


March 2017

Frontline Reports: Emergent Topics for Scholarly Development

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Recommended Citation

Hughes, Donna M. (2017) "Frontline Reports: Emergent Topics for Scholarly Development," *Dignity: A Journal on Sexual Exploitation and Violence*: Vol. 2: Iss. 1, Article 13.

DOI: 10.23860/dignity.2017.02.01.13

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol2/iss1/13><https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol2/iss1/13>

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Frontline Reports: Emergent Topics for Scholarly Development

Abstract

Dignity is a scholarly journal dedicated to creating a publishing space for all members of the community—survivors, activists, legal advocates, service providers, researchers, theorists, and scholars—who write about exploitation and violence. Frontline Reports put Dignity on the leading edge of naming, describing, and analyzing topics relevant to our work of ending exploitation and violence. Each report teaches us about the immediate topic and opens up new horizons for future scholarship. By bringing all together, we facilitate the exchange of information and enhance the development of scholarship in the field.

Keywords

Exploitation, violence, violence against women, violence against men and boys, scholarship, research, personal experience, survivors

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FRONTLINE REPORTS: EMERGENT TOPICS FOR SCHOLARLY DEVELOPMENT

Donna M. Hughes

Editor-in-Chief

ABSTRACT

Dignity is a scholarly journal dedicated to creating a publishing space for all members of the community—survivors, activists, legal advocates, service providers, researchers, theorists, and scholars—who write about exploitation and violence. Frontline Reports put *Dignity* on the leading edge of naming, describing, and analyzing topics relevant to our work of ending exploitation and violence. Each report teaches us about the immediate topic and opens up new horizons for future scholarship. By bringing all together, we facilitate the exchange of information and enhance the development of scholarship in the field.

KEYWORDS

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FRONTLINE REPORTS IS A SECTION OF *DIGNITY* for writings that describe personal experiences and observations. I envisioned Frontline Reports to be a place for professionals, service providers, and community advocates to document their experiences and alert the wider global community of new issues and events.

In addition, Frontline Reports aim to: 1) Make researchers and scholars aware of experiences not yet named or documented in academic publications; 2) Create awareness on which to build research, scholarship, and knowledge about exploitation and violence; and 3) Describe projects, programs, and campaigns to assist survivors and prevent future harm.

In the first two issues of *Dignity*, there are six Frontline Reports. Each of them is valuable in its own right for what it names and describes, but they also present us with new insights and understandings of harm and what is happening around the world. They nudge other survivors, professionals, and service providers to write about their own experiences and observations. And, they call researchers and scholars to ask questions that develop new theories and studies.

In Volume 1, Issue 1 of *Dignity* (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol1/iss1/>), Chris Stark writes eloquently and perceptively about her experience as a girl being used in the making of child sexual abuse videos. Her literary memoir essay, “Fish” (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol1/iss1/2/>), shows us her terror and dissociation. It also brings to our attention that to date

there has not been an anthology of writings or a study of survivors of the production of child sexual abuse images or videos.

Rachel McGinnis (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol1/iss1/8/>) reports on her experience in a refugee camp in Greece and describes how she discovered the sexual abuse and exploitation of boys and young men in the local area. She tells us there are no services for sexually exploited boys, thereby alerting organizations and agencies about the need for services for men and boys, as well as women and girls.

Emily Waters (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol1/iss1/9/>) reminds us that survivors of sex trafficking have much to teach counselors and therapists who have had little or no training in working with these types of victims. She is following the path of other survivors from the battered women's movement, the anti-rape movement, and the anti-child sexual abuse movement who emphasized the importance of survivor knowledge, and what they could teach others.

In Volume 2, Issue 1 of *Dignity* (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol2/iss1/>) there are three Frontline Reports—all from Australia—that independently discuss secondary trauma. In “Doing Sustainable Trauma Research” (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol2/iss1/5/>), Michael Salter outlines a plan for researchers and scholars to cope with a career studying trauma. Service providers are well aware of secondary trauma, but researchers and advocates are just starting to grapple with this topic for themselves. I am not aware of one study on secondary trauma in researchers. This frontline report points us towards further research.

Melinda Tankard Reist (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol2/iss1/7/>) writes about the verbal attacks against survivors who speak out or write about experiences of harm in prostitution. She shows what survivors have to endure to be writers and activists in countries where prostitution is legal. She names and describes a new phenomenon—attacks on authors reading their work at book launches. She also describes the stress that survivors, who are likely suffering from trauma, are subjected to when they choose to speak out.

Simone Watson gives us her personal account of coping with the stress of activism in “A Visit to the Doctor” (<http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol2/iss1/10/>). We learn about her uncomfortable appointment to get medication so she can travel and testify at Parliament in front of a skeptical audience. She also opens up a new research area: How do survivors, likely suffering with post-trauma stress disorder, find strength and cope with activism, especially in the face of hostility?

Frontline Reports put *Dignity* on the leading edge of naming, describing, and analyzing topics relevant to our work of ending exploitation and violence. Each report teaches us about the immediate topic and opens up new horizons for future scholarship.

Dignity is a scholarly journal dedicated to creating a publishing space for all members of the community—survivors, activists, legal advocates, service providers, researchers, theorists, and scholars—who write about exploitation and violence. By bringing all together, we facilitate the exchange of information and enhance the development of scholarship in the field.

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SUGGESTED CITATION

Hughes, Donna M. (2017). Frontline Reports: Emergent topics for scholarly development. *Dignity: A Journal of Sexual Exploitation and Violence*. Vol. 2, Issue 1, Article 13. doi:10.23860/dignity.2017.02.01.13. Available at <http://digitalcommons.uri.edu/dignity/vol2/iss1/13>.

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