



Transcript: Episode 5

Giving Voice to Invisible Populations: Human Rights and Social Justice

A Conversation with Prof. Terry Coonan

Elçin Haskollar: Welcome to Diversity Talks! I am Dr. Elçin Haskollar, and I'm your host. Support for this podcast comes from Florida State University's Center for Global Engagement and the President's Diversity and Inclusion Mini Grant Program. Diversity Talks is a collection of conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion that impact our campus, our communities and beyond. So, get ready to hear from leaders, from professors, from lawyers, and diversity officers as we uncover their stories and journeys. Each week we are going to have a special guest and will talk about how to create change.

Terry Coonan: The Black Lives Matter Movement, the racial justice movement has transformed I think in such a positive way what we do in a classroom because it's bringing voices and experiences to the fore that haven't been privileged and that in fact have been marginalized. And the human rights framework I found is very important for that as well. It is a framework that it's not owned by a particular country or culture. It's a framework that's evolved really in the last 60 years that begins with the notion that every human being has inherent rights and has an inherently vital experience to bring to the table.

Elçin Haskollar: Today's guest is Professor Terry Coonan. Terry is a human rights and immigration lawyer, and the Executive Director of the Center for the Advancement of Human Rights at Florida State University. The Center is dedicated to human rights education and the representation of people seeking to change their lives for the better. Since it was established in 2000, it's helped hundreds of people. On campus, Terry's teaching human rights courses, and sponsoring students, faculty, and staff to engage in human rights projects all over the world. Outside of campus he works on the front lines of human trafficking, represents human rights victims, and works tirelessly to craft better laws to prosecute traffickers and help victims of sex and labor trafficking. Hi Terry!

Terry Coonan: Good morning Elçin.

Elçin Haskollar: Good morning. Welcome to Diversity Talks.

Terry Coonan: Thank you so much. I'm delighted to be here with you.

Elçin Haskollar: I am so delighted to have you here with me today. I've known you for a good number of years and I am so excited for an audience about to hear all the wonderful stories and fascinating background experiences that you have. I know that you're a very busy person. On the FSU campus you're doing so many different things from teaching human rights courses and outside of the FSU campus you actually represent human rights victims across the world. But before we dive into your work and talk a little bit about that, let's talk a little bit about you. I was wondering if you can tell me about yourself in your own words. Who is Terry Coonan?

Terry Coonan: Well, I think human right advocate it's a job, it's a career but it's also who I have increasingly become. It's something that over the years has drawn me increasingly into this whole, what we now call the interdisciplinary human rights field. Curiously my life is not unfolded perhaps like I thought it would. When I was in undergraduate in college, I was studying up at the University of Notre Dame

*Contact Dr. Haskollar and Dr. Kohli Bagwe at diversitytalks@fsu.edu with questions.
Honor diversity and practice inclusion.*

Catholic School. And it was kind of funny at the time as an Irish Catholic male you sort of had the thought that you had two career options; you could either be a Catholic priest or a lawyer. And at the time I didn't know any lawyers I respected, so of course I thought I really should be a Catholic priest. So that the first career really that I embarked on was studying for the ministry and it was... I served for a number of years as a Catholic priest. But it was in those years of service in the church, that I also encountered human rights. So that it also kind of redirected me into the current kind of career and really the vocation as I think of it that those of us in the human rights field pursue.

Elçin Haskollar: I was wondering if you can tell us a little bit about your cultural identity. I know that human rights, immigration, being a lawyer, are the things that are so important to you. But when you think about all of your identities from being a college professor, to what you do in the human rights field, what would you say the most important standing identity for you?

