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## **“NHI” condones violence against prostitutes**

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**F**or many people, the word “NHI” means nothing more than an acronym. It does not illustrate or symbolize victimization, injustice, marginalization, or a complete disregard of humanity in life and death. “NHI” or No Humans Involved is a designation that was used by police, politicians, and judges when dealing with prostitutes and other marginalized communities. This paper will mainly look at the effects of NHI in regards to women sex workers. NHI is an example of the institutional oppression that Tracey E. Ore’s *Maintaining Inequalities: Systems of Oppression and Privilege* addresses. By designating crimes against sex workers as “NHI,” police, politicians, and judges are accepting the continued violence against sex workers, and the belief that sex workers are unworthy of human rights. The main problem of society is the clashing of ideologies, defined as a system of beliefs. It is important that for oppression and thus, the oppression of sex workers, to end, ideologies of individuals must be dynamic to ideologies of other individuals. In other words, we need to be able to have our ideology, but still be willing to learn, change, or adapt to those ideologies of others.

Law enforcement agencies ability to discount the importance of crime against prostitutes is illustrative of Marilyn Frye’s definition of oppression as systematic. Frye in *Oppression* defined oppression as a system in which



one's life is confined and shaped by forces and barriers which are not accidental or occasional...[that] are systematically related to each other in such a way as to catch one between and among them and restrict or penalize motion in any direction (p. 176).

The prostitute is oppressed countless times. First, they are considered criminals by the criminalization of prostitution and therefore, are relegated to the "darker" side of life. Second, they encounter degradation by the johns, the pimps, and of course, by the law. The violence is ignored or accepted as "one of life's harsh realities" (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993, p. 42). Now, with NHI, the prostitute is forgotten once again in her death. When a crime involves a victim who is a prostitute, there is no rush to find the killer. Why should they? Prostitutes are as just criminals as the serial killer. This selective enforcement is evident when a police source told the Sacramento Bee about the deaths of more than 40 women, "a lot of that was because these were 'misdemeanor murders,' biker women, and hookers...sometimes we'd call them 'N [HI] s' no humans involved" (Wiegand, 1990). The sex worker's systematic oppression is best summed up in a statement by Judge Gilbert C. Alston, a former Los Angeles Police Officer,

the law did not afford prostitutes protection against rape or sodomy if they had agreed to and were paid for a "lesser" sex act...A woman who goes out on the street and makes a whore out of herself opens herself up to anybody...She steps outside the protection of the law (Arax, in Almodovar, 1999, p. 2).

In analyzing the statement, one sees the systematic oppression against prostitutes not only happening in the streets and precincts, but also in the court of law. The prostitute's "experience of being caged in" is illustrated by Judge Alston's



beliefs (Frye, p. 176). On the one hand, they have to deal with police officers and arrest; while on the other, they have to deal with the lack of blindness of Lady Justice. When did society give the power to those whose job is “to serve and protect” to decide whose human or not? To decide who will receive justice or not? To designate a person to be marginalized and forgotten even in death? NHI is a systematic form of oppression that marginalizes prostitutes. In Frye’s words, this is an example of the “double bind” (p. 175). Prostitutes are caught in situations in which options are reduced to a very few, and all solutions exposes one to punishment, censure or deprivation (Frye, 1983). In this instance, the “double bind” is personified when the police officer is also the judge.

The criminalization of prostitution continues to marginalize these women. The ‘double bind’ has essentially been institutionalized in the law regarding prostitutes. On the one hand, sex workers are being raped, brutalized, violated, and murdered. While on the other, laws against prostitutes disables them from receiving the law’s protection and justice from the courts. Due to the nature of their profession, they are instead arrested and charged for prostitution, while the johns and the pimps are left to brutalize another sex worker. This is shown in the number of prostitutes in the US prison and jail system. According to Jody Raphael’s *Listening to Olivia*, “out of fourteen million arrests in 2000 in the United States,... 53, 403 women faced arrest for prostitution and commercialized vice” (2004, p. 142). The prostitutes are punished in many ways even if the fault is on the perpetrator. NHI is another form of punishment that is a double bind; essentially, it punishes the sex worker by not recognizing the crime committed against her even in death.



