

Running head: *"THAT WOMAN,"* THE *"FRAUD"* AND THE *"NASTY WOMAN"*: VILLIFICATION OF MONICA LEWINSKY, RACHEL DOLEZAL AND HILLARY CLINTON, AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL

"That Woman," the *"Fraud"* and the *"Nasty Woman"*:

Vilification of Monica Lewinsky, Rachel Dolezal and Hillary Clinton, and the Role of Social Media

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Abstract

In this paper, the author seeks to consider the relationship between social media and character assassination through vilification as embodied in the three (in)famous cases of Monica Lewinsky, Rachel Dolezal, and Hillary Clinton. The author examines the role social media played when the women were publicly shamed with epithets such as “that woman,” the “fraud” and the “nasty woman.” The three cases connect through several common threads, for example, the vilification of these women by the perpetrators is used as an instrument to create a group identity, which is frequently the motive behind vilification (Munro, 1999). The author uses typologies of victimization advanced by Dunn (2004). He argues that four types of victimization occur as a result of character assassination: *precipitating victim*, the *heroic victim*, *stigmatized victim*, and an *ideal victim*; these typologies emerge through a combination of victim’s agency and social evaluation (Dunn, 2004). The author discusses how victimhood played out for each woman and the resulting series of events that took place, the longevity of their ordeals, and ultimately (for two of them) the subversion of their shamed identities into (pseudo)social movements through social media. The purpose of the paper is to help the readers recognize the use of rhetoric to vilify these women by assigning them diabolical motives, and the perceptions shaped about them to isolate, ostracize and disempower them.

Key words: Monica Lewinsky, Rachel Dolezal, Hillary Clinton, *that woman*, the *fraud*, the *Nasty woman*, shaming, name-calling, vilification, victimization, social media.