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Dr. Victoria Canning, Criminology,

The Open University

Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA

Tel: (+44)1908 652575, Email: [Victoria.canning@open.ac.uk](mailto:Victoria.canning@open.ac.uk)

**Gendered Experiences of Social Harm in Asylum:**

**Exploring State Responses to Persecuted Women in Britain, Denmark and Sweden**

**What is the aim of this research?**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of women seeking asylum in Britain, Denmark and Sweden. It will explore women’s experiences in their country of origin, during migration, and whilst waiting for refugee status. The aim is to consider aspects of asylum systems which are harmful or helpful in responding to women seeking asylum so that harms might be mitigated and policy and practice improved.

**Who is conducting the research and who is it for?**

Dr. Victoria Canningis carrying out this research on behalf of the Open University and the Economic and Social Research Council. She is an experienced researcher in the field of refugee studies, violence against women and social harm. Victoria has worked with multiple organisations and agencies in this area and has experience supporting refugees, survivors of violence and working with interpreters. More information can be found here: <http://www.open.ac.uk/people/vc3587>

**Why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

You have been identified as a practitioner working in the one of the following fields: refugee advocacy, psychology or counselling, immigration law and practice, border control, violence support or advocacy, or policy/legislation development. For this reason you have been invited to participate in this research.

**If I take part in this research, what will be involved?**

Victoria will be conducting interviews in 2016/2017. These will be open ended discussions with people who have experience of working with people seeking asylum, survivors of violence and/or women’s services. Your interview will take approximately 1-1.5 hours and will be conducted at your workplace or another organisation office at a date and time that is convenient to you.

**What will the interview be like?**

The interview will be an informal meeting with Victoria who will introduce the project, and ask you some open ended questions relating to your work, volunteering or activism. You will be asked general questions about your role as well as observations about the process of seeking asylum. Depending on your own experience and knowledge, topics may include migration, conflict, violence, policy, law, and emotional support. As this project is interested in the gendered experiences of asylum, you may also be asked to discuss issues related to violence against women, as well as strengths and limitations in state and organisational responses to people seeking asylum. You do not have to answer any questions you are not comfortable discussing.

**Is it confidential?**

Your participation will be treated in **strict confidence** in accordance with the Data Protection Act. No personal information will be passed to anyone. Victoria will write a report of the findings from this study, but no individual will be identifiable in published results of the research. Research articles and other publications will also be produced however your personal information will be anonymised and you will not be identifiable.

**What happens now?**

Over the next few weeks, Victoria may contact you by telephone/email to ask if you would like to take part and, if so, ask you a few questions about yourself. An interview will be carried out once you have agreed a time and place to participate that is convenient for you.

What if I have other questions?

If you have any other questions about the study, you are welcome to contact by telephone or email on the information provided at the top of this sheet.

In case any further queries may arrive, please feel free to contact either of the project mentors below:

Prof. Steve Tombs

The Open University

Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA

Tel: (+44)1908 6 55150,

Email: [steve.tombs@open.ac.uk](mailto:steve.tombs@open.ac.uk)

Dr. Andrew Jefferson

The Danish Institute Against Torture DIGNITY - Danish Institute Against Torture  
Bryggervangen 55  
DK - 2100 Copenhagen Ø

Tel: +45 3693 8625, e: [amj@dignityinstitute.dk](mailto:amj@dignityinstitute.dk)