



# Overcoming the Perpetrator-Victim Narrative

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(1996)

- Empirical research in Hamburg and the Visayas (1993-1995)
- Participant observation, focus on case studies
- Lively exchange with people connected to the Philippines in Hamburg and the Philippines till today

# Media and language

Die Geschichte einer Filipina

## Moderne Sklaverei – mitten in Deutschland



Alina wollte als Haushaltshilfe arbeiten – und wurde versklavt. © picture alliance / dpa / Jan-Philipp Strobel

### Highly sexualised discourses

- „Trade“ in women/girls („Frauen-/Mädchenhandel“)
- Modern „slavery“
- „Sex slaves“
- Emphasis on „childlike“ characteristics
- Pictures with sexualised content



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## FRAUENHANDEL



# What remains the same?

- ▶ Well-meaning attempts „to help“
- ▶ Unintended consequences
- ▶ Economic interests to make money (“sex sells”)
- ▶ Self-victimization (strategic essentialism)
- ▶ Heteronormativity, ethnic/gender stereotypes & sexualisation remain firmly established in our society

# Consequences of ethnography

- E-mails, letters and contact with couples
- Invert the victim-perpetrator discourse?
- Little public/academic interest in undermining supposedly clear distinctions between “good” and “bad”



Mai Ling: Let's Stick Together



# Changes in Social Science Theory

1. Emphasis on agency
2. Critique of essentialism (description of strategic essentialism)
3. Radical Critique of the Culture Concept
4. Loosening up of binary definitions of gender, ethnicity and class

Today I would do a more radical and much better job (I hope)!

Why continue to do research in a „minefield“?

