

## *Introduction*

# TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

*Jay Albanese\**

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**T**ransnational crime will characterize the twenty-first century much in the same way that earlier technological developments changed the face of crime in the twentieth century. Consider the impact of the invention of the automobile, telephone, and computer on social life and crime during the 1900s. Compare that to what we have already seen in the early years of the twenty-first century with the rise of global Internet access, the collapse of political barriers to international travel, and the general expansion of communication to a truly global scale. These changes in society and technology are already having dramatic impacts on crime.

This volume assembles seven contributions on important dimensions of transnational crime from authors in three different countries. Many of these issues were incomprehensible in the recent past. The topics include trafficking in human beings, intellectual property theft, commercial sexual exploitation of children, how we organize the law enforcement response to transnational crime and terrorism, and how we teach and understand the methodology of different cultures and account for divergent perspectives on social problems.

Trafficking in human beings, the subject of three studies in this volume, has been poorly understood thus far due to a lack of primary source information. This volume fills this void with a study by **Dina Siegel** dealing with human trafficking, coercion, voluntariness, and the legal and illegal sex trade in the Netherlands. Professor Siegel's interviews with the

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women caught in these competing commercial, political, and social forces offer unique insight into the dynamics behind prostitution there.

The commercial sexual exploitation of children has gained attention in recent years and the study that I describe in this volume organizes both the existing data and experience. It demonstrates how the cycle of child sexual exploitation operates and what interventions are needed to have a meaningful impact on this conduct, as it crosses the boundaries of human trafficking, pornography, child abuse, prostitution, and sex tourism.

**Hedieh Nasheri's** contribution on intellectual property theft documents the unique nature of intellectual property theft as both an end in itself and as a support mechanism for both organized crime and terrorist groups. She finds evidence of networking among criminal groups across borders, a process facilitated by transnational technological and financial exchanges. She provides a systematic overview of the strengths and weaknesses of current efforts to curtail this form of transnational crime.

**Heather Clawson, Kevonne Small, Ellen Go, and Bradley Myles** conducted a fascinating study to determine what social/psychological/legal services exist for victim of human trafficking, and what services do these victims really need? They carried out a national telephone survey in the United States, and held focus groups with service providers and trafficking victims. The gaps and barriers to effective services for trafficking victims are well documented.

The true extent of human trafficking is unknown. **Jay Albanese, Jennifer Schrock Donnelly, and Talene Kelegian** make an effort to develop hard data through an analysis of news reports of police actions related to trafficking in 18 large border cities in the United States. Their study finds remarkably few cases, but the authors address this issue and also describe what can be concluded about the circumstances of trafficking based on the cases they found.

Research methodology is a fundamental skill because it provides the background needed to obtain valid and reliable knowledge. **Rosemary Barberet** documents that comparative methodology is rarely taught in criminology and it is rarely addressed in textbooks. She makes the case that the relatively low volume and poor quality of some comparative research in criminology and criminal justice may be due to the failure to prepare students to conduct research in international settings.

The law enforcement response to transnational crime and terrorism is crucial to provide meaning to national and international laws and conven-

tions directed toward these crimes. **William McDonald** documents how failures of cooperation with the U.S. law enforcement and intelligence community may be a larger problem than cooperation in the international law enforcement community—comparing the American and European approaches to transnational law enforcement cooperation.

The research reported in this volume adds both new data and insightful analysis to the growing literature on emerging forms of transnational crime and research. You are invited to correspond with the authors of this work so that research efforts in this area will continue to move forward.