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# Conversing with ‘monsters’? Narratives about men who sexually abuse(d) children

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## ABSTRACT

This research has examined multiperspectival narratives told about and by men who sexually abuse(d) children. Drawing on institutional, public and private narratives, I have explored how men who sexually abuse(d) children are characterised, how meanings about these men are created, and how their reintegrative prospects are understood. The project has encompassed five research elements: historical narratives evident in archival materials; media narratives evident in news articles; public discourse reflected in five focus groups; the accounts of support people of men who sexually abused reflected in one focus group; and the stories of ten men imprisoned for sexually abusing children elicited through pre-release and post-release conversations. These multiple levels of narration have allowed me to look within and across these settings to establish links and to demarcate points of convergence and departure of these diverse narratives.

Results have suggested a mismatch between narratives about men who offend(ed) with those evident in the stories of support persons and the men themselves. The latter are anchored in, but contest the former; in particular the narrow representations of these men as inherently evil and not rehabilitatable. Subtle disruptions that question commonly held assumptions about men who sexually abuse(d) children and tell of alternative possibilities are evident in some narratives. My research shows that narratives can accumulate and reinforce assumptions over time and in many respects be discriminatory and exclusionary as well as being liberatory, enveloped in healing and open to change.

By locating these men in their social environment and contextualising the crime, I examine the issues of child sex abuse from various angles. This research offers a more inclusive perspective on men who offend(ed) against children that can contribute to broadening public dialogue regarding the characterizations of these men, issues of community reintegration and repairing people's lives.

This study is dedicated to and a celebration of human development and the relationships that promote the achievement of our potentials.

Without reproach of the past, without fear of the future, I go on.

(Imre Vallyon, 2004, p. 53)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## PROLOGUE

In May 2005 a newspaper article caught my attention. The small, inconspicuous West Coast town of Blackball in the South Island of New Zealand made headlines when a convicted child sex offender resettled there with his wife following time in prison. Members of the small community appeared united in their sentiment that this man had no right to live in their midst and, through vigilante actions, successfully ousted him from the town. Posters told him to leave town, “There’s no home here paedophile” and “Now the hunter becomes the hunted” (“Coasters celebrate,” 2005) or “Do us all a favour and kill yourself” (“Behind the moral outrage,” 2005). Members of the community achieved their goal and the man and his wife left. The problem was solved for the people of Blackball and it became another community’s predicament. News media interest in this case eventually subsided but the story had aroused my curiosity. I had many questions and began to pay closer attention to news media reports on child sex offenders. A more academic engagement with this topic followed. I narrowed the focus to the various characterizations of men who sexually abuse(d) a child or children and the processes to reintegrate them back into society, which now constitute the fabric of this thesis.

Nearly four years after the Blackball incident, at the beginning of March 2009, a similar situation arose in the small South Taranaki community of Patea. A march through the township and a 24-hour watch on a man’s house instigated his removal and return to prison for his own safety (“Paedophile returned to jail,” 2009). And again, in June 2009, a man was hounded out of Whakatane (“‘Round the clock’ minder,” 2009). Communities remain ill-prepared to accommodate a perceived ‘monster’. The act of ousting the known offender does not solve the problem; it does not even address it.

Sexual violation against children evokes strong emotions. It is a contested, complex and taboo topic, yet it permeates society at all levels and is extraordinarily prevalent, although the academic community is divided with regards to this last point. When sexual abuse occurs, it inevitably affects many people: the victims, their families and friends. It has consequences for offenders, their families and friends, who often are one and the same as the families and



friends of the victim(s). This crime polarises people and divides families. It is therefore essential and appropriate that I acknowledge the pain, sorrow, trauma, shame and suffering the victims of child sex abuse, both females and males, experience. The victims' absence in this thesis is not a deliberate omission to disavow their narratives in favour of perpetrators' stories. The omission reflects the nature of this particular research. However, accounts of victims are woven into broader discussions in Chapters Four to Nine. Victim accounts are part of the complexity of child sexual abuse and I will return to the victims' tacit presence in this study in the Epilogue.

My engagement with this research topic had consequences, perhaps not unexpectedly. People were either appalled at my choice of subject or they disclosed abuse or knowledge of abuse that happened to close family members or friends. Rarely was there a neutral position. Remarks ranged from "abhorrent" from one academic with another academic proposing a bullet as a solution, "I don't do yucky cases like this" from a female lawyer, "I don't know why you give them [child sex offenders] the time of the day" from a colleague, to "you don't get brownie points for this [study]" from a male lawyer. Over the course of this research, I encountered many women, some of whom I only just met and others whom I have known for some time, who disclosed their status as sexual abuse survivors. At times this was an overwhelming experience and the staggering numbers confirmed, albeit anecdotally, the high rate of child sexual abuse in New Zealand. These accounts bestowed human faces to statistics while at the other end of the spectrum the perpetrators, the participants in this research, often depicted as disgusting perverts in public narratives, were no longer anonymous either. Over at least two conversations that I had with each man, they, too, became complex human beings embodying much more than the stereotypical notion of high-risk child molesters. Unlike the narrow focus on aspects of the offending frequently taken by news media and in public deliberations, these conversations illustrate ordinary people in relationships and with families.

Throughout the research process, I have been mindful of this privileged knowledge entrusted in me by people who have been victims of this crime. I have been equally mindful of perpetrators' generous narratives that form the core component of this thesis. These are stories from 'enemy camps' and I have been particularly conscious of this dual tension and responsibility but ultimately this

study focuses on men who sexually abuse(d). I do not endorse their or any other offenders' abusive practices. However, I would consider it neglectful not to lift and examine every stone in the search for new understandings to an unresolved issue. My engagement with these men and the topic of child sex abuse is to illuminate the matter from different angles and through multiple narratives in the hope that it may initiate and encourage fresh dialogue about sexual offending.

This is an interdisciplinary study between psychology and history with my orientation towards critical, social and community psychologies. However, academic interest in child sex abuse and the abuser is now vast, and it crosses intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary boundaries. While literature from outside the discipline enriches this study, crossing boundaries into unfamiliar territory was uncomfortable for me at times. In particular, I draw upon philosophical, psychoanalytic and media studies discussions while absorbing readings of these from my own disciplinary perspective. My purpose here was to strive to investigate the issue from a number of angles (see Figure 1, page 18) with the aim of creating more complete understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) and their exposure to reintegrative processes back into communities. I discovered that the scope is much wider than this study allowed me to cover. Consequently, I had to set boundaries. This study, based on a collection of multiperspectival narratives, highlights that representations and understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) are exceedingly complex.

The thesis is divided into four parts. Part One sets the stage by laying out the topic area, research aim, context for the research, research elements, structure, background and methodological approach. Part Two encompasses the first main act by exploring archival, institutional and public narratives that characterize men who sexually offend(ed) against children. Part Three provides the second main act in terms of how the men themselves and their partners and families 'story' or create narratives about their lifeworlds. These narratives are best described as 'up close and personal', representing the experiences of people who support men who abused and the stories elicited from men who sexually abused children. The personal narratives in Part Three provide an alternative orientation towards descriptions of men who sexually abuse(d) children. In Part Four, I synthesise the various research elements and conclude with a discussion. The key

objectives, to foreground various understandings about men who sexually abuse(d) children and views on their rehabilitation, remain the same for all parts.

## **PART ONE**

The first three chapters of this thesis set the scene. I explain my conceptual orientation to the research and key ideas that connect the various research elements. In Chapter One, I introduce the topic. 'Othering' men who sexually abuse(d) children by drawing on a dualistic logic is a frequently used practice to signal their being estranged. This is unhelpful and paradoxical because these men are part of families, networks and communities; they do not exist in isolation. I expand on the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study and present the research elements that encompass the data corpus. Next, Chapter Two positions this study within the context of the current scholarly debates while at the same time grounding the study in New Zealand. I draw on a selection of academic narratives, comprising three themes that have emerged as recurring issues in the multifaceted narratives I engaged with in this study. To accommodate the eclectic body of data that includes five primary research elements (Figure 1, page 18), I have selected narrative concepts and methods. I elaborate on these in Chapter Three, where I also describe data gathering procedures and introduce interpretative frameworks used in the analyses.



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### The issue

Every sex offender isn't the same, but the public view it the same. Yet, you take the worst case scenario and they [the public] then put us in that class, you know. Or they see us [offenders] in that class as we are all like that, but we are not, you know. All these stupid people [other offenders] that haven't learnt by their mistakes and they go out and do it again and again and again, that is why we are up there with them. (Hone)

Hone<sup>1</sup> is a man in his 30s who sexually abused the daughter of his partner. I selected this quotation to introduce and illustrate some of the complexities of the topic of sexual offending including the tension and juxtaposition between offenders and the public. Hone was imprisoned, attended a treatment programme at the Special Treatment Unit Te Piriti, which is part of Auckland Prison, and now lives back in the community. Hone, a research participant for this study, is acutely aware of the social position occupied by men who sexually abuse(d) children.<sup>2</sup> In the above quotation he hints at a number of reasons why he believes people resent and reject him and men like him. He suggests that the public does not differentiate between the various types or seriousness of sexual abuse and collectively aligns all offenders with those who have committed the most vicious acts of abuse. All men who offended against children are immediately categorised and considered to be recidivists because some offenders do abuse again, while many move on to live a life free of crime. Therefore, the public's

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<sup>1</sup> Pseudonyms are used for all research participants.

<sup>2</sup> I use the more cumbersome wording of men who sexually abuse(d) children, rather than child sex offenders or similar terms more commonly used in academic literature. In general, such labels limit the perception of these men, emphasising their shortcomings, rather than opening up possibilities. On occasions, I refer to sex offending, sex offender, abuse or abuser. Within the context of this thesis, this is always to be understood as a sexual offence against a child or children. In the literature, the meaning of these terms is often ambiguous.

understanding is that all child sex offenders are the same; hence once a sex offender, always a sex offender. Hone strongly rejects this notion. He also distances himself from repeat offenders by calling them “stupid people”. He holds them responsible for their overall reputation and portrayal as bad people and beyond redemption.

Pertinent to this thesis, this extract from Hone’s narrative reflects an offender’s perspective on what he recognises as a contested and contentious subject of men like himself who sexually abuse(d) children. Hone’s narrative and that of nine other men who sexually offended against children are at the centre of this study. The ten research participants have been apprehended, charged, and spent time in mainstream prisons. Towards the end of their sentences, they attended a special treatment programme. These men are labelled as child sex offenders, child molesters or paedophiles by the news media and in academic writing. In everyday conversations words such as ‘perverts’, ‘paedos’, ‘kiddie-fiddlers’, ‘monsters’, ‘evil paedophiles’ or ‘dirty old men’ are more commonly used. These terms are value-laden, invoke negative connotations and reflect one-sided characterizations, also hinting at the otherness and the demonisation of these men. Such classifications contribute towards an understanding of these men as ‘deviant others’ and different from the rest of ‘us’. At the receiving end of the abuse are children. The concept of ‘child’ and its associated temporal frame of ‘childhood’ are equally value-laden. They symbolise and call to mind the notion that children are innocent, pure, good, vulnerable, and in need of protection. Failure to safeguard children from harm, and in particular from sexual abuse, induces stern reactions channelled towards offenders that often result in demands for harsher penalties and longer prison terms by the public and groups such as the Sensible Sentencing Trust. The idealised perception of children prevails despite reports of some children engaging in bullying, mobbing or drug-taking. More extreme forms where, for example, children turn into murderers<sup>3</sup> conjure general anxiety, with a British television documentary even suggesting “the end of childhood” (Valentine, 2001, p. 183) and Sacks (1995) predicting that the ‘moral fabric’ in Britain has been torn (cited in Tester, 2001). Yet, while the concept of childhood is upheld, the pessimistic view of men who sexually abuse children equally continues to triumph. Thus, we have two epithets: the ‘child’ and

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<sup>3</sup> For example, two ten year old boys murdering Jamie Bulger in the United Kingdom, or Bailey Junior Kurariki’s involvement in the killing of Michael Choy in New Zealand.

the 'child sex offender'. Both of these terms imply a sense of common understandings (Davies & Harré, 1990) of the respective meanings, and a perceived homogeneous nature of children and of men who sexually offend(ed) against children. In Chapter Two, I add the 'victim' to such uniform depictions.

Contrasting with popular and often narrow representations of child sex offenders, this thesis offers more diverse understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) children. I sketch, unpack, compare and appraise competing and disjointed narratives in an effort to look for alternative representations of men who sexually abuse(d). Manifestations of such pockets of resistance to mainstream understandings exist in subtle forms and are evident throughout the research data. These are subtle because it takes courage to contest the main narrative of men who sexually abuse(d). Abhorrence and evil, Christie (2004) proposes, is a phenomenon understood and not in need of further intellectualising: "evil people are their own explanation" (p. 49).

In this introductory chapter, I outline the aims of the research, detail the various elements contributing to the achievement of the research goals, explain the rationale that underlies this thesis, and preview the chapters.

## **Research aim**

This thesis documents a range of interrelated narratives through which men who sexually abuse(d) children are characterized. Particular attention is given to how these men are portrayed and understood in media coverage and public discussions; how these men negotiate and re-forge their personal sense of selfhood following the abuse; and how their prospects for reintegration into the community are constructed in contemporary New Zealand society. The research objective is to examine how meaning is created about men who sexually abuse(d) children, to delineate the different representations of these men and to scrutinize understandings of reintegration following imprisonment. I have titled this thesis "Conversing with 'monsters'" to highlight a prominent characterization in these constructions. Their perceived otherness often impedes reintegrative efforts following incarceration. Research findings suggest that there are many aspects to these men that are not dissimilar to the wider population. I draw on



five core data sets (Figure 1, page 18), each of which has singular and common ways of depicting these men. Overall, men who sexually offend(ed) against children are frequently described exclusively in diagnostic terms through their crimes and failings. This brands them as abhorrent, dastardly, evil, inhumane and different. This is important, as the orientation towards emphasising shortcomings has consequences in terms of the community reintegration of these men. While the narratives I draw on in Parts One and Two of this study generally support an apparent coherent identity for the sex offender, the narratives of the support people and offenders, explored in Part Three, are more critical of this identity and largely reject these stereotypical notions. Instead, they offer accounts of mostly mundane lives, redemption, regret, reform and hope. In this study, I map out the various characterizations embedded in narratives told about and by men who sexually offend(ed) against children, to demarcate how meaning is produced about these men, and to delineate points of convergence and departures of these diverse stories. At a theoretical level, this thesis offers insights into the dialogical processes through which institutional, public and private narratives are woven across various levels of engagement in contemporary society and how this shapes the characterization of a particular group of men.

Popular talk about child sex abuse is value-laden and burdened by anger, hurt, secrecy, silence, anxiety, antagonism, misconceptions and taboo. My research finds that this is not conducive ground on which to create a space for open public deliberations. It hampers openness, dialogue, understanding and a willingness to move forward in terms of achieving the ultimate goal of finding ways to prevent child sexual abuse from occurring in the first place. The underlying intention of this thesis is to illustrate alternative narratives about men who sexually abuse(d) and to defy common understandings with a view to expanding present public deliberations.

In addition, by contextualising the crime and scrutinising the issues of child sex abuse from various angles, this research attempts to move beyond dichotomous notions of 'us' (the general public) and 'them' (offenders), and to consider alternative representations to those dominating public discourses regarding sexual offending against children. I also offer new insights into the consequences of dominant social constructions for the lives of men who have abused children and of people around them. Embedded in a multivocal and interdisciplinary

approach, I use the research components described below to achieve these goals.

## **Rationale and research elements**

In this section, I consider three points. Firstly, I explain the scholarly rationale that underlies this thesis. Secondly, I illustrate the various research elements that inform this study. Thirdly, I elaborate on the role and significance that each part of the thesis contributes towards the entire project.

In the Prologue I referred to the 2005 case in Blackball where a man who sexually abused attempted to resettle and was ousted. Vigilante actions emphasise and pre-empt possible shortcomings (reoffending), based on a sentiment that justice has not been achieved by imprisonment. In New Zealand, in most cases, offenders are released back into society following their incarceration. Dialogues between institutions and communities or neighbourhoods to discuss an imminent release are not sought because, as Christie (1977) proposes, conflicts are amassed and dealt with by experts in the arena of the court. Thus, key players—victim, offender, families and the wider community—are distanced from active and proper participation in conflict resolution. This is how western judicial systems work. According to Christie, this results in a loss of opportunity for ongoing dialogue within communities, and it removes collective responsibilities. This is exemplified in the Blackball and other cases where vigilante actions are, perhaps in part, reactions to fear and expressions of community alienation from decision-making processes (also see discussion on reintegration, Chapter Two). Such actions are not products of collaborative dialogues nor solutions that lead to mutually beneficial outcomes for all stakeholders.

In New Zealand, the re-housing of men who sexually abused occurs in secret and at the exclusion of any transparency and dialogical efforts. The situation differs in countries with notification laws.<sup>4</sup> Where these men are exposed, it contributes to the polarising of community members into divided groups (see Chapter Two for an example). A sense of justice is thought to be restored following imprisonment with the offender's right to continue with his or her life, once again enjoying all or most of the entitlements and benefits of a full member of society. In the case of a child sex abuser, this principle seems to not necessarily apply. This is attested to by public outcries and, as I have outlined, in extreme cases vigilante action and community resistance to the prospect of re-housing a man who has sexually offended in the neighbourhood. Quite apart from obstructing successful rehabilitation (Ward, Gannon & Birgden, 2007) such actions potentially infringe the rights of men who have sexually offended against children, creating an environment whereby the offender cohort is subdivided into those deserving and those undeserving of rights. This overlooks the tenet that these men are "*both* rights-holders and duty-bearers" (Ward et al., 2007, p. 205) of human rights.

Public outcry and hysteria over released sex offenders ignore the fact that many offenders have never been apprehended, because sexual abuse is often guarded and kept a secret either between victims and offenders or within families (see also Chapter Seven for examples). Consequently, there is a likelihood that such a person already resides in the neighbourhood or, worse still, is somebody we know. According to the website for SAFE (<http://www.safenz.org/>),<sup>5</sup> a community-based sexual abuse treatment programme in Auckland,<sup>6</sup> not only is the rate of sexual abuse in New Zealand one of the highest in the world, it is suggested that only seven per cent (SAFE, 2008) to nine per cent (Ministry of Justice, 2006) of abuse is ever reported.

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<sup>4</sup> Although there is no notification law in New Zealand, there is an "Agreement for Sharing Information About Child Sex Offenders between the Department of Corrections and the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, Ministry of Social Development, Housing New Zealand Corporation and New Zealand Police" (Department of Corrections, 2007).

<sup>5</sup> The word SAFE, not an acronym, is used because of the high level of child abuse in New Zealand, according to the agency's website.

<sup>6</sup> WellStop, a similar agency to SAFE, has offices in Wellington, Palmerston North and Napier; and STOP serves Christchurch and the Canterbury region.

Child sex offenders are characterized, categorised, pathologised and ranked by 'experts' and fellow citizens according to the degree of the perceived risk they represent to the community. Offenders are talked about and discussed by others: media, psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists, police, criminologists, lawyers, judges, concerned parents, neighbours, and the wider public. These men turn into objects of interest for and the property of researchers from various disciplines that often narrowly focus "on issues pertaining to risk assessment, risk management, and treatment aimed at reducing or preventing sexual recidivism" (Ward et al., 2007, p. 196). Inquiries, research and tests are mostly restricted to their criminal behaviour and presented in terms of language used by experts or media broadcast highlighting and underlining these men's failings. Experts are given exclusive institutional rights to interrogate and examine men who sexually abuse(d) children. The perpetrators' voices are silenced and personal experiences remain unheard because, Ward and colleagues (2007) suggest, these men are perceived to have positioned themselves outside the protection zone of human rights through their unlawful actions. We could state that child sex offenders have been positioned outside the 'moral envelope' (Hodgetts et al., 2010).

Since Aristotle, scholars have proposed that a sense of likeness to another person is associated with empathy and recognition of the possibility that one might also find oneself in a similar situation of need (Goffman, 1963; Hodgetts et al., 2010). People are more likely to act for the collective good when their shared social identities are brought to the fore and they experience an 'us-ness' (van Zomeren, Spears & Leach, 2008). This 'us-ness' is often ruptured in the case of child abuse. The ultimate product of this rupture is the positioning of men who abuse(d) children as existing outside the scope of justice, which can result in vigilante actions, and laws and initiatives that displace them from public life through moral re-positioning as outsiders. Hodgetts and colleagues (2010) use a similar line of reasoning to explain how the inhuman treatment of refugees within so called developed countries seldom leads to mass protests and demands for refugees to be treated with some dignity and in accordance with international law. One explanation is that groups such as sex offenders and other 'strangers' have been placed outside the moral envelope, or scope of justice of a society. If people are placed outside our scope of justice, the normative standards of justice simply

do not apply and they can be treated unjustly with impunity (Opatow, 2001). Opatow (2008) suggests that compatriots, family members, friends and neighbours are included in the scope of justice because they are seen as sharing similar values, norms and beliefs. These people are entitled to fair treatment, resources and well-being. It is often assumed that people excluded do not share the same moral codes and are, therefore, excluded from the scope of justice (Opatow, 2008). The scope of social justice implies boundaries for fair treatment which are culturally, historically (see Chapter Four), politically and socially determined (Hodgetts et al., 2010). The application of different procedures, policies and processes to manage men who sexually abused is a violation of the principles of procedural fairness (Lind & Tyler 1988), the fairness of procedures by which outcomes are determined. Specifically, re-housing men who sexually abused following imprisonment is challenging because of residential restrictions (Willis, Levenson & Ward, 2010) and an unwillingness to have such men as neighbours (see Chapter Six).

Epitomising power relations, such moral boundaries denote morally superior citizens deserving of certain privileges and rights from the morally suspect citizens who are undeserving, with sexuality being a key determinant for exclusion (Fischer, 2007). Men who sexually abuse(d) children bear the symbol of social disgrace that characterizes stigma (Goffman, 1963). The undesirable mark, evolving within social relationships (Campbell & Deacon, 2006), links an individual to specific and objectionable characteristics (Goffman, 1963). Sexual offenders are, as Waldram (2007a) puts it “among society’s greatest contemporary pariahs” (p. 964) marking them with a contaminated social identity (Goffman, 1963).

Link and Phelan (2001) observe that stigma is a complex phenomenon that describes a variety of ‘discredited’ groups of people, affecting their lives on multiple dimensions. Within the context of this study, the most useful dimensions of stigma are those of separating ‘us’ from ‘them’, and the dependency of stigma on power and control (Link & Phelan, 2001). The binary division of ‘us’ and ‘them’ has the potential to be expanded to the point that they are thought of as being so different as to be hardly human and a menace to us (Goffman, 1963; Link & Phelan, 2001). This is illustrated, for example, in vigilante actions against men who sexually abused. Members of the Blackball community became united in

their actions against one man perceived as bad to the core: “The idea that an unbridgeable chasm separates good people from bad people is a source of comfort” (Zimbardo, 2007, p. 6). This constructed binary, Zimbardo proposes, ascribes bad as an essential and inherent quality in some people and not in others. In a similar vein, Waldram (2007a) suggests comfort in “essentializing and stigmatizing” (p. 967). Men who sexually abuse(d) are perceived as the different other and physically distinguishable in the prototype of the dirty old man. His appearance, then, alerts us to danger and protective actions, for example ousting, can justifiably be taken. Such binary distinctions become useful tools of social distancing (Simmel, 1950) and keep ambiguity, an uncomfortable position not easily tolerated in western worldviews, at bay. While in this study some narratives seek to provide coherency, clarity and certainty about sexual offending and offenders (Parts One and Two), other narratives are imbued with ambiguity (Part Three).

According to Link and Phelan (2001), power is an essential aspect to the social practice of stigmatisation that has economic consequences and impacts on psychological wellbeing. Cautioning an over-simplification of power and subjugation, stigmatisations are also sites of resistance (Campbell & Deacon, 2006). The ten research participants for this study, men who abused, carry the double stigma of prison and that of a history of sexual abuse. Stigma constrains these men's opportunities to resist their positioning outside the moral envelope, as I go on to illustrate, specifically in their discussion on news media. I point to social forces that sustain control, in particular silencing, thus denying them the opportunity to construct their own images (Couldry & Curran, 2002). One strategy to oppose their stigmatised status is to present themselves as ‘normal’ human beings just like everybody else (Goffman, 1963). I return to narratives that defy their status as other and different in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine. Here, support people tell of alternative images, and men who abused talk about themselves and tell of everyday life events familiar to most people. The outcome of the stigmatised group of men who sexually abused is reflected in the understandings of whether once a child sex offender is always a child sex offender.<sup>7</sup> Depending on the answer, or alternatively on the individual offender's

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<sup>7</sup> In an evaluation study the recidivism rate for child sex offenders who graduated from Te Piriti was 5.47% (Nathan, Wilson & Hilman, 2003), indicating that some men who sexually offended continue to do so, but that the majority do not.

ability to disguise his past, full and integrated citizenship for men who sexually abused may be afforded or may remain elusive.

The positioning of sex offenders through limited representations, often adopted by community members and reflected in the public focus group discussions (Chapter Six), exercises power. It potentially removes community members' responsibility and detaches them from any possible role in the creation of evil. Yet, this study has shown social interconnectedness and relatedness that does not speak of isolated 'monsters'. Men who sexually offend(ed) against children are considered bad, a risk to be managed and controlled beyond prison sentence in order to protect communities, specifically children. Such "tactics of conflation", Hook (2007) suggests, are fortified "by a tautology: to have committed an act of child sexual abuse is to occupy a type, it is to sustain the suspicion of the presence of problematic desire" (p. 170). The above proposal—once a child sex offender, always a child sex offender—is not simply answerable with yes or no but is infinitely more complex and ambiguous, and, given these ideas, in this thesis I unpack the forces that uphold, or disrupt, a recurrence of this problematisation.

This research investigates the nature of the metaphoric gap between 'us' (public) and 'them' (child sex offender) by attending to narratives from multiple angles. As I explain and substantiate in this study, the binary view of 'us' and 'them' is equivocal. I examine whether this abyss is in fact real or whether there are pockets of resistance and incongruities in the narratives from both sides that narrow and contest this perceived chasm. I draw attention to the lack of academic literature that outlines and discusses people's experiences, in particular those of men who re-enter communities following imprisonment (Ward & Maruna, 2007), branded as child sex offenders and paedophiles. People who support a man who sexually abused are largely absent in the literature and in news media representations. It is within this cohort of support people that I discovered the courage to challenge and question stereotypical representations (Chapter Seven). These support people appear to have fallen into the metaphoric abyss and hold the pivotal key to bridging the gap that appears unbridgeable because the comforting distance between us and them has contracted for supporters.

In unpacking the character of this symbolic fissure, I cross the disciplinary boundaries and turn to history. Here, I examine historical and collective understandings of sexuality and sex crimes against children. Our knowledge, awareness and perception of sexual crimes have a background that is shaped through discursive<sup>8</sup> moments in history with a “beginningless development” (Elias, 1996, p. 19): the past resonates in the present. While I draw on archival material for narratives to substantiate ways of understandings, collective (Green, 2008) and social (Healy, 1997) memories are subtle forms of manifestations and practices from the past that are embedded in the present. Psychology rarely embarks on historic excavations other than to explore and map out its own disciplinary past in a highly selective manner (Benjamin, 2009; Billig, 2008) or moves beyond analysing its historical and philosophical roots (Jørgensen & Nafstad, 2004). Engaging with the past to understand contemporary social and psychological issues of a group is essential in paving the path intellectually and practically to attend to problematic issues (Elias, 1996). Billig (2008) is critical of psychology’s attempt to study “de-historicized” (p. 17) individuals without a past, context-less and devoid of relationships. Instead, Billig (2008) advocates examining the construction of the individual in the context of an amalgamation of social and historical influences.

Referring to and synthesising ideas from Gergen and Sampson, Billig (2008) suggests that the reason for psychology’s success is because it is congruent with individualistic western ideologies. The apparent inherent nature of western individualism precludes deep exploration of the more distant past (Billig, 2008). Hook (2007), referring to genealogy as an analytic tool to unearth “buried historical contents and subjugated knowledge” (p. 140), draws attention to an incompatibility between psychology and Foucault’s notion of genealogy. Opposing the notion of genealogy is the privileged object of psychological analysis, the “individualized internal psychological universe” (Hook, 2007, p. 171). Historians show that the meanings of sex, sexuality and men who have transgressed the boundaries of social norms have been negotiated in the past and continue to be negotiated (Brickell, 2006). By drawing on a selection of discursive moments in the history of sexuality in twentieth-century New Zealand, I

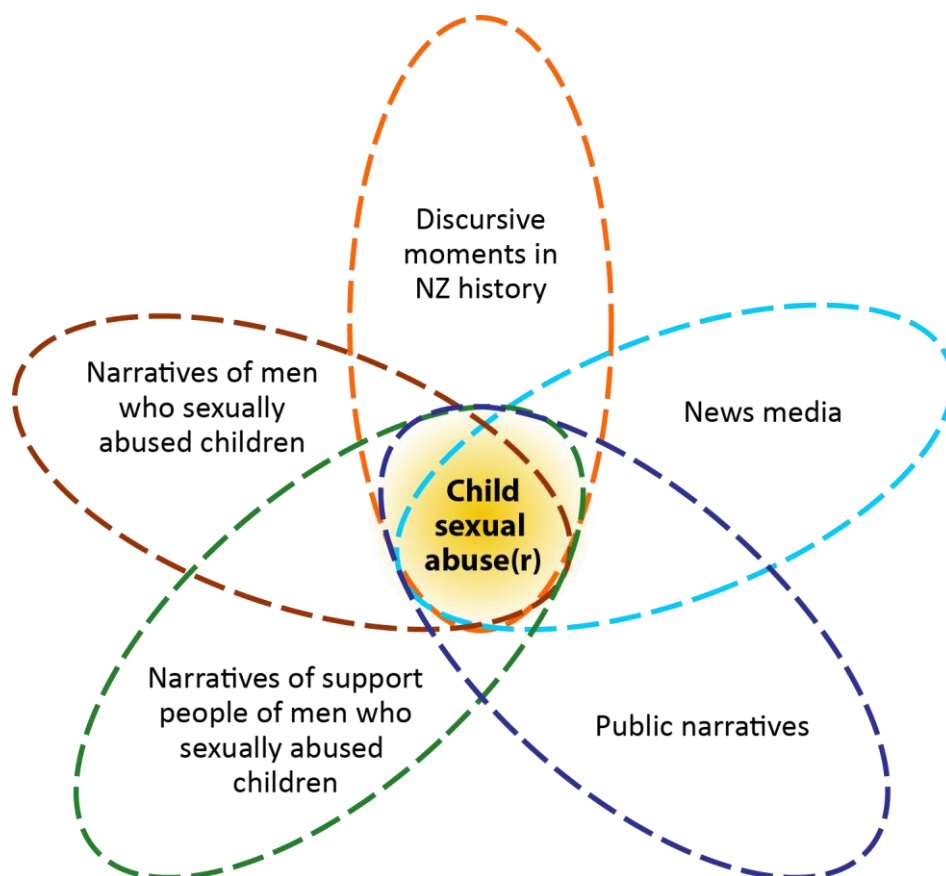
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<sup>8</sup> I use the words ‘discourse’ and ‘discursive’ in a Foucauldian sense. In short, discourses are considered “historically variable bodies of knowledge” (McHoul and Grace, 1998, p. 38) shaping what is possible to consider as knowledge.



hope to demonstrate that contemporary practices and understandings regarding men who sexually abuse(d) have evolved over time with their roots in the past.

The research elements that inform this work are illustrated through the diagram in Figure 1. Each of the five elements signifies an area that contributes to this research and overlaps in the centre. Figure 1 represents knowledge and understandings of child sexual abuse and men who abuse(d) in systematic form, while at the same time it embodies reality for men who sexually abused children. It is crucial to note that the sexual abuse is an element only of each segment. For example, the news media reports on many other topics apart from child sex abuse. Similarly, there are other aspects than those of the abuse to men who offend(ed) against children; only these other attributes frequently remain concealed. The interrupted rather than continuous lines in Figure 1 illustrate the permeability of knowledge and understandings.



**Figure 1. Data sets that comprise these research elements**

This study is based on the premise that people express their life experiences in the form of narratives (Josselson, Lieblich, & McAdams, 2003; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998; McAdams, Josselson, & Lieblich, 2006; Riessman, 1993). Meanings are constructed and produced through interactions. These are articulated through narratives we continuously generate and modify according to the audience, circumstances, contexts and perspectives. We live out our narratives, and understand the actions of others through stories. Narratives are drawn from a stockpile of plots such as culture, history, social conditions and personal experiences (Riessman, 2008) and applied to make meaning of our lives. Narratives become vehicles of shaping our sense of selfhood, allowing us to claim social positions, while institutional narratives are also instrumental in positioning and excluding. Narratives are multilayered and intertwined with social knowledge and understandings, and power relations that fluctuate over time (Riessman, 1993). This thesis is embedded in multiple narratives; these are produced through historical narratives located in archival and official documents, news media, focus group discussions, and the stories of ten men who sexually abused children (see Figure 1). By unpacking the layers of these diverse, often conflicting and seemingly incongruous stories, I reconstitute and create a new story by taking the available narratives from the current study as points of reference.

Specifically, this research is concerned with and draws on a range of narratives, through which social knowledge about sexual offending is revealed, constructed and transformed in relation to various social contexts (Jovchelovitch, 2007). The understanding that knowledge is a co-constructed process and is supple according to 'how', 'who', 'what', 'why', and 'what for' (Jovchelovitch, 2007) is crucial to this study. This allows for the coexistence of various knowledge systems in the community with each fulfilling different functions in response to different needs, analogical to the coexistence of multiple and diverse personal selves. The self (subjective) is in a triangular relationship with others (inter-subjective) and objects (objective) that constitutes worldviews, linking knowledge with people and the wider contexts within which knowledge is produced (Jovchelovitch, 2007). The self is central to understanding narratives due to the function of stories to characterize people (see Chapter Three). Throughout this study, I draw on Jovchelovitch's (2007) work to illustrate relationships between

ways of knowing, conceived within social contexts that are dialogical, and a blend between common sense and science.

For now, I turn to an outline of the thesis and the individual chapters. Following Chapters Two (background) and Three (method), the thesis structure follows the diagram in Figure 1 in a clockwise direction.

## **Thesis structure**

Academic knowledge informs aspects of the discussions about men who sexually abuse(d) children from particular perspectives. Chapter Two comprises three subsections as informative background to this study: heteronormativity and paedosexuality; men who sexually offend and their crimes; and reintegrative processes. The latter two subjects are topical in narratives across all chapters, while heterosexuality represents the taken-for-granted universal sexual orientation, (Kitzinger, C., & Wilkinson, S., 1993). Heteronormativity refers to the assumption that opposite sex attraction is normal and natural (Cover, 2005; Seidman, 2003). Contrarily, research demonstrates a myriad of sexual practices contesting the notion of normative heterosexuality; this includes groups of men explicitly supporting intergenerational sex or paedosexuality.

Examining academic understandings of what sexual abuse encompasses, I discovered that the terms of 'child sex offending' and 'offender' lack unified definitions and theoretical conceptions. Defining child sex offenders is particularly challenging due to the heterogeneity of the phenomenon (Ridenour, Miller, Joy & Dean, 1997; Plummer, 1984). Prevalence in general is considered high, but varies considerably due to differing data gathering processes that rely on information elicited from incarcerated offenders or retrospective studies of victims.

The last part of Chapter Two concerns literature on reintegration that frequently draws on the generic term of 'offender'. The needs of men who sexually abused post-incarceration are, however, specific. Reintegrative discussions are always linked with the ultimate goal of crime desistance. Key concerns in reintegrative processes are suitable accommodation, employment, a social support network

and preventing reoffending. I introduce reintegrative paradigms either based on risk assessment or strength-based, such as the Good Lives Model (Ward & Maruna, 2007). Although family support is desirable and encouraged, this is often not feasible for men who sexually abused because of severed relationships and family ties, or the presence of young children in families.

In Chapter Three, I justify my qualitative methodology and expand on the use of a narrative approach. I detail the research procedures, data collection strategies, and provide frameworks for analysing the multiperspectival narratives. Specifically, I draw on the concepts of framing and social aspects of the constructions of selves to provide an answer to the question of 'who am I?', a recurrent theme in the narratives of the ten men who abused (discussed in Chapters Eight and Nine).

The public concern over sex offenders in New Zealand has a much longer history, which is not always obvious in the way the topic is framed in contemporary discussions. In Chapter Four, I turn the lens onto New Zealand history. This is important because voices from the past in the form of archival material comprise a mixture of official reports, court documents and two case files from Auckland Mental Hospital. I scrutinize these historical narratives for the meanings they bestow to acts of inappropriate sexual practices and how these are represented in official and institutional documents. Scientific knowledge, increasingly hailed as the answer to social problems, were hallmarks of the two Committees of Inquiry (1925 and 1954). While the subjects, 'feeble-minded' and 'juvenile delinquents', were left out of consultation processes, committee members and experts formed understandings about these people by drawing on other authoritative bodies and international scientific knowledge. The resultant reports assisted in shaping and policing normative sexual practices. The narratives of two young men, admitted to Auckland Mental Hospital, tell of 'dull and socially defective' boys who engaged in bestiality. Through a variety of court records that include interviews, I draw on the narratives of eight men who stood trial for sexual abuse. The legacies of these narratives that helped to produce sexual understandings continue to live in present day, taken-for-granted accounts, embedded in our social memories (Healy, 1997).

Constructed in value-laden language, news media characterizations of men who sexually abuse(d) are variegated and draw on a limited number of labels implying common understandings. A label, in contrast to an attribute or mark, arises from socially produced processes (Link & Phelan, 2001). In Chapter Five, I draw on news media framings of men who sexually abuse(d) children and refer to a mixture of media materials. First, I scrutinize general newspaper reports that demonstrate the diverse socio-economic strata of men who sexually abuse, and then I focus on the cases of Peter Ellis and Graham Capill. The act of committing such a crime categorises the abuser and upholds the suspicion that thrusts the abuser into an unavoidable cycle (Hook, 2007). News media discussions on men re-entering communities concentrate on their perceived danger for the benefit of protecting children. The cases of Ellis and Capill attracted extended media attention; both men held positions of trust. In a well-publicised book, Hood (2001) disassembled the case of Peter Ellis and found little grounds for his conviction. At the time and through news media representations, Ellis was defined through children's accounts of bizarre sexual abuse practices. His support people provided alternative accounts. Media reports juxtapose public comments by the former morals campaigner, Capill, with his status as a broken man following his unmasking as a child sex offender. Neither Ellis nor Capill fit pre-existing scripts for compiling reports that are evident in ongoing coverage. While some media outlets (for example, National Radio) used these prominent cases to expand discussions on child sex abuse, in general, print media failed to seize this opportunity to frame men who sexually abuse from different angles or to draw on wider psychosocial issues of abuse.

Focusing on men who sexually abuse children and their representations, in Chapter Six I investigate ways of knowing and creating meanings within the social context of public focus groups. As I go on to demonstrate, creating meanings always has social aspects and is co-constructed. Excerpts from five focus group conversations exemplify how meanings are negotiated in order to characterize men who sexually abuse, and to formulate their concerns regarding reintegration following imprisonment. These narratives reveal the use of labels, again assuming common understandings; significant cases of child sexual abuse; and use emotional and personal statements to characterize men who abuse(d). While referring to 'communicational packages' (Corner, 1998) used by news media to represent men who offend(ed), focus group participants frequently

distanced themselves from media influence in what Davison (1983) termed 'third-person effect'. In an attempt to pinpoint what makes men sexually abuse children, participants referred to a medical model in efforts to explain and understand these men and their crimes. Strict penalties, prolonged monitoring and control were favoured options in face of perceived uncertainties and concerns that marked the discussions on reintegration. Alternative narratives suggesting more benevolent understandings of these men emerged from each focus group discussion.

In Chapter Seven, the focus shifts from official, institutional and public understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) children to more personal narratives. Participants of this focus group conversation discuss the impact the offending, committed by a close family member, had on their and their families' lives, including that of the offender. The understandings of these men, prior to the disclosure of the abuse, were not dissimilar to those of the participants in Chapter Six. Then, their worlds turn upside down and they arrive in "Monsterville" as Tania, a research participant and support person of a man who offended, names that reality from which there is no escaping. I draw on Frank's (1997) work about illness sufferers to illustrate the various phases support people experience and move through while endeavouring to maintain a sense of normality. Their multiple and often conflicting roles include support for all family members, including the offender. The resulting chaos narratives (Frank, 1997) tell of the havoc the abuse caused on personal and relational levels. By telling about their decisions to support the family member who abused, previously unheard accounts emerge that portray these men from different aspects: those of a caring brother, a loving husband, a good father. No longer able to resort to the dichotomy of 'us' and 'them', the four participants become a vital link to bridge this metaphorical gap. Their hurtful experiences provide them with strength and wisdom, which allows them to tell stories about lives that are neither good nor evil but contain elements of both as they turn into inconspicuous advocates to change representations of men who sexually abuse(d). While they express compassion and commitment towards the men they support, doubts, uncertainties and concern about possible future abuse also cause them dilemmas.

The most personal of all the narratives collected for this study emerge from the experiences of men who sexually abused a child or children. In Chapters Eight

and Nine, I draw on their stories that offer alternative representations of themselves and how they make meaning of the chaos they instigated. Their stories are universally shunned (Waldram, 2007a), but in order to learn what has gone wrong in their lives that led them to abuse children, their stories need to be told and contextualised. Mainstream prison mirrors the outside world and most of these men continue to live a lie for fear of repercussions. Through their prison journey, the quest of self-discovery and acquired new understandings allow them to re-narrate their offending past and to reconcile old and new selves. Prior to release these men express hope mainly of re-connecting with family members, finding employment, meeting a potential partner and starting a life that is not only free of abusing but more meaningful. I juxtapose the pre- and post-release narratives to delineate how these men make sense of events that do not match their expectations following release. These two chapters are saturated with stories that tell of broken personal and societal relationships and demonstrate the importance of relationships that are often fragile.

In a symbolic reply to news media representations of child sex offenders, the ten participants mostly collude with media and profess the horrible nature of their crimes. At the same time, they distance themselves from recidivists suggesting that they are different from repeat offenders. Media reports, they feel, should reflect their heterogeneity and the success of treatment programmes such as Te Piriti. At the same time, these men's understandings of themselves remain ambiguous and they express cautious optimism that they no longer represent danger to society. Only the passage of time will determine whether they can live a life free of abuse.

## **Chapter Summary**

Men who sexually abuse(d) children are the focus of this study. I began this chapter with an excerpt from Hone. This illustrates the coexistence of multiple understandings of men who abuse. The community, Hone feels, positions him because of his crime; he offers an amended narrative and points to the problematic use of general terms such as sex abuse(r), implying common understandings of the child sex offender as the deviant other. By resorting to binary frames of purity and pollution through narration, classifications that

distance these men appear to provide some order, meaning and comfort (Fischer, 2007) for many members of the broader public on one hand, and exclusion and stigma for offenders on the other hand. This seemingly unbridgeable chasm that separates good from evil (Zimbardo, 2007) has the potential to deprive men who abused from social interactions through which human beings conduct their lives (Billig, 2008). The example of men who offend also reflects the function of narration as a social process, often involving the search of meaning and certainty where there may be none. It is a prominent process in western cultures that find it difficult to deal with ambiguity and complex moral issues surrounding sexuality.

In the earlier part of the twentieth century efforts to segregate and control men who engaged in sexually deviant practices were undertaken. Doubts and uncertainties regarding potential risks these men pose(d) reverberate decades later and permeate all narratives about and with men who abuse(d) in this study. By drawing on narratives from the past, historical and social analyses are part of psychology, with “no firm boundary to demarcate exactly where the psychology stops, and where the history starts” (Billig, 2008, p. 3). Focusing the lens on New Zealand’s past allows the examination of psychosocial forces in historical contexts that created understandings of sexuality and men who transgressed normative boundaries.

Drawing on the interdisciplinary, multilayered, public and private narratives from five core areas outlined in Figure 1, the aim of this study is to examine and document the processes of understanding men who sexually abuse(d) children. Knowledge is plural and diverse, allowing for the coexistence of various ways of knowing in answer to different needs that fulfil various functions (Jovchelovitch, 2007). Yet, as this study shows, in general men who sexually offended are represented as a homogeneous group of stigmatised outsiders as the preferred way to make sense of these men and their crimes. There are, however, pockets of resistance that contest dominant narratives. These attest to more complex ways of understanding and representing these men, offering opportunities for alternative stories and the possibility to bridge a metaphorical gap that seems to divide ‘us’ from ‘them’. The objective of this study is to reproduce understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) children and to document points of convergence and conflict. In presenting new understandings, I hope to illustrate dialogical



processes that take place across official, public and private levels in the shaping of these narratives in order to disrupt conventional representations of men who abuse.

The structure of this study follows the various research elements (Figure 1) that comprise this thesis, giving an impression that narrative facets are neatly containable within individual chapters; they are not. The co-constructed, dialogical nature of storying and understanding is evidenced in each chapter and hence elements imbue all chapters. Narratives, the bricks and mortar of this thesis, allow the exploration of the complexity of knowledge rooted in the accounts of everyday life and people's meaning-making arrangements of their social environments (Jovchelovitch, 2008). Chapters Four, Eight and Nine provide more detailed, in-depth descriptions to contextualise and demonstrate complexities that are often talked about in simplistic terms (see next paragraph), that then preclude opportunities to engage in broader discussions. Specifically, the more elaborate chapter on discursive moments in New Zealand's history provides a "sociomental topography of the past" (Zerubavel, 2003, p. 1) that is evident in present-day collective memories (Green, 2008).

I conclude this chapter with a couple of cautionary notes. Christie (2004) suggests that the term 'crime' is unhelpful and rudimentary because it means everything and nothing (concrete). This holds equally true for child sex abuse, a term used pervasively (Rind & Tromovitch, 1997). I scrutinize various meanings of this label more closely in Chapter Two, and, although being critical of epithets, I also draw on standard terms for convenience. However, this study is an overall effort to contest unequivocal understandings. And lastly, I attempted to include a wide range of understandings on this topic to bring together multiple representations of men who sexually abuse(d) children. To demonstrate diversity, on occasions I draw on material that does not necessarily reflect my stance. Again, I borrow from Christie (2004) to express that "I am interested in how meanings are born and are shaped. But that is no immoral [amoral] position" (p. 11).

## **CHAPTER 2: ACADEMIC AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNDERSTANDINGS OF MEN WHO SEXUALLY ABUSE(D) CHILDREN**

Discussions of different approaches to knowledge typically invoke explorations of research paradigms, the nature of reality and how human beings know and perceive the world (Billig, 2008). To examine meaning-making processes underlying the social construction of child sex offenders, I draw on Jovchelovitch's (2007) ideas of knowledge systems. These are often formed into narratives structured and shaped within the social contexts of everyday life. Scholastic literature also reflects common knowledge as scholars construct it from within society and history (Gergen, 1973). The knowledge produced through academic research, in conjunction with research participants, provides argumentation and practical reasoning referred to as assertoric knowledge (Polkinghorne, 1983). Human beings offer imperfect representations of the world and consequently psychologists do not capture 'objective' and 'universal truths' about men who sexually abuse(d). Rather, we can produce contextually located interpretations that are at once useful, uncertain, modifiable and imperfect (Hodgetts et al., 2010). Such knowledge does not give us certainty. Instead, it provides the best available explanation (Polkinghorne, 1983). In this sense, we can participate in the creation of assertoric knowledge; a knowledge claim we assert to the world based on our reasoning. This knowledge claim is offered as a basis for debate, criticism and refinement.

For the purpose of, and in keeping with this thesis, academic literature on child sexual offending and offenders is considered a type of narrative that is shaped, as other narratives are, by available knowledge systems. Its scholarly form and content are created with specific intentions. The structure resembles the narrative framing of everyday life, including and omitting certain storylines in order to communicate a sense of coherence in its orientation to forge a plot. Particularly pertinent to the examination of meaning-making processes, academic understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) filter into the public sphere through a number of practices. For example, private and public consultations with psychologists; the inclusion of experts, such as psychologists, in the making of television programmes (in Chapter Six, I refer to the television series "Beyond the

darklands” produced in conjunction with the author of the book, a psychologist); the dissemination of research findings in broadsheet news media; and pundit commentaries in news media. Subsequently, academic knowledge is recycled and assembled with other knowledge systems to create new understandings that are tailored for specific purposes.

This chapter further establishes the scholarly background for this study and primarily comprises academic understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) children. I consider three main areas: heteronormativity and paedosexuality; sexual offenders and their crimes; and community reintegration. These areas emerged from the overall data corpus of this study as recurring core themes and concerns in the framings of the child sex abuse(r) and reintegrative efforts. Underlying the three subject areas are assumed understandings about men who sexually abuse(d): heterosexuality is considered normative; men who sexually abuse have an identifiable disorder; and reintegration is linked to uncertainties and fear. I engage critically with these assumptions.

It is neither practical nor the overall intention of this thesis to carry out an in-depth and extensive review of the vast and interdisciplinary literature on the three themes I selected for this chapter. It is important to keep this in mind as I offer only a limited selection of academic narratives that focus on heteronormativity and paedosexuality; sexual offenders and their crimes; and reintegration, with the aim of capturing current academic understandings within each area. Further, literature relating to particular issues and findings is woven into subsequent chapters. Although this chapter is mostly reserved for international academic voices, I also include some specific information that grounds this thesis in New Zealand. I provide more details on the Treatment Unit Te Piriti, the therapy programme, some legislation and Parole Board decision processes in Appendix A. On occasions, the narratives of the ten research participants, men who sexually abused, are drawn on to juxtapose, elaborate and compare scholarly knowledge with lived experiences. Such experiences are at the core of this study and are influenced by academic knowledge.

I open the chapter by considering heteronormativity and paedosexuality in the context of a discussion about sexuality more generally. The former represents taken-for-granted sexual practices and the latter a minority group that endorses

intergenerational sex. I then scrutinize definitions of men who sexually abuse children, their crimes and statistics. The question of effective reintegration is pondered by academics, laypersons and offenders alike (see Chapters Six, Seven and Nine) and, in association with questions about rehabilitation and desistance, forms the third part of this chapter. Overall, the chapter situates academic knowledge as a series of narratives informed through specific research frameworks which are infiltrated by popular understandings (Flick, 1992) of child sex offending in the wider communities of which they are part.

## **Heteronormativity and paedosexuality**

In this section I briefly elaborate on the concept of sexuality and examine heteronormativity and its impacts, and consider paedosexuality in order to illustrate diverse sexual practices. Thus, I draw on two sexual orientations: heterosexuality, which is widely considered normative practice, and paedosexuality, viewed predominantly as deviant. These lie at opposite ends of the spectrum of 'acceptable' sexual practice. I include the latter to demonstrate that condemnation of intergenerational sex is not universal. Fischer (2007) reminds us that sexual practices vary throughout history and across cultures and there are no universally denounced sexual practices, including incest. I examine contemporary academic understandings and representations of sexuality that include controversial and, at times, uncomfortable aspects to illustrate diverse sexual desires and practices. These stances are not representative of my personal position. They contribute, however, to the complexity of sexuality, specifically intergenerational sex, and its understandings. The terminology used to describe sex between an adult and child in this section differs to that used later in this chapter and throughout this study. Subsequently, I discuss paedosexuality in terms of deviant sexual practice as an offence.

Initially I set out to examine narratives that underpin framings of sexuality with the aim of teasing out factors that contribute to a general loathing of men who sexually abuse(d) children. I suspect the two are linked. However, this focus was too broad. While exploring alternative options, I determined that the literature on sexuality includes little writing on heterosexuality as this is often assumed to be normative practice and not worthy of critical interpretation (Cover, 2005). Such

implied shared understandings of sexuality might be significant for the discussion on representations of men who enter sexual relationships with children.

Sexuality has been the subject of considerable social and scientific investigation and is also a popular western obsession (Foucault, 1998; Tolson, 1996). Perhaps capturing the essence of sexuality, Gregersen (1983) suggests that “sexual tastes are similar to food likes and dislikes, which are also acquired and vary from culture to culture. For both sex and food, elaborate rationalizations are constructed, sometimes of considerable symbolic intricacy” (p. 14). Gregersen points to distinct sexual practices, which are culturally embedded and highly symbolic (Plummer, 1984). How else, Plummer (1984) asks, would we otherwise recognise sexuality? Representing a system of classification, Plummer (1984) proposes that symbols “work to impose form upon formlessness” (p. 230) to provide a sense of stability and predictability, and guidelines of the acceptable and the unacceptable.

A large body of academic literature contributes to the knowledge and framings of sex and sexuality. This topic attracts interdisciplinary interests that include biology, psychology, history, sexology, education, gender and feminist studies, philosophy, health studies, sociology, theology, and anthropology. Scholars propose that sexual understandings and practices are diverse, yet, sex and sexuality are often taken-for-granted (Herdt & Howe 2007), are considered ‘natural’ (Jackson, 1982) and ‘innate’ (Seidman, 2003) and thus seemingly unalterable. In particular, those subscribing to a biological understanding of sexuality assume it remains constant and thus is lacking history (Wrathall, 1992). Challenging the notion of innate and natural, Plummer (1984) suggests that sexuality is “unnatural” (p. 222) because it is heavily symbolised and grounded in changing cultural practices and language.

Understandings of sex and sexuality have been shaped in the west predominantly by three models: “the moral/religious model, the biological model, and the social model of sexuality” (Mottier, 2008, p. 48) with contributions by sexologists such as German Richard Krafft-Ebing (1840-1902), Swiss Auguste Forel (1848-1931), Englishman Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), German Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), American Alfred Kinsey (1894-1956) and the American research team of William Masters (1915-2001) and Virginia Johnson (born 1925).

Studies of sexualities include a vast range of how people define themselves in sexual terms. From their extensive data collection, Kinsey and his colleagues (1948), for example, suggest a diverse range of sexual behaviour. I reproduce an excerpt from Mottier (2008) to substantiate this claim and demonstrate sexual diversity and individual preferences:

gay, lesbian, straight, bisexual, bi-curious, exhibitionists, submissives, dominatrixes, swingers (people who engage in partner exchange), switchers (people who change from being gay to being straight or vice versa), traders (gay men who have sex with straight men), born-again virgins (people who have, technically, lost their virginity but pledge to renounce sex until marriage), acrotomophiliacs (people who are sexually attracted to amputees), furverts (or furies – people who dress up in animal suits and derive sexual excitement from doing so), or feeders (people who overfeed their, generally obese, partners) (p. 1).

To this list we can add cybersexual relationships (Woleslagle, 2007), discussions about prostitution and intergenerational sex (Mottier, 2008). Accordingly these topics and related issues, for example discussions on HIV / AIDS and sexual practices, dominate the geographies of sexualities.

Sexual diversity and individual preferences are celebrated by some and despised by others. Sexuality is clearly political and the extent to which individuals exercise autonomy and agency is debatable (Moloney & Kirkman, 2005). Morally and culturally patterned (Gregersen, 1983), diverse sexual practices that I have just outlined are in stark contrast to heteronormativity, defined as “a system of power and ideology that assumes that heterosexuality is the norm. Heterosexism culturally favors heterosexuals while denigrating and stigmatizing nonheterosexual people” (Ferber, Holcomb & Wentling, 2009, p. 555). Heterosexual dominance has consequences. It excludes and stigmatises, and it seems to render discussions of (hetero) sexuality superfluous in everyday life (Meeks, 2007). Within the “relentless tyranny of the heterosexual assumption” (Kitzinger, C., & Wilkinson, S., 1993, p. 3), with heterosexuality the silent aspect, there seems little need to elaborate and explain what seems ‘natural’. The

invisibility of heterosexuality, suggestive of normality, is likened to whiteness appearing essential and common to humanity (Johnson, 2005).

Nevertheless, Johnson (2005) observes, heterosexuality requires agency and 'doing' as much as other non-heterosexual orientations but remains an under-researched area of study. Referring to Deborah Tannen (1990), Cameron and Kulick (2003) suggest that repressing discussions of sexuality in heterosexual relationships has the potential for communication problems between men and women. This point is particularly salient in the conversations with men who sexually abuse(d) (Chapters Eight and Nine). Eight of the ten research participants were in a heterosexual<sup>9</sup> relationship at the time of abuse. All expressed sexual frustration and relational issues of varying degrees around the time the abuse took place, coupled with major communication breakdowns with significant others. I note that in all conversations with these men, and despite their collective quests to explore their identities, narratives on sexual identity were absent. Yet, Mottier (2008) suggests, "we define ourselves in part through our sexuality" (p. 1). Most participants' (men who offended) narratives contained a desire to meet 'that special lady'. Not questioning these statements further, I, too, made assumptions regarding their dominant sexual orientation. Couple relationships were exclusively discussed in terms of anticipated difficulties in finding a partner willing to enter a relationship with a man labelled 'child sex offender'.

Drawing on the borrowed concept of 'imagery' from Lacan and Althusser, Ingraham (2007) uses this to deconstruct the unquestioned and taken-for-granted heterosexuality. Heterosexual imagery, Ingraham (2007) suggests, is a "way of thinking that relies on romantic and sacred notions of heterosexuality in order to create and maintain the illusion of well-being and oneness" (p. 198). Heterosexual imagery, an idealised relationship between an individual and their social environment (Ingraham, 2007), regulates, normalises and legitimises sexuality through institutional practices (for example marriage and domestic laws). Heteronormativity then is a powerful model allowing for the marginalisation of those not identifying as heterosexual (Binnie, 2007). Underlying

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<sup>9</sup> For considerations of differential meanings between paedophilic and non-paedophilic child molesters see Appendix B.

heterosexuality, Jackson (2009) also observes a complex system of institutions, ideologies, practises and experiences that dominate lives beyond sexual practices into those of labour divisions and resources in the domestic and extra-domestic spheres. 'Normative', like male, white, able-bodied (Kitzinger, C., & Wilkinson, S., 1993), heteronormativity is omnipresent and invisible. The place at the top of the hierarchical erotic pyramid firmly belongs to the heterosexual, married, reproductive couple highly praised in western society (Rubin, 2007).

In an exercise to examine, discuss and challenge heterosexual norms, Rochlin (2009) draws on *The Heterosexual Questionnaire*. This is critical of the pretentiousness of heterosexuality and its unquestioning 'normative' status. I reproduce one question relevant to this study, highlighting the incongruity of child sexual abuse: "A disproportionate majority of child molesters are heterosexual. Do you consider it safe to expose children to heterosexual teachers?" (Rochlin, p. 300). Contradicting the notion of stranger-danger and representations of child molesters as stereotypical dirty old men, this shakes the foundations of understandings of sexuality and the assumed clear-cut boundaries of heterosexuality. In other words, it illustrates possibilities of dual practices and multiple selves of a heterosexual man. This ambiguous situation (heterosexual *and* child molester) complicates discussions on child sex abuse further.<sup>10</sup> With combinations of different sexual orientations the boundaries become even more obscured: meanings of sexuality are no longer linear but multidimensional. I examine the effects of such uncertainties in Chapter Seven where one man and three women each support a man who sexually abused. In particular, women's own sexuality is contested and shattered in face of their partners' infidelity with a child.

Challenges to normative sexuality took place in the historical context of intellectual, social and political ferment around the production of knowledge about sex and sexuality. In France, for example, in the 1970s, Jean-Paul Sartre and his partner, feminist Simone de Beauvoir, signed a petition to decriminalise

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<sup>10</sup> As an example I refer to the documentary film *Capturing the Friedmans* by Andrew Jarecki. Assembled from home videos that were taken over many years, and with increased frequency before Arnold's and Jesse's imprisonment, this film documents the life of Arnold Friedman, his wife and three children. Arnold and his son Jesse were convicted of child molestation.



paedophilia (Henley, 2001, cited in Kitzinger, J., 2004), also supported by Michel Foucault (Kitzinger, J., 2004). The next few paragraphs scrutinize what, if not a diagnostic category of paraphilia (Marshall, Marshall, Serran, & Fernandez, 2006), paedophilia might be. I include this to balance understandings of heterosexuality and to illustrate that ideas about intergenerational sex diverge. Schmidt (2002) offers the following definition:

Pedophiles are men whose sexual wishes and desires for relationship bonds and love are focused either primarily or exclusively on children who have not reached puberty, whereby the relative importance of each of these three areas—sexuality, relationship, and love—may vary, as it does with other people as well. (p. 473)

Schmidt (2002) suggests that paedophilia is “a type of sexuality” (p. 473) and Plummer (1984) points to diverse practices within paedophilia. These include preferences for boys, girls or both, long-lasting relationships or fleeting contacts and a variety of practices. Taylor (1981) also suggests that intergenerational sex is not limited to one category based on “conventional distinctions between ‘paedophiles’ (generally those interested in pre-pubertal sex partners), ‘pederasts’ (those interested in boys) and ‘ephobophiles’ (those interested in adolescents)” (cited in Weeks, 1985, p. 228). If we suspend, for the purposes of this argument and to gain another perspective, our focus on childhood innocence and preconceived suggestions that intergenerational sex must be uniformly harmful, we can consider Schmidt’s (2002) proposition. He suggests that research into paedophilic practices should be carried out on the basis that children do not adhere to the same sexual scripts and sexual meanings as adults do. This is to say that children are less likely to be aware of the symbolic meanings afforded to sexuality (Plummer, 1984). The use of the word ‘child’ here is problematic; childhood spans over many years and understandings of sexuality change with the progression of age. Differing understandings are reflected in the legal age of consent that varies between countries (see next section of this chapter). Schmidt’s (2002) line of thinking is that a morally unacceptable act does not necessarily incur harm. Jackson (1978), too, is critical about sexual scripts which she suggests are “bound up with cultural notions of femininity and masculinity” (p. 30). While such analytical inquiries are important contributions to

challenge normative understandings, there is a danger that such ideas are replicated to defend and justify intergenerational sexual practices. Nevertheless, these ideas around paedosexuality need to be explored further.

Paedophile interest groups emerged in the 1970s in numerous countries (Netherlands, US, UK) only to fade away again a decade later in face of increasing public protests over child sex abuse (Mottier, 2008). Support for adult-child love was sufficient for the formation of a number of groups such as the Paedophile Information Exchange (PIE); the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA); the Danish Paedophile Association (DPA); and International Paedophile and Child Emancipation (IPCE)<sup>11</sup> (Mottier, 2008). Members of these organisations argue that children are sexual beings, a taboo topic since the development, in the eighteenth century, of the demarcation of childhood as an age of innocence and purity (Weeks, 1985). Paedophilic interest groups also refer to ancient Greek models on sex, where the pederastic relationship was conceptualised as “pedagogic and erotic mentoring relationship between an adult and a young boy” (Mottier, 2008, p. 12). This was considered honourable and natural and preparation for the boy’s citizenship role, but guided by prescribed “sexual etiquette” (Mottier, 2008, p. 11). This structured relationship then, held an important and specific function, representing a transformational period essential for boys to reach maturity. Neither teacher nor pupil carried marks of stigma. Over time, new meanings have been allocated to such interactions between an adult and a child. In today’s society, such interaction bears marks of disgrace, often for both participants. Citizenship, a symbolic acceptance into society, afforded as a rite of passage following a period of boys being mentored in ancient Greece, remains only partially attainable for men who sexually abused children following imprisonment.

In this subsection, I briefly outlined one dominant and one peripheral concept of sexuality. On a continuum, research demonstrates different sexual practices mirroring diverse cultural patterns while heteronormativity is considered the most prevalent and ‘natural’ form of sexual expression. Sexual understandings and practices that exist beyond heteronormativity do not necessarily emerge in wider

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<sup>11</sup> NAMBLA and IPCE maintain their own websites ([www.nambla.org](http://www.nambla.org) and [www.ipce.info/ipceweb](http://www.ipce.info/ipceweb)).

public narratives. For example, in the public<sup>12</sup> focus group discussions, heterosexual orientations were assumed normative practices, and intergenerational sex, then, was considered to be both deviant sexual behaviour and criminal. The questions I used for the public focus groups framed sex between an adult and a child as criminal (i.e. child sex abuse). I can only speculate as to whether or not different wording of the questions, adult-child love for example, would have produced different conversations, perhaps even elicited outrage, with the criminal orientation of abuse enduring. Particularly relevant to the current study is Johnson's (2005) comment that a heterosexual orientation requires agency, which I interpret as dialogical engagement with a sexual partner. Such dialogues were lacking in their relationships according to many participants' (men who offended) accounts. I resume the discussion on communication problems in Chapter Nine.

## **Sexual offenders and their crimes**

Psychology often portrays a unified picture and the pretence of universal acceptance within its distinct domains of research (Billig, 2008). This seems no different for research about child sex offending. In this subsection, I draw attention to a number of discrepancies within the literature on child sex abuse. I return to my statement in Chapter One that the umbrella term of 'child sex abuse' is too vague and thus unhelpful for operational definitions. Here, I expand and explain the implications of such an indistinct term. I examine definitions of abuse and abuser and, emerging in combination of the two, sampling and statistical issues that lead to discrepant research findings. This is reflected in incompatible rates of abuse, ranging from 6.8 per cent to 62 per cent<sup>13</sup> in random community

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12 In total, I carried out six focus group discussions. Participants for five focus groups were selected from the general public and one focus group was conducted with support people of men who sexually abused. Details of recruiting processes are provided in the next chapter.

13 I note psychology's tradition of including statistics even in writings where the focus is not on quantitative research. The purpose and the interpretation of statistical numbers is questionable given the difficulties and uncoordinated means of collecting data to measure child sex abuse. Within psychology to date, much effort is still invested in compiling research tools in an attempt to accurately measure the prevalence of child sex abuse.

samples of women (Martin, Anderson, Romans, Mullen & O'Shea, 1993).

Sexual abuse, West (2000) reminds us, includes a “bewildering variety of behaviours” (p. 399). I begin with an example of a research question to illustrate implied understandings of what sexual abuse entails. Research participants’ interpretation of a question determines their answers and influences research findings; vague meanings prevail and are left open to further interpretation by the research and academic communities. “Before the age of 15, do you remember if anyone ever touched you sexually, or made you do something sexual that you didn’t want to do?” (Fanslow, Robinson, Crengle & Perese, 2007, p. 938). Apart from the double-barrelled nature of the question, there is an underlying assumption of mutually shared understandings about the meaning of “touched sexually” and “do something sexual” (I also point to such assumptions of shared understandings in news media reports, Chapter Six). Such understandings rely heavily on symbolic systems and the classification of what is acceptable and what is unacceptable (Plummer, 1984). An affirmative reply to this research question resulted in follow-up questions whereby the abuse was referred to as “it” or “this” (Fanslow et al., 2007, p. 938). The findings of this New Zealand study indicate a prevalence rate for child sexual abuse of “23.5% for women from the urban region and 28.2% from the rural region” (Fanslow et al., 2007, p.935).

Such broad research investigations contain the entire spectrum of sexual abuse ranging from “minor sexual whims” (Plummer, 1984, p. 228) to the most serious forms of child sexual abuse. West (2000) observes that statistical results fluctuate largely depending on the framing of questions and definition of abuse. Research results therefore include a range of abuse experiences, which afford a victim or survivor status to people who suffered minor degrees of abuse, while diluting the status of people subjected to serious abuse by putting them on a par with the others.

Some researchers acknowledge definitional disparities (Wyatt & Peters, 1986) while others specify the definitions for their research purpose. Rind and Tromovitch (1997) provide a more comprehensive definition and differentiate between physical and non-physical contact, adult and non-adult perpetrators, and qualify the use of coercion between two non-adults; they state that their definition is based on “the manner of use” (p. 237). Lacking here, however, is an indication

whether the same definition applies to male and female victims. In a New Zealand study, Romans and colleagues (1996) provided a three-level definition (non-genital touching; genital touching; penetration) of child sexual abuse, explicitly targeting females. According to Ratcliffe (1996), a study of 3,000 women in Otago showed that 32 per cent had been sexually abused before the age of 16. However, the author cautions that the study allowed for a loose interpretation of the term sexual abuse. Findings of a high prevalence of sexual abuse, Ratcliffe (1996) suggests, demand a re-thinking of the focus away from individual causes of sexual deviancy to an epidemiological approach.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), a UK website ([www.nspcc.org.uk/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)), also draws attention to statistical variance depending on the definitions of abuse, with some research indicating prevalence rates between 3 and 36 per cent for females and 3 to 29 per cent for males. Pointing to the restricted definitions, Kelly (1988) suggests that these do not take girls' and women's actual experiences of abuse into account, which vary between women and change with the passage of time. Also implicated in the discussion of child sex abuse is the legal age of consent. The age of consent fluctuates from country to country, but is typically around 17 and 18, with some countries at the lower end of the scale: "12 in the Philippines, 13 in Spain and Japan, and 14 in Germany and Italy" (Mottier, 2008, p. 106). Subsequently, the cohort of victims differs in age, degree of abuse suffered and personal experiences.

Drawing on data from a New Zealand longitudinal study, Fergusson, Lynskey and Horwood (1996) caution not to categorise victims as "an homogeneous population exposed to a common set of experiences" (p. 1361). This is supported by Berlin (2002) who points to an assumption that abuse inevitably causes damage because of a failure to differentiate between having been harmed versus having been wronged. I also refer to the phenomenological approach of this study (described in Chapter Three) with the tenet that exposure to the same environment (in this case abuse) produces different understandings and responses. An indiscriminate approach to victim or survivor status has consequences for the perpetrators: they, too, assume homogeneity and become collectively known as deviant, and are associated with the most serious offenders, as Hone observes in the initial quote in Chapter One. Therefore, labelling these men imposes similar (mis)understandings. Men who sexually

abuse children are not a homogeneous group (Fergusson et al., 1996; Knight, 1988; Ridenou et al., 1997), with one tag or definition unlikely to capture their diversity. Over twenty years ago, Knight (1988), referring to a taxonomic analysis of child sex abusers, already observed their heterogeneity. Even earlier, in the 1920s, prison inspector Hawkins proposed at least two types of sex offenders: the weak succumbing to temptation and the 'real' pervert. I return to Mr Hawkins in Chapter Four.

In a study on internet offending, Durkin and Bryant (1999) propose that little is known about a large number of paedophiles because of the low arrest rate, and academic knowledge on child sex abuse "is based on data gathered from either incarcerated offenders or probationers in treatment" (p. 103). The authors proceeded to undertake on-line research addressing the question of how paedophiles who use the internet account for their deviance. Whether this is an improved research method is uncertain, and Durkin and Bryant caution against generalising their results.

West (2000) reports contradictory findings of attempts to characterize these men and suggests that "child molesters have been variously described as amoral sociopaths, romantic child lovers, sexually incompetent, inhibited and lonely men who cannot sustain adult relationships, or sophisticated and organised predators" (p. 406). Until the 1980s, Ratcliffe (1996) proposes, child sex abuse was considered a problem confined to the lower socioeconomic groups and offenders were considered sociopathic, mentally ill or having a criminal personality. In this study, discussions among the public focus group participants (Chapter Six) occurred along these lines, whereby participants drew on a medical model for explaining abusive behaviour. Some participants speculated whether this is, or was at least in the past, a crime of the lower classes (see also Chapter Four for a discussion on class differences and sexuality). Considering sexual offending a mental and medical condition, public focus group participants framed and discussed 'cure' as unlikely to attain (Chapter Six).

As noted earlier in this chapter, paedophilia, as a type of sexuality, manifests itself in a wide range of forms and practices (Schmidt, 2002; Plummer, 1984). According to Schmidt (2002), paedophilia is embedded in moral discourses based on broad social consensus. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of

Mental Disorders (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) describes a category of sexual disorders called paraphilias that includes paedophilia, which is considered a psychosexual disorder (Marshall et al., 2006) involving pre-pubertal children. Despite the APA identification guideline, Bullough (2002) suggests that the term paedophilia is commonly equated with almost any sexual activity between an adult and a minor. The terms 'child molester' and 'paedophile' are used inconsistently (Murray, 2000), and Fazekas (2002) laments that the terms 'child molester', 'paedophile' and 'incest offender' are often used interchangeably by professionals and lay persons.

The prevalence of child sexual abuse is fiercely debated due to divergent data gathering procedures and, as I have just outlined, vague definitions. In New Zealand, apart from extrapolating data from research projects, statistics are available through a number of government agencies. Statistics New Zealand (<http://www.stats.govt.nz/>) provides extensive crime statistics based on data obtained from New Zealand Police. These contain eight categories with 'sexual' comprising one. This is further subdivided into: sexual affronts; sexual attacks; abnormal sex; immoral behaviour; and immoral behaviour/miscellaneous. However, the number of child sex offences or offenders cannot be determined from these descriptions.

A snapshot on February 3, 2008 revealed that for 1,674 (or 22.2 per cent) of all offenders who were in prison in New Zealand, their most serious crime was a sexual offence (Tamatea, A., personal communication, February 21, 2008). According to Soboleva, Kazakova and Chong (2006) the total number of convictions for violent sex offences (rape, unlawful sexual connection, attempted sexual violation, and indecent assault) in New Zealand peaked in 1996 at 2,085 but has since reduced to around 1,500 per annum. In 2005 there were 1,824 convictions for sex offences. Where the age of the victim was available the following is shown:

- 40% (720) of convictions involved children under the age of 12
- 36% (646) involved victims aged between 12 and 16 years
- 24% (423) involved victims over the age of 16.

However, it is not possible to determine the actual number of men who sexually abused children from this data.

Pathways to collecting research data are through victim accounts, mostly in retrospective studies, surveying the general population, or through offenders by drawing on official (police or court) files. In either method, capturing precise statistics on child sexual offences is fraught with the possibility of inaccuracies as, at times, different data are considered (number of victims, offences or offenders). West (1998) is critical of retrospective research and suggests that what people are prepared to disclose depends on the approach (face-to-face interview with an understanding interviewer; impersonal market-style research; or postal questionnaire). How participants remember abuse varies according to the time elapsed since the incident(s), and what is perceived as significant (West, 1998). Acknowledging possibilities of memory distortions, retrospective studies are defended with the argumentation that research conducted with children is ethically and legally constrained (Martin et al., 1993). Sampling methods are critiqued and considered unrepresentative because researchers frequently draw on American college students, the majority from white middle-class backgrounds, or prisoners (Cowburn & Dominelli, 2001; Murray, 2000; West, 1998). In keeping with my argumentation that meaning is co-constructed and events are re-storied according to new understandings and insight, an abusive episode might not have been understood as such at the time of the incident (Kitzinger, J., 2004). As J. Kitzinger (2004) demonstrates, increased media attention towards sexual abuse transformed women's understandings and enabled them to name and articulate the abuse.

Fergusson and colleagues (1996) point to practical difficulties, such as consent from parents or guardians to question children, or ethical dilemmas following the disclosure of abuse during research with a child. Instead, the authors suggest the use of longitudinal studies in an effort to avoid difficulties associated with data gathering. The divergent prevalence rates for child sex abuse emphasise the challenge of collecting data in "what is essentially a private act" (Martin et al., 1993, p. 383). I also discuss boundaries between private and public in Chapter Six.

Presenting research findings from a self-reporting study, Briere and Runtz (1989) draw on a non-forensic sample of male undergraduate students. The results reveal that 21 per cent of the student participants reported some sexual attraction to small children. Seven per cent indicated a likelihood of engaging in sexual practices with a child or children if they could avoid detection and punishment.



The authors used these research findings to examine and discuss predictive possibilities, and concluded that at least 5 per cent of the research participants were paedophiles. According to this study, a fifth of the male participants were attracted to young children. These findings, assuming they are accurate, have implications beyond the authors' endeavours and much could be learnt from these research participants. Common sense would suggest that people with paedophilic inclinations might exhibit some benevolent understandings towards men who abuse. However, stigma spreads to people sympathising with these men, as support people attest (Chapter Seven).

