

The Sound of Freedom: How Human Trafficking and Porn Compromises National Security

<https://mindmatters.ai/podcast/ep249>

Announcer:

The recently released movie “The Sound of Freedom” reveals the seriousness of today’s chilling practice of human trafficking. Today’s podcast is a repeat of a Mind Matters podcast that details the use of social media in human trafficking. And how you personally can contribute to stopping this heartless practice.

Robert J Marks:

Greetings and welcome to Mind Matters News. I'm your host, Robert J. Marks. Before we start, let me offer a warning that some of the things we'll talk about in this interview might not be suitable for young kids, but I would encourage moms and dads to listen. The average age kids are recruited in human trafficking is 12 years old. First of all, a little bit of background. I'm going to go down a rabbit trail here, but we're going to bring it all together. And this has to do with some of the work that I'm involved in as an electrical engineer. And it's as follows: increased demand for wireless communication continues to increase. Everyone is tethered to their cell phones, and the demand continues to increase. I was separated from my cell phone for 12 hours the other day, and boy, you don't realize how much you rely on your cell phone until you're separated from it.

Now, mobile communications needs spectrum. It used to be that spectrum was assigned for specific use, and there's a certain spectrum assigned for broadcast television, another for AM radio, and another one for military use. The US military uses its spectrum for radar and communications, but the spectrum is a finite natural resource. Use it up, and it's all gone. Because of demand of mobile communications, no longer is the federal government assigning some bands for exclusive use by the US military. Because of demands, the US continues to auction former federal frequency bands to mobile companies like Verizon and AT&T. They auction off this spectrum, and the auctions bring in billions. Because of these sales, the US military is now forced to share spectrum resources with civilian companies. And now comes the really sad part, or I should say the sadder part. One of the biggest uses of mobile devices is porn.

75% of pornography is watched using mobile devices. 10% of the top 50 websites is dedicated to streaming porn. The top porn website has more exclusive content than Netflix. More people view internet pornography every month than watch Netflix. Not only that, people view internet pornography more every month than watch Netflix, Amazon and Twitter combined. Every second, \$3,000 is being spent on pornography. Every second, \$3,000 is being spent on pornography. So, the prevalence of porn has hurt the US military by forcing them to compromise the use of spectrum. The military now has to share, and one of the large reasons they have to share is because of the increased demand for pornography. So what does this have to do with human trafficking? We continue our conversation with Charlie Crockett about human trafficking, and we'll find out this connection. Charlie is head educational trainer for Unbound Now Waco. It's a ministry that helps free victims of human trafficking. Charlie, welcome back again.

Charlie Crockett:

Thanks for having me on, Bob.

Robert J Marks:

Okay, Charlie, a large part of human trafficking is sex trafficking. Young girls are controlled both emotionally and physically by their controllers. The controllers are called pimps, and this is documented in the book that really changed my perspective about human trafficking happening in my own backyard. The name of the book is "Surviving "The Life:" How I Overcame Sex Trafficking," by Julia Walsh. We'll make a link available to this to amazon.com in the podcast notes. In Julia Walsh's book, she offers definitions of terms used in what she calls "the life," or "the game." That's the life that you live when you're under the control of one of these controllers in sex trafficking. The life refers to how she lived under the thumb of her controller.

One of these words was "grooming." The word "grooming" has been banned by some social media because they don't like the idea that kids purporting gender dysphoria or attending drag queen readings were being groomed for a life that deviated from traditional sexual identity. In human trafficking, what is grooming? Charlie, could you address that? We know what grooming is in the general definition, but it has a specific meaning in human trafficking. What is grooming?

Charlie Crockett:

Yeah, grooming is really just the preparation for a victim to be trafficked. It's the breaking down of what a victim already has, their resources, their relationships, the securities they have, and then building connections to the trafficker. I like to think of it as the trafficker is building strings to that person so that all of the things that they need, all the things that they desire are all linked to this one person. And so, that means breaking down their relationships until everything that they need relationally is coming from their trafficker, that means providing them a place to stay, their food, their money, possibly getting them addicted to a drug, and then providing that for them so that the drug they need is now only provided by their trafficker, the food they need is only being provided by them. Money, relationship, protection and love, now the only place they're getting all of those things is from this one person. And so, to leave them means to leave everything that they need. And so, it makes it really hard for them to do that.

