

Doing the unthinkable to others and not thinking about it?

'Decent Work for Everybody'
Utopia or Realistic Perspective in Preventing Human Trafficking &
Exploitation?

‘We must learn that passively to accept an unjust system is to cooperate with that system, and thereby to become a participant in its evil’ (Martin Luther King 1963: 6)

- **SYSTEM?!**

- Philip Zimbardo: 1971 Stanford prison experiment - <http://www.prisonexp.org>

- ‘The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil’ (Zimbardo 2007)



Circle Limit IV (Heaven and Hell)

M.C. Escher

July 1960

48.2 x 53 cm; image: 41.9 cm diameter

woodcut in black and taupe on laid japan paper

Gift of George Escher, Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia, 1983

National Gallery of Canada

<https://www.gallery.ca/en/see/collections/artwork.php?mkey=592>

The Anti-intellectualism of (anti) human trafficking discourse

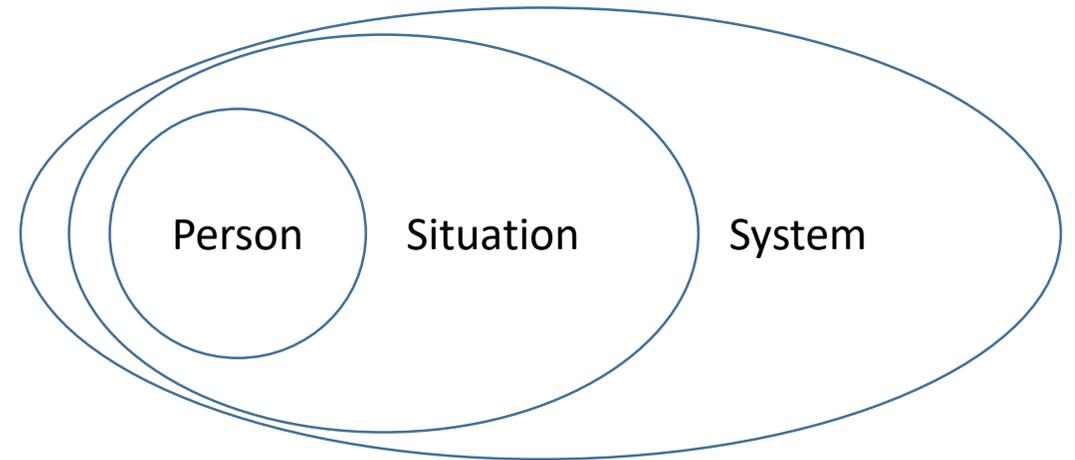
- The EU and national anti-trafficking metrics: the number of victims rescued, and the number of criminals identified and convicted.
- A very specific embodiment of victims – almost innately passive, broken, used and disempowered (meeting the ‘benchmark of victimhood’ to be recognised as such)
- A very specific embodiment of perpetrators - ‘dangerous brown men’ (Ghargi Bhattacharyya 2008) – gendered, racialized and ‘Othered’ – inherently bad and evil criminals and gangs driven by profit and operating across borders

