

Margaret Boittin

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Professor Margaret Boittin's research lies at the intersection of criminal law, local government law, international and comparative law, and Chinese law, with a focus on the regulation of prostitution, human trafficking, law enforcement and civil servants. She uses empirical research methods to examine how marginalized individuals perceive their relationships to the laws and institutions that govern their behaviour. She explores how they think about, and interact with, individuals who represent these laws and institutions, such as law enforcement officers, judges, and lawyers. She reflects upon how and when laws define different types of individuals as lawbreakers, victims, or both, and examines the choices that state agents make when implementing these laws.

She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *The Whore, the Hostess and the Honey: Policing, Health, Business and the Regulation of Prostitution in China*, based on two years of field research in China. She also conducts research on human trafficking vulnerability and public opinion around human trafficking policies in Nepal and China, which is being funded with grants of \$1.5 million from the U.S. Department of Labor, USAID, Humanity United, Terre des Hommes, Stanford University and Vanderbilt University. She is an investigator with The Governance Project, led by Francis Fukuyama at Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, doing research on the Chinese bureaucracy and civil servants. Professor Boittin has been working and conducting research in China since 2001.

Her work has been published in *Law & Society Review*. She teaches in the areas of Property Law, Chinese Law, and Research Methods.

The Unintended Consequences of Mass-Media Anti-Trafficking Campaigns: Evidence from an Experimental Test in Nepal

Mass-media education campaigns are a frequently-used tool to shape knowledge and attitudes around prominent societal issues such as human trafficking. Yet what is the actual impact that such campaigns have on knowledge of and attitudes towards human trafficking victimhood? This study tackles this question through two original field experiments in Nepal. The first study focuses on the general population, and the second study targets police officers. Overall, we find that mass media campaigns are able to meaningfully increase knowledge of and shift attitudes towards human trafficking. Narratives tend to be more effective than fact-based campaigns. In addition, empowerment narratives tend to have a greater impact than danger ones. Yet, while study results point clearly towards the ability of campaigns to improve knowledge around human trafficking, their impact on attitudes is more nuanced. First, attitudes do not shift as easily as knowledge. And second, when they do, campaigns sometimes have the unintended consequence of actually increasing blame towards victims of human trafficking, rather than decreasing it.