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The Sexual Subjection of Boys in Organised Male-Sport

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Contents

Abstract

The man-boy sexual encounter, or male-child sexual abuse (MCSA), is a widespread, persistent social practice. The causes, or aetiology, of sex offending against children has been the topic of sustained research and theory for several decades (e.g. Finkelhor, 1984) and there is now a considerable literature on the impact of such activity on male victims (Spiegel, 2003). Recently, some research has enabled the stories of abused males to be considered in detail (e.g. Hunter, 1990a) and some social theorists have emphasized the importance of this endeavour (Plummer, 1995).

Sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse (CSA) is a relatively recent addition to the study of sport (Brackenridge, 1994) and so far there has been no sustained attention given to the sexual subjection of the male child. This thesis develops the literature on sexual exploitation in sport by examining the experiences of men sexually abused in the context of sport.

Feminist research has identified the gendered nature of sex offending and the role of patriarchy in this practice (e.g. Kelly, 1988) and similar, contextualised arguments have been made by scholars of sport (Brackenridge, 2001). However, explanatory accounts of CSA are deeply contested and psychological perspectives dominate the debate (Ward *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, in considering MCSA in sport, a fundamental issue is how the sexual abuse of children is to be understood.

This thesis draws upon the work of social theorist, Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), and considers MCSA in sport through his theoretical framework. Utilising this framework, I develop an account of the relation between organised male-sport and the sexual abuse of boys where the actions of social agents are deeply embedded within the socio-cultural context. Ultimately, I offer a radical critique of sport, and the man-boy relation that lies at its heart.

Keywords: sport; boyhood; childhood sexual abuse; sexual subjection.

Declaration

This thesis is entirely my own work and has not been submitted in any form for the award of a Higher Degree at any other educational institution.

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The inspiration for this study originated from a guest seminar given by Celia Brackenridge for a Master's programme at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff (UWIC) in the autumn of 1995. I am extremely grateful to Professor Brackenridge for inspiring and encouraging me to pursue this research and for her very generous, critical and unfaltering support of my work.

Principally, this thesis is about and for the men who told me their childhood stories of sexual abuse. I am very grateful. The stories belong to them, the interpretation (with all its faults) to me. It is also for those children (and adults) who continue to suffer, usually in silence. I hope this work helps to raise awareness of this suffering and to reduce it.

The production of this thesis has seen the birth of two special children - Isaac (6) and Frances (5). The question 'Have you finished your PhD yet dad?' seemed to constantly echo through our house during the final months of writing-up. I am indebted to you both for persistently preventing me from becoming too absorbed in my work and for reminding me why I first embarked on this project. I would also like to thank my parents whose constant love and support has carried me through this and many other endeavours.

Finally, and most importantly - I could not have begun let alone finished this project without the understanding, enthusiasm, patience, support and love of my wife, Sharon. Thank you.

INTRODUCTION

The identification of childhood sexual abuse (CSA) as an important topic for academic research and political activism largely began in the 1970s with 'an explosion of literature' on sex offending against women and children (Finkelhor and Araji, 1986: 145; see Kelly, 1988: 43-73) (e.g. Cook and Howells, 1981; Groth and Birnbaum, 1978; Kempe, 1978; Finkelhor, 1979; Rush, 1980). Thus, adult sexual interest in children has only been designated a 'serious social problem' since the 1980s (Corby, 1993). However, according to Jenks (2005b: 93) 'child abuse is nothing new; it has always been an imminent feature of the relationship between adults and the young.' In the UK 'on 31 March 2008, 29,000 children were the subject of child protection plans' (Laming, 2009: 2-3).

Whilst the sexually abused *male* child has received distinct consideration over the past three decades (e.g. Dimock, 1988; Ellerstein and Canavan, 1980; Hunter, 1990a, 1990b; Nasjileti, 1980) some experts refer to a 'male perpetrator-female victim paradigm' (Hunter, 1990a; Mendel, 1995) that has not served male victims well (Etherington, 2000). According to Spiegel (2003: 138) 'social perceptions of and reactions to the sexual abuse of boys in contrast to the ... sexual abuse of girls ... has influenced the minimization, if not denial, of the sexual abuse of males.' Nevertheless, much is now known about the extent of male-child sexual abuse (MCSA) and its effects (see Hunter, 1990a; Spiegel, 2003).

A decade ago, writing on sexual abuse, Donnelly (1999: 108) stated 'generally, sport organizations have, until recently, acted as if such things could not possibly occur in the pristine world of sport.' Over the past fifteen years a small number of researchers have focused on the problem of sexual exploitation in sport with considerable effect (see Brackenridge and Fasting, 2002). However, the vast majority of research within sport studies has focused on the sexual exploitation of female athletes by male coaches or other authority figures (e.g. Auweele *et al.*, 2008; Brackenridge, 1991, 1998, 2000; Fasting *et al.*, 2002, 2007; Tomlinson and Yorganci, 1997; Volkwein-Caplan and Sankaran, 2002).

In terms of a general picture, recent research claims 'up to 5% of boys are exposed to penetrative sexual abuse, and up to three times this number are exposed to any type of sexual abuse' (Gilbert *et al.*, 2009: 68) although the authors go on to say that this probably underestimates 'the true rate of sexual abuse because of under-reporting' (Gilbert *et al.*, 2009: 70). There is little available data on prevalence of CSA in sport. However, Leahy *et al.* (2002: 16) conducted a study in Australia and found that:

> Results from the total sample (n = 370) [male = 160] revealed that 31% of female and 21% of male athletes reported experiencing sexual abuse at some time in their lives. Of these, 41% of females, and 29% of males had been sexually abused within the sports environment.

Importantly, this study included a community/club sample and found that elite athletes (particularly elite female athletes) to be more at risk from sexual abuse in sport than non-elite participants. However, the necessity to broaden

the research agenda is well recognised within the research community; thus Brackenridge (2001: 77) states 'we know very little about boys' experiences of sexual exploitation in sport' and Fasting *et al.* (2007: 430) argue 'we cannot assume that responses to sexual harassment in sport would be the same in different gender and sexuality mixes (e.g. male athlete/male harasser ...).' The 1994 media coverage of a high-profile official disclosure of sexual abuse, and subsequent trial, by the Canadian ice-hockey player Sheldon Kennedy, served to underline the fact that CSA is also a problem facing boys in sport. Such revelations led to a 'moral panic' in sport 'with fears of paedophile incursion into clubs and sports organisations distracting attention from the cultural precursors of sex offending inside sport itself' (Brackenridge and Fasting, 2002: 5).

The Research

The aim of this research is to explore the issue of the sexual subjection of boys in organised sport. In doing so, this thesis presents an alternative theoretical approach through which the (male) social practice of subjecting boys to sex (within sport) can be considered. More particularly, my aim is to offer an account of the *relationship* between organised male-sport and the sexual abuse of boys (by men). This aim incorporates the questions 'why does it happen?' and 'how does it happen?' In the literature on this social problem, studies are most commonly *de*-contextualised, certainly in explanatory accounts that focus on the individual perpetrator (e.g. Cossins, 2000;

Finkelhor, 1984; Ward and Beech, 2006). However, recent reports of widespread sexual abuse of boys by clergy (Isely and Isely, 1990; Nolan, 2001; The Murphy Report, 2009) and its cover-up, might suggest that context requires a higher priority in the development of theory.

Celia Brackenridge, whose work constitutes the vast majority of literature in this field, has developed a sport-focused account (Brackenridge, 2001); she argues 'sport researchers need to seek theoretical relevance from a bewildering array of possible sources' (Brackenridge, 2001:102-3). Therefore, in formulating the research problem, I was considerably influenced by pioneering empirical and theoretical work in the field of sport sociology that argues for a relationship between the normative cultural elements of the hyper-masculinist world of competitive sport and the sexual exploitation of female athletes (Brackenridge, 2002).

Pro-feminist men's studies (e.g. Kimmel and Messner, 2001) have also drawn attention to the problematic nature of men and masculinities within competitive, organised sport (Messner and Sabo, 1990, 1994; Pronger, 1990) taking their lead from earlier feminist research that had designated sport a patriarchal, often misogynist, institution (e.g. Hall, 1985; Hargreaves, 1986; Lenskyj, 1986; Theberge, 1985). In addition, researchers focusing on professional perpetrators (e.g. Colton and Vanstone, 1996; Sullivan and Beech, 2002) and the abuse of male children (Etherington, 1995; Mendel, 1995; Struve, 1990) had pointed to the problematic culture of patriarchal institutions, as well as the neglect of the sexually abused boy in the research

literature. Thus, the field of sport clearly stood out as an important area of investigation.

