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STEPHEN J. BRIERS BSc Hons PhD

AN INVESTIGATION INTO MALE GENDER
IDENTITY AND THE EXPERIENCE OF CHILDHOOD
SEXUAL ABUSE

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Open
University for the degree of Doctor of Clinical Psychology

JULY 2000

20,000 words

SALOMONS
CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

AWARDED DATE 20 September

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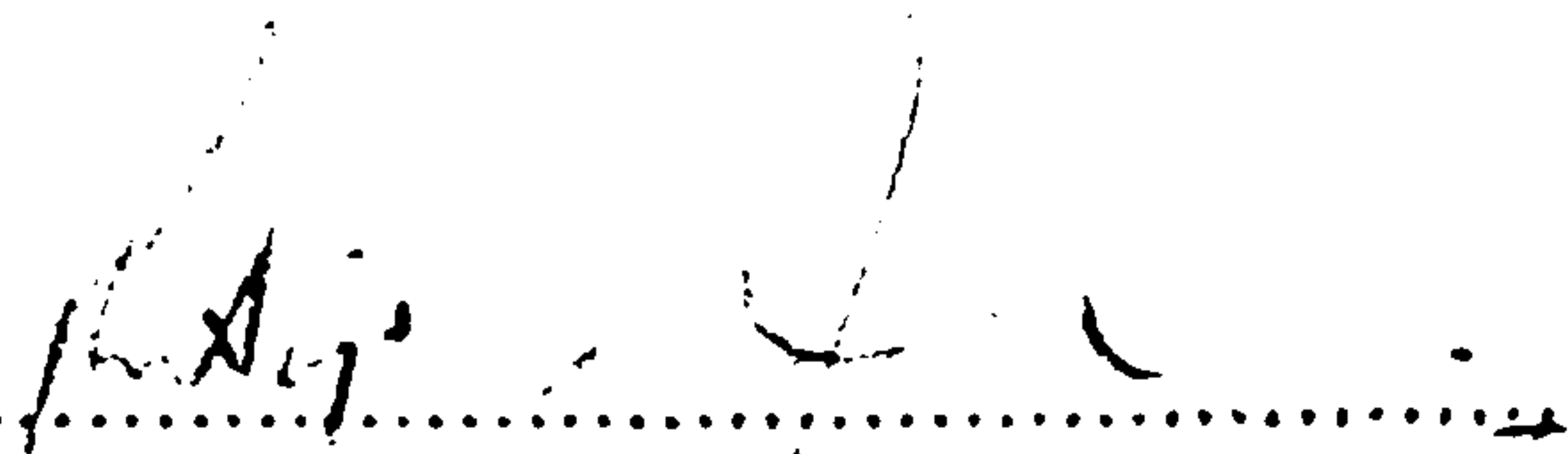
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express his sincere gratitude to the following who have made this research possible. To my supervisor Dr. Philip Dodgson, whose professional expertise and calming presence have been such an invaluable asset to this study. To the therapists of the Men's Service in which the study was conducted, and especially to Dr. Robert Marsh, who was so conscientious in recruiting participants. To Dr. Margie Callanan and Dr. Sue Holttum, who between them managed to rekindle my enthusiasm for research. Also to John McGowan for being such a good friend throughout and for all his valiant efforts to make sure that this time felt different.

Special thanks also to my dearest wife, Mel, who has probably had to work harder than anyone during the preparation of this thesis. You have done more than anyone could have asked or expected of you. I trust that the next phase of our life together will soon make it all seem worthwhile. This thesis is also dedicated to my two sons, Joseph and Will, who make me proud to be their father.

Finally, the author wishes to thank the twelve men who were generous enough to give up several hours of their time and re-visit some difficult memories in the hope that others might benefit. Your accounts were testimonies to your courage and your spirit. I was privileged to hear them.



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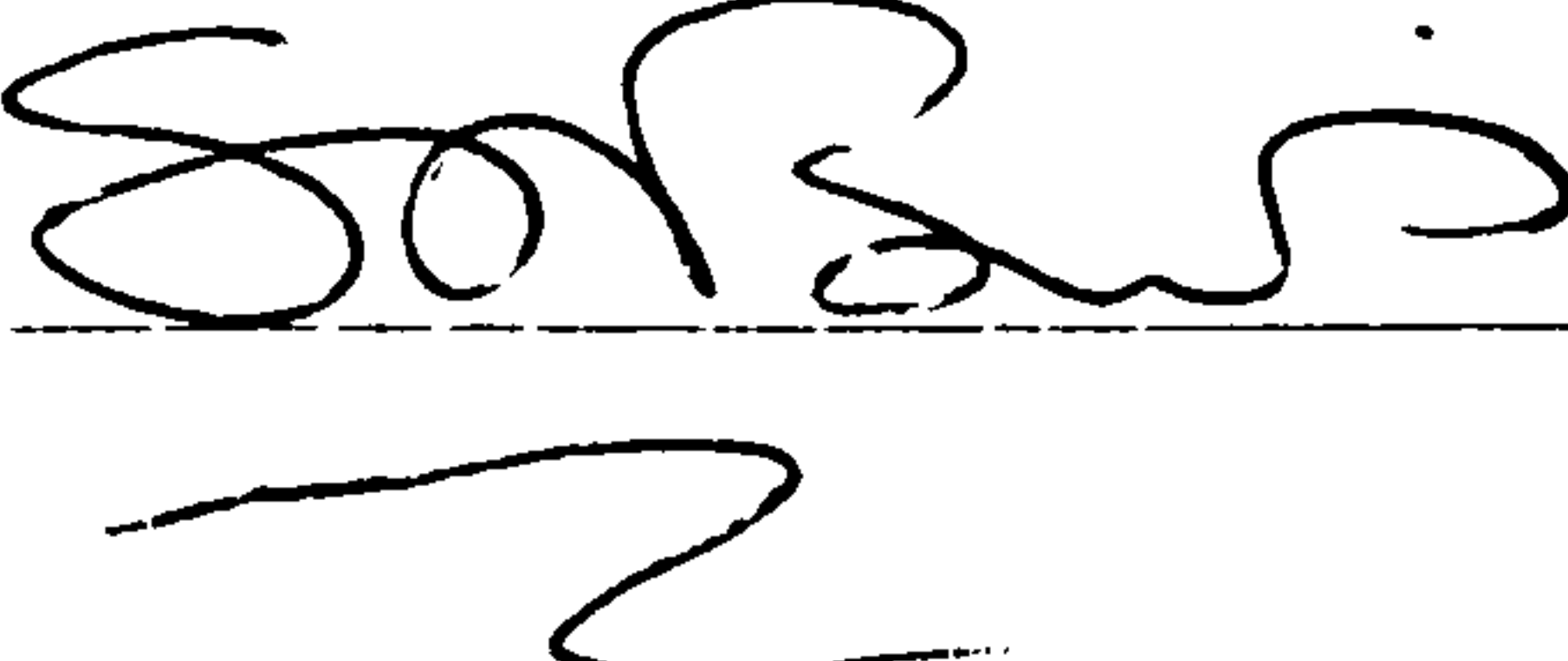
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ABSTRACT

Background and Aims

In view of limitations in existing models, a study was devised to examine the impact of childhood sexual abuse (CSA) on masculine gender identity in relation to other background factors.

Design and Participants

A mixed design incorporated qualitative and quantitative components. A theoretical sample of ten abused men was interviewed, five of whom identified as heterosexual and five as homosexual.

Measures

Interview transcripts were subjected to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith 1996) and a thematic coding frame developed. Modified Repertory Grids (Kelly 1955) were administered to examine participants' conceptualisation of gender categories and to elucidate patterns of identification between participants, abusers, and other key figures. A further selection of transcript data was micro-coded in order to map gender associations of specific participant responses.

Results

Findings indicated that, while CSA did compromise identifications with 'masculine' values of power, agency and control, participants also reported conflicts over their reduced capacity for identification with positive 'feminine' characteristics. These included emotional expression and other interpersonal competencies. Contrary to the Masculinity Model of Adjustment (Antill and Cunningham 1980), many participants expressed ambivalence towards conventional gender roles, and had experienced attempts to conform to them as ego-dystonic. The results provided some evidence consistent with theories of Gender Shame (Mendel 1992), and supported the view that an adequate conceptualisation of the effects of CSA upon gender should incorporate interactions between abuse and other aspects of the individual's developmental and social context.

Clinical Implications

The study supported the view that the framework of conventional gender and sexual categories may be of limited relevance in work with sexually abused men. It endorsed the need for clinicians to set aside some existing assumptions in the literature, and develop more sophisticated models of gender more congruent with survivors' perceptions regarding the impact of CSA upon gender and sexuality.

CONTENTS

	Page
1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 An Overview of Research into the Sexual Abuse of Male Children	1
1.2 Estimating Prevalence	1
1.3 Defining Childhood Sexual Abuse	2
1.4 The Impact of Sexual Abuse on Male Victims	3
1.5 Existing Models of Gender Identity Confusion Amongst Male Survivors of CSA	4
1.6 Proposed Responses to Gender Identity Confusion Amongst Abused Males	7
1.7 Research Studies of Sexual Identity Confusion Amongst Abused Males	9
1.8 Limitations of Existing Research	12
1.9 Research Aims	20
1.10 Choice of Methodology	21
1.11 Research Questions	26
2 METHOD	
2.1 Design	27
2.2 Participants	27
2.2.1 Sampling and Recruitment Strategy	27
2.2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria	28
2.2.3 Participant Characteristics	29
2.3 Data Collection Methods	30
2.3.1 Screening Questionnaire	30
2.3.2 Modified Repertory Grids	30
2.3.3 Methods Used to Elicit Constructs	32
2.3.4 Semi-structured Interview Schedule	35
2.4 Procedure	38
2.4.1 First Interview	38
2.4.2 Second Interview	40
2.5 Ethical Issues	41
2.6 Data Management and Analysis	42
Phase I: The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Interview Data	42
Phase II: The Analysis of Grid Data	43
Phase III: Statistical Analysis	46
Phase IV: Micro-analysis of Selected Transcript Material	47
2.7 Reliability and Validity	47

3 RESULTS

3.1	Reported Levels of Concern Regarding Gender and Sexuality	50
3.2	Overview of Grid Sheet Data	50
3.3	Correlations Between Abuser Characteristics and Ideal Self	51
3.4	Themes from IPA of Transcripts	52
3.4.1	Main Theme One: Gender Positioning	53
3.4.2	Main Theme Two: Power	55
3.4.3	Main Theme Three: Psychological Problems	58
3.4.4	Main Theme Four: Impoverished Relationships	61
3.5	Interactions Between Abuse, Sexuality and Gender	64
3.6	Additional Sources of Gender Influence	73
3.6.1	Problematic Fathers	73
3.6.2	Distant and Enmeshed Mothers	75
3.6.3	Additional Exposure to Aggression	77
3.6.4	Negative Personal Relationships	78
3.6.5	Socio-cultural Factors	79
3.7	Results of Reliability Studies	80

4 DISCUSSION

4.1	Critical Review of the Method	82
4.2	Review of the Findings	85
4.2.1	CSA and the Repression of Positive Femininity	85
4.2.2	Implications of Gender Ambivalence for the Masculinity Model of Adjustment	87
4.2.3	Support for Theories of Gender Shame	90
4.2.4	Towards an Interactive Model	92
4.3	Conclusions	101

BIBLIOGRAPHY

LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix A • Glossary

- Appendix B • Information Sheet
 - Consent Form
 - Letters of Ethical Approval

- Appendix C • Copy of Screening Questionnaire
 - Example of Associative Map
 - Stimulus Sheet for Laddering Exercise
 - Instructions to Participants
 - Sample Grid Sheet
 - Annotated Interview Schedule

- Appendix D • Sample Annotated Transcript
 - Illustrative Extracts Demonstrating Coding Categories

- Appendix E • Table 3
 - Table 4
 - Table 5
 - Table 25 (full version)
 - Table 26 (full version)
 - Sample of Compiled Grid Sheet Data

- Appendix F • Research Diary

- Appendix G • Sample Feedback Sheets
 - Participants' Observations

List of Tables and Figures

Page

Tables

Table 1	Participant Characteristics	29
Table 2	Grouping Variables	46
Table 3	Levels of Concern, Past and Present, Regarding Sexual and Gender Identity.	Ap. E
Table 4	Polarity Balance Within Masculine and Feminine Construct Groups	Ap. E
Table 5	Correlations Between Elements <i>Abuser</i> and <i>Ideal Self</i>	Ap. E
Table 6	Masculine Stereotypes as Restrictive	54
Table 7	Trans-Gender Identifications	54
Table 8	Attempts at Gender Conformity	54
Table 9	Stated Impact of Abuse on Gender	55
Table 10	Challenging Gender Taxonomies	55
Table 11	Feeling Dominated and Controlled	56
Table 12	Becoming Weak and Unable to Cope	56
Table 13	Becoming Aggressive	57
Table 14	Becoming Ambitious	57
Table 15	Becoming Physically Fit	58
Table 16	Negative Self-image	59
Table 17	Self-destructive Behaviour	59
Table 18	Fragmentation, Dissociation, Denial	60
Table 19	Self-Blame	60
Table 20	Depression and Anxiety	61
Table 21	Difficulties in Forming Relationships	62
Table 22	Issues of Trust	62
Table 23	Problems of Emotional Expression	63
Table 24	Fear of Intimacy	63
Table 25	Fathers and Sons	74
Table 26	Mothers and Sons	76

Figures

Figure 1	Construct Clusters	51-52
Figure 2	Model Showing Potential Impact of CSA on the Development of Male Gender Identity	86-87
Figure 3	Sample Map of the Construct <i>Masculinity</i> as Developed from the Association Exercise	Ap. C

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 An Overview of Research into the Sexual Abuse of Male Children

Over the last twenty years, it has virtually become a conditioned reflex for authors on male sexual abuse to begin by lamenting the scarcity of research in the field. Whilst this is no longer strictly true, it is the case that far less work has been conducted with populations of male abuse survivors than with their female counterparts. It is also true that the majority of the work to date has adopted an epidemiological approach to the phenomenon and concentrated upon the documentation of symptoms and sequelae (see Dhaliwal, Gauzas, Antonowicz and Ross 1996; Watkins and Bentovim 1992). With the exception of a handful of qualitative investigations (e.g. Lisak 1994; Gill and Tutty 1997), the voice of the participants is seldom heard in such studies, and few efforts have been made to develop adequate psychological models to explain the specific impact of abuse on male children. In these respects, Gartner's (1997) contention that knowledge of this topic remains in an 'embryonic stage' is largely justified.

1.2 *Estimating Prevalence*

For reasons discussed below, the prevalence of sexual victimisation of boys is difficult to establish with any accuracy. However, estimates amongst the

general male population in the United States have varied between 3 per cent (Finkelhor 1986) and 17 per cent (Urquiza and Keating 1990; Lisak, Hopper and Song 1996), while a large community sample in the United Kingdom yielded prevalence rates of approximately 8% (Baker and Duncan 1985). Even if the lower range estimates are correct, such studies would suggest that the sexual abuse of boys is alarmingly commonplace.

It seems likely, however, that the scale of the problem has been underestimated. Several authors (e.g. Schwartz 1994; Lisak 1995) have argued that conflicts between the dynamics of abuse and societal expectations about what it means to be male in western culture work actively against the likelihood of disclosure.

1.3 Defining Childhood Sexual Abuse

Another significant obstacle to the establishment of accurate prevalence rates has been the range of different definitions of childhood sexual abuse (CSA) employed by researchers (see Dhaliwal, Gauzas, Antonowicz & Ross 1996 for a thorough review of this problem). For the purposes of the present research, CSA will be operationalised in the terms of one of the most widely cited definitions (Schechter and Roberge 1976):

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend and to

which they are unable to give informed consent and that violate the sexual taboos of family roles.

As Watkins and Bentovim (1992) point out, the last part of this definition is redundant in cases where the abuser is not a relative.

1.4 The Impact of Sexual Abuse on Male Victims

In terms of their clinical presentation, Gartner (1997) emphasises that there is considerable overlap between the range of symptoms commonly reported by male and female abuse victims. These common sequelae include depression, symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), shame, dissociation, interpersonal difficulties and addictive and compulsive behaviours (see Watkins and Bentovim 1992 for a comprehensive review).

However, several gender-specific effects have also been observed within male populations, including disturbances in the gender and sexual identities of survivors. Such disturbances will provide the focus of this research project.

In following sections existing research in these areas will be summarised and then critiqued. Before reading them the reader may find it helpful to refer to the glossary in Appendix A which aims to clarify some of the main concepts in the literature and orient the reader to the frame of reference within which the current investigation was conducted.

1.5 Existing Models of Gender Identity Confusion amongst Male Victims of CSA

Reports of gender identity confusion amongst male abuse survivors is one of the predominant themes in both the clinical and research literature (see for example, Mendel 1992; Hunter 1990; Lew 1990; Lawson 1991; Gill and Tutty 1997; Lisak 1994; Schwartz 1994). The almost universal explanation for such findings is that cited by Gill and Tutty (1997), namely that:

Male survivors appear to experience an overwhelming sense of having failed to meet perceived societal standards of masculinity.

In other words, it is claimed that 'masculine identity confusion' within this population is the result of the perceived disparity between the dynamics of abuse and the cultural gender norms into which boys are socialised. The existing literature proposes four primary areas of dissonance:

- a) Since masculinity is equated in western culture with notions of strength, authority and control (Buchbinder 1994; Lisak 1995), it is argued that it becomes extremely difficult for abused men to reconcile a masculine self-concept with the experience of victimisation (Mendel 1992; Dimock 1988; Schwartz 1994). As Lew (1990) puts it: 'If men aren't to be victims then victims can't be men'.

- b) Having been physically overwhelmed by his aggressor, it is suggested that the male victim may also subsequently find himself overwhelmed by the potency of his own emotional responses. It is proposed that susceptibility to powerful emotional states – especially those associated with fear, distress, and vulnerability – also runs counter to the edicts of masculine gender socialisation. Learning to become male is regarded by several authors (e.g. Pollack 1995; Levant 1995) as synonymous with the suppression of emotion and attendant traces of affective vulnerability. As Lisak (1995) argues:

The abused child knows that these overwhelming internal states violate fundamental rules of masculinity – rules that he has most likely already internalised.

If this view is accurate, it is clear that masculine gender socialisation is also likely to impede progress in therapy, which similarly requires men to confront what Scott (1992) terms the 'vulnerability prohibition'.

- c) According to Dimen (1991), Price (1995) and a number of other feminist authors, the fact that men have traditionally been portrayed as the subjects, as opposed to the objects, of sexual desire is also likely to create difficulties. Although it seems clear that sexual abuse is often motivated by factors other than sexual desire *per se* (c.f. Gartner 1997), it has been suggested that abused men are likely to interpret themselves as having occupied the role of

sexual object in a way that is likely to undermine identification with masculine stereotypes (Schwartz 1994).

- d) Finally, it is argued that what Rogers and Terry (1984) describe as the 'homoerotic implications' of being sexually abused by another man also create severe internal tensions within the masculine self-concept. It must be stressed that this author does not regard masculinity as the exclusive preserve of the heterosexual male. However, implicit in much of the research is the notion that masculinity and homosexuality are perceived to be incompatible, both at a cultural level and, more specifically, by the majority of their participants (see Lisak 1995).

Several theories have been advanced as to why masculinity and homosexuality should be regarded as antithetical constructs within popular culture. In a sociological critique of masculinity, Buchbinder (1994 p.60) argues that homosexuality represents an emotive subversion of masculine gender norms simply because:

...The male homosexual is a man who allows his body to be penetrated by another man. In this the gay man permits that which the discourse of masculinity absolutely forbids – the disruption of the integrity and inviolability of the male body – and so challenges the authority and power of that discourse.

It is thus plausible to conceive that male abuse victims, who have also 'allowed' the violation of their physical boundaries by another male, may feel compelled to identify themselves with the gay man's stigma of un-masculinity, as well as calling into question aspects of their sexual identity. The literature that specifically addresses this topic will be examined in a later section. For the moment it is sufficient to register that, within western culture, axes of gender identity and sexual identity appear to be fused in complex and often unhelpful ways (see Lisak 1994).

1.6 Proposed Responses to Gender Identity Confusion amongst Abused Males

The previous section begs the question as to how male abuse victims respond to these perceived assaults on their masculinity? Two main processes are suggested in the literature.

- i) The first and, according to Rogers and Terry (1984), most common response is the strategy of *Hypermasculine Compensation* (Sepler 1990). This describes attempts to re-assert a masculine identity by selectively over-emphasising traits and behaviours designated as masculine, while simultaneously rejecting all characteristics associated with femininity. It is precisely this strategy that Rogers and Terry (1984) hold responsible for the

preponderance of 'acting out' behaviours within their sample of sexually abused boys:

Pre-abuse passivity or unassertiveness is followed by post-abuse aggression such as picking fights, destructiveness, marked disobedience, and a generally hostile or confrontative attitude.

Urquiza and Capra (1990) argue that males who react in such ways are attempting to bolster their sense of failing masculinity by actively identifying themselves with the potency of their aggressors. According to Lisak (1995) and Gartner (1997), Hypermasculine Compensation inevitably results in brittle and stereotyped masculine identities that are ultimately likely to prove maladaptive for those who adopt them.

- ii) While some victims may strive desperately to reconnect themselves with societal gender norms, for others the movement appears to be in the opposite direction. Mendel (1992) argues that because of their perceived inadequacies, many male victims feel they can no longer identify with other men. Such victims are likely to restrict their contact with other males because of the feelings of inferiority induced by such exposure. Since, according to Goffman's dramaturgical theory (Goffman 1969), the plausibility of social identities rests upon their continual re-enactment before audiences of relevant peers, it follows that self-imposed seclusion is likely to exacerbate further these men's sense of themselves as 'masculine failures'.

iii) At the extreme end of the spectrum, Bruckner and Johnson (1987) and Dimock (1988) claim that abuse victims tend not only feel unable to identify with other men but actively reject such identifications. For such men, it is claimed, the connotations of masculinity have become so negative that they are no longer prepared to acknowledge masculine characteristics in themselves. These authors refer to this phenomenon as *Gender Shame* (see Gill and Tutty 1997).

1.7 Research Studies of Sexual Identity Confusion amongst Abused Males

In section 1.4 it was suggested that the dynamics of abuse may not only undermine victims' sense of their masculinity, but may also cause them to question aspects of their sexual identity. It is certainly a fairly consistent finding within the research literature that abuse victims often express concerns about their sexual orientation (see Myers 1989; Nasjleti 1980; Lisak 1994). In a review of available male abuse studies, Watkins and Bentovim (1992) draw attention to the fact that sexual preference concerns were reported in a significant minority of each group of participants. Several mechanisms have been implicated in the promotion of such anxieties.

Firstly, as mentioned above, the coping strategy of assuming some measure of responsibility for the abuse has attendant implications which may prove troubling. As Gartner points out:

Boys who are predominantly heterosexual may wonder why they were chosen by a man as a sexual target and whether having been chosen means they are actually gay.

(Gartner 1997 p.22)

In a similar vein Finkelhor (1984) and Schwartz (1994) also report concerns amongst participants that they were victimised because, unwittingly, they were emitting signals of a latent homosexual orientation to which the abuser was attuned.

Quite apart from private anxieties about the implications of the abuse for their sexuality, Dimock (1988), Nasjleti (1980) and Vander May (1988) all emphasise victims' fears that disclosure of the abuse will lead them to be perceived as gay by others. As already suggested, to be identified as homosexual in the west remains highly stigmatising, especially amongst adolescent males who may be more inclined to homophobic posturing by a sense of the fragility of their own emergent masculinity (see O'Neil 1982). The sad fact that both homosexuality and sexual abuse are both often associated with shame and secrecy creates a further overlap which may only serve to confuse matters further (c.f. Johaneck 1988, Sepler 1990, Struve 1990).

However, as Watkins and Bentovim (1992) point out, there is a crucial distinction between *fears* of being homosexual and the reality of having had one's sexual orientation modified by particular experiences. Although popular folklore holds that precocious sexual experience with an older man may create later homosexual orientations in boys, the evidence from empirical research into this question is inconclusive.

On the one hand there does appear to be a disproportionate number of homosexual men within the male survival population (Gilgun and Reiser 1990; Myers 1989). Johnson and Shrier's (1987) medical survey indicated that half of the boys molested by males subsequently identified as homosexual in adolescence, whereas those molested by females showed incidence of homosexual identification in approximately the same proportion as a non-abused control group. Similarly, Finkelhor (1981) found that men in two large college samples who had been abused before the age of thirteen were four times more likely to be homosexually active than those not sexually molested by an older male.

However, it must be underlined that correlations - even high ones - do not imply causality. It could be, as Gonsoriek (1993) and Thomas, Nelson and Sumners (1994) suggest, that boys in the process of developing homosexual or bisexual orientations may demonstrate characteristics or behaviours that make them more likely to be targeted.

A number of studies have also produced no support for the causal hypothesis. While Bolton et al. (1989), Mendel (1995), and Hunter (1990) all recognise the prevalence of sexual identity confusion amongst participants, they also conclude with Gartner (1997) that:

...sexual orientation is nearly always determined for reasons other than precocious sexual activity and that there is no reason to believe that abuse fundamentally changes or shapes sexual orientation.

In view of these conflicting results and the lack of standardisation in the studies that have been conducted, there is little reason to challenge Gilgun and Reiser's own conclusion that: 'The connection between childhood sexual abuse and the development of sexual identity remains unclarified in the literature.' (Gilgun and Reiser 1990 p.515).

1.8 Limitations of the Existing Research

- a) An initial reservation that might be expressed about the existing research and theory base in this field concerns its rather heterosexist bias. This is not just a reference to Thomas, Nelson and Sumners' (1994) observation that treating a homosexual orientation as a potential 'effect' of abuse heightens the risk of such sexual preferences being labelled as pathological. Rather, it seems evident that despite the high numbers of gay men presenting clinically,

understandings of the gender-specific effects of male sexual abuse revolve around identity conflicts which concern deviations from heterocentric norms. There is a clear need for conceptual and investigatory frameworks in this field which can do justice to the experience and difficulties of both gay and straight-identified men.

b) Perhaps more crucially, existing models tend to offer a somewhat crude and dichotomised vision of the phenomena in question. Thus categories such as 'masculine' and 'feminine', 'gay' and 'straight' are treated as mutually exclusive. There is a presumption of homogeneity, both in terms of the way that socialisation shapes individuals towards stereotypical gender identities, and the restricted number of victim response pathways identified. Such a conservative approach seems ill-advised in view of existing work on the nature of both gender and sexuality.

For example, since the publication of the Kinsey Report in the late 1940s (Kinsey, Pomeroy and Martin 1948), several authors have drawn attention to the fluid and diverse nature of human sexuality (Coleman 1987; Klein, Sepekoff and Wolf 1985). Such perspectives have challenged the utility of conventional tripartite models¹ of sexual orientation and have led Steven Frosh (1997) to comment on the 'polymorphous perversity' of contemporary sexual experience.

¹ i.e. into hetero-, homo- and bi-sexual.

Similarly in the domain of gender identity, it is increasingly recognised that societal changes are shifting the balance of male and female roles. Even if existing stereotypes have not yet been abandoned, it is evident that they are under revision. Curry and Hock (1981) have, for example, conducted research that indicates that girls are now expected to be competent and self-confident as well as understanding, kind and expressive. Meanwhile, sociologists increasingly appeal for the recognition of different 'masculinities' (e.g. Connell 1995). In the field of psychology, having examined seventeen peer-reviewed psychometric scales designed to measure gender attributes, Thompson, Pleck and Ferrero (1992) also concluded that future scales needed to include broader definitions of masculinity. They also proposed, in line with Bem's work on androgyny (1974), that masculinity and femininity need to be treated as independent dimensions, rather than twin ends of a single bi-polar continuum.

The recognition, seemingly ignored by the male abuse literature, that men and women act as carriers for both masculine and feminine characteristics, traces its theoretical lineage from the work of Carl Jung. Jung proposed that:

Every man carries within him the eternal image of woman [...] This image is fundamentally unconscious [...] an imprint or archetype of all the ancestral experiences of the female, a deposit as it were of all the impressions ever made by women.

(Jung in Read, Fordham and Adler 1983, para. 338)

These ideas were developed into Jung's concepts of the *animus* and *anima*. These were understood as innate archetypal gender representations which counterpoised the individual's dominant gender orientation. Thus it was suggested that the man's anima gave him a capacity for relationship and relatedness, while the animus gave the woman a capacity for reflection, deliberation and self-knowledge. Later Jungian thinkers such as Gordon (1993) have tended to reject Jung's original theory of contrasexuality in favour of the view that animus *and* anima (and their related capacities) exist in both sexes.

c) Failure to recognise the possibilities inherent in the work of writers such as Jung and later Bem, also provides grounds for a third criticism of the existing research: the prevailing assumption that deviation from masculine stereotypes is inevitably experienced as pathogenic. Most researchers seem to accept without demur the position espoused by Lew (1990) that:

Once we accept that we fail to meet the standards of masculinity, we carry a sense of inferiority into most areas of life.

However, far from equating social conformity with psychological health, Abraham Maslow (1968) claims that highly actualised individuals are more likely to disregard traditional social scripts and conventional roles. Bem (1975)

also claims that in the complex modern world people need access to *both* male and female sides of their personalities.

More recently, Lisak, Hopper and Song (in press) found to their surprise that non-perpetrating abused men recorded less gender role stress, less homophobia and less adherence to emotionally constricting gender norms than non-abused controls. It may be, therefore, that the 'masculinity' model of adjustment (see Antill and Cunningham 1980) that underlies most of the previous research needs to be challenged. Certainly, it would be provident to pay heed to Okami's warning (1990) that structural aspects of design and methodology in this field have actually disallowed the possibility of the full range of possible outcomes.

d) Another criticism that can be levelled at the theoretical work on gender and sexuality in male abuse victims concerns its lack of specificity. The models and mechanisms outlined appear to have been generated wholesale, largely on the basis of anecdotal evidence and individual case studies. Little attention has been paid to elaborating or testing these models at the process level. There have, to this author's knowledge, been no systematic attempts to appraise key theories such as projective identification with the aggressor or to elaborate which specific aspects of gender identity are compromised by the abuse. Moreover, participants' own understandings of the relative impact of the abuse upon the development of their sexuality and gender identities have been largely ignored.

e) Finally, the most striking limitation of the existing research is its bias towards explanations in terms of single factor causality. Even though sample sizes are often restricted and uncontrolled (Vander Mey 1988), investigators appear content to imply that any distinctive characteristics of the male abuse population can be attributed to the abuse, irrespective of other potentially significant determinates.

This seems a particularly short-sighted approach when investigating topics such as gender and sexuality, which are likely to be shaped by a broad range of influences. Little heed has been paid to Kuyken's recommendation (1995) that:

CSA should not be regarded as a single aetiological factor, but should be considered in the context of other important background variables.

The impact of sexual abuse cannot be realistically appraised until greater pains are taken to understand interactions between such experiences and other developmental influences, especially since these background factors are likely to mediate their effects (see Allen 1999).

Current models do not acknowledge that the child's attitudes towards gender and sexuality are as likely, if not more likely, to be influenced by the characteristics of carers and peers with whom they have direct contact, as by

prevailing cultural stereotypes. Certainly, the way they position themselves with respect to such stereotypes might conceivably be affected by these early attachments. Although sexual abuse may exert an influence over the pattern of one's gender identifications, so too might prolonged exposure to an alcoholic father or a depressed, disengaged mother.

In fact, Hans Kohut argues that the cumulative effect of such background factors may be more significant in the aetiology of mental health problems than the crises to which they are often attributed. He writes:

Psychoanalytic case histories have tended to emphasise certain dramatic incidents, certain grossly traumatic events [...] but we have come to incline to the opinion that such traumatic events may be no more than clues that point to the truly pathogenic factors, the unwholesome atmosphere to which the child was exposed during the years when the self was established.

(Kohut & Wolf 1978 p.417)

Kohut's remarks seem especially salient in light of the few passing glimpses that can be gained from the existing literature into the family backgrounds of abuse victims. Baker (1980) has commented on the fact that many of the boys in his sample appeared to come from 'problem families', while Pierce and

Pierce (1985) also noted, in passing, that the families of abused boys tended to be fatherless.

Furthermore, there is an extensive literature in the psychodynamic tradition that emphasises the role of key carers in the evolution of gender and sexual identities. In the work of Freud (1924), for example, the successful negotiation of Oedipal conflict is regarded, for males, as the basis of identification with the same-sex parent. Since, according to the theory, this resolution is supposed to entail the introjection of qualities belonging to a potential aggressor (in this case the castrating father), it seems logical that the reality of sexual abuse by an older male is likely to intersect with existing Oedipal dynamics.

Freud (1924; 1935) also proposed that fixation at a normative homo-erotic stage of development could be determined by a poor relationship with the father and an overly close bond with the mother. Again post-Jungians have also argued that a homosexual orientation or cross-gender identification in a man could proceed from an unconscious identification with his anima or inner feminine figure as a result of particular configurations of family relationships (see Colman 1995).

No claims are being made here for the validity of such models. Indeed the research evidence on dynamic formulations of homosexuality is mixed (Saghir and Robins 1973; Robertson 1972). However, such perspectives do underline the fact that sexual abuse is not the only factor implicated in the development of a particular gender identity or sexual orientation and that there is an evident

need for researchers need to pay more attention to the wider developmental context within which the abuse occurs.