## **Ideologies as maintained by the State and Policy**

Tracy E. Ore's *Maintaining Inequalities: Systems of Oppression and Privilege* reveals the presence of the matrix of domination—essentially, the belief that “ideologies that maintain systems of inequalities are built into the rules, policies, and practices of our social institutions” and “these ideologies often depend on one another” (p. 193). NHI illustrates the matrix of domination in which one group's ideology is reigning over another (sex workers). This matrix of domination is demonstrated during the murder investigations of more than 40 women from 1985-1992 in San Diego. According to Sisco, “the series of killings became referred to routinely as the ‘prostitute murders’ (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993, p. 42). By its label, public perception was skewed to “hinder awareness and outrage” (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993, p. 42). But is it all law enforcement manipulation? Should the media be the only one to blame? Is the public not capable of making decisions? As Ore stated, the matrix of domination gains its strength from ideologies working together to create a system of inequality. In combining the ability to oppress by the media and law enforcement, public perception can definitely be skewed and manipulated. But the public also plays a role in institutionalizing the matrix of domination. The attitude of blaming the victim or accepting that violence and death are occupational hazards for sex workers are institutionalized in the systems of family, education, and religion. As Sisco noted in her article,

we are conditioned to believe that violence and death are known occupational hazards for sex workers, we respond to their demise with apathy or a resigned willingness to blame the victim, to accept the murder of a prostitute as one of life's harsh realities. At the same time, we are relieved that such brutality could never be visited upon those of us who comply with societal mores (in Scholder, 1993, p. 42).



The above example shows what No Humans Involved does to the prostitute victim who is murdered. NHI essentially “disappears” slain and murdered prostitutes. They are another statistic; another prostitute killed in their line of work. The disappearance is made complete with the lack of public outrage; the public delude themselves from the injustice of NHI by continuing to believe that they will never experience such brutality if they follow society’s standards; by continuing to believe that violence, rape, and murder are all part of being a sex worker.

These competing ideologies between law enforcement and sex workers promote a negative effect in society. Law enforcement beliefs that sex workers are unlawful, immoral, and unworthy of protection have and are being enforced. In contrast, sex workers ideology focuses on basic human rights of protection, nonviolence, and freedom. Kenneth Burke’s *Language as Symbolic Action* identifies these clashing realities as “terministic screens” (p. 1341). Burke argues that terministic screens allows for multiple realities because our choice of terms to describe one reality can be a different reality in the perspective of the listener/ audience. According to this definition, the two clashing realities are whether or not the oppression of sex workers is just or unjust. But, who decides the reality that should be followed? In describing Politics and the State as social institutions that contributes to the systematic oppression and inequality of sex workers,

the state acts as a blueprint for how various procedures of the government should be carried out. In maintaining inequality, it acts in the interest of the dominant group or groups in society, reinforcing policies that work in their favor (Ore, p. 204).



Oppression is viewed through the reality of the more dominant group because they are the most listened to; they have the power to enact policies, to clamor for a better position in society, to use their power and oppress those who are powerless. The state is supposed to try to promote social equality but until it stops listening, and interpreting the oppressive realities of the dominant group into public policy, oppression will continue. It is important that those who are systematically silent are included in the making of the blueprint in society. The first reality sees prostitution as immoral; contributes to the spread of diseases; contributes to the rising divorce rate; and, that it is against Judeo-Christian beliefs (Aronson, 2006). In contrast, the other reality sees oppression from the johns, the pimps, the police, the public; they see lack of shelters to escape to; they experience violence, rape, and death; and, they feel the dehumanization (Aronson, 2006). Which reality prevails? Why is it considered more important than the other? Unfortunately, law enforcement ideology will prevail because they are the rules of society—they are supported by the social institution of politics and the state to continue ignoring the plight of sex workers. The social institutions of Public Policy and State have been given the silent consent by the public to continue to oppress sex workers—by allowing the police to label murdered women NHI because of their status.

This clashing of ideologies does not bode well for society as a whole. As a result of the cover-up and poor police work in the San Diego murders, the public was lead to believe that the murdered women were all prostitutes; therefore, women believed in the false sense of security that if they followed the rules, they would not end up like the murdered women (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993). However, it is important to note that the majority of the women killed were not prostitutes; rather, they were nurses,



homemakers, computer programmers, etc. (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993). Furthermore, the media coverage also did not reveal the fact that most of the victims killed were teenagers under 18 years old (De Santis & Serra, 2000). This clashing of ideologies not only makes the lives of women unsafe, but endangers young girls as well.