Since the relatively recent (re-) 'discovery' of CSA (e.g. Kempe, 1978), social science has commented upon and investigated this social problem (e.g. Finkelhor, 1979, 1984; Plummer, 1981) yet aetiological or causal theorising has been largely dominated by psychological approaches (see Marshall *et al.*, 1990; Ward and Seigert, 2002; Ward *et al.*, 2006) sometimes incorporating feminist theory (e.g. Etherington, 1995, 2000; Seymour, 1998). Cossins's (2000) recent study is probably the most significant attempt to develop a *general* sociological theory of CSA. There are, however, significant weaknesses in these various approaches that make them problematic starting points for a sociologically and contextually sensitive account of the sexual abuse of *male* children. Therefore, the need to identify and develop an approach that could overcome these weaknesses emerged as a key undertaking for this project and constitutes the main contribution of this research.

Alongside the theoretical work I have endeavoured to ensure that the voices of those who understand most about this experience are placed at the centre of my analysis. Therefore, the theoretical account is entwined with and developed out of the empirical data as I re-present the stories of four men who experienced sexual abuse as boys in the context of organised sport.

Research and Reflexivity

Before going further it may be useful to comment on the broad approach to social investigation taken here. A notion central to contemporary social research is reflexivity. According to Bourdieu (2004: 89) reflexivity is:

> Understood as the effort whereby social science, taking itself for its object, uses its own weapons to understand and check itself … which makes it possible to keep closer watch over the factors capable of biasing research … a specific form of epistemological vigilance …

For Bourdieu, (as for others, e.g. Brackenridge and Fasting, 2005; Plummer, 2001) sociology, social science and the social researcher cannot be conceived of as, somehow, outside the issues they focus on. Thus, for Bourdieu, the social scientist cannot be an 'impartial umpire' about the 'truth' of the social world but it is her/his 'task to construct a true account of the struggles that take place to impose what is represented as the truth' (1990a: 181). They are active in the problems and struggles they investigate; that is they construct, and are constructed by, those struggles. As Richardson (1990: 12) argues 'we are always inscribing values in our writing. It is unavoidable' (cited in Plummer, 2001: 171). Thus, Wellard (2009: 17) points out that in the sociology of sport 'much research has been gathered by men about sports they identify with ... [and] there is often a sense of reverence in the way many men write about sport.' Therefore, Bourdieu argues that sociologists, whilst conducting 'objective' research, must simultaneously apply their 'objectivating techniques' to themselves and their own research practice. He argues, then, that researchers have to convert reflexivity into a disposition 'a *reflexivity reflex*' (Bourdieu, 2004: 89) if they are to avoid simply reproducing the *status*

quo and commonsense constructions. This seems particularly important when considering CSA and the various contexts within which children find themselves exploited.

Therefore, reflexivity must be embedded within the research activity, indeed within the researcher. Reflexivity must be a wholly central principle in the researcher's approach and activities, in his/her mode of operating. Bourdieu's notion of 'objectivation' is employed to help the researcher overcome the problem of subjectivism, or the fact that researchers are themselves both agents in, and products of, the problems and worlds they investigate. Attempting to 'objectivate' areas of our unconscious that may obstruct our understanding of the issue we are studying means acknowledging our own position and interests in the field(s) we are engaged with (Bourdieu, 2004: 92).

For Bourdieu, 'radical doubt' offers the possibility for researchers to 'objectivate' their own position and so enable them to offer an analysis that is not beleaguered by the 'preconstructed,' or by 'common-sense':

> How can the sociologist effect in practice this radical doubting which is indispensable for bracketing all the presuppositions inherent in the fact that she is a social being, that she is therefore socialized and led to feel 'like a fish in water' within that social world whose structures she has internalized? How can she prevent the social world itself from carrying out the construction of the object, in a sense, through her … (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 235-6).

For Bourdieu (1992) 'science' must question itself. Thus, he argues 'reflexive analysis must consider successively, position in the social space, position in the field and position in the scholastic universe' (Bourdieu, 2004: 94).

However, he also warns that this should not prompt a narcissistic reflection (such as an autobiography) 'not only because it is very often limited to a complacent looking-back by the researcher on his own experience, but also because it is its own end and leads to no practical effect' (Bourdieu, 2004: 89).[1]

Whilst I do not want to labour the point, it seems important to make some early comments in this regard, and to state at the outset my sustained interest in the academic and sociological study of the field of sport alongside my focus, over the past twelve years, on the problem of the sexual abuse of boys in sport. That is, I could not claim, in any way, to have arrived at the beginning of this doctoral study with a sort of clear mind (*tabula rasa*) about the topic and field I was about to investigate. Far from being a traveller or explorer in a foreign land, I was very much a 'fish-in-water'. Thus, my academic 'trajectory' from the *University of Birmingham*[2] on a sport and social science programme through to postgraduate study under the sport sociologist Scott Fleming at the *University of Wales Institute, Cardiff* (*UWIC*) guided my initial (academic, critical) thoughts on the nature of 'sport and society' (see Fleming, 1995).

Therefore, my consideration of sport and abuse developed over a period of about ten years prior to embarking on doctoral study,[3] and whilst my perspective has developed considerably during the course of this study, nevertheless, my original perspective was firmly embedded in the view that

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[1] See Bourdieu (2007) for a developed illustration of this.
[2] I studied in the Department of 'Sport and Exercise Sciences', as well as 'Social Science' which housed the *Centre for Critical Cultural Studies* (CCCS).
[3] Department for 'Social and Psychological Sciences,' Edge Hill University.

organised sport was far from the wholesome and healthy activity it promoted itself to be. However, it must also be indicated that prior to, as well as alongside, my *critical* thinking on sport, I have also been *doing* sport (see Appendix 1). The former endeavour has been heavily influenced by feminist and pro-feminist sociological thought - the latter has not. Therefore, as I may well be considered a 'fish in water' (a *sportsman*, or sports enthusiast – perhaps in the extreme given I also teach within a 'sports' department) it has seemed particularly important to attempt to question and bracket my presuppositions about the field in order to 'effect in practice this radical doubting' in my considerations of organised male-sport.

Sport in the 21st century appears to occupy something of an enchanted position, at least within western society if not globally. Therefore, a reflexive approach seemed important in order to avoid (or at least attempt to avoid) this enchantment from guiding my thought. This is an on-going endeavour.

Structure of the Thesis

In chapter one, I review and critique theories of sexual offending and child sexual abuse. In chapter two, I introduce an alternative theoretical perspective which I argue can help to overcome weaknesses in current theorising of CSA. In chapter three I offer a critical account of the field of organised male-sport which sets the scene for the narratives of boyhood sexual abuse I present in chapter five. Chapter four explains methodological issues, ethical dilemmas and limitations. In chapter six I explain my theoretical account of boyhood

sexual subjection in sport which I then develop and explore further in chapter's seven and eight.

Throughout the thesis I use the terms 'sexual abuse' and 'sexual subjection' interchangeably. I discuss the application of these terms in more detail below, however, suffice to say here I follow Spiegel (2003: 245) taking 'subjection' to mean 'to predispose; to cause to submit' to sexual activity, and Brackenridge and Fasting (2005: 35) in taking 'abuse' to mean 'to coerce' into sexual activity. Further discussion of definitions of CSA is presented at the end of chapter four.

CHAPTER ONE

Theories of Sexual Offending and Childhood Sexual Abuse

Early perspectives on the perpetrator of child sexual abuse are dominated by pathological accounts of weak and deviant individuals. For example, Groth *et al.* (1982) argue a child sex offender is 'an immature individual whose pedophilic behaviour serves to compensate for his relative helplessness in meeting bio-psycho-social life demands' (cited in Herman, 1990: 183). This type of early explanation is broadly typical of the vast majority of attempts to theorise the sexual abuse of children. However, for Jenks (2005b: 94-95) such explanations are 'sadly simplistic … stemming from the face-value positivism at the heart of their grasp of the issue.' However, there now appears to be a general acceptance that the causes of CSA are complex and multiple, and that any *theory* of CSA must have the capacity to incorporate both individual and social factors (Ward *et al.*, 2006). Nevertheless, as such theorising is dominated by the psychological and psychiatric disciplines (Doan, 2005), this recognition unfolds in a particular (and I argue problematic) way in relation to theory construction.