1.9 Research Aims

In view of shortfalls in the existing literature, the primary aim of the current research was to try to appreciate the effects of male CSA upon gender and sexual identity within the context of a broader developmental perspective.

An important sub-goal was to develop an appropriate means of mapping patterns of gender identification that would both allow the evaluation of existing theoretical models and facilitate a more detailed exploration of potential interactions between the experience of CSA and early childhood relationships.

The research also aimed to access the ways in which abused men understood the impact of their abuse within the progressive evolution of their gender and sexual identities. By integrating data from several sources, it was hoped that the research might expand and enrich ways of thinking about the impact of CSA on identity formation and help inform the design of more pertinent and focused clinical interventions for male abuse survivors. The research questions are detailed in section 1.11 below.

1.10 Choice of Methodology

The decision was made to employ a mixed methodology which included both qualitative and quantitative elements. The two main methodological components will be considered separately and then the rationale presented for their combined use.

a) *The Rationale for Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*

Charmaz (1995) proposes that qualitative methods are particularly suitable for examining the relationship between the individual and their social and interpersonal world. Since this was very much the focus of the current investigation, the use of a qualitative methodology seemed especially apposite. Moreover, since one of the principal research aims was to explore the idiographic meanings that participants had created around their abuse experiences, a methodological orientation that had not only developed out of a symbolic interactionist epistemology (see Denzin 1995) but was able to encompass a broad range of individual perspectives without theoretical foreclosure was deemed of particular value.

Since, in the author's view, the subject area under consideration was poorly understood, it was imperative to maximise the richness of the data in a

manner likely to facilitate fresh insights and promote the generation of new hypotheses. The study was thus conceptualised as the preliminary phase of a research cycle that would later seek to evaluate any emergent hypotheses within the context of more stringently controlled quantitative designs.

The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of semi-structured interview data (Smith 1996; Smith in press) was selected over the Grounded Theory approach (Strauss and Corbin 1998) for a number of reasons. Like Grounded Theory, IPA aims to attune the researcher to the participant's view of the topic under discussion. However, it also permits the investigator greater scope to refract such understandings through different theoretical perspectives via a process of active reflexivity.

In Grounded Theory it is not technically permissible to remove oneself any distance from the surface of the data and, in the author's view, this confines the available analytic space. As a consequence, the generation of theory in the purest form of Grounded Theory is restricted to the higher level patterning of categories provided by the respondents themselves. Whilst the overlap between 'thick description' (Geertz 1973) and explanation is philosophically complex, it does seem clear that Grounded Theory may lack explanatory purchase for psychological processes involving intrapsychic mechanisms or interpersonal dynamics not consciously available to participants.

IPA, by contrast, does not demand a naïve, atheoretical stance from the investigator. Instead, providing they are fully acknowledged, it recognises and validates the fact that the researcher is likely to bring prior knowledge, assumptions, even hypotheses to the apperception of his subject matter. This was important, since it was the author's clinical experience and dissatisfaction with existing theoretical models that had been responsible for motivating the current investigation. It would have been both disingenuous and inefficient to 'reinvent the wheel' using a pure Grounded Theory methodology. Also, since the research aimed to address the 'confusion' experienced by abuse victims, IPA offered a useful framework able to integrate the mutual struggles of both participants and researcher to 'make sense' of the topics concerned within a more open reflexive dialogue.

b) The Rationale for the Use of Modified Repertory Grids

The second component of the mixed methodology was an adaptation of the Repertory Grid technique devised by George Kelly (1955) to delineate and analyse personal construct systems. The grids were envisaged as an economic and convenient means of eliciting relatively detailed information, relevant to the research questions, which might otherwise not have been sufficiently clarified by the interviews alone. They were designed with three purposes in mind.

- 1) The first was to elaborate participants' idiosyncratic notions of masculinity and femininity, and to clarify how they positioned themselves and others in relation to such constructs. The use of grids was conceived as a solution to the limitations that Thompson, Pleck and Ferrara (1992) detected in their review of psychometric scales purporting to measure aspects of gender identity, namely that existing measures failed to measure gender ideology or the extent to which cultural belief systems relating to gender are endorsed or internalised.

- 2) Secondly, the grids were intended to provide a means of measuring and mapping levels of identification between participants and other potentially influential figures in their lives, such as their abuser and primary carers. This information was seen to have bearing on the evaluation of theories such as *Gender Shame* since the victim's self-ratings could be examined for evidence of self-imposed distance from characteristics associated with the abuser. The grids would also allow comparisons to be made which would hopefully shed light on the role played by other individuals in shaping the gender identity of the participant.

- 3) Thirdly, by looking at the disparity between scores for the elements *Typical Man* and *Typical Woman* across various self-constructs elicited from the interview transcript, it was possible to monitor micro-level fluctuations in the gender identity of the participant across time. For example, if a participant noted that after the abuse he became less 'confident', and ratings revealed

that 'confidence' was a characteristic more typically associated by the participant with men than women, then it could be inferred that in becoming 'less confident' the participant also believed that in this respect he had also become more 'feminine'. Clearly this is a crude technique with several limitations (see discussion). However, it had the proposed advantage of enlisting the participant's own value system in making such judgements rather than imposing that of the researcher or independent raters.

Thus it was anticipated that in several areas the grids would provide systematic insights into a process level of which participants might be either unaware or be unable to articulate. It should be stressed that although the design of the study involved elements of triangulation (i.e. the examination of the same phenomenon from two or more methodological perspectives – c.f. Mays and Pope 1995; Smith 1996), the main purpose of the combined methodology was to increase the comprehensiveness of the study and promote a more reflexive analysis. Whilst potential convergence of data from the two methods was of interest, the discovery of tensions and discrepancies was also recognised from the outset as an equally valuable finding. In line with the relativistic stance adopted, triangulation was therefore not being employed as a test of validity since, as Mays and Pope point out, there are significant problems with such a strategy. Rather it was enlisted as a means of using complementary methods to develop a fuller understanding and capture 'the multiple 'voices' and therefore truths, that exist in relation to any phenomenon.' (Smith 1996).

1.11 Research Questions

The study aimed to address the following five research questions:

1. What is the nature of the conflicts experienced by male victims of childhood abuse in relation to their sexual and/or gender identities?
2. Are there common themes in the ways male sexual abuse survivors who report gender identity disturbances construct their ideals of masculinity and position themselves in relation to them?
3. How do the survivors of male sexual abuse understand the impact of childhood sexual abuse within the overall development of their sexual and gender identities?
4. How does the experience of abuse interact with other background factors (for example dysfunctional family dynamics, hostile role models, socially transmitted assumptions) in the aetiology of masculine identity confusion amongst abuse survivors?
5. What can be understood about the developmental impact of abuse by examining the experiences and histories of both 'gay' and 'straight'- identified survivors?

2 **METHOD**

2.1 **Design**

The study employed a mixed design using qualitative and quantitative components. A combination of semi-structured interview schedule and modified repertory grids were used to address the research questions.

2.2 **Participants**

2.2.1 Sampling and Recruitment Strategy

A theoretical sample of ten adult male survivors of CSA was recruited from an NHS Clinical and Counselling Psychology Department. The sample was constructed to reflect an equal balance between participants identifying themselves as predominantly heterosexual and those identifying as predominantly homosexual.

In order to exclude any individuals who might have been unduly distressed by the research procedures, potential participants were screened and nominated by the clinical psychologist who had originally assessed them. They were also contacted through this psychologist, who provided all potential participants with an information sheet and an attached reply form (see Appendix B) on

which they were invited to indicate their preparedness to be approached directly by the researcher. If agreeable, they were then telephoned by the investigator and an appointment arranged for the first interview.

2.2.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

a) In view of the dynamics implicit in some of the theoretical models described in the introduction, participants were required to:

i) Have been subjected to penetrative sex, either oral or anal, by an older male.

ii) Have been under the age of 16 when the abuse occurred.

b) Participants were selected within an age range of 20 to 45 years old. The lower limit represents an age by which a mature gender identity would normally have been consolidated (Schoenberg 1993), while life stage research (e.g. Levinson et al. 1978) implies that gender identities may naturally become less rigid after the age of 50.

c) In view of the potential vulnerability of this group of men, it was stipulated that participants were either to be currently engaged in therapy or to have been assessed by the service and on the waiting list for therapy at the time the interviews took place. In all cases, access to a qualified clinical

psychologist was available to each participant if needed at any stage of the research.

d) Participants were excluded if:

- i) Initial assessment by a clinical psychologist had revealed evidence of severe mental illness.
- ii) Initial assessment or subsequent therapy suggested that the individual was likely to be unduly distressed by the research procedure.
- iii) Participants were judged to be significantly cognitively impaired.

2.2.3 Participant Characteristics

This information is summarised in Table 1.

Participants	Identified sexual orientation	Age Now	Age when abused	Perpetrator	In therapy (T) or on waiting list (WL)
GROUP ONE					
P1	Heterosexual	29	14	Cousin	T
P2	Heterosexual	32	6-7	Uncle	WL
P3	Heterosexual	33	7-13	Stranger	T
P4	Heterosexual	34	6-15	Uncle	T
P5	Heterosexual	29	14	Friend	T
GROUP TWO					
P6	Homosexual	30	13, 16	Stranger	T
P7	Homosexual	28	12	Priest	T
P8	Homosexual	38	5+, 14	Stepfather/priest	T
P9	Homosexual	22	4-13	Cousin	T
P10	Homosexual	25	2-14	Uncle	WL

Table 1

2.3 Data Collection Methods

2.3.1 *Screening Questionnaire*

Participants were asked to complete a simple questionnaire designed by the investigator (see Appendix C) which asked them to rate levels of past and current concerns about their sexual and gender identities. Levels of concern were scored on an eight point scale and converted into four bands: NONE, LOW, MEDIUM and HIGH (see Table 3 in Appendix E for details).

2.3.2 *Modified Repertory Grids*

Two grids were compiled and later amalgamated at the data analysis stage. The first consisted of 15 masculine constructs and 15 feminine constructs elicited from the association exercise described below. The second consisted of approximately 30 constructs which had been used to describe the self during the course of the first interview.

Constructs were scored using specially designed grid sheets (see Appendix C) which all included the following eight elements:

SELF AGED 16	FATHER
SELF NOW	ABUSER
IDEAL SELF	TYPICAL MAN
MOTHER	TYPICAL WOMAN

In addition, participants were asked to nominate four other male figures and four female figures whom they felt had significantly influenced their development. These names were included as elements on the sheet in a randomised order.

Each grid sheet was dedicated to a single construct, and participants were asked to score each element on a scale from zero (Not at all) to seven (Extremely).

It should be noted that the grids are described as 'modified repertory grids' since the design of the grid sheets implies dissent from Kelly's original notion (1955) of all constructs as strictly bi-polar entities in which the poles are assumed to be mutually exclusive and inversely reciprocal.

In the investigator's opinion, to apply such assumptions in the realm of gender characteristics is to risk collapsing clinically important distinctions. Thus while cultural convention might prompt respondents to nominate 'masculine' and 'feminine' as two poles of a single continuum, the study did not wish to reflect cultural bias by presuming that this was necessarily the case. The design was intended to remain open to the possibility that an individual might consider

himself simultaneously highly masculine in certain respects and highly feminine in others. The grid sheets therefore sought to avoid encouraging participants to make forced choices within potentially misleading dichotomies.

2.3.3 *Methods Used to Elicit Constructs*

1) *Association Exercise*

In order to investigate the idiosyncratic fashion in which participants construed key gender concepts, an activity was devised in which participants were encouraged to associate freely around the concepts of *Masculinity* and *Femininity*.

Where necessary, participants' associations were prompted in the following areas: characteristics, values, styles of relating, sexual attitudes and behaviours. As they were elicited, participant responses were incorporated into two associative maps by the investigator (see Appendix C) These maps were then used as the source of the 15 identified masculine constructs and 15 identified feminine constructs employed in the modified repertory grids.

2) *Laddering Exercise*

To facilitate the further exploration of participants' internal systems of values and constructs (see Kelly 1955), a list of 20 well-known male figures was prepared and their celebrity independently validated (see Appendix C).

As the focus of the exercise was participants' idiographic responses to stimulus items, and since no attempts were being made to relate these to particular properties of the list, formal standardisation of the stimulus sheet was considered unnecessary. However, in order to encourage reflections pertinent to the area under investigation, the compilation of the list was guided by efforts to incorporate a diverse range of cultural images of masculinity, contrasting perspectives on male sexuality, and a range of masculine archetypes.

Participants were asked to nominate three men from the list who represented a quality that they either respected, admired, or could identify with in some way. Later they were asked to select a further three who represented a quality they did not respect or admire, or would not wish to be identified with.

In each case the quality or characteristic selected was investigated using a progressive laddering or 'downward arrow' technique (see Kelly 1958) to yield deeper level constructs. For example, if a participant selected Einstein for his intellect, he would then be quizzed about the benefits that intelligence

conferred. If one of the primary benefits was subsequently identified as the ability to avoid deception, the participant would then be asked why he felt this ability was important. This process continued until no further progress could be made.

Information gained from this exercise was used to identify promising areas of inquiry during the interview, and later examined in the light of speculative hypotheses about the impact of the abuse and other life events upon the individual's value system and identity.

3) *Selection of Constructs from the Interview Data*

After the first interview had been transcribed, up to 35 constructs were generated from each script. The main selection criterion was that the constructs reflected characteristics or traits that the participant imputed to himself.

Wherever possible, the participant's own terminology was used. When a trait was either implicit or not described concisely enough for the purposes of the grid, the investigator sought respondent validation for proposed synonyms. Since the constructs were to be rated against a range of elements, descriptors were rejected or modified if their range of convenience (i.e. their applicability to other elements) was too restricted. Constructs prefixed with a negative adverb e.g. 'Not able to express feelings' were transformed into positive

constructs i.e. 'Able to express feelings' for scoring purposes, since piloting suggested that this was less confusing for participants. The rankings were then inverted at the data entry stage to yield scores for the original negative construct. Where self-descriptors duplicated characteristics in the first set of gender constructs, replacements were sought.

2.3.4 Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

A semi-structured interview schedule was devised to collect data relating to the main research questions. The design of the schedule was informed by a comprehensive review of the literature and by the investigator's reflections upon his clinical experience. This had suggested the possible relevance of particular lines of inquiry.

The schedule and associated prompts (see Appendix C) were intended as a guide rather than a rigid template, and the interview was left deliberately open-ended. This was to encourage participants to speak freely and to permit the investigator to pursue lines of questioning suggested by the information as it was generated. Since, in line with the ethos of IPA, the interview was conceived of as a reflexive dialogue between participant and investigator, the degree of external structure was kept to a minimum. The investigator's comments, thoughts and reflections during the interview were considered as legitimate part of the data set.

The interview schedule and the grid components were all piloted prior to data collection on two male survivors of CSA, one of whom identified as homosexual and one who identified himself as heterosexual. Several modifications were made to the design of the grid sheets and the order in which the components were administered was also changed as a result. However, both volunteers experienced the interview positively and the schedule was judged to be yielding high quality data. Consequently, no further modifications were made. What follows is a brief overview of the basic interview structure. For a more comprehensive record of the type of questions and prompts employed, the reader is referred to Appendix C.

Section 1: 'What kind of a man are you?'

In this section, the participant was encouraged to describe himself as a person, and also to reflect upon his feelings and thoughts about his gender and sexuality. Special attention was paid to the way that the participant sought to position himself in relation to cultural stereotypes of masculinity and also to the elaboration of any particular conflicts that the individual experienced in relation to his gender or sexual identity.

Section 2: 'What impact, if any, did your experience of being sexually abused as a child have on you?'

This phase of the interview was designed to access the participant's own understanding of the effects of CSA, and to yield information that would allow the investigator to develop further hypotheses about its potential impact on sexual and gender identities. Where necessary, the participant was prompted to think specifically about these areas.

Section 3: 'Tell me the story of your development...'

The last section of the interview was devoted to an autobiographical account of the individual's development from early childhood to the present day. Special attention was paid to events and relationships that the participant (or the investigator) felt might have contributed significantly to shaping the participant's adult identity. Attempts were therefore made to cover key areas such as early attachments, childhood traumas, developmental transitions and important social and cultural influences. The aim was to locate the experience of CSA in its wider context and gather data about other factors that could, either independently or in conjunction with the CSA, have influenced the participant's relationship to his gender and sexuality.

2.4 Procedure

2.4.1 *First Interview*

All interviews took place in the Psychology Department where the participant had originally been assessed. They lasted approximately two hours.

a) *Pre-Interview briefing (5 minutes)*

Participants were reminded that their anonymity would be protected and were given the opportunity to ask any questions they might still have about the project or the research process. It was stressed that they should not feel obliged to respond to any questions they preferred not to answer, and that they would not be asked about the details of the abuse. Participants were encouraged to notify the investigator if they wished to stop a particular line of questioning or simply needed a break. Written consent was obtained from each participant.

b) *Association Exercise (20 minutes)*

As described in section 2.3.2, participants were asked to elaborate the associations that the terms *Masculinity* and *Femininity* had for them using the

instructions presented in Appendix C. The presentation of the two gender terms were alternated between participants to counteract any order effects.

c) *Laddering Exercise (20 minutes)*

Participants were asked to complete the laddering exercise described in section 2.3.3. The reader can also examine the sample transcript provided in Appendix D for an example of the laddering process.

d) *Interview (80 minutes)*

Participants were interviewed using the semi-structured interview schedule described in section 2.3.4. All interviews were taped and later transcribed by the investigator.

e) *Nomination of Additional Grid Elements*

At the end of the interview, participants were asked to nominate four male figures and four female figures (excluding parents and their abuser) whom they felt had significantly influenced their development. These names were incorporated as additional elements in the two grids administered at second interview.

f) *De-briefing (5+ minutes)*

Participants were consulted about any difficulties that the interview had raised for them. They were asked for thoughts and impressions about the process, and invited back to complete the grid sheets at a further appointment.

g) *Recording of Investigator's observations*

Immediately after the interview the investigator took notes for future reference regarding his own thoughts, feelings and reactions to the initial interview.

2.4.2 *Second Interview*

The second interview was structured around three tasks:

a) *Follow-up Questions*

Having had the opportunity to transcribe and consider data from the initial interview, the later interview was used to correct any significant omissions and to encourage participants to elaborate any points which the investigator felt had not been sufficiently clarified.

b) Administration of Grids (90 mins)

The main purpose of the second appointment was the completion of the two sets of grid sheets that had been prepared by the investigator beforehand. Participants were seated at a desk in a quiet room, and given the instruction sheet presented in Appendix C.

The investigator remained present throughout so that participants could ask any questions as necessary. A break was organised in-between the administration of the two sets so that the quality of the grid data would not be undermined by participant fatigue and perseverative response patterns.

c) Participant Feedback

Finally, participants were asked to feed back any further comments about the grid exercise or any other aspect of the research process.

2.5 Ethical Issues

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the local research ethics committee (see Appendix B). Care was taken to ensure that the research procedure met the directives of the British Psychological Society's Ethical

Principles and Guidelines (1998) and the Division of Clinical Psychology's Professional Practice Guidelines (1995). The specific steps taken to minimise potential participant distress have already been presented in the design and procedure sections above. By such means every effort was made to protect the well-being of clients throughout the research process.

2.6 Data Management and Analysis

Phase I The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Interview Data

Interview tapes were listened to and afterwards transcribed onto computer. Transcripts were then coded according to the analytic cycle of IPA suggested by Smith, Jarman & Osborn (in press). This involved several stages:

- 1) Transcripts were read several times. During each reading one side of the margin was used to note any points felt to be of significance or interest. These initial notes included summaries, records of pertinent associations or preliminary interpretations of the data.
- 2) After this, potential theme headings were generated and recorded in the other margin.

-
- 3) The provisional theme headings were then abstracted onto a separate sheet and examined for natural clusters or the emergence of obvious superordinate themes.
 - 4) The salience of potential themes and possible interconnections between them were then tested against a re-reading of the original data. During this stage several new headings emerged which were used to develop and restructure the evolving list of themes.
 - 5) The stages above were repeated for each transcript and a master list of themes generated capable of accounting for relevant similarities and contrasts between individual scripts and the two participant sub-groups. The master list was modified and re-calibrated in the light of each new interview assessed. Previous transcripts were subsequently re-analysed in the light of any changes. The whole cycle was repeated several times in order to maximise the explanatory power of the coding frame.

Phase II The Analysis of Grid Data

Scores from the grid sheets were entered into a Statistical and Presentation Software System (SPSS) spreadsheet (version 9.0). Three new variables, DERIVED GENDER, POLARITY and GROUP were generated from a preliminary analysis in order to categorise the constructs. These variables are

described below, together with a third variable SHIFT which is a combination of DERIVED GENDER and POLARITY.

A. DERIVED GENDER

If **either** the score for any construct assigned to the element *Typical Man* was greater than the corresponding score for the element *Typical Woman* or the construct had originally been labelled as a masculine characteristic in the original Association Exercise, then the construct concerned was designated as having a *MASCULINE* derived gender.

Similarly, if the score for *Typical Woman* on any given construct was greater than that for *Typical Man* or the construct had been elicited as an association with Femininity, then a *FEMININE* derived gender was assigned to the construct.

If the scores for *Typical Man* and *Typical Woman* were equal and the construct had not already been designated as *MASCULINE* or *FEMININE* on the basis of the criteria above, the construct was labelled as *ANDROGYNOUS* i.e. not characterised by any particular gender bias.

B. POLARITY

If the score for the element *Ideal Self* was greater than or equal to four, then the construct was deemed to have a *POSITIVE* polarity. If the score for *Ideal Self* was less or equal to three, then the construct was assigned a *NEGATIVE* polarity rating.

C. SHIFT

If the result of subtracting the score for the element *Self Now* from the score for the element *Ideal Self* yielded a sum of two or more, then the construct was labelled *UP* to indicate that the participant wished to develop more of the trait concerned.

Conversely, if the result of subtracting the score for *Ideal Self* from *Self Now* was two or more, then the construct was labelled *DOWN* to indicate that the participant wished to reduce the presence of that particular characteristic in his personality.

D. GROUP

Finally the variables POLARITY and DERIVED GENDER were combined to organise the constructs for each participant into the six subgroups shown in Table 2.

GROUP	POLARITY	DERIVED GENDER	CODE
1	Positive	Androgynous	(+A)
2	Negative	Androgynous	(-A)
3	Positive	Masculine	(+M)
4	Negative	Masculine	(-M)
5	Positive	Feminine	(+F)
6	Negative	Feminine	(-F)

Table 2

Phase III Statistical Analyses

Grid data for each element was checked for normality and the presence of outliers using facilities provided by the SPSS software programme.

- i) Mean scores were calculated for each element according to the subcategories of the variables DERIVED GENDER and GROUP.
- ii) Correlations between elements across the whole range of constructs were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlations (r) and Euclidean Distances (d) as measures of similarity and dissimilarity respectively. The Euclidean Distance results were transformed to produce scores on a scale between zero (total congruence) and one (extreme dissimilarity).

Phase IV Micro-analysis of selected transcript material

In a further review of the interview data, a micro-analysis was conducted in which specific concepts and adjectives in the transcripts were cross-referenced against the coded grid data according to group. Thus, if a participant's response suggested that he had become 'less trusting' in the aftermath of his abuse, and the characteristic of 'distrustfulness' had been coded during the grid exercise as a negative masculine trait, then a note was made to this effect.

Alternatively, where the nature of an interview response suggested incompatibility with a group characteristic, this was also noted. Thus in the example given, becoming 'less trusting' would also be judged antithetical to the positive feminine construct 'unguarded', and thus indicative of increased disconnection from a positive feminine ideal.

2.6 Reliability and Validity

A number of procedures were employed to maximise the reliability and validity of the research.

a) *Test-Retest Reliability*

After several weeks had elapsed since the completion of the original grid sheets, two constructs were selected at random for each participant. Participants were asked to re-score their elements on the constructs selected in order to establish whether grid sheet scores demonstrated stability over time. Percentage agreement was then calculated.

b) *Inter-rater Reliability*

An independent rater was given a selection of transcript extracts and asked to code them using the categories of the final coding frame. Cohen's Kappas (Siegel & Castellan 1988) were calculated as a measure of agreement between the original codes and those assigned by the independent rater.

c) *Respondent Validity*

Since IPA aims to build upon an accurate understanding of the participant's perspective, it was judged important to give participants the opportunity to validate the sense that had been made out of their data. Individual summaries were prepared for each participant (see Appendix G) which incorporated the themes derived from the analysis. Participants were asked to comment on the

accuracy of the information and any connections that had been drawn between aspects of their data.

d) *Auditability*

The reflexivity of the researcher is regarded as the principal instrument of analysis in qualitative methodologies. Following Charmaz (1995) and Mays and Pope (2000), it was therefore considered essential to allow independent evaluation of any potential biases and assumptions on the researcher's part that might have influenced the collection and analysis of the data. Accordingly, a research diary was kept (see Appendix F) and the analysis of data subjected to peer review and discussion in order to create opportunities for any such biases to be recognised and taken into account.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Reported Levels of Concern about Gender and Sexuality

Results from the screening questionnaire (see Table 3 in Appendix E) suggested that current levels of concern about sexual identity were generally low, with only two participants in Group One reporting medium levels of concern. In the past, however, all participants except one reported having experienced medium to high levels of anxiety in this area.

Results for gender identity were more mixed. Six participants over all (two from Group One; four from Group Two) indicated that they continued to experience medium to high levels of concern. It was also noteworthy that all ten participants reported medium to high levels of anxiety about their gender identities in the past.

3.2 Overview of Grid Sheet Data

As can be seen from Table 4 in Appendix E, analysis of the relative proportions of positive and negative characteristics within individual construct summaries revealed that feminine constructs were more likely to be construed positively than masculine ones by all but one participant (Participant Three).

The clusters emerging from the coding of the elicited constructs also did not reveal any striking group differences. This suggests that for both the heterosexual and homosexually-identified men, conceptions of masculinity and femininity were organised in a relatively consistent fashion. The main categories into which the constructs were grouped are illustrated in Figure 1 overleaf. The reader should note, however, that whilst these categories are broadly reliable, the gender and polarity codes for specific constructs may vary between individuals.

3.3 Correlations Between Abuser Characteristics and Ideal Self

As Table 5 in Appendix E illustrates, two men in Group One and four men from Group Two produced significant negative correlations between the elements *Abuser* and *Ideal Self*. For Participant Three these elements were *positively* correlated at the $p < .01$ level of significance. Further analysis revealed that, of those who had produced negative correlations, five were rated as having high¹ mean negative masculine scores. However, so was Participant One, whose correlation did not achieve significance.

¹ Score bands were calculated by rounding up the relevant means to 1s.f. and assigning the following bands: 0 – 2 = LOW; 2 – 4 = MEDIUM; 5 – 7 = HIGH.

Figure 1.

Construct Clusters

<p>1 POSITIVE MASCULINITY</p> <p>a) Interpersonal Strength</p> <p><i>Examples</i> able to defend powerful assertive dominant</p> <p>b) Mental Strength</p> <p><i>Examples</i> strong-willed confident</p> <p>c) Physical Strength</p> <p><i>Examples</i> tough active</p> <p>d) Aspirational Strength</p> <p><i>Examples</i> ambitious determined career-minded</p>	<p>2 POSITIVE FEMININITY</p> <p>a) Relational Strengths</p> <p><i>Examples</i> understanding empathic caring open good listener</p> <p>b) Moral Virtues</p> <p><i>Examples</i> compassionate thoughtful pure altruistic fair-minded tolerant</p> <p>c) Psychological Assets</p> <p><i>Examples</i> centred in touch with feelings fulfilled calm</p>
<p>3 NEGATIVE MASCULINITY</p> <p>a) Impaired Relating</p> <p><i>Examples</i> can't express feeling stand-offish shy</p> <p>b) Aggression</p> <p><i>Examples</i> angry violent exploitative</p> <p>c) 'Basic Instincts'</p> <p><i>Examples</i> selfish promiscuous Neanderthall-like macho</p> <p>d) Repression</p> <p><i>Examples</i> closed in secretive not able to be self</p>	<p>4 NEGATIVE FEMININITY</p> <p>a) Vulnerability</p> <p><i>Examples</i> defenceless dominated vulnerable</p> <p>b) Psychological Weakness</p> <p><i>Examples</i> lacking inner strength insecure timid anxious emotionally unstable dependent needy</p>

3.4 Themes from Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Transcripts

From the IPA analysis of the transcripts a number of key themes emerged relating to the impact of the abuse. Individual data units for main themes two to four were subsequently coded for polarity and gender by referring to the framework of categories in Figure 1 and the relevant individual codes for each construct. For the illustrative extracts below, the participant-specific gender codes are presented in the left hand column. The number of men from each group in whose transcript each theme was present is recorded in the square cells to the right of the theme headings. The following abbreviations are employed throughout:

Key

Participants are identified as P1, P2 etc.

Interviewer = INT

Group One, Two = G1, G2

Positive Masculine = (+M)

Negative Masculine = (-M)

Positive Feminine = (+F)

Negative Feminine = (-F)

3.4.1 Main Theme One: Gender Positioning

For a combination of reasons, none of the men in the sample felt able to identify themselves fully with conventional gender roles. All but one of the men (Participant Three) regarded the western masculine stereotype as repressive or restrictive, and likely to foster the development of a 'false self' that was believed to compromise the full expression of personality. Nevertheless, several recognised periods in their lives when they had attempted to assume aspects of such traditional masculine identities.

All felt unable and, for the most part, unwilling to define themselves as unequivocally masculine. Many made elective feminine identifications. Amongst Group Two members, there was a consensus that their deviation from traditional gender roles had begun very early in childhood, often prior to the abuse. Seven men stated explicitly that CSA had made them feel less masculine, while two others denied that the abuse had affected their gender identity to any significant degree. Finally, several men in each group expressed the view that rigid gender classifications were misleading or felt their own gender identities transcended categorisation. The five sub-themes generated are briefly illustrated below in Tables 6 to 10.

Sub-theme one: Masculine Stereotypes as Restrictive

G1	3	G2	4
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	Sample Extract
P1	It kind of endorses that men have got to be big, bulging muscular hero-type people and really we're not like that at all. I think certainly not nowadays. I think we're more sensitive [...] It reinforces the fact that men shouldn't talk about their problems – that they're just there to be macho. It doesn't account for any emotional aspects...
P4	It's like the whole thing of like: men have got to be men and women have got to be like the weak ones that are led along by the men [...] It's that sort of macho thing. It's just so phoney.

Table 6

Sub-theme two: Trans-gender Identifications

G1	3	G2	4
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	Sample Extract
P1	There are lots of times when I wish I wasn't a bloke. [...] I feel that then I would be able to express myself a lot more freely... I always think that emotionally I am more female than male.
P6	INT Childhood heroes or heroines? P6 Wonder Woman – I wanted to be Wonder Woman! INT What was it about her that appealed? P6 A strong woman again. Able. Capable. Yeah.
P7	How do I feel about being a man? I hate it. Well actually I would easily get on better in life as a woman. I don't mind physically looking like a man – it's not that [...] It's just that I'm more maternal – with the children. I just like the woman's role really.

Table 7

Sub-theme three: Attempts at Gender Conformity

G1	5	G2	4
----	---	----	---

	Sample Extract
P4	I was the stereotypical male then. Yes, I was a big macho man.
P7	P7 I've done bar work and things like that – doing things I really didn't want to do... roofing. I hated it but I did it. INT Were you trying to recapture some sort of male identity? P7 Yeah. Yeah. Until recently I was always battling to be straight.
P1	I had a far from normal upbringing but I just wanted to be a normal bloke, and I think that was a lot to do with it.

Table 8

Sub-theme four: Stated Impact of Abuse on Gender

G1	5	G2	5
----	---	----	---

	Sample Extract
P9	It gets really spiritual. I believe... that you have two lives, and that your experience in both those lives... It's either the male or the feminine. And what I see at the moment is that I have no male points left. My male side died – by being abused...
P4	I don't think it changed the way I felt about myself as a man. It very much changed my whole way of thinking as sort of growing up from a child and it sort of restricted that.
P7	I didn't feel masculine at all after the abuse.

Table 9

Sub-theme five: Challenging Gender Taxonomies

G1	4	G2	5
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	Sample Extract
P4	It's difficult to say really in that I don't have that sort of gender thing now. I talk to people as people rather than as men and women. I don't really see a difference between men and women now. And that's what I actually challenged. After coming off the building sites there used to be this huge gulf. Like men in their little box and women in their little box. And I challenged all that.
P6	No I don't feel like a man really. I wouldn't say I want a sex change or to be a woman, but I don't feel like a 'man', a stereotypical man that has to provide and be supportive. Yes, I can be – like my mother can be and vice versa: my dad can be nurturing. But also I don't feel myself as being... as having gender.

Table 10

3.4.2 Main Theme Two: Power

It was evident that for all the men in the sample the experience of abuse evoked feelings of helplessness and vulnerability (-F). The abuse also tended to leave them feeling weak and unable to cope with life (-F). In response to these feelings of powerlessness, many reported becoming uncharacteristically aggressive and controlling (-M). Some appeared to have attempted to re-identify themselves with positive masculine ideals by

focusing on their careers or by attempting to make themselves physically strong (+M). Representative extracts are presented in Tables 11 to 15.