Robert J Marks:

So I wanted to ask you about the role of pornography in grooming and preparing kids for human trafficking. The average age the kids watch porn is really low. In fact, I have a relative. I'm not going to reveal his name. He was a teenager, and I'll call him Frank, just for purposes of discussion. I went to him and said, "Frank, it's not good. You got to stop watching porn." Now, I had no idea whether he was watching porn or not, but I just threw that out there, and his eyes got big, and he looked from left to right, and he said, "Ooh, whatever you do, don't tell Mom." So it's humorous in one way, but very disturbing in another way that these young kids are watching pornography. What is the impact of porn on grooming?

Charlie Crockett:

Yeah, well, there's a lot of components to this. Pornography's used in the grooming process for victims to be trafficked, but it's also the main contributor to buyers. And so, there's a lot of components to this. It's a very intricate deal where... I mean, we know that 90% of these pornography videos is either verbally or physically abusive. And so, what that means is the majority of this content is going to be overtly abusive. So any consumer of this, whether it's someone that the trafficker is grooming, whether it's someone that they're preparing to victimize, watching this is going to make them think that any type of abusive sexual nature, or sexual... any type of action is going to be normal, any type of abusive sexual

stuff is going to be normal. And so, them thinking that is preparing them to be abused sexually in the later future.

But also, as someone watching this, you're now desiring, because we know that just from different studies on how the brain works and responds to pornography is that it responds similarly to how your brain responds to use of cocaine. So it's highly addictive. You're drawn in by this novelty, you're drawn in by what you're watching, and then similarly to drugs, you're watching until you want to move on to something else, and that next thing, we see it's usually going to be more abusive, and it's going to be younger. And so, it creates these buyers because, at a certain point, you can't build this addiction by videos anymore. And so, you seek out encounters, and these encounters are typically violent, abusive and young, unfortunately.

Robert J Marks:

I see. So, does pornography make it easier to recruit young people who have watched porn?

Charlie Crockett:

Absolutely. I mean, just normalizing porn means normalizing just young sexual content. So normalizing that younger people should be involved in just sexual behavior. But it also normalizes, again, this violence in sex, but it also normalizes the treatment, the poor treatment of women, specifically. And so, there's a lot of young guys, even with good intentions, thinking to themselves, "Is this how I'm supposed to be treating somebody? Is this what people want?" And so, a lot of young guys are even watching this and saying, "I just want to please somebody, but I guess this is what is normal. This is how I'm supposed to do it."

Robert J Marks:

I've actually heard that porn is helping increase... Oh, how should I say it? A sexual dysphoria because a young girl might watch porn, an early teenager, and she might think, "I'm not like that. I don't submit to violence and domination like that, so I must not be a woman," and therefore they cross over and think, "Well, I must not be a woman. I must be something else." And so, screws up their sexual identity.

Charlie, given how the controllers or pimps coerce their stable of girls to perform deviant acts, it seems to me they could also coerce them into being in videos taped for viewing on some of the porn sites. Is this true? Is this prevalent at all?

Charlie Crockett:

Absolutely. And this is just another component to how these two industries are linked. I mean, in human trafficking, a large, large number of these victims are having videos and pictures made of them. And so, because of the way these porn sites are set up, the majority don't have any screening for who's posting these videos, and they don't have any real verification of age. Actually, for those reasons, some of these sites, especially MindGeek, PornHub, these big sites are getting a lot of scrutiny, a lot of backlash and different legal issues right now because these are being brought to the light that there's been no verification of age, there's been no screening for who's posting.

