no. 6 (June 1888) and "Would Have Made Them His Prey," *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, 12 August 1888.

¹⁵²*The Philanthropist* 5, no. 8 (August 1890), 1.

¹⁵³*The Philanthropist* 3, no. 1 (January 1888), 5.

W.C.T.U. to warn young women against deceitful advertisements designed to lure them into brothels.¹⁵⁴ World's Fairs remained a source of concern for white-slavery crusaders into the twentieth century. The World's Fair in St. Louis in 1904, for instance, elicited plans among reformers to patrol the railroad stations in St. Louis and the Fair grounds themselves in an effort to protect vulnerable, innocent girls working and visiting the fair from white slavers.¹⁵⁵

Although reformers were busy writing narratives which argued that almost any girl, including victims of the Johnstown PA flood in 1889, girls who had fallen ill, and "women adrift" working for low wages, was a potential victim of white slavers there was one group of girls that reformers did not imagine were open to abduction by procurers.¹⁵⁶ Early social purity reformers, the majority of whom were white, did not apply the terms "white slavery" to African Americans, nor did they argue that African-American women were the targets of traffickers or procurers.¹⁵⁷ Purity forces were, however, concerned

¹⁵⁴"A Timely Warning," The Philanthropist 8, no. 5 (May 1893). For additional narratives on the purported dangers that young girls faced at the Columbian Exposition and middle-class women's plans to protect them see "Notes and Comments," The Philanthropist 8, no. 4 (April 1893), 1; "Schemes to Entrap Young Girls," The Philanthropist 8, no. 10 (October 1893), 5; B.O. Flower, "Social Conditions as Feeders of Immorality," Arena 11 (February 1895), 402-406; Henriette Greenebaum Frank and Amalie Hofer Jerome (eds.), Annals of the Chicago Woman's Club for the First Forty Years of its Organization, 1876-1916 (Chicago: Chicago Woman's Club, 1916), 107-108, 131.

¹⁵⁵"To Help Young Women," The Philanthropist 19, no. 1 (April 1904), 7; "St Louis," The Philanthropist 19, no. 1 (April 1904), 4-5; "Protecting Girls," The Philanthropist 19, no. 3 (October 1904), 6.

¹⁵⁶"The Market of Vice," The Philanthropist 4, no. 7 (July 1889); The Philanthropist 6, no. 5 (May 1891), 5; "A Woman's Young Victims," New York World, 4 February 1887, 3; "The Children of Poverty," The Philanthropist 1, no. 6 (June 1886), 4; "Wages and Vice," The Philanthropist 3, no. 3 (April 1888), 1-3; "The Capitalists of Vice," The Philanthropist 7, no. 6 (June, 1892), 6; "Low Wages and Vice," The Philanthropist 8, no. 5 (May, 1893), 8. Implicating wages in white slavery was a highly contested discursive construction and will be more fully investigated in chapter four. For more information on the discourses surrounding "women adrift" see Meyerowitz.

¹⁵⁷During the twentieth century, African-American female reformers did challenge this portrayal of potential white slaves by constructing narratives which focused on the

about African-American prostitution and their discussion of the subject did include allegations that African-American women were the victims of seduction and assault by white men. Some argued that in spite of efforts by the race to elevate itself, white men continued to hassle "pretty colored girls," and others stressed the need to proselytize among the white men in the South who were misleading and despoiling the African-American girls.¹⁵⁸ Reformers did not, however, take the additional step of arguing that these women were victims of the "traffic in girls" or that their seducers were part of an organized trade designed to enslave them.¹⁵⁹

procuring of African-American girls, a phenomena which will be discussed in chapter six. African-American women like Frances Harper did try to influence the earlier wave of social purity reform by calling on white reformers to expand their rescue efforts to include African-American girls but she did not appeal to the narratives of sexual trafficking to do it. Instead, she merely called for them to open their mission homes to erring African-American girls who were currently being turned away. See Frances E.W. Harper, "Social Purity-Its Relation to the Dependent Classes," in The National Purity Congress: Its Papers, Addresses, Portraits, (ed.) Aaron Powell (New York: The American Purity Alliance, 1896; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1976): 328-330.

¹⁵⁸"The Legacy of Slavery," The Philanthropist 3, no. 2 (February 1888), 4-5; "The Immoral Legacy of Slavery," The Philanthropist 6, no. 4 (April, 1891), 2. See also "Slavery's Legacy of Immorality," The Philanthropist 4, no. 5 (May, 1889), 5, and "The Immoral Legacy of Slavery," The Philanthropist 6, no. 4 (April 1891), 2, which similarly argued that white men were preying on African-American women.

¹⁵⁹Many of the social purity reformers continued to rely on racist explanations of why African-American women turned to prostitution and cited the demoralizing legacy of slavery or biology as the primary reasons. See "Slavery's Legacy of Immorality;" "The Immoral Legacy of Slavery;" Martha Schofield, "Slavery's Legacy of Impurity," in The National Purity Congress; "An Appeal from a Needy Mission Field," The Philanthropist 7, no. 12 (December 1892), 6; The Philanthropist 8, no. 3 (July 1898), 7-11, 14.

African Americans attempted to counter these portrayals of demoralized and biologically inferior African-American prostitutes by arguing that it was economic need which drove these women to prostitution. For instance, The Philadelphia African M.E. Church Review, commenting on the work of the predominantly white White Cross Society, argued that it was "over-work and under-pay", not the immorality of the African-American home which drove women of all races to prostitution. The situation, they stressed, was more dire for African-American women who faced greater wage and job discrimination than white women. As the editors of The Philanthropist noted, their allegations were "painfully suggestive, and may well challenge thoughtful consideration on the part of Christian and philanthropic men and women." See The Philanthropist 1, no. 11

While reformers did not include African-Americans girls under the rubric of potential victims of the traffic in girls, not all the girls allegedly ensnared by what was now being referred to as "white slavery" were white. Reformers claimed, for instance, that "Defenseless native women of Alaska" were being subjected to horrors worse than those perpetuated in the lumber camps by white employees of the Alaska Commercial Company as well as the military and other Governmental officials.¹⁶⁰ These narratives, like those describing the enslavement of white girls, were contested by non-believers and were challenged by individuals who sought to shift the blame for the problem from whites to Indian cultural practices which, they alleged, indicated a high level of "natural" immorality. The construction of native Alaskan women as the victims of white male traffickers by the editors of The Philanthropist, for instance, was challenged by Dr. Sheldon Jackson, the U.S. General Agent of Education in Alaska who blamed the natives themselves for the immorality, stating that native parents saw their daughters as sources of income and sold them to white men for immoral purposes.¹⁶¹ The purity reformers, in response, sought to shift responsibility back to their chosen villains, arguing that Jackson's call for missionaries to teach the natives should be expanded to include a missionary effort "among white men, miners and others, as well as among the native population."¹⁶²

Others, particularly native Alaskans themselves, were quick to join the reformers in blaming whites. At a meeting between native Alaskan and Washington's Indian

(November 1886), 6.

¹⁶⁰"The Alaska Scandal," The Philanthropist 4, no. 1 (January 1889), 4.

¹⁶¹*Ibid.* The claim that parents were selling their children into white slavery was not an allegation which was confined to non-white parents, particularly mothers. In addition to being a critical component of Stead's "Maiden Tribute" narratives, American anti-prostitution and white-slavery reformers, likewise, alleged that American mothers were selling their daughters into prostitution. See Rev. Frank M. Goodchild, "The Social Evil in Philadelphia," Arena 15 (March 1896), 579 and Charlton Edholm, "Traffic in White Girls," Californian Illustrated 2, no. 6 (November 1892), 827. The responsibility of fathers for the sexual trafficking of their daughters will be discussed in chapter three.

¹⁶²"Immorality in Alaska," The Philanthropist 5, no. 4 (April 1890), 5.

Commissioner, "Hollow Horn Bear" alleged that soldiers in charge of the reservations were responsible for seducing and deserting native women, forcing them to turn to prostitution, assertions which led the editors of The Philanthropist to re-assert their contention that whites were responsible for many of the wrongs the "Indians" had suffered.¹⁶³ This did not, however, mean that the narratives constructed by the purity reformers on immorality among the native Alaskans formed a coherent discourse which saw whites as wholly responsible for the perceived problems. Despite their objections to Dr. Jackson's point of view, their own perceptions of "Indian" culture led reformers to argue that vice conditions among the native Alaskans would be improved if the federal government would appoint white women to go as matrons among the "Indians" to give them needed instruction on domestic matters.¹⁶⁴

Following the Spanish-American War, the reformers also expanded their narratives on white slavery to include Filipino women. At the twenty-third Annual Meeting of the American Purity Alliance in 1899, Mariana Chapman, President of the N.Y. State Woman Suffrage Association, argued that the "new militarism" meant the trapping of innocent Filipino girls into a life of sexual slavery for the soldiers, and called for both the protection of Filipino girls and the granting of independence to the Philippines.¹⁶⁵ As in the case of the native Alaskans, the discourse on the "natives" of the Philippines was ripe with contradictions and could result in interventions which constructed the Filipinos as both victims of whites and as ignorant, immoral, overly sensual beings who preyed on American

¹⁶³"Notes and Comments," The Philanthropist 6, no. 3 (March 1891), 1.

¹⁶⁴This Alaskan scandal prompted the Society of Friends and others, including The Philanthropist's editor, Aaron Powell, to appeal to President Harrison to step in to stop the outrages, at which time they asked for the matrons and "protective measures." President Harrison responded to the scandal by appointing a Governor for the Alaska Territory. See The Philanthropist 5, no. 5 (May 1889), 5.

¹⁶⁵Mariana Chapman, "The New Militarism and Purity," The Philanthropist 14, no. 2 (April 1899), 2-3.

soldiers.¹⁶⁶ Some reformers tried to accommodate both these arguments by arguing that soldiers seduced by immoral women turned around and "ruined" one of more native women, creating a vicious cycle which demoralized both.¹⁶⁷ In spite of these opposing assessments of the problem, the American Purity Alliance remained concerned enough about the problem to memorialize Pres. McKinley against the perceived traffic in Filipino women and girls by American soldiers.¹⁶⁸

In addition to expressing concern over Filipino girls in their native land, the social purity forces on the East coast and in the Midwest were also uncovering something Western missionaries had "discovered" decades before, the existence of "yellow slavery." The charges that the Chinese were engaging in the widespread importation and trafficking of Chinese women, as we have seen, were being reprinted in Eastern newspapers as early as the late 1860s but social purity reformers did not pick up these stories until after the purported expose of female sexual slavery in the lumbercamps launched their crusade against white slavery.¹⁶⁹ Once they discovered them, however, they eagerly reprinted information about the trafficking of Chinese girls alongside stories on the trafficking in white girls and by the close of 1887 readers of The Philanthropist were receiving the allegations, begun by the anti-Chinese movement, that Chinese girls, sold by their parents, were being imported into states like California by Chinese traffickers.¹⁷⁰

Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, numerous stories on the trafficking of Chinese and Japanese women on the West Coast

¹⁶⁶"New American Responsibilities and Dangers," The Philanthropist 14, no. 1 (January 1899), 13-14.

¹⁶⁷See "Notes and Comments," The Philanthropist 15, no. 1 (April 1900). See also "Legalizing Social Vice in the Philippines," The Philanthropist 15, no. 3 (October 1900), 4 and "Social Injustice in the Philippines," The Philanthropist 18, no. 3 (October 1903), 6-7.

¹⁶⁸"Memorial of American Purity Alliance," The Philanthropist 15, no. 3 (October 1900), 5-6.

¹⁶⁹See New York Times, 17 March 1869; "The Chinese in California," New York Times, 31 July 1873; New York Times, 11 Feb. 1879.

¹⁷⁰The Philanthropist 2, no. 12 (December 1887), 1.

appeared in the New York Committee's journal, alongside yet another memorial to the U.S. Congress imploring them to open an investigation into the "alleged traffic in Chinese women for immoral purposes."¹⁷¹ The editors argued that while the traffic was headquartered in San Francisco, there was real reason to fear it was occurring in other American cities, including New York.¹⁷² As in the case of white slavery, Expositions were a particular cause for concern among reformers battling what they perceived was the sexual trafficking of Chinese girls. During the Atlanta Exposition in 1896, for instance, reformers picked up the stories being run in local newspapers which charged that twenty-three Chinese girls, imported specifically for the exposition, had disappeared and were on their way to California where they would be sold to well known Chinese traffickers.¹⁷³ Reformers were still concerned over the potential kidnapping and sexual enslavement of Chinese women from World's Fairs in 1904. Believing that it was likely that this "dire calamity" would occur, Margaret Dye Ellis, the W.C.T.U.'s political lobbyist in Washington D.C., convinced the government to get a \$500 bond on each woman and secured the promise that a government inspector would check daily to make sure the Chinese women were still actually on the fairgrounds.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹"The New York Committee-A Parlor Meeting," *The Philanthropist* 5, no. 1 (January 1890), 1-2. See also *The Philanthropist* 3, no. 1 (January 1888), 8; "The Pacific Coast Traffic in Chinese Women," *The Philanthropist* 4, no. 12 (December 1889), 5; "A Modern Slave Trade Horror," *The Philanthropist* 5, no. 5 (May 1890), 5; "The San Francisco Slave-Trade," *The Philanthropist* 3, no. 7 (July 1888), 3.

¹⁷²"Notes," *The Philanthropist* 5, no. 7 (July 1890), 1. For concerns about other cities outside of California see "Notes," *The Philanthropist* 5, no. 2 (February 1890), 1.

¹⁷³"The Traffic in Women," *The Philanthropist* 11, no. 1 (January 1896), 9. Expositions were widely alleged to increase the trafficking in Chinese women into the country by both official and popular sources. See Mary Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1909), 307 and Richard Dillon, *The Hatchetmen* (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1962), 226. As Coolidge points out, the allegations were not borne out by any increase in the numbers of women seeking admission to the United States in Exposition years.

¹⁷⁴Ellis quoted in Alison Parker, *Purifying America: Women, Cultural Reform, and Pro-Censorship Activism, 1873-1933* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 32.

The discourse on Chinese traffickers, which, as we have seen, was malleable and contested even as it emerged on the West Coast, underwent further alterations as it moved eastward. In addition to propagating the stories circulating on the West coast that Chinese men and women were trafficking in Chinese girls, East coast reformers and newspaper reporters were also elaborating their own narratives which alleged that male Chinese traffickers had begun preying on white girls in Eastern cities. In part this was due to the fact that there were few Chinese women in the east in the nineteenth century.¹⁷⁵ One newspaper article alleged, in 1873, that there was not one Chinese woman in New York. The author of the article, written as a "factual" expose of how the Chinese lived and worked in that city, was forced to find other victims as proof of Chinese sexual immorality. "Young white girls," he charged, were the eastern victims of the Chinese, enslaved through an opium addiction which forced them to "sell their souls for the maintenance of their bodies."¹⁷⁶ The reporter, seeing one of these girls, with her body draped across a bed of the Chinese club house, asked the man giving him a tour what she was doing there. The Chinese purportedly replied, with a "horrible leer," that she was one of many young, hungry girls who came to the club house because "Chinamen always something to eat and he like young white girl. He! he!"¹⁷⁷ Other reformers argued that

¹⁷⁵The discourse on Asian trafficking also changed to include Japanese girls in the 1890s as immigration from Japan began to replace the immigration from China. The growth of these narratives on Japanese trafficking in the twentieth century will be detailed in chapter three. For information on Japanese immigration to the U.S. see Takaki, *Strangers*, 179-230.

¹⁷⁶*The New York Times*, 26 December 1873.

¹⁷⁷*Ibid.* Social purity reformers would, over time, develop their own arguments regarding the connections between opium and vice based on the investigations of Kate Bushnell and Elizabeth Andrews. In 1896, the two authors published a pamphlet titled "Opium and Vice" which detailed their investigations into opium consumption in the Orient and allegedly provided proof as to the close relationship between opium smoking and prostitution. Their pamphlet included a chapter devoted to the allegedly widespread trafficking of women and girls in connection with the drug. See *The Philanthropist* 11, no. 4 (April 1896), 9.

white girls were being trafficked to service Chinese men in Asia. An article in The Philanthropist, for instance, asserted that American girls were being imported into Shanghai as articles of trade to work in the regulated brothels there.¹⁷⁸

Social purity reformers in the East, like the Chinese missionaries in the West, tended to formulate their stories regarding the traffic in Chinese women in ways which sought to defend the Chinese against the most egregious charges of immorality by stressing the complicity of whites in the trafficking. In keeping with this tendency, the editors of The Philanthropist printed an address delivered by William Lloyd Garrison titled "The Treatment of the Chinese by a Professedly Christian Nation," in which he championed the cause of the Chinese by implicating whites in creating and perpetuating Chinese prostitution. Noting that Chinese prostitution had become a favorite rallying cry, Garrison repeated charges made by a Chinese immigrant which stressed that the traffic in Chinese women was initiated by white men for their own gratification and was supported by corrupt white officials making profits off the trade. Garrison also stressed the irony of labeling the "disfranchised and outcast Chinese" immoral when "near at hand in Wisconsin among the pineries are enacted horrors by voting white men that make the immorality of Chinatown mild in comparison."¹⁷⁹

In utilizing the evil of white slavery to cast the yellow slavery as "mild" in a pro-Chinese discourse, Garrison's address reveals both the complexity and multiplicity of narratives on the traffic in girls as they emerged on the East coast at the end of the nineteenth century. The authors of the narratives, like those on the West coast, wrote stories whose details fit their political objectives whether they were seeking to elicit sympathy for the Chinese or trying to force the closure of brothels in Michigan's Upper

¹⁷⁸"The Traffic in Girls Between San Francisco and Shanghai," The Philanthropist 3, no. 6 (June 1888), 4-5.

¹⁷⁹"The Chinese and Immorality," The Philanthropist 3, no. 12 (December 1888), 8. Not all purity reformers were opposed to Exclusion. Charlton Edholm, for instance, argued that exclusion had done much to decrease "yellow slavery." See Edholm, "A Stain," 159.

Peninsula.¹⁸⁰ The aims of most eastern reformers focused on forcing state and federal authorities to repress prostitution and close down the brothels they alleged were white-slave dens but they were not always successful in achieving their stated aims. While the revelations of the tragic story of Minnie Pine in January of 1887 prompted the unanimous passage of the Breen bill through the Michigan House, raising the penalty for keeping a dis-orderly house and the stories of Wisconsin's white slaves exposed by newspaper reporters in late 1887 galvanized Governor Rusk to move against the lumber camp brothels these were short lived victories.¹⁸¹ As we have seen, reformers in Michigan found that authorities were often unwilling to enforce new legislation and the Wisconsin lumbercamp dens were back in business when Bushnell went to investigate them, seven months after Rusk closed them down.¹⁸² The eastern social purity forces, try as they might, were unable to compel state and federal authorities to repress prostitution in the nineteenth century.¹⁸³ They were, however, able to lay the institutional and discursive

¹⁸⁰Fighting regulation also remained a primary goal of the Eastern reformers as proposals for the registration and medical inspection of prostitutes continued to be raised in New York, Cleveland, and other American cities into the twentieth century. See articles in The Philanthropist in Vol. 6, no. 3 (March 1892), 1-3, 6-10; Vol. 8, no. 12 (December 1893), 4; Vol. 9, no. 1 (January 1894), 5; Vol. 9, no. 5 (May 1894), 4; Vol. 10, no. 2 (February 1895). It was not until 1905 that the editors of The Philanthropist could congratulate themselves on the fact that no new regulations systems had been proposed in over a year. See The Philanthropist 20, no. 1 (April 1905), 1-3.

¹⁸¹"Michigan Aroused At Last," 26 January 1887; "Closing Wisconsin Dives," 8 November 1887. The Breen bill, which passed unanimously following the publication of the story of Minnie Pine, increased the penalty for keeping a disorderly house to five years in the State Prison and/or a \$1,000 fine (a five-fold increase in penalty). Other states also passed bills similar to Michigan's Breen bill in an effort to protect girls from traffickers. Massachusetts, for instance, passed a bill which increased the penalties for anyone, including employment agencies, who aided or abetted in the procuring or detaining of young girls for the purposes of prostitution. Similarly, Rhode Island passed a law in 1889 which provided for five years in prison for anyone who procured or induced a girl into a life of infamy through false pretenses, false promises or stupefying drugs. See The Philanthropist 3, no. 8 (August 1888), 3 and The Philanthropist 3, no. 5 (May 1888), 1.

¹⁸²"The Lumber Dens," 11 June 1888.

¹⁸³For more on their efforts, particularly with regard to pressuring the federal government

groundwork which paved the way for the outbreak of a moral panic over the issue of white slavery in the first decade of the twentieth century which would force municipal, state, and federal authorities to move against white slavery and prostitution.

Toward a Moral Panic

By the end of the nineteenth century, newspaper reporters and social purity forces had "Americanized" the discourse imported in the wake of William Stead's "Maiden Tribute" revelations. They did not, however, produce a unified, coherent discourse. Instead they created a range of diverse, and sometimes competing, narratives on the traffic in girls. In the process, the details of the stories, including who was vulnerable, why they were vulnerable, where they were vulnerable, how they were procured, and who was doing the procuring, multiplied. This was, no doubt, due to the fact that the individuals and the movements responsible for developing indigenous white-slavery narratives were pursuing diverse goals, including increasing the circulation of their newspapers, advocating Chinese exclusion, lobbying for the repression of prostitution, authorizing female activism, protecting native Alaskan and Chinese women, pushing for higher wages for working women, and reshaping society through moral regeneration. Addressing all of these issues required discursive tools and topics with which to sway public opinion and gain support for the multitude of projects being undertaken by reformers. The power of the "white slave" to accomplish these ends was recognized well before the panic of 1907.

The growth of the discourse on white slavery was matched by the institutional growth of organizations fighting the traffic in girls, including the New York Committee. In

to get involved see *The Philanthropist* 5, no. 8 (August 1890), 1; *The Philanthropist* 5, no. 9 (September 1890), 5; "A National Social Vice Commission," *The Philanthropist* 6, no. 12 (December 1891), 4; "The Traffic in Women," *The Philanthropist* 11, no. 1 (January 1896), 9.

1895, the Committee re-created itself as the American Purity Alliance, a change which they hoped would signal their wider assault against immorality and which would acknowledge the role that other groups from across the country had come to play in their crusade.¹⁸⁴ The New York Committee had gone national. In celebration, they promptly began planning their first National Purity Congress, to be held in Baltimore in October, 1895. It was heralded as a huge success and drew a large audience from across the country including over 200 accredited delegates from different philanthropic organizations.¹⁸⁵ Three additional Purity conferences, all of which drew heavily from the Baltimore delegates and addresses, were held in Boston, Philadelphia and New York in succeeding months.¹⁸⁶ The conferences were also successful in increasing both correspondence to and subscriptions for The Philanthropist, which had become the American Purity Alliance's official journal. In response to this rising interest, the journal doubled in size in January of 1896.¹⁸⁷ Three months later, the editors reported that they had printed more than a half a million pages of literature, including thirty-two leaflets, on various issues related to social purity, and were receiving over 2,000 letters a year in correspondence.¹⁸⁸ One year later, they were estimating that they had circulated twice this much, over a million pages of literature.¹⁸⁹ In part, the increase was undoubtedly due to

¹⁸⁴"The American Purity Alliance," The Philanthropist 10, no. 3 (March, 1895), 1-4.

¹⁸⁵"The National Purity Congress," The Philanthropist 10, no. 11 (November 1895), 2.

¹⁸⁶"American Purity Alliance Conferences," The Philanthropist 10, no. 12 (December 1895), 5; "American Purity Alliance Conference in Philadelphia," The Philanthropist 10, no. 12 (December 1895), 8; "Boston Purity Conversazione and Conference," The Philanthropist 11, no. 1 (January 1896), 5-15; "New York Purity Conference," The Philanthropist 11, no. 2 (February 1896), 12-14.

¹⁸⁷See, The Philanthropist 11, no. 1 (January 1896) when the journal increased from 8 to 16 pages. In October 1896, the journal went quarterly and was published in January, April, July, and October. The page length expanded dramatically with this quarterly shift, sometimes running over 30 pages.

¹⁸⁸"The American Purity Alliance--Twentieth Annual Report," The Philanthropist 11, no. 3 (March 1896), 4-5. For a list of the leaflets in the "Philanthropist Series" see, The Philanthropist 10, no. 12 (December 1895), 6.

¹⁸⁹"The American Purity Alliance: Annual Report for 1896," The Philanthropist 12, no. 2

their publication of a 472-page monograph containing the papers and address from the original Baltimore Purity Congress.¹⁹⁰ Included among the addresses was one issued by Charlton Edholm on "The Traffic in Girls," the history of which goes a long way in demonstrating both the development and the longevity of nineteenth-century white-slavery narratives.¹⁹¹

Edholm was no stranger to the topic of the white slavery when she addressed the Baltimore Purity Congress in 1895. She had been writing on both "yellow slavery" and the "traffic in white girls" for years.¹⁹² As a former newspaper reporter in California and, later, as a missionary for the Florence Crittenton Missions and the W.C.T.U., Edholm came into contact with a number of reformers and evangelists working to rescue girls from

(April 1897).

¹⁹⁰Aaron M. Powell (ed.), The National Purity Congress: Its Papers, Addresses, Portraits (New York: The American Purity Alliance, 1896; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1976). See also Advertisement for The National Purity Congress: Its Papers, Addresses and Portraits, The Philanthropist 11, no. 3 (March 1896), 12-13; The Philanthropist 10, no. 12 (December 1895), 6. The National Purity Congress sold for \$2.50 through the American Purity Alliance. In addition to the printed propaganda, members of the organization spread their platform of social purity through an active schedule of addresses to groups throughout the East, Midwest, and in the South. See "Twenty-Second Annual Meeting," The Philanthropist 13, no. 2 (April 1898), 9-11, 16-19.

¹⁹¹Charlton Edholm, "The Traffic in Girls and Florence Crittenton Missions," in The National Purity Congress, 150-158. See also the coverage of this conference in The Philanthropist throughout 1895 and 1896. Edholm's paper was reprinted in Vol. 11, no. 4 (April 1896), 5-7, 11. As a result of this conference, Edholm founded a Florence Crittenton Mission in Baltimore. See, The Philanthropist 11, no. 8 (October 1896), 1.

Although Grittner alleges that the traffic in girls was not a topic at this Purity Congress, Edholm was not the only one to speak on the topic. See Grittner, 47. For other speakers who dealt with the traffic in girls at this National Purity Congress see, Aaron Powell, "Call for the Congress," xiii-xv; Samuel Blackwell, "The Municipality in its Relation to Vice," 110-117; Mrs. Dora Webb, "Organized Prostitution-How to Deal with It," 118-123; Rev. J.B. Welty, "The Need of White Cross Work," 240-249 all published in The National Purity Congress.

¹⁹²Edholm, "A Stain on the Flag," and "Traffic in White Girls." Edholm's "Traffic in White Girls" was excerpted in "The Traffic in Girlhood," The Philanthropist 9, no. 2 (February 1894), 8.

their supposed imprisonment in brothels in states across the country.¹⁹³ Based on her experiences and her journalist training, Edholm wrote the first American full length treatment on the "traffic in girls."¹⁹⁴ Edholm's text, which went through three editions over a twenty-year period, is a telling example of the development of the American discourse on white slavery throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.

The first edition of Edholm's Traffic in Girls, published in 1893, included very little information on the nature of the white slave traffic in America. She did argue that there was evidence of "*an organized, systematized traffic in girls*" (emphasis hers) in her Preface, describing it as a system by which:

Hundreds of men called procurers, in every large city of the world, make it the business of their lives to lure and snare and trap and buy and sell girls to brothel-keepers. Hundreds of men go into country districts and under the promise of speedy marriage in the city, get girls to accompany them, and by mock marriage and seduction accomplish their ruin, and then enticing them into brothels, these victims find themselves prisoner and slaves.¹⁹⁵

Edholm hoped that when Americans realized that "demons in human shape" were buying and selling girls they would "arouse themselves from their strange apathy and sweep this

¹⁹³For information on the Florence Crittenton Missions see Charles Crittenton, The Brother of Girls (Chicago: World's Events Co., 1910); Charlton Edholm, Traffic in Girls and Work of Rescue Missions (Chicago: Charlton Edholm, 1899); Otto Wilson, Fifty Years' Work With Girls: The Story of the Florence Crittenton Homes (Virginia: The National Florence Crittenton Mission, 1933); "The Founding of the 'Florence Missions'," The Literary Digest 39 (December 11, 1909): 1065. For historical analyses of the Florence Crittenton Missions see, Katherine Aiken, Harnessing the Power of Motherhood: The National Florence Crittenton Mission, 1883-1925 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998 and Regina Kunzel, Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

¹⁹⁴Charlton Edholm, Traffic in Girls and Florence Crittenton Missions (Chicago: The Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, 1893). For The Philanthropist's review of this book see Vol. 9, no. 4 (April 1894), 5.

¹⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 6.

white-slave traffic into oblivion" but the only evidence she could provide in her text was drawn from William Stead, a man who she credited with revealing the power of publicity to arouse public opinion.¹⁹⁶ Her "chief testimony" was, in fact, Stead's "Maiden Tribute," which she reprinted in her text.¹⁹⁷ The remainder of the edition was devoted to the history of the Crittenton Missions.

By the time Edholm issued the 1899 edition of the Traffic in Girls, all this had changed. Her allegations, that there was "an organized, systematized traffic in girls" operating in the United States remained the same but her evidence was no longer drawn exclusively, or even primarily, from British sources.¹⁹⁸ Instead, she stressed that her evidence was drawn from her "own observation" and confirmed by a bevy of American authorities including the courts, police officers, converted procurers, converted girls, and "men of the world."¹⁹⁹ Moreover, although Edholm still included a history of the Florence Crittenton Missions in her 1899 edition, half of the entire text was now devoted to fleshing out the details of the traffic in girls, including separate chapters which detailed the methods traffickers were purportedly using to snare innocent, American girls.

In a chapter titled "The False Employment Snare," Edholm argued that there were 230,000 erring girls in the United States who had an average life expectancy of five years. This meant, she calculated, that 46,000 girls each year were led, like lambs to slaughter, to a fate worse than death. Three-quarters of them, she asserted, were snared through false advertisements placed in newspapers which lured country girls to the city where their "employers" often turned out to be procurers who sold them to brothel owners for \$25 to \$50.²⁰⁰ Efforts of Edholm and others to rescue the girls, she further charged, were

¹⁹⁶Ibid., 6-7. Edholm credits Stead in her "Prelude," 9.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., 13-65.

¹⁹⁸Charlton Edholm, Traffic in Girls and Work of Rescue Mission (Chicago: Charlton Edholm, 1899), 3-4.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., 3.

²⁰⁰Ibid., 10-14. Edholm's estimates as to the number of prostitutes in the United States

complicated by a system of debt slavery through which the girls were forbidden to leave until they had repaid the brothel owners what they allegedly owed them for their upkeep.²⁰¹ After purportedly giving \$6 to a brothel owner to pay off one girl's debt and help her escape, Edholm continued the tradition of invoking African-American slavery to lend to accounts of white slavery by arguing:

There is slave trade in this country, and it is not black folks this time, but little white girls-thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen and seventeen years of age-and they are snatched out of our arms, and from our Sabbath-schools and from our communion tables.²⁰²

In addition to girls captured while looking for work and "snatched from communion table," Edholm alleged that others were abducted through a system of mock marriage or seduction whereby professional procurers scoured the country districts and courted innocent, love-struck girls who were then swept off their feet only to land in nearby cities where they found themselves prisoners not of love, but of evil white slavers.²⁰³ In addition, Edholm claimed that some girls were falling prey to procurers who drugged them with poisons like alcohol. Others, who had been taught to avoid intoxicants were purportedly still vulnerable to unscrupulous slavers and bartenders who, Edholm imagined, conspired to drug their soft drinks. Girls were also, she asserted, being victimized by procurers who used drug soaked handkerchiefs to knock them unconscious and trapped in opium dens by Chinese masters who subjected them to exceptionally cruel treatment.²⁰⁴ Scores more were reportedly being lured into white slavery through "The Snare of the Dance" or "The Snare of Starvation Wages."²⁰⁵

and their life span were based on the calculations of Charles Crittenton. See, Goodchild, 586.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 15-16.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 21-32.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 33-42, 114-115. In detailing the horrors faced by girls trapped in opium dens,

The white-slavery narratives produced by Edholm in her 1899 edition of The Traffic in Girls were important precursors to the tales constructed by white-slavery crusaders during the moral panic years many of whom also argued that young girls were being snared through drugs, dances, and starvation wages and forced into a life of prostitution by diabolical, frequently foreign, white slavers. Edholm's white-slavery narratives are also indicative of the range of political initiatives which could be pursued through their construction. Edholm, for instance, used them to advocate a variety of reforms including temperance, woman suffrage, child education, censorship, and vice related legislative reform.²⁰⁶

Twelve years after Bessie Cushman first published "Another Maiden Tribute" with the hope of Americanizing Stead's white-slavery narratives, the American crusade had come into its own, both discursively and institutionally.²⁰⁷ While they occasionally still crediting Stead with launching the movement, white-slavery reformers no longer needed to base their claims on his evidence.²⁰⁸ They had constructed their own. To be sure, the existence of a widespread system of white slavery on American soil was still a contested claim, even within purity circles, but purity forces had come a long way in establishing a template for the white-slavery reformers who would join the cause after 1907.²⁰⁹

Edholm related a story supposedly told to her by an evangelist, regarding a 13 year old girl who had purportedly been found in a Chinese den where she had been forced to prostitute herself for her Chinese masters for weeks. Edholm claimed that her vermin covered, matted hair and her lacerated body reportedly so shocked seasoned physicians at the Rescue Mission that they burst into tears upon viewing her.

²⁰⁵Ibid., 43-65.

²⁰⁶Ibid., 123-127.

²⁰⁷Cushman.

²⁰⁸Edholm still credited Stead in the "Prelude" of her 1899 edition. See Edholm, Traffic, 6.

²⁰⁹The contested nature of this discourse is evident in the American participation in the International Congress on the White Slave Trade held in London in 1899. America's official delegation, led by Henry Chase, told the Congress that there was, as far as he was aware, "no organized system of White Slavery" in America, nor was he aware of the work being undertaken by the American Purity Alliance, the WCTU, or the Florence Crittenton

Edholm's Traffic in Girls was still around in 1914, when the chapters devoted to the "snares" used by procurers were reissued along with selections from some of the newcomers to the movement, including Clifford Roe, Edwin Sims, and a bevy of judges and social workers under the title How to Prevent the Traffic in Girls: A Symposium By Prominent Social Workers and Others.²¹⁰ How and why Edholm's tract achieved this type of longevity is the subject of the next chapter.

Missions to stop the traffic. The American Purity Alliance had, however, sent their own delegates to the conference, Dr. Kate Bushnell and Elizabeth Andrews, along with a letter stating "though information in detail is difficult to obtain and verify in relation to this traffic, of its existence in our larger American cities, as a factor of their tolerated, and police regulated vice, we are well assured." See The White Slave Trade: Transactions of the International Congress on the White Slave Trade (London: National Vigilance Association, 1899), 154; "The American Purity Alliance Greeting to the International Conference in London," The Philanthropist 14, no. 3 (July 1899), 15.

²¹⁰Mrs. M.A. Mackenzie (ed.), Traffic in Girls: Personal Experiences in Rescue Work By Mrs. Charlton Edholm with a Symposium by Prominent People on how to Prevent Traffic in Girls (Chicago: Edholm, 1899, Symposium and other Additional Matter, San Francisco: Mrs. M.A. MacKenzie, 1914).

Chapter 2

The "Moral Panic" Years

In May of 1912, Stanley W. Finch, Chief of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, took the podium at the World's Purity Congress in Louisville, Kentucky to warn the audience that white slavery had become a massive and dangerous threat to the nation's girls. After regaling the purity forces gathered at the congress with the stories of how innocent girls, some as young as thirteen, were made victims of the white-slave trade "by deception, fraud, and force," Finch stated:

Hours and days might well be consumed in explaining the facts and conditions involved by this white slave traffic in the different sections of the country, but if it has been made clear that *there is such a traffic, that it extends throughout our entire country*, and that it involves conditions which are a disgrace to our nation it would seem that little else need be said regarding this phase of the matter, unless it be to add that it is estimated that **not less than 25,000 young women and girls are annually procured for this traffic and that no less than 50,000 men and women are engaged in procuring and living on the earnings of these women and girls, and that the number of women and girls engaged in prostitution in this country at the present time is estimated at not less than 250,000** [emphases in original].¹

In many regards, Finch's warnings and his speech were in keeping with the nineteenth-century narratives of white slavery developed by Charlton Edholm. The procurer's methods cited by Finch, for instance, including the "cleverly-worded advertisement," mock marriages, and the "snare" of the dance, all traps identified by Edholm in 1899.² In keeping with the nineteenth-century narratives, Finch also appealed

¹Stanley Finch, The White Slave Traffic: Address by Stanley W. Finch, Chief of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, before World's Purity Congress, Louisville, KY., May 7, 1912 (Washington D.C.: International Reform Bureau, n.d.), 1-3.

²Ibid., 3.

to the specter of African-American slavery and implicitly downplayed its horrors by arguing that the plight of the white slave was so bad that "No other form of slavery which has ever been devised can equal her condition" and by justifying federal involvement in the battle by reference to the 13th Amendment, which banned slavery in the United States.³

On another level, however, Finch's speech signals how far the crusade against white slavery had come in the first 12 years of the twentieth century. In the first place, Finch stressed that the traffic was national in scope and drew a number of his examples of white slavery from episodes he claimed took place in the southern states, a region of the country which had not been heavily involved in the nineteenth-century crusade against the traffic.⁴ Extending white slavery to the south was a key component to Finch's argument that this "national" traffic could only be stopped by an federal agency like his Bureau of Investigation for the Department of Justice. The involvement of the Bureau of Investigation in the battle against white slavery was itself a major change from conditions in the nineteenth century, when reformers had a difficult time getting the federal government involved in their crusade. By 1912, however, the federal government was heavily involved, thanks in large part to the passage of a federal white-slavery law, the Mann Act, in 1910. It was Finch's Bureau of Investigation which was charged with

³Ibid.

⁴In the late nineteenth century, the narratives of sexual danger being constructed in the South to patrol the boundaries of race, gender, and sexuality focused on the myth of the black male rapist, not the trafficking in girls. The ways in which the discourse on white slavery borrowed from the abolitionist discourse may also help explain why Southern reformers did not utilize the white-slavery narratives prior to the moral panic. During the moral panic years, Southern reformers did begin to use the narratives but frequently merged the discourse on female trafficking with the discourse on the black male rapist, a phenomena which will be discussed in chapter three. See John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper and Row Pub., 1988), 215-221 and Frederick K. Grittner, *White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 70. For an insightful analysis of the myth of the black male rapist see Diane Mill Sommerville, "The Rape Myth in the Old South Reconsidered," *The Journal of Southern History* 61, no. 3 (August 1995): 481-518.

enforcing this law. As Finch's address to the World's Purity Congress in 1912 stressed, however, the federal attempt to "suppress the white slave traffic has been temporarily crippled" due to a lack of appropriations and his address was specifically aimed at encouraging the public to pressure Congress to provide sufficient funds to "expunge this disgraceful blot of white slavery from the map of our beloved country."⁵

By 1912, the sporadic and regional campaign against the traffic in girls waged by reformers in the nineteenth century had gone national as a result of the outbreak of a moral panic over white slavery in the first decade of the twentieth century. The moral panic, which began in 1907 and emanated out of epicenters like Chicago and New York, was a phenomenal occurrence following half a century of far more low-keyed and ineffectual agitation against the traffic in girls. The agitation, marked by the extraordinary proliferation of white-slavery narratives through "official" and popular mediums across the country, lasted for almost eight years and was remarkably successful in achieving its stated aims including the closure of red light districts, the prosecution of white slavers, the deportation of prostitutes, and the patrolling of illicit sexuality. None of the reformers achieved all that they sought and their gains were frequently chimerical but by the time the dust settled on the white-slavery panic in 1915, the eight years of agitation and indignation had wrought major changes in urban landscapes across the country.

⁵Finch, 4. Specifically, the Attorney General had requested an appropriation of \$25,000 to fight the white-slave traffic for the remainder of the fiscal year in 1912 and an additional \$50,000 for detection and prosecution of white-slavery cases during 1913. Finch also published appeals in purity journals urging readers to lobby Congress on behalf of the appropriations, including *The Philanthropist*, a key periodical for white-slavery crusaders in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. See "An Appeal to Your Patriotism," *The Philanthropist* 26, no. 1 (January 1913). Purity groups were active in assisting Finch's efforts to get appropriations through. The World's Purity Federation, for instance, issued a broadside on the desperate need for the money which called on the public to launch a letter writing campaign to the President and Congress. See "Funds Inadequate to Fight White Slavery," Broadside in Bell Archives, Box 4, folder 4-8.

The Emergence of the "Moral Panic"

Historians who have analyzed white slavery from 1907 to 1915 have adopted the concept of the "moral panic" to describe the outpouring of anxiety over the alleged trafficking, typically citing Stan Cohen's definition of the phenomenon. In explaining how and why moral panics erupt, Cohen writes:

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereo-typical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible.⁶

Explaining the white slavery scare by reference to moral panic theories is, on a number of levels, an accurate, insightful way to conceptualize the movement against white slavery during these years but a few caveats are in order. First, historians like Grittner who have used moral panic theory tend to portray the panic as one which emerged out of nowhere. The term "panic" itself implies a sudden onset in a way which suggests that the concern itself was a new one. This is not inherent in the theory itself. Cohen, for instance, argues that the focus on the moral panic need not be a new or novel concern.⁷ It could, like the concern over white slavery, have a history of its own. As the analysis of Grittner aptly reveals, however, the use of the theory has led some scholars to formulate analyses which obscure an important nineteenth-century legacy both in terms of the reformers themselves, their definitions to the problems, and their proposed solutions.⁸ Many of the white-slavery

⁶Quoted in Grittner, 64.

⁷Ibid.

⁸See also Mark Connelly, The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era (Chapel

reformers active during the moral panic years were involved in the crusade during the nineteenth century, including B.S. Steadwell, Edward Janney, Charlton Edholm, Kate Bushnell, and a host of other missionaries from the WCTU and the Florence Crittenton Missions.

The nineteenth- and twentieth-century movements against white slavery also shared common solutions. This point is particularly important, for historians have tended to perceive the moral panic years as ones in which Progressive reform, hallmarked by increasing professionalism and a reliance on science and the government, eclipsed nineteenth-century purity reform, based on religion, voluntarism, and the regeneration of society through individual initiative. With regard to prostitution reform, this shift is seen as one marked by a movement away from concerns over individual morality and an increased reliance in the twentieth century on repressive legislation and eliminating prostitution.⁹ As

Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 114-135 and Mary Linehan, "Vicious Circle: Prostitution, reform and public policy in Chicago, 1830-1930," (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1991), 149-201.

⁹This is in keeping with the general view of Progressivism which sees nineteenth-century moral reform giving way to a rational, scientific, government and business oriented approach to urban problems in the twentieth century. Historians of moral reform have reinforced this trajectory with their analyses of everything from the age of consent battle to efforts to provide for unwed mothers. See Mary Odem, Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Regina Kunzel, Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). Recently, however, scholars have begun to qualify this pattern by noting that a number of moral reformers and their organizations merged a continued concern with moral reform and a new Progressive approach to the problem throughout the period. A number of nineteenth-century concerns and approaches, including those surrounding unwed mothers and white slavery, bridged the shift to "progressive" reform. See for instance, Katherine Aiken, Harnessing the Power of Motherhood: The National Florence Crittenton Mission, 1883-1925 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998). For an analysis which addresses the general relationship between Progressivism and anti-prostitution activism and argues the agitation against prostitution was fully in keeping with Progressive tenets of reform see Paul Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

a general trend this is an accurate description of the white-slavery movement as well. The perpetual renaming of the organizations and their journals bears this out. For instance, the American Purity Alliance was reorganized into the American Vigilance Committee and their journal, The Philanthropist, was renamed Vigilance. The shift, however, can be overstated in a way which veils the complexity of the solutions proposed to repress both the perceived traffic in women and prostitution itself in both periods. The nineteenth-century activism against white slavery in the lumbercamps in Michigan and Wisconsin, for instance, was initially focused on passing the same type of repressive legislation, aimed at the prosecution of procurers, that has been heralded as a hallmark of moral panic activism.¹⁰ The twentieth-century reformers also did not give up on broader goals of purity reform. Even as die-hard a white-slavery crusader as Clifford Roe, who spent his life working for repressive legislation, devoted large sections of his white-slavery tracts to advocating an end to the double standard of morals, a quintessential "nineteenth century" purity reform.¹¹

In addition to the problems of separating pre-panic goals and reformers from those that took center stage during the panic years, there is also the question of when and where the panic began. There was, to be sure, no single shot which launched the larger war but it is clear that as early as 1905 white slavery was occupying a more central place on reformers' agendas. At the 1905 National Purity Congress in La Crosse Wisconsin, which participants said was held to decide where the movement should head, white slavery was a prominent topic on the agenda.¹² The American Purity Alliance's president, Edward

¹⁰For an analysis of these efforts see chapter one.

¹¹Clifford Roe, "The Prodigal Daughter" and "Our Double Standard of Morals" in The Great War on White Slavery or Fighting for the Protection of Our Girls, ed. Clifford Roe (1911), 42-52, 53-66.

¹²White slavery was also featured, although not as prominently, during the 1901 congress held in Chicago in the form of addresses on the traffic in girls in Europe and white slavery in the United States. See "Purity Workers Denounce Vice," Chicago Tribune, 9 October 1901, 3. See also "Think Prudery Foe of Purity," Chicago Tribune, 10 October 1901 and

Janney regaled the audience with his concerns that the police were acting as agents for the white-slave trade by arresting innocent girls, forcing them to become registered prostitutes and subjecting them to physical examinations against their will. Mary Church Terrell also spoke at the Congress and alleged that employment agencies in the north were luring African-American girls from the south on the pretext of domestic work and then turning them over to brothels.¹³ The courts were protecting the "traffic," and refusing to prosecute or convict white men for violating African-American women, Terrell charged, because they preferred the "traffic" to the possibility of intermarriage.¹⁴ Faced with these arguments, the conference resolved to request that President Roosevelt appoint a commission to inquire into the white-slave traffic and formed another purity alliance, which came to be known as the World's Purity Federation or the International American Purity Federation.¹⁵ The members of this new alliance agreed to re-convene in 1906 for another meeting in Chicago.¹⁶

In the year between the La Crosse conference and the Chicago conference, investigations and "revelations" on white slavery continued to emerge on the East Coast where reformers were increasingly arguing that the battle against white slavery needed to

"Plan for Purity Work," Chicago Tribune, 11 October 1901.

¹³The ways in which women reformers, both African-American and white, attempted to expand the category of "white slaves" to include African-American girls will be discussed in chapter five.

¹⁴"The LaCrosse Conference," The Philanthropist 20, no. 4 (January 1906), 2-3. The Philanthropist also excerpted sections from Terrell's article "Purity and the Negro" in which she argued that in spite of the vulnerability of African-American women to attack and temptation they showed lower rates of immorality than European women in similar environments and stressed that wealthy whites in New York had the most divorces and transgressions from moral laws. See "Negro Social Morality," The Philanthropist 19, no. 4 (January 1905), 6.

¹⁵*Ibid.*; "The Passing of Ernest Bell," The Light Magazine, 11 in Bell Archives, Box. 3, folder 3-6; B.S. Steadwell, "The Great Purity Movement," in Great War, 446. This federation was also known as the National Purity Federation during 1906. See "The Coming Purity Conference," The Philanthropist 21, no. 3 (October 1906), 2.

¹⁶"The LaCrosse Conference."

be placed on a firmer, national institutional footing.¹⁷ In light of these concerns, reformers on the East coast organized the National Vigilance Committee for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic in September of 1906.¹⁸ Formed for the single purpose of eliminating white slavery, this new organization immediately hired five investigators to scrutinize the prevalence of trafficking and vice in cities across the country. The National Vigilance Committee, however, maintained close institutional ties to the American Purity Alliance with Edward O. Janney, serving as chairman and president, respectively, of the two groups.¹⁹ Interestingly, given the later predominance of Chicago as the center for white-slavery reform, Chicago reformers were relatively inactive in the white-slavery crusade prior to 1906 and none of the members of the National Vigilance Committee were from Chicago.²⁰ Over time, however, the East coast based American Purity Alliance and National Vigilance Committee would lose their dominance over the white-slave crusade as Chicago's reformers took the lead in an effort to refute charges that their city was rife with crime, vice, and white slavery.

The "White Slave Center" of America: Chicago

¹⁷"Broader Alliance Labor," The Philanthropist 21, no. 3 (October 1906), 5. Reformers, particularly Kate Bushnell and her co-hort Elizabeth Andrew, were also active on the west coast. In August of 1906, the pair undertook an investigation into Japanese brothel slavery in west coast cities which will be discussed in chapter three.

¹⁸"A National Vigilance Committee," The Philanthropist 21, no. 4 (January 1907), 7-8. National Vigilance Committees had been formed throughout Europe in prior years to battle the white-slave traffic but the British brains of the organizations, William Coote, had been unsuccessful in urging one on his American allies until 1906. For Coote's description of the difficulty in getting American reformers to form a National Vigilance Committee and details of his visit to the United States in the wake of their founding the Committee see William Alexander Coote, A Vision and its Fulfilment: Being the History of the Origin of the Work of the National Vigilance Association for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic (London: The National Vigilance Association, 1910), 118-120.

¹⁹"The National Vigilance Committee: The Work of the First Six Months," The Philanthropist 22, no. 2 (July 1907), 6-7.

²⁰"A National Vigilance Committee," 8.

The emergence of Chicago as the center of white slavery activism began, according to midwestern reformers, at the 1906 National Purity Congress held, fittingly enough, in Chicago's Abraham Lincoln Center in October.²¹ At this Congress, reformers who had been actively battling white slavery, including Chicago's Rev. Ernest Bell and Rev. Sidney Kendall held a sectional conference on the issue during which Kendall gave an address on the "systematized traffic in girls" by French traders.²² Kendall was no stranger to the topic of white slavery. He was apparently drawn into the crusade against the traffic by Charlton Edholm in the 1890s after meeting her in California and reading her book,

²¹Steadwell, 447. Chicago was, of course, not new to either purity sentiment or white slavery allegations. During the nineteenth century, as we have seen, the city's newspapers were active in constructing and disseminating the story of girls imprisoned in the lumber camp regions of Wisconsin and Michigan. In addition, the American Purity Alliance had agreed to hold the 1901 National Purity Congress in the city, citing the fact that Chicago was the center of growing purity sentiment and the prevalence of purity associations in the city who would be able to help with arrangements. This conference was also sponsored by the Northwestern Purity Alliance based in La Crosse, Wisconsin, in conjunction with the National Christian League for the Promotion of Purity and the National Purity Association, both of which were based in Chicago. The marginal role that the American Purity Alliance, based on the East coast, played in this conference was undoubtedly due to the fact that they suffered a serious organizational blow in 1899 when their president, Aaron Powell, died. The loss of Powell, who had been a guiding force behind the New York Committee and the American Purity Alliance, seriously disrupted the organization's work. The Alliance stopped publishing the The Philanthropist for nine months, missing two quarterly publications. When they did begin publishing the journal again, it was a shadow of its former self, a mere 8 pages. The American Purity Alliance did, however, continue to participate in the organization of the Congresses and their new president, Edward O. Janney, became an active member of the new organizations forming in the midwest. He was, for instance, General Treasurer for the 1901 Conference held in Chicago and a prominent speaker at the 1905 Conference held in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. See "A Proposed Purity Convention in 1901," The Philanthropist 15, no. 4 (January 1901), 3; "The La Crosse Conference," The Philanthropist 20, no. 4 (January 1906), 2-3; Steadwell, 446. For a description of the nineteenth-century concern over white slavery in Chicago see chapter one.

²²Ernest Bell, "Barred Windows: How We Took up the Cause of the White Slaves," in Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or War on the White Slave Trade, ed. Ernest Bell (G.S. Ball, 1910), 192.

Traffic in Girls.²³ In the wake of his discovery of Edholm and her text, he decided to devote the remainder of his life to fighting the traffic which he did, primarily in Los Angeles.²⁴ Kendall was apparently quite a speaker and his 1906 address in Chicago made a deep impression on those who heard it. Contemporaries remember his demeanor during the address as one which conveyed that his "whole soul was torn and bleeding over the shame of making commerce of women" and noted that following his speech "the cause of the white slaves lay heavy on the hearts of a number of men and women," particularly those centered in Chicago.²⁵ As another reformer noted, Rev. Kendall's address on the white-slave traffic at this conference "so aroused the friends of the Federation in Chicago that they immediately organized for active warfare against the traffic, and since that time the real activities against the White Slave Trade in America have centered in Chicago."²⁶

Chicago was uniquely suited for this role.²⁷ The city was, first of all, undergoing all the urban transformations, including shifting patterns of immigration and migration, the

²³"The Passing of Ernest Bell," 10.

²⁴Ibid., 10-11. Kendall also published a novel and a book based on his experiences titled The Soundings of Hell and The Queen of the Red Lights. He died shortly after the 1906 Purity Congress but his memory lived on. Kendall's legacy was, in fact, so commanding that when Ernest Bell, a prominent reformer in his own right died in 1928, an editorial devoted to Bell's passing in the World's Purity Federation's magazine The Light spent the majority of this remembrance of Bell remembering Kendall. See "The Passing of Ernest Bell."

²⁵Bell, "Barred Windows," 192; "First Annual Report," The Philanthropist 23, no. 1 (April 1909), 19-20.

²⁶Steadwell, 447.

²⁷ White-slavery agitation in Chicago has frequently been treated as a representative example of how urban areas responded to the perceived threat of the white slavers. This is, however, misleading. Activism in Chicago was exceptionally high compared to other cities both in terms of the range of social actors involved, the number of legislative initiatives passed, and the multiplicity of narratives which emanated from the city's presses and publishers. Given the ways in which white-slavery narratives and activism emerged in Chicago and were spread from that city to the rest of the nation, Chicago is better viewed as an epicenter for the moral panic over the traffic in girls. Other cities were, of course, developing their own narratives on and responses to the traffic in girls but during the moral panic years Chicago was unrivaled in their leadership of the movement to

increased presence of women in urban areas, and the growth of commercialized amusements, that historians have targeted as key issues in the emerging discourse over prostitution during the Progressive Era.²⁸ The revolutionary change in Chicago was so marked that historians have even argued that the city became a "master symbol" in its own right, of all the "achievements and excesses of American urban civilization."²⁹ In spite of a series of catastrophic events in the latter half of the nineteenth century, including the Chicago Fire in 1871 which wiped out two thousand acres of the city and left a third of the population homeless, the Haymarket Bombing in 1886, and the Pullman strike in 1894, which resulted in 13 deaths and required the presence of 14,000 federal troops, deputies, and marshals to patrol the city, the city experienced phenomenal growth during these years.³⁰ The population of the city exploded, growing sixty fold between 1850 when it was 29,963 and 1900, when it reached 1,698,575.³¹ By 1910, it had spiraled to over two million urban inhabitants.³² As one historian has argued, Chicago's growth in the wake of the catastrophic fire gave contemporaries the impression that the city had emerged out of nowhere and while many heralded the rebuilding as miraculous, Chicago's rapid expansion led many contemporaries to perceive the city as the embodiment of growth, change, and instability.³³

exterminate the traffic. For historians who fail to distinguish between different cities during the white-slavery scare or who view Chicago as representative see Linehan; Connelly; Grittner; Ruth Rosen, The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1982).

²⁸Rosen, 38-51.

²⁹Connelly, 92. For a description of these changes see William Cronon, Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991) and Donald L. Miller, City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

³⁰Carl Smith, Urban Disorder and the Shape of Belief: The Great Chicago Fire, the Haymarket Bomb, and the Model Town of Pullman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 22; Boyer, 125-127.

³¹Smith, 5

³²Connelly, 92.

³³Smith, 5-7.

Chicago's reformers, particularly those who became active in the crusade against the traffic in girls, were alarmed by the transformation of Chicago on a number of levels. They were, first, concerned over the large number of "undesirable" immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, particularly Italians and Jews, and the equally "undesirable" migration of African Americans from the southern states and Chinese from the western states.³⁴ In 1880, Chicago housed only 10,000 Jews, a small percentage of which were from Eastern Europe. Following the pogroms in Russia in the early 1880s, however, the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe skyrocketed. By 1900, Chicago's Jewish population neared 80,000. Over half, 52,000, were from Eastern Europe.³⁵ The city's Italian foreign-born population, likewise, grew rapidly during these years, from 5,685 in 1890 to 16,000 in 1900. By 1910, the number reached 45,169.³⁶ African-American migration to the city, which would culminate in the Great Migration during WWI, expanded as well, from 6,480 in 1880 to 44,103 in 1910.³⁷ The numbers of Chinese were considerably lower than all of the preceding groups but they too were on the rise. In 1890 there were only 567 Chinese residents of the city, by 1900 the number had doubled,

³⁴For a compilation of essays which details the arrival of different groups of immigrants and migrants who arrived in Chicago during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the groups typically targeted by the white slavery narratives see Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones (eds.), Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait Fourth Edition (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995).

³⁵Irving Cutler, "The Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb," in Ethnic Chicago, 133. By 1930, Butler estimates that the Jewish population in Chicago was approximately 275,000 with over 80% coming from Eastern Europe. For a more detailed description of the changes described in this article see Irving Cutler, The Jews of Chicago: From Shtetl to Suburb (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

³⁶Dominic Candeloro, "Chicago's Italians: A Survey of the Ethnic Factor, 1850-1990," in Ethnic Chicago, 230.

³⁷James R. Grossman, "African-American Migration to Chicago," in Ethnic Chicago, 319. Contemporaries put the numbers even higher, estimating there were over 50,000 African Americans in Chicago by 1905. See Fannie Barrier Williams, "Social Bonds in the 'Black Belt' of Chicago," Charities 15 (7 October 1905): 40-44.

reaching 1,209.³⁸ These new city dwellers, reformers feared, were particularly likely to become involved in white slavery as both procurers and victims of the trafficking.³⁹

The racial and ethnic heterogeneity that these waves of migration created in Chicago urban landscape was paralleled by the increased public presence of women in the city. The middle-class "new women" moved into and across public space pursuing everything from higher education, reform opportunities, professions, and suffrage to new clothes and ice cream. Working-class women, pursuing employment, likewise moved into public space, taking jobs in retail stores, factories, and offices.⁴⁰ In Chicago the growth of this female labor force from 1880-1930 was more than three times as great as the rate of increase for the female labor force nationally, rising from 35,600 to over 407,000.⁴¹ The number of these working-class women choosing to live "adrift," away from family and relatives, kept apace. In 1880 there were approximately 3,800 wage-earning women living "adrift" in Chicago. By 1910 the number had grown to an estimated 31,500.⁴² This movement of women into Chicago's urban spaces influenced the growth of the white-slavery activism in a number of ways. On the one hand, Chicago's middle-class women participated in the construction of the white-slavery narratives as a means to justify their

³⁸Susan Moy, "The Chinese in Chicago: The First One Hundred Years," in Ethnic Chicago, 379.

³⁹The construction of the procurer as an ethnic or racial "other" will be discussed in chapter three.

⁴⁰A number of historians have written insightful analyses of the nature of female employment in offices, factories, and retail stores. See Lisa Fine, Souls of the Skyscraper: Female Clerical Workers in Chicago, 1870-1930 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); Patricia A. Cooper, Once a Cigarmaker: Men, Women, and Work Culture in American Cigar Factories, 1900-1919 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987); Susan Porter Benson, Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores 1890-1940 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

⁴¹Joanne J. Meyerowitz, Women Adrift: Independent Wage Earners in Chicago, 1880-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 5.

⁴²Ibid. For details of which occupations these "women adrift" were working in in 1910, see Meyerowitz, p. 29.

expanding incursions into the public realm.⁴³ On the other hand, the reformers, male and female alike, perceived the movement of working-class girls into Chicago's public spaces as making them accessible to white slavers who, reformers alleged, were ever on the lookout for potential victims.⁴⁴

The fears over working-class girls' vulnerability and the need for middle-class female reformers to step into these public spaces to "protect" them was tied to another urban transformation that reformers found particularly threatening, the growth of commercialized amusements. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Chicago's urban spaces were awash with department stores, nickel theaters, roller rinks, amusement parks, ice cream parlors, chop suey restaurants, and dance halls. The growth of these amusements was phenomenal. Nickel theaters, for instance, grew in numbers from a few in 1903 to over 600 by 1913.⁴⁵ As historian Mary Ryan has argued, these new urban spaces had not always been portrayed as sites of danger for women. Instead, the growth of many of these new urban spaces, such as department stores, ice cream parlors, theaters, and parks were part of a major civic project in the latter half of the nineteenth century to provide sanitized, safe public space for women. Within this gendered cartography of public space, Ryan asserts, there was no predatory male such as Jack the Ripper stalking women via sensationalized press stories, "filling women's imaginations with images of the sexual dangers lurking in the streets."⁴⁶ With the advent of the moral panic, the portrayal of these locations as "safe" places for women shifted and reformers began to construct them as sites of danger for certain groups of women, particularly young, working-class girls. The real fear for reformers was that these places, along with dance halls and other

⁴³This phenomena will be discussed in chapter five.

⁴⁴For a discussion of these issues see Meyerowitz and Fine.

⁴⁵Perry Duis, "Whose City: Public and Private Places in Nineteenth Century Chicago," Part II, *Chicago History* (Summer 1893), 18.

⁴⁶Mary Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press), 76-82.

emerging sites for urban leisure like amusement parks, would bring innocent girls into contact with a dangerous class of men who might lure them into another commercialized activity Chicago had to offer, prostitution.⁴⁷

Chicago's red light district, known as the "Levee," was located in the political and economic center of the city, the First Ward, and was composed of a range of "low dives" where urban residents could drink, gamble, dance, view peepshows, or visit one of the 200 brothels in the area.⁴⁸ Not surprisingly, the Levee was of particular concern for white-slavery reformers who viewed the district as a place which provided the white slavers a place to sell and imprison their "victims." As such, eliminating the Levee became an overriding concern among white-slavery reformers. There is no question that Chicago's burgeoning, heterogeneous urban landscape, full of brothels, "undesirable" foreigners, cheap amusements, and working-class girls, primed Chicago's reformers for the excitement they experienced while listening to Rev. Sidney Kendall's address on the dangers of white slavery at the National Purity Congress held in the city in 1906.⁴⁹ The

⁴⁷For a description of the growth of commercialized amusements in Chicago, see Perry Duis, "Whose City: Public and Private Places in Nineteenth Century Chicago," Part I, Chicago History (Spring 1983): 2-27 and Part II, Chicago History (Summer 1893): 2-23. For general descriptions of the growth of commercialized amusements in other cities and the concern they sparked among reformers see Lewis Erenberg, Steppin' Out: New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture, 1890-1930 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981); David Nasaw, Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements (New York: Basic Books, 1993); Kathy Peiss, Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

⁴⁸Stephen Longstreet, Chicago, 1860-1919 (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1973, 353-358. See also Connelly, 93. By 1910, reformers believed that the number of brothels in the city had risen to 486. See "President's Address," Juvenile Protective Agency (1910), 56 located in the J.P.A. archives, supplement 1, folder 4. For a map of the brothel locations in Chicago in 1895 see Hull-House Maps and Papers (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1895, reprinted by Arno Press, 1970), 22-23.

⁴⁹B.S. Steadwell, as we have seen, argued this conference so aroused Chicagoans that they launched the larger crusade against white slavery. See Steadwell, 446.

conference was, however, only partially responsible for galvanizing Chicago's reformers against vice in general and white slavery in particular.

In the wake of the 1906 conference, a series of events occurred in Chicago which helped propel it to the forefront of the white-slavery movement. The first of these was the arrival of Gypsy Smith, a noted English Evangelist famous for his ability to rouse the public against vice, in Chicago in January of 1907. Following Smith's two month stay in Chicago, during which time he urged residents to close the city's red light district, the Chicago Law and Order League renewed their crusade against the city's brothels.⁵⁰ Launching what the newspapers called a "monster campaign" on the battlefield of the Levee, the League called for an army of 100,000 boys and 100,000 adults to canvass the city and the Levee in a protest against every form of vice.⁵¹ Among the League's charges were that twenty-five young girls had recently been offered for sale to a brothel keeper after having met their ruin at a dance hall. There were, the League alleged, men who were making a business out of leading the girls "step by step" to their downfall.⁵²

While Gypsy Smith was parading through Chicago's streets in January of 1907, Clifford Roe was prosecuting Panzy Williams for procuring Agnes. While Roe's account of this case was, as we have seen, highly inaccurate, the prosecution of Williams was important from the standpoint of the white-slavery panic for it galvanized Roe to go

⁵⁰"Gypsy Makes Final Plea," Chicago Daily Tribune, 27 February 1907, 5. For a description of early efforts of the Chicago Law and Order League to eliminate the Levee see Duis, "Whose City," Part II, 20.

⁵¹"100,000 Boys in Vice War," Chicago Daily Tribune, 24 February 1907, 1. The League called for 1,000 churches and religious organizations to recruit 100 boys each to help their efforts.

⁵²"War on Vice is Outlined," Chicago Daily Tribune, 25 February 1907, 2. In response to these charges, the women members of the committee appointed by the League to wage the war against vice decided to focus their efforts on closing the dance hall. See "War Against City's Vice Centers on the Dance Hall," Chicago Daily Tribune, 26 February 1907, 7.

looking for more white slavers to prosecute.⁵³ Roe was aptly suited to lead a crusade based on moral indignation. A profile of him published in the Chicago Tribune stated:

The day of Mr. Roe's birth he made a speech on the wrongs of infancy, and he has continued talking on the rights or wrongs of someone or other ever since. He has ideas of his own and he has made up his mind that he is going to let the world know about them.⁵⁴

He apparently had a knack for proselytizing and, by his own account, had a hard time deciding on whether to pursue the ministry or a career in law.⁵⁵ He chose the latter but, in his dogged pursuit of white slavers and his endless traveling on behalf of his cause, built a career which blended prosecuting with preaching. Roe had been working as an assistant state's attorney in Chicago for less than two months when he undertook the prosecution of Panzy Williams for procuring Agnes and, from that trial on, he devoted himself almost single-mindedly to the issue of white slavery. In the wake of the trial, Roe began investigating the prevalence of the traffic in Chicago but found the state's attorney's office was ill-equipped, both in terms of money and available detectives, to handle the type of investigation he believed was necessary to break up the trafficking he alleged he had discovered. Roe did receive assistance in the form of information from individuals like Rev. Bell and the help of the Law and Order League, who loaned him their detectives, but it was clear to Roe in these early months that his crusade needed to be placed on a firmer financial footing. He approached Chicago's elite, believing that as moral, influential men, they should be willing to join his fight but he was rebuffed, receiving "jests" at his expense instead of support.⁵⁶

⁵³See the introduction for more information on Roe's prosecution of Panzy Williams.

⁵⁴Edward F. Roberts, "Clifford G. Roe, Active Public Prosecutor, Pushes Fight on the White Slave Traffic," in the "Worker's Magazine," Chicago Daily Tribune, 27 September 1908, 3.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Clifford Roe, Panders and Their White Slaves (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910),

In April of 1907, however, Roe's allegations that young girls were being forced into sexual slavery in Chicago gained a national hearing when an article by George Kibbe Turner, which argued that a "loosely organized association" of Jewish men were selling Jewish women in the city, was published in the nationally distributed McClure's Magazine.⁵⁷ Turner's portrayal of Chicago as a city riddled with police corruption and prostitution was given additional credibility by the findings of Chicago's Civil Service Commission which alleged that Chicago police were in the practice of levying "tribute" on brothels in the Levee district and another devastating article on Chicago published in McClure's in May of 1907 which alleged that the city's streets were full of murderers and thieves who preyed on women for "sport."⁵⁸ It all added to the impression that vice was, somehow, bolder in Chicago than other cities.⁵⁹

The impression that Chicago was under siege by criminals and vice was, in May of 1907, strengthened by the emergence in the Chicago press of the sensational white-slavery story of Mona Marshall. According to newspaper reports and Clifford Roe's memory of events, Mona Marshall appeared at a Chicago police station in May of 1907 claiming that

35-36.

⁵⁷George Kibbe Turner, "The City of Chicago: A Study of the Great Immoralities," McClure's Magazine 28 (April 1907): 581-582. Like other articles published on Chicago and New York in McClure's, this article was part of a blistering attack on the political system of the city which argued that corrupt politicians and police were supporting vice. See also George Kibbe Turner, "The Daughters of the Poor: A Plain Story of the White Slave Trade Under Tammany Rule," McClure's Magazine 34 (Nov. 1909): 45-61; S.S. McClure, "Tammany's Control of New York by Professional Criminal," McClure's Magazine 33 (June 1909): 117-134; S.S. McClure, "The Tammanyizing of a Civilization," McClure's Magazine 34 (November 1909): 117-128. Turner's anti-Semitic construction of white slavery as predominantly a Jewish enterprise will be discussed in chapter three.

⁵⁸"Faces Exposure for Levy on Vice," Chicago Tribune, 18 April 1907, 1; Roe, Panders, 176-178; Chicago as Seen by Herself," McClure's Magazine 29 (May 1907), 67-73.

⁵⁹"The Condition of Chicago," The Philanthropist 22, no. 2 (July 1907). Members of the American Purity Alliance credited Turner's April article with performing a "splendid service" in revealing vice conditions in urban areas. See "Annual Meeting of the Alliance," The Philanthropist 22, no. 1 (April 1908), 18.

she had been imprisoned in a brothel on Dearborn street for two months, a victim of a procurer named Harry Balding. She alleged that she had met Balding while working at the lace counter at Marshall Fields and that he had convinced her to go out with him, to the theater and on drives. He was, she stated, a perfect gentlemen on these early dates and, believing that he came from a wealthy, respectable family, she agreed to accompany him to a dance hall. Once there, however, Marshall told authorities that his gentlemanly facade faded and he plied her with bitter tasting, probably drugged, wine. She claimed she lost consciousness and awoke to discover that she was in a flat with Balding and his friends. She claimed that she had no clear memory of what had happened. At this point, Marshall stated that she began crying and Balding agreed to marry her but instead of finding a minister, he took her by covered carriage to the "Casino" brothel and sold her for \$50.00. She told the police and Roe that she had remained against her will, cut off from all contact with the outside world, from March 20th until her escape on May 25th.⁶⁰

In addition to prompting a series of raids by Chief of Police Shippy, who was still under pressure to crack down on the red light district in the wake of the vice investigation into graft in his department in April, the case of Mona Marshall provided Chicago's reformers with a powerful example of the "truth" of white slavery as well as a vehicle through which to develop multiple narratives on white slavery.⁶¹ Reformers like Roe made

⁶⁰"Find White Slave and Cadet Band," Chicago Tribune, 27 May 1907, 1; Roe, Panders, 37-46.

⁶¹The raids resulted in the arrest of seven men, including Balding, and one woman. Balding, who was charged with a variety of crimes, involving keeping a disorderly house, disorderly conduct, and abduction, was found guilty and given a sentence of one year in prison and \$100.00 in fines. Mona, it was reported, went home with her mother. See "Find White Slave," 27 May 1907 and "Chief Shippy Inspects Stations on South Side," Chicago Tribune, 18 April 1907. Balding, reportedly told a very different story than Mona when questioned by the authorities. He claimed, according to Roe, that Mona was not drugged, that she went back to his flat voluntarily, and that she was never held captive in the brothel but, given Roe's tendency to create literary works of fiction out of his court prosecutions it is difficult to assess whether or not Roe's account is accurate. Although the story of Mona Marshall appeared in a myriad of publications as "proof" of white slavery in coming

the most of the occasion, using Marshall's story and the purported "confessions" of her procurers to construct elaborate exposes on both the plight of white slave and the methods used to trap them.⁶² The Chicago Press also made the most of the case, providing coverage which, according to Roe, got the public thinking about white slavery.⁶³ They had plenty to think about in coming months as the moral panic in Chicago was well underway by 1907.

months and years, none of the authors included any updates on where Marshall had ended up. Interestingly, word of her activities did surface in 1908 when it was reported that she was suing Roy Jones, the owner of the resort in which she was allegedly imprisoned, for \$50,000 in damages for physical and mental injuries. Her suit was heralded as introducing a new, positive element into the fight against the traffic in vice but it is unclear what the resolution of the case was. See "Penalty for Chicago White Slavers," The Philanthropist 22, no. 2 (July 1908), 1-2. Marshall's story was re-written in popular history in 1950 when two authors alleged that Mona was a regular inmate at the brothel who got "doped up" one night and, feeling morose and melodramatic, threw a note out the window where it was picked up by a milkman who delivered it to authorities. This story alleged that Mona returned to her position as a prostitute following Roe's prosecutions. While it is unlikely that this story is any closer to the truth than Roe's literary stylings turned out to be, it does demonstrate the ways in which the narratives of white slavery were crafted and re-crafted for decades in Chicago lore. See Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer, Chicago Confidential (New York: Crown Publisher, 1950), 187-188.