In short, differing ages of consent, varying data gathering procedures, definition discrepancies and a range of underlying assumptions render research questions ambiguous and subsequently obscure research findings and restrict comparison within and across countries. The terms 'victim' and 'child sex offender' are both generic and imply heterogeneity. As Kelly (1988) observes, child sex abuse does not reflect victim's experiences; specifically for this study, the label of child sex molester or abuser is too limited and, in the absence of context, can be considered somewhat dubious.

## **Re-entering communities**

This section provides a broad overview of the interdisciplinary literature on the reintegration of sex offenders back into the community, and practical measures to assist child sex offenders. Specifically, I focus on related concepts of rehabilitation, desistance and recidivism, accommodation and employment issues, and on parole conditions relevant to child sex offenders in New Zealand. I note that within the literature the word 'offender' is frequently used indiscriminately as a generic term. Post-release conditions for men who sexually abused children are very specific, for example no contact with children during parole. Literature that does not differentiate between types of offending and offenders (i.e. referring to 'offenders' in general) might only be marginally relevant to child sex offenders. I draw on some reintegrative literature discussing the prison population in general without further specifying the researched population. Re-entry or reintegration is viewed as an event and process that occurs over a long period of time, beginning prior to and continuing after release (Maruna, Immerigeon & LeBel, 2004). Understanding processes and pathways in relation

to contexts that lead to change should be the focus of interest in discussions on reintegration (Maruna et al., 2004).

Reintegration, defined as a transitional process from imprisonment to the freedom of community, is considered successful in the absence of recidivism (Department of Corrections, 2005). Responsibility for preparing prisoners for release is shared in some systems and is commonly limited to assisting inmates to outline a plan on paper (Taxman, Young & Byrne, 2004). Arrangement and execution is mostly left to the individual, assuming that she or he is capable of undertaking preparations from the prison cell and has the ability to adjust to life outside prison. This transition from a controlled, dependent and regulated environment to an independent one is a process that takes time (Taxman, cited in Department of Corrections, 2005). Discussions about recidivism and rehabilitation are inevitably part of reintegration. Calling recidivism a “fruit salad concept” with no one definition, Beck (n. d., p. 1) proposes to consider three aspects. The first concerns the question of what is recidivism; the second examines the timeframe of recidivism; and the third is the basis for making sense of the data. Desistance and recidivism are linked concepts with the former indicating the termination of a criminal career and recidivism signalling renewed criminal activity (Bushway, Brame & Paternoster, 2004). Ward and Maruna (2007) critically evaluate the word rehabilitation, the lack of clear definition and its implied, vaguely preachy slant of the right to tell others how to live. The authors also observe that rehabilitation tends to be a non-specific concept, its meaning implied rather than specified.

Ward and Maruna (2007) propose a shift from a risk-management perspective in the field of corrections. Many reintegrative and rehabilitative efforts focus on offender deficits (Bazemore & Erbe, 2004) and culminate in risk-assessment exercises. In contrast, the ‘Good Lives Model’ (GLM) is a strength-based approach (Ward & Brown, 2004; Ward & Mann, 2004; Ward & Marshall, 2004; Ward & Maruna, 2007; Ward & Stewart, 2003) drawing on Seligman’s concept of positive psychology (Ward & Mann, 2004). This model is specifically designed for and applied to men who sexually abused children but is equally appropriate for the wider prison population (Ward & Maruna, 2007). The GLM is concerned with the enhancement of an individual’s aptitude to improve their quality of life and gain a sense of fulfilment and meaning, and, by doing so, to diminish their

chances of recidivism. In Chapter Nine, I draw specifically on generativity, described as conscious efforts to engage with younger generations to foster their wellbeing, to illustrate the participants' (of this study) engagement to contribute to the community in a positive manner. Ward and Maruna (2007) emphasise the role of the community in rehabilitative processes. Human beings are interdependent, and offending and rehabilitation emerge through interactions between individuals and their local environments (Ward & Maruna, 2007).

The role of the family, work and a desire to participate in society have also been identified as critical to successful reintegration (Uggen, Manza & Behrens, 2004). The authors, however, illustrate how the stigma of criminal convictions creates barriers and obstacles to these reintegration processes, showing that communities are ill-prepared to accept offenders as fellow citizens. The authors conducted interviews with convicted criminals, some of whom were classified as sex offenders. Offenders expressed concern about community notification, which ascribes to them a "hyper-stigmatized status" (Uggen et al., p. 277) and an ongoing sense of punishment that moves beyond any court-imposed sentencing. To illustrate how retribution can continue, I draw on Wiremu's experience of being publically called "that paedophile" in Chapter Nine.

The themes of social interconnectedness and relatedness are central to this study. By way of illustration I refer to Yang's (2006) cobweb metaphor representing the self and its relational network to others. Thus, the community has an interest and plays a role in reintegrative processes because it has the potential to influence an offender's behaviour while also being affected by adverse behaviour (Taxman et al., 2004). Clear and Karp (1998) discuss America's uneasiness about the diminishing community life and social cohesion. They present the model of Jackson Heights Community Justice Centre and its multiple roles to assist victims, offenders and communities. Each of these three stakeholders has tasks and obligations with processes in place in case of failure. In this bottom-up approach, the goal is to "strengthen the capacity of residents of this community to manage their own affairs, solve their own problems and live together effectively and safely." (Clear & Karp, 1998, p. 55). R. Wilkinson (2001) also claims that the re-entry transition processes need overhauling, and for a successful outcome a safety-net for both offenders and the community needs to be put into place.

Wilson, Picheca and Prinzo (2005) evaluated a pilot community reintegration project, 'Circles of Support & Accountability' (COSA), sponsored by members of the Mennonite Church (Wilson, McWhinnie, Picheca, Prinzo & Cortoni, 2007). COSA is run by volunteers and operates under the motto of 'no secrets'. The majority of the survey respondents (released prisoners) experienced a sense of support and acceptance. They reported having gained a more realistic perspective of their position in the community, as many initially failed to understand that they had to earn trust and acceptance from the community first. Quinn (1999) reports on community participation in parole processes, suggesting that a lack of grassroots involvement "may be one source of the public's chronic distrust of corrections, and especially of parole" (p. 77). Although not specifically tailored to men who sexually abused, community involvement, the author suggests, allows for swift response to concerns before these reach crisis point.

Community notifications are perhaps motivated to pre-empt problems. Much of the literature on reintegrating men who sexually abused children is generated in the USA, and tends to debate the pros and cons of the compulsory notification laws. Following a prominent and widely published case of child sexual abuse and murder in the 1990s, Megan's Law was introduced in the USA, named after Megan Kanka (Brannon, Levenson, Fortney, & Baker, 2007; Levenson & Cotter, 2005). This authorises the public disclosure of the identity of convicted sex offenders to the community in which they live (Hinds & Daly, 2001; Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Ronken, & Lincoln, 2001). Following the murder of eight-year old Sarah Payne in 2000, a British tabloid, *News of the World*, organised a campaign to 'name and shame' (Ashenden, 2002; Critcher, 2002; Cross & Lockyer, 2006; Drury, 2002; McCartan, 2004).

Similar debates take place in Switzerland (Initiative zur Bekämpfung der Pädophilie, 2006; Verwahrungsinitiative wird umgesetzt, 2006)<sup>14</sup> where proposed initiatives are the result of a serious sexual abuse case. The prominence in the news media of horrific cases of sexually-motivated abductions and killings of children spreads the notion that all such cases are violent (West, 1998). However, statistics show that serious sexual abuse incidents resulting in death are rare in comparison to the more frequent occurrence of child victims killed by

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<sup>14</sup> For references see media reference, Appendix E2.

parents (West, 2000) or sexually abused by a close relative or family friend (Weeks, 2003). Public concerns about child sex offending can result in legislative changes driven by fear and outrage rather than based on empirical studies (Levenson & Cotter, 2005). Such interplay between intense news media reports and policy-making resembles the 'CNN effect'. This refers to concerted news coverage and representations of misery, here the suffering of a child and parents or caregivers, as a recognisable formula for a moral message (Tester, 2001). The public, encouraged by swift, immediate and intense news media coverage, exercises pressure on political decision-makers to take ameliorating action in the form of policy changes (Tester, 2001).

At present, New Zealand has no law requiring notification when sex offenders are released into the community. In an inter-continental study, Cao (Cao, J., personal communication February 23, 2009) examines the merits and disadvantages of the introduction of such a law in New Zealand as part of her doctoral thesis. Coddington (2004) published a New Zealand, and separate Australian, index from "information in the public domain" (p. 3), listing offenders' names alphabetically with two cross-reference listings by town, city, area and occupation. The Sensible Sentencing Trust maintains on its website (<http://www.safe-nz.org.nz/>) both a violent offender and separate paedophile and sexual offender databases, also listed in alphabetical order. Public notifications create an impression that the perpetrator is most likely a stranger, yet statistics indicate that 90 per cent (Hinds & Daly, 2001) of sexual offences are committed by family members or close associates (Anderson, Martin, Mullen, Romans, & Herbison, 1993; Ronken & Lincoln, 2001). By ignoring offences that occur in the domestic sphere, public notifications provide a false sense of security as many sex offenders commit crimes within families and have not been convicted (Cowburn & Dominelli, 2001). Thus, the stereotypical image of a sexual predator lurking in the dark does not exist (Kitzinger, J., 1999). Hinds and Daly (2001) theorise that the persistent belief in the stranger danger myth lies in the fact that a sex offender does not fit into the "the racial schema that white people . . . may use in negotiating safety and danger in their neighbourhoods" (p. 269).

National and international media reports corroborate vigilante actions whereby mobs haunt and oust alleged sexual offenders (Drury, 2002), forcing them to go underground and exist in secrecy (for vigilante action in New Zealand see

Prologue, Chapters One and Five). Alternatively, vigilante actions remain unreported by alleged sexual offenders because of shame and a reluctance to draw further attention to themselves (Brannon et al., 2007). Vigilantism is counterproductive to successful reintegrative processes and increases the risks of re-offending (Wilson et al., 2005). Ultimately, society has a right to safety while simultaneously observing civic responsibilities (Etzioni, 1995). Etzioni proposes that the commitment of the community is fundamental to support the moral, social and political foundations of society, rather than placing responsibilities exclusively on individuals and the state. Re-entry processes are positively affected through community and citizen participation catering to the needs of the victims, residents and offenders (Wilkinson, R., 2001). However, few members of focus group discussions conducted by Brooks, Visher and Naser (2006) felt that communities had any responsibility to facilitate such processes and successful reintegration was up to the individuals themselves (see also Chapter Six). Brooks and colleagues (2006) explored opinions and perspectives of citizens living in a neighbourhood with a high concentration of released prisoners, many personally knowing an ex-prisoner. While many of Brooks and colleagues' focus group participants felt that family support was an important source of support this also strained relationships because of the emotional and financial stress of caring for a person in transition (see discussion on caregiver burden, Chapter Seven). Other participants pointed to the negative influence of families where intergenerational patterns of crime were rampant. The importance of assistance from a wide range of social services, church groups and health professionals was highlighted. Overall, community members were divided regarding whether to accept ex-offenders or not. Brooks and colleagues' (2006) participants were collectively concerned about sex offenders re-entering the community, and expressed fear, anxiety and frustration that the authorities failed to notify the community.

Published offender information was found to be frequently incorrect (Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Ronken & Lincoln 2001), increasing the risk of harm to innocent people in vigilante and mob actions, which presupposes the correctness of official information (Drury, 2002). Community notifications also impede employment opportunities (Hinds & Daly 2001; Uggens et al. 2004) and adequate accommodation (Baldry, McDonnell, Maplestone & Peeters, 2006; Thomas, 2003). Suitable accommodation, a pre-release condition for men who attend Te

Piriti Treatment Unit, is notoriously difficult to find and a major concern for the individual prisoner and the assisting prison staff (Baldry et al., 2005; Brown, Spencer & Deakin, 2007; Department of Corrections, 2005). Lack of housing potentially leads to recidivism in the general offender population (Burnett, 2007). Importantly, men who offended against children are not allowed to cohabit with minors during the probation period. In addition to standard conditions of release, the New Zealand Parole Board may set special conditions (Department of Corrections, 2007). These can include restrictions not to reside in the vicinity of kindergartens, day-care centres or schools (see Chapter Five for media report on re-housing; Chapter Six for public concern; Chapter Nine for offender concern). Standard conditions for a period of six months apply if an offender is released on the statutory release date (sentence end date). The Parole Board's guideline stipulates that "when making decisions about, or in any way relating to, the release of an offender, the paramount consideration for the Board in every case is the safety of the community" ("Parole Act", 2002). Blanket restrictions applied to all men who sexually abused children may result in increased isolation creating emotional and financial hardship, adding to existing stressors and potentially heightening the risk of re-offending (Levenson & Cotter, 2005).

The search for housing and employment occurs concurrently and the geographical uncertainty of accommodation renders the search for employment challenging (Brown et al., 2007). Limited financial resources following imprisonment further complicate the cascading effect of accommodation, employment and parole conditions. Financial hardship, discussed in the next paragraph, rarely allow for the purchase of a vehicle to facilitate transport between accommodation and work. Accommodation then is dictated by parole conditions, employment possibilities and access to public transport, which, too, is deemed unsuitable for child sex offenders because of the potential presence of children. Probation might prevent an ex-offender from becoming mobile too soon, as Jedi, a research participant, experienced. A lack of adequate public transport and no vehicle initially hampered his ability to find employment. Yet, the value and importance of employment for men released from prison are well documented (Maruna, 2001).

Obtaining meaningful employment was an important factor for the research participants in this study. This appears to contribute to their wellbeing, sense of

independence and steps to attain full citizenship by resuming paying taxes. Following release from prison, a number of research participants for this study intended a period of 'acclimatisation' to readjust to life on the outside before starting work. Financial hardship necessitated reassessment of that plan. On release into the community, a person imprisoned for 31 days or more is entitled to "\$350.00 less any amount held by the prison on that person's behalf" ("Social Security Act", 1964). Research participants considered this amount of money, known as 'steps to freedom', a farce in view of the expenses awaiting them immediately following release from prison. The amount of \$350.00 has remained unchanged since 1991 when it was reduced from \$369.14 by the National Government (New Zealand Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society, 2007).

As much of the scholarship in these fields highlights, the processes of civic reintegration, work and family, play vital roles in successfully re-entering society (Farrell, 2004; Uggen et al., 2004; Ward & Maruna, 2007). The transition from prison into the community for men who sexually abused children is frequently hampered as communities are ill-prepared to accept criminals (Uggens et al., 2004). Great disparities between offenders' intentions to stay crime-free and communities' fears of re-offending increase the risk of alienation, rendering offenders helpless and disillusioned. This has the potential for resentment and increases risks of recidivism (Brannon et al., 2007). Family and couple relationships offer a more structured lifestyle and contribute to a desire to desist from crime, potentially reducing criminal activity (Farrell, 2004; Maruna, 2001). At least immediately following imprisonment, such ideological settings are mostly out of reach for men who sexually abused children, for personal reasons such as severed relationships (see Chapter Nine) and legally-imposed conditions. Relationships with their partners often ended during incarceration and anticipated future relationships are perceived as a major hurdle due to their criminal history. Enduring stigma, limited parental rights and overseas travel restrictions also contribute to a decreased sense of civic reintegration and a discontinuity between social positions and pre- and post-punishment roles (Uggen et al., 2004).

This subsection has examined the transitional phase of men who sexually abused from prison back into community life. While some rehabilitation models build on offenders' deficits and are focused on risk assessment, the GLM is a strength-based approach, emphasising the relationship between the individual



offender and his immediate environment and aspirations to lead a meaningful life. Successful rehabilitation is reliant on the interplay between accommodation, employment, support network and communities within the frame of parole conditions.

## **Chapter summary**

In this chapter, I referred to academic literature in three key areas relevant to the wider discussions on men who sexually abuse(d) children to set the background for the subsequent chapters. The literature revealed some of the complexities involved in attempts to comprehend issues of child sex offending and demonstrated challenges and inconsistencies in the approaches by which child sex offending and offenders are examined. As the main focus in academic studies is the deviant sexual behaviour of an individual, wider contextual inquiries are often peripheral. This thesis reveals the importance, impact and consequences of our social environment.

Implied understandings of sex and sexuality underpin discussions about men who sexually abuse(d). I began this chapter by juxtaposing two contrasting sexual orientations: heteronormativity and paedosexuality. Both orientations demonstrate diverse sexual practices with the former being endorsed and the latter denounced by most except for minor groups supporting intergenerational sex. From paedosexuality as a sexual orientation to criminal behaviour, child sex abuse encompasses many practices which are not always adequately captured, demonstrated and discussed in research, resulting in the impression of a homogeneous offender population. The literature reveals discrepancies in definitions and differing data collection procedures that contribute to considerable variance in statistical prevalence of child sex abuse. From this follows the suggestion that only a small number of men who abuse are brought to justice and imprisoned. Following release from prison, managing finances, housing, employment, relationships and parole conditions mark reintegrative processes. Harm has a ripple effect that impacts on the larger community. Therefore, repair cannot be achieved without stakeholder involvement (Bazemore & Erbe, 2004) yet within New Zealand, transitional processes occur without the inclusion of the wider community. While social connections are recognised as important

reintegrative aspects (Farrall, 2004), strict parole conditions apply to child sex offenders, often restricting their participation in communal environments.

By exploring academic knowledge and understandings, I have shown that both the implied and assumed meanings of sexual offending are prominent. What is the meaning of 'crime', asks Christie (2004). Like a sponge, he replies, this term can absorb many acts. Particularly in the first two sections of this chapter, I demonstrated instances of assumptions, taken-for-granted sexual orientations, and vague definitions of child sex abuse and abusers. Generalised terminology leads to portraying victims and offenders as homogeneous groups and underpin common understandings of what a victim, an offender and abuse is. Highly publicised cases of serious child sex abuse further contribute to understandings that all men who abuse(d) are committing the most serious acts of sexual abuse.

Academic narratives represent specific knowledge that permeates institutional, public and private narratives, as I go on to demonstrate. Such understandings are often preferred ways of knowing and are considered more cogent, authentic, convincing and conclusive than other forms of knowing. Consequently, the personal experiences of the offenders, their families and the public is often de-contextualised or absent in the literature I reviewed, or at least not discussed in detail. In all of the ensuing chapters, academic perspectives play a role in the shaping of understanding men who sexually abuse(d). This progresses from the introduction of intelligence testing in New Zealand in the 1920s (Robertson, 2001), discussed in Chapter Four, to focus group participants demonstrating scholastic education and news media employing pundit commentaries. This chapter has explicitly addressed some of the concepts that often remain unarticulated and assumed.

The objective of the next chapter is to explain my approach to the present study.



## CHAPTER 3: MODES OF INQUIRY

When a subject is highly controversial—and any question about sex is that—one cannot hope to tell the truth. One can only show how one came to hold whatever opinion one does hold.

(Virginia Woolf, 1978, p. 6)

Discussions about sex and sexuality are problematic and controversial, as Woolf (1978) attests and as I have indicated in Chapter Two, where I considered two specific sexual orientations and practices that lie at opposite ends of the spectrum: heteronormativity and paedosexuality. The former represents taken-for-granted assumptions and practices, while the latter signals deviant practices. The terms 'sex' and 'sexuality' are value-laden, and their understandings are not limited to one universal viewpoint. Enshrined in taboo, silence and non-existence (Foucault, 1998), discussions on sexuality are potentially reserved and context-specific. In particular, talk about child sex offending is often polemical, contentious and emotional. The two words, child and sex, seem an odd misfit in combination, contrasting innocence and adult pleasure, and (perceived) asexual and sexual beings. I take an approach that considers the sensitive nature of this research and accommodates the study's multidimensionality. In mounting an investigation of the characterizations of men who sexually offend(ed) against children, I use academic knowledge to background this study. I also draw on historical discourses, news media framing, public understandings, and supporter and offender narratives (see Figure 1).

As stated earlier, this study demarcates the often contradictory and incompatible stories about men who sexually abuse(d) children, which impact upon the processes for men reintegrating into communities after periods of imprisonment. Chapter One introduced the topic, aim, rationale and research elements of this study. Taking these components into consideration, I selected appropriate ways of scrutinising the polyphonic narratives shaping the understanding of and responses to men who abuse(d) children. The present chapter outlines my research methodology. I elaborate on how the material for this study was collected and how I engaged with the various data sets, also showing why my

chosen approach to the study is critical to its overall shape. Section One of this chapter accounts for the choice of a particular approach to qualitative research. Section Two discusses the data collection procedures. Section Three outlines the analytic framework for the thesis.

## **Section One: A qualitative study**

As is commonly stated in academic circles, the selection of a research methodology is contingent on the phenomenon examined, the socio-historical context of the project, the tools available to the researcher, and the researcher's own values, beliefs and preferences. The topic of sexual offending against children is complex and often invokes strong emotions, debate and controversy. Therefore, I selected a qualitative approach that enabled me to engage with the multidimensional, multifaceted and contested nature of the social construction of men who offend(ed) against children. At the heart of this study lie people's personal stories and experiences, in particular, the narratives of men convicted of and imprisoned for sexual offending against a child or children. I contextualise these men's stories with reference to multiple representations of these men, evident in official documents accessed through archival work, media reports, focus group discussions between members of the public, and individual narratives collected from family members who support offenders in their efforts to adjust to life following the disclosure of the offending. I aim to demarcate the multiple and multilayered understandings of men who sexually abuse against children, how these men are characterized in society today, and the ways in which reintegrative processes are considered both possible and impossible. In doing so, I take Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) analogy of the researcher as a quilt-maker who must weave together multiple materials in order to create a holistic picture that reflects the complexities of the issue under investigation.

### ***A narrative approach***

This section introduces narrative research as an approach that accommodates the five elements (Figure 1) of this thesis and allows me to demonstrate interconnectedness of all elements in how people and institutions make sense of sex offending. The approach taken allows me to integrate institutional, public and

personal narratives in a manner that provides a richer appreciation of the psychosocial and historical contexts within which we come to understand child sex offending and offenders. This section will achieve five main tasks. First, I will clarify the types of narratives I included in this thesis and then draw attention to their purposeful orientations and functions as key ingredients to human and societal knowledge systems. Diverse and intrinsic human experiences are essential to this thesis and a phenomenological approach that underlies narrative research allows me to value all experiences. I elaborate on the co-constructed quality of narrativity and meaning-making. It is from ongoing dialectical engagements between and within human beings and with institutions that our sense of selfhood and understandings of others emerges. The link between narration and self is crucial for this thesis because stories offer possibilities for offenders to forge, realign and reconcile old and tarnished selves with new and improved selves that speak of change and often regret.

By drawing on a narrative approach, this thesis engages with a fundamental and ancient human activity. I extend this to invoke the idea that the storying of child sex offenders began well before the participants of this study were born and will continue long after we are all gone. In view of that, shared understandings of such men and offences are in process, rather than a set artefact to be mapped and measured with certainty. Within the discipline of psychology, Bruner (1991) points to a paradigm shift that took place in the early 1980s when some psychologists began to explore the importance of narratives to human life and the idea of narratives constituting, rather than representing, reality and people. That is, it is through storying that we come to both understand and create our lives and selves. An aligned school of thought posits that self-narratives represent “personal outlooks and *theories* of reality, not reality itself” (Maruna & Matravers, 2007, p. 431). In a broad sense, narratives are representations of lives (Jovchelovitch, 2007) and have a long history anchored in ancient traditions with no traceable start, a “beginningless development” (Elias, 1996, p. 19).

Narratives are conceptualised in many ways (Daiute & Fine, 2005), carry many meanings (Riessman, 2008) and are ubiquitous. As a result the use of narratives often varies within and across disciplines (Andrews, Day Sclater, Squire & Treacher, 2000; Elliot, 2005; Riessman, 1993, 2008). Although storytelling is frequently linked with fiction, fantasy and playfulness (Sarbin, 1986), forms of

narrative are omnipresent in psychological processes and our existence in the world as sentient beings. Bruner (1987) went so far as to propose that the only way human beings seem to be able to describe 'lived time' is to construct narratives, a primary means of expressing human experience. Narratives appear in different forms and genres, refracted through oral, written, visual and aural modes of communication (Riessman, 2008). For this study I utilise a blend of data sets outlined in Figure 1 that are predominantly language-based, with the exception of printed pictures in media outlets and images from television footage.

For this study the range of narratives can be crudely divided into public and private, or more specifically into institutional, official, public and personal stories. This classification clarifies that narratives are not contained to autobiographical and personal stories more commonly associated with narrative research. It also allows us to explore how people organise their thoughts, how social phenomena such as sex offending is understood by various stakeholders, and how these constructions relate to perceptions of humanity and selfhood in particular historical epochs (*cf.*, Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). Thus, we can explore the impact of the way narratives are structured, relationships are forged between people and in the context of specific events, and how this shapes actions in the world within broader social contexts (Elliot, 2005) containing stories about justice and retribution.

Narratives serve a function for both the storyteller and the listener or researcher. Our roles and purposes in stories often change with circumstances, social context and the passage of time. Thus, stories are fluid, subjective, dynamic, and changing (Lieblich et al., 1998; Riessman, 1993, 2008). They allow us to share experiences, argue, persuade, inform, mislead, entertain, evaluate, recount historical events, and re-assess past experiences. This is particularly the case where the narratives are fragmented and chaotic (Riessman, 2008), as in the lives of men who abuse(d) and their families.

As a reflection of the subjective and changing nature of narrative understandings, a phenomenological orientation underpins much narrative research, including the present study. Phenomenology addresses the meanings of our subjective experiences (McAdams et al., 2006). Phenomenology endeavours to conserve the complexity of human experience and to position its observations in the

context of history and society (Josselson, 2006). A fundamental principle of phenomenological-orientated narrative research is the tenet that people exposed to the same situation and experience can understand and respond differently (Caspi & Moffit, 1994, as cited in Maruna, 2001). This notion is essential to my research. Phenomenology, generally defined as an exploration of the subjective experience through the collection of in-depth descriptions of lived experiences in the form of narratives, offers a space to discover dimensions and explanations central to how people make sense of events in their lives (Chamberlain, Camic, & Yardley, 2004). In short, a phenomenological orientation directs “the gaze toward the regions where meaning originates” as processes and practices of “in-seeing” (van Manen, 2007, p. 11). It is at this juncture where outer and inner worlds amalgamate and synthesise into human experiences.

It is important to highlight that I am not proposing that each individual constructs his or her own stories in isolation from other people or social institutions. Narratives have co-constructed qualities of intra- and inter-personal experiences. Thus, narrative research provides a basis for exploring links between institutions, groups and individuals and the ways in which stories mould people’s lives (Jovchelovitch, 2007). Institutional arrangements shape everyday experiences, frame ways of knowing and signify obligations and restrictions (Jovchelovitch, 2007). In a broad sense, there is no escaping from institutional narratives that imbue everyday life (also see discussion on assertoric knowledge in Chapter Two). Institutional assertions of preferred narratives are consequential for those infringing institutional rules and for those adhering to the rules. Demarcations of sexuality, for example, are largely dictated by institutions (Finch, 1993), which I go on to demonstrate in Chapter Four. Further, narratives are also formed and re-assembled within culturally available frameworks (Bartlett, 1932; Frank, 1997; Freeman, 1999; Silverstone, 2007). For instance, Hone, introduced in Chapter One, exemplifies context specificity by replying to my question about how he experienced living in an extended family of 14 in a four-bedroom house. “I don’t really know because that was our life as we knew it. I can’t really tell you”. Hone’s points of reference were restricted to that experience at that time of his childhood. Lacking comparative knowledge, his candid reply was “I can’t really tell you”.

Analogical to a “voyage of discovery” (Josselson & Lieblich, 2003, p. 26), meanings and understandings are explored and negotiated between speaker and



listener, a recursive process that leads to potential new understandings or solidifies old understandings. Such understandings are continuously incorporated as background knowledge expands, permitting, at times necessitating, the re-narration of stories and reflecting how meanings are not fixed in the past (McKendy, 2006). During re-storying processes old meanings can be challenged and new meanings allocated whereby knowledge and insight become linked to personal action that entails potential consequences and change in relationships (Yang, 2006). Parts One and Two of this study draw heavily on official and institutional narratives, specifically academic literature, archival material and commissioned inquiries, with news media and public focus group conversations leading into the domain of public and private narratives. Part Three begins with the transitional narratives elicited from people who support a man who sexually offended. Their narratives move from public to private understandings of these men. These stories offer the possibility of bridging the metaphoric gap, elucidated in Chapter One, that seems to separate good people from evil people. Support persons' narratives approximate the most personal of all the narratives, which are provided by men who offended. The co-constructed, relational and dialogical nature is common to all narratives, private and public, and thus renders every narrative polyphonic, multidimensional and framed according to available sources, the context and the audience.

People strive to make and share understandings of sexual abuse by drawing on a wide range of stories available in society (*cf.*, Silverstone, 2007). These understandings that “emerge in the context of everyday life activities most often derive not from a solitary being, seeking to account for this or that aspect of experience; they derive from social interaction, coordination, and negotiation” (Freeman, 1999, p. 106). The consideration that narratives are the product of interconnected and combined efforts is crucial in the discussion of men who sexually abuse. It shifts perpetrators from perceived isolated individuals into communal contexts and dynamic relationships, and, as a result, implicates others in the co-construction of their narratives. Throughout this study, but in particular in Chapters Eight and Nine, I demonstrate these processes of dialogical interconnectedness. I draw on the cobweb metaphor for the self (Yang, 2006) to illustrate that, contrary to their frequent representations, men who sexually abuse(d) do not develop and live in isolation. The self, Yang (2006) suggests, is the nexus of a collection of relationships connecting individual actions to the

surroundings. This affects the self and other people linked to the cobweb and beyond.

Although much of this study's focus is on dialogical processes, it is the narratives elicited from ten men who sexually abused that allow me to extensively explore the selves in the process of transforming and making. It is through their stories where development and sense-making takes place: where old selves are reconciled and new selves are shaped. Embedded in stories, as a substantial amount of sense-making occurs through describing (McAdams, 1995), this study examines processes of transformation. Typically, such stories are demarcated by 'then' and 'now' and tell of distinct individual experiences, of past and new selves. Subsequently, the selves are in stages of continuous transformations and adaptations. Within this study, conceptualising and contextualising representations of selves assists to shift the focus from offending to other aspects that make up human experiences, with the objective of delineating processes that allow for reconciliation of offending aspects of selves and opportunities of forming new selves. The representations of the selves, situated in narrative accounting practices, are framed, context-specific and purposeful and entail elements of the properties I have outlined. This needs to be kept in mind in the discussions of all narratives, but in particular those elicited from ten men who abused (Chapters Eight and Nine).

Out of this self-exploration and quest for self-awareness, the need and desire to reconcile old and new selves is central to this study. Particularly in the narratives of the ten men who abused, the question of 'who am I?' is recurring and part of self-developmental processes that Kraus (2006) calls "a story without closure, constantly open to change" (p. 104). Born out of a crisis of belonging, Bauman (2004) calls identity "a hopelessly ambiguous idea" (p. 76) that is contested. In this study, I am specifically interested in processes of changing selves in the face of crises. Attempts to answer the question of 'who am I?' requires configurational processes of transforming past experiences into accounts that hang together to some degree (Freeman, 1999). Presupposing many selves (Kraus, 2006; Yang, 2006), these are considered a "multiplicity of positions with mutual dialogical relationships" (Hermans, 2001, p. 243), as opposed to the belief that the self exists independently (Vollmer, 2005).

The broader discipline of psychology still tends to seek to locate people in specific social groupings that assume coherent and stable stories of who we are. Kraus (2006) argues that “the construction of coherence is no longer guaranteed by the defining force of collective identities” (p. 104). He builds on Levi-Strauss’s stance of the fragmented self-experience and suggests that coherent models to unite fragmented experiences are no longer supplied by society. Similarly, B. Smith and Sparkes (2006) propose that in contemporary western societies, the state of multiphrenia diminishes the possibility of self-experience as a coherent unit and wholeness, leading to context-specific selves that are characterized by multiplicity, fragmentation and changeability, as well as exhibiting coherence and consistency over time. Contradictions and conflicts lie within the scope of narrative inquiry (Lieblich et al., 1998), and are central to this thesis because they allow for multilayered readings and the re-storying of past events.

In sum, narratives function as a conduit and common thread through all research components of this study and provide a conceptual basis for bringing some coherence to understanding the social construction of men who sexually offend(ed) against children. Underscoring my decision to select a narrative approach is the assertion that there is no single, absolute truth in human reality, and not one proper reading or interpretation of any text (Lieblich et al., 1998). “The heterogeneity of self-experience must be accepted” (Kraus, 2006, p. 106). By implication, narratives then contain multiple meanings and are open to change and in the process key characters have opportunities for reform (Lieblich et al., 1998; Riessman, 2008).

Finally, I use the terms ‘narrative’ and ‘story’ interchangeably while acknowledging that some academics make a distinction (Riessman, 2008). The word ‘account’ is used on occasions but not as a synonym for story or narrative; instead, it is used to indicate a shorter narrative segment (Crossley, 2007).

## **Section Two: Data gathering**

The gathering of data spanned from official documents (institutional narratives), group discussions (public narratives), and personal stories (a support group discussion and offender accounts). I described the co-constructed and

interwoven nature of these narratives in the previous section. This section elaborates on the benefits of including the selected research element in this study and outlines the research procedures for the different data sets in the order of history, news media, focus groups, and conversations with men who sexually offended against children.

It should be noted that the overall research project was approved by the Psychology Research and Ethics Committee of the University of Waikato in October 2006. A number of other ethics application processes were required; I refer to these in the relevant subsections.

### ***History***

Public and institutional narratives retrieved from archives, in the form of reports, medical records, court files and news media dating from 1923 to 1968 constitute the raw material for Chapter Four. Archival material, considered by historians as a primary source of information (Howell & Prevenier, 2001; Jordanova, 2000) is less mediated by historical interpretation and therefore nearer to its provenance, implying aspects of intimacy (Jordanova, 2000). Such documents contain privileged knowledge because official repositories are not readily accessible (Jordanova, 2000). These narratives offer insight into 'real life' (Jordanova, 2000) allowing the researcher to creep in sideways (Dalley, 2001) to glean stories about men who sexually abused. These narratives, formerly hidden away, are enshrined in secrecy and silence (Dalley, 2001), in the same way as these men's crimes, which are also secret and silent. Archives are sites of knowledge preservation, but this knowledge is not uncontested. Regardless of whether the archival material emanates from institutions (the court of law, for example) or a private bequest (a collection of letters, for example) the material in question is always the product of circumstances and is therefore framed in certain ways. It is one form of knowing (Jovchelovitch, 2007).

Historians engage with the practices and modes of other social sciences, also using social theories as tools to think about individuals and groups (Howell & Prevenier, 2001). Considering psychology's reluctance to transgress its disciplinary boundaries, it is noteworthy that by drawing on psychoanalysis, some historians endeavour to study the embodiment of feelings or mentalities in history

in order to discover anxieties, hopes, desires and dreams of an earlier epoch (Howell & Prevenier, 2001). Jordanova (2000) suggests that psychoanalysis has its place in history because many historical explanations rest upon assumptions on the subconscious of everyday life. Furthermore, she points out that psychoanalysis in itself deals with the individual legacy and memory of past events.

Within the context of psychology, engaging with history is pertinent and meaningful for a number of reasons. Significantly, for this study, turning the gaze on the past allows me to pursue and document the development of sex and sexuality in twentieth-century New Zealand. Historian Chris Brickell (2008b) suggests that “the study of sexual history also challenges accepted views of society and its inhabitants” (p. 13). This allows us to question how current understandings have come into existence over time. Specifically, it opens ways to demarcate shifts in discussions on sex and sexuality, and to de-compose the ways in which men who sexually abused children and their crimes have been publicly and legislatively constructed and characterized over time.

I have used a range of historical materials to locate twentieth-century histories of sexuality in New Zealand, and in particular, what has been viewed as deviant sexual practices. The local history of sexual behaviour is inextricably connected with historical patterns and larger societal structures and nation states (Moloney, 2005). I combined official material and historical documents to examine and illustrate developments that have occurred over time. The reports from the Committee of Inquiry into Mental Defectives and Sexual Offenders (1925) and the Special Committee on Moral Delinquency in Children and Adolescents (1954) can be considered barometers of accepted and unaccepted sexual practices of the respective periods in New Zealand. Norms about practices were shaped by British and increasingly American influences, trending towards more scientific explanations. To complement these public narratives with individual stories I searched ‘Archway’ (<http://www.archway.archives.govt.nz/>), the online portal for Archives New Zealand, to explore the availability and accessibility of historical documents. Initially I considered records from prisons and mental institutions, with the former not being viable mainly for two reasons. Firstly, according to the Archives New Zealand website (<http://www.archives.govt.nz/>), prison records are restricted indefinitely and secondly, it is questionable whether the prison files

contain detailed data about the crime(s) committed. Among the records of mental hospitals, access to the series titled 'Committed patient case files', dating from 1853 to 1964, is unrestricted until 1937. Thereafter access to information becomes restricted until seventy years after the closure of the file. I perused files from Auckland Mental Hospital between 1910 and 1937. These are kept in 315 boxes<sup>15</sup> covering 27 years. For practical reasons I limited my search to four boxes every fifth year, which amounted to 24 boxes. The number of files in each box varied depending on the thickness of individual files. The boxes contained case notes of both male and female patients. The files were clipped together and typically comprised formal letters of admission and discharge, nurses' and doctors' notes and observations, and other administrative papers. These were predominantly handwritten with some typed documents (for example, a medical officer's note of preliminary examination). None of the files I examined involved men committed to the institution exclusively on the grounds of sexually abusing a child. I located only two suitable files, which I selected for interpretative purposes. These, dated 1935 and 1936, concerned young men who engaged in bestiality and masturbation, with one of them, William Y., indecently assaulting a girl of his own age (14 years) and interfering with girls aged about five in public places. I obtained photocopies of the files which I used as the basis for my analysis.

In my search for more appropriate archival material, and to account for the periods before and after the 1930s, I shifted the search from the mental institution to the courts to pursue a carefully targeted exploration of official legal narratives on child sex offenders. I applied to the Ministry of Justice for permission to gain access to the Hamilton trial and sentence registers.<sup>16</sup> The request was granted, and I was given permission to examine two handwritten ledgers from the Hamilton High Court. The information contained the name and age of each accused person, the date of committal and date of sentencing (if applicable), a brief description of the indictment and the verdict. I browsed the two ledgers paying particular attention to any charges of a sexual nature against children. In total, I selected the names of twelve men (four from the first book and eight from

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<sup>15</sup> Auckland Hospital Board. (1910-1937). Carrington Hospital Committed Patient Case Files (YCAA 1026 Boxes 13 to 328).

<sup>16</sup> Hamilton High Court. (1915-1972). Hamilton trial and sentence registers (BCDG 15338/1 and BCDG 15338/2).

the second) whose offences I deemed best matched the criteria of child sex offenders from the little information I obtained from the ledgers. I applied to the Ministry of Justice for permission to gain access to the court files. This was granted with the stipulation that no prisoner from restricted court records may be named in publication.

The Hamilton trial files series contains legal papers relating to criminal trials at the Hamilton Supreme Court. Each file includes the date of the trial, the name of the accused, the crime for which they were committed to trial, notes of evidence, details of charges and sentencing (Archway). The documents are folded together lengthwise with one A4 sheet folded across with an official seal from the Supreme Court of New Zealand. On this sheet the names of the witnesses and the jury are provided; the name of the accused, the verdict and, if applicable, the sentence. Due to the restrictions placed on the use of the material, I was not permitted to make photocopies. I devised a template (Appendix C) for the purpose of systematically recording the archival material. I summarised the information and filled in the template at the time I was reading through the records at Archives New Zealand's Auckland Regional Office. See Appendix D for demographic details of the eight cases.

To complement the eight court records with newspaper articles I searched *The Waikato Times*, retained on microfilm at the Hamilton Public Library. I used the dates of each trial to search *The Waikato Times* and was able to locate five reports of the eight cases, and printed photocopies of each of the newspaper articles.

### ***News media***

My examination of public narratives moved from the historical newspaper reports on child sex offenders from the 1920s, 1940s and 1950s, to those published by contemporary media outlets. I explain why the inclusion of news media<sup>17</sup> in the

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<sup>17</sup> In this study, I always refer to news media; however, for convenience I occasionally use the word 'media' on its own.

current discussion is indispensable, and detail the material I have selected for analysis. I point out that the choice of the extensive material available and the sources are limited because the media section represents but one segment of this study (Figure 1).

Mediated possibilities of communication about child sex offending have grown exponentially in recent years with the invention of new modalities and instant access to local, national and global news. Here, I draw on print media, television and radio, each providing differing angles on the same story. These forms are considered central to accessing information (Couldry, 2000) and to understand media's role in creating public fora where deliberation and judgement take place (Silverstone, 2007). As I demonstrate in Chapter Six, media is 'practiced' (Couldry, 2000) in that the public draws critically on news media and actively engages in its re-narrating. Chamberlain and Hodgetts (2008) argue for psychologists to pay more attention to contextualising media as a site for social interaction and a raft of social practices, and to consider relationships surrounding media use. Media often re-articulate public and institutional narratives as taken-for-granted frameworks "for understanding the ongoing issues of life and are central to the definition of these issues and the legitimization of approaches to addressing them" (p. 1111). Unpacking this highly mediated information offers an opportunity to examine contemporary social processes and understandings (Chamberlain & Hodgetts, 2008) about a specific topic such as child sexual offending.

News media are storytelling institutions, providing symbolic resources to which people resort when narrating events. J. Kitzinger (2004) suggests the media "for better or for worse, are implicated in the very way in which we think about ourselves and relate to one another" (p. 51). The relationship and social practices around media consumptions are far from linear: they are embedded and intertwined in practices of everyday living and broader social contexts (*cf.*, Chamberlain & Hodgetts, 2008). Media constructions are part of society and daily life. People interpret, and in many respects complement and complete, media accounts in our homes, workplaces and public locales. In short, media are part of societal conversations through which people make sense of a raft of social issues, including sexual offending against children.



In the first part of Chapter Five, I draw on nearly 80 national newspaper accounts on child sex abuse, collected over four years for the purpose of analysis. These represent a spectrum of sexual crimes against children and are used to balance the accounts of Ellis and Capill, discussed later in the same chapter. As a preliminary analysis, I grouped the general articles following the patterns that emerged over several readings. I categorised the articles according to the specific issue highlighted by the media in each article (see Appendix E1) to create a comprehensive overview and to facilitate analysis. All references to media items are in a separate reference list in Appendix E2.

For the next part of Chapter Five I selected the very public cases of Peter Ellis and Graham Capill. Both cases received much media interest over long periods of time and continue to do so beyond sentencing and release. The selection of these two case studies offers an opportunity to explore different data sources (print, audio and visual news) and to map changes in media characterizations of Ellis and Capill. These cases add to the illustration of the diverse nature of child sex abuse(rs) that knows no socio-economic boundaries.

In the early 1990s the case of the childcare worker Peter Ellis, accused of sexually abusing children under his care, gained notoriety. It became a New Zealand version of satanic ritual and sexual abuse cases that swept Britain, Canada and the United States a decade earlier (Hood, 2001). Examining the emergence and development of child sex abuse, Pratt (2005) suggests that child sexual abuse “had become a globalized commodity, moving through a variety of channels of communication and exchange that then became available frameworks of knowledge to make CSA [child sex abuse] understandable” (p. 274). The transformation from Ellis the childcare worker to Ellis the child molester and prisoner played out in the media. The case of Peter Ellis was and remains ambiguous: he pleaded not guilty and maintains his innocence. He has a large number of supporters, suggesting a polarisation of opinions. I draw on media reports of Peter Ellis’s deposition hearing and trial for the first case study.

The reports of Graham Capill, the second news media case study, also offer copious amounts of material across media outlets. A frequent media catchphrase, ‘Capill’s fall from grace’ (“Capill’s long fall,” 2005), draws attention to Capill’s previous status as a Reverend and a morals campaigner.

For the Ellis and Capill cases, I draw on three types of media sources to examine media representations of child sex offenders: print, television and radio. The term 'representation' carries multiple meanings. To clarify the understanding of the words 'represent' and 'representation', I refer to Hall (1997) who suggests a double meaning. Firstly, representation alludes to a notion that something exists that can be re-presented through the media. In terms of media practices, through which meaning is produced, the media represent events, topics, and types of people (Hall, 1997) such as child sex offenders. Tolson (1996) alludes to the question of (mis)representations in view of multiple 'truths'. Secondly, the term 'represent' is used to signify on somebody's behalf in his or her absence (Hall, 1997). I return to this last notion later when presenting the case of Graham Capill, who represented the Christian Heritage Party as its president, and was represented as a modern-day morals campaigner. Based on the tenet that "representation frames knowledge", Jovchelovitch (2007, p. 101) draws on the triad of self-other-object to explore different forms and functions of knowledge. I discussed this earlier in Chapter One.

To select material for the case studies of Ellis and Capill I drew on *The New Zealand Herald*, *The Dominion Post* and *The Christchurch Press* as sources for print media with the widest circulations of daily New Zealand newspapers according to the Newspaper Publishers' Association of New Zealand (<http://www.nabs.co.nz/>). I used the online database, Newztext (<http://www.knowledge-basket.co.nz/newztext/welcome.html>), as a portal to search articles in these three newspapers using 'Graham Capill', 'Sensible Sentencing Trust', and 'Garth McVicar' as keywords. I also searched *The New Zealand Herald's* own online archive.

As the Peter Ellis case pre-dated the Newztext database, I accessed news reports from Peter Ellis's website (<http://www.peterellis.org.nz>), namely from *The Christchurch Press*. I selected a limited number of articles, primarily focusing around the deposition hearings and ensuing trial. The press coverage of this case was extensive with the deposition hearing lasting eleven weeks and the trial six weeks. I supplemented the newspaper reports from *The Christchurch Press* with a microfilm search of *The New Zealand Herald*, using the dates from *The Christchurch Press* as points of reference.

The online database from Radio New Zealand Sound Archives served as a basis to select audio material using the same keywords as outlined above. From the brief online descriptions of the available sound tracks, I selected and ordered 29 items from Radio New Zealand Sound Archives. Unlike the audio material, the search for video footage from Television New Zealand (TVNZ) was carried out by TVNZ's own research staff using the criteria I provided. TVNZ produced a list of the results, which contained brief descriptions. After carefully reading these, I selected television footage by choosing the most relevant material.

The following table details the data used for the media analysis.

**Table 1: Media data**

<b>Type of Media</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Articles on Peter Ellis</b>	<b>Articles on Graham Capill</b>	<b>Total by Media</b>
Newspaper	NZ Herald	12	26	<b>38</b>
Newspaper	The Press	9	14	<b>23</b>
Newspaper	Dom Post	-	10	<b>10</b>
Television	TVNZ	15	4	<b>19</b>
Radio	Radio NZ	19	-	<b>19</b>
<b>Total by Person</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>109</b>

To assist systematic analysis I summarised and chronologically ordered the material by case and media outlet using a template (Appendix F) that included date; title and theme (and visual for television footage); characters in the story; and a summary and plot synopsis.

Within the micro-sociology of every-day life (Corner, 1998), I explored levels of meanings derived from mediated material, as focus group participants clearly drew their understandings of sexual abuse in part, but by no means exclusively, from media outlets. Multiple knowledge sources were discussed by focus group participants with the media representing the most obvious source of information. Frosh (2006) builds his arguments on the significance of witnessing and asks how we understand an event that is removed in time and space and has not happened to us directly. This same question has relevance in media narratives on child sexual abuse. Here, the media consumer is far detached from the actual events unless personal experience informs understandings.

### ***Focus Groups***

I conducted six focus groups, five of which were undertaken to explore public views on sex offenders with a cross-sectional representation of 'the public' (Chapter Six). The sixth group consisted of support people of men who sexually abused, and was undertaken to gauge their experiences (Chapter Seven). I refer to these focus groups as 'public focus groups' and 'support person focus group' to differentiate between the two sets. I begin this section with a brief overview of focus group research, and then describe recruiting processes and data collecting procedures. I provided all focus group participants with a gift voucher as a token of my appreciation. To conclude this section I reflect on the different characteristics of the public focus groups and the support person focus group.

Focus groups are collective discussions and interactions that offer a platform for exploring and sharing understandings and personal experiences on a specific topic. Frith (2000) suggests that focus groups provide a unique opportunity to explore participants' greatest personal concerns. This allows the demarcation of formerly unrecognised subjects. Articulating and documenting areas of concern is particularly pertinent in the realm of child sexual abuse. Concerns of different natures were expressed and discussed by participants of both the public and support focus groups (Chapters Six and Seven). Participants of the public focus groups were anxious about public safety, while support people questioned the purpose of what they consider biased media representations of men who sexually abused.

Focus group discussions are a useful research tool to investigate a wide range of public understandings within particular groups. The emerging narratives uncover meaning-making processes that facilitate the exploration of social interpretations of men who sexually abuse(d) children. Discussions were carried out in a safe and respectful environment and provided a forum where participants reflected on common experiences and negotiated meanings (Yardley & Murray, 2004). The resulting data sets allowed me to elucidate the extent of points of convergence and points of conflict within and across groups. The conversations reflected aspects of the polis (Silverstone, 2007), where people gather for face-to-face, purposeful discussions representing a moral and political space where debates explore potentialities.

I carried out five focus group discussions between May and September 2006. Approval to conduct this research was obtained from the University of Waikato Psychology Department's Ethics Committee. I recruited participants for these focus groups through Toastmasters Clubs. This organisation was selected because of its excellent national website; a comprehensive online data base with club-finder facility; the high number of clubs countrywide (approximately 220); and the clubs' diverse membership, including mixed gender, varied age groups and professional backgrounds. One focus group was conducted in each of the following cities: Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Wellington and Christchurch. I made initial contact via email (Appendix G) obtained from the club website and targeted all the clubs in each centre except for Auckland, where I limited the selection to a number of clubs. The criterion was geographical location for easy access from Hamilton. Reactions from contact persons ranged from extremely helpful to not interested. I sent written information of the research via email to contacts willing to support the project. The contact persons advocated for the research on my behalf at their weekly or fortnightly meetings and encouraged their members to participate. I was then provided with a list of names and contact details of prospective participants to whom I sent out a letter of introduction either via mail or email (Appendix H). I envisaged having up to eight participants in each focus group. In total 22 people (9 male and 13 female) took part with the group size ranging from three (Christchurch) to six participants (Hamilton). The youngest participant was a 21-year-old female student and the oldest a 66-year-old retired male. Three male and five female participants had completed tertiary education, three male and three female participants had attained post-graduate qualifications, and two (one male and one female) had no formal education beyond secondary school. Two students were in the process of completing tertiary education and four participants did not indicate their education level. Fourteen participants were born in New Zealand and six were born overseas, while the country of birth of two participants is unknown.

Prior to the start of each focus group, I reiterated the sensitive nature of the discussion and I invited participants to outline ground rules. I obtained written consent (Appendix I) and permission to record the discussion. I explored five core questions (Appendix J) during the one-and-a-half to two-hour long conversations. I printed the questions and handed a copy to each participant. This offered

transparency and acted as a schedule to avoid participants from moving too far off the topic. To ensure participants' anonymity I use pseudonyms.

In keeping with an abductive approach (see Section Three of this chapter), the discussions allowed me to identify themes within and across focus groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Although the more generic term of 'sex offenders' was used in the research questions, this was mostly understood as men who sexually abuse(d) children. I incorporated data that specifically explored the following questions: one, how do people characterize men who sexually offend against children?; two, what knowledge sources are used to form understandings about child sex offenders and their crimes?; and three, what are participants' thoughts and concerns on reintegrating these men into the community? Following verbatim transcriptions<sup>18</sup> (for transcription symbols see Appendix K), I copied and pasted excerpts from each transcript that considered the three questions just outlined. I then read through the new documents (headed 'characterization of men who sexually abuse children'; 'sources of information on these men and their offences'; and 're-entering communities') identifying common themes and concepts of each category. I discuss these narratives in Chapter Six.

Recruitment for the support people focus group was undertaken with the support of SAFE Network Hamilton. An ethics application went through SAFE Auckland and was granted. Counsellors and therapists from SAFE expressed particular interest in this research. While the pivotal role of support people is acknowledged in the literature (Maruna, 2001), little research data is available on the role of support people of men who sexually offended against children and the impact of the crime on support people and family members. Over several meetings with the SAFE co-ordinator in Hamilton, we discussed strategies to approach support people. I composed a letter of introduction and a leaflet explaining the purpose of this research and my wish to conduct a focus group (Appendices L1 and L2). The co-ordinator then forwarded the information to prospective participants. They got in touch with either the co-ordinator or me.

A focus group with four participants took place in November 2008 at a community centre. Written consent was obtained (Appendix M) from the support people. The

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<sup>18</sup> As part of the interpretative process I transcribed all the interviews and conversations used for this study myself.

procedure for the discussion was the same as I described above. I prepared nine core questions (see Appendix N) for the discussion which lasted just over two hours. The creation of a safe and comfortable environment that fosters respect, tolerance and openness is vital and challenging when investigating a sensitive topic (Côté-Arsenault & Morrison-Beedy, 2005; Frith, 2000). This was important for all focus groups I conducted, but for different reasons. The experience of being a support person for a man who sexually abused was the common denominator that brought the four participants together. The mood of the discussion moved beyond the primary goal of the focus group—the collection of data for my research—and transformed into an environment of solidarity and inclusion for the participants. It became a space where participants exchanged stories no longer for my sake but for their own. This gathering had unexpected beneficial aspects whereby the meeting and discussion enabled participants to share and sympathise with one another, lifting their isolated status for a brief period of time.

The relationships among focus group participants, the social context and dynamic of the focus group influence the discussion. The group's constellation can foster or hamper honest and open contributions (Hollander, 2004). Interaction, in a Goffmanian sense, is seen as a performance created between environment and audience, and constructed to convey a convincing impression of social identity. This was a defining point that characterized and divided the public focus groups and the support person focus group. A focus group environment has the potential to transgress the boundaries of normative social roles. Alternatively, these are maintained and reinforced. Participation in this research took place under the same method of 'focus group' to generate discussions. The briefs were similar in that participants were encouraged to discuss their experiences. Participants in the public focus groups took on implied and temporary roles of assistant researchers. Within the limits and restrictions of social interaction in a focus group situation, participants were free to express and position themselves as they wished. For participants in the support focus group, a position (that of a support person) was given and they drew on their experiences to express their lived, rather than hypothetical, understandings of men who sexually abused.

From a narrative perspective, whereby stories are co-constructed between narrator and listener, focus groups have the potential to appraise and expand

understandings of a specific topic. The sharing of information contributes to collective meaning-making and negotiation of divergent experiences (Wilkinson, S., 1998). All six focus groups yielded rich narratives and the discussions indicate various levels of engagement with the topic. However, the public focus groups and the support person focus group had distinct characteristics. Discussions in the former were more guarded, measured and formal, perhaps because of performative social roles and the sensitive nature of the topic, despite jokes and light-hearted remarks that reflect everyday social interactions (Wilkinson, S., 1998). Ideas, thoughts, knowledge, information and some personal experience, were exchanged, debated and reflected upon. The opportunity to participate in a focus group discussion possibly represented a novel experience, an exercise to test debating skills mixed with curiosity about discussing a taboo topic. Two participants disclosed first- and second-hand experience with child sex abuse while a few proclaimed professional interest in the topic.

The point of departure for the support person focus group was entirely different. These participants were irrevocably emotionally entangled, much like S. Wilkinson's (1998) focus group with breast cancer patients. Resulting in a distinct and qualitatively different form of communication and conversation, this gathering had an unexpected therapeutic side-effect for the participants. The four participants were able to share similar stories in a safe environment, where mutual understandings and respect for their situation was guaranteed without the need for explanation or justification. The focus group became a space for respite where sense-making processes of child sex abuse that started much earlier, at the time of disclosure, were expanded and experiences compared. This discussion was 'up close and personal' next only to the experience of the perpetrators, in representing the most personal accounts in this study.

### ***Participants from Te Piriti Special Treatment Unit***

The Te Piriti<sup>19</sup> Special Treatment Unit for child sex offenders is part of Auckland Prison and one of two such facilities in New Zealand. The other treatment unit,

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<sup>19</sup> The translation from Māori given by the Department of Corrections is "a bridge, a crossing over to a better life".



Kia Marama<sup>20</sup>, is located in Christchurch. Te Piriti, a 60-bed unit opened in 1994, fosters a therapeutic environment within a tikanga Māori<sup>21</sup> framework (Department of Corrections). Māori myths and legends are used as illustrations to dispel, for example, claims that incest was customarily permitted by Māori (Larsen, Robertson, Hillman, & Hudson, 1998). I begin this section with a fable that tells of an inappropriate sexual relationship and its dire consequence (Reed, 2004). Legend has it that Tāne, son of Rangi, sky father, and Papa, earth mother, created Hineahuone, the first female, from earth and breathed life into her. Hineahuone and Tāne engaged in sexual intercourse and Hinetitama, the dawn maiden, was born. Hinetitama, too, became Tāne's wife and they had children. She did not know who her father was, and Tāne was evasive when questioned. Hinetitama became suspicious and discovered that Tāne was both her father and her husband. Disenchanted, saddened and ashamed of the incestuous relationship, she fled despite Tāne's plea, and descended into the underworld. Henceforth she became known as Hinenuitepō, great daughter of the night, Goddess of death.

To scrutinize cultural influences and differences on perceptions and understandings of child sex abuse is beyond the scope of this study. However, by including this fable I make the following points. I acknowledge the diversity of understandings that are "enmeshed within the fabric of culture" (Freeman, 1999, p.105): New Zealand is a bi-cultural nation. Culture is embedded in the phenomenology of everyday life, particularly understandings of sex and sexuality are culturally patterned (Gregersen, 1983). In addition, I point out that other cultures make sense of diverse sexuality in different ways and there is a danger in interpreting other life experiences through our own lenses (Plummer, 1984). Three out of ten research participants identified as Māori. Their narratives told of strong support from the wider family. One Māori participant's interpretation of imposed restrictions on interactions with children differed considerably from that of other participants. He regarded his wellbeing contingent on close interactions with his whanau (extended family), which included children. Part of his safety

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<sup>20</sup> Interpreted from Māori by the Department of Corrections to mean "let there be light and insight".

<sup>21</sup> Hirini Moko Mead (2003) describes tikanga Māori as "philosophy in practice and as the practical face of Māori knowledge" (p. 7).

plan included transparency about his past offending and a joint effort between himself and his wider family to ensure the presence of other adults at all times.

I recruited participants from Te Piriti due to its closer proximity to Hamilton than Kia Marama. An ethics application submitted to the Department of Corrections, asking for permission to enrol participants for my research project from Te Piriti, was approved. Following phone contact and a face-to-face meeting with the unit's Chief Psychologist, I was invited to attend a weekly meeting held every Friday morning where all inmates from Te Piriti were present. I was introduced with the view to promote my research at a later Friday meeting. This took place in mid-April 2007 when I introduced my research project to approximately 60 inmates. Potential participants were invited to talk to me following the meeting, put their name down on a prepared list, or take some information away (Appendix O) and enrol later with the reintegration co-ordinator who was my liaison person at Te Piriti. Five offenders approached me and put their names forward while others contacted the reintegration co-ordinator. One person was deemed unsuitable as he attended a special needs programme within Te Piriti. Exploring the narratives of child sex offenders with special needs was outside the parameters of my thesis and I decided not to interview him. Together with my contact, we arranged an order for the interviews. Taking prisoners' anticipated release dates into account, each interview was carried out close to the prisoner's exit day. This, however, did not always work out due to Parole Board hearings. Interviews took place in late April and May 2007 at the psychology unit located within the prison ground of Te Piriti where I was offered an interview room.

At the beginning of each conversation I explained my research again and obtained signed consent (Appendix P), emphasising my wish to catch up with participants in the community for a second interview. All conversations were recorded with participants' permission. I prepared five main questions (Appendix Q) with some pointers in case the conversation was not flowing or was in need of re-focusing. I asked participants whether they had a preferred pseudonym with three of them providing one and the rest leaving the choice to me.

In order to organise the follow-up conversations, the reintegration co-ordinator agreed to e-mail me a monthly updated list containing the following: name, release date, location of release and community probation details. Two

participants left prison three days after our interview (April 2007) and the last three were discharged in January 2008, with the remainder spreading out over the nine months in-between. I first contacted their respective probation officers via the telephone to introduce myself and to explain the reason for my phone call, namely to get back in touch with participants. I then mailed out a letter to the probation officer (Appendix R) to verify the authenticity of my request. I also included a sealed letter to the participant (Appendix S). I was able to arrange follow-up conversations, either with the assistance of the probation officer or through direct phone contact with participants. These took place at various locations such as the community probation centre, where I was offered an interview room, or I was invited into participants' homes. The latter offered a more conducive setting for storytelling (Riessman, 2008) but was not always practical as some offenders lived in a boarding house situation or with family with no space for privacy.

The follow-up interview schedule (Appendix T) contained five parts, and the conversation was again recorded with participants' permission. As a token of appreciation, I provided participants with a gift voucher. At the conclusion of each interview, I asked for permission for a follow-up phone conversation prior to the conclusion of the thesis. I transcribed the interviews verbatim as soon as possible following the interviews. A synopsis of the two conversations with each participant is provided in Appendices U1 to U10 with a summarised overview of demographic and other data of interest in Appendix V.

Here, I outline the preliminary steps I used to unpack, interpret and reconstitute the transcriptions of the 20 conversations. During the analysis processes, I referred to notes I had taken immediately following the meetings, reflected on the settings within which the encounters took place, and listened to the conversations again to explore nuances and differences in their voices during the pre- and post-release conversations. Although this privilege is denied to the reader, I attempted to convey a sense of tone and atmosphere through the reproduction of quotes and on occasions elaborated on inflections in the participant's voice that communicated more than words.

For each transcribed conversation I created a second file consisting of two columns, with the transcription in the left-hand column and free space in the right-

hand column. This allowed me to add my comments on the right-hand side while using colour, highlight, underlining and bolding words or passages of text in both columns. The first reading was used as an opportunity to familiarise myself with the text in more depth, comment on words, sentences, ideas, metaphors and salient features that caught my curiosity and interest. This nominal analysis (Riessman, 2008) occurred soon after the initial conversation and transcription. Next, I printed each transcript. While re-reading the scripts I considered the entire narrative as a whole, adding hand-written comments on specific themes that emerged and knowledge I gained in the first reading of the individual participant and across all participants. In addition, I included cross-references to existing literature.

The next step consisted of exploring dominant themes and imagos within each transcript. Imagos, a characteristic set of images, are expressed, for example, in symbols, metaphors and personally meaningful images (Crossley, 2007). I summarised these for each participant and then looked across the data for patterns, commonalities, prominent features and inconsistencies. I paid particular attention to the narrative tone, which is conveyed in both the form and content within which a narrative is told (Crossley, 2007).

In this section I have outlined my data collection procedures and preliminary engagements with the various data sets. At this stage, the raw material has taken on the shape of themes, ideas, hunches and clusters, and is in a transitional phase. Next, I expand on the interpretative processes leading to a cohesive data analysis.

### **Section Three: Interpretative framework**

I pursued my objectives for this study, to locate the many characterizations of men who sexually abuse(d) children and to explore concerns about their reintegration, through accumulating polyphonic narratives. This has required a multidimensional analytic approach. These multifaceted narratives offer an opportunity to establish links between dialogical relationships, and delineate the richness of specific themes (Hermans, 2001). Earlier in this chapter I justified the selection of narratives as a research approach, which, as a multiperspectival

nucleus, can be examined for themes, settings, tones, images, characters and plots (McAdams, 1993). In this subsection, I explain my analytic processes and the use of frame analysis.

Narrative researchers generally do not consider data gathering and interpretation as two separate and disconnected processes. Narrative research is interpretative at every stage (Josselson, 2006; Rennie, 1999). Interpretation is a gradual development that starts from the moment data is collected. Propositioned as a methodological and theoretical means for interpretative frameworks, narrativity provides the basis for eliciting commonly circulating understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) children. I was guided by abductive processes (Rennie, 1999) comprising a blend of a knowledge base established over time, and narrative theory, referring in particular to Josselson (2006) for practical direction. This allowed me to amalgamate the research elements (Figure 1) in preparation for the subsequent analyses. Specifically, I engaged with news media articles first, followed by academic literature (see Prologue); both commitments that continued for the duration of this study. I conducted the five public focus groups first. The remainder of the data collections overlapped with some occurring simultaneously; the focus group with support people took place last. I continued informal contact with some of the men who sexually abused. I drew from this knowledge base to write this study and produce a new narrative. In keeping with an explorative nature of narrative research, Richardson (1994) suggests that “I write because I want to find something out. I write in order to learn something that I didn’t know before I wrote it” (cited in Daiute and Fine, 2005, p. 71). Drafting processes became a focus for my dialogical and dialectical engagement with the multiperspectival narratives.

I analysed each data set through intensive reading and writing processes, which involved different stages and levels of engagement depending on the data. Earlier in this chapter, I described preliminary procedures following the description of the data gathering processes. Once preliminary engagement was completed, I started to compare individual studies within a particular data set to establish commonalities and differences in order to seek recurring themes, patterns and overlaps (Josselson, 2006).

To guide these analytic processes through the next stages, I loosely drew on Josselson's (2006) offerings on processes of amalgamating narrative knowledge. Comparing linguistic structures, Josselson (2006) establishes overlapping characteristics to build support for shared psychological patterns and themes. As I proposed, this study in itself allows for the consideration of the research aims from various angles. I attempted to illuminate phenomena from different points within each data set and paid particular attention to dilemmas within and across studies (Josselson, 2006). I also drew on the analytic tool of framing to examine what lies beyond the frame and to ask why the contemporary social issue of child sex abuse is defined in certain ways.

The concept of framing, attributed to Goffman (Kitzinger, J., 2004, 2007) and which I originally considered useful for the news media section became a tool that I applied throughout this study. As 'frames', 'frame analysis' and 'frameworks' expanded and developed across diverse disciplines (Kitzinger, J., 2007) scholarly consensus on conceptual and operational paradigms diverged (Entman, 1993, 2007; Johnson-Cartee, 2005; Kitzinger, J., 2004, 2007). I note that some scholars prefer framing to the use of the term 'social construction' because it offers more potential for complex and multilayered reading of phenomena. Useful to this study is J. Kitzinger's (2004) suggestion that "frames are about how an account organises reality" (p. 15). The word organise alludes to a 'communicational package' (Corner, 1998) that provides a meaningful unit to the audience. Appearing as common sense, such framings are not always easily identifiable (Kitzinger, J., 2007). Reality, therefore, is framed through a particular lens that is not universal, but specific to those doing the framing while being receptive to a wide audience.

Zimbardo (2007) demonstrates the power of framing in his analysis on ethical issues of the Stanford Prison Experience. He suggests that the onlookers of the experience (family members, other students, staff members, and psychologists) "accepted my framing of the situation, which blinded them to the real picture" (p. 237). In Zimbardo's study, the bystanders 'overlooked' the abuse that took place during the experience. Now, the attention shifts to examine what exactly 'overlooking' means, what states of denial (Cohen, 2001) kept these onlookers from asking questions. Within the context of the present study, unquestioningly accepting framings of child sex offenders as deviant others is a comfortable way

of knowing, a state of denial in what Cohen refers to: we know and we do not know. Specifically, we know that men who abuse are sons, brothers, cousins, partners, fathers and friends but we prefer to ignore it.

In practical terms, I referred to J. Kitzinger's (2007) proposition to analyse frames by asking four key questions. These take the definition of the problem into account, identify the key players and how they are characterized, who (or what) is responsible and what are the suggested solutions. Analysing frames then allows me to disentangle processes through which these frames are presented and to explore power structures, professional practices and how social institutions shape stories (Kitzinger, J., 2007). This enables me to search for gaps in information, which, J. Kitzinger (2007) suggests, are an important aspect of frame analysis. The framing of an issue, in the context of this study men who sexually abuse(d), reflects not simply reality but underlying values and criteria (Kitzinger, J., 1996). These are packaged to include already acquired and familiar schemas (Bartlett, 1932) by those who set the frameworks. I demonstrate how men who sexually abuse(d) are framed in specific ways, and, based on abductive processes, decide what information is included and excluded. Thus, framing is a key concept in this study. However, it also reflects my own performance of framing research questions and influences the writing of this thesis.

Complementing the above outlined analytic processes, in Chapter Seven I draw on Arthur Frank's (1997) work *The wounded storyteller*. Here, the diagnosis of a serious illness forces the main protagonists to assign new meanings to their lives. Following the disclosure of abuse the four support people have to revise and re-narrate their sense of selfhood while also taking on the role of caregiver.

In short, this section has outlined my use of interpretative frameworks based on narrativity and abductive processes (Rennie, 1999) to integrate the blend of research elements (Figure 1). In particular, I use the concept of framing as a tool to explore how men who sexually abuse(d) are portrayed and to engage with overt and covert suggestions about the roots of and solution to the problem of abuse. Framing, then, is a vehicle of representational processes which allows for the understandings of knowledge systems (Jovchelovitch, 2007).

## Chapter summary

In this chapter I have argued for the use of a qualitative, specifically narrative, research approach to gather data and for its subsequent analysis. The flexibility of a narrative research approach allows for a single mode to examine the various research components (Figure 1) that comprise this study. Narratives, I suggested, are the bricks and mortar of this study. Encompassing an array of public and private narratives, I use these to examine ways of knowing, as knowledge moves context and permeates the lives of various social groups (Jovchelovitch, 2007). I discussed the co-constructed and dialogical characteristics of narratives. Narratives are fluid and flexible and may alter with the passage of time. A phenomenologically oriented premise underpins narrative research validating human experience. One function of narrative research particularly relevant to this study is to explore the construction, reconfiguration and transformation of selfhood. I draw on social processes that allow for the reconciliation of old, for example offending, selves to forming new selves in light of new understandings of the offending and in the pursuit of offenders' self-discovery.

In Section Two, I provided information about data gathering procedures for each research element and elaborated on preliminary analysing processes. A more detailed data analysis is based on an amalgamation of accumulated knowledge and narrative theory, on which I elaborated in Section Three. In particular, I drew on the theory of framing. This allowed me to examine underlying assumptions and schemas contained within frames while exploring possible omissions. Appealing to common sense, such frames are often the most difficult to identify (Kitzinger, J., 2007). In Chapter Two, for example, I have demonstrated that heterosexuality is often depicted as 'natural' and this study unearths more instances of taken-for-granted understandings that remain unchallenged.

This chapter concluded Part One and I now turn to the first data set, a range of historical materials to ground sexuality and men who offended in twentieth-century histories of New Zealand.





## **PART TWO**

Part Two encompasses three of the five research elements (Figure 1). Chapter Four provides an historic excavation of institutional constructions of offenders. Present-day understandings of sex, sexuality, and men who sexually abuse(d) children are impregnated with collective memories that are legacies from the past. By drawing on discursive moments in twentieth-century New Zealand, I demonstrate instances that shaped contemporary understandings of the topic. Child sex offending is also framed from particular angles in media reports and public discussions. Chapter Five examines a sample of news articles about child sex offenders and focuses primarily on those pertaining to two prominent case studies. Exemplifying spaces of public deliberations and meaning-making processes, Chapter Six presents an analysis of participant considerations in five focus groups, with particular attention given to evaluations of the rehabilitative prospects of offenders. Hallmarks of the three chapters are implied understandings about normative sexual practices and concerns about the risks these men pose to communities. Men who offend(ed) are considered an ongoing threat and in need of control and prolonged periods of monitoring.



## **CHAPTER 4: READING THE UNLAWFUL IN HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS: SEXUAL OFFENDERS IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY NEW ZEALAND**

Everyday life has a history, though mostly an invisible one.  
(Silverstone, 2007, p. 111).

In Chapters One and Three, I argued that historical excavations within the discipline of psychology are essential (Billig, 2008; Elias, 1996; Hook, 2007) because the relationship between past and present offers the possibility of new understandings of sexual offending (Elias, 1996). The present is permeated by collective (Green, 2008) or social memories (Healy, 1997) of the past; history that is, as Silverstone (2007) suggests, mostly invisible yet present in everyday life through its traces. Bringing together the past and those whose knowledge has been deliberately excluded (Hook, 2007)—in this case the subjects of the two commissioned inquiries I shall presently discuss—allows me to link psychosocial developments and changing social understandings of sex and sexuality witnessed by New Zealand over the last century. Sexuality is no longer exclusively seen in the moral domain, but has been transformed to also encompass social, medical and political imperatives (Weeks, 2003).

In this chapter I demonstrate how in the past, individuals contributed towards shaping the present-day landscape of collective memories of sexual offending through their transgressive actions which breached the normative boundaries of sexual practices. The sexual practices of ‘feeble-minded imbeciles’ such as William and Charles, whom we meet later in this chapter, were considered deviant. Behaviours such as theirs contributed to the instigation of the commission of inquiry. This inquiry was then used to legitimise their institutionalisation to Auckland Mental Hospital. The focus of this chapter is to demarcate developments in the perception of men who sexually abuse(d) children over time, and the knowledge about the meanings of sexual acts, which, as Brickell (2006) proposes “have been negotiated within particular historical moments” (p. 415). Such discursive moments in history are exemplified in public

inquiries triggered by public disquiet or a sensational disclosure rendering an issue politically sensitive (Brunton, 2005). Subsequent legislative changes bear witness to new understandings of child sex abuse and its penal consequences (Gordon, 1988; Pratt, 1998; Robertson, 2005).

The chapter focuses on two publicly commissioned inquiries, which targeted first the 'feeble-minded' and then juveniles' sexual practices to control perceived deviant behaviour in New Zealand. The two inquiries are: The Committee of Inquiry into Mental Defectives and Sexual Offenders (1925)<sup>22</sup> and The Special Committee on Moral Delinquency in Children and Adolescents (1954)<sup>23</sup> with the subsequent Report of Juvenile Delinquency Committee (1955).<sup>24</sup> The latter is known as the Mazengarb Report, named after the committee's chairperson, lawyer Oswald Chettle Mazengarb (King, 2003). A perceived lack of sexual control, either by men assaulting children (Committee of Inquiry, 1925) or by youth indulging in sexual experimentations (Mazengarb Report, 1954), forms the narrative bases for exploring the social ecology, which refers to the contextual systems to which individuals are exposed (Hammack, 2005). Both inquiries had consequences for the targeted populations as I illustrate below.

This chapter also draws upon archival evidence. Two casebooks from Auckland Mental Hospital and eight case studies from the Hamilton Supreme Court (summary in Appendix D) reinforce the official narratives and demonstrate their social impacts. Possibly as a direct result of the 1925 inquiry, William<sup>25</sup> and Charles,<sup>26</sup> in their late teens, were committed to the Auckland Mental Hospital for sexual perverted practices. Described as social defectives and persistent masturbators with little control over their urges, their segregation from others was deemed necessary to safeguard the community. The records of William and Charles showed no active treatment other than subjugation to manual labour. During the same period the writer Robin Hyde was also a patient at the Auckland

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<sup>22</sup> Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR) 1925, H-31A

<sup>23</sup> AJHR 1954, H-47

<sup>24</sup> AJHR 1955, I-15

<sup>25</sup> Auckland Hospital Board (1935). Carrington Hospital: Committed patient case files (YCAA1026, Box number 268/9929).

<sup>26</sup> Auckland Hospital Board (1936) Carrington Hospital: Committed patient case files (YCAA1026, Box number 296/10319).

