

THE RED CORD

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Monthly Newsletter of the Red Cord



IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH, THE RED CORD TURNS OUR ATTENTION TO THE ISSUE OF ABOLITION – ABOLISHING THE PRACTICE OF SLAVERY AND FREEING SLAVES.

WHAT IMAGES COME TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK OF SLAVERY?

MOST LIKELY YOU THINK OF SLAVE SHIPS FULL OF CAPTURED AFRICANS. YOU THINK OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH IN THE 1800S. AND YES, THAT IS A PICTURE OF SLAVERY. ONE PICTURE. BUT THERE'S ANOTHER ONE EVEN MORE SINISTER. SLAVERY HASN'T DISAPPEARED. IN FACT, EXPERTS HAVE CALCULATED THAT ROUGHLY 13 MILLION PEOPLE WERE CAPTURED AND SOLD AS SLAVES BETWEEN THE 15TH AND 19TH CENTURIES.

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ABOLISHING SLAVERY (CONT.)

Today, an estimated 40.3 million people — more than three times the figure during the transatlantic slave trade — are living in some form of modern slavery.

<https://braydeng.medium.com/are-there-more-slaves-now-than-anytime-in-history-38420e0542e5>.

Modern slavery generates \$150 billion each year in illicit profits for traffickers. <https://www.freetheslaves.net/slavery-today-2/slavery-today/>

Ashley, Vice President for The Red Cord says, “Modern Slavery preys on two primal shortcomings of mankind: lust and greed. At the root of both of these is self-idolatry--the idea that you are the ‘god’ of your world, and others are worth sacrificing for your pleasure and comfort. With the rise of social media, the “me-centered” world has become mainstream. We not only became more passionate about glorifying ourselves, but we simultaneously degrade the existence of others by reducing them down to no more than a username and their “follow.”

Predators/traffickers are well aware of this new socialization fact, and they are skillfully versed in how to exploit this for their gain. Instead of having to physically hunt down a victim (though this does still occur), all they have to do is “follow” them. Access to vulnerable populations has never been easier. Likewise, the void we feel due to unhealthy human connection is also creating new issues traffickers can use to reel in victims.

Read more of Ashley’s thoughts in this month’s blog
<https://theredcord.org/blog/>.

Freedom Fighters: A Tale of Two Benjamins

History provides us examples of many abolitionists. You’ve probably heard of William Wilberforce. But have you heard of Benjamin Lay? He was an unlikely hero – a British Quaker dwarf born in 1682. He was a hunchback man with an explosive personality intent on abolishing slavery.

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BENJAMIN LAY: Freedom Fighter

Learn more about him here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rv3v9m6PY6c>

and [The Fearless Benjamin Lay, https://www.amazon.com/dp/0807060984/ref=cm_sw_r_em_api_glt_i_HT8WF7EXV7G1BYYC8W6](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0807060984/ref=cm_sw_r_em_api_glt_i_HT8WF7EXV7G1BYYC8W6)



ABOLISHING SLAVERY (CONT.)

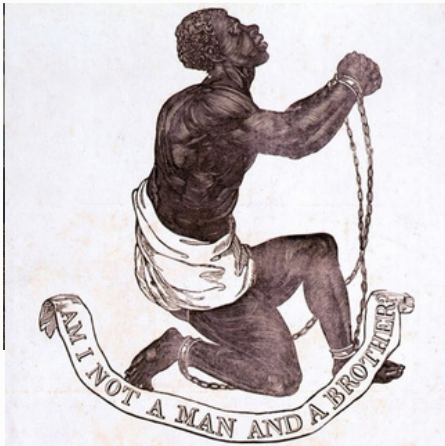
Fast forward to today and meet a modern abolitionist, Benjamin Nolot, founder and CEO of Exodus Cry. He founded Exodus Cry in 2008 after being inspired by the life of William Wilberforce. He is committed to the abolition of modern slavery by campaigning to shift cultural mindsets and laws that would abolish commercial sexual exploitation.

BENJAMIN Nolot
Freedom Fighter
CEO Exodus Cry

[tps://exoduscry.com/oursolution/](https://exoduscry.com/oursolution/)

What's your freedom story? How can you be a freedom fighter today?

Ashley recommends, "The number one way to be a freedom fighter is to start with the question – are you currently supporting the slave trade? (Learn more about that: <https://theredcord.org/get-help-hotlines/>) If so, begin working on freeing yourself from its hold. You can do this by becoming educated on this issue. Start sharing what you are learning with those around you, especially those who might be vulnerable. **Never underestimate the power your words can have on enacting change in our world!**"



WHY AM I SO PASSIONATE ABOUT THE SLAVERY ISSUE TODAY?

BLOG: Ashley, The Red Cord, VP

Gratitude. It is the driving force behind my abolitionism. When I consider the anti-slavery movement of old, I am struck by the reality that I am a product of its work. Without such people as Benjamin Lay, William Wilberforce, Frederik Douglas, etc., I would not be here today. Because they had the moral courage and unwavering conviction to speak up for those enslaved, I can exist and walk freely throughout my day-to-day life without the fear of slavery.

Today, slavery is not solely based on race, ethnicity, or social class. All traffickers are looking for now are bodies they can sell. In the sex trafficking world, any type of person will fit some “genre” of demand or another. One factor in this is the rise in online pornography. For the first time in history, unrealistic novelty in sex has been mainstreamed to millions of people on a daily basis. **There will never be enough supply to satisfy the growing number of porn and sex addicts being milled out of the pornography world today.**

Slavery has many structures that support it including oversexualized media, new social norms promoted on social media platforms, hypersexualized children, etc. Supporting the modern-day slave trade does not always entail physically buying a person. Just as people in history supported slave structures by buying their products, we too are buying the products of slavers today. Pornography, sexually deviant lifestyles, etc. These are all pillars of the modern sex slave market.

I encourage you to get informed. Use the resources mentioned on our website. Also visit:

<https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/human-trafficking/> and The Demand Project

<https://www.thedemandproject.org/> based in Tulsa.

I am very grateful that those abolitionists in the past took on such a massive cause, even though, in some cases, it did not even involve them or their families. In turn, I am inspired daily to use my privilege – my blessing of freedom – to extend the same generosity that was shown to me. I want to help more “Ashleys” come into this world, and that is something that keeps my passion burning. I invite you to join me.



Here is what we did together in January!

- Joined forces with the Lawton Police Department to make a video PSA for National Human Trafficking month
- Held our first Candlelight Vigil with the Jr. League of Lawton in honor of Human Trafficking Month
- Led trainings with:
 - Maysville teacher educators
 - Environmental Pest Control Employees
 - SCORE Program Students at VOTEC
 - OKDHS - Oklahoma Successful Adulthood

COMING THIS MONTH:

- Feb 3-4th "Beyond Summit," Tulsa -- a state wide Human Trafficking Convention. The Red Cord will be a presenter at the event.