



PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE ACCJ JOURNAL BY MATTHIAS WESTFALK



ILLUSTRATION FOR THE ACCJ JOURNAL BY DARREN THOMPSON



COURTESY THE BOEING COMPANY

特集 Features

カバーストーリー 人身売買を見逃すな

闇社会で急拡大している分野、それが現代版の奴隷制度とも言われる人身売買だ。人身売買と戦う「ポラリスプロジェクト」の活動をレポートする。
ジュリアン・リアル

Cover Story Targeting Human Traffickers

The Polaris Project helps fight the criminal world's fastest-growing industry – the modern-day slave trade.
By Julian Ryall

広告業界の常識が変わる

広告業界が厳しい時代を迎えている。消費者の広告注目率が低下する中、事態打開のキーワードは、「ソフトな物腰」、「無料」、「ドキドキ」、「オールドメディア」だ。
ルシール・M・クラフト

Ad Industry Rewrites the Rules

The advertising industry is facing tough decisions and challenges as it fights a low attention span with soft sell, freebies, adrenaline and old media.
By Lucille M. Craft

BRICsに死角はないか

活力あふれる新興市場国BRICs(ブラジル、ロシア、インド、中国)。その市場の可能性に投資家は熱い視線を送るが、リスクも大きいと専門家は警告している。
アンソニー・フェンサム

Bullish About BRIC?

We look at Brazil, Russia, India and China – the darlings of investors looking to exploit the potential of dynamic emerging markets. But experts warn of huge risks, too.
By Anthony Fensom

CFO円卓会議、今後の行方を討論

先ごろ、エコノミスト誌の第2回日本CFO円卓会議が開催され、金融商品取引法、M&Aなど最新事情について議論が交わされた。
ジャスティン・マカリー

CFOs Face the Future

FIE, M&A and more from the *Economist's* Second Japan CFO Roundtable.
By Justin McCurry

成功する仕事術

職場でいかに立ち回るべきか。今月号は「上司との上手な付き合い方」をテーマに、実践的なアドバイスと戦略を指南する。
ロバート・トービン

Making it in Management

Latest in a series for getting ahead in the workplace, with practical tips and strategies on How to Manage Your Boss effectively.
By Dr. Robert Tobin

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Media Watch

Workers wanted. Urban bliss. Wal-mart super center. Thin flexible batteries. Shoplifting soars. By Mark Schreiber

The Decade Ahead

Bates Asia Japan Inc. President David Meredith on the advertising industry's next ten years.

Opinion Leader

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プロティビティ ジャパン代表取締役社長、神林比洋雄氏が企業の価値を高めるポイントを徹底解説。

Classic Journeys

A rare visit to Iwo Jima, including the peak where the Stars and Stripes was raised in 1945; the island is still littered with unexploded ordnance.
By Julian Ryall

Right on Course

In golf, there are two keys to hitting the ball long: solid contact and swing speed. By Steve Dahlby

FDI Portfolio

Osaka-Oz for ¥20,000 return. Entrepreneur fact-finding tour. Coach cruises. Triple Five Soul launches. Sport fashion. Upmarket spa.
By Nicole Fall

Behind the Book

Japan's Love-Hate Relationship with the West by Sukehiro Hirakawa

Business Profile

Organic food is going mainstream thanks to companies such as this natural-foods supplier with roots in Saitama since 1987.
By Gabrielle Kennedy

In Case You Missed It

A Sendai university is finding that microbubble research may help cure cancer, dissolve blood clots, and perform drug and gene therapy with unheard-of precision. By Robert Cameron



Targeting **Human** Traffickers

How an NGO helps fight the criminal world's fastest-growing industry.

Julianna holds up well for most of the time she is talking, despite her harrowing tale. The petite 28-year-old Colombian is calm as she describes how gangsters had threatened to kill her parents and three-year-old son. She is matter-of-fact as she recalls how the job she had been promised was a lie. Instead, she was forced to sell her body on the streets the day she arrived in Japan. She even retains her composure initially as she recounts how she was required to service as many as 15 men a day when she was seven-months pregnant, only breaking down after revealing that since her escape from the gangsters who had tricked her into sexual slavery she has learned that they are still looking for her child.

Julianna does not want her real name used in this article. Her story is shockingly common, according to an official at the Colombian Embassy in Tokyo who has helped dozens of her compatriots escape the clutches of 21st-century slave traders – and tries to help them recover from the ordeal. The official also asked not to be identified.

“The problem started in the 1980s, when Japan was at the height of the economic Bubble and a lot of Colombians began to come to Japan. Pretty soon Colombians saw the opportunities and became traffickers themselves, working closely with Japanese gangsters and bringing in larger numbers of victims,” the embassy official explains. “The peak years

were between 1992 and 1996. In 1996, we received 173 official requests for assistance, and double that number approached the embassy for help and advice, but refused to give their names because they were frightened.”

Every year, 50,000 women enter Japan on entertainer visas, but there are never that many working as dancers or singers, according to the official. “But we know there are a lot more than that because they are entering on forged passports, and simply don’t show up on the statistics.”