Sub-theme one: Feeling Dominated and Controlled

G1	5	G2	4
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Bullied (-F) Defenceless (-F) Dominated (-F) Passive (-F)	Able to defend boundaries (+M) Dominant (+M) Assertive (+M) In control (+M)	P5	It was more violence but without violence - violation I suppose. I couldn't do anything to stop it.
Vulnerable to exploitation (-F) Controlled by others (-F)	Hard (+M) Tough (+M) Powerful (+M) Self-determining (+M)	P4	My uncle totally controlled me. The way I've described it is that he brainwashed me to a certain extent. The biggest part of my childhood was spent with my uncle sort of putting pressure on me like: 'This is what you've got to do. you've got to do what I say.'

Table 11

Sub-theme two: Becoming Weak and Unable to Cope

G1	5	G2	4
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Unstable (-F) Confused (-M)	In control (+M) Mentally comfortable (+M) Calm (+F) Organised (+F)	P3	INT What happens to us then if we're not in control? P3 There's chaos if we're not in control... outside and within. There's chaos, confusion, imbalance.
Emotionally weak (-M)	Emotionally strong (+F)	P1	It made me, I think, a much weaker person.
Lacking inner strength (-F)	Powerful (+M) Able to cope (+M) Able to overcome setbacks (+M) Strong (psych.) (+F) Able to deal with family problems (+F)	P4	In a way I was trying to deal with my own problems and I didn't feel strong enough to take on anyone else's.

Table 12

Sub-theme three: Becoming Aggressive

G1	3	G2	4
----	---	----	---

Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Territorial (-M) Confrontational (-M) Aggressive (-M) Angry (-M) Able to defend boundaries (+M)	Caring (+F) Helpful (+F) Empathic (+F)	P10	If somebody annoys me I have to tell them. Or if somebody approaches me in a pub and I'm sitting there in a pub having a quiet drink with somebody and I'll say, 'Why have you come to my table? I didn't invite you over here. Fuck off...!'
Aggressive (-M) Needs to see self as powerful (-M)	Soft (+F) Caring (+F) Self-disciplined (+F)	P4	I would go into a boxing ring and completely lose it
Powerful (+M) Aggressive (-M) Violent (-M) Angry (-M)	Submissive (+F) Caring (+F) Gentle (+F) Respectful (+F)	P8	I kicked the living daylights out of him... [abuser] And I put him in hospital.

Table 13

Sub-theme four: Becoming Ambitious

G1	1	G2	2
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Ambitious (+M) Self-directed (+M)	Feels worthless (-M)	P8	I became quite focused on doing something meaningful with my life.
Ambitious (+M) Career-focused (+M) Decisive (+M) Energetic (+M) Confident (+M)		P5	You hear so many cases where people's lives are destroyed by it and I was determined that wasn't going to happen. I wasn't going to become someone who would become nothing because of something that happened... If anything I was determined to remove all barriers to get what I wanted.

Table 14

Sub-theme five: Becoming Physically Fit

G1	2	G2	1
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Physically strong (+M) Tough (+M) Positive self-esteem (+F)	Vulnerable (-F)	P4	I was trying to get the fittest I could possibly be. There was a sort of... the physical side of it overriding the psychological side of it: physical perfection can wipe out the psychological damage.

Table 15

3.4.3 Main Theme Three: Psychological Problems

All members of both groups reported various psychological problems that often appeared to be linked to their experience of sexual abuse. Whilst collectively the difficulties were just as likely to be characterised as either negative masculine (-M) or negative feminine (-F), it was evident that problems of all kinds weakened identification with mental health traits regarded, for the most part, as positive feminine characteristics. The five sub-categories for the theme *Psychological Problems* are illustrated in Tables 16 to 20.

Sub-theme one: Negative Self-image

G1	5	G2	5
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
	Happy (+F) Positive self-esteem (+F) Fulfilled (+F)	P4	[I suffered from] ...very, very, very low self-esteem for a very long time. I just wasn't happy with myself. Not in any way.
Insecure (-F)	Respects self (+F)	P10	I think it's really hard to make out you respect yourself when you only partially feel that you own your body anyway.
Exploited (-F)	Content (+F) At peace (+F)	P8	It made me feel like a toy that was used. [...] It just made me feel worthless.

Table 16

Sub-theme two: Self-destructive Behaviour

G1	3	G2	4
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Aggressive (-M) Amoral (-M) Self-destructive/ punitive (-M)	Condsiderate/ Caring (+F) Able to be self (+F)	P6	Callum's ² motivation would be: 'Well I'm going to punish you now...' It's like I'm a vegetarian but Callum makes me eat meat. It's like, 'Ah ha! This'll fucking teach you: the dirtiest rottenist kabab ever – you're going to eat that.'
Self-punitive (-F)	Happy (+F) Fulfilled (+F) Strong (psych.) (+F)	P4	There were so many suicide attempts I lost count.

Table 17

² 'Callum' is a pseudonym for one of the three distinctive personae that Participant Six developed in the wake of a brutal rape.

Sub-theme three: Fragmentation, Dissociation and Denial

G1	5	G2	4
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Self-doubting (-F) Unstable (-F) Negative self-image (-F)	Mentally comfortable (+M)	P3	It's like I'm saying: two people – a split mind. A man and a woman trapped in one object.
Secretive (-M) Can't show feelings (-M) Emotionally cold (-M)	Able to express self (+F) Open (+F)	P4	It was in-built into me all through my childhood going through the abuse: Everything's got to be sort of kept inside. It's a secret. Everything's a secret as far as the emotional side is concerned.
Fraudulent (-M) Not true to self (-M)	Able to be self (+F)	P6	INT And what does it mean to you if something bad does happen? P6 Then I'm not myself. I become somebody else.

Table 18

Sub-theme four: Self-blame

G1	4	G2	5
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Feels guilty (-F)	Secure (+M) Confident (+M) Positive self-esteem (+M)	P5	I took the view that it must have been all my fault.
	Strong (psych.) (+F)	P7	I just felt... what had happened was all my fault.

Table 19

Sub-theme five: Depression and Anxiety

G1	5	G2	4
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Angry (-M)	At peace with self (+F)	P8	I was so het up and stressed out and fucked off with the world...
Anxious (-F)	Relaxed (+F) At one with self (+F) Psychologically strong (+F)	P7	Because I've always been on tenterhooks from a very young age. I've always been living on my nerves... being nervous about people around me and the abuse that I suffered.

Table 20

3.4.4 Main Theme Four: Impoverished Relationships

All the men in both groups reported difficulties in their relationships with others following their abuse. They felt unable to initiate new relationships, and often found themselves paralysed by shyness or anxiety. Several reported fears that they would be rejected by potential partners once they disclosed their abuse history, but felt obligated to do so in order to pre-empt any abnormal behaviours and affective responses on their part. Many of the men acknowledged that they found the prospect of getting close to another person alarming, and several recounted how their inability to express their feelings often sabotaged the relationships they did form at a relatively early stage.

Participants' inability to relate to others strengthened identifications with negative masculine characteristics. Perhaps more significantly, since

relational skills were unanimously conceived as feminine strengths, the abused men found themselves cut off from positive feminine identifications, even though high *Ideal Self* scores for such traits indicated that many wished to define themselves in terms of positive feminine ideals. Four sub-themes were derived and are illustrated in Tables 21 to 24.

Sub-theme one: Difficulties in Forming Relationships

G1	4	G2	5
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Poor communicator (-M)	Open (+F)	P9	I find myself that I can talk to some people but that with other people it's like I put my barriers up and a lot of people can't break those down.
Blanks people (-M)	Good at relationships (+F)	P4	I suppose the biggest effect was that I had a lot of difficulty forming relationships.
Stand-offish (-M)	Able to get close to others (+F) Emotionally involved (+F) Seeks closeness (+F)	P2	I've stayed away from people of both sexes for years

Table 21

Sub-theme two: Issues of Trust

G1	5	G2	4
----	---	----	---

Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Cynical (-F)	Idealistic (+F)	P10	You don't know who you can trust really. Everyone's out for themselves in the long run.
Closed in/ Defensive (-M)	Open (+F)	P1	It's a lot harder for me to trust people.
Distrustful (-M)	Accessible (+F)	P6	I just don't trust them. I've got to know someone a long time before I can show them Jonathan.

Table 22

Sub-theme three: Problems of Emotional Expression

G1	5	G2	5
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Cannot show feelings (-M) Emotionally cold (-M)	Affectionate (+F)	P3	It's like showing emotions is wrong for me – mentally. As soon as it starts coming out or if I do show it, I start repressing it.
Defensive (-M) Stand-offish (-M)	Can show affection (+F) Tactile (+F) Loving (+F) In touch with feelings (+F)	P6	I find it very hard to show affection [...] [Jonathan is not] exactly as tactile and loving as he would like to be.
Not emotionally expressive (-M) Blanks people (-M) Loner (-M)	Able to show feelings (+F) Good at relationships (+F) Caring (+F) Empathic (+F)	P4	I couldn't really show any emotions [...] For a long time it made me just totally uncaring about people. I just couldn't react to people.

Table 23

Sub-theme four: Fear of intimacy

G1	5	G2	5
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Strengthened identification	Weakened identification		Sample Extract
Self-protective (-M) Closed in/ defensive (-M) Superficial? (-M)	Emotionally expressive (+F) Open (+F) Emotionally strong (+F)	P1	I have to put up all these barriers for self-preservation and I find that gets in the way.
Stand-offish (-M) Not able to show emotion (-M)	Seeks closeness (+F) Emotionally involved (+F) Able to get close (+F)	P2	I mean I have this fear of getting close to people [...] I'm sort of stand-offish though I really try not to be.
Not emotionally expressive (-M) Feels alienated (-M)	Able to show feelings (+F) Loving (+F) Good at relationships (+F)	P4	I just totally closed up... was totally distant to everyone around me.

Table 24

3.5 Interactions Between Abuse, Sexuality and Gender

Group One

Four of the men in Group One reported doubts about their sexuality after the abuse, even though each denied having ever experienced sexual attraction towards another male.

Three described periods of promiscuous heterosexual behaviour in their late teens. Only Participant Five made an explicit connection between such sexual activity and an active attempt to lay to rest residual confusion about his sexual orientation. However, like several other Group One members, Participant Five swiftly found himself uncomfortable in his newly acquired role as male sexual predator:

You get to a certain point and you wake up and think: 'Hang on... what am I doing this for? What am I trying to prove?' I'm talking about waking up the following morning with someone whose name you can't remember and wanting to vomit. That sort of thing. Having a one night stand just to prove you're a bloke.

Participant Five also described how fears that he might be perceived as gay by others had curtailed his communicative repertoire in his early twenties.

The interviewee made it clear that such emotional reserve (-M) had prevented him from being able to express himself, but that as his confidence had increased (thanks to membership of a close-knit group of university friends) he had been able to become more demonstrative (+F) and even act 'camp' when he felt like it, without fear of misinterpretation:

You are who you are and you go out and be happy and celebrate that fact rather be constantly afraid of triggering something in someone else.

Participant One explained that he had deliberately assumed the role of 'the stereotypical man... just wanting sex' in order to 'bury' memories of his abuse. By conforming to stereotypes of masculine sexual behaviour he had hoped to make himself appear 'as normal as possible'. However, since recovering memories of the abuse two years previously he described a radical shift towards more explicitly 'feminine' sexual attitudes. He observed:

Sexually my attitudes are definitely more feminine than masculine. I definitely I believe more about...er... intimacy (+F) [...] I actually prefer it in a way if sex doesn't end in penetration. And I'm much more the person who... I get more out of giving in sex (+F) than I do receiving.

The interviewee explained that he appeared in his sexual fantasies as a female, but always in the context of sexual relations with other women. He commented that he often felt 'like a lesbian trapped in a man's body'.

Although he made no explicit causal link between the rape and his current sexual identity, it was evident that some of his feminised sexual responsiveness reflected his desire to dissociate his own sexual activities from the dynamics of his abuse:

P1 Let's say if I am having sex with someone and I feel at all that that person doesn't really want to do it but they're just going through the motions.... I can't do it. I have to stop – even if they're not feeling that at all, if I think that they are then that's when it has to stop.

INT Why is that?

P1 Because it would be like attacking them.

Participant Four also reported fleeting past concerns about being gay, but for Participants Two and Three concerns about aspects of their sexual identity continued to interact with their gender identity in ways that left them unsure about either.

Participant Two had not experienced any acute anxieties about his sexual identity until reading in a magazine article that male abuse victims often develop concerns about their sexuality. Since this time he had exhaustively questioned his sexual orientation and presented at interview as confused and troubled. Somewhat paradoxically, he framed his dilemma around his continued heterosexual attraction to women:

I suppose I was trying to deny to myself that I am confused about my sexuality, but at the end of the day I have real big problems with it. One of the reasons I have a big problem with it is because I find myself attracted to women.

Apart from the article, three main sources appeared to be fuelling his anxiety. One was the fact that his head was still 'full of images' of his childhood abuse and that his first sexual experience had been with another male. The second appeared to be his strong identification with positive feminine values which he felt 'could be seen by the everyday Joe out there as a bit wimpy...' The third was the fact that he had long-standing sexual fantasies about transsexuals:

I have fantasies about having sex with a transsexual - big fantasies, you know? But if it was man... They're beautiful transsexuals - really feminine-looking transsexuals. If it was a man I wouldn't be attracted to that person.

Participant Two reasoned that these fantasies might have stemmed from a desire to master certain aspects of his abuse experience by transmuting the sexual characteristics of his aggressor into a more amenable female form.

Like several other participants, Participant Two used 'gender' and 'sexuality' almost interchangeably and appeared to believe that a homosexual orientation was fundamentally incompatible with full masculinity.

Finally in Group One, Participant Three also experienced a profound sense of gender dislocation that appeared to be related at least in part to his perception of the sexual implications of his abuse. In addition to being unable to reconcile the disempowering experience of abuse with masculine values of control (+M), Participant Three also stated that the sexual dynamic of the abuse and his ignorance of homosexual behaviour had caused him as a child to wonder whether internally he was indeed female:

It made me doubt myself – if I was a male or a female. Mentally more than physically... I sometimes feel like a freak.

Participant Three appeared to be projecting some of his split-off femininity into his body which, he claimed, neither looked nor felt male, but was instead experienced as 'small' (-F) and feminine (-F). Although several homosexual encounters into which he had subsequently been manipulated had been

aversive for him, Participant Three stated that he still 'thought about certain males' and switched erratically between gender identifications as a result:

It's like a split personality: Two minds. I've got female thinking about a man and a man's thinking about females. It's like having two personalities in one body... split mind: a man and a woman trapped in one object.

Shifting between these radically polarised states increased Participant Four's overwhelming sense of loss of control and promoted in him an identification with what he regarded as the negative feminine traits of weakness (-F) and instability (-F).

Group Two

Whilst several Group Two members acknowledged that they could not be certain due to the young age at which their abuse occurred, the group consensus was that sexual abuse was not responsible for members' homosexual orientation. Participant Ten argued that the experience of abuse was more likely to act as a disincentive to a gay lifestyle:

I mean the way I look at it is, if I wasn't supposed to be gay then trust me, I really wouldn't be. I mean if you've had sexual abuse for fourteen years the last thing you want to do is come out as gay and have to spend the rest of your life sleeping with the fuckers. You want

to just put it out of your mind and pretend and think, 'Yeah...Shag loads of women...' But I know it's not like that.

Four of the gay-identified men proffered pre-abuse examples of non-conformity with cultural gender norms (e.g. a preference for girls toys or an inability to relate to other boys) as evidence of the innateness of their sexual orientation, again suggesting that, as for the Group One men, thinking about sexuality and gender was strongly conflated.

Participant Nine was one of three Group Two participants who regarded his strong feminine identification and homosexuality as interrelated. He also believed that his sexual abuse had helped consolidate that link:

P9 It made me feel more inside that I was a young girl and not a young boy and things like that.... And I knew that mums had babies and daddies helped sort of thing. And why is a man coming on to a boy?

INT So are you saying that as a child you resolved this by thinking: 'Therefore I must be a girl?'

P9 I was like sort of a woman with a difference. Yeah.

Whilst Group Two members did not believe that their abuse had made them gay, it was universally acknowledged that the abuse had contaminated their

perceptions of homosexuality and often made it more difficult to endorse a gay lifestyle. Participant Six explained:

[The rape] made me hate who I was. That made me hate being gay. That made me hate having sex. That made me really insular which just alienated me not only from the straight world but from the gay world as well.

The perception of his abuse as related to negative masculine characteristics of the gay scene [e.g. promiscuity (-M); exploitation (-M) and cynical (-M), self-gratifying (-M) sexual attitudes] again prompted re-engagement with positive feminine ideals of monogamy and sexual intimacy. However, like all of the other Group Two men, Participant Six reported that he continued to experience sexual difficulties insofar as he found it extremely difficult to show affection through sexual contact (+F) or even be tactile (+F) with his partner.

While the other three Group Two members ideally viewed sex as a vehicle for the expression of positive feminine values, Participants Eight and Ten used sex to identify themselves with 'masculine' potentials for control (+M) and mastery (+M).

Participant Eight always assumed a dominant (+M) role in sex and had frequently sought to imbue himself with some of the power (+M) of the abuser's position through sadomasochistic role-play. He observed:

I think the abused always becomes the abuser. I think it's something like that that's coming out with me – a lot.

This participant was keen to stress, however, that his exercise of power in a sexual context was never really abusive, since it was regulated both by the consent of his partners and the strict conventions of sadomasochistic practice.

Participant Ten also insisted upon a dominant role in his sexual relationships, but explained how he would deliberately submit himself to modified reconstructions of past abusive experiences to enable him to master them. By doing so, he felt able to re-connect himself psychologically with positive masculine dimensions of power (+M) and control (+M) while dissociating himself from dysphoric identifications with negative feminine traits such as vulnerability (-F) and passivity (-F).

For myself all the things that have been done to me that have been negative experiences I like to repeat to make it a positive experience and through choice. So some of the stuff that was done to me when I was a little child I've dealt with that really well. [...] And it kind of degrades me to do it initially... But then I start to love it. Then I've dealt with that and it is no longer a problem.

3.6 Additional Sources of Gender Influence

The transcripts contained a number of other themes that were judged potentially relevant to the development of participants' gender identities.

3.6.1 *Problematic Fathers*

It was striking that for all the men in the sample fathers had been either largely absent or featured as highly ambivalent figures in their sons' early lives. Participant Eight had been raised in an orphanage and never knew his father, whilst the fathers of Participants Three and Nine had died when their sons were less than eight years old. Four of the other participants reported significant reductions in contact with their fathers at about seven years of age as a result of divorce or protracted illness. Amongst the fathers that remained, several were reported to have undergone what were perceived as drastic and negative changes in their personalities that had transformed their sons' feelings towards them.

Despite the ambivalence expressed by participants about aspects of their fathers' behaviour during their childhood, only Participants One and Ten yielded significant negative correlations between the elements *Father* and *Ideal Self*.

Table 25, below, presents a brief selection of some of the more problematic aspects of the various father-son relationships and contains comments relating to the impact of those behaviours. A fuller summary is offered in Appendix E.

Table 25 Fathers and Sons

	Relationship	Key traits	Effects/comments	(d)	(r)	Sig. level (2 tailed)
P2	Absent father. Drinker. Left home P aged 5.	Masculine Outgoing Capable	'The fact that my father wasn't around much could have turned me homosexual...'	.551	.501	.01
P3	Father became ill. [schizophrenic] Died P aged 4.	Tall Hard-working Firm	Equates father's death with 'loss of the male in my life'. [Search for replacement male figures leads to further abuse which compounded sense of masculine inadequacy.]	.347	.617	.01
P6	Positive nurturing father then became heavy drinker. Withdrew from age 9.	Tactile Nurturing Supportive	Father nurturing: 'Much more tactile and loving than my mother is' but while drinking: 'He was violent and aggressive and bitter and nasty and hung-over' P speculated about role of father's withdrawal in shaping his sexuality.	.386	.629	.01
P7	Absent. Then forced early retirement leads to drink.	Confident Hard-working Trustworthy	'I didn't see that much of him. Not one to one...' 'He never used to whack mum but there used to be a lot of shouting [anger (-M)]...It was aggressive (- M). Very aggressive'	.332	.558	.01
P10	Physically abusive from birth - 14yrs.	Scary Big Passionate Abusive Dim	'Used to slap me around...' 'He was scared to be feminine' [Homophobic]	.650	-.270	.05

3.6.2 *Distant and Enmeshed Mothers*

Exactly half of the sample (three from Group One and two from Group Two) reported exceptionally close identifications with their mothers, whilst the remaining five men described distinctly cool and distant relationships. Of those involved in apparently enmeshed relationships, all appeared to have been drawn closer to their mothers during their parents' marital conflicts and, in one case, by becoming his mother's carer during a protracted terminal illness. Four of the mothers were described as having psychological problems, and the mothers of Participants One and Two had died during childhood. Both deaths occurred in traumatic circumstances.

In terms of the balance between masculine and feminine characteristics, all except two of the mothers demonstrated higher mean scores on feminine traits than masculine ones. These two were further distinguished by being the only mothers to achieve medium (as opposed to low) scores on negative masculine characteristics. Participant Ten's mother, who was described as schizophrenic and persecutory, was the only one to produce a significant negative correlation ($d = 1; r = -.594 p < .01$) between the elements *Mother* and *Ideal Self*. Examples of the nature of relationships between mothers and sons are provided in Table 26 and a fuller account in Appendix E.

Table 26 Mothers and Sons

	Relationship	Key Traits	Comments/notes	(d)	(r)	Sig. Level (2 tailed)
P1	Extremely intimate. Became mother's carer during prolonged terminal illness. [Complex bereavement]	Forceful Kind Mentally unstable Both soft and hard 'Typical redhead'	'...with my mum it was very close – certainly during my teens because she was so dependent on me' 'In some ways I think that's where my feminine attitude could come from – the fact that I used to do the cooking and the cleaning'	.425	.814	.01
P2	No memories of her (dissociated grief reaction) Mother died suddenly when P aged 14.	Provider Caring Thoughtful Sensitive Feminine	'It was as if she vanished into thin air in front of my eyes. It was such a shock.' 'My family all say we had a special bond: that we were really, really close...'	.343	.771	.01
P3	Very mixed feelings about mother.	Outgoing Good with money Genteel Secretive	'I feel it's partly to do with the way I was treated: moved around... I didn't see much of her in the early years. The bond between mother and child was broken. [n.b. found surrogate mother figure who died of cancer when P in teens with devastating effects]	.477	.373	.01
P6	Positive relationship, but father did the nurturing when children young.	Loving Strong woman Not very expressive	'My mother takes on the more protective role sometimes' [inversion of traditional gender roles]	.282	.746	.01
P10	Mother persecutory and abusive.	Schizophrenic Insecure Cynical Vulnerable	'Nothing positive between us' 'I just hated her so much' [Used to try and suffocate P, break his legs. Taunted him.]	1.000	-.594	.01

3.6.3 Additional Exposure to Aggression

Not only had the participants often had to cope with sexual abuse and a catalogue of separation traumas, but many had been subjected to additional experiences of aggression that had undermined their self-esteem and exacerbated their sense of alienation and difference. With the exception of two men, all had passed through institutions where they had been bullied and belittled, and where the consequences of deviation from gender norms became starkly focused. The extracts in Table 27 illustrate the potential gender implications of such experiences:

Table 27 Additional Experience of Aggression & Control

G1	4	G2	5
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	Impact	Sample Extract
P9	<i>Participant earlier linked aggression to 'death of male side'. Increased identification with vulnerability (-F) and victim status (-F)</i>	I was bullied a lot at school. I was reading poetry and my femininity – they picked that up straight away... That's when I realised I was gay.
P7	<i>Contributed, alongside lack of parental affirmation, to overwhelming need for acceptance (-F) which again precipitated an attempt to live as a heterosexual man in order to 'fit in'.</i>	When I first started high school I used to get so much grief because of the hand-me-down shoes and that.[...] And looking back I think that's stupid. But when it's constant day in day out... And that was like the confidence gone from an early age because of the shoes.
P3	<i>Enhanced sense of powerlessness (-F) and confusion (-F) in conjunction with sexual abuse weakened (+M) identification.</i>	There were occasions in my past when I was at boarding school where I was punished for things that weren't my fault... It's like having the power beaten from you – to confront, to stand up. You weren't allowed to defend yourself. You had to accept the punishments whether they were right or wrong.

3.6.4 Negative Personal Relationships

Subsequent to their experience of abuse, many men described entering into relationships which had also had various effects upon their sense of gender. Some partners had become aggressive or exploitative, strongly reinforcing the effects of the original abuse and strengthening identifications with negative feminine traits such as vulnerability.

Transcripts suggested that such relationships understandably tended to make these men yet more cautious about expressing positive feminine characteristics such as openness and intimacy. Table 28 below provides a brief indication of how some of these processes operated.

Table 28 Impact of Negative Personal Relationships

G1	4	G2	4
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	Impact	Sample Extract
P1	<i>Relationship expected to enhance identification with gender norms had the opposite effect.</i>	I thought it would be nice to have someone quite benign who would allow me to be quite a stereotypical male who could take control. But the longer we were together the more she kind of imposed her will on the relationship and the more difficult it became. [...] She got more and more sexually dominant the further it went because I was sort of like falling away: 'Not tonight dear. I've got a headache...' It's the stereotypical woman.
P5	<i>Relationship enhanced sense of impotence (i.e. not +M), vulnerability (-F) and feelings of self-blame (-F), leading ultimately to a breakdown and attendant sense of psychological weakness (-F).</i>	You know she used to wake up in the morning and say, 'I'm going to be a real cow to you today. But I want you to know that it's nothing you have done.' And I got to the stage where I thought, 'How the hell can you go on with a relationship like that because regardless I would think it was something I had done. [...] I wanted to feel that I had a choice and that I was in control, but the problem was that with my ex-partner I actually relinquished a lot of that.

3.6.5 *Socio-cultural Factors*

It was evident that many participants had been subjected to additional social pressures at familial, peer and societal levels that had directly or indirectly impacted upon their gender development.

Pressures of gender socialisation were powerfully experienced by all participants, even those who chose to resist them. Similarly, nine of the ten participants referred to homophobic prejudice either within their immediate family circles or in society at large. For Group One men this had exacerbated fears of the possible misinterpretation of their abuse if they disclosed it. For Group Two members it had encouraged views of their sexuality as contaminated or perverse. Five of the men specifically mentioned the media coverage of HIV in the 1980s as feeding into this process. Table 29 (overleaf) presents a brief selection of the different ways in which socio-cultural factors appeared to have exerted a formative influence upon participants' gender identities.

Table 29 *Impact of Socio-Cultural Factors*

G1	5	G2	5
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	Impact	Sample Extract
P7	<i>Enhanced sense of homosexuality as contaminated. Strengthened P's determination to live as heterosexual male and adopt masculine gender role.</i>	The only others source at the time was when HIV came out in the eighties and all that. And that was after the abuse. And that was like... It scared me witless.
P4	<i>Moment of forced choice which encouraged disengagement from familial masculine stereotype and help make possible a transition towards a more flexible personal gender identity.</i>	You see the other big thing in my life is that when my Dad died I was automatically expected to take over and become head of the household and be the bread-winner and lookout for the people in the family. And I didn't like that at all.
P6	<i>Atypical gender roles modelled by relatives made possible an idiosyncratic gender positioning.</i>	They [mother's family] were a huge bunch of strong women and they didn't conform to convention. There wasn't going to be quiet little women in the corner. [...] because these were women with masculine qualities [...] I could be a man with feminine qualities. I didn't feel I had to conform.
P9	<i>Disparity with gender norms leads to withdrawal (-M), emotional problems (-F) and a sense of gender disorientation.</i>	I think as you grow older and wiser and listen to more people and they take you into the categories... and you don't match what they say and you put yourself down as failed basically.

3.7 Results of Reliability Studies

1. Test Re-Test Study for Construct Scores

Five participants re-scored all their elements for two constructs chosen at random. In view of the imprecise nature of grid values, the decision was made to accept agreements within one scale point in either direction as an

adequate criterion of concordance. Calculated on this basis, a Kappa value of .76 was generated across all the elements for the Ten constructs scored. However, scores for the subgroup of six core elements (*Self Aged 16, Self Now, Abuser, Ideal Self, Mother, Father, Typical Man, Typical Woman*) showed even better stability ($k = .83$). Also, in only one case was the original differential between the elements Typical Man and Typical Woman not preserved. These findings suggest that data from the grids is broadly reliable, although some constructs did demonstrate less stability than others.

2. *Inter-rater Reliability Studies*

A selection of 57 extracts was sorted into the eighteen sub-themes by an independent rater at an accuracy rate of 91% ($k = .89$), suggesting good levels of reliability for the main codes. Ten extracts were also micro-coded using the relevant individual construct grid, producing concordance rates with the investigator of 86% for the 26 'group' variable sub-codes associated with these extracts.

3. *Respondent Validity Study*

Three of the participants were unavailable at the time of writing up, but the remaining seven confirmed that their personalised feedback sheets (see Appendix G) provided an accurate reflection of their interviews, and felt that the way in which their material had been analysed was valid.

4 DISCUSSION

The discussion opens with a critical review of the methodology. The main findings are then examined in relation to the main research questions and key themes in the sexual abuse literature. The clinical implications of the findings are elaborated and directions for future research outlined.

4.1 Critical Review of the Method

Although in general the methodology served its purpose well, two reservations occurred to the investigator during the analysis of the results.

The first concerned the derivation of the crucial grouping variable *Derived Gender*. In retrospect, it seemed less than optimal to have employed participants' perceptions of where a 'typical' man or woman stood in relation to each of the constructs as an index of the construct's gender valency. Simply because a particular characteristic is identified by an individual or a culture as a property of masculinity, it does not necessarily follow that the prevalence of such a characteristic will be regarded as higher amongst men than women. Although one might broadly expect this to be the case, it is – paradoxically – a rather sexist assumption.

Indeed, on two occasions traits that had been specifically identified as masculine in the original Association Exercise (see Method 2.3.3) were judged more characteristic of a typical woman than a typical man. The nature of the *Derived Gender* grouping variable assigned priority to the original association, but other self-constructs generated from the transcripts were not safeguarded in this way. It would perhaps have been preferable to ask participants directly whether they regarded each construct as intrinsically more masculine, feminine or androgynous. However, it could also be argued that it might have been quite difficult for participants to make these judgements at such an abstract level. Certainly, by encouraging participants to think about the constructs in relation to men and women in general, the decision-making process was grounded within a somewhat more concrete frame of reference that encouraged participants to draw upon their experience to clarify their perceptions.

The second problem related to the difficult balance between comprehensiveness and the ethical imperative of not placing excessive demands upon participants. This dilemma was focused by the restricted number of constructs that participants could practically be asked to code.

Ideally, it would have been preferable to have information about the gender valencies of *all* the constructs employed by participants during interview. However, even asking them to code in the region of sixty constructs was clearly asking a great deal of them. The fact that only approximately thirty self-constructs could be selected from each transcript inevitably meant that

selection relied rather too heavily upon the investigator's intuition about which constructs were most relevant. Such filtering could conceivably have introduced a bias into the balance between gendered constructs, although it is difficult to conceive how such a shortcoming could have been circumvented.

A final issue raised by the research process was the difficulty of achieving a satisfactory ethical rapprochement between the research-driven agenda and the therapeutic needs of participants. Clearly, even asking individuals to recount difficult and possibly pathogenic areas of their personal biographies could be considered an intervention of sorts and, judging from their comments (see Appendix G), several participants felt they had derived therapeutic benefit from the research process.

However, the intensity of the feelings raised and the reflexive nature of the interviews inevitably meant that the distinction between data collection and treatment at times became blurred. It did not feel ethically responsible to leave participants wrestling with deeply-seated conflicts or emotive memories recovered during interview, without attempting to offer the containment of an occasional interpretation or clinically-motivated observation.

The research made it very clear to the investigator where his own priorities lay, but I also believe that the work was ultimately strengthened by such interactions. Fortunately, such conduct could more easily be accommodated within the ethos of qualitative methods that tend to be sceptical about the high

levels of neutrality or objective detachment demanded by more empirical approaches.

4.2 Review of the Findings

4.2.1 CSA and the Repression of Positive Femininity

In terms of the nature of the gender conflicts experienced by sexually abused men (see Research Question One), some surprising results emerged. As predicted in the literature (e.g. Gill and Tutty 1997; Lew 1990), men in the sample did find their capacity to identify themselves with traditionally masculine qualities such as power, agency and control compromised by their abuse experiences, and they did on the whole regard their attendant vulnerability and psychological distress as feminising (see Lisak 1995; Gartner 1997).

However, by coding individual traits in terms of gender and polarity, it also became apparent that what caused significant trouble for many of the men was not only their restricted ability to identify with positive masculine traits after the abuse *but also their subsequent inability to express or identify with positive feminine characteristics and values*. In particular, the difficulty that these men found in expressing their emotions or being able to form close intimate relationships – regarded almost universally as predominantly ‘feminine’ skills –

caused considerable distress and was implicated in the aetiology of some of the more deleterious symptoms reported by abuse survivors of both sexes.

The research also casts light upon the internal organisation of gender categories in ways that may have some clinical bearing. As Figure 2 overleaf illustrates, attention to interactions between gender and polarity suggests the presence of complementary dyads that span gender divides. Thus the opposition between say, power and vulnerability, appeared not only to operate as a tension between masculinity and femininity, but more specifically as a tension between *positive* masculinity and *negative* femininity. Similarly, many of the characteristics coded as positive feminine corresponded to antithetical traits in the negative masculine cluster.