⁶²Marshall's story provided Roe with "evidence" for two of his narratives on the white slavers in the form of "confessions" from Harry Balding and another man arrested during the raid on the flats out of which, she alleged, his co-horts were operating. Out of these alleged confessions, supposedly taken after the men were found guilty and sentenced, Roe constructed an elaborate expose which portrayed the men as participating in a widespread, loosely organized band of traffickers who snared women in a variety of urban locations through the promise of love or employment. Roe claimed that he kept the confession of one of the procurers secret but the one he claimed he had received from Balding he apparently made public, indicating that he constructed the narratives with its propaganda uses in mind. The Philanthropist reported that Roe was using Balding's confession in 1908 to call for harsher laws against procurers. See Roe Panders, 51-68; "Advance in Illinois," The Philanthropist 22, no. 2 (July 1908), 9-10; "Appalling Discoveries by Government Agents show Chicago to be Greatest White Slave Market in America," The Chicago Tribune, 26 July 1908, 4-5. Sensational accounts of white-slavery also utilized Roe's narrative on Balding's confession. See Sam Wilson, Chicago and its Cesspools of Infamy (Chicago: n.p., n.d.), 55-56.

⁶³Roe, Panders, 37.

Marshall's revelations were followed by a string of sensational white-slavery prosecutions in Chicago during the summer of 1907. Less than one week after Mona's story was headline news in the Chicago Tribune, the paper was reporting that another innocent girl, named Adelaide Wilson, had been "rescued" from the clutches of a white slaver. Wilson's story is particularly interesting because unlike Mona Marshall she was "rescued" before she actually became enslaved. Her case was the first in a series of white slavery discoveries which followed a very suspect pattern of "rescue" and "revelation" in which the girls told their tales of white slavery only after being identified as potential white slaves or prostitutes by the authorities.⁶⁴ In Wilson's case the "rescuer" was Rev. Ernest Bell, a missionary at Chicago's Midnight Mission who had been active in the crusade against white slavery since the National Purity Congress in 1906.⁶⁵

⁶⁴The ways in which women picked up for prostitution wielded the white-slavery narratives as a means to escape prosecution is the subject of chapter six.

⁶⁵"The Passing of Ernest Bell." Bell was, like Roe, well suited to the role of as anti-white-slave crusader, blessed with both the desire to proselytize and the necessary righteous indignation to carry it off. He was, in fact, so full of "righteous indignation" that the director of the Midnight Mission felt it necessary to caution him to tone it down, warning him that his audiences perceived his tenor as one of "narrow intolerant bad temper" in ways that led them to discount his message. Unlike Roe, however, Bell was somewhat of an unwilling white-slavery crusader who took up the battle in Chicago after a failed missionary career in India. By the time he returned to the United States he had alienated all of his colleagues and grown bitter over his inability to achieve what he believed was his chosen destiny, to establish an "Oxford in India." While he eventually warmed up to the task of reforming "darkest Chicago," he never got over the disappointment of his failure as an overseas missionary and, as late as 1919, was writing indignant letters to "Our Father Who Art in Heaven," calling on God to either provide him with the necessary resources to save the "darkest minds and hearts of India's 300,000,000" or to "take the volcano of desire and incitement out of my brain and put it into the brain whom thou hast chosen and will enable to achieve it." Bell also did not find the job as a white-slavery crusader in Chicago particularly remunerative. He was repeatedly short on money throughout his reforming career and relied on his brother to both put his two children through school and support his household. Bell was paid by the Midnight Mission but they often had trouble raising his salary and he died destitute, forcing his colleagues at the mission to both pay for his funeral expenses and send letters to supporters soliciting money for his widow to live on. See "Letter dated July 6, 1909 from Wirt Hallam to Bell," in Bell Archives, Box 1, file 1-11; Olive Bell Daniels, From the Epic of Chicago: A Biography: Ernest A Bell,

Wilson, who later revealed that this was not her real name, reportedly told Bell and other authorities that she was lured from her country home in Danville, IL by Neil Jaeger after he proposed marriage and promised he would be able to provide a stylish life for her in Chicago. Once they arrived in the city, however, Adelaide stated that Jaeger plied her with alcohol until she didn't know where she was or what she was doing.⁶⁶ Fortunately for her, the press claimed, Ernest Bell was on the scene. According to newspaper reports, Bell saw Jaeger and Wilson enter a disorderly resort and, believing that Wilson did not fit the part of a prostitute, called for the police before following them in. He had, reportedly, arrived just in time to hear Jaeger suggest to Wilson that she should become an inmate of the place. Before she could answer, the police arrived on the scene and, according to newspaper accounts, Jaeger's plans to enslave her were foiled. He was arrested and she was saved.⁶⁷

Bell's biographer, Olive Daniels, records the story somewhat differently, arguing that Bell was actually making a tour of the Levee with another Reverend and two detectives when he discovered Wilson. Daniels claims that at one o'clock in the morning the four men entered a resort on Dearborn street and saw Wilson, modestly dressed, sitting at a table with Jaeger. Bell reportedly began questioning the girl as to whether or not she was an "inmate" and inquired as to her name and address.⁶⁸ She denied that she was a prostitute and, when pressed, accused Jaeger of plying her with alcohol and taking her to the resort, claims which resulted in his successful prosecution by Roe.⁶⁹ Obviously,

1865-1928 (Menasha: George Banta Publishing Co., 1932), 18-27, 41; "Letters from Bell's brother, Chauncey, dated January 8, 1916 and July 15, 1924," in Bell Archives, Box 2, file 2-7; "Letter from S.C. Irving to Lucy Hall," in Bell Archives, Box 3, file 3-6; "Letter dated November 16, 1919," in Bell Archives, Box 2, folder 2-2. On Bell's plans to establish an "Oxford in India" see the numerous letters from 1904 soliciting money for this plan in Bell Archives, Box 1, file 1-11

⁶⁶"Country Girl is Rescued," Chicago Daily Tribune, 1 June 1907, 5.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Daniels, 57-59.

⁶⁹For Roe's melodramatic portrayal of Wilson's testimony and Jaeger's trial see Roe,

whether or not Bell approached Wilson and Jaeger with two detectives in tow and began questioning her as to who she was and how she found herself there or merely followed them in and overheard a lewd proposition makes a difference in terms of understanding how Wilson presented herself and her story to Bell. She did admit during the trial that she had lied to him, giving him the false name of Wilson because she was ashamed.⁷⁰ Jaeger, for his part, alleged that they were merely on a slumming tour and that this was not Adelaide's first experience.⁷¹ To Bell and Roe, however, she was another young girl snatched out of the clutches of a white slaver thanks to their actions. To Chicagoans, she was just one of many. Her story was one of three reported in the same column of the Chicago Tribune on June 1. Thanks to the combined efforts of Roe, Bell, and a bevy of other investigators, reformers, and detectives, these three were only the first of hundreds of alleged white slaves who were "rescued" during the next eight years. Likewise, Williams, Balding, and Jaeger were the first of hundreds of "white slavers" prosecuted in Chicago during the moral panic. In the summer months of 1907 alone, Roe allegedly prosecuted over one hundred white-slave cases.⁷²

He was assisted in these endeavors by the groundswell of anti-white-slavery sentiment which arose in Chicago in the wake of newspaper coverage of stories like Marshall's and Wilson's in 1907, thanks in part to the convening of a Grand Jury in June to investigate the prevalence of white slavery in the city.⁷³ With newspapers alleging that

Panders, 46-50. Roe's portrayal does not shed any light on which account of finding Wilson is correct saying only that Bell "found" her in the resort.

⁷⁰Roe, Panders, 47.

⁷¹Ibid., 48.

⁷²Daniels, 60. Hard statistics on these white-slavery cases are hard to come by, given the fact that the court records are unavailable and statistics do not show any pandering cases in these years because they were prosecuted under the general disorderly conduct statutes.

⁷³"White Slave Inquiry On," Chicago Daily Tribune, 19 June 1907, 3. See also "Two Girls are Rescued," Chicago Daily Tribune, 10 June 1907, 5; "Lured to Chicago," Chicago Daily Tribune, 20 June 1907, 5 and "Two Girls Lured to Ohio," Chicago Daily Tribune, 21 June 1907, 3.

Chicago was a "producing center" and a market for the white-slave trade, Roe found that the Chicago businessmen, who had earlier rebuffed his efforts to raise money for his white-slavery investigations, were more willing to join his crusade.⁷⁴ In the autumn of 1907, five prominent Chicagoans agreed to secretly fund Roe's investigations into white slavery and his prosecutions which would, for the time being, continue under the auspices of the State's Attorney General's office.⁷⁵

With the funding in place to assure that he would be able to devote full time to the battle against white-slavery, Roe began appearing at reformer's meetings across the city to warn them that there was a "great Chicago syndicate for the traffic in young girls" and encourage them to get involved in what he now perceived as his own personal fight against the trafficking.⁷⁶ As we have seen, many reformers in Chicago, like Ernest Bell, were already active in the crusade against white slavery. The summer's events and Roe's appeals, however, helped convince Chicago's reformers that they needed to place the crusade on a firmer institutional footing and led them, in November of 1907, to form the Committee for Suppression of Traffic in Vice.⁷⁷ Finding support for the fight against white slavery was no longer a problem for reformers like Roe and Bell. At the first meeting of the Committee, one week after its founding, fifty concerned individuals, including ministers, lawyers, and settlement workers gathered together to discuss the most effective way to eliminate white slavery from the city. The individuals represented an impressive array of organizations who were anxious to join the crusade, including the Cook County Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Citizen's League, the Cook

⁷⁴"Two Girls Lured to Ohio," 21 June 1907.

⁷⁵Clifford Barnes, "The Story of the Committee of Fifteen of Chicago," Social Hygiene 4, no. 2 (April 1918), 145.

⁷⁶"Chicago Aroused," The Philanthropist 22, no. 4 (January 1908), 8. For Roe's portrayal of the crusade against white slavery as one he had started, practically single-handedly, see the introduction.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 8; "First Annual Report," The Philanthropist 23, no. 1 (April 1909), 19-20.

County Federation of Women's Clubs, the Social Settlement League, the Legal Aid Society, The Associated Charities, the Chicago Purity League, the National Purity Association, the Relief Aid Society, the City Club, the Visiting Nurse Association, the YMCA, the YWCA, the Illinois Training School for Girls, the Salvation Army Home, the Florence Crittenton Missions, and the Midnight Refuge Home.⁷⁸ Within three months, the outpouring of support so overwhelmed the Committee that the leaders of the crusade, led by Roe and Bell, formed the Illinois Vigilance Association in February of 1909, a group solely devoted to the ridding Chicago of white slavery and prostitution.⁷⁹

In the wake of the YMCA meeting, investigators from the National Vigilance Committee converged on Chicago to help their new associates determine the extent of white slavery in the city. What they found helped fuel the white-slavery panic in Chicago and brought an important new crusader, U.S. District Attorney Edwin Sims, into the fight. In the course of their investigation, the National Vigilance Committee discovered that foreign girls were registered with the police as being "inmates" in Chicago's disorderly houses in defiance of a federal immigration law passed in February of 1907 which made importing women into the United States for the purposes of prostitution and harboring any

⁷⁸"Chicago Aroused," 8-9.

⁷⁹"Lash on White Slavery," Chicago Daily News, 8 February 1909; United to Check Traffic in Girls," Chicago Tribune, 11 February 1908, 4. See also "Ministers Unite to Rescue Girls," Chicago Tribune, 7 February 1908, 3; "Blame Put on Clergy for White Slave Evil," Chicago Daily News, 10 February 1908. For a description of the work of the Illinois Vigilance Committee during its first year and details of speakers who spoke at their first annual meeting, see "The Illinois Vigilance Association Annual Meeting," The Philanthropist 23, no. 1 (April 1909), 17-23, "Tell About Vice," The Chicago Tribune, 9 February 1909, 9; Bell (ed.), Fighting the Traffic, 289-298; Daniels, 61-63. For Roe's assessment of his pivotal role at this conference see Roe, Panders, 148-149. The plans of the Illinois Vigilance Association included forming auxiliary organizations in urban areas across Illinois. They were somewhat successful at this but, at least in the early years, lacked the resources to battle white slavery with the vigor they intended. See "The Illinois Vigilance Association," "Plan White Slave Crusade," The Chicago Tribune, 15 June 1909, 3; "Illinois Activity," The Philanthropist 23, no. 2 (July 1909), 24; "Current Events," The Philanthropist 23, no. 15 (December 1910), 4-5.

foreign woman who had been in the country less than three years felony offenses, punishable by up to five years in prison and a fine of up to five thousand dollars. The law also provided for the deportation of any girl or woman found prostituting herself within three years of her entry into the United States.⁸⁰ Under scrutiny by the vice investigators, the Chicago police began the process of securing federal felony warrants to prosecute foreign prostitutes under the federal law, activities which drew the attention of the United States District Attorney in Chicago, Edwin Sims. Sims promptly called for secret service agents from Washington and deputized twenty-five U.S. Marshalls to help him break up Chicago's traffic in foreign girls.⁸¹

Throughout 1908 and 1909, Edwin Sims swept Chicago's streets and red light district for foreign prostitutes and the individuals who had imported them or were harboring them in disorderly houses.⁸² Claiming that there was a "French white slave syndicate" trafficking in foreign girls in Chicago, Sims became an important fighter in the white-slavery crusade.⁸³ He was, as he said, "determined to break up this traffic in foreign women" and alleged that the French were only the tip of the iceberg. By the end of June in

⁸⁰For the full section of this act as it applied to prostitution see U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigrant Commission, Importation and Harboring of Women for Immoral Purposes (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1911), 58. For a detailed description of the development of laws on immigration as they relate to the white-slave traffic see U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on immigration "White-Slave Traffic...Report (to accompany H.R. 12315)," 2-7.

⁸¹Daniels, 62-63. See also Fighting the Traffic 196.

⁸²For a description of one of Sim's raids see "Sims is Pushing White Slave War," Chicago Tribune, 24 June 1908, 5.

⁸³"Ministers Praise White Slave Raid," Chicago Tribune, 23 June 1908, 2. For more on Sim's activities, arrests, prosecutions, and the alleged syndicate see "Prison Looms up for all 'Slavers'," Chicago Tribune, 22 May 1908, 7; "War to Continue on Vice Brokers," Chicago Tribune, 20 June, 1908, 8; "Pastor Praises Sims and Healy," Chicago Tribune, 22 June 1908, 3; "Sims is Pushing," "Plot to Smuggle Girls Unearthed," Chicago Tribune, 29 June 1908, 7; "Girl Slaves Tell Tales of Horror," Chicago Tribune, 19 July 1908, 3; " 'Vice Trusts' Heads Escape," Chicago Tribune, 13 October 1908, 1; "Convict Dealers in Alien Women," Chicago Tribune, 24 October, 1908, 5; " 'White Slavery' Plot is Exposed," Chicago Tribune, 31 October 1908, 4.

1908 he was preparing to move against other nationalities for their participation in the trade.⁸⁴ In a little more than one year, Sims was claiming victory and, having chalked up an impressive number of arrests in the city, stating that he had rid Chicago of the foreign traffic.⁸⁵ He had even, newspapers claimed, broken up an "underground railroad" in foreign girls that ran straight through Chicago.⁸⁶ Sims was not the only one "discovering" underground railroads which were allegedly being used to transport white slaves during these years. One year after the Chicago Tribune heralded Sims' discovery of a "railroad" between Canada and Chicago, they were crediting Roe with "unearthing" an underground railroad "as elaborate as any by which black slaves ever were brought into the north during civil war times" which was spiriting white slaves from St. Louis into Chicago.⁸⁷

Unearthing the "St. Louis Syndicate" was only the most publicized of Roe's endeavors. He had, in fact, been as busy as Sims in discovering white slaves and prosecuting white slavers throughout 1908 and 1909. His job was made easier in the wake of the passage of a new state pandering law on June 1, 1908. Roe had been complaining about what he called the "moss-covered," inadequate laws against pandering in Illinois since he began trying to prosecute under them in 1907. They provided that prosecutors had to prove that the girls procured were unmarried, of previous chaste character, and that they had been procured through deception. In addition, married women could not testify against their husbands, a serious problem according to Roe due to the fact that procurers were allegedly marrying their victims to prevent them from testifying in their pandering

⁸⁴"War to Continue," 20 June 1908; "Pastor Praises," 22 June 1908.

⁸⁵Reports of the Immigration Commission, 87-89.

⁸⁶"Plot to Smuggle Girls Unearthed," 29 June 1908.

⁸⁷"Smuggle White Slaves In," Chicago Tribune, 15 October 1909, 1. For more detailed and certainly more dramatic portrayals of the cases surrounding the prosecution of the Van Bevers and their Chicago/St. Louis Gang see Roe, Panders, 186-206. For the Chicago Tribune coverage of the St. Louis cases see the following dates in 1909: Oct. 14, Oct. 23, Oct. 24, Oct 29, Oct. 30, Nov. 10, Nov. 11, Nov. 13, Nov. 16, Nov. 28

trials.⁸⁸ Given these requirements for prosecution under the existing pandering law, Roe found he often had to charge the white slavers with corrupting the public morals under the Disorderly Conduct Act. This was inadequate, Roe charged, because conviction only carried a penalty of a \$200 fine.⁸⁹

With the assistance of the new Illinois Vigilance Association's committee on legislation, however, these "archaic" laws underwent a major overhaul. The legislative committee, apparently believing that they needed a greater pool of allies to get an amended law passed in Springfield, solicited the help of a number of prominent organizations in Chicago for the passage of a new bill, including The Chicago Law and Order League, B'nai B'rith, the City Club, the Union League Club, the Hamilton Club, the Iroquois Club, and the Citizen's Association. They also founded a new organization named the "joint club committee for the suppression of the white slave traffic."⁹⁰ Ultimately the group decided to throw their support to a bill which was already making its way through the Illinois legislature thanks to the prior initiative of B'nai B'rith.⁹¹ Complete with revisions from the joint club committee, the bill went into effect on July 1, 1908. It provided for a penalty of between 6 months and 1 year and/or a fine between \$300 and \$1,000 for anyone convicted of pandering, defined by the statute as procuring, encouraging, or in any way inducing a female to become or remain an inmate in a house of prostitution. Additional amendments, passed in 1909, made wives competent witnesses

⁸⁸On the concern that men were trafficking in their wives see "Wives made 'White Slaves'," Chicago Tribune, 21 July 1908, 3.

⁸⁹Roe, Panders, 144-145.

⁹⁰Ibid., 151.

⁹¹For details on the early involvement of Chicago's Jewish leaders in pushing for early legislation see "Urge Prison for Levee's 'Farmers'," Chicago Tribune, 28 December 1907, 3. The Jewish involvement in battling the white-slave trade will be more fully developed in chapter three.

against their husbands and made holding an inmate in a brothel through "debt slavery" illegal.⁹²

By the fall of 1909 Roe undoubtedly felt he was well on his way toward eliminating white slavery in Chicago. Not only did he have new laws under which to prosecute offenders but he also had a new position from which to do it. Finding that he was still unable to devote his full attention to the white-slavery crusade while employed by the State's Attorney General's office, Roe abruptly retired in September of 1909. While he claimed that he was planning to return to private practice, he had, in fact, found a way to turn his crusade against white slavery into a full-time job.⁹³ He later admitted that he had been encouraged to resign his position by a group of Chicago's businessmen who were concerned over how allegations that Chicago was the American capital of the white-slave trade were tarnishing the city's reputation and B'nai B'rith who was equally concerned about the ways in which the white-slavery panic, and the allegations that the majority of procurers were Jewish, was fueling anti-Semitism.⁹⁴

⁹²"Debt slavery" was frequently cited as a major cause for white slavery. It was allegedly a system by which brothel owners charged their inmates exorbitant rates for the clothes and necessities the brothel owners provided, resulting in a situation where the women could never clear their debt and leave the house. For a description of the struggle to pass both the law and the amendments see Roe, *Panders*, 144-157. See also "Illinois New Law," *The Philanthropist* 22, no. 2 (July 1908), 1; "White Slave' Bill is Passed," *Chicago Tribune*, 6 May 1908, 5; *Smashing the White Slave Trade*, (Chicago: Currier Publishing Co., 1909); "Two 'White Slave' Bills," *Chicago Tribune*, 22 April 1909, 2; *Chicago Tribune*, 12 May 1909, 2. For the complete, amended pandering law as it stood in 1909 see "Appendix VI," in *The Vice Commission of Chicago, The Social Evil in Chicago: A Study of Existing Conditions* (Chicago: Gunthorp-Warren Printing Co., 1911), 311-314.

⁹³"C.G. Roe Resigns As Wayman's Aid," *The Chicago Tribune*, 1 September 1909, 3.

⁹⁴Roe (ed.), *The Great War*, 191-192. On how the white-slavery scare damaged the city's reputation see Perry R. Duis, "Introduction," in Herbert Asbury, *Gem of the Prairie* (Knopf, Inc., 1940; repr., Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), xvi. The activities of B'nai B'rith and the allegations that Jewish procurers were the ones responsible for white slavery will be discussed in chapter three.

In late September, the businessmen and B'nai B'rith formed an organization which they called the "Committee Directing and Maintaining an Office to Combat the Traffic in Girls," took the phrase "Protect the Girl!" as their slogan, and hired Roe as their full-time legal counsel.⁹⁵ Raising money for the crusade was also no longer a problem. The Chicago Tribune, which had been following the sensational stories closely through the summer months, financed the Committee during their first year with the help of contributions from the Committee's members and other interested organizations.⁹⁶ Securing detectives, which had also been an issue for Roe in the early years of his crusade, was also no longer a problem. As counsel for the new organization, he was assigned four city detectives to help him locate the white slavers and their alleged victims. They were remarkably successful. During the first year, which Roe spent assisting the police in the arrest of alleged procurers and in preparing cases for trial, 348 cases of suspected white slavery were investigated. 97 of these cases went to trial and 91 resulted in convictions. These numbers were apparently not impressive enough for Roe who was quick to argue that they did not convey the real number of white slaves they had rescued, procurers they had chased out of town, and men they had prosecuted under other charges.⁹⁷

⁹⁵"Open War on Vice to Protect Girls," The Chicago Tribune, 26 September 1909, 1-2. This lengthy article was the result of an interview Roe gave to the Chicago Tribune and covered the history of Roe's involvement in the white-slave crusade since 1907. This group would form the nucleus of what would become Chicago's Committee of Fifteen in 1911. See Barnes, "The Story of the Committee of Fifteen," 146.

⁹⁶Clifford Barnes, "Letter to the Editor," Chicago Tribune, 15 July 1910, 4; Roe, "The White Slave Message from Chicago," in The Great War, 193.

⁹⁷Roe, "The White Slave Message from Chicago," 192-204. This section of Roe's book also includes a listing of those prosecuted. This report and the list of those prosecuted was also published in The Philanthropist 24, no. 3, (March 1911), 11-14. These trials are also listed in the records of the Committee of Fifteen which includes a two volume log of all the pandering cases prosecuted in Chicago's municipal courts undertaken by the organization from their founding in 1909 into 1916. See Committee of Fifteen Archives, Vols. 26 and 27. For descriptions of the committee's work during the first few months and the widespread support they received from other civic organizations and religious groups in the city see "Churches Enter White Slave War," The Chicago Tribune, 27 September

As Roe's efforts were getting easier, thanks to new laws, a new organization and increased financial and personnel support, Sims' quest to rid the country of foreign white slavers was put in jeopardy by a Supreme Court decision in July of 1909 on a case out of Chicago which ruled that the clause in the 1907 immigration law which allowed for the prosecution of those harboring foreign prostitutes was unconstitutional because it infringed on rights reserved for the states.⁹⁸ It would now be necessary for Sims and other prosecutors to prove that the men and women accused of trafficking the girls had actually imported them. This did not, however, slow down Sims who continued to move against white slavers and foreign prostitutes in the wake of the ruling.⁹⁹ It also proved to be only a minor setback for the anti-white-slavery forces in Chicago and other states who used the occasion to start agitating for both the passage of state laws modeled on Illinois' example and national legislation against panders.¹⁰⁰

They achieved both these goals. In 1910, Congress passed the "White Slave Traffic Act" thanks in large part to pressure and assistance from reformers such as Roe, Sims, and Bell.¹⁰¹ The act, popularly referred to as the Mann Act, provided that anyone who aided,

1909, 1; "White Slave Band Exposed in Court," The Chicago Tribune, 28 September 1909, 6; "White Slave War Well Supported," The Chicago Tribune, 29 September 1909, 10.

⁹⁸For details on this case, including the actual court decision, see U.S. Congress, "White-Slave Traffic," 4-6 and 18-20. For the dismay the decision produced among reformers see "High Court Kills White Slave Law," The Chicago Tribune, 6 April 1909, 9; "The Supreme Court Decision," The Philanthropist 23, no. 2 (July 1909), 9-10; Smashing the White Slave Traffic; Harry Parkin, "Laws for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic," in Fighting the Traffic, 335-339.

⁹⁹For information on Sims raids in the wake of the decision see "Raided by Sims as 'White Slaver'," The Chicago Tribune, 8 April 1909, 3.

¹⁰⁰On reformers calls for more legislation in the wake of the decision, see "The Supreme Court Decision," Smashing the White Slave Traffic; Parkin, 335-339.

¹⁰¹Bell was suggesting federal legislation under the commerce clause of the constitution in 1908. See his speech during the "Friends and Purity" session of the General Conference of the Religious Society of Friends printed in the Friends' Intelligence Supplement (October 1908) in Bell Archives, Box 6, file 6-7. Bell claimed he got the idea from another Chicago reformer and lawyer named Rufus Simmons and that they took the idea to Sims.

persuaded, enticed, or coerced any woman or girl to travel across state lines for prostitution or any other immoral purpose was guilty of a felony. The offense was punishable by a fine of up to five thousand dollars and five years in prison.¹⁰² Arguments in favor of the bill relied heavily on the belief that widespread trafficking in women and girls for the purposes of prostitution was, in fact, occurring across the country and, consequently, could only be stopped by the passage of federal legislation and the involvement of the federal government in the crusade.¹⁰³ While heralding the passage of this federal "White Slave Traffic Act," reformers also kept up the pressure on state governments across the country to pass their own pandering legislation, modeled on the Illinois laws and by the spring of 1911, 28 states and the District of Columbia had passed new laws to prosecute white slavers.¹⁰⁴ Reformer's success in pushing for the passage of "white slavery" laws on both the state and federal level was due, in large part, to the fact that by 1910 the white-slavery panic was making large inroads across the country.¹⁰⁵

Sims reportedly conferred with Illinois Congressman James Mann and wrote the first draft of the bill. Mann redrafted and submitted it to the House in December of 1909. Bell also reportedly went to Washington to personally push for passage of the bill with Mann when it stalled in the Senate. See Daniels, 70-74. Other accounts credit Roe with helping draft the act. See Grittner, 87.

¹⁰²U.S. Congress, "White-Slave Traffic," 10-16.

¹⁰³Ibid. A great deal of the evidence provided to Congress was drawn from Sims' investigations. For a secondary analysis of how Representatives used the white-slavery narratives to push for the passage of the Mann Act see Grittner, 94-96

¹⁰⁴"Progress in Legislation," *Vigilance* 24, no. 5 (May 1911), 15-16. For a summary of the white slavery laws in each state in 1910 see Parkin, 333-397. For a review of the state laws with reformer's criticisms of them as they stood in 1912 see Herbert E. Gernert, "Legislation on the Social Evil," *Vigilance* 25, no. 6 (June 1912), 2-9. White-slavery laws continued to be introduced, and passed, through 1913. See *Vigilance* 26, no. 3 (March 1913), 27. For reformers who credited Roe with the passage of these laws see J. Frank Chase, "Pandering around Plymouth Rock," and "By St. Clair Adams, District Attorney, New Orleans, Louisiana," both in *The Great War*, 240 and 334.

¹⁰⁵The laws, particularly the federal law, helped spread the moral panic even further as they resulted in prosecutions of panders across the country, cases which themselves helped convince urban residents that white slavery really was occurring in their cities.

Beyond Chicago: The diffusion of white-slavery narratives and activism

The spread of the white-slavery panic was the result of a number of factors. The concern over white slavery was not, in the first place, ever confined to Chicago. Both prior to and during the panic years, cities such as Philadelphia and New York nurtured their own anti-white-slavery crusades and vice investigations.¹⁰⁶ New York, in particular, served as an epicenter of the movement in its own right, as stories of white slavery in New York were picked up by newspapers in cities like Baltimore and Philadelphia.¹⁰⁷ In

¹⁰⁶In 1904, a Grand Jury in Philadelphia alleged they had turned up evidence of a white slave syndicate operating in the city which was preying on young, ignorant foreign girls, mostly Russian Jews, accusations which led to mass meetings and public demonstrations in the city. See "The American Traffic in Girls," *The Philanthropist* 17, no. 4 (January 1903), 7; "Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting," *The Philanthropist* 20, no. 1 (April 1905), 1-2; Philadelphia's Vice Crusade," *The Philanthropist* 21, no. 1 (April 1906), 4-5.

New York also convened an official investigation in the wake of white-slavery allegations in the early years of the twentieth century. In the autumn of 1900, a New York Minister named Paddock appealed to the police to help him "rescue" one of his parishoners who, he alleged, had been "captured" by one of the cities' infamous dens. Their response, in the form of an insult, galvanized the cities' ministers and, ultimately, led to the formation of the Committee of Fifteen to investigate vice conditions in the city. Their report, issued in 1902 under the title The Social Evil: With Special Reference to Conditions Existing in the City of New York, included an appendix which detailed how traffickers in prostitution, whom they called professional "cadets," were seducing innocent, typically foreign girls through kindness, guile, and drugged drinks. See Notes and Comments," *The Philanthropist* 15, no. 3 (October 1900), 1; "A Study of the Social Evil," *The Philanthropist* 17, no. 1 (April, 1902), 2-3; Edwin Seligman, The Social Evil: With Special Reference to Conditions Existing in the City of New York (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1902), 181-188. For a more detailed description of the Committee of Fifteen and the Committee of Fourteen formed to continue the battle against prostitution in 1905 see John P. Peters, "The Story of the Committee of Fourteen of New York," *Social Hygiene* 4, no. 3 (July 1918): 347-388. For a historical assessment of the Committee of Fifteen which recognizes it as one of the first "vice commissions" of the Progressive Era see Timothy Gilfoyle, City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920 (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1992), 302-306.

¹⁰⁷See "Considering the Case," *Vigilance* 23, no. 9 (June 1910), 11 which details the transmission of stories out of New York. New York's role as an epicenter was enhanced with the publication of The Social Evil in New York City, a report by the Committee of

addition, organizations such as the National Vigilance Association and the American Purity Alliance, both based in New York, and the Wisconsin-based World Purity Organization were active throughout these years both on their own and in conjunction with Chicago's reformers and used their publications, conferences, and speaking tours to convince other reformers and the general public that white slavery was a national problem.¹⁰⁸ The spread of the white-slavery panic was, to a large degree, the result of the activities of these reformers, both in and out of Chicago, whose cross-country tours spread the white-slavery narratives throughout the nation.¹⁰⁹

Fourteen in 1910 and with the convening of the Rockefeller Grand Jury to investigate whether or not a white-slavery syndicate existed in the U.S. during the same year. This, in turn resulted in the formation of the Bureau of Social Hygiene in New York which undertook additional investigations into vice conditions and white slavery in the city. For a history of these developments in New York see Willoughby Cyrus Waterman, Prostitution and its Repression in New York City 1900-1931 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932). See also, James Bronson Reynolds, "Procuring and Prostitution in New York," in The Great War, 205-215; "The Rockefeller Grand Jury," in The Great War, 216-236; "The Social Evil in New York City," Vigilance 23, no. 10 (July 1910), 3-8; "Investigation Almost Completed in New York," Vigilance 26, no. 2 (February 1913), 25-26. For a full-length investigation of conditions in New York commissioned by the Bureau of Social Hygiene see George Kneeland, Commercialized Prostitution in New York City (New York: Century Co., 1913).

¹⁰⁸"A Rapidly Growing Evil," The Philanthropist 22, no. 3 (October 1908), 10; "National Vigilance Committee," The Philanthropist 22, no. 1 (April 1908), 24-48; "The Prevalence of White Slavery," Vigilance 24, no. 9 (October 1911), 17-20. "Vigilance" was the new name of the official journal of the American Purity Alliance who began publishing it jointly with the National Vigilance Association in January 1910. It replaced The Philanthropist.

¹⁰⁹Touring was not a new way to promote the social purity issues or the crusade against white slavery. Nineteenth-century reformers such as Kate Bushnell used the technique as well, traveling both nationally and internationally as missionaries in support of their goals. For a description of Bushnell's international tours in the 1890s see Ian Tyrell, Woman's World, Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 197-202. As we have seen, the growth of concerns over white slavery were, in the first place, promoted by the international touring of British white-slavery crusaders, such as Stead, who brought their message to America in the late nineteenth century. British reformers, notably William Coote, continued to tour internationally to push the formation of National Vigilance Committees to combat white slavery throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century. See Coote, A Vision.

Roe, whose prosecutions had convinced him that the trafficking in girls was a national problem, was among the busiest of the touring crusaders and his trips out of Chicago frequently exported the struggle against white slavery into the towns where he traveled.¹¹⁰ Alleging, for instance, that he had discovered a Chicago-St. Louis gang of white slavers through his work in Chicago, Roe went to St. Louis where he convinced authorities to arrest a local saloonkeeper for his supposed role in shipping girls to Chicago. While in the city, he reiterated his belief that there was an "underground railway" running out of St. Louis which transported white slaves to Chicago, Memphis and several other cities, a claim which helped motivate authorities in St. Louis to undertake their own investigations into white slavery in the city.¹¹¹ Similarly, Roe's trip to Cincinnati in the summer of 1910, where he shocked his audience by claiming that white slavers had settled in the city, resulted in the formation of the Cincinnati Vigilance Society, an organization committed to unearthing and ending Cincinnati's purported participation in the trafficking of women.¹¹² Roe's tours also aimed at urging the passage of both state and federal legislation against white slavery. In 1910 alone, Roe gave over 100 speeches in different

¹¹⁰For Roe's claims that white slavery was occurring across the country see Roe, "Large Cities are White Slave Markets" and "From the Atlantic to the Pacific, both in The Great War, 169-185, 261-280. Roe also claimed that his prosecutions were a cause of the diffusion of white slavery out of Chicago because, he alleged, they had scared procurers into fleeing Chicago and forced them to establish their businesses in other cities. See Roe, Panders, 213. Members of the American Purity Alliance also believed that Chicago was exporting their traffickers to other cities. See "In the Middle West," The Philanthropist 22, no. 2 (July 1908), 5.

¹¹¹"St. Louis Joins in Fight," Chicago Daily Tribune, 30 October 1909, 2;" "St. Louis Aroused," The Philanthropist 23, no. 4 (January 1910), 3. By 1914, St. Louis, a city once known for implementing a system of regulation for prostitution, had a strong anti-segregation movement led by a "Committee of One Hundred for the Suppression of Commercialized Vice in St. Louis." See "Brief in Support of Citizen's Memorial to the Board of Police Commissioners of St. Louis, Missouri on the Illegality and Inexpediency of Segregating Commercialized Vice in St. Louis," (1914). St. Louis closed down its red light district in 1914. See Joseph Mayer, "The Passing of the Red Light District-Vice Investigations and Results," Social Hygiene 4, no. 2 (April 1918), 197-209.

¹¹²"Work of the Cincinnati Vigilance Society," Vigilance 24, no. 5 (May 1911), 23-28.

cities to drum up support for the Mann Act and appeared in cities such as Boston and New Orleans to lobby for the passage of state white-slavery bills modeled on the Illinois statute.¹¹³ Roe also took time away from Chicago, in 1910, to travel to San Francisco, where he helped authorities there conduct an investigation into West coast trafficking.¹¹⁴

In 1913, as Executive Secretary, Organizer, and General Counsel for the American Vigilance Association, Roe launched himself on an even more impressive, national speaking tour, which he titled "White Slavery--Cases and Results." He had ambitious plans for the tour and advertised that he was planning speeches in New York, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, and Iowa.¹¹⁵ Later reports indicate that Roe, who was now going by the title of "Director of the Extension and Lecture Department," also spoke in Washington D.C., New Jersey, Tennessee, Alabama, Michigan, Kentucky, Indiana, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. He spoke to a diverse group of people including gatherings at universities, YMCAs, public meetings, men's clubs, women's clubs, union meetings at Armories and churches, and physician's clubs.¹¹⁶ Roe claimed he was receiving requests to appear in regions across the country, including the east, southeast, middle west, south, west, and northwest and his talks were allegedly quite popular.¹¹⁷ Drawing from two letters written by individuals at colleges where he

¹¹³The Great War, 334 and 353; "Legislation in Massachusetts," Vigilance 23, no. 8 (May 1910), 3. See also, Vigilance 23, no. 7 (April 1910), 12.

¹¹⁴"Investigating San Francisco Vice," Vigilance 23, no. 14 (November 1910), 5. For a summary of the findings of this vice investigation see Rev. Jacob Nieto, "Are There Procurers in San Francisco?," in The Great War, 253-260.

¹¹⁵Vigilance 26, no. 3 (March 1913), 23. The American Vigilance Association was formed as the result of a merger between the American Purity Alliance and the National Vigilance Committee in 1912. See "An Extension of Our Work," Vigilance 25, no. 3 (March 1912), 3-5.

¹¹⁶"Significant Work of the American Vigilance Association," Vigilance 26, no. 3 (March 1913), 3-5; "Activities of the American Vigilance Association," Vigilance 27, no. 6 (June 1913), 21.

¹¹⁷Vigilance 27, no. 9 (September 1913).

spoke in Virginia and Pennsylvania, Roe noted that his talks were well attended by capacity crowds. At Pennsylvania State College his message reached a coed audience of 1,200 on Saturday night and another 1,300 men on Sunday night, 700 of whom stayed after the talk to ask questions of Roe.¹¹⁸

Roe was also not the only white-slavery crusader traveling the tour circuit.¹¹⁹ Ernest Bell, for instance, was also crisscrossing the nation as both a representative of the Midnight Mission and as part of a larger group of twenty-four representatives from the Wisconsin-based American Purity Federation, a group which traveled more than seven thousand miles from Chicago to Western Canada, and through the Pacific and Gulf States in 1910.¹²⁰ Three years later, the World's Purity Federation embarked upon another international campaign to spread the battle against the white-slave traffic, traveling through Eastern Canada, the Atlantic coast states, and the south.¹²¹ Other reformers stayed closer to home and focused on finding more novel ways to entice listeners to their lectures on white slavery. The Superintendent of the Whosoever-Will Rescue Mission in San Francisco, J.C. Westenberg, for instance, developed a stereopticon expose of the

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Even the detectives assigned to Roe to investigate the white-slavery traffic were traveling to other cities to help local authorities discover how bad vice conditions in their cities were. See The Great War, 385.

¹²⁰See "Record of Proceedings, November 8, 1910," Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-1 for details of Bell's trips with the American Purity Federation and Bell's letters to his wife in Bell Archives, Box 2, file 2-11 which indicate he was traveling in cities as far-flung as Ohio, Texas, Kentucky, and New York. Bell also traveled to Europe to investigate vice conditions there in 1911 and attended international conferences on white slavery. See "Some Observations in Europe," Home Defender in Bell Archives, Box 4, file 4-8 and his delegates ticket for the 5th Annual Congress for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic held in Westminster in 1913 in Bell Archives, Box 2, file 2-1. For additional details of the tour launched by the American Purity Federation see "A Traveling Purity Campaign," Vigilance 23, no. 14 (November 1910), 3 and Steadwell, 446-447. The group got as far north as Winnipeg where they held meetings in more than 30 protestant churches.

¹²¹"An Eastern Tour," Vigilance 25, no. 4 (April 1912), 21.

White Slave Traffic detailing how white slaves were trapped, drugged, sold, and ruined by evil procurers which he presented, along with his lecture on the topic, in churches across California.¹²²

The touring circuits of these reformers helps explain how the discourse on white slavery, and the resulting activism against the perceived evil, spread out of epicenters like Chicago and New York and into towns across the country. It is, however, only part of the story. The intrepid reformers were aided in their goal of getting the word out by the circulation of their white-slavery narratives through a host of other mediums, including their own publications, newspapers, and magazines. The reformers were, in the first place, an incredibly prolific group and produced an unbelievable number of white-slavery monographs during the years of the white-slavery panic. Bearing titles such as My Little Sister, Horrors of the White Slave Trade, War on the White Slave Trade, The White Slave Traffic in America, Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls, The Shame of a Great Nation, How to Prevent the Traffic in Girls, Panders and Their White Slaves, Crimes of the White Slavers, The White Slave Traffic versus the American Home, and The Black Traffic in White Girls, the books were sold and distributed through magazines, reformer's groups, peddled in rural areas by subscription through book salesmen and, occasionally, given away free to the public.¹²³ Other monographs, published more for entertainment than to

¹²²J. C. Westenberg, "The White Slave Traffic Expose" and "Fighting Against Evil in Barbary Coast: J.C. Westenberg Flays the White Slave Traffic Before Packed Audience," Santa Cruz Sentinel, Dec. 9, 1911 both in Bell Archives, Box 4, folder 4-8. Chicago's Midnight Mission also decided to make a series of lantern slides in 1909 of pictures taken in the Red Light District to use in conjunction with their addresses. See "Director's Meeting of the Midnight Mission, November 1909," Bell Archives, Box 4, file 4-9.

¹²³The Girl That Disappears and The White Slave Traffic were both offered for sale through The Survey. See The Survey 12 August 1911. Purity magazines also filled orders for white-slavery books. See The National Prohibitionist (December 16, 1909). Purity publications also distributed and advertised the publications. New subscribers to Vigilance were offered one copy of either The White Slave Traffic in America, Panders and Their White Slaves or The Great War on White Slavery as a bonus for signing up in 1912. See "Special Offer," Vigilance 25, no. 4 (April 1912), 23. Vigilance was also active in

aid the cause of reform bore equally sensational titles and helped spread the panic.¹²⁴ There were, indeed, so many books published on the topic that it seems as though there simply weren't enough titles to go around and many texts, such as The Girl Who Disappeared, The Girl That Disappeared, and The Girl That Disappears bore names which could hardly be distinguished from one another.¹²⁵ In spite of the seeming glut of books on the topic, they were popular. Ernest Bell's Traffic in Girls, for instance, sold more than 400,000 copies and Reginald Kauffman's House of Bondage was in its fourteenth edition within two years of its original publication.¹²⁶ Chicago and its

advertising white-slavery books. See the advertisement for My Little Sister in Vol. 26, no. 6 (June 1913), 23 which heralded the book as the "'Uncle Tom's Cabin' of the White Slave Traffic" and credited it with "bringing home to the great, inert, indifferent, ignorant mass of the public the dreadful reality of the white slave traffic." In addition, the inscription on my Panders and their White Slaves reads "Russell Hayes, Prairie City Iowa, Distributed freely to the public at Williams Bay, Wis. June 24, 1912. The 'Soldiers in the Field,' as the publishers called them, who distributed the books door to door were given salesman's samples of Roe's Great War which included all the illustrations and portions of each chapter to help them sell the books. They were also given a short pamphlet to help them convince buyers to purchase the books which stressed, in part, that every copy they placed in a home was a "BULLET IN THE HIDE OF THE MONSTER OCTOPUS--THE WHITE SLAVE TRADE." It was also the determining factor in how much they got paid and, to that end, the publishers listed the names of agents and the numbers of books they sold in states across the country. This list indicates that The Great War on White Slavery was being peddled in Missouri, Oregon, Florida, Colorado, Washington, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee Nebraska, New York, Utah, Oklahoma, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. On some occasions reformers distributed their books themselves if they felt they had a needy reader. Bell, for instance, took copies of his War on the White Slave Trade and Clifford Roe's Horrors of the White Slave Trade to Chicago's Mayor Harrison. See Daniels, 82.

¹²⁴See for instance, John Dillon, From Dance Hall to White Slavery (Chicago: Charles C. Thompson Co., 1913) and H.M. Lytle, The Tragedies of the White Slaves (New York: Padell Book and Magazine Co., n.d).

¹²⁵Adding to the confusion was the fact that reformers like Roe and Bell were re-issuing the same book under different titles and covers. Roe's The Great War on White Slavery and his Horrors of the White Slave Trade were identical aside from having been published in the United States and Britain, respectively. Similarly, Bell's Fighting the Traffic and his War on the White Slave Trade were identical, separated only by one year and a different publisher.

¹²⁶Daniels, 63; Connelly, 115.

Cesspools of Infamy, which detailed Chicago's struggle against the white-slave traffic, went through sixteen editions.¹²⁷

These monographs were supplemented by a host of pamphlets, written and distributed by reformers, and countless articles which ran in purity journals, such as Vigilance and The Light.¹²⁸ In the years following 1907, these journals began focusing almost exclusively on issues of prostitution and white slavery, in part because the features on white slavery were being requested by readers. In justifying why they were running endless pages of what they called the "newspaper roll" of white slavery, which merely listed cases from across the country, the editors of Vigilance cited continued interest in the articles among those receiving the journal.¹²⁹ The white-slavery panic may have, in fact, increased the journals' popularity itself. The journal which would become Vigilance in 1910, reported that they had a 50% increase in their circulation during the period from 1908-1909.¹³⁰ They were still, however, only reaching roughly 1,000 people in 1911.¹³¹ The Light, the official journal of the American Purity Federation claimed a much larger readership. The organization's president, B.S. Steadwell, stated in 1910 that the journal

¹²⁷Wilson.

¹²⁸Distributing their message by pamphlet was an early focus on Chicago's white-slavery reformers. One of the first things they did upon organizing in November of 1907 was to appoint a sub-committee to prepare a pamphlet to set forth the "facts" of white slavery. See "Chicago Aroused," 9. For a sample of later pamphlets produced by the Midnight Mission to spread the word of white slavery see If this were your Daughter, in Ernest Bell Archives, Box 6, file 6-7 and It is a Penitentiary Offense, which re-printed Illinois' pandering law and stated that "No, 'white slave' need remain in slavery in this state of Abraham Lincoln who made the black slaves free." in Bell Archives, Box 7, file 7-4.

Pamphlets were also published and distributed through other individuals who were not necessarily connected to the white-slavery reformers or their organizations. See Dangers of a Large City or the System of the Underworld: Exposing the White Slave Traffic, (Chicago: n.p., n.d.) and Walker's Review of White Slavery, (Jas. Walker, 1912).

¹²⁹"Newspaper Roll of 'White Slave' Cases," Vigilance 27, no. 10 (October 1913), 21-28.

¹³⁰"Report of the Annual Meeting of the American Purity Alliance," The Philanthropist 23, no. 1 (April 1909), 4-16. They also noted an increased demand for their pamphlets.

¹³¹"Accomplishments," Vigilance 24, no. 2 (February 1911), 14-16.

was "the most widely circulated purity magazine in the world, reaching at the present time fully seventy-five thousand readers in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and foreign countries."¹³² Even this, however, would pale in comparison to the numbers of individuals across the country who came into contact with the narratives of white slavery through newspapers and mainstream magazines.

To be sure, few newspapers could rival the Chicago Tribune for their continuous, sensational coverage of the white-slavery panic. As we have seen, the were intimately involved in the crusade both in terms of disseminating the stories of the white slaves and funding investigations. In the process, the gained accolades from Chicago reformers for their coverage of stories of missing girls, how they were kidnapped, the trials of procurers, and the efforts of reformers to halt the traffic in women.¹³³ Dailies in New York, Detroit, Atlanta, Milwaukee and other cities did, however, manage to find their own local white-slavery cases to cover and, when they couldn't, they printed news of the cases in cities like Chicago and New York.¹³⁴ When Ella Gingles claimed in 1909 that she had been

¹³²Steadwell, 446.

¹³³On their funding of the white-slavery crusade in Chicago see The Great War, 193 and "Letter to Rev. John Timothy Stone date November 21, 1910," in Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-1 in which Bell states that the Chicago Tribune had given over \$12,000 to the crusade. For reformers crediting the Chicago Tribune see "Address of Ernest A. Bell", Friends' Intelligence Supplement (Oct., 10, 1908): 70-71, "First Annual Report," Philanthropist 23, no. 1 (April 1909), 22 and Barnes, "Letter to the Editor," 15 July 1910, 4. For some of the more sensational of the Chicago Tribune's articles on white slavery see the full page story they ran on July 26, 1908 which portrayed white slavery as a large octopus encircling girls in schools, department stores, factories, at home, in railroad depots, at theatrical agencies, in offices, and on their farms. They regularly covered the different procuring cases which were pending on a daily basis. Other Chicago papers, including the Chicago Record-Herald, also devoted considerable space to white-slavery arrests and prosecutions.

¹³⁴See "Savannah Girls Held in Mobile," Atlanta Constitution, 13 August 1912, 9; "Young Atlanta Girl Escapes Vice Trap," Atlanta Constitution, 9 December 1912, 1; "Girls Blame Nickel Dance Halls for Their Downfall," San Francisco Chronicle, 14 June 1910. On newspapers outside Chicago and New York publishing white-slavery stories from those cities' newspapers see "Considering the Case," Philanthropist 23, no. 9 (June 1910), 11.

kidnapped and sexually abused in a bathtub in a Chicago hotel by white slavers the story was given extensive press coverage in cities like Detroit.¹³⁵ Coverage of white-slavery cases in different newspapers across the country was so widespread in the latter years of the panic that when Vigilance began publishing their "newspaper roll calls" of white-slavery cases in 1913, they pulled stories from newspapers in 36 different states and Washington, D.C. in a period which covered only four months.¹³⁶

In addition to newspapers, national and regional magazines were active in disseminating the narratives of white slavery and news of reformers' activities to the general public. McClure's Magazine, as we have seen, was a pivotal player early in the white-slavery scare, inciting Chicago's reformers with charges that procurers were operating in the city as early as April of 1907. They continued to construct stories around issues of white-slavery in coming years. George Kibbe Turner's piece "The Daughters of the Poor," published in November of 1909, was particularly important for disseminating Turner's belief that procurers from New York, which he saw as the preeminent center of white slavery in the United States, were fanning out across the country and setting up shop in cities such as New Jersey, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Seattle, and New Orleans.¹³⁷ Other magazines also printed stories from New

¹³⁵See for example, "Come, Will Be Killed," Detroit Free Press, 18 February 1909; "Plot of Girl Says Officers," Detroit Free Press, 19 February 1909; "Girl Victim of an Alleged Assault in Chicago Hotel," Detroit Free Press, 20 February 1909; "Ella Gingles is Defended by Minister; Appears in Pulpit," Detroit Free Press, 12 July 1909; "Both Found Not Guilty," Detroit Free Press, 20 July 1909.

¹³⁶These figures are based on the "Newspaper Roll of 'White Slave' Cases" listed in five months. See Vigilance 27, no. 9 (September 1913), 16-23; Vigilance 27, no. 10 (October 1913), 21-28; Vigilance 27, no. 11 (November 1913), 21-28; Vigilance 27, no. 12 (December 1913), 29-34; Vigilance 28, no. 1 (January 1914), 26-32.

¹³⁷Turner, "The Daughters of the Poor," 45-61. See also, McClure, "Tammany's Control;" McClure, "The Tammanizing of a Civilization;" "Five White Slave Trade Investigations," McClure's Magazine 35 (July 1910): 346-348, "Rockefeller Grand Jury Report," McClure's Magazine 35 (August 1910): 471-473. Turner's allegations that the procurers were predominantly Jewish, an important discursive construction in itself, will be discussed in chapter three.

Yorkers supposedly in the know on issues of white slavery. Hampton's Magazine, for instance, ran a story by the former commissioner of police in New York in which he claimed that large numbers of foreign women were sold as "stock" at "well-established prices."¹³⁸ Fictional pieces on white slavery were also published by magazines such as The Forum which printed a one-act play relating the story of Margaret, a runaway who was rescued from the brothel she had been imprisoned in when her father, unaware his daughter was missing and in the brothel, volunteered to "break in" the new girl.¹³⁹ Regional magazines also circulated both "factual" and fictional stories on both national and international conditions. The Texas-based Home Defender, for instance, ran the serialized story of Flora who thought she was going to art school on a full scholarship but, instead, ended up imprisoned in a brothel and Ernest Bell's "Observations" on conditions in Europe.¹⁴⁰ Other magazines, such as The Survey, Outlook, and Current Literature also ran stories and notices on the revelations and activities of the white-slave crusaders.¹⁴¹

Woman's World, which reached two million homes across the country, was another key supporter of the white-slavery crusaders, providing them with not only a

¹³⁸Theodore A. Bingham, "The Girl that Disappears," Hampton's Magazine 25 (November 1910): 559-573.

¹³⁹Witter Bynner, "Tiger," The Forum (May 1913): 522-547.

¹⁴⁰I.M. Page, "The Girl That Disappeared" and Ernest Bell, "Some Observations in Europe," both printed in The Home Defender 1, no. 4 (March 1912), published in Hamlin, Texas.

¹⁴¹See for instance, "Conference on the White Slave Trade," The Survey (August 20, 1910): 714-715; "Recent Advances Against the Social Evil in New York," The Survey (September 17, 1910): 858-865; "The War on White Slavery," The Survey (March 23, 1912): 1987; "National Merger to Fight White Slavery," The Survey (March 30, 1912): 1991-1992; "Slave Traffic in America," Outlook 93 (November 6, 1909): 528-529; "The United States and the Importation of Vice," Outlook 92 (May 29, 1909); "White Slave Traffic," Outlook 95 (July 16, 1910): 545-546; "White Slave Revelations," Current Literature 47 (December 1909): 594-598. Social purity and religious magazines also printed stories on white slavery. See for instance, "White Slave Traffic Number," Word and Work 35 (Aug. 1913) and "Civilization's Crowning Infamy," The National Prohibitionist (December 16, 1909).

national forum to spread their message but also organizational help and funding.¹⁴² In addition to paying Ernest Bell \$400 as an advance on his book Traffic in Girls, the president of Currier Publishing, which published Woman's World, organized a committee to push for the passage of white-slavery legislation in states across the country.¹⁴³ In conjunction with the formation of this committee, which included prominent reformers such as Roe, Bell, and Edward O. Janney, Currier publishing issued a pamphlet titled "Smashing the Traffic," which detailed what was being done in each state to push for new pandering laws.¹⁴⁴ Woman's World also published articles by Edwin Sims and other Chicago reformers on the white-slave trade which warned parents that their country daughters were in imminent danger from procurers on the prowl for young innocents.¹⁴⁵ Reformers claimed that over four million copies of these articles had been distributed by April of 1909 and anticipated the release of another two million additional copies in coming months.¹⁴⁶

Not all the white-slavery stories circulating during these years were, however, created by reformers or vice commissions. The narratives were also being constructed by the very commercial interests they sought to police, namely the popular entertainment

¹⁴²Other women's magazines also published stories on white slavery. See for instance, the fictional detective story written by Arthur Reeve titled "The White Slave" which ran in Cosmopolitan (June, 1912): 128-139.

¹⁴³"Minutes of the Director's Meeting for the Midnight Mission for Oct. 11, 1909," Bell Archives, Box 4, file 4-9; Smashing the Traffic.

¹⁴⁴Smashing the Traffic.

¹⁴⁵Edwin Sims, "The White Slave Trade of Today," Woman's World 24, no. 9 (September 1908), 1-2; Harry Parkin, "Practical Means of Protecting Girls;" Edwin Sims, "Why Girls Go Astray," Woman's World 24, no. 12 (December 1908).

¹⁴⁶"Annual Report," Philanthropist 23, no. 1 (April 1909), 22. The articles by Sims and Parkin were widely published in pamphlets and monographs following their appearance in Woman's World. See "Smashing the White Slave Trade," E. Norine Law, The Shame of a Great Nation (Pennsylvania: United Evangelical Publishing Home, 1909) which re-printed both of Sims' articles, Parkins', and Turner's "Daughter of the Poor;" Fighting the Traffic which reprinted, with minor changes, Sims' "The White Slave Trade of Today" and Parkin's "Practical Means."

industry. Movies makers, in particular, were quick to recognize the commercial value of the white-slavery stories. Bearing titles like "The Traffic in Souls", "The House of Bondage", "The Inside of the White Traffic", "The Expose of the White Slave Traffic," and "A Victim of Sin", a plethora of films appeared on the topic and played in cities across the country. There were, in fact, so many movies released that one reviewer argues that a whole new genre of films, "the White Slave picture", emerged in the wake of 1913 release of "Traffic in Souls."¹⁴⁷ Given the popularity of this film it is easy to imagine why others tried to follow suit. The theater owners of Weber's Theater in New York turned away 1,000 people the first day it was shown at the theater and had to add a fourth daily showing to accommodate the crowd.¹⁴⁸ The movie eventually ran in 28 theaters within one month of being released in New York and crowds packed theaters as far away as Lexington, KY to view one of the forty reels produced by Universal to take the film on the road.¹⁴⁹ With its costly 25 cents admission price, the film would ultimately earn a stunning \$450,000.¹⁵⁰ Other smaller productions also filled the theaters of urban towns. In Defiance, Ohio, for example, the "High Class" production "The Black Traffic in White Girls and Why Girls Go Wrong." was aired in the Citizen's Opera House.¹⁵¹

It would seem as though the dissemination of the narratives and the growth of white-slavery activism in towns across the country would have been a pleasing

¹⁴⁷For an analysis of the new white-slave film genre see Robert C. Allen, "Traffic in Souls" Sight and Sound 44 (Winter 1974-75): 50-52. For an excellent analysis of the white-slavery films as narrative constructions which allow for multiple readings see Janet Staiger, Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 116-146. For a more technical analysis of the Traffic in Souls see Ben Brewster, "Traffic in Souls: An Experiment in Feature-Length Narrative Construction," Cinema Journal 31, no. 1 (Fall 1991): 37-56.

¹⁴⁸"Traffic in Souls' Makes Hit," The Moving Picture World (December 6, 1913): 1157.

¹⁴⁹Allen, 50; Gregory Waller, Main Street Amusements: Movies and Commercial Entertainment in a Southern City, 1896-1930 (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 140.

¹⁵⁰Allen, 50.

¹⁵¹Theater Bill, "Black Traffic in White Girls and Why Girls Go Wrong."

development for the reformers who were working so hard to disseminate it but the proliferation of organizations and narratives devoted to exposing the evils of white slavery presented problems of its own. On the one hand, reformers were concerned with the ways in which the white-slavery narratives were being adapted for commercial ventures.¹⁵² Reformers, forced to defend themselves against charges that they were also participating in peddling pornography, argued constantly that they were only publicizing the stories of the white slaves so "the innocent may be protected, the ignorant enlightened, the foolish and reckless warned, the weak safeguarded, the wicked and designing thwarted, and the traffic suppressed."¹⁵³ It was for them the crucial defining factor which separated their "appropriate" public discourse on white slavery from the more "inappropriate" variety. As Harry Parkin, Assistant U.S. District Attorney in Chicago, stated:

There could be no legitimate excuse for exploiting the white slave trade in the public prints without definite and sincere purpose of securing practical and substantial protection against this terrible social scourge.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵²Reformer's concerns over the ways in which their stories of prostitution and white slavery were being utilized by other groups were not new in the twentieth century. For a nineteenth century example see "Misleading Fiction," The Philanthropist 11, no. 6 (June 1896), 12-13. The W.C.T.U. was also very vocal in their criticism of the sensational portrayals of vice and white slavery in the Police Gazette during the latter part of the nineteenth century. See Alison Parker, Purifying America: Women, Cultural Reform, and Pro-Censorship Activism, 1873-1933 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997) and Gene Smith and Jayne Barry Smith (eds.), The Police Gazette (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972).

¹⁵³O. Edward Janney, The White Slave Traffic in America (New York: National Vigilance Committee, 1911), 6. See also, Sims, "The White Slave Trade of Today," and Mrs. Ophelia Amigh, "More About the Traffic in Girls," in Smashing. For the accusation that white-slavery reformers were circulating pornographic tales see Brand Whitlock, Forty Years of It (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1913), 270.

¹⁵⁴Parkin, "Practical Means." While most reformers, as we have seen, welcomed the publicity provided by the newspapers they were also engaged in an ongoing debate over the relationship between crime and publicity. Many felt that publicizing specific crimes would encourage copycat crimes. See "The Newspapers and Juvenile Crime," in J.P.A. Papers, Folder 3.

For all of Parkin's concern over "public prints," reformer's concerns over the use of white-slavery narratives in print media were amplified when movies on the topic started emerging during the latter years of the panic. Movies such as "Traffic in Souls" and "Inside the White Slave Trade" were considered by many reformers as subversive and dangerous texts capable of undermining their own efforts. In the 1913 movie "Traffic in Souls," for instance, the head of the Citizens League, charged with ridding the city of white slavery, is actually a white slaver himself and, as reviewers noted at the time, the actor chosen for his role bore an unmistakable resemblance to John D. Rockefeller, whose Grand Jury on white slavery was, the movie studio claimed, the factual basis for their film.¹⁵⁵ Other films, such as "Inside the White Slave Trade," were deemed totally objectionable by reformers. Writing of the film in editorials to The Outlook, reformers voiced concerns that the film, which portrayed the life of the white slaver and the prostitute as one of relative ease and luxury, would attract boys and mentally-deficient young women into the life.¹⁵⁶

There was also a growing concern among reformers that even their own colleagues were beginning to construct exaggerated tales of white slavery in an effort to provide the

¹⁵⁵"Review of Traffic in Souls," Variety (November 28, 1913), 12. See also, "Traffic in Souls," The Moving Picture World 18, no. 8 (November 22, 1913), 849. The film industry was also quick to allege that the white-slave movies were not being made by studio regulars but were, in fact, being undertaken by "strangers" looking to make quick money. See "Facts and Comments," The Moving Picture World 19, no. 4 (January 24, 1914), 387.

¹⁵⁶"The White Slave Films: A Review," The Outlook (February 14, 1914), 345-350. See also, "The White Slave Films," The Outlook (January 17, 1914) in which the editors argued that movies such as "Traffic in Souls" were useful and "democratic" ways to convey information on white slavery. It was this article which provoked the editorials which ran in the February issue. "Inside the White Slave Traffic" was eventually banned as obscene in New York. See " 'White Slave' Case for Jury Trial," The Moving Picture World 19, no. 6 (February 7, 1914), 684 and "Facts and Comments," The Moving Picture World 19, no. 12 (March 21, 1914), 1503. For a general review of the connections between censorship and social purity see Parker and Paul Boyer, Purity in Print: The Vice-Society Movement and Book Censorship in America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968).

movement with the "proof" skeptics were demanding. In response, reformers like Roe grew exceptionally cautious over providing specific numbers and cautioning other reformers to be careful not to overstate the facts, particularly with regard to the numbers of white slaves they claimed were being held in sexual bondage.¹⁵⁷ Roe felt he was pursuing the safest course by "steadfastly" refusing to "discuss numbers and thereby jeopardize the cause" to which, he noted, he had devoted the "best years of his life."¹⁵⁸ Other reformers echoed Roe's belief that reformers should avoid being drawn into the quagmire of "fanciful figures."¹⁵⁹ The editors of Vigilance, for example, noted that even

¹⁵⁷Many reformers, throughout the period, drew their statistics from a nineteenth-century investigation undertaken by B.S. Steadwell, who was, at the time, head of the Northwestern Purity Alliance. Steadwell gathered evidence from mayors, police chiefs, reformers, and ministers in cities with over 25,000 inhabitants in an effort to determine how many prostitutes there were in the United States in 1897 and 1898. Steadwell estimated that there were at least 300,000 prostitutes in the United States who lived as prostitutes, on average, a mere five years. While he did not believe that all of them died within five years, arguing instead that some left for honorable professions, returned home, were married, or were "rescued, the net loss in the number of prostitutes led Steadwell, and a host of other reformers, to argue that the system of prostitution operating in the United States required 60,000 fresh women a year, or 5,000 a month, to supply the constant demand. See Steadwell, 15-16. For other reformers who repeated these numbers see

Rev. Guy F. Phelps, Ethel Vale: The White Slave (Chicago: Christian Witness Co., 1910), vii; Lytle, 91; Robert O. Harland, The Vice Bondage of a Great City (Chicago: The Young People's Civic League, 1912), 98.

¹⁵⁸Clifford Roe, "Large Cities are White Slave Markets," in The Great War, 170. Roe had not, however, always been so reticent to discuss figures. Tellingly, he continuously lowered his estimates as the years passed. In February of 1909 he was arguing that 6,000 new prostitutes were needed in Chicago each year, 80% of which, he claimed, would be white slaves, forced into the life against their will. In 1910, he had modified his estimates to argue that only 1,000 new prostitutes were needed in Chicago each year, 60% of whom, he claimed, would be white slaves. In 1911, fearful of jeopardizing the cause, he retained the figure of 1,000 new prostitutes each year but speculated that only 50% would be involuntary recruits. See "Nations Act Against the White Slave Trade," Charities and the Commons (February 20, 1909), 979-980; "Lash on White Slavery," Chicago Tribune 8 February 1909; Roe, "Warfare Against the White Slave Trade," in Fighting the Traffic, 141; Roe, "Large Cities," 170-171.

¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 170.

those who were typically "truthful and honest" were being "drawn quickly and surely to inexcusable exaggeration and misstatement" by demands that they provide hard numbers to arouse public sentiment and back up their claims as to the "horrors" of white slavery.¹⁶⁰

Reformers' fears that any numbers they put forth would be used against them were matched by their concerns that even the most careful of investigations would be misrepresented by the media in ways which undermined their crusade. They had good cause for concern. When, for instance, the New York's Rockefeller Grand Jury Report was released in June of 1910, the press reported it under a headline which read "White Slavery Not in New York" and reported that the Grand Jury had found allegations of white slavery to be myths. The Grand Jury, convened to determine whether or not there was any evidence of a formal, organized body engaging in the white slave traffic, had reported no such thing. While they did state that they had been unable to uncover any evidence of a formal syndicate, they did claim to have a number of loosely connected individuals who were engaging in the trafficking throughout the city. As reformers noted, however, the damage of the headlines had been done. Roe estimated that it took thousands of dollars and almost a year of "hard patient work" to re-convince the public that white slavery was occurring in New York.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰"Editorial," Vigilance 20, no. 11 (November 1912), 1-2. This editorial stressed the impossibility of ever getting any real figures on the number of prostitutes or white slaves in different cities across the country. Skeptics in Chicago were, by 1913, arguing that white-slavery reformers had gotten so carried away by their emotions, in both the U.S. and Britain, that they were using unsubstantiated stories to pass repressive legislation. See "Hysteria and Reform," Chicago Tribune 13 July 1913. The growing doubt over the truth of the narratives and the waning of the white-slavery panic will be discussed in the conclusion.

¹⁶¹Clifford Roe, "The Rockefeller Grand Jury Presentment," in The Great War, 216-217. Roe's text also reproduced the presentment of the Grand Jury. See 230-236. For more information on the Rockefeller Grand Jury and more dismayed reactions from reformers over how it was reported see Theodore Bingham, The Girl That Disappears (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1911), 22-28; "New York's White-Slave Grand Jury," Vigilance 23, no. 11 (August 1910), 8-9; "The Rockefeller Jury Report," Vigilance 23, no. 12 (September 1910), 12; Janney, 55-75; "The 'White Slave' Report," Literary Digest 41 (July 9, 1910):

In addition to concerns about controlling the content of the narratives of white slavery and their portrayal in the popular media, reformers were also deeply troubled that the proliferation of organizations and "new converts" to the cause were turning the movement into an uncontrollable mass of antagonistic groups with different, and sometimes threatening, goals. To be sure, the plethora of organizations and individuals seeking to lead the movement and take credit for its successes created friction among reformers, many of whom were apparently jealous of each other and engaged in what Roe termed "bickerings for honor and distinction in the fight."¹⁶² By 1910 the number of different organizations devoted to extinguishing the white-slave traffic was staggering, particularly in Chicago where raids and stings against white slavers were seemingly being conducted by everyone, including Neighborhood Clubs.¹⁶³ Organizations devoted to battling the traffic sprang up rapidly throughout the city in a matter of months. Within two months of the formation of the Committee Directing and Maintaining an Office to Combat the Traffic in Girls in October of 1909, for instance, two other organizations emerged to vie with Roe and this group for police support and publicity in their own crusades against the traffic.¹⁶⁴ Although Roe met with some of these groups in an attempt to coordinate

45-46; Graham Taylor, "Recent Advances Against the Social Evil in New York," The Survey (September 17, 1910), 861-865.

¹⁶²Clifford Roe, "The White Slave Message From Chicago," in The Great War, 189-190. Roe was, of course, as guilty of this as anyone and even used the occasion of chastizing others for their jealousy to reiterate that the "present historic fight against white slavery in Chicago dates from the day Panzy Williams was convicted." which, obviously, makes him the instigator. See also, "Foes to Panders Near 'Civil War'," Chicago Tribune, 20 December 1909, 4.

¹⁶³"Girl Sold to Man; Seller Arrested," Chicago Tribune, 31 October 1909, 3. This article details the sting run by the Douglas Neighborhood club to "sting" a white slaver by arranging to purchase a girl in the fine tradition of William Stead.

¹⁶⁴One of these groups was the standing committee formed by the union of presidents and rabbies of Jewish congregations which appealed to the mayor to provide them with detectives to drive Jewish procurers out of the city, something Roe's organization was already actively doing with police detective help. See "Jews Smite Levee Traffic," Chicago Tribune, 4 October 1909, 1; "New White Slavery Arrest," Chicago Tribune, 17 October

their plans, their goals were exceptionally diverse, making an alliance difficult at best. One of the Jewish groups active in the crusade, for instance, was the Jewish branch of the Socialist party which blamed economic and industrial conditions for white slavery, a position many white-slavery crusaders, including the businessmen associated with Roe, could not support.¹⁶⁵

As the editors of Vigilance noted in 1912, the war against vice had made allies of old time reformers, modern social workers, businessmen, scientific men, physicians, educators, economists, socialists, and advocates of woman suffrage. They heralded the mass movement, noting that "whether or not we are in favor or not of Socialism and Woman's Suffrage," the support of the Suffragists and the Socialists was inspirational.¹⁶⁶ In some cases the support was more than inspirational. When, for instance, Chicago's club women joined the crusade they placed three of their members at Roe's disposal.¹⁶⁷ In spite of the free assistance it sometimes produced, however, the groundswell against white slavery clearly made Roe very nervous.

Expressing concern over the ways in which reformers other than himself might use the white-slavery agitation he had helped create, Roe was warning his readers, as early as 1910, that reformers should "hew straight to the line" which to Roe meant focusing on ending the procurement of girls by prosecuting their abductors. He cautioned that "Friends who try to aid in the extermination of panders hinder the very cause they would help by dragging it into the fights for other reforms."¹⁶⁸ In an effort to consolidate the forces

1909, 3; "Jews Preparing Roster of Vice," Chicago Tribune, 9 October 1909, 3." The other group formed, the Woman's Anti-Vice Crusade, was having troubles of their own getting police assistance and were complaining that they were, in fact, being harrassed by the police with threats and insults and that the police were warning the resort keepers, with the permission of the police inspector, to turn off their lights when the women approached. See Chicago Tribune, 31 December 1909, 3.