This chapter, then, introduces and critiques influential explanations of childhood sexual abuse. Following a critical discussion of psychology-based theories, I will turn to approaches that are critical of individualised accounts of CSA and instead emphasise socio-cultural factors. In short, I argue that the recognition that socio-cultural factors are relevant for theory construction has

been thoroughly eclipsed by the emphasis on psychology based on individual deviance and deficit and such theories continue to prevent appropriate interrogation of socio-cultural contexts. Yet theories that prioritise socio-cultural factors either have little to say about the individual perpetrator or turn to pathological arguments that researchers and theorists have argued are not sustained by evidence (e.g. Cowburn and Dominelli, 2001). In addition, I argue that disciplinary boundaries have inhibited an engagement with alternative theories of social practice that offer the potential to theorise CSA in a fashion that allows for the social to be properly incorporated but avoids the necessity to pathologise the practice of sexually subjecting a child. I conclude by critiquing a recent sociological theory of CSA.

Psychology-based theories of adult sexual offending against children

Three theories of sexual offending currently stand-out as significant in terms of influence and critical attention from theorists and professionals in the field of CSA. They are: Finkelhor's (1986) 'Four-Factor Model'; Marshall and Barbaree's (1990) 'Integrated Theory of the Etiology of Sexual Offending'; and Ward and Beech's (2006) 'Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending' (ITSO).[4] All these theories acknowledge the relevance of socio-cultural factors and attempt to pull together and combine earlier empirical and theoretical work into more comprehensive accounts with greater explanatory, predictive, and

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[4] Also presented as the '*Unified* Theory of Sexual Offending' (Ward *et al.*, 2006).

therapeutic power. In order to facilitate an overview of established perspectives on CSA I will briefly consider each of these approaches.

Finkelhor and Araji's (1986) 'Four-Factor Model' of Explanations of Pedophilia[5]

Critical of 'inadequate' single factor explanations, Finkelhor and Araji (1986: 147) argue for 'a more complicated model that integrates a variety of single factor explanations in a way that accounts for the many different kinds of pedophilic outcomes.' According to Ward *et al.* (2006: 19) despite being 'relatively old ... Finkelhor's theory is currently thriving and is used by countless practitioners in the course of their day to day practice.' Finkelhor and Araji (1986: 147) summarise previous causal theories 'as trying to explain one of four factors' which they categorise as: (1) *Emotional congruence* – which 'conveys the idea of a fit between the adult's emotional needs and the child's characteristics' (148); (2) *Sexual arousal to children* – referring to 'explanations of how a person comes to find children sexually arousing' (149); (3) *Blockage* – referring to 'explanations of why some individuals are blocked in their ability to get their sexual and emotional needs met in adult heterosexual relationships,' categorised as 'normal development' (153); and (4) *Disinhibition* – theories about 'why conventional inhibitions against having sex with children are overcome or are not present in some adults'[6] (154). They refer to this as a 'four-factor model' of paedophilia (Finkelhor *et al.*, 1986) and

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[5] Also Finkelhor's 'Four Factor Model' (Finkelhor *et al.*, 1986: 124-137).
[6] Finkelhor *et al.* (1986: 113) locate feminist explanations within this category.

it clearly included social factors (drawn particularly from contemporary feminist research, e.g. Rush, 1980) as well as personal/psychological factors.

In addition, Finkelhor (1984) describes four 'pre-conditions' for abuse or the 'necessary conditions for abuse' (Howells, 1995: 201). The first, *motivation*, incorporates the four-factors identified from previous theory (above). The remaining stages are: (2) Overcoming *internal* inhibitions against acting on the motivation; (3) Overcoming *external* impediments to committing sexual abuse; (4) Overcoming a *child's resistance* to sexual abuse. However, noticeably absent from Finkelhor and Araji's (1986) review is any substantial critique of the research from which their four-factors are generated, that is, their model 'is merely constructed around them' (Cossins, 2000: 72-3).

There are a number of critical evaluations of Finkelhor's preconditions model (e.g. see Colton and Vanstone, 1996; Cossins, 2000; Howells, 1995; Ward *et al.*, 2006). Colton and Vanstone (1996: 21-22) argue a key strength of the model is that 'it combines psychological and sociological explanations' and it is sufficiently general 'to integrate all forms of intra- and extra-familial sexual abuse.' However, Ward *et al.* (2006: 26) argue that Finkelhor's desire to draw together theory from different perspectives leaves the model 'with a set of conflicting and mutually exclusive ideas ... in other words it lacks *internal coherence.'* However, this criticism does seem to reflect the limited extent to which Ward and Beech (2006) believe socio-cultural factors should be integrated into a causal theory (see below). Finally, they claim the model 'is very good at linking motives to the different phases of offending, but is

relatively silent on the trajectory leading from early developmental experiences to the onset of sexually abusive actions' (Ward *et al.*, 2006: 27).

Cossins's critique is rather more fundamental (see Cossins, 2000: 74-82). She presents a range of weaknesses in Finkelhor's argument clustered around the criticism that any theory that takes CSA to be a product of abnormal or deviant male psychopathology must demonstrate that offenders are psychologically distinct from the wider male population that do not offend. She claims that Finkelhor fails to recognise this and, therefore, 'he has, at the outset, accepted the dichotomy between so-called normal and deviant masculine sexual behaviour' (Cossins, 2000: 74). Thus, Finkelhor's theory is based upon essentialist claims to distinct psychological characteristics, such as a lack of empathy, but 'fails to analyse the extent to which child sex offending is congruent with normative masculine sexual practices' (Cossins, 2000: 74). She argues:

> Such unsupported supposition [regarding male, biological sex drive] leaves the model looking like an artificial device that could be moulded to explain any type of sexual behaviour without adding to an understanding of why child sex offending is predominantly a male phenomenon ... (Cossins, 2000: 81-2).

It must be recognised that Finkelhor *et al.* (1986) endorsed the early feminist point that paedophilia/CSA appeared overwhelmingly to be a male phenomenon (e.g. Rush, 1980) and specifically addressed why this might be the case (Finkelhor *et al.*, 1986: 128-9), however, his discussion is rather speculative and Cossins (2000) criticisms are accurate.

It appears to be generally agreed amongst key theorists that, whilst Finkelhor's model was, and remains, extremely significant, overall it suffers from considerable weaknesses that make its application problematic. Similarly, I would argue that whilst Finkelhor's work constitutes a major (perhaps *the* major) contribution to the field of CSA, he essentially replaces single-factor theories of causation with a multi-factor theory of causation that he considers a more appropriate response given the complex nature of the phenomenon of CSA. Nevertheless, the overwhelming dominance of individualist, psychiatric approaches in the body of knowledge he draws upon, and the potential bias or limitations this may impose, go unacknowledged. Thus, he also does not connect with or utilise alternative perspectives that readily recognise and attempt to cope with the complexity of social phenomena within theory without distinguishing CSA as a pathological crime. Whilst he addresses the 'male monopoly' in offending through differences in male and female socialisation, there is no development of the early feminist position, so that it seems that the only way to explain the difference between men who do abuse and men who do not, is through recourse to deviant pathology.

Marshall and Barbaree's (1990) 'Integrated Theory of the Etiology of Sexual Offending'

Like others in this field, Marshall and Barbaree seek to develop a truly inter-disciplinary theory. However, their theoretical leanings are very evident: 'as we see it, the task for human males is to acquire inhibitory controls over a

biologically endowed propensity for self-interest associated with a tendency to fuse sex and aggression' (Marshall and Barbaree, 1990: 257). However, for Cossins (2000: 40) '[b]iologically speaking ... it makes no sense for women *not* to have a "biologically endowed propensity for self-interest."' Like Finkelhor *et al.* (1986), Marshall and Barbaree (1990) also recognise the 'male preponderance' in sex offending against children and draw attention to the socio-cultural environment in which males are socialised. However, the way this is done separates the socialisation of the 'sex offender' from that of non-offenders; for example: 'the early developmental experiences of boys who are later to become sex offenders inadequately prepares them for the dramatic changes in bodily functioning which occur at puberty and which initiate a strong desire to engage in sex and aggression' (Marshall and Barbaree, 1990: 261). Here, then, it is normal male biology coupled with inadequate early 'development' that sets the foundations for sex offending in later life. Marshall and Barbaree (1990) build their theory on fundamental assumptions regarding gender and sexual socialisation and make a great deal of the ability to form 'normal sexual relationships,' for example:

> Since appropriate adult sexual interactions usually occur within the context of an intimate, loving relationship, then the growing child needs to develop skills essential to attaining such an intimate bond ... since self-esteem appears to be largely determined in males, and particularly in young males, by their sense of their sexual ability, the young boy who cannot develop a relationship with a female may turn to aggressive sex or sex with children as a way of proving to himself that he is masculine. He may do this imaginally during masturbatory fantasies or he may actually enact the behaviour (Marshall and Barbaree, 1990: 262).