Terry Coonan: Well, you know, I think it's the fact that as a human rights advocate, I think for any of us working in the human rights field particularly; for those of us also working with immigrants and the immigrant victims, in particular, it draws us beyond sort of our initial boundaries. And that's been I think for me the best part of my career. It has moved me beyond just sort of my own background. I grew up Irish Catholic in a small-town west coast of California, went to the Midwest, Indiana to study. At the time I thought that was a pretty big cultural move - that there was snow there – something I had not known about in my entire life. But it was a different worldview living in the Midwest. I did graduate school and on the East Coast, in Boston and then actually came back to Notre Dame when I decided that I would study to be a Catholic priest. It was part of that though that the priest at Notre Dame sent me to South America as part of that seminary training and that was of a very very impactful time. Again, living in a developing country – I was in Chile – but I was also living under a military dictatorship at the time which was quite different worldview. Very different than I think any of us as Americans, North Americans, typically grow up with. So, it was a quite impactful change for me. Most of my work ended up being with young survivors of torture there. That was, I thought I would be doing sort of traditional church work. But instead, was working with young people who had suffered under the Pinochet dictatorship. And that turned out to be really the kind of thing that changed my own life and the direction as well.

Elçin Haskollar: I can imagine; and I also went to college in Chicago and it was very very cold so I can definitely relate to some of your sentiments there. So as you said, before you study law at the University of Cincinnati in the Midwest and became a lawyer, you studied to actually become a Roman Catholic priest at Notre Dame University. And it was a mission trip, right, that let you to Chile and that introduced you to the field of human rights. And as you were saying, in Chile, you worked with torture victims, families of the disappeared during the Pinochet regime - and for those of you who don't know, Augusto Pinochet was a military dictator that ruled Chile during 1970s - and I was wondering if you would feel comfortable sharing with us what happened to you in Chile?

Terry Coonan: Well, absolutely. To begin with, I spent several years living in a shantytown there. So that this was a shantytown - a vast shantytown - wasn't a whole lot of electricity or running water in a lot of parts of that, really dire poverty but it was made worse by what was almost 2 decades of military dictatorship as well. And that the work that I ended up doing ended up being all work with survivors. Survivors as you mentioned, mothers of the disappeared, the families of the disappeared. Again, people who were deemed somehow to be political opponents of this military regime, often times were simply disappeared and never found again. Torture though became really the huge human rights issue in Chile. As many as maybe a 100

or 200,000 people ultimately detained and went through what we now understand were probably over 300 torture centers. My own work began with many of those survivors. I worked with what was called the *La Vicaría de la Solidaridad*. It was the Catholic Church called the Vicariate of Solidarity and it was a human rights office within the Catholic Church there. That alone was quite impactful for me. To see human rights as a ministry of the church, just as important as marriages or teaching, or any of what we sort of think, as traditional church work. At the time the thinking was it is a North American I had a measure of protection to be able to do human rights work. It didn't really turn out to be the case. There had been an assassination attempt on the dictator. It was actually even before I arrived in Chile. I arrived there in 1986, and a week or two before I arrive there was an assassination attempt on this dictator. Communist guerillas who are responsible for it had posed as Catholic seminarians, and they had basically gone to a small town that they knew the dictator traveled through every Sunday night on the way back from going to his mountain home and they attempted to ambush him, unsuccessfully. But that it led to an entire wave of repression and its part of that and we didn't know it at the time but that these guerillas had posed as Catholic priests and seminarians. And I ended up being detained – it was several months later - because I was working in the human rights field. It was not the sort of thing that I had at all anticipated; and it changed my life forever. I was detained for about five days and most of that spent on a torture table, was stripped and blindfolded and had electric wires taped into me and it was really interrogation about what did I know about the assassination attempt which priests were communist. And of course, not only did I know nothing but much of that was not true at all, but it was ... I mean even now, and I still have nightmares about that you know, some 30 years later. It really taught me a whole different view of the world. It was a human rights lesson about this is what happens when people cannot rely on the government to protect them and when in fact it's often the government that is perpetrating the human rights violations.

It changed my life significantly. I remained in Chile. I finished ... I was down there for about another year. Ultimately came back and did decide that I would go on for the ministry but the longer that I was in the ministry - which I loved; I loved the pastoral work; I loved the caring that you could do with people - but wanted to do more and much of it had to do with that experience of victimization really as well. And wanting my life and wanting my career to reflect. Wanting to be a voice for many of those victims, wanting also to do something concrete on their behalf. And that let me really to the career of a human rights lawyer. I came back; I did teach at Notre Dame, was there for a couple of years; but ultimately was able to go to the University of Cincinnati. They have, turns out the oldest human rights law institute in the country and went there on own scholarship and that then sort of launched me into the area of law that really, I have been passionate about since then. Much of my work has been on behalf of asylum-seekers, people fleeing persecution from around the world, torture survivors, but increasingly human trafficking victims as well.