¹⁶⁵"Join Hands in War on White Slavery," Chicago Tribune, 6 October 1909, 3.

¹⁶⁶"Editorial," Vigilance 25, no. 7 (July 1912), 1-2.

¹⁶⁷"Women Plan Home for Girls," Chicago Tribune, 30 November 1909, 13.

¹⁶⁸Roe, Panders, 222.

against white slavery the American Purity Alliance and the National Vigilance Committee merged in April of 1912 to form the American Vigilance Committee and appointed Roe as executive secretary and general counsel. The merger was not only about blending these two national organizations. It was also undertaken in an effort to "coordinate" the efforts of all the groups battling the white-slave traffic across the country, including State and City Committees and Societies formed throughout the nation. Roe stressed that the consolidation was done to achieve "an enlarged spirit of fraternity in coordinating the efforts of all those interested in the cause" but also made it clear that once the Association had decided on a battle-plan they would take a "strenuous and determined stand" against methods which it deemed dangerous to the larger cause.¹⁶⁹

Undoubtedly, the most "dangerous" method being proposed by some white-slavery crusaders was the legalization of prostitution through the establishment of some form of regulation. Reformers, the majority of whom were abolitionists who argued that the only way to rid the world of white slavery was to eliminate the red light districts and repress prostitution, were deeply afraid that the new converts to the cause would take the easy way out and lean toward segregation.¹⁷⁰ It was a real threat. Pro-segregation reformers had, in fact, been arguing that tighter regulation of prostitution by the police and the government would eliminate white slavery since the nineteenth century and key figures in

¹⁶⁹Clifford Roe, "The American Vigilance Association," Vigilance 25, no. 4 (April 1912), 1-3. Chicago was now clearly the center of white-slavery agitation. The headquarters of the new organization were in Chicago and a number of prominent Chicagoans were brought on board the new organization, including Dean Sumner, Julius Rosenwald, Clifford Barnes and Jane Addams, who became the consulting editor for Vigilance in August of 1912. Eastern and western offices were established in New York and San Francisco.

¹⁷⁰"A Suggestive Voice," Vigilance 23, no. 5 (February 1910), 7. During the panic years, the "pro-regulation" position was often called the "pro-segregation" position. Both typically called for the segregation of prostitutes in a certain area of town, registration, and medical exams to check for VD.

the crusade during the panic years continued to advocate this solution.¹⁷¹ Harry Parkin, the Assistant U.S. District Attorney in Chicago who aided Sims in his investigations and arrests, was an advocate for the regulation and examination of prostitutes and supported his proposals by harnessing statistics and stories of how women were being bought and sold in cities like Chicago.¹⁷² Similarly, New York's Police Commissioner Bingham, who was a firm believer that women were being brought into the country "like cattle" to be sold and held as veritable slaves, argued that white slavery could best be eliminated through a system of segregation which placed prostitutes under the control of the police and subjected them to regular examination.¹⁷³

In reviewing the continued efforts of urban areas such as Atlantic City to establish systems of segregation and regulation of prostitution in 1911, Edward Janney noted that the most distressing part of all the plans was "the fact that some of those who favor segregation are the earnest friends of purity."¹⁷⁴ Even Chicago, where the campaign

¹⁷¹The debate over whether white slavery was best eliminated through abolition or regulation ripped through the International WCTU in 1898. Interestingly, the WCTU in the United States sided with the women who advocated segregation as a solution. For details on this debate see Tyrell, 202-211. For coverage of the debate in the U.S. purity press from an abolitionist standpoint see The Philanthropist 13, no. 1 (January 1898) and 13, no. 2 (April 1898). Regulation was also proposed as a solution to white slavery by a Grand Jury convened in Philadelphia in 1905. See "Philadelphia's Vice Crusade," The Philanthropist 22, no. 1 (April 1905), 4-5.

¹⁷²Statement of Parkin in "The Profits of Iniquity," Philanthropist 22, no. 4 (January 1909), 3.

¹⁷³Bingham, "The Girl That Disappears." See also, Bingham, "Policing Our Lawless Cities," Hampton's Magazine (September 1909); Bingham, The Girl That Disappears; "General Bingham on Lawless New York," The Literary Digest 39, no. 9 (August 29, 1909): 289-290. For another pro-segregation article which based their recommendations on the prevalence of white slavery see "White Slave Traffic Number," World and Work (August 1913) in Bell Archives, Box 7, file 7-4.

¹⁷⁴"President's Annual Address," Vigilance 24, no. 2 (February 1911), 8. For additional information on the debate over regulation in Atlantic City see "The Plight of Atlantic City," Vigilance 24, no. 1 (January 1911), 14-16.

Reformers who believed white slavery was inseparable from prostitution accused Bingham of being troubled by "moral faintheartedness" and argued that "common sense"

against white-slavery was flourishing, was not safe from calls for better segregation, rather than abolition, of vice.¹⁷⁵ The fear that reformers, police commissioners, and city governments would harness the discourse of white slavery to regulation schemes must have seemed, to the majority of reformers, a cruel irony after they had spent years constructing white-slavery narratives which sought to close the districts down.¹⁷⁶ Their concerns that the white-slavery panic would end up reinforcing segregated vice were, however, for naught. Within two years, cities around the country, including Chicago, had officially abolished their red-light districts thanks, in part, to the agitation the reformers had whipped up using the discourse of white slavery.¹⁷⁷ It was only one of the results of the white-slavery panic.

should have told Parkin that any plan which included "any sort of public endorsement, regulation or protection" for prostitution was unlikely to result in any improvements on the white-slavery front. See "Reviewing the Commissioner," Philanthropist 23, no. 3 (October 1909), 8-10; "The Profits of Iniquity." For a more detailed criticism of Bingham's plans as put forth in "The Girl" see "Colonel Bingham and Segregation," Vigilance 23, no. 15 (December 1910). Bingham's colleagues in criminology were also critical of his segregation scheme. See G.C. Fisher, "Review of The Girl That Disappears," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 2, no. 5 (January 1912), 804-805. For a strongly worded criticism of ministers who were pro-segregation see Boynton, "Deluded Divines" which ran in reforming and religious magazines throughout the country and which is located in Bell Archives, Box 4, file 4-8.

¹⁷⁵Graham Taylor, "Routing the Segregationists in Chicago," The Survey (November 30, 1912): 254-256; Testimony and Addresses on Segregation and Commercialized Vice (Chicago: American Vigilance Association, 1912). See also Harmon M. Campbell and John J. Flynn, Final Report Police Investigation, 42, 53 which was a report issued to Chicago's Mayor Harrison in 1912 by the Civil Service Commission. It advocated revising and amplifying the rules regarding vice and re-writing the laws on street walking to include graded increases in fines instead of abolishing the red-light district. It also advocated ending the policy of assigning detectives to work on "special duty" assignments, included the three detectives on loan to Roe for his white-slavery investigations.

¹⁷⁶For a highly inflammatory, anti-segregation piece see Ernest Bell, "Segregation versus Elimination," in The Great War, 305-318.

¹⁷⁷For information on the closure of the red-light district in Chicago see Walter Reckless, Vice in Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1933; repr., Montclair: Patterson Smith Publishing Corp., 1969), 4-7 and Barnes, "The Story of the Committee of Fifteen." As both contemporaries and historians have pointed out, the closure of red-light districts did

Consequences of the Panic

By 1912 concerns over trafficking in women for the purposes of prostitution had swept across the nation. Thanks in large part to activities in Chicago, where reformers and vice commission created narratives and templates for explaining and investigating the "evil," cities across the country had undertaken investigations of their own and, in many instances, achieved the "desired" result of pressuring the police to close down previously tolerated red-light districts.¹⁷⁸ This was true in areas such as the midwest and the east, where narratives on white-slavery had flourished since the nineteenth century and in the south, where concerns over the traffic in girls emerged only as a result of the dissemination of the panic in the twentieth century.¹⁷⁹ The prosecutions of alleged "white

not signal an end to prostitution. See Frederick Whitin, "Obstacles to Vice Repression," Social Hygiene 2, no. 2 (April 1916), 145-163, Joel Best, Controlling Vice (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), Rosen, 30-33, Reckless, 7-10 and 30-31.

¹⁷⁸The Chicago Vice Commission, convened in 1910 to investigate vice conditions in Chicago, played a critical role in encouraging the formation of similar commissions in other cities around the country and their report was widely circulated and cited both for its contents and methodology. For the ways in which their findings on white slavery were replicated in other city's studies see the introduction. For the circumstances surrounding the formation of the commission, their investigation, and their conclusions see their official report published as The Social Evil in Chicago. For an excellent secondary analysis of the Vice Commission see Connelly, 91-113. For a list of vice commission investigations and their relation to the closure of the red-light districts in the cities where they were undertaken see Joseph Mayer, "The Passing of the Red Light District-Vice Investigations and Results," Social Hygiene 4, no. 2 (April 1918), 199. See also, the list of vice reports in Vigilance 16, no. 5 (May 1913), 18-19. For some examples of these reports see Report of the Vice Commission of Minneapolis to His Honor, James C. Haynes (1911), The Social Evil in Syracuse (1913), Report of the Hartford Vice Commission (1913), Report of the Little Rock Vice Commission (1913), Report of the Portland (OR) Vice Commission (1913), A Report on the Existing Conditions with Recommendations to the Honorable Rudolph Blackenburg, Mayor of Philadelphia (1913), Report of the Commission for the Investigation of the White Slave Traffic (1914).

¹⁷⁹For a list of red-light districts closed during and shortly after the white-slavery agitation see Mayer, 199. See also, "Cities That Have Closed Their Red Light Districts During

slavers" under new pandering law passed for the purpose was, for those charged under the statutes, another serious consequence of the moral panic. While the numbers of men and women prosecuted under the state and federal statutes was never large, the investigators for the Justice Department's Bureau of Investigation did manage to convict 633 white slavers for violating the Mann Act within the first three years following the passage of the law. Five years later the number had climbed to 2,198.¹⁸⁰ Roe's white-slavery prosecutions in Chicago were also numerically small, but that was undoubtedly little comfort to those who found themselves charged with the crime.¹⁸¹

Men and women charged as procurers were not, however, the only victims of the white-slavery crusade. Instead, the "raids" to rescue the white slaves also resulted in an increase in arrests and convictions of women for prostitution. Chicago police arrests for prostitution related offenses skyrocketed from 1908 when they totaled 2,565 to 10,056 in 1914.¹⁸² If Chicago's general population of prostitutes faced heightened scrutiny and arrest as a result of the white-slave crusade, foreign prostitutes faced an even dimmer

1911 and 1912," *Vigilance* 26, no. 2 (February 1913), 28.

¹⁸⁰Connelly, 129. For federal prosecutions under the Mann Act see U.S. Department of Justice, *Annual Report of the Attorney General of the United States* (1913), 50-51, 361; (1914), 46; (1915), 43 (1916), 52. For details on the types of cases they were pursuing see Grittner, 97 and "The Work of the United States Department of Justice," *Vigilance* 25, no. 4 (April 1912), 13-17.

¹⁸¹The total number of men and women charged with pandering under the Illinois statute from 1909 until 1915 was 441. It is unclear what percentage of these cases resulted in convictions. See Reckless, 289. For more statistics on pandering see the Annual Reports for the Municipal Court of Chicago for the years 1909 through 1915. Other cities were seeing arrest figures in keeping with Chicago's. Cincinnati, for instance recorded 50 convictions for white slavery in 1911, a year Chicago chalked up 62 arrests. See "Events of Current Interest," *Vigilance* 25, no. 1 (January 1912), 20.

¹⁸²These figures are based on Reckless' numbers and include arrests for being an inmate or keeper of a disorderly house, being an inmate or keeper of a house of ill-fame and soliciting for prostitution and pandering. I have subtracted the pandering totals to arrive at these figures for prostitution arrests. See Reckless, 289. The number of women arrested for street solicitation in Chicago was also on the increase during these years. See Reckless, 157.

prospect, deportation. Reformers reported that in 1908, 124 prostitutes and other "immoral women" were denied entry into the country by immigration officials. One year later the number was over two and a half times that and stood at 323, in spite of the fact that the numbers of immigrants seeking admission had declined. The numbers of suspected procurers who had been turned away was also on the rise, increasing from 43 in 1908 to 181 in 1909.¹⁸³ When the numbers of those denied entry are combined with the numbers of those deported on the suspicion that they were prostitutes or procurers a similar increase is notable. In 1908 there were only 213 such deportations. By 1910 the number was 1,580.¹⁸⁴ From Roe's perspective, the prosecutions and deportations of white slavers was undoubtedly an indication that the campaign against white slavery had achieved its primary objective. For other reformers, however, the white-slavery narratives were a vehicle to pursue broader, more elusive, goals including the revitalization of white, American manhood. For these reformers, success was harder to measure.

¹⁸³ Grace Abbott, The Immigrant and the Community (New York: The Century Co., 1921), 172.

¹⁸⁴ See the extracts from the Annual Report of the Commissioner General of Immigration in "Excluding Immoral Aliens," Vigilance 24, no. 3 (March 1911), 14-16.

Chapter Three:
Masculinity, Race, and the White Slavery Narratives

Ethyl Vale, the tragic heroine of Reverend Guy Phelps' 1910 novel Ethel Vale: The White Slave, was, by Phelps' account, the epitome of womanly virtue and innocence. She was, first of all, extraordinarily beautiful. Tall and graceful, Ethel also had warm, luminous hazel eyes and a delicate mouth which Phelps described as "expressive of a deep, womanly nature." Her face, "exquisitely proportioned," was pale and glowed with intelligence and her throat, soft and white, Phelps reported, reminded one of a Grecian goddess. All of this beauty was, according to Phelps, crowned by the high moral standards and chaste principles by which Ethel lived her life, principles which had been heightened and enriched by her engagement to the man of her choice, Harold Wayman.¹

Harold's physical handsomeness and moral righteousness were, on every level, a match for Ethel's and Phelps described him as the epitome of manliness, in highly Anglo-Saxon terms. According to Phelps, Harold had:

a classic face clean shaven with a high and finely proportioned forehead from which dark hair rolled back in wavy profusion over his perfectly formed head. In height he stood full six feet, with a frame so strong and symmetrical that he might have stood as a model for a modern Apollo.²

His physical attributes, like Ethel's beauty, were also accentuated by the "splendor of a noble character."³ Although they had a year to wait before their marriage, with Harold as her fiancée Ethel's happy future seemed all but assured.

The novel's title, of course, gives away the ending to the story by indicating that Ethel is destined to become a "White Slave" instead of Mrs. Wayman, a fact underscored

¹Reverend Guy F. Phelps, Ethyl Vale: The White Slave (Chicago: The Christian Witness Co., 1910), 17.

²Ibid., 19-20.

³Ibid., 20.

by Phelps' preface in which he reveals he has written the "simple romance" of Harold and Ethel to outline some of the more "tragic features" of the white slave traffic.⁴ Chief among these "tragic features," according to Phelps, were the ways in which American manhood, personified in the figures of Harold Wayman and Ethel's father Marcus Vale, was failing in its duty to protect the glory of American womanhood, personified in the innocent, chaste figure of Ethel Vale. It is the men in Ethel's life, Phelps argues, who were primarily responsible for her tragic, horrifying fate.

Harold, for his part, decides to spend the year prior to his marriage to Ethel out of town, making his fortune. He has to leave, he tells his tearful, protesting fiancée, in order to earn enough to take care of her and keep her in the style which he thinks she deserves. Ethel, for her part, tells him that she does not care for those things and would be happy with him, and his love, even if she had only a "crust" but Harold remains adamant. Leaving, he believes, is his only chance to place himself, and his future family, on a firm financial footing as, he reminds Ethel, he has little chance of making anything of himself by following the "common vocations" available in their town.⁵ Harold, believing Ethel will be waiting for him when he returns, leaves her in the hands of her parents.

As Harold, and the rest of the town know, he has not left her in particularly capable hands for her father, Marcus Vale, is a serious drunkard. According to Phelps, Marcus Vale had formed the habit of drinking socially as a young man, a passion which had only "fastened and looped its fatal coils more firmly around him," as he aged. His intemperance had also driven him deeply into debt and forced him to mortgage the family's modest cottage to pay for his "folly." With the cottage facing foreclosure, Marcus

⁴Ibid., v. Like most white-slavery authors, Phelps claimed that his story, in spite of being a novel, was "in every sense true to life" and could be "duplicated from the personal experience of almost every rescue worker." It was, he stated, "not a work of imagination." See Phelps, v-vii.

⁵Ibid., 18-24.

continues to drink heavily, leaving his wife and child at home to lament their plight while he searches for new, ingenious methods to fund his habit.⁶

Eventually Marcus discovers that the only thing he has left to offer in exchange for alcohol is a photograph of his daughter, which he promises to show anyone who will buy him more liquor. In this way, Ethel's own father becomes the first man to affix a price on her beauty and to offer it up for public sale to satisfy his own vice. It is this sale of her image that sets into motion a chain of events which leads, ultimately, to the sale of her actual body for Marcus eventually offers a peek at the "prettiest face ever shadowed in a camera" to a white slaver by the name of Wilkins. Wilkins accepts Marcus' trade, noting that "fair faces" are his line of business, and plies Ethel's father with more alcohol to find out who she is. Discovering that Marcus is showing pictures of his own daughter and hearing about Marcus' desperate financial position, the white slaver decides to follow up on this promising lead and waits for Marcus to get so drunk he needs assistance home, assistance Wilkins readily provides to get a "glimpse of the original." She is, he knows, an easy mark. A "Drunkard's girl" and orphans who don't have any "men folks" to protect them, he tells a colleague, are easy prey for white slavers like himself.⁷

During Harold's absence, Ethel tragically moves from the category of a "drunkard's daughter" to the category of an "orphan" after her father freezes to death on the porch of their cottage after a late night drinking binge and her mother dies of a broken heart. There is, Phelps notes, no money for Ethel to live on while awaiting Harold's return or anywhere for her to live as Marcus has squandered her inheritance. With her father's sin and iniquity laying "darkly" on her and no fiancée to console or provide for her, Ethel is forced to leave the happy valley in search of work, a quest which places her at the mercy of

⁶Ibid., 13-15.

⁷Ibid., 38-42.

Wilkins.⁸ Girls forced to hunt for jobs in the city were, according to Wilkins, his specialty.⁹

Ethel is, in fact, no match for Wilkins' elaborate plan to snare her and, in spite of her best efforts, she eventually finds herself hopelessly trapped in a brothel owned by a "soulless," dark, masculine woman who Phelps described as "red of face and very fleshy."¹⁰ Ethel's real nemesis, however, is a brothel employee by the name of Sullivan whose job, he tells Ethel, is to "tame her."¹¹ Phelps' portrayal of Sullivan leaves no doubt that he, like his female employer, is foreign and/or non-white. According to Phelps, Sullivan is a brutish, "dark," beastlike man with protruding eyes and a "sensual" face.¹² Called a "vile creature" and a "monster" by Ethel and the other inmates of the brothel, Sullivan's "dark" physical qualities are matched by his brutal, primitive behavior toward the women, one of whom he stabs to death.¹³

Ethel's own death, however, proceeds more slowly as her body is gradually destroyed by Sullivan's monstrous attempts to break her spirit. Unable to dominate her when she is sober, Sullivan forces her to drink and use opiates in the most brutal of fashion, shoving the bottles deep into her throat, smashing her teeth and lacerating her once delicate mouth. Her once beautiful face is cruelly beaten and repeatedly scarred and, eventually, an "unnatural look," Phelps reported, settles into her once luminous eyes.¹⁴

⁸Ibid., 130.

⁹Ibid., 41-42.

¹⁰Ibid., 133. See also the illustrations of the Madame which clearly portrays her as foreign and/or non-white between pages 136-137 and 208-209. Ethel does manage to avoid, or fight her way out of, almost all of Wilkins' traps, including his efforts to drug her and place her in a brothel, an attempt which results in Ethel attacking and permanently disfiguring Wilkins with a wine bottle. See Phelps, 110-119.

¹¹Ibid., 192.

¹²For descriptions of Sullivan see 170-173, 191-201 and well as the illustrations between pages 136-137 and 208-209.

¹³Ibid., 191-200.

¹⁴Ibid., 175-176

The "decay" of her frame proceeds apace as she develops a constant rattling cough in her congested chest and, racked with a perpetual fever, begins to give up hope of ever being rescued by Harold. Her "gentle heart," Phelps notes, was broken and "her starry eyes shadowed forever."¹⁵ Her captors, however, are aware that Harold is, in fact, searching for her and, hoping to rid themselves of the troublesome, dying white slave, they send Ethel to another city to die. Unfortunately for them, Harold is already on their trail and is, according to Phelps, poised to unleash his manly, masculine prowess on Ethel's captors. Claiming the title of Ethel's "protector," Harold tracks down Ethel's antagonists one by one and subjects Wilkins to a brutal beating before turning him over to detectives.¹⁶ It is, however, when Harold faces Sullivan that his true manhood emerges.

Harold, whom Phelps' has already constructed as the epitome of moral, manly behavior, becomes a different kind of man when he confronts Ethel's principle abuser. His head, Phelps alleges, fills with "wild thoughts" while he awaits Sullivan's arrival, thoughts which explode into violence when Sullivan tells him that Ethel was a "regular vixen" whom he tamed without any trouble.¹⁷ Facing Sullivan, with his "thick muscular neck," protruding eyes, and dark face, Harold is filled with the "war spirit of generations" as "primordial rebellions" begin stirring in his soul. Energized with the "glory of combat" that his "forebears had known," Harold reportedly smiled a "cold, dangerous smile" and beat Sullivan into a bloody pulp, "raining blow after blow" on Sullivan's "brutal, sensual face."¹⁸ He is prevented from killing him only by the arrival of more brothel employees whose appearance forces him to give up pummeling Sullivan. Turning his attention back to his search for Ethel, Harold forces the employees, at gun point, to lead him on a fruitless search for the dying Ethel.¹⁹

¹⁵Ibid., 200-202.

¹⁶Ibid., 156, 167-168.

¹⁷Ibid., 169-172

¹⁸Ibid., 172-173.

¹⁹Ibid., 173-174. Ethel's captors, including Sullivan, were put on trial but, thanks to the

Harold does, eventually, locate her, after she escapes from her new captors but he arrives one minute too late. In a heart-wrenching deathbed scene, Ethel had succumbed, alone, forlorn, and crying out Harold's name as his cab made its way to the house where she lay.²⁰ Harold, seeing Ethel's lifeless body and her bruised, scarred face, utters a "maddening cry," sinks his head into her chest and moans:

Oh Ethel, my poor crushed and bleeding one, why did I leave you? Why was I not content to be poor? On me rests the blame of all this tragedy."²¹

Then, according to Phelps, "a shudder ran through his frame," his heart strings snapped, the veins on his brow and neck grew large, his hands "open and closed convulsively," and he grew still.²² Overwhelmed by his own grief and culpability, Harold dies. He is buried, with Ethel, under a tombstone which describes him as "manly."²³

Phelps' novel, published during the height of the moral panic in Chicago, reveals an important, and overlooked, function of the white-slavery narratives, one which aimed at patrolling the boundaries of white, middle-class masculinity. Historians of white slavery in the United States have, to be sure, recognized that the narratives patrolled gender boundaries but have limited their analyses to the ways in which the stories policed womanhood. They have argued, in effect, that the narratives were primarily designed to prescribe appropriate societal roles for women and to serve as cautionary tales for those women who might be tempted to wander outside these guidelines.²⁴ There are, as we shall

working of what Phelps' calls an unseen, mysterious power, the tides turn against both Harold and the truth and the defendants are released. See Phelps, 179-190.

²⁰Ibid, 213-214.

²¹Ibid, 215-216.

²²Ibid., 216.

²³Ibid., 217.

²⁴Frederick Grittner, White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 8-9; John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman, Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America (New York: Harper and Row, Pub., 1988), 221. For an argument which stresses that anti-prostitution reform in general, and white-slavery in

see, a number of problems with this interpretation, including the fact that it obscures the ways in which the white-slavery narratives were used to patrol the boundaries of masculinity.²⁵ As Phelps' story of Marcus Vale indicates, white-slavery authors were also developing tales which were meant to serve as cautionary tales to white, native-born men about what could happen to them and their families if they failed to live up to the appropriate codes of manly behavior.²⁶ According to Phelps, even men as "manly" as

particular, aimed at pushing women back into more traditional gender roles see Mark Connelly, The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980). For an analysis which reads the white-slavery panic in Britain as part of a larger campaign designed to shore up the definition of "normal masculinity" see Agnus McLaren, The Trials of Masculinity: Policing Sexual Boundaries, 1870-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

²⁵Other problems with this interpretation will be discussed in chapter five.

²⁶Numerous other white-slavery authors and official investigations into the purported evil also blamed fathers for perpetuating white slavery by throwing their daughters out of the house for real, or imaginary, moral slips, for incestuously leading them to their first misstep themselves or for failing to provide the right examples in self-restraint and moral lessons to their children, both boys and girls. See Edward O. Janney, The White Slave Traffic in America (Baltimore: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1911), 84; Miss Florence Mabel Dedrick, "Our Sister of the Street," "Wanted Fathers and Mothers," and Harry Parkin, "Practical Means of Protecting Girls," all in Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls, ed. Ernest Bell (Chicago: G.S. Ball, 1910), 114, 246-249, 318; Alexander Byers, "Danger of Innocence" or "The Lure of the City": A Melodramatic Indictment of the White Slave Traffic (Chicago: Alexander Byers, 1916) 7-13; Mother Lee's Experience in Fifteen Years' Rescue Work (Omaha: Richard Artemus Lee, 1906), 67-68, 261-263; Leona Groetzinger, The City's Perils (1910), 214; The Vice Commission of Chicago, The Social Evil in Chicago: A Study of Existing Conditions (Chicago: Gunthorp-Warren Printing Company, 1911), 175; "Inquiry in Cities under 100,000 Population," Report of the Illinois Senate Vice Committee (1916), 819; Clifford Roe, "The Prodigal Daughter," in The Great War on White Slavery or Fighting for the Protection of Our Girls, ed. Clifford Roe (Chicago: Clifford Roe and B.S. Steadwell, 1911), 44-46 and 437; Ernest Bell, "The Devil's Siamese Twins," "Facts Every Boy and Girl Should Know," and "An Ounce of Prevention Worth a Pound of Cure," all in The Great War, 319-328, 410-435, 436-441; E. Norine Law, The Shame of a Great Nation: The Story of the "White Slave Trade" (Pennsylvania: United Evangelical Publishing House, 1909), 190-191; Virginia Brooks, My Battle With Vice (New York: The Macaulay Co., 1915), 236-237.

Harold Wayman were finding themselves unable to fulfill their obligations and protect their women from the threat of defilement at the hands of foreign white slavers.²⁷

Phelps was not alone in his concerns. As historian Gail Bederman has brilliantly demonstrated, the turn-of-the-century was a period in which ideas about white, middle-class manhood were undergoing a particularly active period of fluctuation as contemporaries, like Phelps, worried that white, American manhood was proving itself incapable of meeting the challenges posed by the social, economic, and cultural changes facing the country. According to Bederman, the nineteenth century ideal of white manhood was one encapsulated by the term "manliness" which stressed that white men drew their strength, and their power over others, from their ability to become self-made men, achieve self-mastery, and control their own passions by following a code of moral behavior. This ideal, like white-male hegemony itself, was being threatened by the growing political demands of foreign, working-class men, and middle-class women active in the woman's movement and undermined by the changing economic conditions which left middle-class white men, like Harold, with fewer opportunities to achieve the status of a "self-made" man and assume their position as the head of their families, their towns, and the nation.²⁸

²⁷Grittner does, at least, recognize that marking sexual deviancy as "alien" is a way to demarcate appropriate sexual roles, values, and behavior and reaffirm traditional cultural values but his exclusive focus on the gender boundary being drawn around women keeps him from developing these insights with regard to how the construction of the procurers as foreign also served to police masculinity. Likewise, Connelly's insight into the fact that the foreign white slaver pointed to white men's fears that they might not be able to protect their daughters from immigrant men is never developed into a larger exploration of how the narratives sought to reaffirm white, male hegemony. See Grittner, 30 and Connelly, 118-119.

²⁸Gail Bederman, Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 10-15. For other analyses on the importance of manliness and middle-class identity see Mary P. Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) and Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1865

Pursuing a life of "manliness" was, according to Phelps and other white-slavery crusaders, no longer enough to guarantee white men the rewards of family, fortune, and national leadership for the nation was, they imagined, under siege by more threatening, non-white forms of masculinity. If white men and the "civilization" they purportedly built were to prevail, male white-slavery authors argued, they would need to take up the crusade to punish the "barbaric," "primitive" men who were, allegedly, responsible for the white-slave trade, resist the dangers represented by white slavery, and recommit themselves to lives of "manliness."²⁹ White-slavery reformers were, as always, willing to help and, in addition to issuing warnings about the dangers foreign procurers represented to American civilization, called on the public to launch a campaign to "save the boys" from becoming ensnared in the foul business, as victims and procurers. For men and boys who did not wish to be "saved," there were the white slavery laws which proved to be convenient weapons for individuals and authorities seeking to enforce a code of "appropriate" conduct on men, both foreign and American, white and non-white.

The Foreign Procurer and American Civilization

(Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987). For other analyses of white, middle-class masculinity during the nineteenth and early twentieth-century see E. Anthony Rotundo, American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era (New York: Basic Books, 1993); E. Anthony Rotundo, "Learning about Manhood: Gender Ideals and the Middle-Class Family in Nineteenth-Century America," in Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940, eds. J.A. Mangan and James Walvin (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987): 35-51; Michael Kimmel, Manhood in America: A Cultural History (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 13-188; Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (eds.), Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

²⁹Some contemporaries, historians note, were calling on white men to develop more virile and physically aggressive forms of "masculinity," a position supported by Phelps' construction of Harold who was both the epitome of moral manliness and a virile aggressor who, by calling upon his "primordial rebellions" and the "war spirit of generations" is able to thrash soundly the "dark," brutal, beastlike man who was responsible for Ethel's vicious beatings. See Bederman, Manliness, 16-20; Rotundo, 222-246 and Phelps, 171-172.

The idea that the traffic in girls was a foreign menace to American civilization was, as we have seen, a constant component of American narratives on sexual slavery from the beginning, when reformers battling "yellow slavery" constructed the Chinese as evil traffickers in women who posed a dire threat to American civilization.³⁰ These early discursive interventions were waged primarily to fuel the push for restrictive immigration legislation against the Chinese but, even in these early years, the construction of the traffickers in women as non-white or foreign served a variety of purposes beyond the nativist crusade to stop "undesirable" immigrants from entering the country. This held true for the moral panic years as well when reformers of all stripes found that the construction of the procurer as a foreigner or African American was a powerful weapon in their push for a variety of political reforms, including some which were decidedly pro-immigrant.³¹ The racialization of the procurer as a non-white, frequently masculine threat to American civilization also served as a primary means through which reformers,

³⁰For a discussion of these narratives see chapter one.

³¹This was particularly true of women reformers in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, who utilized the discourse on foreign procurers to both enhance their own public power and call for increased government service for female immigrants. For an analysis of these efforts in the nineteenth century, see chapter one. For an analysis which discusses the phenomena during the moral panic years, see chapter five. The construction of procurers as foreigners was, of course, used by anti-immigrant and nativist forces within the United States throughout the moral-panic years, a phenomena which has been analyzed by other white-slavery historians. Interestingly, however, few white-slavery authors ever spoke out on the need for immigrant restriction even as they penned narratives which blamed the latest wave of "undesirable" immigrants from southern and eastern Europe for the problem and even those authors who argued strongly for keeping America open to all immigrants reproduced the stereotypical portrayals of Greeks, Jews, and Italians as white slavers. The portrayal of procurers as foreign men was clearly useful to a variety of urban activists beyond those who were simply calling for immigration restriction. See Grittner; Egal Feldman, "Prostitution, the Alien Woman and the Progressive Imagination," *American Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1967): 192-206; Peter Roberts, *The New Immigration: A Study of the Industrial and Social Life of Southeastern Europeans in America* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1913), 238-239.

particularly male reformers, expressed their fears that something was horribly wrong with white, American manhood, considered by many, particularly white American males, to be the pillar of civilization. What was needed, these reformers argued, was for good upstanding, moral white Americans to meet the threat represented by the foreign male procurer head on and purge the urban areas and the political realm of men who did not, or supposedly could not, live up to the standards of white, American manhood.

In portraying the white-slave trade as a foreign, masculine threat to American civilization and calling on America's white males to reaffirm their manliness and join the crusade against white slavery, reformers were taking part in what Gail Bederman has termed the effort to "remake" manhood at the turn-of-the-century, an effort, which she notes, frequently drew on the discourse of "civilization" as a means to link manhood to whiteness. As Bederman's analysis reveals, the highly racialized and gendered discourse on civilization worked to establish white male hegemony by positing that "civilization" was a "precise stage in racial evolution," which was marked by clear standards for male and female behavior, standards which stressed male restraint and female purity.³² Non-white or foreign men were, consequently, viewed as savage, primitive men who could never reach these ideals.³³ As Bederman herself points out, however, the discourses on civilization and manhood were highly contested by groups who sought to challenge white, male hegemony, an assertion borne out by the white-slavery narratives. Women authors, for instance, frequently participated in constructing white-slavery narratives which saw

³²Bederman, *Manliness*, 23-31. Bederman's analysis details the ways in which the discourse on civilization, seen as a highly racialized and gendered concept in the late nineteenth century, was used by a variety of social actors to link male dominance to white supremacy. Bederman also discusses the ways that the discourse on civilization could be used to challenge white male hegemony and provides a brilliant example through her analysis of the antilynching campaign of Ida B. Well. See " 'The White Man's Civilization on Trial': Ida B. Wells, Representations of Lynching, and Northern Middle-Class Manhood," in Bederman, *Manliness*, 45-76.

³³*Ibid.*, 26-29.

American civilization as under siege from foreigners and non-white individuals but they frequently differed from their male colleagues in their views about whether or not reinforcing traditional gender prescriptions, and white male hegemony, were the best solutions to the problem. Additionally, prominent Jews in Chicago and across the nation developed their own white-slavery narratives and engaged in their own white-slavery activism as a means to combat the anti-Semitic portrayal of the white-slave trade as something imported and run by Jewish traffickers.

Initially, twentieth-century white-slavery authors portrayed the traffickers as African Americans and, in keeping with the nineteenth-century legacy, Asian immigrants. The white-slavery scandal which rocked New York in 1906, for instance, featured an African-American trafficker named Spriggs who, newspapers alleged, was forcibly procuring young white girls, some as young as fourteen, for "negro dens" in the city. Newspapers made the most of the story, reporting all of its sensational details, including the allegations that Spriggs was abducting the daughters and wives of prominent white businessmen and that he was a big time trafficker who had reportedly shipped twenty-five women at a time to a "negro club" in Philadelphia. At these clubs, the stories claimed, the white women were subjected to incredible brutalities at the hands of a host of non-white perpetrators and were kept in cages by their beastlike captors. In addition to being forced to sexually serve African- American masters, the stories reported that the women snared by Spriggs were also being sold to "Chinamen" and "exported" to Cuba where they allegedly died of brutal treatment.³⁴

³⁴"The Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 21, no. 2 (July 1906), 2-3. This article is composed of excerpts from the various New York newspapers including: the New York Evening Post, the New York World, and the Evening Sun. Spriggs was convicted and received 20 years in the state prison. For other examples of the construction of African-American men as procurers in areas outside the south prior to the moral panic see The Philanthropist 3, no. 9 (September 1888), 5 and Helen Campell, Darkness and Daylight; or, Lights and Shadows of New York Life (Hartford: A.D. Worthington and Co., Pub., 1892), 239-240.

African Americans continued to be portrayed as white slavers throughout the moral panic years, particularly in the south where the myth of the black male rapist helped pave the way for the emergence of white-slavery narratives which featured black male procurers.³⁵ The Atlanta chapter of the Men and Religion Forward Movement, for instance, pushed for the closure of the city's red-light district by publishing a series of "bulletins" in the city's newspapers which utilized white-slavery narratives and graphic full-page pictures of lily-white, perfectly proportioned "white slaves" being carried by dark, growling, oversized gorillas.³⁶ The image, given the context, was clearly an attempt to adapt the white-slavery narratives to more southern concerns. The use of such racialized white-slavery imagery by the Men and Religion Forward Movement is a particularly telling example of the ways in which male reformers were using the white-slavery narratives and the construction of non-white procurers to patrol the boundaries of masculinity for Gail Bederman's analysis of the Men and Religion Forward Movement clearly demonstrates that their ultimate goal was to "masculinize the Protestant churches" and re-establish male dominance over both the church and the larger community.³⁷

³⁵For an insightful analysis of the creation of the myth of the "black male rapist" see Diane Miller Sommerville, "The Rape Myth in the Old South Reconsidered," The Journal of Southern History 61, no. 3 (August 1995): 481-518.

³⁶This particular bulletin ran in the Atlanta Constitution on September 25, 1912. The bulletins ran in both the Atlanta Constitution and the Atlanta Journal throughout the second half of 1912. The Men and Religion Forward Movement was clearly affected by Chicago's reformer's views on prostitution. Jane Addams delivered an address to the group on prostitution and an essay she wrote titled "The Church and the Social Evil," which tells the story of a white slave was included in the groups multi-volume Messages of the Men and Religion Movement. In addition, the Atlanta group's bulletin's cited her as an authoritative source on white slavery. See Jane Addams, "A Challenge to the Contemporary Church," reprinted from The Survey; Addams, "The Church and the Social Evil," Messages of the Men and Religion Movement, Vol 1 (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1912): 130-141 and "The Houses in Our Midst," Atlanta Constitution 22 June 1912, 9. For an analysis of the vice crusade in Atlanta see Harry G. Lefever, "Prostitution, Politics and Religion: The Crusade Against Vice in Atlanta in 1912," Atlanta Historical Society Journal (Spring 1980): 7-29.

³⁷Gail Bederman, "The Women Have Had Charge of the Church Work Long Enough":

To accomplish this, Bederman argues, the Men and Religion Forward Movement launched a program of urban renewal which was work they could portray as "manly" and which, they hoped, would entice men to join their cause.³⁸ It was, according to Bederman, a successful plan which drew men across the country into the movement and wrestled what power women had achieved in the church away from them.³⁹ The fight against prostitution, particularly in Atlanta, was a crucial part of the "manly" church work undertaken by the Men and Religion Forward Movement and the discourse on white slavery and non-white procurers was particularly well-suited for the job of drawing white men into the battle. By constructing the danger of white slavery as one which was non-white, masculine, and extremely threatening to white womanhood, the Men and Religion Forward Movement was able to convey, in a most sensational fashion, both the impotence of women in the face of the danger and the dire need for white, virile, manly warriors to take up the task of leadership in both the church and the larger community.

As the discourse adopted by the Atlanta branch of the Men and Religion Forward Movement indicates, the construction of the non-white or foreign procurer depended, in large part, on the context in which the narratives were devised and as the images circulating in Atlanta made their way north they provoked an outcry among reformers and like-minded people. When The Survey published the May, 1913 edition of their magazine under a cover which portrayed a statue titled "The White Slave" which featured a white woman in the clutches of a gorilla, the editors were flooded with irate letters about the inappropriate sensationalism of the picture. There was, however, one writer who penned his support of the cover, noting that "The beast carrying the woman did effective service in the Atlanta campaign" to close down the red-light district and expressing his

The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911-1912 and the Masculinization of Middle-Class Protestantism," American Quarterly 41, no. 3 (September 1989): 432-465.

³⁸Ibid., 445-448.

³⁹Ibid., 449, 457.

appreciation of both the picture and the tactic.⁴⁰ By the time The Survey ran its controversial cover, the portrayal of African Americans as white slavers was giving way, in areas outside the south, to narratives which portrayed the white slavers as foreigners who were recent immigrants to the country. To be sure, the construction of the African American procurer never wholly disappeared in the north but it was, for the most part, eclipsed by the emergence of narratives which focused on other, dangerous, "uncivilized" foreigners from "barbaric" countries in Asia and Europe.⁴¹

Chinese men were, as we have seen, the first to be branded by reformers in the United States as uncivilized traffickers in women and they continued to be targeted throughout the moral panic years by reformers who held them, and their "barbaric" forms of manhood, uniquely responsible for both "white" and "yellow" slavery. The construction of the Chinese procurer did not, of course, remain constant. Instead, as we have seen, it was adapted by authors and reformers who altered it to fit different regional contexts. Eastern reformers, for instance, cast innocent white girls, rather than Chinese girls, as the most likely victims of Chinese procurers.⁴² In addition, portrayals of Asian traffickers expanded to cover new groups of Asian immigrants, including the Japanese, who began

⁴⁰"Communications," The Survey (May 31, 1913), 311-314. The letter in favor of the frontispiece is from Howard Kelly, M.D. and appears on page 312. The image of the gorilla and the girl also circulated on the cover of other national publications. The Men and Religion Forward Movement, in fact, borrowed their picture from Leslie's: The People's Weekly which ran it on the magazine's cover on September 12, 1912.

⁴¹For examples of northern and midwestern narratives which focused on African-American procurers during the moral panic years see J. Frank Chase, "Pandering Around Plymouth Rock," in The Great War, 240-252 and Robert O. Harland, The Vice Bondage of a Great City (Chicago: The Young People's Civic League, 1912), 96. The image of the African-American procurer rose again in the post WWI period in the midwest following the migration of large numbers of African Americans into cities like Chicago. For additional information on this see the conclusion and Walter Reckless, Vice in Chicago (Chicago: University in Chicago, 1933; repr., New Jersey: Patterson Smith Publishing Corporation, 1969), 25-31.

⁴²For a discussion of this see chapter one.

arriving in the United States in larger numbers following the passage of legislation designed to restrict Chinese immigration.⁴³

Kate Bushnell, whose investigations into the lumbercamps in Wisconsin in the nineteenth century had produced the allegation that those engaged in the trade were all "foreigners," was one of the white-slavery crusaders who actively propagated the image of the Japanese as traffickers in girls during the twentieth century.⁴⁴ Bushnell, along with Elizabeth Andrews, undertook an investigation into what she called the "Japanese slave trade in California" in 1907. The resulting narrative on Japanese trafficking was strikingly similar to the one put forth decades earlier by crusaders against "yellow slavery" and, like those earlier authors, Bushnell portrayed Japanese men as highly uncivilized, particularly in their treatment of Japanese women who, she charged, were frequently sold by their husbands and fathers for financial gain.⁴⁵

In some ways, the Japanese came to replace the Chinese as the evil traffickers in the discourse on yellow slavery on the West Coast in the years immediately prior to the moral panic, undoubtedly due to the fact that legislation excluding Chinese laborers from the country had been extended indefinitely in 1904 and the numbers of Chinese in the United States had, since 1882, declined dramatically while the numbers of Japanese immigrants was increasing.⁴⁶ In this context, the Japanese, who had been utilized by the

⁴³For information on Japanese immigration to the U.S. see Paul Spickard, Japanese Americans (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996) and Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1998), 179-229.

⁴⁴See chapter one for additional information on Bushnell's investigations into the lumbercamps and her portrayal of the procurers as foreigners.

⁴⁵Elizabeth Andrew and Katharine Bushnell, "Recent Researches into the Japanese Slave Trade in California," The Philanthropist 21, no. 4 (January 1907).

⁴⁶Takaki, 111-112, 180-181. The Chinese remained, however, a target of reformers, particularly in the East where they dramatically outnumbered the Japanese. In 1900, for instance, there were only 286 Japanese immigrants in New York, compared with 6,321 Chinese immigrants and Chinese Americans. See Lillian Brandt, "The Make-up of Negro City Groups," Charities 15 (October 7, 1905): 7-11 which includes Chinese and Japanese,

anti-Chinese forces as examples of "good," assimilatable Asian immigrants came to be viewed as a larger threat to the nation, a change reflected in west coast narratives on Asian trafficking.⁴⁷ Bushnell, for instance, argued that Japanese men were far more immoral and sold their women far more frequently than the Chinese men, whom she painted as "good protectors" of their families.⁴⁸

During the moral panic, few reformers, aside from Bushnell, differentiated between different groups of Asian immigrants in their narratives. Instead, they frequently used the term "Mongolians" to describe all Asian men who were allegedly trafficking in both Asian and white, American girls. If Bushnell's portrayal of Japanese immigrants as evil traffickers and Chinese immigrants as good family men found few supporters among her white-slavery crusading colleagues, her proposed solutions to the problem were similarly exceptional. While both Bushnell and her male counterparts agreed that white slavery was flourishing because the traditional gender arrangements in the United States had proven themselves incapable of neutralizing the threat, Bushnell did not call for a more vigilant policing of gender boundaries and a shoring up of white, male hegemony. Instead, she called for altering the traditional gender boundaries by advocating that what was needed was for women to step into the breach, assume public and political responsibilities which had once been reserved for men and stop the traffickers themselves.⁴⁹ While many of

as well as Native Americans, under the heading "colored."

⁴⁷For an example of the anti-Chinese discourse which compared the Chinese to the Japanese in highly unfavorable terms and paints the Japanese as desirable immigrants see Committee of the Senate of California, Chinese Immigration. The Social, Moral and Political Effect of Chinese Immigration. Policy and Means of Exclusion. Memorial (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1877), 20.

⁴⁸Andrew and Bushnell, 1. For other, late-nineteenth century, pre-panic narratives on "yellow slavery" see Charlton Edholm, "A Stain on the Flag," Californian Illustrated 1, no. 3 (February 1892); The Philanthropist 3, no. 6 (June 1888), 4-5, "The Pacific Coast Traffic in Chinese Women," Philanthropist 4, no. 12 (December 1889), 5; "A Modern Slave Trade Horror," Philanthropist 5, no. 5 (May 1890), 5; "The California Situation," Philanthropist 20, no. 4 (January 1906); and the narratives detailed in chapter one.

⁴⁹The ways in which women used the white-slavery narratives to challenge white, male

Bushnell's male colleagues shared her view that the real problem with white-slavery lay in the inability of white men to stop it and frequently called on women to enter the fight against the traffic, few shared her faith that women could, or should, rouse themselves as "one body" and single-handedly end the nefarious trade. If, however, Bushnell's platform was one which was unlikely to find support from male reformers, including those active in the Men and Religion Forward Movement, her construction of the dangerous, barbaric Asian procurer was a popular one during the moral panic years.⁵⁰

Ernest Bell, for instance, used his white-slavery narratives to warn Americans that urban cities like Chicago were facing a threat greater than the bubonic plague. They were, he believed, facing the "Black Death in morals" as a result of the introduction of "Mongolian brothel slavery," imported from China and Japan and, he cautioned, it would take "eternal vigilance" to save the nation from what he perceived as a "flood of Asiaticism." It was a flood that Bell, like Bushnell before him, described in highly gendered terms. "Asiaticism" was a great threat to United States, Bell argued, because it signified "weak womanhood," and "men of scant chivalry." Bell also stressed that if the United States did not take up the crusade to stamp out "Oriental brothel slavery" they would be forced to "lower" their flag "to the most despicable foreigners," including

hegemony and create new public roles and professional opportunities for themselves is the subject of chapter five.

⁵⁰Reformers also argued that white girls were being trafficked to service Chinese men in Asia. For narratives on this and additional examples of reformers who targeted "Asian" procurers see James Bronson Reynolds, "The Nations and the White Slave Traffic," and Ernest Bell, "The Yellow Slave Trade," both in Fighting the Traffic, 204-212, 213-222; "Girls Held By Chinamen?," Chicago Tribune, 31 December 1909; U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigration Commission, Importation and Harboring of Women For Immoral Purposes (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 68-69, 82; Janney, 41-51; The Dangers of a Large City or The System of the Underworld: Exposing the White Slave Traffic (Chicago, n.d), 16; Clifford Roe, "From the Atlantic to the Pacific," in The Great War, 278-279; Mrs. Jean Turner-Zimmerman quoted in Jas. Walker, Walker's Review of White Slavery (1912), 32-33.

"Mongolians" and called for a vigorous defense of "American civilization" against the foreign hordes.⁵¹

While Bell tried to temper his racist statements by arguing that "we do not speak against them for their nationality, but for their crimes," other white-slavery authors penned narratives which left no doubt that the crimes of the Asian traffickers were an indication that they were not, by white standards, really even men.⁵² John Regan, in his text The Crimes of the White Slavers, argued that girls who ventured into "chop suey restaurants" risked being procured by the "Mongolians" who owned them. Regan painted the actions of these foreign procurers as unmanly by comparing them to white procurers and arguing that the Chinese were particularly dangerous because their actions, unlike white procurers, could never be ameliorated by "honorable intentions," something that Regan clearly saw Chinese men as incapable of having. In his estimation, Chinese men were, in fact, so far

⁵¹Ernest Bell, "Chicago's White Slave Market-The 'Levee'," in Fighting the Traffic, 260.

⁵²Bell, Fighting, 260. In addition to trying to qualify his racist statements in this text, Bell also argued elsewhere that his comments against Jewish procurers were only meant to apply to the "Judases" who engaged in the commerce and not the "Jews" who didn't. His papers indicate that his work in Chicago's levees led him to form friendships with and work with a number of individuals who were either Asian or Jewish and that, undoubtedly, led him to try to avoid damning the entire group with his comments. It should be noted, however, that his efforts to qualify his statements pale in comparison to the forceful indictments he issued against different groups of foreigners in his text. Bell and the Midnight Mission kept close tabs on which nationalities were attending their meetings in the levee. Bell is also pictured in both his and Roe's texts waving a flag at a street meeting that has been identified as a KKK flag but as it only bears a cross and the words "By this Sign Conquer" there is no definitive way of knowing whether he was aware of its provenance or, in any way, affiliated with the group. See Ernest Bell, "Speech to the 'Friends and Purity Session of the General Conference of the Religious Society of Friends," Friends' Intelligence Supplement (October 10, 1908), 71-73 in Bell Archives, Box 6, file 6-7; "Midnight Mission pamphlet," 23 in Bell Archives, Box 6, file 6-13; "Superintendent's Report for 1910 for the Midnight Mission," in Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-1; Illustration titled "Old Glory and Older Glory," in Bell, Fighting, following p. 226; Illustrated titled "Steeped in Sin," in Roe, Great War, following p. 256. For the provenance of the flag see Herbert Ridgeway Collins, Threads of History: Americana recorded on cloth, 1775 to the present (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979), 404.

removed from whites both "morally and ethically" that they could "never be a 'man and brother'" to American men.⁵³ The image of the dangerous, barbaric Asian procurer who was incapable of reaching American standards of manhood remained predominant, throughout the moral panic years.

From 1907 on, however, it was joined by an equally powerful image which sought to shift the blame to another set of "orientals," the Jews.⁵⁴ The idea that "unmanly" Jews were playing a prominent role in the trafficking of women was not, in 1907, a new one particularly in cities like New York, which were witnessing a phenomenal rise in their Jewish populations. A vice reformer in New York was arguing, as early as 1897, that the "fetid male vermin" who were procuring women for prostitution were predominantly Jews from Russia and Poland whom, he alleged were "unmatchable for impudence and bestiality, and who reek with all unmanly and vicious humors" and had organized their "trade" into a regular federation.⁵⁵ The allegation that the vast majority of white slavers were Jews gained a national forum in 1907 when George Kibbe Turner published his article "The City of Chicago" in McClure's Magazine. This article, as we have seen, played a crucial role in fueling the white-slavery crusade in Chicago and Turner's portrayal of those responsible was a formative one which would resonate throughout the moral panic years.⁵⁶ In "The City of Chicago" Turner alleged that many American cities were dragged down into a "state of semi-barbarism" by European peasants and "vicious negros" from the south who had not "progressed far along the way of civilization" and had slipped back into "savagery" upon their arrival in the city. One group of these immigrants was a

⁵³John Regan, Crimes of the White Slavers and Their Results (Chicago: J. Regan and Co., 1912), 167-168.

⁵⁴George Kibbe Turner, "Tammany's Control of New York by Professional Criminals," McClure's Magazine 33, no. 2 (June 1909), 120.

⁵⁵Frank Moss quoted in Law, 41. The quote from Moss was originally published in The American Metropolis in 1897.

⁵⁶For additional information on the advent of the moral panic and role of Turner's articles in fueling the concern over white slavery see chapter two.

particular concern to Turner and that was the Jews from Russia who, he claimed, were running a business devoted to the trafficking of women.⁵⁷

It was an allegation that Turner built on in an article which ran in McClure's two years later titled "The Daughters of the Poor." This 1909 article was pivotal in establishing and propagating the idea that white slavery was a form of commerce which was being run by Jews and, to a lesser degree, Italians which threatened to undermine American institutions and American civilization. According to Turner, white slavery was a trade which had been developed in Eastern Europe by Jews who, he claimed, made a living out of trafficking girls out of "European civilization" and placing them in Asia.⁵⁸ Turner did not place the blame for importing the nefarious commerce into the United States on the Jews, that was a dubious distinction that he, and many others, laid at the feet of the French, but Turner argued strongly that it was Jewish immigrants from Austria, Russia, and Hungary who had turned white slavery in America into a nationwide system of commerce by forming the "New York Independent Benevolent Association," a corporate entity devoted to protecting the trade.⁵⁹ It was also, Turner claimed, Jewish "cadets" from New York, who devoted themselves to procuring white slaves for prostitution, that had spread the traffic across the country by establishing operations in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Boston, New Orleans, Chicago, and Philadelphia. These Jewish

⁵⁷George Kibbe Turner, "The City of Chicago," McClure's Magazine 28, no. 6 (April 1907), 575, 580-581.

⁵⁸George Kibbe Turner, "Daughters of the Poor," McClure's Magazine 34 (December 1909): 45.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 46-48. For other white-slavery narratives which focused on the French participation in the trade see Ernest Bell, "History of the White Slave Trade," and B.C., "The White Slave Trade in New York City," both in Fighting the Traffic, 23-26, 182-184; U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigration Commission, 76-78; Rev. Lehman, The White Slave Hell (Chicago: The Christian Witness Co., 1910), 168; Clifford Roe, "Whose Daughter Art Thou," in The Great War, 99-100.

procurers, Turner wrote, had recently been joined by a small group of Italians who were procuring girls for the white-slave trade in the lower part of New York.⁶⁰

Jews and Italians were, of course, easy scapegoats for white-slavery crusaders given the anti-immigrant context which frequently branded both groups, as well as Greeks, Hungarians, Russians, and other Slavic peoples, as part of a wave of "undesirable" immigrants which many believed was threatening to topple American society and its institutions.⁶¹ Given this context, Turner's allegations found fertile soil among white-slavery reformers and the public and his construction of white slavery as a business run predominantly by foreigners from eastern and southern Europe played a formative role in shaping the white-slavery discourse throughout the moral panic years. Turner himself was widely cited as an authoritative source on the issue by authors who reprinted his 1909 article in their texts or quoted liberally from it to back up their claims that it was the "Jewish dealer in women," who had "vitiating, more than any other single agency, the moral life of the great cities in America in the past ten years."⁶²

⁶⁰Ibid., 48-52, 57-58..

⁶¹For an example of an analysis which utilized Turner's arguments to focus attention on the changing nature of immigration to the United States see S.S. McClure, "The Tammanyizing of a Civilization," McClure's Magazine 34 (November 1909), 125. McClure argued that immigration to the United States had "degenerated" to such an extent that the country was at risk of becoming another "Botany Bay." The "higher and more intelligent types" of immigrants who had once come from northwestern Europe had been replaced by immigrants of the "poorest breeds" from eastern and southern Europe, a demographic shift which brought the most "incompetent and vicious" newcomers into American cities where they took up the trade in women's bodies and became a danger to American civilization. For a list of the immigrant groups which most concerned moral reformers and the numbers who arrived and where they settled see "Some Incoming Foreigners," Vigilance 23, no. 7 (April 1910), 9-10.

⁶²B.C., "The White Slave Trade in New York City," 174-189. See also Turner, "The Daughters of the Poor," in Law, 72-106; Clifford Roe, "The Slave Traffic in Girls: The Work of the College Man in its Extinction," The Delta Upsilon Quarterly (n.d.), 207; Roe, "Whose Daughter Art Thou?," 97-108. For additional anti-Semitic portrayals during the moral panic years which were linked to economic analyses of the problem and which blamed the problem on Jewish businessmen see chapter four.

Turner was not, of course, the only "authoritative" source arguing that it was primarily foreigners, from both eastern Europe and Asia, who were responsible for the establishment of white slavery in America. New York's Police Commissioner Theodore Bingham, similarly, argued that the vast majority of procurers were foreigners, an assertion backed up by the Immigration Commission's investigation into whether or not white slaves were being imported into the United States from abroad.⁶³ In their report, published in 1911, the Immigration Commission alleged that a "very large proportion" of procurers who lived in the United States were foreign, a claim they sought to prove by noting that their investigation into men who had been charged with procuring found that the men came from "the following nationalities: Egyptian, French, Chinese, Belgian, Spanish, Japanese, Greek, Slavic, Hungarian, Italian, and Russian." Framing the issue in terms of nationalities did not, however, prevent the Commission from expressing their opinion that Jews made up the bulk of suspected procurers from these countries. Instead, the Commission noted that "There are a large number of Jews scattered throughout the United States" who both engaged in importing foreign girls and preyed upon young girls in American cities. They also claimed to have definitive proof that the Jews engaged in trafficking had, as Turner alleged, organized themselves into a "benevolent" organization.⁶⁴

While it is not surprising that an overwhelmingly anti-immigrant investigation designed to root out the foreign traffic in white slaves would focus on foreign procurers from Asia and eastern and southern Europe, the Immigrant Commission's construction of the foreign procurer was reinforced by government agents working strictly on domestic cases of white slavery, including Clifford Roe. According to Roe's narratives, the vast majority of procurers in the United States were Jewish, Italian, or Greek, a "fact" borne

⁶³Theodore Bingham, The Girl That Disappears: The Real Facts About the White Slave Traffic (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1911), 32.

⁶⁴U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigration Commission, 76-78.

out by his accounts of his pandering prosecutions in Chicago which always highlighted cases in which men with Jewish or Italian names like Jacob Jacobson, Abe Weinstein, Israel Schwartz, Frank Romano, Antonio Colafore and Battista Pizzi featured prominently.⁶⁵ Occasionally Roe spotlighted procurers who bore Irish names but he was quick to point out that, in his estimation, assuming an Irish sounding name was a common ploy among Italian white-slavery traders.⁶⁶ Roe also marked the foreignness of the procurers he prosecuted by stating that his experience had led him to the conclusion that criminals could be distinguished by the fact that their noses were frequently so long they reached "down over the mouth," an obviously anti-Semitic stereotype.⁶⁷ Even where Roe did not have access to the white slaver's name or the occasion to note the shape of his nose, he penned his narratives in ways which left little doubt that the procurers were not white, American males by having the white slaves, whose stories he purportedly told, comment on the "dark countenance" of the men who chloroformed them and imprisoned them in brothels and by having them "perceive" that the men were of "foreign parentage, probably a Jew, a Frenchman, an Italian, or perhaps a Greek."⁶⁸ As this last quote implies, even when Roe acknowledged that some procurers might be American-born men, he often refused to see them as fully white or American. Instead, he blamed their crimes on their foreign parentage, an assertion that implied that it took more than one generation to transform the immoral, barbarous, foreign males into manly, American men. For Roe, one

⁶⁵Roe, "The Slave Traffic in Girls," 208-209; Clifford Roe, Panders and Their White Slaves (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), 100-106. Roe also argued that the French were involved in the trafficking but, borrowing from Turner, argued that they had been replaced by Jewish and Italian "cadets" as leaders of the white-slave trade. See Roe, "The Slave Traffic in Girls," 207.

⁶⁶Roe, Panders, 111. For other white-slavery crusaders who argued that Italians were "masquerading" under Irish names see B.C., "The White Slave Trade in New York City," 186 and Turner, "Tammany's Control," 124.

⁶⁷Edward F. Roberts, "Clifford G. Roe, Active Public Prosecutor, Pushes Fight on the White Slave Traffic," Chicago Tribune, 27 August 1908.

⁶⁸Clifford Roe, "Our Double Standard of Morals," in The Great War, 62-63.

thing was certain, true American men like himself did not typically engage in the white-slave traffic.

Both Roe's narratives and the conclusions of the Immigration Commission's helped shore up the predominant image of the white slaver as a foreigner. This was undoubtedly due to the fact that both based their claims on court records of both federal and state pandering prosecutions. From a historical perspective, however, this evidence is exceptionally problematic. First, it is unclear from the available evidence whether or not non-white, or American-born men of foreign parentage were actually picked up for pandering more frequently than American men of Anglo-Saxon heritage. Second, there is the problem of assessing how the prevailing stereotype of the white slaver as a non-white or foreign male may have led police and the courts to charge these men with the crime more frequently than they did white, American males.

Unfortunately, the incomplete nature of the court records related to Roe's pandering prosecutions in Chicago makes it difficult to assess exactly who was being charged with or convicted of pandering by his office but there are indications that the Immigrant Commission's portrayal was not entirely accurate, even based on their own statistics.⁶⁹ The Immigration Commission, as we have seen, constructed white slavers as

⁶⁹Records for Roe's prosecutions prior to 1913 have been destroyed as have his office's records on individual cases. The records for the pandering cases from 1913 on consist only of arrest slips and indictments. In theory, the arrest slips should provide information on the nationality of the person charged but most of the pandering cases are missing these slips, making it impossible to determine the nationality of those charged. The records kept by Roe and, later, the Committee of Fifteen which do exist are complete back until 1909 but the nationality, or color, or the defendant is rarely cited. Some historians have attempted to determine the nationality of the pandering defendants by assessing the foreignness of their names. Mark Connelly, for instance, notes that a cast list published by Roe of his prosecutions "since October 1, 1909" lists 77 cases, 50 of which featured defendants with distinctly Jewish, French, or Italian sounding names. This is, however, a highly speculative way of assessing the pandering cases and, as Roe himself notes, the list does not include all of the prosecutions he had undertaken, a fact which raises the question of whether or not he edited out names that weren't foreign sounding. In addition, Walter Reckless, who had access to records which have now been destroyed when he researched

typically Jews, Asians, and foreigners from eastern and southern Europe, a portrayal purportedly based on records of men convicted of pandering. Interestingly, however, their own statistics on the nationality of men deported for procuring do not support these conclusions. Instead they show that during 1908 and 1909 only one of the 32 men deported for engaging in trafficking could be identified as "Hebrew." Only one was from Japan and there was no evidence of any Chinese men being charged or convicted of the crime. In addition, only 2 were from Southern Italy and none were from Greece, Russia, or other Slavic countries. Their records, however, do indicate that four were German, two were Dutch or Flemish, two were Scandinavian, and two were English, more "desirable" nationalities that the Commission's somehow left off their list of likely procurers. The only nationality that the Commission targeted as typical white slavers that actually had a relatively large showing on their deportation list were the French. Eight out of thirty-two procurers deported during 1908 and 1909 were sent back to France.⁷⁰ In addition, the Immigrant Commission's proof that the Jews had organized themselves into a "benevolent" organization, an allegation that other government investigations would later deny, rested on the fact that they had a copy of the articles of incorporation of the organization itself. The commissioners admitted, however, that the articles in themselves gave "no inkling of

the white-slavery cases in 1933, noted that of 77 pandering cases prosecuted in Chicago from 1910-1913, only 19 could be identified as foreign born. Two were identified as African American. Reckless' analysis does not attempt to identify American-born individuals of foreign parentage. The only other record of pandering cases in Chicago, a secondary analysis by A.P. Drucker, indicates that of 50 men charged with pandering during 1911, 20 were white, American-born men, 3 were African American, 1 was Austrian, 1 was Greek, 1 was Chinese, 6 were Italian, 3 were Polish, 7 were Russian, 1 was Scotch, 1 was Slovenian, and 6 were "other," unnamed, nationalities. See Roe, "Message from Chicago," 196-202; Connelly, 118; Reckless, 44; A.P. Drucker, On the Trail of the Juvenile-Adult Offender (Chicago: Juvenile Protective Association, 1912), fold out between pp. 29-30. The municipal court records dealing with Roe's prosecutions after 1913 are located in the Archives of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois. The records of the Committee of Fifteen are housed in the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago.

⁷⁰U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigration Commission, 62.

the nature of the corporation." That information they had supposedly obtained through unnamed members of the group who had somehow been encouraged to tell their tale to the Commissioners. Their stories were the only "proof" that the Commission had that Jewish white slavers had organized themselves into a corporate body for their own protection.⁷¹

For contemporaries, however, the "proof" that white slavers were a vicious group of foreigners which was provided by the Immigrant Commission, Clifford Roe, and other white-slavery reformers was compelling. It did not, however, go totally uncontested and, not surprisingly, the people most committed to battling the stereotype were prominent Jews and Jewish organizations who recognized that the allegations were fueling a rising wave of anti-Semitism in the United States.⁷² The International Order of B'nai B'rith and their president, Adolf Kraus, were at the forefront of the Jewish movement to battle the allegation that white slavery was a Jewish enterprise.⁷³ Kraus initially took up this crusade in 1907 after he, and the rest of the respectable Jewish community, were "shocked" into action by George Kibbe Turner's article "The City of Chicago." Kraus initially demanded that Turner provide the Jewish community either with an apology or with proof of his allegations that it was Jews from Eastern Europe who were the leaders in the white-slave trade and was dismayed to find that it was proof that was forthcoming.⁷⁴

⁷¹Ibid., 76-78. The Immigrant Commission also claimed that the French had established headquarters for their trade in several cities. The debate over whether or not white slavery was organized on any kind of "corporate" basis by the Jews or anyone else will be discussed more fully in chapter four.

⁷²For a description of anti-Semitism in the United States during these years see Leonard Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994): 58-77.

⁷³Kraus and B'nai B'rith were not, of course, the only Jewish organizations battling white slavery or the image of the Jewish white slaver. Jewish women's groups, including the National Council of Jewish Women, were also heavily involved in the crusade, a phenomena which will be discussed in chapter five.

⁷⁴"White-Slavery Doom Aim of New Crusade," *Chicago Daily News*, 25 September 1909. It is unclear what "proof" Turner provided Kraus in 1907 that convinced him that Jewish white slavers were operating in New York. To be sure, Jews in New York and other cities

As Kraus notes, the allegations led some in the Jewish community to advocate turning a blind eye to the evil but Kraus believed that the Jewish community must take immediate steps to ameliorate the portrayal of the Jews as immoral, uncivilized white-slave traders.⁷⁵ His plan for contesting the construction was two-fold. First, he convinced the police department in New York to undertake an investigation into vice in the city with an eye toward determining the percentage of procurers who were actually Jewish and, upon discovering that only 20% claimed Jewish heritage, waged a spirited effort to destroy the portrayal of the vast majority of white slavers as Jewish.⁷⁶ Kraus also sought to counter the portrayal of the vicious, barbaric Jewish white-slave trader with an image of the heroic, moral, manly, Jewish white-slave crusader. This, he undoubtedly hoped, would recast the public image of the Jewish involvement in the white-slave trade by placing them on the other side of the battle lines.

While Kraus began his anti-white-slavery activities in the wake of Turner's 1907 article and, with the help of other Jewish leaders from Chicago, helped pressure the Illinois legislature to pass new pandering legislation, Jewish activities against white slavery did not

were involved in vice and prostitution but the anti-Semitic nature of most of the primary documents makes it exceptionally difficult to determine the nature or scope of their involvement. In 1909, when Turner was again asked to provide proof for the allegations he made in his article "The Daughters of the Poor," he cited, among other things, convictions of white slavers both in and out of Chicago, information from the New York Board of Immigration, and information gathered from reformers such as Clifford Roe and district captains in Chicago but he later admitted that he had no first hand evidence to back up his allegations. See, "Tammany and the White Slaves," The Literary Digest 39 (November 1909), 753-754; "White Slavery Story Hearsay," New York Times, 13 January 1910. The most careful effort to sort out both the scope of and the reasons for Jewish involvement in prostitution internationally and in the United States may be found in Bristow. See Edward Bristow, Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Adolf Kraus, Reminiscences and Comment: The Immigrant, The Citizen, a Public Office, The Jew (Chicago: Toby Rubovits, 1925), 177-178. This percentage was in keeping with the general percentage of Jews in New York relative to the general population. For more on Jewish investigations into the white-slave trade see Bristow, 161.

take center stage until late in 1909, when events in Chicago and New York made the image of the Jewish slave trader headline news.⁷⁷ The first of these events occurred in Chicago during the widely publicized corruption trial of the city's Police Inspector, Edward McCann in the Fall of 1909. The chief witnesses against McCann, who acknowledged that they owned a number of brothels in the city and had made protection payments to the police, were two Jewish brothers, Louis and Julius Frank. Their testimony, and the revelation that Julius Frank was the head of a Jewish congregation at the Anshe Calvaria synagogue in the city, galvanized Chicago's Jewish community into taking a more active stance toward the white-slave trade.⁷⁸ Kraus, who was described by the media as "one of the guiding spirits" behind the white-slave crusade led the way, arguing that Jewish participation in the white-slaver crusade would "show the world how repellent these people are to the Jewish community."⁷⁹

Under Kraus' leadership, B'nai B'rith became one of the pivotal organizations devoted to ending white slavery in Chicago, across the nation, and throughout the world.⁸⁰ The group was, as we have seen, a key player in funding Roe's investigations and

⁷⁷"White-Slavery Doom," 25 September 1909; "Urge Prison for Levee's 'Farmers'," Chicago Daily Tribune, 28 December 1907.

⁷⁸"Frank Brothers Spurned by Jews," Chicago Tribune, 25 September 1909; "Open War on Vice to Protect Girls," Chicago Tribune, 26 September 1909; "Churches Enter White Slave War," 27 September 1909; "Jews Smite Levee Traffic," Chicago Tribune, 4 October 1909; "Join Hands in War on White Slavery," Chicago Tribune, 6 October 1909; "Jews Prepare Roster of Vice," Chicago Tribune, 9 October 1909.

⁷⁹"White-Slavery Doom," 25 September 1909; "White Slave War Well Supported," Chicago Tribune, 29 September 1909. Undoubtedly, the fact that the Jewish procurers were alleged to be recent immigrants from Eastern Europe played a role in convincing Kraus, who immigrated to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century as part of an earlier wave of Jewish immigration from Austria and Germany, that Jews were participating in white slavery. For a secondary analysis of the immigration of Eastern Europe Jews to the United States and the tensions between these immigrants and the older, established predominantly German Jewish community in the United States see Gerald Sorin, Tradition Transformed: The Jewish Experience in America (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997), 34-60.

⁸⁰For a secondary account of this activism see Bristow. For additional information on

in establishing a separate organization which hired Roe to pursue his pandering prosecutions full time.⁸¹ Kraus also kept up the pressure on the Jewish community to expose, ostracize, and drive Jewish procurers out of the "community," a call which included an strenuous, and ultimately successful, effort to force Julius Frank out of his position as president of his Jewish congregation.⁸² He also continued to stress that the vast majority of procurers were not Jewish.⁸³ Kraus' efforts to convince the general public that the Jews represented a small minority of white slavers was, however, not enough to counter the widespread construction of them as almost wholly responsible for the business in the popular press and the public imagination, a portrayal which became even more prominent following the publication of George Kibbe Turner's article "The Daughters of the Poor" in November of 1909.⁸⁴

Turner was not, as we have seen, wholly responsible for the propagation of the image of the white-slave trader and, unfortunately, narratives constructed by some of the Jewish white-slavery activists frequently served to re-inscribe the idea that Jews were

Jewish activism against white slavery outside of Chicago see "Investigating San Francisco Vice," Vigilance 23, no. 14 (November 1910), 5; "Louisiana Will Act," Vigilance 23, no. 4 (January 1910), 3-4; Rev. Jacob Nieto, "Are There Procurers in San Francisco," in The Great War, 253-260. For B'nai B'rith's plans to combat the traffic internationally see "World-Wide War on Vice," The Survey (July 27, 1912): 593; "Jewish War on White Slavery," Vigilance 25, no. 9 (September 1912), 18; "World-Wide War on Vice," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 4, no. 4 (November 1913): 613.

⁸¹"Open War on Vice to Protect Girls," 26 September 1909. For additional details on this organization see chapter three.