Mental Hospital. Although admitted for different reasons than William and Charles, she was encouraged to write her autobiography as a form of therapy. In the case of Hyde, writing as therapy suggests anticipated improvement in her condition, while treatment for William and Charles points to remedial practices. Other archival material includes the court files of eight men who sexually abused children. Their narratives tell diverse stories mostly of weak, working-class men who succumbed to sexual temptation, drank excessively or suffered from ill health, and intimate to us that child sex abuse was imagined as a class problem in the period.

The structure of this chapter does not adhere to a strict chronological order. The decision to follow a less orthodox approach to history is based on the emergence of common themes in the court files. Framing these together thematically is more conducive to examination of the underlying discourses. I begin by scrutinising the discursive significance of the 1925 Committee of Inquiry that concerns cohorts of people such as the feeble-minded. I then examine the cases of William and Charles, who were both 18 years old when they were committed for supervision and control. After World War Two, a time notable for the development of youth sub-cultures, a further inquiry was commissioned, this time concerned with delinquent and promiscuous juveniles. The Mazengarb Report (1954) forms the next section of the chapter and I then continue with the court records from the Hamilton Trial and Sentence Register of eight men who sexually offended against children. I supplement these documents with newspaper reports where available. Overall, the chapter shows that by exploring historical sources, narrative representations of men who sexually abused children were understood as issues of working-class men. Middle- and upper-class citizens defined proper and moral sexual conduct in efforts to prevent 'pollution' from spreading.

### **Committee of Inquiry on Mental Defectives and Sexual Offences 1925**

As historians have demonstrated, the post-World War One era in New Zealand of the 1920s was a time of unemployment, farm bankruptcies and significant technological development. Although returned servicemen longed for pre-war normality, the country changed rapidly from a pre-industrial to industrial economy,

generating a rational-scientific attitude that challenged the moral and religious values of the previous century. The first direct radio broadcast from America took place in 1928; a development that was later perceived as polluting young people's moral standards (Mazengarb Report, 1954). A new generation emerged, imbued with faith that science would solve social problems. Weeks (1985) suggested that a linguistic shift also took place, with sexuality moving from condemnation, abhorrence and morality to hygiene and medicine in this period. In New Zealand, a rise in the values and influence of the middle class and a growing middle-class population brought a demographic shift from rural to urban. This changed the social structures within smaller families and created a tendency to the separation of a public (work) and private (family) image. Entrenched in this public and private dichotomy are understandings of social norms regarding sexual acts that reinforce this division (see later in this chapter and in Chapter Six).

Welfare responsibilities focused on children's moral and physical wellbeing (Olssen, 2000), a trend popular in America with the introduction of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (Gordon, 1988; Robertson, 2005). The 1920s, then, was a time of some anxiety and concerns about social behaviour, morality and mental health fitness, deemed serious enough to warrant a public inquiry. Such public apprehension was not exclusive to New Zealand; mental hygiene followed by sex crime panic was also topical outside New Zealand (Robertson, 2001, 2005). In 1923 the Reform Party Government under Prime Minister William Ferguson Massey was urged to set up a commission to investigate the apparent repulsive nature of sexual offences, that seemed to be occurring with increased frequency, with the view that state intervention was needed to solve these problems (Tulloch, 1997).

The Committee of Inquiry on Mental Defectives and Sexual Offences (1925), appointed by the Hon. Sir Maui Pomare, Minister of Health, included five men and one woman. They visited mental hospitals, special schools and prisons nationwide to obtain testimonies from many witnesses such as medical doctors, reverends, school principals, headmasters and a professor of moral and mental philosophy. Collaboration was sought from the British Medical Association and information from the USA, Canada and Australia was also gathered. The feeble-minded were regarded as a serious problem and a threat to the future welfare

and happiness of the Dominion. This stance was supported internationally by a growing belief in scientific investigations and knowledge, and the committee quoted findings from the American War Department who subjected “1,700,00 officers and men” (p. 5) to psychological testing. This large sample was used to conclude that over half the American population never developed a mental capacity beyond that of a 12 year old child, with only a small percentage showing “superior intelligence”. It was therefore feared that intelligence was on the decrease in the American population. It was further stipulated that breeding had the capacity of increasing or diminishing the chances of producing a feeble-minded offspring depending on the parents’ intellectual combination; hence selective breeding became a desired objective. Lavell (1986) even suggested that:

Incest seemed more abhorrent than any other female related sexual crime. This abhorrence may have stemmed less from concern for the victim than from concern for the effect such a relationship would have on any potential offspring; the possibility of hereditary defects was sufficient cause to condemn incest. (p. 44)

In keeping with overseas trends that saw psychology becoming part of the discourse about the mental defective, a teacher who studied intelligence testing overseas introduced intelligence quotient (IQ) testing in New Zealand in 1923 (Robertson, 2001).

The scope of the committee’s inquiry in 1925 was twofold: to gather information regarding the care and treatment of the feeble-minded and subnormal, and to recommend forms of treatment for mental defectives and persons charged with sexual offences. It was specified in the report that not all sexual offenders were considered to be mental defectives and vice versa, but the boundaries were blurred. For example, on one hand, the ‘homosexualists’ were seen as bohemians engaging in unnatural sexual practices, with only a small percentage being considered feeble-minded; while on the other hand, sodomy was considered the act of a real pervert. It was acknowledged that sexual offences varied considerably in their characteristics and seriousness, but ultimately the committee expressed disgust regarding the abhorrent nature of these crimes and



commented on the difficulties to remain “judicial and coldly scientific” (p. 25). Members viewed it as their duty to stay impartial in order to discover and employ effective ways to deal with this evil that had infiltrated society like a disease.

A witness to the inquiry, prison inspector Mr Hawkins, believed that there were two types of sexual offenders. The first he considered to be weak men who surrender to sudden temptations, but had a chance of being cured. The second were the ‘real’ sexual perverts who interfered with children and offered themselves for the purpose of sodomy. Hawkins and his contemporaries considered lifelong segregation the only option to keep society safe from the latter group. Another witness suggested that these men became addicted to deviant practices and no longer had any control over their behaviour, and neither long prison sentences nor flogging deterred their actions. The report concluded with the committee’s five recommendations and a final comment on the importance of maintaining and improving national stock, suggestive of eugenic tendencies.

This commission of inquiry had two objectives. The first was to report on the care and treatment for the feeble-minded and the subnormal. The second was to report on the treatment of “mental degenerates” and persons charged with sexual offences. I suggest that the connecting link between these two seemingly distinct aims lies in sex and sexuality. The inquiry specified moral standards by prescribing what sexually acceptable behaviour is and who is ‘entitled’ in sexual interactions. Moral standards, combined with scientific knowledge, framed permitted sexual behaviour. Members of the committee considered themselves as “normal persons possessing ordinary healthy natural instincts” (p. 25), encouraging self-governance and self-control (Brickell, 2009). This conveys the impression that sexual activities are permissible within marriage only, suggestive of universal heterosexuality, creating a normative category of sexuality (see discussion on heteronormativity in Chapter Two), and rendering everybody else asexual, sexually repressed or criminal. In the case of the feeble-minded, who were perceived as a menace to civilisation due to their “extraordinarily prolific” ways, it was debated “whether sterilization should be adopted as a method of preventing the propagation of the feeble-minded” (p. 19). By suggesting sterilisation the board acknowledged that sexual activities between feeble-minded people did occur, creating a moral conflict with social consequences as it was

believed that feeble-minded people produced imbecilic offspring. This became a political issue in need of state intervention and regulation to prevent the feeble-minded from breeding, thus potentially causing a decline in the quality of the national stock. Sterilisation was seen as an attractive solution because it had the (perceived) long-term benefit of fewer feeble-minded children and did not affect the libido. The latter is an indirect acknowledgement recognising the feeble-minded as sexual beings.

The report's discussion of sexual offenders and the "revolting" nature of their crimes directly refers to sexual activities disapproved of by citizens with high moral standards. It was reported that "there is something wrong in their mental, moral, and emotional balance . . . but, as a rule, it is not the 'intelligence quotient' which is at fault" (p. 5). Alluding to societal mores of morality on one hand and to dispositional traits (mental and emotional) on the other, this was believed to be causing an imbalance. Sexual offending was only addressed in terms of safety measures for the community, for example through segregation as a form of eugenic solution (Brickell, 2009), with the individual's wellbeing remaining unaddressed as I go on to demonstrate in the cases of William and Charles.

However, the report did differentiate between sex offences and sex offenders. For example, the attitude seemed more lenient towards the exhibitionistic tendencies of an old man who, it was believed, suffered from degenerating higher nerve cells that rendered him unable to "effectively control his morbid sexual impulses, particularly if stimulated by an enlarged prostate" (p. 25). Elderly men's fear of impotence, medical writers in the nineteenth century suggested, induced them to commit sexual acts with children because their sexual inexperience allowed them to mask deficiencies not possible with an adult partner (Robertson, 2001). On the other hand, deviant sexual behaviour was compared to an addiction where men had no control over their vices; these in fact controlled men and no corporal punishment deterred that behaviour, according to the Mt Eden Prison Medical Officer. Self-control, the epitome of Victorian masculinity, was transgressed (Brickell, 2008b). Indeed, 18 year old William, whose case I discuss later in this chapter, explained his misconduct by talking about the instances in which "a feeling just comes over me".

Although the Committee of Inquiry mostly defined male sexual behaviour, salpingectomy was suggested for mentally defective girls who were capable of leading men to behave immorally. When “liberated from institutions . . . for the purpose of engaging in domestic service or other work” (p. 20) these young women often fell pregnant and became mothers of illegitimate children who most likely were also mentally defective. Immoral sexual behaviour of girls was addressed in more detail three decades later in the 1954 Mazengarb Report where teenage girls were accused of immodest conduct and of corrupting boys. The sexual behaviour of oversexed, mentally defective women (Robertson, 2001) was considered to be at the root of an increasing social problem. This discursive turn shifted the focus of the responsibility of male sexual behaviour from men with the introduction of a new scapegoat: over-sexed girls. The committee had grave concerns about the prolific reproduction of the feeble-minded and, supported by a strong belief that mental defects were hereditary (Robertson, 2001), it was feared that this would result in undue financial burden on the Dominion. The idea of eugenics was thus strengthened and “eugenicists strongly advocated white, middle-class fertility” (Brickell, 2008b, p. 93) with a fervent proponent in Theodore Gray, a psychiatrist and mental health administrator (Brunton, 2007).

This encouragement of “eugenic duties” (Mottier, 2008, p. 88), based on scientifically orthodox discourses, was a trend not restricted to New Zealand. The existence of an International Federation of Eugenic Organisations attests that similar developments took place elsewhere (Mottier, 2008). Advocates of eugenic and hereditary ideologies, Tulloch (1997) suggests, supported new standards of state control over individuals’ sex lives. Sexuality was no longer only a moral issue. Sexuality was transformed and turned into a social, medical and political concern through the application of science and expertise (Weeks, 2003). Based on the “scientific management of reproduction” (Mottier, 2008, p. 88) Forel, a Swiss sexologist, considered the regulation of procreation a moral duty. These narratives suggest early characterizations of public and institutional concerns, elements of which are reflected in contemporary narratives of treatment and institutional responses that have been morally loaded for some time.

The commission focused on various subgroups: the feeble-minded, subnormal, mental degenerates, and persons charged with sexual offences. Although the subjects of the inquiry, it appears that these people were not directly consulted. In

combination with national knowledge and international scientific understandings, the new moral standards resulted in power asymmetries that led to the subjugation of 'mental defectives': they became the objects of knowledge. Following public and institutional concerns, segregation to protect communities, and discussions about selective breeding for the greater good of the nation's welfare, were considered forms of treatments not as therapeutic means for the subjects, but as implementations of corrective measurements.

## **Notes from Auckland Mental Hospital**

The two casebooks from Auckland Mental Hospital offer us the narratives of William and Charles from the 1930s. Archival material provides some insight into institutional life (Swartz, 1999) while simultaneously offering background information and a link to the outside world through correspondence between family members and medical staff. William and Charles exhibited sexual behaviour considered outside the norm, conduct described as disturbing by the 1925 Committee. Both were committed under Section 66 (2) of The Mental Defectives Act, 1911, a law which included idiots, imbeciles and the feeble-minded to those defined as mentally ill (Robertson, 2001). In 1927 the head of the Mental Hospitals Department, Theodore Gray, told Parliament that "while sexual perversion is not generally considered *per se* to be a mental disease, it is undoubtedly a borderline condition" (as cited in Brickell, 2008b, p. 93). William's and Charles's narratives, elicited from and framed by hospital records, convey the impression that the professionals were at a loss as to what to do with two young men who engaged in bestiality and masturbation. Segregation by placing them into a mental institution for an indefinite period of time, as suggested in the 1925 Commission of Inquiry, was the chosen course of action. This practice continues to date (see Chapter Ten). Gray's approach to treatment was described as "clinically conservative with a philosophy founded upon the benefits of fresh air, sunshine, regular habits, suitable diet, exercise, recreation, rest and sleep" (Brunton, 2007). This was reflected in the cases of William and Charles.

### ***William W. Y.***

Eighteen year old William, a farm labourer, was committed to Auckland Mental Hospital on 28 February 1935, at 4pm, and discharged just under three years

later on January 31, 1938. Certificates from three professionals (two medical practitioners and a police constable) legitimised his admission. The first certificate from a medical practitioner stated that William was a 'social defective' and needed to be kept under restraint because he admitted to having had intercourse with a cow, and had interfered with a girl of five years of age. It was stipulated that William followed cows around on the farm as a consequence of his perverted sexual inclination. The medical practitioner's diagnosis was "social defective due to unknown cause". The second medical certificate provided a few more details. Apart from indecencies with cows, the medical practitioner wrote that William exposed himself to a girl aged about five years in daylight in a park. William also admitted to masturbating and having had intercourse with three girls. This medical practitioner's diagnosis was the same as the first (socially defective) but frequent masturbation was thought to be a contributing factor to his mental defect. The third certificate, issued by a police constable, attested that William had sexual inclinations towards animals and that he followed them around on "the farm as a result of his perverted instinct". The constable also commented on William's mannerisms (silly laugh) and appearance, which was that of a "persistent masturbator". Distinct facial features were considered evidence of immoral acts and a bodily manifestation of invisible concealed perversions (Finch, 1993). The certificates represent institutionalisation for William and protection for the community from a 'social defective'.

Although William was an inpatient for almost three years, his medical file, assuming that it has been preserved in its entirety, was surprisingly small. A one-page unsigned report written the day after his admission in 1935 testified to his mental and bodily condition. This told an unremarkable story of an average teenager, appearing shy but smiling. He was slow to walk and talk and in general "slow, forgetful and easily led". He was interested in reading detective and sea stories, and went to the movies on occasion. He admitted masturbating at intervals during the past five years and said that when in England at the age of 14 he was put on probation for 12 months for indecently assaulting a girl of his own age. Since then he had interfered on three occasions with girls aged about five years in public places. He admitted having had intercourse with a cow eight months ago. He denied following cows about the farm. He conceded that his actions were wrong, that he had never thought of interfering with his younger sisters and that he "would give a hiding to any boy who did". He was at a loss to

explain his misconduct and did not feel certain that he could resist interfering with other children should the opportunity arise. It was suggested that he did not appear to entirely appreciate the seriousness of his conduct; he said he felt sorry for what he had done because it got him into trouble.

A number of letters were exchanged between the Medical Superintendent and William's parents, who enquired about his progress, visiting issues, leave application and probation. The first letter to William's parents explicitly stated that their son was committed by a Magistrate and predicted a lengthy stay in hospital due to his past history and the fact that William could not guarantee desisting future impulsive behaviour. Similar questions of uncontrollable sexual behaviour persist to date, and are reproduced in discussions of control and recidivism in contemporary New Zealand. In a further letter, the Medical Superintendent reported positively about Williams' progress and that he had gained some appreciation into the seriousness of his behaviour. This was, however, revoked in the next letter three months later signed by the Acting Medical Superintendent. No mention was made in his scanty, four-page file notes of any interaction, conversation or interview between William and staff that would indicate a change in his attitude or behaviour.

### ***Charles F. M.***

Sixteen months after William's admission, in June 1936, Charles, also an 18 year old farm labourer, was committed to Auckland Mental Hospital after admitting sexual intercourse with cows. A few days before Christmas 1939, he escaped following three and a half years of institutionalisation. As a ward of the state, he lived in a boys' home in Auckland. His notes also contained three reports leading to his committal. One medical certificate stated that he was "dull and socially defective", with no obvious cause provided, while the other considered him to be a constitutional defect and developmentally subnormal. He reached standard 6 at school. The following was noted on his admission:

He is childish in his manner and conversation and is border-line feeble-minded. He has been under the Child Welfare Department for some years but was an indifferent worker in simple farming tasks. Says the other boys thought he was "dippy" and used to

make fun of him. Admits stealing a pair of binoculars and concealing them on a beach, his reason being that he wanted to pawn them to get money for his mother. He admits sexual practices with cows using a stool for the purpose and that he frequently masturbated. He has little sense of responsibility or morality and relates his experiences without shame.

Handwritten notes at irregular intervals commented on Charles's behaviour in similar fashion to those of William suggesting that he behaved well under supervision. He worked in the kitchen and then the poultry farm. His mental defective status was emphasised with the occasional comment that he would require supervision permanently. In one of the last entries in June 1939, it was suggested that "he is full of specious regrets for his past misdemeanours and full of promises for a future life of unblemished virtue. He wants to be discharged so that he can get a job in the city". Furthermore, this entry revealed that Charles was under the impression he was institutionalised "because he was underweight and his habits had drained his nerves". The latter is presumably alluding to his sexual practices. Six months later, on December 21, 1939, the entry in his casebook reads: "Escaped from Auxiliary in A.M. today. It appears that for some weeks he has been selling his personal effects and has now accumulated some £s. Police notified."

In contrast to the unfavourable report portraying Charles as subnormal, he wrote a tidy letter, albeit in simple language, at the beginning of October 1936 asking the Superintendent, Dr Buchanan, to be granted ground parole as he was working in the main building kitchen. Unfortunately, there is no written reply in his casebook and other correspondence also seems incomplete, reinforcing the problematic nature of the psychiatric archive (Coleborne, 2009). However, a letter addressed to a Rev. J. R. Anderson, signed by the Acting Medical Superintendent, reinforces the view that Charles lacked moral sense necessitating "his committal for supervision and control" and suggested that he was "quite unfit at present to be freed from our supervision, as he would inevitably revert to his former conduct".

***Bringing the cases together: Differential treatment at Auckland Mental Hospital***

Citing the case of poet and writer Robin Hyde, who was a patient at the same time as the two young men, I compare the respective treatment approaches to demonstrate different levels of engagement with patients at the Auckland Mental Hospital in the 1930s. These distinct therapies might allude to the general perception of sex offenders as being beyond rehabilitation. Hyde, William and Charles were attended by the same medical staff, namely Drs Henry M. Buchanan (the Medical Superintendent) and Gilbert Tohill. The extent of the roles they played in the three patients' lives, I suggest, varied enormously. In the case of the two young men, 'radical' solutions for them, in the aftermath of the 1925 Inquiry, meant segregation for the protection of 'normal' folk, in particular children. In a letter to Rev. Anderson regarding Charles, the Acting Medical Superintendent explained that the reason for Charles's committal was for supervision and control due to his "sub-normal intellect" and practices that "were extremely degraded, and his apparently complete lack of moral sense". However, William's and Charles's sexual outlets were, according to Kinsey and colleagues (1948), not overly unusual.

During their time at the institution, William and Charles engaged in manual labour and enjoyed the benefit of the outdoors, an approach favoured by Director-General Theodore Gray (Hunt, A., 2006). There were no apparent long-term plans in place for William and Charles and from their case notes little more than Buchanan's and Tohill's initials appear on the admission sheet with little evidence of any interaction. Neither of their files mentions recreational practices amongst patients. An entry in Charles's notes informs the reader that he listened to a wireless most of his spare time. There is no information available about how William spent his time; his admission interview suggested that he enjoyed reading and I assume that he continued this activity during his time at the institution.

In contrast to William's and Charles's treatment regime consisting of manual labour, Robin Hyde was encouraged to write her autobiography to supplement psychotherapy and possible dream analysis (Hunt, A., 2006). The underlying reasons for differential treatment approaches between Hyde and the two young men remain speculative. A. Hunt (2006) points out that psychotherapy was a



time-consuming treatment modality and that the doctor-to-patient ratio was low at the Auckland Mental Hospital at the time. The criteria surrounding eligibility for specific forms of treatment did not seem to lie along the gender axis because A. Hunt (2006) also discovered other autobiographical notes, including those written by a male patient who was listed as a 'farmer'. Class difference offers a possible explanation because at the same time in history parallel developments between discourses of sexuality and those of the working class emerged (Finch, 1993). The middle class imposed their ideologies on working class families and, Finch (1993) suggests, organised knowledge about sexuality and the working class. This is evidenced in the data gathering procedures for the two commissioned inquiries, for example, which suggest that class played a role in the selection of treatment. William and Charles were farmhands; the backgrounds of the eight men who sexually offended (discussed later in this chapter) were also described as working class, and the fact that people on the Family Benefit were singled out to receive a copy of the 1955 Report of Juvenile Delinquency Committee (King, 2003) all point to some preoccupation with working-class people as susceptible to social problems. The diagnoses—'social defectives' for the young men and 'hysteria and schizophrenia' for Hyde—and the respective perceived prognoses might well have been the decisive factor in the choice and eligibility of treatment. According to William's and Charles's file notes, imbeciles had poor prospects to ever improve their immoral, wicked and irrepressible behaviour, suggesting a prevailing view that sex offenders were beyond rehabilitation.

Poor rehabilitative prospects might also explain scarce entries in William's and Charles's file notes. At this time, patients' interviews on admission were more extensive and directed toward a possible diagnosis while subsequent entries were kept brief and repetitive (Hunt, A., 2006; Swartz, 1999). The cyclical, perfunctory nature of these short reports is striking. "Causing no trouble under supervision and control" was a typical entry, highlighting the main concern. The patients' knowledge and knowing were rejected and dismissed (Hook, 2007) and of no consequences to their supervisors; their experiences disregarded. Those two young men were silenced and subjugated by authority and submitted to the daily routines and discipline of the institution in much the same way as other patients were (Brickell, 2005, 2008a). The institutional management of William and Charles was considered a necessary form of discipline and control due to the young men's lack of self-governance. The most frequent and common words

used to describe Charles's and William's behaviour was "working well" and "not giving any trouble under institutional supervision". Whether this form of surveillance was a preparatory measure for a self-regulatory life outside the institution is possible but not made explicit. William was discharged to accompany his family to England and Charles escaped. That is where their stories end, neatly but artificially with a last entry into their casebooks. William had family; perhaps their care, attention and affection kept him out of further institutions. Perhaps he outgrew deviant sexual behaviour. Charles escaped. The lonely figure of a 21 year old man branded subnormal, foolish, lacking moral sense, childish with a stammer and degenerate appearance, resisted continuous discipline and authority: he planned his breakout by selling his belongings. This action demonstrates initiative and forethought, a deliberate disruption to the subjugation.

Both William and Charles had sexual intercourse with animals and admitted to frequent masturbation, a contributing factor, it was thought, to their mental defect, a cause for insanity (Plummer, 1984). In the early eighteenth century, Mottier (2008) suggests, religious understandings of masturbation as a problem of moral weakness transformed "into a medical problem" (p. 27) following a pamphlet appearing in London that offered medical cures from the "filthy commerce with oneself" (p. 27). Kinsey et al. (1948), in their monumental data collection on male sexual behaviour, wrote:

To those who believe, as children do, that conformance should be universal, any departure from the rule becomes an immorality. The immorality seems particularly gross to an individual who is unaware of the frequency with which exceptions to the supposed rule actually occur. (p. 667)

Here, Kinsey and colleagues (1948) refer to data that showed human intercourse with animals occurs more frequently than suspected. Although the percentage of the total male population appeared low, with most frequent contacts taking place in adolescent years under the age of 20, the authors suggested a higher frequency amongst boys raised on farms. William and Charles, both farmhands, therefore fit into that research population where a natural decline in this activity usually occurs following a certain age. The boys belonged to the minority of lower

educated boys engaging in animal contact, with boys in the upper educational level having a ratio of one in three of having sexual contact with animals. Kinsey and colleagues' research challenges Buchanan and Tothill's frameworks of moral behaviour, and undermines their academic knowledge with the findings that intercourse with animals is more prevalent than assumed.

In addition, if Kinsey and colleagues' (1948) research is considered credible, "between 92 and 97 per cent of all males have masturbatory experience" (p. 339). This statement, together with findings that sexual contact with animals occurs more frequently than believed, indicates that at the very least Charles could be considered an average young man.<sup>27</sup>

The narratives built around the two boys, elicited through archival material, rely on 'expert' understandings of sex and sexuality, embodied in the 1925 inquiry, and endorsed by those who signed William's and Charles's committal certificates and the medical staff at the Hospital. Sex and sexuality, Foucault (1998) suggests, are enshrined in the triple edict of taboo, silence and non-existence, which are powerful tools implemented as measures of control. The authorities' ideological views and moral standards imposed on Charles and William probably remained verbally unchallenged, perhaps not in action though, with possible disruptions taking place in the darkness of the night or in a far off corner of the institution's yard, thus ensuring what is supposed to cease: the continuity of secret sexual behaviour and reinforcing taboo, silence and non-existence.

The 1920s and 1930s were characterized by an increasing fear of contamination of the national stock by the feeble-minded and subnormal. They and their procreative capacities needed to be controlled. A new belief in science and psychological testing "into an interior realm" (Rose, 2008, p. 451) not visible on the surface of the body, opened new ways to justifiably control and manage individuals, exemplified in the cases of William and Charles who transgressed normative sexual behaviours. I suggest that the 1925 Commission of Inquiry and the 1954 Mazengarb report, which I discuss next, were not so much about sex

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<sup>27</sup> William spent 12 months on probation for indecent assault on a girl of his own age and interference with young girls.

and sexuality, but rather about how knowledge is produced and ideas constitute our understandings about sexuality (Foucault, 1998; Plummer, 1984).

### **The Special Committee on Moral Delinquency in Children and Adolescents, 1954**

The 1950s, widely described as the “golden age” (Smith, P., 2005, p. 176), was a period marked by full employment and the beginning of the baby boom following the end of World War Two. The demographic shift from country to city continued and with increased prosperity a demand in consumer goods rose. In 1944 the Director-General of Education in New Zealand, Dr Clarence Beeby, was concerned about the increased number of adolescents not receiving ‘adequate discipline’ at home and more education was thought to compensate for that lack. Consequently Beeby raised the school leaving age to 15 as a preventative measure against juvenile delinquency (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, 2007). Delinquency in this context refers to anti-social behaviour with an emphasis on sexual conduct rather than criminal activity. In an effort to explore and develop their own identity, youngsters broke away from traditional entertainment creating a new phenomenon: congregating at milk bars (Simpson, 1992). These became sites of amusement and leisure activity for some young patrons, and of delinquent and immoral behaviour for others. The rapid growth of milk bars, together with other developments such as the sensational trial of Juliet Hulme and Pauline Parker—convicted for the killing of Parker’s mother—and the confession of a 15 year old girl from Petone describing sexual involvement with a milk bar gang (Mazengarb Report, 1954; Simpson, 1992), increased concerns over a decline in moral standards. These concerns resulted in a commissioned inquiry into the moral delinquency of New Zealand’s youth, led by Oswald C. Mazengarb (King, 2003). The timing of this inquiry was no coincidence. News of immoral juvenile conduct spread across the western world tarnishing the Dominion’s good reputation. It was, however, readily pointed out that this problem was not unique to New Zealand and indeed overseas reports were included in the inquiry and used as points of reference. The fact that New Zealand was leading the way by appointing a committee to “sift the available data on sexual misbehaviour with a view to finding the cause and suggesting a remedy” (p. 9) was emphasised. It was with this belief of a scientific discovery into the “conditions and influences that tend to undermine standards of sexual morality of

children and adolescents” (p. 10) that the Committee, comprising professionals working in education, the health area, church and court, strove to discover the truth. Although this inquiry was not concerned with child sexual abuse *per se*, it was concerned with sexuality, because teenagers under the age of consent engaged in sexual activities deemed immoral and delinquent, transgressing boundaries of sexual conduct including a perceived increase in same-sex activities (Brickell, 2008b).

The Special Committee explored causes and influences to explain changes in patterns of sexual misbehaviour. The data for the inquiry was collected from a variety of organisations ranging from church bodies, women’s organisations, educational authorities, government officials to professional societies. Evidence was heard from 145 persons in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland and 203 written submissions were received from organisations or private persons. Young people at the core of the inquiry were absent from the data collection, instead they were talked about because “it was thought undesirable to interview any of the children” (p. 11). The meaning of the word “undesirable” leading to their omission is unclear. Additional information was sought from overseas reports, letters to the press, textbooks, journals and other articles. Particularly salient in the report were suggestions that younger children were implicated in immoral behaviour; that girls were instigating sexual misbehaviour; and that there was an overall change in mental attitudes “of many young people towards this evil” (p. 19). Sexual immorality, the report suggested, was “by its very nature, a clandestine vice” (p. 13); however, normative sexual behaviour, too, is carried out privately and secretly (see Chapter Six). The Special Committee conceded that finding a single cause would be to over-simplify matters. Before listing a number of possible negative influences, the lack of parental control and neglect leading to anti-social behaviour was highlighted and discussed.

Feeble-mindedness, not considered a cause for immoral, delinquent behaviour, was only mentioned in connection with comics. These were divided into ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ with the former suitable for children, while the latter, “basically designed for low-mentality adults” (p. 22), were seen as morally harmful. Nearly forty years later comic books were still considered a violation of the favoured medium to convey ideas and information in the form of traditional books (Schmitt, 1992). Cultural ideologies clashed, polarising opinions between

concerned educators and experts, and consumers of comic books. The German-American psychiatrist, Fredric Wertham, popular with conservatives because of his anti-comic-book crusade (Brickell, 2008b), spearheaded a campaign to control the content of comic books, which he and his supporters viewed as “a threat to the status quo’s facade of order and proper conduct” (Schmitt, 1992, p. 156). The author further stipulated that Wertham’s campaign was “the refusal to see within oneself, that which one so readily sees in another” (p. 157). It is worthwhile noting that television was introduced to New Zealand only in 1960 (King, 2003) suggesting that it was likely that comic books as forms of entertainment retained their novelty value in prior years. This illustrates a fear that young people become corrupted through exposure to new forms of entertainment, potentially leading, it was felt, to sexual promiscuity and the transgression of normative sexual practices.

The Special Committee submitted a 27-point summary, alluding to a worldwide problem with girls becoming more sexually precocious. It was recommended that objectionable publications in the form of print material, films, radio or advertisements should either be banned or the timing of broadcasting carefully considered and for adult consumption only. The “Creation of a New Offence” (p. 61) was further suggested, whereby not only boys, but also girls, could be charged for indecent behaviour. This recommendation was not implemented by politicians (King, 2003). The recommendations outlined in the Mazengarb report necessitated the selection of a further committee directed to study its recommendations. This culminated in the 1955 Report of Juvenile Delinquency Committee, copies of which were delivered to every home in New Zealand receiving the Family Benefit (King, 2003), the cohort of population deemed most in need of curbing their wayward behaviours. Contradicting this gloomy picture are statistics indicating that there was less juvenile offending in 1954 than during the war years (King, 2003).

A noticeable shift had taken place since the earlier report from 1925: male sexual desire was no longer portrayed as “uncontrollable”, with the spotlight moving onto girls, now seen as the instigators of improper sexual conduct. Teenage girls previously characterized as helpless and in need of protection from indecent assault and carnal knowledge now turned into active agents rendering boys into apparent victims. This, it was suggested, remained largely unreported due to

“male chivalry” (Mazengarb Report, 1954, p. 14). It was lamented by school headmasters that precocious girls now made advances toward boys, did not exercise restraint in their conduct and openly discussed intimate matters with the opposite sex, thereby corrupting boys and enticing them into immoral and inappropriate behaviour.

This inquiry, much like the previous one from 1925, gives credence to overseas reports and grants voices to people in expert positions at the expense of the people under investigation. The subjects—children, adolescents, and the ‘feeble-minded’—play a passive role, yet they and a range of their ‘immoral’ behaviours are at the centre of the discussion. Their ‘shortcomings’ are highlighted at the expense of other qualities much in the same vein as men who sexually abuse(d) children are portrayed (this chapter and Chapters Two, Five and Six). The young people are positioned and branded by the Committee as rebellious, irresponsible and immoral juvenile delinquents with ‘changed’ moral attitudes. This implies that members of the Committee and their expert advisors hold stable moral attitudes guiding their inquiry. These parameters then are employed to judge others, in particular young people.

Adults were difficult to please, as they accused teenagers of either possessing too much or too little knowledge in sexual matters. Responsibility for sex education was considered a parental duty. For 15 year old Martin, whom I introduce later in this chapter, a lack of sexual knowledge was suggested as the reason he endured sexual abuse in 1968. Specifically, he stated that “my mother had not explained these things to me”, implying that it was the mother’s rather than father’s duty or a joint effort to educate him in sexual matters. Finch (1993) proposes that from early twentieth-century manuals, the mother clearly was the sexual guardian. In a neutral and detached tone, the Committee suggested suitable literature, the appropriate age of sex education and how to break barriers between children and parents when talking about sex. The matter of sexual (mis)conduct was thus returned to the private sphere of the family environment, specifically targeting families on a benefit.

In his book *The Bodgie: A study in abnormal psychology*, Manning (1958) investigated the trends of young men who identified themselves as ‘Bodgies’ with the female counterpart of ‘Widgies’. I draw on his study to illustrate a continuation

and solidification of knowledge on normative behaviour based on scientific investigations. Thirty young people (15 male and 15 female) from Australia and New Zealand took part in the study that explored various social issues. Most pertinent to this thesis are the discussions on sexual morality and homosexual tendencies. Again, Manning's (1958) study did not concern child sex abuse as such, although consensual under-aged sex was seen as contributing to declining moral standards. Psychology provided the new moral standards against which the 'Bodgies' and 'Widgies' were measured. While moral standards were previously considered to include 'inherent' knowledge of right and wrong, now such knowledge was considered to be measurable and standardised with equally preconceived, but scientifically justified ideas what 'normal' or 'abnormal' encompassed. According to Manning (1958), 23 out of the 30 participants had read a number of books on psychology; 75 per cent of teenagers in his sample sought to expand their knowledge by reading academic writings. Manning (1958) did not praise his research participants for such efforts or explore what they hoped to learn from such books. Instead, he called them either emotionally disturbed or pretending to have a wide understanding of abnormal psychology. 'Bodgies' and 'Widgies' read such material perhaps to find answers to contemporary issues and dilemmas in other than conventional sources. By doing so, they followed a general trend that considered scientific knowledge as superior while at the same time this study pathologised their behaviour. Instead of recognising a quest for knowledge, fostering such endeavour or addressing matters conjointly, these youths were reprimanded and labelled. The framing of the meaning of sexuality remained firmly embodied in the system, which sought conforming sexual practices to normative standards amid concerns over precocious sexual knowledge. Supposed precocious sexual knowledge triggered the demise of 12 year old Victoria and 15 year old Erin who I introduce in the next section. Both girls were allegedly sexually abused: one by her father, and the other by her stepfather. Both men were acquitted of these crimes.

### **Hamilton Trial and Sentence Register**

I examined eight court files, supplemented by newspaper reports and spanning a 45-year period from 1923 to 1968, containing multiple narratives storied from



different angles about men who sexually abused children. Shaped and informed by the commissioned inquiries and institutional narratives on mental defectives, the narratives of these men, together with the accounts from William and Charles, contribute towards present day social memories and our familiarity with contemporary representations of men who sexually abuse(d). These archival court documents also story people in the context of prominent public and institutional narratives. They provide descriptive material otherwise not easily accessible. I utilise these narratives to allow for more encompassing and variegated descriptions to reconstruct the events surrounding the abuse, and to represent men who sexually abuse(d).

I begin by discussing the offenders' modus operandi, by which I mean the way each scene was orchestrated and set up to enable the subsequent abuse to occur. Whether the initial intention was invariably of a sexual nature remains speculative and varies from case to case. The method of operating is closely linked with the space where the abuse took place and the propinquity of others, predominantly other children, as elicited from statements. On the occasions where the abuse took place in a very public space, it is debatable whether other witnesses were present or not. In the next section of this chapter, I scrutinize the particular transgressions of social norms these men were found guilty of, and how these transgressions are represented in court records. To conclude this chapter, I sketch how men who sexually abused children are characterized and defined in historical documents.

### ***Enticements, rewards and compliance***

Seven of the cases occurred in rural towns in the Waikato region, with the other taking place in Hamilton. Although the cases spread over more than four decades, the offenders displayed similar strategies to entice, coerce or threaten the victim into compliance with an unlawful sexual act and to separate potential witnesses, mostly other young children. The promise of a small gift or money was not uncommon and also observed in Gillingham's (1998) research. This ritual continues today (Kaufman, Mosher, Carter & Estes, 2006). An exchange of presents is an acceptable practice under many circumstances. Different purposes and meanings—explicit, hidden or implied—are ascribed to the acts of giving and receiving. In the cases where the offender was a stranger, the promise of either

small amounts of money, sweets from the bakery, lollies from the dairy or an opportunity to pick fruits, was sufficiently attractive for children, seemingly unconcerned and unsuspecting, to accompany someone. The little pink lollies dished out by Chapman,<sup>28</sup> who molested two sisters outside a Picture Palace, seem of extraordinarily little value nowadays. We can only speculate on the attraction the promise of sweets had for young children in the 1920s. They possibly represented a special treat, either for a particular occasion such as a birthday, Christmas, or, perhaps more sinisterly, as the reward for 'good' behaviour. Children therefore might have perceived any adult offering such a luxury as benevolent and trustworthy. At times, a ruse was used to lure young children away from home. The function of a gift or a promise to play with a little dog, as in one of Gillingham's (1998) case studies, is multi-faceted. A present has the potential, unintentionally, to lead to discovery of the abuse as inquisitive mothers question the provenance of money, for example. The little pink lollies found in Chapman's coat were recognised by the two sisters and used in court as evidence.

The young victims, aged between 5 and 15 years and girls in all but one case where the victim was a boy, were most commonly in the company of either friends or siblings before and around the time of the assault. The friendly man turned molester was most often, but not always, a stranger. Skilfully and successfully, the victim was separated from others. Chapman sent Rosie to buy lollies to isolate Emily. He then proceeded to pull her bloomers down. Two siblings and their friend followed White to a remote farm to pick plums with the blessing of Dunstan's mother. Ted and Dunstan were sent to pick fruits while White took Ruth into the house where he assaulted her. Moynahan gave Eliza a penny and she accompanied him down to the river, while Edwina and her brother were treated to sweets from the bakery.

It seems significant that neither Victoria nor Erin, both alleged victims of incest,<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> All names have been altered to ensure that no individual can be identified.

<sup>29</sup> Fischer (2003) describes an older and newer way of thinking about incest that in terms of kinship rules (or blood ties) and child sex abuse (or sexual desire), represents both ends of a spectrum. The latter has emerged as family constellations change and now often comprise kin and non-kin relations. The two lines of thinking are illustrated by Victoria, who was abused by her adoptive father, and Erin by her biological father.

was offered a reward or 'silence money'; Victoria was threatened instead. On three occasions, Cooper interfered with his 12-year-old adopted daughter Victoria in her bedroom, while his wife and son were away. He offered or promised no luxury treat; instead, he threatened her into silence. Cooper warned Victoria that she would receive a "thrashing" or be sent to the industrial school if she disclosed the abuse. Erin was 15 years old when attending fairs with her father. On these occasions, they shared a double mattress in a tent. Here, and at times in his matrimonial bed, Thurlow had sexual intercourse with Erin. Cooper was not found guilty of carnal knowledge and incest and neither was Thurlow; instead both girls, 12-year-old Victoria and 15-year-old Erin, were portrayed as loose characters. These two cases, from 1941 and 1952, foreshadowed a change in perceptions of girls, as expressed in the Mazengarb Report of 1954. Moral decline and female delinquent sexual behaviour, observed in America in the early twentieth-century (Gordon, 1988), was now considered an increasing social problem in New Zealand with girls turning into the instigators of sexual (mis)conduct.

Children, Gillingham (1998) found in her case studies, responded obediently to authoritative adults whether familial or non-familial. Examples of acquiescing to authoritative figures in my case studies include: accompanying the perpetrator to a secluded or remote location; complying with instructions; passive obedience around the act of the assault; and discretion. Watkins befriended 7-year-old Edwina and her 8-year-old brother Adam. According to Adam's witness statement the three of them wandered the streets of a rural Waikato town for some time, eventually ending in the local park. In his witness statement, Adam recounted:

The man told me to turn my face around. We were near where the two trees are together. I turned my back when the man told me. Edwina was under a tree when I turned my back, and the man was standing up outside the tree. I did not see the man or Edwina do anything. I stood as he told me, and I did not look around. (Adam)

Adam unquestioningly turned his face away while his sister was assaulted. On the way to the farm, White "pulled out his thing and said 'what a big thing'. He did that three times" recounted Ted. This sexually explicit behaviour, it seems, did not alarm the three children, as they continued walking with him. Indeed Dunstan's mother served White a meal in her fish shop. Upon his suggestion to

take the children plum picking, she entrusted her son, his friend and sister into his care. She handed over the children's supervision to another adult person. Martin, a 15-year-old school boy, worked in Howell's butcher shop after school. There, as well as in his car, Howell indecently assaulted Martin up to three times a week over many months. In an effort to resist Howell's advances, Martin unsuccessfully attempted to push him away. In his statement, Martin declared:

I knew what was happening was wrong, my mother had not explained these things to me I did not realize the implications of it; I just thought he was a bit mad in the head. I did not realize there was anything unlawful. (Martin)

Gillingham (1998) suggests that boys' naivety about male homoeroticism rendered them vulnerable to sexual assault. Martin exhibited not only naivety and confusion but did not express personal distress about the experience. Within legal processes, Robertson (2005) proposes, boys were treated differently because of their 'masculinity' which increased their likelihood to resist assault. Martin did not resist other than trying to push Howell away, which he attributed to a lack of knowledge in sex education that his mother did not provide. His comment "I did not realize there was anything unlawful" begs the question whether Howell and Martin had a mutual understanding.

### ***Secret acts in public spaces***

Linda Gordon (1988) explored abuse cases from records of Boston child-saving agencies. Unlike her suggestion that non-familial child sex abusers were often men in familiar roles such as caretakers, neighbours, or respected members of the community with access to private space where the abuse happened, this study showed that in the more rural landscape of New Zealand, some acts of abuse were carried out in very public spaces. The two sisters, Rosie and Emily, accompanied the stranger Chapman upon his invitation to the Picture Palace. He ushered them to the side of the building, presumably a more secluded location. With a penny in hand, Rosie was sent to buy lollies to separate the sisters. Moynahan walked with Eliza to the river to watch other children swim. It is here that the assault took place. Watkins's choice of location to abuse Edwina was

under a tree in the Domain. I caution that from the court records it cannot be discerned that these men interacted with children with the sole intention of sexual abuse or whether the idea occurred at a later stage, which Moynahan suggested. Similarly Lance, a contributor to this research, took two children to a park with the intention to play; he disputes the abuse that later occurred was a premeditated act.

Riverbanks, parks, grounds of a picture theatre, locations freely accessible to and indeed designed for the public, are locations imbued with social meanings (Bhattacharyya, 2002). A park, the embodiment of a space of playfulness, fun and relaxation, appears non-threatening to a child. These unlawful acts against children were perpetrated during daytime, with seemingly little assurance of remaining undiscovered unlike men seeking out other men for sex in public parks after dark, when police seldom patrolled (Brickell, 2008b).

Multiple transgressions of boundaries occur during these unlawful interactions with children based on dichotomous understandings of good and bad, private and public, right and wrong. Neither a playground nor daytime is associated with malevolence, nor are acts such as sexual practices in public spaces, which are reserved for private spheres (see Chapter Six). The offenders turn these sites of innocence (riverbank, park, movie theatre) into sites of deviance.

### ***Acquisition of knowledge as a form of social control***

Court records fulfil a specific purpose, namely to document legal proceedings; individual reports and statements that make up each case file are written with intent to achieve this aim. Robertson (2005) captures the psychosexual developments of working-class New Yorkers between 1880 and 1960 through criminal court files. Referring to Cynthia Herrup's work, Robertson (2005) suggests that historians rarely pay attention to the regulations that govern a court case and mould the content of the records to suit their purposes. While critically examining the use of court records, Brickell (2008a) sees them as "valuable sources with which to explore the experiences, meanings, identities and social changes that make up (homo)sexual histories" (p. 25). Common meanings can still be drawn despite the tailored statements for an official audience (Brickell,

2008a). Robertson (2005) proposes that records frequently lack coherence and consistency between them and are “polluted with authority” (p. 162). Such files are a heavily mediated source of information that turns into a continuous narrative through processes and methods of reproduction (Gillingham, 1998). There are limitations to these court records: the type of questions that can be asked, answered and provided as evidence in court is restricted and orchestrated and occur devoid of context (Robertson, 2005). The level of articulation, eloquence and language of individual statements varied. It can only be speculated under what circumstances they were obtained and written, and what level of negotiation occurred in particular between an adult, that is to say police, and the victim, a child, and how the note-taker and typist manipulated a child’s spoken language into written form. Archival records are also reflections of past power relationships (Coleborne, 2010).

Intimate body parts and acts, for example, were frequently described. Only 15-year-old Martin in 1968 used the word ‘penis’; otherwise this was verbalised as ‘thing’, ‘privates’ or ‘private parts’ (*cf.*, Gillingham, 1998). This possibly reflected the common parlance of the day, as Brickell (2008b) directly quotes men engaging in same sex acts also using the expression ‘private parts’. Alternatively, this term precisely symbolises what is a very private matter: an exclusive act between what we have come to understand as ‘private parts’.

In the historical cases described above, all eight men pleaded not guilty to their respective charges. Five were found guilty and three were discharged. The latter deserve further scrutinising to determine what distinguishes them from the other cases. Moynahan, who assaulted Eliza by the river, described the incident as follows:

We sat down. The girl sat on my knee. I kissed her and gave her a penny. I did not take her pants down. I put my hand under her clothes and felt her privates outside of her drawers. I did not take my own pants down or undo my pants. Neither did I get on top of her . . . I did not take the girl down with any idea of touching her . I have no idea what made me touch her. (Moynahan)

Moynahan's interfering with Eliza is comparable to that of Chapman, at least from the interpretations of the court records, or that of Spence who indecently touched eight-year-old Betty in the darkness of a movie theatre on New Year's Eve, 1942. Alert picture theatre staff, Brickell (2008b) suggests, kept a close watch on men who changed seats to sit near a youth, possibly in order to initiate sexual contact. Spence's move to sit next to Betty following the interval went unnoticed. Chapman was sentenced to five years imprisonment with hard labour and Spence six months with hard labour. Newspaper articles of these two cases contextualised circumstances. Chapman's case, reported in *The Waikato Times* on June 15, 1923, warranted four headings: "Menace to society"; "Should have life sentence"; "Criminal's bad record"; and "Already served 14 years". In the last sentence of the newspaper report it was explained why he escaped flogging: "His Honor added that he felt inclined to order prisoner to be flogged, but as the children, fortunately, had suffered no actual physical harm, he would forego this additional punishment" ("Menace To Society," 1923).

An apparent lack of physical evidence taken as a benchmark that no real harm had occurred was not uncommon for that time (Gillingham, 1998; Robertson, 2005). Following an assault, the first step was to check and comment on the state of clothing (dishevelled or not) and then the body was scrutinized for physical evidence, the examination often undertaken by the parent. Rosie's mother bathed her and checked her body for marks but could not find any. Gillingham (1998) made similar observations when Bella's mother examined Bella's 'person', not finding any marks and thus assumed the child to be unscathed. Embedded in these comments lies an assumption that tidy garments, no obvious physical marks and an intact hymen are indicative of no or only 'minor' abuse (Gordon, 1989; Robertson, 2005). The language changed considerably into professional, authoritative medical jargon in doctors' witness statements with the most common observation concerning the state of the hymen. Edwina, following her assault by Watkins in the Domain, underwent a medical examination. The general practitioner's findings were that the hymen was intact and "the small opening not sufficiently large for passage of male organ". The state of the hymen was taken as another indicator whether 'damage' had been caused or not. An intact hymen, however, does not necessarily exclude vaginal penetration (Herman-Giddens & Frothingham, 1987). "Lack of physical evidence never rules

out abuse because many sexual acts leave no physical findings" (Herman-Giddens & Frothingham, 1987, p. 203).

The article about Spence carried less sensational headings: "Offence denied" and "Incident at theatre" ("Offence denied," 1943). Two days later under the title of "Six months' (sic) hard labour" it was reported that the jury "had recommended him to the court's mercy, as no actual physical harm had resulted to the girl" ("Six Months' (sic) Hard Labour," 1943). Taking his previous record of sexual offences into account the Judge sentenced him to six months imprisonment. Moynahan's case made only seven lines in *The Waikato Times* with three headings: "Not guilty"; "Serious charge"; and "Case from [name of town]" ("Not Guilty," 1929). Chapman and Spence's previous convictions influenced the length of the sentence but the jury convicted without the knowledge of the previous offences, so why was Moynahan discharged? In his court papers, the probation officer and police sergeant spoke favourably of this 25-year-old man living with his parents. Neither the accused nor any of his family members were in trouble before and his father was said to be a respected citizen. Moynahan's membership in the Salvation Army taught him to "always tell the truth". These excellent testimonies potentially contributed to the jury's decision, as did, possibly, the following statement by the police sergeant:

The little girl complained to me that the man hurt her and at the same time he put his hands to her privates. I wasn't then satisfied that I had a case against the accused. The age of the girl more or less made me dissatisfied. Experience tells us that they [girls of five] may give a statement one day, and wouldn't get it the next.  
(Police Sergeant)

Despite Moynahan's admission of touching her, the policeman's account cast doubt on the girl's veracity. This officer's symbolic representation of 'truth' and power overrides the position of both the accused and Eliza. The police officer's personal agenda, suggesting that he took a liking to or felt pity for Moynahan, and the probation officer's report likely influenced and contributed to the not guilty verdict. The community, represented by the jury, trusted the judgement and knowledge of figures of authority. Underpinning this knowledge is perhaps an



understanding that the police's experience with men who sexually abuse children identified Moynahan as being of a higher calibre.

The young man, however, confessed to kissing the girl and putting his hand under her clothes, which resonates with the earlier case of William. An impulsive act and loss of control were traits suggestive of mental defectives (Robertson, 2001). Moynahan's apparent good family background possibly does not fit commonly-held perceptions of an evil child abuser. The policeman identified instead a lack of socialising skills with young girls of his own age, perhaps evoking a sympathetic jury. While Moynahan's poor social skills were recommended as a mitigating factor, for William and Charles inadequate social skills in part led to the label of 'social defective' and committal to a mental institution.

Such lacklustre explanations shift responsibility from an active, decision-making agent to somebody surrendering to impulsive behaviour or 'something' that is inexplicable, the loss of power over one's own control culminating in abuse. Power, Foucault suggests, is only effective once it is enacted (Hook, 2007): the abusive action is on one hand a loss of personal power while on the other hand an increase of power, a personal affirmation to obtain pleasure in what Foucault (1998) suggests is the double impetus of pleasure and power. Within the various discourses (medical, scientific, religious, moral, biological) of acceptable sexual behaviour there seems no space for an alternative explanation and sexuality remains enshrined in taboo, non-existence and silence (Foucault, 1998). Any attempt to explain sexual interference with children is doomed to fail. Based on Foucauldian discourses of sexuality, Wrathall (1992) proposes that if sexuality is discussed in different contexts or the categories change, what can or cannot be said about sexuality changes. Charles appeared less inhibited when narrating his sexual practices with cows and masturbation, which is interpreted in his case notes as "he has little sense of responsibility or morality and relates his experiences without shame". Cooper provided another type of explanation for his sexual misconduct with his adopted daughter: his heavy alcohol consumption rendered him unable to act soundly and reasonably. Durkin and Bryant (1999) distinguish between accounts of excuses and accounts of justifications used by child sex offenders to explain deviant behaviour and to neutralise guilt. Alcohol consumption as an excuse is frequently attributed to deviant sexual behaviour

(McCaghy, 1968, cited in Durkin and Bryant, 1999). These uninspiring justifications prevent the discovery of more thorough and comprehensive understandings of meanings about abuse. Official discourses offer rational and scientific knowledge of sexuality, seemingly devoid of emotional involvement and pleasurable aspects. This is also reflected in the court narratives that present a rich web of information about men who sexually offended against children. Their disgraceful affairs remained secret and private until disclosed or discovered, a private act turned into public knowledge and through media narratives taking on new dimensions with the publication of cases like those of Peter Ellis and Graham Capill, discussed in the next chapter.

Cooper and Thurlow were found not guilty on charges of incest. The witnesses in Cooper's case were all male, possibly leaving the 12-year-old victim Victoria surrounded exclusively by men in court. According to one document, Victoria was extensively interrogated about her behaviour at a social dance, when she returned home late. She was asked: "Was there not an occasion when you were a naughty girl when you stayed out till 10-30 and your dad found you with a little Māori boy at the Hall?" Such a question positions her father alongside other concerned family fathers worried about the welfare of their daughter, thus normalising his behaviour while at the same time both questioning and drawing attention to Victoria's moral conduct. Cooper and Violet's statements diverged considerably: although he admitted to "skylarking" and putting his hands "on her private parts" he denied allegations of unlawful carnal knowledge and expressed his regret for what he did. Furthermore, he blamed his behaviour on the 20 bottles of beer he consumed on that particular day. In the account of young Bella (Gillingham, 1998) her assailant's mind was also muddled with drink and he proclaimed that he did not know what he was doing, a point highlighted by the defence counsel. Cooper's claim of consuming alcohol was contradicted by Violet; she stated that her father had not been drinking. *The Waikato Times* reported twice on Cooper. The headlines are succinct and self-explanatory: "Sexual charges" and "Timber worker in court" ("Sexual Charges", 1941) provided brief details of the 54-year-old accused on May 7, 1941, and a day later "Charges fail", "Timber worker acquitted" ("Charges Fail," 1941).

Erin experienced a similar fate. She was 14 and 15 years old when her father sexually abused her. To complicate matters Erin was pregnant. Her boyfriend

John, who admitted sexual intercourse with Erin, and her father discussed the pregnancy as a matter of fact and worked the dates backwards. John said: "We talked it over, that is the accused and I, and on working the dates out, it appeared that it was me". In Erin's mother's absence, she was ordered to sleep in the matrimonial bed with her father while John, the boyfriend, slept in Erin's bed next door. To the question whether he heard anything during the night he replied "I did hear quite a bit but he [the father] could have been turning over in his sleep, but I doubt it, because it was so continuous, it definitely was the bed moving. The bed was squeaking quite a bit". This testimony had the potential to serve as evidence that Thurlow did sexually abuse his daughter. Instead, the attention shifted from the accused to the victim. Erin was questioned why she did not call for help, particular on the occasions where they shared a tent while attending fairs. Failure to complain was suggestive of consent and "adolescent girls were cast as temptresses, their sexuality objectified" (Gillingham, 1998, p. 153). The portrayal of Erin as sexually active with her boyfriend while seemingly passively enduring her father's advances occurred in the lead up to the Mazengarb Report which was preoccupied with immoral behaviour of young people, in particular the sexual misconduct of girls. Thurlow suffered from ill health. It is noteworthy that Cooper, too, had health issues. One conjecture is that weakened health was considered a mitigating factor, contributing, perhaps in the same vein as alcohol, to reduced sexual self-control. Alternatively, it might imply that ill health prevents men from being sexually active thus serving as evidence that intercourse could not have taken place. Conceivably physical ailments, visible and palpable, and psychological, invisible and intangible harm, as sustained by sexual abuse for example, are juxtaposed and played out in court against one another. This is supported by the notion and conclusion that a lack of physical evidence in young victims proved that they incurred no damage.

The unfolding of the events narrated by victims and offenders, where available (*cf.*, Brickell, 2008a, for discussion on incomplete court records), invariably tell different stories. Despite favourable character statements and an extensive and detailed statement, Watkins was found guilty. He did not deny spending the best part of the day with Edwina and her brother Adam. He claimed, however, that they followed him around. He tolerated them and bought them food from the bakery because, he suggested, he was a Christian. Watkins described a conversation he had at a football match with a young man discussing the death of

President Lincoln in an effort to provide an alibi. It is through these narrated interactions that he demonstrated political knowledge, an interest in sport, and his caring nature for the siblings roaming the streets. The casebooks examined for this study represented working-class men. Manual workers and labourers also comprised the bulk of Brickell's (2008b) research findings on male homoeroticism. Alluding to limitations regarding the representation of social groups, Brickell speculates that more affluent men were either treated more leniently or were never charged. Working-class men appeared to be at risk, historically, of surveillance through the gaze of the middle-class and subjected to their interventions (Finch, 1993).

### ***Historical documents and the sexual past***

I elicited these narratives from legal documents but thanks to the descriptive nature of some witness statements, a picture emerges not just of the characters involved but also of the landscape and environment where the abuse took place. In the earlier cases from the 1930s where the assault occurred in public spaces—alongside a Picture Palace, a tree in the Domain and a riverbank—it seems that the offenders exuded a sense of confidence that they would not be discovered, impudence, or simply carelessness. Alternatively, an open public space might add to the excitement and promiscuity of their undertaking, reflect a lack of an alternative space, or embody a location where children agree to go. Embedded in social norms these men overstepped the bounds of appropriate and legal behaviour. The abuse is kept secret until its 'discovery' by an inquisitive mother inspecting a dishevelled dress, for example. The abusive act was narrated first, in most cases, to a family member, before the authorities were alerted. Juxtaposing these disclosures, in Chapter Nine offenders narrate their desire to reveal the abuse, but also their decision to remain silent due to the nature of the crime, a fear of the consequences and uncertainty about who to turn to. Following the disclosure, the crime becomes visible in official documents. Despite the legality of the historical files, the vocabulary describing the offences often lacks clarity as to what precisely occurred. In particular, in the earlier years, and when the victims were very young, such as in the case of Emily and Rosie, the degree and exact nature of the offence is vague. Watkins is simply described as lying on top of Edwina, possibly a failed attempt at intercourse, since her hymen was intact

according to the General Practitioner's report, although this is not a totally reliable means of excluding abuse (Herman-Giddens & Frothingham, 1987). The most illustrative statement was provided by Martin: "He grabbed me and handled my penis through the process of undoing my fly. When these things occurred he used to quite often pull my trousers down". Whether the explicitness of his statement is reflective of the era, 1968, his age (15) or the fact that he is male is uncertain.

## **Chapter summary**

This selection of archival narratives has served to delineate representations of sexuality and of men who sexually abused children over time in New Zealand society. In the overall context of this study, this chapter sets the tone for implied mutual understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) that have been shaped in the past and are imbued in contemporary understandings of our collective (Green, 2008) or social (Healy, 1997) memories. Although Green (2008) points out that the concept of collective memory is poorly defined and contested amongst scholars, it might be a useful framework on which to reflect and seek explanations for taken-for-granted understandings. Here, collective or social memory is not an active engagement in remembering; instead the past emerges in subtle forms through traces of knowledge and in everyday understandings. It is through such discourses, embodying knowledge (McHoul & Grace, 1998) that power and actions have been and continue to be implemented, attempting to portray themselves as natural, sincere and scientific (Hook, 2007). While individual cases, as discussed in this chapter, may serve as an impetus for commissioned inquiries and policy changes, it is through such legacies that the past fuses with the present, and social memories infuse our consciousness, rendering the past meaningful in the present (Healy, 1997). To illustrate such discursive moments and to solidify the argument that history plays a pivotal role in psychology, I provide two examples to juxtapose past and present narratives.

The first concerns present-day discussions that continue to revolve around safeguarding communities. The institutional regulation of William's and Charles's lives was considered a necessary form of discipline due to the young men's lack of self-control in the 1930s. Members of (public and support) focus group

discussions for this study debated child sex offender recidivism in today's society. Preventative strategies of prolonged control following release from prison were contemplated as an option. This discussion is taken up in Chapter Six. In response to this predicament, men who sexually abuse(d)—research participants of this study—express cautious optimism that therapy provided them with the necessary tools and skills to keep themselves, and thus the community, safe. These men's narratives, however, are ambiguous and tainted with institutional and public understandings that they continue to represent danger.

The second example is more specific to a particular case but no less relevant. A witness to the 1925 inquiry, prison inspector Mr Hawkins, suggested two types of sexual offenders. The first he considered to be weak men who surrender to sudden temptations, but had a chance of being cured. The second were the 'real' sexual perverts who interfered with children and offered themselves for the purpose of sodomy. In a conversation with a participant of this study, Harry, a young man who sexually abused the daughter of his partner, considered that admitting his weaknesses (succumbing to temptation) was an insurmountable hurdle because he felt that he failed to maintain a strong male image. Harry suggested that this prevented him from seeking help. Such insights illustrate that contemporary discourses of men who sexually abuse(d) are at once familiar, socio-mental topographies (Zerubavel, 2003) as we "come to remember *as social beings*" (p. 2).

Over the last century, understandings of sex and sexuality transformed from moral issues to social, medical and political concerns, influenced by the development of psychology (Rose, 2008) and other expert knowledge. Increasing faith in science as an answer to social problems led members of the Committee of Inquiry, 1925, to seek inspiration from psychological testing, thus creating a new form of knowledge (Finch, 1993). Such examinations are not limited to past behaviour but are a measure of subjects' future criminal potential (Hook, 2007). Focused on the treatment of the feeble-minded and persons charged with sexual offences, the inquiry was framed by concerns of the subjects' excessive reproduction. Eugenics was an emerging trend across western nations in efforts to regulate procreation. Two young men, William and Charles, fitted the descriptions of 'feeble-minded' and were subjected to live in a controlled environment as a form of treatment with little prospect of release. Little is known

how they spent their time from the sparse notes in their medical files other than performing manual labour. Their bodies and knowledge were subjugated (Hook, 2007).

During the same period, Robin Hyde was a patient. Her 'condition' was worthy of differential treatment and she was encouraged to write her autobiography. The resulting images of the two young men as 'simpletons', 'sexual perverts' and 'outsiders' differ from the stereotypical representation of the 'dirty old man' only in that William and Charles were young men. The legacies of William and Charles live on in the understanding that they are different from 'us' and that their masturbatory habits are visibly manifested in their physical appearance.

The court records explored have framed eight men who sexually abused children as weak, coercive, cunning, befuddled with drink, or who suffered from ill health. Three out of the eight accused were acquitted and the man who molested Martin, the only male victim, was sent to a mental institution. All case records, including those from William and Charles, tell stories of working-class men and their deviant sexual practices. Middle- and upper-class citizens are represented not as offenders but as indirect victims of immoral behaviours, thus legitimising their engagement with the psychological scrutiny of the working-class. This assessment of medical casebooks and court records has produced diverse rather than unified representations of men who abused children. The heterogeneous nature of men who sexually abuse children is confirmed in recent research following a period of understanding these men as a homogeneous group.

As suggested by the two casebooks of William and Charles and the 1925 Committee of Inquiry, there is a sense that society was at a loss as to what to do with men who transgressed boundaries of normative sexual practices. While segregation as a form of treatment was the answer in the 1920s to protect communities from feeble-minded people and sexual perverts, nearly a century later men who sexually abuse(d) children continue to be excluded from full civic participation beyond their prison sentence. Such sentiments persist and are supported and reinforced through news media narratives, discussed in the following chapter. The examination of media narratives bridges the past (and the current chapter) with contemporary and public representations of men who sexually abused. In particular the cases of Peter Ellis and Graham Capill cover

the last two decades of the twentieth century and constitute an extension of oral public history.





## CHAPTER 5: CONTEMPORARY NEWS MEDIA CHARACTERIZATIONS OF CHILD SEX OFFENDERS

By the powers invested in me by phone-in on daytime TV you are condemned as a paedophile. I see no need for legal ties I will not rest until it is said that every kiddie-fiddler is dead.

(The Paedofinder General)

The BBC animated television series *Monkey Dust* (2005) provides a satirical social commentary on modern life in Britain. The programme presents the 'Paedofinder General' in his black cape and wizard hat representing a witch-hunt mentality against suspected paedophiles. The General wears a half-mask that reveals demonic yellow eyes and he carries a staff in his hand. In the item referred to above, he shows the front page of a tabloid newspaper that reads "schools full of pervy sirs" and points with his left hand to the headlines. Moral panics instigated by tabloid news are symbolised by the Paedofinder General's actions in seeking out and catching child sex offenders. In his quest to protect innocent children the Paedofinder General sees danger in the most benign settings and takes immediate and drastic measures to bring the alleged perpetrators to justice with deadly outcomes. He spots, for example, the word 'pedo' on a swimming pool supervisor's swimming trunk only because his hands are positioned on his hips covering up the letter 's' (spedo) with his thumb. This has fatal consequences for the unlucky man.

Over the course of the television series, the animated parody of the Paedofinder General and his incessant quest to expose and punish men who sexually abuse children highlights the diverse cohort of child sex abusers. This emits ambiguity because everybody becomes a suspect; it creates uncertainty and fear about the identity of molesters. The programme emphasises tabloid media's obsession with such crimes. The attention is deflected from the alleged perpetrator with the focus being on the Paedofinder General, representing the tabloid media's position as a 'pursuer of justice'. His 'fair and swift dealing' with offenders who have no right or opportunity to defend themselves is praised by onlookers. The character of the Paedofinder General is modelled on Matthew Hopkins, known as the 'Witch-

'Finder General' in seventeenth-century England (Deacon, 1976). His demise was controversial with one version claiming that he himself was a witch. It is, therefore, conceivable that the self-proclaimed 'Paedofinder General', protector of children, is himself a paedophile. His role as a persecutor is so convincing that we overlook what is glaringly self-evident. He wears a mask to protect his own identity; he is doing good deeds and seeks out evil under the pretext of protecting communities while his actions and true identity remain unchallenged. Later in this chapter, I draw on the case of Graham Capill, a modern day 'witch-finder general' in the form of a morals crusader, who was unmasked to reveal that he sexually molested children.

Tabloid news outlets tend to represent men who sexually offend(ed) against children as noticeably different from other men, using extreme and derogatory terms complemented with mug shots (Kitzinger, J., 2004). Capturing an image from a particular angle akin to a still photo is an analogy J. Kitzinger (2007) uses to describe mediated information. Much like other news coverage, reports on sexual crimes against children are framed in particular ways (see Chapter Three for discussion on frames). For the present news media analysis I draw on J. Kitzinger's work on media frames that relate a story through a particular lens hedging an account. This metaphorical still image, however, is anything but still. As Chamberlain and Hodgetts (2008) argue, movement is created through the negotiation of meanings between narrator and listener. The meaning of media representations is never an end product but is subject to ongoing processes of re-making or re-storying by various audiences. Understandings outside the provided frames are drawn in to solidify or thwart boundaries and to challenge commonly-held beliefs. In this chapter, I scrutinize how news media frame men who sexually abuse(d) and in subsequent chapters, I examine how meaning is created in an interplay between media-based understandings and other forms of knowing.

Similar concerns expressed through public narratives about men who sexually abuse(d) link the previous chapter and this one. Collective (Green, 2008; Zerubavel, 2003) or social memory (Healy, 1997) are relics from the past and reveal cultural and historical feelings of public and private narratives that are saturated with meanings, shared social understandings and assumptions (Green, 2008). In the context of this study, they concern normative and deviant sexual

practices. Collective memories transfer power, agency, processes and pluralism (Green, 2008) from the past into present-day manifestations, such as the framing of child sex offending. Here, I examine more recent and common media representations of men who sexually offend(ed) against children. The data sets I use for this chapter comprise a selection of print media articles and television and radio reports. Again, on occasions, I introduce accounts elicited from research participants, men who abused, to contrast and ground news media reports with lived experiences.

The purpose of the first part of this chapter is to position the news media within broader societal conversations regarding child sex offenders and offences. The media represent one voice that is shaped and imbued by various stakeholders, such as legal and other professionals, lobbyists for tougher sentences and various members of the public, who are central to the public discourse regarding offending, offenders and possible solutions. The beginning of the chapter offers a commentary on news media content, and relates core findings to the voices of participants in the focus groups and the offenders I interviewed. In many ways, this is not a typical approach to media analysis, which generally focuses on a sample of news texts. However, it is an approach that allows me to illustrate some of the ways in which news media narratives are entangled within public discussions and men who offended themselves.

I refer to general newspaper reports about men who sexually abused (Appendix E1, and media references in Appendix E2) and provide an overview of ways in which media narratives frame men who sexually abuse. News coverage shows a repetitive use of the same few labels; an over-emphasis on these men's shortcomings. It reveals a diverse socioeconomic cross-section of these men, and the use of direct quotes that allows for the broadcasting of disdainful wording. Entangled in these articles are narratives that tell of relationships between teenage girls, not yet of the legal age of consent, and adult men. Classified as child sex abuse, these cases speak to specific dilemmas of age of consent, which vary considerably across nations (see Chapter Two for ages of consent). It is noteworthy that in these news media articles the young women are rendered and categorised collectively as victims. They remain voiceless, disempowered and enshrined under the protective cloak of adults and the law. While many aspects of the sex offenders' lives remain obscured in these public

media narratives, one that is disclosed, on occasions, is their marital status: married with children. For instance, in the following discussion on Capill, the fact that he is married and the father of ten children is repeatedly emphasised. However, the reader is left on his or her own to reflect on its meanings and possible implications on his family (see Chapter Seven for the ripple effects of child sexual abuse).

Following general newspaper reports on child sex offenders, we turn to the cases of Ellis and Capill that encompass a more conventional media analysis. Unlike Capill, Peter Ellis had not been a public figure until his name suppression was lifted. Accused together with four female co-workers, he was the only one to stand trial. The range of 'bizarre' allegations against him compelled the Crown prosecutor and judge to caution the jury. There were no reference points from earlier trials in this country to draw on for these accusations; not for the jury, the media or the public. I reproduce some of these accounts before providing alternative stories that tell of a caring person establishing good rapports with children. A prominent mechanism used in news items to frame Capill was to juxtapose his former character of a self-proclaimed morals campaigner with that of a broken man. I draw on these binaries to re-construct the new public face of Capill.

News media—and men who sexually abused, as I will illustrate later in this study—frequently juxtapose binary distinction to propel stories forward, to contrast good and evil, then and now, before and after. Such binary distinctions assist the media to further contextualise child sex offenders within certain frames while precluding others. Binary distinctions focus on dramatic effects produced by dichotomies, directing the audience to consider extremes; they de-contextualise and do not take into account the social environments of everyday life that exist between the two extremities. Fischer (2007) proposes that Anglo-American culture favours binary representations of physical and social realities. Subsequently, people socialised to think dualistically tend to judge in 'either or' terms. The in-between, grey zone—the chasm that separates the binaries—is a source of discomfort (Fischer, 2007).

Within the current media analysis, deliberations on how a man might turn into an offender remain largely unexplored. At this point, I reiterate that my stance is to

analyse news media to demonstrate how sexual abuse and abusers are framed in public and not to condone abuse. I stress that the news media employ frames that are similarly restrictive and assumptive to describe other groups of people: victims, for example, are often represented as having been ‘scarred for life’.

### **The weeping judge**

I begin with the reproduction of the headline and a quote from a report on the sentencing of a man who sexually abused 14 boys to illustrate the appeal to emotions, present or absent, which is prominent in most of the articles reviewed. The heading reads: “Judge weeps over sex abuser’s crime” and in the text the judge, dabbling her eyes, is reported as saying “I hope you don’t mind if the judge shows a little bit of emotion” (“Judge weeps,” 2006). The judge’s action of dabbling her eyes and her reported statement display emotion. Compassion, Tester (2001) suggests, plays a role in the orientation of the other actor, here the accused child sex offender. Compassion towards the victims’ experiences of misery and suffering, expressed in the judge’s tears, is juxtaposed with the other character in the story, the offender, who has inflicted pain and distress and lacks morality. The judge occupies a powerful position and by verbalising and demonstrating emotion, she manifests a human side that contrasts the offender’s behaviour as even less human. I return to judges’ positions later in this chapter, where the judges, perceived as being impartial, take a stance very publically.

This section draws on 79 newspaper articles, which I divided into nine categories according to the content (see Chapter Three): young abusers; grooming; released abusers; repeat abusers; ousted sex offenders and compensation; men in positions of trust and historic cases; brief articles; internet offending; and miscellaneous (see Appendix E1 for categories, and appendix E2 for media reference). Each cluster speaks to a specific aspect (grooming, for example) or issue (recidivism, for example) of child sex abuse. A small number of articles speak to more than one category (for example, “Youth counsellor jailed” is filed under “brief article” but would equally fit in the category of “men in position of trust”). In keeping with the aim of this study I examined these articles for language, framing and other techniques (binary distinction, emotional content, for example) used to depict men who sexually abuse(d).

The nine categories just outlined, at a glance, suggest diversity within the genre of child sex abuse reports in terms of who these men are; what they do; and the type of abuse they commit. Unlike the metaphor of the dirty old man (see Chapter Six for a discussion on popular contemporary use), the age of men who abuse varies and ranges from adolescents (classified under “young abusers”) to older men. One article suggests: “A Napier retirement village has been told it cannot evict a resident convicted of child sex offences” (“Village can’t evict,” 2008). The headlines and the content of the texts reveal the use of a limited and repetitive vocabulary to label men who sexually abuse(d). Within these news reports, the most frequently used tags are: (child) sex abuser, sex offender, sex attacker, predator, pervert and paedophile. The ‘dirty old man’ label is absent from this particular news corpus, but lives on as a characterization in public memory that is tagged to terms like the predator.

I propose that epithets used to describe men who sexually abuse turn into media templates and underpin media’s framing of this issue (Kitzinger, J. 2004). Templates are media’s abstractions of a schema or script and “sites of media power” (Kitzinger, J., 2000, p. 81). Templates are drawn on to explain contemporary events and underscore particular and ongoing social problems, and are considered a proof thereof (Kitzinger, J., 2004). Assigned a single primary meaning, media templates are no basis for debates (Kitzinger, J., 2004). The ‘child sex abuser’ and similar labels embody risk, fear and suspicion as I illustrate throughout this study. Simplified and at times distorted, such media templates offer minimal opportunities for alternative interpretations (Kitzinger, J., 2004). It is from understandings of such templates that focus group participants’ debates originate (Chapter Six), restricting and narrowing discussions rather than broadening to explore innovative approaches (Kitzinger, J., 2004). However, throughout this study but with the exception of this chapter, I present instances of more open dialogue that tell of alternative stories. Here, none of the news items contest the stereotypical child sex offender narrative, but within news reports alternative accounts emerge; for example, Ellis has a team of supporters, which invokes complexity and ambiguity over his assigned status as an offender.

Returning to the newspaper articles, in the cases where men in positions of trust are accused of sexual abuse, their professions are frequently stated in the

heading and repeated in the text: Christchurch religious brother; ex-cop; (music) teacher; camp leader; ex-political candidate; ex-St John ambulance driver; league and softball coach; prominent computer businessman; doctor; and GP. These signifiers (jobs) invite culturally specific mental processes to convey particular meanings (Tolson, 1996). In these examples, the professions are associated with trust and direct or easy access to children. These job descriptions, when used as headings, are complemented by other wording to ensure clarity for the reader about the content of the article, for example, "Ex-St John ambulance driver 'not a pervert'". The word 'sex' appears in 45 headlines while in the remaining headlines other signifying words (paedophile, predator, pervert) qualify the content. In the case of Capill (see latter part of this chapter), the media repeated, like a litany, 'the former police prosecutor and leader of the Christian Heritage Party' in an apparent effort to remind the audience and juxtapose Capill's former selves with the person he has become. In contrast Ellis, who was employed at the time the allegations were made, is defined as 'unemployed'. The list of professions elicited from the data points to a diverse socioeconomic strata and varying levels of education of men who abuse(d). Yet, public focus group participants concentrated their efforts on depicting men who abuse(d) around very narrow descriptions, seeking commonalities rather than diversity (see Chapter Six).