This seems highly speculative and is underpinned by a 'heteronormative' approach so that it would seem that a young male whose sexual interest

inclined towards other *males* would *de facto* turn to 'aggressive sex or sex with children.' In addition, Cossins (2000) points out that many victim-report studies show that most female victims of rape know, or are in a relationship with, their abuser Therefore, the ability to form sexual relationships with the opposite sex does not appear to prevent large numbers of men engaging in 'aggressive sex.'

In a later piece Marshall and Marshall (2000: 250) argue that 'the origins of sexual offending lie in the offender's experience of poor quality childhood relationships with their parents.' Thus, the 'Integrated Theory' relies heavily on the idea that 'early developmental experiences are especially significant in the formation of psychological predispositions to behave in sexually deviant ways' (Ward *et al.*, 2006: 34). Thus, Marshall and Marshall (2000: 254) suggest that 'there is a pathway involving insecure attachments → a greater risk to be sexually abused → heightened sexualisation (most particularly masturbation) → which finally results in adult sexual offending.'

Such leaps of faith seem typical of much theoretical speculation in the sexual offending literature. If, by 'pathway,' they are suggesting that this characterises one *possible* route through which an individual *may* end up committing a sexual offence then this may well be true – equally many other 'pathways' might be postulated and many individuals whose early attachments can be described as 'insecure' clearly do not go on to be sexually abused or to offend. However, under the title 'The origins of sexual offending' (Marshall and Marshall, 2000) the authors provide no such caveat. The desire to identify

a fundamental cause of CSA arguably results in a relative blindness to socio-cultural factors, particularly the male preponderance of perpetrators that render their 'theory,' at best, incomplete. As Cossins (2000: 85) concludes, the attempts by Finkelhor *et al.* (1986) and Marshall and Barbaree (1990) at theory integration 'suffer from the belief that, at the heart of all social behaviour, is an underlying biological drive that determines the social and that, consequently, there is little possibility of escape from such biological destiny.'

Ward and Beech's 'Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending' (ITSO) (2006)

Tony Ward and Anthony Beech have been extremely influential in the development of theory around sexual offending. They also write from a psychology-based perspective. In their recent review of the main theories on sexual offending, they, like Finkelhor (1984) and Marshall and Barbaree (1990) before them, attempt to unify all that is known on sexual offending into a 'theory' - 'a global explanation of all aspects of sexual offending using our current knowledge of the surface facts' (Ward *et al.*, 2006: 331); they are specifically interested in 'knitting' together extant theory on CSA to produce a more comprehensive explanation (see Ward and Siegert, 2002). They summarise contemporary theories and offer many criticisms that ultimately renders them inadequate: however, their criticisms are limited by their broad agreement with the epistemological position of these approaches. This, then, sets up their own attempt to 'integrate' or 'unify' all previous knowledge.

Despite spending considerable time reviewing Cossins's (2000) 'sociological' theory of CSA in a chapter devoted to feminist theories of sex offending in

their comprehensive review (Ward *et al*., 2006: 167-180), Ward and Beech (2006: 46) are clear about the sources they draw upon to develop their 'Integrated Theory': 'the ITSO has been derived [from] ... philosophy of science, current ideas in biology and ecology, neuroscience, developmental psychopathology, and clinical/empirical work in the risk assessment field.' Thus, they appear to resolutely ignore wider criticisms and alternative perspectives (despite being aware of them) with little explanation other than that such (feminist) approaches offer little in regard to effective treatment and, therefore, are of limited value (Purvis and Ward, 2006).

Ward and Beech (2006) set out their 'Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending' (ITSO) in an article of the same name. According to the *ITSO* 'there are a number of types of causes plausibly associated with sexual crimes': *genetic predispositions*; *adverse developmental experiences*; *psychological dispositions/trait factors*. In addition, they cite '*cultural structures and processes*; and *contextual factors.'* (the examples offered under the latter are 'intoxication and severe stress') (Ward and Beech, 2006: 45).

Thus, a key aspect of Ward and Beech's (2006) theory is that sex offenders are psychologically distinct from non-offenders. They argue:

> We would suggest that a critical element as far as understanding the psychological vulnerabilities of sexual offenders is concerned, is the neuropsychological level. It is this level of analysis that directly informs researchers of the mechanisms generating offenders' psychological symptoms and problems (Ward and Beech, 2006: 48).

In other words, to offend is to exhibit psychological vulnerability and it is weakness/deficit/deviance at the 'neuropsychological level' that is at the root of offenders' deviant sexual desires. Relating brain integrity (a rather ambiguous notion) to sexual offending seems unwise to say the least; however, Ward and Beech are in no doubt that sex offending is a product of psychological 'faults' or 'deficits' – 'vulnerabilities.' That is, sex offenders have a psychology that is distinct from non-sex offenders. However, they also recognise that socio-cultural environment cannot be ignored. Thus, they go on to argue:

> A second source [the first being 'brain development'] for offence related vulnerabilities is the ecological niche (social and cultural roles of the offender) and habitat (environment in which a person lives), which in certain circumstances may cause a person to commit a sexual offense in the absence of any significant psychological deficits or vulnerabilities ... For example, the experience of fighting in a war ... or the death of a partner may sometimes lead to individuals deciding to commit a sexual offense ... In other words, sometimes the major causal factors resulting in sexual offending reside in the ecological niche rather than within the person (Ward and Beech, 2006: 52-3).

This sort of catch-all theorising is unhelpful and superficial. It seems to say that where it is not possible to identify psychological deficits or weaknesses that we may (or *should*) reasonably identify as the cause of sexual offending, then we can look beyond psychological/brain malfunction in the individual to environmental circumstances that cause the individual to act in a non-typical way - 'out of character.'

In such circumstances then, the extent of the 'ecological niche' is that anything that constitutes a traumatic or negative situation may reasonably be cited as an explanation for why an individual sexually abused a child. In other words,

where the offender is apparently 'normal' then the environment is to blame and, seemingly, the offender is absolved. This seems to do no more than cite an array of possible causes related to psychological stress, but without an explanation as to why this may result in a sexual offence against a child or why it is overwhelmingly men that are the perpetrators. The result of both 'sources' (psychological or ecological) of offending is that the offender seems to be 'acting under the influence'; that is, their action is the result of factors beyond their control. Clearly, such theorising suggests mental illness or abnormality of some kind, either permanent or transitory. Given that many offenders seem able to function without drawing attention to themselves for many years and most *never* do, sociological perspectives rightly suggest that it is insufficient for theory to construct the sexual abuse of a child as an action beyond the rational mind, that is, as one that is more or less beyond the capacity of an individual to control. I will return to the issue of rationality in subsequent chapters.

A central issue is that Ward and Beech (2006) build their entire theory on the assumption that child sexual abuse is caused by a 'problem' of some sort. For example, they claim:

> Problems in an individual's genetic inheritance, cultural upbringing or negative individual experiences, may lead to defects in the motivational/emotional system. For example, someone who was brought up in an emotionally impoverished environment might find it difficult to identify their emotions in an accurate manner and also become confused when confronted with emotionally charged interpersonal situations. Such an individual might become angry and act in an antisocial manner on occasions ... Poor early learning could lead to an individual lacking the skills necessary to establish strong interpersonal relationships and result in social isolation and further psychological and social deficits, such as intimacy problems or

attachment problems that could lead to sexual offending (Ward and Beech, 2006: 53, references removed).

Thus, a range of adverse personal circumstances are cited, then speculatively (but in a fashion to suggest a strong relation) linked to a potential psychological 'problem' leading to a practical/social problem, which is then linked to sexual offending by drawing upon previous, and equally speculative, ('single-factor') hypotheses on the causes of sex offending (e.g. intimacy or attachment problems). The impression is that the individual in question faces so many compounded problems that sex offending appears to be almost inevitable. Again, however, this 'theory' seemingly ignores the fact that sex offenders, just like any other group, exhibit the whole range of human capacities, and that those individuals who experience the whole range of negative individual circumstances and experiences do not (in any necessary fashion) go on to sexually offend.

It seems then that Ward and Beech (2006) construct a theory that cannot be falsified, despite the fact that they cite very specific factors as causal, as there are an untold number of combinations that could, potentially, lead to an individual offending. Thus, specific factors can be identified within those offenders within treatment programmes and then easily cross-referenced to the ITSO which has the capacity to incorporate an infinite number of factors. In short, Ward and Beech's (2006) theory is not so much a theory as a model. Indeed, Ward *et al.*, (2006: 340) seem to tacitly acknowledge this on the final page of their book when they say 'finally, the unified theory is really an abstract framework for thinking systematically about sexual offending and its

constituent causal variables.' They also claim that, with the passage of time and the development of more sophisticated measurement protocols, current theories will come to be viewed as little more than 'sophisticated folk psychology' (Ward *et al.*, 2006: 340). However, immediately prior to this they affirm that future theorising 'will be solidly grounded in neurobiological constructs' (340) so that increased understanding of sexual offending is dependent on doing the same things *better*, rather than seriously considering alternative paradigms; in essence they reaffirm their own epistemological position rather than questioning it and are dismissive of perspectives that draw upon alternative theoretical frameworks or refuse to endorse the current body of knowledge.