Consequently, the presentation of Hypermasculine Compensation (which according to Sepler (1990) is usually expressed through negative masculine attitudes and behaviours) may be formulated not only as a defence against underlying masculine inadequacy, but also as a defensive resistance to the expression of positive feminine traits. For some individuals the appropriate clinical focus therefore may not, as might be assumed, be to develop more constructive ways to bolster the client's sense of self-efficacy and agency, but instead to foster reconnection with 'feminine' capacities for emotional expression and engagement with others.

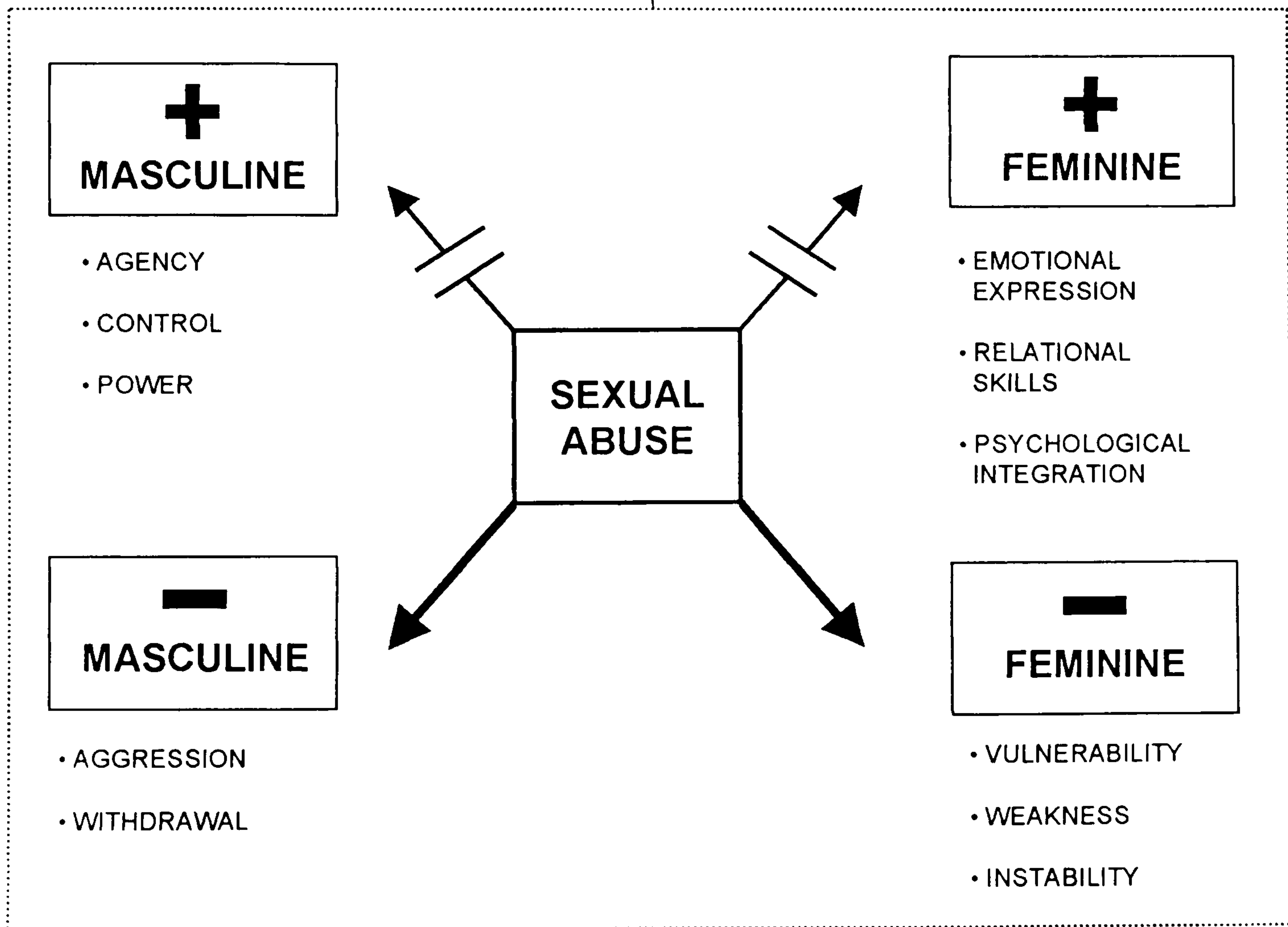
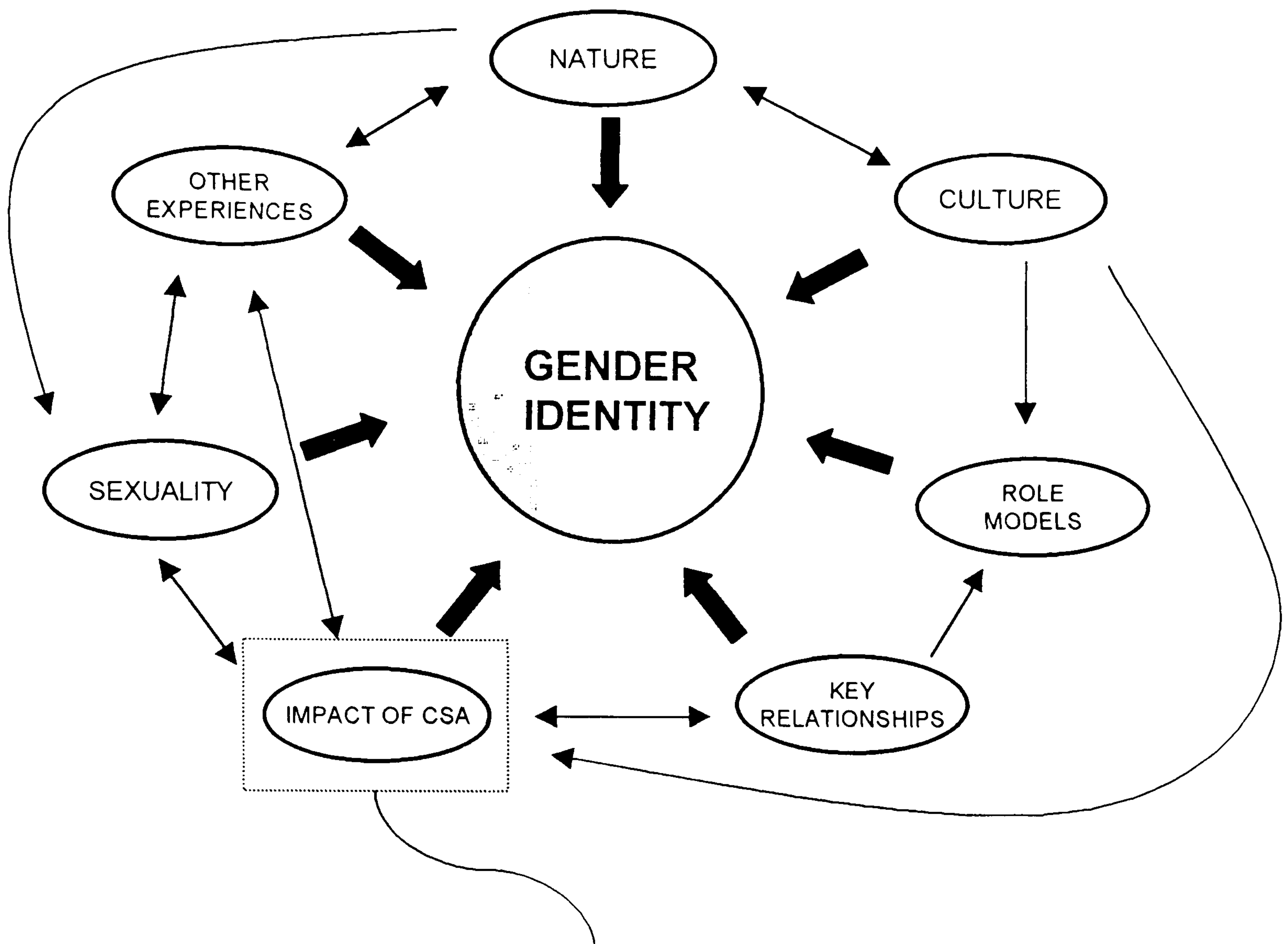


Figure 2. Model showing potential impact of CSA on the development of male gender identity

4.2.2 Implications of Gender Ambivalence for the Masculinity Model of Adjustment

Such distinctions certainly proved relevant when considering how male survivors of CSA positioned themselves in relation to cultural gender norms (Research Question Two). The widespread ambivalence expressed by participants towards conventional masculine stereotypes suggested that, far from experiencing deviation from gender norms as acutely stressful (c.f. Lew 1990), by the time of interview many ultimately regarded their blurring of normative gender parameters as a strength rather than a weakness.

Surprisingly, for only two of the participants did concerns about 'being a man' currently feature as a significant issue. While the balance between past and present levels of concern suggests that this may not always have been the case, from a clinical perspective it is important to recognise that clients may hold very different attitudes towards traditional gender stereotypes, and varying levels of attachment to them. Moreover, the strength of those attachments may change over time. Clinicians should not, therefore, assume that the features of 'masculine identity confusion' (Dimock 1988) are necessarily regarded as pathological by the client. Otherwise, there is a genuine risk that therapist and client may end up working at cross-purposes.

The findings also suggest that it may also be necessary to review some of the assumptions regarding the Masculinity Model of Adjustment (Antill & Cunningham 1980) that has guided the interpretation of so many previous studies.

Certainly many participants in the present study reported past behaviours consistent with strategies of Hypermasculine Compensation (Sepler 1990). However, the polarity coding of such traits indicates that, far from representing a vision of masculinity that participants wished to endorse, the development of such characteristics was experienced by the majority as profoundly ego-dystonic. In becoming more stereotypically male, many felt that they were adopting roles and behaviours antithetical to core values. Instead of reinstating a former identity, participants often saw themselves as engaged in the active distortion of their true natures. In the words of Participant Six, they 'became somebody else' as a result.

An alternative explanation consistent with the data is that the cultural gender connotations of such characteristics were not the crucial issue for participants. Rather, these behaviours and attitudes appear to have been endorsed either for conscious, pragmatic reasons, or unconsciously as intuitive defences against future attacks. For participants in the current study, the assumption of more masculine personae in the wake of the abuse often appeared motivated by potential secondary gains rather than an intrinsic desire to view themselves as more 'male'.

Thus for Participant Eight, the adoption of a heterosexual masculine gender role provided him with access to much sought-after family membership through marriage, while for Participants One and Seven, the development of traditional masculine identities represented attempts to secure peer acceptance. For these men the gender implications of such behaviours seem to have featured as a largely incidental effect and certainly did not constitute their primary motivation.

Interestingly, it was the few men in the sample who sought to adhere to rigid gender roles, or who switched between highly compartmentalised masculine and feminine positions, that seemed to be experiencing the most stress and dissatisfaction regarding their gender identities. Conversely, those who had been able to deconstruct traditional gender roles and step beyond the dichotomised vision of gender offered by society seemed on the whole to demonstrate higher levels of adjustment and well-being in this area. The findings therefore provide additional support for David Lisak's argument (1995) that the treatment of sexually abused males should include 'an active critique of gender socialisation'.

Returning to Okami's objection (1990) that existing research paradigms for sexual abuse have precluded the possibility of positive outcomes, it may also be important for clinicians to feel able to validate their clients perceptions of

abuse as ultimately having helped them dismantle potentially restrictive gender norms.

Evidence from other studies (e.g. Harvey et al. 1991; Allen 1999) suggests that account-making often plays a crucial role in delimiting the damaging effects of abuse. Such narratives, with their implicit redemptive undertones, may be an important vehicle through which survivors have attempted to come to terms with their abuse histories. Therapists, in this author's view, do clients no favours by undermining them or re-framing them in pathological terms.

Since many of the men described significant shifts in their attitudes and gender affiliations over time, the current study underlines the need for clinicians to be especially sensitive to the stage at which clients present themselves, and not to assume that feelings and views about gender are necessarily static.

The sorts of processes and positions assumed by men in this study may also offer some clues to the design of clinical interventions that would enable male abuse survivors who are struggling with a sense of masculine inferiority to move towards less stressful accommodations.

4.2.3 Support for Theories of Gender Shame

Another interpretation of participants' ambivalent feelings towards masculinity is that such attitudes are a function of Gender Shame (Mendel 1992) generated by their abuse. Data from the present study is broadly consistent with such a

notion. The fact that all but one participant regarded feminine characteristics as more likely to be positive than masculine ones, and that the polarity of constructs was actually derived from their relationship to the element *Ideal Self*, does support the hypothesis that, in the majority of cases, perceptions of masculinity may have been tainted by their experiences as victims of male abusers. It would be informative to conduct a larger-scale study, including a comparison group of non-abused men, to discover whether the relative polarity of gender characteristics observed in this study is specific to abused men, or whether it reflects the views of men in society at large.

The eight negative correlations between the elements *Abuser* and *Ideal Self*, six of which were statistically significant (see Table 5 in Appendix E), were also broadly consistent with the purported intrapsychic mechanisms of the Gender Shame hypothesis. Closer analysis of the grid data revealed that, on the whole, these men did appear to be seeking to define themselves in opposition to perceived abuser characteristics. Meanwhile the abusers all demonstrated medium to high levels of masculine traits and half were considered to be strong exponents of negative masculinity.

In light of additional information from participants' histories it seems clear, however, that the abusers were not the only significant negative male influences in the lives of the majority of participants. It seems plausible that the presence of aggressive or absent fathers, school bullies and other negative

male role models are also likely to have coloured participants' conceptions of masculinity as a somewhat dubious commodity.

Although the extremely limited sample size means that such findings must be treated with caution, they do perhaps suggest that a larger scale study of adequate statistical power might be able to substantiate such a relationship. This having been said, the clinical value of such a study would seem somewhat limited, since ultimately it is the idiographic responses of individuals to their abuse experiences that provide the only secure basis for effective clinical work. From this perspective, however, the application of construct grids to examine the relationship between the identities of self and abuser would appear to have considerable clinical potential, especially in attempting to formulate effectively in cases where the abuser and ideal are not negatively correlated.

4.2.4 *Towards an Interactive Model*

In relation to Research Questions Three and Four regarding the *relative* impact of CSA on gender, the study produced consistent evidence that sexual abuse had not been the only, or even most significant, factor in determining the nature of participants' mature gender and sexual identities. Data presented in Results sections 4.4 to 4.5, and illustrated in Figure 2, strongly supported the position that the impact of sexual abuse on gender needs to be contextualised within an interactive model that takes into account the interplay between CSA and other environmental and biographical factors.

Although it fell outside the scope of the present study to provide a detailed analysis of the way that familial constellations impinged on gender development, it was clear both that a) the families of these men featured a notably high level of disruption and trauma, and b) that participants themselves were making deliberate links between their gender development and aspects of their domestic backgrounds. There are also strong theoretical grounds to support the view that the sorts of family configurations described by participants are likely to have affected their gender development.

Particularly striking was the high rate of absent fathers, with eight out of the ten participants reporting significant periods of separation or paternal withdrawal during childhood. Guy Corneau (1991) argues that the lack of a positive paternal presence during a boy's development can have significant implications for the development of gender identity:

This lack of attention from the father results in the son's inability to identify with his father as a means of establishing his own masculine identity.

Corneau adds that in his own clinical experience he has found a frequent connection between inadequate fathering and the development of a number of teenage identity problems including confusion about sexual identity, the adoption of 'feminine types of behaviour' (Corneau 1991, pp. 19-20).

However, while Corneau's claims are of great interest in the present context, it should be noted that he does not attempt to substantiate them with research evidence. Moreover, research by Hetherington, Cox & Cox (1978) suggests that only paternal absence prior to the child's fourth birthday is related to lower indices of 'masculine' characteristics. Since the periods of paternal absence or emotional withdrawal began prior to the four year old cut-off for only four men in the current sample, perhaps not too much weight should be placed on them.

It is not, however, only the absence of fathers that Corneau identifies as a critical factor, but also the kind of role model they provide for their sons. He writes:

In cases where the father is violent, weak, or continually drunk, the son may find him so repugnant that he will absolutely refuse to identify with the masculine; not only will he hold his father in contempt but he will try not to resemble him in any way.

(Corneau 1991, p.13)

For two of the men in the study, significant negative correlations between the elements *Father* and *Ideal Self* across all traits, and a tendency to construct the *Ideal Self* in terms of primarily feminine traits, are consistent with Corneau's hypothesis. For the remainder, significant positive correlations between *Father* and *Ideal Self* suggest that, in the long term, their fathers' periods of drunken or

aggressive behaviour did not unduly bias their son's perception of them as positive role models. However, even if this is the case, no specific information is available about the effect of their fathers' behaviour on them at the time. Certainly the abrupt transformation that several men reported in their father's behaviour, changing them from essentially positive figures to exponents of negative masculinity during their pre-teenage years, would seem likely to have raised questions about how safe or desirable it was to identify with them.

From a Social Learning perspective (Bandura & Walters 1959), it also seems clear that many fathers modelled dysfunctional coping strategies such as denial and dissociation. These were later adopted by their sons and strengthened identification with negative masculine traits and the repression of positive feminine ones.

Relationships between participants and their mothers are also implicated as potential sources of gender instability. Stoller (1968) actually argues that maternal relationships may be more important in male gender development than paternal bonds. As Stoller explains:

In contrast to Freud's decision that masculinity is the natural state and femininity is at best a successful modification of it, I feel the boy's relationship to his mother makes the development of feminine qualities more likely [...] The boy must manage to break through the peak of his mother's femaleness, a task so frequently incomplete, to judge from the

amount of effeminacy, passivity or forced hyper-masculinity that one sees.

(Stoller 1968 p.263)

For five of the participants, their fathers' aggressive behaviours appeared to have further consolidated existing allegiances and identifications with their mothers, for whom they often provided protection or emotional support during their parents acrimonious marital disputes.

In Jungian terms, the exceptionally intimate relationships between four of the men in the sample could be regarded as fostering *anima-possession*, or an over-identification with the female. Such relationships could conceivably have weakened conventional patterns of gender identification.

Several of the mothers also exhibited strongly masculine qualities or fulfilled masculine roles in the family. It is again possible that exposure to carers who blurred gender distinctions themselves may also have promoted flexibility or instability in their children's gender orientation.

The findings also emphasise that interactions between aspects of sexuality, gender identity and the experience of male sexual abuse are potentially extremely complex and raise a number of issues quite apart from whether abuse engenders homosexuality.

On this latter point, however, the results consistently supported the view espoused by Gartner (1997) that sexual abuse by another male does not of itself determine sexual orientation. However, in interpreting such results it is important to remain open to the possibility that the gay-identified men in Group Two might quite naturally not have *wished* to believe that their sexuality was a function of abusive experiences in their past. However, the fact that their sense of 'difference' often pre-dated their abuse, and that the men in Group One denied so categorically any homosexual leanings, does support the view that abuse in itself is not a causal factor in determining sexual orientation.

Evidence from the study does, however, suggest that the dynamics of sexual experiences can exert an especially powerful purchase on gender identifications. It seems likely that the sexual concerns of the Group One men were largely a consequence of having assumed a 'female' role in sex. At least two men from each group explicitly made this connection. If Melanie Klein is correct in her view that children are pre-programmed with implicit sexual knowledge from birth (Klein 1932), it become somewhat easier to comprehend why the experience of abuse might foster such conclusions in the developmentally immature child.

The cultural meanings ascribed to such events also appeared to have played a part, since it seems likely that Group One members' anxieties about homosexuality were directly related to the fact that the term 'gay' is widely employed in western societies as a synonym for femininity. The way that many

participants employed the terminology of gender and sexuality almost interchangeably suggests that, at a cultural level, the two domains are strongly conflated in ways likely to promote concerns about aspects of both gender and sexuality as a result.

Nevertheless, the data suggests that even in the sexual sphere it is important not to leap to reductive conclusions about the interplay of abuse, gender and sexuality. It would, for example, be easy to focus upon the unusual sexual fantasies of Participants One and Two – which both feature elements of transsexualism – as compelling evidence of the gender disrupting impact of sexual abuse. However, both of these men also lost their mothers in their early teens. Therefore, although both men made connections between their sexual fantasies and their abuse, one could also speculate that their fantasies reflected sublimated erotic attachments to their dead mothers and ingenious attempts to circumvent internal incest taboos. It is probably no coincidence that the transsexual with whom Participant Two entered into a relationship shared the name of his dead mother.

Finally, the study drew attention to the way that abuse histories intercepted with a range of socio-cultural factors in the shaping of individual gender identities. For participants who, for various reasons, felt insecurely attached to culturally-accredited gender roles in early childhood, contact with the world outside the family tended to focus such differences in ways that made them feel alienated and vulnerable. Several participants described how the real impact of their

abuse only became apparent to them when the experience was refracted through the lens of social opinion.

Fear of being misunderstood, judged and rejected was very evident amongst all the men interviewed, and either pushed participants into defiant opposition to social gender norms or drove them, at least temporarily, to redoubled efforts at gender role conformity. In particular, for both gay and straight-identified participants, homophobic attitudes both inside and outside the family often discouraged the expression of 'feminine' traits.

The importance of individuality, and the virtue of being able to resist the efforts of others to control and define the self, was a theme constantly iterated in the values generated by the laddering exercise. It seemed clear from the content of the interviews that the fear of domination was not merely a reaction to the experience of abuse, but also to the societal and cultural pressures to which these men had found themselves subjected in its wake.

Linked to this is perhaps one of the most surprising findings of the study: namely that that the experience of the heterosexually-identified men in Group One, and their homosexually-identified counterparts in Group Two seemed in many respects so similar. By and large, the same sorts of themes emerged from both groups and the issues which these men were facing appeared remarkably alike.

The overall impression was that the two groups were headed by different routes towards a similar destination. For the majority of Group Two members, their battle with gender norms had begun prior to their abuse, as they discovered their innate preference for dolls over footballs and the company of girls over boys. For these men the abuse appeared to have consolidated their sense of alienation from conventional gender categories, and reinforced feelings that their difference was not socially acceptable. Whatever strategies they employed to circumvent such feelings, ultimately they had all more or less reconciled themselves to the fact that interactions between their nature and their experience had placed them outside the restricted repertoire of gender classifications offered by their culture.

For the majority of Group One participants, the abuse and its sequelae also appeared to have catalysed a similar transition. Whilst undeniably traumatic, in the long term the abuse appears to have exposed the intrinsic fragility of a masculine identity grounded in the denial of feeling and the suppression of purportedly 'feminine' attributes. By forcibly deconstructing their existing gender scripts, the abuse seemed to have encouraged a 'return of the repressed' for at least three members of this group and enabled them to move more fluidly between gender poles. While they continued to struggle against the forces of gender socialisation, the impression given by all but one of these men was that they now regarded masculinity in Bernstein's terms (1971) as a 'restricted code' that they were mostly grateful to have escaped.

4.3 Conclusions

The study suggests that the framework of conventional gender and sexual categories may be of limited relevance in work with sexually abused men. It endorses the need for clinicians to develop more sophisticated approaches, including the capacity to distinguish between gender identities as objectified social representations – generalised and relatively stable clusters of sex-linked traits that yield conventional cultural categories – and the subjective experience of gender as continual phenomenological flux between gender-concordant states.

The findings pose a challenge to the Masculinity Model of Adjustment, and suggest that the impact of sexual abuse upon gender may be more complex than previously supposed. They imply that clinicians may need to relax assumptions about the meanings that male sexual abuse survivors ascribe to their experiences with respect to gender, and be sensitive to the possibility that these meanings may change over time. Finally, the research underlines the fact that the ways in which CSA impacts upon gender cannot be properly understood without taking into account interactions between the abuse experience and other aspects of the individual's developmental and social context.

The investigator is glad to report that his efforts to apply of some of these principles in his own work with this client group have been encouragingly productive, and a meeting is currently being arranged to feed back the results from this study to other clinicians in the service.

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Glossary

The naming of parts: towards a functional taxonomy of gender and sexuality

It is worth being aware from the outset that the study of gender and sexuality is a taxonomical minefield. As Gill and Tutty (1997) observe:

Confusion with respect to what comprises sexual identity exists throughout the male sexual abuse literature.

Terms such as 'orientation' and 'identity', 'sex' and 'gender' are all too often used interchangeably. Unfortunately, while some researchers have attempted to bring this classificatory chaos to order, the net result appears to have been a proliferation of different nomenclatures that if anything it has made it harder to make sense of the relevant distinctions.

The generation of adequate conceptual categories in this field is not merely a matter of academic precision but has important clinical implications. Several authors have suggested (see Gill and Tutty, 1997; Gilgun and Resier 1990) that a lack of specificity is likely to interfere both with an adequate understanding of the processes involved and may even increase the risk of iatrogenic harm in clinical settings.

What follows below is therefore a brief glossary of some of the most important terms as defined in the current piece of work. It represents an attempt both to synthesise some of the main classificatory stands in the literature and to provide a set of constructs relevant to the self-understanding of the men in the sample.

Glossary

Sex	A technical biological term referring to the classification of organisms as <i>Male</i> and <i>Female</i> on the basis of common physiological, reproductive and anatomical features c.f. Shiveley & DeCecco (1977); Good and Mintz (1993); Lisak (1995).
Gender	<i>Gender</i> refers to the way that biological sex categories for humans are elaborated in terms of specific, culturally-defined patterns of characteristics and behaviours.
Gender role	<i>Gender role</i> (often called <i>sex role</i>) refers to those behaviours, values and attitudes that are considered appropriate for members of each sex. Gender roles thus generate the distinction between what is considered <i>Masculine</i> and <i>Feminine</i> within a given culture c.f. Lisak (1995); Good, Borst and Wallace (1994).
Gender Identity	Refers to the way that individuals position or classify themselves in respect to societal gender norms. Shiveley and DeCecco (1977) and Chilman (1983) propose that a rudimentary gender identification is established for most children by the age of three years. However, it seems clear that the child's sense of gender identity is developed and elaborated via <i>Gender Socialisation</i> processes well into adulthood.

Gender Identity Confusion	State of psychological conflict arising from an individual's partial or complete inability to identify themselves with the culturally predicated gender norms traditionally ascribed to their sex. <i>Masculine Identity Confusion</i> refers to the male version of such a condition.
Gender Socialisation	The set of cultural processes through which individuals are encouraged to assimilate the psychological characteristics and behaviours associated with their sex. Unfortunately, the term is often used interchangeably with <i>Sexual Socialisation</i> , which this author would suggest is technically a <i>subset</i> of gender socialisation processes and should be used to refer specifically to the inculcation of the sexual behaviours and attitudes associated with a particular gender role. However, the confusion is informative since it indicates the strength of social pressure to equate gender concepts such as 'masculinity' with a restricted range of sexual practices.
Masculine Gender Ideology	Defined by Pleck et al. (1993) as the individual's degree of endorsement and internalisation of cultural belief systems about masculinity and the masculine gender role. It also refers to the individual's personal belief system about gender roles and characteristics.
Sexual Orientation	A term referring to the individual's erotic and affectional attachments i.e. preferred choice of sexual partners. Traditionally, <i>Sexual Orientation</i> has been classified in terms of a tripartite division between heterosexual, homosexual and bi-sexual. Although it has often been assumed that 'sexual orientation' reflects an innate disposition that is likely to remain fixed throughout adult life, empirical research in the field of sexuality indicates that this is not necessarily the case (c.f. Paul 1984).
Sexual Identity	The way that individuals understand and represent their sexual nature to themselves and to others. Although the term will be used to refer to the collective interplay of all aspects of the individual's sexual behaviour, erotic attachments and orientation, it is important to recognise that a person's sexual identity may be more or less integrated and coherent. As Gilgun and Reiser (1990) and Goggin (1993) point out, <i>Sexual Identity</i> should not therefore be seen as a synonym for <i>Sexual Orientation</i> . While for most people sexual orientation is likely to be congruent with an elective sexual identity, some individuals may experience <i>Sexual Identity Confusion</i> as a result of internal tensions and discrepancies between different facets of their sexual identity.

- 1) Information Sheet
- 2) Consent Form
- 3) Letters of Ethical Approval

INFORMATION SHEET

Date

Dear NAME,

Re. An investigation into male gender identity and the experience of childhood sexual abuse.

I am writing to invite you to take part in a research project that is about to be conducted within the Department of Clinical and Counselling Psychology.

The aims of the study are to investigate the relationship between childhood sexual abuse and the ways it affects men's thoughts and feelings about gender and sexuality. The study will also look at the role played by other factors in shaping their masculine identities.

The study will hopefully help us to understand more about the effects of sexual abuse and enable therapists to treat men who have been abused more effectively.

If you decide to take part in the project, you will be interviewed by the researcher who has previously worked as a therapist within the Men's Service.

The initial interview would last about two hours and would include questions about your feelings about your identity as a man, your childhood relationships, your experiences of sexual abuse, and the way in which you feel it has affected you.

Some participants may also be asked to attend a second session of approximately the same length. During this you may be asked to complete an exercise that involves thinking about similarities and differences between important figures in your childhood.

Since these topics could cause distress or even trigger traumatic memories for some people, everyone taking part will be given a named therapist who will be available to provide any necessary support. You would, of course, also be able to stop the interview at any point.

The information given will be treated in confidence and any details which might identify you would be removed from the final report. Although the interviews will be taped, the tapes will be destroyed once the research is finished.

Please note that participation in the study is entirely optional, and that if you do not wish to take part or subsequently wish to withdraw from the study, this will not in any way affect your treatment.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the project after reading this sheet I would be most happy to discuss them with you.

Having read this information sheet, please could I ask you complete the attached form and return it to me in the stamp addressed envelope provided. If your form indicates that you might be interested in taking part I will then contact you by phone or meet with you in person to talk further.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this. We still have much to learn about the effects of sexual abuse on men and hopefully the study will give us further insight into the difficulties faced by men who have survived abusive experiences.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Stephen Briers
Psychologist in Clinical Training

CONTACT PERMISSION FORM

Dear Dr. Briers,

I **am/am not** willing (please delete as appropriate) to be contacted to discuss my possible participation in the proposed research project.

NAME

ADDRESS
.....
.....

TELEPHONE

CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF STUDY An investigation into male gender identity and the experience of childhood sexual abuse

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR Dr Stephen Briers, Psychologist in Clinical Training
Department of Clinical and Counselling Psychology

I have read and understood the information sheet provided and have agreed, on that basis, to take part in the proposed study of gender and sexuality in men who have experienced abuse in childhood.

I understand that I can withdraw at any time without this affecting my treatment.

Signed

Date

Pathways towards masculine identity confusion amongst male survivors of childhood sexual abuse

The above study was reviewed by the _____ Local Research Ethics Committee, under their Chairman _____, at the meeting on 7 October 1999. I am pleased to inform you that the Committee have *APPROVED* this study. However, please correct the patient information sheet as detailed below and send a copy of the amended sheet to _____ c/o of myself.

Patient information sheet remove paragraph 2 "Both past research and clinical experience suggests thatboth as straight and gay". It was felt this paragraph may cause offence to some patients.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ethics Committee Administrator

Dear Dr Briers

Study title: Pathways Towards Masculine Identity Confusion Amongst Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Your letter of 25 October 1999 detailing a possible amendment to the above study was reviewed by the Local Research Ethics Committee, under their Chairman, at the meeting on 2 December 1999 and was **approved**.

Yours sincerely

Ethics Committee Administrator

1. Copy of initial screening questionnaire
2. Example of associative map generated from the Association Exercise for the concept *Masculinity*.
3. Stimulus Sheet used in Laddering Exercise
4. Instructions for Association Exercise and Grid Sheets
5. Sample Grid Sheet
6. Annotated Interview Schedule

INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Participant No.

1. To what extent do you **currently** experience concerns about your sexual identity?

Not at all Extremely Troubled
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. To what extent have you experienced concerns about your sexual identity **in the past**?

Not at all Extremely Troubled
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If relevant, can you give brief details of when these concerns were most pressing for you?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. To what extent do you **currently** experience concerns about your gender identity e.g. worries about your masculinity or other aspects of your identity as a man?

Not at all Extremely Troubled
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

To what extent have you been troubled **in the past** by concerns about your gender identity?

Not at all Extremely Troubled
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If relevant, can you give brief details of when these concerns were most pressing?

.....
.....
.....