Of the 79 articles, 18 included a photo of either the offender or related photos and two articles had multiple photos. A number of large scale photographs depict middle-aged men, the offenders. Signifying practices extend to the way in which an individual is introduced through the use of specific techniques to be positioned as typical representation of a particular group (Tolson, 1996). A photograph, for example, from a particular angle establishes a visual distance between 'us' and 'them'. The photograph of Raymond Ratcliffe, charged with 49 sex attacks on children, is twice the size of the written text. It shows Ratcliffe close-up, cigarette in right hand and closed umbrella as protective shield across his torso. In green shorts, blue polo shirt and bucket hat he could be any middle-aged man except this is the face of a child sex abuser who lives near a school. He is now identifiable and anybody with physical similarities could be mistakenly identified as a child molester. The photographs of two young school teachers guilty of sexual abuse ("Fallout over predators," 2006; "Teacher denies," 2008) defy the stereotypical dirty old man image.



In another picture, a young couple and a toddler are shown inside a house. In the background, through the window, the neighbouring house is visible. The caption provides the names of the couple “and 10-month-old daughter Jade can see from their home the house where Colin Davies was going to live” (“Police wife outs,” 2005). A leaflet drop in the neighbourhood, following leaked information from police, brought an end to that plan and “residents were celebrating yesterday after a proposal to house jailed sex offender Davies at his sister’s home was abandoned” (“Police wife outs,” 2005). The re-housing of a child sex abuser next door causes distress for these residents, and is a general concern echoed by public focus group participants (Chapter Six). Media reports on men re-entering communities are characterized by highlighting the perceived danger of housing such a person in the neighbourhood, as the above example illustrates. In the same article the father of a young boy is quoted: “It’s my right as a father and parent to stand up and say, ‘No, this is not going to happen in this area’. We pay enough taxes during the year. They should put [men who sexually abuse] all on an island.” (“Police wife outs,” 2005). This man’s entitlement as a taxpayer and father supersedes the rights of a released sex offender. Providing a solution to the problem (put them on an island) absolves him from the thought that now another community is left to deal with an ‘undesirable’ neighbour. Although the man who offended is the impetus for this article, he is peripheral to it and is talked about as “the jailed sex offender”. Other than a comment from the Parole Board that “the position now is that there is no home for Mr Davies to go to”, the reader is left to worry Mr Davies might move into his or her neighbourhood. The tension arising from the issue of re-housing a released child sex offender is emphasised but the key issue, the need to re-house the offender versus public fear, remains unaddressed in such media discussions.

Re-housing released sex offenders next to a school gives rise to extra concerns which are discernible from the headlines: “Sex-case accused lives near school” (2005); “Sex offender in home near school” (2008); or “Sex attacker lived near two schools” (2009). “I was very concerned that his location was totally inappropriate and I could not understand why he had been put there,” said a Wellington police inspector, because “nearby there were schools, playgrounds, a playcentre and reasonably dense shrub” (“Child sex abuser awarded,” 2006). In this case, police circulated leaflets that included a photograph of the man to

inform residents of the suburb in which he was re-housed. “High-risk child sex offenders are being released unsupervised into the community” (“Dangerous paedophiles run free,” 2005) are the ominous opening words of this report, the word “unsupervised” accentuating the danger.

Committing an act of sexual abuse against a child classifies the abuser and sustains the suspicion that locks the abuser into an inescapable cycle of desire and disposition (Hook, 2007). The obvious question for the community is how to best control these men, which is not a new concern as illustrated in the historical cases of William and Charles in the 1930s (Chapter Four). Controlling and monitoring these men is also debated amongst public focus group participants (Chapter Six) and in Chapter Nine the participants of this study, ten men who sexually abused, discuss their experience of being the subject of this debate and what their ‘reality’ entails.

Overall, these newspaper reports illustrate that media’s stance remains unambiguous: communities, in particular children, need protection from dangerous and predatory child sex offenders. “He should be held in custody ‘in the interest of justice and for the safety of the victims and the community as a whole’” (“Sex-case,” 2005). In this article, the attention extends beyond the tenet of the safety of children and victims by appealing to a collective sense of ‘justice’. Prolonged prison terms are one means of protecting the community: “Repeat sex offender has gone to jail under a preventive detention sentence, and will not be considered for parole for seven years” (“Child sex offender must do,” 2008). This man, whose offending was described as “insidious, prolonged and premeditated”, will not pose a risk for at least seven years. For the time being this problem is deferred, while the fact that unidentified abusers already live in communities remains ignored, unspoken and unaddressed (Kitzinger, J., 2004).

Also absent in news media reports are accounts that discuss the ongoing dilemmas of re-housing men who sexually abused, due to a shortage of appropriate accommodation and parole conditions that prevent them from living near schools or with family members where children are present. These are real and critical concerns for men who abused and are in the process of re-entering communities. Reflecting dilemmas of offender wellbeing versus community safety, I draw on an account from Bruce, a research participant, to illustrate the

challenges of re-housing within 'safe' distance from children, and the interpretation of re-housing rules that is open to ambiguity. Bruce is released to his mother and stepfather's house. The accommodation is at first approved, then rejected and finally endorsed:

Yeah, there was some trouble with accommodation because there is a day-care half a kilometre away and there is a park in the area somewhere; they [Parole Board] seemed to have sorted it out. Yeah, it is between a rock and a hard place. They say they don't want you to isolate yourself, and then they don't want you around young families or, you know, you try to find in [name of town] that hasn't got a young family on the street somewhere, or a day-care, or a park. (Bruce)

The imposition of the rule not to re-house men who sexually offended in proximity to schools, kindergartens, day-care centres, parks and playgrounds is perhaps a politically motivated effort to appease communities and provide them with a sense of security. Although sexual abuse can occur anywhere, J. Kitzinger (2004) suggests that "this fact is rarely fundamentally absorbed into people's ways of thinking" (p. 124). I resume the discussion on re-entering society from offenders' perspectives in Chapter Nine.

News reports on repeat offenders are of particular concern to men who abused as well as to the community. Such media templates imply that each of these men is a repeat offender and a long-term high risk as though 'once a child sex offender, always a child sex offender'. In the introductory quote I drew from Hone (Chapter One), who strongly opposes such uniform representations. In Chapter Eight, I discuss the offenders' views towards media. News media reinforces the public belief (see Chapter Six) that child sex offenders are a risk. The following quote typifies narratives of unrepentant men who reoffend following release from prison:

Even after the trial he is still denying the offences of assault with intent to commit sexual violation by digital penetration, and indecent assault. Reports from a psychologist and a psychiatrist said Cant was a continuing high-risk offender, even though

defence counsel Tim Fournier indicated there was some progress in his latest course in the Kia Marama programme at prison for sex offenders. ("Repeat sex attacker," 2007).

Here, three points contribute toward an image of a man who is a danger to the community: he is in denial; experts advise of continuing risk; and he made only "some progress" while attending a treatment programme. This narrative furnishes the reader with a template of the stigmatised that is used as a point of reference (Kitzinger, J., 2004; Silverstone, 2007) to be re-utilised and re-negotiated in future conversations. Rather than a binary tension, this excerpt alludes to a tripartite division between the sex offender, the experts' knowledge and the wider public relying on secondary sources (news media, for example) to understand. It is at this juncture that all three parties pull in slightly different directions: the sex offender desires to resume full citizenship; the experts caution; the public wishes to be protected and safe. At this site of friction, dialogical possibilities are not seized to explore stakeholders concerns, to communicate and to seek collaborative and satisfactory solutions for all concerned.

On occasions, media use direct quotations as an alternative means of defining and demonising men who sexually abuse. This allows for the reproduction of extreme views while moving beyond the use of journalistically appropriate language. Garth McVicar is the spokesperson for the Sensible Sentencing Trust, an organisation that seeks to ensure a safer society through advocating for longer and tougher prison terms. Audiovisual media outlets allow him to speak directly to the audience while print media benefits from his outspokenness through direct quotes. For example, following the release from prison of a man who sexually abused, McVicar expressed concern for the children living in the area where he was to be re-housed. McVicar suggested that "parliament accepts that we cannot rehabilitate a mongrel dog that mutilates children but are prepared to make excuses for a human mongrel that commits atrocities far worse" ("Outrage grows," 2003). This way of framing men who sexually abuse(d) children is congruent with their portrayal as the least desirable members of communities, the scum of the earth (Taylor & Quayle, 2003; Waldram, 2007a). Suggestions that they are beyond rehabilitation and redemption akin to mongrel dogs leaves the reader with little imagination of what best to do with such "human mongrels". With such radical solutions in mind, the issue of child sex offending

would be eliminated while also serving as deterrent for potential offenders, a tactic, research has shown, that is not certain to succeed (Von Hirsch, Burney, & Wikstrom, 1999). In a number of vigilante cases that the police were implicated with, McVicar endorsed their (illegitimate) actions: "There's definitely a law change that needs to be made to give police the right to out sex offenders, and I still encourage them to do that" ("Child sex abuser awarded," 2006).

In sum, media reports on child sex offending cast perpetrators as a distinct subaltern population. As a concept, J. Kitzinger (2004) suggests, the paedophile is entangled "in a series of stereotypes which place the child sexual abuser outside society" (p. 155), or outside the 'moral envelope' (Hodgetts et al., 2010) as I proposed in Chapter One. Consequently their deliberate marginalisation can be justified. Transgression of social and moral mores turns such men into revolting, disgusting 'others'. The mongrel dog analogy as a symbolic mark of social disgrace and stigma (Goffman, 1963) sets up and reinforces the boundaries between 'us' and 'them'.

More robust inquiries that explore possible understandings why men abuse in full knowledge of the consequences are largely absent from media narratives. This omission, perhaps too, implies collective understandings about the reasons that motivate men to sexually abuse children. Again, I refer to Christie (2004) who suggests that "evil people are their own explanation" (p. 49). In this vein, perhaps, binary distinctions of good and evil preclude investigations, as these would inevitably lead us to examine the uncomfortable liminal zone (Fischer, 2007) that exists between 'us' and 'them'. Alternatively, any media initiative to explore the reasons or motivations for child sex abuse could be considered as an attempt to absolve despicable crimes. Portraying child sex abuse as an individual problem relieves collective responsibility. McKendy (2006) draws on comments made by Jerome G. Miller on the judiciary and sentencing trends in the USA, suggesting that certain stories are banned from the courtroom for fear of humanising a defendant, thereby evading collective responsibilities that might come with such knowledge.

## Two prominent cases

Drawing on the media constructions of Ellis and Capill, I continue this chapter with more detailed accounts of two cases present in the media for prolonged periods of time. In the first part of this chapter, I established that news media are part of the discussion in society through which people construct narrative understandings of offending and offenders. The media endeavour to represent child sex offenders as a homogeneous group. This is not substantiated, an argument that I continue with the cases of Ellis and Capill, as the same media articles tell of a diverse offender group. Firstly, I provide an overview of the two cases and then discuss each case individually. By examining two high-profile media narratives in this manner, I show that neither the offending nor the offenders are homogenous, as these crimes and criminals are often depicted as being.

Christchurch, located on the east coast of New Zealand's South Island, was the site of both abuse cases. Child sex abuse gained notoriety in this country in the early 1990s with the Peter Ellis case. Child sex abuse emerged in the public arena approximately a decade earlier in the United Kingdom (Kitzinger, J., 2004) as the concept of child sex abuse began to take shape in academic literature in the 1980s (Taylor & Quayle, 2003). Ellis was convicted of sexually abusing children under his care at the Christchurch Civic Crèche. The trial occurred at a time when New Zealand had caught the tail end of sexual abuse hysteria, satanic rituals and moral panics that swept the western world in the 1980s and 1990s. Examples include the Cleveland and Orkney cases in the United Kingdom (Hood, 2001; Kitzinger, J., 2004; Nava, 1988) and the McMartin case in Manhattan Beach, California (Hood, 2001; Kitzinger, J., 2000, 2004). The case of Peter Ellis "that refuses to go away" (Prime Time, 1993) has been etched into New Zealanders' memories due to its publicity, bizarre allegations and controversial nature, particularly embodied in young children's testimonies (*cf.*, Hood, 2001). Ellis maintains his innocence throughout his six and a half years of imprisonment and to this day. He was released in 2000 and he continues his quest to clear his name. In 2000, retired Chief Justice Sir Thomas Eichelbaum conducted a ministerial inquiry and found no grounds to consider the granting of a pardon (Eichelbaum, 2001). Peter Ellis's name sporadically re-surfaces in the news media: in March 2008, the Government declined to conduct a new Royal Commission of Inquiry into his case ("Govt 'no' to inquiry," 2008). A renewed

request for a Commission of Inquiry, instigated by a “high profile group” was declined in October 2009 (“Request for inquiry,” 2009). Ellis still has the option to take his case to the Privy Council in London, which was traditionally the final court of appeal in New Zealand for any court decisions prior to December 31, 2003; the Supreme Court now carries out this function for decisions after that date (“Supreme Court Act”, 2003).

On April 1, 2005, name suppression was lifted at the Christchurch District Court and Graham Capill was named as the man who indecently assaulted a girl under the age of 12. Exactly 13 years earlier, on April 1, 1992, *The New Zealand Herald* reported that a man was charged with indecently assaulting a girl under the age of 6 years (“Indecency case,” 1992). Ellis entered no plea. Both narratives, as elicited through media coverage, have similar beginnings: indecent assault on a girl by a man in a position of trust who was granted name suppression. Their paths then bifurcate, reflecting their very different backgrounds, personal characteristics, and the nature of their crimes. Yet both men were accused of sexually abusing children. The judge commented that Capill’s offence was “not at the serious end of the scale” (“Former Christian Heritage,” 2005). Capill pleaded guilty but later faced more charges involving two girls under the age of 12. Capill had been working as a police prosecutor after resigning as the president of the Christian Heritage Party (CHP). At the time of writing he is still in prison, serving a nine-year sentence. He is eligible for parole after serving one third of his sentence (“Sentencing Act”, 2002). In June 2008, the Parole Board declined to grant Capill an early release (“Proposal for paedophile,” 2008). A parole hearing was deferred for “further consideration of psychological assessment” (“Capill ‘resigned’,” 2009) in August 2009. Two months later, Capill was denied parole with the argumentation that he still posed excessive risk to the community until he completed a treatment programme for sex offenders (“Sex abuser Capill,” 2009).

Both cases attracted extensive media coverage, mostly for different reasons except for the commonalities that Ellis and Capill offended against children while in positions of trust. Capill was a well-known figure in the media before his ‘fall from grace’, a favourite media metaphor drawing on the biblical story of the fall from grace in the Garden of Eden (perhaps also a reference to his status as a Reverend) to describe the transgression from morals campaigner to child sex offender. Media most frequently juxtaposed Capill before and after the exposure

of his crimes. Facilitated by the media, Capill himself provided ample examples that portrayed him as a holder and defender of impeccable moral standards, a position media later called 'hypocritical' referring to his public campaigns while at the same time sexually abusing children. In contrast, the centre stage in the Peter Ellis case was occupied by the victims' claims, the young boys and girls he abused at the Christchurch Civic Crèche.

### ***Deconstruction of media coherence***

#### *Peter Ellis and tales of bizarre sexual practices*

I analyse the case against Peter Ellis, an extensive and complex case that continues to re-surface in the media, within the parameters of this study to illustrate representations of men who sexually abuse(d) and to further exemplify the complex nature of child sex abuse. Hallmarks of the Ellis saga, some of which lasted well beyond the trial period, were frequently cast as 'new twists' by TVNZ: children dropping charges; his former girlfriend accusing Ellis of abusing her children (One Network News, 1995) although she made no formal complaint to the police; and fresh allegations of historic abuse following his release from prison.

Peter Ellis,<sup>30</sup> together with four female co-workers, was accused of sexually abusing children under his care at the Christchurch Civic Crèche. While charges against the four women were subsequently dropped, Ellis was accused of "26 counts of indecent assault, six counts of inducing another to do an indecent act upon him, 12 charges of sexual violation and one of wilfully doing an indecent act in the toilets at the centre" ("Sex crimes spanned years," 1992). As the story unfolded in the media, the audience became familiar with explicit details of the more than 40 charges as recounted through children's descriptions. The key characters in this story were the complainants, the parents of the children, the Crown prosecutor and the judge. It is through their accounts, facilitated by news broadcasts, that the public becomes acquainted with Ellis. In keeping with the main aim of this study, I focus on media characterizations of Peter Ellis. I begin by detailing some alleged charges, as it is through Ellis's actions of abuse that he

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<sup>30</sup> In her book, *A city possessed: The Christchurch Civic Crèche Case*, Lynley Hood examines and details events surrounding and leading up to this case.



is portrayed as a sex offender different from any other. Unlike in other stories about men who sexually abuse(d), and despite the serious allegations and the guilty verdict, Ellis had supporters, which allows for alternative stories to be told. In other ways he is depicted as just another child sex offender, an individual who “represents walking evil” (“Banks backs Ellis term,” 1993).

Throughout the trial, media furnished their audience with specific details of the abuse. Reporters did not consider it inappropriate to plainly verbalise and catalogue accusations. At the beginning of the trial, the Crown prosecutor foreshadowed evidence ranging from Ellis urinating into kids’ faces, exposing himself, making children touch his penis, putting his penis into their mouths, putting sticks up their bottoms, children being made to stand naked in a circle, to Ellis touching children’s penises and vaginas. I draw on an excerpt to illustrate some evidence that compelled the Crown prosecutor and the judge to caution the jury, perhaps the news media and the entire nation, to keep an open mind and be prepared to hear extraordinary testimonies. Here, a boy gave evidence:

The children had been made to stand naked in a circle drawn on the floor at Ellis’s house. Adults stood outside the circle with some of them playing guitars and Marie and Gaye (fellow Crèche workers) pretended to (have) “sex” to make the children laugh. The children were made to kick each other and “Peter took photographs”. The children were kicked in the “balls and kneecaps”. Afterwards the people had put them in ovens and “pretended to eat us”. “If you tell we’ll put you in the oven and kill you”. . . . Bad things had happened like “sticks up bum” and “burning paper”. The women and Ellis were lying if they said the incidents that he had outlined in the interview did not happen. (“Boy tells of visit to house,” 1993)

Television news showed Ellis’s former flat where the abuse took place while a voiceover listed the abuse. On another occasion, TVNZ used a still photo of Ellis’s face, projecting bullet points listing the abuse. A girl’s evidence included comments on Ellis’s pale, white penis and that Ellis “touched her vagina with his penis beneath her clothes” (“Girl tells of nasty things,” 1993), while another girl reported that Ellis put “food in her bottom” (“Child’s sex knowledge,” 1993).

Amongst these forms of abuse just outlined, media reported on charges more habitually aligned with child sex crimes. A mother suggested that “her daughter acted out postures which suggested oral sex and sexual intercourse” (“Sex abuse claims,” 1993).

The Ellis case is set apart from other abuse cases because of the publicly and explicitly described sexual acts, and stands in contrast to the habitual framing that draws on generic and vague terms such as sexually inappropriate touching, for example. These illustrations highlight the multidimensional levels of what are considered sexual offences. It is, however, against such tales of abuse the Crown prosecutor warned that “allowance had to be made for the limited experience and vocabulary the children possessed” (“Bizarre’ evidence,” 1993). This remark draws attention to the wider problematic of children giving evidence. I do not discuss this further other than to suggest that in general, in reports on child sex abuse, news media do not alert the audience to particular problems surrounding the use of child witnesses. This implies that such problems were unique to the Ellis case (see Chapter Four on child evidence). The Crown prosecutor’s cautionary remark, at least as reported through news media, did not provide guidance on how to interpret these abuse accounts or what boundaries the word “allowance” might entail. Some of Ellis’s victims drew on a powerful discourse; who tells the truth? In the above quote, the boy suggested that Ellis was lying. The question of credibility, innocent children versus a child molester, purity and pollution, was taken up by the victims and brought into the public sphere through media outlets. While expressed in childlike honesty—“the women and Ellis were lying if they said the incidents that he had outlined in the interview did not happen”—this question of knowing the truth touches at the heart of the debate. It represents a particular challenge in the case of child sex abuse in the absence of physical evidence and with no third-party witnesses. Through children’s testimonies, implying nefarious incidents and demonstrating precocious sexual awareness, news media built up an image of Ellis. The absence or only sparingly used labels of child sex offender, paedophile or similar, might indicate media ambiguity in the case of Peter Ellis.

Perhaps in an effort to resurrect a more stereotypical image of a child sex offender, television coverage drew repeatedly on three particular visual frames (one of Ellis, one of lawyers, one of children) during the lengthy trial, lasting from

April 26 to June 5, 1993 (Hood, 2001). Footage that was repeatedly broadcast showed Ellis, a lonely figure slouching to court. This became a familiar sight on television screens. I briefly describe this clip: Ellis dressed in a suit, tie and jumper, holding a book in his right hand, looked somewhat bewildered, lost, surprised and unsure as he stopped at one point and turned around. This footage was immediately contrasted with shots of the Crown prosecutor or defence lawyer in their robes, officially and purposefully striding to the court. In this triadic representation of Ellis, the legal teams and the victims, the children were symbolically represented by drawing on locations associated with children. TVNZ showed the closed Christchurch Civic Crèche with an empty swing swaying in the wind, children cutting out paper shapes, children playing outside on tricycles, pushing a pram, sitting on a slide, and a woman putting shoes on a toddler. In these images, the children's faces were not shown, implying that they are the victims.

Two days into the trial, Radio New Zealand reported that Ellis described himself as being of a "flamboyant nature who likes to tease" (National Radio, 1993). Over the ensuing weeks, former co-workers and parents contributed to paint a different image to that of the child molester Ellis. He was "a creative, spontaneous childcare worker and children seemed to respond to his humour" ("Crèche worker shocked," 1993). Ellis, skilled in building up good rapports with children, seemed popular with staff and parents ("Ellis abuse signs," 1993), attested by the fact that he was invited to birthday parties. A girl's evidence is reproduced in the following excerpt:

In the interview she first said she disliked Ellis from the start but later said she liked him until one day when she found out he was mean. He would tickle children under the arms 'lots and lots of times' and poke children in the crotch. Ellis came to her mother's birthday party and while there did her hair and gave her a funny, noisy kiss on the cheek. She told her parents everything because they asked her. ("Child's criticism rejected," 1993)

In this brief account imbued with contradictions, cohesion is lost as Ellis moved in and out of the girl's approval. Describing tickling under the arms and crotch-

touching in the same sentence, the former associated with fun but the latter a deviant act, Ellis was nonetheless a guest at her mother's birthday party.

While waiting for the verdict, television cameras switched between rival camps of Ellis supporters and parents, the two groups kept in separate waiting rooms at the court with "police at hand" (One Network News, 1993), pointing to the emotion-laden atmosphere. Ellis was found guilty. The report, "Tears and hugs as crèche man found guilty" (1993), suggested relief for the parents and disbelief for the supporters while "Ellis showed little emotion as he listened to the 25 verdicts". Television NZ drew on Mr Justice Williamson's praising of the jurors who believed the children. A still shot showing Ellis in the background on the left of the photo and the judge to the right with the words across the picture: "The jury saw and heard the evidence and believed the children . . . I agree with them" (One Network News, 1993). Mr Justice Williamson's own narrative continued to be reproduced in the media following Ellis's sentencing. The report in *The New Zealand Herald* from June 23, 1993 captured the ambiguous nature of the Ellis case. This was full of uncertainties despite a guilty verdict endorsed by the judge. The excerpt below illustrates the polarised representations of Ellis which ranged from kindness to perversion:

"It is said these offences robbed children of the innocence and some of the joy of their childhood," Mr Justice Williamson said. Letters received from Ellis' family, friends, children who attended the childcare centre, colleagues, former teachers and acquaintances had described him as creative, gentle-mannered, humorous, caring and a person who made positive contributions to the centre. "Others who wrote letters just cannot accept your guilt. Indeed, some may not appreciate that sexual abuse is not necessarily the act of a cruel person, but that of a perverted person," Mr Justice Williamson said. ("Ellis sentenced," 1993)

Innocent children and a perverted adult are juxtaposed in a way which implicates what in general is considered good and bad, desirable and undesirable, positive and negative. Such opposing frames appeal emotionally where rights and wrongs are key ingredients of social contest (Kitzinger, J., 2007). The narratives in-between these opposing positions are less clear-cut. Testimonies describe Ellis

in a positive light that contradicts the image of a pervert. They portray a man with other qualities: he was spontaneous, creative and flamboyant. Unlike the case of Capill, Ellis is predominantly constructed through media lenses but he is silenced. In reply to a television programme where his former partner claimed that he abused her children, Ellis wrote a letter, reproduced by TVNZ (One Network News 1995).

News media offered a multitude of reference points that framed Ellis from different vantage points, with different levels of competencies and in different power relationships to each other and the accused. The complainants told of unusual sexual practices unlike any others before and since (in New Zealand), which, on their own, might be considered abhorrent acts. The various angles of Ellis's personhood as caring, gentle and perverted have the potential to live side by side. Jovchelovitch (2007) reminds us that different forms of knowing coexist in the same community and constitute worldviews of everyday life. There are a number of ways to interpret news media representations of Ellis. He embodies a mixture of elements that are neither all good nor all bad. His representations thus fall into a grey area of in-between, which is perceived as unsettling and intimidating (Fischer, 2007). Associating Ellis with "nasty things" ("Girl tells of nasty things," 1993) invokes a pollution metaphor (Fischer, 2007) with its counterpart of purity representing the children, and implies that Ellis is potentially dangerous.

### *Graham Capill: Media's crescendo engagement*

Graham Capill, unlike Peter Ellis, was not the average, faceless man who sexually abused children; he was a recognisable face in the media landscape from his past positions as leader of the CHP, a Reverend and a police prosecutor. Thus, news media did not need to construct a portrait of Capill. He already had a public profile, facilitated by the media for his purpose as a morals campaigner. Media subsequently called him the Patricia Bartlett of the 1990s ("Capill and Huata," 2006). Bartlett was a pro-censorship campaigner and founder of the Society for Promotion of Community Standards in the 1970s, "an ex-nun and indefatigable anti-pornography activist" (Hood, 2001, p. 44). Capill's name suppression was lifted at the beginning of April 2005 and he was publically unmasked; he pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting a young girl. More charges followed in June of the same year. In July, Capill again pleaded guilty and was

sentenced to nine years imprisonment for rape, unlawful sexual connection, attempted rape and indecent assault against children.

It is against the background of Capill as a morals campaigner that media altered its portrayal of him to that of a man who sexually abused children. With a reservoir of quotes to draw from, which were provided by Capill in his previous roles, media juxtaposed representations of his past with representations of the present, polarising good and evil, strong and weak, competent and inept. I begin this section by referring to Capill's earlier public image and then illustrating his gradual fall from grace. I use the word "gradual" for two reasons. One, he pleaded guilty to indecently assaulting a girl under the age of 12 at the beginning of April 2005, but further charges followed. Two, at his court appearance in April, the media reproduced a comment made by the judge: "the offending was 'not at the serious end of the scale'" ("Former Christian Heritage," 2005). Earlier, I suggested that a judge's comments are potentially influential. Here, the judge minimised the offending and, together with Capill's lawyer, who suggested "the early guilty plea 'reflects his deep shame and heartfelt regret for the harm he caused'" ("Former Christian Heritage," 2005) attempted to reinforce the story. With these comments, the continuity of Capill's public image was maintained despite the seriousness of his crime. His tainted image changed further over the following months.

Capill positioned himself at the opposite end of the spectrum to a child molester. Perhaps he, too, used the words "I never expected myself to be one of them [child sex offender]" that Tom, a research participant who sexually abused his stepdaughter, uttered. Capill's frequent comments on social, religious and moral issues allude to perceived shortcomings of men who abuse because they lack integrity, morals and religious qualities. I provide a few examples of his public campaign to illustrate his contribution to the framing of sexuality, sexual norms and men who abuse(d).

In 1998, Capill objected to the erection of a pole depicting a Māori statue and its erect penis in the rural township of Tokoroa. "He [Capill] said it was obscene and 'deliberately sexually provocative'. The line must be drawn—it doesn't matter what culture it is if it's offensive" ("The importance of," 1998). In another crusade, he publicly encouraged the Government to deny Marilyn Manson, an American

rock musician, entry into New Zealand, because Capill perceived “Manson’s messages of sex and death” as potentially harmful (“Better the devil,” 1999). He also criticised the television series *Shortland Street*—a New Zealand soap opera and drama television series running since 1992—in an interview on National Radio, for concentrating too much on homosexuality, abortion and promiscuity (National Radio, 1995). Each of these examples is a cultural representation of sexuality that clashed with Capill’s understandings that were shaped by his openly Christian beliefs.

Such instances, taken up by media to showcase his own causes, emphasised moral standards, honesty and his status as a family man and father of ten children. Capill portrayed himself as a man with clear boundaries between right and wrong and guided by the Bible. “The Bible is very clear that fornicators will not enter the kingdom of God. That includes homosexuals and others with sexual perversions” (“Casting stones,” 2005). By publicly positioning himself as a moral guardian, Capill promoted, framed and sustained a specific stance on sexuality, sexual practices and sexual permissiveness. By setting these symbolic markers, he contributed to understandings of sexual meanings, using the media as a vehicle for promotion. Capill set standards against which he was ultimately judged.

The media’s favourite ‘fall from grace’ metaphor presupposed that Capill enjoyed his social status and possessed a public image of respect and trust. This image, co-constructed between Capill and the media, portrayed and represented him in various roles: as a Reverend; political leader; family man, and police prosecutor. This image is later utilised to contrast with a different persona: a tearful, ashen-faced, predatory character struggling with his emotions in court, shoulders slumped and jaw quivering. Underpinning images of weakness, television and print media repeatedly drew on one particular scenario, symbolising the fall from grace that left Capill “sprawled on the ground crying” (“Former Christian Heritage,” 2005). Against the idyllic backdrop of old brick buildings and the green banks of the Avon River in Christchurch, Capill, dressed in a suit, was attacked and thrown to the ground as he left the court. In a foetal position, he was left whimpering on the ground while his lawyer wrestled with his assailant. Although the offender was rendered a victim, with the attacker justifying

his actions “child molester Graham Capill deserved the brutal assault” (“Capill earned beating,” 2005), the media used this story as an analogy.

The various roles in which Capill was publicly known were utilised repeatedly by TVNZ, Radio NZ and the print media as points of reference for the construction of his identity. Polarised frames, representing an eminent model citizen versus a child molester, hallmarked media reports across all outlets for the duration of media interest. The form and content of media reports became repetitive. On the eve of his second court appearance, Capill sent an e-mail to his “loyal friends”. The media obliged by reproducing it, thus allowing Capill to again create his own image, this time that of a desperate and confused man supposedly in damage control. I reproduce this email because it speaks to issues beyond the individual offender Capill. In this email, he inadvertently frames himself as the epitome of a child sex offender.

Dear Friends

I have decided to plead guilty tomorrow morning. The law as it has been explained to me seems so different to what the Biblical law and indeed common perceptions are of rape. The fact that [name deleted] consented is irrelevant.

It is enough that we touched each others private parts – rape is then deemed to take place. Ignorance of the law or the effect of what I was doing to the girls is no excuse and so I must take full responsibility.

There are many aspects of the summary of facts that will be printed in the papers or on TV I disagree with. Some will be pointed out at sentencing.

For example, I believe the girls were a lot older than the age alleged but I have no way to prove it.

Please also pray for my dear family who are very upset at the prospect of me leaving them.



For myself, I am praying my walk with God and my bonds with dear Judy and the family will be stronger. Please pray we don't all drift apart.

With our love and God's blessing,

Graham

("Capill a broken man," 2005)

In this message, Capill acknowledges he infringed boundaries of sexual conduct that, earlier, he assisted to establish and maintain in his capacity as Reverend, leader of the CHP, and morals campaigner. Here, his sexual practice is caught in his own construction of morality. His decision to plead guilty suggests that he arrived at this conclusion following prolonged consideration with the possibility of the outcome going either way. The result is a grotesque mixture of confession and defence, presumably in an effort to safeguard and salvage his integrity. Inappropriate touching is admitted, but unlike in the cases I discussed in Chapter Four where men seemingly lost control over their actions, Capill suggested that he was unaware of the young age of the girls (he does not use the term 'victims'). It is possible that Capill sees his acts as adulterous rather than abusing children, and therefore judgement and punishment should be lenient.

The inclusion of his wife, in particular the use of the pronoun "our", implies her consent to this note and her support. It reinforces his position at the helm and in control of the family for the moment. Despite his imminent guilty plea with all its consequences, Capill paints a superior picture of himself (Goffman, 1971) while simultaneously feigning confusion. I refer to the victims in the case of Peter Ellis and their "bizarre allegations". This email is on a par with children's abuse accounts that lack coherence. Capill's narrative, inconsistent to the reader, consisting of clashing elements of child sex abuse, marriage, family and religion seem to make sense to him. Media's engagement with this email, other than reproducing it, was limited to the judge's response to the email. No interpretative guidance is offered to the audience to decode the seemingly contradictory accounts.

Reports of his guilty plea contained more comparisons between Capill's past and present. The next excerpt outlines Capill's journey from police prosecutor to defendant in the dock:

His head down, his chin quivering, and with tears welling in his eyes, Capill's shaky composure steadily eroded as he signed guilty pleas to each of five charges of indecent assault and rape involving two girls under the age of 12. Until a little over three months ago he was a prosecutor in this very courtroom where he was now in the dock. . . .He also knew almost everyone around him in Court No. 1. . . . I tried to reconcile the endlessly helpful, dignified and professional Capill I knew with the sexual predator whose proclivities were outlined in court. ("The fall of," 2005)

Journalists are members of the same culture they report on (Schudson, 1995, cited in Wardle, 2006) and experience the same emotional reactions as the readership. The writer of the above article reflects on the fact that Capill was known to him (and other journalists). He asserts his struggle as a journalist and human being to reconcile the incompatible images of Capill. Ultimately the reader, too, is left to make sense of these various aspects of Capill, no longer coherent but fragmented. Capill placed himself, with the assistance of the media, into positions of trust, respect and as spokesperson of moral issues. Through the unmasking of his secret actions he became the focus of attention and was positioned, metaphorically and physically, with those he once most condemned: the worst of the worst, the child sex offenders.

## **Chapter summary**

I started this chapter by introducing the satirical and ambiguous character of the Paedofinder General in pursuit of bringing 'paedophiles' to justice. By exposing the villains, he renders a benevolent service to the community, or so it seems. Ultimately, his actions are efforts to protect his own identity and to deflect attention from his own abuse. In a less scandalous news media landscape to that described by J. Kitzinger (2004) in the United Kingdom, this fictitious witch hunt takes on the form of occasional vigilante action in New Zealand, with leaked information alerting communities to an imminent release of a child sex offender.

Drawing on general articles about men who sexually abuse(d), I have shown how news media frame these stories by employing patterns and clusters (J. Kitzinger, 2007). Men who sexually abuse(d) children are represented exclusively in terms of deficiencies and threats to communities. Children are primarily implicated as potential victims while parents' and guardians' fears lie in their (in)ability to provide protection. In an increasingly disjointed society, children are considered to symbolise social order and past nostalgia, and any risk is conceived as rocking the social foundations (Wardle, 2006). These news media representations, J. Kitzinger (1996) also reminds us, are not accurate recordings of reality but journalistically framed accounts.

The criminal and deviant foci in the news media representations of men who sexually abuse(d) potentially culminate in the production of detrimental labels that deny these men's existence other than that of the designated tag. Labels do not have feelings; real people do, suggests Mark Tipene, a former prison inmate (Tipene, 2008). Labels are considered congruent with the entire selfhood of a person and seem sufficient to provide the audience with common understandings (Wardle, 2006). This study is an effort to de-centralise and de-stabilise labels used to describe men who sexually offend(ed) against children. Labels develop into powerful media templates that assist the conceptualising of child sex offenders. Attached are multidimensional meanings and understandings of these men: they are evil; they represent a relentless danger to society; they require prolonged supervision; and they should not be re-housed near places where children are found.

Media pre-contextualisations and pre-conceptualisations of men who abuse children propose an asymmetrically distributed reporting responsibility in favour of official institutional (police and legal) narratives representing the nation's interest. This is a very uneven allocation: for any given case, one man against the rest of the nation. At least that is the mediated impression as family members, acquaintances, and friends of abusers are largely rendered invisible and inaudible. The perspective of the offender is not newsworthy (Wardle, 2006). Therefore, the public's primary points of reference are mediated information and second-hand evidence, which paint a dismal picture. Support people of men who sexually abused struggle to speak out publicly in an effort to provide more variegated representations, yet they express hope that these men's public image

might change for the better (see Chapter Seven). Offenders' views are more pessimistic (see Chapter Nine). Narratives from family and friends are mainly absent from media reports, leading to the assumption that these men are hermits or have been cut off from all relationships and therefore are social misfits. Later in this thesis, my research findings challenge the view that the child sex offender is a recluse.

Ellis, seemingly well-liked by children, co-workers and parents, does not fit into this category of outcasts, and neither does Capill, a married man with ten children. Ellis was surrounded by people who publically claimed their support; media reporting of support is an exception rather than the norm. In a carefully crafted sentence, Devereux reported that Graham Capill's family stood by him ("Former Christian Heritage," 2005). Through mediated information over prolonged periods of time, the public became familiar with Ellis the offender who committed bizarre sexual crimes, but not with the person, Peter Ellis. His image as a child sex offender was mostly created through the reproduction of children's evidence, through apparent games with sexual connotations that render him an ambiguous persona: neither child nor man. News media described allegations as 'shocking', but in the absence of any previous similar case to use as a reference point, media consumers were left uncertain how to position the Ellis case compared with other child sex abuse cases.

The case of Capill was hallmarked by media reports that juxtaposed his public profiles with the incongruous image of a man sexually abusing children. Here, too, media consumers are left to make sense of these clashing images and accounts, while for Capill this seemed less of a problem. His email conveys the sentiment that he is very familiar with the role of a Reverend (he refers to the Bible); husband (he talks of his bond with his wife); family (not drifting apart) but not with the character of the sex offender. He has (as do all other men who sexually abuse) many other parts of selfhood than that of a child molester. But this one characteristic is over-emphasised as evidenced in the general reports on men who sexually abuse(d) (explored in the first part of this chapter). Media discussions on this case remained within the habitual frames within which child sex abusers are discussed. This case, however, had the ingredients and therefore the potential to broaden public conversations about the child sex abuser because his other attributes were well known, and Capill contradicts images of a

social misfit. Instead, he came to represent a second stereotype: a man of trust who cannot be trusted.

In this chapter, I examined news media coverage of men who sexually abuse(d) children, a form of knowledge contributing to the public representation of these men. The mass media, J. Kitzinger (2004) proposes, expose and define contemporary social issues. Levels and layers of public and institutional narratives about men who sexually abuse children converge in news media and are reproduced to provide additional and more widely circulated representations and meanings. These media accounts, then, accomplish various functions: they inform, demonstrate that the police and legal system is competent in fulfilling their jobs, alert communities and provide offender profiles. My findings are comparable to J. Kitzinger's (2004) research findings. Media construct and maintain ideas about men who sexually abuse; media evade or confront aspects of the issue of re-housing, considered problematic for the community; perpetuate misleading terms (paedophile, child sex offender, perpetrator); disseminate social science research findings (discussed in the next chapter); and present or omit information that illustrates different ways of understanding child sex abuse.

In the community, media reports are consumed and further processed as audience members draw on a multitude of understandings and personal experiences. In the next chapter, I consider how this particular social knowledge of child sex offending, offenders and their rehabilitative prospects are conjointly assimilated.

## CHAPTER 6: AMBIGUOUS UNDERSTANDINGS OF MEN WHO SEXUALLY ABUSE(D) CHILDREN

<p>Die Gedanken sind frei, wer kann sie erraten?          Und sperrt man mich ein im finsternen Kerker,          Das alles sind rein vergebliche Werke.          Denn meine Gedanken zerreißen die Schranken          Und Mauern entzwei, die Gedanken sind frei!          (German song ca. 1810 – Composer unknown)</p>	<p>Thoughts are free, who can ever guess them?          And if I am thrown into the darkest dungeon,          all this would be futile work,          because my thoughts tear all gates and walls apart. Thoughts are free!</p>
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The unknown composer of this early nineteenth-century German song expressed the mighty potency of freedom of thought and fantasy. These poetic lines were written about two hundred years ago. Yet the lyrics touch on a central question within the contemporary discussion of community reintegration of men who sexually offended: the (im)possibility of controlling thoughts and fantasies that have the potential to lead to action or escalate into offending (*cf.*, Quale, Erooga, Wright, Taylor & Harbinson, 2006). Hence, men who sexually abused are thought to have uncontrollable thoughts and as a result are considered a constant threat to society.

The chapter begins with a general reflection on the binary construction of private and public. Dichotomous thinking continues to be topical in all focus group debates. The lyrics of this song expose tensions between public and private domains. The private, here in the form of thought and fantasy, is at its most radical because it is invisible and secret; its control an impossible task. The concept of the Panopticon, a model prison designed by Jeremy Bentham to function as a monitoring mechanism (Elden, 2001; Finch, 1993), has been taken up by Foucault (1975) to describe the power and implication of surveillance. In the absence of external management, the Panopticon represents the disciplinary

power of a relentless self-monitoring dynamic (Hook, 2007) that serves to subjugate human agents to normative behaviour. Thoughts however, can germinate and develop clandestinely and have the potential to evade even a Panopticonic model of self-monitoring.

Earlier in Chapter Four, I pointed to a demographic shift that changed social structures creating a public (mainly work) and private (mainly family) life. Cowburn and Dominelli (2001) draw attention to the division of the public and private domain with the latter considered safe from 'paedophiles'. Harry, a young man who abused the daughter of his partner, is the only research participant referring to his fantasy. I reproduce an excerpt from his narrative, which also exemplifies the illusion of security in a private setting: "You know, it was obvious she [daughter of partner] loved me because she was nice to me, you know, and everything else. And you know, she was for what I always wanted at intermediate and high school: she was my fantasy". Harry turned his fantasy into his reality. In the context of his overall narrative his interpretation of love emerges as a fantasy from an environment otherwise experienced as confrontational and unloving.

Here, the distinction between private and public extends to sexual acts. Intimacy and sex are considered one of (western) life's most private matters (Connell, 1999). In Chapter Four, I illustrated the transgression of boundaries where private acts occurred in public spaces. Sexual life, Bhattacharyya (2002) suggests, "tends to take the form of secrets and fantasies" (p. 45). There are two points to consider here: one, under some circumstances secrets are acceptable and essential in that they are dictated by social norms; two, certain fantasies are judged normative. The purpose of coercing a child into silence is to maintain and manage multiple secrets. These are to conceal the illegal activity of sexually abusing a child, to hide the abuser's own weakness (see Chapters Two, Eight and Nine), and for the perpetrator, this act imitates sexual experience that is private and neither displayed nor discussed in public in any case.

A further illustration of this division is provided by Dennis, a man who sexually abused and a research participant (see Chapters Eight and Nine), who explicitly draws on the public and private binary in his narrative. Revealing little about himself to the researcher, his probation officer, or within the relapse prevention

group,<sup>31</sup> he asks “where does my private life start and private life end”? Later he adds, “I suppose that is who I am”, suggesting an offender is reduced to a social construction produced in institutional and public discourse. Dennis’s remarks allude to a desire to establish definite boundaries between public and private and to preserve a sense of self as more than an offender. In view of his label as a child sex offender, his considerations of private and that of the public have the potential to lead to misunderstandings. Dualities of private and public, understanding and not understanding, knowing and not knowing, visibility and invisibility, certainty and uncertainty, caused much debate and trepidation across both the public and support person focus groups and was echoed by the ten men who abused. “We can’t see inside people’s heads” Peter, a Hamilton focus group participant, proposed. His comment is uttered in the context of rehabilitating men who sexually offended. This suggests that the answers can be discovered inside people’s heads and therefore that they are accountable exclusively for their conduct.

This chapter draws on five focus group discussions with members of the general public. In particular, I examine participants’ understandings of sex offenders and their views of these men re-entering communities following imprisonment. Public attitudes to sex offenders remain understudied (Brown, Deakin & Spencer, 2008) despite the fact that literature indicates heightened public debates about men who sexually abuse(d) children following particularly vicious and highly publicised abuse cases. Public deliberations on extreme cases of child sex abuse force politicians, under public duress, to improve the management and control of these offenders through legislative changes and law enforcement (see CNN effect discussed in Chapter Two). The current chapter offers an expansion on contemporary public understandings of sex offenders derived from five focus group discussions. It is an extension to the previous chapter about media representations of child sex offenders. References to news media feature prominently in the focus group discussions. I refer again to media reports in this chapter to contextualise the accounts emerging from the focus groups and to also foreground links between the levels of narration and associate source materials. In a sense news reports are woven into and lie behind many exchanges in the group discussions. Media reports also disseminate social science research to

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<sup>31</sup> Stage four of treatment programme (see Appendix A); participants continue to attend relapse prevention groups during their probation.



audiences, who take up aspects of these 'scientific' narratives within their own deliberations. Emerging from these narratives is a strong desire to fathom and comprehend criminal behaviour and discover its cause, leading to explanations drawn on medicalized understandings. The criminal aspect of the lives of men who sexually abuse(d), as I have outlined so far, manifested, mediated and narrated through academic, historic and media lenses, turns into public consciousness, which has come to be understood in certain ways. These then develop into points of reference in everyday narratives about men who sexually abuse(d).

The purpose of the first part of this chapter is twofold. I explore how focus group participants depict men who sexually abuse(d) children. I also examine the knowledge bases to which participants resort. What becomes apparent is that meaning-making practices based on available resources and personal experience and characterizations of these men work in tandem. In the second part of this chapter, I delineate participants' thoughts and concerns on reintegration. This chapter illustrates that in the absence of familiarity (Silverstone, 2007) with men who sexually abuse(d), focus group participants resort to frames and points of reference provided in 'communicational packages' offered by news media<sup>32</sup> (Corner, 1998). Stereotypical labels imply common understandings and characteristics that distinguish 'us' from 'them', which is further reinforced by drawing on a medical model to explain their perceived otherness in pathological terms. Finally, emphasising these men's past shortcomings, discussions about reintegration focused on the fear of the unknown and mechanisms to control men who sexually offended.

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<sup>32</sup> I am not inferring a type of linear effect relationship here between media coverage and public attitudes. Media reports are constructed within society and in many respects reflect aspects of public deliberations such as those reproduced in these public focus groups. It is more accurate to see the relationship between news coverage and audience discussions and members of the public as circular than linear.

## Focus group participants make sense of men who sexually abuse(d) children

### *Is the 'dirty old man' a psychopath?*

Roberts, Stalans, Indermaur and Hough (2002) observe that “when people think about sex offenders, predatory stranger rapists and child molesters most readily come to mind” (p. 131). Fitting this pattern, focus group participants revealed representations of men who sexually abuse(d) children embedded within socially prescribed and available labels and frames that emphasise the ‘stranger’. The identifiable and known offender (family member, friend, neighbour, acquaintance) was referred to in passing but was not prominent in the focus group discussions. In this sub-section I examine how focus group participants acquire, construct and apply knowledge about men who sexually abuse(d).

Focus group participants characterized men who sexually abuse(d) in a number of ways. Charles from the Christchurch group suggested that “my first one [impression of a sex offender] would be the dirty old man”, and Heather from the same group described her image of a child sex offender as follows:

Yes, definitely somebody who is out of the norm. There is that sort of hyped vision of somebody who preys on people, whether they are boys or girls, or whatever, but it's an irrational picture really, because, I don't know that I have ever met one. (Heather)

Other representations ranged from straightforward and simple labelling to descriptive features, examples of men who sexually offended or prominent cases (Graham Capill, Pitcairn Islanders, Blackball<sup>33</sup>), to the expression of personal feelings (“if someone touches my girls I am going to kill them”, Rose, Tauranga) and forms of imaginary punishment (“chop to bits, gas chamber, capital punishment”, Henry, Hamilton; “shoot”, Charles, Christchurch; “lock them up and leave them there”, Heather, Christchurch; “effective chemical castration”; Todd, Wellington). Dirty old man, child molester, evil, misfit, sneaky outsider, paedophile and pervert were descriptive terms used to symbolise a male leading

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<sup>33</sup> Capill and the case in Blackball are discussed in this thesis. The Pitcairn Island in the South Pacific, famous for its Bounty mutineer descendants, made headlines in the late 1990s for endemic child sex abuse (Marks, 2008).

a solitary life as a socially undesirable outcast. The omission of further specifications and clarifications beyond tags implies common and dominant characterizations of offenders (Davies & Harré, 1990). In reality, most men who abuse lead inconspicuous lives until the abuse is disclosed or discovered. Henceforth, their social identity is considered contaminated (Goffman, 1963). The existence of female predators was acknowledged by focus group participants, but remained unexplored.

While the long-held myth of a dirty old man lusting after young children in sexual frustration is not substantiated (Romans et al., 1996), such vivid imageries prevail. The dirty old man metaphor perhaps represents the sum of the perceived attributes (evil, misfit, pervert, kiddie-fiddler, outcast, soiled) of a man who sexually abuses children. An effort to reduce men who sexually offend(ed) into an identifiable character, exemplified in the label of dirty old man, resonates with mainstream psychology's endeavours at generalisations "about universal, and thereby, unchangeable, facts of human nature" (Billig, 2008, p.13). A belief in universal and fixed facts has implications for, and impedes confidence that men who sexually abuse(d) are capable of change as I illustrate later in this chapter in the discussion on rehabilitation.

I followed up on a book (Latta, 2007) recommended by Carley, a participant in the support persons focus group (Chapter Seven). The use of stereotypical labelling is still entrenched in contemporary popular writing (see quotation below) about men who sexually abuse, thus contributing to the framing of these men through a particular lens. Latta's (2007) book provides a New Zealand example of repeating and reinforcing unoriginal and unhelpful epithets. A clinical psychologist and author, Latta's book was converted into television series with his involvement thus reaching an even wider audience. In his book, he suggests that "while it's true that some sex offenders look like dirty old men in raincoats, they're by far the minority" (p. 111). Later, the author details the physical appearance of a man who sexually abused as follows:

On top of all that he even *looks* like a paedophile. He's dressed in a blue shirt, grey walk shorts, white socks and brown sandals. When he smiles at you there's an unpleasant simpering quality to it that makes you want to lean out and slap him a couple of times.

You don't, of course, but you sure as hell feel like it. (Latta, 2007, p.136)

Latta conveys the message, maybe implying a correlation, that child sex offenders have physically identifiable traits (see Chapter Four) such as an irritating smile and a bad sense of dress, strengthening the idea of the predatory stranger danger and second class citizen deserving of ill-treatment ("makes you want to lean out and slap him"). Latta underpins this typecast and creates uncertainty: is every man who is perceived as badly dressed and has prominent physical features a potential paedophile? Building on Foucault (2003), Hook (2007) suggests "the individual resembles his crime before he has committed it" (p. 17). The character of the dirty old man becomes the yardstick of his future culpability and turns into a prospective danger to society. The visible mark of stigma manifested in filthy personal hygiene and grubby clothes affords this character his social identity as an outcast. He embodies discredited traits (Goffman, 1963) of a child molester.

In a more reflective approach, participants in the Wellington focus group questioned the proverbial metaphor of dirty old man.

But I immediately think of probably a dirty old man, but I suppose these days it can apply to absolutely anyone, going from Catholic priest to the teacher at school. It now sort of tends to be, well, you just don't know sort of what goes on. (Sonia)

Sonia raises a new aspect regarding the temporal frame (these days) of the dirty old man label and a change in its perception over time. She proposed that in the past the tag of dirty old man was more applicable because it indicated an identifiable sexual predator, presumably of lower socioeconomic status. This view seemed substantiated by past considerations that suggested abuse was a problem of the lower class (Finch, 1993; Ratcliffe, 1996). Now, Sonia proposed, sexual offending has become more complex and the image of a dirty old man is no longer representative of all men who sexually abuse. This raises the question whether Sonia perceives child sex offending now to be more prevalent and across all social classes than it was in the past, or whether the clumsiness and visible marks of the 'dirty old man' made him an easier target for the law

enforcement while other offenders were more effective in concealing their crime. Participants of this particular focus group did not explore these questions and moved on to discuss the betrayal of trust by people in authority.

While the various labels symbolised the other, the stranger, and the outsider, participants acknowledged that a fear of the 'stranger' is mostly unfounded. The relationship with the stranger is distant, yet near (Simmel, 1950). As Suzanne from the Auckland group observed, "We teach our kids more about stranger danger, but it is often not [the stranger who abuses]". This was not used as a platform to discuss incest or to explore settings where abuse occurs by a person known to the victim in this particular group.<sup>34</sup> The discussion also turned to the stranger in the Wellington group with Scott suggesting "it's your uncle, and it's your cousin, it's not the stranger" but this strand of thought was not explored either. Instead, concerns about unknown men remained entrenched in all focus group discussions. This was particularly the case in the deliberations over re-housing child sex offenders following imprisonment, as I examine later in this chapter.

In short, focus group participants either drew on the symbolic image of the dirty old man or, in the absence of visible differences, references to the child sex offender's execrable actions were used to set him apart from good, ordinary citizens. The limited frames within which sex offenders were represented over the course of the discussions supports the premise that participant knowledge, while multifarious and fluid, is also restrained by an overreliance on a narrow range of tropes.

Contributing to the knowledge production of child sex abuse(r), participants in Hamilton discussed that parents, family and education influence a younger person's perspective and later we are "taking a little bit of everything" (Charlene). Upbringing was viewed by some participants as a crucial period where values are imparted, later turning into templates for understandings that are malleable

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<sup>34</sup> Two participants in separate focus groups revealed personal knowledge of or experienced child sex abuse. According to statistics, the familiar child sex offender is the more common scenario (Kitzinger, J., 2004). Despite the disclosures, the 'known child sex offender' or person who abused these discussants was not debated further in either of these focus groups.

according to life stages and circumstances. Peter added the dimension of 'feeling' to knowledge frameworks, demonstrating conscious and subconscious reference points:

Your friends talked about it [child sex offending and offender] and you hear it on the news. And then, you know, once you have a family, family's friends talk about it, just from general conversation you hear it, you know, just generally, you do not actually consciously take it in, it is all sort of subconscious and things are formed, I guess, from there by your feelings. (Peter, Hamilton)

Participants also resorted to other narrative forms to acquire knowledge about sex offending and offenders, including statistics, autobiographies and dirty jokes. This latter was mentioned by a male participant (Carl) in the Tauranga focus group. He became aware of and was introduced to sexual knowledge through the sharing of this type of humour behind the bike shed. Learning about sex through dirty jokes points to the "taboo nature of sexuality" (Jackson, 1978, p. 35) and sexual scripts imbued with guilt confirmed by adults' evasiveness on the topic. Information sources such as books, comics (see Chapter Four), movies or television programmes are consumed, re-consumed and "reformed in social spaces" (Chamberlain & Hodgetts, 2008, p. 1118). The place behind the bike shed becomes a mediated space of appearance or mediapolis (Silverstone, 2007). Silverstone's notion of mediapolis (polis referring to the ancient Greek city-state of corporation of citizens) concerns the role of "the media in the formation of social, civic and moral space" (p. 5). This mediated appearance where public debate and communication occur, offers visibility, possibility and worldliness (Silverstone, 2007). The space where Carl was introduced to sexual awareness imitates the mediapolis of the television, newspapers or the internet as commonplaces of media production. Once the door is open we cannot pretend ignorance (Silverstone, 2007). Once Carl was exposed to his mates' jokes he could not easily forget this knowledge, although Cohen (2001) would argue that Carl could pretend that it did not exist by engaging in various states of denial. Mediated space is political because it allows for judgements to be made; judgements, Silverstone (2007) proposes, about social inclusion and exclusion. This is consequential for men who sexually abuse(d) children because, as I

illustrate throughout this thesis, it provides the context that renders them different from us.

The following is an excerpt from the Christchurch focus group. It illustrates processes of negotiating meanings, the backwards and forwards exchange of conversation where new ideas are presented, explored, evaluated, accepted and rejected. It highlights the diversity of the discussions, the scepticism towards some forms of media while others are considered to be more representative of the 'truth'. We can literally see narration at work or practices and understandings that constitute worldviews and the phenomenology of everyday life (Jovchelovitch, 2007).

Heather: I don't trust the telly very much because it is a very extreme, or constantly extreme, you know, sensationalisation. It is only a bit of the truth that ever comes out. You never know why that person was in that situation, there is no holistic approach to it at all. And Joe Public could not give a damn about a holistic approach.

Charles: Television, of course, is worse than the newspaper, at least you got, you can have a sizeable article about a subject in the newspaper, whereas television you have 10 seconds or 20 seconds and that's the news item and then they move onto something else. So it is a matter of getting in-depth information, which the newspaper, some magazines perhaps, can provide. So I certainly would not think the newspaper is reliable, sorry the television is a reliable source, but newspapers I think can be, not necessarily are, but can be.

Heather: There is more scope for=

Jill: =there is not so much sensationalism, well I mean there is sensationalism but there is usually a story that goes with the sensationalism in the newspaper if you choose to read it, but with the television all you get is that 30 seconds of fame=

- Heather: =don't forget there is an awful lot of CSI [Crime scene investigation] type of programmes on, they portray this graphically.
- Charles: But there is sensationalising.
- Heather: It is sensationalising again, but again it's not the news and you very often get a picture of the victim or a picture of the offender, but it is, and what they are trying to portray is what actually happens in real life and this is another feeding of those pictures and those ideas into the media. (2) I mean into the public arena.
- Moderator: Through programmes, through fiction, through TV programmes and series?
- Heather: I would expect.
- Charles: But it is still only fiction, isn't it? It is only somebody's ideas, whereas the news=
- Heather: =yes, but it is
- Charles: =is the real stuff.
- Heather: Is it?
- Charles: Well, it is the real happening, supposedly. If it's in court it's=
- Heather: =I bet there is more of those CSI programmes based on fact than fiction.
- Charles: Heh. I don't, yeah, I think it is just fiction. Full stop.
- Heather: It's not the figment of somebody's imagination.
- Charles: Of course it is. But, but I just get back to the newspaper side of things. The front page has the sensational stuff, or the front page or two, but it is the, throughout the paper or back into the paper that you get a full page on the happenings or the background and I think that is where the information, that is where I look for information.
- Heather: The other thing is there are bigger articles and more in-depth studies in things like the [New Zealand] *Listener* or *North & South* [Magazine] or



- these sort of more, one would be inclined to feel perhaps broader reviews of situations and things=
- Jill: Yeah, but=
- Heather: =they are still looking for readership.
- Charles: Yep
- Heather: They are still hooking on that emotional content. So they have to get that something, and I would be more inclined to pay credit to those sorts of articles and those medias, I am not so inclined to go and, to the local university library and read research documents on these things, but there you may start to find some more balanced reviews of what goes on.
- Jill: But if you look at where the majority of people get their information from, well, it is just the newspaper or television I think.
- Charles: Yeah, the television before the newspaper for most people.
- Heather: You don't have to learn to read.
- Jill: Then I suppose you form your opinions by discussing it with your peers and depending on what sort of life they have had or have not had or, basically, the three of us probably have not experienced any first-hand sexual offending.

This conversational exchange exemplifies co-constructive processes through which meaning is often negotiated to shape and cultivate narratives. Heather offers her opinion while positioning and distancing herself as different from the 'average Joe Public'. This 'third-person effect' (Davison, 1983) is also observed in other focus group conversations whereby participants suggested that media had little effect on them personally while other people were easily influenced. One Wellington participant claimed that "I get the media input, which I filter quite strongly" (Todd). This renders him and others experts on a particular topic assuming that they have access to information that others do not (Davison, 1983). The emphasis here is on assuming, as some people indeed are privy to information and experiences that others are denied, as I illustrate in the next

chapter on support persons. However, due to the hypersensitive nature of the subject, participants might be reluctant to state their position as having 'inside' knowledge on or experience with child sex abuse. In search of the most reliable and credible media source, Charles favours the newspaper (or so it seems; his answer is ambiguous). Later, perhaps after thinking it over, he qualifies his apparent confusion: the two front pages contain sensational news while the content further into the newspaper is more trustworthy.

The exchange between Charles and Heather on the debate of boundaries between facts and fiction raises the question whether fiction is completely fabricated or whether it contains factual elements, assuming the importance of truth and its discovery that can only be found in real life narratives. Bruner (1991) suggests that a distinction between narrative truth and narrative fiction is not very apparent in western society. Yet, for some research participants well defined boundaries between fact and fiction seemed important. This seems in keeping with binary distinctions that are frequently juxtaposed and serve to move narrative plots forward. Polarities provide a sense of safe distance at the expense of processes that occur in-between, in the uncomfortable grey zone (Fischer, 2007).

In the above passage, Heather suggests that "you never know why that person was in that situation". This is significant because it suggests an alternative perspective to a dispositional stance and considers a perpetrator's situational circumstances (discussed in Chapters Eight and Nine). Shifting the lens has the potential to allow for examination of abuse and abuser from a different angle, prompting a new way of knowing that might lead to the contesting of stereotypical representations. I return to this in the following chapter when support people of men who sexually abused challenge conventional illustrations. For now it is worth noting that in the above conversation, alternative views were not pursued and neither was raising such alternatives topical in other focus groups. Instead, much attention was paid to possible causes that make somebody abuse, following the pattern of a biomedical model of health (examined later in this chapter) and thus abuse becomes the act of an individual. In contrast, narratives positioning a perpetrator in the context of his environment highlight relationality that is social in nature (Freeman, 1999; Kraus, 2006; Yang, 2006) and importantly, these narratives imply complexity in human relations. The spider web metaphor (Yang,

2006) underscores interrelationships and societal co-constitutions of experiences (see Chapter Three). The focus group discussions, in general, lacked such relational and contextual debates.

Lastly with reference to the above excerpt, the underlying critical assessment of news media's portrayal of men who sexually abuse(d) children is a claim, it seems, that these men are particularly severely judged. Criticism at news media's biased representations suggests more complex understandings that are more eclectic and shaped by a multitude of factors.

### ***Medicalized framing of child sex offenders and barriers to change***

In all public focus groups, I noted a tendency towards a medicalized understanding of sex offenders. Stipulating that "all diseases and physical disorders can be explained by disturbances in physiological processes" (Lyons & Chamberlain, 2006, p. 9) the biomedical model now is considered the leading folk model of disease in the west (Engel, 2002). The following extract presents a typical example and is drawn from the Auckland focus groups. "I think, you know how you were saying before that sometimes it is a physical disease, there is some sort of chemical imbalance that means that this person is pre-determined to have these really warped behaviour patterns" (Fran). Such points of reference are equally available, promoted by, interlinked with and communicated through news media channels. The news media's asymmetrical representation of men who sexually abuse(d), documented in the previous chapter, is further buttressed by scholarly knowledge disseminated through news media. I point back to Chapter Four and the use of international medical and psychological knowledge as points of reference by members of the 1925 and 1954 committees.

I draw again on newspaper reports here because it serves to illustrate two points about how news media report social science research, particularly broadsheet newspapers, and how these accounts emerge again in public deliberations. The first concerns perceived risks of child sex offenders, and the second academic knowledge that is reproduced and disseminated through news media outlets. Both involve expert opinions. Imposing preventative detention on a repeat offender, the judge commented that "the risk of continued serious offending by you is high, and this court must consider the protection of the public from that

offending” (“Repeat sex attacker,” 2007). The headlines in an article on a blind offender put under extended supervision claimed that he continues to be a risk: “Freed sex abuser ‘long-term risk”” (“Freed sex abuser,” 2006). References to public safety in terms of risk evaluation and management that feature prominently in news media coverage re-emerge in public conversations. Zero risk tolerance is expressed by a Hamilton participant: “I do believe that people can change their attitude and behaviours; when it comes to sexual offence I would rather not have the risk” (Gina). Reducing perceived risks of reoffending implies constant monitoring. I elaborate on this in the next section of this chapter.

To continue with the illustration of how media imparts expert knowledge, Dr Kim McGregor, spokesperson for Rape Prevention Education, in her appearance as a pundit (Fenton, Bryman, Deacon & Birmingham, 1998) advised: “For child sex offenders who successfully complete 1-2 years of specialist treatment the recidivism rate may be as little as 5 per cent. For those offenders who have no treatment at all their risk of reoffending is elevated” (“Outrage at release,” 2009). In the same article, on the release of a businessman, McGregor further commented on the low reporting rate of child sex offending, referring to one study that apparently estimated only one per cent of sex offenders were ever convicted. This one newspaper article provides the reader with a current affair story—that of a prominent citizen who sexually abused a child and was being released from prison—while simultaneously offering scholarly background knowledge on child sex offenders in general. McGregor is used by media as commentator to provide information while legitimising media’s stance and agenda (Fenton et al., 1998).

These ‘communicational packages’ (Corner, 1998) offering a limited spectrum of understandings and thus signalling a preferred way of talking, are then reconstituted, reproduced and negotiated in everyday life, including within settings such as the focus group discussions. The news media’s reference to judges and academics, as illustrated above, indicate expert knowledge that is accepted as authorised, infallible and validated. This might explain why some participants felt compelled to comment, hint or justify their level of academic knowledge, while others contested the value of such knowledge.

When I think about it, it is probably pretty dubious most of the information sources that at least, like, I can’t really recall too many

journal articles or books that I have actually read on child abuse or sexual offence. A lot of it is, you know, CSI on TV or the news, or the newspaper, maybe a short article in a magazine, nothing that I would sort of say is particularly scientifically rigorous. I mean yeah, I guess a lot of information we get is probably that sort of second hand stuff. (Scott, Wellington)

Self-assessing, evaluating and categorising the sources that Scott draws his knowledge from leads him to conclude that none are particularly “scientifically rigorous”. Within this act of positioning vis-à-vis the topic some participants professed “limited knowledge of sex offending” (Heather, Christchurch), while others emphasised some academic knowledge acquired through reading of articles or books. Emma from Hamilton suggested: “criminology, I have not studied it but the tapes and books I have read”. And Anna, another Hamilton participant, referred to her parent who had studied “well, definitely I would trust my mum, well because she studied criminology for years and years” while an Auckland participant explicitly demonstrated psychological knowledge: “I did a couple of psychology papers at uni” (Irene). Knowledge on sex offenders and offending is validated it seems, through scholarly frames, predominantly endorsing a medical model that explains sex abuse in terms of underlying disorder. Science is glorified in a quest to unearth knowledge and truth (Fenton et al., 1998).

The following excerpt from the Tauranga focus group explores the possibility of the sex offender as possessing a distinct personality disorder.

- Brett: They manipulate the situation big time. It is often hard to unravel, like fraudsters are much easier to unravel, but sex offenders because they cover their tracks, umm, so carefully.
- Jasmine: They are devious, aren't they?
- Brett: Umm, yeah, they are. There is a devious, sort of sleaziness and manipulation thing that goes on with them.
- Benson: Would it be justifiable to say that quite a number actually have some sort of personality disorder or

some sort of psychosis or something that goes with it as well? It's not a clear-cut case of 'I am a sex offender'.

Jasmine: There is maybe some other diagnosis that could go with it. I wouldn't mind knowing what the, you know like=

Barbara: =the personality

Benson: =whether there has been any research done to identify is there a particular type of psychosis or some label.

Here, the manipulative performance of a sex offender is judged more harshly than that of a fraudster, and is associated with deviance and sleaziness. Such undesirable attributes, Benson speculates, might be indicative and part of a larger picture: a diagnosis of personality disorder. Participants from the Auckland group debated whether sex offenders are psychopathic and "without conscience" (Suzanne). While trying to describe and explore the essence of sex offenders, these debates moved beyond the cliché of the dirty old man, in an effort to locate and identify their faultiness and deficits. Resorting to the comfort and familiarity of a biomedical model to seek an explanatory framework illustrates the model's pervasiveness and omnipresence in everyday life and its wide acceptance (Engel, 2002). The ascribing of sexual offending to a diagnosable disorder may serve several purposes. By setting diagnostic criteria, it alleviates uncertainties and fear that they are like 'us' and legitimises their perceived otherness and their stigmatised status. Sex offending then becomes distinctly an individual problem that demands individual solutions. This exempts us from collaborative engagement, commitment and collective responsibilities and the threads of the interconnected and relational cobweb (Yang, 2006) become destabilised and weakened.

So far I have examined representations of men who sexually abuse(d) and the sources to which focus group participants resorted. Limited either by available frameworks or the hypersensitive nature of the topic, discussions in the focus groups followed along the lines of a biomedical model approach in an endeavour to discover who these men are and to assign set causes for their actions. This was confined to and explained in terms of offending aspects only, which continue

to take precedence in the final part of this chapter that concerns the reintegration of men who sexually abused back into communities. It is to such concerns that we now turn.

***Once a child sex offender always a child sex offender?***

I open this section that examines focus group participants' understandings of rehabilitation, with a quotation from a Christchurch contributor suggesting offenders require ongoing "supervision by strict disciplinarians" (Charles) post-prison.

As I said before if you are dealing with somebody basically face-to-face for many hours a day you will get to know that person, you will get to know what his thoughts are, you are not going to be not talking, you are not going to be blank, you are going to be chatting and learning about that person and his thought patterns, they are going to come out. And I think that person would be the ideal person at least if he or she was switched on would be able to relate that to let's say OK, I have supervised this person for 8½ years now, and I do not believe he will be an offender. So, in that instance, if that was done to my way of thinking, out in the community without anybody being told [reference to re-housing], would be OK. But proof, of course, is in the non-offending from thereon, but to me, if someone has proved himself over a good number of years, then that does not mean going to courses and saying the right things in front of a namby-pamby psychologist or whatever. If you can really get down to the nitty-gritty of a person's thoughts over a period of years I think I would be comfortable having that person living next door to me, but certainly not until that time. (Charles)

This passage resumes the initial discussion on freedom of thoughts and a belief that "you will get to know what his thoughts are". Here, in this scenario, the sex offender is depicted as unpredictable, at least initially following release. Central to this passage are the ideas that his thoughts are unknown, therefore he is

untrustworthy, and represents danger; and for the protection of the community he should be excluded from civic engagement and isolated. In the absence of self-control, total control is imposed by others in this supervision model offered by Charles. The function of the person(s) doing the monitoring is multidimensional: control, guardian, attachment figure, companion and judge in whom society trusts to make an accurate assessment of the captive's thoughts. Underlying such an approach is an assumption that transparency, trustworthiness and honesty are exercised commonly and represent the norm within society, with the exception of the deviant sex offender. Furthermore, Charles builds his argument on the premise that people in general possess impeccable communication skills, which also must develop between a supervisor and a supervisee over time. Proof of transformation—which is hard to attain and to substantiate for released offenders (discussed in Chapters Nine)—emerges through such relational practices and over a long time period.

Charles doubted that “going to courses and saying the right things in front of a namby-pamby psychologist” attests to a reformed life. Instead, he proposed longitudinal supervision that, in his mind, would yield superior results because with the passage of time a person's true identity can be gauged. The unflattering reference to a psychologist is perhaps his perception of this profession and a serious concern to him; an attempt to challenge me; or simply a flippant remark, as Heather probed Charles earlier: “I better be careful because I never know whether you are baiting me or not”.

Monitoring was discussed in terms of its practicality and manpower in the Tauranga group while raising the question of the usefulness of community notification. As research shows (Bedarf, 1995; Levenson & Cotter, 2005), community notification has not achieved the expected benefits and is controversial (see Chapter Two). Re-housing and reintegration provoked ambivalent and ambiguous feelings. While recurring references to a metaphoric chasm of ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Greer & Jewkes, 2005; Maruna, 2001; Zimbardo, 2007) were most apparent in the discussion on reintegration, in particular re-housing. Some participants stepped outside the dualistic frame by expressing empathy. For example, Heather (Christchurch) was empathetic for both victim and offender at the same time: “my heart goes out to both sides”. However, she, too, raised concern and proposed that it is a “fear of the unknown, what are they going to do”



when the group discussed the re-housing of a man imprisoned for sexually offending. In general re-housing was considered a concern, again singling out a perceived unpredictability of sex offenders' behaviour while supposing stability and certainty in the general population. For a Hamilton participant ignorance is bliss: "what you don't know you don't fear" (Henry). He preferred not to know about a neighbour's past history.

A Wellington participant acknowledged that

you have done your prison sentence, in theory you've paid your debt to society. Society doesn't really know what to do with you, we accept that prison term is up, but we don't trust you because we know you are prone to doing very odd things, so we are going to sort of tweak the laws to come up with various ways of watching. (Scott)

This quotation followed another participant's reference to the Blackball case and a discussion of how to best reintegrate a child sex abuser: "I think we are all struggling. I say 'we' collectively for the whole society is struggling to know what to do about it" (Todd). The problem of this type of crime extends beyond prison punishment and sentence. Dilemmas, concerns and an absence of satisfactory stakeholder solutions characterized discussions on reintegration, summarised by comments from Scott and Todd.

Social control is exercised over the deviant other beyond imprisonment in an asymmetrical power distribution based on the perceived certainty ("we know you are prone") of knowing. The binary division is reinforced, which affords us the right to "tweak the laws" to ensure their subjugation. These men are not only judged by their past criminal activity but measured by their "*future capability*, their prospective dangerousness to society" (Hook, 2007, p. 16). A released child sex offender has nothing to verify redemption other than offering a verbal assurance and psychological reports (see Chapter Nine).

Peter from the Hamilton group reflected on the fact that re-housing possibilities for released sex offenders are restricted and points to a problem at the centre of

the impasse: how is it possible that these men resume full civic roles if we deny or hamper their return into communities?

I feel that, you know, once someone had done their time in prison they have to go somewhere. But it is hard because often they will say they don't want sex offenders near a school or whatever and then there are schools everywhere, and there are shops everywhere. Unless you go and live in the middle of the country and if you do not have any family in the middle of the country or whatever, I mean, also how do you, if you talking about rehabilitation again, how do you work to be rehabilitated and working as an active member of society if you are not allowed into society. It's the way you would in your head to get them back into society, rehabilitate them but in your heart you get that fear of something happening. (Peter)

The line of the seemingly clear-cut division between 'us' and 'them' is momentarily jeopardised in the above extract. The edges become blurred as participants reflect on the predicaments of sex offenders, evaluating their situations and expressing some concerns. This leads, however, to a new binary division: "head" and "heart". This participant's rationale thinking, his "head", allows him to acknowledge facts (prisoners do get released). He reasons that it is difficult to find an appropriate location for re-housing, which is not in the proximity of a school; he identifies the importance of family support that might not be available "in the middle of the country"; and he asks how can rehabilitation work if we exclude them from participation. Peter seemed on the verge of sympathising with a child sex offender's predicaments. The inevitable preposition 'but' follows, indicating a shift in his narrative: his heartfelt doubt foresees trouble, superseding his rationale thinking. He fears something catastrophic might occur. Dominant narratives that depict the child sex offender as unpredictable prevented focus group participants from exploring alternative possibilities that may lead to the discovery of other aspects to men who sexually abuse(d) and new narratives.

