



Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



‘SIGNALS AND SIGNS’: COMMUNITY HEALTH PRACTITIONERS AND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE FAMILY

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, CLASSICS AND
ARCHAEOLOGY
BIRKBECK, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**

SEXUAL HARMS + MEDICAL ENCOUNTERS

About Us

Sexual Harms and Medical Encounters (SHaME) is a research project exploring the role of medicine and psychiatry in sexual violence. We aim to move beyond shame to address this global health crisis. The project is funded by the Wellcome Trust and led by historian Joanna Bourke.

Our Research

Sexual violence is one of the most serious problems in the contemporary world. Our interdisciplinary project seeks to understand the role played by medical professionals, including psychiatrists, in understanding and dealing with sexual harms.

Instead of shame, we advocate for empowerment and knowledge.

'Signals and Signs': Community Health Practitioners and Child Sexual Abuse in the Family

Ruth Beecher's current research investigates the ways nurses, doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists have responded to the possibility that a child is being sexually abused by a family member since the 1960s in the UK and the US. How have their thoughts, behaviours, public utterances, and clinical practices changed over time?

The aim is to bring a historical perspective to a problem that is often seen only in a particular cultural moment.

Archival sources and new oral histories are sought. The methods aim to acknowledge the challenges for nurses, doctors and mental health practitioners in responding to child sexual abuse without minimising the immediate and long term harm to children.

If you have worked as a school, public health or emergency department nurse; a paediatrician or family doctor; or a community psychologist or psychiatrist at any time since the 1960s and have something to say about your training, practice or experience in this area, Ruth would like to speak to you confidentially for background information, with the option to get more involved in the research if you are interested.

Contact

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