When Sandy D'Alemberte and FSU - and it's been 20 years now - back in 2000 and asked, "would you come and start an interdisciplinary human rights center at FSU?" I jumped at the opportunity. It has been a wonderful 20 years. FSU has been a remarkable community really, to get to pursue human rights work whether it's teaching, whether it's sending students around the country or around the world to pursue human rights work within their own respective disciplines, or direct representation. At our human rights center, we provide direct pro bono representation for many of the same kind of survivors that I've worked with over the years. So, again asylum-seekers, people fleeing death squads in their own country. Great many of our asylum-seekers now have gender-based claims. That has been one of the changes that I've noticed in the field. A great many of them are young women and who are fleeing gender-based violence.

Contact Dr. Haskollar and Dr. Kohli Bagwe at diversitytalks@fsu.edu with questions.
Honor diversity and practice inclusion.

That's becoming really the profile of most of our survivors that we represent. But we also work with again, survivors of tortured from around the world and increasingly human trafficking victims, human rights victims right within our own backyard here in Florida and throughout the country as well. So, FSU has been a great place to do that work: tremendously supportive a faculty and staff, we've got great centers like the Center for Global Engagement that are wonderful partners in that work, our FSU faculty have been tremendous partners as well. So, it's been a great mission and a university in general is a great place to kind of work, sort of; and it's a great privilege really to work with that next generation of human rights advocates. The students that we have given me great hope. They come in with great aspirations. They know things like social media skills that some of us over the age of 40 don't nearly have as much of, but it's a great great group of people and a faculty to work with. So FSU has been both family and it's also been that the great sort of framework for us to get to do human rights work now in the 21st-century.

Elçin Haskollar: Absolutely, and the FSU Center for the Advancement of Human Rights and you have done a remarkable work helping hundreds of people every single year and as a lawyer and the director of human rights center and there you manage full-time staff, you teach human rights courses, and you also offer pro bono legal services to - as you were saying to refugees, asylum-seekers, human trafficking victims, and survivors of torture. So as a lawyer and the director of a human rights center who has helped hundreds of people every year, and also as a torture survivor who wants to be the voice of the victims, and help people who don't have a voice, would you share with us some examples of how your experiences shaved your perspectives on diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Terry Coonan: Absolutely. Well, I think one of the really important things, and that this is so true of our human rights center; it's really probably our signature is that we are victim-based and that we are, whether we're teaching, or whether we're doing research or policy work, we start with victims. We start with survivors, with their perspective of the world and that is such an important part I think of the diversity and inclusion movement in general that we actually, in one sense, give voice to voiceless people, but really allow their voices to speak. We don't at the end of the day wanna speak for them. We want their voices to be brought to the table. That is so much of what we're doing in the human trafficking world, it's what we do in the policy world, it's what we do in our teaching as well. That we want those voices and those life experiences to basically speak to us, and we want those voices to craft our laws, craft our policies. We want those voices also to inform our classrooms and as a teacher that's one of the things that I continue to be a learner on a day-to-day basis. The Black Lives Matter Movement, the racial justice movement has transformed I think in such a positive way what we do in a classroom because it's bringing voices and experiences to the fore that haven't been privileged and that in fact have been marginalized. And the human rights framework I found is very important for that as well. It is a framework that it's not owned by a particular country or culture. It's a framework that's evolved really in the last 60 years that begins with the notion that every human being has inherent rights and has an inherently vital experience to bring to the table. Not just as a human rights lawyer, I suppose simply as a human rights advocate I find that so important. I find it's also potentially an avenue for us to travel that moves us beyond some of the polarization that we've experienced in recent years especially in this country. That this is a common language, they're common standards, no political party owns them; it's not a liberal or a conservative agenda, it's a human agenda. And I think that's a great sort of roadmap, it's a great compass for us to follow.