Defined exclusively in terms of their offending, Bridget, an Auckland focus group participant, described these men as a "loose cannon therefore not in our neighbourhood" and suggested the "police know who they [child sex offenders]

are so if anything happens around them, they're in trouble". This brief remark alludes to a further problem: sexual offenders remain crime suspects and need to justify their whereabouts at any given time. Hook (2007) refers to this as tautological "measure of potentiality" (p. 16). I return to this quandary in Chapter Nine with Jedi's account, a man imprisoned for child sex offending. He recounts how his probation officer advised him to 'collect' alibis to verify his movements.

Lamenting a lack of public knowledge about the existence and success of treatment programmes, (offender) participants suggest publishing achievements rather than endless stories of failings (see Chapter Nine). The following exchange between Auckland participants indicates vague knowledge about treatment programmes for child sex offenders:

Suzanne: There are sexual offenders units, rehab units that they have tried in New Zealand and they have some success with that in terms of they sign into the programme, they get assessed and they get signed to a programme.

Fran: Like a 12 step programme sort of thing almost=

Suzanne: = yeah, and it is really intensive therapy and all sorts of things like that to bring them to, I think, a place that you are talking about, you know, recognising what is acceptable and what's not. And they are not successful with every one of them, but my understanding is that there has been some success.

Treatment, Suzanne suggested, focuses on deviant behaviour and the therapist's effort to lead the offender to recognise normative behaviour. Similar discussions took place in other groups, but scepticism about successful outcomes prevailed. In the next excerpt Charles from the Christchurch group referred to treatment as a waste of time, while other participants considered the costs of treatment programmes and concluded that money could be better spent.

Heather: It is possible to change but it is quite difficult to change the wire.

Charles: Yes, so all the programmes that would try and overcome this offending, this sexual offending, perhaps are a waste of time. That's what my opinion would be, that they are a waste of time.

While reintegration was predominantly discussed as an insurmountable problem across all five focus groups, alternative narratives were offered. To illustrate this, I draw on three examples. First, an Auckland participant also referred to the Blackball incident. She called the man that was ousted “the poor sod I was worried that he had nowhere to go” (Fran). Claiming to remember the story with clarity, she produced a different meaning: that of an excluded, unwanted, stigmatised human being in danger of becoming homeless, warranting concern for his wellbeing expressed in “I was worried”. Fran opposed dominant narratives and introduced a different aspect within that focus group discussion. Momentarily she sided and sympathised with this man, condemning police and vigilante actions. Then she considered the wider context within which sexual offending is embedded. She conceded that she understood why a small community opposed plans for this man to live there. This ambivalent position depicts a sense of ambiguity, tension and dilemma: the right of an individual to re-settle following imprisonment versus protecting a community from a ‘sexual pervert’. The mediated space of the focus group became a site of conflict and struggle to understand and make meaning of this particular situation in Blackball. Silverstone (2007) proposes that paradoxes manifest in everyday life “in its full-blown kaleidoscopic intensity” (p. 111). Ambiguities and constant struggles against uncertainties, Silverstone continues, can threaten our sense of security, but are part of every-day life and the renegotiation of shared narratives. Jovchelovitch (2007) reminds us that different and at times conflicting forms of knowing can live side by side. All five focus group discussions were denoted by tensions and resistance. The abuse was entirely and vehemently condemned, call for harsh(er) penalties for perpetrators was mostly supported, but at least one person in each group moved beyond the stereotypical representation of sex offenders, disrupting and challenging mainstream narratives.

The second example of an alternative narrative is taken from the Wellington group:

As long as that person had some supports around him, I would be happy to be part of that support network, but not just on my own. So I feel OK if I knew there was a sex offender in my street, but I would not be OK if it was, like if someone was put in on the quiet and then left to, you know. I would stand up for that person and his right to be there. (Todd)

Todd substantiated his strong standpoint with his involvement in a community that supported a man with a history of abusing his sons. Transparency, honesty, accountability, responsibility and support between the man and the community are considered to be key ingredients to sustaining a life without abuse. Todd's fellow focus group participants endorsed such a collective approach, unpicking and discussing specific issues, for example, offender isolation and the benefits of community networks (see Chapter Two on the reintegration project of 'Circles of Support & Accountability'). Despite polarised opinions in the Hamilton focus group, one participant—the last example—talked about possibilities of forgiveness. "It almost goes towards saying that you cannot forgive someone for what they have done? But I feel that you can forgive people, they can learn from their mistakes with rehabilitated help" (Charlene). An endorsement of learning from past mistakes is a valid point, but would this folk wisdom apply to sex offenders and be accepted by the wider public? Reading self-help literature and attending self-help groups point to a contemporary belief in our own abilities to overcome a myriad of psychological and physical concerns and problems. However, we do not necessarily extend such a conviction to others (Maruna, 2001) in particular when child sex offenders are concerned, perhaps in a similar vein to Davison's (1983) observation of the third-person effect: 'we' are capable but 'they' are not. Appealing for forgiveness, Charlene remained the only public focus group participant who opened up ground for alternative conversations. However, this line of thinking was only briefly pursued before other participants refocused on risk management. Overall, the narratives used for this thesis lacked this aspect of exoneration.

Sex offender treatment programs were supported with cautious optimism by some, but others remained unconvinced with some participants advocating for harsher prison terms instead. Some suggested indefinite incarceration would solve the problem and nullify this debate. Such a viewpoint does not take into

account statistical findings that only a small number of perpetrators are ever brought to justice (Cowburn & Dominelli, 2001; Kitzinger, J., 2004). The overall sentiment of the discussion on rehabilitation was succinctly captured by a Hamilton participant:

Rehabilitation can mean that he just does not do it or they don't do it again but they still might want to do it but they won't because they are scared of the repercussion. So, you know, if you say rehabilitation is just sort of get it so that they don't want to or just don't consider doing it again or whether it just prevents them from doing it again, so you have to define that I suppose. I suppose, I believe if you can get that they are too scared to do it again because they think they might get caught but, I get that feeling, I suppose, that it might or might not work. It's pretty hard to say. I do not know enough about rehabilitation. (Deidre)

The meaning of successful rehabilitation was debated in all focus groups. Questioning whether men who sexually offended desist from committing further abuse, but would be inclined to do so if the abuse had no consequences, whether these men are not apprehended or whether they have been 'cured' formed the crux of the debates on rehabilitation. As Deidre indicated the answers remain ambiguous and uncertain. This collectively renders benevolence towards these men unattainable. Some participants expressed faith in experts reinforcing the pervasive and influential position afforded to expert and psychological knowledge. "Well, you would have to be a pretty well experienced psychologist to be able to answer that question [are child sex offender rehabilitatable]" suggested Heather from the Christchurch group.

Monitoring, supervision and control beyond imprisonment dominated this part of the focus group conversations. Associated uncertainties expressed in fear of the unknown regarding recidivism dictated a willingness to accept men who sexually offended back into the community. While some participants expressed compassion, these men were considered a risk not worth taking due to their perceived unpredictability.

## Chapter summary

This chapter began with a verse from a German song that celebrates and idealises power and freedom of thoughts, exuding spirit and heroism. At the other end of the freedom of thought spectrum reside innermost private processes that are sinister and deviant. The potentiality to enact upon such thoughts caused vacillation and uncertainty amongst participants of the five focus groups who set out to discuss men who sexually abuse(d) and their prospects of re-entering society.

I have illustrated that focus group participants resort to labels and emotive statements when they characterize men who sexually abuse(d). Readily accessible frameworks re-negotiated through interactions, emphasise their shortcomings manifested in the past offending history and their potential failings. Risk is assessed to guard against such eventualities. Hook (2007) calls this “spiral of problematization” because “there can be no innocent ‘paedophile’ (even if no act is committed); we have here a tautology in which to desire *is* to act, in which the act *is* the incontrovertible evidence of the desire” (p. 170). Accounts around risk are most visible in the public realm in connection with men who sexually abuse(d) children, while assessment of risk in forensic patients for example, is less publically displayed. In his discussion on a notorious child sex offender in South Africa, Hook (2007) proposes that medico-scientific and psychological understandings have pushed aside a moral assessment of the ‘paedophile’. Striving for a reliable model of practical intervention suspending moral judgement forms one part of a bifurcation. Hook (2007) proposes the other prong concerns overinflated discourses of speculative representations that include a representative cross-section from paedophile data. Combining these two modes of bifurcating paedophilia ensures an unremitting presence in society (Hook, 2007). Similarly, drawing on institutional, formal and mediated understandings, focus group participants restricted the exploration of these men at the expense of contextual, relational and social dimensions. Such forms of representations are in keeping with literature on reintegration that is commonly concerned with minimising risks at the expense of relational engagement and psychosocial processes to unite communities.

Earlier I elaborated on participants’ positioning vis-à-vis knowledge of sex offending and offender, scrutinized with regards to institutional and academic

understandings. Knowledge acquired through personal experience was expressed by two participants. Others deliberately denied any such insight, or the knowing of a person who experienced sexual abuse, or knowing an abuser as Heather (Christchurch) attested in an earlier quote (“I don’t know that I have ever met one”). This distancing perhaps serves to underscore the fissure between ‘us’ and ‘them’. It also reveals a lack of first-hand knowledge or unwillingness to admission due to its sensitiveness. We know through mediated information only. The following quotation from Silverstone (2007) captures the essence of this chapter:

As such, mediation has significant consequences for the way in which the world appears in and to everyday life, and as such this mediated appearance in turn provides a framework for the definition and conduct of our relationships to the other, and especially the distant other, the other who only appears to us within the media. (p.110)

In the absence of personal experience, understandings occur through mediated processes, as I have illustrated. Silverstone suggests that such discussions position the narrator into a relationship to the distant, unknown other. And it is through such mediated points of reference that focus group participants depicted and judged men who sexually abuse(d) and claimed knowledge which, in its modality of power, creates portraits of undisciplined persons (Hook, 2007). Heather points to the absence of knowing and refers to surrogate knowing provided by media, and makes sense of sex offending by drawing on mundane examples.

See, we are relating it [sex offending] to things we know. That is why we are talking about these things. We cannot actually talk about sex offenders because we do not know. We are only going on all this stuff we have heard on the media. (Heather)

With “things we know”, she refers to the earlier conversation on speeding and severity of punishment. Heather and her colleagues draw on everyday examples to illustrate and simulate recognizable scenarios because “we do not know”. They substitute unfamiliar with familiar behaviour in an effort to try and understand and



authenticate the experience that is otherwise only hypothetical and “heard on the media”. Suggesting a greater reliance on mediated information as our social networks alter from neighbouring to more distant relationships, Christie (2004) observes the consequence of relying more heavily on state intervention to handle local conflicts. Earlier in this chapter, Deidre explicitly pointed to the government’s duty to take control of released prisoners. This potentially alienates communities and together with the stance that sexual offending is an individual problem removes collective engagement as I proposed earlier.

I argued that understandings are created through mediated processes, by drawing on the familiar medical model and expert opinions to form an image of men who sexually abuse children. However, if the topic under scrutiny relates to more common, everyday experiences, Fenton et al., (1998) suggest, personal experience “becomes the bearer of all knowledge” (p. 127) and supersedes expert opinions. There are two points to consider. One, discussions about these men rely heavily on surrogate information because of an apparent lack of personal experience, and therefore such framing as provided by the news media is perpetuated and entrenched as dominant. Two, statistics propose that child sexual offending is prevalent; therefore it seems that more people do have personal experience but do not readily share such knowledge. At least some of these people with personal knowledge appear statistically under the label of victim and their framing of the issue is through a particular lens. People who have personal experience or knowledge generally remain silent because of the sensitive nature and pre-framed structures of these stories (see Chapter Seven). However, their narratives have the potential capacity to fulfil a vital function in narrowing the perceived gap between us and them. I go on to explore this in Chapter Seven. While this public focus group research demonstrates that understandings are mediated and reliant on secondary sources, knowledge is transformed in interactions between common sense, science and everyday experiences (Jovchelovitch, 2007).

Up to this point in this study I have reproduced narratives about men who sexually abuse(d) children, by and large, from the safety of distance that does not require responsibility as only proximity does. I now leave the safety of distance and reproduce narratives elicited from the support people of men who sexually abused children. Their accounts of first-hand experiences allow me to represent

these men through a different lens. I describe how three women and one man make sense of the chaos the abuse created and their decision to support a husband, brother and father.



## PART THREE

There is a need to pause between the previous and the current parts (Chapters Seven to Nine) of this thesis. Thus far, the knowledge I have drawn upon is, by and large, commonly accessible or in broad circulation in society. These narratives have mostly been structured and moulded into coherent documents: archival material and commissioned inquiries; news media reports; and everyday discussions that constitute public discourse. Now the path diverges from public to more private narratives. In the next part of this thesis, I draw closer to the narratives told by men who sexually abused children. In the following chapters the storytellers are; first, the support people of men who sexually abused; and second, men who themselves sexually abused children. Here, the conversations are no longer about, but with these men. These narratives embody participants' sense of self as implicated through actions of sexual offending against children. In this part of the thesis, I pay particular attention to the processes of 'making sense' and of implicating selves, by both the supporters of men who sexually offended and the men themselves. The decision to recount the following narratives in the present tense is deliberate: it symbolises the predicament and reality of many people affected by child sex abuse, whether they are the instigators, victims, or those caught up through kinship.



## CHAPTER 7: WHEN LIFE IMPLODES: SUPPORTING A MAN WHO SEXUALLY ABUSED A CHILD

So it is easy to say you have done this bad, horrendous thing so you are bad to the core in every way and you cannot do that. You cannot make that assumption because someone has done that one bad thing that they are actually evil in every aspect of their lives. (Tania)

The “bad, horrendous thing” is one facet of a bigger story, as Tania suggests, and one aspect of many that comprise a person who sexually abused. For the four support people whose stories form the basis of this chapter, the good aspects of the person win over the bad, and despite devastation, struggles, confusion and hurt they express hope that the offending does not recur. I examine the ripple effects from offending in order to illustrate the importance and value of multiple narratives that lead to diverse ways of knowing. Support people’s newly acquired understandings—that the offender is familiar and not an unknown monster—have the potential to facilitate between those located on either side of the metaphoric chasm of ‘us’ and ‘them’. John,<sup>35</sup> who supports his father, suggests: “I am thinking I only have this understanding because I have been forced to understand. It has come into my family and I cannot ignore it”. Victim and perpetrator often belong to the same (extended) family, a fact that renders circumstances all the more complex and chaotic, as I illustrate in this chapter.

This chapter draws on the gamut of experiences of four people who each care for and support a man who has sexually offended against a child or children. Support people are implicated in past, present and future relationships with the perpetrator. However, the narratives of supporters of men who sexually abused are often missing from social science research and wider institutional and public discussions about men who sexually abuse(d). Public and media discussions about child sexual offending are often restricted to the offender, the victim(s), the

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<sup>35</sup> Pseudonyms are used to protect focus group participants from identification.

act of abuse and its implications for the community. Caring for men who have sexually offended remains an under-researched domain.

General literature on caregiving provides some insights into what the four participants may be experiencing. This literature includes a focus on the impact of caring for physically or mentally ill (Baronet, 1999; Greenberg, Kim & Greenley, 1997; Song, Biegel & Milligan, 1997), drug dependent (Biegel et al., 2007), or elderly persons (Boland & Sims, 1996; Garity, 2006; Hunt, C., 2003). Research shows that caring for another person can be rewarding as well as coming at a cost, such as at times wounding the carer (Boland & Sims, 1996; Biegel et al., 2007; Sales, 2003). This chapter sheds new light on the experiences of people caring for men who offended against children.

In news media, offenders are most often portrayed as autonomous individuals divorced from all but the most essential relationships. Television footage of Ellis and Capill, for example, showed them predominantly on their own, or in the company of lawyers or police, suggestive of pathetic, lonely male criminals, and reinforcing a stereotypical image of the offender as an outsider. On occasions, a brief comment or television footage rectifies public understandings of the relationships between an offender, partner or significant others. One newspaper, for example, reported that “his wife Judy has opted to support Capill through his difficulties, sources have confirmed” (“Casting stones,” 2005) or refers to the impact of offending “Capill’s parents had been shattered by the allegations” (“Pray for Capill,” 2005). The stigma of the offending extends to the offender’s family (Biegel, Ishler, Katz & Johnson, 2007; Sales, 2003) and family members are in danger of becoming silenced as I demonstrate in this chapter. During the public focus group discussions, little attention was paid to the families or relationships of men who sexually abuse(d), except when the debate turned to speculations about possible causes that drive these men to abuse. Family backgrounds then were scrutinized to search for dysfunction, abuse or denial of love, or any other event that might ‘cause’ sexual offending.

To provide a useful interpretive framework for the narratives in Part Three of the thesis, I draw on Arthur Frank’s (1997) work *The wounded storyteller*. While Frank’s book presents “ill people as wounded storytellers” (p. xi), the personal and social nature of the stories narrated by ill people can be adapted to the

context of support people and, to a lesser degree, men who have sexually abused. The lives of the ill and support people have been interrupted either by sickness or the actions of a family member. The lives of men who abused have been thrown into chaos through their own wrongdoings. Unanticipated consequences of these actions reach every aspect of supporters' and offenders' existence. Narrators have previously internalised how to formally structure stories of illness (Brijnath & Manderson, 2008; Frank, 1997) or of child sex offending. Frank (1997) challenges the usefulness of such preconceived frameworks in times of chaos, showing how these necessitate the negotiation of new meanings for which reference points are not readily available.

To contextualise the relationships between support person and abuser, I introduce the four research participants that made up this focus group. Their involvement, each with a man who has sexually abused, brought them into contact with the community treatment programme, SAFE. None of them had previously met, although two participants discovered that they had attended the same SAFE workshop. Janice, in her sixties, supports her husband who abused their grandchildren, crimes for which he was imprisoned. Carley's husband offended against his stepdaughter, Carley's oldest daughter. He, too, was in prison for a short period. During the investigation into the abuse, it came to light that he had a history of abusing. Carley is in her 30s and has three children, two of whom are the offender's biological children. Tania is supporting her brother. He started offending as a youth. She describes the offending "like it could almost have been just ordinary children's sexual play" until the age gap between her brother and the children increased. "Playing" took on new and more sinister meanings as her brother was identified as an abuser. John, in his 20s, supports his father who sexually abused his stepdaughters (John's half-sisters) before John was born.

The four support people draw on a personal history with these men and position them within familial and relational contexts. Support people challenge and disrupt binary understandings because "no one person is all good or all bad" (Carley). The conversational excerpts I reproduce illustrate the central themes of this thesis: representations of men who sexually abuse children and reintegration. Reintegration is used here in the sense of considering a future without offending, as only two men were incarcerated for short sentences. These narratives also



reveal that caring for a man who sexually abused results in feelings of strain, diminished quality of life (Sales, 2003), is emotionally draining (Boland & Sims, 1996) and creates tension and conflict. Caring hurts and co-stigmatisation is a by-product of support persons association (Baronet, 1999; Biegler et al., 2007; Sales, 2002) with offenders.

Achieving a tidy structure for this chapter was a challenge. The core issues intersect, overlay and impinge on one another. One account often speaks simultaneously to multiple issues. Coherence is accomplished through a narrative flow and an approach that reflects underlying forms and meanings of patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Support people's disrupted lives are a reminder that life itself is not linear and unproblematic; it has the potential to turn messy. This conversation with the four support people mirrors everyday life, "everyday is where normality, ordinariness, the taken-for-granted, is to be found; yet it is the kind of normality and ordinariness which is always at risk, always vulnerable to crisis, catastrophe, disappointment or disillusion" (Silverstone, 2007, pp. 108-109). Everyday life is the hub of knowledge production that is not representative of straightforward development but comprises of plural processes with conflicting forms and rationalities (Jovchelovitch, 2007) as the four participants attest. Moscovici (1988) reminds us that we derive most knowledge through communication that influences our thinking and generates new content. The site of everyday life has turned into a crisis, termed "Monsterville" by Tania. The following narratives speak of affinities that survive the chaos because support people witness change and are privy to exclusive knowledge that surpasses the offending aspects that brings these men into public view.

### **Making sense of "Monsterville"**

"Monsterville" (Tania) embodies Frank's (1997) chaos stories where words fail to describe what has happened and "people just write it [abuse] off, yuck, throw away the key, that is not really that helpful" (Tania). Frank (1997) contrasts the preferred restitution stories—a 'natural' desire to return to normality—with chaos narratives, where "its plot imagines life never getting better" (p. 97). Chaos narratives describe the aftermath that child sex abuse instigated and control is lost (Frank, 1997). The result of abuse is not terminal as the prospect of the

illness of some of Frank's protagonists. Chaos stories no longer sequential are beyond speaking as there are no longer listeners prepared to hear parts of the chaos (Frank, 1997). Child sex abuse creates havoc as the four participants attest: "it has just completely blown the whole family out of the water" and "my life is just imploded", is how Carley describes the experience.

I reproduce a quote from a patient suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome and suggest that support people's lives have taken a similar, unexpected, involuntary and cruel turn: "The destination and map I had used to navigate before were no longer useful" (Frank, 1997, p. 1). Akin to a shipwreck the consequences of disclosure of child sex abuse are enormous in all four participants' narratives and emerge throughout this chapter. The ensuing wounds do not manifest in tangible or visible ailments as do Frank's ill persons, but these wounds are nonetheless intrinsically connected with pain. And pain, Frank (2001) reminds us, "is not just physical" (p. 354). Out of this hurt transpires great strength, as I illustrate later. The four support people experienced shock, disbelief, worry, distress, disappointment and sadness following disclosure. "Something I never thought in a million years I would have to, I never thought anyone in the family would commit anything like that" is how Janice describes it. In John's case, sexual abuse occurred before he was born; it was a well-kept secret. One of his two stepsisters, both victims, informed him when he was about 18-years-old. "Initially, I was, I was actually unsure whether, if it was true, I could not believe that dad had actually offended, is this right? What is going on?" (John).

The reactions of the four support people are not unexpected because of the scripts defined by society. Child sex abuse is regarded as abhorrent and horrific, and child sex abusers are perceived as different, physically and in their pathology, points I illustrate throughout this thesis. The act of abuse, disturbing and damaging on its own, extends in the case of the two married women to their own sense of sexuality and womanhood. Carley exclaims: "I thought how could he, he is married to me! How could he! It is like a really bad insult to put it mildly. What the hell is wrong with me that he wants a kid?" As the impacts of the abuse become more apparent, support people's sense of selfhood goes through progressive stages of disruption. The coherent story of the sex offender as an outsider is no longer valid. One aspect of the "wounded storyteller's" narrative is that fundamental assumptions, which in the past provided meaning to life, have

changed (Frank, 1997). Only with gradual, new understandings, for example, through reading, attending a workshop about sexual offending or conversations, new points of reference emerge. Understanding child sex abuse, Janice suggests, was previously “what you see in the papers and you think, oh, lock them up and throw away the key. You don’t want them to be anywhere near a child anymore in their lives”. The conclusion could be drawn, perhaps, that none of the participants had personal experience with child sexual abuse, and that their understandings were based entirely on mediated information and interactions with others, as most public focus group participants claimed (outlined in the previous chapter). However, during the course of the conversation it emerged that two women had also been victims of sexual abuse.

I draw on Janice’s case to elucidate the helplessness in the face of her own experience as a victim of child sex abuse, re-living the past decades later. The inability to address her own abuse adequately may have resulted in anguish and suppression as a coping strategy. The dynamics that allowed for the abuse to remain secret and unchallenged is recounted by Janice and questioned by other focus group members. I reproduce the passage and interaction with other participants where Janice discloses the abuse and then unpack some of the issues.

- Janice: I was going to bring it up before, but I am a victim of sexual abuse myself from a brother.
- Carley: Makes a double whammy. Sets off your own stuff.
- Janice: Because it sort of brings it all to the fore and when it happens you think “oh no” and sort of buried it, it was not talked about in the past.
- Tania: Does this give you a double shock then when you find out that having been a victim that your own close person has victimised others? Does it make it hit even, is it way worse?
- Janice: No, I don’t think it was worse, I think it helped me to understand in a way.
- Tania: To understand your abuser, abusing you?
- Janice: Yeah, but it brought it all to the surface, that was the bad thing, it brought it all back, all the memories

back, I could go through the whole thing and I thought well I didn't go to the police, you know, I had to deal with it myself, I didn't tell my mother about it until I was 21.

Tania: Wow, far out.

Janice: And she just, well it is over now (laughs) that is a long time that is in the past. So that is all the understanding I got.

It is only towards the end of the conversation, after an hour and forty minutes, that Janice discloses her status as a survivor of sexual abuse. She indicates that it has been on her mind: "I was going to bring it up before" probably as a result of Carley's much earlier disclosure. The reluctance to reveal abuse is complex and it is possible that Janice had not talked about it since the time she told her mother, decades earlier. Janice received little sympathy, comfort or help ("I had to deal with it myself") as her mother probably was caught between the love for two children, a son and a daughter. Child sexual abuse was then, as it is now, a behaviour that renders people numb, perplexed, and confused. Janice, despite being familiar with abuse, reacted with incredulity at the revelation of abuse at the hands of her husband ("I never thought anyone in the family would commit anything like that").

Janice concealed her childhood experience, but the memory remains vivid. She endorsed the decision of her husband's victims to report the abuse to the police. At the same time her statement implies feelings of resentment ("I didn't go to the police, I had to deal with it myself") because her family unity was disrupted by the disclosure of her husband's abuse while she carried the secret of her own abuse. Tania questions Janice whether she has contemplated confronting her brother now, saying that "my instinct in my head goes 'is he still around?'; 'have you gone to the police?'; 'is he abusing other kids?' you know". Janice has never faced her brother and to concerns that he might have abused others, Janice replies "well I put it into my mind that I don't think he still offends". The unspeakable and unthinkable experience, buried for many decades, resurfaces and refuses to disappear. No aspect of life remains untouched as Carley suggests. Tania verbalises what Janice has been thinking; she does not know whether her brother has sexually abused others. This uncertainty is expressed in her wording "put it

into my mind” and “I don’t think”. Janice does not really know and lives with ambivalence.

It is against such memories of personal experience and initial reactions to dissociate from the offender that these four people decide to support. Janice expresses hope, conviction and a nuptial promise she made, and supports her husband because

I do love my husband. And although initially one might think oh you should just leave the person, you know, they have done terrible things and just leave them. But no, when I thought about it, no, love means that you go through thick and thin and in the thin parts of your life you were going to help that person whom you believe to be a much better person than when they were offending. You are always hoping that they will get to this stage where they will be that person that you always believed they would be and you know that they can be a better person. So that is why I am a support person and why I decided to be a support person because of loving my husband. (Janice)

Evaluating her own reactions to the disclosure of her husband’s abuse, Janice defies what she feels is expected of her and remains with her husband. I understand that Janice refers to traditional marriage narratives and her vows (“through thick and thin”) of for better or for worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health. Apart from expressing love and a promise she made at the altar, she justifies her decision because of their shared history and contextual understanding that he is a good person, and her belief and hope that he will be that person once again.

For John and Carley the decision to support is also based on love. In John’s case, this is reciprocated with stages of change: “it is to see him become a better person, rather than hide away and be banished” (John), while Carley struggles to recognise shifts in her husband’s behaviour. Her support now is peripheral:

I was hugely supportive for the first year, and I did not see any fruit for a lack of better word, I did not see any great remorse and have

stepped back. In that I still consider it loving, he probably doesn't.  
(Carley)

Carley's support has altered over time and now she is separated: "I went from being married with a husband and good money to being on DPB [Domestic Purpose Benefit] and spending masses of money on counselling and medical expenses and transportation". Loss of monetary security is also felt by Janice. Her husband resigned from his job following a threat to inform his employer about the nature of his offending. This left her to struggle financially during the time of his imprisonment. For Tania, who supports her brother, lack of money was a barrier at first to secure him treatment in the community.

The impact, damage and consequences of a family member who sexually abused children are described as "huge" and "massive" with ongoing ripple effects, spanning from emotional turmoil to financial battles. Emotional distress, psychological disorders, detrimental impacts on mental and physical health (Boland & Sims, 1996); reduced leisure time, social isolation (Baronet, 1999); concealment of feelings (Sales, 2003); and general unmet caregiver needs (Biegel et al., 2007) are some of the documented effects experienced by caregivers and are reflected in the narratives of the four participants. Participants also lack previous experience (Boland & Sims, 1996) to support a man who sexually abused, and as 'novice' they have to educate themselves as Carley illustrates (see below).

Support people adopt multiple roles, defined as 'burden' in the literature (Baronet, 1999; Biegel et al., 2007; Hunt, C., 2003; Sales, 2003). Their care work stretches beyond the attention of the offender and renders the scope of care work extensive as their families disintegrate and, too, need nurturing. Some support aspects are practical. These are considered objective burdens that are tangible and concrete (Hunt, C., 2003), place demands on the caregiver and have negative effects (Baronet, 1999) or disrupt the family (Biegel et al., 2007). The burden concept's other dimension, subjective burden, comprise experiences of negative and positive feelings (Hunt, C., 2003). It refers to a personal appraisal of the situation (Baronet, 1999), often described as worry, stigma and displeasure (Biegel et al., 2007). The experiences of the four support people contain both burden dimensions. They include taking on the role of the driver (see below),

finding help for the offender, gathering a social network around the offender, educating self and others about offending and keeping children safe. Other expressions of care entail healing, mending, counselling family members and maintaining a sense of normality amidst chaos. In the case of Janice's husband, care work includes suicide prevention. Carley tells of the disrupted daily routines because her teenage daughter, the victim, "would not go to school and she had a breakdown and couldn't cope. Or, ah, sleepless, you know, it is like having a baby, sleepless nights". At the same time these support people need to reconcile and reconstitute their own sense of selfhood following the revelation of sexual abuse, and to reassess their values, feelings, priorities and understandings in ambivalent, tense and stressful circumstances. In short, they are in need of support, too, which is frequently absent as their circle of friends diminishes.

Janice balances private acts of supporting and public appearances (see discussion on private and public division in Chapter Six). Acting as her husband's chauffeur, Janice negotiates explanations why she requires time off work because "I don't want people at work to know [about her husband]". In the following excerpt Janice expresses her feelings of distress. She also attends to practical matters:

I was very, very upset for so long, just crying at the drop of a hat and it affected me terribly like that. And when he came out of prison he was on home detention for seven months, I think. And during those seven months, because he got injured in prison, I had to take him to medical appointments and physiotherapy and things like that. Because he was not allowed to drive anywhere and I just drove him all over the place and everywhere we drove we talked.  
(Janice)

While driving her husband to various appointments they talk. Sitting side by side, the close confinement of the car turns into an intimate space for cathartic conversations. These trips signal transformative processes whereby Janice and her husband create and co-construct new meanings to their tarnished selves in these dialogical interactions, each representing the other's counterpart (Cooley, 1964). "It was strange" Janice puts it "that is how initially we sort of came to grips with things". Caring comes at a personal cost as Janice illustrates, but harvests

unexpected benefits, defying the burden label, a term that is critiqued by some as it implies an imposed rather than a chosen commitment or something that is unrelentingly negative (Sales, 2003).

Following disclosure, Carley mobilised the couple's friends and family and provided them with educational tools to facilitate understanding and encourage support. She undertook this in an effort to prevent her husband from becoming isolated, a danger she recognised as a potential to lead to further abuse (Levenson & Cotter, 2005; Maruna, 2001; Uggen et al., 2004).

Supporting a husband, father or brother, challenges conventional barriers and understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) children. Their stories of struggle and ambivalence reject preconceived narrative frames of men who sexually abuse(d) children that have been presented to us and that we have internalised (Kraus, 1999) (see Chapter Six). Support people transgress the boundaries of formal narrative structures, images, traditional metaphors and norms of what is appropriate and what is not appropriate to convey (Brijnath & Manderson, 2008; Frank, 1997) about men who sexually abuse children. To support and care, acts that entail multiple meanings and involvement as I pointed out above, represent pockets of resistance to the mainstream narratives about men who sexually abuse(d) that I have outlined in this study so far. Despite the tentacles of the aftermath of child sex abuse reaching every part of four people's lives, coined "Monsterville" by Tania, their decision to support is founded on personal knowledge that encompasses the offender's entire personhood. Witnessing positive changes in these men reinforces their decision and hope for a future free of abuse. Next, I discuss the processes that allow support people to transform chaos and damage into strength.

### **Shout it from the rooftop: Everyone should know**

The narratives that tell of disrupted lives have a social aspect in that they require an audience (Frank, 1997). This is a prerequisite for any narrative but some voices are easier to hear and are favoured over others. The audience is not equally receptive to every type of story. I discussed the preference for some



stories to be heard over others in the previous two chapters. John and Janice tell the story of child sex abuse in their family to selected listeners only. Tania encounters resistance to raising the problem of child sex offending and resigns:

Well, well, I am at University and I raised it. But given the reaction of such intolerance, it's probably made me much more cautious for the next time, you know. I wanted to be "Ms Open" but you know, it is like, it is very difficult in dealing with people who aren't open and it is hard work and exhausting trying to, I don't want to defend what they did, but you know, what are you going to do with this person? Nobody, they haven't got any solutions, they have just got this little narrow, I don't know. (Tania)

Tania, a mature student, considers the educational setting of a University as a more conducive space for open deliberation on child sex offending, expecting, perhaps, an intellectual curiosity or a 'neutral' position to this issue. She regards her role as purposeful to "help break down those barriers", but relents "because if you have met with this strong, sort of 'how disgusting, how could you even do that' you know, I don't know, it is, I suppose you don't want to put yourself in that all the time". Carley is a self-proclaimed evangelist and shares her experiences more freely. Imparting this narrative carries risks of losing friends, being misunderstood, becoming isolated or falling on deaf ears. Tania and Carley's efforts to provide alternative narratives from personal perspectives that allow the representation of an offender as a human being with other qualities than the abuse are frequently met with intolerance. Despite Carley's relentlessness to share her experience, she concedes and proposes that campaigning is:

hugely isolating and tiring because there is not a huge understanding what it actually is like. I mean this has been huge. The reality of it is, and most people cannot relate to the reality of it that is isolating you, not wanting to talk about it, I don't want to hear about that shit, let's talk about something else, that is yuck, the divisions that you get in family. Yeah, it is not many people that actually meet you where the rubber hits the road. (Carley)

Carley's repeated use of the word "huge" denotes levels and dimensions of this crime. This includes consequences of isolation and alienation because few understand, share similar experiences or are prepared to listen because child sex abuse is "yuck". During chance discussions on child sex offenders, John withdraws from the conversation.

I have noticed that I tend to go a bit quiet, I don't really want to get into it, and especially with people who don't know that dad has offended. Yeah, its, when I do that I am conscious, consciously aware that again I am protecting him, that is what I feel that is why I am keeping quiet about, I don't want to get involved, I don't want people to know and to judge and I have to defend him, because that is what I would do. (John)

Dealing with the discomfort that such social situations entail, John remains silent and justifies his decision to distance himself in a number of ways. For example, John evades lengthy explanations and possible vilification. As research with men who have not offended suggests, John achieves a sense of selfhood through "situated social interactions and against the backdrop of symbolic systems mediating exchanges between people" (Hodgetts & Rua, 2008, p. 529). In John's case this broader symbolic contexts contains ready-made characterizations of offenders that he works to distance himself from.

John, Carley's and the other support people's wounds, similar to Frank's (1997) ill persons, turn into the source of strength for their narratives, narratives that can only be told by those who are damaged, as their wounds are evidence of the stories' 'truthfulness'. In Frank's quest stories, the sufferer accepts the illness and seeks to use it; they bear witness to the experience and share wisdom. Support people similarly use their wounds as an impetus to narrate their experience. Their unique position as victims of circumstance allows them to vocalise while the perpetrator is silenced. Support people represent a link between good and evil, 'us' and 'them', the metaphoric gap I embarked to explore (see Chapter One) because they have fallen into the abyss. The decision to support a person who has done such unthinkable acts has consequences because Tania, Janice, Carley and John can no longer claim to be one of 'us', and, because they are not the abuser, they are not 'them' either. Their caregiver roles act as "broker

between the world of the care-recipient and the social world” (Brijnath & Manderson, 2008, p. 607). This role is vital and support people have the potential to traverse the division that appears to separate ‘us’ from the child sex offender. They are privy to insight, knowledge and understandings of the person who is neither all good nor all evil. This affords them a unique status and credibility to tell the story. Their stories provide resources for creating more sophisticated accounts that illustrate complexities, contradictions and dilemmas. Altruism, it seems, is not their ulterior motive: participants have a vision that their willingness to reveal and share their painful experiences is rewarded. Despite reluctance to listen to these narratives, the telling represents opportunities for improved understandings of men who sexually abuse children. The re-telling of stories extends the connections because “those who listened then tell others, and the circle of shared experience widens” (Frank, 1997, p. xii).

John suggests that child sex abusers are “still widely seen as the demon and education is the key. It makes it less of a painful journey”. Participants feel that biased media framings contribute to misrepresentations of men who abuse(d) and education is a means to transforming understandings and expanding knowledge. Media representations are criticised, as these are considered to promote prejudice and to be unhelpful. These points are illustrated in the following brief exchange:

- Tania: Badly, very much one aspect of them [men who abuse(d)].
- Janice: Yes.
- Tania: The criminal, negative aspect, which is there, but there is more to that person than that, I think they [news media] do a very poor job.
- Carley: Yeah, I agree.
- Janice: And they lump all of them together.

Unlike some critical media appraisal commentaries by public focus group participants in the previous chapter, here concern at biased representation is consequential: it affects the men who abused and the families, including the four support persons. Acknowledging the criminal aspect, Tania reiterates that there is more to this person than the narrow characterization of these men, but this, they

feel, remains largely absent in media representations (“they do a very poor job”). To this, Janice adds that news media does not differentiate between the degree and seriousness of crime (“lump together”); men who sexually abuse are perceived as a homogenous group (see Hone’s quote in Chapter One).

To address public education, participants propose a documentary that tells a number of real life stories of men who sexually abused children. Janice suggested “a TV documentary that dealt with that, and perhaps had more than one case story and just showed that person being a normal, loveable, likeable person, and the dark side, how it came out”. Minimising or defending these men’s crime is not their intention. Rather the four participants agree that a more holistic picture of men who sexually abuse children might foster improved and more favourable understandings. These participants also had preconceived ideas as Janice expressed earlier (“my understanding of people previously is what you see in the papers”). Their experiences of chaos, and status as ‘novice’ (Boland & Sims, 1996) lacking child sex abuse understanding, does not transform into comprehension unassisted. This is facilitated through reading, education and support provided by SAFE.

Carley: The lady who did that SAFE course, she came down from Auckland, she role-played it quite well, didn’t she?

Janice: Yes

Carley: And she unpacked the whole thing from his point of view and made it quite normal, you know, if you had that on TV.

Janice: And it was easy to understand.

Carley: And it was easy to understand how they went from this step and there are some subtle shifts to this, because we just think offending uh, it is over here, you know, and she unpacked it slowly.

In the last sentence, Carley replicates a common reaction to child sex offending: “it is over here”. In this excerpt, there are elements of before and after. These are prominent narratives told by men who abused and I return to such juxtapositions in the next two chapters. In Chapter Five, I discussed how news media carries

stories forward by using binary distinctions, suggesting these neglect processes that lead from good to bad. In contrast, here, processes are excavated, explained, discussed and contextualised. Janice and Carley were guided through “the whole thing” that rendered their husbands into abusers and sense is made. Similar education on a public scale is proposed<sup>36</sup> to demonstrate that “they are not paedophiles” (John) as “there doesn’t seem to be a differentiation between a paedophile, what the actual meaning of paedophile is, to a serial rapist, to a sexual offender” (Carley).

On two separate occasions the discussion turns to public campaigns such as alcohol or drug awareness in public media domains. Participants suggest that thanks to such campaigns alcohol and drug dependent people benefit from more benevolent understandings than men who sexually abuse. They feel that the dissemination of information about abusive practices results in improved public understanding, offers early recognition of warning signs, helps to break the stigma and provides contact details for help agencies. Contemplating the question on the commonly-held belief ‘once an alcoholic always an alcoholic’ participants discuss whether this is also applicable to men who sexually abuse(d) children. Attempting to answer this question, participants present progress accounts and testimonies in an effort to reject suggestions of a lifelong disposition. I examine the efforts of men who sexually abused to provide evidence of their intentions to desist offending in Chapter Nine. Ultimately, neither these men or the support people know and, as I go on to illustrate, this causes trepidations for support people, the men who offended and the wider public (see previous chapter).

Carley suggests that her husband’s progress is slow: “I was really hopeful that my, he would talk at that level but he is still very much locked up and you can see that, that holding up, you know, really is a big part of his offending”. Despite the progress of the other three men, there is general scepticism, uncertainty, ambiguity and ambivalence about what or who to believe with regards to re-offending. Janice suggests that:

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<sup>36</sup> Maruna and King (2004) suggest that public education is no panacea but helps. The authors draw on a variety of research findings to demonstrate that the impact of education to alter deep-seated views on crime is difficult to measure but likely short-lived.

He [Janice's husband] had insisted, and I believe him, that he will never offend again. Now I have been told by SAFE that you never say that they will never offend again, but it is his intention never to offend again and he, and I feel that I believe that he will never offend again. (Janice)

Incompatible understandings clash: experts recommend caution, wariness and vigilance, and advise avoiding situations that have the potential to lead to reoffending. At the same time a crucial aspect of their support is a strong belief in these men, a belief of their worth, that they will change, are in the process of changing and will not offend again.

Following disclosure, Janice's husband was suicidal: "So initially it was to try and help him see that he did have value and he could get beyond what he was at that particular moment when he had been an offender." Here, Janice builds on the past knowledge of her husband's values and underscores his merits in an effort to avert more chaos. Throughout the conversation, Janice tells of progress and changes her husband has embraced since attending the treatment program: "I feel that has just gone streets ahead". Yet, Janice has "these odd little thoughts of suspicions sometimes. I put them out of my mind, because I now talk things over". Again, she sets thoughts aside but this time reasons that she talks "things over". Uncertainty is reality and prevails.

John, too, is left with uncertainties and a personal dilemma that indicates a preference for clarity. Certainty is not granted and he has to content with ambiguity.

I firmly believe that he will never do it again. But also part of me thinking of course you are going to say that because you are his son, you have a close bond with him and you never doubt him. I never want to just go right here, once an offender always an offender, that is how everyone else has reacted. So as well as never, as I am saying I am feeling a bit of a hypocrite because I believe he will never offend but at the same time I never want to let him be in that situation where it could happen. So part of me is wary which I have learnt through the process, something I have

picked up through SAFE. That there are conditions that you make sure that can never happen again. At first, I thought nah, he will be sweet, but that is a responsibility that the whole community needs to take. (John)

Unconditional trust is aspired to, but John does not dare to do so. He is concerned that an inattentive moment has the potential to result in reoffending. Here, John extends individual vigilance of continuous attentiveness to communal responsibility. This cannot currently materialise without improved understandings and willingness to more sincere and open public dialogues.

Narratives are created and formed within the expected frames internalised by the storyteller who has absorbed conventional metaphors, formal narrative structures, imagery and norms of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate (Frank, 1997). In the previous chapter, I illustrated how public focus group participants have drawn on pre-given frameworks to portray men who sexually abuse(d) children. Here, one man and three women transgress covert boundaries twice: one by telling others about their experiences with a child sex abuser, and two by professing support for a perpetrator of sexual abuse. This is against a performance that leans to embody societal values and traditions (Goffmann, 1971). The scripts for the performing selves are removed and the stories can only be understood in context. Honest conversation on this topic is not often possible and the narrator hides blemishes in order to convey an impression of impeccability (Goffmann, 1971). Janice's work colleagues seem oblivious that her husband has sexually molested, and John remains silent during incidental conversations about men who sexually abuse(d) children. Although upon disclosure John said "the temptation was to, you know, shout it from the rooftop, just to go, dad you are going to deal with it, take responsibility, everyone should know". Even within families open conversation is met with resistance because the abuse polarises family members. This discrepancy between appearance and overall reality (Goffmann, 1971) is maintained with the view to construct a united front.

Carley's husband abused her daughter (his stepdaughter) and during the police investigation, a history of abuse emerged. Despite this, his family blames Carley for reporting the abuse to the police: "My husband's family, they were, he doesn't

have an issue: I have an issue because I went to the police. That is the issue. We had a great marriage and I am the problem". Similarly, Janice has "two children in different camps" with one side blaming the other for involving the police. Interpretation of such intra-familial division would be mere speculation. It exemplifies, however, complex family dynamics, relationships and the chaos resulting from offending. Social relationships, Freeman (1999) suggests, permeate all facets of narratives, "the mind itself 'peopled', permeated by our relationships with others, present and absent, real and fictive" (p. 110). At this juncture, the four participants require synthesizing processes to make meaning of the chaos that damaged and harmed their selfhood and split families.

Child sex offenders are associated with 'monstrous others', exemplified in explicit labels, which are incompatible and discordant with the husband, partner, son, brother or cousin we believe we know. Relationships are unpredictable, as Janice tells of her brother who abused her as a child and now he refuses to have any contact with his brother-in-law (Janice's husband). Undergoing constant transformations, relational narratives between offender, support person and other family members resemble a 'narrative wreck', or wreckage in need of repair (Frank, 1997).

Hurt, anger, confusion, disbelief and sadness are some of the emotions support people experience. Yet, it is in midst of this chaos they find strength to campaign for men who sexually abused children in an effort to ameliorate the status of these men, and thus their own. Despite their commitment and a strong desire to unconditionally believe in these men, support people have ambivalent and ambiguous feelings whether this is altogether possible, and troubling uncertainties with regards to re-offending linger.

## **Chapter summary**

Mostly absent from official child sex abuse narratives, support people's experiences have considerable potential to contribute to wider discussions. Their unique position allows them to narrate and bridge the symbolic chasm of 'us' (the general public) and 'them' (men who offend(ed) against children). It offers dialogical opportunities to represent the abuse stories from new perspectives; as



Moscovici (1988) proposes, social reality differs depending on how an issue is framed. The narratives of the four support people, “enmeshed within the fabric of social relations” (Freeman, 1999, p. 100), can be used to move beyond dominant forms of knowledge such as science and psychology (Hook, 2001) about men who sexually abuse children. However, Janice, Tania, Carley and John opt to tell their stories predominantly in private domains and to selected listeners, while also expressing the need for a public forum that allows for such narrations to reach a broader audience. Relevant here is Waldram’s (2007a) question regarding whether or not offenders’ stories should be told. This begs the counter-question why is there so much reluctance to listen to such stories, shifting the focus away from the narrator onto the listener. The listener’s role is acknowledged as vital within narrativity but the examination of potential impacts on listeners has often been neglected and would warrant further analytic engagement.

The current narratives told by support persons allow for the construction of men who sexually abused from perspectives that move beyond criminal and pathological frames. Support people attest that these men also have good sides to them. However, these have been overshadowed by the abuse, the aspect that has shaped their representations, which have been at the forefront of this study so far. Janice, Tania, John and Carley’s narratives represent various stages of lives in turmoil. There is no tidy conclusion at the end of this focus group discussion, the abruptness aligned with dialogical processes in progress and repairs underway as they are still coming to terms with ‘new data’ in need of interpretation (Freeman, 1999). Support people’s narratives are imbued with ambiguity. Tensions about competing understandings, specifically regarding recidivism, remain unresolved.

A shared history coupled with hope and witnessing improvement underpins the decision to support and maintain relationships with men who have offended. Support people turn their wounds into testimonies because they have, as one of the ill people participating in Frank’s (1997) study suggests, “access to different experiences, different knowledge” (p. 141). Insider knowledge allows them to recognise and value other qualities that remain obscured to outsiders. Tania tells of her brother that “he has got a girlfriend because he is kind and because he is generous and because he is this, he is more than just that one part you know”.

Through processes of treatment and a restorative justice meeting, John's father emerges as a person with improved communication skills. Unexpected benefits emerge from these chaos narratives (Frank, 1997): improved communications and better relationships as John comments: "it has been weird, it has actually brought us closer together". The solitary supporter journey has multifaceted dimensions (Boland & Sims, 1996) and must be considered in its entirety.

So far, I have constructed a picture of men who sexually abuse(d) children through other people's accounts. In the following two chapters, I present the narratives of ten men who collectively have been talked about as child sex offenders. Conversations with them offer opportunities: first, for them to narrate their stories; second, to listen to their stories; and third, to juxtapose the multiple narratives which encompass this study, as outlined in Figure 1. This is done to produce and explore points of conflict and, most importantly, to demonstrate points of convergence.



## CHAPTER 8: STORIES THAT NO ONE WANTS TO HEAR

To tell one's life is to assume responsibility for that life.  
(Søren Kierkegaard, 1987)<sup>37</sup>

In an article on the psychological profiles of paedophiles and child molesters Murray (2000) poses the question, "How do pedophiles see themselves?" (p. 214). In a brief paragraph, he reports on the results of a questionnaire (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire) outlining personality traits, which he compares to previous findings. These include emotional immaturities, fear of being able to function in adult heterosexual relationships, and social introversion (Levin & Stava, 1987, cited in Murray, 2000). In this and the next chapter, I move beyond clinical and deficit frames used to describe men who sexually abuse, and a western belief "that dispositions matter more than situations" (Zimbardo, 2007, p. 212). Instead, I contextualise aspects of offenders' lives that are more reflective of how these men represent themselves and demonstrate the importance of social environment and interactions.

Notwithstanding selective (see discussion on narrative functions in Chapter Three) and evasive narrations, I argue for the value of the abuse story being told. I utilise material that is underpinned by pre- and post-release conversations with men who sexually abused children.<sup>38</sup> Later, in Chapter Nine, I locate these narratives relationally and contextually.

Opportunities to 'tell one's life' when that life contains episodes of sexually abusing children are largely denied to men who commit(ted) such crimes

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<sup>37</sup> I consider this quote, which I encountered in a couple of books, particularly pertinent as I go on to explain. The referenced page was p. 260, however, I did not find the exact wording on this page in Kierkegaard's *Either/Or Part II*. As I understand, the meaning is authentic and thus the sentence was perhaps paraphrased rather than direct quoted.

<sup>38</sup> Synopses of participants' narratives are available in appendices U1 to U10, an overall summary of demographic data in appendix V.

(Waldram, 2007a). With few exceptions, such as for legal purposes, community-based treatment agencies (SAFE, STOP, for example) or the privacy of a therapist's office, the telling of and listening to their stories is rejected in the community and in mainstream prison, as I illustrate presently. In the face of strong societal condemnation and frequent lack of support, Durkin and Bryant (1999) ask, how do men who sexually abused children make sense of their disvalued identities? When these stories are permitted or required to be told, they are frequently purpose-specific and framed within these boundaries. As Waldram (2008) demonstrates; sex offenders learn how they are expected to make sense of and present themselves and their actions.

Referring to ill people, Frank (1997) suggests that "those who have been objects of others' reports are now telling their own stories" (p. xiii) through which they figure out who they are. While in Parts One and Two of this thesis, men who sexually abuse(d) are subjected to other people's accounts, in this part of the thesis I draw upon selected stories of ten men. I endorse the idea that a story needs to be told for the benefit of the narrator (this is substantiated by offenders, discussed later in this chapter) and the listener, because the story is 'peopled' (Freeman, 1999) and permeated by relationships that are dizzying, mundane and troubling at times.

The fact that the silencing (before and during mainstream prison) caused trepidation is worth exploring further in this chapter and raises the question of what processes take place when particular kinds of stories are articulated or withheld. I continue my argument that first, telling the story is important; and second, telling one's own story and sharing personal experience, as opposed to within prescribed frames (judiciary, correction, for example), fulfils crucial functions, which I outline and examine in this chapter. In short, these include achieving a sense of openness and honesty towards themselves and the public which can allow these men to take responsibility, and enables the forging of new and improved selves with a more positive outlook on life.

Narratives that have been deemed 'unworthy' of listening to form the basis of this and the next chapter. Specifically, I examine how these counter-narratives provide representations of these men's past, present and projected selves, answering to the question of 'who am I'. I discussed the conceptual frameworks

of the relationship between narratives and selves in Chapter Three. In this and the next chapter, I continue to pursue the main themes of this study (representations of child sex offenders and re-entering society following imprisonment) as these are narrated by men who sexually abused children in an effort to understand their subjective realities. I also examine processes of transforming offending selves into non-offending selves. Critically appraising the values of narratives in a treatment setting founded on cognitive behavioural therapy Waldram (2008) poses the question: "Does the meaning of the narrative actually shift for the inmate [referring to unspecified sex offenders], or just its content?" (p. 436). To what degree meanings have been transformed during the processes of narrating and therapy, or temporary conformity assumed, remains speculative in this study; its manifestation gauged in the absence of further (reported) abuse is perhaps one way to denote change. Post-release conversations I carried out provide one opportunity to engage with Waldram's (2008) concern, although this is restricted by the fact that research participants were still under probation at the time of the second conversation.

The narratives I draw on are multifaceted, intense, dynamic and intricate. They are also self-presentations situated within broader narrative accounting practices and dialogical processes in society. Language and discourses used at the treatment unit, Te Piriti, pervade some accounts. A lack of research on sex offenders was lamented by Wormith (1983) nearly three decades ago. The scientific community has since filled some of this void. However, I uncovered a dearth in research that exclusively draws on narratives of men who sexually abuse(d) children. Maruna's (2001; Maruna et al., 2004) work, especially his Liverpool Desistance Study (LDS)<sup>39</sup> has served as reference for this and the next chapter. His study focuses on processes of change among offenders. While this is useful, the participants in Maruna's study have a different, mixed criminal background in contrast to my study that draws on narratives of men who sexually abused children. These men's post-prison needs and restrictions differ from the general prison population.

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<sup>39</sup> The LDS "involves a systematic comparison between the self-narratives of desisting ex-offenders and those of a carefully matched sample of active offenders" (Maruna, 2001, p. 38).

As the individual stories move backwards and forwards in time I combine pre- and post-conversations, allowing for greater latitude to present parallel contents. Considering the large research corpus, I divided the analysis of the narratives into two chapters. I open this chapter with offenders' thoughts on news media to complete and complement earlier discussions on public and media representations of men who sexually abuse(d). This is important because these men characterize themselves within the context of a broader symbolic field in which they are already characterized by others. Furthermore, there is a lack of research that examines the views of the subjectified, specifically, how do men understand their own news media representations.

The offenders' sentiments are, in many respects, ambiguous: while concurring with the seriousness of child sex abuse, they reject homogeneous representations that suggest all child sex offenders are recidivists. They are particularly critical of the lack of stories that tell of successful reintegration, in particular following treatment. I continue with their journey through prison, symbolising a site of purification and because prison signifies the meeting place where I first encountered research participants. It represents a place where transformative processes are in progress and aspects of old selves shape into new selves that have not yet had a chance to be tested and fully lived. Prison also represents a site where 'evil' people are banished and segregated from good citizens, and where evil must emerge as good in order to re-enter society.

Frank's (1997) figure of the wounded storyteller served well to explain the experiences of support people in the previous chapter. Words such as 'wreck' and 'chaos' also are apt descriptions of child sex offenders' circumstances. "I don't ever want to be that person again because I know as much as you [the researcher] now know the chaos that person caused and the mess he made of his life" is Tom's description of himself and his past. On occasion, I draw again parallels with 'the wounded storyteller' (Frank, 1997) as the full impact of their crimes becomes gradually more apparent. Overall, this chapter examines personal experiences that provide glimpses of what it might mean having been pushed out of the moral envelope (Hodgetts et al., 2010). The ten men's endeavour to attain full citizenship once again begins in mainstream prison, where various processes of purification, redemption and healing begin.

## **Media perspectives through the eyes of the subjectified**

As I argued in Chapter Five, public and news media frame child sex offending and offenders in terms of their crimes and imply that these men are particularly deviant and dangerous. Here, I explore how the ten research participants experience media coverage about men who sexually abuse(d), whom they collectively embody. Through implication of their crimes, men who abused and the news media are locked in an asymmetrical relationship. Research participants are mostly of the understanding that mediated information and public perceptions of child sex offenders are interconnected. For instance, Lance suggests that “bad news sells” and sexually abusing children represents the pinnacle of bad-ness.

Participants show various degrees of interest in news media representations of men who sexually abuse(d). Their seemingly blasé attitudes emanate out of awareness that their collective media image is not favourable. They are exposed publically by news media and depicted from their worst perspective, as sexual predators and analogical to an unfavourable critique of an art performance, they are reluctant to talk about it in their conversations with me. Across their accounts about media, similar patterns emerge: they comment whether or not their name appeared in the news media; they juxtapose their crimes, which they perceive as less serious and not recidivist; and comply with news media representations of men who sexually abuse.

I begin with a quotation from Tom who supports dominant understandings and representations of child sex offenders. His comments are, however, conflicting and dualistic:

I understand that [public assumptions about sex offenders] because I thought the same way as them. I did not like child sex offenders either and I never expected myself to ever be one. They [the public] are going to do what they want to do anyway and I am not going to be able to stop it. I don't think they will centre on me, because I am only a small fish in their big pond. It is my first time offending. I have lived a good life apart from that, what I mean I have not offended in any other way either. I never had a criminal record apart from that. I did not go out into the general public and



pick a victim; it [his stepdaughter] was just someone close to me. I did not go looking, so I think they would not class me as a predator. They tend, I think the media tend to focus on the worst case scenarios, on people that are more dangerous than I was.  
(Tom)

In the first sentence, Tom positions himself alongside ordinary citizens who loath men who abuse(d) children and in doing so he expresses his disdain at his own offending self. This signifies processes of balancing or reconciling conflicting selves: while condemning such practices, Tom embodies such practices. By colluding with news media representations, Tom minimises his offending when it is contrasted to the 'worst case scenarios'. 'Embracing' the role of a child sex offender ("I never expected myself to ever be one") implies consistency between his self-concept and ascribed social identity (Snow & Anderson, 1987). However, Tom instantly disavows this positioning by distancing (Snow & Anderson, 1987) himself from other child sex offenders as someone who is not so bad and who is not just an offender. Tom emphasizes how he has never had a criminal record or offended before. This type of positioning is also observed by Maruna (2001) in a sample of 'desisting' participants who describe themselves as "better than some common criminal" (p. 91). Tom's statements suggest mostly socially normative and law-obeying behaviour. Distancing is a common storytelling practice, and associational distancing serves to maintain a sense of self-worth, which is also observed in other marginalised groups such as homeless people (Snow & Anderson, 1987). Through his proposition that, "it was just someone close to me" he judges this to be a lesser crime to that of a predator, which is similar to Waldram's (2007a) observations: "The rapists looked down on the pedophiles; date rapists thought ill of those who attacked strangers" (p. 964). Tom creates a 'them' (worse offender) and 'me' dichotomy and distances himself from the others just as Hone did in Chapter One. This also reflects how the wider public creates an abyss to illustrate that 'we' are different from 'them' (men who abuse). Even in Tom's situation, binary distinction or associational distancing (Snow & Anderson, 1987) provides a level of comfort.

Tom acquiesces to what he perceives as news media's agenda ("they are going to do what they want to do"), which he feels unable to disrupt or contest. Neither Tom nor other participants consider their crimes as serious enough to warrant

news media attention but their united sentiment is that they are collectively burdened by media representations.

Tom's comment, "I never expected myself to ever be one" seems peculiar but not dissimilar to other prison narratives encountered by Maruna, Wilson and Curran (2006) where criminal actions were in conflict with previous representations of selves. This is similar to Janice's remark at learning that her husband sexually abused (Chapter Seven) despite her personal experience of being abused. Tom identifies himself as a sex offender and momentarily accepts the public label (Snow & Anderson, 1987). Amongst the possibilities of life's misfortunes that could befall people, sex offending is not anticipated, neither for Tom nor Janice. Tom's wording proposes passive endurance of his own behaviour.

Bruce, like Tom, colludes with the public and, too, distances himself from other offenders: "I understand it with serious offenders and high risk re-offenders the public has a right to know, but I quite honestly think that everyone deserves at least one chance". While expressing understanding and public right to knowing in certain cases (serious, high-risk and re-offend), he appeals for a second chance to be granted to others, including himself. He reasons that "if you have got people that have accepted responsibility and have done the right courses and have got good support, what are you going to achieve by advertising who they are and hassle them?". Bruce alludes to the treatment programme. In general, participants feel that news media's exclusive focus on offence and deficit aspects obfuscates public understandings that treatment programmes exist, are successful and change is possible. Public focus group participants commented on treatment programmes. However, they were somewhat vague about the specifics of the programmes and remained sceptical regarding successful outcomes (see Chapter Six). Bruce questions the value of publicising offender names and observes that news media have created collective images of child sex offenders which position him amongst the cohort of sex offenders regardless to his personal risk status, which is low (see Appendix V).

In the next excerpt, Hone expresses similar concerns at a general lack of public awareness of successful treatment outcomes. He concedes that the best way to change the offender profile is to stop abusing.

There is only one way we can change that [public perception]: stop offending, you know. To let the public know that programmes do work. And it is only, you know, it is only maybe 15 per cent of sex offenders that re-offend after 10 years, that's a study, so you know, the course does work and programmes do work. Just the little few that stuff up again. It just makes it all bad for us. The headlines in big bold letters are: "Child sex offender strikes again" and things like that. And maybe in little writing that we have 80 per cent success rate of rehabilitation. (Hone)

Hone, and a number of other participants in various contexts, discuss research outcomes, knowledge presumably acquired during the treatment programme. He contrasts himself to "the little few that stuff up again" compelling the media to write sensationalist headlines that collectively render men who abuse(d) beyond rehabilitation.

Also conspiring with media representations of men who sexually abuse(d), Harry's view is that "well, to be honest, if I didn't want to put up with the stereotype I shouldn't have done an offence. They are just trying to protect the community". With this last comment, he affords the media a functional purpose thus legitimising the stereotyping.

The theme of uniform news media representations is also echoed in Papa's brief comment: "we are all blanketed". Beyond suggestions that media characterizations of men who sexually abuse(d) children and public perceptions are linked, most participants consider this discussion as moot. Shifting the public's attitudes is not in their power because they are the subjects of the negative debate. A pessimistic view is expressed by Tom: "the newspapers and magazines are their [public] bibles and they take what they read as kosher" with the media only reporting "one side of the coin". Jedi's stance, however, differs. He identifies the media as a vehicle for mass communication and considers this an opportunity to engage and work with media outlets in an effort to broadcast more informatively and holistically about men who sexually abuse(d). During the first conversation, he suggests:

What I will do is I am going to be like the devil's advocate: I will go on talkback radio as someone just calling up and just throw these questions to people and create discussion topics on the radio what I think about rehabilitation. Just to be a devil's advocate. (Jedi)

Post-release, Jedi heeds his mother's advice: "I cannot get proactive because of my [offending] history. That is what mum has said, you cannot get too involved because of your past". However, on other popular issues Jedi engages in radio talkback as he elaborates in a lengthy monologue. Despite recognising a need to challenge conventional media framings of child sex abusers and to disseminate information about successful treatment outcomes, he feels his offence history does not allow him to take on an active role of the "devil's advocate".

Their brief comments and reluctance to discuss media representations suggest conflicting sentiments. While not rejecting official narratives that deplore child sex abuse, they emphasise their different-ness (for example, none predatory sexual offending or none recidivist). Most participants do not consider any merit in challenging the media, but Jedi, similar to support people (Chapter Seven), regards the media as a possible platform to showcase treatment programmes and broadcast successful outcomes. Asymmetrical media power (Couldry & Curran, 2002) denies men who abused direct news media access other than through anonymous channels (talkback, letter to editors, blogs, for example). Papa and Tom suggest alternative means of raising awareness about child sex abusing by engaging in public speaking using their story as an example while also attesting that change is possible.

## **The journey through prison**

### ***The label sticks and deception continues***

The somewhat poetic way of describing imprisonment as a journey towards personal change is used explicitly by Papa: "so that is what I am trying to do and hence why I am doing this journey to change myself". Other participants imply a journey(s) metaphor to reflect on the time in prison and the stages of change they have undergone, are undergoing and hope to undergo. In these transformative

processes, the narrators position their selves in relation to others and social environments in an overall quest to explore, discover and articulate 'who am I'. The journey implies movement, fluidity, openness, possibilities, processes and personal growth. This is in contrast to earlier stories and the telling of stressful events and unsolved problems that recur in circular fashion and imply stagnation and rigidity. Other researchers have drawn on the concepts of transitions, events and trajectory, referring to a "line of development over the life-course" (Gadd & Farrell, 2004, p. 125) to explore criminal life stories. I persevere with the journey metaphor. It invokes processes of reflection and transition similar to processes of self-transformation. These stretch over time with no clear-cut beginning or ending, with its onset not necessarily coinciding with the first days in prison because life on the inside mirrors life on the outside. Men who sexually abuse(d) children are detested, it seems, universally. While other criminals potentially earn kudos amongst their peer by bragging about their illegal activities that brought them to prison (Ainsworth, 2000; Maruna, 2001) the opposite applies to men who sexually molest children. Subsequently, the true nature of their crime must be disguised or kept secret while in mainstream prison, further delaying the telling of the abuse story. To illustrate this, I begin by recounting the prison experience and associated fears of entering prison branded as a child sex offender, a concern for all but one research participants.

Prior to sentencing, Bruce prepared for prison by taking up boxing, otherwise he was at a loss of how to anticipate imprisonment labelled as a child sex offender. A conversation about prison in general at a police cell provides Bruce with some advice and a sense of what life in jail might be like. He expects physical confrontation that requires self-defence. Hone, although expressing concern about entering prison, suggests:

I was worried but, not that overly worried. I was, I thought to myself at the time, well, if I get the bash I deserved it anyway, you know, and it was a way of punishment. I had to take the punishment. And, I lied a bit, but I always maintained that I was in prison for rape and they just, they seemed to think I was, you know, but they didn't know it was under-age rape. Child sex offenders are, are the worst, worst people. (Hone)

Hone expects more than judicial retribution after going to jail as a child sex offender. His status as a human being with few rights left has reached a low point as he equates child sex offenders to the worst people, albeit externalising this by using the third person plural “child sex offenders are”. As a result of his crime, he is prepared to take additional punishment in the form of a beating, judged and executed by other criminals. His perceived status as “worst” denies him even self-defence and he subjugates himself to possible further punitive measures because he deserves reprimand. Wayne, too, frames child sex offending as “probably one of the worst things anyone could ever do” while Bruce calls it “the most hated crime of the world”.

These statements, using superlatives (worst, most hated), mirror socially expected responses. Through careful wording their conflict-saturated stories, they frequently externalise the problematic aspect of themselves (*cf.*, Winslade & Monk, 2001): the child sex offender. On a number of occasions, Tom divorces his present selfhood entirely from his earlier one, for example, in the description of “the chaos that person caused” (see earlier quote) where he speaks about himself in the third person singular. Although situating his various selves on a continuum over the course of the two conversations, Tom states that “I am nothing like that person that went away [to prison] four years ago. I am not that person, totally different person. Same face, different character[s]. It is like I had a personality transplant”.

These self-representations are critical and condemning to the point of disowning the entire former self as in Tom’s case. While other participants hedge the changes predominantly to abusive aspects, Tom’s narratives suggest major transformations with the exception of employment, which “was the only thing going well. So I nurtured that and I have only ever had two jobs since I left school. My employers rave over me”.

His wording of “I had a personality transplant” is interesting and in keeping with other participants’ use of “I received treatment” (discussed further in the next chapter), implying a passive and submissive role. The self-imposed status of ‘worst people’ may reflect their own belief that child sex offenders are most evil, shaped by prior internalised understandings. Alternatively, they are expected to assume this role and comply by paying lip service to align with institutional

discourses (McKendy, 2006; Waldram, 2008). Or, perhaps, such self-deprecating comments represent more accurate descriptions of their feelings about their offending selves.

Narratives of such detrimental self-positioning resemble collusion with collectively expressed sentiments about men who sexually abuse and highlight the socially prescribed aspects of criminal involvement (Maruna, 2001). These resurface in various modified accounts over the course of the conversations. This position of 'worst people', epitomised in labels such as 'child sex offender', is stated according to contexts within the narratives of the ten participants while contested at other moments by drawing on juxtapositions. For an example, see Hone's quote in Chapter One where he differentiates between men who sexually offend and distances himself from repeat offenders. By submitting to stereotypical representations, research participants' entire selfhood is characterized through this notion of 'worst'. Only during the course of the two conversations, more positive and over time stable aspects of their selves emerge. It is, however, from this low point of being identified as or believing they are the 'worst people' that change must emanate. Narratives are a means of discovering new destinations (Frank, 1997).

While eight of the ten research participants use a ruse to disguise child sex offending in mainstream prison, Papa and Dennis do not conceal the crime. As I learned during the second conversation, Dennis had been imprisoned previously for different offences and in a different country. He is more prison savvy than first time prisoners. Dismissing any confrontation from fellow inmates regarding his crime, he challenges and asks them the rhetorical question "what are you going to do about it?" and suggests that he has had no problems. Despite Papa's big stature, he was scared about going to prison. The only reference points to what prison might be like he draws from movies and television series. He offers a mental picture: "If I am getting into the shower I get stabbed, especially with my crime". On account of his well-known surname, he is also easily identified and linked to his whanau (extended family). He responds to any confrontation by being truthful:

They say: ah, you are so and so and you did such and such. And I go: yeah. And as soon as I do that it is like, because they expect you to lie, in prison you lie your way through it. (Papa)

Papa and Dennis do not adhere to the implied prison scripts of being deceitful in order to keep safe (Waldram, 2008) and they leave prison unscathed. In this web of unequal relationships, men who sexually abuse(d) children perceive the other criminals as an extension of good citizens who express disgust at their crimes. But Papa is upfront and takes ownership of his crime in face-to-face interactions with other prisoners. It is at this intersection where narrative enactments take place and selves are shaped. Adding to the context of the above quote by Papa, he was challenged by a fellow inmate saying that “I don’t like people like you, I killed someone like you”. In my first conversation with Papa, he tells “how we became best mates”. He negotiates and interacts verbally and through actions (offering of a cup of coffee) with his provoker. Name calling, distrust, power games and challenging each other’s viewpoints subside and mutual respect eventually turns into friendship.

Then we sat down together one day and had a good talk and he says you are doing something about this [history of abusing] and I say “yeah, cous”. That is the only thing I can do, and I said my victim has got more right than you, my family has got more right than you to be pissed at me, you know. Who the hell are you to be pissed at me? And he goes “true” and so, and now we are best mates. (Papa)

Papa resists subjugation by his fellow inmates. He dissents and challenges his opponents. This approach serves him well. The other eight participants maintain silence and submit to the practices of institutional power, with which fellow inmates are considered complicit. On a different scale, but not insignificant in the context of men who sexually abuse, a barrier of absolute silence was encountered by a friend of Frank (1997). Frank recounts her story of discussing the ‘unspoken group norm’ of the support group she belongs as the parent of a mentally disabled adult person. The unspoken group norm is not to tell the ‘truth’ about setback, disenchantment and frustration that life has not materialised as intended. Here, the group itself vetoes the telling of the story. But Frank’s friend



insists what went wrong must be acknowledged and examined. Acknowledgement and examination are two key points and, I suggest, noteworthy because they are precursors to improved and new understandings and insights of what went wrong for men who abused and include relationships and their social environments. Perhaps the injunction to tell the story is at its most extreme but not limited or unique to men who sexually abuse as the example of Frank's friend illustrates. The creation of a space that allows for the telling of and listening to these stories seems of value for men who abuse(d) and for the communities.

In general, such opportunities remain also suppressed during the time in mainstream prison. Responsibility, as Kierkegaard (1987) proposes, for their crime cannot yet be fully assumed. Offenders' narratives suggest that accountability is essential, as they tell of much trepidation due to the prolonged silencing that is extended in mainstream prison. Perhaps this is even more crucial for men who offended against children and leave prison without treatment.<sup>40</sup> At the symbolic juncture between judiciary processes, where abuse narratives emerge, and incarceration, where the same narratives are forced back underground, an opportunity presents for such stories to be manifested.

So far, I have illustrated that the epithet of child sex offender is equally problematic in prison and in the community. Fear of repercussion pressures some of these men into denying the nature of their crime, while colluding with the general tenet that child sex offenders are the worst people. This burden, together with the realisation of the impact of the abuse, instigates processes of self-transformation. Below, I continue to explore the gradual onset of personal reform stories.

***What have I done? The personal and relational consequences of sexual offending***

The autobiographical nature of these narratives is an attempt to comprehend 'who am I?'. Extending on this question, Freeman (1999) asks "How might I have

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<sup>40</sup> Not all men entering prison for child sex abuse attend a treatment programme during their imprisonment.

come to be that way?” (p. 105). This is a query at the forefront of men who sexually abused children. With an increasing awareness of the impact of his crime, Wayne enters a downward spiral and feels overwhelmed. He describes the loss of his children and consequences as:

It was the hardest thing I have ever dealt with actually, having to deal with what I have done and how other prisoners saw me what I have done, and also the reality of what I have done to my kids and my wife. I actually went to the self harm unit for three months I think. It has just got to that stage. I just got myself out of the environment, away from all the other prisoners, yeah, because the prisoners, yeah, the guards would show the files and that I am a sex offender and show them all who is the sex offender and who are not child sex offenders. (Wayne)

This extract invokes an internal crisis of despair (Schaefer, Friedlander, Blustein, & Maruna, 2004) and it forces Wayne to confront multiple issues. In this short segment, Wayne repeats three times “what I have done”. He takes responsibility and insinuates a sense of intense encumbrance and sorrow with heightened awareness of the consequences. In the context of his overall narrative, the realisation of his actions takes on particular significance. Wayne himself is a victim of sexual abuse at the hands of two brothers and one sister. He witnessed sexual abuse as his father systematically abused all his sisters. These experiences and his own abusive behaviour render him vulnerable “because I was just, I was broken, just dealing with what I have done”. Indicating in the word “dealing”, a multidimensional process has begun so overwhelming and coupled with fear of being identified as a child sex offender that leads him to the self-harm unit. The above excerpt illustrates a further point: Wayne is assertive, takes an active role, and demonstrates agency and responsibility in his statements of “I have; got; am”. Maruna (2001) describes taking responsibility as “the comeback of the ‘I’” (p. 148), the threshold where compensatory stories (disadvantaged upbringing, for example) dissipate and participants manage their future, expressed through ‘I’ statements. This is in contrast to his and other participants’ use of a passive voice and “subtle, linguistic devices to avoid directly acknowledging responsibility” (Maruna, 2001, p. 94) that describe a frequent lack of control over decisions, and failed attempts to deal with conflicting situation.

The transfer from mainstream prison to the treatment unit signifies relief and a more official turning point as I illustrate presently. Time in captivity to evaluate life frequently leads to a 'turning point' (Leibrich, 1993; Maruna, 2001) that indicates processes of affirmative changes as opposed to events such as the first time abuse took place, which, too, is a turning point. The arrival at Te Piriti assumes an official status: men who sexually abused children claim responsibility, attend therapy and prepare for an abuse-free future. Furthermore, the unit represents a sanctuary where physical safety is assured and relationships with family members often resume or become more intense in preparation for their release back into communities. There are exceptions, and I draw on Wiremu's experience in the next chapter: his children retreat once he enters Te Piriti.