⁸²"White-Slavery Doom," 25 September 1909. Frank's congregation refused to force him out and showed their support by unanimously reelecting him to his position in the wake of the scandal. Frank, however, stepped down as president but was immediately elected by the congregation to be the superintendent of the cemetery. See "Jews Smite Levee Traffic," 4 October 1909.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴For examples of the Jewish response to Turner's narrative, which included calling for increased activism on the part of respectable Jews against the trade and seeking to downplay the centrality of Jews in the trade see "Jews and the White-Slave Trade," Literary Digest 39 (December 4, 1909): 993-994.

heavily involved in the commerce. In 1908, for instance, the American Hebrew ran an article which stressed Jewish responsibility for the trade, noted that it was "possible" that Jews had spread the traffic to the United States and called for increased Jewish activism against the trade on the basis that "If Jews are the chief sinners it is appropriate that Jews should be the chief avengers."⁸⁵ The Jewish outcry over the revelations during the McCann trial in Chicago, likewise, brought forth Jewish allegations which supported the notion that white-slavery was predominantly a Jewish business. In the wake of the scandal, the Yiddish language daily, The Forward, printed an editorial which claimed that the trial had proven "Seventy-five percent of the white slave trade in Chicago is in Jewish hands," an assertion which was picked up and published by other, non-Jewish, white-slavery reformers who used the fact that the claim came from a Jewish source as proof of its veracity.⁸⁶ Even Jewish narratives which attempted to counter the stereotype of the foreign Jewish procurer by detailing the crimes of American-born men were ultimately unable to avoid including a host of evil Jewish characters in their tales, including both Jewish white slavers and unethical Jewish lawyers, "shekel seeking shysters," who helped get guilty procurers out of jail.⁸⁷

Jewish narratives on the white-slave trade which, like those penned by Gentiles, stressed the beastlike, uncivilized qualities of procurers and portrayed them as a dire threat to both girls and boys in the cities, helped spread the idea that it was, in fact, Jews who were responsible for the trade.⁸⁸ Jewish activism, likewise, did little to recast the Jewish procurer into the Jewish crusader in the eyes of other reformers. Instead, it was itself

⁸⁵Quoted in "The White Slave Traffic," The Philanthropist 22. no. 2 (July 1908), 22-23.

⁸⁶"Frank Brothers Spurned by Jews," 25 September 1909; Law, 55; McClure, "Tammanyizing," 123.

⁸⁷Nieto, 253-258.

⁸⁸For Jewish portrayals of Jewish white slavers as "creatures," "vermin," and barbaric, unworthy individuals who threatened both boys and girls see "Frank Brothers Spurned by Jews," 25 September 1909; "Churches Enter White Slave War," 27 September 1909; "White-Slavery Doom," 25 September

interpreted as further proof that white slavery was a Jewish enterprise. As one white-slavery reformer stated, calls for activism on the part of "good Jews" and the Jewish recognition that Jews were the " 'chief sinners' " helped establish the "absolute fact that corrupt Jews are now the backbone of the loathsome traffic in New York and Chicago."⁸⁹ Jewish activism did temper the anti-Semitic pronouncements of some white slavery reformers. Clifford Roe, for instance, acknowledged their contribution to the crusade and acknowledged that "No one race or creed predominates in this awful business" and stressed that "Jews and Gentiles alike have contributed to the great army of panders."⁹⁰ As we have seen, however, this recognition did not prevent Roe from formulating the vast majority of his narratives in ways which highlighted Jewish traffickers, nor did it prevent him from reproducing the worst of Turner's anti-Semitic history of the white-slave trade in the pages immediately prior to his acknowledgment of Jewish participation in the crusade against the commerce.⁹¹ Despite the activism of Kraus, B'nai B'rith, and other Jewish leaders and Jewish organizations, reformers, even those who, like Roe, benefited directly from their assistance, continued to construct narratives which cast the Jews as the villains, rather than the heroes, in their white-slave dramas.

In part, the inability of Roe, and others, to fully acknowledge the Jewish participation in the white-slavery crusade may have been due to the ways in which the construction of the procurer as foreign or non-white served to patrol the boundaries of masculinity and paint the "evil" of white slavery as representative of a type of non-white, dangerous masculinity, a construction which also called on white, American men to renew their commitment to chivalrous, manly behavior.⁹² Manly, Jewish white-slavery crusaders

⁸⁹B.C., "The White Slave Trade in New York City," 188. The author of the article drew his quotes on Jews being the "chief sinners" from the 1908 editorial published in the American Hebrew.

⁹⁰Roe, "Whose Daughter Art Thou?," 102.

⁹¹Ibid., 97-102.

⁹²Roe, "Double Standard of Morals," 63.

had little place in this racialized dichotomy of good and evil masculinities which cast all Jews, even those who did not hail from Eastern Europe, as less than men by white, "civilized" standards.

This is not, however, to imply that non-Jewish, white reformers believed they could conquer the evil of white slavery on their own, or even at all. Instead, many expressed grave doubts as to whether or not white, American manhood was up to this challenge. The problem, they argued, was that in addition to defiling white womanhood and undermining American civilization, white slavery was having a similarly corrosive effect on American manhood.⁹³ As Ernest Bell warned his readers in 1910, the "pollution" brought to the United States by foreigners was "already corrupting the manhood and youth of every large city in this nation," a fact which did not bode well for the future.⁹⁴

"Save Our Boys"

According to many white-slavery reformers, both male and female, white slavery was threatening American manhood by undermining the manly tenets of restraint, exposing young boys to illicit and deviant sexual experiences, and leaving them vulnerable to moral degradation and physical defilement at the hands of brothel keepers, procurers, and the white slaves themselves. It was also, they feared, encouraging men to turn their backs on prevailing standards of white manhood and adopt more primitive forms of masculinity, which would lead them to give free reign to their passions for vice and

⁹³Bederman argues that the discourse on "civilization" served to promise white middle-class men that, ultimately, they would prevail and the "virile Anglo-Saxon man" would continue to move toward "racial dominance and the highest evolutionary advancement" but a plethora of white-slavery narratives testifies to the fact that many white, male reformers were not so sure about this implicit guarantee. See Bederman, *Manliness*, 31.

⁹⁴Bell, "Chicago's White Slave Market-The 'Levee'," 260.

encouraged them to join the ranks of the predominantly foreign procurers. Religious reformers, who were especially concerned with what was widely perceived as the breakdown of the nineteenth century ideals of moral manliness, were particularly vehement in their insistence that the nation's sons were in trouble. Convinced that white slavery was threatening to demoralize both girls and boys, they argued strongly that the crusade against the evil must be expanded to include an effort to "save our boys." "Saving the girls" was not enough.

The most frequently cited danger to boys was the same as that facing girls. Both, reformers imagined, were being targeted by vice interests who lured them into the brothel districts where they became "hopeless victims," subject to both moral and physical ruin.⁹⁵ In many instances, the concerns over the dangers facing "unprotected" boys who ventured into the red-light district mirrored the discourse on the enslavement of young girls.⁹⁶ When Charles Davenport, a paper manufacturer from Massachusetts, instituted a search for his "lost" son in New York's red-light district, authorities and newspaper reporters immediately tried to interpret what had happened to him through the discourse on abduction and white slavery. Noting that his son had been seen in the Waldorf-Astoria, sitting at a table talking to a young man and "looking dazed," speculation ran high that he had, in fact, been kidnapped and was being held somewhere in the tenderloin district. The allusions to his conversations with a strange man and his "dazed" demeanor prior to his disappearance obviously implied that he, like so many girls, had fallen prey to some sort of

⁹⁵The red-light districts in cities like Chicago were, as we have seen, a primary target of the white-slavery crusaders who argued that white slavery was an integral component of the brothel system. It was the brothels, they argued, that both created the need for prostitutes and made the system of enslavement possible by both providing white slavers with a place to sell their "goods" and giving the new "owner" a secure place to forcibly hold his or her new slaves. White slavery and the brothel system, to these reformers, were two sides of the same coin. For one example of this argument see Bell, "Chicago's White Slave Market-The 'Levee'," 259.

⁹⁶The Dangers of a Large City, 7.

drugging before being spirited off. His father, however, resisted these suggestions. In spite of the fact that his trek to the big city in search of his offspring fit with white-slavery reformers' portrayals of fathers in search of their missing daughters, Davenport stressed that his "boy" was really 36 years old and stated that he fully expected his son to turn up as soon as "his stomach gets so bad that it will not hold any more highballs."⁹⁷

While Davenport was skeptical of the idea that his son had been duped or dragged into New York's tenderloin district, some reformers imagined that procurers were using these very methods to find patrons for their brothels and were, as early as the nineteenth century, calling on authorities to make the luring of boys into brothels a felony offense.⁹⁸ In some instances, the portrayals of the means by which young men and boys were tricked or forced into becoming brothel patrons echoed the narratives on the enslavement of young girls. In 1896, for example, reformers at the American Purity Alliance Conference heard allegations made by a representative from the American Seamen's Friend Society that sailors were falling victim to panderers of vice who were duping them into becoming johns by providing them with bogus letters supposedly written by lonely widows who wanted only companionship, a ploy which reformers later alleged was a common means by which young girls were trapped by seemingly respectable procuresses.⁹⁹

In other instances, the narratives reformers crafted as part of the "save our boys" campaign alleged that procurers for the brothels were physically assaulting young boys and compelling them to become customers just as they coerced young girls to become prostitutes. In a telling example, Ernest Bell claimed to have heard of an instance where a

⁹⁷"Father Seeks Midnight Son," Chicago Tribune, 26 February 1910. For another narrative on the dangers to boys which mirrored the white-slavery narratives in portraying the perils of the big city to innocent country boys "adrift" in the city see Drucker and "The Peril of City Loneliness," Literary Digest 44 (February 3, 1912): 215-216.

⁹⁸Charlton Edholm, Traffic in Girls and Work of Rescue Missions (Oakland: Charlton Edholm, 1899), 127. See also "Boyhood and Girlhood Perils," The Philanthropist 3, no. 6 (June 1888): 4.

⁹⁹"Notes and Comments," The Philanthropist 11, no. 2 (February 1896), 1.

young choir boy from the Methodist church was "forcibly" dragged into a brothel where he was allegedly made to engage in activities which left him infected with a "disease" and, ultimately, brought about his untimely death. To Bell there was no question that the brothels were also "frightful traps for boys." ¹⁰⁰

Some reformers took these concerns about the dangers red-light districts posed to young men even further and imagined that the traffic in girls had given rise to a homosexual traffic in boys. These allegations were initially made by the Immigration Commission which was formed to investigate, among other things, the importation of female white slaves into the country.¹⁰¹ In addition to finding widespread trafficking in foreign girls, the authors of the report also claimed that investigations undertaken by the commission and the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, revealed a "traffic in boys and men for immoral purposes" and called for applying existing laws meant to stop the importation of female white slaves even more "rigidly" when males were being trafficked.¹⁰² The Chicago Tribune was quick to publish the Commission's findings in an article which stressed that both men and women were being trafficked and degraded in a

¹⁰⁰Ernest Bell, "The Story of the Midnight Mission," in Fighting the Traffic, 427. For a dissenting voice, in which an ex-madam criticizes that "save our boys" campaign and claims that allegations that young boys are being enticed into the underworld are simply false see Josie Washburn, The Underworld Sewer: a Prostitute Reflects on Life in the Trade, 1871-1909 (Omaha: Washburn Pub. Co., 1909; repr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 282. Washburn also claimed that the only people sending boys into the levees were those who employed them as messengers, something she asserted was not a concern for reformers. In coming years vice reformers would, however, become very critical of the practice of sending both messengers and newsboys into vice districts. Their criticism of the practice mirrored the concern expressed by white-slavery reformers over employment agencies which, they alleged, were sending young girls into brothels as domestics, a practice which they claimed led to white slavery. See Washburn, 293-285; Report of the Portland Vice Commission (Portland: Henry Russell Talbot, 1913), 129-131; Vice Commission of Chicago, The Social Evil in Chicago, 241-245, 371-379. The concern of white-slavery reformers over the practices of employment bureaus will be discussed in chapter four.

¹⁰¹For further discussion of this report see chapter two.

¹⁰²U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigration Commission, 86.

similar fashion.¹⁰³ Newspapers on the West Coast also speculated that a national system for trafficking boys for homosexual purposes had emerged alongside the trafficking in girls after a scandal erupted in 1912 over homosexuality in Portland, Oregon's YMCA.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³"World Vice Ring The Acme of Evil," Chicago Tribune, 11 December 1909.

¹⁰⁴John Donald Gustav-Wrathall, Take the Young Stranger by the Hand: Same-Sex Relations and the YMCA (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 176. The relationship between the white-slavery panic and the patrolling and persecution of homosexuals has been most fully developed in studies which focus on Britain and Canada, where the panic resulted in either the criminalization or the increased persecution of gay men. George Chauncey's analysis of homosexuality and the gay subculture in New York from 1890-1940, however, indicates that these findings are not applicable to what occurred in the United States. Chauncey argues that the obsession over female prostitution among moral reformers at the beginning of the century, instead of fueling the persecution of homosexuals "granted gay men an astonishing degree of mobility and freedom." Moral purity reformers, he argues, did not identify homosexual vice as a "discrete social problem" until WWI, after the moral panic over white slavery had begun to recede. See Judith Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 82, 125; Jeffrey Weeks, Sex, Politics and Society: The regulation of sexuality since 1800 (New York: Longman, 1989), 102-108; Steve Maynard, "Through a Hole in the Lavatory Wall: Homosexual Subculture, Police Surveillance, and the Dialectics of Discovery, Toronto, 1890-1930," Journal of the History of Sexuality, 5, no. 2 (1994), 232; George Chauncey, Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940 (New York: BasicBooks, 1994), 145-147, 160-163. The vast majority of white-slavery narratives, and the fact that the Mann Act was not applied to homosexual relations until 1978, support Chauncey's arguments. Few focused on the dangers that homosexuality represented to boys or American manhood during the height of the white-slavery panic. As the panic wore on, however, some did begin to turn their attention to the issue in the years prior to WWI. Ernest Bell and his Midnight Mission were at the forefront of this shift and, following the closure of Chicago's red-light districts, began soliciting money on the basis that they needed it fight the "literal abominations of Sodom." "Very many perverts," they alleged in 1915, were preying on, debauching, and infecting stranded boys in what had been the levee area. This "war on the vice of sodomy," undertaken by the Midnight Mission tends to support Chauncey's conclusions as it did not occur until the moral panic over white slavery was on the wane. See "Minutes of the Director's Midnight Mission Meeting September 1914," Ernest Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-5; "Letter addressed to 'Dear Friend' from the Midnight Mission dated June 25, 1915," in Bell Archives, Box 2, folder 2-1. For information on the Mann Act and homosexuality see Grittner, 183, note #28.

Reformers like Ernest Bell were also deeply concerned that even those males who avoided being forced into brothels or trafficked by homosexuals were in grave danger of being "lured" to their degradation by the heterosexual pleasures being offered in the red-light districts. Bell, whose work in Chicago's levee was divided between rescuing white slaves and saving young men who were in danger of themselves becoming debauched, was a particularly outspoken critic of the effect of vice on America's young men and used his white-slavery narratives to warn parents, men, and the authorities that the existence of white slavery, and the brothel system it supported, was a menace to American manhood. Bell was convinced that Chicago's red-light district was a "maelstrom for young men," many of whom, he alleged, were "irresistibly" drawn to it by the blazing electric lights, like moths to a flame.¹⁰⁵ Chicago's "pet institution," Bell's moniker for what he otherwise called the "white slave market," was itself a big draw for men according to his narratives. Whole conventions of Shriners and scores of cattle men from Texas and Montana, he claimed, came nightly to see how the business of vice was carried on in Chicago.¹⁰⁶ Bell portrayed these men as both in grave danger and as men who lacked reason, a fundamental quality of white manhood. Bell believed that the "hundred thousand foolish young men" who were drawn to Chicago's levee district were "void of understanding." They were, he imagined like a young man he had once seen in a dream who was:

stepping carelessly on and off a railway track, near a curve around which the express train might come thundering and screaming at any moment. Whether on the track or off it, the young man was indifferent to the danger and wanton in his movements.

¹⁰⁵Bell, "Chicago's White Slave Market-The 'Levee'," 257.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

The reasons for his careless, life-threatening behavior were soon clear to Bell who realized, in looking at the young man, that "there was nothing whatever above his coat collar-he had no head."¹⁰⁷

In addition to portraying brothel prostitution as symbolically beheading America's young men, white-slavery reformers warned that the dangers of white slavery and the brothel system it supported were destroying the physical manhood of the country's youth.¹⁰⁸ The concern that white, American boys would contract venereal diseases from enslaved prostitutes was, in fact, a central component of the narratives on "yellow slavery" during the late nineteenth century. Painting a dire picture of how this form of sexual slavery menaced both the nation and the next generation of American boys, the Senate Committee, convened by the California State Senate in 1876, argued that diseased Chinese female "slaves" were luring thousands of young men and boys into their "dens," where they infected them with "venereal diseases of the worst type."¹⁰⁹ They supported their allegations with evidence drawn from a member of the San Francisco Board of Health, Dr. Toland, who claimed that numerous boys from the ages of eight to twelve had been infected with syphilis as a result of their exposure to Chinese prostitutes. He also claimed that the numbers being infected were large, stating first that his office treated a dozen young men each day for the diseases and then arguing that his office had seen at least a half a dozen every day for an entire year, nine-tenths of whom had purportedly caught their diseases from Chinese prostitutes. Toland also warned that this contamination of America's young men would ultimately have dire consequences on the health of the

¹⁰⁷Bell, "The Story of the Midnight Mission," 417.

¹⁰⁸For an analysis of venereal disease in the United States see Allan Brandt, No Magic Bullet: a social history of venereal disease in the United States since 1880 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

¹⁰⁹Special Committee on Chinese Immigration, Chinese Immigration. The Social, Moral and Political Effect of Chinese Immigration. Policy and Means of Exclusion (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1877), 25. For more information on this Committee and "yellow slavery" see chapter one.

community and would retard the development of "Christian civilization."¹¹⁰ Obviously, Chinese prostitutes were an easy target for anti-Chinese forces who saw both the Chinese traffickers and the Chinese "slaves" they imported as both moral and physical contaminants which threatened both white, American boyhood and American civilization.

The fear that prostitutes were destroying a generation of American boys was not, however, confined to the nineteenth century. It was also not reserved for narratives on "yellow slavery." Instead, white-slavery reformers in the twentieth century also expressed grave concerns that "white slaves" were similarly infecting white, American young men. B.S. Steadwell, the President of the American Purity Federation and an important white-slavery crusader throughout the moral panic years, expressed his concerns through a narrative in which he related the story of a young soldier who had purportedly come to his office seeking help. The young man, Steadwell stated, was "seemingly of superb manhood, handsome build, was a high school graduate and unusually bright." He had, however, fallen victim to a disease contracted in a brothel three years before and was in an incurable state. His hair and teeth were both falling out and he was in incredible pain. He told Steadwell that his eldest brother had taken him to the brothel and lamented that his father had failed to warn him of the consequences or the necessity of leading a pure life. Steadwell, meditating on what might have been had the boy been warned, noted that the young man, a soldier with a face free from viciousness, was a "young giant who might have accomplished most anything he had set his hand and heart to," but was now "ruined for life." It was, for Steadwell, a powerful example of the dangers that the brothels represented to American manhood and he wished for a "sort of new wireless instrument" by which he could send a billion messages and reach every father's heart to warn them of

¹¹⁰Ibid., 26-28. Other witnesses backed up Toland's claims that the majority of the diseases were being spread by Chinese, not white, prostitutes by alleging that white prostitutes were either too expensive or unwilling to take young boys as customers.

the threats to their sons.¹¹¹ Lacking such an instrument, white-slavery reformers instead relied on their white-slavery tracts to get the word out and promised those who read them that they would learn "How to save **Your Boy**."¹¹²

Everyone's boys, these reformers imagined, were in danger of "losing their heads" and polluting their manhood in the city's brothels, a fact revealed by Bell in a narrative he titled "If this were your son." This narrative told the story of a boy named Joe who purportedly came to a Midnight Mission's meeting in Chicago's levee district one Saturday night and confessed that he had been living the life of a libertine. He had, he stated, been a gambler, a pickpocket, a drunkard, and "worse" had played the role of a white slaver, enticing young girls from their homes to place them in the city's brothels. After praying with Joe, Bell and his cohorts felt "obliged" to advise his father of his activities. The father, according to Bell, lived in another state and was totally unaware of his son's activities. He was also an elder in the Presbyterian church who spent his time teaching other people's sons in Sunday school. Faced with his own son's vile actions, which Bell

¹¹¹B.S. Steadwell, "'An Ounce of Prevention Worth a Pound of Cure,'" in The Great War, 437. By portraying this male victim as a "soldier," Steadwell was tapping into a larger discourse, circulating in the early twentieth century, which crafted the dangers of sexual immorality and venereal diseases in terms of military preparedness. Other reformers tapped into concerns about "race suicide" by stressing that infected men transmitted the disease both to their wives, who would then become infertile, and to their children, who would be born blind, deaf, or insane. See also Ernest Bell, "Insanity, Surgery, Blindness," in Fighting the Traffic, 419-420; Walker, 31; Ernest Bell, "The Red Mills Grind Out Babies Eyes," "The Red Mills Deform Children and Mutilate Wives," both in The Great War, 307-310. For another narrative which constructs the men corrupted by white slavery as soldiers see Clifford Roe, "From a Pander to Protector of Girls," in The Great War, 67-75.

¹¹²Advertisement for Ernest Bell's White Slavery: Horrors of the Traffic, emphasis in original. It is unclear where this advertisement is from. It appears to have run in the back of a book published by Johnson, Smith and Co in Racine, Wisconsin. White Slavery: Horrors of the Trade was Bell's Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls published under a different name. It was also published under the title War on the White Slave Trade.

imagined left him "unspeakably humiliated," the man finally "proved himself a father indeed" and helped restore Joe to a "right life." As a result, Bell stated, Joe became:

a respected citizen, instead of-God knows what-most likely a despicable white slave trader in Chicago or Detroit or New York.¹¹³

Although most reformers denied that American men were trafficking in girls and continued to portray those who did as "a foaming pack of foreign hellhounds" drawn from the "moral and civic degenerates of the French, Italian, Syrian, Russian, Jewish or Chinese races," Bell was not alone in positing that white slavery was turning some white, American males into procurers.¹¹⁴ It was a particularly troublesome worry for the existence of white, American procurers implied that white American manhood, instead of progressing to greater heights of manliness and civilization was actually regressing in the face of white-slavery.¹¹⁵ Even Clifford Roe, whose portrayals were typically designed to highlight the participation of foreign men, or sons of foreign parents, in the trade was occasionally forced to acknowledge that not all procurers had noses that extended past their mouths.¹¹⁶ He described Harry Balding, the procurer who allegedly trapped Mona Marshall in a brothel in 1907, as a well-dressed, "fine-looking fellow," with a rosy

¹¹³Bell, "The Story of the Midnight Mission," 422-423. For other Bell narratives in which he argued that Americans were also procuring girls see Bell, "White-Slavery in Chicago," *The Philanthropist* 22, no. 3 (October 1907); Bell, "Chicago's White Slave Market-The 'Levee'," 260; Bell, "History of the White Slave Trade," 26.

¹¹⁴Jean Turner Zimmerman quoted in Connelly, 118. Reformers, including Bell, also argued that white men who visited prostitutes or seduced innocent girls were also "white slavers." See Bell, "How Snakes Charm Canaries," in *Fighting the Traffic*, 229 and Law, 198.

¹¹⁵The idea that races of once civilized men could regress to become procurers was occasionally used to describe what had happened to the Greeks. John Regan, for instance, argued that the Greeks, whom he believed were using their ice-cream parlors to capture young girls, had once been a splendid race of heroes in ancient times but had, of late, "deteriorated remarkably." See Regan, 159-160.

¹¹⁶For Roe's physiological description of criminals see Roberts.

complexion, light hair, and "clean, even features." His appearance, however, startled Roe and led him to wonder how someone with the "bearing of a young man who had come from a good home and had been well brought up" could have ended up in the "business of girl slave trafficking."¹¹⁷

Roe blamed the phenomenon of white, American procurers on a number of different factors. In some instances, he claimed that the adoption of what he perceived as foreign trafficking methods by white American men engaged in the vice trade was a matter of self-preservation which was necessary to allow them to compete with the foreign, and foreign-born.¹¹⁸ In others, he blamed the introduction of foreign vices by equally foreign individuals as responsible for the downfall of American men. His narrative on how Paul Sinclair became a procurer is telling. Casting Sinclair as the prominent son of an Ohio Alderman and an all-American college boy who plays professional baseball, fights in the Spanish-American war, and even rescues a white slave whom he has fallen in love with, Roe reports that he turned to procuring only after he became addicted to opium, a habit he learned from a "Jewess."¹¹⁹ Roe also argued that young men were being lured, and ultimately trapped, into a life of procuring by other white slavers who persuaded them to commit a small crime and then used their guilt to force them to become white slavers themselves.¹²⁰ This allegation was, like his others, undoubtedly designed to portray the participation of young, white men in the business of white slavery in ways which made them victims of foreign business practices, foreign vices, and professional procurers, whom Roe still envisioned as being predominantly foreign or of foreign parentage. In the hands of other authors, however, the idea that young, white, American men were being

¹¹⁷Roe, *Panders*, 63-64.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, 212.

¹¹⁹Roe, "From a Pander to Protector of Girls."

¹²⁰Clifford Roe, *The Girl Who Disappeared* (Chicago: American Bureau of Moral Education, 1914), 74-75.

forced to procure girls by blackmailers was a powerful means to portray white slavery as resulting from the breakdown of white, American, middle-class standards of manliness.

According to a narrative penned by I.M. Page, titled The Girl That Disappears, blackmail was a primary means by which white slavers procured other, less guilty but still unmanly, men for the business of procuring. In Page's tale, however, both the blackmailer and his male victim are white, American men from upstanding families who have turned their backs on the tenets of moral manliness. The story opens with the tale of Flora, a Southern girl who is snared from her home by white slavers who have somehow managed to discover her dreams of becoming a famous artist and who lure her away from home, with her parents' consent, on the promise of a paid scholarship at a prestigious art school.¹²¹ It is, initially, unclear who exactly is responsible for bringing Flora to the attention of these white slavers until Page introduces the readers to two good-for-nothing young, white American boys named Charles Rogers and Don Jackson who are in the midst of hatching a plot to snare another girl. Rogers, who is described by Page as the son of a wealthy businessman who owned a "great mercantile concern," and a quiet church-going woman who idolized her son but never spoke to him about religion, is initially hesitant to go along with the plan to procure another girl but he is blackmailed into it by Jackson who threatens to tell the town of Rogers' role in procuring Flora, which was itself an act which he was forced to commit to regain his employer's money after Jackson lost it gambling.¹²² Jackson was, by Page's account, an even worse specimen of American manhood than

¹²¹I.M. Page, The Girl That Disappears (Paducah: Billings Printing Co., 1915), 3. All of Flora's procurers, including the man who pretends to be from the art school and, later a high official in a mining company who purchases her to work in his mining camp are described in terms which strongly suggest they are white, including references that their faces and heads showed "superior intelligence" and descriptions of them as being "fair complected" with brown hair. In contrast, the brothel owners and Flora's actual rapists are repeatedly portrayed in ways which suggest they are brutish and foreign. See 3, 6-7, 42-43, 44-46.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 18-20, 25, 28-31.

Rogers and saw, in the white-slave trade, a means for funding his own personal vice. They were both, according to Page, worthless, dangerous, "dudes."¹²³

Fortunately for Flora, her hometown of Rosewood, in addition to producing two "dudes," also contained at least one man who Page believed was the epitome of American manhood, a childhood friend of Flora's named Morris Elliot. Constructing Elliot's character in opposition to Rogers and Jackson, Page portrayed him an upstanding, churchgoing, businessman who was the model of proper manliness.¹²⁴ Like Phelps' description of Harold Wayman, Page's construction of Morris spared no adjectives in describing him as the most manly of men. Waxing philosophically on the glory of Morris' manhood, Page stated that:

there is a manhood that moves the soul. Till no one dares refuse to obey it. Such was the manhood of Morris Elliot. His was a manhood that a sentence prayer from a fallen woman could drive through dangers. It was so powerful as to undertake anything but so sensitive as to melt to the warm touch of a tear.¹²⁵

Not surprisingly, it is Elliot who sets off in search of Flora. His search, like Harold Wayman's ill-fated attempt to locate Ethel Vale, leads him into a series of confrontations with the powerful, beastlike men who are holding Flora prisoner whom he is handily overpowering until Flora inadvertently gets in the way.¹²⁶

He and Flora are, however, ultimately reunited thanks to the actions of a preacher affiliated with the National Anti-White Slave Association of Denver who rescues Flora. She and Elliot return to Rosewood where they are married and live happily ever after.¹²⁷ Charles Rogers and Don Jackson do not fare as well. Following a trial in which he lamented the fact that he had chosen to associate with Don Jackson instead of Morris

¹²³Ibid., 17.

¹²⁴Ibid., 16-17.

¹²⁵Ibid., 35.

¹²⁶Ibid., 42-43.

¹²⁷Ibid., 57-60, 66-68.

Elliot, Charles Rogers was banished from Rosewood and left for the west coast.¹²⁸ Don Jackson, had an even unhappier and certainly shorter future after his trial. Found guilty and sentenced to two years in jail, Jackson met the fate typically reserved for non-white men who purportedly defiled white womanhood. He was lynched.

There was no question for reformers that the participation of white, American men in the white-slavery trade was a troubling development that proved that white slavery was forcing both white women, and white men who had turned their backs on the tenets of manliness, into participating in the diabolical trade. What was needed, reformers stressed, was for white men to, in Roe's words, "recover their souls" and "mend their ways." Even procurers, he claimed, could get out of the business if they had "sufficient manhood."¹²⁹ Even some women reformers, like Norine Law, advocated that what was needed was for men to reinvigorate their manhood by avoiding alcohol, gambling, and brothels and, above all, maintain their self-control through "acts of manly resistance." This was the "advice" white-slavery reformers gave young men in their exhortations that one way to combat the white-slavery evil was to propel young men to "reach new heights of true manliness."¹³⁰ For those young men who didn't particularly want to strive for these new heights, the white-slavery crusaders had more than just advice. They had a host of new white-slavery laws designed to enforce male compliance to middle-class standards of white manliness.

Enforcing Manliness

The federal white-slavery law, the Mann Act, was, as historians have recognized, not merely used to prosecute those engaged in "white slavery." Instead, the wording of the

¹²⁸Ibid., 29, 50.

¹²⁹Roe, "Our Double Standard of Morals," 63; Roe, "Whose Daughter Art Thou?," 91.

¹³⁰Law, 199.

law, which specified it could be used to prosecute men who transported women across state lines for prostitution or "any other immoral purpose," criminalized a range of sexual behaviors, including consenting adult relationships, which were deemed threatening to traditional conventions of sexual morality.¹³¹ The Mann Act was also, as Gail Bederman has argued, a way to punish non-white men for their purported transgressions of white America's racial and gender hierarchies. As Bederman notes, the white crusade against Jack Johnson, who had symbolically defeated white manhood in his crushing boxing conquest over Jim Jeffries in 1910, culminated with his conviction under the Mann Act.¹³² Bederman argues that the prosecution of Johnson under the Mann Act for his symbolic transgression of white manhood was exceptional but, in fact, the white-slavery laws were frequently used to police the boundaries of masculinity.¹³³ In most instances, the laws were used to punish men, many of whom were white Americans, for their failure to live up to the standards of white manliness.¹³⁴ This was true of both the Mann Act and white-

¹³¹See Connelly, 127-129; Grittner, 83-106, 139- 162; Marlene D. Beckman, "The White Slave Traffic Act: Historical Impact of a Federal Crime Policy on Women," in Prostitution, vol. 9 of History of Women in the United States: Historical Articles on Women's Lives and Activities, ed. Nancy Cott (New Providence: K.G. Saur, 1993): 106-122; David Langum, Crossing Over the Line: legislating morality and the Mann Act (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). Beckman's article is particularly notable for the ways in which her analysis demonstrates how the law was used to punish the very female "victims" it was designed to protect. As her own evidence, however, indicates some groups of women, particularly those who were using the law against husbands who were crossing state lines with other women, were finding the law to be a source of empowerment. See Beckman, 112, 118-119.

¹³²Bederman, Manliness, 1-5.

¹³³*Ibid.*, 4.

¹³⁴As we have seen, it is impossible to determine the nationality of the defendants in the pandering cases due to the incomplete nature of the court records in Chicago. Based on what records are available it appears as though the white-slavery laws were being used to hold both white, Anglo-Saxon men and, as Roe would say, "American men of foreign parentage" to the standards of white, American manliness. It is clear from the records of the Committee of 15, which identified defendants as "colored" early on, that African-American men were rarely charged with pandering in the pre-WWI period. Following WWI, however, and into the 1920s they were increasingly charged with pandering under

slavery legislation passed on the state level.¹³⁵ Chicago's pandering law, for instance, proved to be a valuable weapon for a range of individuals, including disgruntled or deserted spouses and angry parents, who were seeking to force recalcitrant, unrepentant men to adhere to prevailing standards of white manliness.

As historians have demonstrated, working-class individuals and their families frequently perceived that the court system could be used to pursue their claims against others or to gain control of family members whose behavior was deemed inappropriate. Mary Odem, for instance, has analyzed the ways in which working-class parents attempted to use the courts to control their daughters and to enforce traditional courtship and marriage customs.¹³⁶ The disposition of pandering cases in Chicago, several of which ended in the marriage of the alleged trafficker and his white slave or the payment of child support, bears out Odem's conclusions by demonstrating that families, and the girls themselves, were using the white-slavery laws to force wayward men to adhere to the tenets of manliness and uphold their conventional familial responsibilities.

On October 18, 1910, for instance, John Reed was charged under Chicago's pandering act after he allegedly put Ella Kalowsky in a sporting house. The case against Reed fell apart, however, after Ella and her mother, who apparently brought the suit, refused to sign the pandering complaint in the wake of Reed's agreement to marry

Chicago's law. For a discussion of this shift see the conclusion.

¹³⁵Cases prosecuted under the Mann Act and the ways in which they punished both men and women for stepping outside the traditional boundaries of sexual morality have been well documented by Beckman and Langum. For additional primary information on the ways in which everyone from angry fathers and mothers, jilted husbands, and distraught sons, to religious organizations were using the Mann Act to punish men who transgressed the boundaries of appropriate manly behavior see the cases detailed in "Newspaper Roll of 'White Slave' Cases," *Vigilance* 27, no. 10 (October 1913), 21-28 and "Newspaper Roll of 'White Slave' Cases," *Vigilance* 27, no. 11 (November 1913), 20-28.

¹³⁶Mary Odem, *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the U.S., 1885-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995). Odem stresses the need to conceive of the court system as a network of struggles and negotiations among working-class parents, their teenage daughters and court officials.

Kalowsky.¹³⁷ Similarly, the 1910 pandering case against Harry McCartin, which prosecutors had noted was "weak" from the beginning, was dropped when he agreed to marry the complainant, LuLu Gurthrie.¹³⁸ In another case, the charges against Edward Tierney, whom Lillie Christopherson had accused of pandering, were dismissed after she admitted during sworn testimony that she had only brought the charges against him on the, relatively bad, advice of friends after Tierney broke his promise to marry her and wed another.¹³⁹ Another "fishy" pandering case was discharged a month later after the prosecutors and judge discovered that the complainant had already filed a civil suit against the man for breach of promise and determined that the case was an attempt on her part to extort money from him.¹⁴⁰

The disposition of pandering cases in Chicago also suggests that some women were using the courts to gain financial redress against boyfriends and husbands who had deserted them and their children. On November 1, 1912 Celia Dopke charged Edward Glickstein with pandering and failing to support their child. The pandering case was dismissed but the bastardy case, as it was then called, was settled.¹⁴¹ While it is unclear

¹³⁷Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 98. For other cases where parents swore out warrants against men and women for allegedly putting their daughters in brothels see Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 132, 134, 181 and "Girls Only 15 Years Old Taken from Levee Resort," Chicago Tribune 28 December 1907. Parents also charged men with abduction, seduction, harboring underage girls, and rape. See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 182, 257, 258, 274, 292, 312, 314. The courts also brought charges of fornication against couples which occasionally ended in marriage. See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 187, 188, 224.

¹³⁸Ibid., 31. See also the case of Steffen Nybold who, in October of 1908, had the pandering charges dropped against him after he agreed to marry the girl in question, a case detailed in "White Slaver Sent to Cell," Chicago Tribune, 27 October 1908. Marriage was not, in these instances, a means by which the men prevented the women from testifying against them. A 1909 amendment to Illinois' pandering law made wives competent witnesses against their husbands. For details on this pandering law see chapter two.

¹³⁹Ibid., 265.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 48.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 273.

what, if anything, Dopke gained from the settlement, other cases indicate that some women were granted financial settlements by the courts or, at least, promises from the men that they would support them, after filing pandering charges. William J. Connor, who was accused of pandering by his wife, had his case dismissed after he promised the court and prosecutor Roe that he would "take care of his wife and support her."¹⁴² In another case, Irene Bowmay charged Claude Powers with pandering and bastardy on September 7, 1910 alleging that he "put her in a family way" and tried to put her in a brothel. With Roe, again, prosecuting, Powers pled guilty to bastardy and was ordered to pay \$550. He also paid Bowmay \$100 in court. The pandering charges were dropped after Bowmay claimed she could not remember where the brothel was located and the court determined that what she really needed was money to support her child.¹⁴³

In some instances, it was the relatives of the purported "white slaves" who initiated the pandering cases designed to force men to support their wives and children. Dorothy Hardy charged her son-in-law, Bernhard Sells, with pandering in 1910, accusing him of placing her daughter in a house of prostitution. She dropped the case, after requesting that the couple live together, when her daughter refused to testify and Sells came forward with the promise that he would support her daughter.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, Walter Radies was brought up on charges of pandering and contributing to the delinquency of a minor by his sister-in-

¹⁴²Ibid., 85.

¹⁴³Ibid., 86. Some women also wielded white-slavery narratives to retain control of their children according to reformers' narratives. In what was reportedly a tense custody hearing over her four year old, Mrs. Jahn found herself forced to defend her fitness as a parent, against her father-in-law who was seeking to have custody of the child turned over to him. Jahn defended her lifestyle, which apparently also included living as a common law wife with a man who was estranged, but not divorced, from his first wife, attempted to win the court's sympathy by claiming that her husband had seduced her and attempted to force her to enter a brothel. She also denied the charges that she was pursuing the court fight for her son as a ploy to extort money from her estranged husband's wealthy family. See Regan, 34-38.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 76.

law Pearl Black who alleged that she had been left with the responsibility of raising his child while he kept her sister in a disorderly house and lived off her earnings. The pandering case, which was being pursued by Roe, was dropped after Radies was ordered to pay child support to Black.¹⁴⁵

Pandering charges were also being lodged by wives to punish their spouses for desertion. Jessie O'Brien, for instance, had her husband hauled in on pandering charges after he left her for another woman, a charge which landed him in jail for six months and cost him \$300. Husbands were also using Chicago's pandering laws to pursue their wives new lovers and punish them for their transgression of acceptable male behavior. In July of 1912, Harry Dudley charged James Stowe with pandering, accusing him of placing his wife, who had been arrested for prostitution, in a brothel. Stowe was released after May Dudley refused to testify against him.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, Grace Gardina's husband, a 23 year old butcher, charged Nathan Mason with pandering for allegedly inducing his wife to leave him and enter a life of prostitution. Grace, who was only 17, was also picked up and turned over to the Juvenile Court for trial, presumably for prostitution. Taking a page

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 126. Evidence also suggests that some women reportedly lodged pandering charges against men for less noble reasons than to secure support for themselves or their children. Pandering charges against Charles Williams, lodged by Belle Winters in March of 1910, were dismissed after the court concluded that Winters was trying to blackmail Williams. They based this decision in part on the fact that Winters had a history of appearing as a complainant in white-slavery cases. She had, in fact, been a witness against Chicago's infamous procuress Mrs. Lemuel Schlotter in 1907. See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 68. For more details on the case of Schlotter see chapter five. The case against Williams was not the only one the courts threw out on the basis of the fact that the complaining witness appeared to be extorting something from the defendant. The evidence in Sarah Feingold's pandering trial in 1912 reportedly showed that the woman who accused her, Ida Shapiro, had only begun proceedings against Feingold after the woman refused to give her \$50.00. Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 213. The concern that the white-slavery laws were being used as a form of blackmail grew as the moral panic waned. See "White-Slave Laws and Blackmail," Literary Digest 54 (January 27, 1917): 178.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., 244.

from her husband's book, she struck back and charged him with pandering, claiming that he was guilty of trying to induce her to enter a brothel after only one week of marriage. It was a poor strategy on both of their parts. Joseph was sentenced to six months in jail and fined \$300 plus costs. Grace was sent to the Woman's Refuge to be held until she turned 18. Nathan Mason was the only one to escape being imprisoned as a result of the marital discord between Joseph and Grace. The charges of pandering against him were dismissed.¹⁴⁷

As this last case demonstrates, using the pandering laws to punish son-in-laws, husbands, and wives' new lovers was not necessarily an effective strategy for gaining redress against a man who had violated the tenets of acceptable male behavior but it did sometimes bring relief to the plaintiff in the form of financial support or a commitment of marriage. As such, the white-slavery laws were a powerful weapon for individuals who lacked other means of recourse against men who had failed to live up to their manly obligations which dictated that they marry the women they were sleeping with and support their wives and children. If they failed to live up to these standards they risked being branded as procurers, a group of men whom the white-slavery discourse constructed as particularly unmanly. In portraying white slavers as unmanly, foreign men whose masculinity menaced both American civilization and American manhood and by constructing narratives which portrayed the traffic as threatening to boys as well as girls, white-slavery authors crafted their narratives into cautionary tales for white, American men which warned them of the dangers awaiting them, their families, and their nation if they failed to live up to the tenets of manliness.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 202 and 205. For a similar case in which one woman's allegations against a man resulted in him filing charges against her and her current boyfriend see "Says She was White Slave," Chicago Tribune, 27 December 1908.

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**"FOR GOD'S SAKE DO SOMETHING:" WHITE-SLAVERY NARRATIVES AND
MORAL PANIC IN TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY AMERICAN CITIES**

VOLUME II

By

Amy R. Lagler

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Chapter Four

For Greed Not Lust: Policing the Capitalists

On December 26, 1909 Emma Goldman warned a crowd gathered in New York's Women's Trade Union League Hall that the current agitation over the white-slave traffic was a ruse designed to distract the public from pressing labor issues.¹ It was, she announced, a "toy" to keep the attention of the "baby public" diverted so that they would not discover the true causes of prostitution.² For Goldman the ultimate cause was economic exploitation, the "merciless Moloch of capitalism that fattens on underpaid labor," which pushed thousands of women into the arms of traffickers. Reformers like George Kibbe Turner who were writing white-slavery narratives for the public, Goldman claimed, were well aware that economics and wages were the primary causes of the traffic but were only interested in using the issue of white slavery to play the role of outraged "Pharisees" and create political jobs for themselves.³

Goldman's view of the white-slavery panic as a contrived effort to divert attention from economic issues has found support among historians who argue that the discourse "reduced the problems of prostitution to the cardboard dimensions of a modern day morality play" and obscured the role of economic exploitation in forcing women to enter the profession.⁴ Goldman's assessment that the "'righteous' cry against the white slave

¹For a short history of Goldman see Alix Shulman, "The Most Dangerous Woman in the World," in Emma Goldman, The Traffic in Women and other essays on feminism (New York: Times Change Press, 1970): 5-15.

²"Fight Upon White Slavery Denounced by Emma Goldman," Chicago Tribune, 27 December 1909, 5.

³Emma Goldman, "The White Slave Traffic," Mother Earth 4, no. 11 (January 1910), 344-345.

⁴Mark Connelly, The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 132-133; Judith Walkowitz, Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State (New York: Cambridge University Press,

traffic" was a "toy" to create more "fat political jobs" for investigators and detectives does seem, on one level, to be an accurate one. As we have seen, Roe's work in Chicago did just that.⁵ Consequently, historians, many of whom have based their assessments of white slavery on the works of a limited number of twentieth-century reformers like Roe have concluded that Goldman was, substantially, correct. Frederick Grittner, for instance, argues that Goldman's critique is "one of the best attempts at coming to grips" with the meaning of the white slavery phenomenon.⁶

On another level, however, the discourse on white slavery was incredibly malleable and capable of being harnessed to a variety of causes, including economic reform. Even Emma Goldman utilized the discourse as part of her argument that economic exploitation was the primary cause of both white slavery and prostitution and used the white-slavery

1980), 250. For another analysis which assesses the relationship between the rise of the panic over white slavery and economic issues see Amy Dru Stanley, From Bondage to Contract: Wage Labor, Marriage, and the Market in the Age of Slave Emancipation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Stanley argues that during the late-nineteenth century, the prostitute became a "negative exemplar of the legitimate trafficking in human bodies and souls, taking the ideological place of the chattel slave" for reformers looking for ways to minimize and isolate concerns that the market economy, based on the freedom to contract, had given rise to relations which resembled slavery, not freedom. In effect, Stanley argues that reformer's focus on the white slave, instead of the wage slave, defined the sale of sex, instead of the sale of one's labor, as the defining feature of slavery in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This association, according to Stanley, served to justify other contract relations, in marriage and labor, which had, historically, been seen as forms of slavery by feminists and workers. While Stanley's analysis is an insightful assessment of the debates over contract, freedom, and slavery during the nineteenth century, her argument that the specter of white slavery was constructed as a means to undermine broader critiques of the economic system reinforces the notion that the discourse of white slavery was crafted by apologists for the prevailing system of market relations as a means to deflect the public's attention from the plight of the wage slave. As we shall see, critics of the economic system and white-slavery crusaders merged the plight of the wage slave with that of the white slave in both the nineteenth and twentieth century in ways which complicate Stanley's analysis.

⁵For details on Roe's involvement in the white-slave crusade in Chicago see chapter two.

⁶Frederick Grittner, White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 127.

narratives of Clifford Roe as evidence that white-slaves were being exported out of America into other countries. Goldman also defended Roe against what she perceived, incorrectly, as his firing from his job as Assistant District Attorney, claiming that he lost his job because his "discovery" of an "underground railroad" which brought white slaves from Boston to Washington ruffled the feathers of his higher ups.⁷

Socialists also found the white-slavery discourse useful for the construction of their economic critiques. As Mari Jo Buhle has argued in her analysis of women and American Socialism, white-slavery stories were standard fare for the socialist press during the early twentieth century as socialists perceived that they could use the white-slavery hysteria to "fight Progressives on their own ground" and "steal much of their political thunder."⁸ The results were often wildly popular. Reginald Kauffman's socialist novel The House of Bondage, which included biting criticisms of the economic system, went through sixteen printings in two years.⁹ Socialists also sought to join the larger crusade against white slavery to have their economic message heard. The Jewish branch of the Socialist Party in Chicago, for instance, participated in the rallies and meetings held in the

⁷Goldman, The Traffic in Women, 28-29. For information on Roe's resignation from the Assistant District Attorney's Office see chapter two.

⁸Mari Jo Buhle, Women and American Socialism, 1870-1920 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 254-256. For an analysis of socialist's use of the white-slavery narratives in Canada see Janice Newton, "From Wage Slave to White Slave," in Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics, eds. Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989): 217-236.

⁹F.C.S., "Introduction," in Reginald Kauffman, The House of Bondage (1910; repr., Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Gregg Press, 1968). For a detailed analysis of Kauffman's novel see Grittner, 109-113. For additional texts which merged socialist concerns with narratives on prostitution and white slavery see Ida Van Etten, "The House of the Dragons," Cosmopolitan Magazine (March 1893): 615-625 and Estelle Baker, The Rose Door (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Co., 1911). Van Etten's article offers a scathing portrayal of the uselessness of middle-class female reformer's efforts and the church. Baker's analysis conveys its socialist message, which calls for a complete change in the social and economic institutions, by having a middle-class, female reformer read from a socialist tract given to her by a prostitute she is interviewing.

city during the heyday of the moral panic and used the forum to blame industrial and economic conditions for its prevalence.¹⁰ If radicals like Goldman and American socialists saw white-slavery as a "toy" to distract the public from economic issues, they also clearly believed that the furor over white slavery could be harnessed to their own agenda and they used the white-slavery discourse in their attempts to change the rules of the game.

In addition, the growth of concern over "white slavery" was intricately bound to the development of concerns of "wage slavery." The discourses on white slavery and wage slavery had, in fact, been linked since the nineteenth century when antiprostitution reformers, such as the Female Moral Reform Society, and reformers pushing for economic changes, including B.O. Flowers, began claiming that young, female "wage slaves" were uniquely vulnerable to being forced into a life of "white slavery" by deceptive advertisements, procurers fronting as employment bureaus, low wages, and immoral employers. These allegations found fertile soil among nineteenth-century white-slavery reformers like Charlton Edholm who similarly stressed the relationship between poverty and vice. Twentieth-century white-slavery reformers, in turn, picked up and built on this discursive legacy during the moral panic years by arguing that the rising capitalist ethos was encouraging both the commercialization of women and the commercialization of vice and stressing that the example set by modern capitalist business practices had resulted in the formation of a profitable, organized syndicate devoted to the "business" of white slavery. They also continued to implicate immoral employers and low wages for the plight of the white slave. Far from being a ruse to distract the public's attention from the economic roots of prostitution, the "economic side" of the white slavery problem had, by 1913, become a prominent component of the white-slavery narratives. Tellingly, the moral panic itself helped open the door for legislators in Chicago to push for minimum wage legislation by arguing that the *real* white slavers were the city's capitalists.

¹⁰"Joins Hands in War on White Slavery," Chicago Tribune, 6 October 1909.

White Slaves and Wage Slavery in the Nineteenth Century

During the nineteenth century, antiprostitution reformers linked the plight of the white slave and the working girl by portraying girls searching for work as being in a highly perilous position. White slavers, they alleged, took advantage of these girls by placing deceptive advertisements in the newspapers and used "information offices" and employment bureaus where girls went to seek open positions to snare their victims. In the 1840s, for instance, the Female Moral Reform Society was calling New York's employment agencies fronts for the white-slave trade and printing the names and addresses of suspected agencies in their journal to warn women to stay away from them.¹¹ Similarly, William Sanger expressed concern over the institutions in the 1850s, arguing that "intelligence offices," the nineteenth-century term for employment bureaus, were responsible for inveighing and entrapping a large number of girls into houses of prostitution.¹² The dangers in finding employment were not, however, the only, or even primary ones, that working girls reportedly faced. A far more troubling problem, according to reformers, was the way in which the low wages paid to working-class girls laid the groundwork upon which procurers found fertile soil on which to operate.

The connections among low wages, poverty, and vice were drawn as early as the mid-nineteenth century by the first wave of antiprostitution reformers.¹³ The members of

¹¹Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Beauty, the Beast, and the Militant Woman: A Case Study in Sex Roles and Social Stress in Jacksonian America," in Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 118.

¹²William W. Sanger, The History of Prostitution (Medical Publishing Co., 1897; repr. New York: Eugenics Publishing Co., 1937), 517-518. For another nineteenth-century source which blamed intelligence offices for trapping girls in brothels see Report of the Temporary Home for Working Women, From May 1, 1877-January 1, 1879 (Boston: W.L. Deland and Son, 1879), 3-4.

¹³The idea that there were two "waves" of antiprostitution reform in the nineteenth century is drawn from Ruth Rosen, The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-

the New York Female Moral Reform Society, for example, combined their calls for an end to the double-standard and male lasciviousness with arguments that women's low wages were forcing girls into prostitution. Formed in the 1830s with the expressed goal of eradicating the "social evil", the group had, by the 1840s, taken up the cause of laboring women and were arguing for a causal relationship between wages and vice. As their journal stated in 1844:

In every large community and especially in cities there are multitudes of the young who...are thrown on their own resources and obliged to earn a subsistence...or become prey to the tempter...Shame on...men who, by oppressing the hireling in her wages,...drive the young and unfriended to dens of shame, while they fill their coffers with the avails of unrequited toil.¹⁴

The arguments of these early antiprostitution reformers which linked low wages and prostitution gained additional credence in 1858 when William Sanger's authoritative study of New York's prostitutes argued that over one quarter of the 2,000 prostitutes he interviewed were driven to prostitution through "actual want" and "the apparent and dreaded approach of starvation." 534 of the women interviewed were earning only \$1.00 a week in wages, a sum which Sanger calculated would lead to starvation in less than a month. This system of wages, according to Sanger, forced women to join the ranks of prostitution in order to survive.¹⁵

1918 (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 7-9.

¹⁴Quoted in Barbara Berg, The Remembered Gate: Origins of American Feminism: The Woman and the City, 1800-1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 205. For another analysis of the Female Moral Reform Society which acknowledges the efforts of the reformers to provide economic alternatives to prostitution and to fight for the rights of working-class women see Smith-Rosenberg, 109-128.

¹⁵Sanger, 489, 529-532. Rosen argues that Sanger helped absolve industrial employers by stressing that half of prostitutes were domestics and another quarter had come directly from their homes but his analysis does contain a strong critique of the industrial system's low wages and their relationship to prostitution. It is notable, however, that Sanger did not advocate raising wages. His solution to the prostitution "problem" was regulation. See, Rosen, 10 and Sanger, 627-676.

This early antiprostitution discourse left a legacy for the second wave of antiprostitution reform which began to take shape in the 1880s, including the growth of concerns over white slavery. The white-slavery reformers in the 1880s, however, also had another discursive source for narratives which linked wages and prostitution thanks to social activists like B.O. Flowers who was using the pages of his journal The Arena to excoriate capitalism and businessmen for transferring the rightful earnings of the working class into "the pockets of the parasites who prey upon society."¹⁶ Flowers' analyses of the problems facing the urban working class demonstrate how tangled the relationship between "white slavery" and "wage slavery" became in the late nineteenth century.

The narratives of Flowers and other reformers like him merged the plights of the "wage slave" and the "white slave" on a number of levels. First, the term "white slavery" was utilized by labor activists and reformers who argued both that low wages led to vice and that all workers, or all women workers, were white slaves. B.O. Flowers, for instance, charged that the working women in New York were white slaves as a result of the legislature's failure to consider legislation to alleviate the low wages, working conditions, and hours of working women.¹⁷ Others claimed that all workers, male and

¹⁶B.O. Flowers, "Wellsprings and Feeders of Immorality," The Arena 12 (May 1895), 343; B.O. Flowers, "Social Conditions as Feeders of Immorality," The Arena 11 (February 1895), 411. For more of Flower's views on the ways in which the plutocracy of industrialists stole from the proletariat and what was needed to correct the system see "Social Extravagance," "Deplorable Social Conditions," and "Society's Exiles," all in Satan in Society and his Modern Methods of Winning Victims, ed. Norman Morand Roumane (Beaver Springs: American Publishing Co., 1903): 54-60, 240-257, 349-379. For another reformer who used the pages of the The Arena to critique the treatment of female workers see the essays by Helen Campbell who argued that working women were paid insufficient wages, that poverty was the source of the social evil, and that working women faced the threat of seduction and defilement in both retail stores and as domestics. Campbell's articles also provided detailed information on women workers and their wages. See, Helen Campbell's six part series, "Women Wage-Earners: Their Past, Their Present, and Their Future," which ran in The Arena from January of 1893 through July 1893.

¹⁷B.O. Flowers, "White Slaves of New York," in Satan in Society, 61-83.

female, were white slaves under the current capitalist system.¹⁸ Narratives on the plight of wage-earners had, of course, always drawn from the imagery of slavery and, thanks to the American experience with "black slavery," the term "white slavery" was adopted by a number of reformers to describe the condition of white working-class men and women regardless of whether or not they were dealing with sexual enslavement.¹⁹

Economic reformers, however, rarely limited their discussions of "white slavery" to the plight of white, industrial workers. Instead, they continued to build on the discourse over wages and vice in ways which either implied or stated that women forced into prostitution as a result of low wages were also "white slaves." In large part this was due to the fact that the narratives on "wage slavery" and "white slavery" were being developed simultaneously and, as they were both a part of the larger discourse on women, wages, moral purity, and reform, they frequently drew on each others' texts. As a result, the images of the "white slaves" who toiled in the factories and shops in the urban areas and the "white slaves" who toiled in the brothels often appeared side by side in reformer's narratives. For instance, Nell Nelson, the pseudonym for a female reporter for the *Chicago Times*, wrote a series of articles for the paper based on her undercover experiences in factories and shops around Chicago in the late-nineteenth century and had her findings published under the impressive, if longwinded, title of:

The White Slave Girls of Chicago: Nell Nelson's Startling Disclosures of the Cruelties and Iniquities Practiced in the Workshops and Factories of a Great City: A Graphic Account of the Slave-Grinding Process Carried on By Heartless Task-Masters. Young Girls Given Worse Treatment Than Dumb

¹⁸John T. McEnnis, The White Slaves of Free America: Being an Account of the Suffering, Privations and Hardships of the Weary Toilers in Our Great Cities (Chicago: R. S. Peale and Co., 1888).

¹⁹This connection was encouraged by pro-slavery southerners who liked to argue that northern free labor was as bad, or worse, than southern slavery. See, George Fitzhugh, Cannibals All! or Slaves Without Masters (Richmond, 1857; repr., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).

Brutes.--Herded Like Cattle in Foul-Smelling Lofts and Basements.: A Woman's Exposure of the Bitter Hardships Suffered by Working Women.-- Hell-Holes Where Virtue is Laughed at and Womanhood Debased.--The Continuous Tragedy of To-Day.²⁰

Nelson did not refer to all the workers she encountered as "white slaves" but the circumstances under which she did use the term, however, are telling. In one instance she describes a white girl who is working side by side with an African-American girl as a "white slave," as if to indicate that both white and black were enslaved in this northern city.²¹ She also used the term to describe Kitty Kelly, a woman charged with solicitation who, unable to find any other type of employment that would provide a living for her and her starving infant, was forced into prostitution.²²

B.O. Flowers also drew from the emerging discourse of white slavery for his analysis of the dangers facing the "white slaves" of industry both by arguing that there was a "the traffic in girls carried on in the business world" and through his allegations that employers were requiring girls to sacrifice their virginity as the "price of her position" and turning them into prostitutes. In some instances, Flowers alleged, employer's methods of debauching their female employees mirrored the methods of the white slavers, including the drugging and raping of their victims.²³ For Flowers, the ruin of poor girls by rich men

²⁰Nell Nelson, The White Slave Girls of Chicago (Chicago: Barkley Publishing Co., 1888).

²¹*Ibid.*, 86.

²²*Ibid.*, 117.

²³Flowers, "Social Conditions," 401; Flowers, "Wellsprings," (May 1895), 343. Flowers was not, of course, the first to voice these allegations against employers. Sanger, for instance, argued that seamstresses were at the mercy of male employers who had a great deal of latitude in determining how much the women would be paid for her labor. This situation, he believed, often required the woman to "sacrifice" her virtue to her boss in order to be assured even the most "nominal" wages. See, Sanger, 533-534.

For an analysis which describes the ways in which employers threatened girls who would not submit with firing as "essentially rape," see B.O. Flowers, "Prostitution Within the Marriage Bond," Arena 13 (June 1895). As the title of this article also implies, Flowers and other reformers were arguing that married women, forced to submit to the continual

was a basic feature of industrial slavery.²⁴ Flowers also quoted from William Stead, whom he argued had exposed a "systematic traffic in virgins created by wealthy men who were "possessed by a mania for despoiling innocent little girls" and Charlton Edholm, in whose text Traffic in Girls Flowers claimed to have found proof that wealthy employers were underpaying female workers and encouraging them to make liaisons with male "friends" to support themselves.²⁵ That Flowers was able to harness the early white-slavery narratives penned by Charlton Edholm and William Stead on the traffic in women indicates how those narratives were themselves rooted in an economic analysis of the prostitution problem.

In fact, the discursive borrowing went both ways. Just as nineteenth-century economic reformers, investigators, and commentators built analyses of immorality and prostitution into their texts and drew from white-slavery reformers, the social purity forces in America, including those focused on white slavery, took heed of the arguments these social reformers were putting forth and integrated them into their own texts. The arguments of B.O. Flowers and Helen Campbell, who both argued strongly for a connection between poverty and vice, were particular favorites among social purity reformers. Both Flowers and Campbell had their articles republished in the pages of the purity press and gave addresses in front of purity organizations.²⁶ The official journal of

sexual demands of their husbands, were akin to prostitutes and slaves of their husbands. For a similar argument along these same lines see B.O. Flowers, "Some Causes of Present Day Immorality and Suggestions as to Practical Remedies," in The National Purity Congress: Its Papers, Addresses, Portraits, ed. Aaron M. Powell (New York: The American Purity Alliance, 1896; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1976), 306-319. For a secondary analysis of feminists' critiques of marriage during the nineteenth century see Stanley, 175-217.

²⁴Flowers, "Wellsprings," (May 1895), 343.

²⁵Flowers, "Social Conditions," 407-8; Flowers, "Wellsprings," (May 1895), 339-340.

²⁶Helen Campbell read a paper entitled "Poverty and Vice" in front of the 14th Annual Meeting of the New York Committee. The group's journal published both portions of this speech and excerpts from her series on "Prisoners of Poverty" which ran in the New York Tribune and blamed poverty for prostitution. See, The Philanthropist 2, no. 4 (April

the New York Committee for the Prevention of State Regulation of Vice also occasionally borrowed from articles which ran in working-class journals to link vice and wages. In 1886, for example, they excerpted from an article which ran in the Workmen's Advocate which stated that the fundamental cause of social vice was low wages and discrimination against women and called for legislation to stop oppressive combinations of capital. The arguments that the current economic system imperiled both working-class girls looking for work and working girls making low wages were, by the mid-1880s, well known and well respected ideas within the social purity movement.

When the American white-slavery narratives began to take shape among these social purity reformers they were forged within this discursive context and drew heavily from its critique of the economic system. In part the economic focus of the white-slavery narratives was also due to the fact that William Stead's Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon, a pivotal precursor to the development of American white-slavery narratives, was constructed around the theme of class inequality.²⁷ As historian Judith Walkowitz has argued, Stead's narrative was highly anti-aristocratic and portrayed upper-class male villains seducing and buying working-class girls for their pleasure.²⁸ According to Walkowitz, these anti-aristocratic themes functioned, in part, to ease the guilt of the

1887), 4-5; The Philanthropist 5, no. 3 (March 1890); The Philanthropist 5, no. 5 (May 1890). The New York Committee also noted that Campbell's "Poverty and Vice" was also published in the WCTU's Union Signal. B.O. Flowers presented an address in front of the National Purity Congress in 1895 and his articles on immorality were excerpted in the New York Committee's journal. See, B.O. Flowers, "Some Causes," and "Wellsprings and Feeders of Immorality," The Philanthropist 10, no. 1 (January 1895), 1-3.

²⁷For the role of Stead in provoking the American concern with white slavery see chapter one.

²⁸Judith Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 86-87. Walkowitz argues that the melodramatic genre employed by Stead, and other antiprostitution reformers, was a favorite genre of radical politics because the ways it represented power and virtue were highly compatible with the antiaristocratic and democratic traditions of radicalism.

middle-classes and remove the opprobrium from the economic system.²⁹ Notably, however, the growth of similar narratives in America and Stead's 1893 analysis of vice in Chicago merged traditional anti-aristocratic themes on seduction with anti-capitalist themes which blamed immoral employers and low wages for the downfall of innocent working girls.

Stead's visit to Chicago in 1893 and the resulting book, published under the title If Christ Came to Chicago, detailed the life of America's "Scarlet Women" and stressed that the low wages paid to working-class women and the immoral nature of their supervisors left them vulnerable to temptation where prostitution was concerned. Procureesses, Stead believed, preyed on these unfortunate working girls both in the stores and in the streets and were always on the lookout for a girl in need of a better paying job.³⁰ One particularly wily procuress, according to Stead, worked as both the head of the dress-making department in a dry goods store and as the manager of a brothel in the Levee, a "combination" she found very "convenient" as she could recruit for her nighttime establishment among her dress-makers. Stead's narrative also alleged that the wages of women working in stores were being pegged at a rate "which assumed that they would be supplemented by the allowance of a "friend," a claim frequently repeated by American reformers.³¹

²⁹Walkowitz, Prostitution, 250 and City of Dreadful, 94. Some American reformers did use antiaristocratic diatribes to congratulate the middle-classes for their social purity. For an example of this type of argument see "Social Purity in the West," The Philanthropist 8, no. 5 (May 1893), 1-2. For additional authors who picked up the theme of the debauched upper classes and vulnerable working-girls in both the North and the South throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries see Howe and Hummel, In Danger; or Life in New York (New York: J.S. Ogilvie and Co., 1888); Dick Maple, Palaces of Sin (St. Louis: National Book Concern, 1902); The Philanthropist 5, no. 9 (September 1889), 3.

³⁰William Stead, If Christ Came to Chicago (Chicago: Laird & Lee, Publishers, 1894; repr., New York: Living Books, 1964): 243-260.

³¹Stead, 245. See also, "If Christ Came to Chicago," The Philanthropist 9, no. 6 (June 1894), 1-3. For examples of the repetition of the "friend" story in the nineteenth century see "Low Wages and Vice," The Philanthropist 8, no. 5 (May 1893), 8; Flowers,

A number of Stead's allegations struck a chord with American reformers, both in and out of purity circles. B.O. Flowers, for instance, drew from Stead's examples in If Christ Came to Chicago to prove that girls were being forced to "sacrifice their virtue" to survive the brutally low wages paid to them by "millionaire merchants" and the New York Committee for the Prevention of State Regulation of Vice ran long excerpts from the text, including the chapter on "Scarlet Woman," in their journal.³² Few social purity activists and white-slavery reformers in America were willing to call for the kind of economic reform that both Stead and Flowers advocated, but that does not mean that they did not integrate similar economic critiques into their narratives of female, sexual danger.³³

Specifically, nineteenth-century white-slavery reformers argued that the traffic in women was thriving on the starvation wages being paid to women and girls by industry.

"Wellsprings" (May 1895), 343; Isaac H. Clothier, "Protection for Young Women in Store, Factories, and Other Places of Business," The Philanthropist 11, no. 7 (July 1896), 17-19.

³²Flowers, "Social Conditions," 408; "The Scarlet Woman," The Philanthropist 9, no. 6 (June 1894), 1-3. See also, "Casting Out Devils," The Philanthropist 9, no. 7 (July 1894), 1-3.

³³As David Pivar has pointed out, purity reformers were typically unwilling to criticize the system itself, in spite of their recognition that poverty was, to a great extent, responsible for vice. Instead they advocated ameliorative reforms such as pressuring employers to pay a living wage, improve working conditions, or advocated vocational education. See, David Pivar, Purity Crusade: Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973), 152. Purity activists were also quick to credit businessmen who adopted liberal business practices that the reformers felt would lessen the peril the girls working for them faced. See, The Philanthropist 3, no. 6 (June 1888). Some, however, did criticize the capitalist system itself in the harshest of terms. Rev. DeCosta, for instance, argued capitalists were responsible for vice and that reformers were afraid to deal with the real cause of vice, the manipulation of capital and the social order itself. DeCosta called for a "recognition of the enormity of the Crime of the Capitalist" and the execution of laws against him. See "The Capitalists of Vice," The Philanthropist 7, no. 6 (June 1892), 6. For Stead's plan for economic reform in America see Joseph Baylen, "A Victorian's 'Crusade' in Chicago, 1893-1894," The Journal of American History 51, no. 3 (December 1964): 418-434. For Flowers' views on what was needed to correct the system see "Social Extravagance," "Deplorable Social Conditions," and "Society's Exiles," all in Satan in Society, 54-60, 240-257, 349-379.

The ways in which early American white-slavery narratives targeted low wages as a primary source of the traffic in girls is best exemplified by the narratives of Charlton Edholm, whose writings on the issue repeatedly cited low wages and other employment related problems as the reason that many girls became victims of the traffickers. In the 1899 edition of her text The Traffic in Girls, Edholm devoted a chapter to "The Snare of Starvation Wages," citing it as one of the primary causes, along with drugs, dancing, and seduction, of the traffic. In this narrative, where she announced that "thousands upon thousands of girls were forced into a life of shame by starvation wages," Edholm repeated a number of arguments put forth by Flowers, Sanger, and other reformers, including alleging that employers considered a woman's virtue part of the service they were hiring her for.³⁴ In her 1892 article "Traffic in White Girls," Edholm built on these themes, drawing from the statistics of Parent Duchatelet whose research was aimed at finding the principal causes as to why women ended up as prostitutes. As Edholm reported, more than half of the 5,000 prostitutes Parent Duchatelet interviewed were forced into the life by "want and misery." Re-iterating that much of this misery was caused by low wages, Edholm cited August Bebel, a socialist who argued that the low wages paid to working women were a primary cause of prostitution.³⁵

In spite of the fact that Edholm was, like most social-purity reformers, unwilling to criticize the economic system itself, her reliance on socialist authors and her arguments regarding the vulnerability of working-class girls and the ways in which low wages led to

³⁴Charlton Edholm, The Traffic in Girls (1899), 56-57. Edholm called for a more even distribution of wealth and woman suffrage as a means to ameliorate the conditions which led to vice. She also argued for a family wage, encouraged women and girls to enter the higher paying field of domestic service, and urged middle and upper-class women to be friendly to service girls at their local stores to combat the girls loneliness and vulnerability to treacherous men. See, Edholm, 56-65.

³⁵Charlton Edholm, "Traffic in White Girls," Californian Illustrated 2, no. 6 (November 1892), 828-829. For Bebel's views on the relationship between capitalism and prostitution see August Bebel, Woman in the Past, Present, and Future (London: The Modern Press, 1885): 91-104.

vice indicates that early white-slavery reformers did not utilize the white-slavery discourse to divert public attention from economic issues. Instead they crafted their narratives in ways which focused on the links between the plight of the "wage slave" and the plight of the "white slave" and, in some instances, argued that it was capitalists themselves who were engaging in the trafficking. As we have seen, Kate Bushnell's investigation into white slavery in the lumbercamps in Wisconsin in 1888 convinced her that the traffic was being run by a "systematic organization of men of business intelligence" and "male capitalists" who were eager to turn a large profit by selling women into prostitution.³⁶ These arguments left a powerful legacy for white-slavery white-slavery reformers in the moral panic years who used them in their efforts to expose the "economic side" of the white-slavery problem.

The "Business" of White Slavery During the Moral Panic Years

White-slavery reformers in the twentieth century continued to argue that working-class girls were uniquely vulnerable to white slavers. Like the nineteenth-century reformers, they stressed that girls searching for work frequently fell prey to deceptive advertisements and procurers who were reportedly scouring the countryside with false promises of lucrative and glamorous positions.³⁷ They also continued to argue that

³⁶"The Wisconsin Lumber Dens," The Philanthropist 3, no. 12 (December 1888), 1-2. See also, her corrections to the terminology used in this story which ran in The Philanthropist 4, no. 1 (January 1889), 5. For a discussion of the investigations which produced these allegations see chapter one.

³⁷See, "The Tragedy of the Want Ad," in H.M. Lytle, The Tragedies of the White Slaves (Chicago: Charles C. Thompson Co., 1909): 23-38; Clifford Roe, "Procuring Country Girls for City Resorts," in The Great War on White Slavery or Fighting for the Protection of Our Girls, ed. Clifford Roe (1911), 160-161; Clifford Roe, The Girl Who Disappeared (Chicago: American Bureau of Moral Education, 1914); Clifford Roe, Panders and Their White Slaves, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), 55-57; Edwin Sims, "Menace of the White Slave Trade," Ernest Bell, "How Snakes Charm Canaries: Methods of

employment bureaus were being used as fronts for white slavers anxious to find girls desperate for work, allegations which resulted in the establishment of "legitimate" employment bureaus by concerned reformers and the passage of legislative bills to regulate employment agencies.³⁸ In addition, white-slavery crusaders during the moral panic years used their narratives to criticize both the ethos and practices of the capitalist system of production which they blamed for commercializing vice, encouraging the traffic in girls, and providing the white slavers with a *modus operandi*.

