

Overview

[The Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University](#) (GHELI) supports interdisciplinary education about world health through the production, curation, and dissemination of educational public goods. This exemplar work was a capstone project for the Master of Science in Media, Medicine, and Health at the Harvard Medical School. The capstone course requires students to craft a public health intervention that represents the culmination of what they have learned in the master's program. Students select both the storytelling medium and public health message, then create a written companion piece that contextualizes the project alongside its accompanying media component.

Abstract

A short essay film exploring the embodied afterlife of sexual trauma through medical imaging, microscopy, archival footage, and personal narration.

Artist

Ayden Seanna Massey (2026)

Caption

Enter the gynecologic archive: when the body is rendered as a series of “unremarkable” findings, what histories and systems remain unseen? Through personal microscopy, ultrasound, archival footage, and personal narration, *Dogstar* constructs a visual and sonic landscape that resists the clinical gaze, translating trauma across micro and macrocosmic scales.

Artist Lens

At twenty years old, I was told I needed a hysterectomy. In the aftermath of sexual violence, I was confronted with one of the most difficult decisions of my life: continue living with severe pelvic pain or sacrifice my uterus. Rooted in this encounter, *Dogstar* examines the enduring costs of sexual violence and medical sexual abuse, tracing the physical, economic, relational, and systemic reverberations of sexual trauma.

The rationale behind my creative capstone is largely grounded in Laura Rascaroli's theoretical framework, which understands essay film as a mechanism that literally *thinks*. According to Rascaroli, the disjunction through which experimental essay films operate produces an epistemological intervention, functioning at the level of knowledge production. Working through the tension between images, sounds, words, and spaces, my essay film seeks to reconfigure the medical gaze through the subversion of medical imaging, reimagining biosocial ways of understanding sexual violence and sexual trauma beyond trauma-blind institutional logics of classification and legitimacy.

In the making of this film, I both produced my own medical imaging and volunteered my body as a site of research. By performing these opposing identities: subject and researcher, narrator and witness, I positioned myself as an agent of my own seeing, transforming my “unremarkable” findings into knowledge and meaning.



Rejecting the myth of sexual violence as a catalyst for transformation, *Dogstar* speaks to a slower violence: one in which harm is cumulative, embodied, and systemic rather than spectacular.

Media

Video

[Watch Dogstar](#)