Elçin Haskollar: Then how would you define the terms diversity equity and inclusion? And this is a question that I asked every single guest of mine. So what did these terms mean to you, and how would you define them in your own words?

Terry Coonan: In my own words, I suppose that would mean that at the end of the day every human story is of equal value. And that we need to have whether it's learning, teaching, policy, whether it's laws, especially when I think of as a lawyer as someone who works with our Florida legislature and with Congress on creating better laws, we need to bring both the full diversity of life experience and I don't even want to just say victims, but I want to say that again inherently human beings. And we are such a great melting pot in America. This is one of the things that till the end of my days I will be grateful for being an American because of the melting pot that we are, and truly the diversity that our country is always represented and needing to understand that many of the voices in our country haven't been given sort of equal access, they haven't been privileged, they in fact I've been marginalized. So it's my hope and I think it's the best hope for America and its who we are as Americans on our best days that all those voices need to inform both our identity as Americans but beyond that as humans. And that's what I think is so important about the connection between the human rights movement, the human rights community, and the whole movement towards diversity and inclusion; absolutely one and the same.

Elçin Haskollar: You are so passionate about the human rights field. I think it's very very energizing. And I know that - and again you have mentioned this - you've helped hundreds of victims every single year and personally through our discussions I know that you helped a 17-year-old girl from Nigeria who fled her country because she was afraid of female genital mutilation, and you also helped another young woman from Peru because she was brutalized by the guerillas when she was a child. You helped both of these young girls seek safe heaven here in the United States, so that they can stay here legally. So, I was wondering can you please give us an idea of what it must like to flee your home country because you're afraid and leave your entire life behind to go to another country because you wanna be safe there?

Terry Coonan: That continues to inform why we do human rights or why I am in that field as well. It has to be, and again I have not had that experience of a being a refugee. I've had a home and a country to come back to always, but it's that experience of working with, especially very very young survivors. What struck me about both of those cases is that, for instance, that young 17-year-old girl from Nigeria. We found he... she was encountered in the Tallahassee bus station. That her mother who when her father died and realized she can go longer projector from FGM. Her father had been a doctor and protecting his daughters and when he died it was another family member, an uncle, who literally became the owner of those young women, and told them, "the first thing that you're going to do is undergo FGM to make you marriageable". And this mother took her life savings, got her daughter to the United States here, got her as far as the Tallahassee bus station where we were called, "there's a 17-year-old girl at the Tallahassee bus station." The other young woman was working as a waitress here in Tallahassee, when we met her and yes she had suffered as a child, a very young child, being sexually abused and violated by the *Sendero Luminoso* guerillas to punish her family for the fact that they would not support these guerillas in Peru. And it was a reminder to me, 1.) of just the fragility of life in a lot of countries, but also how these young women in particular could bear the brunt of some of those things. That's our privilege. I also have to remind people, my students or folks that we work, that the human rights don't happen in distant countries; they happen in our own backyard. These were two young women right here in Tallahassee. We now work with over 300 refugees from around the world that are here in Tallahassee. Some great services, support services that are student groups here at FSU offer them. We provide pro bono legal representation. For the most part, these refugees are either from

*Contact Dr. Haskollar and Dr. Kohli Bagwe at diversitytalks@fsu.edu with questions.
Honor diversity and practice inclusion.*

Syria that are here in Tallahassee or from the D.R.C., the Democratic Republic of Congo where they have fled what's sadly been referred to as the rape capital of the world, that again one of the most violent countries in the world.

So that our refugees bring a great deal of trauma with them. It's a reminder to me also why human rights are too important to be left to the lawyers of the world; why we need social workers and therapists. It's underscored I think the wisdom of FSU to you have an interdisciplinary human rights center, one that we train our future social workers but also our filmmakers, our business students, our doctors, our nurses. Our belief is that human rights should inform everyone's career, and that human rights sensibilities are a part of every career that FSU can prepare a student for. So yeah, it's this reminder that human rights don't happen just in distant places. Eleanor Roosevelt was once asked, "where do human rights happen?" she famously replied that, "human rights happen in small places close to home" and I thought there couldn't be a better description. This was the woman who would really pull together the Universal Declaration of Human Rights back in 1948.