The ongoing inequality and oppression of sex workers reveals how unimportant sex workers are to society. Terms like “misdemeanor murders” and NHI “make it clear that those of us who choose, for whatever reason, to engage in commercial sex are no longer considered a part of the human race” (Almodovar, 1999, p. 3). As a community of people, should we just accept the belief that prostitutes are not humans? Burke’s “collective revelation” describes how we distinguish between “actions” of “persons” and the “motions” of “things” (p. 1346). According to Burke, “the difference between a thing and a person is that one merely *moves* whereas the other *acts*” (p. 1346). The NHI designation exemplifies society viewing prostitutes as merely things, rather than people. The social institution of State and Policy illustrates this marginalization by deciding what right, or lack thereof, that sex workers receive when crimes are committed against them. Furthermore, the illusion that “laws against prostitution are meant to protect basic human rights and to preserve our (society’s) dignity” implies that prostitutes are not humans whose rights and dignity are worth protecting (Almodovar, 1999, p. 2). This is a reality that sees society’s human rights and dignity to be preserve, and then there’s the worthless ‘Other’ that needs to be destroyed or forgotten for the sake of preserving mainstream society’s human rights and dignity. According to Almodovar, “laws against prostitution serve to brand the prostitute as worthless and inhuman,” therefore, “it is possible to conclude that the deaths of prostitutes are meaningless and thus it is not necessary to expend



the energy to investigate their murders” (1999, p. 3). The truth of this statement is disheartening, especially when one considers the uproar that would occur if the person murdered was a “good-girl” from a middle-class neighborhood.

The Sacramento Bee reveals the bipolarity of law enforcement towards investigating murders of prostitute versus murders of middle-class women. In an unrelated series of murders in San Diego in 1990, five women were murdered—all lived in a quiet, middle-class neighborhood. As a result of these homicides, the largest manhunt in San Diego history took place and the perpetrator was quickly apprehended (Wiegand, 1990; Sisco, in Scholder, 1999). This investigation illustrates selective law enforcing by police. It shows what Almodovar and what NHI does to sex workers. They are considered worthless and not human enough worth protecting or worth investigating crimes committed against them.

### **Media Oppression**

In a number of articles I have read, one reason that was given to accept designations of prostitute murders, misdemeanor murders, and NHI was that the police did not have enough funding and time to designate to all murders. This is refuted when a sheriff was quoted saying, “It’s hard to evoke as much empathy for a prostitute as there is for a pretty little college coed” (Sisco, in Scholder, p. 44). The sheriff was responding to the question regarding the delaying tactics in the “prostitute murders” versus the speedy result of the murder of a college coed. Obviously, there is enough resources to create a large manhunt for a speedy resolution of five murdered middle-class women, but there is not enough funding to look for the perpetrator who has killed more than 40 women. I admit that if you see the headlines “College Coed Murdered” and “Middle-class women murdered in a quiet neighborhood” versus the headlines “prostitute murders,” the





majority of the public would be more concerned of the former group. The media is a form of oppression in society that has the power to exacerbate the problem concerning sex workers. The way the media portrays violence against women is unfair and often underestimates the problem. According to Elizabeth K. Carll,

By presenting stories of violence against women as separate isolated events, the news media reinforces the idea that the violence was an isolated pathology or deviance. Maintaining this mirage of individual pathology, the news media denies the social roots of violence against women and absolves the larger society of any obligation to end it (2003, p. 3).

The media's influence is important to whether a crime and the victim is correctly portrayed. According to Sisco, the media coverage of the No Humans Involve project continued to perpetuate the myth that all slain women were prostitutes. The media also referred to the term of NHI as "an old time police term...a bit of folksy nostalgia without contemporary currency" (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993, p.43). The fact that both the media and the police have made light of this term shows the lack of concern for sex workers rights. It also illustrates their lack of knowledge on how such term continues to demean sex workers; and, it implies the ignorance to the violence that these women experienced.

Additionally, as Carll stated, the media's report that violence against women are often portrayed as isolated events strengthens the argument that violence against prostitutes only happen to prostitutes. The police are able to get away with NHI, prostitute murders, and misdemeanor murders because the labeling implies violence against prostitutes are experienced only when one does not follow societal norms (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993). The



combination of the police and the media's indifference implies to the public not to worry about the murdered women. It continues the conditioning that prostitution includes the risk of not only physical abuse, but also murder. By using the term NHI, the media and police demonstrate to the public that violence and murder against prostitutes happen. NHI takes away the identity of women who just happens to be prostitutes.

