

Introduction to the Steinfatt Research Papers on Sex Trafficking in Cambodia

The four Steinfatt papers on the Prevent Human Trafficking site discuss my research results on human sex trafficking in Cambodia and methods used to obtain them.

Reason for Creating Steinfatt's Response to AFESIP, Swingle, and Kapoor

During the summer of 2003, several anti-trafficking NGOs in Phnom Penh approached the British Ambassador to Cambodia asking him to intervene with the US Ambassador to Cambodia to quash my 2002 and 2003 papers. The US Ambassador forwarded my papers to the US State Department in Washington and they were used as part of US TIP Report 2004 judgments.

The US Embassy subsequently requested the Asia Foundation, the conduit for much of US Foreign Aid to Asian countries, to conduct a roundtable discussion in Phnom Penh in mid-May 2004 of all research methods of determining human trafficking numbers to that date and appraising best methods: the Asia Foundation International Roundtable. My research methods as presented in our 2002 and 2003 papers were labeled the Gold Standard for methods of studying human trafficking numbers in Cambodia by the Roundtable panel of judges.

Earlier, In May, 2004, Somaly Mam's well-funded NGO in Phnom Penh (AFESIP) published an extended comment on our 2002 and 2003 papers. It was written by Dr. Joseph Swingle of Wellesley College and Aarti Kapoor, a lawyer working for AFESIP. It argued that our work had not been done properly. The AFESIP paper was considered by the Roundtable judges and its points deemed not important enough to discuss in the public sessions.

Steinfatt Response to AFESIP

In 2004 I wrote a response to Swingle and Kapoor to make clear that their comments were, at best, irrelevant to the validity of our work, in the event these points were raised again at a later time. Three printed copies of that response in individual envelopes were delivered by me to the AFESIP office that August. One envelope was addressed to Pierre Legros and Somaly Mam, one to Aarti Kapoor, and one to Joseph Swingle. No other copies were distributed at that time.

I presented a revised version of that 2004 response to the *Trafficking, Migration, Minorities and HIV/AIDS, UNESCO, UNIAP and UNDP-SEAHIV Parallel Conference to the AIDS 2004 - XV International AIDS Conference*, held 11-16 July 2004 in Bangkok. Twelve audience members requested a hardcopy of the 2004 paper and received one. A final version of that July 2004 paper, corrected for spelling, grammar, and phrasing, was produced in September of 2005 but never distributed in hardcopy, internet, or in any other form to our knowledge.

Reason for Releasing the 2005 Steinfatt Response to AFESIP in June 2014

Newsweek's May 21, 2014 cover story by Simon Marks discusses Somaly Mam's resignation from AFESIP after falsifying her story of being forced into a brothel and tortured. He says she continued repeating that story for over a decade, deceiving well known movie stars, a NY Times reporter, and the United Nations General Assembly, among many others. We agree with Marks' condemnation of Somaly Mam's claims, including the rescue of large numbers of trafficked women and children. No one who has rescued trafficked persons from brothels across Cambodia, as Mam claims to have done, could approve the Swingle and Kapoor paper as an official AFESIP document. That paper continues to circulate on the web, and is occasionally cited as an attack on our work. It claims the existence of Phantom Cities in Cambodia: cities that do not exist. Anyone who knew rural Cambodia would not have approved Swingle and Kapoor's paper, and anyone who rescued those trafficked victims would not believe that three large cities exist in Cambodia when they do not in fact exist there or anywhere. The Steinfatt (2005) response to Swingle and Kapoor, publically available here for the first time, makes that clear.