Historians such as Ruth Rosen have argued that antiprostitution reformers were fearful that what they perceived as the rampant commercialization of all areas of life was encouraging prostitution.³⁹ This was particularly true of white-slavery crusaders who

Procurers," Harry A. Parkin, "Practical Means of Protecting Our Girls," all in Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or War on the White Slave Trade, ed. Ernest Bell (G.S. Ball, 1910), 63-65, 226, 318; Stanley Finch, "The White Slave Traffic: Address by Stanley W. Finch, Chief of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice, before World's Purity Congress, Louisville, KY., May 7, 1912," (Washington D.C.: International Reform Bureau, n.d.), 1-3.

³⁸For white-slavery authors who focused on employment bureaus in the twentieth century see Rev. Seth Cook Rees, Miracles in the Slums (Chicago: S.B. Shaw, 1905), 250; Edward O. Janney, The White Slave Traffic in America (New York: National Vigilance Committee, 1911), 102-103; Theodore Bingham, The Girl That Disappears: The Real Facts about the White Slave Traffic (Boston: The Gorham Press, 1911), 55-56; Leona Groetzinger, The City's Perils (1910), 50; "Salvation Army Experiences," in Fighting the Traffic, 442. Women reformer's concerns over the employment bureaus during the moral panic years and the emergence of narratives which argued that African-American girls were particularly vulnerable to being forced into prostitution by employment bureaus will be discussed in chapter five. For a discussion of the efforts of reformers to establish their own employment bureaus see Lisa Fine, The Souls of the Skyscraper: Female Clerical Workers in Chicago 1870-1930 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 127-133. On the struggle to pass legislation in New York to regulate the agencies see "The Employment Agency Bill," The Philanthropist 19, no. 2 (July 1904), 2-3 and Timothy Gilfoyle, City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790-1920 (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1992), 260. For the effort in Chicago see "Annual Report of the League for the Protection of Immigrants, 1909-1910," in Reports of the Immigration Commission, Statements and Recommendations Submitted by Societies and Organizations Interested in the Subject of Immigration (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 77-78.

³⁹Rosen, 41-42. Mary Linehan is the only historian to analyze, albeit briefly, how white-

blamed capitalism for creating a nation of money worshippers and indicted this capitalist ethos with creating white slavery, a system which they argued was rooted in the commercializing of both vice and womanhood.⁴⁰ Clifford Roe, for instance, argued that:

An America commercialized has commercialized its daughters. Who would have every prophesied a century ago that today like hardware and groceries the daughters of the people would be bought and sold?⁴¹

Similarly, Robert O. Harland's analysis of vice and white slavery in Chicago argued that contemporaries were living in a "sordid age of commercialism" which had "warped" the city's values and made morality subservient to material and financial interests.⁴² This, Harland alleged, led to "thousands of innocent girls and women" being "hurled into the bottomless pits of Hell" each year by "a coterie of Godless creatures" who valued their souls and their bodies on a scale of dollars and cents.⁴³ As another reformer stated, "In the city, where commerce is the only god, men play with the souls of girls with the calmness of checker players in a country grocery. Profit is their fetish."⁴⁴ Capitalism, and the seemingly unstoppable commercialization which flowed in its wake, had, reformers alleged, placed a monetary value on the bodies of America's "daughters" and encouraged their sale in the marketplace of vice.

slavery reformers utilized arguments regarding commercialization in their texts. In spite of this recognition her economic analysis is flawed by her inability to see these reformers as anything but reactionary, anxiety-ridden, powerless bigots. See, Mary Linehan, "Vicious Circle: Prostitution, reform and public policy in Chicago, 1830-1930," (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1991), 172-174 and 193.

⁴⁰These arguments were not new to white-slavery reform in the panic years. For an analysis of the traffic in girls which blames the elevation of money over morals for commercializing the girls see Rees, *Miracles in the Slums*, 15-16.

⁴¹Clifford Roe, "Large Cities are White Slave Markets," in *The Great War*, 182. See Roe, "Large Cities," 220 and 261; Roe, *The Girl Who Disappeared*, 264-265.

⁴²Robert O. Harland, *The Vice Bondage of a Great City* (Chicago: The Young People's Civic League, 1912), 8-9.

⁴³*Ibid*, 191.

⁴⁴Newcomb quoted in *The Great War*, 296.

Reformers also held the capitalist system responsible for promoting the traffic by providing a model of organization for the white slavers to follow. As Rosen has stressed, antiprostitution reformers saw commercialized vice as "the underworld analogue of the faceless trusts and monopolies of the legitimate business world."⁴⁵ This was certainly true of the white-slavery crusaders and other reformers who repeatedly stressed that white slavery was a highly profitable business organized along the lines of other syndicates and corporations. Ernest Bell, for instance, argued that it was "beyond dispute that a prodigious and appalling commerce in girls is a part of the colossal business enterprise of our great modern cities." Honest businessmen, Bell continued, were right to feel "sense of shame" for the ways in which "capital and business methods" were being utilized for such a purpose.⁴⁶ As B.S. Steadwell wrote in 1911, the white-slave trade was a "public business," pursued for greed, not lust.⁴⁷

Other white-slavery reformers stressed it was a business being run by an organized syndicate. Robert Harland, for instance, alleged that a "White Slave corporation" existed in Chicago which was part of a commercially organized "trust" that was "stronger, more powerful, more impregnable than the biggest financial or industrial combine in the United States!"⁴⁸ According to Harland this "merciless, parasitic, powerful corporation," which he dubbed "Vice, Graft, Crime & Co.," drew the bulk of its profits, which he estimated

⁴⁵Rosen, 41.

⁴⁶Bell quoted in E. Norine Law, The Shame of a Great Nation: The Story of the "White Slave Trade" (Harrisburg: United Evangelical Publishing House, 1909), 151. Not all white-slavery reformers were in agreement over the relationship between "legitimate" business methods and those used by white slavers. The Immigration Commission, for instance, stressed that trading in women required "the daring and shrewdness of the criminal rather than the energy and industry necessary for success in legitimate business," a conclusion reproduced in other white-slavery narratives. See, Immigration Commission report quoted in Janney, 14-15

⁴⁷B.S. Steadwell, "Introduction," in Roe (ed.), Great War, 16.

⁴⁸Harland, 18, 101. For nineteenth-century reformer's allegations that the traffic in girls was an "organized, systematic" trade see Edholm, Traffic in Girls (Chicago: The Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, 1893), 6.

reached almost ten a half million dollars a year, from women whom they caught in their "woman traps."⁴⁹ Harland was not the only reformer arguing that white slavery was a highly profitable business.⁵⁰ In a widely quoted passage, Edwin Sims alleged that the international traffic, which Sims believed was being run by a man who went by the moniker "The Big Chief," made more than \$200,000 a year.⁵¹

The question of whether or not white slavery was organized into a syndicate was, of course, a hotly debated issue among reformers and skeptics. To answer this question, the Rockefeller Grand Jury was convened in New York in 1910 and charged with determining whether or not there was a formal, organized body engaging in trafficking in women in the city. As we have seen, their conclusions, which argued that there was no evidence of any specific organizations devoted to white slavery but that individuals who were "more or less informally associated" were, in fact, trafficking in women, did little to resolve the issue.⁵² Most white-slavery reformers, however, continued to stress that the traffic was organized on some level and repeatedly emphasized that the organization, however loosely it was construed, functioned according to capitalist business practices.

⁴⁹Ibid., 18, 143, 114. For other reformer's estimates as to the profits of white slavery or the cost of "white slaves" see Janney, 32; Roe, Panders, 42; Samuel Wilson, Chicago and its Cesspools of Infamy (n.d.), 37; Bingham, 29; Groetzinger, 173-182 and 207-209.

⁵⁰Historians such as Gilfoyle and Rosen have argued that prostitution was, in fact, profitable for both the brothel owners and the prostitutes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. See, Gilfoyle, 267-268 and Rosen, 137-168.

⁵¹Edwin Sims, "The White Slave Trade of Today," Woman's World 24, no. 9 (September 1908), 2. This article, including his allegations about the existence of a white-slavery syndicate which he maintained had "clearing houses" and "distribution centers" in all major cities was reprinted and widely excerpted in a variety of sources. See, Fighting the Traffic, 47-60; Smashing the White Slave Trade, 12-14; Law, 107-118; Rev. F.M. Lehman, White Slave Hell or With Christ at Midnight in the Slums of Chicago (Chicago: The Christian Witness Company, 1910), 33; Lytle, Tragedies, 53-54; Groetzinger, 52-67.

⁵²"The Grand Jury Presentment," in The Great War, 230-236. The Grand Jury also stated that these associations were "analogous to commercial bodies in other fields." On the Grand Jury's conclusions and the debate which followed the release of the report see chapter two.

This tendency is particularly notable in George Kneeland's study of prostitution in New York in 1912, done under the auspices of the Bureau of Social Hygiene, an organization formed to carry on the work of the Rockefeller Grand Jury.⁵³

Kneeland argued both that white slavery was occurring in New York and that a combine existed which controlled brothel prostitution in the city. Kneeland believed that this combine was composed of fifteen or more men and was led by a "king" who possessed the necessary "business sagacity" to keep the operation running smoothly. The men reportedly met for business in a number of different "trading-places," including restaurants, pool-rooms, and delicatessens, where they traded, bought, and sold shares in their brothels. While Kneeland noted that political shifts and occasional efforts to clean up the town made the business a tenuous one, he also stressed that in good times the profits of the thirty houses owned by the combine could take in over two million dollars a year.⁵⁴ In describing the businessmen who ran the combine, Kneeland alleged that they were foreigners who came from Russia, owned delicatessens, and who both exploited prostitutes and sold diamonds in the city. In other words, they were Jewish.⁵⁵

Blaming capitalism and the increasing commercialization of society with providing both the ethos and the organizational template for white slavery was, however, only one means by which reformers integrated a critique of the prevailing economic system into their narratives.⁵⁶ They also expressed their misgivings about the economic changes

⁵³For a description of the formation of the Bureau of Social Hygiene and the relationship of Kneeland's study to the group see John D. Rockefeller, "Introduction" in George Kneeland, Commercialized Prostitution in New York City (New York: The Century Co., 1913), vii-xii.

⁵⁴Kneeland, 77-82, 112-132. See also, "Man's Commerce in Women," McClure's Magazine 41 (August 1913):185-190.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 79-82. As we have seen, anti-Semitism was an inherent part of many of the white-slavery reformer's narratives and the construction of the "business" of white slavery as one run by Jews who had organized themselves through a "Benevolent Association" was a crucial component of this anti-Semitism. See, chapter three.

⁵⁶While most white-slavery crusaders in the moral panic years, like those in the nineteenth

sweeping America by building on the nineteenth-century which blamed immoral employers and the wages they paid for exposing working-class girls to seduction or abduction by white slavers.⁵⁷ The outbreak of the moral panic over white slavery did not diminish reformer's beliefs that capitalists who paid "starvation wages" were responsible for making working girls desperate and ripe for white slavers.⁵⁸

century, did not use the narratives to construct harsh portrayals of the class inequality in the United States, there were rare exceptions. Norine Law, whose text reprinted a number of articles from major white-slavery reformers such as Roe, Turner, Parkin, and Sims, argued that the "capitalist class supreme court" had legalized the white-slave trade because they perceived the white slaves, all of whom were drawn from the working class, as "part of the great bulk of human commodities in which capitalism traffics to maintain its trust-blown power." According to Law, the white slave traffic in the United States was "a peculiarly virulent symptom of class ruled and class corrupted society." See, Law, 182.

⁵⁷The discourse on white slavery did, of course, evolve and economic themes were adapted and broadened as part of that evolution. For example, allegations that wealthy men were debauching working girls, including their employees, were joined, in the years following the passage of white-slavery laws, by the claim that these men were avoiding prosecution as a result of their money and social connections. For examples of both of these types of narratives see "New York's White-Slave Grand Jury," The Philanthropist 23, no. 11 (August 1910), 8-9; Harland, 73-79, 105; Virginia Brooks, My Battles With Vice (New York: The Macaulay Co., 1915), 17-18; Bronson Reynolds, "The Diggs-Camineeti Cases a Crisis in Public Morals," Vigilance 27, no. 10 (October 1913), 2-15; "The Attorney-General in Hot Water," The Literary Digest 47 (July 12, 1913), 39-41; Grittner, 139-141. As the campaign against the red-light districts heated up during the moral panic years, the wealthy also increasingly came under the scrutiny of white-slavery reformers for profiting off vice by renting their property, at exorbitant rates, to brothel keepers. For these allegations and the resulting passage of abatement laws see Walter Hurt, The Scarlet Shadow: A Story of the Great Colorado Conspiracy (Kansas: The Appeal to Reason Press, 1907), 272; "Address of Ernest Bell," Friend's Intelligencer Supplement 10 October 1908, 72; John B. Hammond, "The Iowa 'Red Light' Injunction Law and its Success," in The Great War, 358-370; Vigilance 27, no. 8 (August 1913), 19; Rosen, 29.

⁵⁸Working-class women in the early twentieth century were, by almost all accounts, paid wages which were so low that even the most frugal of individuals would have trouble making ends meet. There was, to be sure, no consensus on what constituted a "living wage," an issue complicated by debates over whether or not the majority of girls lived at home and worked only for "pin money" or were "women adrift" trying to subsist solely on their own earnings, but most reformers agreed that a weekly wage of somewhere between eight to twelve dollars was necessary to keep a woman out of poverty. For a historical discussion of both the issues of wages and its role in pushing women into prostitution see

Edwin Sims, for instance, argued that employers were responsible for making young women in the city, some of whom he alleged were laboring for wages as low of \$3.50 a week, vulnerable to white slavers. Sims stated:

No man who is paying such a salary, knowing it to be the sole support of a decent girl, can hold himself innocent of a part in her downfall if she shall find herself a victim of white slavery in the end.⁵⁹

These allegations appeared in a two page article on the white-slave trade run by the Chicago Tribune which portrayed the evil in the form of an octopus whose tentacles stretched into all arenas of female life and labor including: schools, factories, stores, offices, farms, theatrical agencies, and homes, implying that all women were potential victims of the traffic.⁶⁰ From Sims' perspective, however, it was clear that the octopus of

Fine, 42-44 and 98-101; Patricia Cooper, Once a Cigar Maker: Men, Women, and Work Culture in American Cigar Factories, 1900-1919 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 173-177; Susan Porter Benson, Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 182-184, 190-193, Appendix C; Linehan, 235; Gilfoyle, 59-61; Connelly, 30-31; Joanne Meyerowitz, Women Adrift: Independent Wage Earners in Chicago, 1800-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 21-39; Rosen, 137-168. For contemporary accounts which sought to expose the inadequacy of the wages and determine a "living wage" for women workers see Sue Ainslie Clark and Edith Wyatt, Making Both Ends Meet: The Income and Outlay of New York Working Girls (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911) and Margaret Drier Robins, "The Minimum Wage," Life and Labor 3, no. 6 (June 1913): 168-172. For contemporary assessments of the particular problems facing African-American women with regard to labor and wages see Louise De Koven Bowen, "The Colored People of Chicago," Survey (November 1, 1913): 117-120; "Employment of Colored Women in Chicago," Crisis (January 1911): 24-25; Mary White Ovington, Half a Man: The Status of the Negro in New York (1911; repr., New York: Hill and Wang, 1969), 76-92. For a prostitute's view of the role low wages played in driving women to prostitution see Josie Washburn, The Underworld Sewer (Omaha: Washburn Publishing Co., 1909; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 153-154.

⁵⁹"Appalling Discoveries by Government Agents Show Chicago to be Greatest White Slave Market in America," Chicago Tribune, 26 July 1908, 4-5.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

white slavery was being fed by employers and industrialists who offered up girls making starvation wages.⁶¹

The argument that it was the low wages paid to working-class girls that left them vulnerable to procurers was also made by reformers like Edward O. Janney who argued in his text The White Slave Traffic in America, that women working for "trifling wages" were more easily victimized by the traffickers, particularly in times of high unemployment. Janney stressed that "economic conditions" were one of the chief causes of the white slave traffic due to the fact that procurers were able to make alluring offers to girls who were out of work or who were laboring "long hours for a pittance."⁶² Janney called for the managers and owners of department stores and factories to pay women workers higher wages, even if it meant cutting into their profits and stated that he agreed with the socialists who argued that the "present social order" was "selfish, cruel, provocative of crime and widespread misery." In calling for women employees to be paid a living wage, Janney reiterated his views on the connections between white slavery and inadequate pay by stressing, "We would do well to bend our energies to the improvement of those social and economic conditions which lie at the basis of the white slave traffic."⁶³

Men like Sims and Janney, who were central activists in the crusade against white slavery, were not the only reformers constructing white-slavery narratives which focused on the plight of working girls and implicated immoral employers for thrusting them into white slavery.⁶⁴ In some instances, reformers crafted narratives which argued that girls were being victimized by a combination of economic factors, including low wage and immoral overseers who were cooperating with procurer's plans to snare the girls. The

⁶¹See also, Groetzinger, 216-217.

⁶²Janney, 93.

⁶³Ibid., 156-157.

⁶⁴For a description of Janney's leadership role in the vigilance movement which helped give rise the moral panic and Sims' role in prosecuting white slavers in Chicago see chapter two.

most elaborate example of this is Reverend Guy Phelps' text Ethyl Vale: The White Slave which, as we have seen, was predominantly aimed at shoring up the boundaries of white manhood by stressing the role that white, native-born, American men who were unwilling or unable to fulfill their "manly" obligations played in facilitating the white-slave trade.⁶⁵ Phelps' text, however, also focused heavily on exposing the "economic side" of the white-slavery problem by exposing the vulnerability young working-class girls faced from procurers who considered them their "line" of business.⁶⁶

In Phelps' narrative, Ethel Vale, left alone and penniless by the death of her parents, is lured into the city after a procurer, named Wilkins, convinces a manager at a large department store to send her a letter offering her a job, knowing full well that the low wages she will be paid will force her into a desperate position. As he tells a colleague, "Starvation and unpaid rent with poor clothes and a scowling boss, do wonders I know, for I have worked along these lines before."⁶⁷ The procurer also enlists the assistance of the store's overseer, Monte, who "for a small stipend" tells him when the girls are in desperate straits and ripe for his suggestions.⁶⁸

Ethel, having received the letter from the store manager and having few options, agrees to accept the job even though she recognizes the wage is too low for her to survive comfortably on. Her hopes to overcome this obstacle by earning raises are, however, dashed and she eventually finds herself at the mercy of Monte, who tells her she must find a way to buy new clothes to keep up the appearances of the store. He suggests that if she can't afford it she might consider entertaining offers from gentlemen "friends" who will

⁶⁵For this analysis see chapter three.

⁶⁶Rev. Guy Phelps, Ethyl Vale: The White Slave (Chicago: Christian Witness Co., 1910), 41-42.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 41-43.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 93.

look after her needs.⁶⁹ Ethyl resists his suggestions and, in keeping with Wilkins' plan, soon finds herself "adrift" on the street, hungry, and desperate for money.

Upon hearing Ethyl has quit Hall & Hall, undoubtedly from Monte himself, Wilkins relishes in the fact that she does not have enough to survive on as it "makes the trapping part easier." He is, he alleges, part of a larger organization run by a man named "Big Chief" which operates throughout the world and makes large profits off the trafficking in female flesh.⁷⁰ Wilkins' methods, as portrayed by Phelps, were standard white-slavery fare. In Ethyl's case he takes advantage of another connection, this time to a restaurant owner, who agrees to offer the girl a job as a ruse to provide Wilkins with the opportunity to drug her which he does, on her first day at work.⁷¹ Ethel is not, however, so easily trapped and escapes from the brothel that Wilkins places her in by knocking him unconscious with a wine bottle. In spite of her heroics, she is recaptured by Wilkin's associates who lure her through the offer of free stenography training in a plot twist clearly designed to further Phelps' argument that all working girls, in all professions, were vulnerable to the "employment snare."⁷² Finding herself unable to escape a second time, Ethyl is brutally beaten and mutilated by the brothel keepers.⁷³

In constructing his narrative, Phelps merged the plight of the white slave and that of the wage slave on a number of levels. In addition to the story of Ethyl, which posits that the immoral overseers, poor working-conditions, low wages and the act of searching for work exposes working-girls to the wily traps of white slavers, Phelps introduces another character by the name of Kitty Bond, who works with Ethyl at Hall & Hall and

⁶⁹Ibid., 74-76.

⁷⁰Ibid., 88-89. Phelps was, no doubt, basing his construction of the organization of the white slave trade and their leader, "Big Chief," on Edwin Sims' claims, which had been published two years earlier.

⁷¹Ibid., 110-119.

⁷²Ibid., 131-137, 165.

⁷³Ibid., 175-176. For a description of Ethyl Vale as a "white slave" following her second capture by the procurers see 196. For additional details on this narrative see chapter three.

who acts as a mouthpiece for Phelps criticisms of the capitalist system and the injustice it creates. On Ethyl's first day at the store, Kitty lectures her regarding the plight of the working girl telling her "it does get old, this thing of being ground up into money while you starve and live in a kennel." Bond also tells Ethyl that they, the workers, are the ones responsible for earning the enormous profits the store makes, money which she claims is tainted by the blood of the worker's souls. Kitty, who has already succumbed to the necessity of finding a "friend" to supplement her wages, states:

It gets very tiresome, this offering of one's self every day on the altar of mammon to be ground up into dollars and cents. It does seem that dollars, dollars, is the master passion. I had to sell my hands, my eyes, my feet, my body, and then they put my honor up and I had to sell that; I suppose they will ask for my soul next. The whole thing is wrong, Miss Vale, it is all wrong. Why should one man work for another? I say it again, why should one man work for another?⁷⁴

Her speeches to Ethyl repeatedly compare the lot of the worker under capitalism to that of the slave. Stressing that workers make their wages in the first two hours of each day, Kitty alleges that "the other eight we give them just for the privilege of being slaves" and tells Ethyl that the slavery under which they toil is "worse than the blacks ever knew."⁷⁵ They are, according to Kitty, the "White Slaves" forced by an unjust system to labor for the riches of other men.⁷⁶

Phelps' construction of wage slavery as a primary cause of white slavery and his indictment of department store managers and the starvation wages the stores paid was part of an evolving discourse on the relationship between the low wages paid to women and girls, particularly those who labored in department stores, and the girl's vulnerability to evil white slavers. Few white-slavery reformers constructed narratives as elaborate as

⁷⁴Ibid., 100.

⁷⁵Ibid., 57-60. For additional tirades by Kitty Bond on class inequality and the position of workers as slaves see 82-86 and 101-103.

⁷⁶Ibid., 101.

Phelps, but many did express concerns that the scenario faced by Ethel Vale as an employee of a department store was more fact than fiction. As we have seen, allegations that department store girls were easy prey for procurers had been a crucial part of the white-slavery discourse since 1907, when Mona Marshall, a clerk at Marshall Fields, reported she had been procured by a man named Balding who frequented her counter, won her confidence and, ultimately, trapped her in a brothel.⁷⁷ Marshall's story typified what many reformers, including Roe, feared was the danger facing these girls, who were not only paid starvation wages but were also constantly exposed to the public and were allegedly at the mercy of both their male customers and unscrupulous employers who tried to force them into compromising positions.

Leona Groetzinger, for example, wrote at length about the "Department Store Evil" in her text The City's Perils. Groetzinger argued that the combination of low wages and overwork made the department stores, and the business practices they employed, a "menace" to the morality of the girls who worked in them. She also stressed that the female employees were placed at the mercy of:

the temptations of the male and female wretches whose business it is to supply the underworld with girls, and who know, only too well, that the routine of the department store has paved the way for their victim's downfall.⁷⁸

Similarly, Theodore Bingham argued that the divisions in the stores that paid the lowest wages were a "regular stamping ground for the cadet" who won the girls' confidence by taking them out and then lured the underpaid girls into the more lucrative profession of prostitution.⁷⁹

⁷⁷For a discussion of the case of Mona Marshall see chapter two

⁷⁸Groetzinger, 72-73, 78.

⁷⁹Bingham, The Girl That Disappears, 46-47.

By 1913, the idea that the low wages in the department stores were driving working-class girls into prostitution was a widespread belief among a range of urban reformers, many of whom drew from the white-slavery discourse. The President of the Illinois Retail Clerk's Association, for example, argued in 1909 that "If the working women were paid a living wage, white slavery to a great extent would be eliminated."⁸⁰ The Chicago Vice Commission also borrowed from the ideas being propagated by white-slavery crusaders and argued that underpaid department store girls, in addition to receiving substandard wages, were vulnerable to procuresses who lured the girls into brothels on the promise of a nice dinner, cadets who waited outside the employee's exits to pick the girls up, married men who reported girls that wouldn't speak with them to management, and employers who harassed girls for refusing their advances and suggested that they supplement their wages by entertaining "friends" or taking up the sporting life.⁸¹

Other urban reformers, similarly convinced that department store girls were exceptionally vulnerable to white slavers, joined the crusade to stop the trafficking in these girls by undertaking their own investigations. Chicago's Juvenile Protective Association and its president, Louise De Koven Bowen, for instance, sent a female, undercover agent

⁸⁰Alexander Peterson quoted in "Economics and Vice," The Philanthropist 23, no. 3 (October 1909), 1. Peterson called for a living wage of \$9.00 a week.

⁸¹Vice Commission of Chicago, The Social Evil: A Study of Existing Conditions (Chicago: Gunthorp-Warren Printing Company, 1911), 203-213. The Chicago Vice Commission also argued that the low wages paid by employers of large establishment simply drove women into prostitution, noting that the girls earned, on average, only \$6.00 to \$7.00 a week, even though studies repeatedly demonstrated at least \$8.00 a week was the minimum on which working girls could survive. As the "plain blunt facts" of the report noted, the difference in estimated yearly salary between the salesgirls and the prostitute was \$300.00 versus \$1,300. For additional information on the connections drawn between wages and vice in this reports see Graham Taylor, "Chicago Vice Commission," The Survey (May 6, 1911): 244 and "Chicago Vice Report," Literary Digest (April, 22, 1911): 767-769. For an example of the debate the report's handling of the wage issue sparked among reformers and the public see "Vice and Wages," The Survey (August 12, 1911), 701-702 and The Survey (September 30, 1911), 915. For secondary analyses of the vice commission see Linehan, 202-252, Connelly, 91-113, Grittner, 72-74.

into the city's department stores in 1911 to research the dangers working-girls faced. Like the white-slavery crusaders, the organization charged that department store girls faced perilous conditions in the form of low wages, immoral employers, and constant exposure to large numbers of strangers. Among the strangers that most concerned Bowen were procurers who, she claimed, were frequenting the waiting rooms of the stores to "ply their trade" and forcing their attentions on female clerks by threatening to report the girls to their bosses if they refused to engage in conversations.⁸² Two years later, Bowen and the J.P.A. began taking an even more active role in the crusade against white slavery. When another investigation turned up the same conditions "discovered" in 1911, the J.P.A. took action. Bowen reports that within three weeks of their 1913 inquiry the association had caused the arrest of twenty men who were convicted as white slavers for carrying on their "nefarious business" in the stores.⁸³

As the Chicago Vice Commission Report and the activities of the Juvenile Protective Association demonstrate, the white-slavery narratives, far from diverting the attention of the public from economic issues, were being used by reformers to focus attention on issues like working conditions and wages and were an effective springboard for individuals like Bowen who called for the passage of minimum wage legislation to "safeguard" young girls.⁸⁴ By 1913, in fact, the argument that there was a close connection between wages and the traffic in girls had become so prevalent and powerful that capitalists in Chicago found themselves on trial, blamed for doing more than any procurer to force young, innocent working-girls into a life of white slavery. For reformers attempting to shed light on economic issues and the plight of the underpaid girl it was

⁸²Louise De Koven Bowen, The Department Store Girl (Chicago: Juvenile Protective Association, 1911).

⁸³Louise De Koven Bowen, The Juvenile Protective Association (Chicago: 1913), 2509.

⁸⁴Louise De Koven Bowen, "Some Legislative Needs in Illinois," (1912), 11. See also, "President's Address," Juvenile Protective Association, (1910), 56-57 in J.P.A. Archives, Supplement 1, Folder 4.

apparent that the discourse on white slavery was clearly "the best way of attracting public attention." ⁸⁵

Capitalists on Trial

On February 4, 1913, the newly elected Lieutenant-Governor of Illinois, Barratt O'Hara, made his opening remarks to the State Senate. O'Hara, an ex-journalist, was no stranger to narratives on the traffic in women. Protecting women from white slavery, he told the Senators gathered to hear his first speech as president of their illustrious body, was the most "vital problem" facing Illinois. O'Hara argued that the "industry of the white slave" was increasing so rapidly that a commission should be appointed to study the conditions relating to it. He would, he vowed, devote his "chief energies and efforts" to uncovering the causes of white slavery during his four year tenure.⁸⁶ The legislature, sympathetic to the Progressive leanings of O'Hara and the newly elected Democratic Mayor Dunne, gave O'Hara his committee.⁸⁷

Senate Resolution Number 25, passed by a unanimous vote, appointed a committee of four senators with O'Hara as its chairman to "investigate the subject of white slave traffic in Illinois" and to "devise a comprehensive plan" for its "complete

⁸⁵"Before the Court," The New Republic (December 5, 1914), 11.

⁸⁶Report of the Senate Vice Committee (1916), 13. Hereafter this report will be referred to as the Report of the SVC. O'Hara claimed that his interest in white slavery was a result of a personal experience in which a friend of his wife took a position in a Chicago department store for \$5.00 where she was approached by a man who offered to help her out with money to buy new clothes and take her out to dinner. The women consulted O'Hara and his wife and, warned off by them, emerged "unscathed" from the whole situation. O'Hara apparently emerged from the experience committed to ending this "path to white slavery." For this account see Thomas H. Russell, The Girl's Fight for a Living (Chicago: M.A. Donohue and Co., 1913), 34.

⁸⁷Daniel J. Elazar (ed.), "Working Conditions in Chicago in the Early 20th Century," American Jewish Archives (November, 1969), 149. This essay is composed of excerpts of the testimony given by Jewish employers and employees to the O'Hara Committee.

suppression." The newly created Senate Vice Committee was given an appropriation of \$10,000 to accomplish the task of ridding Illinois of the "heinous crime" of the white slaver.⁸⁸ There was, in O'Hara's call for the committee and the Senate Resolution which created it, no indication that the senators planned to deviate from a white-slavery script which constructed the white slaver as a foreigner who derived his profits from selling women into prostitution and/or collecting the money the women made from the sale of their bodies. As we have seen, however, there was no uniform story of the white slave or the white slaver and the O'Hara committee clearly had its sights set on a different kind of procurer. Building on prior white-slavery narratives which cast employers as responsible for casting women and girls into white slavery, the O'Hara Committee aimed at proving, through public sessions and testimony, that it was greedy capitalists and the low wages they paid women that were forcing girls into brothels.

The Senate Vice Committee attempted to keep up the appearance that they were devoid of any ulterior motives by waiting an entire day, the length of two sessions, before taking up the issue of wages. They "diverted" their attention to wages, they argued, only after repeated testimony from prostitutes indicated that low wages were responsible for their downfall.⁸⁹ This claim was more than a little disingenuous. The testimony taken from prostitutes prior to the committee's decision to focus on wages did not give the overwhelming impression that girls were snared only through low wages. Instead, the first two sessions held by the committee produced witnesses who argued that a range of influences led them into "sporting," including women who argued that they had, in fact, been beaten and forced to prostitute themselves by men who took their earnings or had been duped into the life through mock marriages.⁹⁰ The testimony of these witnesses,

⁸⁸Report of the SVC, 13-14. The four senators appointed along with O'Hara were: Senator Juul from Chicago, Senator Beall from Alton, Senator Tossey from Toledo, and Senator Woodard from Benton.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 167.

⁹⁰See the testimony of Z.M., E.T., and A.O. in Report of the SVC, 135-137, 140-142,

however, was not the focal point of the first two sessions. Instead it was the testimony of the prostitute J.M. that impressed the senators and, they argued, put them in pursuit of the economic side of the white-slavery problem. J.M. testified under questioning that she would be living an honest life if she could make at least \$12.00 a week in a respectable job. She further stated that a number of other girls she knew who were "hustling" took up the life to avoid the starvation wages paid to working girls.⁹¹ That was enough for the Senators to decide they needed to subpoena both the large employers, who were being accused of paying starvation wages, and their female employees to get to the bottom of the causes of the white-slave traffic. Senator Juul, stating that there was no use just "nibbling off the top" of the question, suggested they devote a week to interviewing these new witnesses.⁹²

In reality, investigating the wages paid to working girls and the "possible connection of low wages with the spread of immorality" was more than a brief diversion for the committee. It was their guiding focus from the beginning. The public hearings, which gathered testimony from prostitutes, employers, female employees, social workers, public officials, reformers, dance hall owners, labor leaders, physicians, morticians, and educators lasted a little over four months during the Spring of 1913 and were devoted almost exclusively to rooting out the economic causes of white slavery.⁹³ The timing of the committee and the importance of the issue of wages was undoubtedly due to the fact

151-155. Prostitutes were identified only by their initials in the press and the published reports. Other witnesses during the first session, particularly reformers, were questioned repeatedly as to whether or not they knew of any actual cases where women had been bought and sold and were repeatedly questioned as to whether or not they believed low wages had anything to do with women entering prostitution. See, the testimony of Mrs. Susan B. Adams, Mrs. Alice Phillips Aldrich, and Mrs. Josephine Schell in Report of the SVC, 142-148.

⁹¹Report of the SVC, 155-156.

⁹²Ibid., 157.

⁹³The Committee was renewed by various senate resolutions through 1915 and disbanded only in November of 1915. See, Report of the SVC, 16-22.

that multiple bills to establish a minimum wage for women were pending in the Illinois legislature. Although they denied that their committee was, in any way, attached to the effort to get minimum wage legislation passed it is clear that that was, in fact, their primary goal. In justifying their turn to economics after only one day of testimony, the committee issued a statement which argued that since "it appears that one of the apparently vital causes of the industry of the White Slave is the low wage paid to women workers," they were setting aside all other issues connected with the trade to make a full investigation of the wage question. They also requested that all legislators from both houses attend their meetings in light of the fact that there was a bill presently pending which sought to establish a \$12.00 minimum weekly wage for Illinois women.⁹⁴ Although they guaranteed a "full and fair hearing to all persons interested in the subject," those opposed to the passage of minimum wage legislation and those who sought to deny the primacy of wages as the underlying cause of white slavery got something less than a fair hearing.

From the beginning, the committee treated witnesses who challenged the association of wages and white slavery to badgering, hostile questioning. This was true not only of employers but also reformers who sought to either deny economics was a factor or who attempted to get the committee to recognize that wages were only one factor which led girls into prostitution. Arthur Farwell, a Chicago reformer who had been active in the crusade against white slavery, was repeatedly pressured by the Senators to state that low wages were the primary cause of prostitution. He resisted and continually stated that they were only one of the underlying causes.⁹⁵ Others who resisted the implications of the senators' questioning were similarly badgered. Mrs. Adolph Kahn, a club woman interviewed when the committee was conducting their investigation in

⁹⁴Report of the SVC, 167.

⁹⁵Ibid., 168-169.

Washington, D.C., attempted to stress home conditions and the lack of moral training as the primary causes of girls taking up prostitution. The senators repeatedly challenged her, asking her if the women of Washington placed a lower value on the life of a working girl than other girls, implying that her class bias was leading her to wrong conclusions. They also misrepresented her statements by implying that her arguments expressed her belief that working women were not entitled to make the wages necessary to feed, clothe, and house themselves.⁹⁶

Other reformers who went on record as stating that wages were either not the main factor, or were only one of a number of factors, were subjected to the innuendo that they were in the pockets of wealthy employers who were opposed to raising wages. In spite of the fact that Robert Barrett, who represented the Florence Crittenton Missions, went on record as being a supporter of a living wage for women, his repeated statements that wages had little or no bearing on immorality drew the ire of his questioners who repeatedly asked him if his organization was being funded by large employers of women. Although Barrett repeatedly stated that no one gave the organization over \$100 a year, he was pressured to produce the names of the contributors.⁹⁷ Similarly, Graham Taylor, President of the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy and a member of the Chicago Vice Commission, was subjected to a very hostile interrogation, thanks to his prior criticisms of the committee for their methods and his refusal to cite wages as the only cause of white slavery. Pressure was undoubtedly on the committee to produce more evidence of the connection between wages and vice when Taylor testified due to the fact that a vote was due on the minimum wage law later in the week.⁹⁸ Given this context, his testimony, in which he argued strongly that the issue of the minimum wage should be separated from the issue of vice and stressed that the cases in which a girl was driven to

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, 358-361.

⁹⁷369-372.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 668.

prostitution by sheer want were rare, was not well received. When he attempted to argue that the issue of prostitution was a complicated issue which involved a complex mix of factors including wages, individual temperament, home conditions, and parental training, Senator Beall argued that he was drawing them "way off our subject" and began a new line of questioning based solely on wages.⁹⁹ Chairman O'Hara was even less charitable to Taylor asking him if:

Isn't it a fact, Professor, that not every, but nearly every professor of political economy, every newspaper and publication that has criticized this Committee is receiving part of his or her income from big business concerns that are underpaying these girls?¹⁰⁰

O'Hara also implied that the conclusions of the Chicago Vice Commission, which stopped short of advocating minimum wage legislation, had been influenced by the funding they received from wealthy, Chicago merchants.¹⁰¹

Not all antiprostitution and white-slavery reformers were, however, as unwilling as Barrett and Taylor to follow the committee's script and cite wages as the principal cause of white slavery. As we have seen, their arguments had been a part of the white-slavery discourse since the nineteenth century and some twentieth-century white-slavery reformers were more than sympathetic to the committee's viewpoint. Virginia Brooks, author of a well-known white-slavery tract Little Lost Sister, stated unequivocally that she believed economic conditions were at the root of the white-slavery evil.¹⁰² Similarly, Chicago Police Sergeant William Bowler, who had been arresting white slavers for three years under the direction of Clifford Roe and was responsible for the convictions of 97 procurers asserted that poverty was the direct cause of a girl's downfall. O'Hara made the most of his testimony, asking him if he had arrested more panderers than any other police

⁹⁹Ibid., 669-671.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 671.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 673.

¹⁰²Ibid., 160-163.

officer in the United States (he had) and then reiterating his testimony by asking "Did I correctly understand you to say that effectively to stop white slavery we must go into the matter of poverty?" Bowler affirmed his statement.¹⁰³

Most of the witnesses subjected to hostile questioning by the committee were not, however, reformers or police officers. Instead, the wealthy employers that the committee alleged were driving girls into white slavery got the worst of it. The presidents and owners of all of the big department stores in Chicago were subpoenaed to appear in front of the committee where they were asked a series of questions including: how many women they employed, what wages were paid to them, what the profits of the store were, whether or not it would be a hardship on the store to raise women's wages, whether or not they supported minimum wage legislation and whether or not they believed there was any connection between vice and wages.¹⁰⁴ With few exceptions, the employers acknowledged that it would not produce any real hardship on them to raise women's wages but denied there was any connection between what they paid their female employees and prostitution. As the testimony progressed it was clear that the employers were taking a concerted, hostile position vis a vis their interrogators. They refused to answer questions regarding the profits made by their businesses and frequently responded to questions regarding wage rates with some variety of the answer "I could not give you the exact number" or "I am not competent to answer that question."¹⁰⁵ It was clear to the

¹⁰³Ibid., 509-510.

¹⁰⁴Employers called in Chicago included: Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Co., Edwin Mandel, president of Mandel Brothers, James Simpson, vice-president of Marshall Field and Co., Roy Shayne, president of John T. Shayne and Co., William Thorne, vice-president of Montgomery Ward and Co., John T. Pirie, partner in Carson Pirie Scott and Co., Edward Lehmann, vice-president of the Fair and Henry C. Schwab, vice president of Rothschild and Co. For a summary of their testimony see Russell, 65-71. As many of these employers were Jewish, the methods of the committee and the discourse they constructed did little to combat the anti-Semitism of previous white-slavery narratives.

¹⁰⁵For a particularly glaring example of this type of stonewalling on the part of the

employers that the committee's goal was to push for minimum wage legislation and they had no interest in helping them attain it.¹⁰⁶

The committee continued to deny that they were advocating anything in particular and stressed that they had not declared themselves in favor of a minimum wage bill, but given the tenor of their questioning it is easy to see how the employers may have gotten that idea.¹⁰⁷ The committee responded to the recalcitrance of the employers by accusing them of organizing against the committee through their professional associations and of encouraging groups like the American Vigilance Association to write them letters stating that their focus on wages had put them on the wrong track. They also accused the employers of slandering the committee in their publications and of raising money to fight the minimum wage bill.¹⁰⁸ In addition, they threatened the employers with punitive legal action and jail time for refusing to answer questions regarding store profits and mocked their efforts to establish social welfare programs for their employees by implying that it was just another way to extort money from their employees.¹⁰⁹ In keeping with earlier discourses which linked white slavery and economics, they also accused the employers of

employers see the testimony of Henry Schwab, vice-president of Rothschild's in Report of the SVC, 271-274.

¹⁰⁶Many of the employers stated that they were not opposed to minimum wage legislation but wanted it to be federal legislation so Illinois merchants and manufacturers were not penalized in their competition with out-of-state merchants. See, Report of the SVC, 186-263. The committee was not opposed to federal legislation but argued they needed to start somewhere. For their effort to get uniform state laws passed and their meeting with Pres. Wilson on the issue see Report of the SVC, 347-350. Some employers also threatened that if a minimum wage law were passed for women, they would fire the women in their employ and replace them with men. See, Report of the SVC, 253.

¹⁰⁷Report of the SVC, 255.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 181, 230, 269, 272, 275, 295-296, 386, 417.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 207, 263, 272, 277-279. The issue of profits and the unwillingness of the employers to reveal them was a constant bone of contention in the hearings. One of the senators suggested they stop asking the question but O'Hara insisted it was an important part of demonstrating their ability to pay a living wage. The committee finally resorted to subpoenaing a witness who had made a study of all the store's profits as part of a lawsuit and had his findings entered into the public record. See, Report of the SVC, 237, 688-693.

having white slavers on their payrolls and of encouraging the underpaid girls to get a "friend" to help them out.¹¹⁰ Not surprisingly, private meetings between committee members and the Association of State Street Merchants produced no results.¹¹¹

The committee's primary interest was in demonstrating the connections between vice and wages. In their questioning of employers they repeatedly focused in on the low wages paid to women and attempted to force the employers to acknowledge their responsibility for leaving women with no choice but to enter the ranks of the prostitutes. Their questioning of these prostitutes was, similarly, designed to elicit responses which focused on the wages the women were receiving immediately prior to their "downfall." Their tactics, no doubt, must have seemed extreme as they included sending investigators unannounced into private firms, giving prostitutes a public hearing, interrogating the city's most prominent businessmen, and subpoenaing whoever they chose, whenever they chose. In one instance, they held a midnight session so they could interview the owner and patrons of a late night cabaret, all of whom were picked up and hauled in front of the committee.¹¹²

The conclusions and recommendations of the committee, given the nature of their investigation, are not surprising. They argued, first, that poverty was the principle cause of prostitution and white slavery and that economics was at the root of all other causes. Even a girl's vulnerability to the phony marriage proposals of procurers, they argued, could be traced to economic need.¹¹³ They also stated that thousands of girls were driven to prostitution out of the "sheer inability to keep body and soul together on the low wages"

¹¹⁰Ibid., 197. For an employer who argued strongly that these rumors regarding "friends" were myths see 300-301.

¹¹¹Ibid., 421.

¹¹²Ibid., 419, 469-486.

¹¹³Ibid., 23 and 30. In making this argument, the committee separated immorality from prostitution, which they defined as immorality for profit. Economics, they argued, was always the cause which turned immorality, or an initial misstep, into prostitution. See, Report of the SVC, 28-31.

they received.¹¹⁴ The committee also refuted the arguments of employers that girls didn't need a living wage because they lived at home by stressing that the wages their fathers were making were too low to support their families and implied that the employers themselves were forcing girls into prostitution by demanding they submit to immoral advances or be fired.

Like white-slavery reformers before them, O'Hara and the committee did not see any contradiction in arguing both that low wages caused vice and that an organized system of white slavery devoted to trafficking girls into prostitution existed in the city. Instead, they stressed that it was low wages, particularly those of department store girls, that left them vulnerable to procurers who often operated in the shops themselves. As he stated, in defending the committee's conclusions:

We have found that there is combination engaged in wholesale traffic in women, and extending over the entire country. In a large proportion of the cases we have investigated we have found that the girls have been procured from large department stores and similar institutions where women are employed. Low wages are to blame for most of the immorality among young girls.¹¹⁵

O'Hara and the committee also followed the tradition of previous groups of white-slavery reformers in seeking to equate the plight of the working girl with that of the black slave, arguing, as did many, that the girls were worse off.¹¹⁶ In this discourse, the meaning of the term "white slave" symbolized both the plight of underpaid working girl and the girl forced into prostitution.¹¹⁷ For the committee, as for earlier reformers like B.O. Flowers,

¹¹⁴Ibid., 23-51. Other conclusions by the committee included statements that: the conditions of domestic workers were so bad that they were breeding grounds for prostitution, that segregation was a failure, that a new "call girl" system was emerging in many cities, that prostitutes were redeemable, that liquor was a strong contributor to vice, and that higher education protected girls from falling into prostitution.

¹¹⁵O'Hara quoted in "Wages and Sin," Literary Digest (March 22, 1913), 621.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 306.

¹¹⁷See O'Hara's comments in which he alleges that any woman receiving starvation wages is a white slave, regardless of whether or not her condition involves immorality and argues that the plight of these white slaves is a bigger question for the nation than black slavery

they were one and the same and O'Hara was convinced that minimum wage legislation would bring about the "second great emancipation in our union."¹¹⁸

The results of the committee were, to many, impressive. Although the minimum wage bill they were pushing for in Chicago failed, the committee both credited itself and was credited by others with encouraging the passage of eight other minimum wage bills in 1913.¹¹⁹ Other state legislature's, including those in Minnesota, Michigan, Missouri, California, Iowa, and Pennsylvania, also passed resolutions creating inquiries modeled on the Illinois investigation with the expressed purpose of looking into industrial conditions, wage of women, and their relationship to vice.¹²⁰ Some employers in Chicago did respond to the committee's allegations that they were responsible for driving women into white

was, quoted in Russell, 15 and the comments of Senator Beall, a civil war veteran, who argued that "White slavery presents a hundred times greater national crisis than did black slavery," quoted in Russell, 16.

¹¹⁸Quoted in Russell, 198. Although some historians have read the Illinois Vice Commission as a conservative attempt to force women back into the home, this seriously misstates the nature of their investigations and conclusions. Using an isolated quote from O'Hara, Connelly implies that his goal was to push women back into traditional roles in the home. A thorough reading of the entire investigation, however, indicates that this was hardly the committee's aim. Their focus on men's inability to support their families, for instance, was put forth not as a call for a family wage and the return of women and girls to the home but as a strategy to refute employers' charges that girls living at home were being supported by their fathers and did not need to make a living wage on their own. Similarly, the committee was hardly conservative in its position on a number of issues regarding women's position in society and labor. Its members supported higher education, including college, for women, portrayed domestic service as among the most morally dangerous positions a working-girl could find herself in, and challenged employers on their policies which paid women less than men for the same work. See, Connelly, 35 and Report of the SVC, 35-41, 51, 200-201.

¹¹⁹Report of the SVC, 945 and Olive Bell Daniels, From the Epic of Chicago: A Biography of Ernest A. Bell (Menasha: George Banta Publishing Co., 1932), 90. Daniel's actually credited them with helping 12 states pass minimum wage laws. Others credited them with a rise in the prevailing wage for women and for the formation of unions of department store employees. See, Herbert Asbury, Gem of the Prairie: An Informal History of the Chicago Underworld (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986), 296-297.

¹²⁰"Editorial," Vigilance 26, no. 4 (April 1913), 19.

slavery by raising wages on their own. Some credited the committee with opening up their eyes to the problems and others denied their actions had anything to do with the activity of the Illinois Vice Commission.¹²¹ Although the majority of employers and their organizations continued to refute the committee's findings in the months following the public hearings, the committee did have its defenders.¹²² Not surprisingly, the Women's Trade Union League heralded their investigation as did a number of socialists.¹²³ The Socialist magazine The New Review, for instance, called the conclusions of the committee "the most advanced position to which the progressive but non-Socialist thought of the world has advanced" and the New York Call credited the senators with bringing out "fundamental truths" regarding current conditions.¹²⁴

¹²¹Report of the SVC, 231 and Russell, 21.

¹²²See, for instance, a rebuttal study undertaken by the Retail Dry Goods Association, under the auspices of the National Civic Federation, in which a host of "authorities" on the topic, including Graham Taylor and Kate Waller Barrett, argued that the linking of low wages and vice was misleading and a great injustice to working girls. The study also alleged that the statistics which linked vice and wages were being provided by socialists who were advocating the overthrow of the industrial system and argued that bad "germs" in prostitute's blood and poor parenting led girls to vice. See, "Working Conditions in New York Stores," The National Civic Federation Review 4, no. 1 (July 15, 1913): 1-2; "The Store Girl's Wage," Literary Digest 47 (August 9, 1913): 199-200; "Relation of Woman's Wage to the Social Evil," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 4, no. 3 (September 1913): 323-325; "The Truth about Wages and Vice," The National Civic Federation Review (December 1, 1913). For other articles which argued strongly against the committee's findings see "Are Low Wages Responsible for Women's Immorality," Current Opinion (May 1913): 402; "Minimum Wage Discussed by Retail Association," The Survey (May 24, 1913): 260-261; "Facts about the Department Store," The Nation 97, no. 2509 (July 31, 1913): 94-95; "Review of the Illinois Senate Vice Commission Report," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 7, no. 3 (September 1916): 470; Russell, 36-37.

¹²³Ethyl Mason and S.M. Franklin, "Low Wages and Vice--Are They Related?," Life and Labor 3, no. 4 (April 19, 1913): 108-111. Working girls, and the authors of articles in Life and Labor, frequently tempered their connections between wages and vice with a vigorous defense of the morals of working girls. See, Russell, 160-163 and Robins, "The Minimum Wage," Life and Labor 3, no. 6 (June 1913): 168-171.

¹²⁴Caro Lloyd, "The Illinois Vice Commission," The New Left Review (April 12, 1913), 455-456 and "Wages and Sin." Socialists did not, of course, think the recommendations of the committee went far enough and some authors mocked both the committee and their

Some of Chicago's most prominent white-slavery reformers also heralded the Senate investigation. Bell's Midnight Mission, for instance, noted in their Director's Meeting in March of 1913 that there was a remarkable awakening occurring nationwide into the "economic phases of the White Slave Traffic," and appointed a committee to confer with O'Hara's Senate committee.¹²⁵ Ernest Bell also helped turn the O'Hara commission's findings into a movie by playing himself, one of Chicago's most well-known white-slavery crusaders and preachers, in the red-light district scenes shot during the filming.¹²⁶ Not all of Chicago's prominent white-slavery crusaders were, however, happy with the new focus on economics.

conclusions. See, Henry Slobodin, "Social Utility of Vice," The New Review (August 1913): 724-725.

¹²⁵"Minutes from Director's Midnight Mission Meeting for March 1913," in Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-4. Deaconess Manley, a longtime member of the Mission and white-slave activist, attended several of the Senate committee's sessions and issued reports to the Midnight Mission on their activities. See "Manley report to the the Midnight Mission dated March 1913," in Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-4. In spite of their support for the committee's work the Midnight Mission never translated their concern over the "economic phase" of white slavery into any kind of labor activism. For one brief moment in 1914 they did consider working for the "demand for industrial justice" but their organizations never made any visible strides in this area. See "Minutes from Director's Midnight Mission Meeting for January 20, 1914," in Bell Archives, Box 5, file 5-5. For an example of a group which combined a focus on white slavery and committed themselves to labor activism see the activities of the Men and Religion Forward Movement detailed in Harry Lefever, "The Involvement of the Men and Religion Forward Movement in the Cause of Labor Justice," Labor History 14, no. 4 (Fall 1973): 521-535 and Lefever, "Prostitution, Politics and Religion: The Crusade Against Vice in Atlanta in 1912," Atlanta Historical Society Journal (Spring 1980): 7-29.

¹²⁶Daniels, 89-91. The film, titled "The Little Girl Next Door," was constructed around a series of flashbacks which depicted the story of different girls who had fallen into prostitution and were being interviewed by an State Moral Committee that was trying to keep the white slave trade from re-establishing itself, following their break up of it, in Chicago. There were efforts to revoke the film's permit but they failed. Reports indicate that clubwomen, clergymen, and social workers all wanted restrictions removed from the film so that high school boys and girls could see it. See, American Film Institute Catalog: Feature Films, 1911-1920 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 526. For reviews of the film see The Motion Picture News, 10 June 1916, 3541; Moving Picture World, 2 June 1916, 1691 and 10 June 1916, 1864; Variety, 23 June 1916, 20.

Clifford Roe, who was continually dismayed over the ways in which the crusade against white slavery was being harnessed to reforms not of his making, was never a big proponent of the "economic side" of the white slavery question. His early narratives, for instance, tended to avoid the topic of wages. When he discussed the methods by which procurers lured girls through promises of employment, for instance, he constructed their offers as appealing to the girl because she was trying to better her position or was ambitious, not starving.¹²⁷ He did acknowledge that "sheer want" could cause girls to yield to temptation but just as frequently he stressed that girls were tempted by a different kind of "want," one rooted in the desire for amusement or the love of luxuries.¹²⁸ Roe's tendency to avoid economics as a factor in white slavery grew with time, particularly after he took over as executive secretary of the American Vigilance Association, an organization notable for the large number of businessmen who sat on its executive board.¹²⁹ Following the formation of this group Roe began calling only for the improvement of industrial *conditions* for women and avoided the issue of wages altogether.¹³⁰ The events surrounding the Senate Vice Committee's investigation and the increased predominance of economic issues within the movement against white slavery, however, forced him to take a stronger stand on the issue of wages and their relationship to white slavery.

Roe's last full length white-slavery text, The Girl Who Disappeared, was published in 1914. It related the story of Jane, a country girl lured by a white slaver on the promise of a stage career, who finds herself enslaved in a Chicago brothel. She escapes but is

¹²⁷See, Roe's comments in Groetzinger, 26-27.

¹²⁸Clifford Roe, "Some Economic Causes For White Slavery," The Great War, 290. Most of this chapter is not devoted to economic issues and Roe leaves it to others, whom he quotes, to make the argument that wages and vice are intricately bound. See, 296.

¹²⁹For a list of the board members see "The American Vigilance Association," Vigilance 25, no. 4 (April 1912), 2.

¹³⁰Clifford Roe, "The American Vigilance Association," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 3, no. 5 (1912), 807.

brought up on trumped-up theft charges, a ploy by the procurers designed to force her back into the brothel. Thanks to a heroic lawyer, who bears a striking resemblance to Roe, the procurers' plan is foiled and Jane is saved. Although Jane is snared by an "employment snare," it is her ambition, not starvation, that leads her to accept the offer. In addition, the characters repeatedly deny any connection between low wages and white slavery. Jane, who ultimately finds an excellent job as the head of a social welfare bureau for a large department store, chides an immoral woman working for her when she attempts to blame her low wages for her behavior, stressing that the woman is just seeking to shift responsibility for her misdeed to someone else. There are, Jane alleges, plenty of places where women can earn a decent living in the city.¹³¹ Other characters similarly refute the allegation that low wages were the primary cause of a girl's downfall and some call for the institution of a family wage so women would not have to work at all.¹³² The text itself, particularly with regard to the story of Jane and her successful rehabilitation as the head of a department store welfare bureau, sought to defend department stores and their owners against allegations of immorality and rescue them from charges that their low wages were functioning to procure girls for the underworld. They were not, this narrative alleged, the ones responsible for white slavery.

Roe was not the only one who thought the focus on wages as the cause of white slavery had gone too far.¹³³ Some of the most trenchant criticism of the new trend in white-slavery reform came from reformers who had always been skeptical of the white-slavery crusade and the arguments put forth by its crusaders. The case of Brand Whitlock

¹³¹Roe, *The Girl Who Disappears*, 115.

¹³²*Ibid.*, 80 and 264-270.

¹³³*The Chicago Tribune* also ran a series of editorials which, while supporting the general thrust of the committee's investigation expressed concern that their investigation was also capable of causing serious and widespread harm and implied it was being run by self-serving politicians who were exaggerating the role of wages and advocating hasty and drastic legislation. For a complete compilation of these editorials see Russell, 168-177.

is particularly revealing of how reformers on all sides of the white-slavery issue had come to realize that the crusade had, by 1913, becoming overwhelmingly economic in its focus. Whitlock, as we saw in the introduction, was a harsh critic of the white-slavery crusade itself and accused the reformers and their punitive laws as being the ones who were turning women into "white slaves." He was also an early advocate of the connections between economics and vice. In 1910, Whitlock stressed that low wages and immoral employers were causing prostitution.¹³⁴ By 1913, however, Whitlock was concerned that the economic side of the question had been taken to a misleading extreme and was giving the public the impression that all prostitutes were underpaid girls.¹³⁵

That both friend and foe of the white-slavery crusade were cautioning that the movement was focusing too heavily on economics points to the ease with which reformers utilized the white-slavery narratives to criticize the prevailing economic conditions. Far from being a ploy to divert the public's attention away from economic issues, the white-slavery narratives were, instead, a means by which reformers in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries spoke out against commercialization and capitalist practices which they believed provided the ethos and the organizational model for the traffic in girls. White-slavery crusaders also tangled the plight of the white slave with that of the wage slave by constructed tales of underpaid girls forced into white slavery by greedy capitalists and, thereby, paved the way for reformers like O'Hara to champion the cause of the white slaves in their push for economic reforms.

¹³⁴Brand Whitlock, "The Lid in Laomi and Elsewhere," *Vigilance* 23, no. 14 (November 1910), 6-10. See also, "Discussing Whitlock's Lid," *Vigilance* 23, no. 14 (November 1910), 11-12. For Whitlock's skepticism regarding the white-slavery crusade see the introduction.

¹³⁵Brand Whitlock, *Forty Years of It* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1913), 280.

Chapter Five
Empowered or Endangered?:
Women Reformers and the White Slavery Narratives

In January of 1912, billboards and handbills began appearing on the streets of Hartford, Connecticut warning the city's residents that the white-slave traffic was endangering the city's daughters. The billboards read: "The White Slave Traffic. What It Is. The Results. What to Do." The handbills were even more sensational, picturing a mother and her daughter standing in front of a sign posted on a city building which read:

DANGER!
MOTHERS BEWARE!
60,000
INNOCENT GIRLS
WANTED
TO TAKE THE PLACE OF
60,000
WHITE SLAVES WHO DIE
THIS YEAR IN THE U.S

The handbills, all 10,000 of them, were printed for circulation throughout the city as part of the larger effort to advertise a mass meeting in the city's largest theater to discuss the dangers of white slavery. The meeting and the publicity surrounding it brought forth a backlash of ridicule and hostility from a number of Hartford's newspapers but the organizers of the event, the city's leading suffragists, were undeterred.¹

In many ways, the emergence of white slavery as a hot political, public topic in Hartford in the early months of 1912 is indicative of the ways the moral panic over white slavery spread in the wake of state and federal investigations into the trafficking. Hartford, and the city's suffragists, got their first exposure to the phenomenon when a detective

¹Katharine Houghton Hepburn, Woman Suffrage and the Social Evil (New York: National Woman Suffrage Publishing Co., Inc., 1914), 4-5.

employed by the United States government to prosecute white-slave traders was brought up on charges of blackmail by one of the city's brothel owners. The detective was acquitted but the trial was not without its consequence thanks, in large part, to the fact that Katharine Houghton Hepburn was on hand to watch the proceedings.² According to Hepburn, the trial had revealed that "135 girls, little young girls from seventeen years old up" had been sent to Hartford from New York for immoral purposes in a little over one years time and she called on the city's women to interest themselves in the issue. Hepburn, who was the leader of the city's militant suffrage organization, the Hartford Equal Franchise League, and the acting president of the Connecticut Woman Suffrage Association, was quick to recognize the political possibilities inherent in the white-slavery discourse and was at the forefront of the effort to organize Hartford's women residents for a massive anti-vice crusade using the discourse on white slavery.³

²The Hartford Vice Commission credited the investigations by the U.S. government and this trial with revealing the ways in which Hartford had become a market for the traffic in women out of New York. See Report of the Hartford Vice Commission (1913), 21-22. As a result of the trial, the residents of Hartford took up the crusade against white slavery and forced the closure of the city's brothels. The battle, however, did not end there as proponents of legalizing and segregating vice in the city launched a countercrusade to have the brothels reopened. As part of their efforts they began arguing that the brothels afforded "hundreds of innocent young girls" in the city "great protection" from seduction and rape at the hands of men who found themselves with out any other form of sexual release, an allegation which women reformers, both in and out of Hartford, found particularly repulsive. In response, women reformers argued that middle-class women did not want protection at this cost and threatened that if men could not figure out a way to assure women's safety in public without relying on brothels, women would be forced to take the matter into their own hands and "secure weapons" to protect themselves. Official reports, which were anti-segregationist, also refuted the association between brothels and the protection of women and girls from rape and seduction. In the case of Hartford, the vice commission stressed that these crimes had not risen since the closure of the red-light district. See Hepburn, Woman Suffrage, 4-8; Balding, 709; Madeline Southard, The White Slave Traffic Versus the American Home (Louisville: Pentacostal Publishing Company, 1914), 88-89; Report of the Hartford Vice Commission, 16 .

³Hepburn, Woman Suffrage, 3-4; Peter Baldwin, "Antiprostitution Reform and the Use of Public Space in Hartford, Connecticut, 1878-1914," Journal of Urban History 23, no. 6 (September 1997), 722, 724. For more on Hepburn's views on prostitution see Katharine

White-slavery narratives of sexual danger proved a potent weapon for women reformers seeking to authorize greater public roles for middle-class women and challenge the traditional gender divide of the public sphere.⁴ Hartford's suffragists, for instance, carried through on their plans to hold a mass meeting in the city's largest theater, despite the mayor's threats to revoke the license of the facility on the grounds that the stereopticon slide show planned for the meeting included indecent pictures.⁵ At the meeting crowds of spectators poured in to watch the stereopticon show and to hear white-slavery crusaders such as Edward O. Janney talk about the dangers of the traffic. They were ushered to their seats by women doctors and college graduates dressed in cap and gown and sporting regalia which bore the inscription "Knowledge is Power." These women kept up their public presence through a series of meetings for two months and weighed in on the city's mayoral and city council elections, particularly after the latter group opted to table a resolution against segregated vice. In the eyes of the suffragists, this was tantamount to allowing Hartford to become a headquarters for white-slave traders but, without recourse to the vote, the women were forced to settle for publicizing the candidates' views on segregation on the windows of the Woman Suffrage Headquarters in the middle of the shopping district and distributing thousands of pamphlets listing the names of the offending councilmen.⁶

The Hartford suffragists were not particularly successful in keeping specific councilmen out of office, but they were able to keep Hartford's red-light district from re-opening.⁷ More importantly, they claimed that they had learned important political lessons

Houghton Hepburn, "Letter to the editor," The Survey (July 23, 1910): 637-638.

⁴For an analysis which reads the activities of the Hartford feminists as an attempt to give middle-class women greater access to the public sphere see Baldwin.

⁵Hepburn, Woman Suffrage, 6.

⁶Ibid., 12-14. For another contemporary account of these events see "Votes for Women and Votes to Table the Hartford Vice Report," The Survey (October 18, 1913), 73.

⁷Baldwin reports that their effort to blacklist 17 councilmen in 1914 was a disappointment after 15 of them were re-elected. See Baldwin, 729.

during their struggle. According to Hepburn, the most crucial lesson was that women's political activism was hampered by their inability to vote and she argued strongly that the crusade against white slavery and segregated vice in Hartford presented a "striking demonstration" of the need for woman suffrage.⁸

The ways in which suffragists in Hartford used the battle against white slavery to call for woman suffrage in 1912 is not particularly surprising from the perspective of antiprostitution reform and the development of the white-slavery narratives. As historians have demonstrated, white middle-class women frequently used discourses on women's victimization and prostitution as a wedge to enter public debate, push for political change, claim moral authority for themselves, and speak out against their own subordination.⁹ These women reformers, as Peggy Pascoe has noted, used prevailing ideas about female piety and purity to give them a "strategic" advantage and turned "ideas about female nature into tools to challenge male power." In effect, women reformers built their activism on the belief that they, as women, had a societal duty to rescue and protect other women

⁸Hepburn, *Woman Suffrage*, 9.

⁹See Barbara Berg, *The Remembered Gate: Origins of American Feminism: The Woman and the City, 1800-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 176-222; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Beauty, the Beast, and the Militant Woman: a Case Study in Sex Roles and Social Stress in Jacksonian America" in *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America*, ed. Carrol Smith Rosenberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985): 109-128; Ruth Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 67-68; Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 95-129; Peggy Pascoe, *Relations of Rescue: The Search for Female Moral Authority in the American West, 1874-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Mary Odem, *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 8-37; Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). Ryan's text also includes a discussion of the ways in which middle-class women's use of the issue of prostitution to enter public debates both constricted women's access to the public realm and reduced gender politics to issues of sexuality.

and girls who had fallen prey to male sexual lasciviousness.¹⁰ Occasionally perceiving themselves as similarly victimized by male sexuality in their marriages, these middle-class reformers argued forcefully for a single standard of morals and for the need for sexual self-control on the part of men and women alike.¹¹ White-slavery, with its lurid tales of pure, innocent womanhood despoiled by unrestrained male lust, was a powerful weapon for women reformers in both the United States and Britain who were seeking to use tales of "male vice and female virtue" to push for an expanded public role for white, middle-class women and pursue goals like woman suffrage.¹²

¹⁰Pascoe, xvi-xvii.

¹¹Some white, middle-class female reformers argued that marriages contracted for economic reasons and which were based on women's subordination in society were akin to prostitution because they subjected women to sexual exploitation at the hands of men. See Rosen, 55-56. In addition to trying to end the male sexual abuse of prostitutes, women reformers also waged a campaign for "voluntary motherhood" which called for ending wives' sexual submission to their husband's demands by granting them the right to refuse their husband's sexual requests. For an analysis of this campaign see Linda Gordon, Woman's Body, Woman's Right (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 95-115. For an analysis of the Victorian belief in female "passionlessness" see Nancy Cott, "Passionlessness: An Interpretation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790-1850," in Women and Health in America, ed. Judith Walzer Leavitt (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1984): 57-69. As Gordon notes, many women's rights advocates believed that women also had a sexual drive which they needed to keep under control but still primarily focused on men whose sexuality they deemed as more unrestrained and dangerous.

¹²Judith Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Female Virtue: Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain," History Workshop Journal 13 (Spring 1982): 77-93. For nineteenth-century examples of suffragists' use of white-slavery narratives and white-slavery authors' calls for woman suffrage in the United States see Woman's Journal (January 26, 1889); "Why Women Want to Vote," The Philanthropist 5, no. 7 (July 1890); Charlton Edholm, Traffic in Girls and Florence Crittenton Missions (Chicago: The Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, 1893), 9; Charlton Edholm, The Traffic in Girls and the Work of Rescue Missions (1899), 123-125. For twentieth-century examples see Rosen, 114; Mrs. T.P. Curtis, The Traffic in Women (Boston: The Woman Suffrage Party of Boston, n.d.), 11-12; "The American Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 17, no. 4 (January 1903), 7; "The Women are All Right," The Philanthropist 22, no. 4 (January 1909), 1; "Suffrage as a Protection," Vigilance, 23, no. 13 (October 1910), 7; "One-Sided Statutes," Vigilance 23, no. 14 (November 1910), 10; Edward Janney, "Progress in Suppressing White-Slave Traffic," Vigilance 23, no. 5 (February 1910), 13; The Literary Digest 43 (September 30, 1911), 523.

Suffragists' role in the white-slavery crusade has, unfortunately, been overlooked by historians who have analyzed white slavery in the United States. Their analyses, in fact, obscure both the formative role suffragists played in the emergence of the discourse in the nineteenth century and the ways in which other groups of women attempted to harness the discourse to their efforts to expand their public authority and increase the professional opportunities available to them in urban areas.¹³ This is undoubtedly due to the fact that these historians have read the white-slavery narratives only as reactionary, masculine attempts to patrol gender boundaries, push women out of the public sphere, and constrict the public roles available to them by stressing their vulnerability to sexual predators.¹⁴ Frederick Grittner, for instance, argues that the white-slavery phenomenon was designed to constrict the roles available to white women and states that the narratives contained a uniform subtext which "told young women to beware the city, the immigrant, her sexuality, and ultimately, her freedom."¹⁵ Mary Linehan's analysis of white slavery, similarly, sees the narratives as masculine, reactionary tirades penned by male chauvinists and anti-feminist bigots.¹⁶ Even Mark Connelly, who notes that two proposed solutions

¹³The lone exception is the analysis of Egal Feldman who reads the crusade against white slavery as a "means of warning modern industrial America to make way for the New Woman." Feldman, however, fails to see the contradictory results the crusade had for different groups of "new women." See Egal Feldman, "Prostitution, the Alien Woman and the Progressive Imagination," in Prostitution, vol. 9 of History of Women in the United States: Historical Articles on Women's Lives and Activities, ed. Nancy Cott (New York: K.G. Saur, 1993), 206.

¹⁴There were, to be sure, white-slavery narratives which fit this analysis, some of which were written by women. See for instance, Leona Groetzinger, The City's Perils (1910).

¹⁵Frederick Grittner, White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 8-9. Grittner draws his assessments, in part, from D'Emilio and Freedman, who also argue that narratives of enslavement constricted the social roles available to white women. See John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America (New York: Harper and Roe, 1988), 221.

¹⁶Mary Linehan, "Vicious Circle: Prostitution, reform and public policy in Chicago, 1830-1930," (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1991), 150, 177-178, 193. Curiously, Linehan draws some of her evidence from a pamphlet authored by Clifford Roe which was published by the National American Woman Suffrage Association, an

to the prostitution problem were woman suffrage and the appointment of women police, argues that antiprostitution reform and the white-slavery scare were aimed at getting women back into traditional roles and writes off the more progressive solutions as merely evidence of the contradictory nature of antiprostitution reform. As a result, he misses the opportunity to analyze the ways in which suffragists and other groups of women reformers saw the white-slavery narratives as a means to expand, rather than constrict, women's roles.¹⁷

While historians analyzing white slavery in the United States have ignored the ways in which women reformers used the narratives to expand their opportunities, Judith Walkowitz's insightful assessment of the uproar provoked by William Stead's Maiden Tribute contains a thorough assessment of the ways in which women reformers in Britain sought to harness the movement to their own ends.¹⁸ As Walkowitz argues, narratives of white slavery in Britain were highly contested texts which could be taken up by different social constituencies, including feminists, and revised for a variety of political purposes.

author/publisher link which should have raised some questions about her portrayal of the anti-feminist nature of the white-slavery phenomena. See Linehan, note #7, 194. Linehan does not refer to this text by its full title What Women Might Do With the Ballot in her note. Instead, she lists it by its subtitle, Abolition of the White Slave Trade. She does, however, note that it was published by the National American Woman Suffrage Association. See Clifford Roe, What Women Might Do With the Ballot: The Abolition of The White Slave Trade (New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association, n.d.).

¹⁷Mark Connelly, The Response to Prostitution in the Progressive Era (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 38-45, 114-135. Kay Sloan, a historian of film, re-inforces this interpretation by arguing that the white-slavery films were designed to reinforce women's traditional roles. See Kay Sloan, Loud Silents: Origins of the Social Problem Film (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988). For a radically opposing view, which argues that the movie Traffic in Souls actually glorified intelligent, self-reliant, public woman capable of manuvuering around in the heterosocial public sphere see Janet Staiger, Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 138-146.

¹⁸Judith Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 81-134.

As the white-slavery activism of Hartford's suffragists demonstrates, white-slavery narratives in the United States were, similarly, picked up and revised by women reformers who attempted to use them to expand both their political power and public presence.