In his suggestion that "space is fundamental in any exercise of power" Foucault (1999, p. 140) refers to practices of subjugation. The one-story treatment unit, dwarfed by the adjacent maximum security prison, Paremoremo, can be interpreted as signifying an ease in that exercise of power, a re-orientation towards humanisation, while continuing to represent "ideological confinement" (McKendy, 2006, p. 496). McKendy (2006) and Waldram (2008) point to the severely restricted discursive opportunities within prison environments, where stories remain officially framed. I draw attention to the problem that Te Piriti is a continuation of a relationship characterized by power inequality (Waldram, 2008). In his research, Waldram observes autobiographical narratives that stay close to expected templates. Thus, it becomes unclear whether these narratives represent an individual's personal reality (Waldram, 2008) or a preferred story (shaped by treatment) to conform. It is not the intention of this study to analyse this further and I have no means of examining how the research conversations differ from those offered during the course of the treatment programme. However, in keeping with my argumentation, their re-storied selves are a co-constructed product that is "'peopled', permeated by our relationships with others, present and absent, real and fictive" (Freeman, 1999, p. 110), thus suggestive that these stories are forged dialogically and are transitional. Freire (1972) suggests that dialogues between researcher and participant are essential processes to explore relationships and social power. They form the basis for academic engagement and interpretation, and facilitate alternative understandings and subsequently open ways to respond to issues that have been identified jointly.

The transfer to Te Piriti and more relaxed rules that allow for the use of first names between prisoners and officers is experienced by Bruce as part of a re-humanising process. "This is only a little thing but it makes a big difference, when you are locked up you feel like a human again" (Bruce). This "little thing" might be more significant than rendering life more humane. Prison guards, in full awareness of the inmates' past history of sexually abusing children, symbolically represent the outside world. Their interactions with these men are kinder. Effectively this offers optimism and glimpses of redeeming possibilities in the community.

For both Wayne and Harry, Te Piriti represents a new stage and silence is replaced by articulating what they have done:

It was definitely a relief getting here because, as far as I was concerned, this is a place where you could come out of your cell and expect nothing is going to happen. And you could just relax and feel safe. You don't have to, because you come into jail and you know I had faced up to what I had done and that and going through those other prisons you sort of are living in denial because people ask you what you are in for. You know, you can't say this is what I have done because, but in here you can sort of, you know, this is what I have done and it is all out on the table. You can talk to the other guys about it and things like that. It was a big relief coming in here. (Wayne)

Due to fear of repercussions, maintaining a façade (Goffman, 1971) or self-imposed states of denial as a by-product of prison discipline have questionable merits as these extracts illustrate. In the second conversation with Wayne, he reflects on the time in mainstream prison. He says: "I struggled every day, every day denial, denial, denial" despite "having faced up" to his crimes. Only now, in the safety of the treatment unit, Wayne allows himself to articulate what he did. There is no other way to accept this than to announce self-acknowledgement to others. This is a process, Cohen (2001) suggests, we are encouraged to do, openly if possible. The proof of acknowledgement lies in such publically announced admissions (Cohen, 2001). But for men who sexually abused

children, acknowledgement and willingness to change are not sufficient: they need to prove that they have changed, are able to sustain change and do not re-offend. I explore these men's near impossible task to verify change that can only be confirmed with the passage of time in Chapter Nine. Public focus group participants considered these uncertainties as a primary concern, which was reflected in the mostly unfavourable views on reintegrative abilities (Chapter Six). Support people, too, struggle with this ambiguity. They are torn between feelings of loyalty towards and belief in the person they support and experts' advice of caution.

These accounts raise the issue that "everything that we study is emplaced" (Gieryn, 2000, p. 466) and that the treatment unit is a particularly significant place for offenders to explore who they are and how they got here. The unit is rendered a 'therapeutic landscape' (Gesler & Kearns, 2002), a place of care (Conradson, 2003) in which interpersonal interactions and the placement of bodies in space serve to reconstruct the prison as caregiving space influenced by external professional knowledges, policies and practices (Gleeson & Kearns, 2001). The unit provides a space for the men to explore and to take on board insights formulated in encounters with staff as well as to reformulate their own stories and sense of self.

For Harry, too, Te Piriti represents a physical and mental space that permits him to "deal with it".

At last, when I got there [Te Piriti] I could actually start to deal with it [abuse] rather than just hiding from it and trying to deal with it by yourself. There is nobody to talk to, you can't share it with your cell mate, you can't share it with an officer because the officers are just too busy, the doctor is too busy. (Harry)

Holding on to secret knowledge ("nobody to talk to" and "can't share") exudes an impression of involuntary and prolonged endurance, isolation, and frustration at further delaying the inevitable: dealing with the abuse and its impacts. Beyond internal processes, similar to support people's requirements and efforts to understand and encode the chaos (Chapter Seven), Harry yearns to verbalize

and share his experiences. The chaos story needs to be honoured (Frank, 1997), a process that has been denied Harry.

Drawing on his experience of listening to prison narratives, McKendy (2006) observes that some inmates need the embodied presence of a listener while others conjure up an imaginative listener. Articulating their stories initiate processes that lead to new meanings (McKendy, 2006). In the present study, narratives containing the word 'dealing' indicate processes and possibilities that are frequently linked to situations of conflict. During the pre-release conversations, the word 'dealing' was commonly used to describe stressful situations that generally remained unresolved. I resume this discussion in Chapter Nine as these narratives instigate particular relational accounts of ambivalence.

A desire to deal with the abuse, conviction, and the subsequent chaos is perhaps a first step towards exploring the self, gaining self-knowledge and healing. As Cohen (2001) suggests, there is no healing without self-knowledge. The word healing is mostly absent from conversations (only Hone uses this word twice), but not so the desire to balance and harmonise conflicting selves by understanding and accepting the abusive history. Before processes of re-constituting and re-shaping selves occur, crises of self-narratives reach low and lowest points as Wayne, Hone, Harry and others describe. Narratives, Freeman (1999) suggests, "emerge in relation to, and in dialogue with, other people, as well as other texts, as well as contexts; each of these arenas of both relationality and dialogicality serve to highlight their eminently social nature" (p. 106). I understand this to mean that narratives are situated and constructed within social environments and must be understood within these contexts. The child sex offender's narrative is no exception and merits a multidimensional exploration from all angles and aspects to facilitate understandings that are more comprehensive. Yang (2006) uses the metaphor of a cobweb to explain the self and the connectedness to many other people (outlined in Chapter Three). This analogy allows for the consideration of a number of points. The impact of the crime spreads and affects many people. The cobweb dynamics contextualise the abuse and illustrate the interconnectedness with others while rendering the self responsible to those people linked to the web (Yang, 2006). Significantly, it allows for the legitimisation of telling and exploring what went wrong because what did go wrong occurred within the social

connections of the cobweb: we are implicated not only by the consequences, but in the processes that lead to the abuse. In the next chapter I continue to build on Yang's metaphor and foreground that some threats of the cobweb are stronger than others.

The realisation of the impact and the consequences of their offending initiate questions and stimulate further developments but not before these men reach low points. The transfer to the treatment unit is experienced as a sanctioned start of dealing with their abusive selves officially and openly. I continue with their journey that still considers the past in search for answers.

### **From bad to understanding: Processes of meaning-making**

Over the course of the conversations, research participants refer to the treatment programme repeatedly. Time in prison and the programme instigate processes that assist to finding answers to the question Freeman (1997) poses: how did I become that way? This question assumes that there is a before I became that way (offending), which is different and presumably better, from when I was that way. The links between these stages are processes that I explore. "I have never understood myself. I never knew who I was. I never knew who I was meant to be. I still don't know who I am going to be" is Tom's description of himself over time. I provide another instance where this question of 'who am I' is explicitly articulated and then discuss the significance. Referring to the treatment programme, Wayne proposes that

It [Te Piriti] gave me a lot of insight about myself, you know, some of the reasons why I was doing some of the things that I was doing and that. Certainly for the first time in my life, I had some, some organisation and some answers answered, I learnt more who I am too, believe it or not, or where I stand, you know? (Wayne)

At this juncture, Wayne's sense of selfhood regains coherency. Affording meaning to experiences through processes of telling stories is to "transform what would otherwise be a mere string of meaningless, disconnected events" (Freeman, 1999, p.107). Wayne's use of "believe it or not" following "who I am"

and the intonation of his voice articulating these words, exude a hint of amazement and embarrassment at his own failure of understanding seemingly common knowledge that answers this mundane inquiry. This question of 'who am I' is central not only to Tom and Wayne, but to all the narratives I refer to in this and the next chapter. For Bruce understanding his past leads to acceptance:

I can accept myself who I am and understand who I am and why I did some of the things I did. I am disappointed in what I have done, I am relieved that I understand myself and won't do those things. (Bruce)

However, self-discovery narratives are not exclusive to the prison participants of this research. Quests for self-knowledge, too, are pursued by the general prison population (Leibrich, 1993; Maruna, 2001; Waldram, 2007b). Processes of figuring out 'who I am' that lead to improved selves, provide strength to desist from future criminal activities (Maruna, 2001; Maruna et al., 2004). In narrative performance, the 'I' constitutes of dialogical selves that occupy many positions by the same person (Hermans, 2001; Kraus, 2006). Building on work of William James, Cooley (1964) suggests that there cannot be an 'I' without a or several counterparts (you, he, she, they). He compares the self to a looking glass. The self then is no longer individual but becomes dialogical and social. The 'I' is meaningless without a sense of a distinction from and to others.

I reproduce Tom's four short sentences again: "I have never understood myself. I never knew who I was. I never knew who I was meant to be. I still don't know who I am going to be." Extending Cooley's (1964) line of thinking together with the social and related aspects of narratives (Freeman, 1999; Yang, 2006), Tom's (and others) selves are only capable of developing in relation with and to others. Each of Tom's sentences speaks of discord, dissonance, confusion and uncertainty. The first two sentences when put into context, mirror his narrative of his upbringing and failed relationships (see Appendix U1 for Tom's synopsis). Following the metaphor of the looking glass, none of the questions can be understood as an individual pursuit. This is reflected in the question "who I was meant to be", which assumes common social knowledge of whom we are meant to be. It is through shared interactions, the reactions and responses from others as reflected in the looking glass, that we experience who we are. For Tom,



accounts of strained relationships dominate the narratives and resulted in uncertainty in his past. A forthright admission (“I still don’t know who I am going to be”) predicts an ambiguous future regarding his selfhood. The journey of self-discovery continues in the second conversation with Tom. “The first time in my life I can actually just be me. But I am still learning who that is, but I pretty much know now.” Tom alludes to developmental processes of engaging with others (a potential partner, for example) that lead to better self-knowledge with the elapse of time.

Jedi, too, seeks to find out who he is:

I spent most of my life trying to figure out what my niche in life was and I sometimes still do. Not finding out what my niche in life is as a 43 year old is still concerning. I still trying to figure what my niche in life is and discovering what my positives are. (Jedi)

Jedi, similarly to Tom, talks of a lifelong search of what he terms “my niche in life” and he proposes a journey with a destination (his niche) to discover “what my positives are” rather than considering the benefits of ongoing processes. By emphasising his age Jedi, like Wayne, assumes tacit but common understandings of knowing one’s niche, otherwise, Jedi suggests, this is cause for concern. In the context of Jedi’s overall narrative (see Appendix U3), he, too, tells of struggles instigating and maintaining relationships throughout his life. Drawing on the looking-glass metaphor, Tom and Jedi frequently experienced relational engagements and interactions with others as unconstructive, unhelpful and pessimistic, and compromising their sense of selfhood. Inevitably, the self is dialogical (Hermans, 2001) and hence any discussion must include relationships. Jovchelovitch (2007) emphasises that the relational engagement with others is the foundation of knowledge and selfhood that are testimonies of complex communicational processes. The pivotal function of relationships in shaping a sense of self is reflected in the excerpts of the research participants. The narratives of all ten participants are permeated with accounts of relationships, most often problematic and uncomfortable ones. I resume the discussions on relationships in the next chapter. Here, I continue to explore how meaning is forged between the stages of understanding the offending and the consequences of the aftermath.

Wiremu ascribes overstepping the line that led to offending to “bad decisions” he made in his life. He explains that “the underlying reasons why I made those choices and decisions, and I call it plain stupidity, and stress and unresolved, not being able to communicate clearly how I feel and how I felt”. Elaborating on “stupidity”, he lists possibilities that had led to that wrong decision. During the conversations, he specified opportunities that encroach on decision-making processes (Gadd & Farrall, 2004). By allocating some meaning to the abuse through explanations (stupid, stress, unresolved), Wiremu retains a sense of self. He expands his explanation and alludes to relational issues and lack of good communication. Such justification accounts are described by Maruna (2001) as “a posteriori rationalizations to justify their behavior to others and themselves” (p. 41). Referring to narratives from the general prison population, Maruna (2001) offers competing views within criminology. It is suggested that such “cognitive orientations” (p. 41) in the form of excuses and justifications either allow for a criminal act to occur, or are after-the-event thoughts that are unrelated, or possibly a combination of both. Whether Wiremu’s (and other participants’) clarifications fall in either category seems less relevant for the present discussion. Instead, these men’s understandings of themselves and their interpretations provide insight (Maruna, 2001). I propose that for these men, reflection and the search for explanations fulfil the function of understanding, self-discovery and self-awareness that potentially lead to turning points or, as Maruna, Porter and Carvalho (2004) suggest, improvement of their selves. These processes assist to preserving some sense of ‘self’ rather than denying responsibility and open possibilities to live differently. Whether “moments of clarity” (Maruna, 2001, p. 25) follow a particular event, as Tom exemplifies in “best day of my life” when his victim disclosed, or take on prolonged processes, is subject to individual experiences.

As I continue to investigate processes of meaning-making that link the various stages of then and now, some accounts of turning points contain the word ‘realise’ to indicate an epiphany. The realisation of choice was important to Jedi: “you realise that everything is a choice and everything has a consequence”. Lance suggests that now he realises a lot of things, “it gives you a bit of an insight into how things are going wrong instead of what is going wrong”. Lance, perhaps less articulate than other participants, reflects on processes by using the

word 'how'. Lance turns this how into an analytic tool. "It gave me the chance to actually see outside the square" that enables him to use this self-knowledge to anticipate and avoid situations that have the potential to lead to stress, isolation, excessive alcohol intake and finally abuse.

The treatment unit Te Piriti represents an agentic space (Gieryn, 2000), physically and metaphorically, of transformative possibilities. Within such 'spaces for care' (Conradson, 2003), social processes are relational and dependant while mirroring wider social practices. This renders people within these spaces, and spaces themselves, adaptable and changeable. "So yeah, hard case going to prison and learn that, aye?" is how Papa sums up his journey. His pre-release narrative contains many accounts of interactions with fellow prisoners, his wife and daughter who support him. He ends one account with the words "and that is what I have learnt". He uses every opportunity to gain understanding "so that is what I have noticed since I have been in prison, ah, that is who I am at the moment, which is good". In this self-observing remark, the self is considered fluid and open to malleable transformative processes that shape and change a person's selfhood over a lifetime (Maruna, 2001). With clarity, Papa recognises who he is at this moment and anticipates future modifications in accordance with his journey metaphor. In contrast, Tom and Jedi's narratives illustrate an expectation to discover their destination—who they are—and sustain a sense of self-stability.

Shame, guilt, disappointment and regret at their own bad choices that interrupted and altered their victims', their families and their own lives everlastingly, mark these men's narratives. I note, however, that only sparing use is made of specific words such as guilt(y) and (a)shame(d). The two concepts differ in that guilt is reflective of behaviour and shame implies the self (Landman, 2002). Dennis does express "you hold a lot of guilt when you keep it [history of abusing] to yourself and that guilt is eating me up inside all the time" (Dennis). Although Bruce talks about carrying "the guilt for years" he says that "I am disappointed in what I have done and I am relieved that I understand myself and won't do those things". It can be argued that the meanings of these instances of explicitly expressing guilt or shame are unequivocal, but its precise interpretation is left to the listener or reader. More elaborate and descriptive narratives told by participants express guilt and shame without using these words. Resembling confessions, such

accounts convey a sense of remorse or disgrace and have a much richer, more authentic and earnest quality than single words.

Confessional narratives, Foucault suggests, are the results of power mechanisms that induce the subject to articulate the sins and hence are instrumental for disciplinary measures (Hook, 2007). Here, in this autobiographical loop, the telling subject is at the same time the subject of their own narrative through therapeutic processes. The readily offered confessional narratives of shame and guilt represent an acknowledgement of deviation from normative standards while punishment is justified and accepted. Hook (2007) suggests that confessionals ultimately lead to salvation. Embedded in the child sex offender's confessional is his positioning as an outcast evicted from the moral envelope (Hodgetts et al., 2010). The only possibility of returning is through approved scripts of remorse and punishment. Ending this chapter, I return to the beginning and to the prison narratives that defy earlier accounts of anxiety and worries of prison life as a child sex offender.

Through these processes of narrating their lives and assigning new meanings to past events, research participants reach a cross-road. This is characterized by narrating the self in a new light: narratives anticipating an improved future emerge with participants drawing on the wisdom gained from an adverse history. At this juncture, these redemption narratives (Maruna, 2001) separate 'then' from 'now' and become most pronounced. However, such juxtapositions persist throughout their narratives. In these stories, prison and punishment represent purification. In prison, transformative processes occur, a threshold is reached that enables stories to become reflective and associated with possibilities that signal improved selves free of abuse and hope for the future (Maruna, 2001, 2004). Although a desired outcome, these accounts are framed within socially expected norms. Conformity and the creation of an ideological self have the potential to be temporary only.

Participants draw on a spectrum of language and expressions to narrate expected outcomes, ranging from hesitant and cautiously optimistic to animated and passionate wordings (examples are provided below). Accordingly, these stories vary in depth and dimensions, are personal and inter-personal. Reaching "horrors of identity nakedness" (Lofland, 1969, as cited in Maruna, 2001, p. 86)

following assessment of their offending selves, participants are confronted with a selfhood that is stripped at least of the offending selves but, as I demonstrate, also of other selves as the selves invariably are interconnected and relational. This symbolic bareness of a deficient personhood and lost orientation that repeatedly leads to the question of 'who am I?', now allows the induction of redeeming selves, which start to emerge. "A lot of positives have come out. And I don't have to carry this lie any longer and got the help I needed" (Bruce). Alluding to the offending history and a time of general chaos in his life (see Appendix U9 for synopsis) Bruce has assessed these events, taken stock and reconciled. Metaphorically unburdening himself, combined with treatment, allows Bruce to move forward. Similarly, Wayne indicates that he is prepared for the next step, release. "It was getting it off my chest. You know I feel pretty positive, I have left a lot of stuff behind in here" (Wayne). Prison assumes the symbolic role of dumping ground for toxic baggage amassed in the community. Wayne, too, talks about feeling positive, a word that encompasses layers of meanings, including the rebuilding of relationships and the forming of new friendships (see next chapter). Mostly, this word suggests an optimistic outlook for a future as a man branded a 'child sex offender' where there was only pessimism before. Included in this improved outlook is a prudent confidence of a future free of offending. Papa's wording "and what prison has given me is time to see that there is another way to do it" proposes that prison has gifted him time, which has been recognised as an opportunity and is optimally utilised (Maruna et al., 2006).

At this juncture, where processes of reconciling old with new selves take place, new stories are created that have the potential to sustain important behavioural transformation (Maruna, 2001). "For the first time in my life I am proud to be who I am now. I now don't look into the mirror and hate myself. I like the new me" (Tom). Tom reveals that his relationship with himself was flawed beyond the time he abused his stepdaughter: he expresses lifelong self-hatred until now (*cf.*, Maruna, Wilson & Curran, 2006, for examples of offender self-hatred). By looking into a mirror and reflecting back, Tom exposes his own social relatedness to his self that has altered with the passage of time. He now likes what he sees; he has made peace with himself. Juxtaposing narratives of then and now are often connected to and associated with relationships (see next chapter), but not exclusively and frequently extend to goals and ambitions: "now I sort of feel like I have got a direction. I have never had plans, now I have got plans" (Wayne). In

the following quotation from the pre-release conversation, Tom contrasts past and present outlooks. He comments on past experiences and how he envisages future encounters:

I am moving on and I can see life so differently and the fact that I am getting out soon I am looking to life now with different eyes than I had before, with different priorities that I had before. I value things now that I did not before. I see people now not as ogres, I don't see people now, I don't look to the worst in people now. I don't look like everything is just going to be another let down. And I now have hope, I now have purpose, I now have a reason to live. I now want to live; I don't just want to exist. (Tom)

This series of 'I' statements (seventeen in this short extract) begin and end with Tom positioning himself in relation to his past and future life; he locates himself in relation to people, things, and experiences by polarising then and now. He had "a personality transplant" (Tom), a complete transformation that converted a meaningless existence into a purposeful life (Maruna, 2001). Processes between now and then occurred in mainstream prison and in Te Piriti; the prison experience an instigator and agent of change. Tom uses the word "now" nine times in the above passage to contrast his previous selfhood and existence with the present selfhood, purposeful direction and hope. All ten participants provide hope narratives. These have many different levels, and concern the self, others, the prospect of employment and a better future; crucially, they are all relational and I examine these in the next chapter.

## **Chapter summary**

The current offender narratives provide insights into life on the other side of the metaphoric gap that is seen as separating 'us' from 'them'. Central to this chapter are processes of self-discovery in the pursuit to learn 'who am I'. I opened the chapter with the continuation of the discussion on news media representations of men who sexually abuse(d) children by reproducing these men's thoughts of their own public images. The subjects simultaneously endorse and contest media narratives. They, too, draw on binaries by highlighting the deviant 'otherness' of

more serious and repeat offenders. In doing so they approve of the very tactics that they also denounce: they characterize 'worse offenders' in exclusive terms that accentuate their shortcomings. This is perhaps an attempt to demonstrate moral understandings at the cost of betraying men in similar situations. Alternatively, on occasion participants position themselves in a socially acceptable light by expressing concern for fellow offenders 'worse off', with Jedi for example, sympathising with Lloyd McIntosh<sup>41</sup> saying that "he was treated harshly and he was not helped when he got out".

Life in mainstream prison imitates social and relational practices of the outside. The continuous subjugation of knowledge of offending while in mainstream prison was experienced by most participants as a drawn-out period and ordeal of denial. Eight of the ten participants fabricated stories and produced 'half-truths' for use in interactions with members of the general prison population. Only two participants disclosed the nature of their crimes. In his ethnographic research with sex offenders, Waldram (2007b) proposes that their survival in the community and in prison depends on identity management: the concealment of their crimes. Yet, as one of the most silenced groups of people, Waldram (2007b) observes during research interviews that sex offenders talk about their experience for prolonged periods of time, a fact that reveals a need that "exists within human beings to tell our stories" (p. 966). Sex offender stories lack a willing audience as Wayne attests. "No one wants to know [about child sex offending]. It is just something no one wants to talk about, no one wants to talk about it, everyone hates. It is, it is quite sad, it is an issue, it is a major issue". Based on Kierkegaard's (1987) notion that responsibility can only be assumed once a story has been told, I substantiate this idea with participants' accounts of discomfort and anguish in mainstream prison. However, this plea for an opportunity to narrate the abuse and assume responsibility as a preferred and guaranteed outcome is over-simplified, as Papa attests. When his abuse came to light, his extended family attempted to deal with it. He had what he called a "felt sorry for myself attitude" (Papa) and he resumed abusing his stepdaughter.

With transformative processes in motion, the transfer to the treatment unit is experienced as an official cross-road that marks the beginning of new developments leading to change. Emerging from these narratives are two key

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<sup>41</sup> McIntosh's offences include raping a 23 months old baby and a six year old.

terms: 'dealing' and 'realising'. The first indicates earlier attempts to sort out dysfunctional relationships (see next chapter) and other stressful life events while the second, resembling an epiphany, marks a personal turning point at the discovery of choices and options that previously seemed concealed. Participants embark on a quest to discover their selves and I drew on Cooley's (1964) looking glass metaphor to demonstrate the relational nature of the self-construction. In their quest to forge new selves, some aspects of the 'old me' are not entirely discarded as certain selves—that of a good employee, or a caring son, for example—do not contain criminal elements and are not contaminated (Goffman, 1982). Time in prison and therapy at Te Piriti generates new meanings that allow illuminating life events from different angles and ascribing different meanings (Maruna, 2001). As McKendy (2006) suggests, past meanings are not irrevocable. From low points, re-narrating and re-orienting of the selves begin to emerge. Not yet tested in everyday life, these new selves are based on good intentions, therapeutic conversations and newly gained insight. Nevertheless, these allow for a more positive outlook upon release into the community while realising that they emerge from prison labelled as child sex offenders. I continue to examine the development of their selves in the community in Chapter Nine.





## **CHAPTER 9: NO LONE RANGERS: MEN WHO SEXUALLY ABUSED CHILDREN IN CONTEXT**

In Chapter Eight, I focused on stages of transformation that can be used to enrich our understanding of the ten research participants' reactions to their situation during their imprisonment. Adjustment and change continued at the time of the follow-up conversation after the men had been released from prison. While in prison, the intentions of change are optimistic but hypothetical as life in prison plays out "divorced from the public realms" (Hook, 2007, p. 200). Transformation needs to be substantiated, practiced and maintained in the community. With the help of the cobweb metaphor (Yang, 2006), I have been emphasizing the importance of the men's interconnectedness with others (Freeman, 1999; Kraus, 2006), while also drawing attention to the way that individuals have responsibilities within the dynamic web created through their relationships with other people. In this chapter, I continue to draw on the experiences of the ten research participants. I look at their hopes and expectations that are inevitably enmeshed with past relationships and relationships they wish to form in future. Much hinges on relationships. However, because of their crimes, many relationships have been severed, are fragile or unattainable. The two conversations pre- and post-release, allow me to demarcate whether these narratives of hope expressed during the first conversation in prison, materialise or not in the community.

This chapter further underscores my proposition that attempts to understand and appreciate specific life events (abusing, for example) by paying particular attention to the nature of relationships and ongoing interactions between people. Relationships to self and others allow for the contextualisation of these men's lives and for a more holistic picture of these men as human beings to emerge. Over the two conversations I had with each participant, the focus was not on the criminal aspects of these men's behaviour (see Appendices Q and T for interview questions). However, their positioning in society and broader public narrations that story offenders shaped and structured the men's own narratives. They arranged their stories around their offences and divided their lives into before the offence and the lead-up to, the period of abuse, and the consequences of abuse accounts. Participants provide earlier stories, before the abuse took place, to

position themselves in relation to their status as mostly law abiding citizens with families, friends, partners and jobs. It is here that stories of lives manifest that contain a gamut of experiences telling of ordinary everyday events, banalities, sorrow and joy, love and disappointment in its perfections and imperfections. The accounts of offending and the consequences are less mundane and present ruptures to their life stories, much like the wounded storyteller discussed by Frank (1997). Post offending, the men work to repair ruptures to their life stories and to reflect upon and understand who they are and who they might become. Now, with the wisdom of hindsight, time in prison and therapy, participants examine and revisit their own life- stories from different angles and build their futures upon newly acquired insights. Narratives, as McKendy (2006) reminds us, are not set in concrete. Follow-up conversations, carried out between three and nine months after prison release (see Appendix V for details) illustrate how these men negotiate life branded as child sex offenders and continue to test, modify, solidify, and perform their re-moulded selves.

During the two conversations, at least one prominent relationship featured in most of these men's narratives. Dennis and Lance's narratives lacked reference to a specific relationship. I begin this chapter by examining some of these accounts because the self is dialogical (Hermans, 2001) and any discussion must include relationships as these interactions are, at least partially, mirrored in our selves. Relationships shaped these men's past sense of selfhood and, in some cases, still play a role (for example a parent). Scrutinising these often uneasy relationships provides some context to these men's lives. I continue with narratives of hopes and expectations. These emerged towards the end of the first conversation. In particular, participants I interviewed only days before their release narrate these tropes with palpable excitement and cautious optimism. These stories represent the beginning of a new future, parts of which is intended to be lived differently from the past. They are indicative of transitional processes leading from states of hopelessness (I am a child sex offender) to hopefulness (I can live a good life without offending). However, setbacks are unavoidable and I outline how participants master situations and re-story events that do not fulfil their expectations. In search of more fulfilling lives and to demonstrate pro-social engagement, most of the research participants express a desire to contribute towards future generations and to give back to the community (Maruna, 1997,

2001) or at least contribute to society as a taxpayer. I explore these men's generativity attempts in face of limited family interactions.

While rehabilitation is often understood in terms of risk management (Burnett & Maruna, 2006), processes of re-entering communities are complex, have multiple meanings for offenders and other meanings for communities. This entire chapter is an accumulation of transformative processes and the men's efforts to construct new versions of themselves. This does not mean that they are attempting to ignore or put away the past. Rather, they appear to learn from their mistakes, embrace what they have done and move on to be more constructive citizens. In preparation for re-entering communities, which I discuss more specifically in the last part of this chapter, the lens is often turned to past relationships to which new meanings are given, and possible new and more positive directions for interaction can be fostered. There is hope and the potential for change in these men's stories.

The following excerpts are very unique. The reproduction of individual accounts does not imply that we can generalise from these stories to the experiences of all men who offend(ed) against children. However, at a conceptual level we can see broader links to processes of self construction and meaning-making that appear to be central elements of the human condition. Further, within this research similarities or differences between these men's stories emerge, and some of these elements reflect the findings of previous research. Again, I reiterate that I do not seek to justify sexual offending. Nor do I imply links between the relationships discussed here and the offending behaviour. Rather, these narratives should be considered a continuation of my argument that our lives are interconnected and our actions have consequences, as Yang's (2006) cobweb metaphor illustrates. My task here is to extend understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) beyond public narratives readily available in society, as well as to shed further light on the rehabilitative process and the experiences to reintegrate into society.

## **We all live in cobwebs**

In Chapter Eight, I stated that 'dealing' is a prominent word in these men's narratives that contains multiple meanings. It indicates interpersonal and dialogical processes as well as intrapersonal processes of reconciling selves. The use of the word dealing denotes the acknowledgement of a concern and indicates the possibility of an active engagement to attend to and improve an unsatisfactory situation and mend relationships with others. 'Dealing' validates these accounts despite often failed attempts, some of which leading to frustration, stress and eventually isolation, and signals these men's communicative (in)abilities. I will show that it reveals the performance of relationships to the selves and others.

Within the overall context of this study, scrutinising some relationships more closely allows me to illustrate some dynamics that occur within the men's relational cobwebs, while also offering some context for their lives in the form of personal histories. These accounts represent everyday aspects that align these men alongside people who have not committed similar offences. In the process, we can see overlaps between the poles of 'us' and 'them', which are so central to public characterizations and narratives about child sexual offenders.

The narratives of the ten men speak to multiple subject matters and implicate others. Here, I concentrate on communication and relationship issues from the stance of these men. Deficient communication skills are a recurring theme across most conversations, explicitly expressed, implied or exemplified. It is considered a notorious impediment to initiating and maintaining healthy relationships. Therefore, it is essential that I document instances of often imperfect dialogical relations that turned into toxic situations. This allows me to position and examine these men in their interpersonal contexts as it is here, in interactions with others, that misunderstandings, misjudgements, resentments and withdrawal from relationships occur.

The quote from Tom included in the chapter's heading "I am now no longer a lone ranger" seems at odds and contradictory to my argument that men who sexually abuse(d) do not live in a vacuum separated off from other human beings. The metaphor of the lone ranger appears to reinforce understandings of these men as isolated outsiders and stigmatised others. Tom is not a hermit. He lived with a

partner and her daughter, and he was employed, performative roles that allowed Tom (and other research participants) to preserve a personal front (Goffman, 1982). The lone ranger refers to an internal emptiness and meaningless existence, a void to be filled with a purpose and told, post-release, in generative stories (discussed later in this chapter). This metaphor needs to be understood within the context of the two conversations and Tom's plea that "I now want to live; I don't just want to exist". His story suggests a fragile and superficial nature of his relationships, and the weak quality of connections or threads in his cobweb.

The narratives of the ten men tell of dysfunctional aspects of relationships early in their lives (*cf.*, Leibrich, 1993; Maruna, 2001). I reproduce excerpts from Harry and Jedi's accounts which describe their middle-class upbringings and then turn to stories of relationships from other participants. There are parallels between Harry and Jedi's stories, most significantly a strained relationship to their mothers, parental support throughout imprisonment, the ongoing roles of parents in their lives (more for Jedi than Harry) despite the fact that both set of parents moved overseas, and ongoing awkwardness in initiating intimate relationships, which they feel are due to lacking social skills.

Harry describes himself as a "geek" and never attended a party during his school years. "I really didn't know how to interact with young women, you know, my mother was a very dominant, powerful figure in our lives. So interacting with girls and women that I wanted to go out with was intimidating for me" (Harry). Lacking confidence to address and interact with women remains an ongoing concern for him. Jedi's earlier years were marked by frequent shifts. He recounts one particular event, which, he claims, has lasting effects.

I look back at many, many pivotal moments. I can remember, I was five or six, when I was living in [name of town] and I was shipped off to a Health Camp. When I came back we had moved house, and to me that was a moment, a defining moment, which probably screwed me up something shocking as to figure out and find out why. Even to this day, I really don't know why. Well, they [parents] never really told me what I would consider the truth. I mean there are obviously more things than possibly just saying oh we want to move house, we felt a change was necessary. (Jedi)

Jedi was, and still is, unable to make sense of this sudden and for him unexpected move. He returns from a camp into an unfamiliar environment and this experience turns into a “pivotal and defining moment” that he remembers years later. Parts of his selfhood that identified with the familiarity of his previous home disintegrated. Jedi uses this example to present a rationale for the idea that “there is no point in making friends”, as presumably relationships have been severed by this and other shifts. Drawing on many moments of clarity (Maruna, 2001) throughout both conversations, Jedi creates points of reference that are meaningful to him and facilitate his understandings of his life and actions. These pivotal moments speak of low points that made little sense at the time, leaving him hurt and vulnerable. High school was “when things went from horribly bad to worse. Yeah, that is when I started offending. It has taken me 30 years to understand that is how I reacted”. Jedi hints at an incident of “being humiliated by my peers sexually was something that threw me off associating with peers”. Total humiliation, Whatley (2007) suggests, is often the punishing consequences for adolescent sexual experimentation. Jedi did not elaborate further but the fear of being humiliated prevails and towards the end of the second conversation, he returns to this issue. “Probably running into someone that knows you, knows your past and again will use that to try and humiliate you in public” remains one of his major fears.

Harry and Jedi’s narratives are saturated with clashing accounts that implicate mostly members of their respective families. I reproduce an excerpt from Harry, who, in his early twenties, narrates the first time he confronted and resisted his mother, which becomes a focal point in this account, a personal heroic moment “quite something for me” when, in fact, another event should have taken precedence:

So the fool that I am I told them [parents about the pregnancy] so mum spat the dummy in an epic fashion, told me to sell my paintball gear, and I said why? And she said you will need money, and I said I ain’t going to get much money for it, oh no, you are going to sell your gear anyway. So I told her to get fucked, which she didn’t like. It was the first time in my life that I stood up to her, which is quite something for me, and she really didn’t look too

happy about that. So then she turned around to me and said that I was going back to university and doing teachers training college and that Ruth and I was getting married. (Harry)

In this excerpt, Harry re-enacts an interaction with his parent. This is his account, and Lieblich and colleagues (1998) remind us that “no story is unidimensional in its voice” (p. 168). He recounts how a conversation about the pregnancy took shape against the backdrop of what are presented as his parents’ concerns regarding his lack of finances and ability to support a child. The positioning of Harry and his mother as having differing stances regarding the pregnancy establishes an asymmetrical dialogue as exemplifying their relationship and positions his mother as being unsupportive (Jovchelovitch, 2007). To illustrate such different points, Harry’s mother’s suggestion to sell his paintball gear is met with objections because, he feels, the monetary gain would be minimal. There is a more profound reason why he resists his mother’s proposal, which can only be understood within the context of his broader account of their relationship as one of domination and subordination, which has disrupted his efforts to make friends. Losing his equipment takes on more meaning and surpasses any possible financial benefits because playing paintball is Harry’s passion, only pastime and link to a circle of friends. As sense of alienation is communicated through Harry’s (re)construction of the interaction with his mother.

Other participants also referred to past discussions with parents and strained relationships as impacting on their lives, and for some, as shaping their present sense of selfhood. Such accounts also extended to conversations emerging out of their relationships with life partners. In Hone’s narratives, accounts of his failed relationships feature prominently. In the following extract, he recounts contemplating a separation from his partner, which he decided against for the welfare of his children.

There was relationship problems started. The mates, the friends we had, basically we were all druggies because we were both smoking dope. And it is just the crowd we started to hang out with was a bad influence and I actually, during that last pregnancy, I ended up not being able to sleep with my partner. I took it as, I took it as the pregnancy, she couldn’t get comfortable with



someone in the king size bed, and she is only a small lady. I couldn't understand that, but things started happening from there. I noticed distance, you know, and just communication breakdowns and stress getting up there, and anger, and frustration, a lot of frustration. Yeah, that is basically, our relationship was going bad and I knew it and I wanted to leave but I couldn't. You know what I mean? We have family together, and I thought nah, no I just handle it, for our children's sake, yeah. And then that is when I started forming a really close bond with her daughter and that is when it all started with, we started our breakdown. (Hone)

This extract should not be taken to assign any blame for Hone's offending to his partner or distance in their relationship. What I am attempting to do is recount how Hone invokes aspects of the wider interpersonal context of his life when making sense of his own actions. Two of Hone's comments indicate uncertainty and vagueness whether the issue was discussed between him and his partner: "I took it as the pregnancy" and "I couldn't understand". He assumed the increasing rupture in their relationship was a result of the pregnancy. The consequences are an accumulation of assumptions and unresolved issues, leading to further communication breakdown, stress, anger and frustration. Taking into account the already existing discordance, dealing with the situation is not presented as a mutual effort. He presented himself as being isolated and as his adult relationship went bad, he began offending against his partner's daughter.

Hone's monologue is asymmetrical because his partner's voice is missing. We are not privy to know how his partner made sense of this situation that leads from relationship problems to offending. Heterosexual relationships, Tannen (1990) suggests, are problematic because of divergent vantage points between a man and a woman, consequently causing miscommunication and requiring constant dialogue. I draw on a later excerpt of the conversation to suggest Hone's own deficient communication and relationship skills.

Well, I have become more confident. I used to be too shy to even speak to a stranger, you know, and come out of my shell. I am not afraid to say how I feel, how I think, and I do it proper, not inappropriately. Like with me I used to be all passive and build up,

bottle up and all that and then something will trigger it and it is straight to aggressive and it was not a good place to be when I was aggressive. And now I have found the middle ground, I found assertive and dealing with things properly, proper. I think I become a better person, yeah. (Hone)

In this extract, Hone juxtaposes his former selves with the new, re-moulded selves to demonstrate changes. Particularly, he compares his passive aggressiveness with newly found means of assertiveness and dealing “properly”, and through these processes, he has gained confidence.

I draw on the concept of ‘knifing off’, described as distancing from detrimental relationships and environments for the purpose of pursuing a new life path (Maruna, 2001; Maruna & Roy, 2006). Although more commonly linked to the general prison population and contemporary discussions of crime desistance (Maruna & Roy, 2006), this is a useful term to describe participants’ attempts to distance themselves from unfavourable social environments. Whether these associations have or have not contributed toward the offending is debatable.<sup>42</sup> The concept of ‘knifing off’ is however, useful to consider as attempts, by some participants, to change social milieu in order to ease pressure to preserve a consistent identity (Maruna & Roy, 2006), allowing for the development of their new selves to continue in the community.

Hone, quoted above, tells that “we were all druggies because we were both smoking dope”. Processes of estrangement from undesirable and unfavourable relationships in expurgating endeavours are evidenced in most narratives. Usually discussed in connection with a more purposeful life, goals and achievements, participants wish to dissolve past relationships and “meet a whole new network of friends” (Hone). Wiremu pledges to “associate with people that are more positive” and to sever ties with gang members:

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<sup>42</sup> Maruna and Roy (2006) examine several “knifing off” possibilities, of which “associates” is the most useful in the current discussion. Disassociation from former acquaintances, as the examples of Wiremu and Hone show, is an active effort to create a different and improved social environment. However, Maruna and Roy point out that “even divorced couples sometimes remarry” (p. 5).

I know a lot of people that are in gang situations, like the big leaders, I know heaps of them. Because I used to hang out with them, but I decided, I did not want to associate with them. I did not want to know them or their friends. I just walk away from them.  
(Wiremu)

Such plans are part of “possible routes of self-change” (Maruna & Roy, 2006, p15) and contribute to demonstrate the then (“I used to hang out with them”) and now (“I just walk away from them”) in efforts to “‘prove’ this internal change to a rightly sceptical world” (Maruna & Roy, 2006, p. 13).

Complex, fragile and intricate relationships are fluid and changing, disrupted and rekindled, its impacts, both positive and negative, evidenced in all narratives. The research participants’ social environments varied considerably, and for some participants parents represent their strongest support despite strained relations. While some parents seem to have undergone transformative developments of their own selves alongside their sons (Tom’s father, and to a lesser degree, Jedi’s mother, for example), other narratives tell of ongoing conflicts. Seeking and maintaining relatedness is part of who we are; in the context of men who sexually abused, past, present and future relationships affect reintegrative processes.

## **From feeling hopeless to hopeful**

### ***Transformative processes***

Relationships, too, are central in this section. Here, I draw on accounts that tell of relationships that participants hope to resume following their release from prison. Specifically, I examine how these men re-narrate the accounts where expectations of rekindling or maintaining relationships are not materialised. The pre- and post-release conversations allow me to delineate the accomplishments and setbacks. Narratives that tell of disappointment are carefully evaluated and re-storied in follow-up conversations. Alternatively, obstacles are foreshadowed in the same sentence as hope is expressed. Wiremu, in the first conversation, suggests that “my biggest hope and concern that I have is being able to mend the bridges with my children”. Wiremu qualifies hope by using the superlative “biggest”. Hope represents re-connecting with his now adult children and is

important to him. But hope is associated with the concern and disappointment he already experienced upon his transfer to Te Piriti.

My relationship with them [his children] since I have been in [prison] has deteriorated. I had a good relationship with my son and my oldest my youngest daughter, but yeah, I think it was when I came into this unit [Te Piriti] and then they decided they did not want any more contact with me. (Wiremu)

Earlier in the conversation, Wiremu recounts how his children reacted “disgusted and shocked that their father was a sex offender”. Despite this, they maintained contact with him until his transfer to Te Piriti. I can only speculate about the reasons that prompted his children to withdraw at this particular time. This seems counterintuitive because Wiremu takes responsibility and accepts help in the form of treatment. Rather than pleasing his children, this evokes the opposite reaction and they retreat. I propose two possibilities. One, his children rarely elaborated on their father’s crime in their social environments. With the arrival at Te Piriti, the nature of his crime can no longer be concealed because only men who sexually abused children attend this unit. The seriousness of their father’s crime, too, becomes evident and real to his children perhaps only now. Two, by accepting help, the image of their father falters further, as accepting and receiving help is frequently equated to weakness that is removed from masculine ideologies. Perceived damage to their masculinity is invoked as preventing Bruce and Wayne from appealing for help in crisis situations. For example, working harder to address financial hardship is presented as leading to more stress. Wiremu’s image as the father figure is incongruent with Wiremu the man who sexually abused the daughter of his partner. To fully understand Wiremu’s (and other participants’) story, additional viewpoints, elucidated through conversations with family members and friends, would complement these narratives.

Wiremu draws on the ‘bridge’ metaphor. This is also used by other participants, in particular in connection with biological children to illustrate a desire to restore the rift between older children following release and to re-connect in future with younger children. Unlike Bruce, who uses the verb “cross”, and Papa who speaks about “building” the bridge, Wiremu talks of mending the bridge. He thus acknowledges damaged relationships in need of restoring and re-building that

have healing qualities. The gulf, representing his abuse history and time spent in prison, cannot be ignored. Processes of making sense of sexual abuse and an absent father must be taken into consideration in efforts to re-establish relationships. In the follow-up conversation, Wiremu tells of a whanau hui (family gathering) his family organised to welcome him back into the family and community. He recounts that “the sad thing was that none of my children showed up. It was just my own immediate brothers and sisters and some of my nephews and nieces, but yeah, the ones I really wanted, they never came”. His hope of a reunion with his children remained unfulfilled. Furthermore, his oldest daughter is now completely estranged. “My name is real mud. She has changed her name” and with this Wiremu’s hope of mending the bridge with his oldest daughter is fading. In a ‘knifing off’ process (Maruna & Roy, 2006) in reverse, his daughter disassociates with her father in what Elder (1998) calls a “ritual wiping out of self” (as cited in Maruna & Roy, 2006, p.2).

As his premonitions turn into reality, and the extent of the consequences of his crime manifest, Wiremu feels miserable. Despite his anguish, he puts on a façade (Goffman, 1982): “I just keep trying to keep myself happy, but things inside me are sad, sad, sad. But, ah, the main positive is for me, it is all part of paying back for the things I have done”. Putting this statement further into context, Wiremu’s son is ‘assessing’ him but denies him contact with his grandchildren. To make sense of the situation, Wiremu finds solace in the knowledge that he is the instigator of the chaos and accepts punishment unremittingly and beyond prison term. Within his family setting, Wiremu must tolerate his children’s decision, while in the community he challenges prolonged reprimand of continuous reminders about his offending past. I resume his account later when I examine reintegration concerns where Wiremu challenges a former friend who now calls him publically “oh, that is that paedophile, he is that paedophile”.

Narratives involving biological, non-victim, children is for six parents a particularly sensitive issue, which mark pre-release conversations with elation and high hopes of reconnecting or strengthening existing bonds. Two participants have no children; Dennis expresses no strong desire to connect with his children, some of whom live overseas, although he is in touch with one son; and Lance is philosophical about the situation with his son who is cared for by his estranged

mother (his son's guardian). Expectations to rekindle and maintain relationships with children are rarely fulfilled for a number of reasons. Wiremu's youngest daughter, who resumed contact with him, "has found herself a boyfriend, and, you know, things happen when you are young, it is the relationship first and everyone else comes second. So I have not seen her, yeah, it is about a month and a half". Similarly, Wayne's teenage son "has sort of got his own life now. He is doing a course, and he has got his own mates, going to a few parties and this sort of thing. But I am always there if he needs me". Wayne made a deliberate choice to reside post-prison in the same city as his now 16 year old son lives. His words "he comes in [Te Piriti] and sees me and that. He is looking forward to me getting out" are in stark contrast to the reality when Wayne resettles. Both men delicately formulate the need for their children to take charge of their lives. The disappointment is not in their words that articulate understanding and justification ("things happen when you are young" and "got his own life now") but is audible in their voices and visible in their facial expressions: their expectations to spend time with their children and develop a relationship are not met.

Children represent love, joy, kinship, connectedness, pride, delight and hope. Re-establishing ties with children following imprisonment are particularly relevant to the contribution of generativity (Maruna, 1997, 2001, 2004), an Eriksonian notion of commitment to the well-being of future generations (McAdams, 2006), or engaging in a meaningful life in Seligman terms (Jørgensen & Nafstad, 2004). Generativity, a commitment and concern to encourage and support future generations (Maruna, 2004), is one means of contributing to the community. Their crimes prevent men who sexually abused to take part in activities that include children (their own and others), at least during probation.<sup>43</sup> Based on a strength-based re-entry model, Maruna and LeBel (2003) suggest that to contest "social exclusion, the strengths paradigm calls for opportunities for ex-convicts to make amends, demonstrate their value and potential, and make positive contributions to their communities" (p. 97). Men who sexually abused would likely welcome opportunities to take part in such projects, while the communities would probably strongly oppose any such undertaking. Exceptions are projects such as the 'Circles of Support & Accountability' (Wilson et al., 2005) (see Chapter Two) that promote transparency and encourage community and offender engagement and accountability.

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<sup>43</sup> In Appendix V, I list individual probation duration which vary in length.

As I have just illustrated participants wish to assume an active role in their children's lives. In contrast, their former partners often put measures in place that disrupt such plans. Bruce's former partner took their two sons to court to see him being sentenced, an experience he describes as "pretty hard". Subsequently he has not had any contact with his now teenage boys. Bruce concedes "they have not been brought up like me. It was very different, I never whacked my kids. I never actually used physical violence or force. They got a very, very sound mum". These thoughts of a different and perceived better upbringing and confidence in his former partner's abilities are comforting and compensate for his absence. He juxtaposes his upbringing to that of his children to indicate that he was a good father by alluding that he suffered physical abuse (which he confirmed elsewhere in the conversation) but he did not physically discipline his children.

Pre-release, Hone talks of mending relationships with his children and he is excited to catching up with his 18 year old son who "can't wait until I get out so he can come and spend a bit of time with me. He knows what has happened and, yeah, he doesn't like what I have done but he still loves me". Hone's son stayed in touch while he was in prison but now that he has been released, has decided against further communication. Hone's suggestion that "he still loves me" was likely a source of consolation during his imprisonment. Now he has to re-evaluate the meaning of this love and the feelings attached to it. Hone's former partner deliberately timed her and their two sons' migration to Australia to coincide with his release. By telephone, she informs him that "as far as they are concerned they don't even know who you are" (Hone). He asks laconically "what can I do" and compensates this major setback with the thought that these circumstances are of his own doing much like Wiremu does.

But yeah, I know that will happen later on, because like me, you know, I, I did not know my biological father but I searched until I found out who he was and I went and met him. So I am hoping that will be the same, even though they know who I am, you know, but they might want to come back later on, you know. Because they all know, they all know. Anyway, I try not to, I try not to dwell on this anymore because if I do it will put me back into a

depression and all that and I don't want to go there. All I think, all I think about that is one day, one day they will be old enough and they will come and see me and that is the hope I live with. Yeah, concerning my children, yeah, because I cannot do anything.  
(Hone)

During the second conversation, Hone readily recounts how he reconnected with family members. He avoids mentioning his children until I prompt him, resulting in the above excerpt. Hone uses a number of strategies to make sense of what he feels is a “big blow, it is my own fault really”. One, drawing on his own experience of hope, Hone reflects on his desire to find and get to know his biological father. This is the source of his newly formulated hope narrative. Two, he chooses not to think about the loss because it might cause depression. His words “I don't want to go there” indicate that he knows what it means to “be there” or be depressed. In the first conversation, he does not use the word depression but his narrative is scattered with accounts of stressful situations that are not well handled, leading to “communication breakdowns” between him and his partner (see earlier excerpt) and increased marijuana consumption. Three, he is the instigator of the mess, as Wiremu, Bruce and other participants also point out. Four, he surrenders to the fact that there is nothing he can do to change this particular situation.

### ***Contributions to future generations***

Despite disappointments around reconnecting with family members as I have just outlined, most research participants seek personal fulfilment by promoting the wellbeing of the future generation. Due to their past actions, opportunities to contribute positively to children's lives are often denied or their efforts are hampered. This prevents them from repairing their narrative ruptures. Papa's account differs from that of other participants'. Generativity motivates him to “go hard”:

So that is what I am trying to do, and hence why I am doing this journey to change myself as to get my moko [grandchildren] away from this, the same patterns that I had, because that is what I noticed the whole family, all the families patterns just keep



following, keep following, so what I want to do it stops here, it stops with me and that is why I go so hard. (Papa)

In this passage, I understand Papa to talk about his own and that of his extended family's culture of drug use and "the same patterns" include, perhaps, other abusive or illicit behaviours that he did not elaborate on. Seven participants indicated using drugs (see Appendix V); I did not ask for further details. Papa used marijuana, which "chilled me out" (Papa). His proposition to link his use of marijuana and the abuse resonates with Cooper's heavy alcohol consumption to explain sexual misconduct with his adopted daughter (Chapter Four). The intent and function of Papa's disclosure (using marijuana) within his story construction is debatable. In Chapter Eight, I suggested that such accounts may lead to self-discovery and understanding rather than serve as justifications for one's actions. The notion that excuses are bad and reform requires the acceptance of responsibility for one's behaviour seems not tenable (Maruna & Copes, 2005). Despite his offending history, Papa presents himself as aspiring to be a good model for the benefit of his children who are the reason and purpose to "go so hard". The transformation from criminal to model citizen in offender narratives may contribute to keeping these men straight (Maruna, 2001). Papa has close ties and contact with his extended family, including children and grandchildren from his biological daughter and stepdaughter, his victim (she has no direct contact with him). Although adhering to restrictions, his interpretation of these rules differs from those of all other participants. "I know why they [probation conditions] are there, I created them, you know, they were put in place but I was the one that made them come on me" (Papa).

Bruce experiences parole conditions very differently. Post-release he lives with his mother and stepfather. This has consequences for the entire family:

The hardest part for me has been my family because the conditions they put on you to not, you know, be around anyone under 16, my family members cannot even be sponsors [official support person]. So Christmas day comes along, my sister has got kids, four kids, they vary in ages, and I could not even go there for Christmas day. And it is not so much that it upsets me but it upset her and it upset my mum. (Bruce)

His interpretation of parole conditions, typical for other participants as well with the exception of Papa, prevents Bruce from participating at family gatherings. He later adds: "I can accept it. It is just part of my conditions. I will live like that for the rest of my life." Bruce translates parole conditions into lifelong vigilance as a consequence of his actions that he must accept. To support or to reject extended watchfulness leads to ambiguous feelings in the discussion with support people (Chapter Seven). Later in this chapter, I draw on Harry and Jedi's narratives that also tell of their continuous watchfulness never to be alone with children.

Within the general prison population, the concept of generativity is considered an important component of a crime-free future (Maruna, 2001; Maruna & Ramsden, 2004). Participants in this study, in particular those with children, aspire to reconnect with their children in order to contribute to future generations and render their own existence more meaningful (Maruna, 2001). Bruce is concerned about his boys' likelihood of engaging in criminal activities: "just the simple fact that I have been locked in prison increases the chances of my sons ending in prison". Papa embarks to break a cycle of drug abuse; and Harry proposes financial support:

I just would like to get back to being a machine operator and get some money under my belt, a car, be able to send my daughter some money so that they can have school uniforms and things, because my partner can't afford that, my ex can't afford that. She can't even afford to buy, you know, a movie ticket once in a while. And, I maybe an asshole and I may have done a lot of damage but at least I can give them a quality of life, at least I can give them, you know, some things. (Harry)

Generativity scripts also speak to the broader question that I began to explore in the previous chapter: 'who am I?'. A future free of abuse is an integral imperative but not an exclusive part of a happier and better future, and these narratives tell of attempts to enrich life with more meaning. In his foreword to Maruna's (2001) book *Making good*, Hans Toch suggests that the functions of narratives "are those served for the narrator, who has to reconcile the person he or she was with the one he or she claims to have become" (p. xvii). Coming to terms with the past

abusing selves as a form of internal reconciliatory process, is facilitated through understandings why they turned to sexually abusing children. Hallmarks of the 'new selves' portrayed during the first conversations are in general, optimism and a more positive and goal-oriented outlook. If such "life transformation is to be believed" Maruna (2001) suggests "the person needs a coherent narrative to explain and justify such turnaround" (p. 85). Supporting, caring, "being there for him" (Wayne, see above) or simply expressing concerns are ways of demonstrating intentions to foster a better future for the next generation.

Jedi's and Lance's narratives do not tell of such aims, as I signalled earlier in this chapter. They live in the shadow of their past experiences which are marked by damaged and fragile friendships and relationships. Neither of them has a future plan or an extensive support network: Jedi's parents are supportive but live overseas; and Lance is supported by his former boss. Although their narratives differ in many ways (Jedi, for example, is employed while Lance is on a sickness benefit) the way they narrate their stories are similar. They frequently digress and draw attention away from their selves, for example, turning a question into a political issue is one of their tactics, or showing concerns for others in similar situations rather than focusing on themselves.

I draw on Lance's account to illustrate how he creates meaning in the absence of positive outlooks. Lance's overall narrative has a pessimistic tone. His representation of himself as the black sheep of the family has not altered considerably over the two conversations. Explicit expressions of 'then' and 'now', frequently used by others (see Chapter Eight) are largely absent from his narrative but are demonstrated symbolically. Both conversations reflect similar sentiments: "I am just like the poor old bugger that turns around that has everything going wrong with him. Most people are born with a silver spoon in their mouths; I was born with a shovel" (Lance). He predicts that events in his life will go wrong in an attempt to lessen the pain when, indeed, they go wrong. This is exemplified in a seemingly more trivial incident which I reproduce. Here, Lance talks about the graduation ceremony at Te Piriti:

Well, they have forgotten about me. They remembered me at the last minute, at the last minute they remembered I had to have a stone, they remembered the stone. It is actually in a box

somewhere. It is a graduation stone that when you look at it you can remember Te Piriti and stuff like that and where you come from. And it is just basically like a trophy sort of thing but they forgot my stone and then they forgot my graduation certificate like at the last minute they went down and had to write one up and yeah, anything possibly can go wrong it will go wrong and it will be mine and it will go wrong. (Lance)

The stone, embodying transformative processes experienced during the treatment program, is important to Lance. During the follow-up conversation in his small inner city apartment, Lance gets up in search for the stone in boxes that are scattered around the floor. He assigns the meaning of this stone akin to a trophy, earned through hard work and achievement. It is a reminder, representing the threshold of then, the man who sexually abused a child and used the internet to download child pornography, and now, the person who is no longer like that. The stone also symbolises “where you come from” and functions as a warning not to return to this place. He obtained his stone and certificate in the end, after he was remembered. It is interesting to note that Lance is the only participant talking about the graduation ceremony and the stone. I assume that this ceremony, a rite of passage and stepping stone to resuming citizenship once again, is more important to him than to others. While for Lance this took place inside the prison, for others a ritual in the family marks the occasion. I refer back to Wiremu whose family organised a whanau hui, a ceremony to welcome him back into the family, a milestone that indicates a new beginning. Papa’s symbolically cleansing ceremony is a trip to the beach “I got into the water and did my karakia [prayer]”.

I reproduce another excerpt from Lance’s second conversation that illustrates his coping strategies in face of predications that things go wrong.

You expect too much and it won’t work. So I just work on each one day at the time and then you get there. But I can look back on history, not a problem. You sit back and think, well, you know that there was good and everything but you don’t look at the future in the same way. Because the second you start doing that, you start thinking: well if I do this that is going to happen and this is going to happen and that is going to happen and chances are it won’t. That

is the way it is. Well, every time I sit there and think about doing something, making a plan for something to come together, it will fall to bits so I just work on each one day at the time. Working in that way, usually it works out but if it does not work out it is only the one day that has not worked out and I can still bring it back to work in a different way, it might be an extra week or two weeks down the track but it will get there. And it works. (Lance)

Lance tells of elaborate and well thought through plans to safeguard from disappointments. I note that this passage is devoid of relationships. In the context of his overall narratives, few relationships prosper. He juxtaposes past and future events and concludes that they are incompatible. His selective approach to past memory allows him to recall pleasant events only, while suppressing others and not anticipating future events. Lance appears factual and stoic: “that is the way it is” precluding further discussions. He has negotiated, with himself, a way that usually works and if it does not then the disappointment is only ‘worth’ one day (“if it does not work out it is only the one day that has not worked out”). Unlike other conversations, with the exception of Jedi’s pre-release, neither conversation with Lance contains the word ‘hope’ or expresses hope. ‘Expect’ is used in the above context and in the following quote only: “they [the public] probably expect us to fail. Going by the way the public treat sex offenders they expect you to fail” (Lance). Expectation is not linked to a positive notion but a negative outcome, which is failure.

While other participants express hope and expectations, and re-negotiate meanings on the occasions where hope does not eventuate, Lance and Jedi protect their selves by living day-to-day. “Well, I have got no real plans. And take one day at the time. I am not getting into the habit of making plans, because you don’t know whether they are going to pan out or not” (Jedi). Jedi, too, screens from disappointment.

I have delineated how hope narratives function as optimistic indicator for an improved future outlook. At times, these narratives end in disappointment as I have outlined and meaning is re-negotiated. Narratives pertaining to endeavours of generativity mainly involve a desire by the men to reconnect with children in their efforts to seek fulfilment, exoneration (however problematic) and a

contribution to the wellbeing of the future generation (Maruna, 2001). I continue with the narratives of the ten men in the next section to illustrate their perspectives on re-entering communities.

## **Rehabilitated? Reintegrative processes in the making**

In a broad sense, this and the previous chapter are about rehabilitative and reintegrative processes, which begin prior to release and continue over a long period of time (Maruna, Immarigeon & LeBel, 2004). These encompass more than finding a place to sleep and employment. Reintegration is about rebuilding lives, making a home, resuming relationships, processing past events and reconstituting selves as I have described. Yet, reintegration is commonly framed in terms of reoffending risks, which underscores individuals' responsibility. The Good Lives Model offers an alternative approach and is a strength-based intervention (Ward & Maruna, 2007). In Chapter Two, I introduced rehabilitative models and suggested that statistically, the overall outlook for men who sexually abused is positive (Nathan, Wilson & Hilman, 2003). Archival material shows that in the past, due to their mostly 'uncontrollable' urges sexual offenders were best kept segregated to protect communities (Chapter Four). Media narratives consider men who sexually abuse(d) a threat to society. The re-housing of these men seems particularly perilous if near schools and parks (Chapter Five). Similarly, public focus groups emphasised these men's perceived short comings and discussed the uncertainties whether they can be rehabilitated or not (Chapter Six). Support people of men who abused take a different stance: they believe and hope that these men will never abuse again, but their enthusiasm is tarnished by expert advice for lifelong vigilance (Chapter Seven). In this section, I draw on the narratives of men who have abused and their efforts to demonstrate that they will never abuse again. So far, I have been outlining their engagement with reconstituting selves that promise an improved future free of abusing.

The word 'rehabilitation' *per se* remains absent in the conversations with the research participants. Instead, rehabilitative processes are prolifically circumscribed with individual meanings ascribed. These narratives, again, are characteristic of binary oppositions: 'the old me' and the 'new me', 'back then' and 'now' as they try to undo their estranged status. They imply change on a

personal scale beyond the narrow focus of abuse but to related and overall improved skills (see above discussion on relationship and communication) that allow them to abstain from further abusive behaviour and to forge better relationships. Nonetheless, the ensuing narratives echo ambivalence. Their stories contain confidence, optimism and intention that they will never again sexually offend against children, while they suggest that they themselves cannot be certain. In the face of all the hurdles, making good is hard work, and if going straight entails the acceptance of stigma, self-hatred and docility, there is little motivation to desist further criminal activities (Maruna, 2001).

At the time of the first encounter at Te Piriti, research participants were freshly equipped with new skills and tools against a backdrop of sexual abuse and in the context of other life events, some discussed earlier in this chapter. The narratives of their shattered selves, interrupted due to their own actions, tell now of processes of re-formulating new selves: an assemblage of old and new selves. These have been co-constructed with the assistance of psychological guidance, time in prison to reflect on life and a toolkit acquired through the treatment programme. Participants regard the newly acquired skills as holding the key to an offence-free life. The self can now engage in processes of action-taking by which relationships with the surroundings improve (Yang, 2006). The experience of the treatment, certified and manifested in a bundle of papers containing their assignments and psychological reports, becomes a symbolic prized possession. These papers embody physical proof to convince the doubter that change is possible and is taking place. No other testimony is available as the future has not yet been lived. Evidence of a crime-free life cannot be demonstrated other than confirming that they are accountable for the past abuse, addressed the problem by attending a treatment programme and expressing their intentions of never to abuse again (*cf.*, Maruna & Roy, 2006).

This dilemma of having no record to verify good behaviour is exemplified in Wiremu's account. Following release, he is repeatedly accosted and publicly (in his local pub) called "oh, that is that paedophile, he is that paedophile" by a former female acquaintance. Disenchanted, in an attempt to stop harassment and to validate what he verbally expressed—that he had done something about his past behaviour—he takes the folder containing official court and probation documents, psychological reports and assignments from Te Piriti to the pub. He

puts the folder in front of the woman with the words “Do you like to talk about me? Well here is everything in black and white, yeah, have a good look and read it and satisfy yourself”. Here, Wiremu takes action and contests the woman’s public accusations. This interaction is in contrast to the passive endurance to respect his children’s decision not to interact with him (see Chapter Eight). The aim of his public display is at least twofold: first, by demonstrating that responsibility has been assumed and corrective measurements taken, he pleads to be left in peace; and second, punishment had been served. This begs the question, at what point can Wiremu, and other men who sexually abused, expect to resume full citizenship again?

Tom enlists people and agencies to corroborate the changes he has undergone. He nominates himself as the key witness and observer to his own transformative changes, yet he is also the least likely person to be believed that he has embarked on a transformative journey. He is engaging in his own performance appraisal and he is pleased with the result:

We are human beings, and yes we made mistakes, we did things wrong but if we genuinely made an effort to change they [the public] should embrace that. Tom wanted to change and he has proved that himself, I have got the reports to prove it and I have got the testimony of my family and friends who sat at the Parole Board: yes, he has made massive changes and we like the new Tom. There is proof that I have changed. There is proof I am a different person so when they say you can’t change, who are they kidding? They just need to come and talk to people who have changed. So I am definitely going to come across people that as soon as they hear what I was in for and what I have done they are going to instantly judge me without actually finding out what has happened since then. Yes, I offended but since then there are all these things that have happened, and look at the change that has happened. I have got proof, if they want to know I have got my reports so I can give it to my employer and say look at this, this is the new me. This is what I have done to deal with my problems.  
(Tom)



Following the disintegration of his selves (“personality transplant”, see Chapter Eight) at the beginning of his prison term, Tom now allows himself to reclaim personhood. Anticipating challenges, he has prepared an array of testimonies to demonstrate his “new me”. Tom metaphorically invites people to come and talk to him and men like him so the public can witness the changes for themselves. He expands beyond reports and family testimonies to “all these things that have happened” suggesting a spectrum of transformative processes that have taken place.

These accounts exude confidence and defy perceptions that they are incapable of and unwilling to change. Yet, for these men in the process of transition it is ground zero; the above excerpts are from the first conversations and thus rely heavily on evidence by third parties. Other participants’ sense of eagerness to demonstrate changes are mixed with apprehension at the prospect of ‘trying out’, implementing and revealing their ‘new selves’ to themselves and significant others. The real test awaits these men at the exit gate out of prison and continues for an undetermined time span. Leaving the segregated space represents a new stage in life to be lived as a ‘new me’. The prison itself symbolises purification processes and takes on the function of a rubbish dump for discarded problems and burdens: “I have left a lot of stuff behind in here” (Wayne). Prison, too, is a site to conform at least temporarily and concoct a self that complies with societal norms in order to become or pass as a better or moral person. Prison is the location where evil is banished and segregated from good, and where evil must emerge as good in order to re-enter society. Prison in general, and Te Piriti in particular, represents for the ten research participants a place for punishment, repentance, reflection, personal growth, purification, transformations and symbolic garbage disposal.

Harry feels “positive now about tomorrow” but his account conveys uncertainty and trepidation that he has the potential to offend again.

I am not going to do it [offend] again [very quiet voice]. I can't say 100 per cent I am not going to do it again, it scares me the fact that I know I can, I could, it terrifies the crap out of me because I can pick who I am most likely to re-offend and that is my own daughter. So I probably watch myself every day who I am. And

everything I do I have got to make sure that I make the right choices. It is not just simple things like not going, hanging out kids any more. Things like dealing with my family when they say something I don't like rather than just swallowing it, swallowing the reply, I actually have to spit it out. (Harry)

Harry talks of his conflicting selves and the resulting ambivalence. His first statement is resolute and definite: "I am not going to", that is his intention. This is immediately followed by doubt: "I can't say 100 per cent" and mirrors the wider public and support people's concerns. A strong belief in the person's ability to never offend again is crucial and contingent to the four support people's efforts to care for men who sexually abused, yet, the supporters are advised by experts that lifelong vigilance is indispensable (Chapter Seven). To keep himself and therefore others safe, Harry suggests the need for constant watchfulness and careful decision making processes. He expands on the meanings of right choices. This includes 'dealing' with his family. Earlier, I reproduced an exchange between Harry and his mother. Now in his early 30s, relationships are still strained, interactions fragile, power asymmetry persists and Harry needs courage to speak his mind. But this is part of the rehabilitation package: life in the cobweb of relationships where relationships must also be improved in order to secure an offence-free future.

Harry refers to "watch myself every day who I am". Here, I assume, he does not allude to a voyage of discovery that I proposed elsewhere. Instead, Harry considers this an ongoing duty to preserve the memory of his offending past for the purpose of maintaining vigilance, a lifelong reminder that he has sexually abused a child. Lance draws on the graduation stone as a constant reminder of his past and efforts to change. Jedi suggests:

The people that are more likely to offend are the ones that they consider less of a risk I mean, I acknowledge that I am higher risk so I am treading very carefully, I don't get complacent and even in two years from now I will still have the same attitude and not getting complacent because that is when you do get complacent is when you are four or five years out there and you think that you are going well. (Jedi)

Jedi considers his high risk status an impetus to keeping himself safe by not succumbing to complacency. He vows to maintain this attitude for years to come. Harry and Jedi's accounts diverge from the others in their expressions of trepidations. Their narratives are more cautious and anxiety oriented while for other participants their offending past has moved to a conscious, omnipresent awareness. In the following quotation, Hone tells about his honest intentions that clash with the contradiction of not knowing:

All I know I don't want to do that [offending] again, and that is all I know. And I honestly know my, in my heart [soft voice] that I never want to do that again. Yeah, and I never had thoughts like that ever again, you know. I can say to you, to anyone, I will never offend on a child again. But, I can't, I can't say that because what happens if I do? You know, who knows. All I can say I don't want to again, and, I know in my heart I won't but I can't say that to you, you know, and expect you to believe it. I have got to prove it by not doing it through the rest of my life. Yeah. But I know for myself and my own self, I will never do that again [soft voice]. (Hone)

Hone takes ambivalence to a new level: proof that he is not a re-offender will have materialised upon his death and not before. Hone's own self is split into a heart and head binary over this uncertainty with the heart "knowing" and the head "doubting". He supports the knowing position by saying that "I never had thoughts like that ever again". Peter, a public focus group participant whom we met in Chapter Six, described similar binary tensions in reverse to Hone's. In his head, Peter understands that men who offended re-enter communities but in his heart, he fears that these men have the potential to re-offend. This typifies modernist, Enlightenment thinking of the mind and body split (O'Flynn & Epstein, 2005). Peter and Hone, one representing the community and the other the cohort of child sex offender, have never met but they feed on each other's fears in a circular fashion.

Rehabilitation narratives are inevitably linked to treatment. Ward and Maruna (2007) suggest prisoners' resistance to therapy, which, within a correctional setting, focuses on behavioural changes for the good of the community rather

than promoting insight for personal growth. The intensive and extensive treatment program at Te Piriti provides life-changing epiphanies, and affected each of the ten participants to various degrees, from explicitly profound, representing one or multiple turning points, to more implied and subtle changes. Without exception, the treatment programme receives praise.<sup>44</sup> Therapeutic processes are experienced as agonising but necessary out of which good will and must emerge. Hone uses the word “awesome” to describe the programme, “it gets down to everything”. Wiremu’s expression of “receiving treatment” intimates understandings that healing is guaranteed by undergoing therapy. “I don’t ever want to return back to prison but at the same time I really wanted to receive the treatment so that I could understand the reasons, the underlying reasons why I made those choices and decisions” (Wiremu). He has a particularly strong conviction that treatment, rather than he himself, has changed him, and he uses the documentations as physical proof in the pub (see above). Although readily talking, Dennis shares personal life stories cautiously and sparingly (see his early comment about public and private life in Chapter Six). He concedes that his communication skills improved. Prior to coming to Te Piriti, he suggests, he would not have engaged with me: “I have never let anyone else into my life before properly”. The metaphors of ‘opening up’ or ‘letting it all out’ are ubiquitous and cathartic themes. Implied in ‘it’, and elaborated in their stories, lies not only the secretive behaviour of the abuse but layers of unresolved, conflict saturated, uncomfortable narratives.

So far, I have described the participants’ efforts to substantiate the changes they have undergone. In pre-release conversations, some participants express specific concerns about their release, predominantly related to the safety and wellbeing of family members rather than themselves.

I don’t worry about it for myself. It’s my family I am getting involved in that, if it does happen, you know, they don’t need that. It is not them that has done wrong; that is my only concern really, is bringing unnecessary hurt to the ones that actually still care about me and want to help me, and, you know, they don’t need that sort of attention brought to them. (Hone)

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<sup>44</sup> Not in my research schedule, these were spontaneous testimonies to the programme, while some participants were critical of individual therapists.

Hone, and other participants, expect to be called to account, for example when applying for jobs, and are mentally prepared for such occasions. Embedded in Hone's comment is concern that housing a released child sex offender has implications for the family. In keeping with one-sided representations of men who abuse(d) as outcasts and isolated outsiders, considerations about family and friends are absent in most public narratives that concern these men. During public focus group discussions, family background was only taken into account in order to scrutinize for weakness and dysfunction, while support people offer glimpses into the challenges of supporting and caring for a man who sexually abused.

Over both conversations Jedi points out that he is inconspicuous and has no distinct physical features such as a tattoo to attract attention: "I don't stand out", thus contesting the stereotypical convictions that the child sex offender is physically marked and distinguishable. While on one hand carefully avoiding attention, he ensures that he 'collects' alibis of his movements as a safety precaution from being wrongly accused.

I mean one of the strategies that [my probation officer] came up with was like if you are out and about have a little book. If you are meeting people, get to meet them, get to know their names so if you ever get questions of anything you have got an alibi to where you were, which is a good strategy. I went in there and I went into this shop that sells i-pods and MP4s and I talked to a guy for about 10 minutes. Dad was with me and I got to meet him and got his business card, got to look at all that sort of thing and said I will come back and see you in a couple of months. So I went into that place and I went into a book store and bought this book and did the same thing, I got the business card because I want to go back there and order another book at a later stage. (Jedi)

This excerpt is the account of a day release from prison with his parents where he 'tested' this strategy under the watchful and protective eyes of his father. His status as a potential threat to society is obvious to him: there is fear on both sides of the metaphoric chasm. Unlike Dennis who masters the transition

independently and competently, Jedi seeks and follows advice from authoritative figures (his father, probation officer) to guide his movements. Thus, he compromises his aim to “slip under the radar” that provides him with a momentary feeling of safety, by following a strategy that offers a potential safety net of an alibi. In this particular situation, prison offered the ultimate safety from being wrongly implicated in crimes. Jedi exercises a form of self-policing to safeguard himself from being wrongly accused while other disciplinary acts of self-monitoring are related to children.

Overall, offenders discuss their return to communities either in practical terms or concur with public views and express uncertainty about their own future ability to avoid re-offending. Equipped with new skills that allow them to create an improved future, participants develop individual strategies to cope with various tensions.

## **Chapter summary**

In this and the previous chapter, I have outlined processes of transforming selves. These narratives constitute attempts by the men to make sense of their past crimes and to gain insights and learn from their experiences (Maruna, Porter & Carvalho, 2004). Participants move through stages of despair to accepting the past, re-forging selves, and expressing hope for an improved future. These processes signal rehabilitative efforts and indicate internal changes in preparation for re-entering society. Implicated in these developments are the self and others. I began this chapter by scrutinising relational processes that take place in the metaphoric cobweb (Yang, 2006) and I discussed significant relationships. These stories revealed that the links between self and others have different qualities. The threads that bind us are strengthened or weakened through (inter)actions and can be both strong at times and weak at others. Harry's relationship to his parents is an illustration of the fluidness of these links; some aspects of their relationships are problem saturated, while his parents are also supportive. Such relationships that are good and faulty at the same time, speak against the dichotomous understandings that seem to prevail western thinking. Other relationships are deliberately disrupted in 'knifing off' processes (Maruna, 2001;

Maruna & Roy, 2006) in attempts to distance from old and build up new, more constructive social networks.