By the way, people had said that that was going to be an impossible job to get the world to agree on what are the basic sense of human rights that everyone could agree on. You know it has always been said that "if you have a difficult job, give it to a man; if you have an impossible job, give it to woman." Eleanor Roosevelt absolutely epitomizes that. She did, in many ways, the nearly impossible thing. She came up with this basic document; this now roadmap for the human rights movement that really spells out what are all the human rights that every person in the world is entitled to claim, just by virtue of being human. And again, a tremendous roadmap. I mean we are going on almost 70 years that we've had that. It is the roadmap for the human rights movement, but it's great that it's multinational; it doesn't come down to a particular culture, a language, particular faith... no... this is the human roadmap for us as we go further into the 21st-century.

Elçin Haskollar: I'd like to unpack some of the things that you just said. For those of us who may not necessarily have any background in human rights education or legal education, I was wondering if you can elaborate on the differences between what it's like to help the client like the two girls from Peru and Nigeria to seek asylum, and you know some of your other clients who come to you for other immigration issues. What are the main differences between seeking asylum and immigration issues?

Terry Coonan: Sure. Well immigration of course is the larger purview; it's the larger framework there. Now when we talk about refugees that's, technically, it's a legal term; and those are people that have already demonstrated a well-founded fear of persecution before they come here to the United States. So for instance, our clients from Syria, our clients from the Democratic Republic of Congo, they have entered the United States already having proven that they've have a well-founded fear of persecution back in their home country. So they come here; and oh by the way, they are at the most severely vetted groups of individuals that can actually enter into the United States. They also don't get to choose the United States. They go through a U.N. process where they, if they are fortunate, end up in another country other than the one where they fear the persecution. But that they ultimately don't choose countries. That it's the United Nations that will often times allocate these refugees to different countries. So that's one group: they've already proven their fear of persecution or they've already suffered persecution. Asylum-seekers are the people who come here to the United States, and request asylum. They request refugee status. So, they have to demonstrate that will founded fear of persecution in front of either an asylum officer, or if they're in what we call deportation or removal proceedings, in front of an immigration judge. So that's where we will represent

*Contact Dr. Haskollar and Dr. Kohli Bagwe at diversitytalks@fsu.edu with questions.
Honor diversity and practice inclusion.*

them. And we currently have cases, again from all over the globe, many of them young women fearing domestic violence, fearing sexual assault at the hands of say, MS 13 in Central American countries. Interestingly, we have a number of young men that also fear gender-based violence; that their orientation as LGBTQ, has actually made them at risk as well. So, that when we talked about gender-based violence or gender-based threats now also includes young men in it as well. So, I should be clear that it's not just young women. but a great many of them are. Between what we call the feminization of poverty, the fact that women are poor and more vulnerable, often times they are more exposed and that especially when it comes to the world of human trafficking, this is where we see an inordinately high number of women victims. And these are cases once again here in our backyard. The victimization they face is not in their home country, it's here. It's either forced prostitution or forced labor and that has made also a significant part of our, our caseload. What I found curious Elçin is that the trauma that I saw, and I worked with in terms of survivors of torture, you know some 30 years ago in Chile, is what we now see in the lives and the experiences of trafficking victims. We didn't have the language of trauma some 30 years ago; we know a lot more about it now. It's also why mental health specialists, social workers, therapists are such important players in the human rights field, but in particular, actually serving are survivors of human trafficking. So this has been again, it's a human rights violation that we understand it's perpetrated here; it's not in a distant country and it's a reminder that much of the human rights work we have to do right here in America.

Elçin Haskollar: On asylum-seekers and refugees, many people might feel hesitant about admitting outsiders, people from other countries into the United States for fear of an increasing violence here or terrorism. How would you respond to those people?