In fact, a diverse group of middle-class women reformers in the United States manipulated the discourse on the traffic in girls in narratives designed to to justify an increased public role for themselves and to gain greater access to the "public sphere." They did this by crafting a highly specific portrait of female vulnerability which imagined that the victims of white slavery were typically young girls. This construction both protected older middle-class women reformers from the imaginary dangers of the city streets and supported their arguments that they were the appropriate ones to patrol the streets and safeguard the younger girls whom, they argued, could trust that women proffering aid meant them no harm. Although the question of whether or not girls could trust that seemingly respectable middle-class women offering assistance were not really procuresses in disguise was a hotly contested issue during both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a variety of middle-class women reformers were able to parlay the white-slavery crusade into new opportunities for themselves.

To be sure, different groups of women white-slavery crusaders were not necessarily motivated by the same concerns and, in some cases, they were not even pursuing power in the same "public sphere." As a result, women reformers, like their male counterparts, put forth competing narratives, pursued different goals, and achieved different levels of public recognition and political power through their activism. They all, however, saw the white-slavery crusade as a way to push at traditional gender boundaries and empower themselves in the process. Some middle-class white women, as we have seen, used the white-slavery crusade to lobby for woman suffrage. Other white, Christian, middle-class women formed Traveler's Aid Societies and took to the streets, docks and depots to "protect" the young girls they envisioned were being imperiled by white slavers. In this, they were joined by Jewish and African-American women who, for different

reasons, formed protective associations and stationed women at locations throughout the country to guard Jewish and African-American girls moving into northern cities from Europe and the South. With the outbreak of the moral panic, some white middle-class women even found that they were able use the increased concerns over white slavery to transform their voluntary activities with Traveler's Aid Societies into official positions as immigration inspectors, detectives, and police women.

The empowerment of these middle-class women through the white-slavery crusade did not, however, have the same liberatory effect on the working-class girls, immigrants, and other groups who were the subjects of this new female surveillance. Instead, the policing advocated by women white-slavery reformers facilitated the deportation of other females, restricted working-class women's access to urban areas and resulted in the increased surveillance of the public spaces which were crucial for the formation of oppositional working-class communities and identities. These repressive consequences of cannot be written off as "unintentional" on the part of women reformers.¹⁹ Instead, they

¹⁹Scholars analyzing women's participation in the white-slavery crusade have frequently argued that the repressive consequences which resulted from their activism were unintentional. This is particularly true of feminist scholars such as Kathleen Barry and Sheila Jeffreys who argue that the conservative or antifeminist results of the campaign were the result of the tactical mistake made by the women who linked their crusade to the male movement for social purity and blame any conservative or antifeminist results on the men in the movement. Even historians such as Ruth Rosen paint the repressive consequences of the crusade, including worsening the plight of the prostitute and the oppression of working-class women, as unintended on the part of the women active in the crusade. To be sure, there is a great deal of truth in these assessments. Few reformers shared the same goals and women reformers were frequently unable to control the results of their activism even when they achieved legislative successes. As Judith Walkowitz has argued, women reformers lacked the cultural and political power to imprint their vision of societal reform on the larger social purity movement and, as a result, their campaign was easily co-opted and rechannelled into repressive campaigns. Walkowitz also, however, points out women were not "innocent" just because they were on the sidelines and while they, like all public actors, were bound by the parameters of the available cultural texts, they are still responsible for the ways in which their innovations played out. See Sheila Jeffreys, *The Idea of Prostitution* (North Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 1997); Barry, *The Prostitution of Sexuality*; Rosen, 51-68; Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*, 81-134;

were implicit in the women's white-slavery initiatives themselves. As we shall see, the middle-class "new woman" utilized the white-slavery narratives to carve out new roles for herself in public life which were premised on the necessity of restricting and patrolling the working-class "new woman" as she attempted to create new possibilities for herself in the urban arena.²⁰

Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Female Virtue," "Patrolling the Borders: Feminist Historiography and the New Historicism," Radical History Review 43 (1989), 30. For an analysis which argues against Walkowitz's idea that the early British feminist crusade against the contagious disease acts was co-opted into a more repressive social purity campaign after 1885 see Ian Tyrell, Woman's World Woman's Empire: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union in International Perspective, 1880-1930 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 210-211. Tyrell argues that the contradictory tension between liberatory and repressive impulses coexisted in British feminist thought and the social purity movement at the turn-of-the-century. Tyrell's analysis of the different feminist positions on regulation is also important for revealing the diversity of feminist views on the subject of prostitution. For other analyses which investigate the ways in which women's social purity activism, in the battle of the age of consent, antiprostitution reform, and within the birth control movement, resulted in repressive consequences for women see Odem, 63-81; Ellen Carol DuBois and Linda Gordon, "Seeking Ecstasy on the Battlefield: Danger and Pleasure in Nineteenth Century Feminist Sexual Thought," Feminist Studies 9 (Spring 1983): 7-25; Gordon, Women's Body.

²⁰One of the few historians to recognize how middle-class women's patrolling of working-class women for their "protection" both extended women's sphere into the urban spaces of the city and restricted the efforts of working-class women to carve out new identities for themselves is Kathy Peiss. Her analysis, however, stops short of really developing this tension and investigating how it was middle-class women's ambition, not just Victorian values, which motivated the reformers. See Kathy Peiss, Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986). For other historians who have recognized the ways in which "new women," utilized the issue of prostitution and white slavery to increase their own access to the realms of the political and the public see Feldman; Edward J. Bristow, Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight Against White Slavery, 1870-1939 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 102-108, Baldwin, 709-738. None of these historians, however, analyze how these activities restricted the access of working-class women to public space. One of the few historians to fully investigate the ways in which middle-class women used the rubric of "protection" to patrol and restrict the activities of working-class girls while expanding their own female authority and creating new professional opportunities is Mary Odem. From the standpoint of the white-slavery narratives, however, her analysis is problematic for she alleges that a new generation of Progressive white women reformers, such as Maude Miner, moved away from analyses which incorporated tales of victimization and

Vulnerable Girls and Evil Men: Women's White-Slavery Narratives

White-slavery crusaders, both men and women, formulated their narratives in ways which supported their larger political agendas.²¹ For women white-slavery reformers who were attempting to expand their own public authority and professional opportunities by envisioning themselves as the natural, most trustworthy protectors of the white slaves, the construction of which females were vulnerable to becoming white slaves and who was procuring them were particularly important. Middle-class women, obviously, could hardly justify a greater public presence for themselves as protectors if they were themselves imagined to be in danger of abduction. These women also could not portray themselves as

white slavery in the twentieth century. While Odem is undoubtedly correct that there was a general movement toward new interpretations of female, sexual delinquency, her analysis obscures the continued relevance of white-slavery narratives to some of the twentieth-century women reformers. Maude Miner, for instance, devoted a large segment of her text, *The Slavery of Prostitution*, to analyzing the white-slave traffic which, she believed, was still a pressing problem in 1916. See Odem, 95-100 and Maude Miner, *The Slavery of Prostitution* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1916), 88-124. For another assessment of the ways in which Progressive women reformers revived the language of victimization even as they sought to acknowledge the limitations of this interpretation see Ruth Alexander, *The "Girl Problem:" Female Sexual Delinquency in New York, 1900-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 37-38.

²¹With regard to some details, including where white slaves were vulnerable, there was widespread agreement on the part of most reformers. The vast majority of white-slavery crusaders, both male and female, imagined that there were multiple sites of dangers including, the streets, saloons, businesses where young girls worked, dance halls, ice cream parlors, theatrical agencies, employment bureaus, chop suey restaurants, depots, and waiting rooms. Which particular site was highlighted in any given text, however, still depended on the agenda being pursued by the author and their construction of the white slave. As we have seen, reformers seeking to highlight the "foreignness" of procurers targeted Chop Suey restaurants and Greek-owned ice cream parlors as sites of danger. In contrast, reformers attempting to harness the white-slavery narratives to economic reformers typically argued that employment agencies, factories, and department stores were the areas where the girls were in the most danger. For examples of these narratives see chapters three and four.

trustworthy public guardians if they were themselves imagined to be evil procuresses in disguise. Women white-slavery crusaders, in other words, had to create narratives in which middle-class women were excluded from playing the role of the white slave and the white slaver if they hoped to transform this discourse on sexual danger into a weapon of empowerment.

In attempting to portray themselves as the ones who should be safeguarding females against traffickers, women white-slavery reformers were fighting an uphill battle against male reformers who imagined that assuming the role of the protector of womanhood was a male prerogative. Most activists, both male and female, believed that protecting females from white slavers fell, first and foremost, on parents and a great deal of white-slavery activism was aimed at warning parents of the dangers that their daughters faced and encouraging both mothers and fathers to take steps to protect their young daughters. Most reformers, however, believed that parents had proven themselves woefully unprepared for this job and called on other middle-class reformers, public officials, the state, or the federal government to take up the task.²² Among male and

²²See Ernest Bell, "Wanted--Fathers and Mothers," in Fighting the Traffic or the War on the White Slave Trade, ed. Ernest Bell (G.S. Ball, 1910), 246-252; John Regan, Crimes of the White Slavers and the Results (Chicago: J. Regan and Co., 1912), 11-12 and 75-78; Virginia Brooks, My Battle With Vice (NY: The Macaulay Co., 1915), 234-240; Mrs. Ophelia Amigh, "More About the Traffic in Shame," Harry Parkin, "Practical Means of Protecting Girls," Edwin Sims, "The White Slave Trade of To-Day," all in Smashing the Traffic (Chicago: Currier Publishing Co., 1909). A number of the white-slavery narratives also highlighted the ways in which it was the actions of parents which endangered the young girls in the first place. See Edholm, Traffic (1899), 113; "Kidnaps Girl Seeking Work," Chicago Tribune, 31 July 1908; Rev. Guy F. Phelps, Ethel Vale: The White Slave (Chicago: The Christian Witness Co., 1910); Clifford Roe, The Girl Who Disappeared: A White Slave (Chicago: American Bureau of Moral Education, 1914), 146; Charles Warren, Dangers of Innocence or The Lure of the City (Chicago: Alexander Byers, 1916); Rev. Seth Cook Rees, Miracles in the Slums (Chicago: S.B. Shaw, Pub., 1905), 119, 170. The most inflammatory versions of these stories of parental endangerment, some of which date back into the early nineteenth century, relate stories of parents, both white and non-white, selling girls and tales of men who arranged with procurers to buy virgins only to find, once in the brothel, that the procurers had grabbed their own daughters. See Edholm,

female white-slavery crusaders, however, there was little agreement on whether or not the reformers best suited to take up the task were men or women. To be sure, most male white-slavery crusaders did feel that women reformers had a role to play in battling the traffickers but they frequently portrayed them as late-comers to the crusade or gave them supporting roles, arguing they should be focused on passing legislation in spite of the fact that the vast majority of them could not vote.²³ Women reformers, on the other hand, saw themselves as the natural center of the white-slavery crusade and its most effective agents. Katherine Bushnell and Elizabeth Andrews, for instance, asserted that the best way to end the traffic in women was to have women rise as one body and, emulating the Paris Commune, nail a decree to the door of every brothel which read:

Whereas slavery is repugnant to all our sentiment of Liberty and Justice, we decree that this institution, which is an institution for the enslavement of women, be abolished.²⁴

Similarly, Mrs. Katherine L. Wolfe, president of the Chicago Women's Anti-Vice crusade, argued that what was needed to end the traffic was an army of 10,000 women prepared to invade the vice district with dynamite and hatchets. Mrs. Charles Henrotin summed up the sentiments of these women when she argued, in an address in front of the Illinois Vigilance Association, that "The emancipator of the white slaves will be a woman; a woman strong enough, wise enough and brave enough to fight the battle of the new slavery."²⁵

Traffic (1899), 115-116; Barbara Meil Hobson, Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 52; and the narratives detailed in chapter one. Other reformers, particularly women, noted that some girls were being sold by their fathers or were originally incest victims. See Southard, 89; Martha A. Lee, Mother Lee's Experience in Fifteen Year's Rescue Work (Omaha: Richard Artemus Lee, 1906), 67-68, 261-262; Rees, 295; Groetzinger, 214.

²³See Clifford Roe, Panders and Their White Slaves (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), 220 and Regan, 84 and 139.

²⁴Elizabeth Andrews and Katherine Bushnell, "Recent Researches into the Japanese Slave Trade in California," The Philanthropist 21, no. 4 (January 1907), 11.

²⁵"The Illinois Vigilance Association Annual Meeting," The Philanthropist 23, no. 1 (April

Women reformers who envisioned that vice and the white-slave trade would be eradicated by female emancipators did not, of course, conceive that these women might themselves be in danger of being trapped by the slave traders they believed they were battling. Instead, women white-slavery crusaders used a variety of tactics to protect themselves and other female reformers, discursively, from the imaginary dangers they were constructing for others.²⁶ Typically they crafted narratives which demarcated the boundaries of the dangers by reference to race, age, ethnicity, class, and immigrant status.²⁷ In the nineteenth-century construction of the narratives of "yellow slavery,"

1909), 19. The Chicago Tribune reprinted a portion of Henrotin's address but left out this particular part. See "Tell About Vice," Chicago Tribune, 9 February 1909, 9. For another female reformer who thought a nation-wide movement on the part of women would eliminate the trade see Brooks, 240.

As historians have noted, women in the nineteenth and early twentieth century often justified their reform activities with reference to the concept of female moral superiority arguing, for instance, that they would purify the political realm if granted suffrage. See for instance, Estelle Freedman, Their Sisters' Keepers: Women's Prison Reform in America (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1981) and Barbara Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1981). The idea of female moral superiority was not, however, a prominent discourse among women active in the white-slavery crusade. This was perhaps due to the fact that the idea that men were morally inferior to women undermined white-slavery reformer's efforts to push for a single standard of morals for both men and women, a goal which remained a high priority for a number of white-slavery crusaders. See Southard, 58-81 and Clifford Roe, "Our Double Standard of Morals," in The Great War on White Slavery or Fighting for the Protection of Our Girls (1911), 53-66. For a critical assessment of the use of the idea of female moral superiority by historians which argues it distorts women's activism see Pascoe, xvi-xvii.

²⁶White-slavery historians such as Frederick Grittner have been unable to explicate the ways in which the narratives endangered only certain groups of women because they have approached the narratives as aimed at an undifferentiated, universal category of "women." Mark Connelly's analysis is plagued by a similar oversight. He notes, for instance, that the dominant image of the white slave was of a child but sees it as an oversimplification rather than as a discursive strategy on the part of the white-slavery authors. For further discussion of this see the introduction and Connelly, 126.

²⁷Age was the most salient divide drawn by the vast majority of women reformers but they did manipulate the other variables in support of their larger political agendas. For women's white-slavery narratives which marked the "otherness" of the victims of traffickers by reference to class, ethnicity, and immigrant status in an effort to establish a custodial relationship to the girls during the nineteenth century see the narratives

women reformers were able to rely on the racial construction of the victims to establish a custodial relationship toward them.²⁸ The development of the narratives on "white slavery," however, raised the possibility that all white women were potential victims and forced women white-slavery reformers to focus more exclusively on the special vulnerability of young girls.²⁹ Charlton Edholm, for instance, argued that both Chinese girls and Chinese women were falling prey to "yellow slavery" but her narratives on white slavery focused exclusively on the procurement of young girls.³⁰ Age, for Edholm and a future generation of women white-slavery authors, was a pivotal and enduring mark of difference that set them apart from, and helped them establish a custodial relationship to, white slaves.

In part, the focus on the traffic in *girls* was a central component of the white-slavery narratives as they developed in the United States during the nineteenth century due to the formative influence of Stead's narratives which portrayed the victims of procurers as very young girls. He described the virgin he allegedly purchased as a "bright, fresh-looking

constructed by Edholm and WCTU missionaries which are detailed in chapter one.

²⁸See M.C.G. Edholm "A Stain on the Flag," Californian Illustrated 1, no. 3 (February 1892): 159-170 and Strange True Stories: Chinese Slave Girls (Woman's Occidental Board, n.d). For further discussion of "yellow slavery" and the larger crusade against it see chapter one.

²⁹The development of white-slavery narratives did not eliminate reformers' concerns over the trafficking of non-white girls. Instead, many reformers repeatedly stressed that the term was a misnomer and argued that the traffic in girls victimized girls of all races. See James Bronson Reynolds, "The Nations and the White Slave Traffic," in Fighting the Traffic, 203; Groetzinger, 215; Clifford Roe, "Whose Daughter Art Thou," in The Great War, 97; "International White Slavery," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 3 (1912), 135; Vice Commission of Chicago, The Social Evil in Chicago (Chicago: Gunthorp-Warren Printing Co., 1911), 41, 177; Edward Janney, The White Slave Traffic in America (New York: National Vigilance Committee, 1911), 13. The efforts of women reformers, both white and African American, to focus attention on the trafficking in African-American girls as a means to expand their own public authority will be discussed later in this chapter.

³⁰See Edholm, "A Stain on the Flag," and "Traffic in White Girls."

child."³¹ In keeping with this portrayal, the earliest narratives in the purity press in the United States on the traffic imagined the victims as girls or very young women.³² The editors of The Philanthropist, for instance, stressed that very young girls were the most likely victims of the "international traffic in girls," and noted that the majority of brothel inmates were young girls in their teens.³³ There were, however, competing narratives even in these early years and many of them did not differentiate between girls and women, portraying both as vulnerable to the sexual danger represented by the procurer. The earliest stories on the white slaves in the lumbercamps written by male newspaper reporters stressed that both girls and women were being abducted and imprisoned.³⁴ Minnie Pine, whose sensational story fueled the push for anti-white-slavery legislation in Michigan in 1887, was repeatedly presented as a 24 year old "woman."³⁵ Women active in the crusade against white slavery in the lumbercamps, however, countered these portrayals by stressing that the female victims were young girls, a fact they repeatedly underscored in their calls for activism on behalf of the "white girl slaves of the north woods."³⁶

³¹Stead quoted in Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 101.

³²See for instance, "The Traffic in Girls" and "The International Traffic in Girls" both in The Philanthropist 1, no. 6 (June 1886), 4-5.

³³"The International Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 14, no. 2 (April, 1899), 12.

³⁴"Closing Wisconsin Dives," New York World, 8 November 1887, 6; "Michigan Aroused at Last," New York World, 26 January 1887, 7;

³⁵"It is Needed," The Detroit Free Press, 24 January 1887, 1; "White Slaves in Michigan," New York World, 24 January 1887, 2. For more details on this case see chapter one.

³⁶Frances Willard quoted in "The Lumber Dens," The Detroit Free Press, 11 June 1888. For additional discourses, penned by female missionaries, who portrayed the white slaves as young girls see "The Wisconsin Lumber Dens," The Philanthropist 3, no. 12 (December 1888), 1-3; "Slavery of Young Girls in the Michigan Lumber Camps," The Philanthropist 9, no. 6 (June 1894), 5; "The Sacrifice of Girlhood in the Lumber Camp Dens of Michigan," The Philanthropist 9, no. 12 (December 1894), 5. The construction of endangered females as young girls in women's white-slavery narratives also undoubtedly drew from the close connections between the crusade and the effort to raise the age of consent, a movement which sought to protect girls from male seducers and sexual predators. For an analysis of this campaign and the ways in which women reformers constructed the vulnerable girls as young "daughters" see Odem, 8-37.

The construction of white-slavery victims as predominantly young girls by women reformers did not end with the advent of the moral panic in the early twentieth century. Instead, the image of imperiled girlhood, so carefully crafted by nineteenth-century women and social purity reformers, continued to be the dominant representation mobilized by activist women who sought to portray the victims as girls and themselves as rescuers and protectors.³⁷ Twentieth-century women reformers did not, however, have to contend, to any large degree, with competing narratives which described white-slavery victims as women. Instead, the moral panic years were marked by the widespread agreement on the part of both male and female white-slavery activists that young girls were the primary victims of the traffic. While it would be nice to argue that women authors had the power to control the narratives and impress their portrayals of the age of the white slaves onto male authored narratives, this development owed more to legislative requirements and the emergence of new ideas regarding the dangers of "adolescents" than women reformer's influence.

Clifford Roe's portrayal of white slaves as predominantly young girls, for instance, probably had little to do with acceding to the discursive demands of anyone else's white-slavery narratives and he did, on occasion, craft narratives which portrayed middle-class "new women" who were pursuing new occupations in the city as vulnerable to white slavers.³⁸ Like other white-slavery authors, however, Roe narratives were shaped by his

³⁷See for instance, Amigh; Brooks, 115-116; Hepburn, 4; Curtis, 13-16.

³⁸In one narrative, Roe alleged that procurers were masquerading as "detective agents looking for women detectives to work for them," a job which, we shall see was one of the primary new professions to open up for women, thanks in large part to the white-slavery investigations. Consequently, Roe's narratives challenged the efficacy of this new public role for women by implying that the pursuit of this profession actually placed them in danger of becoming white slaves themselves. See Clifford Roe, "The Auctioneer of Souls," in *Fighting the Traffic*, 171. The only other narrative to imply that women active in patrolling for white slavers might be in danger is found in John Regan's text *Crimes of the White Slavers* which relates the story of Mabel Carroll, a 25 year old former waitress and missionary worker who was said to have alleged that another woman induced her to enter

own political agenda which focused on casting himself as the preeminent rescuer of white slaves and showcasing his heroic prosecutions of white slavers. Since Illinois law did not allow for the prosecution of a procurer for transporting girls across state lines or harboring them in immoral houses unless the girls were under 18 for most of Roe's career, Roe's prosecutions and the resulting narratives frequently highlighted the youthful age of the victims.³⁹ In developing his narratives, Roe also stressed that what made these girls vulnerable was their adolescent tendency to fall for the allures of love, wealth, and fame offered up by the procurers, an allegation which points to another reason that the association of white slavery with young girls became dominant in the early twentieth century. It tapped into the emerging, and powerful, discourse on adolescence.

As historians have argued, the early twentieth century was a formative period for ideas regarding adolescence and was marked by the efforts on the part of parents, reformers, and the state to both define adolescence and control these girls during a period which was perceived as a particularly dangerous time for them.⁴⁰ As Roe's narratives

a brothel against her will. See Regan, 38-39

³⁹Roe, *Panders*, 79-93, 145. Women were also operating under legislative constraints which encouraged them to portray the victims of sexual trafficking as girls. Female missionaries in California were, for instance, only allowed to gain guardianship over the Chinese females they allegedly rescued, but who didn't want to go with them voluntarily, if they were under the age of 21. See Carol Green Wilson, *Chinatown Quest* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1931), 210. While it is impossible to determine the actual ages of the females who were involved in Roe's prosecutions, Walter Reckless, who was able to utilize the records of the white-slavery cases prosecuted in Chicago before they were destroyed, argued that the females involved as "white slaves" in the cases were young girls in their late teens and early twenties. None, he stressed were children. See Walter Reckless, *Vice in Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1933; repr., Montclair: Patterson Smith Publishing Corp., 1969), 43-44.

⁴⁰See Odem; Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Regina Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1934* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Elizabeth Lunbeck, *The Psychiatric Persuasion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Alexander. My thinking on the category on adolescence has also been shaped through discussions with Dr. Lisa Fine who has repeatedly stressed that the category of adolescence itself was being

demonstrate, the construction of white-slavery narratives frequently drew on this emerging discourse on adolescence to argue that females, typically in their teens, were particularly prone to poor judgment, flights of fancy, a romantic belief in love at first sight, rebellion, and impulsive behavior, all of which were believed to make them easy targets for white slavers promising fame or love. As another male white-slavery author noted, even those who didn't study the "scientific laws of adolescence" knew the years comprised a "dangerous age" for young girls.⁴¹ The ascendancy of ideas regarding adolescence and legislative requirements undoubtedly helped women white-slavery reformers imprint their vision of who the most likely white slaves were on the narratives crafted by other white-slavery authors during the moral panic years. Women reformer's arguments regarding who the most likely white slavers were, however, remained a hotly contested issue throughout the period.

The portrayal of white slavers as women was a predominant tenet of many of the white-slavery narratives throughout the nineteenth century in the United States. In part this was due to the formative influence of William Stead's Maiden Tribute which, as Judith Walkowitz has argued, placed women at the center of the white slavery evil by alleging they were the ones selling their daughters and procuring virgin girls for men.⁴² Stead's later narratives on white slavery in the United States also stressed that women were the

forged during this period. For an insightful analysis of the emerging ideas on adolescence and boys see Gail Bederman, Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 77-120. For a contemporary source which looked, in depth, at the role adolescence itself plays in jeopardizing young girls see Robert A. Wood and Albert Kennedy (eds.), Young Working Girls: A Summary of Evidence from Two Thousand Social Workers (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913).

⁴¹Regan, 139.

⁴²Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 97-98, 101-102. As Walkowitz argues, women reformers had to recast Stead's drama considerably in order to make it an "imaginary vehicle" for their own emancipation. See Walkowitz, City of Dreadful Delight, 132. For a discussion of the role Stead's narratives played in sparking the crusade against white slavery in the United States see chapter one.

primary operatives of the white-slave trade. In his text, If Christ Came to Chicago, Stead alleged that it was women who were doing most of the procuring for the city's brothels. Stead also used his text to paint middle-class women's activism against white slavery as useless and imply that some seemingly middle-class women offering help were really procuresses in disguise by arguing that the inadequate efforts of the "excellent societies of good women" to warn the girls as to the danger they faced were failing to protect them from "plausible ladies" who promised them good lodgings.⁴³

Stead's portrayal of white-slavers as women was adopted by the purity press in the United States. The official journal of the New York Committee for the Prevention of State Regulation of Vice, for instance, repeatedly ran stories which highlighted the role of women in securing girls for the traffic.⁴⁴ According to these stories, women operatives were bringing Canadian girls from Canada to Chicago, luring American girls through employment bureaus, transporting immigrant girls from Newark to New York, and abducting young innocent girls for New York's white-slave trade from the Connecticut countryside.⁴⁵ Some of these women, the editors alleged, were even posing as respectable middle-class ladies in a ploy to win the trust of unsuspecting girls. One well-dressed "matronly woman" was supposedly trapping young girls in Australia by actually employing them for a short time as domestics in a very nice home. Eventually, however, she revealed her true colors by throwing a party at which the girls were being drugged, ruined, and

⁴³William Stead, If Christ Came to Chicago! (Chicago: Laird & Lee, Pub., 1894), 247-260; "The Scarlet Woman," The Philanthropist 9, no. 6 (June 1894), 2.

⁴⁴For a discussion of this group see chapter one.

⁴⁵"Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 1, no. 5 (May 1886); "The Trade in Girls," The Philanthropist 2, no. 8 (August 1887), 4; "The Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 2, no. 2 (February 1887), 4; "Country Girls Missing," The Philanthropist 5, no. 8 (August 1890), 1. See also "Boyhood and Girlhood Perils," The Philanthropist 3, no. 6 (June 1888), 4; "The Market in Vice," The Philanthropist 4, no. 6 (June 1889); The Philanthropist 4, no. 12 (December 1889), 1; "Recruiting for Vice," The Philanthropist 5, no. 10 (October 1890), 5.

forced into a life of prostitution.⁴⁶ Other women were said to snare girls by posing as nuns recruiting for convents.⁴⁷

These tales of female vipers preying on young girls in the purity press were reinforced by early stories on white slavery in the popular press.⁴⁸ Stories in the Chicago Tribune in 1887 on the lumbercamps in Marinette, for instance, were framed around a reporter's tale of following a known procuress named Mrs. Cassidy on her way home after her release on charges of abducting young girls for the camps.⁴⁹ Other stories on white slavery in New York which ran in the New York World related the crimes of women like Mrs. Mary Austin who allegedly ran a house of prostitution disguised as a massage parlor over a jewelry-store in the city and was procuring girls as young as 15 for her business.⁵⁰ Even the traffic in Chinese girls, the New York Tribune alleged in 1887, was being carried on by women, in this case Chinese women, who were reportedly paying \$450 for girls in China and having them shipped to San Francisco.⁵¹

The image of the "well dressed" female procurer preying on young girls did not disappear with the onset of the moral panic. Instead, it was propagated in male reformer's narratives, official reports, and by reporters in the popular press who built on the idea by arguing that women procurers had their own methods for snaring girls which were sometimes more successful and more devious than those attempted by men.⁵² Clifford

⁴⁶"How Young Girls Are Preyed Upon," The Philanthropist 6, no. 6 (June 1891), 5.

⁴⁷"As a Catholic Sees It," The Philanthropist 20, no. 2 (July 1905), 2-3.

⁴⁸For examples of how purity journals such as The Philanthropist drew on the white-slavery stories appearing in urban newspapers see "The Traffic in Girls," The Philanthropist 2, no. 2 (February 1887), 4 and "Notes and Comments," The Philanthropist 7, no. 12 (December 1892), 1.

⁴⁹"Marinette's Foul Dens," Chicago Tribune, 1 November 1887, 1. See also "The Marinette Dens," Chicago Tribune, 2 November 1887, 2.

⁵⁰"A Woman's Young Victims," New York World, 4 February 1887, 3.

⁵¹Story reported in The Philanthropist 2, no. 12 (December 1887), 1.

⁵²See Stanley Finch, The White Slave Traffic (Washington D.C.: International Reform Bureau, n.d.), 1; Regan, 55-56 and 124-130; "The Infamous Stockade," Vigilance 23, no. 9 (June 1910), 3; Ernest Bell, "How Snakes Charm Canaries: Methods of Procurers," in

Roe was perhaps the greatest proponent of the idea that women should be classed among the most dangerous procurers operating in America's urban areas, perhaps because of his pivotal role in prosecuting them for the crime.⁵³ His first exposure, he claimed, to the phenomena of white slavery came during his prosecution of Panzy Williams for allegedly imprisoning a girl named Agnus in her brothel in 1907. As we have seen, this was a formative experience for Roe and his narratives repeatedly stressed that women were operating as very effective agents for the white-slave traffic.⁵⁴

Roe was particularly fond of stories which implied that procuresses were masquerading as respectable middle-class women, a claim which obviously made all seemingly trustworthy women, including middle-class women reformers, suspect. Prominent among these tales was the story of Mrs. Lemmel Schlotter, alias Leona Garrity, whose story made sensational headlines, in part because this female enslaver was allegedly living a life of luxury in the fashionable suburb of Glencoe as an upstanding middle-class woman. Her double life, as a middle-class matron and a brothel-owning procuress, prompted Roe to call her a female "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" and to construct his narrative to capitalize on the sensational image of a female, middle-class procuress.⁵⁵ During her appearance in court he described her as the epitome of a well-placed matron stating:

Fighting the Traffic, 231, 234-245; Sims, "The White Slave Trade of Today" and "Why Girls Go Astray;" U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigrant Commission Report, Importation and Harboring of Women for Immoral Purposes (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 65-66.

⁵³Statistics compiled by the Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago indicate that eight women were charged with pandering in Cook County in 1910, compared to 32 men. In 1911, five women were charged with the crime, compared to 25 men. See "Cook County Jail Statistics," in J.P.A. Papers, file #6. See also A.P. Drucker, On the Trail of the Juvenile-Adult Offender (Chicago: Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1912) who states arrest statistics for Chicago in 1911 indicate that 10 women, including four African-American women were charged with pandering, compared to 50 men.

⁵⁴For details of this case see the introduction and Roe, Panders, 1-25.

⁵⁵Roe, Panders, 97. Many of Roe's narratives failed to differentiate between the procurers who lured the girls to the brothels and the madams, including Williams and Garrity, who imprisoned them. Both, according to Roe, were guilty of being white slavers. See Roe,

In a public place she would be taken for a quiet matron, with love for her neighbors and scorn for acts that were immoral. She was dressed in a tailor-made suit of blue; her hat was modestly trimmed. No one would take her for an outcast who buys and sells girls.⁵⁶

The trial of Schlotter, at the conclusion of which she was found guilty of harboring an underage girl in a brothel, was broadcast throughout the city in the pages of the Chicago Tribune which opened its sections on her with headings like "Society Woman Resort Owner?" and "Glencoe Banishes Its White Slaver."⁵⁷ Other narratives penned by Roe indicated that "fine looking and well dressed" women were procuring department-store girls by promising them music lessons and offering them easy employment for high wages.⁵⁸ Roe was also fond of reproducing other's narratives which highlighted the prominent role played by women procurers, including a "confession" of a convicted procuress by the name of Dora Douglas, an ex-school teacher who reportedly became a white-slave trader.⁵⁹ Although the narrative, as a first-person confession, attempted to portray Douglas as a victim of a white slaver who allegedly forced her into the trade, Roe's use of her story in other publications omitted these details, portraying her as just another female trader of girls.⁶⁰

What Women Might, 5.

⁵⁶Ibid., 98.

⁵⁷"Society Woman Resort Owner?," Chicago Tribune, 19 June 1907, 3; "Glencoe Banishes Its White Slaver," Chicago Tribune, 22 June 1907, 3.

⁵⁸Roe, Panders, 115, 117. For more of Roe's narratives which detailed the crimes of women panders see Panders 55, 60, 87, 217; "The Lady Pander and Her Traps," in Great War, 104-106; The Girl Who Disappeared, 113.

⁵⁹Ibid., 68-78. For more on the Dora Douglas case see "Admits Traffic in White Slaves," Chicago Daily Tribune, 19 January 1909, 7 and Ernest Bell, "Procuresses and the Confession of One of Them," in Fighting the Traffic, 234-245.

⁶⁰Roe, What Women Might Do, 4. For an earlier first-person narrative in which a woman claims she was forced to oversee brothel inmates because she was herself imprisoned and forced into white slavery see "Wisconsin Horrors," The Philanthropist 4, no. 6 (June 1889), 2.

Interestingly, Roe's most detailed construction of women panders were published in his text What Women Might Do With the Ballot, a pamphlet which both heralded women in suffrage states for their passage of white-slavery legislation and their election of anti-segregation officials and called for woman suffrage.⁶¹ Roe also, however, used this pamphlet to argue that middle and upper-class women were preying on their young sisters by stating::

The most dangerous and the meanest of the white slave traders are the women who have entered this lucrative vice field. Snug fortunes have been made by these beasts who prey upon their sisterhood. Women panders are often creatures of superior culture and intelligence, who carry on their wretched business with cunning and dispatch. Even a former school teacher, Dora Douglas, was convicted and sentenced to prison in Chicago in December of 1908, for procuring girls from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and other places.

Roe refuted the idea that "women who are naturally more sympathetic than men would shrink from such a business," arguing instead that these women were capable of performing the worst outrages ever recorded "without a quiver of a lip, or a droop of an eyelash. For Roe, the woman procurers were among "the most dangerous creatures extant in the civilized world" in part because they were able to "gain the confidence of young girls more readily than do the male procurers."⁶² Roe's allegations, that the city was the home of a cadre of cultured, intelligent, and well-dressed female white slavers who preyed on the vulnerability of their young sisters and were aided by their ability to appear more

⁶¹Ibid., 8. In spite of acknowledging the role women were playing in the white-slavery crusade in this text, Roe, in painting himself as the father of the movement, has perhaps done more to obscure the early participation of women in the movement than perhaps any other white-slavery activist or historian. For another portrayal in which Roe argues that women, including missionaries from the W.C.T.U. were late-comers to the crusade see Roe, Panders, 220. Roe was also great at playing to his audience. Not surprisingly, when he wrote an essay on the white-slave traffic for publication in the Delta Upsilon Quarterly for his fraternity brothers, Roe failed to include his call for woman suffrage in his list of recommendations for what was needed to end the traffic. See Clifford Roe, "The Slave Traffic in Girls," The Delta Upsilon Quarterly, 207-214.

⁶²Ibid., 4-5.

trustworthy to the girls than men, was a direct challenge to the claims of middle-class women active in the crusade who were arguing that they were the proper ones to patrol the public places and protect the young girls precisely because the girls *could* trust that other women would keep them from harm.

Many women white-slavery activists had, in fact, recognized the danger these narratives on women procurers presented in the nineteenth century and had struggled in their own narratives to redefine the "evil" of white slavery and its operatives as male. Kate Bushnell, who conducted the W.C.T.U. investigations into the lumber camps in Wisconsin in the 1880s, stressed that the trade was being run by male capitalists. The sex of the traders was a point she was committed to getting across and when the early reports of her findings substituted the word "trade" for "male" in her text, she quickly wrote with a correction asserting that they had misquoted her and re-iterated that the traffic in girls was controlled by men.⁶³ Another W.C.T.U. missionary, Mrs. Obenauer, likewise highlighted the role of men in procuring young girls in her speech on the Michigan lumber camps in front of a packed Detroit Opera House in 1888.⁶⁴ Charlton Edholm was also aware of the allegations that women were preying on young girls when she wrote her 1892 article on the "Traffic in White Girls." Edholm did not deny that there were women procurers, stating instead that both men and women were in the business of seducing, luring, trapping, drugging, ruining, and imprisoning innocent girls. Her article, however, highlighted the activities that individual women and women's clubs were undertaking to stop the trafficking, activism which, Edholm claimed, disproved the adage that "Woman is woman's worst enemy."⁶⁵

⁶³For the original story see "The Wisconsin Dens," The Philanthropist 3, no. 12 (December 1888), 1-3. For Bushnell's correction see The Philanthropist, 4, no. 1 (January 1889), 5.

⁶⁴"The Lumber Dens," Detroit Free Press, 11 June 1888. See also "The Trade in Girls," The Philanthropist 2, no 8. (August 1887), 4.

⁶⁵Edholm, "Traffic," 825, 838. Edholm was not the only woman active in the white-

Typically, women seeking to use the white-slavery narratives to justify an increasing public role for women argued that it was men who were the real threat to girls and stressed that white slavery was, in general, a business controlled by men.⁶⁶ Virginia Brooks, whose personal investigations into the white-slave trade were published under the title My Battle With Vice, argued that the traffic in women was just the latest in a series of historical episodes in which women had been made slaves and were captured and sold for profits by the "brute that lives in man."⁶⁷ Other women white-slavery authors similarly

slavery crusade to acknowledge that there were women procurers in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some, like Grace Dodge, were apologetic about their existence. In her 1889 "confidential letter to girls," Dodge cautioned girls to be careful of men who would seek to drug them for wicked purposes and added that she was "sorry" to have to advise them that they must be careful even with some women they might meet on the streets who would offer them high paying jobs and cheap places to board. See Grace Dodge, "A Portion of a Confidential Letter to Girls," The Philanthropist 4, no. 7 (July 1889), 1-3. See also Arria Huntington, "Police Regulation for Women," The Philanthropist 10, no. 5 (May 1895), 2-3.

⁶⁶For other women reformers who blamed men for the prostitution evil see the comments of Katharine Bement Davis, Superintendent of the New York State Reformatory for Women who argued that prostitution was fundamentally a man's business and stressed that, contributing causes aside, men were "chiefly responsible" for dragging women into the "mire." Quoted in Mary Beard, Woman's Work in Municipalities (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1916), 105. For more on Bement's views see "A Study of Prostitutes," in George Kneeland, Commercialized Prostitution in New York City (New York: The Century Co., 1913), 163-196. Vice committees formed during the period, particularly those with women on them, made it a point to note that those responsible for procuring unwilling girls to labor as prostitutes were men. See Moral Survey Committee of Syracuse, The Social Evil in Syracuse (Syracuse: 1913), 92 and Vice Commission of Chicago, 47.

⁶⁷Brooks, 9. Brook's narrative did include a sequence in which she went undercover as a vice agent herself and was able to procure innocent girls from an employment agency but, in general, she argued that the vice trade and its operatives were men and the saviors of young girls were women. For her portrayal of her experiences as a vice agent see 132-134 and 175-178. For Brooks arguments that women, including herself, were responsible for saving hundreds of girls from the exploits of men and a life of prostitution see 62-69, 151-163, 224. For additional information on Brook's involvement in the vice crusade in Chicago, including efforts to get her to dress up in Joan of Arc armor for a vice parade in 1912 see "For Vice War Parade," Chicago Daily News, 27 September 1912, 2 and "Vice War Parade is On," Chicago Daily News, 28 September 1912, 2.

sought to refute the charges being put forth by Roe and others that women were the ones running the brothels in which the young girls were enslaved. One of the primary goals of Mrs. Curtis' pro-suffrage white-slavery text was to prove that prostitution and the traffic in women was a man's business.⁶⁸ To support these allegations she stated:

Right here I want to call your attention to the fact, which I have many authorities to prove, that with very few exceptions almost all the women keepers of houses of ill-fame are nothing more than paid servants, there is always a man or men behind them, who are the real proprietors.⁶⁹

Drawing on what she called a "composite picture" of these men from George Kneeland's investigations, Curtis stressed that they were typically sleek, fashionably dressed men over 40.⁷⁰

Curtis' use of Kneeland's conclusions is revealing for the ways in which most female white-slavery writers selectively drew from male-authored narratives and ignored any conclusions which didn't fit their goals.⁷¹ Kneeland, for instance, also argued that women were involved in the trade, both as madams who battled with pimps for the control of white slaves and as procuresses who snared girls through employment agency fronts and on the streets. Like Roe, he argued that the woman procurer was even more "insidious" than her male counterparts for she was able to meet young girls in "private rooms," talk to them in public, and invite them home without arousing any suspicion.

⁶⁸Curtis, 2.

⁶⁹Ibid., 5.

⁷⁰Ibid., 5-6. See also the analysis of Frances Kellor, who asserted, in 1906, that women, who she presumed had once been procuresses, were no longer in the business which was now being pursued almost exclusively by men in *The Philanthropist* 21, no. 1 (April 1906), 2.

⁷¹Curtis also utilized portions of Stanley Finch's narratives but not the ones in which he argued that both men and women were operating in the United States as procurers. Instead she chose examples which highlighted male procurers. See Curtis, 1-3.

Women procurers, Kneeland concluded, had a number of "avenues of approach" which were not open to men, including feigning sympathy.⁷²

Women authors like Curtis scrupulously avoided reproducing the argument that women were better equipped to take advantage of young innocent girls by virtue of their sex.⁷³ Instead, these women crafted narratives which refuted Roe and Kneeland's allegations by arguing that women like themselves were better suited to protect these girls because, as women, they had greater access to the girls and were more trustworthy in their offers of assistance. It was an important point of discursive contention for the claim that women were the ones who should be patrolling the public areas to protect girls from white slaves was the linchpin in their efforts to harness the narratives to their quest for new public and governmental roles for themselves.

⁷²See Kneeland, 77-99. For another male white-slavery author who both stressed that prostitution was predominantly a man's business but acknowledged the existence of "women procurers, women importers, and women proprietors" see Theodore Bingham, "The Girl that Disappears," Hampton's Magazine 25, no. 5 (November 1910), 566.

⁷³One exception to this in Leona Groetzinger's monograph The City's Perils which repeats the charges being made by Roe and other male reformers that women procurers were particularly dangerous foes for young girls because she "comes in the guise of a woman friend and her sex alone is enough to disarm suspicion." It should, however, be noted that Groetzinger's objective in penning her narrative was to portray the city as a perilous place for everything. She was clearly not interested in expanding women's opportunities or challenging traditional gender boundaries. See Groetzinger, 81-82. On rare occasion, even women reformers who were committed to using the white-slavery panic to expand their public roles crafted narratives which featured women procuresses. The reports written by Louise De Koven Bowen in her role as President of the Juvenile Protective Association, for instance, frequently acknowledged that procuresses, madams, and professional prostitutes were snaring new recruits in department stores and other urban areas. Notably, however, Bowen's narratives were free of the conclusions found in Roe's texts that procuresses enjoyed a professional advantage over their male counterparts as a result of the "sisterhood" they shared with their prey. See Louise De Koven Bowen, The Road to Destruction Made Easy in Chicago (Chicago: Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1916); Louise De Koven Bowen, The Straight Girl on a Crooked Path: A True Story (Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1916); Louise De Koven Bowen, The Department Store Girl (Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1911). See also Amigh.

Challenging Gender Boundaries with Narratives of Sexual Danger

Women who sought to utilize the white-slavery narratives during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to expand their access to both the public sphere and public space faced an uphill battle.⁷⁴ As historians have argued, women's access to public space was particularly limited during the nineteenth century. Mary Ryan, for instance, asserts that the cartography of urban space during the latter half of the century was clearly gendered as male terrain. In this masculine mapping of the city, middle-class women were perceived as particularly endangered.⁷⁵ As Ryan also argues, however, the city contained "immense political possibility" and women were quick to recognize what Ryan calls the "potential for reading new meaning into the term *public*."⁷⁶ To do so, however, they had to both construct the urban spaces as safe for them and find a political or social justification for re-mapping the city according to their vision. Prostitution was a prominent justification by the late nineteenth century and one which allowed women to join vice patrols in the red-light districts, a role which had been constructed as dangerous even for male flauers.⁷⁷

⁷⁴For an analysis of the distinctions between the politically defined, suffrage oriented "public sphere" from public space, defined as locations within the city, see Mary Ryan, "Gender and Public Access: Women's Politics in Nineteenth-Century America," in Habermas and the Public Sphere, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992): 259-288 and Ryan, Women. For an analysis which argues that women needed access to autonomous public space to create an activist feminist movement see Ryan, Women, 92-94.

⁷⁵Ryan, Women, 68. As Ryan notes, these narratives tended to portray both middle-class men and women as vulnerable to a host of different villains, including working-class females, who were portrayed as a particular danger to the male flauers whose investigations were the cornerstone of the urban, male mapping of the city. As we have seen, middle-class women's white-slavery narratives flipped this imaginary mapping on its head, asserted that men were the danger, working-class females were the endangered, and middle-class women were their saviors. See Ryan, Women, 64-82.

⁷⁶Ibid., 175.

⁷⁷Ibid., 120-127. For an insightful analysis of the problems middle-class women in Britain

The "discovery" of the traffic in girls helped transform this narrow entrance into public life into an avenue through which a procession of women traveled in search of new public and professional opportunities. It was an effective strategy which allowed urban, middle-class women to take on new public roles as "rescuers" of the white slaves, investigators, and immigration inspectors, traveler's aid matrons and police women.⁷⁸ For the most part the middle-class women who were able to take advantage of these new opportunities, particularly those which involved an official job with the state or federal government, were white Christians or Jewish women. Middle-class, African-American women did, however, join in the effort to protect young girls from procurers and, thereby, justified an expanded public role for themselves. Although their reasons for entering the crusade varied, it was a diverse group of middle-class women who sought to turn these narratives of sexual danger into tools of empowerment.

Women in the crusade against the traffic in girls in the nineteenth century found their first path to empowerment through the initiation of investigations into both "yellow slavery" on the West coast and "white slavery" in the midwest. As we have seen, nineteenth-century women activists like Donaldina Cameron and Kate Bushnell assumed the mantels of "rescuer" and "investigator" in the crusade against the traffic in girls in ways which justified their incursions into previously male-defined public and political arenas.⁷⁹ Cameron and Bushnell were quickly joined by other groups of women who sought to turn

had in undertaking the role of urban flauers, in large part due to the ways in which male flauers conveyed the "otherness" of the city through the spectacle of the "fallen woman," and the inventive ways in which women sought to carve out roles for themselves as urban, female spectators see Deborah Nord, Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation and the City (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

⁷⁸Women also expanded their public roles through their participation in the purity and vigilance associations, law and order leagues, vice commissions, and Committees of 14 or 15 which sprang up in urban areas as a response to the perceived threat.

⁷⁹For an analysis of the ways in which these women used the narratives surrounding "yellow slavery" and "white slavery" to claim greater access to public spaces, the judicial system, and the state legislature see chapter one.

themselves into erstwhile "rescuers" of vulnerable girls by forming, and joining, a host of new female organizations designed to snatch young girls out of the hands of the traffickers.

Nineteenth-century reformers also formulated narratives which highlighted the potential of women missionaries to act as rescuers of girls on the brink of being snared by white slavers. For instance, a story which appeared in The Philanthropist in 1891 detailed the rescue of a young girl from the waiting hands of male procurers. The girl's savior, a female missionary, just happened to be in the ladies waiting room of a depot where the young girl, clearly alone and confused, was anxiously awaiting her aunt. White slavers, sensing her plight, were pacing outside when the missionary with the King's Daughters appeared. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the woman was able to spirit the girl out of the depot and place her safely in the arms of a female matron who watched over her at the police station until her uncle arrived the next day.⁸⁰ The moral of the story, that white slavers were preying on young girls in depots and only women could stop them, was not lost on women reformers who, apparently unwilling to rely on the happenstance encounter of a vulnerable girl and a capable rescuer, began organizing themselves into Travelers' Aid Societies to assure that women guardians of girlish virtue were always on call.

The first Travelers' Aid Society was founded in Chicago in 1888 in response to concerns over white slavery but the popularity of the organizations, which were often affiliated with the YWCA, and the spread of the discourse on the traffic in girls soon spread the Societies throughout the country.⁸¹ The Societies stationed women wearing badges which identified them as members of the "Travelers' Aid" in the depots and on

⁸⁰"Six Hours in a Ferry-House," The Philanthropist 6, no. 3 (March 1891), 1-2.

⁸¹Grace Kimble, Social Work with Travelers and Transients: A Study of Travelers Aid Work in the United States (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935), 12-18 and the introduction to the Travelers' Aid Society of Chicago Papers.

docks where large numbers of young girls traveled to warn them about the dangers of white slavery and to assist them in finding their families or a safe place to stay.⁸²

Travelers' Aid was a particularly important means by which middle-class women claimed new public roles for themselves through recourse to narratives of sexual danger for it was one that was not only open to white Christian women across the country but was also an avenue through which Jewish and African-American women authorized their public presence in the urban scene.⁸³

Jewish groups, as we have seen, were particularly active in the white-slavery crusade in response to the allegations that Jewish procurers had both initiated the trade in the United States and ran the "syndicate" that perpetuated the evil.⁸⁴ It is, therefore, not surprising that Jewish women were early and active participants in travelers' aid

⁸²For a history of traveler's aid associations see Kimble. As Kimble's history of the traveler's aid movement makes clear, the push to professionalize the once voluntary, religiously-based traveler's aid movement led progressive women, like Kimble, to cast the initial concerns over white slavery, as misguided and indicative of the early, unprofessional, untrained nature of the early groups. Kimble's 1935 text fits with the arguments made by historians such as Kunzel regarding the process by which women's voluntary organizations became professionalized in the twentieth century.

⁸³For an interesting analysis of the ways in which the methods and agendas of female reform, including using the white-slavery narratives to claim new roles, spread from cities like Chicago all the way to Texas through the General Federation of Women's Clubs see Judith McArthur, Creating the New Woman: The Rise of Southern Women's Progressive Culture in Texas, 1893-1918 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.) McArthur's analysis demonstrates that women in the South were also using the white-slavery narratives and the issues surrounding vice to expand their public roles. For an example of the ways in which women suffragists used the anti-white-slavery activities of their "friends" with Travelers' Aid in their narratives see Curtis, 7-8. See also Mrs. L.P. Crane, "Travelers' Aid Society of California," in A Record of Twenty-Five Years of the California Federation of Women's Clubs 1900-1925 (California Federation of Women's Clubs, 1927), 159-160 and Joanne Meyerowitz, Women Adrift: Independent Wage Earners in Chicago, 1880-1930 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 45-54.

⁸⁴For a discussion of this and the Jewish activism that resulted see chapter three. For further discussion of this with regard to the activities of the National Council of Jewish Women, Charlotte Baum, Paula Hyman, and Sonya Michel, The Jewish Woman in America (New York: New American Library, 1975), 170-175.

activities.⁸⁵ They undertook these activities as a means to impact both the larger political sphere, by combating anti-Semitism, and their status within the Jewish community itself.⁸⁶ As historians have argued, Jewish women often met strong resistance to their efforts to carve out a larger public role for themselves within the Jewish philanthropic community. The necessity of battling white slavery proved an important means to overcome this resistance and the specter of white slavery was used by Jewish women reformers as "a sophisticated form of political blackmail" to secure money from male dominated Jewish organizations to fund their own work.⁸⁷ Part of this work involved securing a salaried matron who spoke Yiddish to meet the boats at Ellis Island and provide travelers' aid to unmarried girls who needed assistance.⁸⁸ In 1904, Sadie American, head of the New York section of the National Council of Jewish Women and an active crusader against white slavery, solicited the assistance of the Baron de Hirsch Fund to help subsidize a permanent position for a female matron who spoke Yiddish and who could, they hoped, help prevent

⁸⁵The majority of Travelers' Aid Societies remained affiliated with the YWCA into the 1920s in spite of a strong push to put the movement on a non-sectarian basis. Where the groups were non-sectarian, Jewish women participated in the activities. For a discussion of this see Kimble, 11-14.

⁸⁶For an analysis of the ways in which the activities of these Jewish women, like those of middle-class Christian women, aimed at giving them greater access to the public sphere see Beth Wenger, "Jewish Women of the Club: The Changing Public Role of Atlanta's Jewish Women, 1870-1930," American Jewish History 76, no. 3 (March 1987): 311-333. As Wenger and other scholars have noted the trajectory that different groups of Southern women followed was similar to that of their Northern counterparts, if somewhat slower, thanks in part to the ways in which the women of different regions came into contact with one another at events like the 1893 Columbian Exposition, were connected through women's clubs, and disseminated their programs for advancement through both literature and personal touring. See Wenger, McArthur, and Schulz.

⁸⁷Baum, et al... 170-179. For more on the philanthropic activities Jewish women undertook on behalf of working-class girls in other cities see Hyman L. Meites (ed.), History of Jews in Chicago (Chicago: Jewish Historical Society of Illinois, 1924).

⁸⁸These matrons also assisted women and children but their primary effort was aimed at unmarried girls. See "Statement of the Council of Jewish Women," Reports of the Immigration Commission Vol. 41, 38.

girls from being "misled into immoral lives."⁸⁹ The Council was also exceptionally active in their own right and, through their port and dock department, sought to meet every girl who came through Ellis Island and protect them from white slavers.⁹⁰ Between 1909-1911, a paid employee and a staff of volunteers offered assistance to over 19,000 girls.⁹¹

What began as one salaried employee on Ellis Island rapidly blossomed into a network of paid female agents and volunteers through the formation of the National Committee on Immigrant Aid by the National Council of Jewish Women. This Committee, which sought to protect unmarried girls on the docks and in their new homes, gave Jewish women in cities like New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Boston, the authority to claim both a prominent spot for themselves as both Jewish philanthropic workers and an even greater public presence on the cities docks and public streets. As salaried agents and volunteers, these women patrolled the major ports through which Jewish women entered the United States and passed out leaflets which warned the girls that they were the only strangers who could be trusted. They also developed a systematic program of visiting which mobilized a host of female agents to take to the streets to track down, and investigate, the living conditions of the girls, to assure that they were not in any kind of moral danger.⁹²

African-American women, similarly, battled the traffic in girls as a means to combat racist stereotypes, to create new public roles for themselves, and to gain a greater

⁸⁹Mildred Welt, "The National Council of Jewish Women," American Jewish Yearbook 46 (1944/1945), 66; Sadie American quoted in Baum, et al..., 165-166.

⁹⁰Welt, 65-66. Welt also states that the impetus to undertake the work originated with a request from the U.S. Government in 1903.

⁹¹Baum, et al..., 166. For a more detailed description of the work undertaken see Baum, et al..., 166-170.

⁹² "Statement of the Council of Jewish Women," in U.S., Congress, Senate, Reports of the Immigration Commission, Statement and Recommendations Submitted by Societies (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 41, 31-51.

voice in African-American religious institutions, which some historians have termed an alternative "public sphere."⁹³ While their efforts, in many ways, paralleled the attempts of Jewish women to empower themselves both with regard to the larger society and the Jewish community, there were also important differences between the African-American activists' push to protect young girls from organized sexual exploitation and white and Jewish activists' efforts to end the "white-slave trade," not the least of which was the fact that African-American activists never used the term "white slavery." There were also more substantive difference in the methods and goals of the reformers. As Mary Odem has argued, African-American women "defined sexual danger differently than white moral reformers" because they recognized that African-American women and girls were not only sexually vulnerable but also lacked the power to protect themselves and each other. As a result, they proposed different solutions than white reformers and steered clear of the efforts to increase the penalties for male sex offenders fearing that they would be used to target African-American men while doing nothing to protect African-American women.⁹⁴ African-American women's efforts to channel the crusade against the traffic in girls toward protecting African-American migrants from the south supports Odem's conclusions. Mary Church Terrell, for instance, argued in front of the predominantly white social purity reformers gathered in La Crosse Wisconsin in 1906, that the courts were exonerating white men who were preying on African-American girls and were doing nothing to stop the trafficking in African-American girls which, she imagined, was being carried on by

⁹³Evelyn Higginbotham, Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 7-13.

Higginbotham's analysis is particularly important for her expansive assessment of the term "public sphere," which argues that, for African-Americans, the church constituted an important "counter-public sphere," reveals the ways in which women of different races were seeking power and access to different realms, or different "publics," when they utilized narratives of sexual danger.

⁹⁴Odem, 27-28. For further discussion of the activities African-American women reformers engaged in to "prevent young women from going astray" see Odem, 118-121.

employment agencies who were luring the girls and then turning them over to brothels where they were forced into a life of prostitution.⁹⁵

African-American women reformers were also motivated by a different set of concerns than white reformers. As historians have argued, the organized activism of middle-class African-American women in the early twentieth century was propelled, in part, by the desire to combat racist stereotypes which portrayed all African-American women as immoral and sexually promiscuous.⁹⁶ This, obviously, put a premium on preventing African-American girls from becoming prostitutes even as it made it difficult for middle-class African-American women to discuss sexual issues in public.⁹⁷ The stereotype which associated African-American women in public with prostitutes also made it doubly difficult for middle-class African-American women to carve out a public space in

⁹⁵Mary Church Terrell, "The La Crosse Conference," The Philanthropist 20, no. 4 (January 1906), 2.

⁹⁶For an insightful analysis of the founding of the National Association of Colored Women and the increase of African-American women's activism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century see Stephanie Shaw, "Black Club Women and the Creation of the National Association of Colored Women," in We Specialize in the Wholly Impossible, eds. Darlene Clark Hine, Wilma King, Linda Reed (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1995): 433-447. As Shaw's analysis indicates, white racism, and the prevailing stereotype of African-American women as immoral is an inadequate explanation for the increased activism for it fails to take into account the ways in which the founding of this national organization was merely a continuation of African-American traditions of self-determination, self-improvement and community development. As the writings of the clubwomen themselves indicate, however, the claims by some contemporary writers that all African-American women were prostitutes was a factor in pushing African-American women to step up their activism. See A History of the Club Movement Among the Colored Women of the United States of America (National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, 1902).

⁹⁷For thoughtful analyses of the ways in which negative sexual stereotypes about African-American women have led them to mask their own sexuality and avoid sexual issues in public discussion see Darlene Clark Hine, "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West: Preliminary Thoughts on the Culture of Dissemblance," in Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Reader in U.S. Women's History, eds. Ellen Carol DuBois and Vicki L. Ruis (New York: Routledge, 1990): 292-297 and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," in We Specialize: 3-24.

which they, as "respectable" women, could operate without being perceived as "loose" public women.⁹⁸ In spite of their reticence, and the danger involved, in speaking about sexual matters publicly and taking to the streets, middle-class African-American women believed that young, African-American girls who were frequently traveling from distant Southern cities into the North in search of work faced a myriad of dangers one of which, as Terrell's comments indicate, was that they were being diverted to brothels by unscrupulous procurers and employment agencies. African-American women entered the public debates over white slavery in an effort to broaden the movement to include, in practice rather than theory, a concern over the special dangers facing African-American girls.⁹⁹

The earliest efforts to establish Traveler's Aid societies among the African-American community were undertaken by African-American reformer Victoria Earle Matthews, in conjunction with her White Rose Mission in New York in the late nineteenth century. According to the history written by a former President of the Mission, Matthews became interested in forming a Travelers' Aid society for African-American girls after she was asked to meet a girl being sent from Florida to New York. In spite of her best efforts to find the girl, who had a red ribbon pinned to her coat, she had disappeared. When she finally did show up at the wharf three days later, she had a "sad and bitter" tale to relate which convinced Matthews that she had fallen into the hands of one of the numbers of "unprincipled men" who preyed on young girls arriving to the city. In response to this

⁹⁸For a discussion of the "politics of respectability" in African-American women's activism and the ways in which African-American women's claims to respectability were, in themselves, subversive see Higginbotham, *Righteous*, 185-229.

⁹⁹For African-American women's efforts to push white reformers to consider the trafficking in African-American girls see Terrell and *Friends' Intelligence Supplement* (October 10, 1908), 74 in Ernest Bell Archives, Box 6, folder 6-7. For an argument of one white woman reformer who asserted that "there is a proportionally larger black slave than white slave traffic," see Mary Ovington, *Half a Man: The Status of the Negro in New York* (1911; repr., New York: Hill and Wang, 1969), 85.

experience, and her concern that employment agencies in New York were recruiting young African-American girls in Southern cities to work in brothels, Matthews formed a band of women who took turns meeting the boats and assisting African-American girls.¹⁰⁰

These efforts, which included keeping agents at piers to protect African-American girls from any dangers they may meet were expanded in the twentieth century, thanks in part to growing concern that African-American girls were being targeted by procurers posing as employment bureaus. Frances Kellor, a white female reformer whose investigations into employment bureaus and their connection to the traffic in girls had convinced her that the bureaus posed a special problem for African-American girls, was at the forefront of the movement to expand the Travelers' Aid services being offered to these girls. In 1905, Kellor began calling for preventive measures to protect the "helpless," inexperienced African-American girls whom, she alleged, were being brought north in considerable numbers by white agents on the assurance that they would find good jobs as domestic servants only to find themselves trapped into contracts with unscrupulous agencies who sent them to brothels. Among the measures Kellor called for was the placement of a "practical sympathetic woman" to meet these girls at the docks when they arrived.¹⁰¹ Before the end of the year, Kellor herself had helped form protective associations for African-American women in Philadelphia and New York.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰Mary L. Lewis, "The White Rose Industrial Association," The Messenger (April 1925), 158; "The White Rose Mission," Charities (October 28, 1899), 6-7. See also the paper Matthews read at the Woman's Conference in New York in 1898 on the "Dangers Confronting Southern Girls in the North" published in Southern Workman 27 (September 1898): 173-174.

¹⁰¹Frances Kellor, "Southern Colored Girls in the North: The Problem of their Protection," Charities (March 18, 1905). White women reformers were still expressing concerns over the dangers of employment agencies to African-American girls in the 1920s. See Grace Abbott, The Immigrant and the Community (New York: The Century Co., 1921), 30-31.

¹⁰²Frances Kellor, "Assisted Emigration from the South: The Women," Charities (October 7, 1905), 13-14.

The work was from the start interracial, and utilized African-American female agents to meet the girls at the docks. During a five month period in 1905, the Philadelphia branch of the organization and their African-American dock matrons met and assisted more than 450 African-American women and girls who were traveling to the city from states throughout the south. The formation of a "Travelers' Aid Committee" in the New York branch and the "successful" efforts of the African-American women in Philadelphia led to the propagation of the work throughout the country and the formation of the National League for the Protection of Colored Women, which stationed women agents to help the girls in cities located along the major routes of travel.¹⁰³ Travelers' Aid also provided African-American women with an opportunity to construct themselves as heroic, public rescuers of young girls and occasionally led to paid career opportunities with private organizations.¹⁰⁴ African-American women's activism on behalf of young African-American girls remained, however, a private affair. As Odem argues, African-American women reformers were unable to parlay their "preventive-protective work" into professional opportunities with governmental institutions, a path that white women were pursuing with greater success.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³Ibid., 14; Higginbotham, Righteous, 180-181; Arvarh E. Strickland, History of the Chicago Urban League (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 10. As Strickland notes, the Travelers' Aid work was continued by the Urban League.

¹⁰⁴E.M. Rhodes, "The Protection of Girls Who Travel: A National Movement," The Colored American Magazine 13, no. 2 (August 1907): 114-115; Strickland, 12, 17. African-American women also apparently served as matrons on excursion boats although reformers complained that they lacked the authority to be effective. See Belle Linder Israels, "The Way of the Girl," The Survey (July 3, 1909), 492.

¹⁰⁵Odem, 119-121. See also Linda Gordon, "Black and White Visions of Welfare," in We Specialize: 449-485. While Gordon's assessments of the differences between the goals pursued by white and African-American women reformers is, in many ways, insightful, her assessments of the differences between the two groups with regard to protecting girls from sexual exploitation is problematic. In particular, her argument that white women focused on prostitution, not rape, during these years fails to consider the ways in which white women's antiprostitution narratives on white slavery merged rape and prostitution by portraying rape as part of the girl's forceful initiation into a life of prostitution. See

The efforts of middle-class white women to turn the "protection" of young female travelers into official positions with the government began in the years prior to the outbreak of the moral panic. Travelers' Aid was, in fact, one of the earliest paths through which white, Christian women sought to turn their search for white slaves into government jobs. The W.C.T.U., already aware of the ways in which concerns over white slavery could be harnessed to the push for expanded opportunities for women in the public realm, was at the forefront of this effort. In 1903 Mrs. Margaret Dye Ellis, W.C.T.U.'s superintendent of the department of legislation, petitioned President Roosevelt, requesting that he appoint women immigrant inspectors to be stationed at Ellis Island and give them the authority to board the incoming ships to investigate whether there were any women in the first and second class cabins who had been lured to America by the "Vice Syndicate."¹⁰⁶ The appointments were necessary, Ellis argued, due to the fact that the current policy of placing female matrons only in steerage left the women in the first and second class cabins unprotected.¹⁰⁷ She also stressed that Traveler's Aid Societies, the only existing protection available to these passengers, were incapable of protecting the girls as they had "no official authority from the government--no badge to show as the woman inspectors have" and had no powers of detention.¹⁰⁸ Roosevelt, convinced by Ellis' arguments and apparently in agreement with her assessment that civil service examinations were unnecessary to find qualified women, agreed to appoint five women inspectors for an "experimental" 90 day trial.¹⁰⁹

Gordon, "Black and White," 470-471.

¹⁰⁶Francesco Cordasco and Thomas Monroe Pitkin, The White Slave Trade and the Immigrants: A Chapter in American Social History (Detroit: Blaine Ethridge Books, 1981), 3-4.

¹⁰⁷"Women Immigrant Inspectors," The Philanthropist 18, no. 1 (April 1903), 1; "The Women Inspectors Again," The Philanthropist 18, no. 2 (July 1903), 1.

¹⁰⁸"Women Immigrant Inspectors," 2.

¹⁰⁹Ellis had handpicked five settlement workers from New York to take the posts. Two of these appointments were, however, rejected by Immigration Commissioner Williams who substituted his own candidates. See Cordasco, 3-4.

The experiment was, however, not without its critics and, when the ninety days were up, the women were unceremoniously released from service amid rumors that they had "proven themselves failures." Ellis was quick to deny these charges, arguing that the women had conducted themselves in a "businesslike and womanly way" and had saved a number of girls from falling into the hands of men who were planning to force them into lives of prostitution. In addition, Ellis believed that they had "overcome much of the prejudice of the male inspectors, physicians and officials" in general.¹¹⁰ Their detractors, however, told a different story and alleged that they were not providing any real service to the Bureau and had, in fact, proven themselves incapable of determining which women needed their "protection." In addition, the male inspectors and the Commissioner of Immigration at Ellis Island claimed that the women were unable to meet the physical demands of the job and could not climb the ladders to reach the decks even though they were wearing bloomers and long skirts, specially designed by Margaret Ellis.¹¹¹ Their debut certainly re-inforced these perceptions as their first attempt to locate a vulnerable young woman focused on a woman who claimed she was married and who became hysterical when questioned by the female inspectors.¹¹²

In spite of this faulty start, proponents of the women inspectors realized that the resistance to them was based in large part on "the feeling that women ought not to occupy public positions, and that service of the sort they render should be monopolized by men" and Margaret Ellis and a coterie of white-slavery activists kept pressuring the government to re-instate the women. Their arguments, that women were better equipped to detect female immigrants in need of assistance and their stress on the fact that the legislation which provided for the inspectors did not require that they be male, convinced the

¹¹⁰"Women Immigrant Inspectors," 1-2.

¹¹¹"The Latest About the Women Inspectors," *The Philanthropist* 18, no. 3 (October 1903), 1; Cordasco, 3.

¹¹²Cordasco, 4.

government to back down, a little. They agreed to appoint "boarding matrons" at Ellis Island. These women, however, were only authorized to act as assistants to the male inspectors and were to be chosen for their ability to "appreciate the position they occupy and not presume upon the authority vested in them."¹¹³ It was not exactly the kind of professional opportunity that Ellis had in mind when she proposed the appointments to Roosevelt.

The onset of the panic over white-slavery less than four years later, however, offered a new, more promising, opportunity for women to push their way into positions as immigration inspectors. By 1906, immigration officials were beginning to class white slavery as one of their most pressing problems, thanks in part to the action of female white-slavery activists who pressured the government to take a more determined stand against the traffic.¹¹⁴ In response, the Immigration Bureau undertook a massive effort to eliminate the white-slave traffic on the eastern seaboard. The effort was concentrated in two areas, both of which opened up new opportunities for women. First, they began a series of investigations which frequently involved employing women to act as undercover agents. Second, they began to experiment with new ways to detect potential white slaves on the incoming ships, which led them to take another look at the efficacy of the experiment tried three years earlier with the employment of female immigration inspectors.

In 1907, the new Immigration Commissioner of Ellis Island recommended that Miss Helen Bullis be appointed as a full-fledged immigration inspector in connection with

¹¹³"Women Immigrant Inspectors," 2; "A Conference of Workers," The Philanthropist 18, no. 1 (April 1903), 5; "The Women Inspectors Again," The Philanthropist 18, no. 2 (July 1903); Cordasco, 4-5.

¹¹⁴"Importing Vice Votaries," The Philanthropist 21, no. 2 (July 1906), 1; "Letter to Elihu Root from Kate Waller Barrett dated January 4, 1906," and "Letter from Robert Bacon to Kate Waller Barrett dated January 15, 1906," both in Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service: Series A: Subject Correspondence File, Part 5: Prostitution and "White Slavery," 1902-1933, Reel 1. Cordasco also alleges that the Immigration Bureau was feeling the pressure from other groups, including the Immigrant's Protective League under the leadership of Grace Abbott. See Cordasco, 18-19.

the effort to suppress the white-slave trade.¹¹⁵ Bullis was no stranger to the crusade against the traffic in girls. Instead, she was one of the five white-slavery activists who had, in 1907, founded the United States National Vigilance Committee, dedicated to exterminating the white-slavery evil and helped bring Alexander Coote, the founder of Britain's National Vigilance Committee, to the United States to warn the government and the country about white slavery.¹¹⁶ Given her background and her mandate, it is not surprising that she was remarkably successful in locating trafficked women among the throngs of female immigrants entering the country through Ellis Island and in New York's Tenderloin district.

By 1908 Bullis was reporting that she had secured evidence that New York was home to a clearing house for the white-slave traffic, an allegation supported by the reports she sent to her boss, Immigration Commissioner Watchorn. These reports, filled with details on specific women whom, Bullis believed, were being imported by procurers and information on the specific locations of disorderly resorts in the Tenderloin area, indicate that Bullis' new job empowered her to act both as an official agent of the government on the docks and as an undercover operative in New York's vice district.¹¹⁷ She still, however, faced the challenge of convincing others that her pursuit was a worthy one. Watchorn, for his part, appears to have been convinced that she was, in fact, locating white slaves but he urged her to find more conclusive proof, cautioning her that her evidence on the "the White Slave Traffic" would not stand up in court.¹¹⁸ He also selected Bullis to be one of four inspectors, and the only woman, to head up a new investigation in

¹¹⁵Cordasco, 19; William Coote, A Vision and Its Fulfillment (London: The National Vigilance Association, 1910), 119.

¹¹⁶Coote, 118-119.

¹¹⁷"Notes on the White Slave Traffic," The Philanthropist 22, no. 4 (January 1908); "Letters from Helen Bullis to U.S. Commissioner of Immigration Watchorn," in Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Reel 1 and Reel 4.

¹¹⁸"Letter from Watchorn to Bullis dated November 19, 1907," in Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Reel 1.