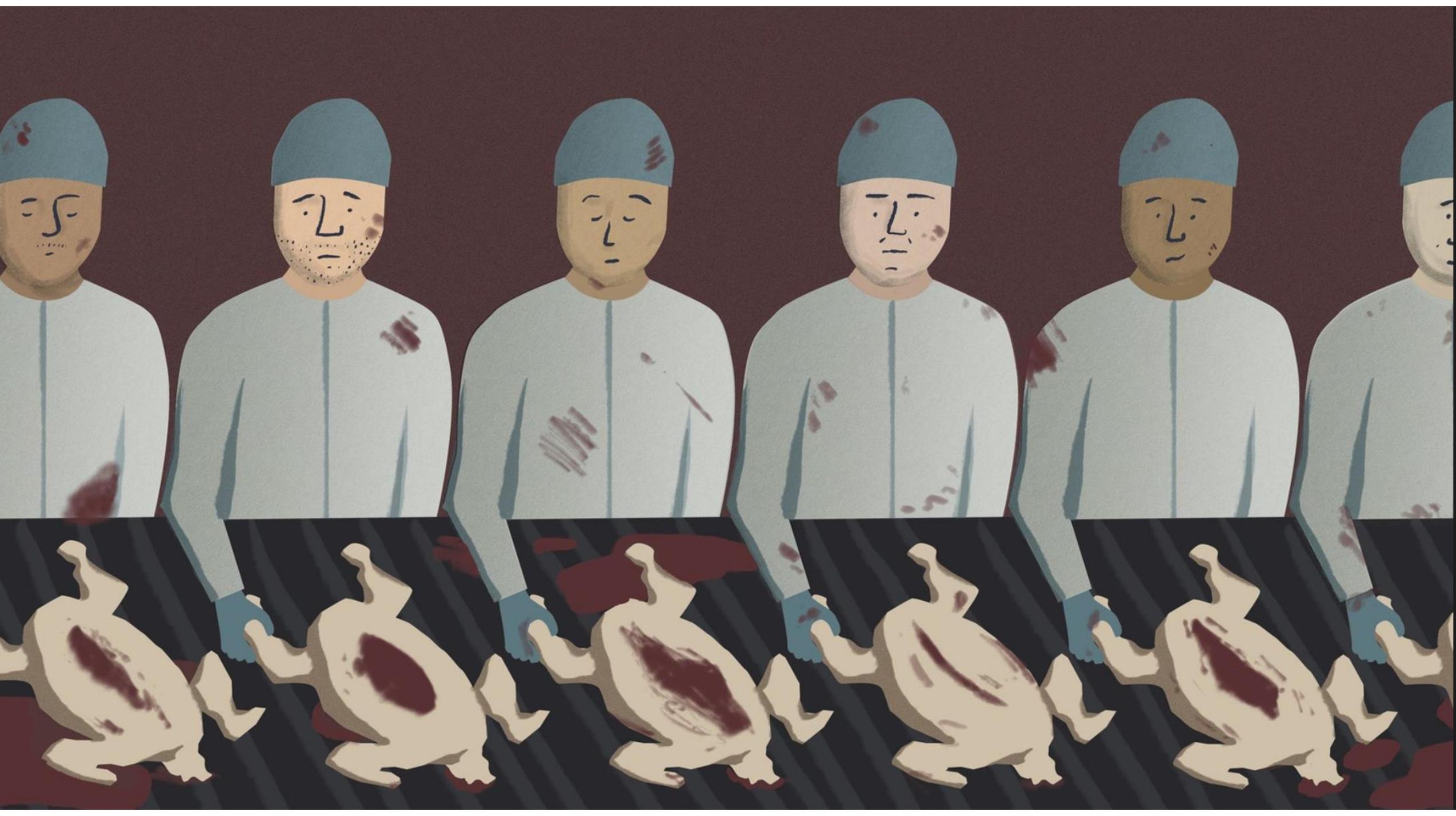
Person, Situation and System (Zimbardo 2007)

- Extending the notions of victims, perpetrators and, also, of bystanders and survivors
 - (a) individuals who are exploited, and people who move and exploit them;
 - (b) consumers and people who benefit directly or indirectly from such exploitation; and
 - (c) governments and private capital that allow such exploitation to happen

Fundamental Attribution Error (Zimbardo 2007)

- ...locates the inner qualities of people (criminals and victims, consumers and bystanders) as the main source of their actions (Zimbardo 445).
- Person, Situation and System approach:





Changing or preventing 'evil'

- Understanding, on an **individual level**, what strengths, virtues, and vulnerabilities individuals bring into a given situation'
- Recognising the complexity of **situational forces**: change or avoid a situation, rather than changing the people in the situation: 'public health approach' replacing 'medical approach': modify the environment rather than 'cure'
- Challenging the real power of **the System** (hidden behind a veil of secrecy and ideology) – unless we change the system, behavioral change will be transitory and situational change will be just an illusion
- Example: 2013 Rana Plaza collapse – 38 people charged with murder, consumer awareness, fashion retailers' commitment etc. but no systemic change, so exploitation continues

Panel: Spotlights & Reality Checks

- **Julia Planitzer:** Searching for accountability of the private sector for trafficking in human beings
- **Idar Smedsrud:** 'Fighting human trafficking is a question of our everyday decisions'
- **Alexandra Malangone:** 'Decent work for us, Slovaks (in Austria, UK and elsewhere), not for them - third-country nationals (in Slovakia).
- **Markus Zingerle:** 'It's not easy to bring cases of Human Trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation to the court – but with joined efforts it's possible.