### **Language as Oppression**

The murder of the women in San Diego went silent because terms like prostitute murders, misdemeanor murders, and NHI were used to describe the victims. Due to our conditioning regarding sex workers, to ignore or to accept the hazards of the industry, we, as a society has allowed the degradation and oppression of women. As Elaine Audet state in *Prostitution: Rights of Women or right to women?* "prostitution constitutes one of the most violent forms of collective oppression of women" (2003). To ignore victims labeled as NHI because they are prostitutes ignores the fact that the victims were women. NHI therefore, not only condones violence against prostitutes but it also overlooks the issue of violence against women. This issue is largely due to society's use of language. Terms like prostitute murders, misdemeanor murders, and NHI automatically relegates victims into something less than human and not worth investigative time. Why is language important? Why is it effective in marginalizing the sex worker community? Robert Moore describes why language is an important part of our culture. In *Racism in the English Language*, Moore state

Language not only develops in conjunction with a society's historical, economic and political evolution; it also reflects that society's attitudes and thinking. Language not only *expresses* ideas and concepts but actually *shapes* thoughts (1976, p. 396).



Prostitution is the oldest profession and yet, the language that describes this industry still places the women in a position of less than human. What does this imply about our society who uses NHI to describe crimes against sex workers? Why should we care? It implies that this society has a long way to go in securing women rights and dignity. It also illustrates the ability of language to shape the values of future generations.

The importance of language is its ability to express ideas and shape thoughts and because of this ability language can maintain inequality. Ore's *Maintaining Inequalities* argues that "the ways in which we use language can maintain the values, roles, norms, and ideologies of the dominant culture" (p. 207). The use of the term NHI shows the dominant cultures ability to decide who is human or not. In this instant, language is being use to maintain inequality against prostitutes. Because it is a tool use to interpret our environment, language creates reality (Ore). In correlating this definition with Kenneth Burke's terministic screens and the ability of the dominant group to have their reality as the accepted norm, language not only creates reality, it can also define what exists in that reality (Ore). Through language, the dominant group is able to designate who exist. By using NHI, the dominant group is essentially saying prostitutes are not humans, and therefore, do not exist. Or, maybe not completely labeling them as inexistent, but by using terms such as NHI, the dominant group is deciding whose reality is more important. When the No Humans Involve public art project was shown to the community to give voice to the murdered women ("prostitute murders"), language was again use to trivialize their deaths. While the exhibit was open, a police officer wrote a comment in the gallery saying, "he had been trained to disregard the humanity of victims from the "darker side" of life" (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993, p. 43). This shows that when we start labeling a person a slut, a



prostitute, a sex worker, a hooker, and a whore, we begin to form this concept of “they” are different. While differences are good, “it is the meanings and values applied to these differences that makes them harmful” (Ore, p. 1). Sex workers, whose occupation is considered ‘different,’ are considered insignificant to society; thus, NHI is used when crime is committed against them. The language of NHI implies that sex workers don’t exist. The worse of it all is that it also implies these WOMEN don’t exist; that the violence committed against them does not exist.

Language maintains inequality in its ability to pass on culture (our values, beliefs, etc.). According to Ore, language helps children learn about socially constructed differences and meanings to them (Ore). Prostitution is an old occupation with the same bad connotation. NHI is another word that defines our values and beliefs that sex workers are not important. Before I had this Honors class, I learned that prostitutes were unacceptable through my family and my church. I was taught about their differences, their ungodliness, and their sinfulness. NHI is a term that I would have accepted and “prostitute murders” would have caused me to just flip another page of the newspapers. This is my example of language’s ability to pass on to the next generation our values whether they are wrong or right. NHI is a term that if passed on will cause the extinction of these women because it will continue to devalue these women’s worth.

If I would ask random people if they are being oppressed, I would think that most will say no. The word oppression is often believed to be a physical form of oppression—being jailed for one’s belief, being beaten and raped, etc. are the images that come to mind when describing oppression. As Frye argues, oppression is a systematic process. It is not just the visual and physical violence, but oppression happens through State and



Public polices, by the media, and even through language. NHI or No Humans Involve is an oppressive system that systematically dehumanizes sex workers. In the process, it degrades all women.