During the pre-release conversations, special significance is afforded to the possibility of rekindling disrupted relationships, including the participants' adult children. Expectations remained, on occasions, unfulfilled when contact was minimal and less frequent than hoped for, or ceased completely. Disappointment was carefully narrated in what Waldram (2007b) calls "twin processes of disemployment and re-employment" (p. 151) in efforts to make meaning, create coherency and re-position themselves in relation to their social environment. As the instigators of the rupture, it is not in these men's power, they propose, to object the decision to withdraw that is taken by family members. Silent endurance, acceptance and putting on a façade (Goffman, 1982) are present solutions, while inwardly they hurt. As Wiremus says "things inside me are sad, sad, sad". Supportive families, spouses, partners and children enhance reintegrative processes (Maruna, 2001). Family and social ties have destabilized for men who sexually abused children. Yet, threaded through discussions of self-reformations are narratives that speak of optimism, improved outlooks and ambitions to contribute to the wellbeing of future generations. This desire to engage is frequently opposed as these men are deemed unsafe and untrustworthy because of their histories of offending. This dilemma is dealt with and negotiated individually by the ten participants. Within the boundaries of parole restrictions, one participant partakes in family activities while others retreat and comment that their absence at family events is hard on the family. Harry, in his pre-release interview, articulates his hope to financially assist with his former partner and their daughter's living expenses. Jedi is childless and his pre- and post-release narratives do not include any generative intentions. In a subsequent conversation, he showed a family photo that included a niece and a nephew. He expressed his delight at being an uncle to two children he is not likely to see in the near future as they live overseas. The hope of seeing them one day might be one of his motivations to stay straight and repair the tarnished family reputation.

Referring to the life stories of two criminals, Gadd and Farrall (2007) ask whether these men have stopped offending or they simply avoided detection. Reintegrative efforts of men who sexually abused children are troubled by such questions. The reintegration narratives of the ten participants are marked by two

major dilemmas or questions. One, how can they convince their families and the public that they have changed and do not intend to ever abuse again? Two, how do they know themselves that they will never abuse again? Participants engaged with these problematic issues individually, but their accounts were mostly ambiguous and suggested: they do not know and therefore they need to be vigilant. These narrative disruptions that tell of uncertainties become storied selves never to be forgotten. Time in prison and treatment at Te Piriti has become these men's symbolic passport to re-entering society. Some participants provided detailed accounts of their first day and night and subsequent weeks following release. Akin to acclimatisation processes, some men required more time to settle while others seemed to slip back effortlessly into life on the outside. Not concerned about their own safety, participants are apprehensive about repercussions for their families or friends who offered accommodation. Public narratives (Chapters Five and Six) do not engage with the social environment of men who sexually abuse(d). Their families and friends are absent from these discussions, as if they do not exist or are of no importance. Most of the narratives told by the ten research participants are filled with relational accounts that involve their social networks. These connections are important to these men while the family members and friends have the potential to tell alternative stories that attest to the changes these men undergo (see Chapter Seven).

Although I divided this chapter into three subsections, this (and the previous) chapter speaks to rehabilitative processes that commenced long before the ten men exited prison and continues after their release. I have outlined processes of re-defining selves that include intra- and interpersonal developments. These more detailed personal narratives embody self-representations of men who sexually offended. These are some of the stories, I proposed, that no one wants to hear. They are stories that, at least in parts, resemble many other autobiographical accounts that are woven with the threads of interconnectedness that make up a cobweb.





## **PART FOUR**

Examining representations of men who sexually abuse(d) children and their reintegrative prospects, this study began with institutional and public narratives about these men and ended with offenders talking about themselves. These conversations situated the men's stories in broader symbolic contexts and allowed for the consideration of other than their criminal dimensions. In the final chapter, I will assemble the dominant themes that have emerged to demonstrate that institutional, public and private understandings of these men are diverse, complex and at times contradictory. I link the multivocal narratives and illustrate that constructions of men who sexually abuse(d) are often unsophisticated. However, there are also opportunities for linking the various levels of narration explored in this thesis and for extending current public deliberations that can contribute to more complex understandings of child sex offending and offenders. I reflect on my personal journey and research engagement with this emotive and contentious topic and comment on a number of cases and developments on child sex abuse.



## CHAPTER 10: IN SEARCH OF THE 'MONSTER': ASSEMBLING THE MULTIVOCAL NARRATIVES

Western culture provides very few acceptable ways of saying, "I did some bad things. What can I say? I was a prick. But I'm not a prick anymore." A story like that will not fly in a society that believes crudely, "Once a prick, always a prick".

(Maruna, 2001, p. 144).

In this quotation Shadd Maruna observes the impasse that binary thinking often creates in western society. Estranging those 'fallen from grace', including men who sexually abuse(d) children, displaces these men in a seemingly diathetic circle. In this research I have shown that the pasts of those men come to haunt them, and that their futures are overshadowed by the uncertainty and trepidation that they present a permanent risk to the community. This thesis reveals that the narratives about men who sexually abuse(d) children are more sophisticated and diverse than the representation of these men as pure evil that dominates public discourse and relies on dichotomous thinking. The account offered by this thesis moves beyond dichotomies between good and evil, 'us' and 'them' in order to explore ambiguities surrounding men who offend(ed) against children. This undertaking has been conducted with reference to multiple levels of narration in society. It is within and across multiple narratives that institutions, the public and people directly involved come to make sense of offending and offenders. I have shown that the resulting understandings have consequences for how these men are received, managed and treated.

The narratives through which these men are characterized exist in institutional practices, historical documents, news reports, and public discussions, experiences shared by support people, and when men articulate their actions and reconsider their lives. Webbed throughout a society, the different contexts in which these narratives occur influence each other. A particular strength of this thesis has been to look both within and across these settings. Figure 1 links the narratives of each contact zone to reveal the breadth, depth and complexity of child sex abuse stories that transcend various public and private domains. A

prominent feature to emerge across many public and private narratives is the use of binary distinctions between 'us' and 'them' and segregation and inclusion. I will re-consider such distinctions in this chapter.

It is useful at this point to refer back to Denzin and Lincoln's (2005) analogy of the researcher as a quilt maker (Chapter Three) who creates an interpretation by weaving various pieces of fabric or narratives together. I have done this in order to show how we might consider a variety of new aspects to the characterization of men who sexually abuse(d) children and their reintegrative prospects. To use a more masculine metaphor, a narrative framework provides the mortar for combining the various narratives or bricks into the construction of a coherent structure. By considering institutional, news media, public and personal narratives I have produced a contextually located interpretation of child sex abuse, the abuser and his reintegrative prospects. This knowledge is useful and modifiable, uncertain and imperfect (Hodgetts et al., 2010) because at its foundation lies a collection of narratives, which are subjective, fluid and dynamic (Lieblich et al., 1998; Riessman, 1993, 2008). New understandings are constantly assimilated with already existing knowledge. This demonstrates that narratives are the product of combined efforts (Riessman, 2008), set within specific contextual, cultural, political and historic frames (Bartlett, 1932; Frank, 1997; Freeman, 1999; Silverstone, 2007). The narrative theory that underpins this research allows for the telling, linking and analysing of multilayered and multidimensional stories. This reflects the importance of interdisciplinary approaches that combine insights into societal meaning-making processes occurring at institutional, public and personal levels. When combined, these insights inform our understandings of the complexities of issues such as child sex abuse.

This final chapter interweaves the various narratives in an effort to find a space for forging a new way of extending our understandings of the complexities and ambiguities surrounding child sex abuse and the men who have offended against children. In closing off this research and pointing towards future work, this chapter is presented in three sections. Section one explores the mismatch between narratives about men who have offended as evident in official documents, media reports and public discussions with those evident in the stories of support persons and the men themselves. I reconsider the dominant ideas evident in media reports and public discussions that these men are not

rehabilitatable. In section two I discuss the need to engage with the men themselves in dialogue in order to enhance public deliberations. I continue my consideration of the re-characterization of men who offend(ed) that can enhance societal understandings of and responses to child sex abuse. Dialogue is also central to how these men come to re-characterize themselves. The chapter and thesis concludes in section three with my reflections on this research and where it might lead academic endeavours and practice in the future.

### **The metaphoric gap: Binary oppositions and contrasting characterization of men who offend(ed)**

Throughout this study I encountered a particular proclivity for dualistic conceptualisations of 'us' and 'them', culminating in a metaphorical chasm. Scholars have proposed that such a chasm establishes social distance (Simmel, 1950) between the general public and the offender to provide a sense of comfort (Fischer, 2007; Zimbardo, 2007) and function to keep ambiguities at bay. The actions that brought men who sexually abuse(d) to public attention result in them being socially distanced from 'us' (*cf.*, Simmel, 1950). The result is a tension between an individual and society of which the child sex abuser has become a marginalised member; his position as a stranger and outsider has been determined by his own actions and the reactions of others. He has become 'the stranger' in Simmel's (1950) sense of the term as an outsider who does not go away, but whose 'way of life' is distinguishable from our own.

Hodgetts and colleagues (in press) note that the concept of social distance has a long history. Research has been conducted about the ways in which individual preferences, based in a person's membership of specific social in-groups, influence social relations with people from other out-groups (Lewin 1936; Park, 1924). These judgements are often measured along a continuum with nearness, intimacy or familiarity at one end, and farness, difference and unfamiliarity at the other (Triandis & Triandis, 1962). Simmel developed the concept of social distance as the strength of the lack of intimacy and distance that people feel towards other people from ethnic, occupational and religious groups different from their own. This was derived from Simmel's (1908/1921) earlier work on 'the stranger'; an ideal type of individual or group that is distanced socially from others, who is only partially a member of society, and who often transgresses social norms and conventions. According to Simmel (1950): "Distance means that

he, who is close by, is far, and strangeness means that he, who also is far, is actually near” (p. 402). Strangers can come into contact with other groups, yet they are excluded from membership, so that they embody a “combination of the near and the far” (Park & Burgess, 1921, cited in Levine, Carter & Gorman, 1976, p. 836). The stranger embodies social distance, his or her presence invoking a lack of involvement as well as a measure of indifference, even when such people are in close proximity to ‘us’.

The concept of social distance is useful because it shows that change and movement in the dichotomy between ‘us’ and ‘them’ is possible given the right circumstances. In different narratives the distance changes and there are aspects of near and far in the storying of men who sexually abuse(d) children. Historically, we see changes between how men were treated within institutions one hundred years ago and how they are treated in contemporary contexts, such as the treatment unit Te Piriti. Today, the distance between men who offended and those who treat them had reduced. News media maintain a relatively large social distance between men who offend(ed) and their assumed audience, while public narratives shift and also encompass glimpses of closeness and distance. Fluidity is also seen in the support persons’ narratives and those of the men as they embrace their own characterizations as child sex offenders while distancing themselves from other offenders.

A (western) preference for binary conceptions favours opposing and mutually excluding values to in-between categories (Fischer, 2007) that hold the potential for more sophisticated understandings of offending and those who offend(ed). Binaries can be overly restrictive because of developmental processes that can lead people progressively through change are obscured by binary thinking. Binaries obscure an open consideration of how one might move from one pole to the other, or how a bad person might seek redemption or a good person might do bad things (*cf.*, Zimbardo, 2007). Underscoring this reconsideration of the overreliance of binary distinction in some of the narratives, Chapters Four to Six demonstrate how institutional and public narratives can characterize men who sexually abuse as pariahs to be kept at a distance. In the characterization of the child sex offender as evil, meaning has already been constructed in ways that demonstrate the child sex offender is bad to the core and any challenge to this

understanding is contested in turn, as the accounts of support people attest in Chapter Seven.

In Chapters Two, Four and Five, I relied on documents prepared and written by institutions and professionals that represent child sex offenders as marginalised and displaced strangers. The narratives that provide frames of reference include scholarly writings (Chapter Two), official and archival material of twentieth-century New Zealand (Chapter Four), and news media reports (Chapter Five). These narratives solidify the plotlines around the perceived differences between men who sexually abuse(d) and those who do not. News media frame offender narratives by using patterns and clusters (Kitzinger, J., 2007) and the child sex offender becomes familiar through such journalistic accounts (Kitzinger, J., 1996). The media's construction and portrayal of the recluse are re-used until they are taken-for-granted and no longer questioned. An accumulation of such discursive instances facilitate our collective memories (Green, 2008) that bring legacies of the past into contemporary understandings of men who sexually abuse(d). Overall, news media represent men who sexually abuse(d) as dangerous outcasts (Chapter Five). In the material I used for this thesis, news media avoid broader discussions to highlight the complexity of child sex abuse despite including short comments (locating men who offended within relationships, for example) that pave the way for a more holistic conversation.

From Chapter Six onwards, the research data for this study are based on my engagement with focus groups and individual participants. Participants of the public focus groups seemed to reinforce, by and large, the pre-constructed narratives and readily accessible frameworks. Unpacking these accounts uncovered that participants highlighted the shortcomings and failings of men who abuse(d) while some participants offered counter-accounts that revealed personal experience and deeper understandings and concerns for the predicaments of these men. Potential for change is evident in public focus groups. While the participants resorted to readily accessible frameworks such as those evident in news reports, they did not simply regurgitate these, but often re-narrated ideas to begin to invoke some complexity outside of coverage and with reference to available alternative sources. This process was restricted due to the limited availability of alternative sources.



Counter-narratives to dominant public accounts do exist, but are often silenced or ignored in public discourse. This is supported in the Hamilton focus group where one participant disclosed that his mother was sexually molested by her father (the participant's grandfather) and fell pregnant. It was not until much later that I questioned whether this focus group participant was the result of incest. Re-reading the passages of disclosure I am surprised at the nonchalant attitude of the other focus group participants as the conversation proceeded. The disclosure became part of the larger narrative, but no specific questions were asked and there was no awkward silence following the disclosure. A Wellington focus group participant had been abused as a child. In this discussion, too, the conversation continued without discussing that specific event. It was dismissed. The classic social psychological concepts 'of confirmation bias' (Nickerson, 1998) and 'attribution bias' (Miller & Ross, 1975) can inform our interpretation of these processes. A confirmation bias occurs when members of the public attend only to information that confirms their existing narrative beliefs and ignore or dismiss information counter to these beliefs. This is often associated with reliance on stereotypes of other people who are the target of one's beliefs. It can also lead to an attribution bias in that one attends to the internal traits of the other person or group (in this case men who offend against children) and do not consider external factors that may also contribute to his actions.

The familiar and basic representation of abusers as outcasts is often absorbed without question, while people who draw on different frames are also in danger of becoming marginalised (Chapter Seven). Marginalisation through association is experienced by support people who transgress the recognisable script of the child sex offender as bad to his core by telling that the offender is a husband, a brother, a father, in short, a person "worth being loved and he is a person who has value" (Janice). This representation of the child sex offender as a human being is incompatible with that of the monster and ruptures the 'us' and 'them' distinction. The listener's performative role (Goffman, 1963)—to denounce the offender—has become disrupted.

Stories that characterize the men as more than offenders invoke ambiguities and transgress the preferred lines of binary thinking and are often met with discomfort and suspicion. A possible explanation for this trend is offered by Maruna, Matravers and King (2004) who build on psychoanalytic theories to argue that the

sexual offender is the scapegoat because he bears resemblance to the male population. Gilmore and Somerville (1994) explain the origin of the scapegoat metaphor as follows:

Historically the ritual of scapegoating involved two goats: one was sacrificed to God or the gods; the other assumed the evils of the society and was exiled into the desert carrying these evils with it. Thus, scapegoating represented both good and evil in the same form. (p. 1346)

The sex offender is no longer 'over there' but one of 'us', which is vehemently denied and "punitive energy is dedicated to establishing the difference between sex offenders and ordinary people" (Maruna et al., 2004, p. 291). Already stigmatised groups often resist scapegoating by counter-reacting that is manifested, for example, by forming a community of solidarity (Gilmore & Somerville, 1994). Such public platforms are denied to men who have sexually abused because the marks of stigma disallow them to construct their own images (Couldry & Curran, 2002).

Rather than accept their estrangements, men who abused (Chapters Eight and Nine) suggest the only link they have with other sex offenders is the nature of their crimes. "We have all done the same crime [but] every sex offender isn't the same" (Hone). These men portray themselves in relation to accounts about their families, upbringing, school, employment, friends, relationships, offending history, imprisonment and life thereafter. Telling of struggles, disappointments and relationship issues, these narratives show a desire to discover and understand who they are and what has led them to sexually abuse children. While often ordinary and banal, the stories are also complex, intrinsic and sophisticated and clash with those stories that reduce these men as undesirable outsiders. The ten research participants seek opportunities to demonstrate change, but a lack of interaction and meaningful dialogue in society between the various stakeholders maintains social distance rather than disperses their respective positions. The resulting lack of knowledge about the other weakens the relational threads in Yang's (2006) cobweb metaphor. One crucial issue for the men who have offended was the need to engage openly with their partners, significant others and the broader community about what they have done, why they did what they

did and how we might move forward collectively. This invokes the need for dialogue in processes of reintegration and healing that involves those affected by the impacts of child sexual abuse, including the community.

The estrangement of offenders has manifested in various institutional and social practices. Historically, the committal of those engaging in deviant sexual practices, including sex with children, to mental institutions was considered an appropriate measure to safeguard communities (Chapter Four). In other cases, imprisonment, hard labour and, on occasions, flogging (“Menace to Society,” 1923) functioned to punish and segregate perpetrators from society. Today, we imprison people for a time, before releasing them back into the community. Decisions regarding release rely on risk assessments. Risk assessment criteria has shifted from crude observations of facial features (Chapter Four) to the use of sophisticated scales because “criminal recidivism among sex offenders is a task of great concern to the judicial system, the correctional services, and society at large” (Sjöstedt & Långström, 2001, p. 629). Beyond professional assessment, members of the public have varying opinions regarding the danger of the reintegration of offenders into communities. Aspiring a ‘zero-risk’ approach and, therefore, invoking the NIMBY (not in my back yard) principle, some public focus group participants opposed the re-housing of an offender in their neighbourhood (Chapter Six). Other participants were less clear and debated the value of knowing versus not knowing a new neighbour’s past history. Again, the term ‘risk’ invites binary division between ‘us’ and ‘them’.

Rehabilitation extends beyond the notions of risk and recidivism and the ‘us’ and ‘them’ binary. Rehabilitation is more complex and places further emphasis on the offender’s social environment. Re-entry and reintegration are processes that occur over prolonged time periods starting prior to and continuing after release (Department of Corrections, 2005; Maruna et al., 2004). Critical to a successful reintegration, Uggen and colleagues (2004) suggest, is the released prisoner’s participation in society. It is at this juncture that best practice and the public’s antipathy towards men who sexually abused clash because often there is a lack of interplay between the released offender and the community through planned rehabilitation and reintegration.

The ten research participants (Chapters Eight and Nine) mostly avoided the words rehabilitation and risk in their self-narratives other than indicating the risk level under which they were released (see Appendix V). Instead, the need for lifelong self-monitoring was considered mostly an individual task. Fearing negative reactions, the research participants shared their history of abuse cautiously. For one participant, however, maintaining a safe environment was achieved through transparency and mutual accountability between him and his extended family who provided opportunities to prove that he has changed and in this way, trust can be re-built gradually.

In this section I have reassembled the various narratives discussed separately in chapters to show that the character of the child sex offender is diverse and more complex than the 'dirty old man' stereotype evident in news report and public discourse. Such physical stereotypical typecasting is no longer, nor has it ever been, a reliable indicators of a propensity to offend against children. I have also questioned the key binary opposition between 'us', the public, and 'them', men who abuse(d). In the following section I will continue this line of thought in relation to the characterization of offenders as defective and unable to be rehabilitated.

### **Engaging men and considering alternative stories**

Narratives told by men who sexually abused carry histories, memories and personal perspectives that I have integrated with institutional and public narratives that also tell part of the story. At its core, this thesis is about men who offended against children. The focus on men comes through analyses of institutional, media and public characterizations of them or the accounts of their support persons and the men themselves. This thesis is about how these men are characterized by others and how they make sense of themselves in the context of these broader deliberations. Men who sexually offended against children offered to tell their stories for a variety of reasons. Perhaps they were simply looking for a distraction from the routine of prison life (Burnett, 2007), or considered participation in the research an opportunity to practice newly-acquired skills, one of which is identified as improved communication. Some participants expressed hope that my research might document their narratives from a different stance and to open a path for public dialogues with the view to improving reintegrative processes and their long-term prospects to re-gain their citizenship.

Repeatedly, the discussions returned to possibilities of averting offending; some men expressed willingness to engage in future conversations to explore ways of preventing abuse.

Examination of personal narratives about men who sexually abuse(d) has revealed that these stories are suffused with collective (Green, 2008) memories that 'other' these men while also demonstrating the interconnectedness (Yang, 2006) of these men's lives to other persons and institutions. Narratives are multidimensional (Hermans, 2001), often speak simultaneously to various subjects, and contain layers of meaning. Even when speaking with these men, traces of institutional, public and media narratives were woven into their accounts. While men who sexually offend(ed) are represented mostly in terms of their failings across the various research elements (Figure 1), within the individual narratives I discovered accounts that disrupt such common representations. Varying in length, perhaps no more than a sentence or two, sometimes subtle interruptions of public and private accounts are embedded in the same narratives that characterize men who sexually abuse(d) as outcasts or beyond rehabilitation. Additionally, in the institutional and public narratives traces about these men are also detectable and offer alternative perspectives. Within the archival documents (Chapter Four), the assertion that an offender was either an imbecile or a criminal appeared incontestable. Only persistent parental concerns about William's and Charles's wellbeing, evidenced in letters to the medical superintendent, suggest ongoing support, concern and hope for a change in their 'conditions'. Although Charles was a ward of the state, his records contain letters written by his father to the superintendent asking for leave so Charles could spend time with him. An excerpt from one letter reads: "I have a nice furnished home, also I desire his company, as I feel lonely without him". These letters interrupt William's and Charles's positioning as hopeless cases of 'feeble-mindedness' and attest to intrinsic human values appreciated by their families. Similarly, references to family members or supporters in news reports of the Peter Ellis case locate him within meaningful and ongoing relationships and interrupt his estrangement. Reading across the media articles selected for this study reveals a diverse image of the child sex offender who varies in age, ethnicity, social status, education and profession.

In each of the public focus group conversations (Chapter Six) I also encountered challenges to commonly accepted characterizations of these men. Here, too, these trajectories were not usually pursued to explore alternative possibilities with the exception of the Wellington focus group, specifically one man's contribution. As a survivor of sexual abuse, Tom later supported a man who sexually abused. This is an important story because Tom traverses multiple boundaries and he embodies alternative options. In particular, his narrative as a victim and support person unites rather than divides roles that are often perceived as incompatible. Providing informal support and care for a man who sexually abused represents the strongest defiance and disruptions (see Chapter Seven) to common representations and the binaries within which they are captured. These pockets of resistance contest binary thinking because they reject the all good versus all bad child sex offender accounts, accepting that shades of in-between are inherent to all of us.

Dichotomous representations are contested by men who abused and also rejected by support people (Chapter Seven). Support people are the wounded storytellers, representing partners, family members and friends of men who sexually abuse(d) and their untold stories of the consequences of abuse. Through kinship or association, the crimes of these men drag them into the symbolic abyss, an unappreciated position in dichotomous (western) thinking. The narratives of the four support people tell of different, non-offending aspects of these men and of relationships that are strained, but survive the chaos. Often narrated to a selected audience only, these stories hold the potential for the bridging of the metaphoric chasm discussed in the previous section. Supporters know the men who no longer resemble the stranger as more complete human beings. With the exception of the abusing aspects, the lives of these men seem ordinary, mundane, banal and indistinctive from other people's lives. Evil exists amongst normality. Arendt (1963) coined the phrase 'banality of evil' in her analysis of Adolf Eichmann, concluding that so many were like him. The idea of recognising overlapping parts of one's selves with those of men who abuse(d) clashes with the preferred distance that the chasm offers and seems to separate 'us' from 'them'.

Acts of disruption to the dominant narrative trope—that men who sexually abuse(d) are evil—takes courage because alternative accounts conflict with

(western) binary thinking that disallows for imperfections and its repentance. Overall, the narratives within which these disruptions are located indicate more sophisticated understandings that include the existence of conflicting views within the same story. Within the context of this thesis, men who offended undergo processes of reconciliation between their offending and non-offending selves. However, the public does not undergo any such process and remains overly reliant on the dominant narrative. An irony here is that the men have benefited from advances in treatment and are able to discuss and reflect upon their actions and the associated consequences for themselves and those whom they have offended against. There is a space for them to reflect, change, grow and heal. Conversely, there is no such communicative space for the public and so changes in perceptions of and responses to offenses have been restrained. The power of stigmatising stories featuring pure evil pariahs is to restrict dialogue and to silence even the stories of those who may not have offended, for example, support persons. However, these people may offer useful insights for increasing public understandings of the complexities and contradictions surrounding these offenses. Taking another example, when engaged in a public discussion (such as that reflected in the public focus groups), how would the brother of an offender state that his sibling had committed this crime, but that there was more to his character than the offense and he still loved his brother? Such plots are likely to be withheld because the speaker does not want his own character to be rendered suspect. What is required is a civic space in which such perspectives and associated contradictions can be voiced. The stories of support people have the potential to bridge the metaphoric gap by telling alternative stories about these men.

### **Reflections, implications and suggestions for future research**

Through my use of multiple narratives from various sources, this study also emphasises the societal and relational aspects of the meanings created surrounding men who sexually abuse(d) children. Jovchelovitch (2007) considers research a dialogical and social act performed by actors bearing knowledge as well as carrying their own agendas. I acknowledge my part in shaping the narratives I collected through my interactions with research participants. In particular, I met the ten men from Te Piriti at least twice, and in some cases more often. During the interpretative phases and drafting processes, I engaged

intensely with the transcripts of the conversations and finally, I became the creator of a new narrative through the production of this thesis.

This thesis has brought together an assemblage of institutional, public and private narratives in a manner that has allowed me to link the self to others and institutions to demonstrate relatedness and connectedness. A proclivity to estrange men who sexually abuse(d) in western society is prominent in the dominant public narratives we witness. While excluding an abuser from specific communities (Blackball or the church, for example) one property of the cobweb (Yang, 2006) is its stickiness. Men who offended remain a thread in the web, or part of society. The weakened links that result from 'othering' the sex offender endangers his rehabilitation and the community's safety. Bringing together these multiple narratives demonstrates diverse and at times conflicting ways of knowing. Co-existing, these forms of knowing fulfil different functions in response to different needs (Jovchelovitch, 2007). In the absence of primary knowledge, we rely on surrogate information for understanding, knowledge that has been framed in particular ways and is re-produced in specific ways. Christie (1977) observes that we often know people in certain roles only and not as the whole person, which provides limited opportunities to understand and appreciate an entire human being. Segmented forms of knowing weaken the inter-relationship and connectedness. Knowing only one part of a person is less meaningful than knowing a person in his or her completeness; compassion, accountability and responsibility are in danger of diminishing (Christie, 1977). In the case of men who sexually abuse(d), the knowing is often restricted to the abusive act as I have demonstrated, the most abhorrent aspect of these men. In the title of this thesis, "Conversing with 'monsters'", I draw attention to a prominent characterization of men who sexually abuse(d) that highlights their bad-ness, but I use this self-consciously to interrogate the notion of the monster. Christie (2004) observes that there is no monster to be found: "I have worked with crime and punishment most of my life, but never met a monster. There are people I dislike, but none that are completely impossible to reach, at least for some important moments" (p. 97).

Public, institutional and private narratives are intertwined and feed on one another often in unevenly distributed relationships. The data collection procedures for the commissioned inquiries (Chapter Four) exemplified the fact



that the relationship between the 'feeble-minded' and authority is asymmetrical because the committee members gained understandings about a cohort of people (the 'feeble-minded' and 'perverted') without their engagement. This field of research suffers from the far too common problem in psychology of conducting research *on* subjects rather than *with* participants. As a result there is limited dialogue between both researchers and people they research (Hodgetts et al., 2010).

Over the course of this study and in an effort to comprehend the complex relationships central to this topic, I used visual representations of the various facets of this research. First, I drew on the metaphor of a quilt. As the data collection progressed and my own awareness of processes and understandings expanded, the image of a quilt soon became too one-dimensional. I then resorted to a kaleidoscope that allows for multiple dimensions. A shake of the kaleidoscope rearranges the elements to form a new picture. This study is one such narrative possibility that I created with the research elements at my disposal. Now, at the conclusion of the study, even the possibilities afforded by a kaleidoscope seem too restricted. I now imagine each element of the kaleidoscope to represent its own kaleidoscope while being part of other kaleidoscopes to describe the complexities of how we make sense of our lives and how meanings are situational and contextual, which have levels of depth and importance that fluctuate over time.

A number of child sex offending cases and other unusual developments regarding children and sex have emerged in the media over the year 2009 and at the beginning of 2010. The topic of child sex offending is reaching intensified interests with the disclosure of abuse at the hands of Catholic priests. Debates to address the issue are absent in the news media narratives, instead I note suggestions to 'defrock' ("Pope stalled," 2010) the abusers (priests in this case). These public narratives highlight again the complex, paradox, absurd, bizarre and wacky nature of child sex abuse. The last adjective, of course, a reference to a famous pop star acquitted of molesting children despite a way of life that favoured the company of children. In July 2009, I read about baby clothing with slogans such as "I am a tits man", "I'm a living proof my mum is easy", and "Mummy likes it on top" ("Outrage over risque slogans," 2009). This might be considered funny by some and tasteless by others. The purpose of baby clothing

with such slogans, however, warrants scrutiny because the sexualisation of babies appears contrary to all the standards and frames by which men who sexually abuse(d) are judged.

The realm of child sex abuse is vast, expanding and re-shaping in unexpected ways. Technological advancement over the past years has led to new trends and practices obscuring child sex offending further, bizarrely positioning young girls simultaneously into binary, seemingly incompatible roles of victims and offenders. In mid-January 2009, Times Online reported on “sexting”, a practice described as “sending nude or semi-nude pictures to one another on their mobile phones”. Three girls, aged between 14 and 15, who allegedly took lewd pictures of themselves, were charged “with manufacturing, disseminating or possessing child pornography” in Pennsylvania (“Teen ‘sexting’,” 2009). The peculiar distortion of the term ‘child sex offending’ is perhaps more a reflection of anxiety and uneasiness with sexuality and its developments.

In mid-May of 2009 TVNZ screened a BBC documentary. *A place for paedophiles* (Theroux, 2009) concerns the Coalinga Mental Hospital in California, best described as a holding pen (the presenter used the word “warehouse”) of men who sexually abused children. The reference to this documentary symbolically closes the circle and allows me to return to the historical narratives of Charles and William. The two young men, discussed in Chapter Four, were committed to Auckland Mental Hospital in the mid- and late 1930s for an indefinite time. Committee members from the 1925 Inquiry on mental defectives and sexual offenders wrote in their report: “many of the men referred to are not fit to live, but it must be remembered that in many instances the evil tendencies have been inherited, while in others environment has played a prominent part” (p. 27). This excerpt alludes to the complexity of deviant sexual practices. An understanding that these men are unfit to live is reflected and maintained in the fact that an institution such as the Coalinga Mental Hospital even exists; it demonstrates limited progress since the mid-1920s when these words were written.

My suggestions for future research relate to the use of narrative theory, qualitative research methods and the importance of practical outcomes in community settings for support people, agency staff and in terms of prevention. One, narrative theory provides a means of both exploring local meaning including

processes and links between institutions, public discussions and the lives of various stakeholders. Future research can use a narrative frame to explore consequences of these multi-narrational processes for people who have been offended against. Two, research in this area dominated by quantitative risk assessment need to engage more with experiences in ways that preserve context. Qualitative methods are well suited for such a research agenda and need to be more utilised. Three, more open dialogue to inform reintegrative practices in ways that support the public, victims, support people and offenders extends understandings. Communicative practices invite deliberations that move beyond the “once a prick always a prick” (Maruna, 2001, p. 144) impasse.

To close on a strong note, in this thesis I endeavoured to encapsulate diverse human experiences on an emotive topic, yet, I feel, this study has barely scratched the surface. It is time to dig open the wounds and deal with the vileness so that healing can occur.

## EPILOGUE

Perpetrators of child sex abuse were the focus of this study. However, this framing exposed my own dichotomous thinking. As I progressed through the different research stages I realised that a victim and offender separation was unattainable. I did not seek out the victims' narratives. However, these stories are omnipresent in this study and emerge through numerous accounts. The witness statements of the victims defined the men who sexually abused in Chapters Four and Five. During the public focus group discussions (Chapter Six) a male participant disclosed his status as a victim of sexual abuse. In another focus group, Henry narrated how his "grandfather was fiddling around with her [Henry's mother], it influenced her whole life". His grandfather's actions had long-lasting effects, Henry suggested, on his life and that of his family. In Chapter Seven two women who each support a man who sexually abused disclosed their own history of sexual abuse. And lastly, six of the ten men (see Appendix V) who sexually abused also claimed to have been sexually abused as a child. I expanded on Wayne's case (Chapter Eight) who witnessed systemic abuse by his father and his siblings and was abused by two brothers and one sister. The realisation that he inflicted the pain he himself endured on his victims weighed heavily on Wayne (for a summary of the conversation with Wayne see Appendix U4).

Such accounts reflect how in actuality the supposedly 'fixed' positions of the victim and the offender are often transgressed, rather than dichotomous. Stories explored in this research often speak for an uncontested acceptance of the framing of all child sex offenders as deviant others, but the fusion of victim and offender knowledges demonstrates multilayered understandings of child sexual abuse. There appears to be an unwillingness in our society to publically engage with more variable and complex understandings of, and knowledge about, child sexual abuse. Reflecting on this study and the unexpected disclosures of child sex abuse (see also Prologue), I suspect that the efforts of denial are only temporary as many people are confronted with child sex abuse. The social distance (Simmel, 1950) that seems to separate 'us' from 'them' appears porous. The silence that enshrouds personal experiences of child sex abuse that we only reluctantly share (see Chapter Seven) ultimately hampers progress in the effort to combat child sex abuse.



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## APPENDIX A

### *Te Piriti Treatment Unit, the therapy programme and some legislation*

The following provides background information about the treatment units, the therapy programme, the New Zealand Parole Board and the Parole (Extended Supervision) Amendment Act 2004. None of the participants (men who abused) in this study is subject to extended supervision, but this Act was part of their peripheral discussions.

#### Sex offender treatment units in New Zealand

Unless indicated otherwise, this information is compiled from Hudson, Wales and Ward, 1998. Kia Mārama at Christchurch Prison was established first in 1989 followed by Te Piriti in 1994, a stand-alone facility at Auckland Prison, Paremoremo. Te Piriti contains 60 beds and its purpose is to treat men who committed sexual offences against children under the age of 16 ("Crimes Act", 1961) and to reduce recidivism. Participation in the treatment programme is voluntary, offenders require a minimum IQ of 70 and those suffering from a mental health illness are excluded. A transfer from mainstream prison to Te Piriti occurs close to the time of an offender's release back into the community.

#### The therapy programme

At Kia Mārama, offenders who attend the treatment programme are assessed twice. The first assessment concerns suitability and eligibility for programme entry (i.e. appropriate offence type, sentence length, degree of motivation, intellectual and cognitive ability to manage course content). The second assessment is conducted by a psychologist not attached to the treatment programme and assesses for any change (positive or negative) in dynamic risk.

Participants are divided into groups of eight to ten men with each working through the programme and assignments at an individual pace. Thus, the duration of the treatment programme varies. Participants enter and exit a group at varying times depending on individual requirements and needs. This concept allows for a more flexible approach to individualise treatment in order to avoid a one-size-fits-all



approach and maximise inputs where it is most needed and beneficial. Therapy is predominantly group based for economical reasons and an underlying belief that if offenders' challenge each other's behaviours and thoughts this increases treatment efficacy. At the beginning of the programme, two weeks are dedicated to assessments for the purpose of individualising treatment. Interviews are conducted to explore:

general life management skills; his ability to use leisure effectively; his interpersonal goals and ability to form satisfying intimate relationships; his beliefs and attitudes about self; his ability to regulate his affect, particularly negative emotions; his capacity for empathy and perception of victim harm; his sense of responsibility for the offences and the extent to which he is still minimizing some aspects of his offending; his views regarding sex, particularly his own entitlement, the appropriateness of sexual contact between adults and children, and what needs he considers are satisfied by his deviant and nondeviant sexual activity; and, finally, his use of both pornography and intoxicants. (Hudson et al., 1998, pp. 18-19)

To elucidate the existence of deviant attraction to children and / or aggressive themes, prisoners undertake phallometric testing and complete self-reporting scales including sexual attitudes, beliefs and behaviours; emotional functioning; interpersonal competence; and personality. At the conclusion of the programme, phallometric testing and self-reporting scales are repeated together with psychopathic evaluation, which forms part of the risk assessment.

Te Piriti used a similar programme but changed this to a rolling format, operating a staged treatment programme. This begins with a motivational group, progressing through a preparatory group, a core treatment group and a relapse prevention group. The first stage is an orientation, assessment and motivational phase. The second stage is intended to provide exposure to therapeutic concepts, group work skills and mood management skills. Stage three is the core therapy group, where offenders work through a series of assignments designed to help them understand the reasons for their offending, the effects they had on others and the likely risk factors which might cause them to re-offend. Stage four is a relapse prevention group, where new skills are consolidated and reinforced for as long as the person remains in the unit. All four stages operate as rolling

groups, with an offender's movement through the programme determined by motivation and progress towards treatment goals, although this may be affected by the availability of treatment space at the next stage (Van Rensburg, J., personal communication, March 5, 2008).

Apart from spending time in therapy sessions, offenders complete their homework assessments, undertake therapy-related activities, work (in kitchen, garden etc), or have time out.

The psychological treatment programme at Te Piriti has bicultural components in accordance with Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi), in particular adhering to the principles of partnership and self-determination (Larsen, Robertson, Hillman & Hudson, 1998). The aim is to foster diversity and validate Māori values and beliefs known as tikanga, which is described as embodying Māori customs and practices, supporting social and spiritual relationships expressed in daily living activities. Tikanga, the cumulated and collective knowledge of generations of Māori, applies to groups and individuals and is described by Mead (2003) as "Māori philosophy in practice" (p. 7) which permeates to all social situations and offers tools to guide behaviours and thoughts. Policies at Te Piriti treatment unit stress the importance of a holistic treatment approach, including spirituality, kinship, te reo (Māori language), and connectedness with land and nature. Staff competency in cultural knowledge is also fostered.

An evaluation study of child sex offenders 2½ to 4 years post-release from prison was conducted by Nathan, Wilson and Hilman (2003). Results of graduates from the treatment programme at Te Piriti indicate a recidivism rate of 5.47% compared to a control sample of 22%. These include both Māori and non- Māori participants. The recidivism rate of Māori is lower for Te Piriti graduates at 4.41% compared to those from Kia Marama with 13.58% (Nathan et al., 2003).

Underlying the treatment procedures are cognitive-behavioural and social learning theories. The following table provides an outline of the treatment components used at Kia Mārama:

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Module	Duration	Content
Assessment	2 weeks	Clinical interviews Written social, sexual, and emotional histories Psychometric
Norm building	6 sessions	Establishment of group rules Disclosure of personal details Introduction to principles of relapse prevention
Understanding your offending	17 sessions	Disclosure of offense preconditions Completion of offense chain Identification of factors contributing to offending Disclosure of own experiences of abuse Challenging dysfunctional cognitions
Arousal reconditioning	6 sessions	Covert sensitization Masturbatory reconditioning: Directed masturbation and satiation
Victim impact and empathy	12 sessions	Impact of offending on victims Reading from victim accounts Videos portraying victim experiences Discussion with guest speakers (abuse survivors) "Autobiography" from own victim's point of view Role play between self and victim
Mood management	12 sessions	Cognitive behavioral model of mood

Relationship skills	12 sessions	Identification of mood emotions associated with offending Physiological, cognitive and behavioral to manage these Intimacy Establishing and maintaining intimate relationships Sexuality
Relapse prevention	12 sessions	Identification of relapse chain Identification of skills to manage relapse issues Identification of support people Presentation of personal statement
Reassessment	2 weeks	Re-administration of psychometric and plethysmographic assessment

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(Hudson et al., 1998, p. 20)

### Parole

The New Zealand Parole Board (NZPB) decides on the release of offenders from prison on parole, assessing the offender under the guiding principles of the Parole Act, 2002, while considering the safety of the community first and foremost. The NZPB bases its decision on information such as reports from the Department of Corrections, Psychological Services, and Community Probation Service staff; and submissions made to the Board, namely the Police and victims listed on the Victim Notification Register. Under the Victims' Rights Act, 2002, victims of serious crime (which includes sexual violation) are eligible to apply to be listed on the Victim Notification Register. The Board also sets conditions for offenders, which are usually recommended by Psychological Services and Probation Service. A typical example of such conditions includes no unsupervised contact with children aged 16 years or under. If these conditions are breached the NZPB has the power to recall the offender to prison. The NZPB is an autonomous statutory body which is not part of the Government, Department of Corrections, Ministry of Justice or the Police. It consists of a

chairperson, 20 Judges and 17 non-judicial members (New Zealand Parole Board, 2007).

Offenders serving a finite minimum sentence of two years and have been sentenced after July 1, 2002, are considered for parole at hearings by the NZPB after serving one third of their sentence, unless a minimum non-parole period has been set by the court. Offenders sentenced prior to July 1, 2002, are released from prison upon completion of two-thirds of their sentence unless an application has been made under Section 107 of the Parole Act ("Parole Act", 2002) to keep an offender in prison beyond the two-thirds release date. In general, offenders are eligible for a parole hearing once a year. If the application is successful, an offender will be released into the community under the supervision of a Probation Officer for the remaining term of the sentence. Standard conditions of six months duration apply to offenders who are released on their statutory release date. These include reporting to a Probation Officer within 72 hours following release, and restrictions on work and living arrangements. Special conditions set out by NZPB may include the attendance of rehabilitative programmes.

#### Extended Supervision

Under the Extended Supervision Amendment Act 2004 ("Parole (Extended Supervision) Amendment Act 2004), the court can impose extended supervision for child sex offenders deemed high risk and for specified sexual offences. The decision is based on a psychological health assessment for the purpose of protecting the community, in particular children. The order can be imposed for up to ten years, taking effect either after the offender's release from prison or on the completion of any release conditions. Extended supervision is managed by Probation and standard parole conditions apply unless the NZPB sets additional conditions.

## APPENDIX B

### *Paedophilic and non-paedophilic child molesters*

The following definitions that differentiate between paedophilic and non-paedophilic child molesters are reproduced from the Association for the Treatment of Sex Abusers (<http://www.atsa.com/ppOffenderFacts.html>).

#### Paedophiles

True paedophiles are motivated by their sexual attraction to children and their offenses are directed toward vulnerable children whom they court or groom for the purpose of victimization.

Offenders who seek out children to victimize by placing themselves in positions of trust, authority, and easy access to youngsters can have hundreds of victims over the course of their lifetimes. One study found that the average number of victims for non-incestuous paedophiles who molest girls is 20; for paedophiles who prefer boys, over 100.

- Predatory paedophiles, especially those who molest boys, are the sex offenders who have the highest recidivism rates. Over long follow-up periods, more than half of convicted paedophiles are rearrested for a new offense.
- Paedophiles frequently are uncomfortable with adult intimacy and may spend their lives manoeuvring to be near children. They may be extremely charming and skilled at manipulating adults, and they will use adult relationships to gain access to children.
- The paedophile may spend years working his way up to a position of authority and trust within a church, school, or youth organization in order to have access to children.
- Their offenses are usually predatory—directed towards children whom they engage in relationships for the purpose of victimization. However, paedophiles may also sexually abuse children in their own families.
- Paedophiles are sometime referred to as "fixated," "preferential," "predatory," "extrafamilial," or "nonfamilial."

### Non-paedophilic Child Molesters

- The non-predatory molester tends to be a man whose primary sexual attraction is toward adults, but who may molest children in a maladaptive attempt to meet emotional needs.
- Incest offenders are more likely to be non-paedophilic molesters
- Research has found that many heterosexual incest offenders have sexual interests that are indistinguishable from those of normal males.
- However, there are many research studies that indicate, under conditions of anonymous survey, guaranteed confidentiality, or polygraph, that approximately 60% of incest offenders also molest non-relative children.
- Data suggest that incestuous offenders, regardless of the gender of the victim, have lower numbers of victims and are less likely to be rearrested for new sex crimes after they've been convicted.
- Non-paedophilic molesters may turn to a child for sex out of a perceived inability to be close with an adult partner, out of poor self-esteem, or to escape feelings of powerlessness and loneliness.
- This type of offender often has appropriate (but dysfunctional) relationships with peers and may be married.
- These child molesters are sometimes called "regressed," "situational," or "opportunistic," and often are apprehended in incestuous situations.
- Outcome studies have demonstrated consistently low rates of recidivism for incestuous offenders. However, it is important to note that incest victims are among the least likely to report sexual crimes, and incest is one of the most damaging types of sexual abuse to victims.
- Intrafamilial offenders may be among those most likely to benefit from therapeutic intervention.

## APPENDIX C

### *Templates for archival data collection*

I used the following templates to record data from the files from the Hamilton trial and sentence register.

Archives New Zealand, Auckland Regional Office, Hamilton Trial and Sentence Register BCDG 15338/1 1915 to 1937 and BCDG 15338/2 1938 to 1972

Personal details: Name Age or DOB Profession Other	Record details: # of documents description of documents (formal, informal, typed etc) who wrote doc.	Charge, date and related details	Summary of content including: Victim details Who laid charges Characterization of offender Sexual norms / permissiveness My comments

Archives New Zealand, Auckland Regional Office, Hamilton Trial and Sentence Register BCDG 15338/2 1938 to 1972

Personal details: Name Age or DOB Profession Other	Record details: # of documents description of documents who wrote doc.	Charge, date and related details	Summary of content including: Victim details Who laid charges Characterization of offender Sexual norms / permissiveness My comments





## APPENDIX D

### *Demographics of eight archival case studies*

The following is a summary of the archival material from the Hamilton trial and sentence register

<i>Name of accused and victim(s) (pseudonym)</i>	<i>Age of accused / victims</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Modus operandi</i>	<i>Location of abuse</i>	<i>Relationship with victim</i>	<i>Verdict</i>
Chapman / Rosie & Emily	Unknown 5 & 6 years	Unknown	U	1923	Promise of lollies	Alongside picture theatre	Stranger	Guilty 5 years prison with hard labour
Watkins / Edwina	Unknown 6 years 10 months	Marine steward but employed as second chef	U	1923	Buying food from bakery; walk to the Domain	Domain	Stranger	Guilty 5 years prison with hard labour
White / Ruth	Unknown Unknown	Farm labour	U	1924	Picking plums	Farm house	Stranger	Guilty 3 years prison with hard labour
Moynahan / Eliza	25 5 years 8 months	Labourer	S	1928	Money	By the river	Stranger	Not guilty
Cooper / Victoria	54 12 years	Bushman	M	1941	Threat of industrial school	Home	Father / adoptive daughter	Not guilty
Spence / Betty	39 8 years 6 months	Labourer, baker, soldier	M	1943	Under darkness of movie theatre	Movie theatre	Stranger	Guilty 6 months prison with hard labour
Thurlow / Erin	53 Unknown	Unknown	M	1952	Isolation	In tent and at home	Father / daughter	Not guilty
Howell / Martin	Unknown 14 years	Butcher	S	1968	Gifts of extra money, condoms	In butcher shop and car	Employer / worker	Guilty Detention at Tokanui Hospital



## APPENDIX E1

### *Categorised newspaper articles on men who sexually abuse(d)*

The following news reports (New Zealand cases only) are taken from *The New Zealand Herald* unless indicated otherwise. These articles are analysed in Chapter Five. I classified the reports into nine categories (see Chapters Three and Five) with some items fitting into more than one category. A (P) following the title indicates the inclusion of at least one photograph.

#### Young abusers

Date	Title
08/05/07	Teenage sex offender drives mum, daughter from home
09/05/07	CYF checking 130 sex abusers' files
16/12/07	Young sex offenders turned around
Total: 3	

#### Grooming

21/03/06	Appeal on 'grooming for sex' sentence fails [aircraft engineer]
08/07/06	Abuser groomed girl for sex over 18 months: Judge says behaviour left teen angry, disturbed and probably scarred for life
16/08/07	Girl 'sexually abused while mother watched': Salesman's girlfriend groomed 13-year-old daughter as sexual plaything, court told
21/08/07	Man gets six months after grooming teenager for sex
Total: 4	

#### Released

13/03/05	Sex-case accused lives near school (P)
07/10/05	Dangerous paedophiles run free: Courts taking too long to issue supervision orders for sex-offenders let out of prison, says Corrections (P)
28/12/05	Secret locations for paroled sex offenders 'big trouble'

27/07/06	Freed sex abuser 'long-term risk'
13/08/06	\$200k to rejoin society (P)
02/04/08	Sex offender in home near school: Family with two girls furious at lack of any probation service monitoring of criminal
11/03/09	Sex attacker lived near two schools: Corrections thought primary school was adult philosophy training centre (P)
11/03/09	Parole Board unaware predator had moved before assault
Total: 8	

### Repeat

12/03/06	Freed predator abuses again
21/03/07	Repeat sex attacker jailed indefinitely: Risk of continued serious offending means public must be protected, says judge
09/02/08	Newly released inmate back in jail after sex attack on sleeping girl
Total: 3	

### Ousted sex offenders and compensation

27/09/05	Ousted paedophile sues for \$80,000: Police breached powers with leaflet warning public court told [beneficiary]
28/09/05	Leaflets stressed paedophile: Psychologist tells court police actions increased chances of reoffending
25/11/05	Police wife outs paedophile: Inquiry asks how sex offender's details were leaked to residents of a Christchurch suburb (P)
21/03/06	Child sex abuser awarded \$25,000: Court rules police invaded paedophile's privacy
26/03/06	Paedophile's payout opens door: Experts: Sex offenders get new privacy shield
Total: 5	

### Men in positions of trust / historic cases

05/12/05	Paedophile slips through state's vetting net [caregiver] (P)
13/12/05	Paedophile faces life in jail

11/03/06	Sex-abuse accused declines to testify: Christchurch religious brother facing more than 40 charges
18/03/06	Judge weeps over sex abuser's crimes: 'Reprehensible and revolting' attacks on 14 boys bring nine years in jail (P)
22/07/06	'No point' in jailing ex-cop in sex case: Judge defends sentence despite defendant's lack of remorse for indecently assaulting teenage girl at Rotorua thermal pool (P)
24/08/06	Mothers weep to hear stories of daughters' abuse: Music teacher jailed for indecently assaulting 12 young girls during private piano lessons (P)
09/09/06	Teacher faces sex and rape charges
10/09/06	Teacher hired despite charges
12/09/06	Teacher faces two fresh charges involving girls: Schools told it is up to them to check to the best of their ability the staff they employ
15/12/06	Fallout over predators who targeted young girls goes on: Rumour mill in full swing after two men are jailed for sex offences with 15-year-olds (teacher and computer technician) (Px3)
02/02/07	Teacher gets continued name secrecy
21/11/07	Intermediate school pupil tells court of teacher's kiss
17/08/07	CYF: Sex offender fit to care for girls: Father has turned his life around, says welfare agency after mother complains
22/09/07	Ex-camp leader jailed: Sex abuser who 'robbed the innocence' of boys aged 11 to 16 sentenced to 11 years in prison (P)
12/02/08	Teacher denies student-sex charges: Head of Maori studies 'breached environment of trust he created' (P)
18/03/08	Neighbour in court for 'touching' girl
08/05/08	Former teacher avoids jail (P)
12/08/08	Ex-candidate committed for trial (P)
28/08/08	Teacher admits sexual abuse but trial to continue
28/08/08	Ex-St John ambulance driver 'not a pervert'
30/08/08	Private lessons led to abuse, says ex-principal
07/03/09	Coach jailed over boy sex: League and softball man used position of trust to isolate youngsters for indecencies (P)

The following are two historical cases of child sex abuse and concern men in a position of trust. Four articles concern businessman Peter Stewart and three articles GP Ronald Bruce Vautier.

13/10/06	Prominent businessman to face trial on sex charges
30/01/07	Wide suppression in child-abuse case: Prominent Canterbury man faces seven charges relating to a girl from age 7 to 16
27/11/07	Visit from accused leads to sex charges
22/12/07	Sex abuser had a life to envy – until now: 'I made probably the biggest mistake of my life and we had sex' he told court (P)
13/02/08	Rich rapist 'will be all right' in prison (P)
28/04/09	Outrage at release of prominent child rapist: 'Paltry' time businessman has served in jail sends signal to abusers, campaigner says
18/02/08	Doctor on historic child sex charges (P)
19/02/08	Ban for sex-charge doctor
25/04/09	Child sex abuse GP named
Total: 31	

#### Brief newspaper reports

05/04/06	Paedophile fails to have conviction overturned
12/04/06	Paedophile denied leave to appeal
25/05/06 <i>The Dominion Post</i>	Offender sentenced (former music teacher)
12/09/06	Farmer on sex charges
14/12/06	Jail for sex with girls
16/02/07	Sex offender jailed
26/07/07	Man guilty on sex charges (former Auckland camp leader and St John ambulance officer)
17/08/07	Extradition for sex accused, 83
23/02/08	Crown says man lured girl, 12 (former would-be MP)
18/03/08	Sex case man named (Hawera man)
29/03/08	Jail for sex 'groomer'
18/08/08	Porn accused named (promising young Waikato motor racing

	driver)
12/12/08	Child sex offender must do 7 years
09/04/09	Youth counsellor jailed
30/04/09	Sex charges admitted (Waiouru army sergeant)
Total: 15	

#### Internet offending

26/08/06	Ex-councillor to appeal decision on child porn
07/09/06	Man with child porn on PC gets community work: Downloading pornographic images is not a crime without victims, says judge
08/02/07	Cracking children's computer code could save them from paedophiles
01/09/07 <i>The Waikato Times</i>	Porn library 'worst'
29/07/08	Child porn collector to serve sentence next to playcentre: Judge says jail would be very harsh for man in wheelchair but a lobby group is infuriated
10/08/08 <i>Sunday Star Times</i>	Child-porn teacher sorry amid legal scrap
03/08/09	Queen St cellphone antics expose paedophile's dark secrets
Total: 7	

#### Miscellaneous

12/04/07	Man in sex case loses claim over sacking
22/02/08	Village can't evict child sex offender
30/08/08	Conviction catches up with Kiwi sex offender: Dunedin man who made UK legal history finds it hard to slot back into hometown
Total: 3	

Total number of newspaper articles: 79





## APPENDIX E2

### **Media references**

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- Pope stalled paedophile case before coming to power (2010, April 10). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Porn accused named (2008, August 18). *The New Zealand Herald*.

- Porn library 'worst' (2007, September 1). *The Waikato Times*.
- Pray for Capill, parish urged (2005, June 13). *The Christchurch Press*.
- Prime Time (1993, June 22). *Television New Zealand*.
- Prime Time (1994, September 8). *Television New Zealand*.
- Private lessons led to abuse, says ex-principal (2008, August 30). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Prominent businessman to face trial on sex charges (2006, October 13). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Proposal for paedophile Capill's early release 'novel' - Parole Board (2008, June 27). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Queen St cellphone antics expose paedophile's dark secrets (2009, August 3). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Repeat sex attacker jailed indefinitely: Risk of continued serious offending means public must be protected, says judge (2007, March 21). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Request for inquiry in Peter Ellis case declined (2009, October 14). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Rich rapist 'will be all right' in prison (2008, February 13). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- 'Round the clock' minder for sex offender (2009, June 18). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Secret locations for paroled sex offenders 'big trouble' (2005, December 28). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex abuse claims told to mother (1993, May 4). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex abuser Capill denied parole (2009, October 6). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex abuser had a life to envy - until now: 'I made probably the biggest mistake of my life and we had sex' he told court (2007, December 22). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex attacker lived near two schools: Corrections thought primary school was adult philosophy training centre (2009, March 11). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex case man named (2008, March 18). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex charges admitted (2009, April 30). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex crimes spanned years says Crown (1992, November 3). *The New Zealand Herald*.

- Sex offender in home near school: Family with two girls furious at lack of any probation service monitoring of criminal (2008, April 2). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex offender jailed (2007, February 16). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex-abuse accused declines to testify: Christchurch religious brother facing more than 40 charges (2006, March 11). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sex-case accused lives near school (2005, March 13). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Sexual charges (1941, May 7). *The Waikato Times*.
- Six months' hard labour (1943, February 4). *The Waikato Times*.
- Teacher admits sexual abuse but trial to continue (2008, August 28). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Teacher denies student-sex charges: Head of Maori studies 'breached environment of trust he created' (2008, February 12). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Teacher faces sex and rape charges (2006, September 9). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Teacher faces two fresh charges involving girls: Schools told it is up to them to check to the best of their ability the staff they employ (2006, September 12). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Teacher gets continued name secrecy (2007, February 2). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Teacher hired despite charges (2006, September 10). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Tears and hugs as creche man found guilty (1993, June 7). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- Teen 'sexting' craze leading to child porn arrests in US (2009, January 14). *Times Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/>
- Teenage sex offender drives mum, daughter home (2007, May 8). *The New Zealand Herald*.
- The fall of Graham Capill (2005, June 29). *The Christchurch Press*.
- The importance of being earnest (1998, June 24). *The Waikato Times*.
- Theroux, L. (2009). A place for paedophiles. BBC.
- Verwahrungsinitiative wird umgesetzt (2006, June 20). *NZZ Online*. Retrieved from <http://www.nzz.ch/>
- Village can't evict child sex offender (2008, February 22). *The New Zealand Herald*.

Visit from accused leads to sex charges (2007, November 27). *The New Zealand Herald*.

Wide suppression in child-abuse case: Prominent Canterbury man faces seven charges relating to a girl from age 7 to 16 (2007, January 30). *The New Zealand Herald*.

Young sex offenders turned around (2007, December 12). *The New Zealand Herald*.

Youth counsellor jailed (2009, April 9). *The New Zealand Herald*.





## APPENDIX F

### *Media template*

This table illustrates my data recording method (described in Chapter Three) for the various news media data on the cases of Peter Ellis and Graham Capill.

Date of publication or broadcast	Title / Theme	Characters / sources	Summary / Plot synopsis My comments:



## APPENDIX G

### *Recruiting participants for the public focus groups*

Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Date

To

Dear

**Re: Focus group participants**

Thank you for agreeing to hand out some information sheets to your Toastmaster members at your next meeting.

Please find enclosed details about our research, the topic, time and place of the focus group and my contact details.

Your assistance in recruiting participants for my focus group is very much appreciated, thank you.

Kind regards

Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Encl.

Date

Dear Toastmaster member

**Re: Participants for focus group discussion**

Greetings and thank you for taking time to read this information.

I am a member of the First Impressions Toastmasters Club in Hamilton. I am also a graduate student at the University of Waikato and currently I am involved in research using focus group discussions. I am recruiting participants through various Toastmasters Clubs around the country. I have chosen Toastmasters to recruit participants because of their diverse membership and the fact that in general their members seem to enjoy robust discussions.

I am looking for participants who are willing to give up an hour and a half of their time and would be happy to share their views, beliefs and opinions. The topic of the discussion is 'sexual offenders'. A focus group is a discussion amongst a group of people where the moderator asks structured, open-ended questions in order to elicit maximum information about people's attitudes. The group will only be small, ideally about six participants. Following the discussion we would like participants to fill out a questionnaire.

If you would like to participate, or know of any other interested parties, I would love to hear from you. You can either contact me via e-mail or give me a phone call. If you have any questions I would be happy to provide more details.

My contact details:

e-mail:

phone:

Thank you again and I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Amanda M. Young-Hauser

## APPENDIX H

### *Letter of introduction*

Amanda M. Young-Hauser

ph:  
e-mail:

Date

Recipient's address

Dear

Re: Invitation to discussion

Thank you for considering participating in one of our focus group discussions to share ideas with others. This letter is to introduce myself and provide some information about the nature of focus groups and the topic under discussion.

I am a graduate student at the University of Waikato and I am in my second year of a three year post-graduate programme in community psychology. I will carry out five focus groups nationwide under the supervision of Dr Jo Thakker, Clinical Psychologist. For each focus group we would like to include up to eight participants in the discussion. We are looking for people who are happy to share their views and opinions in a non-judgemental environment that nurtures different perspectives. The duration of the discussion will be approximately one hour following which we would like to ask you to fill out a questionnaire. This should take no longer than 15 minutes.

A focus group is a discussion amongst a group of people where the moderator asks structured, open-ended questions in order to elicit maximum information. The conversation will be taped and notes will be taken, however, confidentiality is guaranteed.

You might be aware of recent changes in legislation with regards to sex offenders. Last year, for example, saw the introduction of the Extended Supervision Act 2004. The media also frequently reports on sex offenders, either when they appear in court or upon their release back into the community following a prison sentence. We are interested in learning about your views and opinion on sex offenders.

We understand that this is a particularly controversial subject and, for various reasons, people might experience very strong emotions and feelings with respect to this topic. However, if you feel you would like to be part of a focus group discussion, we would very much value your time and contribution. I will take the liberty to contact you again in the near future to find out about your decision and to answer any questions that you may have, or alternatively you could send me an e-mail to the above address.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda M. Young-Hauser

## APPENDIX I

### ***Consent form public focus group***

University of Waikato  
Psychology Department  
**CONSENT FORM**

Participant's copy

Research Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Focus Group Research on attitudes to sex offenders

Name of Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): \_\_\_ Dr J. Thakker

I have received an information sheet about this research project and the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee (Dr Robert Isler, phone: 838 4466 ext. 8401, e-mail r.isler@waikato.ac.nz)

Participant's

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

=====

University of Waikato  
Psychology Department  
**CONSENT FORM**

### **Researcher's copy**

Research Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Focus Group Research on attitudes to sex offenders

Name of Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): \_\_\_ Dr J. Thakker

I have received an information sheet about this research project and the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee.

Participant's \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## APPENDIX J

### *Public focus group research questions*

#### Question 1

- a) When you hear the words “sex offender”, what comes to your mind?
- b) How would you define a sex offender?

#### Question 2

- a) Most of us have an opinion on the topic of sexual offenders and sexual offences. I am interested to hear how have you formed your opinions? What is the source of your information?
- b) Which sources of information do you trust?

#### Question 3

- a) In recent times there have been some changes to the legislation with regards to sexual offenders in New Zealand. I am wondering what you know about these?
- b) What do you think of these changes?

#### Question 4

- a) One of the public debates is whether sex offenders can be rehabilitated or not. What is your opinion?
- b) Why or why not do you think that spending money on rehabilitation is money well spent?

#### Question 5

- a) When sex offenders are released into communities, the communities often react strongly and protest against the fact that a sexual offender is released into their midst. How would you feel if such a person was to be released into your neighbourhood?
- b) Could you tell me something about the concerns you would have with regards to a sexual offender being released back into the community?



## APPENDIX K

### *Transcription symbols*

I used the following transcription symbols for the public focus groups.

[ ]	Square brackets mark start and end of overlapping speech.
Underlining	Vocal emphasis
CAPITAL	Speech that is obviously louder than surrounding speech.
* *	Indicate obviously quieter speech
(possible)	Indicate where the words are doubtful or a best guess. Where they
(xxx)	Cannot be guessed at
(0.5)	Pauses in seconds
(.)	Micro pause, but too short to measure.
Hhh	Aspiration (out-breaths): the more the longer.
.hhh	Inspiration (in-breaths): the more the longer.
> <	Speed up talk.
=	No pause between speaker line; 'latching' of successive talk.
Heh heh	Voiced laughter.
(h)	Laughter within speech



## APPENDIX L1

### *Recruiting participants for the support people focus group*

October 2008

Dear SAFE Client

#### **Re: Focus Group participants for support people**

I would like to inform you that I intend to organise a focus group discussion with support people of men who sexually offended against children and would appreciate if you endorse and promote this project. The focus group is planned to take place on Thursday, 20 November, 2008, in Hamilton.

I am a PhD student at the University of Waikato and my overall research is looking at the reintegration of child sex offenders following release from prison, their experiences, the experiences of support people and the wider public's understandings of these issues. As you know support people play an important role; however research into the understanding of their experiences, feelings and needs has not been explored or validated to any significant degree. Your support person(s) can participate in the focus group discussion regardless whether or not you have been imprisoned because the emphasis is on their experience.

Recruitment for participants of the focus group will occur with the assistance of Maurice Jennings from SAFE. I recognise the sensitive and confidential nature of this research and I will ensure the anonymity of all participants and will also ensure that the person supported, i.e. you, cannot be identified.

Maurice Jennings will liaise with support people and the purpose of this letter is to tell you of my intention. I would appreciate if you could encourage your support person(s) to take part in my research.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Amanda M. Young-Hauser  
Doctoral Candidate



## APPENDIX L2

### *Information sheet for support people focus group participants*

#### Purpose of this research

This project is being carried out as a requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy degree by Amanda Young under the supervision of Dr D. Hodgetts and Dr C. Coleborne, at the Department of Psychology, University of Waikato / Te Whare Wananga o Waikato. The project has been reviewed and approved by the Waikato University Human Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking time to read about my research. I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group discussion. This leaflet tells you about my study, what is involved in my research and why I would like you to participate.

#### Research

The overall aim of my research is to explore processes of social reintegration of child sex offenders released from prison. As you are family / whanau, a friend or support person of a child sex offender I am interested to listen to your personal experiences and issues that you find particularly challenging. You can participate regardless whether the person you support has been imprisoned or not as the focus of the discussion is around your experience and not the offender's.

Prior to the start of the focus group discussion I will ask you to sign a consent form. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary and at any stage you can withdraw. The discussion should last no longer than two hours and will be audio-recorded with your permission so that I can transcribe it. The sound file will be downloaded for transcription onto the computer at my office (secured access with number code) at the University. The sound file will be erased as soon as the transcription has been completed. Your real name will be substituted with a letter and number (for example A1, A2, A3 etc) to protect your identity; apart from myself nobody else will be able to match your real name with your code. I will also blank out place names or names of other persons mentioned during the conversation to avoid identification.

At the conclusion of my research I will provide a written summary of my findings to research participants.

The focus group discussion will take place on Thursday, 20 November, 2008, 6pm, at Chartwell Cooperating Church – St Albans, cnr of Comries Road and Bellmont Ave. I will provide light refreshments.

#### How to participate in this focus group

To participate in this focus group either contact Maurice Jennings at SAFE or myself. Contact details are:

Maurice Jennings

Email:

Phone:

Email:

Daytime:



Mobile:

Should you have any queries about the research please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. The sharing of your experience in an honest and open discussion is very helpful to my research and much appreciated.

Thank you.

Amanda M. Young-Hauser  
Doctoral Candidate

## APPENDIX M

### *Consent form support people focus group*

University of Waikato  
Psychology Department  
**CONSENT FORM**  
**Participant's copy**

Research Project:\_\_\_\_\_Reintegration of child sexual offenders back into the community

Name of Researcher:\_\_\_\_\_Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): \_\_Dr D. Hodgetts, Dr C. Coleborne

I have received an information sheet about this research project and the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee.

Participant's

Name:\_\_\_\_\_Signature:\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_20/11/08

=====

University of Waikato  
Psychology Department  
**CONSENT FORM**  
**Researcher's copy**

Research Project:\_\_\_\_\_Reintegration of child sexual offenders back into the community

Name of Researcher:\_\_\_\_\_Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): \_\_Dr D. Hodgetts, Dr C. Coleborne

I have received an information sheet about this research project and the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee.

Participant's

\_\_\_\_\_Signature:\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_20/11/08\_\_\_\_\_Name:



## APPENDIX N

### *Support people focus group research questions*

- What motivates you to be a support person of a man who sexually abused a child / children?
  - Have you known the person before becoming involved as support person?
  - If yes, how has your relationship changed?
- How do you see your role as a support person?
  - Who “defines” the role?
    - In accordance with SAFE program, for example?
  - How important is your support to the person you support?
    - Support 100% or areas of doubts and worries?
  - How important is this to you?
  - Do you believe that men who sexually offended can change?
  - What are some of the obstacles encountered by you / person you support that have the potential to hamper progress (obstacles by institutions, organisations or individuals, employment, access to children).
- Is rehabilitation possible?
- Have your understandings of men who sexually abuse(d) children changed since your involvement as a support person?
  - What did you know beforehand?
    - What were / are your sources of information?
  - Describe a man who sexually abuses children?
  - What do you think of other men who sexually abuse(d) children?
- How has the involvement with a man who sexually abused a child / children impacted on you?
  - How do you make sense?
  - What support have / are you receiving?
  - What information have you received and who from?
  - What would be helpful to you?
  - What are your needs?
  - What are your biggest struggles?
  - Are your needs in terms of support for you, mental health etc met?
  - Coping strategies?
- When a conversation is around child sex abuse, how do you react?
  - Do you stand up for them?
  - Do you explain?
- What are your thoughts on the media and their representations of men who sexually abuse children?
- How is this type of abuse prevented?
- Anything you would like to add, share or voice your concern?



## APPENDIX O

### *Information sheet for participants from Te Piriti*

#### Purpose of this research

This project is being carried out as a requirement for a Doctor of Philosophy degree by Amanda Young under the supervision of Dr D. Hodgetts, Dr J. Thakker, and Dr C. Coleborne, at the Department of Psychology, University of Waikato / Te Whare Wananga o Waikato. The project has been reviewed and approved by the Waikato University Human Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking time to read about my research. I would like to invite you to take part in this project. This flyer tells you about my study, what is involved in my research and why I would like you to participate.

#### Research

The aim of my research is to explore processes of social reintegration of child sex offenders released from prison. I am interested to listen to your personal experiences prior to release from Te Piriti. In a conversation with you I will be asking open-ended questions that allow me to get a sense of your understanding, views, hopes and concerns that are on your mind with regards to your forthcoming release.

At our first face-to-face meeting I will ask you to sign a consent form. Participation in my research is entirely voluntary and at any stage you can withdraw. The conversation should take about an hour to an hour and a half. The conversation will be audio-recorded with your permission so that I can transcribe it. The sound file will be downloaded for transcription onto the computer at my office (secured access with number code) at the University. The sound file will be erased as soon as the transcription has been completed. Your real name will be substituted with a pseudonym to protect your identity; apart from myself nobody else will be able to match your real name with your pseudonym. I will also blank out place names or names of other people mentioned during the conversation to avoid your identification. Should I use a direct quote for special emphasis in my thesis I will only do so with your permission. The transcriptions will be kept in a locked cabinet in a secure office and will be destroyed after six years.

Three to six months following your release I would like to catch up with you to find out about your experience of living back in a community. With your permission your Parole Officer will provide me with your contact details. At the beginning of this conversation, which will be recorded again, I will summarise our first conversation. At this stage I will also invite your Parole Officer in a separate conversation to share his / her views with regards to the reintegration process.

At the conclusion of my research I will provide a written summary of my findings to research participants and I will present my findings to the Department of Corrections ensuring your anonymity.

Your participation

Your stay at Te Piriti indicates an end of your prison term. Thoughts of leaving a protected environment, re-gaining 'freedom', albeit in a restricted form to begin with, will very likely be a mixture of concerns, worries and hope. Taking part in this research will give you the opportunity to talk about your experience, how you feel about re-entering the community and what your perspectives are.

Please indicate to staff that you are interested in participating in this research project. I will be then contacted by staff and arrange a suitable time to meet.

Thank you.

Amanda M. Young-Hauser

## APPENDIX P

### *Consent form for participants from Te Piriti*

University of Waikato  
Psychology Department  
**CONSENT FORM**

#### Participant's copy

Research Project:\_\_\_\_\_Reintegration of child sexual offenders back into the community

Name of Researcher:\_\_\_\_\_Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): \_\_Dr D. Hodgetts, Dr J. Thakker, Dr C. Coleborne

I have received an information sheet about this research project and the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand the researcher wishes to have a follow-up interview after I am released, and I give my permission for CPS to give her my contact details for this purpose.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee.

Participant's Name:\_\_\_\_\_Signature:\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_

=====

University of Waikato  
Psychology Department  
**CONSENT FORM**

#### Researcher's copy

Research Project:\_\_\_\_\_Reintegration of child sexual offenders back into the community

Name of Researcher:\_\_\_\_\_Amanda M. Young-Hauser

Name of Supervisor (if applicable): \_\_Dr D. Hodgetts, Dr J. Thakker, Dr C. Coleborne

I have received an information sheet about this research project and the researcher has explained the study to me. I have had the chance to ask any questions and discuss my participation with other people. Any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand the researcher wishes to have a follow-up interview after I am released, and I give my permission for CPS to give her my contact details for this purpose.

I agree to participate in this research project and I understand that I may withdraw at any time. If I have any concerns about this project, I may contact the convenor of the Research and Ethics Committee.

Participant's Name:\_\_\_\_\_Signature:\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_





## APPENDIX Q

### *Conversation schedule Te Piriti*

#### **Question: 1**

##### **How about you start of by telling me about yourself?**

(start with childhood; upbringing; adults life)

- Tell me who was playing an important role at that stage in your life? Why is this?
- You have been talking a little about your work, but what activities did you pursue outside work?
- How would you describe yourself? For example, would say that you worry a lot, are you outgoing etc?

#### **Question: 2**

##### **Now I want you to think back to the time of the offending: Tell me about the period that led you here?**

- What feelings did you have at that time?
- What impact did this have on your life?
- What other consequences did this have for you?
- How did this impact on other people around you?
- Did it affect relationships? How?

#### **Question 3:**

##### **Now lets move on to the most recent period in your life: tell me about the time you have spent in prison?**

- What did you expect if anything when you entered prison?
- Describe the prison experience for me in terms of what you experienced as positive?
- Now tell me what was negative?
- Did you find it challenging to fit into the prison environment?
- You talked before about important people in your life. How have you been keeping in touch?
- How do you think they feel about you being here?
- Has anything helped you to improve your time in prison?

**Question: 4**

**I believe that you are now shortly before your release. How do you feel about this?**

- What are you most excited about when you think of your release?
- Is there anybody in particular you are looking forward to catching up with?  
(Alternatively: What does it mean to you having lost friends?)
- How do you imagine the day of your release will be?
- Do you have any concerns about returning to a community?
- Think back to the time you entered prison and now that you are shortly before your release, are you the same person?
- What has changed?
- Do you discuss your release with others (inmates or whanau / friends)? What do you talk about?
- What do you expect of yourself?
- Is your story similar or different to that of other inmates?  
Can you elaborate?

**Question: 5**

**You have been talking about expectations that you have when you get back into the community. Do you think the community has also expectations of you?**

- What assumptions do you think the public makes about a person who committed a sexual offence?  
What are they missing?
- How do you think these assumptions differ from somebody who has been in prison for another type of crime?
- What goes through your mind when you think about the publicity sex offenders get from the media?
- What media coverage did your case get?
- How do you think you will cope with this?
- What do you think the best outcome could be?
- Is there anything we have not discussed that you like to talk about?

## APPENDIX R

### *Follow up letter to probation officer*

To

October 2007

Dear

Re:

Following our phone conversation from ..... I would be grateful if you could pass on the enclosed envelope to .....

As discussed I would like to catch up with .....for a follow up conversation. I would appreciate if you could assist in negotiating a suitable time and venue. I am very mindful of .....’s other commitments and try to fit in with him. As such I would be happy to meet in the evening or on a Saturday.

My contact details are:

e-mail:

Mobile:

Office at University:

I am looking forward to hearing from you; alternatively I will contact you in a few days’ time.

Kind regards,

Amanda M. Young-Hauser  
*PhD Candidate*

Encl.



## APPENDIX S

### *Follow up letter to participant (ex Te Piriti)*

Private and confidential

To

Date

Dear

Re: Follow up interview

It has been nearly ..... months since I first met you at Te Piriti and I trust this finds you well.