1909 being undertaken by the Immigration Commission into the "White Slave Traffic" in New York City, noting that she and the other inspectors were the only ones that he felt had the experience and qualifications to obtain the desired results.¹¹⁹

Bullis' early involvement in the white-slavery crusade and her ability to "locate" white slaves served her well and helped open up the Immigration Bureau to other white middle-class women who sought careers there.¹²⁰ To be sure, few women reached the levels of authority that Bullis achieved and became official special agents for the Immigration Bureau but those who did manage to achieve illustrious positions with the Immigration Service often did so by virtue of their expertise on the issue of white slavery.¹²¹ Overall, however, the path into service with the Immigration Bureau remained a limited one. In spite of the fact that Bullis and a few other women used their prior white-

¹¹⁹"Letter from Watchorn to Commissioner-General of Immigration Keefe dated March 22, 1909," in Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Reel 1.

¹²⁰On the importance placed on the ability of immigrant matrons to "find" the white slaves see the conclusions of the Immigration Commission whose recommendations included hiring women specifically for their ability to detect procurers and prostitutes by sight in Report of the Immigration Commission. Importation, 90.

¹²¹Examples of women who were able to parlay their knowledge of white-slavery into more illustrious official positions with the Immigration service include Kate Waller Barrett who was appointed "Special Agent of the Department of Labor in connection with the Immigration Service" and given the task of protecting "alien female employees" coming to the United States in conjunction with the Panama-Pacific Exposition in 1915 from being procured into a life of prostitution and Frances Kellor whose investigations into white slavery and immigration led to a series of official jobs, including the head of the State Commission on Immigration in New York and the head of the Bureau of Industries and Immigration. See "Letter from Commissioner-General Camminetti to Mr. Moore dated February 26, 1915," in Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Reel 7 and Martha Bensley Bruere, "Frances Keller, Chief Investigator," Life and Labor 1, no. 2 (February 1911), 44-45. For the official records of Barrett's tenure with the Immigration Service, including her reports to them and letters acknowledging her position and service see Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Reel 7. For an analysis of her work with the Immigration Service see Katherine Aiken, Harnessing the Power of Motherhood: The National Florence Crittenton Mission, 1883-1925 (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1998). Kellor's views on white-slavery and government response to them can be found in the Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Reel 1.

slavery activism to gain access both to public spaces and governmental jobs which had previously been off limits to women, the majority remained ostracized as "matrons." As Grace Abbot, head of the Immigrant's Protective League, argued in her plea for the appointment of women inspectors, matrons were akin to a cross between a "housekeeper and a chaperon" and were unable to make any real impression on the Service which remained, as late as 1917, almost entirely in the hands of men.¹²² When Bullis, who had been in the constant employ of the immigration service since 1907, was reassigned in 1914 she took on the role of a "boarding matron," charged with supervising foreign prostitutes who were facing deportation. For Bullis it was undoubtedly a step down from the early days but for the women who were appointed with Bullis to be "boarding matrons" in states as far flung as Texas, Maryland, New Jersey, Illinois, and California it was a new opportunity to assume a public role as a government employee.¹²³

The onset of the panic over white-slavery also opened up new career options for white women as detectives and investigators.¹²⁴ The image of the middle-class "new

¹²²Abbott, 77-78. Abbott's work with the Immigrant's Protective League helped expand the federal machinery of immigrant "protection" into cities like Chicago and argued for the employment of female "assistant inspectors" to help protect young girls who, the League perceived, were facing moral exploitation at the hands of men out to procure them for the "white-slave trade." This expansion of federal authority helped create more official jobs for women with the Bureau in other inland cities as inspectors on trains and in depots. Abbott, as Director of the Immigrant's Protective League and, later as the executive secretary of Massachusetts' Commission of Immigration is another example of how women utilized concerns over immigration and white slavery to create authoritative public roles for themselves both in and out of government. See Abbott, 21-22; "Statement of the Immigrants' Protective League," Reports of the Immigration Commission. Statements, 41, 53-78; "Fourth Annual Report of the Immigrants' Protective League for the Year Ending January 1st, 1913" and "Immigrants' Protective League: Annual Report, 1911-1912," both in the Immigrants' Protective League Papers, Supplement II, Box 4, file 59A; Beard, 197.

¹²³"Letter No. 53678/155 dated October 7 + 8, 1914," Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Reel 7.

¹²⁴There is some evidence that "rescued" white slaves were also finding employment in the crusade against the traffic. Stanley Finch, for instance, claimed that twenty "victims" had been given paid employment doing clerical and office work for the white-slavery

woman" as an intrepid investigator who cruised the city's streets in search of white slaves and their procurers was not, of course, new. Thanks to the well publicized exploits of Donaldina Cameron, the woman "rescuer" was already a well known component of the white-slavery discourse which continued to be propagated by white-slavery reformers during the panic years.¹²⁵ Virginia Brooks, an active white-slavery crusader in Illinois, portrayed herself as one such investigative rescuer in her autobiography titled My Battle With Vice, a book which tracked Brooks' public pursuit of a young girl named Mary Holden, whose mother, Brooks claimed, had written her for help in locating her daughter. This text, which followed Brooks as she went undercover in a range of jobs, including as a waitress, a department store clerk and an office worker, claimed to reveal how different types of girls were snared into prostitution. As the publisher's introduction stated, Brooks' expose of these dangers rested on her ability to follow the girls who had "fallen into those precarious crags and ledges down the mountainside that delay the final plunge into the abyss." The sensationalism of Brooks' own narrative was similarly drawn and portrayed her as a heroic rescuer who risked her own freedom to save Mary Holden from a brothel and helped reunite her with her mother. While the claim of Brooks' publishers that she was fighting the forces of vice "singlehanded" was, no doubt, overstated, there is no question that they were correct when they stated that her text represented the "viewpoint of the new woman," who saw, in the white-slavery panic, an opportunity to flex their public muscles and portray themselves in daring new public roles as detectives and undercover investigators.¹²⁶

Virginia Brooks' autobiography was not the only white-slavery narrative which spotlighted the daring exploits of the "new woman" who went in pursuit of white slavers during the twentieth century. Authors of popular white-slavery tales also portrayed the

reformers. See "The White-Slave Decision," The Literary Digest 46 (March 8, 1913), 501.

¹²⁵For details on these exploits Donaldina Cameron see chapter one.

¹²⁶Brooks, 8.

crusade against procurers as an avenue through which women were assuming new roles. H.M. Lytle's text, Tragedies of the White Slave, for instance, told the tale of a young female detective employed to lure a procurer out in the open.¹²⁷ Movies, likewise, cashed in on the idea that women detectives were pursuing dangerous white slavers. D.W. Griffith's 1908 white-slavery film "The Fatal Hour," for instance, featured a female investigator chasing an evil, Asian trafficker.¹²⁸ Other movies also cast women as saviors of white slaves. The movie "Traffic in Souls," which portrayed male white-slavery reformers as procurers in disguise, credited a quick thinking young woman with rescuing her own sister in a narrative twist which, as Janet Staiger has argued, crafted an image of the "new woman" as an intelligent, thinking, public woman who could take care of herself, and others, on the city's streets.¹²⁹

The construction of middle-class "new women" as intrepid white-slavery investigators in reformer's autobiographies and movies was no mere fiction. It was, instead, reflective of the changes being wrought in women's opportunities in the wake of the white-slavery panic. The onset on the moral panic initiated a round of new investigations by private organizations and the state and federal governments who hired women detectives to work undercover as part of their inquiries. Private organizations typically hired women investigators to infiltrate areas where they feared girls were in danger of being abducted by white slavers, including dance halls, excursion boats, and department stores.¹³⁰ In many instances these women faced tough conditions in their pursuit of information on how girls were being trapped by traffickers. An undercover agent named "Miss B" who was sent to conduct an undercover investigation into a beach

¹²⁷Lytle, 35-38.

¹²⁸Grittner, 108.

¹²⁹Staiger, 138-143.

¹³⁰See Bowen, The Department Store Girl, Bowen, The Road to Destruction, Beard, 140, Regan, 116, "Making Model Dance Halls a Paying Proposition," New York Times, 10 November 1912, 11.

in Wilmette by the Juvenile Protective Agency was repeatedly endangered by young men apparently convinced that she was, in fact, just another girl hanging out on the beach. She reported that she was once forced to defend herself against six men and, in another instance, spent 45 minutes fighting off a man who was attempting to rape her. Needless to say, she determined that girls on the beach were defenseless and vulnerable to degenerate, dangerous young men.¹³¹ Other female investigators, including those hired by the Chicago South Side Club to investigate how saloons led women into a life of shame were similarly accosted while working undercover.¹³² In spite of these dangers, women detectives continued to be valuable assets to the white-slavery investigations in large part because it was believed that they could more readily gain the sympathies of the girls and infiltrate the gangs without arousing suspicion.¹³³

In addition to working with private organizations, women also found employment as undercover detectives with a variety of different governmental inquiries undertaken during the white-slavery panic years on the municipal, state, and federal levels. The Immigrant Commission, formed in 1907 to research various phases of immigration into the United States, hired a number of women investigators during their inquiry into the relationship between immigration and white slavery. The Commission's investigation into immigrant aid societies, for instance, employed eleven women (and seven men) to assist in their investigation into whether or not immigrant homes and aid societies were knowingly sending immigrant girls to brothels to work.¹³⁴ The women, some of whom went undercover as brothel owners, were from various backgrounds and less than half had

¹³¹"Letter to the J.P.A. dated July 10, 1912" in J.P.A. Papers, File #16.

¹³²Chicago South Side Club, Survey of the Conditions Demoralizing to Women and Girls in the Saloons of Chicago (1913).

¹³³Beard, 140; "Making Model Dance Halls," 10 November 1912.

¹³⁴These investigations, which found that the immigrant aid societies were sending girls to brothels resulted in the suspension of four aid societies from Ellis Island. See Report of the Immigration Commission. Importation, 135 and 140-143.

previous investigative experience. One, hired to infiltrate and live in an immigrant home for the duration of the inquiry was a young married woman of foreign birth who spoke four languages. Her previous jobs included working as a domestic, a waitress, and a bookkeeper. Five of the other women hired also had no prior experience in investigations. One was a professional musician, another a student at a school of philanthropy, a third was a professional actress and two others were settlement workers.¹³⁵ The Commission also employed women agents in their investigation into the "importation and harboring of women for immoral purposes." Some came in for special commendation due to the dangerous nature of their assignment. The official report noted that one woman was attacked, beaten and escaped being murdered only with the "greatest difficulty." In spite of this she was "cheerfully" back to work the next day in a new location.¹³⁶

The federal investigations initiated by the U.S. Department of Justice following the passage of the Mann Act also employed a number of women detectives who were typically brought on board to pose as procuresses. One woman was, for instance, hired by the Justice Department to track two "notorious" white slavers who were accused of transporting girls from New York to Hartford, CT. Her account of her activities indicates that her job, to pose as a madam interested in buying a brothel, required that she live and travel undercover with the traffickers for some time, in order to convince them that she was actually a madam.¹³⁷ The Hartford Vice Commission was apparently so impressed by what could be accomplished by undercover female agents that they hired one of their own to impersonate a "common prostitute" and live "on terms of intimacy and equality" with

¹³⁵Report of the Immigration Commission. Importation, 133-134. For information on the work of these female agents which appeared in the popular press and white-slavery tracts see "Immigrant Girls Sold for \$1 Each," Chicago Tribune, 12 August 1909, 1; "Immigrant Homes Under Probe Here," Chicago Tribune, 13 August 1909, 3; Regan, 51-52.

¹³⁶Ibid., 59. See also "Doomed to Death by White Slavers," Atlanta Constitution 28 October 1912, which related the story of a female agent working undercover who was murdered by white slavers.

¹³⁷Report of the Hartford Vice Commission, 22-26.

Hartford's harlots in order to obtain their personal histories for the city's investigation of the white-slave trade. She was reportedly highly successful and won the confidence of the girls, whom she took to her room, accompanied to the theater, and treated at cafes. None of the prostitutes apparently ever suspected that she was anything other than a friend and colleague. This is not surprising, given the fact that she came highly recommended and had been working as a detective for eleven years. Her resume, which included stints with the United States Government and investigations undertaken by vice commissions and other organizations, is demonstrative of the variety of jobs the concern over white slavery and prostitution opened up for these middle-class "new women."¹³⁸

Women detectives also played a prominent role in the investigations undertaken by the Rockefeller Grand Jury in New York in 1910. It was, in fact, two female college graduates who reportedly gathered the "conclusive" evidence that New York was a distribution center for white slaves. In order to set up the purchase of girls from New York, these two women went undercover in Seattle and Juneau, Alaska and pretended they were interested in obtaining New York girls for disorderly resorts. Working slowly to establish themselves as regulars in the underworld, they were eventually able to obtain letters of reference from local proprietors of the western brothels which they took with them to New York. Once in New York they were able to purchase, according to press reports, four white slaves. In keeping with the portrayals of white slaves as very young girls, reports drawn from the accounts of these female investigators stressed that one of the girls they had arranged to purchase was a mere 11 years old, another reportedly cried

¹³⁸Ibid., 44, 69. For other vice commissions, official and unofficial, that hired women to work undercover see Report of the Portland Vice Commission to the Mayor and City Council of the City of Portland, Oregon, January 1913 (Portland: Henry Russell Ralbot, 1913) and Howard Kelly, The Double Shame of Baltimore: Her Unpublished Vice Report and Her Utter Indifference (1916). For additional sources which discussed the use of undercover women in white-slavery investigations see "Astonishing White Slave Traffic in Boston, Mass," Word and Work 35, no. 8 (August 1913), 229 in Bell Archives, Box 7, file 7-4.

when her doll was lost during the transfer and a third was upset over the loss of a teddy bear.¹³⁹ If, however, the narratives which emerged from these investigations reproduced the construction of the trafficked females as young girls, it was the belief that women were acting as procuresses, something the female authored white-slavery narratives frequently denied, which facilitated the employment of female detectives to act as white slavers in these official investigations.¹⁴⁰ Women activists in the white-slavery crusade who had their eye on the expansion of women's public authority and professional opportunities certainly did not speak out against the practice of employing women detectives to work undercover as procuresses. They did, however, continue to focus their energy on having women appointed to official positions that were both more permanent and more in keeping with the idea that women were the natural protectors, not procurers, of young girls. Foremost among these campaigns was their push to have women police officers appointed in cities across the country.

Women had been working with police departments as police matrons, guarding and caring for women prisoners, since prior to the Civil War but it was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that a systematic, widespread crusade to open up this profession to women was undertaken by women's groups and social purity crusaders. These groups, led by the W.C.T.U., were successful in their efforts to get women appointed to work within the jails, a feat they accomplished by deploying narratives of sexual danger which imagined that they were preventing "the ruin of many a helpless young girl and the moral degradation of not a few men of the police force."¹⁴¹ In some instances these police matrons took their "protection" to the street and carved out a very public presence for themselves, monitoring dance halls, hotels, and theaters, in ways which

¹³⁹"To Emancipate New York's White Slaves," Literary Digest 40 (May 14, 1910), 960-961.

¹⁴⁰For other instances where women went undercover as vice operatives for private investigations see Brooks and Brief in Support of Citizens' Memorial (St. Louis: 1917).

¹⁴¹"Police Matrons," The Philanthropist 6, no. 1 (January 1891), 5.

would prefigure the activities of policewomen but most police matrons did their policing within the jail walls.¹⁴² While this was adequate protection for girls facing the sexual threat of immoral jailers, the concern that innocent girls were also vulnerable to sexual predators, in the form of white slavers, on the city's streets called for a different solution. In the minds of women activists, it called for the appointment of policewomen.

Women's organizations which were involved in the crusade against white slavery, including Travelers' Aid Societies, the Florence Crittenton Missions, the W.C.T.U., and the Juvenile Protective Association, were at the forefront of the effort to secure positions for policewomen, a drive which historians have argued "greatly expanded women's roles in public affairs and public employment."¹⁴³ Their strategy for achieving these appointments was to focus on the dangers facing young girls in urban areas and to stress that they were in need of the kind of female guidance and police protection that policewomen alone could provide. They were remarkably successful, particularly in areas like Chicago where the white-slavery panic had put pressure on the public authorities to take extraordinary steps to "protect" vulnerable young girls.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²For a thorough historical analysis of the police matron movement see Dorothy Moses Schulz, From Social Worker to Crimefighter: Women in United States Municipal Policing (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1995), 9-20. See also Kerry Segrave, Policewomen: A History (Jefferson: McFarland and Co., 1995), 5-15; Chloe Owings, Women Police (New York: Frederick Hitchcock Publisher, 1925), 107-117; David J. Pivar, Purity Crusade: Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973), 100-103, 153-154; Berg, 213-215.

¹⁴³Schulz, note #2, 18.

¹⁴⁴The idea that women could, or should, work with the police force as officers or detectives was not a new one in the twentieth century but few women had actually been appointed to salaried positions by the time the white-slavery panic broke out in the first decade of the twentieth century. The rare exception, Mary Owens, had been working as a detective in Chicago since 1893, tracking down wife deserters and helping investigate cases which involved women. In 1906, an article highlighting her career appeared in the Chicago Tribune which noted that she was the only woman detective sergeant in the world and the only woman who reported for duty every morning at a Chicago police station. Less than ten years later, there were 21 policewomen who reported with her. See "The Only Woman Detective," Chicago Tribune 27 October 1906; Schulz, 27; Segrave, 11-12.

In 1913, Louise De Koven Bowen, president of the Juvenile Protective Association, issued a call for the appointment of policewomen which exemplifies the ways in which female activists utilized the white-slavery discourse to plead their case. Noting that thousands of young people were taking advantage of the new opportunities for urban recreation being offered by "penny arcades, slot machines, moving picture shows, cheap theaters, amusement parks and dance halls," Bowen called for the stationing of policewomen in urban theaters and dance halls in city's across the country to protect young girls from young men with "disreputable intentions" who plied them with alcohol for "illicit purposes" and "white slave traders" who saw, in the dance halls, a "happy hunting ground" for new victims. Bowen also argued that policewomen were needed to act as "mothers" to girls in "all public places where the danger to young people is great," including bathing beaches, pleasure boats, and parks. As Bowen stressed:

Women police are not needed to handle crowds, to regulate street traffic, to arrest drunkards and criminal, but they are sorely needed in order that they may adequately protect the thousands of children and young people who every day are exposed to the dangers of unsupervised and disreputable places of amusement and for whose safety and welfare the city is responsible.¹⁴⁵

Mrs. Gertrude Howe Brittain, superintendent of the Juvenile Protective Association, backed up her colleague's views. During her testimony in front of the Illinois Senate Vice Committee on the causes of white slavery and the dangers that commercial recreation posed to young girls in the city, Brittain was asked what she thought the police should do

¹⁴⁵Louise DeKoven Bowen, "The Need of Women Police," Life and Labor 3, no. 5 (May 1913), 153-154. See also Bowen, Some Legislative Needs in Illinois (Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1912). Bowen is also an excellent example of the ways in which women coupled their calls for policewomen with the argument that women needed to assume more prominent public roles throughout the court system and, in conjunction with this, should be granted the right to sit on juries and vote. See Bowen, "Women in the Courts," The Survey (March 7, 1914): 719-720. For an analysis of their success in achieving these positions see Odem, 95-127.

to protect girls from danger in train stations and dance halls, to stop brothels from imprisoning girls and to afford more protection to women in general. She replied:

I believe in women policemen; I believe it is necessary. Of course, in depots we have pretty good supervision there. You see, the Catholic Women's League and the W.C.T.U., they try to control it. They go there, and they are doing good work in meeting girls as they come in, and save hundreds of girls, but I do believe in policewomen.

Like Bowen, Brittain did not believe that policewomen and men should do the same jobs. Instead, she argued they should serve as "a chaperon and a friend" to the young girls and take advantage of their sex to supervise what was happening in the women's dressing rooms. Brittain called for the appointment of thirty women whom, she estimated, might be able to save one hundred girls.¹⁴⁶

Other women activists, not connected with the Juvenile Protective Association, argued that policewomen were the only ones who could stop girls from being abducted into white slavery. Rev. Anna Shaw, for instance, called for Chicago authorities to station two policewomen at movie theaters, claiming that in one month's time twenty-three young girls had been lured from moving picture shows in the city on the promise of theatrical careers and "shipped to Texas for immoral purposes." Shaw's comments called forth a barrage of indignation from the moving picture industry which accused her of propagating malicious slander but, from the perspective of the activists calling for appointment of policewomen, it was very effective malicious slander.¹⁴⁷ When police departments did bow to the pressure to bring women officers on board they hired them for the express purpose of protecting young people from moral exploitation and shielding young girls from the dangers of white slavers.

¹⁴⁶Report of the Senate Vice Committee (1916), 434-435.

¹⁴⁷"'Recruiting Stations of Vice:' A Libel on Moving Picture Theaters," The Moving Picture World 6, no. 10 (March 12, 1910), 370-371.

Between 1905 and 1915, 26 different cities across the country appointed a total of 70 policewomen. Urban areas which were at the center of the battle against white slavery or who had appointed vice commissions, many of which called for the appointment of policewomen, were prominent among the cities who hired women officers.¹⁴⁸ Most of these women were employed to do "rescue and protective work" among women and girls, patrolling the urban areas and shielding vulnerable females from moral exploitation.¹⁴⁹ Some, like Kathlyn Sullivan of the San Francisco police force, came in for special commendation after they reportedly broke up gangs of white slavers preying on young high school girls.¹⁵⁰ Others, like Lola Baldwin, were clearly hired on the basis of their experience with protecting young women from procurers.

Baldwin, in many ways, exemplifies the ways in which the crusade against white slavery propelled women into their positions as police officers. Baldwin had been involved with the W.C.T.U.'s fight against white slavery since the 1890s on the East Coast. She stayed active in the struggle following her move to Portland, Oregon and, in 1905, was

¹⁴⁸Maude Miner, "The Policewoman and the Girl Problem," Proceeding of the National Conference of Social Work (1919), 134. Forty percent of vice commissions formed, including those in Chicago, Harford, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Portland (OR), Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Syracuse, and Little Rock, recommended policewomen. See Joseph Mayer, "The Passing of the Red Light District-Vice Investigations and Results," Social Hygiene 4, no. 2 (April 1918), 202. For the ways in which these reports frequently led to the appointment of women officers see "Emilie L. Glorieux: The Minneapolis Policewoman," Life and Labor 2, no. 3 (March 1912): 87. For more information on which cities hired women police officers see Alice Stebbins Wells, "Women Police Officers," Vigilance 26, no. 5 (May 1917), 19; Schulz, 21-42; Segrave, 16-29.

¹⁴⁹Mayor of Seattle quoted in Miner, "The Policewoman," 135-6. Women officers were, occasionally, assigned to protect the growing public presence of other middle-class women who took to the streets in an effort to expand women's rights even further. When, for instance, Maude Miner went to one city to talk to the women police officers there in the course of her research into policewomen she found they were all unavailable, having been assigned to patrol a woman suffrage parade. See Miner, "The Policewoman," 136.

¹⁵⁰Schulz, 27. Schulz's analysis of these early police women includes numerous examples of the protective work to which these early officers were assigned. See Schulz, 21-42. See also "Women Who Are Making Good in Public Office," Current Opinion (August 1913), 95-96.

recommended by the National Exposition Travelers' Aid Committee, formed three years earlier to protect young girls from the procurers who allegedly gathered at expositions and world's fairs, to head up the effort to foil white slavers at Portland's Lewis and Clark Exposition. Baldwin was hired for the job by Portland's Travelers' Aid Association which had convinced the authorities in Portland that she would need police powers to carry out her duties. She continued to work in Portland, as Director of the Travelers' Aid Society, for three years following the 1905 exposition, investigating vice and pursuing procurers whom she believed were "preying upon innocent girls." She was, however, afraid that the cost of her labors would overwhelm the small budget of the Travelers' Aid Society and began lobbying city officials to pay for her services. Arguing that she had, in fact, been serving as a "de facto" member of the police force since 1905, Baldwin called on Portland's government to put her "protective work for girls" on an official basis with the police department and noted that they were currently spending more to "shelter" animals than they were to shelter girls. It was an effective argument and Baldwin was appointed Portland's first woman detective.¹⁵¹

Although women's activism and the onset of the moral panic over white slavery facilitated the hiring of women police officers, both the activists and the policewomen continued to meet with ridicule and resistance in their efforts to open up this profession to women.¹⁵² The appointment of 10 women in Chicago to serve as police officers in 1913, for instance, led the New York World to ask:

¹⁵¹Schulz, 22; Gloria E. Myers, A Municipal Mother: Portland's Lola Greene Baldwin, America's First Policewoman (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1995), 1-24, 79-80. White-slavery work continued to be a large part of Baldwin's investigations and her biographer notes that she found the Mann Act and local trafficking laws very useful during her career. She also assisted in U.S. Government in their white-slavery cases. See Myers, 24, 96, 100-101.

¹⁵²For a revealing assessment of how difficult it could be to get women police appointed in the face of the recalcitrance of city officials see the report of the women activists and suffragists of their efforts to get women police hired in Indianapolis in 1912 reported in Grace Julian Clarke, "Closing a Red-Light District in Indianapolis," Vigilance 25, no. 6

When Officer Blank, in natty blue jacket and skirt, with star on her breast, hears of a hold-up or murder in a low dive on the Levee in Chicago, what is she going to do? Will she seize the murderer red-handed, wrest his smoking pistol from him, and march him off to the corner, bruised and subdued, to wait for the wagon, while a mob clamors for his life?¹⁵³

In the face of this resistance, advocates for policewomen continued to rely on the white-slavery narratives to plead their case and argued that the experience of European countries demonstrated that the policewoman was the 'the best and most effective agent' in the fight against the "monster of modern society," the white slaver. From Chicago to Charleston, newspapers reported that policewomen were the "best instrument" available to "combat the evil" of the white-slave trade.¹⁵⁴

To be sure, the women who were envisioned to be these "best instruments" were a select group. As a historian of the policewoman movement points out, they were predominantly upper middle-class, native born, college educated women. They were also, initially, all white.¹⁵⁵ They are, however, a prime example of how women activists sought

(June 1912), 9-12.

¹⁵³Quoted in "Policewomen in Chicago," Literary Digest 47 (August 23, 1913), 271. When one of these "muscular" Chicago policewomen did physically subdue a "powerfully built man" on a Chicago streetcar, it made the news in New York. See "Policewoman Subdues Man," New York Times, 27 December 1913, 4. The struggle to get women appointed as policewomen in New York City met with far less success than the push in Chicago. Although police matrons were appointed by the city as early as 1845, the city did not open its rank to fully sworn policewomen until 1921. See Schulz, 29-30.

¹⁵⁴"Policewomen in Chicago," 271. Ironically, activists in Europe were making the same arguments in reverse, using the example of policewomen in America to call for the appointment of similar officers in their countries. See "Policewomen," Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 5, no. 4 (November 1914), 609. For additional discussion of the effort to get policewomen appointed in Europe see Segrave, 30-43.

¹⁵⁵Schulz, 4. While white women would begin to assume the role of policewomen as early as 1905, the first African-American woman would not be appointed until 1919 when the LAPD promoted Georgia Robinson, who had served as a matron since 1916, to the position of policewoman. See Schulz, 31. Activists with the Juvenile Protective Agency were among those who investigated the dangers facing African-American girls in the city

to harness the white-slavery crusade to their efforts to expand their public presence and professional opportunities.¹⁵⁶ Unfortunately, the efforts of middle-class women to empower themselves did not have a similar effect on the young working-class women and immigrants who came under the "protective" surveillance of this new cadre of policewomen, travelers' aid matrons, and female immigration inspectors. Undoubtedly, the assistance these middle-class women offered was welcomed by some women, particularly immigrants who genuinely needed assistance locating a safe place to stay or help finding decent jobs. The help was never, however, without its price and women and girls who gave their names to Travelers' Aid or Immigrant Aid societies faced repeated visits in their new homes to determine whether or not they needed "rescuing" or help "assimilating." As one historian has noted, an individual who sought help from the Council of Jewish Women's Immigrant Aid Committee "forfeited her or his right to independence and self-determination" at the hands over the "overprotective" organization.¹⁵⁷ The young women

and who advocated the appointment of African-American police, expanded recreational opportunities for African-Americans and giving African Americans political representation. See "Letter dated January 6, 1912," in J.P.A. Papers, File #16.

¹⁵⁶In many instance, the women who achieved positions as police officers or white-slavery investigators used their mandate to undertake international investigations or national tours to promote their cause and open up similar opportunities for other women. For instance, LAPD officer Alice Stebbins Wells, appointed in 1910, undertook an ambitious national tour to encourage other cities to hire policewomen. For information on Wells and her tour see Alice Stebbins Wells, "Women as Police Officers," *Vigilance* 27, no. 6 (June 1913): 4-7; Schulz, 20-42; Segrave, 12-15.

¹⁵⁷Baum, et al... (eds.), 169. For more details on how truly invasive the program of the Jewish Immigrants Aid Committee was see "Statement of the Council of Jewish Women," 33-94. Ironically, the women reformers recognized that the Jewish girls they were seeking to aid would be suspicious of them, given their tendency to attribute anti-Semitic intent to authorities and to fear that the offer of assistance was really an effort to convert them but stressed that their efforts were necessary to help the women and girls "assimilate." Obviously, the push to have them assimilate could be perceived by the new immigrants as an anti-Semitic effort to have them convert to a different kind of Judaism. Earlier efforts of the Women's Trade Union League to visit new immigrants was aimed at encouraging them to enter organized trades. For information on this and other programs of protection offered to immigrant girls see "Statement of the Immigrants' Protective League," 53-78.

who were the focus of this new female surveillance, whether immigrants or American-born working girls, were not, of course, passive recipients of this attention. Some merely lied about their names to avoid further attempts to "rescue" them, others utilized the help available to gain a measure of control over their lives.¹⁵⁸ For other working-class girls and immigrants, however, the employment of a cadre of women detectives, policewomen, and immigration inspectors to "save" them from enslavement by evil procurers actually raised their chances of imprisonment and deportation at the hands of their putative rescuers.¹⁵⁹

The quest of middle-class women to gain greater access to political power and professional opportunities in the public sphere was also premised on the need to restrict, under the guise of protection, working-class women's access to urban areas. This, in turn, interfered with working-class women's efforts to carve out new possibilities and identities for themselves in urban cities and resulted in the increased surveillance of the public spaces

¹⁵⁸On the concerns of reformers that girls were lying to them see "Statement of the Council of Jewish Women," 41 and Abbott, *Immigrant*, 18. For an analysis of the ways in which Chinese women used the protection offered to them by female mission workers to escape exploitative conditions and gain a measure of control over their futures see Pascoe, 93-111. For additional texts which looks at the ways groups of "clients" or aid recipients sought to shape the programs designed to control them see Eileen Boris, "Reconstructing the 'Family': Women, Progressive Reform, and the Problem of Social Control," in *Gender, Class, Race, and Reform in the Progressive Era*, eds. Noralee Frankel and Nancy Dye (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1991), 73-86; Linda Gordon, *Heroes of Their Own Lives* (New York: Viking Press, 1988); Sarah Heath, "Negotiating White Womanhood," and Thomas Winter, "Contested Spaces: The YMCA and Workingmen on the Railroads, 1877-1917," both in *Men and Women Adrift: The YMCA and the YWCA in the City*, eds. Nina Mjagkij and Margaret Spratt (New York: New York University Press, 1997): 65-85, 86-110.

¹⁵⁹For details on the deportation of "immoral" women see Abbott, *Immigrant*, 172 and the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization Memos on the "White Slave Traffic" in *Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*, Reel 6. Grace Abbot was the lone voice of concern over how the work of Immigration Societies, including her own, was functioning to deport vulnerable girls. See Abbott, *Immigrant*, 76-77. For an analysis of the ways in which the federal enforcement of the Mann Act served to imprison young girls and force them to testify in the trials see Marlene D. Beckman, "The White Slave Traffic Act: Historical Impact of a Federal Crime Policy on Women," in *Prostitution*, 106-122.

which many historians have argued were crucial for the formation of oppositional working-class communities and identities.¹⁶⁰ Chicago Judge Mary Margaret Bartelme, the nation's only woman judge in 1913, summed up the female assault on these locations in her call for police women by stating that their activities to guard innocent girls should include the inspection of "factories, stores, and all places where girls are employed in large numbers." They should also, she continued, "chaperon all public dances," patrol public theaters, and "keep a watchful eye on skating-rinks, ice-cream parlors, and saloons that do a back-room business" in addition to patrolling city parks and summer gardens. In order to "guard girls against men who prey," Bartelme concluded, women police officers needed to "supervise commercial amusements of all kinds."¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰The scholarship on how different groups of individuals, including working-class girls, prostitutes, and African Americans were using the sites of work and leisure to construct new identities for themselves during this period is vast and growing. Pivotal texts include: Peiss; Rosen; Meyerowitz; Alexander; Timothy Gilfoyle, "White Cities, Linguistic Turns, and Disneylands: The New Paradigms of Urban History," Reviews in American History (March 1998): 175-203; Ardis Cameron, "Landscapes of Subterfuge: Working-Class Neighborhood and Immigrant Women," in Gender, Class, Race, 56-72; Susan Porter Benson, Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); Patricia A. Cooper, Once a Cigar Maker: Men, Women, and Work Culture in American Cigar Factories, 1900-1919 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987); Susan Glenn, Daughters of the Shtetl: Life and Labor in the Immigrant Generation (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); Mary Carbine, " 'The Finest Outside the Loop:' Motion Picture Exhibition in Chicago's Black Metropolis," Camera Obscura 23 (year?): 9-42; Elizabeth Ewen, "City Lights: Immigrant Women and the Rise of the Movies," in Women and the American City, eds. Catherine Stimpson, et al... (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980): 42-63; Roy Rosenzweig, Eight hours for what we will: Workers and leisure in an industrial city, 1870-1920 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹⁶¹"Women Who are Making Good in Public Office," Current Opinion (August 1913), 95. For another source which conveys the breadth of places that women reformers believed needed patrolling see "The 'Block System' of the J.P.A. of Chicago," (1916) in the Juvenile Protective Association Papers, File 129. Women reformer's commitment to keeping women in this area of policing was so strong that when Chicago's policewomen began to assume more regular police duties reformers like Bowen expressed disappointment and lobbied to have them returned to their jobs as "municipal chaperones" to young girls. See Louise De Koven Bowen, Public Dance Halls of Chicago (Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1917), 5; Louise De Koven Bowen, Growing Up with

The increased policing of the sites in which working-class women were attempting to carve out new urban possibilities for themselves was not an unintended consequence of the reforms sought by middle-class women and feminists.¹⁶² Instead, the "logic" which led to repressive policies toward, and the increased surveillance of, immigrants and working-class women was implicit in their initiatives from the beginning. This has serious ramifications for the ways in which historians need to view what Mary Ryan calls the "tenacious efforts" of women to enter the public sphere.¹⁶³ Middle-class women's access to both public space and the public sphere, while it did indicate a "progressive incorporation of once-marginalized groups into the public sphere," was also consolidated around the effort to undermine the public space and cultural autonomy necessary for other marginal groups to constitute their own "subaltern counterpublics," and form their own oppositional identities.¹⁶⁴

a *City* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1923), 136-137 and *The Road to Destruction*, 15.

¹⁶²For analyses of the problems that the ideology of "protection" presents to the feminist movement and the ways in which the white-slavery panic was used to gain greater control over working-class women and functioned to suppress working-class culture see Peiss, Odem, and Hobson. This was true also of Jewish and African-American reformers who also placed a high priority on controlling the sexual behavior of their working-class sisters as a means to combat racist stereotypes. For historical analyses of this phenomenon see Riv-Ellen Prell, *Fighting to Become American* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999); Nancy Sinkoff, "Education for 'Proper' Jewish Womanhood," *American Jewish History* 77 (June 1988): 600-616; Baum, et al... (eds.), 168-170; and Higginbotham, *Righteous*, 198-201.

¹⁶³Ryan, "Gender and Public Access," 284.

¹⁶⁴The term "subaltern counterpublics" is drawn from Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in *Habermas*, 123. Fraser argues that counterpublics serve as the location in which marginalized groups "formulate oppositional interpretation of their identities, interests, and needs."

Chapter Six
Thief, Hysteric, Auto Hypnotist, or White Slave?;
The Strange Case of Ella Gingles

At 9:30 on the morning of February 17, 1909 Mary Ralien, the chief maid at the Wellington Hotel in Chicago, discovered the door to the 5th floor bathroom was locked from the inside and notified the desk clerk, who sent the hotel janitor up to gain access to the bathroom. What they found when the janitor forced open the door would shock Chicago and make headlines in cities across the country. A small candle burning on the radiator revealed the ghastly scene. According to newspaper accounts, a young woman, bloody and semi-conscious, lay on the floor with her hands tied together over her head. Her legs were also bound together and lashed to a radiator on one side, a wash basin on the other. Both the basin and the nearby bathtub were half-filled with bloody water. Wisps of hair, apparently torn from her head, were discovered on the floor as was a partially empty two ounce bottle of laudanum and a half-filled bottle of wine. The girl herself was also blindfolded and gagged, with one towel tied around her head and another stuffed in her mouth. She was lying on her side, clad only in a thin nightgown which had the name "A. Barrette" inked on the collar. The nightgown did not prevent the witnesses from observing that the girl had apparently been the subject of a horrible attack. She bore over thirty slash wounds on her face, arms, legs, and body. Ralien and the janitor called for assistance from Dr. Watson who was employed by the Wellington hotel. It was Watson who gently untied the girl and carried her into one of the empty rooms at the Wellington. She was, by now, regaining consciousness and was constantly uttering seemingly incoherent sentences, including "I didn't tell him all Miss Barrette" and "Keep her away; keep her away. She's coming back. Don't let her touch me." ¹

¹"Tied Gagged and Cut Girl is in Hotel Bath," Chicago Record-Herald 18 February 1909; "Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 18 February 1909; " 'Come, Will Be Killed,'" Detroit Free Press 18 February 1909; "Girl, Tied and Gagged, Tells of Death

While Ralien, Bronson and Watson were attempting to determine what had happened to the girl, a letter arrived in the Randolph Street law office of P.H. O'Donnell addressed to his stenographer, Mary Joyce. The front of the envelope bore the instructions "will bellboy please mail this" and the enclosed letter contained a cryptic message which read "will be killed Wellington Hotel come quick Ella." O'Donnell, realizing the letter was from his client Ella Gingles hurried off to the police department to secure assistance from his friend, Chief of Detectives O'Brien.²

Captain O'Brien was well acquainted with Ella Gingles. She had appeared in his office January 5th to complain that two women, Agnes Barrette and Cecelia Kenyon, had entered her room the night before and taken a number of her belongings, including lace she herself had made, jewelry, and money. Gingles' story, that she was a good, honest, young girl, a newly arrived immigrant who had gone from Ireland to Canada before finally settling in Chicago undoubtedly raised the sympathies of O'Brien who promptly called in Barrette for questioning. Barrette claimed that she had been in Gingles' room with Kenyon but that they were only attempting to recover items that Gingles had stolen while working in Barrette's lace shop in the lobby of the Wellington hotel. To back up her story, Barrette produced a signed confession in which Gingles admitted to the theft. In spite of the confession and his own belief that Gingles had probably taken the lace, O'Brien castigated Barrette for taking the law into her own hands and urged her to file charges if she felt she had a case against Gingles. Privately, however, he hoped no charges would be filed for he

Plot," Chicago Daily News 17 February 1909. The newspaper coverage of the Gingles case contains a number of conflicting reports, different spellings of names, and inconsistent details in keeping with the confusion that surrounding the event and the ways in which Gingles herself kept changing the story. How the janitor gained access to the bathroom, for instance, was disputed as some newspapers reported he forced the door and others alleged that he climbed through the transom. There was also widespread disagreement on how Barrett's name was spelled and it appeared as both Barrett and Barrette throughout the newspaper coverage.

²"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "O'Donnell's Doubts Gingles Stories," Chicago Tribune 9 July 1909.

viewed her as someone in need of assistance, not prosecution. He himself sought to provide some of this assistance by taking the girl into his own home and placing her under the care of his wife.³

O'Brien also contacted John O'Shaughnessy of the Irish Fellowship club to see if he would take an interest in the girl and related her story to Miss Josephine Sullivan, a detective who worked for attorney P.H. O'Donnell, a long-time friend of O'Brien's. She approached O'Donnell who called O'Brien and offered to defend the girl should she be officially charged with theft.⁴ O'Brien accepted his offer and, when Gingles was arrested on January 9th, the two men met at the police station to secure Gingles' release on bond. Following her release and her indictment later in the month, the Chief of Detectives and the Attorney continued to confer about her case over lunches with their wives at which they speculated on whether or not she really was guilty.⁵ The days of friendly lunches between the two men were, however, drawing to a close and it would be the little "left-handed" girl, as both Irish Catholic men liked to call Irish Protestants like Gingles, who would drive the wedge between them. For while both initially agreed that she had been the subject of persecution at the hands of Barrette, the discovery of Gingles' in the Wellington bathroom and her allegations as to how she got there would turn the Chief of Detectives and the defense attorney into bitter rivals.⁶

On the morning of the 17th, however, there was no such animosity between the two men who were still united in their concern over Gingles' plight. When O'Donnell approached O'Brien during roll call at the Police Station with Gingles' letter and his

³"Letters Assail the Gingles Girl," Chicago Tribune 5 July 1909.

⁴"Letters Assail the Gingles Girl," 5 July 1909; "O'Donnell's Doubts Gingles Stories?," 9 July 1909; "Jury Frees Ella; Finds Tale False," Chicago Tribune 20 July 1909.

⁵An announcement of Gingles indictment appeared in the Chicago Record Herald 26 January 1909.

⁶"O'Donnell Doubts Gingles Stories?," 9 July 1909; "Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909.

concerns that something terrible had happened to the girl, O'Brien assigned two detectives to help O'Donnell search for her. When they found her, hysterical and bloody, in the care of Dr. Watson at the Wellington Hotel, they immediately called O'Brien who met them at the Francis Willard hospital to take charge of the investigation. Gingles had, in fact, been calling for O'Brien since her discovery by Mary Ralien, perhaps because she knew that he had, up to this point, been one of her staunchest defenders.⁷

Gingles was, by all accounts, still hysterical at the hospital and continued to lapse in and out of consciousness. She also continued to rant and rave, yelling "Don't hit me again. I did not tell all I knew," "I won't get into that cab. Don't try to make me drink that," and "I won't go to French Lick Springs with you. I won't, I say! Stop, stop, I won't, I won't." In between these bouts she did, however, manage to relate her story of how she came to be in the bathroom on the 5th floor to her attorney and Captain O'Brien. Gingles alleged that on the previous day she had attended a conference at O'Donnell's office on her pending trial and had informed him that the confession she had signed on January 4th had been procured by force after Barrette and Kenyon made a failed attempt to entice her into going to French Lick Springs, where Barrette owned a hairdressing shop, to take up a life of prostitution. Gingles charged that when she refused to participate in this plan the two women forced her to strip and kept her naked until she agreed to sign a confession of theft.⁸

In the wake of Assistant State's Attorney Clifford Roe's white-slavery prosecutions in Chicago, which had been making headlines for two years, Gingles' tale of procuresses trying to force her into prostitution by bringing theft charges against her was a familiar one and it was one that her attorney wanted State's Attorney Wayman to hear.⁹ He was

⁷"Asserts Gingles Girl Cut Herself," Chicago Tribune 13 July 1909.

⁸"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "Say Ella Gingles Imagined Attack," Chicago Tribune 6 July 1909.

⁹The idea that a procurer would use the legal system, and charges of theft in particular, as leverage to force a girl into prostitution was not, in the context of the larger white-slavery

perhaps hopeful that the allegations would get Wayman's office to drop the larceny charges on which Gingles had been indicted, a real possibility given that the prosecutor assigned to pursue the case against Gingles was none other than Clifford Roe. Gingles reportedly told O'Donnell at the meeting that she would try to accompany him to State Attorney Wayman's office the following day to tell him her story. She claimed that she was given an addressed and stamped envelope by O'Donnell's stenographer, Mary Joyce, to notify their office if she would be ready to see Wayman in the morning. O'Donnell apparently expressed concern over her safety and cautioned her to avoid strangers.¹⁰

Gingles reported that she left O'Donnell's office at 4:45 p.m. and went to a neighborhood department store to purchase some thread to make lace. She was on her way home, around 7:30 p.m., when she realized she was being followed by a man. She took the Clark street car to Goethe street but had only gone a short way toward her home on LaSalle Avenue when she was stopped by Agnes Barrette and Cecelia Kenyon. Barrette, she claimed, threw pepper in her eyes and hit her on the forehead. Blinded, she was seized by the man who had been pursuing her and forced into a nearby cab where

discourse, an unusual claim. As one of the alienists who examined Gingles' alleged, he had himself heard that the "first move of white slave traffickers is to obtain a confession of theft from their intended victims" to gain leverage over them. Even Roe, in spite of the fact that he didn't believe Gingles, crafted narratives around the idea that white slavers were using trumped up theft charges to gain control of girls. See "Girl Puzzle Solved? Alienists End Quest," Chicago Record-Herald 22 February 1909. The narrative also remained popular among white-slavery reformers throughout the white-slavery panic years and was used by other women who were facing court charges. See Clifford Roe, The Girl Who Disappeared (Chicago: American Bureau of Moral Education, 1914); Clifford Roe, What Women Might Do With the Ballot (New York: National American Woman Suffrage Association); Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 144. Roe's fictional account of the strategy, in The Girl Who Disappeared, is particularly interesting for in it he takes on the role he had refused to play in the Gingles' case by portaying the character modeled on himself as defending, and saving, a young woman who has been charged by her procurers with stealing in an effort to regain control of her after she escapes from their brothel.

¹⁰"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "Say Ella Gingles Imagined Attack," 6 July 1909.

Kenyon was waiting. Her efforts to cry out, she asserted, were muted when one of the three assailants pressed a sweet smelling cloth against her mouth and nose, causing her to lose consciousness. When she came to, she found herself in Agnes Barrette's second floor room in the Wellington Hotel which she identified by the fact that she could see the Illinois Theater across the street. By her own account, she lay motionless on the bed and waited until her assailants left. She then forced herself up and, still semi-incoherent, found the stamped and addressed envelope she had been given earlier in the day at O'Donnell's office. She frantically scribbled a message which stated she was being murdered and threw the letter through the transom and into the hall. She claimed, at this point, that she was unable to remember any more of the details of her assault, although she was certain that a man had "annoyed" her while she was half conscious. She apparently had no memory in these early days of how she received all the wounds or ended up in the bathroom.¹¹

O'Brien initially believed her story and assigned 10 detectives to track down leads and find evidence to back up Gingles' claims. O'Brien also interviewed Agnes Barrette to establish whether or not she was involved in the vicious attack. Barrette was a successful 31 year old businesswomen who had herself come over from Ireland at the age of 18 and worked a number of different jobs before opening up, first, a hairdressing shop in the town of French Lick, Indiana and, more recently, a lace shop in the lobby of the Wellington Hotel. It was at this hotel where she first came into contact with Gingles and hired her to make lace for the shop. When she was informed that Gingles had been found bloody and wounded in the bathroom on the fifth floor and was implicating her in the attack, Barrette immediately went to the police station to speak with O'Brien.¹²

¹¹"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "Say Ella Gingles Imagined Attack," 6 July 1909.

¹²"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "Sensations Fail in Gingles Trial," Chicago Tribune 2 July 1909.

In their meeting, Barrette provided O'Brien with a detailed account of her whereabouts the night before. She had, she claimed, been in her store until 6:15 p.m. after which she had returned to her room and had a maid named Alice help her into her dress. She then met a friend, Miss Hale, at a restaurant, where they hooked up with other friends for drinks prior to going to the movies. They saw "The Thief" and returned home around 2:00 a.m. Miss Hale stayed the night and left around 11:00 the following morning. Barrette also denied that she and Cecelia Kenyon had subjected Gingles' to any indignities on the night of January 4th, when they searched her room for stolen items and secured a confession of her guilt. Her only crime, she claimed, was befriending Gingles, giving her money when she was hungry and, eventually, providing her with a job. It was assistance, she continued to allege, that Gingles repaid by stealing her lace and her jewelry.¹³

Faced with Barrette's alibi and corroborating evidence from those with whom Barrette spent the evening, O'Brien began to suspect that Gingles was simply not telling the truth and told newspaper reporters that the more he, and the team of detectives he had placed on the case, investigated the more it seemed as though her story was an entire fabrication, a product of her overactive imagination.¹⁴ In addition to Barrette's alibi, evidence that Gingles' story was an elaborate effort to frame the woman who had accused her of theft continued to stack up. Her gaping wounds turned out to be mere scratches and the blood found in the bathroom turned out to be wine.¹⁵ In addition, Dr. Watson and Mary Ralien began to cast suspicion on her, and the newspapers', account of her discovery by claiming that she was not unconscious when they discovered her and she was not

¹³"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "Recalls Girl's Deceit," Chicago Daily News 18 February 1909.

¹⁴"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909. See also "Plot of Girl, Says Officers," Detroit Free Press 19 February 1909.

¹⁵"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "Hotel Case Baffles; Girl's Tale Refuted," Chicago Record-Herald 19 February 1909.

drugged, in spite of the presence of the "laudanum bottle."¹⁶ A scrubwoman at the Wellington Hotel also came forward to report that she had seen Gingles in the hallway of the hotel on February 16th with another woman, whom she claimed was dressed like a man.¹⁷ Barrette also denied that the nightgown Gingles was found in, which bore the laundry mark "A Barrette", was hers, a claim backed up by the fact that the gown had never been laundered and her scrubwomen reported that she always marked Barrette's clothes with a piece of red thread sewn into the cloth, not with ink.¹⁸

Gingles' claims that she knew she had been held in Barrette's room because she could see the Illinois theater through the window also undermined her credibility. Barrette's room had, in fact, been across from the Illinois when Gingles worked for her but she had since moved to a different room, from which the theater was not visible. The room Gingles alleged she was held in had, in fact, been occupied for ten days by a group of women from Iowa.¹⁹ To make matters worse for Gingles', repeated interviews of all hotel employees failed to locate anyone who found and mailed the letter she reportedly threw over the transom and tended to confirm the assertions of the hotel's management that it would have been impossible for anyone to carry an unconscious woman through the hotel without being noticed.²⁰ The investigation also revealed that Gingles', as a former employee, was familiar with the layout of the hotel and that she had been picked up for shoplifting in another department store, and signed a confession, in December of 1908.²¹ More damaging was the fact that Edna Wolfe, matron at the La Salle street railroad

¹⁶"Cast More Doubt on Gingles Tale," Chicago Tribune 19 February 1909; "Attacks Denied by Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 10 July 1909.

¹⁷"Miss Gingles' Story a Twice-Told Tale," Chicago Record-Herald 20 February 1909; "Get New Gingles Clew," Chicago Daily News 19 February 1909.

¹⁸"Hotel Case Baffles; Girl's Tale Refuted," Chicago Record-Herald 19 February 1909; "O'Donnell Pilloried With Gingles Client," Chicago Record-Herald 8 July 1909; "Gingles Girl's Story Upset by Canadians," Chicago Record-Herald 15 July 1909.

¹⁹"Two Ella Gingles Inquiries," Chicago Tribune 22 February 1909.

²⁰"Hotel Case Baffles; Girl's Tale Refuted," Chicago Record-Herald 19 February 1909.

²¹"Gingles Tale Puzzles," Chicago Record-Herald 21 February 1909.

station, reported that Gingles' had been in the train station on January 27th and told Wolfe that she had suffered a terrible attack at the Wellington Hotel the night before, a revelation which led the Chicago Record Herald to dub her story a "Twice-Told Tale."²²

In spite of the overwhelming evidence that Gingles was being less than honest, O'Donnell continued to defend her, claiming that she was, in fact, the victim of a white-slavery plot and an attempt to murder her. O'Brien was, however, no longer a believer. Instead he continued to assert that all of his evidence indicated that the events Gingles' claimed occurred on La Salle Street and in the Wellington Hotel on the night of February 17th never occurred. He was certain, he reported, that when confronted with the facts he had unearthed Gingles would admit that the story was untrue.²³

While O'Brien was clearly underestimating Gingles' capacity for storytelling, he was not alone in his suspicions that there was something wrong with both Gingles' and her story. Chicago's newspapers, awash with the details of the case from the beginning, were quick to highlight her contradictory testimony and speculate on what exactly was wrong with the girl. It was possible, they alleged, that she was an auto-hypnotist or perhaps a prevaricator.²⁴ The alienists brought in by the police to examine Gingles while she lay in the hospital similarly concluded that she was in a state of hysterical insanity and that her wounds were self-inflicted. She might also, they claimed, be a mono-maniac, in which case she would have no memory of cutting herself and now genuinely believed her own story.²⁵

²²"Gingles Tale Old, Says New Witness," Chicago Tribune 20 February 1909; "Miss Gingles Story a Twice-Told Tale," 20 February 1909; "Girl in a Confession," Chicago Daily News 20 February 1909.

²³"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909; "Cast More Doubt on Gingles Tale," 19 February 1909. See also "Believes Her Own Wild Story," Detroit Free Press 21 February 1909.

²⁴"Hotel Case Baffles; Girl's Tale Refuted," 19 February 1909; "Gingles Tale Puzzles," 21 February 1909.

²⁵"Miss Gingles Story a Twice-Told Tale," 20 February 1909; "Girl May Be Self-Hurt," Chicago Daily News 22 February 1909; "Girl Puzzle Solved? Alienists End Quest," 22 February 1909.

Even Clifford Roe, who was actively portraying himself as the nation's pre-eminent white-slavery prosecutor, distanced himself from Gingles' story. As the attorney assigned by the State's Attorney's office to prosecute Gingles for larceny, he rushed to conduct an investigation into her allegations that the theft charges were really the result of Barrette's unsuccessful attempt to procure her for a life of prostitution. Roe clearly did not believe Gingles, noting that his familiarity with Barrette led him to conclude that it would be "preposterous" to accuse her of complicity in the attack which Gingles alleged occurred on February 17th. Gingles' whole story, he concluded, "looks queer." He did, however, take the detectives assigned to him to prosecute white-slavery cases to the Wellington to conduct a more thorough investigation and met with Captain O'Brien. When questioned by reporters following the meeting he refused to comment, except to say that he agreed with the police in their belief that Barrette had nothing to do with the alleged attack on Gingles.²⁶ The Gingles' case, in spite of its high profile nature, was not apparently one that Chicago's most intrepid white-slavery prosecutor wanted any part of. Shortly after his meeting State's Attorney Wayman announced that the government's investigation of Ella Gingles' allegations and her prosecution on the pending larceny charges would be undertaken not by Roe but would, instead, be pursued by B.J. Short, Wayman's Chief Assistant.²⁷

O'Donnell, who may well have hoped that Roe's fondness for high-profile white-slavery cases would provide him with a powerful ally in the State's Attorney's office, continued to press Wayman to call a grand jury to investigate Gingles' allegations. The government was conducting a thorough investigation into the matter and continued to assign large numbers of detectives to the case but, as O'Donnell noted, their activities were aimed more at discrediting the girl's story than arresting the people he believed were guilty

²⁶"Discredit Raving of Ella Gingles," 18 February 1909.

²⁷"Gingles Case is Taken Up By State's Attorney Wayman," Chicago Tribune 24 February 1909; "Probes Gingles Case," Chicago Daily News 23 February 1909.

of attempting to force her into white slavery.²⁸ It was clear in the weeks following the alleged attack that no grand jury would be called. In response to this and Roe's distancing of himself from the case, O'Donnell began casting around for other white-slavery crusaders who might be willing to pursue his allegations that Gingles was a white slave. He turned first to United States District Attorney Edwin Sims, who was actively prosecuting those accused of importing white slaves into the United States, charging that Gingles had been brought from Ireland to Canada as part of a system of peonage in which girls were being sold as domestics.²⁹ When these allegations failed to elicit any support, O'Donnell turned to Assistant United State's Attorney Harry Parkin, another white-slavery crusader, urging that he help O'Donnell get the United States Government involved in the case on the basis that Gingles' may have been lured from Canada to the United States for immoral purposes.³⁰ None of O'Donnell's efforts bore fruit and the decision over whether or not to call a grand jury to investigate Gingles' allegations remained with Wayman, who continued to insist that his office would proceed with the larceny case against Gingles whenever she was well enough to leave the hospital, statements which led to a relapse in Gingles' general health.³¹ Doctors were, however, already suspicious that Gingles was faking her medical condition, by sticking her thermometer in hot water, after they caught her lying about vomiting blood and she did eventually leave the hospital on March 14th.³²

²⁸"Story Modified by Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 21 February 1909; "Two Ella Gingles Inquiries," 22 February 1909.

²⁹"Charges Peonage of Girls," Chicago Tribune 2 March 1909.

³⁰"Wants Uncle Sam to Take up Case of Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 3 March 1909.

³¹"Ella Gingles to Face Trial," Chicago Tribune 4 March 1909; "Gingles Girl Nearly Well," Chicago Tribune 6 March 1909; "Ella Gingles Has Relapse," Chicago Tribune 7 March 1909; "Ella Gingles Much Better," Chicago Tribune 8 March 1909; "Will Press Gingles Case," Chicago Tribune 10 March 1909; "Ready to Try Gingles Case," Chicago Tribune 13 March 1909.

³²"Report is Expected Today by Short in Gingles Case," Chicago Tribune 1 March 1909; "O'Donnell Pilloried with Gingles Client," 8 July 1909; "O'Donnell Attacked as Gingles Mentor," Chicago Record-Herald 9 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Quits Hospital," Chicago Tribune 14 March 1909. The alienists assigned to assess Gingles condition similarly

In spite of the skepticism that surrounded Gingles in the days following the discovery of her in the 5th floor bathroom, no amount of inconsistencies could budge her from her basic allegations that she had been attacked by Barrette in the hotel on February 17th. O'Brien reported that when he talked to Gingles about her account and pointed out that Barrette couldn't possibly have been involved in any cab abduction as she could account for all her time until 2:00 a.m., Gingles laughed and told him that she had made up the cab story but was now prepared to tell him the truth. The "truth" according to Gingles' future testimony was that she had gone to the Wellington that night of her own accord to collect money from another woman in the hotel who owed her for payment for lace she had made. When she went to the room where she thought the woman lived she was met by a large man who sent her into the bathroom and chloroformed her while she was in there.³³ When she awoke she was naked in bed and was certain that Barrette was in the room. She was also certain of the time as she reportedly heard someone say "Let us hurry up; it is 2 o'clock." Her memory, she claimed, was growing clearer with time and by her trial she was able to give a vivid account of the physical attacks she now alleged Agnes Barrette had subjected her to on both January 4th and February 16th.³⁴

The Trial

With the State's Attorney's office poised to prosecute her for the theft of Barrette's lace, Ella Gingles surrendered herself to police on April 30, 1909. She was forced to

concluded that she was fabricating her medical problems, noting that she only responded to pain when she was showing them where it hurt. Later, when they pressed the same areas at times when she was preoccupied with something else, she reportedly did not register any pain at all. See "Flays R. Keene Ryan For His Gingles Talk," Chicago Daily News 13 July 1909.

³³"O'Donnell Doubts Gingles Story?," 9 July 1909.

³⁴"Gingles Tale Puzzles," 21 February 1909.

voluntarily revoke her bond, she claimed, because she feared for her safety. Someone, she claimed, was still following her and she, and her attorney, decided the only place she would be safe from being kidnapped was jail. It was also, her attorney later asserted, the only way to get the state to pursue the charges against her so she could clear her name.³⁵ Not surprisingly, the prosecution had their own ideas as to why she surrendered her bond. They proposed it was a tactic designed to increase the sympathy of the women who had interested themselves in the case.³⁶ There was no question that sympathy for Gingles ran high among a number of women's groups, some of whom had been approached by her lawyer in an effort to elicit support from them. Louise deKoven Bowen, for instance, noted in her memoirs that she and Jane Addams were approached by a lawyer who asked them if they wanted to hear the story of an Irish girl who had been badly cut, locked in the bathroom of a hotel, assaulted and sold to a white slaver by a woman who owned a shop there. They met with the girl who, Bowen states, told a story which was the "most revolting and the most terrible" she had ever heard and were initially convinced that a "horrible tragedy had been revealed." Upon hearing, however, that doctors from the Psychopathic Clinic had concluded that the story was all a figment of her imagination, Bowen and Addams apparently withdrew their support for Gingles.³⁷ There were, however, plenty of other women who didn't let the opinions of a few trained alienists get in the way of their sympathy for, or belief in, Ella Gingles. Throughout the trial, representatives from a variety of women's clubs, including the W.C.T.U., Daughters of the Confederacy, Catholic Women's League, the Socialist Women of the United States, Irish

³⁵"Miss Ella Gingles Seeks Refuge in a Prison Cell," Chicago Tribune 30 April 1909; "Ella Gingles Goes to Jail," Chicago Record-Herald 30 April 1909; "Say Duel Divorce is Gingles Model," Chicago Tribune 12 July 1909.

³⁶"O'Donnell Pilloried with Gingles Client," 8 July 1909.

³⁷Louise De Koven Bowen, Growing up with a City (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1926), 132-133.

Choral Society, and the Woodlawn Woman's Club, kept up a constant presence by her side, in spite of the "revolting" details involved.³⁸

The trial, which O'Donnell promised would include the "most sensational" testimony ever heard in Chicago, opened on June 30, 1909 with jury selection.³⁹ Gingles attended, dressed in a "natty white duck suit with blue trimmings, and a brown straw hat." Barrette was also present, although the newspapers failed to report on what she was wearing.⁴⁰ Following the seating of the jury, which O'Donnell tried to stack with family men who would not be prejudiced against a Protestant Irish girl, the trial opened with the testimony of Agnes Barrette, the only primary witness for the prosecution following the seemingly mysterious death of Kenyon less than a week before the trial opened.⁴¹ Barrette testified to the circumstances surrounding the discovery of Gingles' theft and the events which transpired on January 4th when she, and Cecelia Kenyon, went to recover the items from Gingles' room. Gingles, she stated, had admitted to the theft and had signed the

³⁸"Trial Brings Aid to Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 1 July 1909; "Four in Gingles Jury," Chicago Record-Herald 1 July 1909. These club women also tried to intercede, unsuccessfully, with Wayman to have the case dropped before it went to trial. See "Wayman Declines to Hear Ella Gingles Tell Story," Chicago Tribune 11 March 1909.

³⁹"Ella Gingles Trial On," Chicago Daily News 30 June 1909. For a description of the jury selection and the complaints of trial judge Brentano that it was taking too long see "Secures Gingles Jury; Court Scene is Tense," Chicago Daily News 1 July 1909.

⁴⁰"Trial Brings Aid to Ella Gingles," 1 July 1909.

⁴¹"Trial Brings Aid to Ella Gingles," 1 July 1909; "Death Miss Gingles' Friend," Chicago Tribune 26 June 1909; "Pranks by Fate in Gingles Case," Chicago Tribune 27 June 1909; "Dies in Gingles Case; State Eyes Mystery," Chicago Daily News 26 June 1909; "Gingles Trial Begins Today," Chicago Tribune 30 June 1909. Although the newspapers tried to make the most out of the "mysterious circumstances" surrounding Kenyon's death in ways which implied that she had been the victim of her white-slavery connections, a coroner's inquest determined that she had died of a heart condition. On the urging of O'Donnell, who continued to insist that Kenyon's death involved white slavers and the Gingles case, newspapers refused to accept the conclusions of the inquest and began asserting that irregularities in the inquest suggested that the real facts were being covered up. The allegations that Kenyon met foul play included the standard allegation that she had run afoul of racialized white-slave traders. In this case, the claim that she had visited chop suey restaurants prior to her death served to implicate Asian traffickers.

confession of her own free will. O'Donnell's cross examination failed to sway her story and, much to the dismay of the spectators and the reporters present, also avoided raising any of the charges that Gingles had made regarding Barrette's effort to force her into white slavery. The trial had, according to newspaper reports the next day, opened "without sensations" and left the "throng" of people who had fought to gain admission to the trial at its onset "disappointed."⁴² As one Chicago newspaper reported, the real question at the Gingles trial was "Sensation or no sensation?"⁴³

The question would be answered soon enough as Gingles' testimony provided the audience with such outrageous allegations that both men and women "involuntarily recoiled" in their seats. The trial, newspapers reported, had finally delivered on its promise of "thrills and sensations."⁴⁴ As it turned out, Gingles' allegations as to what happened to her on February 16th were only the tip of the iceberg. Far more shocking was her version of what had occurred on the night of January 4th when, she alleged, Barrette and Kenyon had tried to force her to take up a life of prostitution. In her testimony, she stuck by the story she told O'Donnell in his office on February 16th which involved the charge that Barrette and Kenyon had removed her clothes and left her naked until she signed the confession but she fleshed out her account with more graphic details as to the type of

⁴²"Sensations Fail in Gingles Trial," Chicago Tribune 2 July 1909; "Gingles Trial Opens Without Sensations," Chicago Record-Herald 2 July 1909; "Agnes Barrett Acts as Gingles Accused," Chicago Daily News 1 July 1909.

⁴³"Sidelights on Gingles Case," Chicago Daily News 2 July 1909.

⁴⁴"Fresh Thrills Given in Gingles Girl Trial," Chicago Record-Herald 13 July 1909; "Ella Gingles' Story Appalls Her Hearers," Chicago Record-Herald 4 July 1909. The testimony was, in fact, so inflammatory that Judge Bretano began barring women and minors from the court on the ground that her testimony was not "proper" for women to hear. Only those women who could prove they were Gingles' supporters were allowed to attend, a requirement which a bailiff alleged produced scores of women who claimed they were presidents of Irish clubs. Bretano reported that he was approached daily on the street by "Gray-haired women" who begged him to let them in. See "Ella Gingles is Calm," Chicago Daily News 6 July 1909; "Judge Bars Women and Minors," Chicago Daily News 7 July 1909.

force they used, details which made the spectators in the courtroom "shudder" and were so atrocious that they "burned the cheek and dimmed the eye" of everyone who heard them.⁴⁵ As the Chicago Tribune reported, Gingles' testimony was "absolutely without parallel, and no such language ever has appeared on the legal records of Cook county."⁴⁶

Gingles began her testimony with a recital of her early life which served to portray her as an innocent, well-bred Irish girl, who was an accomplished lace maker and who worked a series of honest jobs in Canada after immigrating there from her home in Belfast in 1907. She came to Chicago, she asserted, in 1908 and worked as a waitress and chambermaid in the Wellington Hotel before taking the job making lace for Agnes Barrette. On the night of January 4th, Gingles claimed, she returned home from the Newberry Library where she had been reading the newspapers on the racks in search of a new job to find Barrette and Kenyon at her boardinghouse. The two women, Gingles claimed, had planted lace from Barrette's shop in her room which they then seized, along with Gingles' jewelry and money, and forced her to accompany them back to Barrette's room in the Wellington hotel. She went, she claimed, on their promise that once they arrived she would be given her items back.⁴⁷ Instead, she asserted, they tried to force her into a life of prostitution and attacked her when she refused.

According to Gingles' testimony they all arrived at Barrette's room at the Wellington Hotel sometime around 9:30 at night at which time Kenyon locked the door and Barrette insisted on conducting a further search of Gingles to see if she had anymore stolen items hidden in her clothes. Sobbing, she related how the two women stripped her down to her socks and lingerie and then removed their own clothing as well. Barrette then allegedly told Gingles she had a man for Gingles to go live with and was going to send her

⁴⁵"Ella Gingles' Story Appalls Her Hearers," 4 July 1909.

⁴⁶"Worse Tale Told by Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 7 July 1909.

⁴⁷"Gingles Girl on Stand," Chicago Record-Herald 3 July 1909; "Jury Hears Story of Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 3 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Tells Life Story on Stand," Chicago Daily News 2 July 1909.

to French Lick Springs where, Barrette reportedly claimed, Gingles could make lots of money, wouldn't have to work, and would have lots of fine clothes. Gingles also testified that the two women had mentioned the name of Tom Taggart, the owner of the hotel where Barrette's hairdressing shop was located in conjunction with the plan. When Gingles refused to be sent to French Lick, she claimed, the two women threw her on the bed and assaulted her.⁴⁸

The details of this assault were not reported by the newspaper accounts of the trial which clearly considered them too obscene to print. But bearing in mind that the women were all either naked or scantily clad and the fact that this particular testimony made the jury and all the spectators lean forward in anticipation, it is probable that Gingles asserted the two women sexually assaulted her. Gingles' reported that their actions frightened her, made her sick, and led her to cry out "You are dirty beasts." At this point, Gingles' alleged that there was a knock on the door and, after putting on a nightgown, Barrette let in a man wearing a velvet mask who, with the assistance of the two women, attacked her and held a pillow over her face to muffle her cries. Following this mistreatment, Gingles charged, Barrette pushed her against a wall and, threatening further attacks from the man, forced her to sign two papers, one of which was presumably the confession of theft.⁴⁹

Gingles testified that she was allowed to go home at 11:30 p.m. after being told that a man would come to get her the next day and she would be going to French Lick Springs for three months. By her own account, she then left the hotel but was too scared

⁴⁸"Gingles Charges Attack Accusers," Chicago Tribune 4 July 1909; "Worse Tale Told by Ella Gingles," 7 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Story Appalls her Hearers," 4 July 1909. The claim that Tom Taggart was involved was particularly sensational as he was a prominent Democratic politician in Indiana. He appeared at the trial to defend Barrette and to deny that he had any involvement in any plans to turn Gingles into a white slave. See "Attacks Denied by Ella Gingles," 10 July 1909.

⁴⁹"Gingles Charges Attack Accusers," 4 July 1909; "White Slavery Charge," Chicago Daily News 3 July 1909; "Worse Tale Told by Ella Gingles," 7 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Story Appalls her Hearers," 4 July 1909.

to stay on the street and find a policemen. Instead, she ran home in the rain and arrived at her boarding house, wet and distraught. The following day she went to the police department where she told Captain O'Brien that Barrette and Kenyon had taken items belonging to her. She did not, she claimed, mention the assault because she was too ashamed.⁵⁰ Later, in a narrative which was purportedly written by Gingles herself, she would also state that she was too sick from the indignities she suffered the night before to reach O'Brien's office until late in the afternoon and then failed to reveal the sexual mistreatment because the story was too horrible to relate to a man.⁵¹

Prosecutor Short, not surprisingly, subjected Gingles to a forceful cross-examination designed, to a large degree, to reveal the inconsistencies of her story. In addition to repeatedly questioning her as to why she didn't call for help or report the attack to O'Brien or her landlady, Short introduced evidence designed to portray Gingles' story as a fraud, including testimony from a librarian at the Newberry Library who reported that they didn't have newspapers available to patrons and the report of a meteorologist who refuted her charges that she ran home in the rain.⁵² Short also pressured the court to allow him to introduce the claims Gingles made about the February

⁵⁰"Gingles Charges Attack Accusers," 4 July 1909; "Worse Tale Told by Ella Gingles," 7 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Story Appalls her Hearers," 4 July 1909.

⁵¹H.M. Lytle, *Tragedies of the White Slave* (New York: Padell Book and Magazine Company, 1909), 116. Although it is possible that this narrative was, in fact, written by Gingles, it is also possible that another author penned the story for publication in this text. Written in first person narrative, the story also claims to include two affidavits that Gingles reportedly gave police while laying in the hospital. This is unlikely as the story of the attack on January 4th does not seem to have surfaced until the trial and was not, apparently, related to the police following the events of February 16th as the affidavits suggest. The court records, and any affidavits given by Gingles, have been destroyed so it is impossible to determine when the text was actually written. This text also fails to reveal the details of the actual assault Gingles alleged she suffered at the hands of Barrett and Kenyon, merely stating that the affidavit included "four pages of revolting details" that the authors of the text have omitted. See Lytle, 112.

⁵²"Worse Tale Told by Ella Gingles," 7 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Names Taggart in Recital," *Chicago Record-Herald* 7 July 1909; "White Slavery Charge," 3 July 1909.