### **Concluding with a community project**

During my community presentation, the debate over the criminality of prostitutes was brought up by one of the audience. The way I understood his question was that why should they have rights or standing in the law when they are criminals who have committed a crime? Why should there be recognition of their deaths when they are criminals? First of all, should prostitution be criminalized? By criminalizing sex workers, society has essentially put these women between a rock and a hard place. They cannot get protection from the law when they are raped, beaten, and murdered. They also cannot escape the abuse and violence from the johns and the pimps. They are further stigmatized by the public. Who, then, are the criminals here? Whether sex workers chose the profession, whether they like it, hate it, was force into it, should not matter. The fact that sex workers face and experience humiliations, physical and sexual violence, theft, and murder should be reason enough for protection instead of oppression (Audet, 2003). For some reason, the public and the police like oppressing sex workers because they do not address the marginalization that NHI does against sex workers. While in contrast, there is outrage when women (who are not prostitutes) are violated. Are not sex workers women? Are not women, people? NHI should not have withstood the lawfulness process of policies in the start because NHI violates human rights. The debate of whether sex workers are sex workers or prostitutes and whether they can be identified as humans is moot. Whether it's a sex worker or a prostitute should not matter—that is a woman, who is a person and therefore, a human being with rights.



Furthermore, since when did this country have a perfect law? The Jim Crow Laws were supposed to be perfect laws—good laws—that kept African Americans from going to good schools, riding in the front of the bus, drinking in the same fountain as White people and going to restaurants. These laws were later considered unconstitutional and repealed. Just because a law says that prostitution is criminal does not mean it's the right law. First of all, by criminalizing prostitution, society is essentially creating an arrest record for these women. This arrest record virtually guarantees that they will not be employed when they do want to leave the sex industry (Almodovar, 1999). Additionally, because sex workers are criminals their voices are essentially silenced. They cannot report rape and brutality for fear of being arrested by police; they cannot escape easily from the johns and pimps; and, they cannot get help from shelters because they are involved in a “criminal” activity (Aronson, 2006). Criminalization of prostitution allows for police to continue labeling sex workers as NHI. This places sex workers in a position of less than human. The silence of society to this injustice further illustrates its acceptance to the marginalization of sex workers. Finally, the debate concerning prostitutes has also divided feminist organizations that are meant to give voice to prostitutes. According to Gregg Aronson, “the goals and solutions sought by the others (feminist organizations) so fundamentally conflict with their own that they have vowed not to cooperate” (2006, p. 1). These feminist organizations are arguing against each other and losing their credibility by criticizing the other's argument (Aronson, 2006). By their quarrel, they have become another wall for sex workers—they are not helping sex workers by continuing to shout over each other's voices. What all parties need to realize is oppression of prostitutes is oppression to women. As Almodovar stated, “laws against prostitution are extraneous and do nothing to protect



women. If we want to protect women, we should concentrate on enforcing laws designed to punish offenders truly infringe on a woman's right to choose" (1999, p. 4). The debate is not prostitution versus sex workers because by utilizing these terms, we have labeled these women and forgotten they are people. From the above arguments, it is safe to say that prostitutes are treated as not humans therefore, NHI is very appropriate. But as I said before, are all policies perfect and right? When the policy is about dehumanizing and oppressing a group of human beings then it is not right. Ideologies present in society will often clash. It is important to realize that to start changing the oppression that result from the conflict of beliefs, one must be willing to listen, react, adapt, learn, and sometimes, change one's belief.

Terms like NHI, prostitute murders and misdemeanor murders silences victims of crime because of their status in society. When the term "prostitute murders" was used to describe the San Diego murders, there was a lack of public outrage. I believe that this silence brought what Lloyd F. Bitzer would describe as a rhetorical situation. According to Bitzer, rhetoric is situational when:

rhetorical discourse comes into existence as a response to a situation, in the sense that an answer comes into existence in response to a question, or a solution in response to a problem (p.5).

The very first NHI No Humans Involved projects seek to give voice to the murdered victims and to show that violence against one woman is violence to all women (Sisco, in Scholder, 1993). NHI project was the first response to the NHI situation. Bitzer also noted that "rhetorical situations mature and decay without giving birth to rhetorical utterance" (p. 4). The fact that I was asked to do this project by the community illustrates that the



situation involving sex worker oppression is still an issue. This is the answer to the ‘so what?’ question. The community wanted to hear, and needed to hear and learn of the continuing marginalization of sex workers. So what? Because people and their rights matter; that’s what.