As we discussed I would like to catch up with you for another conversation. We now have to negotiate a date, time and suitable venue and your probation officer,....., has agreed to assist us in this matter. I would like to ask you to suggest a convenient date and time that will not interfere with your other commitments. I am very flexible and try to fit in with you; therefore an evening or Saturday meeting would not be a problem. I can be reached at my office at the University, phone ..... , or you could pass on a message through your probation officer and I will liaise with .....

At our next meeting I will summarise what we have been talking previously and then would like to find out how you have been doing since your release.

I am looking forward to catching up with you in the near future.

Kind regards,

Amanda



## APPENDIX T

### *Follow up conversation schedule*

- A) Summarise 1<sup>st</sup> conversation
- B) Check demographics and other information
- C) General questions:
  - a. Tell me about the time since I last saw you?
    - i. Adjustment / employment / accommodation / support / stresses
    - ii. Probation & relapse prevention
    - iii. Skills learnt at TP now applying – any issues?
      - 1. Interaction with others who have not gone through treatment?
    - iv. Any negative experience due to offending history?
    - v. Any particular concerns?
    - vi. Function of offending: what was gained by offending?
    - vii. What made you decide to go to TP?
    - viii. How do you integrate offending past with your “self”?
    - ix. Where to from here?
- D) Individual questions
- E) ? Possibility of further follow up?





## APPENDIX U1

### *Participant 1: Tom*

#### First conversation April 20, 2007, at Te Piriti

Tom was born in 1969 to a couple who had a fling and his mother fell pregnant. Due to family pressure they married. He described his mother as violent and the union ended in divorce with his father and paternal grandparents sharing custody of him. A couple of years later, his father, who was in the army, re-married a woman with two daughters. A shift from a rural area to a big city was described by Tom as a “deliberate upheaval” to unsettle him. He was subjected to physical and verbal abuse by his alcoholic stepmother over the following eleven years. When he was eight years old he was bullied at school because he was short in stature and his cousin sexually abused him once. The last six months of this period he spent with his stepmother and her daughters alone as his father had moved out. This experience intensified Tom’s feelings of bitterness and anger towards his father, who was now living with his third partner and they had a son together. Tom moved in and stayed with them until he was 21.

Tom’s first marriage only lasted ten months. In hindsight he felt that neither he nor his wife was ready for marriage and despite his best efforts to make things work, “treating her like a princess”, they separated. He described this time as hitting rock bottom, feeling depressed, becoming even more reserved and losing self-confidence. Despite not having any desire to enter a new relationship he met a lady with a young daughter and within a short period of time they moved together. His new partner had left a violent relationship and was very jealous, and he commented that both of them carried a lot of “baggage”, meaning that they had unaddressed issues from their respective pasts. They entered counselling, moved house and got engaged despite their difficulties. It was around that time that her parents’ marriage dissolved and his future mother-in-law spent more and more time with them. He experienced her as taking up his partner’s time and intruding on their space. He felt trapped in a situation that was unacceptable to him but felt powerless to set clear boundaries between his mother-in-law and his new family, because, he felt, she had nowhere else to go to unload her problems. This resulted in many arguments between him and his partner, communication and intimacy deteriorated and Tom began to isolate himself. Her young daughter also felt increasingly marginalized and her and Tom became “very close”, which

soon let to his first offence. Tom and his partner proceeded to get married and he commented: “we just became a married couple dealing with the same issues, still unhappy, still fighting, still frustrated, still angry”.

Tom offended against his stepdaughter over a period of two years, with increasing frequency over the second year, and eventually she confided in the Church Youth Pastor. The day Tom’s abuse was disclosed he described as “one of the best days of my life because I knew I could stop now, because I did not have the ability to stop it”. However, he pleaded not guilty and the case went to Court. He thought the jury would have a difficult task to find him guilty due to lack of medical evidence (no penetration or intercourse had taken place).<sup>45</sup> Again he commented how happy he was now that he had to face the truth and pay for his crime; nevertheless he appealed the conviction. Following a couple of months at Mount Eden Prison he was moved to Rangipo Prison Farm. He used the time in prison to reflect but he still had hopes that his appeal might be successful. When this was declined he went to see the “sentence planner”, admitted his guilt and disclosed that he was sexually abused. As a result he received ACC funded counselling for eleven months, a process he described as being harder than attending treatment at Te Piriti because he had to unpack the past and deal with it. He spoke very highly of the female counsellor, a fact he thought was ironic because he felt betrayed by women all his life. He was eager to attend treatment at Te Piriti or alternatively he planned to attend a SAFE programme following his release. On “day release” from prison he went to meet staff from the SAFE programme where he was assessed. His father and stepmother also attended and for the first time Tom disclosed the extent of his offending to his family. This meeting was also an opportunity for Tom to tell his father how much he resented him; this was a turning point in their relationship, which then began to improve.

In our conversation Tom talked about his hobbies and interests: these centred mainly around sports, music and collectables / antiques, the latter being connected with his job in the second hand trade. He discussed with some pride his knowledge about period furniture. On occasions he mentioned friends who supported him throughout difficult times in his life. While at Te Piriti he wrote letters to family and friends admitting his offending, resulting in some friends

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<sup>45</sup> During a presentation at the SAFE symposium in May 2009 in Auckland I learnt that 80 per cent of children do not show physical signs despite vaginal penile penetration.

ending the contact. The relationship with his father continued to improve considerably and Tom now feels supported by him.

Tom described himself as a transformed man with a new outlook and purpose. He had embraced Christianity, which offers him moral standards and values. He had also reconciled with his first stepmother who visited him at Te Piriti. He was acutely aware of the protected environment of the unit and was keen to apply his newly learnt skills outside prison. At the time of the interview he had three days left until his release from the treatment unit, which he referred to as the “boot camp” with the “real mission” lying ahead of him. He stated that although he was very positive and excited, he was anxious having to leave a protected environment. In particular he was worried about his job prospects and how his offending history might impact on potential relationships with women. He was aware of the stigma attached to child sex offenders. He explained that he had changed but worried that people did not realize that he had undertaken a treatment programme and would continue to judge him solely by his past offending. He added that it would be difficult to change people’s attitudes towards child sex offenders because they wanted to protect their children. He thinks one way of educating the public and possibly changing the public’s perception might be an interactive approach between ex-offenders and communities with the former given a chance to talk about their lives, the treatment programme and their ability to change and remain safe without re-offending. He concluded the conversation by saying that he wanted an opportunity to work, find a new partner and be a good member of society.

#### Second conversation December 1, 2007, at his flat

Tom provided good instructions of how to find his place and I met with him on the first Saturday of December 2007. His current home was the sleep-out of friends who live in the bigger house next door. The small place consisted of a lounge area filled with gaming machines, a lounge suite, TV and stereo, a kitchen corner and a bedroom. We chatted while he made a cup of tea and when we sat down I asked for permission to turn on the MP3 player to record the conversation.

Tom described the transition from prison to freedom in detail and how he spent that first day. The first night at his new place he was unable to sleep because of the many new impressions, the strange noises and different smells. As he had savings of \$ 800.00 he did not receive the \$ 350.00 known as “steps to freedom”. After a fortnight he had spent all the money on basic necessities (he needed to renew his driver’s license, for example) and he needed to use his credit card before he received the benefit three weeks post-release.

Tom spoke highly of his supportive family and friends and said he was keeping himself busy. He had become a Christian while in prison and he continued to be involved with church activities, attending church on Sundays and belonging to the Christian Prison Ministry group who previously visited him in prison. They were aware of the nature of his offence, while the pastors at the church only knew that he was on parole. He also socialised on Friday nights with a friend he met at Te Piriti; they usually get together for a drink, have a meal and wander around town. In the course of our conversation Tom talked about the problems and challenges his friend faced with regards to his children and the barriers Child Youth and Family (CYF) put in place. Tom himself holds a negative view of CYF and also had a negative experience with the department: he has a female friend whom he knew since childhood because their fathers joined the Air Force at the same time. She visited him on alternate weeks at Te Piriti. Since Tom’s release they had regular contact on weekends when her young children spent time with their father – she separated from her husband a year ago. This friend belonged to a church and when the pastor’s wife found out that she is friendly with a convicted child sex offender she got CYF involved. Although Tom said he had done nothing wrong and never saw her with the children he was indirectly investigated and in the end his probation officer had to intervene in his support; she suggested that he sign a non-association paper (from his female friend) in order to protect himself, which he did. He now had lost a valuable support person and will have no contact whatsoever with her until the end of his parole in December 2008. He expressed his disappointment at the fact that CYF is a Government department just like Corrections and that the two seem to work against each other in a counter-productive fashion rather than with one another. He said that he was judged by people who do not know him, that he was classed as low-risk and that he would have been happy to talk to anybody were he approached. Tom added that his friend has a couple of boys and that his only victim was a girl.

His stepsister and husband offered him a job when he was released from prison. They were preparing to open a second hand car yard and he worked there for minimal pay. The business however failed to thrive and after three months he parted amicably. The following two months he spent looking for jobs, mainly over the internet. He had a couple of job interviews, which he felt went well, however he did not find employment. He became frustrated and felt that he was stagnating. One day he decided to phone up a Mitre 10 Mega Store to see whether there were any vacancies. This initiative led to a position and Tom started working two weeks prior to our meeting. He was very pleased and happy that he had a steady position and income and was planning to move out of the current accommodation into his own place with the approval of his probation officer.

Throughout the conversation Tom talked about his “new” self as somebody he likes and, although regretting every single day what he had done to his victim, felt that he was able to move forward and live a good life. As a next big step he hoped to meet a partner and enter into a relationship, he added however, that there were potential difficulties due to the fact that many women around his age group were likely to have young children. He was also very apprehensive about disclosing his past and said that even if he found somebody who liked him despite his offending, her family and friends might feel otherwise.

Tom had no grand plans for the future other than paying off his credit card, establishing himself in his work, move flats and start dating. He has excellent support from friends and family and said there was no reason for him to ever go down that road of offending ever again. He was very confident that he had good coping skills and that he just wanted to get on with life and be happy. As far as he was aware he was still married at the time of the conversation, and neither his wife nor her lawyer had approached him about a divorce. One of the more difficult prospects was that he might have to face his stepdaughter one day but said that he would be happy to take full responsibility and talk to her. He thought it was ironic that he met the biological father of his stepdaughter, who was also imprisoned for the same offence, though not against his own daughter.

Tom was a prolific narrator and he covered most areas without prompts and only few questions from me. Towards the conclusion of our conversation I completed the data for the spreadsheet I made. I asked whether he would be agreeable to be called in six months or so for a chat and he was very happy for me to do that. He expressed his willingness to being involved in more research in the hope that this might lead to an amelioration of the reputation and stereotypical views of men who sexually offend(ed) against children.

## APPENDIX U2

### *Participant 2: Wiremu*

#### First conversation April 20, 2007, at Te Piriti

Wiremu grew up in a large Māori family with his parents following the Mormon faith. His father was very knowledgeable in tikanga Māori and an excellent narrator. Wiremu had a good relationship with his parents and siblings and he formed strong bonds with the three brothers living at home when he grew up. He enjoyed sports while at school, made friends easily and was an outgoing “noisy type of individual”. He described witnessing his older brother masturbate and said he was sworn to secrecy not tell his parents. A few years later, when he was about 11 years old, he got himself a job selling newspapers and one day on his way home he was sexually abused by a man in a public toilet. He did not equate this, or the earlier experience, as abuse until he hit puberty when he started masturbating, a behaviour that he found hard to control.

Wiremu was a foundry worker and married at the age of 20. He has one son and two daughters from this marriage. At the time of his offending he was living with a new partner who had three daughters and he abused the youngest over a period of about two years. During the time leading up to his first offence he and his partner argued on occasions, with Wiremu feeling particularly hurt by her remark that she would return to her former husband if he would take her back. His children and his partner’s children did not get on; therefore they had the children separately, which caused frictions between the couple. He described the first time he touched his victim indecently, adding that he lost control of his thoughts and action. He felt guilty and surprised at how easy it was. He apologised to the girl for what he had done and that he had hurt her, but he continued to take advantage of her. Three years elapsed between the time he stopped offending and her reporting the abuse. When he was contacted by the police he was prepared for this and admitted his offending.

His family was stunned to learn about his offending, however, his sisters disclosed that they too had been sexually abused. His own children were disappointed, shocked and disgusted to find out that their father was a child sex offender. They have had little to do with him in particular since he came to Te Piriti. His siblings supported him. Wiremu disclosed his offending to a friend who



has also been very loyal and maintained contact with him throughout his prison term. He was keen to receive treatment but first had to come to terms with the fact that he was going to prison as a child sex offender, a prospect that concerned him. While in mainstream prison he did not tell anybody about the nature of his crime. Some of his fears about the prison culture were confirmed. He talked about some of the degrading experiences he went through. Wiremu went from Mount Eden to Wanganui Prison before attending Te Piriti. He spent his time inside “soul searching” and said that he “turned to religion, obviously”.

At the time of our conversation Wiremu was three days away from being released. He described how the Te Piriti community was counting the days for him and he gave a synopsis of the time spent in this unit from the moment he entered and being introduced, to his farewell where he was able to thank the guys for their support. He had a job lined up and he was looking forward to working and earning some money. The treatment he received at Te Piriti helped him to understand why he offended, to deal with underlying issues and to make changes. He felt more confident and positive about his future and planned a big whanau hui for those who could not attend the previous hui organised through Te Piriti. He was anxious to stay clear from old associates who were involved in drugs. He was not too concerned with regards to public views of child sex offenders and felt that the media tended to focus on prominent cases only. His biggest concern and hope was to mend bridges with his children, which he conceded would be a slow process in particular with his oldest daughter. Overall he was happy to have received treatment, set himself good goals and was looking forward to catching up with his family.

#### Second conversation November 27, 2007, at the Community Probation Centre

I met Wiremu for the second time on Tuesday, 27/11/07, at the Probation Centre where we used one of the interview offices. Despite my reservations about location and privacy Wiremu seemed to talk freely. He opened the conversation by telling me about his struggles to obtain employment. While he talked I asked for permission to turn on the MP3 player to record the conversation. I did not adhere to my (interview) schedule as I felt it would interrupt the flow of the conversation, which covered most of the questions I had prepared anyway. It was

only towards the end of the discussion that I asked questions that we had not covered. He was the first follow up interview I conducted and I did summarise our previous conversation about two thirds into the conversation, however, I feel that this did not work very well judging by his posture (he was leaning back in his chair with his arms crossed).

Wiremu continued his narrative from where he had left off just over six months ago. He was released on Monday, 23/04/07, and started to work on that day for his brother. He also went to Work and Income (WINZ) to sign up for the unemployment benefit. Wiremu worked for his brother "for love" as he called it, his brother and sister-in-law provided board in return. After about five weeks he ended up paying his brother \$100.00 board and soon after Wiremu felt that it was time to move on and find himself a proper job. He had ideas of attending Te Wānanga o Aotearoa to do a te reo language course, however, he found out that he could not get a student loan. As he mentioned later in the conversation learning te reo was still something he wanted to pursue. This seemed important to him because younger generations looked upon him as a leader on a Marae and expected him to speak te reo.

Hunting for a job was challenging and frustrating analogical to hitting a brick wall due to his past offence history. He had numerous interviews but once he had to disclose the fact that he had been in prison for child sex offending his chances of finding work diminished, often he would not even hear back from a prospective employer. In the end he got a job at Fisher & Paykel, obtained through Allied Work Force. He was paid a minimum wage of \$ 12.50 gross / \$ 11.00 net and he needed to work between 50 and 58 hours a week to get \$ 600.00. When he found alternative employment at an AFFCO tannery, he took up this offer because it paid more.

In our first conversation Wiremu told me that he became involved with church while in prison. I enquired whether he attended church since his release. Wiremu has been brought up as a Mormon and was an active church member between the ages of 17 and 25. According to him, Latter-day Saints (LDS) members did not visit the prison and he was part of another denomination while inside, but rejoined LDS on his release. He attended church only for a couple of months and was telling me that he had to go through a big church meeting with elders and it

was ruled that he could attend church but not actively participate until his parole ended. Subsequently he drifted out of church but said that he still gets visits from church members.

Wiremu spent some of his spare time at the local pub where he socialises with old friends. He made it however clear that he did not associate with a lot of previous mates, in particular those with gang and drug connections. He had been harassed on numerous occasions by old acquaintances while in the pub, in particular by a woman whom he previously regarded as a friend, calling him "that paedophile". One day he took his folder containing all his reports, assignments and psychological assessment with him to the pub and put it in front of her telling her to read it all and to leave him in peace in future because he had accepted his guilt, taken his punishment and addressed his problems. He frequently socialised with his best mate who plays in a band and they have jam sessions with Wiremu singing.

His brother-in-law and sister organised a hui to welcome him back with most of his immediate family turning up, except, he said, those he wanted most to attend: his children. He made contact with his three children but his son said he needed more space and was "assessing him", his oldest daughter did not want anything to do with him and even changed her name, while he had the most contact with his youngest daughter who used to stay with him over weekends but was busy now with a new partner. He has five grandchildren but has no contact with them.

Wiremu was saving money in order to obtain his truck license. The job in the tannery is seasonal work and in about 19 weeks he will need to look for alternative employment. He considers living in Australia particularly in view of his children's alienation and will make some inquiries whether this is possible in light of his convictions.

Wiremu agreed to being called every now and then for a follow up phone conversation.

## APPENDIX U3

### *Participant 3: Jedi*

#### First conversation April 30, 2007, at Te Piriti

Jedi, a reference to a character in the Star Wars movies, selected his own pseudonym. Prior to our official conversation Jedi inquired about the MP3 players, showing an interest in the new technology. He also initiated a conversation on media days held at Kia Marama where he attended the programme before being transferred to Te Piriti. At this point I asked for permission to record the conversation and Jedi began by telling me how he experienced the media days at Kia Marama. He felt that the public often had a one-sided, negative view of the sex offender treatment programme. Engaging child sex offenders (who have gone through the programme) in public conversations to highlight the possibilities that people can and do change, offers, he felt, a new perspective to stereotypical views about child sex offenders. The media days had potential for educating the wider public, however he conceded that the other side of the story was not something the public was necessarily eager to hear. Towards the conclusion of the conversation he said that he would go on talkback shows as a devil's advocate and challenge some of the stereotypical views the public has about child sex offenders.

He viewed the stigma attached to Kia Marama and Te Piriti as detrimental to reintegration in particular with regards to accommodation. In addition Jedi commented on the difficulties getting employment because he had sexually abused a child. He felt that prisons in general, Kia Marama and Te Piriti in particular, should invite agencies for a dialogue to demonstrate that their offences did not prevent them from being good and efficient employees. Staff at Kia Marama, he thought, was more proactive and getting day parole was easier than at Te Piriti.

Jedi, the youngest of three boys, was born in Auckland and his parents, whom he felt did not have the greatest parenting skills, moved frequently. This and the fact that he was "cotton woolled" by his parents had prevented him from acquiring good socialising skills and he experienced problems making friends. He did not do well academically and failed School Certificate three times. Things deteriorated and he started offending between 1978 and 1982 when he was 16,

17 and 18. He never used physical force but manipulation and coercion, and the offending left him with ambiguous feelings of satisfaction taking away his own pains and the knowledge that he was not supposed to feel good about this. However, he was charged for something that occurred in 1995, which he described as consensual sex with somebody over the age of 16. He felt that he was convicted for his earlier offences too, for which he takes ownership, rather than the latest incident. He described this as a “stitch up” and on occasions he contemplated taking this to the Court of Appeal claiming that he had evidence but conceded that he just wanted to get on with life.

Jedi then continued to describe at length his family’s dynamics, particularly emphasising his mother’s domineering personality and manners that always upset someone. He repeatedly expressed his respect for his father who started as a diesel mechanic and became a consultant civil engineer frequently working overseas. He stated that his father sacrificed a lot to maintain stability at home. His oldest brother attended university and his middle brother excelled at sports, however, got involved with drugs and later committed suicide. Jedi worked as a glazier. He spent most of his life trying to figure out what his positive traits are and what his niche in life might be. Only once he left home he began to get a sense of his own identity. He enjoys motorbikes and the camaraderie he shared with other motorbike enthusiasts.

He spent his prison time keeping himself “proactive and not allowing this place to get to me” and he never disclosed the nature of his crime while in mainstream prison. He was just focusing on doing his lag and people he met kept him going, some of them he planned to keep in touch following his release. He will be assisted by the Prisoners’ Aid Society and his parents will return from Australia for a period of time to support him. Jedi felt that he became a lot wiser and was now listening to an age appropriate inner voice rather than that of an 18 year old. He was in no rush to find a job and explained that he needed time to re-settle and re-humanise himself. One of his biggest concerns was to meet somebody who would recognise him from his past but he was confident that he would be able to blend in as he did not stand out. He was concerned how a potential partner might react to the disclosure about his past. He was particularly looking forward to getting a decent car.

The community, he reflected, expected him to stay safe. The public should not be overly critical of child sex offenders instead realise that they made mistakes but in fact they were not different from anyone else. Jedi was classed as a high risk offender and this, he said, made him even more determined to succeed. He felt that low risk offenders had the tendency to become complacent and therefore had a higher likelihood to re-offend. He planned to be mindful of his thoughts and actions at all times. To the question about media and child sex offender he cited McIntosh whom he met in Wanganui Prison, and whom he felt was treated harshly by the media. The media was predominantly focusing on negative aspects rather than positive ones. He saw public education as a crucial instrument to inform people that sex offenders are not bad people: they have only made bad choices but they can successfully change that behaviour. He also saw a role for government agencies to help break down public attitudes. He added that the “steps to freedom” of \$ 350.00 was a joke that would not allow people with no other financial mean to stay straight due to the costs of daily living.

#### Second conversation November 27, 2007, at his studio

Jedi agreed to meet me one evening following work. He invited me to his place on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of an inner city apartment / hotel block, a minute studio overlooking the next building. He waited for me at the reception. The studio contained a kitchen which was the length of the entrance corridor, a small table with two chairs, a bed, taking up most of the studio's space, TV and stereo. The studio was furnished. He had stayed in accommodation provided by PARS prior to moving in the studio. Conversation was easy and while he made a cup of coffee I turned the MP3 player on with his permission.

He talked about his work and the struggles and knock backs he had looking for employment. Compared to the other participants in my research Jedi had been in jail the longest for nearly 10 years. Because he was living in the inner city transport or the lack thereof became an issue and he needed transportation in order to find employment. Initially his Probation Officer was not in favour arguing that he was becoming mobile too soon. However, there was no other solution to this than getting a motorbike. His first job did not pay very well, and then he found employment working as a glazier – a job he did prior to imprisonment. Upon

being told that he just got out of jail his employer wanted to know only whether he went in for murder or theft and was satisfied when he denied this.

Jedi worked half days on Saturday to earn some extra money. He is a member of a motorcycle club and goes for rides on most weekends. He has few friends, mainly men he met in prison, and they occasionally go out for meal or a drink. He did not have many friends from his past and his parents and brother live in Australia. His parents came to New Zealand to support him when he first was released and his brother was coming over for business shortly and was planning to catch up with him. His brother is married and has two young children, whom he has never met. He was unsure whether his sister-in-law had been informed about his past. His parents will visit again in the New Year but he expressed his disappointment that they did not come for Christmas. He hoped to find some casual work over the festive period to “kill time” and that the holidays were just like any other days to him.

I wanted some clarification as to why he started at Kia Marama and ended up in Te Piriti. He did the entire treatment at Kia Marama but was transferred to Te Piriti in preparation for his release in Auckland. Jedi also elaborated on his two court cases, the first of which was a hung jury, and he maintained that he had been convicted falsely as a child sex offender because the victim was over 16. He said that he had a “107” (of the Parole Act) put on him but this was removed following a High Court appeal because of a blunder with regards to the victim’s age. He then was released about six months short of his full sentence and now the standard conditions of release only apply. Jedi is classed as high risk and one of the parole conditions was that he would be re-assessed by a psychologist in the community. I also learnt that he had been seen on and off by psychologists since the age of 5, initially for behavioural problems.

He felt that it was an advantage to live in the inner city where there were fewer children around apart from the school holidays. Jedi has no big plans other than saving some money and taking one day at the time, keeping himself safe and not becoming complacent. He was keen to meet somebody special but said that this was not on his high priority list.

## APPENDIX U4

### *Participant 4: Wayne*

First conversation April 30, 2007, at Te Piriti

Wayne grew up in Hawkes Bay in a large family of 12 siblings. His family, which he described as dysfunctional, was very insular: he does not know any of his relatives and had never met his grandparents. His father, a war veteran on a war pension, was violent towards his children and wife and sexually abused his daughters. Wayne himself was sexually abused by two brothers and a sister. The family frequently shifted, affecting Wayne's school performance and socialising skills. His siblings left home as soon as they were able to and the family drifted apart. Wayne, however, felt sorry for his parents and stayed home due to his parents' ill health. His mother died at the age of 45 when Wayne was 19 and he continued to support his father. He took on labouring work but was unable to stick with a job for any length of time.

Wayne talked about his mates but said he had no real friends at that time. He enjoyed fishing and hunting and was also smoking marijuana. He has one son from his first relationship but when he met his new partner it became increasingly difficult to see him and he felt manipulated by the two women. Wayne has also two sons with his new partner. At that stage life was pretty hectic, leaving little time for himself. He increased his marijuana smoking, was reading pornography, working on his cars and isolating himself. He described this time as living from day to day without any future plans, feeling trapped and going around in circles. His relationship with his partner deteriorated and there was little communication. It was around this time that Wayne started to offend. He now ran his own business and felt that things improved and were going good; however, he handed himself in to the police because of his guilt and love for his partner.

As he started to come to terms with the seriousness of his offending, what he had done to his wife and sons and going to jail as a child sex offender he became stressed and depressed and spent the first three months in the prison self harm unit. He felt he needed to get out of mainstream prison where child sex offenders were hated by fellow prisoners and staff alike. He claimed that wardens showed other inmates the files of sex offenders with the consequences that they got



beaten up in the yard, called names at night and generally got tormented. During that time he felt very vulnerable and “broken” having to come to terms with his offending. He was reading the bible and the only visit he had was from a pastor as his family was unaware of him being in jail. He built a rapport with the pastor whom he described as non-judgemental and somebody he could trust. When the minister passed away unexpectedly he was very upset but at about the same time his sisters started to visit him. A positive outcome of Wayne’s conviction was that this brought some of his family back together.

Arriving at Te Piriti was a relief for Wayne, as this provided him with a sense of safety; he felt that he could relax and at long last put his cards on the table and openly admit the nature of his crime. While in prison he worked in the kitchen and was looking forward to doing the treatment program. This provided him with a lot of insight about himself, gave some answers as to why he offended and taught him skills such as how to communicate and deal with personal problems. Wayne made new friends while inside and was grateful for his supportive siblings. At the time of the interview he was writing letters in order to find accommodation: although one of his sisters’ offered him accommodation this was out of the question because of young children in the household. Wayne applied to various boarding houses and the New Zealand Prison Aid and Rehabilitation Society but expressed his frustration at the lack of suitable accommodation. He concluded the program at Te Piriti nine months ago and had been unable to find housing.

Wayne expressed hope for his future with the words “I have got a vision now”. He had plans working in the housing industry and helping his oldest son, talking to him and keeping him safe. He had no contact with his younger two boys because he offended against his wife’s sister but he hoped to rebuild relationships one day when they were ready for it. Wayne was looking forward to talking to his siblings and addressing issues from the past. His main concerns were to keep himself motivated and to stay away from the wrong crowd.

With regards to the public’s opinion on child sex offenders he felt that they were entitled to their views and that this was something he had to accept, after all, he added “I would probably feel the same if I was in their shoes”. However, he felt it was unfair to an extent as he (and other child sex offenders) had attended a treatment program yet public opinion was unlikely to change because what they

did was one of the worst things. He felt he was equipped with adequate coping strategies to avoid confrontations should he be challenged with regards to his offending. He felt positive about his future and said that Te Piriti gave him the opportunity to unburden himself and he was keen to put his newly acquired skills into practice.

Second conversation April 18, 2008, at the Probation Service Centre

It took three attempts (and trips) to catch up with Wayne. Although we did discuss reintegration issues this conversation offered an unexpected opportunity and opening for me to learn more about his position of an abuser and victim. From the first conversation I was aware that he had been abused but unaware about the extent of abuse that occurred in his family.

Wayne was released from jail in August of the previous year, four months following my first conversation with him. He had to stay in prison for a further four months due to the lack of appropriate accommodation. He felt let down by the system and did not believe that he was leaving prison until he was sitting in the car driving away from Auckland prison. He recounted that while he was waiting to be picked up a staff member told him that there had been a mistake and he would not be released. Although this was meant as a joke he believed it and felt devastated. He has little support in the city and got picked up by the father of a friend who dropped him off at the boarding house where he still lives.

His first priority was to obtain work and he was able to get a job as a labourer working seven days a week. He did that for some time but recently changed jobs; he is now stripping frames and doing a variety of jobs. His employer knows that he has been in prison but did not inquire about the nature of his offending. Wayne has not yet been confronted about his past. Apart from the contact at relapse prevention he has no contact with former inmates, although he has some of their phone numbers in case he needs to talk. He explained that in prison one became friendly with people because there was no other choice, but now he was able to build up relationships with people of his preference. His oldest son, aged 16 years, is living in the same city. He sees him on occasions but said that he is just starting out in the workforce and has his own life but that he would be there for

him. Wayne has a vision to own a house with his son one day. He has two younger sons but has no contact with them, although he is thinking about them frequently.

Wayne's siblings live elsewhere in the North Island and he is in close contact with some of his sisters. As I understand, all his sisters had been sexually abused by their father. Wayne himself had been sexually abused by two brothers. He confronted one before he went into prison but told him that he forgave him. While inside this brother visited and Wayne suspected that something was wrong because of the way he said goodbye and kissed him. Two weeks later he learnt that his brother took his life. Wayne said that his brother believed he was in prison because of him. His brother received counselling for over six months but, as Wayne put it "would not let anyone in". There is another brother Wayne would like to catch up and talk but he said he disappeared and it was unlikely that he would ever see him again. As I understand his sisters also wanted to confront him. We talked at length about ways and possibilities of seeking help for sexual offending. He suggested that there were few agencies to turn to apart from SAFE / STOP and to find out about their existence was a mission. Before his court appearance Wayne attended a SAFE programme but it took some "detective" work to find out about it. He suggested that many sex offenders might be very amenable to seek help but did not know how to go about or fear prison. Therefore they do not disclose and possibly continue offending because they do not know how to stop it.

I asked what the possible role of women was with regards to offending. He said that his second partner, whose under-aged sister he abused, had no idea what was going on. However, he confined in his first partner, a victim of sex abuse herself, following the first time he abused her daughter. Although they separated following disclosure he said that she dropped the kids off a fortnight later, indicating that she should never have trusted him. He also wondered why his mother never did anything about the abuse that went on in his house because she knew.

Wayne is on probation until mid of June. He just had a new probation officer allocated, which unsettled him because he built up a good rapport with his first probation officer. He is positive about the future, is able to unload issues as they

come along but overall carries the burden of being an abuse victim and an abuser. He continues to receive ACC counselling and uses relapse prevention to good effect.

As he recently lost his mobile phone I have got no way of keeping in touch with him once he leaves his current accommodation and finishes probation. I asked whether I could call him again in future. He took my contact details and promised to keep in touch. Time will tell.



## APPENDIX U5

### *Participant 5: Papa*

#### First conversation May 1, 2007, at Te Piriti

The conversation with Papa started very factual: "I am 43 years old, I have been in prison since 01/11/01 and I have got nine years with a non-parole of five". He is from a big Māori family and is the youngest child. He went to live with his brother in Auckland at the age of 14 and then went to Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand with his brother who was in the army. He planned to do basic army training before joining the water police but, following a visit to see his sisters in Australia, stayed there because he got paid good money for a job he enjoyed doing: driving a bus. He met his wife, who is also from a big Māori family, in Australia and they have two daughters, the older is his step-daughter, the younger his biological daughter. Papa tells has three mokopuna (grandchildren).

He described his upbringing as pretty good; his mother passed away in 2000 before he went to prison and his father is still alive. He is particularly close to two of his brothers and some friends from Australia who stand by him but expect him to do something about his offending behaviour. His friends and family, in particular his wife, daughter and stepdaughter, whom he called the three ladies in his life, are his greatest motivations for doing this journey and stay drug free in future. His stepdaughter, who was his victim, was also supporting him. His wife was put in a difficult situation: because she supported him her family disowned her and his family blamed her for his offending. Papa and his wife separated a couple of years ago and she has embarked on journey of self-discovery. Although they are still friends he understands her and is philosophical about the situation, however, later in the conversation he expressed hope that they might be able to re-build their relationship.

While in Australia he was working long hours as a driver, he had a second job as a bouncer. To chill out he used marijuana, which disinhibited him and, as he put it, made offending against his stepdaughter easier. He had black and white visions of how his family should operate and if things were not done his way he became aggressive and verbally abusive. He manipulated people around him and justified his behaviour and offending by blaming work, his wife and children. He frequented pubs not so much to drink but to pick fights by provoking

situations. He offended by manipulating and bullying everybody around him so he would be able to get his way.

At the time his family first learnt about the abuse the extended family tried to help by exposing him to the impacts his offending had on everybody. He agreed but ultimately just felt sorry for himself and carried on offending. This caused a lot of mistrust in the family and eventually his stepdaughter went to the police. When he found out he handed himself in and he has been in prison ever since. Prior to his court appearance, while in prison, Papa was confronted by his wife who told him to plead guilty and be “pono” meaning straight up, the former was easy and with the latter he was struggling because he reverted to his old attitudes. He was scared going to prison but did not conceal the nature of his crime, instead he announced that he was addressing the issues and that he wanted to change, and thus gained the respect from prison inmates. Papa embarked on a journey of self-discovery, taking responsibility for his crime, scrutinising his past behaviour in order to understand and learn from his mistakes. He spent time in the Māori Focus Unit, which helped him to reconnect with his roots and understand who he was. During much of the conversation Papa talked about his journey, symbolised by good and evil sitting on each of his shoulders. He explained that he was his own worst enemy and that evil needed to stay there in order for him to keep an eye on it, then things would be alright.

He also instigated support for fellow prisoners and became very proactive talking to government representatives in an effort to get various agencies to collaborate. He took a “no nonsense” approach, was straight up with fellow inmates and expected them to do the same. A group of prisoners including Papa recognised a need to form a support group outside prison for inmates who were released and needed some direction. He felt that ex-convicts had the best tools to keep other ex-convicts out of trouble because they had the insight and knowledge.

Papa had a job and accommodation sorted. His main concerns following release are readjustment to the outside and facing the extended family. He was looking forward to working outdoors and talked about fishing and travelling the country.

Papa described his journey as “awesome” but ironic because he had to go to jail to discover who he is, how to communicate, listen and interact with others in a

safe, conducive manner. He used the conversations he had with other inmates as illustrations and parables for himself within a tikanga Maori framework of “whakaoranga” or healing and redemption. He named his immediate family and close friends as the main motivators to do well outside and he planned to support his family and grandchildren and to keep them away from prison. He also intends to talk to groups, in particular women, to raise awareness about child sexual offending and not to be afraid to speak out therefore preventing the offending and at the same time helping the offender.

With regards to the media’s portrayal of child sex offenders he said that those who are repeat offenders deserve “bad press” but that the media should not brand all child sex offenders as predatory and paedophile and should acknowledge that people can change, in particular those who have addressed their offending by attending a treatment programme.

#### Second conversation May 8, 2008, at the Community Probation Centre

Papa and I met following his monthly relapse prevention meeting at the Community Probation Centre. I encountered Bruce again, who also attended relapse prevention. We chatted while Papa added money to the parking meter. When Papa returned we made our way to the interviewing room. Once there, he greeted me again, which I took as a symbolic act to give me permission to begin our follow up conversation. The interview room was small and narrow and Papa elected to sit on the sofa and I sat on the chair. Conversation was easy and he started by telling me about his whanau hui (family meeting) he had upon his release. This was an opportunity for the family to make explicit what they expected from him within the terms of his conditions and to demonstrate his probation officer the support he has from his extended family.

Papa reflected on his last night inside. He said a karakia (prayer) leaving prison and descried the moment walking out of confinement as unreal and hassle free unlike when entering prison. A sister and brother picked him up and, unbeknown to him, his daughter, an emotional moment of reunion. The first stop on their way home was a hospital visit to his sick father. Papa was apprehensive being surrounded by lots of people all of a sudden but said it “felt like I have been away on holiday overseas and I have just come back home”.



His whanau and work are two important aspects of Papa's life. At the time of the conversation he was living with two cousins but, he felt, it was time to return to his hometown, a move encouraged by his whanau and approved by probation. He ensured that his victim, who lives in the same town, has been contacted and invited to comment on his proposition. She has no objection to his intention to live in the same town as long as he keeps his distance. Papa continues on the journey he started in prison, growing, understanding and building bridges with his family. He interacts frequently with his extended family, including children. It appears that his whanau is well aware of his past offending history. He is also mindful of the rights and needs of his victim, who is part of the same whanau. He illustrated this by telling me about a tangi (funeral) he attended. He ensured that his victim had time and space to pay her respects first and he attended only after she had left on the following day.

A big part of our follow up conversation was about his work on a big farming business where he is involved with heavy machinery in the tractor unit. He has been made second in charge soon after he started. He enjoys his job very much and works long hours. I inquired about struggles as I heard only positive and success stories. He recounted a couple of incidents where his authority was challenged and he was unsure whether his boss, a former prison guard, would back him. His shadow still sits on his shoulder raising his head on occasions but is under control. An occurrence in a dairy, where a young, intoxicated man caused trouble to the Indian shop keeper, was deflated by talking rather than physical intervention.

Papa and his wife divorced but are still good mates. He had a lady friend at the time of our conversation. Because of her friendship with his ex-wife she already knew about his offending history when he was about to tell her. He reconnected with his extended whanau, nieces, nephews and grandchildren, and was pleased to be part of their lives once again. They are his rock and motivate him to do well.

He helps out where he can to keep young men out of trouble, supporting current and former inmates. He calls it an "awesome journey" and is very obliging and agreed to continue our conversation but, he reiterated, his whanau comes always first.

## APPENDIX U6

### *Participant 6: Harry*

#### First conversation May 1, 2007, at Te Piriti

Harry started our conversation by telling me about his conservative upbringing, which he described as “good” in a sense that he wanted for nothing. Although doing academically well at school this was never good enough for his parents. He was not so much encouraged to do well but expected to do so and his time was spent either at home studying or at school; he had no social life resulting in a lack of skills to interact with his peers, in particular with females. Harry has one older brother. Harry went to Otago University to please his parents but lacked enthusiasm or direction. He managed the first year but the following year he felt very depressed and not feeling good about himself. He never completed the degree. He then started working in a polyester factory, describing his job as horrible although he enjoyed the work but his depression worsened. He was a member of a paintball team, one of the few enjoyments in his life. He sometimes socially interacted with team members but felt always somewhat awkward and spent a lot of time on his own. When he was about 15 Harry indecently assaulted a family friend’s daughter and he had sexual fantasies around her and two other young girls, also family friends. These fantasies continued throughout his years at University and even when he was living with his partner.

Following redundancy he started a degree at another University but still lacked social contact. Dropping out of University he went back to live with his parents in where he was looking for employment. He was unemployed for some time and in the end his parents bought a video store in order to create work for him. Although this was supposed to be a joint business venture he ended up working long hours, he felt very frustrated in particular with his domineering mother and the enterprise ended being sold at a loss as he predicted. However, while working at the video store he met a young woman who asked him out, and Harry, at the age of 23, started his first relationship and they soon moved in together.

His partner, who had a young daughter, fell pregnant at about the same time as Harry’s parents decided to move to Australia. After he broke the news of the

pregnancy to his parents he had a number of big confrontations with his mother who never thought very highly of Harry's partner and now she tried to organise and control their lives. Harry described his girlfriend's pregnancy as a big mistake as they were having issues in their relationship. His pot smoking girlfriend had big mood swings, in particular following her contraceptive injections. Harry felt that she was very controlling and constantly demanding to know his whereabouts. He began to feel very rejected, frustrated and unloved and although he tried to address the issues on a number of occasions nothing was ever resolved.

It was around that time that his sexual offending started. His partner's daughter represented the dream of his fantasies and he started to touch her indecently. Offending continued for some time and Harry found it impossible to stop so one day he decided to pack and move out. A failed suicide attempt followed and he then handed himself in to the police and confessed to what he had done.

While in mainstream prison his cover story was that he was a computer hacker. He said that he got the sentence he wanted (2 years and 1 month) which would qualify him for the treatment programme. He spent a lot of time reading while inside but also had a spell on suicide watch after he learnt that his relationship had ended. He remarked that he made some good friends in mainstream prison but he still had to lie to them about the nature of his conviction. Thus it was a relief to attend Te Piriti where he finally could be honest and was able to deal with the issues.

Harry had some difficulties finding suitable accommodation and he was wondering how he would get on finding work. He felt more positive about the future and realised that he had to take full responsibility for his behaviour. He felt that the community had a right to be angry at child sex offenders, in particular repeat offenders, but first time offenders gone through a treatment programme should be given a second chance. He said that he was never going to offend again but was scared that there was a chance that he might do it again (he explicitly named his own daughter as a potential victim) and therefore he had to work hard and make the right choices every day. His name was on the front page of a newspaper relating to his suicide attempt and despite name suppression his name appeared again when he pleaded guilty and on sentencing. Harry had

quite strong views on the motivation of some offenders who, he felt, attended the treatment unit for the only purpose of an early release.

Second conversation January 22, 2008, at his flat

I called Harry on Monday, 21/01/08, after receiving his mobile number from his probation officer. Harry invited me for another interview the next day. He moved into this flat only a couple of weeks earlier from a halfway house that he had been released to. He shares the flat with another child sex offender whom he met at Te Piriti, and his parakeet, Sam. Conversation was easy and we chatted about his flat and bird while he got me a glass of water before settling into his small lounge consisting of a lounge suite, TV and big bird cage. While Harry was reflecting on the inconsistency of imposed probation conditions and compared his to those of his flatmate I asked for permission to turn the MP3 player on to record the conversation.

Despite having an approved support person in the paintball team Harry was not allowed to pursue this activity while on probation, indeed, he was not allowed to join any club where there was a remote possibility of children being involved or present. He was keen for his probation to end in April '08, but in the meantime his movements were very restricted, extending to work and home only. I asked him about his risk level and he was classed as low-medium following a positive plethysmograph test.

Harry was picked up from Te Piriti by a couple whom he calls surrogate parents. He did not much elaborate on his first day of freedom but said that the first week was very hectic. He was released to a Christian based halfway house, which he found acceptable although he is not a Christian. This meant alcohol and drug ban and no visitors. One of the biggest adjustments was to realise that strangers were no threats and that they did not know about his crime and were harmless. Harry found himself a job in a plastics factory while still in prison. He has four years experience of working in this industry and felt the pay was poor at \$14.50/hour. He was contemplating changing jobs, possibly studying at Polytech or going back to University. He said he was ready now to study and later in the

conversation he inquired about psychology and what the implications of a conviction might be.

Overall the transition from prison back to community went relatively smoothly for Harry, although he had some issues finding car insurance due to the nature of his conviction. Also, his ex-partner had taken out a protection order. He had supervised access to his daughter and he described the first time he saw her again as very emotional, in particular because the girl chatted about her mother and half-sister, his victim. He has seen neither his brother nor parents since his release. His brother lives in Auckland and his parents in Australia. They are in phone contact but he prefers to have as little contact with them as possible, in particular his parents, as the dynamics between them had not changed. He said that his mother still saw him as a substitute husband because his father worked long hours and that she continued to speak badly about his ex-partner and children, something he found very hurtful. His strongest supporters were ex-offenders, which he justified by saying that they all wanted to change and stay straight. They call upon each other for encouragement, challenging and questioning each other's behaviours.

One of his parole conditions was that he needed more psychological assessment and this had been completed. When I inquired about his depressions he said that he got himself off medication a couple of months ago without any difficulties and that he was feeling fine, although he admitted to having bad days but added that it was important to recognise these. He carefully structures his days, something he learnt from the past admitting that this helped him to function better without sliding back into old habits such as staying in bed all day. Flatting allowed him to having friends over, something he enjoyed. Indeed the night before, following a relapse prevention meeting, Harry and his flatmate invited some of them back for a BBQ and to watch a DVD. Harry was quite critical about probation's role and said they were mainly covering their own backs and that some unannounced visits would be a good thing as probation officers largely relied on their honesty and on self-monitoring abilities.

I picked up on the sexual fantasies he described in our first conversation and asked him what could have prevented him from going the extra step and acting on these fantasies. He replied that this was one of his major cognitive distortions

because he did not acknowledge that there was a problem and the woman he loved behaved very erratically and he identified the lack of good relationship skills as a contributing factor to his offending. Although he practiced his social skills engaging women in conversations, he still found it excruciatingly difficult to ask a woman out on a date due to his low self-esteem.

When I asked him whether he had any particular concerns or anything else he wanted to share, Harry pointed out that it would be very useful to be given an 'exit packet' from prison in the form of some practical tips with regards to which bank was easiest to open an account with, what forms WINZ requires etc. He was reasonably lucky because his drivers licence was still valid and he had a bank account but others, he commented, were less fortunate and struggled. Harry had no idea about his long term future. In the short term he was looking forward to getting back into paintball and either changing job or studying.

Harry agreed to be contacted again for further conversations.



## APPENDIX U7

### *Participant 7: Dennis*

#### First conversation May 2, 2007, at Te Piriti

Dennis is originally from the UK and came to New Zealand via Australia. He is 58 years old and he described his upbringing as “pretty good” but conceded that he got in a bit of strife when younger. He elaborated little on his earlier days and seemed to have no contact with his family: He was unsure whether his mother was alive or not and knew that his sister had had numerous heart attacks. He assumes that she is still alive. Dennis is divorced and has three sons and one daughter. He has many acquaintances but no real friends; he said that friends were supposed to support you whatever happened but there were few with these qualities nowadays. He described himself as a “happy-go-lucky” type of guy; however, women depressed him because they were giving him a hard time and were exploiting him financially. On a number of occasions he set up house with a new partner and following separation he ended up with nothing. Dennis declared that henceforth this was going to change and that any future relationship has to be built on reciprocity on financial and emotional levels.

Around the time of his offending his marriage was not going well, in fact he described a relationship in which he invested emotionally and financially but was going downhill from the beginning. Offending gave him feelings of worthlessness, sadness and loneliness and he said that he ended up where he never wanted to go. Dennis was offending over a three months period and said that he moved out once he realised what he had done. However, it is not very clear whether he indeed moved out as a consequence of his offending or whether in fact he met another woman with whom he set up household. Subsequently she visited him in prison for two and a half years until she found another partner – and ended up with his possession. Another lady friend visited him thereafter. He caught up with his son who also served a prison sentence (although not for the same type of crime as Dennis emphasised).

He knew that he could handle prison and said that he was quite content doing his time because he was guilty and was expected to take punishment. While at Waikeria he was working as a painter. He did not disguise the nature of his crime and said he never had any problems and got on with everybody, including the



prison guards. He kept himself busy reading, watching television, playing cards and carving.

He was looking forward to his release and his main concern was getting a job, although he did not foresee any problems being a painter and decorator. Dennis enjoys fishing but is otherwise not a sport enthusiast. He had no particular concerns or worries with regards to his release or the fact that he is a convicted child sex offender. He thinks that the media hypes up their broadcasts, half of which Dennis believes is untrue. People should be given another chance, in particular child sex offenders who have completed a treatment programme.

Second conversation April 21, 2008, at the Community Probation Centre

Dennis has been released in January of this year and will be on probation until 2010. Staff from Te Piriti drove him back and dropped him off at a place run by the Prison Ministry. He only stayed there for three weeks. There were too many rules and regulations for his liking, something adults should not be subjected to he explained. For example there was a 10pm curfew and he went into a lengthy monologue about reasons why this should not be imposed on adults. Dennis was very skilful in diverting any personal question into a general conversation. He had lots to say with regards to prison and re-integration politics, the media, and the government but he was not at all forthcoming with personal stories. As the conversation unfolded he established very clear boundaries with regards to what he was prepared to tell me and what not. As far as his private life was concerned this was none of my business. When I asked him to explain what he means by "I am doing a bit of this and a bit of that" he came up with a standard answer of seeing the probation officer and looking for a job.

Dennis had cut off all connections with his family in the UK and he has no plans to change that. Although all his children live in Hamilton he has no contact with three of them. He does not talk to his daughter, he made this very explicit and this was his choice. He would not elaborate what happened between them. I do not know who his victim is. He never talked much about his offending, although I know it was one victim and she (this is an assumption on my part that she is female) was known to him. In the first conversation he talked about the guilt he

felt because he offended. I learnt, however, that he pleaded not guilty and the case went to Court. Now he talked about his offending as “alleged” offending. Again he brought up ACC compensation for sex abuse victims and how people should come forward regardless whether money was on offer or not.

In the first conversation Dennis told me of numerous relationships with females that all ended up with him losing out financially. He had a woman / partner visiting him when he went inside but she found another man and married. He then had another lady friend visiting and a fortnight ago he married her. He now lives with her and his oldest son. So far he had not been working due to the restrictions that have been put on him. He said he had a number of job offers but his Probation Officer deemed these unsuitable (one was painting at a school). He had plenty to say about this restriction as well and he thought it stupid that he had to be on the dole when he was perfectly capable of working.

Dennis had no real concerns for his future, answering with his standard reply “not a problem”. Just before we finished though I did learn a bit more about his past and that he was imprisoned in England for theft and burglary. We talked about this some more and he assured me that he had outgrown this lifestyle. I also wanted to know why he attended Te Piriti and he said mainly for the therapy and that he did learn a lot. We left the Probation Centre together and quite unexpectedly he said that he and his son now enjoy better conversations, which he attributed to the therapy he received.

Although Dennis was not very talkative about what he considered his private life he was happy to provide me with his mobile number so I could contact him again later.



## APPENDIX U8

### *Participant 8: Lance*

#### First conversation May 2, 2007 at Te Piriti

Thirty-five year old Lance began his account by talking about and listing the various jobs he has had. These range from farming to computer technician. He explained that he gets bored easily and moves to the next job. He has a brother, sister and a half-sister. He was physically abused by both his parents, but in particular by his alcoholic father. His parents later separated. When he got older and physically stronger he stood up to his mother who threw him out of the house when he was 15 years old. He went to live with an uncle, a carpenter, for whom he also worked. Lance did not have many friends at school; in fact he described himself as an outsider and that people would not mix with his type. However, he became the leader of his own little group of what he described as “undesirables”. Following boxing classes he went around the school ground beating up other bullies. He said that they “weren’t wanted by anybody or anything like that, always mistreated at home and kicked in the guts”.

In general Lance described his life as “hectic” and when working for his uncle he was given big responsibilities at a young age while also helping in his uncle’s household, sometimes taking care of his children. He took his job very seriously, worked long hours and consumed copious amounts of alcohol on a daily basis. Lance described in some details the jobs he did for his uncle. Eventually it got too much and he left; despite this he described a special bond between him and his uncle and he said “he is the only one that really knows how to talk to me”.

He left the South Island for Auckland when he met a lady over the internet. Around the time of his offending he just separated from his partner, he was drinking a lot of alcohol, and despite working he had too much spare time on his hands. He also claimed that he did not take his medication (Risperidone) for his psychotic thoughts and that “things were just building up”. Lance was also checking out inappropriate internet sites, and one night he organised a BBQ for some people he met over the internet, his ex-partner and former boss. It was on that occasion that he offended. He also took pictures of his victim to add to the collection he amassed from the internet. Two months elapsed before his arrest and the police confiscated his various computers, discs and digital camera.

Lance was very concerned about his property that had not been returned to him and, as his lawyer was not proactive, he contemplated suing people (lawyer, police) once he was out of prison.

Lance had been imprisoned before for driving while disqualified and claimed to have been in a maximum security prison, however, he was concerned going to jail as a child sex offender. While in prison he kept to himself and was doing his lag. He did not see anything positive about jail apart from the fact that the pressures of daily living were taken off him: He received three meals and had no bills to worry about. Life was monotonous on the inside and on the outside he thought. However he complained about some of his fellow inmates who did nothing else but moan all day long. While in Kaitoki he was working in the kitchen.

At the time of our conversation Lance was waiting a Parole Board hearing. He was well over his two thirds but he could not find suitable accommodation and he was prohibited from returning to his houseboat. He said that he would happily finish his entire sentence and then get on with life [although I understand that if an offender has been detained until the expiry of his / her sentence standard conditions apply for a period of six months after release]. He had written to PARS hoping to return where his boat is moored but he said that PARS had not replied to his letter. He added with an ironic shrug that neither anybody else had answered his mail. He was cynical about the prospect of getting released in Auckland, where, he said, everything is so expensive that he could not afford to live there. With only \$350.00 in his pocket upon release (step to freedom) he would probably return to jail before too long. Apart from accommodation issues he also had no support network whatsoever, although later in the conversation he mentioned that he will catch up with a couple of guys he met inside, conceding that these might not be the best network but that they would be at least some sort of network and people he could relate to. His only contact he had while in prison was an elderly lady for whom he did some handiwork and his former boss. Lance said that he was a Jehovah Witness but that nobody from this denomination ever visited him while in prison.

Lance had a very black humour and described himself as "I am just like the poor old bugger that turns around that has everything going wrong with him" but this,

he continued, must change one day when he dies. Later in the conversation Lance confided that an old Maori friend, whom he considered a father figure, died of a heart attack when he was 12 and his first girlfriend at school also died falling off a horse.

Despite his bleak viewpoints he planned to run his own business and be a self-employed handyman and live a happy life. He was looking forward to going fishing off the back of his boat and being able to relax. He did feel that he had changed in many ways and that he is no longer grumpy all the time.

With regards to the public's view of child sex offenders he said that they probably expect them to fail but he would prove them otherwise. The media had a point warning people from serial child sex offenders but a distinction should be made between them and offenders who abuse once only. Bad news, he suggested, sells and people rather believe the media than an offender's story. Lance planned to work for himself and thus he was not worried having to disclose his offending to a prospective future employer.

#### Second conversation May 10, 2008, at his studio

I caught up with Lance a year after we met at Te Piriti. He had been released to Auckland and he invited me to his study for a follow up conversation. Although not in the same apartment building, his studio resembled that of Jedi's with a very similar layout and noticed for its minute size. Later in our conversation Lance called the place a "dog box". He prepared a hot drink and cleared the small table where he had his laptop and some papers. Conversation was easy and he was telling me about the bank account that PARS opened on his behalf. However, he did not agree with the fees this particular bank charged and changed the account back to his old bank. He also took his medication while I was present.

The police returned Lance's property. We discussed the use of the internet and he was unhappy with probation wanting to check out his computer on a regular basis despite the fact that the Parole Board did not restrict internet access. I asked Lance whether internet offending was addressed at Te Piriti and he said that he did an extra module on internet pornography. Lance has developed and

sells a software program analysing races for betting purposes on horses or greyhounds. He turned the computer on and gave me a demonstration. He is on an unemployment benefit but hopes to pick up work as soon as he moves back to "....." where his houseboat is moored. He has been in touch with PARS in "....." regarding suitable accommodation but has not had much luck.

He is also designing a webpage for a friend who regularly visits him together with another ex-prisoner from Te Piriti. He has regular contact with his former boss who picks him about once a week and Lance helps him maintaining gardens and mowing lawns. Other than that Lance described his life as "just sort of wake up each day and see what today brings sort of thing".

Lance calls himself "the black sheep of the family" and has no contact with his family or with his uncle: he was estranged from his siblings even prior to incarceration. He regrets not being allowed contact with his 13 year old son. He lives with his mother (the boy's grandmother) who has guardianship but Lance has full custody. He pointed to the irony that while inside he was allowed to write to his son and talk to him over the phone but not now until the end of his probation in October 2008. He hopes that when his son is a bit older he would seek contact then.

I needed some clarification regarding the night of the BBQ where the offending took place. The party only consisted of his ex-boss, his ex-girlfriend and a woman he met over the internet. However, he was unaware that she had children and that she was bringing them to the BBQ. Lance recounted the events and told me that everybody had a good time and talked to one another except with him and after a while he got bored and took the kids to a park where they played. He had already consumed alcohol at this stage and said that the abuse was not premeditated, the opportunity just arose and he overstepped the boundaries. He has not touched alcohol since his release not only due to financial limitations but he said he had no desire to drink. In addition, I learnt that he has a girlfriend in "....." whom he met through a mutual inmate. She is a recovering alcoholic determined to stay off alcohol as well. I inquired again about his first prison sentence, which he spent at a high security prison for a traffic offence. He replied that he was the laughing stock of the prison spending time at a "max" with murderers for a minor offence, just his luck, he added.

When asking Lance about the future he said that he was determined not to return to jail but otherwise was taking one day at a time. He added that “otherwise if I sit there and get too up in arms about something that I want to happen further down the track when it falls over you end up disheartened about it”. Looking back at history was OK but it was more prudent not to look too far ahead because the chances of disappointment were high. He did express hope to live on his houseboat – an ex-fishing boat – soon and to rent out some rooms.

Lance was happy for me to call him again in the future. Just as I was about to leave he presented me with a CD of his betting program.





## APPENDIX U9

### *Participant 9: Bruce*

#### First conversation May 3, 2007, at Te Piriti

Bruce began his account by telling me about his dysfunctional family with his parents having an “on and off” relationship which meant that he lived with his alcoholic father for the last couple of years while at school and was separated from his siblings, a brother and sister, who stayed with mum. He left school at 14 and worked as a fencing contractor before starting an apprenticeship as an engineer. He started a family when he was 18 and said that he had two kids by the time he was 19 and another one at 23 from another relationship. He was working very hard, which did not leave him much spare time. Bruce had a long history of substance abuse, mainly alcohol and marijuana, which he grew himself to keep the costs down. He described himself as quite content although he admitted that he was disappointed in himself having made mistakes in the past.

In the year leading up to his first offence he supported his mother who had a nervous breakdown following her divorce from Bruce’s father, who died not long after. Bruce’s daughter was born and he commented that his relationship was a bit in a mess and all one-sided, culminating in stress and sexual frustration. He also described difficulties seeing his sons from the previous relationship. He offended against his partner’s daughter and said that he did not know how to ask for help, and that there were many times he wanted to tell his partner about it but was afraid of her reaction and prison, always hoping that he could sort himself out. As he carried the guilt of his actions he also began to isolate himself more from people and his life was reduced to work and smoking dope. His relationship was also tempestuous and following a period of separation they were back together. At this stage he saw his sons again fortnightly but since going to jail has had no contact because, he said, their mother took them to Court to see him getting sentenced.

Bruce pleaded guilty and was very anxious and scared about going to prison, in fact he took up boxing in order to prepare himself for the prison environment and with the help of his family he got off drugs prior to entering prison. He also stressed about the effect this had on his family. Despite having assurance that his name was not going to be published because of his children his name was

printed in the newspaper. While in prison he lied about the true nature of his offending. The worst day in prison was when his cellmate, who claimed to be HIV positive, lost it one night, threatened to stab him and was bleeding profusely. Bruce called for help but the officer only peeked through the peep hole and left it at that until the morning.

He felt that a lot of positive had come out of the time he spent in prison, in particular since attending Te Piriti. There he no longer had to lie, the atmosphere was a lot more relaxed and that prisoners were treated more humanely being allowed to call the officers by their first names. He reflected that some of the skills he acquired at TP would have been useful to possess earlier and that having more communication and relationship skills might have prevented him from offending in the first place.

Bruce expressed a lot of frustrations with regards to the prison "system". His sentence plan was not followed and he felt that it impacted on his family as well who were there to support him. One of his parole hearings went ahead despite the fact that the psychology report had not been completed but was part of the required paperwork. There were also discrepancies with regards to his accommodation: this was approved by one Parole Board committee but the next one disapproved due to the close proximity of parks. He was disheartened about the discrepancies within Corrections and gave examples about the varying length people spent in prison for similar types of crimes. He suggested that by going through the treatment programme he was disadvantaged at parole hearings.

Bruce was very positive about his release although admitted to 'gate fever' the closer his release date approached. He thought that it would take some time to re-adjust, wondered about Relapse Prevention and was very much looking forward to sleeping on a soft, nice bed.

#### Second conversation February 5, 2008, at the Community Probation Centre

I met Bruce again on the day before Waitangi Day at the Community Probation Centre following a Relapse Prevention meeting. His probation officer organised an interview room for us where I was waiting for him. The office was rather small

(long and narrow) with a couch, two chairs and a coffee table. I sat on a chair and Bruce was happy to sit on the couch. Conversation was easy and I asked for his permission to turn on the MP3 player.

He started the conversation by telling me about his job, which he had lined up while still inside. A former prison officer helped to find him work in a sawing mill. Bruce is still working there and very proudly said that he had just been promoted and had a pay increase. Although he could have started his job straight away Bruce opted to defer the start in order for him to settle back into life on the outside. Getting released after 4½ years of incarceration was a great shock and it took him some time to get used to people, the hectic environment, and phones, which he did not answer for about 2 months. He was worried that people could tell that he had been in prison as a child sex offender and was also continuously looking over his shoulders, a residual habit from prison.

Apart from the ex-prison officer and his immediate boss Bruce thinks that nobody at work knows about his past. Due to restrictions imposed by the parole board he does not have a prolific social life but has a couple of good mates and a very supportive family. He is not allowed to be in contact with his sisters' children, which upsets his family in particular around Christmas time and birthdays, and limits the socialising he can do with them. He continues to have a good relationship with his sister but not with his brother. He had not yet seen any of his children and said that he would wait for them to contact him. He lives with his mother and stepfather, an arrangement that works out very well. He is in no hurry to move out and intends to gain some financial security first. His initial worries with regards to his family being hassled were futile and he had no negative experience apart from one occasion when a police car pulled up outside his house upon his returned from work. He walked from the car to the house the police put the spotlight onto him.

Bruce commented on the meagre sum of \$ 350.00 when released from prison. He needed to borrow money to buy himself a car in order to travel to work. There were a number of ex-prisoners in his hometown who did not have accommodation and resorted to sleeping in parks or derelict houses. He enjoys tinkering with cars and he spends many hours in his stepfather's workshop doing up cars. Although there are many restrictions Bruce takes pleasure in little things

and is able to relax, something he was unable to do in the past working himself into a hole. The only way he knew how to deal with his problems was to work harder. His communication skills were very poor; he was unable to be assertive and express his feelings and certainly was not going to ask for help, because, he said, he learnt from a young age that if you put yourself into a bad situation you make sure you get yourself out of it. As in our first conversation he stressed that he wished he acquired some of the life skills earlier and realised the importance of life balance. He concluded that he might have selected different partners. We talked again briefly about his offending and I learnt that he also offended against his own daughter (the other victim was his stepdaughter). I was curious to learn why he did not have an affair when he talked about his sexual frustration to which he replied he did have a "friend" for many years but he only saw her every now and again.

The turning point for Bruce came when he told his family about his offending and asked them for help. They supported him to get off his long-standing drug habit, he said he was so sick of being constantly wasted and life became a lot easier thereafter. Bruce hopes that one day his children would like to see him again and to have a partner, but he is no hurry and hopes to make a better choice. Meanwhile he enjoys life and is grateful for what he has.

He is happy to be contacted again in the future.

## APPENDIX U10

### *Participant 10: Hone*

#### First conversation May 3, 2007, at Te Piriti

Hone grew up with his grandparents in a big, blended household, living in a four bedroom house together with about 14 other family members. He described this time as reasonably happy, mainly because he did not know any different, but with limited financial resources he and his brother and three sisters had to go without a lot, wearing hand-me-downs for which he was teased. He did not perform well at school; in fact he never sat school "C". He had little contact with his biological mother, whom he saw once a year. Although he enjoyed sports there was never enough money to pay for fees or rugby boots. When he was about 15 he started to get into trouble with some of his mates and he took up smoking cigarettes. Subsequently Hone went to live with an uncle in Auckland and began a string of various jobs, which he all enjoyed although in his first job he was teased by his boss who made racist remarks. While living in Auckland he met a girl from his hometown. Once she completed polytechnic they moved back home. His first son was born when he was 21. His partner started to cheat on him while he was working nightshifts. He left her and moved back to Auckland. He met his next partner who had a daughter; and over the next few years they had two sons together. They went farming, an experience he enjoyed because it offered a family lifestyle. It was around that time that his two boys were diagnosed with cystic fibrosis, requiring many trips to Starship Hospital in Auckland. Eventually they shifted back to Auckland and Hone went into contract painting, which he continued until he went to prison.

He described his mates as "druggies" and he and his partner were also smoking marijuana. During his partner's second pregnancy the couple started to have relationship problems: they were no longer intimate and their communication deteriorated which culminated in anger and frustration. He contemplated a separation but considered the children and felt that he could handle the situation. It was at that time that his offending began. His victim, his partner's daughter, was nine years old at the time and he described the close bond they began to form. Hone talked about the shame and guilt he felt the first time he offended and that he did not offend for about six months until another stressful life event occurred. His offending became more serious over the ensuing four years with

him trying to penetrate his victim when she was 13 years old. It was at that point that she disclosed the abuse to her mother who confronted him. Hone admitted his guilt. He was shocked to find out that he was sentenced to eight years but expressed a sense of relief that the offending now could stop. While in mainstream prison he pretended that he was in for rape. Hone used the time inside to reflect on his past and how he could have handled things differently. He praised the treatment programme at Te Piriti, which started a healing process for him. Prison, he said, was alright and he deserved the punishment. He was however disappointed that he had little contact with the outside with many letters remaining unanswered, in particular his siblings cut off all contact since his imprisonment. He worked throughout his prison term, he took up reading and commented that he made some really good friends, who were far better than the ones he had on the outside.

Hone was particularly looking forward to catching up with his boys, although he kept in contact with them via phone he said that he missed five years of their lives. He gained a lot of self-confidence and is no longer afraid of expressing his feelings. Despite this he is wary about job prospects as a child sex offender. He did not think that his name was in the media and felt people are entitled to their opinion. The media, he felt, most often portrayed repeat offenders, which then gave the impression that all child sex offenders were the same. He felt that the public should be informed about the successful treatment programmes, reducing recidivism. People have the ability to change and therefore should be given another chance.

Hone had good goals and plans and was determined to stay drug free. He said that he just wanted to start all over again, save money to buy a house, make new friends and rebuild relationships with his siblings and children. He reflected on the little, taken for granted things while on the outside and that he realised now how precious small things such as a walk on the beach or a swim were. He was apprehensive about the possibility that people might find out about his past and could inflict undue worries upon the people who love and support him; he was not worried about his own safety and said that he was going to be alright.

Second conversation March 12, 2008, at his flat

Hone invited me to his uncle and cousin's place where he lives. He pointed out that it was an all men household but was proud in how well they managed. When I arrived his girlfriend was also there. For privacy we conducted the interview in his bedroom. During the conversation it transpired that they had not known each other very long. Although she was aware that he had been in jail he had not yet told her why he was inside. He felt that they needed to get to know one another better and build up some trust before he could disclose the nature of his offending. He worried about telling her and was particularly apprehensive about her family and friends knowing, something that would impact on his self-esteem he thought.

Conversation was easy and Hone emphasised that he was doing well. When I turned the MP3 player on we talked about his release. He thought he was prepared to get out but then he found it very difficult to make conversation with people out of fear that they would straight away see where he just came from. It took him about two weeks to realise that the conversations he had inside were in fact not much different from everyday conversations on the outside and he started to gain confidence, which increased his self-esteem. Throughout our conversation he praised the support from his uncle and cousin and he repeated that they talked about everything. He planned to stay off work for about a month to re-acustom himself to life on the outside, however, money was tight and he began working in the third week packing fish bait, a job he hated because of the smell, long hours and poor pay. He got in touch with his previous employer who was happy to offer him a job because he was honest and reliable. His boss said that the past was in the past as long as he was straight now. Hone described this as: "the wonderfulest words I heard, you know, since I got out". He proudly told of his recent promotion and that he now got a company vehicle. Hone continued? his painting despite the parole board recommended that he did not work in his profession. However, his probation officer supported Hone to work in his trade as he was working on commercial buildings only.

When his uncle picked him up from prison Hone was very surprised to see his brother there as well. They had no contact during his time inside and he described the emotions of seeing his brother again. He has also seen two of his sisters (he plans to catch up with the third one before too long) and he has re-



connected with his mother. When I inquired about his children he said that they "had gone". They and their mother moved to Australia. His former partner contacted him from Australia to say that she did not want the children to have anything to do with him. He described this as a major blow. He said that he understood and this was of his own making but he would have preferred having been told by his ex-partner in a face-to-face conversation that moving overseas was her intentions. His oldest son, now 19, also refuses to see him. He hoped that when the boys grew older they would change their minds.

Hone plays in a rugby team meeting people with good values and he plans to stay healthy and fit. He keeps in touch with some former and current inmates whom he occasionally supports by sending them small amounts of money. The monthly relapse prevention meetings are helpful and important as he sees this as a place where men like himself can share their experiences knowing that others have gone through similar struggles. Apart from one incident at a wedding he had no negative experience due to his past. He mentioned that he sees Wiremu in his relapse group.

I clarified some points from our first conversation and asked what prevented him from having an affair instead of abusing a child. He said that he did have an affair with his partner's best friend but said that his victim was very accessible. He deeply regretted what he did but commented that jail was good for him and that he learnt a lot. He plans to lead a good and healthy life and do things the proper way. Hone had never had a driver's license but legally obtained one as soon as he was released. He said that he is the happiest he had been in a long time and was very positive about this future. The only sore point were his children and he tried not to dwell too much on this because it would lead him into depression; he prefers to stay positive and hopes that time will heal and the children would reconsider their decision.

Hone was happy for me to give him a follow up call in the future. His probation ends in May 2010.

## APPENDIX V

### Summary of demographics

<b>Participant</b>	<b>One Tom</b>	<b>Two Wiremu</b>	<b>Three Jedi</b>	<b>Four Wayne</b>	<b>Five Papa</b>	<b>Six Harry</b>	<b>Seven Dennis</b>	<b>Eight Lance</b>	<b>Nine Bruce</b>	<b>Ten Hone</b>
<b>Age in 2007</b>	38	46	45	37	43	31	58	35	37	39
<b>Year of birth</b>	(1969)	(1961)	(1962)	(1970)	(1964)	(1976)	(1949)	(1972)	(1970)	(1968)
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Pakeha	Maori	Pakeha	European	Maori	Pakeha	English	Kiwi	Pakeha	Maori
<b>Date of 1<sup>st</sup> conversation</b>	20/04/07	20/04/07	30/04/07	30/04/07	01/05/07	01/05/07	02/05/07	02/05/07	03/05/07	03/05/07
<b>Release date</b>	23/04/07	23/04/07	11/06/07	18/07/07	23/01/08	04/07/07	23/01/08	30/01/08	27/06/07	29/08/07
<b>Date and location of 2<sup>nd</sup> conversation</b>	01/12/07 His flat	27/11/07 Probation Centre	27/11/07 His flat	18/04/08 Probation Centre	05/08/08 Probation Centre	22/01/08 His flat	21/04/08 Probation Centre	10/05/08 His flat	05/02/08 Probation Centre	12/03/08 His flat
<b>Approx. time elapsed between conversations / between release and 2<sup>nd</sup> conversation</b>	7 months  7 months	7 months  7 months	7 months  5 months	1 year  9 months	1 year 3 months 6 months	9 months  6 months	11 months  3 months	1 year  4 months	9 months  7 months	10 months  6 months
<b>Sentence length</b>	5 years	2years 3mths	10 years	4 years	9 years	2years 1 month	8 years	2 years 3 months	6 years 5 months	8 years
<b>Time spent in</b>	3 ½ years	1 ½ years	9 1/2 years	3 years	6 years 2	1 year 10	5 years 7	2 years 1	4 ½ years	5 years

<b>prison</b>				8 months	months	months	months	months		
<b>Probation ending</b>	03/12/08	August '08	April '08	15/06/08	2010	April '08	2010	16/10/08	Oct '09	May '10
<b>"Cover" story in mainstream prison</b>	Keeping quiet	Yes	Keeping quiet	Not sure	No	Computer Hacker	No	Yes	Yes	Yes In for rape
<b>Number of victims</b>	1	1	Multiple	2	1	2	1	1 and internet	2	1
<b>Duration of offending</b>	2 years	2 years	4 years '78-'82 + '95	5 ½ years	10 years	3 years	3 months	Once off and internet	6 years with gap year	4 years
<b>"In-house Offending"</b>	Yes Step-daughter	Yes Step-daughter	No Unsure of relationship	Yes Sister of partner / step-daughter	Yes Step-daughter	Both Family friend / step-daughter	Yes Relationship unclear	No Daughter of girlfriend	Yes daughter & step-daughter	Yes
<b>Number of biological children</b>	None	1 son & 2 daughters	None	3 sons	1 daughter	1 daughter	3 sons & 1 daughter	1 son	2 sons & 1 daughter	3 sons
<b>Admitting offending</b>	Court plus appeal conviction	Admission	Two Court Trials – 1st trial hung jury 8/4	Admission handing himself in	Guilty plea	Admission handing himself in p. 27	Not guilty	Guilty plea	Admission	Admission
<b>Siblings</b>	3 younger half-brothers	18 youngest. Brother committed suicide	2 youngest. Middle brother committed suicide	11 3 <sup>rd</sup> youngest. Brother committed suicide	7 youngest	1 brother	1 sister	1 sister 1 brother both younger 1 half-sister	1 sister 1 brother	1 brother 3 sisters 2 <sup>nd</sup> eldest

<b>Sexually abused / sexual abuse in family</b>	Once by cousin	Yes as child in public toilet; his sisters were abused	Middle brother suspected of being abused	Yes by 2 brothers and 1 sister. Father abused all sisters	Not known	No	No	Yes, by a friend when aged 8	Yes at primary school once	Yes
<b>Employed before imprisonment</b>	Yes 2 <sup>nd</sup> hand trade	Yes Foundry work	Yes	Own business	Yes	Yes	Yes Painter & deco.	Yes part-time	Yes	Yes
<b>Employment post-release at time of 2<sup>nd</sup> interview</b>	Yes Initially work through family	Yes Initially work through family	Yes	Yes	Yes Found work while in prison	Yes Found work while in prison	No	No	Yes Found work while in prison	Yes Returned to old employer
<b>Accommodation post-release</b>	Friends	Family	PARS	PARS	Family	Prison Ministry	Prison Ministry	PARS	Mum & step-dad	Uncle
<b>Other offences</b>	No	Yes Juvenile burglary	Yes Juvenile SO	Unsure	No	No	Yes	Driving while disqualified	No	Driving without driving license
<b>Drugs</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Religion</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Unsure	Spirituality	No	No Ex Christian	Unsure	Unsure	Believes but is not member of church
<b>Risk status</b>	Low	High	High	Low	Low	Low-med	Low-med	Low	Low	Low-med
<b>Length of 1<sup>st</sup></b>	1'33"	1'	1'14"	37"	1'27"	1'30"	56"	1'06"	46"	48"

<b><i>interview</i></b>										
<b><i># of pages pre-release, font 12, 1.5 space</i></b>	33	15	25	11	34	29	15	22	16	13
<b><i>Length of 2<sup>nd</sup> interview</i></b>	2'05"	1'24"	1'10"	1'16"	1'11"	1'32"	1'01"	1'12"	56"	58"
<b><i># of pages post-release, font 12, 1.5 space</i></b>	43	20	22	20	25	27	16	22	18	16

Pre-release total interview time 10'56"; average 1'5"  
Pre-release total number of pages 213; average 21.3

Post-release total interview time 12'45"; average 1'16"  
Post-release total 229; average 22.9