Within this type of theory construction, a relationship is created whereby subjecting a child to a sexual encounter can only be associated with (as a product of) negative psychological/personal circumstances. Again, this serves to establish that it is not possible to come to an understanding of the practice of sexually subjecting a child in the way we may come to an understanding of other widespread social practices (that many/most people *don't* engage in) such as riding a motorbike, adult/higher education or ten-pin bowling. This prompts the question (assuming *all* behaviour is not the result of negative experience or circumstance) at what *point* does social action become the product of negative psychological/personal circumstance? Is all illegal behaviour to be understood from the perspective of 'abnormal' psychology, or only that which is sexual or especially taboo? Equally, does all legally-

sanctioned behaviour correlate with 'normal' psychology and 'positive' personal circumstance? This seems unlikely.

For Cossins (2000: 41) 'it is possible to discern an on-going tension in academic work between feminist explanations and non-feminist psychological and biological theories of men's sexual attraction to children.' Hence, in response to her work Purvis and Ward (2006: 309) state 'perhaps one of the most notable shortcomings of feminist literature on child sexual abuse is the feminist tendency to dismiss the value of psychological research.' Unsurprisingly, psychology-based work conducted by researchers with a close interest in the therapeutic context place great value on the necessity for any theory to have a 'clinical utility,' and it is this emphasis that is at the heart of psychology's approach to sexual offending and its critique of gender/culture-based approaches to CSA. Thus, Purvis and Ward (2006: 304) claim 'the difficulty for a radical feminist perspective [of CSA] is that it does not provide a clinical framework for changing the dispositions and behavior of sexually aggressive men.'

Of course, the focus of the therapist/clinician is perfectly reasonable. Their 'pragmatic' role is to assist the individual offender to reduce offending behaviour. Thus, the more we know about offending behaviour (arguably) the more we are able to understand the individual men that present themselves in treatment and counselling programmes. But this does not imply that such research - for example, 'empathy deficit' research - offers the theoretical tools required for a comprehensive theoretical account of the social phenomenon

of rape or the sexual abuse of children. Nor, I would argue, should it be assumed that the ultimate test for a *theory* of CSA is whether it can prescribe a clinical solution or treatment that will 'fix' the individual perpetrator. This would certainly seem to be the realm of individualist approaches (therapy and counselling) based on clinical models. Yet it is perhaps unwise to assume that by selecting the most popular hypotheses and evidence from past research - carried out almost exclusively with those men who have been officially labelled as sex crime offenders/paedophiles - and 'integrating' it into an all-encompassing 'theory,' will facilitate an explanatory account of why sexual activity with children is a widespread, historically persistent endeavour for many men.

Yet Purvis and Ward (2006: 306) insist, in their critique of postmodern feminism, that there is '... an inability to explain how it is that science is slowly converging on the causes of child sexual abuse and the development of treatment strategies that, through the modification of these causes, reduce the recidivism rate.' What they consistently fail to state, however, is that there may be many reasons why incarcerated men ('paedophiles', 'rapists', 'sex offenders') in treatment programmes might cease offending (even if this could be reliably monitored) which would have nothing to do with the particulars of the treatment they received. According to Howells (1981: 87-8):

> Aetiological theories and hypotheses are built on the foundations of observation of the nature and circumstances of pedophilic incidents, and of the behaviour of adults who have become sexually involved with children. Such foundations would be seriously weakened if it could be shown that the incidents and persons observed were atypical and unrepresentative of the total population of pedophilic events. Unfortunately, such a demonstration is easily made ... reported

> incidents are likely to be a non-random sample of the total population of pedophilic acts, and findings and observations based on such incidents may be seriously biased ...

Howells (1981: 89) concludes 'it is difficult to resist the conclusion that statements about the aetiology of pedophilic behaviour cannot be made, without considerable qualification, when such [unrepresentative] groups form the basis of clinical and research material.' More recently, Cowburn (2005: 225) argues such research studies 'do not recognize that 'deviant' populations are identified solely by criminal conviction, and that this is not considered to be problematic.' As Jenks (2005b: 96) argues 'much of this psycho-sociological speculation takes the problem as given, the phenomenon as short-term and local and the explanation as available, and readily so, at the level of attitude.'

This summary demonstrates the lack of engagement by clinical and psychological approaches with the theoretical developments within feminism and sociology. The no doubt genuine, but somewhat superficial, desire by researchers (such as Finkelhor (1984), Finkelhor and Araji (1986), Marshall and Barbaree (1990), Marshall and Marshall (2000), Purvis and Ward (2006), Ward and Beech (2006), Ward *et al.* (2006), and Ward and Siegert (2002)) to engage with social theory is confined and restricted by their (perhaps understandable) unwillingness to step outside either the boundaries of their own discipline – clinical psychology – or beyond their own topic of intellectual endeavour (sexual offending and CSA) – and this is reflected in the nature of the literature that informs them.

Thus, whilst key theoretical developments include reference to the importance of 'socio-cultural' factors (e.g. Finkelhor and Araji, 1986; Marshall and Barbaree, 1990; Ward *et al.*, 2006) I would argue they do little more than pay lip-service to the idea that CSA is a *social* phenomenon as they engage purely with psychological/psychiatric theory in their search for causal explanations (Hunter, 1990b). Therefore, recognition that there may be theoretical tools available more suited to offering *fundamental* theories on the existence of social phenomena, such as CSA, is negligible.

Furthermore, a key element of all the theories discussed above is that they focus exclusively on the perpetrator: that is, they construct all sexual offending as an action carried out by an individual within a one-sided power relation rather than as an encounter between *two* 'social agents.' The effect of this focus is two-fold: first, the other social agent in this encounter (or 'crime') – the *child* - is virtually absent and thus objectified; and second, the *context*, both socio-historical and particular, is virtually irrelevant except where it is potentially traumatising (Ward *et al.*, 2006). It is contended here that in cases of sexual abuse (principally constituting coercion as opposed to physical violence[7]) it is not sufficient to neglect the context, nor the experience of the victim. I intend to demonstrate that by drawing from a broader range of theoretical perspectives and going beyond the established theorising of those who take paedophilia/CSA as their focus, the relative contribution of medical and psychological approaches can be more appropriately positioned when

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[7] Notwithstanding that sexual coercion constitutes a 'violation' and that it can include aggression and physical violence.

considering childhood sexual abuse. The main opposition to these approaches has come from feminism.

Feminist Approaches

Feminist activists and researchers have played the most significant role in politicising the issue of childhood sexual abuse (e.g. Rush, 1980). This attention followed quickly on the heels of feminist analyses of rape (e.g. Brownmiller, 1975; Griffin, 1971) and a similar pattern occurred in the context of organised sport, a decade or so later (Brackenridge, 1992, 1994). Feminist perspectives on CSA are critical of individualist accounts that developed through the mid- to late-twentieth century, culminating in the theories discussed above, that ignored the evident gender aspect to CSA. The tension between these perspectives clearly persists, (e.g. Purvis and Ward, 2006) thus Cowburn (2005: 221) claims that feminist 'voices have largely been ignored in forensic consideration of male sex offenders.'

According to Doan (2005: 304) 'feminist understandings ... compel an analysis that connects [CSA] to the hegemonic constructions of family and masculinity that support it.' Cowburn and Dominelli (2001: 402) illustrate the feminist and sociological critique that has shifted the ground for debate: 'medico-legal discourses minimize sexual violence by individualizing and pathologizing this kind of behaviour, thereby diverting attention from addressing its underlying social causes and links to hegemonic masculinity.' Thus, 'the feminist perspective examines child sexual abuse within its wider social context' but

'there exists no single feminist theory' (Seymour, 1998: 415-6). Herman (1990: 188) argues:

> Issues of power and exploitation must be addressed explicitly ... organized male groups which foster traditional sexist attitudes should be considered high risk, since such misogynist attitudes have been shown to be associated with sexually exploitative behaviour.