The official adds: “To be honest, we don’t know how many Colombians are in Japan at the moment.”

The victims – typically poor women from traditional coffee-

“After I was deported the first time, I only came back to Japan because the traffickers threatened they were going to kill my family ...”

growing regions of Colombia experiencing economic hardship – are approached through the network of extended families and acquaintances that permeates Colombian society. They are offered well-paying jobs in restaurants, hotels or casinos in Japan. They are told to travel on forged documents; Julianna was given a fake Norwegian passport the first time and an Argentinean version the second time. Slave traffickers take advantage of travel routes and entry points around the world where Colombia’s drug traffickers learned were most susceptible.

As soon as they meet their contact in Japan, the victims become ensnared.

“After I was deported the first time, I only came back to Japan because the traffickers threatened they were going to kill my family,” recalls Julianna. “I arrived at Osaka airport and took the train to Yokohama, where I met a Colombian woman. Until then, I thought I was going to be working in a casino, but that night she sent me out onto the streets to work.”

The trauma continued. “I was terrified. I wanted to die. But they knew where my family was so I could not run away, and they told me I had to pay back the debt of ¥5 million that I owed them,” she adds. “I had to work every day, from 11 p.m. until 3 a.m. in the summer, and three hours longer in the winter. I only got a few hours’ sleep. They had no compassion.”

Julianna names the Colombian woman who controlled her and

numerous other South American women, as well as her Japanese husband. The name of the woman is being withheld for legal reasons. The Colombian Embassy confirms that it has a thick file on the woman, which has been shared with the Japanese authorities; but it is proving very difficult to pin charges on her, even when she travels to Colombia.

◀ SNAPSHOT ▶

The Polaris Project, an international organization against human trafficking and slavery based in the U.S. and Japan, empowers survivors and raises awareness to create long-term social change with grassroots campaigns such as Slavery Still Exists. Its Tokyo branch, the Japan Campaign Against Trafficking (JCAT), offers shelter, legal advice, medical help, repatriation and employment, with over 120 calls and emails logged since multilingual hotlines began in 2005; Fifteen volunteers have given 5,000 hours worth over \$85,000 since launching. ACCJ member Morrison and Forester LLP gives pro bono legal services to Polaris and the ACCJ donated ¥3 million last month.

www.polarisproject.jp
www.polarisproject.org
Phone: 050-3496-7615

With the help of a Japanese customer who eventually became her husband and gave her money to pay off the debt, Julianna was able to get away from the manager. However, her situation got worse when she fell into the hands of a group of Japanese gangsters.

“There were about 50 of us and we were their slaves,” she says.

Even when she did pluck up the courage to go to the police to file a complaint, the police failed to act, according to Julianna. She left her Japanese husband after he started abusing her, and now she is in training for a job. She has to stay in Japan (despite the danger she faces if her tormentors find her) because, she says, it is safer for her family not to know where she is.

“I’m getting psychological support from the embassy, which helps, but I have suffered. I did think about committing suicide by jumping from the window of the apartment, but I’m still here,” confides Julianna. “And I have my son.”

And while the plight of women from South America and Southeast Asia is well documented, far less common are cases involving Western women among the 27 million people around the world who are victims of modern-day slavery. Armed with a singing contract, Rhoda Kershaw admits she “knew nothing of a world of real evil” when she set off for Japan. After a successful and fascinating first taste of Japan, she returned in April 1989 for a second visit – still only 18 years old. Contracted to different agencies in the U.S. and Japan, she believes they were simply fronts for the business of selling naive young women to the highest bidder. With the promise of a chance to sing, she was, instead, put on display in a hostess club in Osaka, and told that the club she was to perform

“I was treated cruelly at the hospital – by the police, a lawyer and the media – and all the while, no one bothered to call my embassy.”

at was still being built. The bar where she worked attracted a lot of yakuza, who were, in turn, attracted by her red hair.

Drugged, beaten

Invited to an after-hours get-together (and, admittedly, awe-struck by the gangsters she was with), she had a drink. Within minutes she passed out, and the last thing she remembered was being carried to a car. Coming round in a luxurious suite, she was surrounded by gang members wearing only full-body tattoos. Kershaw made a bolt for the door, but was caught and beaten. She woke up on the bed, and was gang raped over several days. She recalls them laughing as she called out for her mother.

Kershaw estimates she was assaulted by at least 40 men in the space of the first 24 hours.

“The things done to me over the next three days are inconceivable to most human beings,” she says from her home in Tennessee. “Each one had his own perversion, and I was tortured.” The abuse she received resulted in her being unable to bear children.

Kershaw recalls screaming “Jesus” before attempting her second escape; and after bolting from the apartment, she ran naked through the streets. She hammered on the doors of apartments until a stranger took her in and helped her call the police. But with the arrival of the authorities, a second, equally terrifying, experience began. Kershaw says she expected the police to be

“good people” who would help her; instead, “I found myself being treated like a criminal. I was treated cruelly at the hospital – by the police, a lawyer and the media – and all the while, no one bothered to call my embassy.”