Terry Coonan: Well again these are the most significantly vetted immigrants that we have in the United States. They've gone through years of vetting, both at the U.N. level if they're refugees, but then also by U.S. Department of Homeland Security and they are vetted repeatedly in the time that they're here. Also, these do not tend to be the folks that are a politically violent. It's actually the fact that they've been victimized by political violence that distinguishes them. Einstein was a refugee; I mean we hark it back to that. But again, this is the better part of our angels as it were; or the better angels of America if you want to put it in Lincoln's words. That these other people for whom that American dream, that American promise of refuge, is absolutely what draws them here. That it's also very clear legally that they cannot come here and be given asylum or refugee status if they just want a better job or a better life. It actually has to be what we call fear-based and this is the part of the immigration field that we specialize in at the human rights center. Fear-based immigration where you have to be able to both identify and, in a sense, prove up why it is that you're afraid to go back to your home country. So that these turn out to be the least violent people in the world. And again, all the statistics, in general statistics, show that our immigrant population here in the United States far less likely to commit a crime than say our American population. When we look at good research that's what that indicates to us. This is not to say that, you know, some bad apples haven't made their way into the United States. Immigration law has become increasingly criminalized in the last 20 years to try to get at that effect, but right now, immigration is quite severe when it comes to the consequences for criminal activities. But the vast amount of ours are immigrants, but especially of our refugees or asylum-seekers or not at all threats to the United States.

Elçin Haskollar: You are right now working on a very exciting project with FSU Dance School, working specifically with female asylum-seekers and it sounds like an amazing opportunity. Would you like to tell us a little bit about the project?

Terry Coonan: Yeah, it's a great project. It's between our School of Dance and our Communications School. And it's a great film project that looks at the resiliency of women in the human rights field and it's essentially a dance film. It's being done with 360 technology meaning that again you'll need actually special (laughs) special goggles to watch this, but it's in the process, it's in the final process of editing. We think it'll be about an 8-to-12-minute film or so; so short. But it's the expression of women dancers basically telling the stories of women survivors of human rights violations and again not explicit at all, but again as only dancers can do, convey through their art, what is this experience of resiliency that women in particular we think ... it's such a gift that they bring to the human rights field. They become tremendous advocates often times as a result of their experiences. So, I have not seen the final version of this yet, but we're very excited both to work with some great professors and some great dancers in our dance school and also some great film makers in our communication school.

Elçin Haskollar: When can we get to see it?

Terry Coonan: We hope to have a version of it available early summer. They're working on the soundtrack right now, so we hope that it will be available at some point this summer. You'll be the first to know.

Elçin Haskollar: I am really looking forward to it.

Terry Coonan: Absolutely. Also working with our film school. Got a great young filmmaker there, Valerie Scoon who's looking ... we're actually helping fund a filming project that she's doing now, looking at what she called invisible populations; it's the enslaved population of Tallahassee, both a historical look but a look in which she's trying to bring to the world of film, what were the stories of the African Americans who were enslaved right here in Tallahassee. Interestingly she's a runner, and Valerie told me she was running through Betton Hills when she realized they were old slave cemeteries that were right there in the heart of Tallahassee; and wanting to be able to tell the stories of the people that in many ways the stories have not been part of our sort of main stream history. So that's the kind of great work that filmmakers can do whether in our communication school or film school and we've been very excited to support them over the years as well.

Elçin Haskollar: Terry, I was trained as a genocide scholar at the Center for Human Rights and Genocide at Rutgers University, and one of the things that I learned about studying and teaching human rights and genocide is that when you are presenting, you know all this information to the students, statistics don't necessarily make an impact, but stories do. So I really appreciate all of the work that you're doing in order to highlight these significant stories that can actually get people understand that these are not numbers. These are actually human lives.