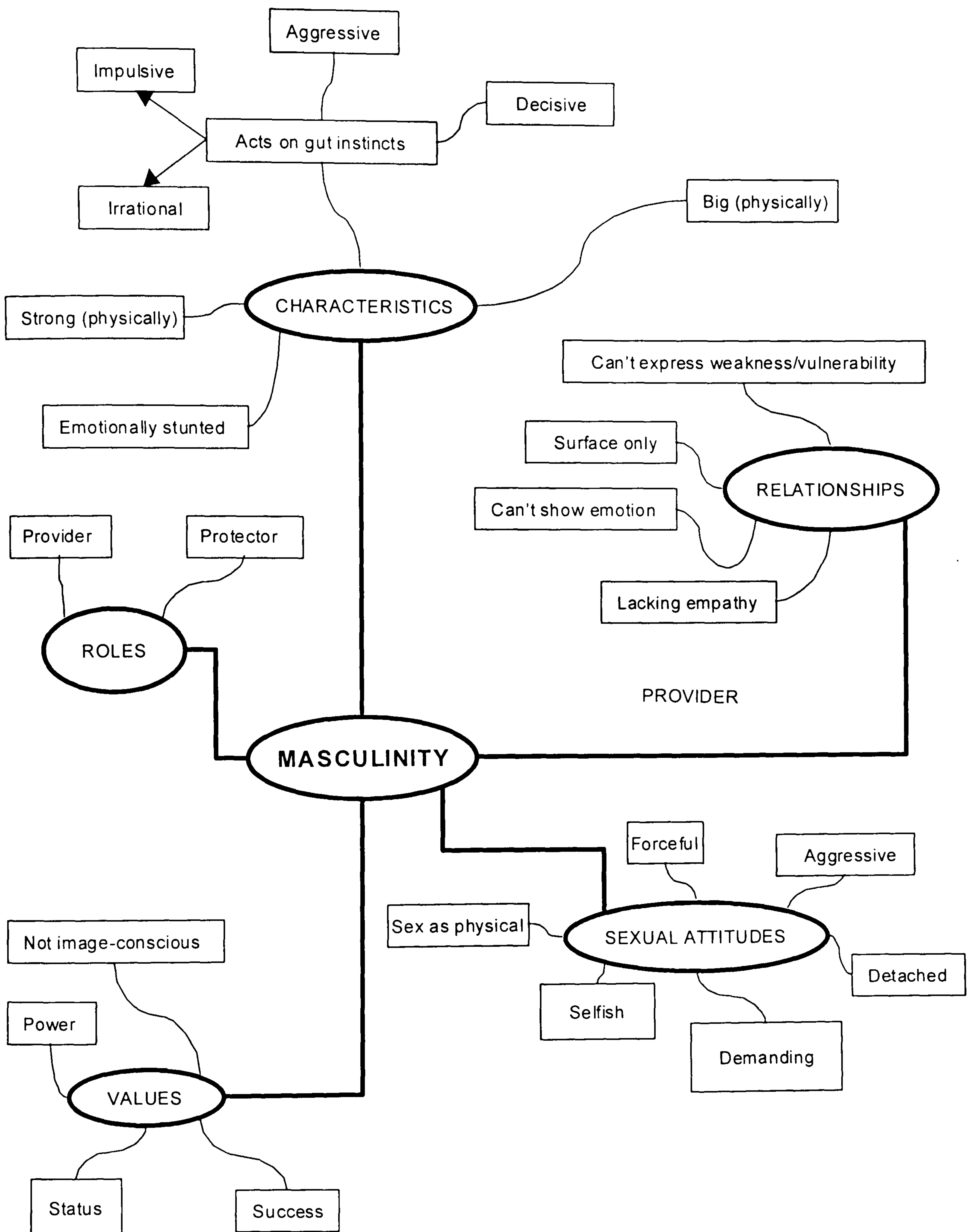


Figure 3 Sample association map for the construct *Masculinity*

Stimulus Sheet

TARZAN

ELTON JOHN

RICHARD GERE

BATMAN

GRAHAM NORTON

DAVID GINOLA

JARVIS COCKER

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGAR

MICHAEL BARRIMORE

NELSON MANDELA

VINNIE JONES

ALBERT EINSTEIN

JESUS CHRIST

MICHAEL OWEN

BOB DYLAN

OSCAR WILDE

KEVIN COSTNER

ROBBIE WILLIAMS

MAHATMA GHANDI

JOHNNY DEPP

WINSTON CHURCHILL

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSOCIATION EXERCISE

'I want you to think now about the term MASCULINITY/FEMININITY and tell me what kind of characteristics you associate with it. Try and allow yourself to say whatever comes into your head. There are no right answers. I am also aware that these associations do not necessarily reflect your own beliefs about what a MAN or WOMAN *should* be. I am interested only in any connotations or connections that the term has for you.'

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF GRID SHEET

Next to each of the individuals on the left hand side of these sheets you will see a scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 7 (extremely). Thinking about the characteristic written at the top of each page, please ring the number on the scale for each person listed which best reflects the extent to which the individual concerned demonstrates the characteristic in question. If you feel you do not know enough about the person to make an informed judgement, please simply guess where you think they might fall on the scale. It is your *impression* of the kind of person they are that is of most importance. Insofar as it is possible, please try to use the whole of the scale and not just the extremes.

CONSTRUCT:

	Not at all							Extremely
MOTHER	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FATHER	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SELF NOW	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SELF AGE 16	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IDEAL SELF	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ABUSER	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MALE 1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FEMALE 1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MALE 2	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MALE 3	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FEMALE 2	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MALE 4	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FEMALE 3	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FEMALE 4	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TYPICAL MAN	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TYPICAL WOMAN	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sample Grid Sheet

Interview Schedule

(sample probes are bulleted)

Section 1 Identity/Gender placement

- How would you describe yourself as a person?
- What kind of a man are you?
- How would someone who knew you well describe you?
- How do you feel about being a man?

Section 2 Impact of abuse

- What impact, if any, do you feel the experience of being sexually abused as a child have on you?
- How did it affect how you felt about your identity as a man?
- What effects do you think the experience had on your sexual identity?
- Can you tell me about any ways in which the abuse changed your feelings about your body?

COFFEE BREAK

Section 3 Developmental history

You have told me about how you view your identity as a man. Now I want you to think about how you arrived at that identity. I would like you to tell me the story of your development from early childhood through adolescence to the present day. I am particularly interested in relationships and experiences of any kind, both positive and negative, that you feel may have been significant in shaping the kind of man you have become.

Early childhood

Mother and Father – nature of relationship with?

- Tell me about your memories of your parents.
- What was it like growing up in your family?
- What kind of a child were you?
- How did the nature of your relationship with your Mother/Father change as you grew older?

Beliefs about sex and gender in the family?

- What kind of messages were you given about what it meant to be male in your family?
- Can you tell me about attitudes towards the role of men and women in your family?

Role models

- Who were your most important role models?
- Who were your heroes and heroines as a child?

School Days

- Tell me about your memories of school
- (Peers/friendships) How did you get on with other children?
- What sort of attitudes were around in school regarding gender roles/sexuality?

Adolescence

- What was adolescence like for you?
- What changed for you during this period?
- Early sexual awareness?
- Early sexual encounters/relationships?

Adulthood

- Since that time what other experiences do you think have shaped your gender and sexual identity?
 - Recent relationship history
 - Current partner – nature of relationship?
 - How have your attitudes towards sexuality/gender changed over time?
 - How do you feel about your sexual/gender identity at present?
-

1. Annotated sample transcript

2. Additional transcript material illustrating main themes

**TEXT BOUND INTO
THE SPINE**

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P1

[Interview opens with laddering exercise]

I: Can you pick out for me three people on that list who you represent a quality that you respect or admire or would like to be identified with?

P1: The one that definitely springs to mind is Jarvis Cocker.

I: What's admirable about Jarvis?

P1: It's the fact that he's not scared of being different. He very much does what he wants to do... he doesn't conform to stereotypes.

vs. PRESSURES of external expectations?

Not scared

non-conformity valued

I: And what's good about that?

P1: I think that if as a species we're going to progress we've got to change. We can't just stay the same. If you don't evolve then you don't survive.

Imperative for change/evolution

I: So there's something about being free of expectations allowing you to grow?

P1: Exactly. Definitely.

I: But why do you think its important that people are able to grow and develop?

P1: because otherwise they just get left behind...

I: And what would be so terrible about being left behind?

P1: What would be so terrible? You don't progress.. If I think back over the last century and I think how backward we used to be and how much people's attitudes are changed... without people like this -people who aren't scared to - what's the word

Growth & Development vs. Stagnation / Death

Fear of change

INDIVIDUALITY VS CONFORMITY

ANTI - STEREOTYPES

1 I want to use? Express themselves... Without those, without the
 2 people leading the way I think the other people would be stuck
 3 back in to the attitudes of the fifties.

Social
PRESSURES
→ conservative
attitudes

5 I: And what would be so difficult about that? What happens if
 6 you do become stuck in archaic attitudes and you get left
 7 behind in this way? What are the implications of that for a
 8 person?

ABILITY TO BE
SELF VS.
PRESSURE TO
CONFORM
C.F. MASLOW
ON BASIC
NEEDS / SELF-
ACTUALISATION.

10 P1: Well they tend not to get on with work. It affects everything
 11 in our lives. If it comes to relationships, their work and their
 12 general well-being.

14 I: Right. What sort of ways does it affect those things do you
 15 think?

17 P1: The worst effect is as I say in the work place if you don't
 18 have any bright ideas – if you've not come up with anything new
 19 then you're just going to stay in the same job. You're not going
 20 to progress. that's one kind of – that's just one... Certainly
 21 within an office environment...

originality

23 I: So there's something about not maximising your potential?

25 P1: Yep.

27 I: What are the benefits for a person of being able to self-
 28 actualise or maximise their potential in that way?

30 P1: I think they will get on better in life. They'll be happier in life.

32 I: OK... Any other benefits apart from being happy?

34 P1: Um... There's one quote that I remember because I've read
 35 quite a lot of [inaudible]'s poetry and that as well...er... 'We're
 36 not dangerous at all we want to be is different...' is a very poignant
 37 thing – that people... that society on the whole is frightened of
 38 change... very comfortable with what we've got... And it takes a
 39 few inspirational people to lead us out of that and progress
 40

Difference
linked to
FEAR
Being misunderstood/
Rejected?

1 society on. And it's not just people like him. It's also certain
2 politicians. Another big example would be Nelson Mandela...

3
4 I: Who's also on the list. And again you would respect him
5 for...?

6
7 P1: Being different and for standing up and saying to the
8 society: 'What you're saying is wrong.'

9
10 I: OK. So what's important about being able to take a stand like
11 that? What do you admire about somebody who can do that?

12
13 P1: Again well I think as a society again we're frightened of
14 change and people are always frightened to stand up or be the
15 first one to stand up and say, 'No, this is wrong.' As soon as
16 one person does it, I think a lot of people are able to fall in line
17 behind them and yet as a society I think we're – how ca I put it?
18 We're scared of being the first one to stand up and say
19 something.

20
21 I: And what happens if people aren't prepared to stand up and
22 challenge conventions?

23
24 P1: Well then society again doesn't evolve and it doesn't
25 change... In South Africa if it wasn't for people like Nelson
26 Mandela then they'd probably still have apartheid.

27
28 I: OK, so these people are initiators of change and also have
29 capacity to stand against the initial opposition of other people.

30
31 P1: yeah. Another name is Martin Luther King... Again was the
32 same kind of thing.

33
34 I: Pick someone else off that list.

35
36 P1: A quality that I admire?

37
38 I: Yes.

39
40

Challenging
social
orthodoxy

risk / dilemma

Boundary
maintenance/
segregation.

Society as
metaphor
for psyche?

Keeping
internal
divisions
in place?

c.f. Masc/Fem.
as opp. integration.

1 P1: Again Mahatma Ghandi – but gain that's for the same
2 reasons as the previous two.

4 I: What do you think is difficult about standing against
5 convention... against the crowd? What do you think the cost of
6 that is?

8 P1: Failure. I think people are too scared to stand up and be
9 counted. And also it's showing us people are too... - certainly
10 myself. I tend not to be the first one with ideas. I have the ideas
11 but I'm not the first one to express them.

13 I: And as a result of that what do you think you lose?

15 P1: I think it's the respect of other people. If you're the first one
16 to come up with ideas that are at all radical then I think you get
17 a lot more respect, but the risk is that you end up getting egg on
18 your face if people don't agree...

20 I: So why is it important that other people respect you?

22 P1: I think you need to be respected as a person.

24 I: Because...?

26 P1: Well if you're not respected by other people then I think you
27 lose some of your own self-respect.

29 I: And if you lose your own self-respect what happens?

31 P1: Well... You're not happy.

33 I: And if you're not happy?

35 P1: [laughs] If you're not happy you end up just becoming a
36 face in the crowd and not really... It's all to do with self-esteem
37 and your own power. Not being just a face in the crowd.

39 Annihilation
40 of self? /
individuality

Need for respect
Fear of humiliation

Self-respect seen
as contingent upon
respect of others.

CONFORMITY
TO CONVENTION
↓
DEPRESSION

LOSS OF SELF-EFFICACY (+M)
LOWERED SELF-ESTEEM (+F)

DIFFICULTIES
RE.
SELF-
EXPRESSION

1 I: OK. One more...

2

3 P1: Em... There isn't really people here... There are people
4 like Trazan and Elton John who I think are just kind of comic –
5 OK Tarzan is a comic book character, but I look at Elton John
6 and think he's the same. I like his music but as a person...

*In what
sense?
Follow-up.*

8 I: Is there any quality in either of those two that you find...

9

10 P1: Not really. I'm certainly not a macho person...

Not macho (M)

12 I: Well maybe we'll move on, and I'm going to ask you now to
13 pick some people out who represent things that you don't
14 respect or admire – that you either can't identify yourself with or
15 wouldn't wish to.

16

17 P1: The first one is definitely Jesus Christ. To me... I'm not too
18 sure whether I'm an atheist or an agnostic. I believe that there's
19 some sort of life force out there but I don't believe in the Bible. I
20 don't believe in... the church whatsoever.

*Anti logos
(= Mase principle
in Jung)
STRUCTURE vs.
SPIRIT?*

22 I: So what does Jesus stand for that you don't like?

23

24 P1: I think it's all the hypocrisy... I think the main reason why
25 I'm against religion is the fact that if you look at all the wars that
26 have taken place over the last couple of hundred years I would
27 say a good ninety per cent of them are in the name of religion...
28 The hypocrisy is that it's OK to go and kill people in the name of
29 religion. But it firmly states that you should love thy neighbour...
30 and that you should not harm anybody... I would almost go as
31 far as saying that I find the church offensive.

*c.f False Self /
dissembling.*

33 I: And why is hypocrisy so difficult for you?

34

35 P1: Well it comes back to honesty.

(+ F)

36

37 I: Why should people be honest?

38

39

40

*SECTION
OF
SC
TAPES*

1 P1: Well, if people aren't honest... If you're a devious person
 2 and you're not honest then I think that is one of the worst
 3 qualities that people – that we as human beings have. Because
 4 being devious is like lying, stealing – all bad things. And again
 5 these are things that I think about the church: how they used to
 6 go and steal from the poor and expect the poor to support them
 7 while the Bishops live in lavish luxury.

9 I: So appearing to be one thing...

11 P1: While they're actually something completely different.

13 I: And does that have parallels for you with experiences in our
 14 own life?

16 P1: Oh certainly. Certainly. I was brought up until the age of 13
 17 or 14 as a strict Catholic... and that drums in so.. it's just my
 18 personal guilt... If it wasn't for that Catholic upbringing I don't
 19 think I would feel nearly as guilty about things that happened in
 20 my life. I know other people who have been brought up in a
 21 Catholic environment and they've said pretty much the same
 22 thing.

24 I: And what happens to people who are prone to guilt?

26 P1: Well they end up having problems like myself... OK, if
 27 you've done something wrong then you deserve to feel guilty
 28 about it. Let's say for example with my mother. There was
 29 nothing that I could have done about the situation. But yet I felt
 30 guilty about it. I don't feel so guilty now, but I certainly did. And
 31 a lot of that's to do with being Catholic.

33 I: Pick out someone else from that list. You say you don't regard
 34 yourself as a very macho person in relation to Tarzan. Do you
 35 just want to tell me a little bit more about that? What's wrong
 36 with macho?

38 P1: It kind of endorses that men have got to be big, bulging
 39 muscular hero-type people and really we're not like that at all. I
 40

10 -
MORAL
REACTION

Catholicism
↓
Guilt
↓
'problems'

Guilt re. situation
concerning mother's
death
irrational nature of
guilt
c.f. abuse?

Stereotype
= false self /
unrealistic
expectations.
Mask.

1 think certainly not nowadays. I think we're more sensitive and it
2 just kind of represents that stereotype of having to be macho
3 and having to save the woman and having to solve all the
4 problems.

Male
Gender role
=> suppression
of sensitivity (+F)

5
6 I: So you're saying that's a stereotype that puts quite a lot of
7 pressure of unrealistic expectations on...

8
9 P1: Yeah. It does.

10
11 I: Do you think there are any other drawbacks to that complex of
12 ideas?

13
14 P1: I mean if... In relationships as I said earlier on physically
15 men have more power, but I don't... I think that Tarzan just
16 represents... OK, so he's Good against Evil as such but... ahh..
17 I find it very hard to describe that... um... He just... To me it's
18 false. I don't believe that men really are like that - even say
19 going back a few hundred years into like a tribal um... I don't
20 think you'd have one person who was like a super-hero... It was
21 very much a pack thing.

Strength of
collective.

22
23 I: So what doesn't get expressed then?

24
25 P1: Men's ability and... it reinforces the fact that men shouldn't
26 talk about their problems - that they're just there to be macho. It
27 doesn't account for any emotional...

28
29 I: And if men can't articulate their emotional lives what
30 happens?

31
32 P1: We end up having quite bad problems. Not being able to
33 express yourself everything gets bottled up and then you just
34 end up exploding. I think a lot of violence in the world actually
35 comes from that... because of frustration. And it also reinforces
36 that it's OK for men to be violent as well. I really hate all forms
37 of violence.

Men prevented from
expressing
vulnerability /
access to certain
coping strategies.

↓
Emotional &
problems

Repression of
(+F) → (-M)
ANTI-VIOLENCE
cf. Gender
Stance?

38
39: What is so bad about it?
40

c.f. hypermasculine
compensation.

SECTION
OF
REQUIRE:
ISC AS
STRUCTURE

(+F)

(-M)

(-M)

1
 2 P1: Well I suppose it's nasty. I can't... If people get hurt... I
 3 cannot see anything really positive that can come from being
 4 violent. OK, let's take as an example the second world war.
 5 Sometimes you have to fight fire with fire. You have to be
 6 violent in order to stop violence. But all kinds of violence it really
 7 does upset me.

Dilemma:
 functional
 aggression?
 (-M)

8
 9 I: So one person imposing their will...

10
 11 P1: Over somebody else.

12
 13 I: And what happens to the person on the receiving end?

14
 15 P1: Well generally they suffer – emotionally and physically.

16
 17 I: OK. Anybody else on that list?

18
 19 P1: That I consider an anti-hero. Well Vinnie Jones for the same
 20 reason. Cos it's really just promotes violence within his own
 21 field. Also... Nick Brown it's difficult for me to pick on him but
 22 politicians on the who I don't like...

23
 24 I: For the same reasons as the church?

25
 26 P1: Yeah. Hypocrisy. Do as I say not do as I do kind of attitude.
 27 And if anything I think they are worse than the church because
 28 with the church they hide behind their book and so there's
 29 something written down from the past which they can hide
 30 behind, whereas politicians bare-faced lie to people for their
 31 own personal gains. Whereas at least with the church people
 32 have a faith which I think is misguided, but it gives them
 33 something, where politicians to me are there just to grab what
 34 they can. I think if politicians truly had the country's interest at
 35 heart I think society would be a lot better. Too much personal
 36 gain.

"Masculine"
 institutions
 (church/politics)

exploitation /
 hypocrisy

Selfishness (-M)

37
 38
 39 I: What kind of a man are you?
 40

TRANSITION

1
 2 P1: I think I'm quite thoughtful. I never used to be but I am
 3 now... Quite sensible. I still have the urges to go and do
 4 ridiculous things but now I tend to stand back and look at the
 5 consequences a lot more than I used to... As I think I said to
 6 you before a lot of my friends are a few years younger than me
 7 and I know I'm not wise but I think that in my own social group
 8 I'm quite a wise person. People tend to - especially in the last
 9 year since I've been able to express myself...

SS-headed
+F

less impulsive
reckless
younger friends.
increase in
characteristics
over recent
months.

10
11 I: As a result of what? Where do you think that wisdom comes
12 from?

Index of
maturity?

13
 14 P1: From life experience and growing up. The fact is that I'm not
 15 a person who conforms to what society says that I should be. I
 16 believe in free expression, saying what I want to say.

Is this
aspirational
or reality?

17
18 I: How does that position not to conform make itself apparent?

19
 20 P1: Er... Well generally in my attitudes... I don't believe in this
 21 male macho thing; that men have got to be men and not
 22 express themselves and kind of... have to cope on their own. I
 23 don't believe in that whatsoever. Well I used to up to three or
 24 four years ago.

Non-conformity
explicitly linked
to gender id.
Recent change

25
26 I: What changed for you?

- Multi-determined?

27
 28 P1: Illness... and my own experiences have made me realise
 29 that as a person I'm not strong enough to do that. I have to talk
 30 to people. I have to express myself. Otherwise everything just
 31 bottles up and I end up emotionally lashing out.

COG dissonance?
Masc = strength

32
33 I: So how do you feel about being a man generally?

34
35 P1: There are a lot of times when I wish I wasn't a bloke.

- wants not to
be masc +
wants to be female.

36
37 I: Why?

38
39
40

NS-
UNDER
ENTIFICATION

1 P1: Why? Um... Now that's a very good question. Why? Purely
 2 to do with power, I think. Women do hold a lot more power
 3 these days. men are physically more powerful but certainly
 4 within the work place and within society as whole women are
 5 slowly overtaking men to be the stronger sex.

Women
more
powerful.

Are societal
shifts blurring
distinctions
in ways that
make trans gender
ids more easy?

Women seen as
(+F) + (+M)

7 I: Any other advantages you can see - of being a female?

9 P1: Being female I think you can get a way with a lot more...
 10 You can get away with saying things where a bloke can't.

12 I: What sort of things?

14 P1: It's difficult to say. I think it's a very general thing. Let's
 15 say... I can give you an example. My resident's association...
 16 The chair is a woman and she openly admits that because
 17 she's a woman she can get away with saying things on the
 18 phone to counsellors to get things that if a bloke said them they
 19 wouldn't tolerate. but because it's a woman you can get a way
 20 with a lot more. And also I think women are treated with a lot
 21 more respect than men are. I like that. I don't feel that men are
 22 given the respect or... Also, I feel that then I would be able to
 23 express myself a lot more freely than would be... I always think
 24 that emotionally I am more female than male.

Respect/value.

Trans-gender
identification

26 I: Say a little bit more about that.

28 P1: Well it's the fact that I always could express myself more.
 29 My attitudes I've been told by a lot of people, both male and
 30 female, that I have a very feminine point of view. Or I'm able to
 31 see their point of view lot easier than a man.

(+F) ← long-standing

Able to see from
♀ perspective.

33 I: Right. can you give me an example again of the sort of things
 34 that people are picking up on. What sort of views do you hold?

36 P1: Again it's the macho thing - that I don't believe in being
 37 macho, I don't believe in being - er- having to keep everything
 38 within yourself as a male. And I'm much more... I think in terms
 39 of personality as well I'm much more... Nobody has actually

Mach =
repression

1 said: 'Oh that attitude is really feminine...' It's more like I'm quite
 2 a... In my general demeanour - not so much my demeanour but
 3 my whole attitude towards life is much more feminine.

Not effeminate?
 Distinction

4
 5 I: I wonder what they would think of as a typically male attitude
 6 towards life that you're not sharing?

7
 8 P1: Well I'm certainly not going down the pub on a Friday night
 9 and getting beered up. I don't have any of those kind of
 10 attitudes. I'm much more aware of dangerous situations. I hold
 11 back much more where the typical bloke would go head long
 12 into things. I have ... I think that comes from... I have a very
 13 strong feeling of self-preservation which I think is more of a
 14 female attitude. Also my driving. I've been told that I drive like a
 15 woman. Something that I'm proud of.

Defines self in
 opposition to
 male stereotypes
 cf "basic instincts"
 cluster.

self-preservation
 as a result of
 more feminine
 approach?
 Masc → danger?

16
 17 I: Carefully?

18
 19 P1: Carefully, yeah. I drive with lilly boots. I think a lot of this
 20 comes from... I find if I look back over my life the strongest
 21 friends that I've had have always been female. The ones that
 22 have had the most influence on my life. And also, when I was
 23 young, there was definitely a... er... a lack of a good male role
 24 model, because I was brought up mainly by my mum and then
 25 really by myself, so there's always been a lack of a male role
 26 model.

Female friends
 +
 lack of male
 role model
 Brought up by
 mother.

27
 28 I: Anything about being male that you do see as being an
 29 advantage.

30
 31 P1: Not that I can think of at the moment. Well the fact is, going
 32 down the way that I can be a bit reckless and it's... and
 33 someone might turn round and say, 'Well you're just a bloke...'
 34 In the same way that women can get away with other - with a
 35 lot, I think it's...

So still some
 identification
 with masc.
 qualities but
 tempered.

36
 37 I: What that your behaviour is excused?

38
 39 P1: Yeah, because you're a bloke.

40

THE
 ACTORS

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I: So there are two bits to you: there is this cautious, careful, self-preserving bit and then there's this reckless bit?

P1: Yeah. And it's finding the balance in-between that that's quite difficult.

I: When you think about the kind of man you would like to be, what would you be like?

P1: I've thought that actually I'm heading that way quite a lot at the moment - being sensible, being - how can I put it? Being sensible... being sensitive to other people which is a quality which I don't think many men have. You get to deal with being able to be outspoken... I think that is a very... and also being able to put forward new ideas. I think that is a very important thing.

I: All right. Thinking now about the experiences of being abused as a youngster, how do you feel those experiences changed you?

P1: They made me, I think, a much weaker person. I'm not - How's the best way to put this? It's made me a lot shyer... and a lot... It's a lot harder for me to trust people. Trust is a negative thing in my life - something that I don't really have. Being able to... er... I certainly think it's made me a weaker person. it's made me much more within myself. And also my relationships with other people. it's had a great effect on. let's say I find it much harder to... I have a lot of female friends but say if I meet someone and I'd like to start a relationship I find that very difficult because I feel I have to go through and explain to them what's happened to me in the past. Otherwise undoubtedly my partner would set off triggers which er... Something that happened to me after I saw you: I was fine - probably the welllest I've ever been since my mother passed on... and then it was Halloween. We went up to London for a party that was going on - for a spirit sort of group. And my girlfriend she completely accidentally - we were talking about something and

difficulty in finding balance: Masc / Fem.

Aspiration to (+F) qualities

outspoken (+A)
innovative (+A)

ISSUES OF TRUST

FACILITY FORMING RELATIONSHIPS

TRIGGERS
↓
SETBACKS
PAST
↓
PRESENT
BREACH

1 she touched the front of my neck and that sent me into a three
 2 month major depression and I went straight back down to the
 3 point where I was at my worst during the counselling. Instantly
 4 within literally hours I was down and not able to cope... And I
 5 have to do it - if I was with someone new I would have to go
 6 through all that again which brings up all the emotion that's
 7 within me. So each time I meet somebody I have to kind of put
 8 up all these walls in order - and that's not really me. When I get
 9 to know somebody on an intimate, on a one-on-one basis I'm
 10 actually a very open person. But because... I have to put up all
 11 these barriers for self-preservation and I find that that gets in
 12 the way. When I have talked to women that I've been getting on
 13 well with and a relationship is seriously on the cards as soon as
 14 they find out what's happened to me in the past they run a mile.
 15 And the only reason that my present partner doesn't is because
 16 she's been through similar experiences. She wasn't sexually
 17 abused as a child but the way that she puts it is that she was
 18 the runt of the litter... her parents never had time for her and
 19 during her twenties she was raped so she understands all the
 20 triggers, all the processes that can start all those triggers off. So
 21 that's why we get on very well. And I felt very comfortable -
 22 even though I met her about eight months before the suicide
 23 attempt... And we were together again and then we split up and
 24 now we've got back together again. And... she understands me
 25 and I found it a lot easier to open up to her than I have done
 26 with any other partner because I... Well the way we got
 27 together was I split up with the girlfriend I was with at the time,
 28 and I was actually with her tutor and she happened to hear me
 29 talking to my boss about how I needed some time off because I
 30 needed to find somewhere else to live. And she said, 'Well you
 31 could always kip on my sofa...' And I took her up on her offer,
 32 and we spent hours talking about ourselves and the past, and
 33 that's how we got together. So she was someone who...
 34 because she had opened up to me first I was able to realise
 35 that she would not frown or kind of run a mile.

37 I: Tell me a little bit about whether you feel your experience of
 38 sexual abuse changed the way you felt about your identity as a
 39 man?
 40

Relapse
 H (+F) able to cope

closed in/defensive
 = (-M) Not open (+F)/expressive (+F)
 forced into ego-dystonic reactions.

Stigmatised by abuse?

Understanding partner

Fears of rejection.

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P1: That's something that I can't really say because I haven't had the... because it happened to me at a very crucial time when I would have been developing I don't actually know what I would have become if that hadn't happened. So it's very difficult for me to say whether it has changed me or not because I don't know what the end result would have been. Let's say it would have happened ten years after - when I was in my early twenties - then I would already have had my er... I would have been defined as a person... but it could have changed me. I would certainly say that the effects of all the flashbacks has changed me. I have completely different attitudes towards sex now than I used to.

I: Tell me a little bit more about that.

P1: I used to think of myself as a bit more promiscuous. I've had not really had one night stands but you know at parties you get drunk and things happen. Where now that certainly wouldn't happen because I feel having gone through it again and having re-experienced it in a much stronger state I realise that... Let's say if I am having sex with someone and I feel at all that that person doesn't really want to do it but they're just going through the motions which a lot of women do...erm... it just. I can't do it. I have to stop - even if they're not feeling that at all, if I think that they are then that's when it has to stop.

I: because it would be like...

P1: Like attacking them.

I: Imposing yourself?

P1: Yeah. And I can't do that. It has to be 100% something that both parties want or it doesn't happen.

I: Are there any other ways that you feel those experiences have influenced your sexual identity?

- Implication is not abuse interacted with developmental phase. Unable to comment upon impact of abuse definitively due to timing c.f. P9.

change as a result of post-abuse symptoms.

IN AGE SEXUAL ATTITUDES

ERM
ASC
STEREOTYPE?

Need for sex to be fully consenting.

Fears of identification with abuses?



SS
see

1 P1: Yeah. I don't know where this has really come from, but
2 over the years it's actually coming more and more now, when I
3 have sexual dreams I am always a woman. I am not a man.
4 And it's something that... I do know a couple of people who are
5 transsexuals and apparently that is a perfectly typical
6 heterosexual attitude... but I do definitely sexually - I don't
7 particularly like penile sex a lot. I'm much more the person who
8 prefers the foreplay.

no.
No
explicit
link to abuse
sexual fetteries
of being a
woman.
fem' attitudes.
- intimacy (+F)
- sexuality savour (+F)

10 I: And is that something that you're comfortable with? With the
11 dreams?

self-accepting

13 P1: Oh definitely. It's part of me. It has brought up a few issues
14 of gender bias - of whether I feel I am a man. It has brought up
15 a few kind of ...

sexual confusion
linked to
gender confusion

17 I: Can you tell us a bit more about that. [both laugh] I'm not
18 prying but that is partly what this project's about.

20 P1: Er... I definitely... Sexually my attitudes are definitely more
21 feminine than masculine. I definitely I believe more about...er...
22 intimacy and sex doesn't have to... I actually prefer it in a way if
23 it doesn't end in penetration. I prefer it to be more... And I'm
24 much more the person who... I get more out of giving in sex
25 than I do receiving.

27 I: So is this about intimacy as opposed to power do you think?
28 Keeping sex as something that's to do with closeness and
29 generosity rather than taking and dominating.

31 P1: Exactly. I get a lot more pleasure about bringing my partner
32 to orgasm than I do about having an orgasm myself. Definitely.

34 I: And you say this has raised questions for you...?

36 P1: Yeah. Definitely. I think the best way to describe it in a nut
37 shell is that sometimes I feel like a lesbian trapped in a man's
38 body. I know that may sound a very bizarre thing to say... but
39 that's how I feel. I'm much more... I don't find men at all
40

excluding
male...
sexually
attracted
to ♀

1 attractive but I find erm I'm much more... say with oral sex and
2 that kind of thing – that's what I enjoy... than having an orgasm.
3 I have a lot more pleasure than that.

Ejaculation as
disempowerment?

5 I: Were you aware – and I'm thinking of the age you were at the
6 time that you experienced your abuse... had you been aware of
7 your sexuality taking a particular direction prior to that?

Sexually
naive

9 P1: No. Because of my upbringing I wasn't really sexually
10 minded. OK, I suppose it wasn't long before the abuse that I
11 discovered masturbation. I think compared with like how friends
12 would talk about it I think I was actually quite late, but I was one
13 of the first people in my school to reach puberty. I was quite
14 early, but it wasn't until that time that I found any kind of...that I
15 discovered that willies were anything more than just for weeing
16 out of... to put that in a way a kid would say it.

atypical
chronology?

18 I: But that did happen before the abuse...?

20 P1: Yeah but not very long before. I think I discovered my elder
21 brother's pornographic magazines and that kind of thing and
22 first started thinking 'Mmmm'.
23 *het.*

implications
of abuse
↓
newly discovered
sexuality?

24 I: So there was as sense in which your emergent sexuality
25 was... It was quite a crucial period wasn't it?

27 P1: Yeah. And I think that the abuse probably couldn't have
28 come at a worse time because I was just discovering myself
29 when I had like a homosexual kind of thing forced upon me.
30 And if anything that has completely turned me away from
31 homosexuality, where maybe I could have had the attitudes – or
32 had the mental ability to have that attitude – do you understand
33 where I'm trying to go with that?

interaction
with developmental
aspects.

of open to poss.
of homosexual
attraction.

↓
Is this a result
of conflation
between
'gay' +
'feminine'?

