



Facilitator Guide for THE DAY MY GOD DIED

THE DAY MY GOD DIED is a feature-length documentary that presents the stories of young girls whose lives have been shattered by the child sex trade. This unforgettable examination of the growing plague of sex slavery weaves footage from Bombay brothels with stories of young girls who are taking action to stop the child sex industry. They describe the day they were abducted from their village and sold into sexual servitude as “the day my god died.”

Potential audiences for THE DAY MY GOD DIED screenings and events:

- Public policy makers, including elected officials and government agencies that monitor U.S. policy on child sex trafficking
- Organizations that work on human rights, women’s rights, child welfare, public health and global relief
- The faith-based community
- Direct service organizations that work with trafficked women and girls
- Students in women’s studies, international affairs, law, public policy and Asian studies programs
- Male offenders of violence against women and men’s awareness groups
- Travel agents and professionals in the international tourism industry
- Law agencies responsible for enforcing sex trafficking laws

Notes to facilitator:

Suggestions for opening the event:

Welcome participants to the viewing event and express your gratitude for their attendance.

- If it is a small group, ask participants to introduce themselves and to tell the group their reason for attending the event. If it is a large group, have participants turn to a neighbor they do not know and introduce themselves.
- Briefly introduce the film and the agenda for the viewing event. Warn the audience that the content of the film is fairly graphic and may be difficult for some people to watch.
- Ask the participants to notice their reaction to the film as they watch and to be prepared to share one aspect of the film that they found particularly powerful.

Suggested questions for discussion with the audience or panelists:

1. The title for the film was taken from a former trafficking victim that said, “the day I was sold was the day my god died.” How did watching this film affect you emotionally? Is there an image from the film that stands out for you that you would like to share? *Note: If you are facilitating discussion in a large group, ask each person to share one thing that struck them with another audience member they do not know.*
2. In the film, Anita of the Maiti Nepal organization said: “I am not a victim. I am a survivor working as a strong activist against trafficking.” The young women and organizations in the film demonstrate the importance of former victims leading the movements to stop sex trafficking. Why is that so important and how can allies support this important work?

3. The film portrays the story of survivor Meena who, after escaping from slavery, returned to her village in Nepal only to face the scorn of her community as she tried to hold the woman who sold her into slavery accountable. In India, Nepal, and almost all countries that are plagued by trafficking, the burden of proof for convicting perpetrators falls on the girls. The globalization of the world economy has provided new and lucrative opportunities for criminal entrepreneurs to be relatively free from detection and prosecution. How can governments make it easier for former victims to hold sex traffickers accountable?
4. Why are poor women and children particularly susceptible to trafficking? What supports can international development and human rights groups provide to end trafficking? How can income-generating skill training help girls and women at risk of being trafficked to break the cycle of violence?
5. The movie discusses sex trafficking as one of the worst human rights violations imaginable—combining kidnapping, torture, rape and sometimes murder. What more can the United Nations and international human rights institutions do to hold governments accountable for their inaction to halt the sex slave industry?
6. According to the U.S. State Department, up to 50,000 women are trafficked to the United States each year. What efforts have been taken to stop this atrocity and are they effective? Why is there little public knowledge about this epidemic?
7. The film briefly touches on the complicity of law enforcement and the sex trafficking industry. Police are often bought off by gangs and brothel owners or given access to sex workers in exchange for their silence. How can the international community address this law enforcement problem?
8. In Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, an estimated 60 to 80 percent of those in the sex industry are infected with HIV. The film portrays the work of Maiti Nepal and Sanlaap Hospice to empower girls living with HIV/AIDS and to enable advanced stage AIDS patients to die with dignity. What more can be done to educate governments and communities about the spread of HIV/AIDS through sex trafficking and to stop this public health crisis?
9. The sex slave industry is driven by the immense profit opportunities for traffickers. The United Nations has estimated that trafficking in the global sex industry generates five to seven billion U.S. dollars in annual profit. The trans-national nature of trafficking crimes has been effective in evading law enforcement activities. How can international institutions and governments stop the flow of these transnational profits? What international responses can be developed to more effectively combat this trans-national crime?
10. In April 2004, HIV/AIDS legislation was amended in the U.S. to require U.S.-funded groups to adopt a position opposing prostitution and trafficking. While the intentions behind this legislation may be good, the result could mean the de-funding some of the most successful HIV/AIDS prevention services and empowerment strategies for women in the sex industry. How can the U.S. promote sound health policy that helps liberate children and adults from the sex slave trade while securing condoms, health care and protection from police violence for those who remain in the industry?

Evaluation Form

Suggested Time: 10 minutes

We appreciate hearing about your community and classroom activities. In order to better understand how individuals and communities are using our films and outreach resources, please take time to submit an event evaluation form online at: www.itvs.org/outreach/events/evaluation.htm

Acknowledgements and Credits

THE DAY MY GOD DIED is produced by Andrew Levine and is presented by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), with funds provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. THE DAY MY GOD DIED will broadcast on the PBS series INDEPENDENT LENS, November 30, 2004 at 10:00pm. Check your local listings.

Writers: Amy Quinn, ITVS-CCP Field Coordinator

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