And so, a lot of these videos are people that are actively being trafficked. And so, what happens as a result of that is that the consumption of these videos, even if it's in the most innocent of senses, someone just gets curious, someone clicks on an advertisement that popped up out of nowhere, and it brought them to this video or to this site, even just the views of that video, the time spent watching that video is actually giving those producers, those people who posted those, it's giving them money. I mean, those views, that time spent is contributing to human trafficking. So one of the things I always say when

I give a presentation and talk about pornography is, I tell the kids, "Hey, even if I talk to you this whole time, even if I spent this next hour-and-a-half talking to you about how to prevent trafficking, and then I went home and watched pornography, I very well could be contributing to the same cause that I'm telling you not to do." And so, these two industries are completely linked. I mean, they work together to contribute to each other, for sure.

Robert J Marks:

Wow, wow. A couple of years ago I saw a post that the top porn streaming site, you mentioned it, PornHub, removed 80% of its videos because of this backlash. The videos were submitted without verification, and included children and rape victims. Now, when this happens, if you are a victim of this, do you have any recourse? Can you sue these big companies with the big bucks? I know that suing costs a lot of money, but is there any way that this can be addressed and brought to justice?

Charlie Crockett:

I actually don't know too much about this. I mean, I would hope so. I don't know exactly. I know it's tough when it's involved in pictures, media that's put on the internet. It's really hard to get some of that stuff back. And the recourse is not linear, it seems like, but I can't speak on too much of what your opportunities are in legal recourse there.

Robert J Marks:

Okay. It seems to me that there should be a lot of volunteer law firms that would participate in that. Just thinking and knowing about some of the people that are out there that are good people.

Do you have any idea whether porn sites are currently using any sort of scrutiny in order to make sure that the videos that they are airing are not children or rape victims?

Charlie Crockett:

I know the vast majority isn't. I don't know if there are that are trying to take a more productive approach there, but the vast majority are not going to be doing that. I mean, if you think about it, I like to think about pornography sites and pornography, just the industry itself, as if human trafficking had a marketing department, this is really what they're going to do, the way that they're going to advertise for what they're doing. I mean, human trafficking makes over \$150 billion a year. And so, this is bringing in a lot of money. And the pornography industry brings in over a hundred billion every year. And so, without having TV commercials, without being able to, again, post ads or billboards and say, "Hey, come and buy people." Instead, what they're doing is they're normalizing people to be abused online, and then creating this highly, highly addictive content for free that's unbelievably accessible, unbelievably easy to hide. And again, like you mentioned, it's on your mobile device.

And so, it's like having the drug you're addicted to always free, always in your pocket, and really easy to hide. And so, that is a very, very dangerous combination. And so, that's really how they're selling it. As a result, I mean, these porn websites are going to do whatever they can to make it as accessible, to make it as consumable for people. And so, we're not seeing a whole lot taking productive approach here.

Robert J Marks:

It's an old saying, but there's a special place in hell for these people. My goodness, the terrible things they do.

So, pimps and controllers in human trafficking, for sex trafficking, have been around for a long time. They use abuse in order to keep their stable of girls in line. And this used to be for individual sex acts. Now they're forcing these... slaves, because that's what they are, into pornographic videotaping, and they do this by coercing with love, or purported love, and also gorilla pimping. Now, you involved in Unbound. You mentioned to me, and I'd like you to repeat it. It's very interesting. It seems to me that you would encounter, occasionally, a gorilla pimp, somebody that had a propensity for violence if you were to try to help one of the girls out of the so-called life, out of the game. But I think you're not allowed to do that. How do you incorporate law enforcement, and have you, yourself, ever become involved? By the way, I met Charlie Crockett. He's seven foot tall. He's very intimidating. I think in a conflict he would be, so you would be good in the physical altercation, but you don't do that, do you?

