Call for Submissions

Edited Volume on Race and Racism of Anti-Trafficking

Editors: Kamala Kempadoo (York University) and Elena Shih (Brown University)

Global efforts to combat human trafficking are ubiquitous and reference particular ideas about unfreedoms, suffering, and rescue. The discourse has, however, a distinct racialized legacy that is lodged specifically in fears about “white slavery,” women in prostitution and migration, and the defilement of white womanhood by the criminal and racialized Other (Doezema 2010). It is the aim of this collection to center the legacies of race and racism in contemporary anti-trafficking work and to examine them in greater detail.

We are interested in interdisciplinary work that asks the following questions:

- In what ways do anti-trafficking discourses/policies/interventions shore up racialized notions of statehood, national belonging, and citizenship?
- What is the role of “non-racial” discourse in anti-trafficking? What do these obfuscations reveal about hierarchies of power and inequality across the global anti-trafficking movement?
- How do contemporary anti-trafficking efforts attend to historical legacies of white helping imperatives in antislavery movements?
- Is there evidence of racism – anti-black or other - in anti-trafficking outside North America and Western Europe – in Asia, Australia, Africa, Central and South America, or the Caribbean? What does that look like/how can we understand that within emerging comparative ethnic studies frameworks?
- In what ways do intersectional constructs of race and gender combine in anti-trafficking discourses, and what is this producing?
- How are racialized, migrant and indigenous/aboriginal communities responding to anti-trafficking interventions and discourses?
- In what ways can we speak of the construction of hierarchies of race, including hierarchies within whiteness, in anti-trafficking discourses and practices?
- How are forms of racial privilege explicitly or implicitly deployed to justify the benevolence of anti-trafficking interventions?
- How do anti-trafficking identification and awareness campaigns “see” race? Ranging from the crack down on Asian massage parlors, to the hyperpolicing of black trans women, to the training of truck drivers, postal workers, and flight attendants to identify human trafficking, what are some empirical examples of racial profiling in anti-trafficking globally?

Abstracts (300 words max) should be submitted to either Kamala Kempadoo kempadoo@yorku.ca or Elena Shih elena_shih@brown.edu by September 30, 2018. We seek/welcome both full-length academic articles (5,000-7,000 words), as well as shorter essays (1,000-1,500 words) that encompass a range of perspectives.

The complete draft of the essay is due March 31st, 2019. We aim to hold a workshop in Late Spring/Early Summer 2019 to hone the submissions.