Terry Coonan: And as you mentioned Elçin, stories are the important thing there. That we can't reduce the field to statistic. We can't even reduce it to, sort of news clips, but that it's the human story and that's at the heart of the human rights movement, it's the heart of the human rights field that it is made up of individuals, each of whom has a story that has to be valued, has to somehow become part of our public discourse. So yeah, it's that story element and it's the reason too that storytellers are so important in the human rights movement. I kid that at the end of the day, human rights are too important to be left to the

lawyers of the world. We can do important advocacy but that it's the people that can tell a story that can make a world of difference when it comes to reaching out to students, when it comes to reaching out to judges, to policymakers, the story's incredibly important.

Elçin Haskollar: And as a professor at FSU, you make a world of difference by telling you know the stories of other people to your students and you help FSU students engage in human rights projects all over the world. You help them serve on international tribunals, refugee camps, torture centers, recovery programs for sex trafficking victims, so by doing so you must actually come in to contact you know with so many different students who come from so many different backgrounds. So I was wondering, what is your experiences working with diverse groups of students help you about diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Terry Coonan: That's a key a key dynamic. And part of it has to do with the fact that when we have survivors that we work, we have to be very respectful of their needs. We don't impose any particular person or type of person on them. Increasingly our survivors tell us what kind of help that they want, and who it is that they would like that help from. We've seen it in the world of young sex trafficking survivors; they don't trust law-enforcement, they may not trust initially even a victim advocate. We've been called into in a number of situations where its either myself or one of the women in our staff, given the preference of some of our young sex trafficking victims to confide in a woman, and we understand that innately. That's so very very important, and you mentioned again that you know being a voice for voiceless people; that's important but at the end of the day, we are not about appropriating their stories or be the ones to tell their stories necessarily for them. The real objective is for them to tell their stories; for them to be given the tools at times the healing, but for them to them become advocates. And that maybe for me the most impressive dynamic when I've seen our young survivors, or our not so young survivors, who go forward and are finally able to tell their own stories. We work with a quite diverse group of students and faculty at FSU; that's one of the great privileges that we have. And we're quite mindful that again every student can do something with us or for us, but that often times if they're going to be doing direct client work, it's the client that will determine what those needs are and it times who it that can best help them. So we're trying to be very very attentive to that as well.

Elçin Haskollar: And I have a final question. What would you recommend to newcomers into your field who would like to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Terry Coonan: That's great question and I think the great general answer is to step outside your own boundaries for however you can do so. You know here at FSU multiple opportunities to study abroad, but even if you don't study abroad, the opportunities I think of at the Center for Global Engagement; just for expanding your worldview. I think that's the task that's incumbent on all of us and that's myself as well, that every single day as an advocate, I'm not just meant to get up and tell people what I know or what I've learned but I meant to be a learner as well and it's that dynamic hopefully that all of us learn. This is what we need to be about as we go about being global citizens and I think that constantly being open, listening to diverse viewpoints, that's I think one of the most important things that I think we have to do even in 21st century America; listening to others that may feel quite differently about the world than we feel. Diversity and inclusion will require, I think simply listening skills to begin with. That's I think a great thing for us to both model, but also to actually show our students how important that. At the end of the day the human rights movement, I think also if you want to call the movement for diversity and inclusion, it's about the fact that there are no boundaries. There are no ... at the end of the day, the world is one and if the globalization movement doesn't teach us anything it's that; that again the other day there's not national

*Contact Dr. Haskollar and Dr. Kohli Bagwe at diversitytalks@fsu.edu with questions.
Honor diversity and practice inclusion.*

boundaries, linguistic boundaries, we are increasingly a world that operates really as one. And preparing our students for that and actually moving beyond even our personal boundaries is I think the great challenge for us as educators and as global citizens.

Elçin Haskollar: Any final thoughts?

Terry Coonan: I am just so grateful that FSU has this sort of audience and this also sort of framework for both its faculty and for its students to go out and make it a better world.

Elçin Haskollar: Absolutely. Thank you so much for being here Terry and sharing with us your knowledge, your experiences, but most importantly your passion for human rights and also highlighting the stories of refugees and asylum-seekers and really letting us know and helping us see their experiences from a human dimension. I feel like I learned a lot today, so thank you so much for that.

Terry Coonan: Thank you for having me and look forward to partnering more with you as we go forward at FSU.

Elçin Haskollar: Have a great day.