35 I: Explain a little bit more.

37 P1: I don't find men attractive but the thought of it can be quite
38 appealing – of homosexual sex. But my experiences definitely...
39 I would never go down that road. I would – where during your
40

abuse
↓
phobia

1 teens when it could be quite normal to experiment, that never
2 happened because of what happened to me.

3
4 I: So do you feel that there is part of you sexually that got
5 closed off as a result of these experiences or is it just a kind of
6 'Don't know... May have been different...'

7
8 P1: It may have been different. Because I had a homosexual
9 experience and it was so horrific to me I kind of 'I don't want to
10 go down that road'. That's not the direction that I want to go in.

aversive conditioning

11
12 I: But you are raising the question whether if things had been
13 otherwise...

14
15 P1: But as I said earlier the abuse happened at such a crucial
16 time that I don't know... It's impossible for me to say what it
17 would have been like if it hadn't happened. It would be
18 interesting to find out where I would be if it hadn't happened.

*left with
questions re.
sexual id.*

19
20 I: Do you have any speculations about that?

21
22 P1: No, not really, no. I don't think I would be as sensitive as I
23 am. I don't feel I'd have had the attitude what I've said to you: if
24 I don't feel my partner is a hundred per cent. I think I would be
25 much more the stereotypical man just wanting sex. I don't think
26 I'd be anywhere near as sensitive. Cos a lot of this has come up
27 since I first started having the flashbacks. And it's only
28 happened to me er really over the last three or four years.

(XF)

*So in long-term
abuse has
promoted
(XF) identifications*

29
30 I: So when you say it's only happened to you over the last three
31 or four years, are you talking about...?

32
33 P1: My attitudes over the last three or four years towards sex
34 have changed.

35
36 I: So how have they changed?

37
38 P1: I used to be much more laddish... and as I say you'd go to
39 parties and end up having sex with someone... and it's kind of

*"laddish"
phase*

*ONFORMITY
TO
MASC.
STEREOTYPES*

1 where they make you think it could lead somewhere and now
2 it's kind of something that just happened. Do you know what I
3 mean? I was fairly much like that - not caring much about sex
4 at all.

Not sex as vehicle of intimacy = (+F)

6 I: Not caring about it. Do you think there was any sense for you
7 in which having those laddish attitudes and promiscuous
8 attitudes, do you think you were trying to distance yourself. Was
9 it a statement about heterosexuality in some way?

11 P1: Um... I think in some ways it could be me trying to escape
12 from the experiences that I'd had... or just trying not to allow it
13 to... Cos as you know for years I buried everything that
14 happened. And I think it was part of that process - of keeping it
15 buried, of just trying to be completely normal. And also it is also
16 peer pressure as well. There was quite a lot of peer pressure.
17 Certainly within that kind of teenage age group... when it
18 comes to the sex.

20 I: Do you think at that stage it was important for you to give the
21 impression... I mean in a way that's about conforming to a
22 particular notion of what a bloke should be.

24 P1: Yeah.

26 I: And was there something about that intrinsically that you
27 wanted to be thought of in that way?

29 P1: I had far from a normal upbringing but I just wanted to be a
30 normal bloke, and I think that was a lot to do with it. but looking
31 back I think that has done some damage to me as well. Trying
32 to be someone who I really wasn't. And it's only really now -

34 [over the last three or four years that I'm actually kind of
35 discovering who I am, and starting to feel OK about it.

Abuse → // able to be self (+F)

36 I: Ok. Last question in this section. Do you think the abuse
37 changed the way you felt about your body?
38
39
40

WITAL/ISSOEN
CULTURAL
REACTION
(+ peers
pressure)

Quest for
normality
(w. individuality
prized in laddening)
cf. "face in the crowd"

Interaction + upbringing
damaged by attempts to conform + be something he wasn't cf. 'hypocrisy'

Maladaptive solution

if- discovery/acceptance

1 P1: Oh most certainly. For years it was... OK, it was the typical
2 thing: I felt dirty... I felt very violated. I didn't like my body at all.

Body disliked
Dirty / Violated

4 I: How did it seem to you...?

6 P1: Kind of... it was something there for other people to use. It
7 wasn't... it wasn't kind of like... My own kind of sacredness
8 within myself had gone. It's only now that I'm starting to get that
9 back. .. But again it's taken a lot of hard work for me and my
10 partner to erm for that to be able to come about.

loss of
self - worth

13 I: OK. You've told me a little already about how you see your
14 identity as a man. I want to think more with you now about how
15 you arrived at that identity. Can you take me through the story
16 of your development from early childhood through adolescence
17 to the present. I'm particularly keen to know about any
18 relationships or experiences – both positive and negative – that
19 you feel may have been significant for you in shaping the kind
20 of man you've become. Does that sound OK?

22 P1: Sure... I suppose up to the age of about six I had a normal
23 childhood: typical family situation – mother and father and my
24 siblings. My parents split up when I was around seven and they
25 finally got divorced when I was eight and then there was a lot of
26 [TAPE CHANGE]

Disruption
aged 6

Divorce /
marital
conflict.

28 ...til when I was 15 and I had the problems with social services
29 where they kind of took me away from the home.... at a very
30 crucial point because I'd looked after my mum for years... Then
31 suddenly they took me away - it's kind of left me feeling all of
32 this guilt. I wasn't there til the end. And I think that's had a lot to
33 do with the inability to trust people. I had total faith in my social
34 worker. I thought that she wouldn't do that to me. She promised
35 me categorically all the way through that she wouldn't take me
36 away. But then going back a little bit from that it was...er...
37 Well, because my mum was going in and out of hospital all the
38 time I had to stay with my father a lot. And that's where the
39 abuse happened... during one of those...

Trauma - forced
to leave
dying mother
↓
guilt, also
Trust issues

INTERACTION
WITH OTHER
EVENTS
LE TRUST

1 I: What age were you then?
2

3 P1: I was twelve, thirteen when that happened. Again that
4 happened at a very crucial time of my development. So again
5 that caused me a lot of problems with trust ^(+F) because my
6 stepbrother was someone that I thought I got on really well with
7 and he suddenly kind of turned nasty on me. You do tend to
8 trust your family.
9

12, 13

unpredictable
change
→ control?

10 I: Tell me a little bit more about your memories of the first period
11 - up to when your parents split up. Do you have any memories
12 of your mum and dad and what they were like up to that point?
13

14 P1: I don't have many memories. I can clearly remember them
15 arguing a lot. I lay upstairs in bed late at night and I could hear
16 them argue. But going back... I can't really remember a lot
17 about my childhood up to that point. I can remember going
18 away on holiday - it must have been 1976 because it was
19 during that really long hot summer that we had. I can remember
20 it being really hot and dry and about nine o'clock everyone just
21 came out of their tents. Normally it would be the other way
22 round: everyone running into their tents! But everybody came
23 out and it was... it was a quite nice feeling to feel the rain... So
24 even at that age I was aware of that kind of situation.
25

Mental
conflict

limited
access to
childhood
memories.
Dissoc'n?

26 I: Tell me a little bit more about your relationship with your mum.
27

28 P1: Well with my mum it was very close - certainly during my
29 early teens because she was so dependent on me.
30

v. close to
Moses.
M. dependent
on him as
her carer.

31 I: because of her illness?
32

33 P1: Because of her illness. We got on extremely well and it was
34 erm I would say a normal mother-son relationship. I wasn't
35 really a rebellious teenager - certainly not the way my sisters
36 were. but I think that was to do with the way I had to be
37 responsible ^(+A) and look after her... I mean responsibility was put
38 on to me at quite an early age.
39
40

didn't rebel.

forced to
grow up
prematurely?

1 I: Sure. Your mum started to become ill when you were how
2 old?

3
4 P1: I was... The first sign of it was that she had a fall at home.
5 And then she became ill and no one knew what was wrong with
6 her. And the next thing I knew she was in hospital. I was at
7 school... and a message from the teacher came into the
8 classroom and it said you're to go to your father's because your
9 mum is in hospital. And it all kind of started from there.
10

unpredictable /
uncontrollable
events.

11 I: What effect do you think that looking after your mum for all
12 that time had on the relationship between the two of you?

13
14 P1: Made it a lot closer. It was just the fact that we used to
15 spend so much time together... It's the fact that - as I said to
16 you before I had this daily routine: I used to get up about six in
17 the morning - erm first get myself dressed and then change the
18 dressings on her legs because she had open ulcers. I used to
19 make sure she got her medication... make her breakfast and
20 basically make sure that she's been able to get in and out of the
21 bath... because basically because of the medication she was
22 on there was no way I could physically lift her in and out of the
23 bath because she was on steroids, which if you're inactive
24 basically blow you up but making sure she was able to get in
25 and out of the bath... and basically making sure she was OK,
26 and dealing with the mail when it came in. I used to sit down
27 with her and go through all the mail and deal with the financial
28 side.
29

circumstances
foster
close id
+ mother.

nurturing
carer role /
domestic
= fem?

30 I: So you had to be very adult and responsible...

31
32 P1: From the age of about twelve - yeah. I had to be an adult.
33

34 I: And you and your brother were doing all this on your own?

35
36 P1: Well my brother was - he was three and a half years older
37 than me so when I was twelve he was leaving school and he
38 went out to work, so of course he was more the provider - he
39 adopted the providing role whereas I got in some ways I
40

Brother in
'male' provider
role.

Process note:
good level of
coherence.

CHILDHOOD
TRAUMA

1 suppose more of the home-making role. In some ways I think
 2 that's where my more feminine attitude could come from - the
 3 fact that I used to do the cooking and the cleaning... the fact
 4 that I used to do what would stereotypically be the female role
 5 in the home.
 6

7
 8 I: Do you think there might be something about having such a
 9 close and intimate period of connection with your mother that
 10 might also have given you more understanding of the way that
 11 women think?
 12

13 P1: Certainly. Certainly. I was never close to my siblings... By
 14 the fact that there's only three or four years that separate my
 15 brothers and sisters and then I'm three and a half years
 16 younger. So it was always them together and me on my own. I
 17 was always quite a lonely child but I was always a child that
 18 enjoyed my own company - which is completely the opposite to
 19 how I am now. So at the time I just accepted the situation and
 20 did what I had to do.
 21

22 I: I remember you saying something to me about the way you
 23 felt she had devoted herself to you...
 24

25 P1: Yeah. Certainly. I felt I was doing what I felt was my duty...
 26 My mum had looked after me for the first eleven years of my
 27 life, and also when she was going through a pretty bad time
 28 with the divorce and stuff like that. She was there for me and
 29 even at that age I had the attitude that I should be there for her.
 30

31 I: Tell me a little bit more about the divorce and the impact that
 32 had on you.
 33

34 P1: As I say I used to hear them arguing a lot at night. And I
 35 can remember hearing my sisters talking, but that... - that's
 36 when I first heard the word 'divorce'. And the next thing I knew I
 37 went home from school one day and my dad wasn't there. A lot
 38 of stuff was gone: the stereo, TV - all that kind of stuff was
 39 missing. And my mum said that dad's left home. He wouldn't be
 40

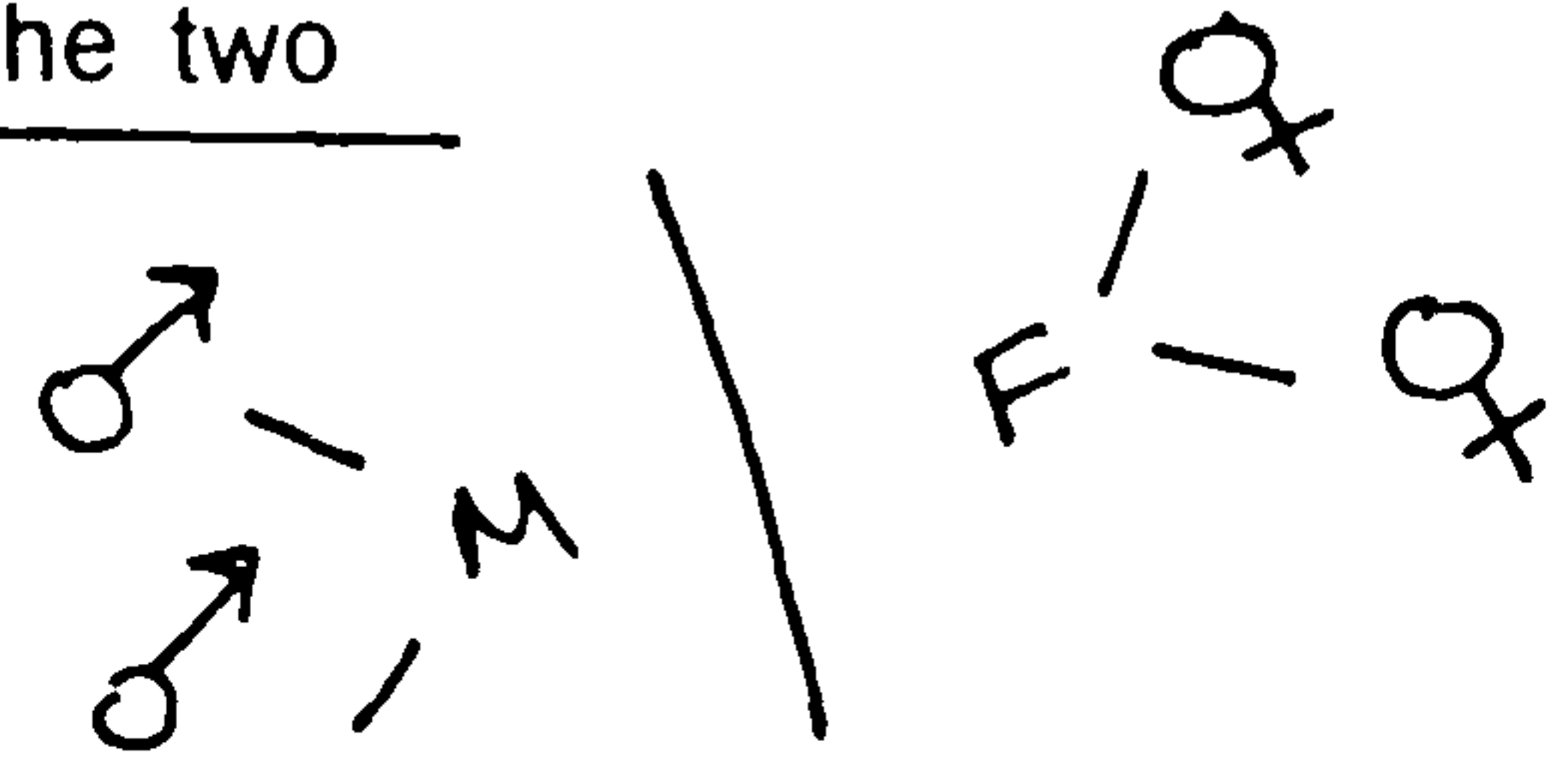
*Isolated from
 siblings
 loner?*

moral obligation

*More
 unpredictable
 traumatic
 events.*

*SHARING
 ROLES.*

1 coming back and it would just be me, my brother and her from
 2 now on. At that point one of my sisters was ... I mean within my
 3 family my father has always regarded the daughters as the
 4 darlings, the other way round my mum it was always the two
 5 sons.



6
 7 I: How did you feel about your dad at the time?
 8

9 P1: I was upset but... it was put very crudely to me. I mean both
 10 of us standing there... kind of shepherded into the living room
 11 and I had to decide then and there who I wanted to live with -
 12 which I thought was not a very nice thing really to do. But I
 13 suppose it was something that had to be done.
 14

*sudden
 forced
 choice.*

15 I: Did you feel like you were betraying him, choosing to go with
 16 your mum?
 17

18 P1: No. Not really. I decided to stay... Out of my siblings I was
 19 closest to my brother than my sisters, so he'd already decided
 20 to stay with my mum so I decided to follow suit because of that.
 21 I wanted to try and keep as much of my life as normal as
 22 possible. And also if I had gone with my father it would have
 23 meant another move... I wouldn't have stayed in the family
 24 home... It was the easiest option for me.
 25

*STABILITY /
 NORMALITY.*

26 I: How important was he for you?
 27

28 P1: Until the divorce he was quite important to me.
 29

*F as male role
 model
 - lost at divorce.*

30 I: What kind of a dad was he?
 31

32 P1: At that time he was a hard worker. I never used to see a
 33 hell of a lot of him because he never used to come home from
 34 work until about half past six, seven at night... And obviously
 35 being a young child I used to go to bed quite early and so there
 36 wasn't a lot of time during the week that we spent together, but
 37 during the weekend we used to go - I used to be a very active,
 38 sporty child: used to go and play football. I mean just do the
 39
 40

Absent

*Some
 recreational
 time together*

1 general things that fathers and sons would do. It was
2 completely normal relationship until he...

4 I: Did you look up to him?

6 P1: Yes. But I think virtually any six year old would look up to
7 their parents.

9 I: So you did stuff together. Was he quite a caring dad?

11 P1: Yeah. Looking back at it retrospectively I wonder how false
12 that really was.

14 I: Was he very emotionally expressive?

16 P1: No. Emotionally he's the very stereotypical male of that age.
17 he was very closed in. But saying that I suppose I was too
18 young to pick up on that. But even now he's a very closed in
19 person.

21 I: Tell me a little bit more about attitudes within your family
22 towards gender and sexuality.

24 P1: I was very much the black sheep of the family. My attitudes
25 are very different to the rest of the family. My mother as I said
26 was a devout Catholic. My father, as I said was from the age of
27 seven and a half, eight wasn't really an influence on my life. I
28 think it is possibly more to do with the fact that I had to grow up
29 so quickly, that I had so much responsibility at an early age...
30 so I became a lot more free-thinking at a younger age.

32 I: So where were the differences? Where was your non-
33 conformity located? What attitudes...?

35 P1: this is coming up more through my teenage years. They're
36 (siblings) very anti-drugs... very fashion conscious...um... very
37 materialistic, where if you came over to my flat you'd probably
38 think I am materialistic, cos I've got a decent stereo, decent TV
39 etc. but I'm not materialistic at all. As long as I've got something
40

- looked up to F.

Questions F's
care in retrospect
Not prepared to
accept F. as
having +F
guilt.

↓
SPUTTING?

Abuse forced
identification
with some
aspects (-M)
of Father.

Marginalised
in
family

SENSITIVE
IN MLES
FAMILY?

+F

-F

1 that functions, that works - and works well... that's all I care
 2 about. I don't. I've never been fashion conscious. The music I
 3 liked has always been different from my brothers and sisters.
 4 the fact that I was the only one out of four who during their
 5 teenage years experimented with any kinds of drugs... that
 6 whenever I did get any freedom, in the evenings when my
 7 brother would stay at home and look after my mum I used to go
 8 down the pub with my friends,... listen to heavy metal music
 9 with my friends... and down a bottle of cider. Now my brothers
 10 and sisters never did this. My sisters used to stay out late and
 11 that kind of thing... But I was influenced a lot by my neighbour
 12 all the time... Between the ages of... We moved there when I
 13 was six and moved away coming up to twelve, thirteen and he
 14 was a biker - always loud, pop music coming out of his -
 15 bungalow next door. When I used to go out in the evening he
 16 used to have at least five or six bikes sitting outside his
 17 bungalow in the evening... And I got on very well with him. I
 18 used to spend quite a lot of time with him and even today - he
 19 lives in Nottingham - I go and see him at least four or five times
 20 a year. We share the same birthday so it kind of we got
 21 something else in common as well. He was a very big influence.
 22 If anything he was probably the male role model.

self defined
in opposition
to sibs.
} masc?

alternative
male role
model
|

FUSION
OF + MASC
AND + FEM
TRAITS.

24 P1: Do you think he replaced...?

26 P1: He did in a way. yeah. I have a lot of respect for him.

28 I: What kind of a guy is he?

30 P1: He's a very... quite self-reliant... very successful person. he
 31 was eleven years older than me so he was only in his late teens
 32 when this was really going on - late teens, early twenties, and I
 33 just thought he was a really cool bloke really [laughs] I would
 34 say yeah he was definitely the role model.

36 I: Macho bloke?

38 P1: Not that... I don't really see that in his personality. He's
 39 quite a sensitive person... a very positive person.

(+F) ?

(+F)

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I: So you say that your own free-thinking tendencies were a bit at odds with what sounds like quite a traditional family. And do you think that attitudes towards men and women, gender and sex...were they traditional as well?

P1: Yes. very much so. As I say we had a Catholic upbringing. It was frowned upon if we had any kind of sexual relationship - even when I was 14 and 15. It was definitely something that shouldn't happen. My Bible values that you shouldn't have sex outside marriage and also that's been reinforced again by my step-mother who's a Jehovah's Witness where she has that kind of attitude.

*nb promiscuity
opposed to
childhood
values.*

I: If say one of you had been gay, how would that have gone down?

P1: Like a bomb at a peace rally.

I: OK.

P1: It wouldn't have gone down whatsoever.

*Homophobia
in family.*

I: Who with?

P1: My entire family. My entire family.

I: Do you think this is any way connected to the reaction that you had when you did disclose the abuse?

P1: Even though my brother was still living at home at that stage, he didn't actually know. We decided that... he's completely the opposite to me - he thinks with his fists first and his mind later. And if he had found out... Even to this day he doesn't know the full extent of it. I can't talk to him. Cos I know that he would go straight and find my stepbrother and do some physical harm to him. Even though there's part of me that wants that to happen, two wrongs don't make a right and I know that. So.. he doesn't know. My sisters know but again they've only

*Brother as
"completely"
opposite"
ie. aggressive (-M)*

(-M)

**COMING
AGGRESSIVE**

1 found out since the last eight months, since the counselling,
 2 since I've been able to talk about it. And I've actually got a bit
 3 closer to my family because now they understand why I am who
 4 I am. Why I do certain things, why I'm different to them. And
 5 also the fact is that they weren't around when I had to cope with
 6 it all. They never really saw what my upbringing was like. So
 7 that's why I really resent them kind of treating me like the black
 8 sheep of the family. Just because I'm different doesn't mean...
 9 They actually used to treat me as a lesser person.

Improved
relationships
with siblings

Penalised
for difference
prior to abuse.
PRECURSOR

11 I: How did that become apparent to you?

13 P1: Well certainly going back to when I was a child I think it
 14 was to do with the age difference, because three and a half
 15 years is a lot when you've got three who are so close together.
 16 I've always been the outsider between the four of us. I've
 17 always been the one who was left out Which I can understand.
 18 there's a big difference between being a ten year old and being
 19 a thirteen, fourteen, fifteen year old.

Marginalisation

21 I: You decided to go with your brother. You sound quite different
 22 people, yet you said you were quite close to him at the time?

24 P1: At the time we were. Don't forget that when my parents split
 25 up I was seven, eight so my kind of attitudes hadn't developed
 26 at that point. the differences didn't really come out until I got into
 27 my teenage years.

29 I: So tell me a little bit more about your relationship with him at
 30 that point. Was he someone you looked up to or was he more of
 31 a rival?

33 P1: I wouldn't say I looked up to him. We used to do things
 34 together, especially when my sisters left home... because they
 35 didn't get on with my mum. They both left on their sixteenth
 36 birthdays - as soon as they were able to leave they flew the
 37 nest.

Conflict
between
Moms and
daughters.
Oedipal?

39 I: Why didn't they get on?

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P1: They were both quite rebellious and my mum was quite strict... I don't know the ins and outs. I know that - obviously the memories that I have of my mother were very different from the memories that they had... being that bit much older and obviously being around more when she was well. But looking back my mother definitely had some kind of mental illness. She was very much a person that... She was fine all the time that you needed her, but the moment you stopped needing her she would kind of sabotage the relationship. So I think a lot of it comes from that... the fact that they became independent so suddenly they were at loggerheads with each other. All the time that she was wanted by people then she was fine. At the time I didn't believe this at all but as I've become more adult and look back... and hearing my sisters' point of view on it... where before I couldn't.

I: You said that you had had to move locations because your mum had had conflict with the neighbours?

P1: Oh yes. The neighbours. yes. We moved a lot when I was a child. That's something I've got more from my father. At the moment he's settled down, got a place and started working on the place and getting it a home. We had to move because she made the situation with the neighbours completely unbearable. And I have seen that myself in my late teens - in my early teens rather, not long before she died.

I: So in terms of her personality she sounds quite a forceful person in some ways.

P1: In some ways she was, but in quite a kind way.

I: Do you think she was - it's crude - but in terms of typical feminine values, was she a very feminine woman?

P1: She was slap bang in the middle of eleven children and out of those I've only got two uncles. The rest were aunts. So a very

Mother's mental illness / 75 problems / dependency
↓
likely to make other relationships difficult?
independence = betrayed?

Mother aggressive (-m)
cultivated conflict.

re-evaluating past.

1 traditional Catholic big family...so she was brought up with very
2 Catholic, very stereotypical values at that time.

Catholic Values.

4 I: But in her attitudes she sounds like quite a soft person in
5 some ways but also capable of being...

7 P1: She was a very ^(XF) soft person at times but also very hard
8 person at other times. When she needed to be she was a very
9 hard person. That's something that I admire.

= strong } M combined. Masc + Fem qualz?

11 I: Strong person?

13 P1: A very strong person... typical red head. I think that's a very
14 good way to describe her.

16 I: Was she volatile?

18 P1: I never really saw the volatile side to her but when I used to
19 hear my parents row I did hear things breaking and there was
20 obviously some kind of physical thing going on. My parents
21 were quite good at hiding the things they had from the children.

→ Dislike of violence?

denial/dissenbling: Family coping styles?

23 I: Do you think she was stronger than your dad?

25 P1: My father in his marriage now is well under the thumb. She
26 definitely wears the trousers in the family.

28 I: Looking back, do you think that was the case in your parents'
29 relationship?

31 P1: I couldn't say for sure but I would say it's quite likely. One
32 time I remember us having a big argument with my father about
33 my stepmother. And she said to him: 'Are you a bloody man or
34 a mouse?' And he said 'A mouse every time...' He was always
35 one just to keep them happy. He's a very weak person, which is
36 why I think he's not a very good role model for me at all. He's
37 always been one to run away from responsibility... he's always
38 been one for just having the quite life which is how he is
39 nowadays.

Father weak / Mother strong (XF)
Father rejected as role model.

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I: Is he a sensitive person? ^(+F)

P1: I think he is, but he can't show it. (-F)

emotionally repressed male.

I: So you talked about [NAME] being a significant role model for you. Is there anybody else who has been a significant role model for you?

P1: No. Not really no. I can't think of anyone who had nearly the same kind of influence on me.

I: Did you have any heroes/heroines at school?

P1: Not really, no. I wouldn't say that there was strong... I've always been a very musical person and I suppose the pop music and I kind of wanted to live that lifestyle, but obviously wasn't really able to because of my home life. But no, I wouldn't say I had any what you would say 'heroes' or anybody that I kind of... I suppose there were public figures that I admired.

Circumstances constrain self-expression

I: But nobody that you modelled yourself on?

P1: No. Cos I think even from a very young age I didn't want to model myself on anybody, because I think subconsciously was saying you've got to be who you are... I did have friends who just kind of go along with the crowd and I think that's a very weak thing, because all you become is the sum of your friend's personalities.

Desire for individuality / fear of conformity = weakness.

I: So how did that evolve for you, that sense of wanting not to conform., to be yourself?

P1: Round about the age of nine, ten, eleven. My brothers and sisters always were listening to the same music. I was always different from them. I used to go - looking back at it even at a very young age, I used to sneak down in the middle of the night and put my father's Pink Floyd albums on. It's not normal for a six, seven year old to want to listen to that kind of music and

INDIVIDUALITY VS. CONFORMITY

1 want to be different. Normally people are kind of conforming to
2 what their siblings are. but even at that age I was different.

4 I: Tell me a little about school.

6 P1: I loved my school days. Even at the time... I think the main
7 reason why I liked them so much was because it was my
8 escape from my home life. It was my chance to go and be
9 normal amongst my peers.

SCHOOL A POSITIVE
EXPERIENCE
→ CHANCE TO
ENJOY 'NORMALITY'

11 I: Tell me a bit about your relationships with your peers.

13 P1: Again I was never one for having a huge circle of
14 friends...at school, especially during my teenage years...
15 secondary school. At that point I was very much different from
16 other kids. I was already starting to grow my hair long, already
17 defined what sort of music I was into. I was the school weirdo -
18 which in some ways I actually quite liked. When I grew up I
19 used to live in [TOWN] - quite a middle class area, quite a
20 wealthy area. And the kids at school were very, very fashion
21 conscious. They had to have the right trainers, the right
22 trousers...everything. And I was completely against the grain. I
23 used to go to school in a pair of jeans, shirt as scruffy as I
24 could... a leather jacket with a sort of cut-down over the top...
25 And there was like three or four of us at school who were a bit
26 like that, so we all got on really well. So that was my close
27 circuit of friends.

cultivated
was a discussion

close peer group.

29 I: And these friends, were they mostly male?

31 P1: Yes. I can think of one who wasn't. There was one female
32 friend who wasn't actually in that circle at all. But I suppose she
33 was a big influence on me because she was like my sounding
34 board when I was a kid, and her parents as well had been very
35 good to me over the years. But...since the suicide attempt she's
36 completely blanked me, which is probably the most hurtful thing
37 that's... When I think about all the good things that have
38 happened over the last couple of years then the only real
39 negative thing that's happened is that I've lost her as a friend.

Self-harm
[Anxious probs
lead to rejection/
alienation]

1 From the age of eleven right through to... I class her as being
 2 my real sort of sister. Our friendship did go really deep. And on
 3 and off over the years we did have sexual relationships... It
 4 never really worked cos as soon as we come together like
 5 girlfriend and boyfriend things went wrong... But the moment
 6 we took the pressure away she was like a sister to me.

7
 8 I: Why do you think the suicide made such a difference to her?
 9

10 P1: I don't know. She went through a really bad depression in
 11 her early twenties...late teens. Just the fact that she had a very
 12 forceful family... and I was always there for her. And I don't
 13 know. Maybe it just upset her so much that I didn't turn to her.
 14 And again she didn't know about the sexual abuse at all. And
 15 again she was the only person that I tried to talk to beforehand
 16 but she either chose not to listen to me or she wasn't just
 17 hearing what I was trying to say. I think it was probably the
 18 latter. but that was the only real negative thing that's happened.

19 And even now I still write to her every now and again to let her
 20 know what's going on in my life and just hoping that... and
 21 always letting her know where I am so if she did decide she
 22 wanted to get back in contact with me she was always able to.
 23 I'm hoping that we will meet up again.... because we were like
 24 as thick as thieves.

25
 26 I: What about adolescence for you. What was that like?
 27

28 P1: I suppose abuse aside it was quite a normal adolescence. I
 29 didn't really rebel until after my mum was dead - or no, until I
 30 was taken out of the family home. And then I became a little...
 31 for a little while I became quite rebellious ^(+F) But a lot of that was
 32 down to the fact that my step-mother forced me to go to her
 33 religious meetings. I had nowhere else to live but she said: 'if
 34 you want to live under this roof then you have to go...' which
 35 again is one of the reasons why I hate religion so much. All
 36 through my childhood it was kind of rammed down my throat.

37
 38 I: What about your sexual development during adolescence?
 39
 40

Not being heard:
 poor response
 to disclosure.

Period of rebellion
 after M. death

No
 choice.

MONAL
 TO PRESSURE
 TO CONTROL
 REPRESSION

1 P1: Well I suppose when I look back I think to when I started
 2 secondary school, about [mid 80s] which was the time when
 3 AIDS certainly started to become known. So of course sex was
 4 ... If it was going on I didn't get a piece of it! [laughs]
 5 Understand what I mean? It just never happened until really I
 6 got to about 16. Then people were getting a little bit more
 7 relaxed about it and then things started to happen. But during
 8 my early teens I wasn't really sexually active because there
 9 wasn't anything going on. And that was purely I think down to
 10 people being scared about AIDS.

11
 12 I: And what about attitudes towards sex amongst your peer
 13 group?

14
 15 P1: Yeah, it was... well certainly in school we had a very good
 16 personal development course which in our fourth year it was
 17 when I was 14 to 15 that was very good. But then a lot of that
 18 was centred around the AIDS thing. It had to be. It was at that
 19 time when sex was no longer a dirty word. It was something that
 20 people could talk about but which was associated with danger.
 21 It was a bit like 'Hello'. they talked to us about drugs when we
 22 were at school, but cannabis was put in the same bracket as
 23 heroine. Obviously now I know that it's not but it was... anything
 24 that was drugs was really, really bad. But because it was a
 25 middle-class area the kids did have money and drugs from
 26 about the age of 14 were quite common. But personally I didn't
 27 start experimenting until I left school. But again it was just kind
 28 of to reflect the attitudes that we had.

29
 30 I: All right. So when you first started going out with girls that was
 31 OK was it?

32
 33 P1: Oh yeah. Yeah, typical normal kind of... as normal as
 34 13,14,15 year olds can be.

35
 36 I: OK. Since that time have there been any other experiences
 37 that have shaped your gender or sexual identity significantly?
 38
 39
 40

INTER-CULTURAL
 AIDS
 CONTAMINATION
 of sex.

SEX ⇒ DANGER

1 P1: I don't really know. I think that they have had an affect on
2 me but in a subtle way that I wouldn't really notice. I believe that
3 if anything happens to you throughout your life - especially
4 throughout your younger life shapes through you are....
5

CHANGES
NOT NECESSARILY
CONSCIOUS /
ACCESSIBLE
BUT RESULT OF
CUMULATIVE
IMPACT OF
LIFE EVENTS.