In creating my community project, I wanted to give voice to the murdered women as well. It is my way of answering and bringing change to the still present situation. These women were not only silenced by their perpetrator but also by the law that was and should have protected them. This was a very difficult project because I found that they were also muted in mainstream society. Their portrayal by the media and the labeling by law enforcement made it almost impossible to learn about the subject. NHI and the other accompanying terms were like whispers in society. I saw it in blogs, in articles, in newspapers, and some books but never was NHI mentioned outright. It was defined, commented on, but most often it was cited in a large article—a one sentence depiction of a term that made the deaths of many women insignificant. San Diego Mayor Maureen O’Connor illustrates the irrelevance of sex workers when instead of fighting for the murdered women and correcting police practices, she said, “This is a big city with big city problems...and one of those problems is that there are a lot of disturbed, dangerous people on the streets” (Weigand, 1990, p. 4). The reality is that danger come in many forms—the worst is the one that blind sides you. Donna Marie Gentile, one of the 40 murdered women, had a point in saying that “the badge is capable of committing crimes” (Weigand, 1990, p. 2). Gentile was later found naked, beaten, and strangled with her mouth and throat stuffed with gravel.





## **Project End to Violence against Sex Workers**

*Speech:*

Look...Here I am  
Standing here, all alone  
In the dark, no one cares  
Just a shadow  
Forgotten, another statistic for you to swallow  
Listen to this, another voice  
This time it's not just any noise  
But listen now, I'm a person  
This is my voice against oppression  
An oppression, humanly created  
Under the assumption that it was needed

*Verse I:*

Look at me, standing here  
Under the harsh light of your stare  
You don't care, I'm a scare  
Just a problem in your mind  
(To) set aside, not provide even my need to be alive  
Look at me, dying here  
Voice silenced, you un-aware  
Forgotten under your so called peace  
Forced to live a disgrace  
But hear me now!  
This weakening voice  
A plea to you to make a choice  
For the better  
(I want) a future where I'm more than litter  
Pick me up  
Stand with me, I ask for you not to flee  
Against this violence that rules me  
A violence that surrounds  
All around me I hear pain, I see death and more sufferin'



Where's the help? There is nothin'  
My human rights (just) forsaken

*Refrain:*

You are the voice, the one with all the power  
Make a change to make a world that's better  
Come with me and understand my world  
Before you judge and restrict me with your hold

*Verse II:*

In the dark, I am nothing  
Just a body, all for sale  
To a world unaware  
Of this scare and disaster  
My body's been rape and been beaten  
But you hear none of the screamin'  
(You see) in the news, another crime  
Violence against my kind  
What you see, what you hear  
There is no victim due to fear  
You see me as not human  
Just some flesh for consumption  
Do you know NHI?  
This special word to poke my eye  
No humans involve  
As prostitutes we are nothing  
I tell you now, I'm somebody  
Asking for the right to my body  
Do you hear me now?  
This ain't a joke  
All I ask is to be understood  
To be accepted as I should...be  
Now, you see?  
Just accept me as me (optional?)

*Refrain:*



You are the voice, the one with all the power  
Make a change to make a world that's better  
Come with me and understand my world  
Before you judge and restrict me with your hold

*Bridge:*

I'm begging you

Hear my plea

Don't you see this misery?

All I ask is for your help

Change inside and then you'll find

The answer was always in your mind

See me then...

Help me...

Allow me to just be me...

This rap song was a way for me to give voice to the murdered women and the sex workers and prostitutes (women themselves) who are still experiencing the marginalization and degradation for their status in society. Bitzer argued that rhetoric is "a mode of altering reality" and "to produce action or change in the world" (p.4). I wanted my project to continue the discourse of the oppression of sex workers; and, to be a start into changing and adapting one's ideologies with those surrounding us. Jim W. Corder proposes a solution into changing one's perception by arguing that,

A necessary correlate of acceptance (of the other's view) is understanding, an understanding which implies that the listener accepts the views of the speaker without knowing cognitively what will result. Such understanding, in turn, encourages the speaker to explore untried avenues of exchange" (1985, p.24).



This project does not seek in forcing one's ideologies into others, but to listen and understand to more than one belief system. It is only when we change inside can we have the ability to see the oppression in society—and, the solution into breaking the problem.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this rhetorical analysis is to illustrate that NHI and other terms like it are not just merely terms. Whether a term is nostalgic and old, it still has meanings and values that it carries; this message can be good or bad and then the term is learned. NHI is a labeling that results in the continuation of stigma against prostitutes, and essentially condones violence against women. It is important that to change ideologies, we must be able to change our own ideologies—to react, to change and then adapt. This analysis was to reveal how NHI or No Humans Involve is a systematic oppression implicating the police, the justice system, the law and policy, the media , the public, and finally, our culture. Language is important in society and NHI is one term that should not be utilized as an identification of people.



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