Charlie Crockett:

Yeah, absolutely. It's funny you say that. I mean, when I got into this work, my heart for this issue, and again, my size and just being a very larger guy, and having the capability to probably win in an altercation or something like that if it came up, and my heart for this issue, I mean, seeing this stuff breaks my heart, hearing about women, children, people that I really care about being trafficked and being taken advantage of and abused in this way. It really does make me want to do things like kick down a door, or take out a trafficker, or something like that. And the funny thing is that that's actually not going to be helpful in a situation where you run into somebody. Our protocol is always call the hotline, get in touch with law enforcement if it's dangerous, let them handle what they're handling, and then just play your role.

And so, I've had one instance where I responded to a hotline call with somebody else on our team, and typically, if it's a situation where we think that there may be a trafficker present, there may be a dangerous situation, or we're not sure, we would respond with law enforcement, or let law enforcement respond. We let them do it, and then they'll contact us when we can be involved. And so, in this particular instance, we weren't sure, and decided let's just go for the victim was saying, "I'm in a safe place. I'm not with anybody." And so, we said, "Okay," and showed up around 10, I think it was 10:00 PM, 10:30 PM, something like that, and showed up, everything seemed fine, and then as we went back to the hotel room where they were staying at, ran into the trafficker.

And so, while it's one of those instances I had to remember my own training and refrain from any type of altercation, or saying something that could put the victim in more danger than they were in, because the reality is, if I were to respond the way I wanted to in a violent situation, or an altercation, or some type of physical response, I could be putting that victim in more danger than they were in. There may be way more components involved than I know of. Law enforcement may already have things set up, or people that have been working on this that I could just never know of. And so, the best thing to do for that situation was to remain calm, not send off any red flags for that trafficker, and then get that victim to safety as soon as possible, which in that case was the following morning.

And so, the best thing that we were able to meet up with them, and that victim has been in recovery since. And so, it really is the best course of action to continue to just call the number, and then for us, get law enforcement involved as soon as we think something is dangerous so that they can handle what they do, and then we can work with the victim.

Robert J Marks:

Wow. So you met the guy, but there was no threats from him at all?

Charlie Crockett:

There were not. It was obvious that he was the trafficker, the one that was controlling and abusing her. You could see those things that we've talked about where it was obvious that he was controlling her, but I don't know if he was sure, unsure who we were, but there was no type of threats on his end, or anything like that towards us.

Robert J Marks:

Okay. Something interesting, I talk to a bunch of phlebotomists. I give blood a lot. Phlebotomist is a fancy word for somebody that takes your blood, like little vampires, if you will. And I used to be afraid of needles, and I decided it was stupid to be afraid of needles, so I just decided to look at my arm and watch the needle go in to take the blood. And it's not that bad. I asked the phlebotomist who the big chickens were when it came to giving blood. I have a son that just hates to give blood. It just destroys him. And she said, "Well," and I've had more than one respond this way. They said, "It's usually the big, burly guys with all the big tattoos, the ones that are huffing around trying to make themselves into big men." I imagine that some of these pimps are like that. Some of these controllers are like that. They are really big around controlling and beating up the women in their stable, but when confronted, they are going to be just chickens, like the big, burly guy being afraid of the needle.

Look, Charlie, we've talked about some depressing stuff. We've talked about the pornography compromising the military readiness. We've talked about use of social media in recruiting people for human trafficking. We've talked about the porn industry. We've talked about relapses. Let's end with some good stories. I mean, one of them was Julia Walsh's story where she recovered, and she's out of the life, and now she's helping people that have been involved in human trafficking. I wonder if you could share maybe some of the success stories that warm your heart, and that keep you in the ministry.

Charlie Crockett:

Absolutely. And I think that's a great point. I mean, all of the work we do is hope-driven. We don't use anything like a fear tactic or a scare tactic to do our teachings or prevention, anything like that. And that's not just an educational tactic. That's more just the truth. We come against a lot of these things, we see a lot of darkness in this work, but the overwhelming feeling leaving all of these instances with the victims is there is hope. And we see recovery stories, we see victory stories in this stuff all the time. And whether it's walking with someone for years and years and watching them slowly, slowly recover and go back and forth, back to their trafficker and back to them, it's forward progress. And I remember back, one of the biggest moments for me in this work was we had worked with a victim who came in, and he was about five years old, and so, came into our office, and that was hard for me to experience, to see that that was someone we worked with, and thinking it through. Yeah.