For radical feminism, CSA is 'a manifestation of the oppression of females inherent in patriarchy' (Seymour, 1998: 416). The work of Florence Rush (1980) was pivotal; Rush (1980: 1) argued:

> It is difficult to be patient with contemporary attitudes toward the sexual abuse of children. A current inclination to view child-adult sex as harmless and a reluctance to hold molesters responsible for their behaviour has encouraged sexual liberationists to insist that in matters of sex 'children aren't always children anymore,' that pedophilia is a victimless crime and, comes the sexual revolution, 'the taboo of pedophilia will fall away.' This new morality has also spurred organized pedophiles to come forward and claim sex with children as a civil right, and encouraged some professionals to 'scientifically' defend the practice.

Thus, the contested ideological and political ground of CSA becomes apparent. According to radical feminism 'sexual assault is understood to be intrinsic to a system of male supremacy' (Herman, 1990: 177-8) where 'males learn that their needs are primary and to be fulfilled at the expense of others, particularly females … males are socialized to adopt a predatory approach to sexuality and to use sex to assert power over females' (Seymour, 1998: 416). According to Herman (1990: 177-8):

> If ... the social definition of sexuality involves the erotization [sic] of male dominance and female submission, then the use of coercive means to achieve sexual conquest may represent a crude exaggeration of prevailing norms, but not a departure from them ... It is a commonplace

notion that men who commit sex crimes must be 'sick.' Feminists contend, rather, that these men are all too normal.

Thus, Kelly (1988) developed the notion of a 'continuum' of sexual violence to illustrate how it is related to the 'everyday aspects of male behaviour' (Kelly, 1988: 75).

However, as feminists (e.g. Seymour, 1998) and non-feminists (e.g. Purvis and Ward, 2006) alike have argued, 'the feminist perspective has tended to develop as a critique of other theories rather than as a theory in itself' (Seymour, 1998: 418). Consequently, the question of why it appears that only *some* males take advantage of a gender order that socialises them as sexual predators and constructs them as dominant, has gone largely unanswered. Thus, Seymour (1998) 'extends' the feminist account.

Seymour's (1998) 'Extended Feminist Perspective'

Seymour draws upon social learning theory to argue that the social construction of masculinity, characterised by emotional illiteracy, lack of an ability to empathise, and a moral code that does not prioritise care for others (all in contrast to female socialisation patterns) should be at the centre of any attempt to understand why men sexually abuse children. Seymour (1998) draws upon the work of MacLeod and Saraga (1988: 43) who argue that 'it is a particular construction of masculinity that enables men to sexually abuse children.' Seymour (1998: 422) states, 'it is evident that the nature of gender socialization in our patriarchal society predisposes males toward child sexual abuse.'

Seymour goes on to address the specifically sexual component of CSA arguing that male *sexual* socialization 'encourages males to validate their masculinity through sexuality ... sex becomes an issue of masculine conquest and performance' (423). In addition, males are socialised to 'sexualize the expression of non-sexual emotions,' 'be sexually responsive separate from the context of a relationship' and 'to become sexually aroused in the absence of feelings of intimacy' (424). Finally:

> Males, in contrast to females, are socialized to consider appropriate sexual partners as those younger and smaller than themselves and taught that dominance is a measure of their masculine success ... to be sexually dominant ... it is logical that males would seek as sexual partners those they are most likely to be able to dominate [thus] patriarchy provides males with the social opportunity for abuse. Male socialization provides the motivation for abuse. Male sexual socialization provides direction for expression of the motivation for abuse (Seymour, 1998: 425).

Seymour provides a strong general account of the social and cultural context in which patriarchal forces prioritise a particular notion of masculinity, and how that is related to the sexual abuse of children (particularly female children). However, in drawing upon a 'psychoanalytical framework' and Groth's work on incest (e.g. Groth, 1982) in particular, she nevertheless promotes a pathological approach; she claims:

> The fact that offenders are insecure males with low self-esteem, yet also dominant authoritarians, can be understood from a psychoanalytic framework. Psychoanalysis describes a process whereby people use what are often unconscious defences to help them cope with their feelings of insecurity ... a male who feels insecure about his masculinity may compensate for these feelings by acting in an excessively masculine manner ... The offender punishes himself by punishing the child ... Thus by sexually dominating the child with whom he identifies, the offender counters his own inadequacy (419-420).

Seymour clearly locates the origins of sexual offending within a patriarchal construction of masculinity, but to account for actual men who seek sex with children, she then draws upon (Jungian) notions of insecurity, anxiety and inadequacy, where sex with a child represents a strategy to restore inner (psychological) equilibrium. This serves to position the man who engages in sexual activity with children as abnormal and *lacking* compared to the 'normal' male; despite citing Howells (1981) she chooses to ignore his critique (above) about the unrepresentative nature of the research data from which such psychological profiles are drawn. In addition, Seymour writes within the confines of the 'male-perpetrator – female-victim paradigm' which means a great deal of offending is overlooked (Mendel, 1995) and consequently evaded in theory.

A Sociological Critique

In 1981, Ken Plummer wrote 'pedophilia cannot, in sociological terms, be seen as inherently deviant; it must be seen as a stigmatizing categorization historically produced in certain kinds of societies' (1981: 236). And Cossins (2000: 177) argues:

> Although not explicitly stated in the psychological literature, sexual deviance is not an objective scientific measure but merely constitutes a subjective evaluation of what researchers consider, from their own subjective standpoints, to be socially unacceptable sexual behaviour.

However, Plummer's 'highly speculative' ideas are contradicted in contemporary Western discourse, where, for some time, there has been something akin to mass (media) hysteria over sexual offending against children by 'predatory paedophiles' (see Cowburn and Dominelli, 2001; Critcher, 2003: 99-117; Kitzinger, 1999, 2008) in the context of 'a permanent sense of anxiety about the safety of children' (Furedi, 2006: 117). Plummer (1981: 243) goes on to say:

> At the very least it could be suggested that on occasions, pedophilia may help the child (a) relate closely with adults outside the limited family context and thereby help to reduce age divisions in society, (b) in his or her emotional and sexual development when parents abrogate their responsibilities in this, and (c) find parental substitutes and guidance in situations of parental neglect ... It is difficult, then, within a pedophile relationship to be very clear about the balance of power ... sometimes, then, it is possible for the child to 'exploit' the adult – financially and emotionally.

There is considerable distance between Plummer's (1981) perspective and the vast majority of recent published research and opinion on sexual activity between adults and children: however, in considering theories of sexual offending against children (developed since then), his comments serve to remind that the intellectual debate around notions of paedophilia and childhood sexual abuse may not be as resolved as is perhaps generally thought. Plummer's (1981) comments can also be read as an important, if extremely controversial, early academic juxtaposition and critique against a century of the medicalisation of 'paedophilia' beginning most notably in the work of Krafft-Ebing (1886/1998) and his major work 'Psychopathia Sexualis,' which had a profound impact on thinking about sexual offending against children that retains currency (Goode, 2010).

Thus, in more familiar contemporary accounts sexual activity between a child and an adult (male) is implicitly constructed as a problem – as an 'inherently deviant' act and actor - that is to say, such activity *necessarily* constitutes an abusive relationship where the adult male is constructed as being *the* problem.

This perhaps identifies an important disciplinary distinction whereby 'abnormal psychology' requires the phenomenon to be of a problematic (*abnormal*) nature as a condition of its relevance to intellectual study. The perpetrator as deviant is a given; the originating point from which analyses develop (Cossins, 2000). In other words, the nature of the 'problem' is already substantively given prior to methodological considerations; thus, a moral judgement is made before evidence is collected (Sumner, 1994). This is not to suggest research can be value-free but to emphasise that researchers must hesitate before they 'pronounce on the moral worth of people and events' as to do otherwise is to engage in 'an ideological practice' (Sumner, 1994: 302). Following others I will argue that taking deviance not just as a starting point but an almost totalising characteristic that pre-structures analysis, is ill-advised if the objective is to develop a full explanatory account of this social practice (see Cowburn and Dominelli, 2001; Gilmartin, 1994).

Jenks (2005b: 96) argues that it is far more instructive to locate the problem of child abuse 'within the context of changing social structures' and from the perspective of 'a childhood historicity.' He claims 'it is not essentially that the character or pattern of our actions towards children has altered but that our

threshold of tolerance of potentially 'abusive' conduct has lowered' (99). For Jenks (2005b) 'the source of blame for this abuse … should really be sought in the way that we have, over time, come to organize our social relationships' (114); and, the potential for abuse 'resides within the differentials of both power and status' (93). Whilst Jenks does not refer to the earlier work of Gil (1975) it would seem that such an analysis owes at least some debt to Gil's early comments on the origins of child abuse. Originally published in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, it is the foundation upon which a number of key theorists have built. Similarly it will provide a platform for this work. According to Gil (1975):

> The most fundamental causal level of child abuse consists of a cloister of interacting elements, to wit, a society's basic social philosophy, its dominant value premises, its concept of humans; the nature of its social, economic, and political institutions, which are shaped by its philosophy and value premises and which in turn reinforce that philosophy and these values; and, finally, the particular quality of human relations prevailing in the society, which derives from its philosophy, values, and institutions (in Donnelly and Oates, 2000: 65).