6 I: And in terms of your current relationship? Tell me about that.
7

8 P1: It is good but there are 200 miles between us. She lives in
9 [TOWN]...it's seven hours each way. But the journey doesn't
10 bother me. It's the fact that the only time we can talk to each
11 other is on the phone...And even then we're both sort of held
12 back by financial constraints by the fact we can't talk to each
13 other for a particularly long time. Having said that I have
14 recently changed my phone company so I can make use of the
15 Cable and Wireless 50p unlimited amount of time per call...so I
16 do that and we talk for about three or four hours on a Saturday.
17 It is quite good.
18

19 I: It sounds as if you're not experiencing any particular difficulty
20 being in an emotionally intimate relationship?
21

22 P1: We were together when I actually had my breakdown -
23 when I made the suicide attempt. then it all got a bit too much
24 for her and she kind of had to distance herself from me because
25 it all got a bit too much which I can perfectly well understand...

26 And you probably remember me saying that I'd just got back
27 together with an old ex-partner and I think that was a lot to do
28 with how well I was feeling at the time in that we had just got
29 back together again. And what helps is that she has the same
30 attitudes that I have. I don't want children. We don't want to get
31 married. we don't even want to live together. My long-term plan
32 once I've been to college is to move down to [TOWN] because
33 the pace of life down there would be much more suited to me.
34 Things are a much slower...less hustle and bustle and things
35 are much more friendly down there. but no way would I live with
36 her. I would keep my own flat and just have a normal girlfriend-
37 boyfriend type of relationship. Don't want it to get any deeper
38 than that which suits me down to the ground.
39
40

Doesn't
want children.
generosity?
Developmentally
arrested in
adolescence?

Desire to
maintain
distance /
independence
- Trust?

OF
IMACY?

1 I: Where do you think it comes from, this fear - maybe that's too
2 strong a word, but this wanting to stay independent.
3

4 P1: I do know exactly where that's come from and that's the
5 other girlfriend that I had. We were planning to get married and
6 everything and settle down. And then I came home and found
7 her in bed with my neighbour which kind of then Well, if that
8 can happen again then I'm not going to put that level of
9 commitment to someone unless...let's say my present partner
10 in ten years time is still the same...we're still together and feel
11 that at that time we both want to get married or whatever then it
12 could possibly happen. But it's basically once bitten, twice shy
13 and a few things have happened to me in my life and that's
14 basically one thing that has shaped my attitudes. I never really
15 wanted to get married to her anyway: we were going through
16 the motions because that's what people do. But then that
17 happened an no way. My attitude's that I don't want to get
18 married, don't want to have children...just live on my own.
19

20 I: Is the not wanting children different? A separate issue?
21

22 P1: I don't want the responsibility of the children. I want to be
23 able to go out, earn the money...live my life. I don't want the
24 kind of 18 year old kind of tie on me I want to... I have difficulty
25 enough kind of coping on my own but that having to take
26 responsibility for minors... Also I have raised a child already
27 which is my younger brother. And I've kind of been there and
28 felt I've done that. And it's not something I want to have to do
29 again. Because Kids nowadays have no respect for older
30 people anyway so I'll probably... Also I also feel my temper can
31 sometimes can be a bit short - especially with children and also
32 I've thought that I probably would hurt them if I lost my temper.
33 Children automatically have that kind of effect on me. They do
34 bring out some of the worst in my personality.
35

36 I: What about them do you find intolerable?
37

38 P1: If I hear a kid crying it immediately makes me feel very
39 stressed, very angry. I just want to go and shut that child up.
40

(-M) (-M)

ACT
= OTHER
STATIVE
RELATIONSHIPS

Betrayal
of
trust.

FACULTY
SPRING

Reaction against
premature
responsibility
as rejection.
Rejection of
nurturing role?

Fears potential
for aggression (-M)

1
2 I: One theory that crops up is that such a response might be
3 because you identify in some way with the pain and anguish of
4 the child and can't tolerate those feelings in yourself?

5
6 P1: Maybe on a subconscious level but I'm not aware of that. It
7 immediately grates. I really hate it. I feel uncomfortable about
8 children. New-born babies aren't so bad because you can see
9 that they are completely helpless but when they get to the 2, 3,
10 4-year old and they have an awareness of what's around them,
11 and they do have an awareness to a point of what's right and
12 wrong. And they learn to grizzle. I mean a baby, if it cries, is
13 crying for a reason where children... from about school age
14 upwards... they certainly know that – they start grizzling
15 because they just don't get their own way. And that is
16 something that I have absolutely no tolerance for whatsoever. I
17 was never a grizzly child myself and I've always... It's just
18 something that I *hate*. I really dislike them: children that are
19 more than say nine months old. Again that's where I'm different
20 from my brothers and sisters because they've all got children.

21
22 I: And finally on this, how would you say you feel about your
23 sexual and gender identity at the moment?

24
25 P1: Um... It's something that I am going to explore. As I said I
26 do have a couple of friends who ~~are~~ are cross-dressers,
27 transsexuals, transvestites – whatever you want to call them,
28 and it's something that I am going to explore. But it's not
29 something that I want to explore right here, right now... I've got
30 enough on my plate in recovering from my depression and I've
31 got my college and I want to concentrate on getting on with my
32 life. And once I start to feel comfortable with how my life is
33 going and I feel that I've reached that...cos I've got goals that
34 I've got. And once I've achieved those then I feel that I will have
35 time in my life to explore other parts.

36
37 I: So what is it that you want to explore –specifically?
38
39
40

*Selfishness.
manipulation?*

*Feels need to
explore
sexual id.
future.*

depression

*Need for
security/stability*

1 P1: Well, they're trying to get me to have go at dressing up and
2 that, but I don't feel ready for that.

3
4 I: But curious about it?

5
6 P1: Oh yes. Very curious about it. It's something that's a part of
7 me that I know that's in there. And it won't go away. But it also
8 gives me the power to leave it at the moment. But I know that I
9 can leave it, cos it's not going to go away, and I'm quite
10 comfortable with how it is at the moment. And it's not really
11 affecting me sexually. My girlfriend's well aware of it and she
12 actively encourages it... for me to be comfortable sex-wise and
13 to explore whatever I want to explore but at the right time –
14 which she completely agrees with me with how I am – with my
15 attitude at the moment.

16
17 I: So this is about exploring and developing more female roles?

18
19 P1: It could be. Yeah. I had a... I mean I look back on my life
20 and I've had plenty of female roles in the past. So I'm not
21 scared of it at all. It's just something that I feel is not appropriate
22 for me to do at this time. I have to concentrate on getting myself
23 better, back to work and getting mot of my home life stable
24 before I explore what could be another change in my life if you
25 understand what I mean. I don't want to go... or have
26 something that will bring in some instability in my life.

27
28 I: You want to be doing that from a platform of stability. That's
29 very sensible.

30
31 P1: I'm not going to explore right here right now. Its in no way
32 appropriate.

33
34 I've certainly had have sexual fantasies but they're not very
35 strong. They're not prominent, and in the past whenever I've
36 had sexual fantasies and I have lived them out, I've always
37 regretted them. I've always wished that I'd left them as a
38 fantasy. And the things that the fantasies I have are physically
39 impossible because I am a woman in those fantasies so it's not
40

Acceptance of
fem dynamic

Previous
female roles.
↓
comfortable

avoidance of
instability

Fantasy
↓↑
Reality.

1 physically possible for me to live them out... which is something
 2 that I like. I don't think that I have any feelings that I actually
 3 want to go through any kind of gender change... at this point
 4 anyway.

5
 6 I: But you wouldn't rule that out?

7
 8 P1: I wouldn't rule anything out...

9
 10 I: I'm just trying to establish whether this is part of being
 11 somebody who is much more open to unconventional things...
 12 whether this is an ideological statement or whether it's about
 13 something that you feel is drawing you in a particular direction.

14
 15 P1: I'm open to the idea, but as I said it's not something that I
 16 want to think about now. It's something that I know I can deal
 17 with in the future. It's not causing me any problems because the
 18 sexual relationship I have at the moment is probably the most
 19 fulfilling that I've ever had... because I'm able to be open and
 20 I'm with someone who understands where I'm coming from.

21
 22 I: I don't want to pry into your fantasy life but since you've been
 23 so frank this far. When you say these fantasies are physically
 24 impossible because you're a woman, this scenario in your head
 25 is that one which involves women with you?

26
 27 P1: Yes as I said I sometimes feel I'm a lesbian trapped in a
 28 man's body. And that's pretty much why it's physically
 29 impossible... but certainly my attitudes towards giving sex... I'm
 30 definitely coming from a more female point of view. It's not just
 31 something like you just do it and then it's all over and done with.
 32 It's something that normally goes on for hours and it's not just
 33 the act itself. It's what happens before. And even more
 34 importantly, what happens afterwards.

35
 36 I: Interesting. You're going to be heavily in demand sexually...
 37 [laughter]

38
 39
 40

*possibility
 of
 gender
 reassignment
 not
 ruled out!*

*defining
 sex in
 non-masc
 terms.*

1 P1 (Second Interview)

2

3 I: I didn't ask you last time about your experiences of disclosing
4 your abuse and what happened then?

5

6 P1: Do you mean at the time?

7

8 I: Yes. At the time.

9

10 P1: Well at the time it happened my mum was in hospital. For
11 fear of my own safety I kind of played down what actually
12 happened to my father and my step mother, because I felt if I
13 like told them about what was actually going on he would like
14 hurt me. So I didn't really say anything at the time. But as soon
15 as my Mum came out of hospital I obviously talked to her about
16 it and the police were called and social services.... But because
17 my stepmother denied it – that she's actually walked in and
18 caught us... nothing was actually done about it and it was all
19 just brushed under the carpet. Then for years I just kind of kept
20 it within me. (-M)

21

22 I: Alright. OK. So your mum's reaction when you told her... She
23 obviously tried to set things in motion... Do you remember how
24 she responded?

25

26 P1: She was very upset about it. She felt that it was her fault
27 because it was because she was in hospital that I had to go
28 and stay there. So she felt that she had put me in that position.
29 But I don't feel it was her fault at all. It was down to him.

30

31 I: And when talking about the people from the list you said that
32 Tarzan and Elton John were like comic book characters. What
33 did you mean by that?

34

35 P1: Just... the public face that you – using the example of Elton
36 John... The public face that you see is nothing like the true self.
37 I think again with a lot of public figures they put on a kind of
38 false appearance. It's how they want themselves to be

39

40

*Nb. no self-blame?
but c.f. guilt
method p.6*

*False selves/
Self-denial.*

1 perceived. Not how they really are. It's almost as they are kind
 2 of going into an alter ego...

3
 4 I: But it's a false self?

5
 6 P1: Yeah.

7
 8 I: And it sounds like that's something you feel quite strongly
 9 about?

10
 11 P1: Yeah. I like people to be very open and very honest.
 12

13 I: OK. And is that something you apply to yourself as well?

14
 15 P1: I go out of my way to make sure that I'm honest with people
 16 and they see the real me. But when it comes to the rapes and
 17 the abuse I was completely the opposite because I didn't want
 18 people to know about it... not my peers.
 19

20 I: Why not?

21
 22 P1: Because I didn't want to show the weakness. I suppose it
 23 goes back a bit to this macho thing. It's something I just didn't
 24 want them to know.
 25

26 I: Because you felt that weakness was incompatible with you as
 27 a man?

28
 29 P1: Mmm. I felt dirty about it. I didn't want people to know. It felt
 30 like a dirty secret.
 31

32 I: Your stepmother... What sort of woman was she?

33
 34 P1: She was a very hard, abrasive. That is the only way to
 35 describe her. I would actually say that the word 'horrific' comes
 36 to mind. I don't get on with her at all.
 37

38 I: She sounds a real contrast in many respects with your own
 39 mother?
 40

0 -
 REACTION
 PEERS

SHAME?

Abuse
 → H (+F) Open
 → (-M) Closed in/
 defensive.

Abuse
 → weakness,
 = not manly

1

2

P1: Yeah. Chalk and cheese. Definitely.

3

4

I: So not a very warm person?

5

6

P1: No. She does try to... I put her down a lot but her heart is in the right place. But just the way she goes about things... She just goes all about things... She just rubs everybody up the wrong way.

10

11

I: And tell me a little bit about the relationship with [NAME] and how you understand that now looking back on it...

12

13

14

P1: Well I think I said we met in [PLACE NAME] and she was over here as a student. And the time when we were living apart and I used to go over and visit her a lot was a wonderful time. I was travelling a lot... It was just like the whole romance of the situation. And then after she moved over here for the first six months it was OK... Then just slowly it went down hill. I was having pressure at work which was affecting me. And she just... we started to grow apart. She wanted different things. She wanted to get married. She wanted children. I didn't...and luckily I was able to use her age as – because when I met her she was only 16... She was 18 when she moved here so I was able to say, 'No, wait until you're at least in your 20s because you don't want to be tied down too early...'

27

28

I: What appealed to you about her?

29

30

P1: She was very different from all the other girls I had met before. She was a very beautiful woman which was something that I really... I had never had like a girlfriend that made people's heads turn... And that was great for me because it kind of boosted my own self-confidence. So there was definitely a physical attraction and she seemed to me at the time as quite a benign person. I've always had very strong characters in my life... and I thought it would be nice to have someone who was quite benign and would allow me to be quite a stereotypical male who could take control. But the longer we were together

40

girlfriend
as
status symbol
↓
admiration/respect.
low self-esteem?

Did 'strong' of
checked
prejudice sense
of identification
with masc.?

1 the more she kind of imposed her will on the relationship and
2 the more difficult it became.

*Dominant
or*

4 I: And how old were you when you met her?

6 P1: I met her in the summer of [YEAR]

8 I: And the relationship went on for about...

10 P1: 3 years.

12 I: So you quite enjoyed being in that more stereotypical role?

14 P1: I did enjoy it a lot more.

16 I: And did that aspect of the relationship change the sexual
17 relationship between you?

19 P1: No. She was always more sexually dominant. She had a
20 fairly high sex drive where I was... I suppose for while I sort of
21 tried it but I found it very difficult... And it slowly... She got more
22 and more sexually dominant the further it went through because
23 I was sort of like falling away... 'Not tonight, dear, I've got a
24 headache.' – It's the stereotypical woman: the female role. And
25 I've never been a greatly sexually orientated person anyway.

TM

*Low sex drive
= # Masc.*

*IMPACT
OF
NEGATIVE
RELATIONSHIP*

*Instead of
balancing
sense of
masculinity as
anticipated,
relationship
weakened
identification
of left p
feeling
feminised.*

27 I: And lastly you said that the experiences with [ABUSER]
28 precluded any exploration of any homosexuality for you, but you
29 also said that the thought of homosexual sex can be quiet
30 appealing. What did you mean by that?

32 P1: It is appealing. It's something in a way that I wish I could
33 experiment with, but I know that I never would be able to.
34 Because it's always going to bring up the same fears, or I'd be
35 too frightened to do it because I know that it would bring up the
36 same fears. But there is still something appealing there.

38 I: So what's the appealing bit?

40

1 P1: I don't know. Something different. I don't know what it is
2 that's appealing but I know that it's something that I've had a
3 very bad experience with and that that was not a typical
4 experience. So that kind of wiped out any chance that I would
5 have been able to explore that part.
6

7 I: So something different. But something more than different? Is
8 this coming out of the art of you that likes to defy convention,
9 likes to push the envelope a bit?
10

11 P1: I do like to experiment, whether it be sexually or drugs or
12 whatever... I've done a lot of that in the past. I like to be
13 different. If I hear an idea I don't just dismiss it off the top of my
14 head. I will always think about it and want to explore that before
15 I make my own mind up.
16

*desire for
self-determination.*

17 I: So is that wanting to be open to the possibility rather than
18 feeling that a homosexual relationship would give you the
19 opportunity to know another man in a different way?
20

21 P1: Again it's the same thing that... because of my views being
22 clouded because of what happened it's very difficult for me to
23 kind of put that on...
24

25

26

DE-BRIEF

27

28

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ADDITIONAL TRANSCRIPT MATERIAL ILLUSTRATING MAIN THEMES

MAIN THEME ONE: GENDER POSITIONING

Sub-theme one: Masculine Stereotypes as Restrictive

	Sample Extract
P10	I don't like Schwarzenegger – that crap aesthetical crap. [does a parody of voice] 'Just look at my body...' It's just being paid to have big biceps and talk badly on the screen. And its because he's supposed to be this idealistic male. I just think surely there is more to men than a body – you know?
P5	I think its partly that men are more generally not expected to be outgoing in their emotion. I think it is a society thing but it's also true that if a man is seen as over-emotional it's because they've had a very different upbringing.
P8	They've projected him as a sort of big, macho muscle man. He's probably as soft as a sponge underneath.
P7	Arnold Schwarzenegger I suppose. Just the way he's stereotyped really. I mean he's muscly and... just the way he looks really. [...] To me it's all things that are so false. The image is just made up really.

Sub-Theme Two: Trans-Gender Identifications

	Sample Extract
P9	I felt more inside that I was a young girl and not a young boy and things like that. I used to play with My Little Ponies and Barbie's and everything else instead of cars and guns and things like that. I preferred the pram instead of the bike.
P9	Maybe just born kind of... too feminine... Not many boys prance about with flowers stuck behind their hair cos that's what I used to do....From the age of two... I used to pinch people's flowers. People used to call me 'The Flower Power' cos I used to pinch their flowers. So that was from a really early age.
P2	I see my voice as very weak and I often hear my voice as I'm speaking and it sounds really weak and almost effeminate...
P3	I sometimes feel a freak... [pause] Because my body doesn't look male. It doesn't feel male. [...] If I was to put female clothes on I would probably look more like a woman. Mentally that's sometimes how I feel.
P1	And the fantasies I have are physically impossible because I am a woman in those fantasies so its not physically possible for me to live them out... which is something that I like.
P1	I look back on my life and I've had plenty of female roles in the past. So I'm not scared of it at all.
P6	I just didn't want to get my hands dirty. I was a real primadonna... a real girlie: All I was interested in was clothes and music and going out and having a good time. I didn't want to take on any responsibility.

Sub-theme three: Attempts at Gender Conformity

	Sample Extract
P6	All the girls liked me because I would talk to them. I just went out with the best-looking girl in the school and that was fine. I never got any trouble. Until – this was the beginning. By the second and third year then I thought : ' Well I'm not playing the charade anymore.'
P10	And I went out with a lot – well not a lot – but with a few girls and stuff. I slept with a few girls but that was just to prove a point.
P1	I used to be much more laddish... not caring much about sex at all...
P7	I found myself just growing up with this is the way to grow up and fitting into it when basically I should have been myself and actually admitted to myself who I actually am.
P5	I was obviously: 'Well I'm not going to sleep with half the university just to prove my manliness...' But I ended up doing that anyway....four years later.

Sub-theme four: Stated Impact of Abuse on Gender

	Sample Extract
P8	No, how it made me feel was less masculine if anything.
P3	P3 I didn't feel like a man. INT Why did it make you feel less manly? P3 I suppose because I wasn't in control.
P6	INT And what about [the effects of abuse on] your identity as a man? P6 Um. [pause] I never felt that I had to conform to any male role models anyway.
P7	I didn't feel masculine at all after the abuse.
P9	INT OK. So is this something about being encroached upon – something coming over your boundaries? P9 Yeah. Them coming into your space sort of thing. INT So am I right in thinking that part of what being male is about within this system is being able to maintain those boundaries? P9 Yeah.
P10	INT Did the abuse change your feelings about yourself as a man? P10 I don't really think the abuse has made me who I am today – not necessarily. If anything it just gave me a little more – you know... backbone. And things like that. I mean it just went on forever until I put a stop to it.

Sub-theme five: Challenging Gender Taxonomies

	Sample Extract
P10	I think I'm quite feminine. I have a combination of them both – not with the physical aspect of things. I'm quite feminine physically. I'm masculine in other ways. Do you see what I'm saying?
P9	Sometimes I think what would it be like to be normal – just to be sort of like the ordinary person who don't go out of their categories and their boxes – whatever. Maybe I'm thinking like what would it be like to be one of these people? But the other times I think: 'Well, sod it! Why not be an individual?'
P8	I think it's wrong that we fit people into categories and things like that... because there isn't a category: we're all individual people and whether you're pink, purple or black or gay and straight or whatever you are you are who you are.
P9	At the moment I don't class myself as a male or as a female.
P6	I kind of knew before that I wasn't like everybody else. I didn't fit in... to that kind of man/woman stereotype.
P8	I don't think there's any difference to be quite honest... [between men and women] It's all just the way society makes it.
P2	I think a lot of it's just cultural. People are people whether they're male or female. And they should be free to be the way they want to be.
P1	I don't believe in this male macho thing: that men have got to be men and not express themselves and kind of.. have to cope on their own. I don't believe in that whatsoever. Well I did up to three or four years ago.

MAIN THEME TWO: POWER**Feeling Dominated and Controlled**

	Sample Extract
P6	[Re. being photographed by abuser] I didn't like that... at all. I felt manipulated... bullied into it. But I did it because he was an adult and I was easily led.
P8	I felt as a toy, just to be picked up and taken advantage of...
P9	I just had no choice in the matter really.
P2	Because as a child if I had been in control of it... then it wouldn't have been so traumatic.
P6	There was no way of stopping. That's when I thought, 'I'll just relax... This isn't going to hurt as much.'
P4	Everything I done was controlled by the abuse.

P5	No, no I can remember feelings and that and um odours, but I couldn't actually stop it...
P2	And he's just drag me into his bedroom in the middle of everything and just do it... You know? And I used to think: 'Why can't someone just come in?'
P4	It was just his way... there was just a sort of a way about him that you couldn't say not to him.
P3	But being in a defenceless state all my shields were down and I suppose being... because of what happened... having been made weaker – effeminate, I got drawn into being with a person that had other ideas.

Sub-theme two: Becoming Weak and Unable to Cope

	Sample Extract
P4	It's not so much the fact that I don't want to care for other people. In a way I was trying to deal with my own problems and I didn't feel strong enough to take on anyone else's.
P2	I feel that I am...incapable of...almost everything. You know?
P9	I just get sort of weighed down by all my problems.
P2	And the reason I have these fantasies about being superman is that...er... It's just that I am the opposite of that.
P5	But there were times when – when you were under pressure and the pressure could become amazing... It could be pressure in your studies or pressure in your work or pressure financially and those sorts of pressures you are immediately in a negative frame of mind and things can suddenly start occurring – nightmares even.
P7	I couldn't deal with problems.
P1	Illness... and my own experiences have made me realise that as a person I am not strong enough to so that. I have to talk to people. I have to express myself. Otherwise everything just bottles up and I end up emotionally lashing out.
P3	INT And what might happen to you as an individual if you are bullied, abused and terrorised? P3 You become weak – mentally and physically. INT And if they do become weak in that way? P3 They no longer become a man.

Sub-theme three: Becoming Aggressive

	Sample Extract
P8	And then sexually I used to be quite rough with men anyway, probably leaning towards a bit of S and M and that. It's just a role play and playing games – which is good... sometimes.
P3	It was when my sister's voice finally broke through – like breaking through a barrier – she was saying to me, 'Please, for God's sake, stop! Don't do it...' And all I can actually remember is that I was ready to force with every ounce of effort... to drive his head into the wall. With no remorse.
P4	Honestly, if he wasn't already dead I would probably have killed him by now. I really would have done.
P10	I'm aware of exactly how I'm feeling on the moment and I have a need to express that to whoever, however evil... either verbally or with a vibe.
P8	I still have a lot of anger in me
P6	As soon as I'm feeling like I'm being manipulated or bullied or into a situation I don't want to be in I just become completely negative and stand-offish. I'm not myself... I'm horrible... vicious.
P6	If I get into that mode where I'm negative and not myself that's how I get: completely 'Don't care... This is what I'm going to do... If you don't like it... Fuck off!' I'm not prepared to listen to people who love me or... I don't look at it logically when I get into that frame of mind.
P1	I have to express myself. Otherwise everything just bottles up and I end up emotionally lashing out.
P8	When I was younger with like older men looking at me I used to say... in myself I was saying: 'Fuck off! Cunt...' Do you know what I mean?
P8	When I actually beat him up I was stoned out of my head anyway. I felt like a tiger in the lion' den. I felt like the beast came out of me: the anger... and it's over now. You know what I mean?

P10	I was kind of always in control with that. We did things when I wanted when I said so. And I'd go back to his when I wanted to. And if he didn't want me to, well tough shit: I was going anyway...
P9	I'd like to do that to him. Just pin him in the corner and put the spotlight on him. I know that much. I imagine you'd think it was revenge?

Sub-theme four: Becoming Ambitious

	Sample Extract
P8	The world is full of opportunities. You just have to grab them. I won't let any man stand in my way.
P5	I just got on with it... you channel your energies into other things and rather than channel a lot of anger into people around me who didn't deserve it, I just channelled it into bettering myself... getting on with life.
P10	I feel like I really want to make something of myself, you know? Maybe be successful with my writing.

Sub-theme five: Becoming Physically Fit

	Sample Extract
P8	INT And on the masculine side? P8 Well I like to keep myself toned and in shape.
P2	I've been wanting to join a gym for a while now. I think it would make me feel better about myself.

MAIN THEME THREE: PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Sub-theme one: Negative Self-image

	Sample Extract
P7	...Not having self-respect after the abuse at all.
P6	At that age you think: 'Oh it's all my fault...' You put yourself down and you mould yourself into this nasty person that you believe you are. You don't think you're the nice boy you were a year ago. You think you're now this sexual deviant who must go and get pleasure.
P1	I felt very violated. I didn't like my body at all... It was something there fore other people to use... My own kind of sacredness within myself had gone.
P10	Um... I was really insecure. but I didn't have much time to think about myself. I didn't give a fuck about clothing or the way I looked or anything...
P7	Am I good enough? It's always... It was like work as well. I was thinking 'Am I good enough really' And I know that if you're not good enough you'd be told really wouldn't you, but actually how you feel in yourself.. I don't know.
P4	In my case I started doubting myself more and more and it got to the extent that nothing I done was ever right. I could never do anything right in my own eyes.
P2	A little problem that I have is whether the opinions that I have are the result of low self-esteem or that I truly feel that.
P8	And it's only really now – over the last 3 or 4 years that I am actually starting discovering who I am and starting to feel OK about it.
P1	They no longer become a man. They... How can I word it? They no longer become a man. They become smaller than a man. They can't be classed as feminine, because they're smaller.
P7	I suppose when I was in my early twenties I thought: 'God! What if I do turn like that in the course of time?
P8	It made me feel like a toy that was used: 'I'll have this one...'

Sub-theme two: Self-destructive Behaviour

	Sample Extract
P6	Like I'll sit at home and drink five bottles of wine on my own and make myself ill... not eat. Not wash. Just wallow in self-pity with Joshua. Hating the world. Not wanting to see anyone... Not answering the phone... Don't want to watch telly... Don't want to listen to music... Don't want to do anything. Don't want to sleep. Just don't want to do.
P8	I've really cut back on the hash now. I don't have to be stoned the whole time.
P9	I've basically just come out of hospital after an overdose and that was the same.
P3	I was drinking more and more spirits to the point that I was actually crawling home... literally paralytic. One morning I woke up and looked in the mirror. My face was pure white and all I could think of was drink... And I remember waking up one morning and saying to myself. 'What the hell are you doing to yourself? You're killing yourself.'
P1	We were together when I actually had my breakdown – when I made a suicide attempt.

Sub-theme three: Fragmentation, Dissociation and Denial

	Sample Extract
P6	I just dissociated myself from it: it wasn't happening to me. It was happening to somebody else...
P5	You just sort of do anything to top thinking about the events that have happened.
P4	For a long time I didn't even know about the abuse. I just totally blanked it. It was only my daughter's death that actually brought the abuse to light... and jolted me into remembering it. I wasn't sort of living a life. I was sort of existing... if I had a problem it would be go down the pub and forget about it sort of thing...'
P9	Maybe I could be quite lucky in that sort of thing in I think I may have a split personality sort of thing where I may be one person and then another person.
	Sometimes I find I'm stuck in the middle... So on certain occasions the male will come out. And on other occasions the other side comes out, and on some occasions it's a bit of both... [pause] I feel very insecure... not in control.'
P2	You see I'm not sure if the way I see myself is the way I portray myself or whether I try and portray myself as something I'm not... I find it difficult to portray myself as anything because I feel sort of empty inside.
P2	Another thing that I do find most distressing is that I can't find any anger or hatred towards abusers...
P10	I can switch really fast – I can come across completely differently depending on the circumstances.
P9	[when looking at reflection] Just little bits stand out like my piercings and things like that. But no sort of features or the shape of my body or that... It's just a blank body with little dots here...
P2	She died when I was fourteen but I don't remember her... For years I felt guilty that I couldn't remember her until I realised that it wasn't my fault that I couldn't remember her. That was something I couldn't help.

Sub theme four: Self-blame

	Sample Extract
P10	And I was weak because I couldn't... let go of men if you like.
P9	Maybe I've been blaming myself for too long. But then it could happen to anyone.
P6	When he did rape me I thought this was my punishment. Because I'd been having sex with his boyfriend. Because to me my nature is to be monogamous, so I thought I was doing wrong by having slept with his boyfriend...
P4	I suppose that's why I've felt so guilty over the years because I've actually given him extra victims.
P5	And also realising that sometimes you can just be unfortunate... I think the biggest thing that probably changed from how I viewed myself from the previous ten years was seeing that 'This really isn't your fault...'
P7	I felt what had happened was my fault.

P2	I do feel totally selfish because I am so unhappy I can't bring joy to other people. And that is what I'd love to do. I'd love to be able to help people just by being myself.
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Sub-theme five: Depression and Anxiety

	Sample Extract
P5	Flashbacks... moodiness. You become withdrawn and I was never moody when I was younger. I never get snappy with people. I just sometimes don't want to be with anyone. I just want to be on my own
P7	Perhaps it all happened because I didn't have enough guts to stand up for myself and I did go in myself and withdrawn and depressed... scared of people
P10	Yeah I was frightened all the time when I was younger. All the time. I mean he used to say things to me like: 'I can kill you...' Things like that. 'You'll end up in jail...' Do you know what I mean? He would say, 'your dad will kill you if he finds out...' Stuff like this. And I thought, 'That's right. my dad will kill me...'
P4	I was terrified. That was why I didn't say anything.
P3	My wife has woken up to me screaming. I've woken up to horrifying nightmares.... A lot of pain and fear. A lot of anger.
P5	Because I'm letting myself down and just becoming... I don't know... fed up and withdrawn.
P3	Two sides. One is strong and part confident. The other is weak, not very confident: frightened, timid, scared... nervous.
P2	I'm forever going on about my background – not to everybody but to myself...and it depresses me...and then I get depressed that I'm depressed.'
P3	I feel less masculine when I get the terrified sensation.

MAIN THEME FOUR: IMPOVERISHED RELATIONSHIPS

Difficulties in Forming Relationships

	Sample Extract
P4	I just couldn't find a way of approaching someone to talk to them or take that first step to getting into a relationship.
P5	I was quite reserved and withdrawn.
	I was very much a loner.
P4	I just totally closed up... was totally distant towards everyone around me. I sort of alienated people by being sort of stand-offish with them rather than sit and talk to them.
P2	I have this sort of problem talking to anyone but I think with women in particular...
P3	I didn't have any [friends] at that time.
P1	I have to put up all these barriers for self-preservation and I find that gets in the way.

Sub-theme two: Issues of Trust

	Sample Extract
P9	I knew that I had to either swallow my pride or not try and think of things what had happened and actually trust someone to actually show me love and things like that and not show me that I would be used like I was in my childhood sort of thing.
P10	There's a definite lack of trust there.
P9	I find myself a really easy-going person but if someone sort of rocks that.. then that's it: never trust them again.
P5	One of the things that again took a long time to realise was the fact that there had been a bond of trust broken between us. What happened should never have happened.
P2	I think I find it really hard to trust them. I always think they're going to leave.

Sub-theme three: Problems of Emotional Expression

	Sample Extract
P8	But I would say that it's only recently in the last twelve months that I've come a bit more together in my feelings towards another person.
P6	I find it very hard to show affection. I don't know whether that's my upbringing from my parents or my abuse. I don't know.
P2	I feel the person inside is someone who is caring and sensitive and...um... generally a nice person but who is unfortunately trapped...
P5	I think it was coming out of a phase where I'd been cautious about giving any sign that people might misconstrue.
P4	For a long time I couldn't show anyone that I did love them and as a result I didn't really feel loved back.
P3	I used to channel my emotions in...

Sub-theme four: Fear of Intimacy

	Sample Extract
P6	I'm prepared to let people cuddle me more whereas before I wouldn't even let myself be cuddled. If I was upset I didn't want anyone to touch me at all... I wouldn't even sit on the sofa next to someone. I'd rather have a chair on my own... or a bed of my own.
P1	Don't want it to get any deeper [...] I don't want to have children. We don't want to get married. We don't even want to live together.
P2	I mean I have this fear of getting close to people but I hate myself for that. That's part of me that I don't like and that's a part of me that I feel people can see and don't like – sort of stand-offish though I really try not to be...
P5	There's absolutely no question of us living together in the near future.

Other Experiences of Aggression and Control

	Sample Extract
P10	And she used to try and suffocate me. She used to try and break my legs when I was a young kid... take my legs and try to put them round my head like this. I don't know why.
P1	Forced me to go to her religious meetings: All through my childhood it was kind of rammed down my throat...
P8	I think basically because of the orphanage days. I think every day was a fight anyway – know what I mean? When I came out of that sort of environment I was sort of having fights with myself.
P4	I was always being bullied at school...
P10	And my dad used to slap me around a lot and he denies it...
P3	And the times when I've tried to explain to my mother about what was happening.... Things taken. Not just physical punishment but... items taken away: things like coats, torches, money. It was a mental punishment. You were being denied... It wasn't enough that my father was taken.

