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FODL

Contest

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Library Research Statement

The first part of my research process was to choose a general subject to write about that would fulfill the parameters of the final paper for Global Perspectives on Women and Gender. I originally chose the topic of sex trafficking since it predominantly affects women and girls in every part of the world and because it is a subject, about which I have strong feelings. I had attended a documentary screening and panel discussion of “Very Young Girls” at Albany Law School on February 22, 2018, shortly after my decision on my topic, which further informed my research.

I began my research at the “Library” quick link on The College of Brockport website and clicked on “Articles, Databases, and Journals.” Once there, I clicked the “Scholarly Only” box. I typed “Sex Trafficking” into the search bar and it revealed many results. Then, to narrow down my topic, the first thing I did was to check “Peer Review” because I wanted to ensure my references were acceptable for a research paper. This reduced the results. It was important to me that my references be as current as possible while also relevant to the topic of my paper, so I used the publication date search in the right sidebar, which revealed that there were plenty of recent publications on this topic. Therefore, I chose “Date (newest)” under the search bar to identify the newest sources on the topic, which proved to be futile without relevancy to the topic. However, I tried the advanced search without date restrictions, adding “Women’s Studies” as a discipline. This revealed more relevant publications than the first two searches. Google Scholar was another source I searched for articles. I sent these searches to my email address and printed them out to consider.

Looking at titles and abstracts, I affirmed that this is a complex topic with a variety of perspectives and that I couldn’t simply write about sex trafficking. The requirements of the paper were myriad. The biggest challenge, from my perspective, was to focus on the situation in the United States and tie it in globally. I needed a subtopic within that topic and a point of view to share. The course has a strong grounding in human rights as defined by the United Nations. From the perspective of human rights, I observed that the most vulnerable population was female children. I also observed that sex trafficking is a serious problem in the United States and wanted to bring this to light. Therefore, I added the topics “children” and “girls” to my advanced search.

Finally, I identified “female domestic minor sex trafficking” as a common topic in the article titles I found and this became my topic of focus.

I printed out the articles that seemed most promising and requested a couple of articles through Interlibrary Loan as well. Librarians helped me obtain articles I had difficulty accessing and answered citation questions through email and the online chat feature. Dr. Jacobson was available for consultation via email and phone regarding clarifying questions about the paper requirements and responded quickly. Academic Success Center Tutors Diana Bachelor and Mike Lane advised me on how to use the library sources and how to organize my paper.

Although I was able to narrow down my sources quickly, the process continued well into my first draft. I sought out recently written articles and articles that touched upon many of the criteria required for the paper. After specifying my topic, I discarded sources that were less specific and focused on those directly addressing domestic minor sex trafficking. The global perspective was important, so I made sure to have at least two sources focusing on that. I noticed a few articles on the topic coming from a perspective that would not support the goals of my paper and that I disagreed with, so I culled those. It was fortunate that I chose a couple more references than required because late in the process, I found that one article would not serve any purpose in my paper.

I was satisfied with the results of my research. The specific requirements of the paper helped me get those results. The most important and compelling requirement was “raise public awareness and change public attitudes and behaviors toward a social issue.”