For Gil, then, it is the nature of society's basic approach to human relations, and particularly adult-child relations, that serve as indicators of child abuse. Gil (1975) refers to three 'levels of manifestation' which 'identify the agents and the settings in which children may experience abuse': the familial (or home) level; the institutional level; and the societal level. Prior to Gil's (1975) analysis, discussions of child maltreatment focused on the family environment and the role of parents in perpetrating abuse; crucially, Gil 'expands the definition of child maltreatment' and 'adds many forms of institutional abuse' (Donnelly and Oates, 2000: 61). In contrast to Gil's analysis, media coverage continues to engage almost exclusively with the 'evil' paedophile (e.g. *Daily*

Mail, 2004; *ITV1*, 2009; see Critcher, 2002; Kitzinger, 1999) a term that first

appeared in 'The Times index … only in 1977 and was used in scholarly

works, at the time, to refer to a lone male sexually interested in children'

(Parton, 2006: 117-8).

The focus of this work, however, is much more closely aligned with an

'ecological approach' to child maltreatment (Belsky, 1980) where 'child abuse

is understood to be a product of the characteristics of the environments in

which it occurs rather than simply being the result of the actions of certain

individuals' (Jack, 2001: 185). In this fashion, Gil (1975) argues:

> Clearly, then, any human phenomenon, at any moment, involves both
> social and individual elements. In real life, these elements are
> inseparable … child abuse, at any level of manifestation, may be
> understood as acts or inactions of individuals, on their own or as
> institutional agents, whose behaviour reflects societal forces mediated
> through their unique personalities (in Donnelly and Oates, 2000: 65).

As I will discuss below, such an approach bears a striking resemblance to the

theory of social practice posited by the late French anthropologist, sociologist

and social theorist Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. 1977; 1998). Thus, for Gil and others,

in explaining child abuse, the social and the cultural is fundamental. Nigel

Parton (1979, 1981, 1985) built on the work of Gil drawing attention to the

culture of institutions over traditional concerns with the individual and the

family, arguing that the causes of CSA 'may reside elsewhere in the social

structure' (Parton, 1985: 168).

Similarly, for Kitzinger (1997: 185):

> Debates about the sexual abuse of children are deeply embedded in discourses about childhood – what it is and what it should be. However, much of the 'pro-child' discussion, even many of the most radical 'child-centred' or 'empowerment' approaches, have succeeded in *problematizing child sexual abuse without problematizing childhood as a structural position within society* … Ultimately, it is childhood as an institution that makes children 'vulnerable' … The risk of abuse is built into childhood as an institution itself … Child abuse is not an anomaly but part of the structural oppression of children (my emphasis).

Therefore, according to Wyness (2000: 65) 'we cannot rule out the possibility that a starting point for the analysis of child sexual abuse is the social structural position of childhood.' Yet in dominant approaches to CSA, it is most commonly the 'anomalous' (Jenks, 2005b) 'demonized' (Young, 1999) individual (and his/her psychological distinctiveness) who is drawn to the heart of the issue, rather than the commonplace features of the society within which they develop.

Parton (2006) helps to develop this debate, framing the discussion in terms of an essentialist response to social anxiety wrought by the transition from modern to late-modern society that emphasises individualism. He argues that late modernity has brought a degree of uncertainty or 'ontological insecurity' (see Giddens, 1991) where traditional and secure certainties have been undermined (Bauman, 2000; Young, 2009) and that essentialist reductionism helps to resolve this. According to Young (1999) essentialism is 'the necessary prerequisite for the demonization of parts of society [which] allows the problems of society to be blamed upon "others" usually perceived as being on the edge of society' (in Parton, 2006: 58). Thus 'the monstrous is construed and experienced as "outside us" and is thus a quality possessed by monstrous others' (Parton, 2006: 58).

Parton (2006) argues that we are in a period of 'uncertainty' and that during such times notions of 'good' and 'evil' become prominent; indeed currently hardly a news report goes by without the mention of 'paedophilia' or 'child sexual abuse' (which is in contrast even to very recent history) and it appears that the paedophile has come to represent the embodiment of 'evil.' As many commentators have noted, the prominence and persistence of the 'stranger danger' discourse (supported by theoretical arguments regarding pathological weaknesses) is contradicted by the empirical evidence on child abuse, yet 'is significant in drawing our attention away from thinking of abuse within familiar settings' (Wyness, 2000: 60).

The argument from psychological deviance is based on (perhaps convenient) notions that sexual offenders differ radically from the mainstream population, yet as one expert on counselling male sex offenders said, 'monsters don't get close to children, nice men do' (Ray Wyre on BBC TV, 1993). Arguably, the deviant paradigm stems from the fact that sexual activity with children has recently been classified as a 'serious social problem' (Kempe, 1978)[8] that for neuro-scientists, psychiatrists and psychologists translates to a 'serious psychological dysfunction' or 'disorder' originating either in the structure and function of the brain or traumatic childhood experiences and behavioural dysfunction that results from that. This starting point, the hegemonic perspective in the field (Cowburn, 2005), has served to immediately distance

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[8] Although psychiatric research on sex offending against children goes back to at least the mid-1950s with the term 'sexual abuse' appearing in the title of a research paper by D.W. Swanson as early as 1968 (see Virkkunen, 1981).

the man who seeks sexual activity with children from the 'normal' male population, assisted by media coverage of the 'monster paedo' (Critcher, 2002) which in turn trains the general perception that child sex offenders are 'nothing like us', or 'nothing like normal men.' This distinction persists even though frequently coupled with the oft repeated response 'he seemed like a nice man'[9] and clear evidence that long-term ('career') child abusers frequently operate undetected in publicly visible, even high profile, roles for many years, as recent cases related to sport, education, religion, children's homes and the music industry testify.

Again, such evidence, rather than raising the suggestion that such men are in fact rather similar to the general male population, is instead taken to confirm their *difference* from the 'normal' population through the commonly espoused idea that these men are especially devious. Once again abnormal pathology is at the heart of discourse. Drawing on the work of Laws (1994) Cowburn (2005: 226) argues 'the difference between normals and sex offenders continues to be unclear in research that examines the attitudes about, and proclivities towards, sexual violence in populations of normal adult men.'

Thus, the obsessions of neuro-science and psychopathology (e.g. Ward and Beech, 2006) with notions of the psychologically damaged/deviant individual, obstruct the recognition that men who seek sex with children are indeed *normal* men and hinder attempts to reduce the numbers of children (boys as

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[9] Similarly in response to cases of *female* offending (e.g. response of parents after it was revealed that Plymouth nursery worker Vanessa George had sexually abused young children).

well as girls) that experience CSA. That is to say, there is no reason to believe that the majority of child sex offenders are, as a group, somehow cognitively coherent and unique (Parton, 2007) although of course there may be every reason to effect the pursuit of evidence that 'proves' they are, especially amongst the male population.

If the vast majority of sexual offending against children (and boys) is committed by males, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion (highlighted by feminist theorists) that such practice is related, in some way, to the dominant paradigms, discourse or narratives through which a society socialises males. This perspective has framed the approach of social theorists sensitive to gender who have engaged with the problem of sexual offending (e.g. Brownmiller, 1975; Colton and Vanstone, 1996, 1998; Griffin, 1971; Rush, 1980; Seymour, 1998). However, according to Liddle (1993: 105):

> ... [a] sociological account of the male preponderance in child sexual abuse offers not only to give theoretical prominence to macro-level factors, such as those so effectively highlighted within feminist and other recent works on gender, but also to allow for a *theoretical linkage* of these with the more local details of everyday sexual politics, and with the emotional and other complexities which seem to occasion matters of sexual desire and attachment (my emphasis).

The 'theoretical linkage' Liddle (1993) refers to is in fact a long-standing dichotomy for sociology, often referred to as the 'structure-agency' debate (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Marshall, 1998: 10). This debate has been central to feminist theory (McNay, 2000) where theorists 'must straddle the space between recognizing macro-conditions, while also having some

understanding of how such macro-conditions are lived out ... at the level of very different individuals' (Whitehead and Barrett, 2001: 14).

The same 'straddling' is also a requirement for any (sociological) analysis of childhood sexual abuse. Anne Cossins (2000) takes up this challenge in her sociological theory of the *male* perpetration of sexual offending against children.

