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Recruitment of Ultra-Orthodox Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse for Academic Study:

Reflections and Insights

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Abstract: This article discusses how I, as a female researcher, was able to do research in a field normally off limits to women — male ultra-Orthodox society — in which, moreover, the specific topic, the sexual abuse of boys, is taboo and surrounded by a strong “conspiracy of silence”. Despite the complexity of both the field and the topic, I was able to find and interview a sample of forty ultra-Orthodox victims of sexual abuse. The article describes the multi-channel approach I used to locate potential interviewees. It also introduces that modular typology I developed to facilitate the creation of an interview format appropriate to both the personal and the cultural needs of the interviewees. By using these two strategies, I was able to obtain maximum cooperation.

Key Words: Ultra-Orthodox, Male, Sexual Abuse