Impact of Negative Personal Relationships

	Sample Extract
P2	Every time I get close to someone they have died.
P8	I couldn't perform in the way that she wanted me to perform - as a man.
P5	She was very clever in how she was able to come a cross and then try to manipulate me.
P5	I could have forgiven a lot of things but I could never forgive someone turning round and trying to basically destroy me with something like that. And there were parallels with what happened.
P2	I'm really frightened.... Because I know nothing lasts forever and the thought of finishing a relationship really frightens me. That's why I stayed with the transsexual so long. Cos we both had a fear of breaking up, you know?
P9	Maybe that's why I'm sort of emotionally scarred on the masculine side of men anyway...

	because of all what's happened to me. These men have been like sort of brutal. Maybe that's why...
P10	...which is probably with all this abusive crap in the background why I went for him. The one with the black eye who is six foot two – do you know what I mean?

Socio-Cultural Factors

	Sample Extract
P7	And then my parents feeling that gay life was wrong.
P8	I think the purpose of it was needing to escape from everything around me after society had let me down. The police had let me down. A lot of people had let me down while I was trying to bring this man to justice - do you know what I mean? And the annoyance that I had that he could be allowed to work in society and where he works now had made me angry and I thought: 'Fuck the world. Fuck you and fuck the world...'
P8	I look at my friends and quite a lot of my friends are very successful. And I think they take the place of something that I never had to look up to – a father. They take up that kind of father image of what I would like to have learned in my earlier life. And it's somebody to look up to in early life like following along a path.... I look up to my friends quite a lot – especially my male ones and try and be just as successful, if not more successful, than they are now.
P5	You do basically doubt yourself – particularly at the age of fifteen and sixteen and seventeen... And I still think to an extent that single-sex schools are an unhealthy thing... particularly when it's a public school and people are travelling away from their friends and away from their family and spending less time with them. I think that can affect their development basically...
P1	But during my early teens I wasn't really sexually active because there wasn't anything going on. And that was purely I think down to people being scared about AIDS.
P5	I was at an all-boys school and the humour and the Micky-taking that goes on is quite intense and it's like: 'Christ! If this got out, I'd be lynched...' sort of thing.
P4	In those days the boy was supposed to grow up to be the head of the household and get married and have kids and the woman was supposed to be there for you to cook your dinner when you got in of a night and sort of look after the kids while you go out with your mates...
P4	Purely and simply because of the way the family would have seen me. My dad was especially fiercely anti-gay
P4	It wasn't only our family. In those days emotions just wasn't talked about.
P5	I've got quite a few friends who are gay and it's like a form of political correctness when I say that. There's no tension there or anything. I can laugh and joke with them and it's never been a problem.. It's more other people's narrow-mindedness. It's like: 'Oh you have a few friends who are gay and therefore you must be gay yourself...'
P2	P2 The way society is if you voice that opinion...' INT Then you get categorised? P2 Oh of course, yes. I mean I have been categorised anyway because I had this relationship with the transsexual. And the people I've told... They don't understand. And they do pigeon-hole me as suspect I think'
P5	We both sort of mocked the idea of people being gay and we never thought of children being gay anyway... We thought it was basically something blokes did when they couldn't pull a bird.
P6	I think also, looking back on it with hindsight, it was the AIDS thing. I was projecting all this stuff that had happened to me in the past on this new AIDS epidemic... 'Sex is bad... Look what happens to you if you have sex. You're going to die... It's wrong.' And seeing sex as completely negative. Not wanting to have sex when I did have sex. It was a hurried situation. It wasn't a loving thing. It was a functional thing.
P6	Being a policeman all he ever saw was the negative side of homosexuality – you know: the people he had to arrest and the perverts in cottages and [sighs] child abuse as well... So he only saw the negative side...
P6	[Pressure] to conform. Not to want to sit at home and play with my 'Girl's World' and make curtains with my sewing machine.
P7	From an early age I was trying to please people and make friendships. I started smoking

	early just to fit in with that kind of culture.
P7	I think they were a bit upset with me really because I didn't tell them. But it was like... They wrote a letter to him and got their church to read this over the phone saying they didn't want any more contact with them... It was a bit... 'It's all done now. We've spoken about it. We don't want anything to do with him any more.' So it wasn't talked about any further.
P8	They're all rolling around in Jags and I'm in my Dr Martin boots and quite happy to keep fit and walk. You carry on in your metal car. Do you know what I mean?... I don't have to keep up with anybody - apart from myself.
P8	I didn't see it as awful. It was just an everyday life. And it was but it's when you came away from it all - know what I mean? - and saw how other people lived... Other people being in their families and I looked at that and thought, 'That's nice.. That's what I've missed out on. That's what I haven't got.'
P9	But then I also felt that I was only little kid sort of - you know... a lot of people say like this isn't happening in the eighties and it was known that it was going on but it weren't spoke about. And it's like just sort of maybe people have been making things up...
P8	If I had the choice open to me as much as they're open now, say when I was 13, I don't think I would have or getting married or anything like that. I would basically have been quite happy and open... And I was scared to be a gay man. So choice is very important. You should be able to choose.
P7	I suppose I was quite angry inside. When I was younger Mum would say, 'If I had a gay son I don't know what I'd do. I wouldn't be able to cope with it..' Knowing deep down inside that she's got two really, but one living a lie.
P10	Being brought up as a Catholic and having to be an altar boy and all this boring crap - which I don't believe in. And I kind of exploded with that as well.
P10	Just this like scared to be feminine. Very sort of straight laced - you know? A man should behave like a man kind of thing. And I just thought, 'Phew!' And he often looks at me when I'm talking to my brothers or when I'm reading them or trying to help them with their homework or that - or whatever. And he sort of used to look at me and go... 'Fucking weirdo!' [laughs]
P9	And I thought that being a child um with a school counsellor if I was to mention anything about being abused and that she'd make it so that social services were involved and things like that.'
P9	And it was quite upsetting when you went to school and it was like the teacher asks you on a Monday 'Oh what did the family do?' and things like that. At that time it was like... 'well I haven't got a family' - although I had, but because they turned round and said that family was mother and dad and it was like sort of Dad died and all I've got is my mum... and that wasn't classed as what they said was a family.
P7	... It was like growing up wanting to be like him. He just had male friends and a bit more freedom to go out with them. I wanted to grow up too quick I think. But I think all kids are like that...
P3	I wasn't treated like a male... we weren't treated as male. The stigma of a male having his privacy invaded. When changing clothing or bathing there was always a female there. You were always being watched so the privacy for the male was taken away.

Contamination of Sex

	Sample Extract
P8	I think it put me off the whole lot. I didn't want to be sexed up. I wanted to be loved up - do you know what I mean?
P7	All that I knew of gay life was what had happened to me. I felt affected by it.
P7	No. It used to. It was like [NAME] undressing me... I couldn't have anybody who I was undressed by... and it was like the idea of someone taking my underwear off that was...
P6	It's brilliant at first and then sex becomes a bit complicated for me. It's like: 'Something's going to go wrong now. I can't do this. I don't like sex. I don't want to be physical with you.' You know? I like the loving, cuddling, holding hands, lying on the sofa, socialising, being a couple thing, but the sex becomes a bit jaded after a while.

1. Table 3. Levels of concern, past and present, regarding sexual and gender identity
2. Table 4. Polarity balance within masculine and feminine construct groups
3. Table 5. Correlations between elements *Abuser* and *Ideal Self* (all traits)
4. Table 25. Fathers and Sons (full version)
5. Table 26. Mothers and Sons (full version)
6. Sample of compiled grid sheet data

Table 3. Levels of concern, past and present, regarding sexual and gender identity

Participant	SEXUAL IDENTITY CONCERNS				GENDER IDENTITY CONCERNS			
	CURRENT		PAST		CURRENT		PAST	
	Score	Band	Score	Band	Score	Band	Score	Band
1	2	Low	6	High	2	Low	6	High
2	4	Med	7	High	5	High	6	High
3	3	Med	6	High	5	Med	4	Med
4	2	Low	4	High	1	Low	5	High
5	1	Low	3	High	1	Low	3	Med
6	2	Low	7	High	3	Med	5	High
7	2	Low	7	High	6	High	7	High
8	1	Low	7	High	1	Low	6	High
9	1	Low	2	Low	5	High	5	High
10	2	Low	4	Med	4	Med	6	High

Score bands for Table 3

NONE = 0
 LOW = 1 – 2
 MEDIUM = 3 – 4
 HIGH = 5 – 7

Table 4. Polarity balance within masculine and feminine construct groups

	Participant	MASCULINE CONSTRUCTS		FEMININE CONSTRUCTS	
		% POSITIVE (2sf)	POS:NEG RATIO	% POSITIVE (2sf)	POS:NEG RATIO
Group 1	1	35%	8:15	71%	20:8
	2	32%	6:13	83%	19:4
	3	67%	16:8	48%	13:14
	4	46%	13:15	90%	27:3
	5	68%	17:8	75%	15:5
	Mean	50%		73%	
Group 2	6	26%	7:20	65%	22:12
	7	70%	7:10	89%	16:2
	8	64%	14:8	73%	24:9
	9	22%	4:14	65%	22:12
	10	27%	7:19	53%	17:15
		Mean	42%		69%

Table 5. Correlations between elements *Abuser* and *Ideal Self* (all traits)

Participant	Euclidean Distance (d) (re-scaled)	Correlation Pearson (r)	Significance level (2-tailed)	Abuser score band ¹ for Masculine Traits	Abuser score band for Feminine Traits
1	.897	-.231		HIGH	MEDIUM
2	.931	-.254	.05	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
3	.440	+.440	.01	HIGH	MEDIUM
4	.690	-.276	.05	HIGH	LOW
5	.735	+.048		MEDIUM	MEDIUM
6	.868	-.139		MEDIUM	LOW
7	.916	-.247	.05	HIGH	LOW
8	1.000	-.551	.01	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
9	.781	-.397	.01	MEDIUM	LOW
10	.907	-.391	.01	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

Table 25 Fathers and Sons

	Relationship	Key traits	Effects/comments	(d)	(r)	Sig. level (2 tailed)
P1	Father absent Then left (when P aged 7)	Hard-worker Not expressive Weak	'Until the divorce he was quite important to me.' 'A very stereotypical male... a very closed in (-M) person' 'He was a very weak (-M) person, which is why I think he is not a good role model for me.'	.657	-.292	.05
P2	Absent father. Drinker. Left home P aged 5.	Masculine Fun-loving Outgoing Capable	'The fact that my father wasn't around much could have turned me homosexual...'	.551	.501	.01
P3	Father died P aged 4.	Tall Good-looking Hard-working Firm	Equates father's death with 'loss of the male in my life'. [Search for replacement male figures leads to further abuse which compounds sense of masculine inadequacy.]	.347	.617	.01

¹ Score bands were calculated by rounding up the means to 1s.f. and assigning the following bands:
0 - 2 = LOW; 2 - 4 = MEDIUM; 5 - 7 = HIGH.

Appendix E

	Relationship	Key traits	Effects/comments	(d)	(r)	Sig. level (2 tailed)
P4	Father heart attack leads to prolonged childhood separation during which abuse took place	Nice bloke Not expressive Devoted to family Strong	'The earliest recollection I have was the ambulance screeching up outside and my dad being taken away' 'I very much respected my dad and tried to shape myself on what he was...' Father 'didn't talk about feelings' (-M)	.253	.400	.01
P5	Positive pre-teens role model but took early retirement and became very negative	Respected Disciplinarian Not demonstrative but loving Opinionated	'He actually changed as a person: he was aggressive, argumentative...' 'I think on one occasion he hit her' [mother]	.810	.306	.05
P6	Positive nurturing father then became heavy drinker.	Tactile Nurturing Supportive	Father = nurturing: 'Much more tactile and loving than my mother is' but while drinking: 'He was violent and aggressive and bitter and nasty and hung-over' P speculated about role of father's withdrawal in shaping his sexuality.	.386	.629	.01
P7	Absent. Then forced early retirement leads to drink.	Confident Hard-working Trustworthy	I didn't see that much of him. not one to one. 'He never used to whack mum but there used to be a lot of shouting (anger = -M).. it was aggressive (-M).. very aggressive'	.332	.558	.01
P8	None: raised in orphanages		Feels that with male role model he could have been more strongly identified with (+M) values of success and achievement: 'I could have climbed the ladder to the top' Also more able to express love (+F)			
P9	Died P aged 7	Honest Loving Sincere Masculine	Mother overwhelmed so P takes on female domestic and nurturing roles.	.369	.673	.01
P10	Physically abusive	Scary Big Passionate Abusive Dim	'Used to slap me around...' 'He was scared to be feminine' Homophobic.	.650	-.270	.05

Table 26 Mothers and Sons

	Relationship	Key Traits	Comments/notes	(d)	(r)	Sig. Level (2 tailed)
P1	Very close. Became mother's carer during illness. Complex bereavement reaction	Forceful Kind Mentally unstable Both soft and hard 'Typical redhead'	'...with my mum it was very close – certainly during my teens because she was so dependent on me' 'In some ways I think that's where my feminine attitude could come from – the fact that I used to do the cooking and the cleaning'	.425	.814	.01
P2	No memories of her (dissociated grief reaction) Died when aged 14 Unexpectedly	Provider Caring Thoughtful Sensitive Feminine	'It was as if she vanished into thin air in front of my eyes. It was such a shock.' 'My family all say we had a special bond: that we were really, really close...'	.343	.771	.01
P3	Very mixed feelings	Outgoing Good with money Genteel Secretive	'I feel it's partly to do with the way I was treated: moved around... I didn't see much of her in the early years. The bond between mother and child was broken. [n.b. found surrogate mother figure who died of cancer when P in teens with devastating effects]	.477	.373	.01
P4	Prolonged separation (2 years) while father recuperated from heart attack. Produced some resentment.	Popular Caring Feminine Nest-builder	'a poor sixth in terms of influence' 'She always did the best she could. She always tried to be a good mother.'	.195	.572	.01
P5	Very close	Provider Strong Family focused Empathic	'Always the affectionate one' 'We're still very close'	.617	.347	.01

Appendix E

	Relationship	Key Traits	Comments/notes	(d)	(r)	Sig. Level (2 tailed)
P6	Good relationship, but father did the nurturing when children young.	Loving Strong woman Not very expressive	'My mother takes on the more protective role sometimes' [inversion of traditional gender roles]	.282	.746	.01
P7	Not very available	Busy Hard-working Proud Feminine Psych. Strong	'She was not one to sit down and play a game or anything' '...always too busy. She was always washing. Always cleaning.'	.348	.567	.01
P8	Orphan		[Feels that a relationship with a mother would have enabled him to get more in touch with his feelings (+F).]			
P9	Very close	Too soft hearted Caring Loyal 100% diamond	'She gets walked over too many times' 'She became a hell of a lot weaker emotionally after my dad died.' [P assumed domestic roles]	.256	.814	.01
P10	Mother persecutory and abusive.	Schizophrenic Insecure Cynical Vulnerable	'Nothing positive between us' 'I just hated her so much' Used to try and suffocate P, break his legs. Taunted him.	1.000	-.594	.01

Research Diary

1999

March 29th My first research diary entry... This is suspiciously organised. I'm still sifting ideas for the thesis. I feel pretty certain I want to do something with the Men's Service clients. Male sexual abuse is such an underdeveloped field and there seems to be relatively little work which really moves beyond the classification of symptoms. You don't seem to hear the voices or perspectives of these men themselves coming through in what I've read to date, so perhaps there would be genuine value in a piece of qualitative research that attends closely to these men's own perspectives on what has happened to them. Looking at some of the literature has given me a few possible leads. Three main areas appeal to me: a) the impact of the abuse on identity, b) the way that it affects individual worldviews, or c) the way that CSA interacts with other factors in survivors' lives. The latter seems to have been really neglected, yet clinical experience strongly suggests that that abuse is seldom the only issue or even necessarily the main one for this client group. Clients always seem to have really complicated relationships with their families for example (what about looking at narcissistic vulnerability?). However, I badly need an issue that will provide an effective focus around which the research can be structured.

April 4th Have started to wade through the huge pile of papers. With some reluctance I have dumped the worldviews idea on the basis that it would be difficult to operationalise, and also because the clinical relevance is not so immediately obvious. However, it looks like gender identity might provide a way of linking up the other two possibilities. Also, judging from the articles I've read, not only do gender and sexuality issues crop up consistently for this group, but the theory accounting for the effects of abuse in these domains seems pretty unevolved. Lots of it just doesn't really tally with my clinical experience. I am conscious that gender identity issues are always around, but not necessarily in the rather simplistic terms in which they are represented in the research literature. There is a need for a more in-depth treatment of the subject.

May 22nd Got a proposal in but I can't say I'm entirely happy with it. The comparative 4 x 4 design is definitely problematic. I want to include a control group of non-abused men for comparative purposes, but having to control for sexual

orientation and experience of abuse leaves so few participants in each cell that I am not sure that the comparisons will be meaningful, or that it will be possible to establish what factors are producing the effects. Part of me thinks that I should stick with a theoretical sample of abused men which would at least allow me to get more purchase on commonalities between their experience which may well be pretty diverse in any case. I need a design that is going to be congruent with my qualitative method and not bite off more than I can chew. I think another chat with Philip is required.

August 12th The feedback from the external and Margie [Callanan] was pretty positive, although both of them picked up on some of the control group issues, and the need to match these participants across a whole range of factors that, to be honest, I hadn't even thought of. Given the difficulty of recruiting participants from this group, I simply may not be able to be that choosy. As a result I have pretty much decided to abandon the controls and the design feels more coherent to me as a result.

October 8th Got ethical approval from the LREC which is an enormous relief. I finally feel like I'm getting somewhere. At least I can now get on with some piloting and start thinking about recruiting some participants. I just wish that the wretched small-scale research project was out of the way so that I could concentrate fully upon the dissertation.

October 18th I've just sent Philip an e-mail including the revised proposals for the integration of repertory grids to supplement the interviews. Although it will make for more work both for me and the participants the advantages seem to me to be as follows:

1. By permitting comparisons between scores allocated to self now and ideal self, grids would provide a means of both illustrating and quantifying the extent of an individual's gender confusion issues.
2. They would also provide a more controlled method of establishing whether men experiencing these problems do so because they subscribe to rather stereotypical versions of gender roles attributed to them in the literature.

3. By using key figures from childhood as additional elements, and working deductively from their characteristics, the task of eliciting the grids should provide a more systematic way of looking at the 'hidden' influence of key figures in the modeling of gender constructs.
4. The grids would allow for triangulation with the data collected from the interviews and therefore provide a multi-dimensional perspective.

October 26th Late evening meeting with Philip who generously stayed on to discuss the amendments and bought me a pint of beer. Tediously, the proposed changes mean that I am going to have to go back to ethics. However, I think the rep grids will really add something. Since I have to commit so much time and effort to this piece of work anyway, I want it to be as strong as I can make it. However, the words 'rod', 'own' and 'back' come forcibly to mind.

29th October Am beginning to query the appropriateness of a grounded theory approach. In some respects a narrative analysis might be suitable given the nature of the project but I do need a mode of analysis that will enable me to engage properly with the literature theory and underlying internal processes. I need to find out more about IPA which could also offer a way forward.

4th November Presented proposal to the Men's Service therapists and received some useful feedback. Mixed reception to the construct grids component but I'm going to stick with it. Therapists seemed willing to nominate participants once given a list of inclusion/exclusion criteria, although the initial impression is that not that many suitable participants were on their books at present.

7 December Received approval for modifications from the LREC. Now all I need is some participants...

2000

February 22nd First pilot completed. I suspect I've been very fortunate in that [PARTICIPANT NAME] was highly cooperative and seemed very engaged in the whole process. The laddering exercise seems to work well, but I need another way of getting at the way they construct masculinity and femininity. Asking them about similarities and differences may well be too demanding for some of them. Still, the interview data was really interesting, and the basic design seems sound. It is quite a long haul for participants though and I may need to think about including another break.

March 14th I'm getting a bit concerned about the slow trickle of participants. I may have to ring round the therapists again. However, I have got a few people to approach and at least the quality of the data I am getting seems really high. I am surprised, having been doing this sort of work for a while now, how affecting some of the accounts are. I suppose in therapy the time constraints and the whole clinical agenda tends to truncate the accounts that people give. You certainly get a very different feel for people's lives when they are able to tell you their own story in a single sitting. As the listener, it is also a refreshing novelty to be able to follow one's curiosity without feeling constrained by the need to formulate on the spot or to prioritize only information that appears to have immediate clinical relevance.

April 16th Last week's course at the Tavistock has definitely seduced me into a new enthusiasm for all things psychodynamic (well maybe not *all* things). The hard evidence may not always be entirely satisfactory, but the rhetorical plausibility and explanatory power of dynamic principles is undeniable. I suspect that this approach may be quite useful in interpreting some of my own data.

April 20th This has been a really heavy week of data collection and I'm feeling quite drained. Even though I think I have few illusions about people's capacity for cruelty and neglect, it still takes me aback just how brutal human beings can be to one another. I sometimes wonder whether Psychologists don't unwittingly become apologists for all manner of horrors by always seeking to explain rather than condemn. Somehow the notion of personal accountability seems to get

diluted along the way. Maybe this is all transferential projections of the participants' own feelings of injustice. Maybe I'm just tired. I'm looking forward to the Easter break.

16th May I appear to be gathering an enormous amount of information, and have no idea just yet how I am going to compress it into 20,000 words. The individual accounts are so compelling and I really don't want to end up with a bunch of bland generalizations. However, it doesn't look as if I'm going to have the space to present individual case histories. I note from the suggested dissertation timetable that I should be writing up my results this week... This would be slightly easier if the data was all in by now. I'm still trying to recruit to Group Two, but at least it looks as if Group One is relatively sorted. I might have to go for a 6:4 split, but I tend to agree with Philip that this isn't really ideal. I think its worth hanging out for a bit longer. I've got plenty to get on with in the mean time.

12th June It is beginning to hit home just how much work the analysis is going to involve. What with quite a busy clinical schedule and various child demands at home it is not proving easy to find either the time or mental space that I want to devote to this stage. Still, at least I can honestly say that I am still interested in the project, which I guess is an encouraging sign.

4th July Final grid session today. It was worth waiting for the last participant, but the pressure is really on now.

18th July This is disastrous... I just cannot see myself being ready to submit on Friday. I have had so little sleep over the last week or so that I really am no state to do justice to the discussion and the appendices still need doing. I feel completely stressed out and exhausted. The fact that Will is teething at the moment just adds insult to injury. This will be the first extension I have had to request, and it does feel pretty humiliating. However, at the very least I owe it to the participants to write up this project in a reasonable way. Besides which, even if I stayed up again all night over the next couple of days, I just don't think I can physically finish on time - regardless of considerations of quality. I am going to have to swallow my pride and call Tony first thing tomorrow.

20th July A reprieve of two weeks has been granted. Thank God. A few hours sleep later and my head already feels a lot clearer.

27th July

In many respects this project probably been the most stretching and rewarding of any piece of academic work I have done to date. It raises so many issues, and I can't but help feel it is only scraping the surface of an area that has implications for many client groups - not just victims of sexual abuse. Emotionally and intellectually it has been a real roller-coaster ride. Listening to these men recount their stories has been consistently thought-provoking and often genuinely moving. It still amazes me how people can find the resources to cope with even the most aversive, crushing and abusive of circumstances. Time to call a halt before the prose gets any more purple... and hand the wretched thing in. I can't believe I am finally at this point.

1. Sample Feedback Sheets for Participants
2. Participants' Comments and Observations about the Research

P1 FEEDBACK

You associate both masculinity and femininity with positive and negative characteristics. However, whilst you see a relatively small group of positive masculine traits as overshadowed by the concept's negative connotations, femininity is seen as a strongly positive complex of characteristics with only a few associated drawbacks (such as the desire to be looked after, a need for approval and more materialistic attitudes).

For you femininity is actually associated with psychological, emotional and moral strength. You regard women as essentially more powerful than men. Masculinity on the other hand, whilst connected to a freedom and physical strength that you aspire to, is also synonymous with emotional vulnerability and moral deficiencies (e.g. selfishness, superficiality and exploitation) which you have no wish to be identified with.

In your early years your father was an important role model for you, but you became disillusioned with him when your parents' marriage broke down and he left home when you were seven. You regard him as 'a very stereotypical male' who has difficulty expressing his feelings and think of him also as demonstrating some of the psychological and moral weakness that you tend to think of as masculine. You believe that this weakness allows him to be dominated by your stepmother.

You found a more positive male role model in [NAME], who was someone who combined positive 'masculine' qualities such as self-determination and freedom with a number of more 'feminine' virtues as well.

You regard your mother as a huge and positive influence on your life. You see her as epitomising almost exclusively 'feminine' virtues – including the notion of emotional strength and resilience. She was able to be both forceful and tough as required, but also soft and affectionate as well. Being placed in the role of carer for her during her illness brought you especially close until you were so closely identified with her that you were able to predict her requests and communicate without words. Whilst you assumed the traditionally female roles of carer and home-maker, your brother assumed the role of breadwinner. Thus both the closeness of your bond with your mother and the role that you assumed at home strengthened your identification with your feminine side.

From a very early age you had always seen yourself as an individual and rejected the pressures of cultural conventions. You were a free-thinker and tended to define yourself in opposition rather than conformity to family norms. You feel that you were always an outsider in

your family, and feel hurt that your difference lead to rejection and exclusion by your siblings. However, your free-thinking attitudes may also make it possible for you to be more comfortable with aspects of your gender identity that don't fit with traditional perceptions of men and women.

The sexual abuse heightened your sense of yourself as different – this time in a negative way. After the abuse you did develop a more overtly masculine persona. You wanted to act and feel like 'a regular bloke'. Maybe you felt that your uniqueness had made you an easy target and therefore sought to protect yourself by suppressing it. However, immersing yourself in 'laddish' culture was difficult for you because you feel it prevented you from being your true self – something that continues to be extremely important to you.

The abuse also made you react against male homosexuality which you associated with brutalisation and trauma. You now feel that the abuse closed off an opportunity to explore an avenue of your sexuality that, under different circumstances, you might have investigated. You do not, however, find yourself sexually attracted to men.

Your relationships with women have been mixed. In [EX-GIRLFRIEND] you thought you had found an apparently 'benign' woman who would allow you to take a male lead, and initially you enjoyed the status and admiration that [HER] physical beauty brought you. However, as time progressed she became more and more dominant in the relationship. You found yourself unable to meet her voracious sexual demands which you experienced as intrusive and progressively withdrew sexually, adopting what you described as the 'typical woman's role' of fending off the sexual advances of a more sexually dominant partner. Thus a relationship that had initially promised to augment your masculine identification ended up ultimately leaving you feeling overwhelmed and feminised.

In your sexual attitudes now you describe yourself as 'very feminine'. The abuse has given you a horror of being a sexual exploiter of others (as you feel you may have been during your more promiscuous phase) and now you have to feel assured that both parties are completely consenting. It seems clear that, quite naturally, you want to distance yourself from any identification with your negative and strongly masculine-identified abuser. You tend to get more out of giving in sex than receiving, emphasise foreplay, and avoid penetrative sex if possible. You have sexual fantasies of actually being a woman with another woman, and stated that in many respects you feel like 'a lesbian trapped in a man's body'. You feel that there are areas of your sexuality that you still want to explore, but feel that you need a platform of stability in your life before it will be appropriate to do so.

P10 FEEDBACK

For you both masculinity and femininity appear to have positive and negative aspects to them.

On the positive side, your femininity is associated with your aesthetic and creative abilities, your latent idealism and also your capacity to care for other people and your sensitivity. In its negative aspect, femininity is associated with softness, vulnerability and insecurity which make the feminine self susceptible to attack and exploitation.

You seem to regard the positive and negative aspects of masculinity as strongly interrelated. Masculine qualities such as assertiveness, self-determination and strength give you power to protect yourself and others. However, the protection afforded by masculinity is synonymous with being prepared to mobilise and identify yourself with the predominantly negative characteristics associated with this concept: arrogance, cynicism, aggression, anger, domination, and violence.

The experience of having to draw upon the resources of this protective but negative masculine persona is at times quite stressful, since you don't wish to identify yourself with characteristics that typified the many threatening and abusive male figures in your past. As you put it: 'I hate being put in situations where I have to act the arsehole'.

Thus although many of your core values are feminine, there is a real question around whether you can afford to identify yourself with them. Both 'masculine' and 'feminine' aspects of your identity have their potential problems and your solution is to move fluidly and interchangeably between aspects of both, depending on the context. Thus you can switch instantly between idealism and cynicism, softness and harshness, caring and indifference. You also project this need to alternate into your partners: if they're 'too soft' you try and toughen them up and vice versa. Similarly, as a teenager you also divided your time between two groups of groups of friends representing these twin aspects of yourself – the predominantly female group who exhibited positive 'feminine' qualities, and the 'roughneck scrubbers' on the estate who represented the more destructive, but necessary 'masculine' traits in you.

Seeing yourself as a combination of 'masculine' and 'feminine' capacities also has the added advantage of allowing you to feel like a closed system and therefore self-sufficient – no longer dependent on other people who might use you, hurt or betray you as they have done in the past.

Because of your mother's illness and your father's absence you had to assume both masculine and feminine gender roles (maternal and paternal) in relation to your siblings. You did what you could to nurture and care for them, while also attempting to protect them from the many threats in your environment. This presumably helped consolidate identifications with both positive 'masculine' and positive 'feminine' aspects of yourself.

The development of your 'feminine' side also allowed you to distance yourself from an identification with your father's negative masculinity, an identification that you actively resisted until the need to defend yourself became overwhelming in puberty. Your mother's announcement that you were the product of a rape – itself an act associated with a number of negative masculine attitudes and behaviours – appears to have precipitated the unleashing of a negative but powerful male persona capable of protecting you.

Like your father, your mother also seems to have exemplified many negative 'masculine' qualities: violent mood swings, aggression, violence, persecution. These characteristics do not appear to have been counterbalanced at the time by positive 'feminine' characteristics such as caring or sensitivity.

You appear to have had no positive role models of either sex, with the possible exception of some of your friends' parents. Those around with a duty to protect you were either negligent or actually perpetrating the abuse. This left you feeling that your only option was to protect yourself.

Throughout your childhood you experienced oppression from a number of different sources, of which the sexual abuse by your uncle was only one: 'another notch on your belt'. Your Catholic upbringing forced you into roles and behaviours not of your own choosing. You were physically abused by both your mother and your father in ways that left you feeling powerless. Messages received from your mother – apart from those implicit in the physical abuse – defined you as 'ugly' and worthless. Collectively, these events left you feeling frightened and persecuted with the result that you felt and acted like a 'victim' until your early teens. Your reaction to being defined negatively in this way has subsequently been to place a strong emphasis on self-determination and the fundamental importance of free choice.

While you questioned some of these negative projections, part of you came to believe them. You developed hang-ups about your appearance and acted out the role by appearing scruffy and unkempt at school – a strategy that resulted in further persecution from your peers. The invasion of your physical boundaries during the sexual abuse was the beginning of the belief that you 'only partly owned your body' and this further undermined your sense of self-respect.

These feelings of worthlessness were also acted out via the frequent 'meaningless' sexual encounters that you were compelled to repeat, even though they left you feeling 'a total scumbag and a tramp...' They also often put you in vulnerable situations reminiscent of the dynamics of the original abuse.

Although you do not believe that the sexual abuse was responsible for your sexual orientation, the abuse made it harder for you to feel positive about being a gay teenager. You were repulsed by the experience of intercourse with your uncle and believe that this negative and distressing initiation was more likely to encourage you into heterosexual identification rather than continue to seek out sexual contact with men who had become in your mind synonymous with abuse and violence. You did try out heterosexual relationships and kept your early sexual activity as a gay teenager secret.

The abuse was not the only source of initial discomfort about your sexual identity. Your parents' homophobia and the threat of your father's reaction also made it extremely difficult to feel good about being gay. Your Catholic upbringing also communicated the message that your sexuality was sinful and perverse.

You believe that being precociously sexualised may have given you an exceptionally high sex drive and resulted in an obsession with sex. You have found that a useful mechanism for overcoming some of the more traumatic experiences to which you were subjected as a child has been to re-play them of your own volition with a partner of your choice. Although you find this initially demeaning, the act then becomes positive and enjoyable, in a way that to some extent overwrites the negative emotions originally connected with it.

Selected Participant Observations about the Research Process

'Yeah. I think I can say I've enjoyed doing it. It's nice that people are actually taking into consideration what people do go through...'

'I found it very interesting. It helps you understand perhaps why I have been feeling the way I have about certain things. And in a strange way it helps me understand what I'm feeling... And also the questions themselves I found interesting – you know: thought provoking.'

'It does spin your mind back quite a bit... made me more in touch with my feelings. And it does help.'

'It does feel really strange seeing it all laid out like that [in the feedback sheet]. It's stuff you know, but of course there's knowing and knowing. I think I tend to shut a lot of this stuff out normally. But it's been OK.'

'I just find every time I talk about it over the years it just gets a bit easier – it's definitely not so raw now as it once was. And if its going to help out other people in the same boat then I think it's worth it.'