16th attack into evidence, over the objections of O'Donnell. Both men undoubtedly recognized that the inconsistencies of that story would work against Gingles' credibility.⁵³

Short won the day and Gingles was forced to re-create the story of how she was assaulted a second time by Barrette in the bathroom of the Wellington Hotel. Miraculously, her memory had become even clearer on how she wound up slashed and bound on the bathroom floor. She was certain, she claimed, that Barrette had been involved in the assault on her. The man guarding her, she stated, had told her they were in Barrette's room. She also charged that she was now able to remember that she had seen the man give Barrette \$50 following his assault on her. Gingles also asserted that it was Barrette who initiated the attack on Gingles in the bathroom, cutting Gingles herself and helping hold her down while she ordered the man to cut her. All of these claims, however, were refuted by Short's cross examination, during which time he pointed out the slow and often contradictory genesis of the February 16th tale and brought in scores of witnesses who challenged Gingles' testimony, including a doctor who maintained that the wounds she allegedly received from Barrette had been enlarged since he initially viewed them in the hospital.⁵⁴

Perhaps more damaging to Gingles' credibility, however, was the attack Short waged on her portrait of herself as an innocent, vulnerable girl who had fallen prey to a vicious band of white slavers. Short paraded a host of witnesses before the jury who had known Gingles during her stay in Canada who testified that she was, in fact, a known thief

⁵³"Say Ella Gingles Imagined Attack," 6 July 1909; "Worse Tale Told by Ella Gingles," 7 July 1909; "Gingles Girl's Past Rises to Blast Her," Chicago Record-Herald 5 July 1909; "Brand Torture Tale as Hysteria of Girl," Chicago Record-Herald 6 July 1909.

⁵⁴"Tortured in Orgy, New Gingles Tale," Chicago Tribune 8 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Beaten," Chicago Daily News 7 July 1909; "Attacks Denied by Ella Gingles," 10 July 1909; "Repeats Slave Story at Ella Gingles Trial," Chicago Record-Herald 14 July 1909; "Asserts Gingles Cuts Herself," 13 July 1909; "Fresh Thrills Given in Gingles Girl Trial," 13 July 1909. The allegations regarding Gingles' cuts produced further sensations in the courtroom when O'Donnell tried to have her raise her skirt to the jury to show them the wounds, a tactic disallowed by Judge Brentano.

who had stolen from previous employers and was prone to immoral behavior with men. She had even, these witnesses claimed, attempted to perform an abortion on herself while working as a domestic servant in a Canadian home. Her employer testified that he had seen the dead baby, a story corroborated by a Canadian doctor who reportedly performed a second operation on Gingles after the botched abortion. Gingles, Short alleged, was hardly the type of girl prone to victimization by evil procurers. Instead, he claimed, she was the type of girl who had read stories about white slavery and, seeking to get herself out of trouble and seek revenge against Barrette, had constructed one of her own.⁵⁵ Short attempted to convince the jury of this by producing pamphlets on white slavery and questioning Gingles as to whether or not she was familiar with them. She denied every having read them or ever having heard of white slavery, a dubious claim given her assertion that she was reading Chicago newspapers which were, at the time, full of news about how procurers operated and the local crusade to prosecute them.⁵⁶

O'Donnell's efforts to re-establish the credibility of his client in the face of Short's attack focused more on attempting to whip up public sympathy for her than on trying to refute Short's findings. He was, however, able to interest other Chicagoans in her cause. The Irish Presbyterian Church in Chicago rallied to her aid, as did the local group of

⁵⁵"Letters Assail the Gingles Girl," 5 July 1909; "Attacks Denied by Ella Gingles," 10 July 1909; "Deny Innocence of Ella Gingles," Chicago Tribune 15 July 1909; "Gingles Girl's Story Upset by Canadians," 15 July 1909; "Gingles Story Jarred," Chicago Daily News 14 July 1909. For Gingles denials of these charges, made in an interview with a reporter from the Chicago Daily News see "Ella Gingles in Denial," Chicago Daily News 10 July 1909. Prosecutors also alleged that Gingles' story was based on a similar assault which occurred in Belleville, Canada while she lived there. See "Gingles Story Jarred," 14 July 1909.

⁵⁶"Tortured in Orgy, New Gingles Tale," 8 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Names Taggart in Recital," 7 July 1909; "O'Donnell Pilloried with Gingles Client," 8 July 1909. Edna Wolfe, the matron in the train station who alleged she had heard Gingles relate her tale weeks before it occurred also testified that she had asked Gingles if white slavery was involved in her situation, a question she claimed to ask every troubled girl, and Gingles had told her it was not. Wolfe also testified that she believed Gingles knew what white slavery was. See "See New Gingles Angle," Chicago Daily News 12 July 1909.

Orangemen, both of whom focused on raising money for her defense. Reverend Ryan of the Garfield Boulevard Presbyterian Church denounced the police and the prosecutors in front of a packed service and, placing his hand on Gingles' head, related the circumstances surrounding her escape from a band of white slavers. He was particularly angered by Short's cross-examination which he called a "living outrage" and accused the prosecutors of participating in a "heinous plot" to frame her. His words, which drew the wrath of State's Attorney Wayman who threatened to charge Ryan with contempt, hit home with his congregation who promptly raised \$300 to help Gingles.⁵⁷

O'Donnell was having his own problems. He was forced to resort to accusations that the police had replaced the ropes used to tie Gingles up on February 16th with baby strings and placed in the uncomfortable position of defending himself against the prosecution's charges that he had participated in Gingles' attempt to frame Barrette. He was also accused by the prosecutors of doubting the girl's story from the beginning and being overly familiar with the girl, a charge that resulted in bitter denunciations from O'Donnell.⁵⁸ His closing argument was, however, brilliantly presented and offered him an opportunity to defend both himself and his client.⁵⁹

⁵⁷"Say Duel Divorce is Gingles Model," 12 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Aided; Held Near Martyr," Chicago Record-Herald 12 July 1909; "Ella Gingles is Defended by Minister; Appears in Pulpit," Detroit Free Press 12 July 1909; "Alibi Staggers Gingles Charge," Chicago Tribune 14 July 1909; "Fresh Thrills Given in Gingles Girl Trial," 13 July 1909; "Flays R. Keene Ryan For His Gingles Talk," 13 July 1909.

⁵⁸"Say Duel Divorce is Gingles Model," 12 July 1909; "Tortured in Orgy, New Gingles Tale," 8 July 1909; "O'Donnell Doubts Gingles Stories?," 9 July 1909; "Her Own Lawyer Doubts Story," Detroit Free Press 9 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Aided; Held Near Martyr," 12 July 1909; "O'Donnell Attacked as Gingles' Mentor," 9 July 1909; "O'Donnell Pilloried with Gingles Client," 8 July 1909; "Gingles Frame-Up Cry," Chicago Daily News 8 July 1909; "Flays R. Keene Ryan for His Gingles Talk," 13 July 1909; "Gingles Trial Halted; Death Invades Court," Chicago Record-Herald 10 July 1909; "Repeats Slave Story at Ella Gingles Trial," 14 July 1909. The death referred to in the title of the July 10, 1909 Chicago Record-Herald article was the death of one of the juror's brother's which brought the trial to a temporary halt.

⁵⁹Short's closing was also apparently quite impressive and featured him tying himself to a

O'Donnell's closing statement, which the newspapers noted appealed more to sentiment than fact, began with his recitation of a story about his father who had fallen ill with yellow fever on his way from Ireland to New Orleans. When he arrived, he awoke to find an old white-haired slave bending over him, caring for him in his time of illness. It was a story, O'Donnell claimed, that had stuck with him throughout his life, motivating him to devote his work to the poor and oppressed. It was also a fitting story for O'Donnell's efforts to cast himself in the role of an emancipator of a white slave and, according to press reports, he did just that, melodramatically crying out:

That black face is bending over his son today. I am ready to make that sacrifice for humanity when humanity calls for aid. I have answered that call, my father, I have answered it.⁶⁰

He knew, he stated, that it would not be easy and that fighting for Gingles' freedom meant danger for himself. He was not, he stated, "forgetful of the fate of Stead in England" whose efforts to destroy the evil Gingles faced, landed him in jail.⁶¹

The closing statement was, by all accounts, impressive and left not a dry eye in the courtroom, except Gingles who reportedly only smiled when he finished. Jurors wept audibly, as did many of the spectators.⁶² They returned with their verdict seven hours, and

chair to demonstrate how easy it would have been for Gingles' to tie herself up in the Wellington Hotel bathroom. He also taunted O'Donnell by alleging that he had missed his opportunity to be declared the "Abraham Lincoln of the white slaves." See "Makes Jury Laugh at Gingles Story," Chicago Tribune 16 July 1909; "Rest Till Monday in Gingles Trial," Chicago Tribune 17 July 1909; "Hints at Conspiracy in Gingles Argument," Chicago Record-Herald 16 July 1909; " "Asks Gingles Verdict," Chicago Daily News 15 July 1909; "Gingles Jury 7 to 5 to Convict, Is Report," Chicago Daily News 19 July 1909. ⁶⁰"Rest Till Monday in Gingles Trial," 17 July 1909.

⁶¹"O'Donnell Makes Plea," Chicago Daily News 16 July 1909; "Final Plea To Save Ella Gingles is Made," Chicago Record-Herald 17 July 1909.

⁶²"Final Plea To Save Ella Gingles is Made," 17 July 1909; "Rest Till Monday in Gingles Trial," 17 July 1909.

five ballots, later.⁶³ Gingles, they declared, was not guilty. The jury also took the extraordinary step of including a message with their verdict which read "we the jury further find that the charges made by the defendant against Agnes Barrette are without foundation and are untrue."⁶⁴

The jury's verdict, which both declared Gingles innocent of larceny and guilty of perjury was claimed as a victory by all sides. It was greeted with marked enthusiasm by Gingles' female supports in the audience, whose joyous outburst brought reprimands from the judge. Gingles, with some prompting from a female friend, shook hands with each of the jurors, many of whom took the opportunity to give her advice including: "Be a good girl, Ella" and "Be careful that you don't do anything wrong."⁶⁵ O'Donnell, who had been absent from the courtroom when the verdict was read, merely reported that he was happy over the verdict when newspaper reporters caught up with him on the street. He also stated that the portion of the verdict which exonerated Barrette was "purely gratuitous." He refused to further discuss anything related to Barrette or the white-slavery story Gingles had told in court.⁶⁶

He wasn't the only one who had enough of Gingles' white-slavery narratives. Gingles' allegations and her inflammatory testimony had taken the heaviest toll on the woman she accused, Agnes Barrette, who was attending a dinner party at the Palmer House when the verdict was read. When the news reached her through a messenger she returned to the Wellington Hotel where she told reporters she really didn't have anything to say about the verdict. She did, however, say that she had expected to be vindicated by a guilty conviction and "found the ways of an American jury" to be "beyond

⁶³"Jury Frees Ella; Finds Tale False," 20 July 1909.

⁶⁴People V. Gingles, #90279.

⁶⁵"Jury Frees Ella; Finds Tale False," 20 July 1909; "Both Found Not Guilty," Detroit Free Press 20 February 1909.

⁶⁶"Ella Gingles Free; Barrette Charges Called Unfounded," Chicago Record-Herald 20 July 1909.

comprehension." She supposed, she told reporters, that she should be appreciative to the fact that the jury had taken an extra step to declare the charges against her to be unfounded but she remained astonished at the verdict itself.⁶⁷

If Attorney Short was astonished he didn't show it. When reporters caught up with him, he declared the jury's decision a victory for the state. Arguing that the State's Attorney had never really cared about winning a conviction, Short told reporters:

The indictment was rather loosely drawn, and we never had any serious purpose of insisting upon the punishment of the girl. We wanted to discover the truth or falsity of the "white slave" charges made by Attorney O'Donnell. That was the beginning and end of the whole case.⁶⁸

It was a case that State's Attorney Wayman wanted to wash his hands of. Following the verdict he told reporters that he would not pursue any charges against the girl but he was also not going to be calling any grand juries to further investigate her white slavery charges. He wanted Miss Gingles to "get out of the Criminal Court building and stay out."⁶⁹

Ella Gingles, however, had different ideas. When asked what her future held, she repeatedly stated that she would be telling her story again and pursuing charges against Barrette but Wayman was not the only one standing in the way of her plans.⁷⁰ Following the trial, O'Donnell stated unequivocally that Gingles would now be sent home to her

⁶⁷Ibid. Prior to the trial Barrette reported that she was under so much stress that her health had broken down and that she was unable to eat or sleep. She cried frequently throughout the trial. See "Dies in Gingles Case; State Eyes Mystery," 26 June 1909; "Gingles Story Jarred," 14 July 1909; "Gingles Frame-Up Cry," 8 July 1909.

⁶⁸"Ella Gingles Free; Barrette Charges Called Unfounded," 20 July 1909.

⁶⁹"Jury Frees Ella; Finds Tale False," 20 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Free; Barrette Charges Called Unfounded," 20 July 1909. See also "Ella Gingles Prefers to Stay in America," Chicago Record-Herald 21 July 1909 and "No Perjury Charge Against Miss Gingles," Detroit Free Press 21 July 1909.

⁷⁰"Ella Gingles Free; Barrette Charges Called Unfounded," 20 July 1909; "Jury Frees Ella; Finds Tale False," 20 July 1909.

mother in Ireland. It was, he stated, "the best place for her."⁷¹ Gingles bitterly resisted the plans to send her home, claiming that the stories told about her during the trial had ruined her reputation there and asserting that she wanted to remain in the United States, secure employment as a lace maker and pursue the case against Barrette.⁷²

Her protests were, however, ignored and on August 8th she left Chicago for Ireland, accompanied by a clubwoman assigned to make sure she returned home safely.⁷³ She was also accompanied by the promise of \$1,500 which was being collected by Chicago's Orangemen to help her get settled in Ireland.⁷⁴ The money, reporters speculated, would help her establish a lace shop in her home country but Gingles was still not convinced that Ireland was the place for her. When a friend bidding farewell on the dock asked her what her future held she replied that she did not know.⁷⁵ The night before, however, she had told reporters that they shouldn't be surprised if she returned one day to pursue her charges against Barrette.⁷⁶

The trial was never reopened but the legacy of Ella Gingles lived on to haunt State's Attorney Wayman and became part of the white-slavery discourse that emanated

⁷¹"Ella Gingles Free; Barrette Charges Called Unfounded," 20 July 1909. O'Donnell had planned on having Gingles deported following the resolution of the larceny case from the beginning, a fact which came out during the trial. See "O'Donnell Doubts Gingles Stories," 9 July 1909.

⁷²"Ella Gingles Back to Erin," Chicago Tribune 22 July 1909; "Ella Gingles Prefers to Stay in America," 21 July 1909.

⁷³"Ella Gingles Leaves Today," Chicago Tribune 8 August 1909; "Ella Gingles Starts Home," Chicago Tribune 9 August 1909.

⁷⁴"Club Women Weep as Ella Gingles Goes," Chicago Record-Herald 9 August 1909. Reverend Ryan and Chicago's Orangemen promised to pledge up to \$3,000 if need be. See "Ella Gingles Starts Home," 9 August 1909.

⁷⁵"Club Women Weep as Ella Gingles Goes," 9 August 1909

⁷⁶"Ella Gingles Leaves Today," 8 August 1909. While it is unclear whether or not Gingles every returned to the United States, a letter from her mother sent to Reverend Ryan in September reiterated her intention of keeping Gingles in Ireland. See "Ella Gingles Not to Return," Chicago Tribune 9 September 1909.

out of Chicago.⁷⁷ Chicagoans were treated to daily newspaper articles during the early days of the investigation and the trial, articles which frequently pictured the main players, including Gingles, Barrette, Kenyon, O'Brien, O'Donnell, trial witnesses and individual pictures of the jury members, and drawings of the court proceedings and sketches of Gingles bound and gagged in the Wellington Hotel.⁷⁸ It was the most sensational white-slavery trial Chicago would ever see and undoubtedly helped spread the white-slavery panic both in and out of the city. It was the kind of trial that led devoted followers of the case to forge orders of admission to gain a coveted seat in the audience or to carry clippings from the news reports in their pockets.⁷⁹ It also reportedly led a number of other

⁷⁷Wayman was forced to deal with Gingles' case less than a month after the close of her trial when a grand jury formed to investigate charges of vice and graft within the Chicago police department tried to force him to re-open the Gingles case. Although they were unsuccessful in getting the case re-opened, the grand jurors and Wayman's foes used the occasion to cast suspicion on his efforts to root out graft among the police. See "Wayman Attacked by Grand Jurors," Chicago Tribune 18 August 1909; "Grand Jury Clash Awaiting Wayman," Chicago Tribune 19 August 1909; "Wayman Replies in Word and Act," Chicago Tribune 20 August 1909; "Foes of Wayman Make New Attack," Chicago Tribune 6 September 1909; "Wayman Lays Lash Upon His Accusers," Chicago Daily News 19 August 1909. For the ways in which Gingles' story became part of the larger white-slavery discourse in ways which re-inforced the idea that Gingles had, in fact, been the victim of a terrible white-slavery plot to enslave her see Lytle, The Tragedies of the White Slave, 92-190; John Regan, Crimes of the White Slavers and the Results (Chicago: J. Regan and Co., 1912), 58-71; Theodore Bingham, "The Girl that Disappears," Hampton's Magazine 25, no. 5 (November 1910), 566; Theodore Bingham, The Girl That Disappears (Boston: Richard G. Badger, 1911), 34-35.

⁷⁸"Girl Victim of an Alleged Assault in Chicago Hotel," Detroit Free Press 20 February 1909; "Lacemaker to Whose Aid Women Flock," Chicago Tribune 1 July 1909; "Woman Whom Ella Gingles Accuses," Chicago Tribune 18 February 1909; "Chief State Witness in Gingles Case Who Died Mysteriously in Roadhouse," Chicago Tribune 27 June 1909; "Gingles Frame-Up Cry," 8 July 1909; "Gingles Story Jarred," 14 July 1909; "Gingles Jury 7 to 5 to Convict, is Report," 19 July 1909; "Proprietress of Lace Store Testifies Against Girl Accused of Larceny," Chicago Tribune 2 July 1909; "Recalls Girls Deceit," 18 February 1909; "Scene of Young Woman's Alleged Torture in the Wellington Hotel, Victim of the Affair, and Letter She Sent to Friend Asking Assistance," Chicago Tribune 18 February 1909; "Hotel Bath 'Victim,' Her Appeal for Aid and Sketch of her Dilemma," Chicago Record-Herald 18 February 1909.

⁷⁹"Worse Tale Told by Ella Gingles," 7 July 1909; "Asserts Gingles Girl Cut Herself," 13

girls to fabricate their own copycat white-slavery stories, an allegation which, along with the details of Gingles' case, raises the issue of how and why young girls crafted their own white-slavery narratives.⁸⁰

"Help me, I'm a white slave"

As the case of Ella Gingles demonstrates, "white slaves" were not always the passive subjects of a discourse constructed by middle-class reformers and white-slavery crusaders. Instead, some young women who were facing charges for criminal offenses utilized the discourse on white slavery to paint themselves as innocent victims and avoid prosecution on criminal charges. The historical evidence also suggests that some women presented themselves as white slaves in an effort to gain leverage over and win concessions from men they felt had abused them in some way.⁸¹ It is, of course, difficult to assess with any absolute certainty whether or not individual "white slaves" were willfully crafting themselves as victims for these purposes or were, instead, interpreting their own experiences with reference to the white-slavery narratives. In spite of this, reformers' accounts and the details of specific court cases indicates that Ella Gingles was not alone in seeing the manipulation of the white-slavery discourse as a means by which to improve her chances of being acquitted of the criminal charges pending against her. This was particularly true with regard to women who had been charged with prostitution.

July 1909; "Is Posted on Gingles Case," Chicago Tribune 5 July 1909.

⁸⁰Frances Fenton, "The Influence of Newspaper Presentations upon the Growth of Crime and Anti-Social Activity" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1911), 78-79.

⁸¹For a discussion of these particular cases see chapter three.

As we have seen, the moral panic over white slavery was a part of the larger anti-prostitution movement which swept urban cities in the United States during the first two decades of the twentieth century.⁸² As such, it was accompanied by a large scale effort to close the brothels and "rescue" the prostitutes who, it was imagined, were imprisoned within them.⁸³ The vast majority of "white slaves" had, in fact, been "rescued" prior to telling their stories to the police or the prosecutors. In practice this meant that the girls had been picked up on the street or in disorderly houses on the suspicion that they were engaged, albeit involuntarily, in illicit activities. Once in custody these women faced exceptionally limited options. A conviction for solicitation under the state's Disorderly Conduct Code meant fines or a jail sentence, both unappealing prospects. Convincing the police and the prosecutors that they were the innocent victims of white slavers held the possibility at least of being released from jail without being charged.⁸⁴ Faced with these limited choices, it is not surprising that a number of the young women, either on their own volition or at the urging of police and prosecutors, sought to portray themselves as unwilling participants in a vile flesh trade. The white-slavery discourse undoubtedly appeared to these women as a powerful discursive tool which had the capacity to keep them from being imprisoned by a different group of enslavers.

⁸²For a general history of this movement see Ruth Rosen, The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918 (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1982). For an analysis of the growth of the white-slavery panic in this context see chapter two.

⁸³Prosecutors in other cities were often not as receptive to the "rescuing" activity of reformers as those in Chicago. In New York, for instance, the District Attorney's office complained that reformers were engaging in too "zealous" a pursuit of white slaves and refused to press charges see "Acquitted of White Slaving Charge," New York Times 28 May 1910.

⁸⁴For a copy of this code, which provided for fines upon conviction, see "Appendix VII," The Social Evil in Chicago (Chicago: Vice Commission, 1911), 314-316. For a more detailed description of what women convicted of moral offenses in Chicago faced in terms of the trials and punishments in the early twentieth century see George E. Worthington, Specialized Courts Dealing with Sex Delinquency (New York: Frederick H. Hitchcock, 1921), 3-82.

The idea that prostitutes manipulated popular discourses to develop sympathetic personas for themselves and affect judicial decisions is not, of course, new. In addition to the fact that many contemporaries suspected that prostitutes were lying to reformers, police, and the courts, historians have, more recently, begun to analyze the ways in which prostitutes manipulated popular beliefs about seduction in an effort to shape both their pasts and their public identities. Patricia Cohen, for instance, argues that the nineteenth-century prostitute Helen Jewett constantly re-invented herself to increase her prospects. She had, Cohen argues, no compunction about telling the "true" version of her life but, instead, changed her history to suit her circumstances. This typically involved her portraying herself as an upper-class, innocent seduction victim which, Cohen asserts, appealed to the fantasies of her customers.⁸⁵ Other historians, like Carolyn Strange, have demonstrated that women's narrative re-invention of themselves as innocent victims was a particularly important weapon for women facing prosecution by the state. Her analysis, which argues that women spun their own tales of vulnerability as strategies of survival and resistance, delves into the ways in which women accused of crimes ranging from infanticide to murder attempted to construct themselves as innocent maidens to gain their acquittals. The women, she alleges, who were able to craft stories for themselves which most closely conformed to prevailing images of vulnerable women adrift stood the best chances of gaining their freedom.⁸⁶

The narratives on white slavery which took center stage in cities like Chicago during the first two decades of the twentieth century provided young women with a

⁸⁵Patricia Cline Cohen, The Murder of Helen Jewett: The Life and Death of a Prostitute in Nineteenth-Century New York (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 29-30, 40-42, 133.

⁸⁶Carolyn Strange, Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 11, 53-88. See also Barbara Meil Hobson, Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 72-75 and Ann-Louise Shapiro, Breaking the Codes: Female Criminality in Fin-de-Siecle Paris (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

particularly sensational image of imperiled innocence to attach to themselves.⁸⁷ Gingles' case was, however, unusual in one sense for it generated an incredible amount of press coverage in Chicago, coverage which provides an invaluable resource for historians attempting to piece together how women utilized white-slavery narratives in their criminal defenses. Chicago, the pre-eminent site of white-slavery reform both in terms of narrative dissemination and criminal prosecutions, is certainly the best place to look for evidence as to the ways in which women wielded the white-slavery discourse to gain leverage in court proceedings. In part this is due to the zealous pursuit and prosecution of white slavers undertaken by Clifford Roe and his definition of a white slave as a woman placed into a life of prostitution "with or without her consent" which made presenting oneself as a white slave a viable strategy for a range of prostitutes, even those who could not demonstrate that they were forced into the life.⁸⁸ Unfortunately, the vast majority of the documents which could shed light on individual cases prosecuted by Roe, and all of the official court records prior to 1913, have been destroyed. What remains of the records from 1913 on, primarily arrest slips and indictments, is also silent on the circumstances surrounding the filing of complaints by the women's accusers.⁸⁹ There is, however, enough historical evidence, in the form of newspaper articles, reformer's narratives, and prosecutorial court accounts to suggest that women were participating in the construction of themselves as white slaves as a means to win their freedom when charged with criminal offenses.⁹⁰

⁸⁷As the white-slavery narratives were emerging in the late-nineteenth century, they were also available to women who found themselves arrested for prostitution during this earlier period. Evidence suggests they also wielded them to escape conviction on prostitution charges. See for example, the case of "Minnie Pine," detailed in chapter one.

⁸⁸Clifford Roe, Panders and their White Slaves (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1910), 94.

⁸⁹The municipal court records, where Roe's prosecutions took place, were destroyed prior to 1913. What remains of the records after that date are housed in the Archives of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois.

⁹⁰The most useful documents were located in the records of Chicago's Committee of Fifteen, housed in the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago. These archives

The vast majority of accounts recorded by reformers and the courts indicate that the girls who came forward with white-slavery narratives had, in fact, already been identified by reformers or police as potential "victims." They had, in other words, been identified as women who were involved in illicit, illegal activities and had either been arrested or brought in for questioning. Take, for instance, the story of Hazel Williams and Katherine Craig. Williams and Craig came to the attention of police late one Saturday night on N. Clark Street, right in the heart of the Levee District. Both 17 years old, the two claimed they had come to the city from their respective country homes in Sault St. Marie, Michigan and Whiting, Indiana in February of 1907 to pursue careers. They both told the police that they had regular jobs. Craig said she was employed in a department store while Williams asserted that she was working as a domestic. Whatever story they initially told these officers as to what they were doing on the street at such a late hour must not have been particularly convincing. According to press reports, the officers were suspicious of their stories and took the girls to the police station where they faced further interrogation by a lieutenant. While in police custody they eventually told a tale which claimed that they had been approached numerous times by a man named Fleishman and a woman named Greenman who were trying to entice them to enter a resort and who had showed them trunks of fine clothes and promised them that there was a great deal of

include two volumes of "Research Data" which includes a number of pandering cases tried in Chicago from 1907 into the 1920s. As the early cases predate the formation of the Chicago's Committee of Fifteen, which was founded in 1911, the records appear to have been kept by Roe himself or someone affiliated with him as early as 1907, when he began undertaking pandering prosecutions under the auspices of the State's Attorney General's office. While the records are somewhat inconsistent in their details, many of the accounts include specific details of the cases, including reasons for both the indictments and the final disposition. These handwritten records, which were clearly prosecutorial accounts of the cases, offer the greatest proof that many of Roe's prosecutions were not all they were cracked up to be. For a history of Chicago's Committee of Fifteen see Clifford Barnes, "The Story of the Committee of Fifteen in Chicago," Social Hygiene 4, no. 2 (April 1918): 145-156. For more information on the genesis of Roe's prosecutions see chapter two.

money to be made in the Levee district. The girls reportedly stated that they had refused to enter a south side resort but had continued to see the man and were on their way to meet him when they were stopped by the police. These allegations were enough to get Fleishman and Greenman arrested on suspicion of white slavery. The girls, who the newspaper reported had their minds "poisoned with false tales of the pleasures of a life in the 'levee'," were held as witnesses against them.⁹¹

Throughout the white-slavery panic this same scenario would be repeated over and over as girls and suspected prostitutes were arrested or hauled into police stations around Chicago and forced to defend themselves against invasive questioning or allegations that they were voluntary inmates at one of the Levee's "sporting houses."⁹² In response to the interrogations, these women frequently created stories which cast them as victims of actual or potential white slavers obviously in hopes of avoiding prosecution on charges of

⁹¹"Girls Accuse Two of Levee Traffic," Chicago Tribune 3 June 1907, 3. For an example of the ways in which "rescues" undertaken by reformers could result in similar outcomes see the story of Adelaide Wilson in chapter three. See also the story recorded by Chicago reformer Samuel Paynter Wilson who related the story of a girl who claimed that she was duped into entering a brothel on the promise on light chamber work and restrained by force. The girl reportedly alleged that following her thwarted escape attempt, the madam made her sit by the windows and entice men to enter the house. Her efforts to drum up business were, however, cut short when she recruited a detective who had her arrested. It was at this point that she related her white-slavery experiences to her new captors, whom she alleged had given her her freedom. While the police apparently believed her tale, it is unlikely that a brothel-keeper would place a girl who had been trying to escape through the back yard on display in the front window and charge her with talking men on the streets into entering the house. See Samuel Paynter Wilson, Chicago and its Cesspools of Infamy (Chicago: Samuel Paynter Wilson, n.d), 135-136.

⁹²For one particularly interesting case in which a woman, who was picked up on the streets dressed in men's clothes, alleged she had been the victim of a white slavery plot when questioned by police see "Girl Dreams of Kidnaping; Wanders from Home City?," Chicago Tribune 22 October 1908. Her story, which included allegations that she had been kidnapped, chloroformed, held against her will in a house, and was searching for a policeman when they discovered her in men's clothes was apparently too far fetched even at the height of the white-slavery panic. Like Ella Gingles, the girl was diagnosed with a mental condition and perceived to be the victim of nothing more than wild dreams and somnambulism.

disorderly conduct. That these women had frequently been charged with disorderly conduct prior to making their white-slavery allegations is demonstrated by the prosecutorial court records which frequently note both the days on which the women were charged and the dates of the arrest of their purported panders and by accounts which state that the prostitutes implicated the men in their own confessions.⁹³ These were the epitome of captive witnesses.⁹⁴ Faced with prosecution if they didn't name names and often held in police custody until the trials of their alleged kidnappers came up on the docket, the girls were forced to repeat their allegations in court if they hoped to be released, a fact which obviously helps explain Roe's successful prosecutions against alleged white slavers throughout the period.

The court records indicate that many of these young women were successful in their attempts to cast the blame for their lives of prostitution onto others and avoid prosecution themselves but the strategy was not without its flaws and was not open to all women. In the first place, signing a pandering complaint did not immediately win one's freedom even though it frequently meant that the disorderly conduct charges against the woman were eventually dropped. As the case of Hazel Williams and Katherine Craig reveals, charging someone else with pandering meant that one could count on a few weeks or months of free, compulsory housing in the city's jail annex.⁹⁵ The police defended this

⁹³See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25 and Vol. 26 and "Held on White Slavery Charge," Chicago Record-Herald 16 February 1909.

⁹⁴The tendency of Chicago's police to arrest first and sign complaints later, which prevailed as late as 1925, and the practice of booking the women on open charges, which allowed the police to maneuver around a requirement that arrested individuals be booked within twenty-four hours helped create an environment in which women could be pressured to bring charges against others in exchange for having potential charges against them dropped. Under an open charge, they could be held for two weeks before being booked for any crime. See Worthington, 14-15, 29.

⁹⁵For additional accounts of how material witnesses in white-slavery cases were held for periods from three to six weeks see Roe, Panders, 195-197. See also Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 218, 221, 272.

practice and reformers pressured the courts to deny these women bond on the basis of the fact that they were in jeopardy of being spirited away by the traffickers. Some reformers even argued that the white slaves actually found that being held in jail as material witnesses was like a "liberation" when compared to their lives in prostitution but it is unlikely that the women were so enthusiastic about being held in Chicago's Detention Houses, where rooms of 25 to 30 women all shared one shower, one toilet and two clean towels a day.⁹⁶

The best case scenario that most of these women could hope for was that prosecutors might allow them to go home with their parents or relatives following the disposition of the pandering cases against the men and women they had accused. Few were simply let go.⁹⁷ Instead, most were shipped home or were entrusted into the care of Chicago's reforming community.⁹⁸ Being sent home, which frequently meant being shipped out of Chicago, was not a prospect that many young women found appealing and, facing it, some opted to stay in the Detention Home.⁹⁹ Others took the first opportunity to

⁹⁶"Versions Differ on Girl's Arrest," Chicago Tribune 23 March 1909; Regan, 72; Wilson, 81; Worthington, 28-30.

⁹⁷One exception is the case of Margerite Smith whose successful prosecution of Jesse Millard, a 23 year old American bartender, for pandering in 1913. Smith, who had charged Millard after being arrested for disorderly conduct, was simply released after his trial. The individual recording the disposition of the case expressed their incredulity by noting that the judge merely "turned her loose." See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 310.

⁹⁸In 1912, Chicago's Committee of Fifteen reported that as a result of 63 pandering convictions they had sent 47 girls home to their parents. Another 13 were sent to institutions. See "Chicago Committee Against Vice," The Survey (July 27, 1912): 593-594 and Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology 4, no. 4 (1913): 613-614. As individual women frequently charged more than one individual with pandering, these 60 cases probably represented all "white slaves" allegedly trafficked by the 63 defendants. By 1913, the Committee of Fifteen was reporting that out of 76 arrests for pandering, and 46 conviction, only 25 girls were restored to their parents or committed to institutions. It is unclear what happened to the other girls. See "Wanted! Reinforcements on the Firing Line Against Commercialized Vice," in Clifford Barnes Papers, Box 2, folder 1913.

⁹⁹"Child-Wife a White Slave," Chicago Tribune 23 December 1907. For cases in which

return to Chicago and pick up their lives. Fredia Hess, whose pandering allegations against Floyd Williams landed him a six-month stay in jail, was accompanied to her Niles, Michigan home by Deaconess Dietrich on February 18, 1911. She was back in Chicago on the 20th, purportedly working in the restaurant in Carson, Pirie, and Scott.¹⁰⁰ As Catherine Haight, an alleged white-slave whose disappearance created a sensation in Chicago at the end of 1909, stated: "I would rather go to jail or the house of correction than to go back home." At home, she alleged, she was "tied down all the time" and not allowed to do anything she wanted. What she wanted to do was to stay in Flint, Michigan, where she was discovered, marry a bellboy and go on the vaudeville stage. She did, however, agree to go home after her parents promised her that she would not have to return to school.¹⁰¹

the women arrested for soliciting had their disorderly conduct cases dropped and were sent home or turned over to their parents or other relatives following the disposition of pandering cases see Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 80, 137, 166, 195, 196, 200, 212, 215, 225, 278, 200, 278, 294 and Vol. 26, 62, 63. For cases in which women were turned over to other reformers, including the House of Good Shepard see Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 96, 147, 157, 171, 193, 228, 275, 290, 294 and " 'White Slave' Facts Given," Chicago Tribune 24 December 1907. Those who couldn't make it with the reformers faced being referred to the House of Detention. See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 164. For the conditions awaiting women sent to the House of Corrections, also known as Bridewell, see Worthington, 52-54.

¹⁰⁰Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 125. See also the case of Olga, who reformers in Chicago put on the train back to her home in Racine, against her wishes, to protect her from white slavers in Roe, Panders, 81-82.

¹⁰¹"Find Haight Girl in Resort," Chicago Tribune 20 December 1909; "Haight Girl Returns Home," Chicago Tribune 21 December 1909. In spite of this "happy ending," the police were apparently unwilling to resolve the well-publicized case without arresting someone for the "crimes" allegedly committed. When Haight exonerated the three men that Chicago police had already arrested in conjunction with her disappearance, they charged the woman who owned the hotel where Haight was stayed when she was found in Flint, even though Haight's father vouched for the fact that it was a respectable place. See also "Trace Lost Girl to Panders," Chicago Tribune 11 December 1909; "Bellboy Admits Seeing Girl," Chicago Tribune 12 December 1909, "Missing Girl Vainly Sought," Chicago Tribune 13 December 1909; "Search West Side for Girl," Chicago Tribune 14 December 1909.

If constructing oneself as a white slave to avoid prosecution for soliciting did not provide women with an surefire way to avoid jail, or worse, being sent home, it was also not an effective strategy for all women charged with prostitution. It was clearly most effective for young, native-born, white American women or immigrants who could prove they had been in the country over three years. Foreign-born women who had been in the country less than three years were subject to deportation if caught practicing prostitution, white slaves or not, under the 1907 immigration law.¹⁰² In addition, the evidence suggests that African-American women had a harder time making charges of pandering stick than white women did. As Strange has argued, one's ability to wield successfully seduction narratives depended on how well one could play the part. Traditional victim narratives, including those which centered on white slavery, required the victim to be sexually innocent, a pre-requisite which clashed with society's prevailing racist beliefs that African-American women were, by nature, highly sexual.¹⁰³ This hampered African-American women's ability to utilize the white-slavery narratives as a defense against prostitution charges. As a result, some African-American women found that the courts were quick to reduce the pandering charges they lodged against others to disorderly conduct.¹⁰⁴ Some African-American women, however, were able to make the pandering charges stick. This was particularly true when the accused pander was a woman. Alma Kendall was, for instance, arrested by an African-American police officer on the charges that she brought two African-American girls from Memphis to a "colored boarding house" in Chicago and

¹⁰²For a discussion of these laws see chapter two.

¹⁰³Strange, 78-83.

¹⁰⁴Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 248. The case of Blanche Clark's pandering allegations against Clifford Clark was also reduced in this way. See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 280. Unfortunately the records do not specify that Blanche was "colored." They do specify that Verette Wilson, Rufus Soules, Clifford Clark and the attorneys in both cases were.

forced one of the girls to prostitute herself. Kendall, who was African American, was found guilty and sentenced to six months in the country jail and a \$300 fine.¹⁰⁵

While African-American women had a harder time convincing the courts that they were victims of panders and procuresses, some white women had an equally hard time convincing prosecutors that they weren't. Some of these women claimed that they had the narratives foisted upon them, a fact which came out when they appeared in court as unwilling witnesses or failed to show at all. Some, like Mary White, alleged that they were threatened by police and forced to bring pandering charges against innocent men.¹⁰⁶ This is not unlikely, given the accounts which prosecutors gave of how they secured their evidence from white slaves. The pressure they applied to these "victims" was so notorious that newspaper referred to the room in which they were examined by police as the "sweat box." Edwin Sims, relating how prosecutors discovered the white-slavery story of an immigrant girl, noted that the girl was in a state of "abject terror" when approached for questioning. In spite of this, she was reportedly coaxed, between sobs, to reveal to Assistant United States District Attorney Parkin how she had been duped into coming into

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 158. In other cases where African-American women were charged, the complainants were white and the penalties for conviction were higher. When Roberta Drew, whom Roe's prosecutorial records note was "colored," was convicted of making Alma Peterson, a Swedish girl, prostitute herself to a "colored man," the racial component of the allegations garnered Drew a one year stay in jail. The man to whom Peterson was allegedly pandered was originally charged with abduction but was released after the court found their was insufficient evidence to charge him. See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 171 and 172. In other cases, the race of the complainant is unclear. See for instance, Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 25, 141 and Vol. 26, 22. As the moral panic over white-slavery waned during and after WWI, the pandering laws were increasingly used against African-American men who were being convicted both on the complaints of white women and African-American women. The penalties, however, were still generally higher for those convicted of pandering white women. See Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 26, 61, 70, 117, 119, 123, 140, 141, 146, 151, 152, 156.

¹⁰⁶Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data, Vol. 26, 18.

the country by a procuress and had been imprisoned in a life of prostitution.¹⁰⁷

Interrogation conditions like these may help explain why so many women, who initially agreed to prosecute their "panders" as a means to escape prosecution themselves, came up missing when called to testify.

A number of women, who managed to escape the protective custody of their parents or reformers prior to trial, simply failed to show up to press their cases.¹⁰⁸ In some instances, Roe's office tracked the wayward witnesses and brought them back to testify. Ida Parker and Evelyn Krause, two girls who alleged that a theatrical agent had lured them from Chicago to Springfield on the pretense that they would become members of an opera company there, had attempted to avoid testifying in the trial of the theater owner by fleeing the city as the trial approached. Roe, who had received a letter from a woman in Wisconsin stating that she had seen them, hired an investigator who discovered them living in Milwaukee under assumed names. With the assistance of Chicago's Law and Order League and the State Attorney's office, the two girls were arrested and transported back to Chicago where they reportedly told prosecutors that they had left, in part, because they were tired of all the restraints placed on their liberties while they were in the care of Mrs. Lizzie Levy, the woman to whom they had been entrusted by the Chicago Law and Order League pending their trial. Roe's account of the case also claimed that the girls stated that they had been duped into leaving by Mrs. Levy and a friend who told them the trial had been delayed and they would be sent for when it came up. When it was time for them to go, Roe claims, they were "half-persuaded and half-forced" into the waiting carriage. In Milwaukee, they charged, they were given money and warned against

¹⁰⁷Edwin W. Sims, "The White Slave Trade of Today," Woman's World 24, no. 9 (September 1908), 1-2. On the need to force the employees and prostitutes of vice lords to turn state's evidence by increasing the penalties they themselves faced see Frederick H. Whitin, "Obstacles to Vice Repression," Social Hygiene 2, no. 2 (April 1916), 155-156, 160-162.

¹⁰⁸Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data Vol. 25, 20, 268, 270.

returning to Chicago. They couldn't contact the prosecutor's office, they reportedly told Roe, because they were kept under constant surveillance. Their allegations led to the arrest of Levy, who Roe claimed to suspect the whole time, and her conviction on charges that she had induced the girls to leave the state. The conviction was, however, overturned by another judge who plainly did not believe the state's witnesses.¹⁰⁹

Most women did not, or could not, go to the same lengths as Parker and Krause to avoid testifying either because they were not willing to leave Chicago or because they were being held by the state as material witnesses and had no opportunity to get away. They had little choice but to show up in court, state that they were unwilling witnesses, and deny the original story they had told police.¹¹⁰ In some cases these women were allowed to go home after their testimony but, in others, changing their stories resulted in more dire consequences.¹¹¹ Sarah Ipo, a Japanese woman who had initially told police she had been placed in a brothel by her Japanese husband, tried to deny her original charges when she appeared in court in January of 1909 but found they were unwilling to reunite the couple or believe that the Japanese man, whom popular discourse held uniquely responsible for the trafficking in women, really hadn't procured his wife for a life of shame.¹¹² Instead, her husband, who was apparently quite ill, was taken to the hospital

¹⁰⁹"Involved as Aids of Girls' Lurers," Chicago Tribune 14 April 1908; Roe, Panders 122-141. See also "Police on a New Crusade," Chicago Tribune 8 January 1908 and Ernest Bell (ed.), Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls or War on the White Slave Trade (Chicago: G.S. Ball, 1910), 167-168, 231-233. Girls who ran away from their "protectors" risked facing charges themselves. When Josephine Walker ran away from the social worker with whom she had been placed following her testimony in a disorderly conduct trial in which she alleged three Italians had taken turns having sex with her, she was arrested, fined \$85.00 (\$35.00 more than the men she helped convict), and sent to the House of Good Shepherd.

¹¹⁰Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data Vol. 25, 44, 100, 180,

¹¹¹For cases where the women were allowed to go home following their refusal to testify in the pandering cases see Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data Vol. 25, no. 266 and Vol. 26, 18.

¹¹²Some white women also played on the tendency to see Chinese men as white slavers in their effort to avoid prosecution. When a white woman was arrested with seven Chinese

and Sarah, who had recanted on the idea that she was a involuntary inmate in a disorderly house, was placed in the Harrison street annex pending further investigation.¹¹³

In many cases, the courts deemed that no further investigation was needed and meted out swift punishment to the women who, in giving up their victim status, had left themselves vulnerable to the court's conclusions that they were guilty of the, now voluntary, immoral activities which had brought them to the attention of the police in the first place. Julia Costella, who recanted on her story that a 22 year old, married, Italian barber named Jim Rosa had procured her into a life of prostitution, found that the court now considered both of them guilty of disorderly conduct. They were each fined \$100 and costs.¹¹⁴ Hattie Skirpou, who had been found in a sporting house on Peoria St, was similarly fined \$25.00 after she refused to testify against her husband on the pandering charge which had been lodged against him. Her husband, Albert Skirpou, was found guilty anyway and sentenced to six month in jail and a \$300 fine.¹¹⁵ Mary Buckley, who similarly refused to follow through on her complaint that her husband had pandered her by testifying against him at his trial, was also found guilty of disorderly conduct and fined.¹¹⁶ Other women who went back on their statements to police and changed their stories were charged with fornication.¹¹⁷

Caught in a court system which viewed them as either victims or as guilty of immorality, women had to prove their victim status with their testimony or risk conviction themselves. Women whose testimony was not enough to convict their purported

men in a raid on a Chicago brothel in 1907, she reportedly told a "white slave" story but later admitted it was untrue. See "Finds Girls in Rooming House," Chicago Daily News 22 June 1907. For a discussion of the racial components of the narratives and the construction of the procurer as racially "other" see chapter four.

¹¹³"Admits Traffic in White Slaves," Chicago Tribune 19 January 1909.

¹¹⁴Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data Vol. 25, 305.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 84

¹¹⁶Ibid., 129

¹¹⁷Ibid., 87, 115.

traffickers also occasionally found prosecutors less than willing to drop the disorderly conduct charge against them. When, for instance, the court found they didn't have enough evidence to back up Theresa Birnetti and Eva Moyer's allegation that Tony Caneni tried to induce them to enter a brothel, the judge found all three guilty of disorderly conduct, fined the girls \$25.00 plus costs and sent them to the House of Good Shepherd.¹¹⁸ This is not, however, to imply that all those who followed through on their charges and helped Chicago's prosecutors secure a pandering conviction were home free or even free to go home. Some of them were still charged with disorderly conduct after their testimony helped convict others of allegedly procuring them. Annie Morris, who had Toney Rosso charged with pandering after she was arrested for disorderly conduct in June of 1912, found that the court's conviction of Rosso didn't stop them from fining her \$85.00 on the disorderly conduct charge and sending her to the House of Good Shepherd.¹¹⁹ On rare occasions, however, even women who changed their stories and refused to testify against their alleged panders had the disorderly conduct charges which prosecutors had lodged

¹¹⁸Ibid., 151.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 229. For an analysis of the ways in which women "victims" were forced to testify in federal Mann Act cases and charged with the crime themselves see Marlene Beckman, "The White Slave Traffic Act: Historical Impact of a Federal Crime Policy on Women," in Prostitution, vol 9 of History of Women in the United States: Historical Articles on Women's Lives and Activities, ed. Nancy Cott (New York: K.G. Saur, 1993): 106-122. The tendency of the courts in Chicago to find both the procurer and his victim guilty grew over time. In part this was due to the fact that the definition of what constituted pandering was changing to focus on men who lived off the wages of a prostitute. This definition did not require that the court find that the woman was an involuntary prostitute and they responded by presuming that the girls were voluntary participants and finding them guilty of disorderly conduct. Changing ideas about prostitution, the increasing tendency to see the girls as feeble-minded delinquents, and the waning of the moral panic over white slavery also helps explain why prostitutes had an increasingly difficult time claiming "victim" status in their dealings with the court. For evidence as to the growing tendency of the courts to charge both the alleged pander and prostitute during and after WWI see Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data Vol. 26, 64, 65, 66, 67, 78, 79. These women, who typically got placed on adult probation, still fared better than the men, who continued to face jail time.

against them dropped.¹²⁰ Claiming that others were responsible for the acts of prostitution with which they had been charged was not, by any stretch of the imagination, a perfect strategy, nor did it confer an automatic "get out of jail free" card upon its users. As one of the few options available to women charged with crimes against morality, it remained a viable strategy and, sometimes, it worked.

Subjectivity and the White Slave

While the foregoing cases suggest that some women were actively manipulating the white-slavery narratives to portray themselves as victims for their own gain, the historical record is silent on why other women who appeared as plaintiffs in pandering prosecutions or who approached police of their own free will claimed they had been the victims of traffickers. Historical accounts of Mona Marshall's early white-slavery allegations in Chicago, for instance, state that she approached prosecutors with her story even though she wasn't facing any criminal charges. These stories are, however, few and far between and accounts of Marshall's case, including Roe's melodramatic narrative on her pitiful appeal to police, were challenged by later accounts which portrayed her as a prostitute who was, in fact, rescued and forced to pursue charges against her alleged procurers by Roe.¹²¹ Others who gave themselves up as white slaves also had suspicious motives.

Contemporaries speculated that some women, and girls, claimed they were victims of white slavers as a ploy to gain notoriety or to avoid getting in trouble with their parents.¹²² Gertrude Spode, for instance, constructed an elaborate story about how she

¹²⁰Chicago Committee of 15 Research Data Vol. 25, 200.

¹²¹For a discussion of Marshall's case see chapter two.

¹²²Gingles was repeatedly accused of being interested in the notoriety. A newspaper report of Ella Gingles reported that she spent her time awaiting the verdict "wondering aloud whether newspaper photographers would keep promises to supply her with copies

was kidnapped and tortured in 1904 as a means, she later confessed, to avoid being punished by her parents after she stayed out all night.¹²³ Others, like 14 year old Helen Schat, were apparently trying to excuse their absences from home and work and avoid telling their parents that they had been fired from their jobs. Schat phoned her mother in 1909 to tell her that she had been given drugged wine, taken to Chicago's red-light district by two men in a big red automobile, had been threatened with death and was being held prisoner somewhere in Chicago's red-light district. Schat had, in fact, been missing for weeks and her phone call resulted in the dispatch of a score of detectives who began searching all the resorts in the district. When a third telephone call revealed that the phone Schat alleged she was calling on, purportedly hidden behind a picture in the resort, was really in a drug store on West Madison street, the search was called off. The girl, police concluded, "was a corker" who had been hanging around 5 cent theaters and had invented the story for unexplained reasons.¹²⁴ She was apparently, however, a harmless "corker."

The same cannot be said for 15 year old Margaret Lima whose story emerged after she shot a young man outside a New York theater, claiming he had drugged her and taken her to a hotel a week before. The man reportedly had never seen Lima before and, after an investigation, the police agreed. After witnesses came forward to refute Lima's accounts, authorities concluded that she had become unbalanced from attending too many moving-picture shows. Her "mania" for films which featured a girl avenging herself for wrongs

of the pictures they had taken of her, a fact which led the Chicago Tribune to note that Gingles "seemed to realize that it was her last day in the limelight." See "Jury Frees Ella; Finds Tale False," 20 July 1909.

¹²³"Recalls Girl's Deceit," 18 February 1909. Newspapers speculated, in the early days following Gingles discovery in the Wellington bathroom, that she was another Gertrude Spode case.

¹²⁴"Girl, 14, Phones for Help," Chicago Tribune 28 December 1909; "Doubt's Girl's Abduction Story," Chicago Tribune 29 December 1909.

inflicted upon her had apparently inspired her to "stage a drama of her own in order to obtain notoriety."¹²⁵

Contemporaries' belief that Lima was following a movie script and that Ella Gingles had received the storyline for her narrative from books and pamphlets circulating at the time raises an interesting question regarding how the dissemination of white-slavery plot lines impacted those who read them. The evidence in the cases of Lima and Gingles clearly points to the conclusion that the girls were engaged in a willful manipulation of the discourse of white-slavery for their own purposes, but it is possible in other cases that some women saw, in the narratives, an explanation of their own situations and used the discourse to given meaning to their own experiences.

There is some, albeit scant, evidence that prostitutes were reading the tracts published by white-slavery authors. Josie Washburn, a madam in Nebraska who penned an autobiographical analysis of brothel prostitution in the early twentieth century, noted that the prostitutes in her brothel, all of whom she claimed were voluntary inmates, were reading and sending for white-slavery publications emanating out of Chicago.¹²⁶ In addition, reformers in cities like Chicago were actively peppering the brothels and red-light districts with pamphlets on the "facts" of white slavery designed to get the prostitutes to recognize themselves in the stories and come forward to be rescued.¹²⁷ The question is, of course, whether or not women who came forward to tell their stories of exploitation were doing so only as a manipulative strategy. It is possible that some genuinely believed

¹²⁵"Girl Shoots Youth; A Stranger, He Says," New York Times 14 December 1913; "Youth Shot by Girl Thinks Her Insane," New York Times 15 December 1913; "Think 'Movies' Led Girl to Shoot Man," New York Times 16 December 1913.

¹²⁶Josie Washburn, The Underworld Sewer: A Prostitute Reflects on Life in the Trade, 1871-1909 (Omaha: Washburn Publishing Co., 1909; repr., Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 126-127. Washburn herself declared that all prostitutes were victims but not of white-slave traders. Instead, Washburn believed the most prominent evil driving women to prostitution was poverty. Men's deceit and their failure to support their wives were also cited by Washburn who denied that brothels utilized unwilling prostitutes.

¹²⁷See chapter two for a description of these efforts.

that their lives fit the template of a white-slavery narrative and interpreted their own experiences through the white-slavery discourse. There is also the possibility that the white-slavery discourse shaped the identities and subjectivities of some women.¹²⁸

The idea that discourses shaped both the experiences and subjectivities of historical actors is a topic which has recently been the subject of an insightful analysis by Regina Kunzel. Kunzel, who analyzes the ways in which unmarried, pregnant women drew from popular culture to construct their own experiences, was fortunate to have an exceptional source base for her research which consisted of letters written by single, pregnant women to the Children's Bureau in response to an advertisement for their services which ran alongside an article on single pregnancy in True Confessions magazine. This allows Kunzel to compare the women's first-person narratives to a story she knows the women read and assess how they used the narrative put forth in the article to shape their portrayals of their own experiences.¹²⁹ Unfortunately, no such source base exists to determine whether or not prostitutes, reading the white-slavery narratives, used them to

¹²⁸The idea that discourses shape experience and subjectivity is one that has, of late, provided the historical profession with a topic of lively discussion. The historical analyses and theoretical musings of Joan Scott are at the center of this larger debate in the United States. Scott, criticizing the ways in which historians treat the subjective testimony of historical individuals on their "experience" as the most reliable and authentic portrayal of the historical past, has called on historians to undertake an analysis of the ways in which all "experience" is itself socially constructed through discourse. Scott's efforts to get historians to engage in ever deepening forays into the realm of discourse have, from the start, been controversial and have led other historians to caution that the effort to shift the focus of history onto the discursive underpinnings of everything from politics to identity will lead to a history so mired in theoretical jargon and speculation that the historical activity of individuals and the ways in which material reality has shaped the options and actions of historical subjects will be lost. See Joan W. Scott, " 'Experience', " in Judith Butler (ed.), Feminists Theorize the Political (New York: Routledge, 1992): 22-40 and Christine Stansell, "A Response to Joan Scott," International Labor and Working-Class History (Spring 1987): 24-29.

¹²⁹Regina Kunzel, "Pulp Fictions and Problem Girls: Reading and Rewriting Single Pregnancy in the Postwar United States," American Historical Review (December 1995), 1465-1487.

shape explanations of their own lives or integrated the tales told by the white-slavery discourse into their sense of who they were.¹³⁰

The only written records penned by prostitutes during the early twentieth century were written by madams, who often denied any first-hand experience with white slavery. To defend themselves against charges that they, as brothel owners or managers, were participating in the trade, they frequently alleged that they had never come across a white slave or issued bitter denunciations of the entire white-slavery crusade. Madeline, a madam whose autobiography focuses on her personal experiences in the early twentieth century, used her "Afterword" to castigate the reformers whom, she suggested, had created the panic over white slavery in pursuit of their own financial gain. Claiming that she knew everything there was to know about prostitution, Madeline asserted that "I do not know anything about the so-called white-slave trade, for the simple reason that no such thing exists." It was, she stated, a "Great American Myth." As Madeline noted, the myth had its uses, particularly by women who found themselves in a "scrape" and used it as a "defense mechanism."¹³¹ The narratives were also, as she herself found out, a means to trick wealthy brothel patrons into thinking they were getting an innocent virgin and a way for prostitutes to blackmail money out of madams by threatening them with prosecution.¹³² While Madeline recognized that white-slavery narratives were frequently "employed as a weapon of blackmail and revenge," she also acknowledged that the

¹³⁰For an analysis which asserts that discourses on prostitution must have shaped how prostitutes saw themselves see Gail Hershatter, "Courtesans and Streetwalkers: The Changing Discourses on Shanghai Prostitution, 1890-1949," Journal of the History of Sexuality 3, no. 2 (1992), 268-269.

¹³¹Madeline: An Autobiography (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1919, repr., New York: Persea Books, 1986), 321-322. See also Washburn. The only "autobiography" of a madam during this period which contains "evidence" of wide-spread white slavery is the one purportedly written by Nell Kimball which historians have argued is not authentic. See Nell Kimball, Nell Kimball: Her Life as an American Madam (New York: Macmillan Company, 1970) and Rosen, 196, note #29 and 202, note #1.

¹³²*Ibid.*, 108-109, 279-281.

narratives were having a real effect on girls' subjectivity and related a story in which one girl, repeatedly exposed by her worried mother to white-slavery stories, was "driven insane through fear of white-slavers."¹³³ Prostitutes, however, were apparently not prone to such discursive suggestions. If there were any "slaves" in the brothel, Madeline asserted, it was her, the madam, who was "chained to a smile" and forced to "placate every one in the country."¹³⁴

Madeline's description of herself as "slave" was, no doubt, a sarcastic retort to reformers' allegations that women like her were procuresses luring innocent girls into their sporting houses but the possibility that other "criminal" women may have actually interpreted their experiences through the lens of the white-slavery discourses still exists. One rare example is the case of "Chicago May." May, who lived a life of crime in and out of prison in Chicago during the early part of the twentieth century, was hardly the type of woman that reformers had in mind when they imagined an innocent, vulnerable white slave. In her autobiography, however, May challenged their definition by using their construction of white slavery to explain the period of her life which, she noted, filled her with "disgust" for herself. It was during this time, she asserted, that she had become a "willing slave" of a man she described as a "confirmed procurer."¹³⁵

On one level, her construction of her paramour, who was living off her earnings, as a procurer was in keeping with the expansive definition of the activities which made one guilty of pandering in the eyes of the law. On a number of other levels, however, May's

¹³³Ibid., 322-324. While this story seems improbable, historians such as Joanne Meyerowitz have argued that narratives on women adrift, which spoke of both the dangers they faced and the opportunities they had, effected their choices of jobs and their self-perceptions. See Joanne Meyerowitz, Women Adrift: Independent Wage Earners in Chicago, 1880-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 24, 133.

¹³⁴Ibid., 277.

¹³⁵May Churchill Sharpe, Chicago May: Her Story (New York: The Macauley Company, 1928), 272. Sharpe's definition of white slavery also included women held in brothels by debt-slavery and women married to Chinese men, both of which were ideas drawn from the mainstream white-slavery crusade. See Sharpe, 159, 286.

efforts to give meaning to her experiences by recourse to the white-slavery narratives was sharply at odds with reformers' ideas about what constituted a life of white-slavery. In the first place, the money she and her "procurer" were living on was garnered by May not through actual prostitution but by using knock-out drinks to dope her "Johns" and then rolling them for their money. May also found her own way out of her "slavery" by introducing her "parasite" to a female friend whose game was shoplifting. The friend, May states, was "sorry for me and agreed to take the pimp off my hands."¹³⁶ A white-slavery victim who gave, rather than received, knock-out drops and transferred her procurer, instead of being transferred herself, was hardly in keeping with more standard versions of the "Great American Myth" of white slavery. It is, however, evidence that the discourse on white-slavery was utilized by some women not only as a source of empowerment but also as a mean to construct their identities and their own understanding of their experiences.

¹³⁶Ibid., 318, 275-276.

Conclusion

In the mid-nineteenth century, political activists seeking to halt the immigration of the Chinese into the Western states developed a discourse on enslaved Chinese prostitutes as a means to push their political agenda. It proved an effective tool, not only for the anti-Chinese forces, but also for missionaries, both male and female, who used it to expand their own authority in the public sphere. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, this American discourse on "yellow slavery" was joined by another discourse on "white slavery," imported into the Eastern social purity movement in the wake of William Stead's explosive "discovery" of the trafficking of young girls in England. Throughout the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century, women investigators from the WCTU, social purity activists, male reporters in eastern and midwestern cities, and a variety of urban politicians utilized the furor created by Stead's revelations to construct their own Americanized versions of the white-slavery story in pursuit of their own political goals or bigger profits for their papers.

All of these narratives helped set the stage for the explosion of a moral panic over white slavery in the first decade of the twentieth century. From roughly 1907 to 1915, this moral panic, disseminated out of epicenters like Chicago and New York, blanketed the country with the fear that young girls were being procured into prostitution by force or guile. Even at the height of the moral panic, however, there was no uniform narrative of white slavery. Instead, a plethora of diverse narratives emerged as reformers of all stripes sought to harness them to a variety of political initiatives. Some formulated narratives designed to shore up the shifting boundaries of masculinity and patrol the boundaries of race and immigration. Others, particularly women reformers, used the narratives to challenge gender boundaries and penned tales which called for woman suffrage, expanded professional opportunities for women, and justified the excursion of middle-class women

into an ever widening realm of both public space and the public sphere. Some also sought to wield the image of imperiled girlhood in their battle for economic reform. These reformers were aided in their propagation of the narratives by the willingness of young women to utilize the image of the white slave to paint themselves as victims in court to gain leverage against the men in their lives or to avoid prosecution on charges of theft or prostitution. It was, however, only marginally successful in helping these women achieve their goals and their freedom. It was also a very short-lived strategy.

Skepticism over the narratives was growing as early as 1913, even among those who had once been white-slavery crusaders themselves. A.W. Elliot, President of the Southern Rescue Mission, for instance, declared that in six years of work with prostitutes he had yet to discover any "white slaves" and confessed that:

there never was a joke of more huge proportions perpetuated upon the American public than this white slave joke. There is scarcely a simmering of truth in the various stories of so-called white slavery. I will admit, tearfully tho, that when the subject was being so vigorously agitated a year or so ago I fell right in line with the rest of them and, without making scarcely any investigation or using any common ordinary sense, told the public that thousands of girls were held in the toils of white slavery; but I now beg pardon and am sorry of my hasty conclusions.¹

Similarly, vice investigations called upon to look into the prevalence of the traffic in women also began to argue that it simply didn't exist. The commission appointed in Massachusetts in 1913 conveyed their skepticism when they titled their report to the legislature "Report of the Commission for the Investigation of the White Slave Traffic, So Called." In their report they stressed that the "large number of stories" which were furnished to the committee on women and girls being forced into prostitution were untrue. Having heard how young women shopping in department store were abducted by well-

¹A.W. Elliott quoted in "Is White Slavery Nothing More Than A Myth?," Current Opinion (November 1913): 348.

dressed ladies feigning illness to get assistance to their carriages, how girls at soda fountains were drugged and spirited away after they lost consciousness by men pretending to be their brothers, and how procurers were stabbing women on the street with narcotic filled hypodermic needles, the committee argued that:

Every story of this kind has been thoroughly investigated, and either found to be a vague rumor, where one person has told another that some friend of the former (who invariably in turn referred the story farther back) heard that the thing happened, or, in a few instances, imaginary occurrences explained by hysteria or actual malingering.²

Editorials in newspapers in cities where the white-slavery scare had been widespread, such as Chicago and New York, also began denouncing white slavery as a myth. The New York World ran an editorial in which they called white slavery a "new witchcraft mania" and one of their correspondents stated that after his wife came home from a "white slavery" lecture it was only with the "greatest difficulty that I persuaded her that not more than half of the men in the country are engaged in the traffic of the 'white slaver'." He was unable to persuade her that there was not "an organization as formidable as the Steel Trust working day and night in the interest of vice."³ The New York Sun similarly questioned the narratives by stressing that authoritative evidence testified to the fact that it would be impossible to drug someone in the manner described by the white-slavery stories and lamented that such "wild yarns" should have gained such wide circulation and credulity.⁴ The Chicago Record-Herald, which had previously given wide coverage to white slavery cases, was also, by 1914, changing its tune. They predicted that

²"Report of the Commission for the Investigation of the White Slave Traffic, So Called," (Boston: Wright and Potter Printing Co., 1914), reprinted in Prostitution in America: Three Investigations, 1902-1914 (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 21-23.

³Quoted in "Popular Gullibility as Exhibited in the New White Slavery Hysteria," Current Opinion (February 1914): 129.

⁴Ibid.

the white-slavery excitement would soon recede, leaving people mortified and ashamed of the results it had produced.⁵

The reasons for the eventual end of the moral panic over white slavery are as varied as those which led to its outbreak in the first place. WWI, as white-slavery crusaders recognized, played a major role in diverting both public attention and resources from "girl-saving" and refocused them on "mankilling." The involvement of the United States in WWI, as numerous scholars have noted, also altered and accelerated the suppression of prostitution. These changes helped bury what remained of the credibility of the white-slavery discourse by fueling the perception that prostitutes were contagious vixens who, by spreading VD, threatened the health of the nation.⁶ This, combined with the closing of urban red-light districts before and during WWI and the fact that the national organizations devoted to moral reform were changing their focus from white slavery to moral education meant that those white-slavery reformers who remained committed to fighting evil traffickers found themselves the odd men, and women, out.⁷

⁵Ibid. See also "Hysteria and Reform," Chicago Tribune, 13 July 1913 and "Editorials," The Survey (February 28, 1914): 682-683.

⁶For a description of these changes see Mark Connelly, The Response to Prostitution (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 136-150 and Ruth Rosen, The Lost Sisterhood (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 34-36. Other factors which helped fuel the decline of the white-slavery narratives includes the increasing tendency of officials, and the public, to view prostitutes as feeble-minded, mal-adjusted girls, instead of victims and the temporary resolution of some of the tensions which had shaped the narratives. Historians have, for instance, argued that by the 1920s society had begun to shift their views on, and become more accepting of, hetero-social amusements, female sexuality, and women's public activism, issues at the center of much of the debate over white slavery. Other issues, such as immigration, were also temporarily "resolved" thanks to the ways in which WWI halted European immigration and new, restrictive immigrant legislation passed in the 1920s. For descriptions of these changes see Barbara Hobson, Uneasy Virtue (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 139-208; Mary Odem, Delinquent Daughters (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 188-189; Joanne Meyerowitz, Women Adrift (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 123-126.

⁷On the closure on the red-light districts see Joseph Mayer, "The Passing of the Red Light District--Vice Investigations and Results," Social Hygiene 4, no. 2 (April 1918). For a description of the mergers and re-orientation of white-slavery organizations away from

Some, like Ernest Bell, disappeared from public view in the wake of WWI and began what other reformers described as a prolonged period of rest.⁸ Others, like Roe, found themselves forced out of the white-slavery organizations they once led as their cause fell out of favor with other activists and the government.⁹

This does not, however, mean that the "horrors" of white slavery totally disappeared from public view. In fact, both the discourse on the traffic in women and the coercive laws which it helped foster continued to be wielded by reformers, the states, and the federal governments when it suited their purposes.¹⁰ When, for instance, women reformers in Chicago decided to take on the Committee of Fifteen in the 1920s for what they saw as the group's failure to move against illegal brothels they re-surrected the myth of white slavery to do it.¹¹ In many ways the American crusade against white slavery

white slavery and toward education see "The American Social Hygiene Association," Vigilance 27, no. 12 (December 1913), 1; Frederick K. Grittner, White Slavery: Myth, Ideology, and American Law (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 74.

⁸"Letter from Steadwell dated July 14, 1925," in Bell Archives, Box 2, file 2-3.

⁹Grittner, 74-75. In many instances, these groups felt that the battle against the white slaver had already been won and that the closure of the red light districts had sealed his or her fate by removing the market in which they sold their "goods." See for instance, the assessment of the declining role of "exploiters" in Commercialized Prostitution in New York City, November 1, 1917: A Comparison Between 1912, 1915, 1916, 1917 (New York: Bureau of Social Hygiene, 1917).

¹⁰State laws against procurers continued to be used throughout WWI, although prosecutors in Chicago found it was harder to get cases pursued and convictions won as the years passed. Convictions under the Mann Act, however, continued throughout the period and underwent a resurgence in the 1930s, thanks to the activities of Hoover and his FBI agents who used the law to pursue a variety of criminals and celebrities. For statistics on the decline in white-slavery prosecutions in Chicago see Municipal Court Records of Chicago from 1909-1920; the Annual Report of the Committee of Fifteen from 1917 through 1922; Walter Reckless, Vice in Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1933; repr., Montclair: Patterson Smith Publishing Corp., 1969), 255-257. For an analysis of federal prosecutions under the Mann Act in the 1930s see David Langum, Crossing Over the Line: Legislating Morality and the Mann Act (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

¹¹"Letter to Bowen from Mr. Rupp dated January 24, 1923," in J.P.A. Papers, File #2. The narrative disseminated by this latest round in Chicago reformers' fight against vice focused on the specter of white girls compelled to sell themselves to African Americans,

returned to its international roots in the decades following the end of the moral panic and WWI as reformers from the United States found that the newly formed United Nations provided them with a new forum through which to pursue international traffickers. It is a role the United Nations continues to play.¹²

The crusade against white-slavery enjoyed a resurgence in the 1970s, thanks both to its re-emergence in the popular press and the fact that some women affiliated with the emerging feminist movement adopted the struggle against what they perceived as forced prostitution as their own.¹³ The resulting analyses of authors like Kathleen Barry on the issue of female trafficking are, as we have seen, problematic. In addition to presenting a universalizing and exceptionally broad definition of what constitutes "sexual slavery," Barry's construction of the problem of female trafficking also utilizes the nineteenth and early twentieth century narratives on white slavery as proof that trafficking actually existed and brands disbelievers as antifeminists.¹⁴ Unfortunately, Barry's assessment of the problem, re-issued in a new text published in 1995, continues to resonate at the turn of the twenty first century and her voice has been joined by others who advance similar assessments of the nature of prostitution and the trafficking in women.¹⁵

whose mass migration to Chicago and other northern urban cities during WWI had made them a favorite target of reformers searching for convincing ways to construct the "evil" of white slavery. See "Vice Laid to Mayor," Chicago Tribune, 18 January 1923. Another wave of vice reform in Chicago, more than ten years later, also played on the image of African Americans enslaving young white girls into a life of prostitution. See "How Vice Ring Traps Girls into Slavery," Chicago Daily Times, 13 February 1934.

¹²For a detailed description of the investigations undertaken by the U.N. in the twenties and the resulting Report on the Traffic in Women and Children see H. Wilson Harris, Human Merchandise: A Study of the International Traffic in Women (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1928).

¹³For a description of the re-emergence of the white-slavery discourse in the 1970s see Grittner, 163-185. Grittner's text also includes an analysis of the uses of the white-slavery discourse from 1920 until the 1970s. See Grittner, 144-156.

¹⁴Kathleen Barry, Female Sexual Slavery (New York: Avon Books, 1979). For a further analysis of the problems with Barry's analyses see the introduction and Grittner, 172-176.

¹⁵Kathleen Barry, The Prostitution of Sexuality (New York: New York University Press,

The problem is, of course, that in re-inscribing the early twentieth century narratives on white slavery and using them as a means to interpret the prostitution in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, these analyses risk re-producing the negative consequences of the early waves of antiprostitution reform. To be sure, the early waves of reform did lead to some positive improvements for some groups of women, including middle-class white women who used the issue to enhance their own public power and professional opportunities. Tellingly, however, they did so by building on racist, ageist, and classist stereotypes and empowered themselves at the expense of the freedom of others. In the process, they limited the choices of other women and subjected them, and the men they were involved with, to punitive sanctioning by both state and federal authorities. As white-slavery has again emerged as headline news at the turn of the twenty-first century, activists would do well to remember the lessons of the past.¹⁶ The discourse on white slavery, a powerful, malleable political tool, has, historically, been used by activists as a means to pursue their own agendas, however varied they may be, and has frequently resulted in the repression of the very groups it was designed to protect.

1995); Sheila Jeffries, The Idea of Prostitution (North Melbourne: Spinifex Press, 1997); Sietske Altink, Trading Women into Sex and Slavery (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1995).

¹⁶For more recent examples of the narratives in the press see "Trafficking in women: Procuring Russians for sex abroad--even in America," U.S. News and World Report, (April 7, 1997): 38-44; "Ex-Soviets fall prey to sex trade," USA Today, 12 November 1997; "These Women Uncovered Sexual Slavery in America," Marie Claire (August 1998): 66-70; "Slavery still exists- it's called the sex trade," Detroit Free Press, 19 January 1998; "Traffickers' New Cargo: Naive Slavic Women," The New York Times, 11 January 1998; "Promised fresh start turns into enslavement," Toronto Star, 20 February 1999; "Multistate ring held runaways for sex, FBI says," The Detroit News and Free Press, 20 March 1999; "FBI: Young runaways used as prostitutes," Ann Arbor News, 21 March 1999.

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