Robert J Marks:

How old, again?

Charlie Crockett:

Five, five years old.

Robert J Marks:

Oh my gosh. Okay.

Charlie Crockett:

And so, seeing that and thinking that through, most likely a family trafficking situation, and that's the kind of stuff that's just pure evil. But thinking that through, one of the worst things you could see is that now the way I have to see it is this person is now in our care, this person is now out of that life, and it could have been years and years that they could have been in this, but now they're on the road to recovery. And that's just what it is. Even in the tough days where the victim goes back to a trafficker, and again, it's an average of three times, which means after that third time, on average, they're staying in recovery. And so, while it feels like relapse, it feels like a step backwards, we still see all of that as moving forwards in the progress. Even if it's not a linear line, it's still progress.

And so, we'll be consistent, and we'll stay with somebody, and we see a lot of the time that there's victory on the other side. So we don't get discouraged, we keep working with them, and I'm going to keep doing the work.

Robert J Marks:

And I think probably a lot of your success might be unseen. Your purpose is to educate people about human trafficking, and possibly through that education, you have prevented a lot of people from maybe going into that terrible area. So the prevention is also a success, but one that's more difficult to measure, I believe. One of the things I think you do is, you probably give talks to schools and things of that sort. Is that right?

Charlie Crockett:

Absolutely. Yeah, I talk in schools, I train high school students, middle school students, go into juvenile detention every week, talk to kids there, boys, girls. Yeah, I'm talking to students all the time.

Robert J Marks:

So if somebody wants to get a hold of you, or somebody else from Unbound, because, as you mentioned, Unbound Now has offices all over the country right now, if they would like somebody to come in and talk to students about human trafficking, is there a way that they can get contact with you or somebody else about this?

Charlie Crockett:

Yeah, the easiest way to do that will be to go to our website, and you can request a training, you can look at our board and choose me. I'm Charlie Crockett, and so, you can choose my information there and get in contact with me directly. And if you go under Unbound Now Waco, you can see all of our specific resources and get us over there. We can do trainings. All of our trainings are for free. And so, to provide resources to your school, to your community group, whatever it is, and get y'all prepared and trained. I mean, we do parent groups. We work with non-profits, after-school groups, CIS, FCA, all of the different things. We're pretty flexible.

Robert J Marks:

Who is the most vulnerable? Would you say high school students, college students, or is there no demographic that's more in danger than another?

Charlie Crockett:

I wouldn't say there's heavy... being specific on one group like that. We see this happening early. As soon as someone's going to be on social media, again, that's where it's happening. And so, someone

who's on social media at any age is going to be open to be talked to, to be groomed. And so, as soon as they're on there, I mean, the younger are typically more naive and more easily recruited. But, I mean, this happens across all ages, across all demographics, in college, high school, middle school. So I wouldn't say there's any specific age more so than others.

Robert J Marks:

Okay. Well, Charlie, is there anything else you'd like to talk about, or if we covered things pretty well?

Charlie Crockett:

I think we've touched on all of the important stuff that I would say right off the bat. I think this is great.

Robert J Marks:

Okay, great. God bless you, Charlie Crockett. Man, what a ministry, and what a difficult ministry. I imagine that this is one of those ministries that it's difficult not to take home with you after a day's work because you see so much human suffering and such. Wow.

So our guest today has been Charlie Crockett. Charlie is head educational trainer for Unbound Now Waco, a ministry that helps free victims from human trafficking. Until next time, be of good cheer.

Announcer:

This has been Mind Matters News with your host Robert J. Marks. Explore more at mindmatters.ai. That's mindmatters.ai. Mind Matters News is directed and edited by Austin Egbert. The opinions expressed on this program are solely those of the speakers. Mind Matters News is produced and copyrighted by the Walter Bradley Center for Natural and Artificial Intelligence at Discovery Institute.