She was initially taken back to the apartment where she had been held – followed by TV cameras and reporters after someone had tipped off the media. She had to identify the gang members and undergo questioning over the next three weeks. Again, the men whom she identified cannot be named, as she was unable to find a Japanese lawyer to join her American legal representative before the statute of limitations had run out in 1994. No one was prosecuted for what happened to Kershaw.

“There are lots of misconceptions surrounding human trafficking, one of which is that it only affects people from poor countries. It is also a mistake to think that organized crime is entirely to blame,” says Shihoko Fujiwara, head of the Tokyo branch of the U.S. anti-trafficking campaign group, the Polaris Project. “There are an increasing number of ‘family-run’ operations that involve foreigners living in Japan who go back to their own country a couple of times a year and woo young girls with stories of the money that can be made in Japan waiting on tables in restaurants.”

Fujiwara points to the huge scale of the problem facing organizations such as the Polaris

Project, operational in Japan since 2002. Human trafficking may be the world’s third-largest criminal industry, after drugs and weapons, but it is the fastest-growing sector. Fueled by its colossal sex industry, Japan is ranked as one of the largest destination countries for trans-national trafficking of women and children for sex, as well as forced labor. Some are as young as 12 years old. The victims are not always foreign women, however, as trading of Japanese women and children is also a serious problem, according to the Polaris Project, which benefited from funding from the ACCJ through last December’s annual charity Crystal Ball.

Massive problem

According to the National Police Agency (NPA), there were 1,700 reported victims of child prostitution or pornography in 2003, the highest number since statistics were first collated in 2000. That figure is merely the tip of the iceberg, campaigners believe.

Thanks to organizations such as the Polaris Project, recognition of the scale of the problem has increased in recent years in Japan. This movement was also boosted by the U.S. State Department’s June 2004 decision to place Japan on its Tier Two watch list. The annual Trafficking in Persons report out of Washington, D.C. stated that Tokyo – which was deeply embarrassed to be the only industrially developed nation identified in the report – was not in compliance with the minimum

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standards toward the elimination of human trafficking.

Within months, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had outlined a range of measures to combat the problem, and the government made it a criminal offence to traffic in human beings. Immigration procedures were also revised to allow victims to remain in Japan for their own safety – although the temporary visa they are issued does not permit them to work, and so leaves them reliant on shelters or support from the public.

Crime fighters

In 2004, the NPA finally set up the Organized Crime Control Department to specifically deal with trafficking of people, and in 2005 it announced 81 arrests. Courts do not appear to be keeping pace with the changes, however, with a mere five cases reaching the prosecution stage as of last August, all of which ended in suspended sentences.

A reduction in the number of entertainment visas for Filipinos, however, has only led to an increase in the number of women from other Southeast Asian countries entering Japan.

Other nations also have problems; an estimated 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States each year. Combined with the additional population of victims of internal or domestic trafficking, there are upwards of hundreds of thousands of victims of human trafficking each year in the United



Women are often duped or bullied into working in red light districts such as Kabukicho in Shinjuku.

States. Victims work in the sex trade, farming and as domestic helpers, particularly in Florida, California and Texas, according to the U.S. State Department, which puts the value of the industry at some \$9.5 billion a year.

Some progress

Tightening up the rules worked for the Japanese government, and the U.S. State Department subsequently applauded Japan's progress in its next report. But there is no indication that demand for women in Japan's brothels is in decline, according to Fujiwara of the Polaris Project.

"The demand is huge and seems to be growing. Of course, if the demand no longer existed, then the traffickers would be out of business within days," she adds. "But as long as 'entertainment districts' such as Kabukicho exist, then women will be forced to work in these establishments."

A lot of them are not aware that their embassies will be able to help

them, and still fear they will be handed over to the authorities if they should seek assistance.

"In all my dealings with the Japanese police, no one bothered to tell me that the American Embassy would be able to comfort me and give me real help," recalls Kershaw. "Exactly one year after it happened, I was back in the U.S., but had still not shed a single tear. But soon something went wrong. I had flashbacks of Japan; and violation, fear and utter terror blazed before my eyes."

"I became angry. Grief overwhelmed me. I flipped out," she continues. "I just about broke everything in my apartment. My boyfriend – who is now my husband – found me in the closet and took me to a hospital. I spent two months in that hospital, and have had many more visits to hospitals due to post-traumatic stress disorder."

"People think it has been long enough to get over it, but they don't suffer from nightly terrors to this day [like I do], nightmares that make it feel like it just happened when you awake," she emphasizes. But Kershaw adds that after bottling up her trauma for 17 years, she wants her experiences to be heard and to, perhaps, stop others falling into the same trap as she did.

"If I don't use my voice, then I let them win; and the ones who cannot speak will not have a voice to speak for them," she concludes.

Julian Ryall is a Tokyo-based freelance journalist.