Cossins's (2000) 'Power-Powerlessness Theory of Child Sexual Abuse'

Cossins (2000: 111) makes considerable progress towards theorising CSA from the perspective of 'the normal' as she focuses on 'those elements of masculine sexuality that are common to all forms of masculinity' that she refers to as 'exploitative masculine sexuality.' Cossins (2000: 88) argues:

> In examining the relationship between child sex offending and masculine social practices, it is argued that different masculinities contain normative sexual elements that are reproduced and affirmed by child sex offenders in a cultural environment where the objects of culturally normative masculine sexual desire are constructed by reference to characteristics such as passivity and receptivity ... and because of the historical and cultural variability of men's sexual practices (such as heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality and transvestism), sexual practices with children are related to that variability and, are, therefore, a particular sexual choice for some men ... this argument raises the uncomfortable possibility that sexual practices with children could be a sexual choice that child sex offenders make, in much the same way as other men make choices about engaging in sexual practices with adults.

This argument may be uncomfortable but it seems eminently sensible. As Colton and Vanstone (1998: 514-5) state 'abuse can be seen as a re-assertion of masculinity and the maintenance of the ideal male role of dominance.' Cossins (2000: 134) argues:

> Child sex offenders are actively involved in a 'masculinising practice' in that because of the centrality of sexuality for establishing relations of power between men, child sex offending is a specific sexual practice for the accomplishment of masculinity by some men in a cultural environment where men's lives are characterised by a combination of power and powerlessness.

Thus, Cossins firmly acknowledges the feminist perspective that sexual offending is overwhelmingly a male offence permitted and approved through the patriarchal privileging of male over female. She also takes on the point made by masculinity scholars, such as Connell (1995, 2000), and Kimmell and Messner (2001) that men may well occupy a structural position of dominance but that does not always accurately characterise men's subjective feelings, i.e. they might *feel* power*less* even whilst *being* power*ful* (Kimmell, 1994). Whilst I agree with much of Cossins's (2000) perspective, her application of her theory to the life-histories of perpetrators in order to explain why they, and *all* male perpetrators, abuse children, is not so convincing.

In her 're-analysis' of Colton and Vanstone's (1996) interviews with (male) offenders, Cossins considers the narratives of five perpetrators. One is 'Ronnie,' a homosexual man who reports struggling with his sexuality as a boy and experiencing 'emotional rejection and constant criticism' from his father and who as a young man experienced a fear of 'going into pubs, clubs, places where male-orientated dominated' and an inability to form sexual relationships with adults (Cossins, 2000: 226). According to Ronnie:

> I think that, in my case, the fact that I found it difficult to make relationships with adults – it's the only relevant word that you could use – adult males, and how easy it was to make a relationship with non-adults ... my ego was definitely given a boost that these people wanted

my company … I had a tremendous comfort out of that, if only I hadn't gone the full way in sexual abuse. I'm sure perhaps I could have had that comfort, which in a way we all do need (Colton and Vanstone, 1996: 121).

Ronnie justifies his offences by recourse to his own inadequacy (inability to 'make relationships with adults'[10]) previously explained through an emotionally abusive family structure (rejection of his homosexual identity). He also refers to the realisation (as a 24-year-old) that he would never be a father: 'in time you get used to something ... you accept that. But I suppose I crept into abuse through that need' (Colton and Vanstone, 1996: 121). Thus, his behaviour is justified as simply a misguided attempt to find 'comfort' and the 'need' to be a father, a prospect denied to him as a homosexual man, in other words through no fault of his own. The unspoken corollary is 'and who could really argue with *that*? It's a natural need.' Yet Cossins says little about the self-serving nature of Ronnie's narrative, arguing instead:

> Ronnie's early life can be said to have been characterised by experiences of powerlessness as a result of the relationship of power between him and his father ... it appears that homophobia was another source of Ronnie's experiences of powerlessness and low self-esteem ... it is possible that his fear of adult male relationships can be attributed to his previous experiences of powerlessness as a boy. Arguably, one way that these experiences were able to be alleviated was by engaging in sexual practices with socially inferior boys in circumstances where he exercised the public power of a school teacher. Thus ... Ronnie's sexual abuse of boys can be said to be both evidence of his social power and authority, since his role as a teacher enabled him to gain access to the children he abused, as well as an expression of his lack of power, as a result of the relationships of power that existed between him and socially dominant, heterosexual men (Cossins, 2000: 227-8).

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[10] A common theme within the research literature (Finkelhor, 1986) and virtually monolithic within popular discourse.

The issue here is not Ronnie's thought-patterns in response to a (male) interviewer, interesting though they are, but Cossins's (2000) acceptance of the 'traumatic childhood' account that then translates into an emphasis on the powerlessness in the lives and motivations of child sex offenders generally. There would seem to be considerable problems with relying on the testimony of an incarcerated man who has been labelled a 'paedophile' and/or 'sex offender' (with all that that implies) in a (research) situation where he is clearly being given the opportunity to explain/rationalise his actions through a (re-) construction of a personal (life-history) narrative (see also Palmer, 1988). Colton and Vanstone (1998: 517) are aware of this and note how the perpetrators they interviewed 'invariably seek psychologically rather than sociologically defined explanations for their behaviour.' Yet in seeking evidence for her 'powerlessness' thesis Cossins (2000) appears to ignore the fact that the men's accounts are often served up as tacit rationalisations for their offences, essentially founded on the 'cycle of abuse,' deviancy narrative, intended to diminish their culpability.

Thus, we also hear David's account, a Catholic priest, who 'describes a childhood in which he was the youngest of a large family ... in which he was the "last in the pecking order" and describes relationships of power between himself and other members of his family, in particular his older brothers' (Cossins, 2000: 231). He goes on to describe a 'macho' working-class upbringing where 'you had to be very street-wise and very hard' and emotions had to be 'suppressed' (Colton and Vanstone, 1996: 67) as did his academic ability. According to Colton and Vanstone (1998: 521) this:

> Exemplifies how a particular definition of masculinity creates distortion in what, on the face of it, appears to be acceptance rather than denial of harm. By defining masculinity as cold and callous and to do with physical power, the abuser, even when acknowledging the concept of victim, can minimize his behaviour.

Again, the perpetrator casts himself as a victim, misunderstood, through which he rationalises his actions, and asks others to do the same. He extols us to understand his abusive actions through the narrative of victimhood (emotional abuse), in other words, it was not his fault, or at least *not really*. As David states:

> ... very much to do with being isolated from friends, family ... suddenly being on your own and actually craving company. I believe that the abuse developed through this craving company ... And then progressing that need for company into fulfilling other needs within yourself (Cossins, 2000: 234-5).

Thus, whilst obviously unable to deny the sexual activity, constructed as 'other needs' – that is, needs common to all - he constructs himself as a victim of circumstance (isolation) and suffering a very natural/normal reaction ('craving company'). Therefore, he constructs his actions as misguided but not unreasonable attempts to alleviate an emotionally distressing situation – crucially, a situation that anyone would find distressing. In other words, it was not how he would have behaved if external factors had not placed him in such an understandable state of anxiety. Thus, he constructs a narrative whereby his abusive actions were determined by things external to him and, crucially, as an individual who was merely the victim of circumstance, the corollary to which is that it could have happened to anyone in a similar situation. However, according to Cossins (2000: 235):

It can be argued that David's experiences of powerlessness as a man were likely to have been a necessary pre-condition for his subsequent sexual behaviour with children ...

Therefore, David's rationalisation for his actions whereby his abuse is the (understandable) outcome of his own victimisation is translated directly into Cossins's (2000) theory construction.[11] Thus, Cossins (2000: 125-6) argues '... it can be said that child sex offending allows a man to accomplish masculinity and overcome experiences of powerlessness *when his power is in jeopardy* as a result of his relationships with other men ...' (my emphasis). I would not discount such a possibility and Cossins's (2000) emphasis on normative masculine sexuality is important: however, constructing these men's actions as a reaction to stressful situations couched within a psychology of weakness, lack, deficit, *etc.* seems to move the debate back towards the perpetrator with pathological failings.

Cossins (2000) argues, following many feminist and pro-feminist writers, that sexual activity is one important way (perhaps *the* most important) in which men engage with, or express, the struggle to 'do masculinity'. However, the 'theoretical linkage' that Liddle (1993) argues for is not apparent. Do these men *choose* sexual activity with a child as an expression of masculinity, or do they somehow *succumb* to it, driven to it, because of their (apparent) inability to live up to normal masculine standards? Cossins's 're-analysis' of Colton

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[11] In an age where the confessional mode, via psychoanalysis, psychiatric therapy, counselling, *etc.* are all staple elements of western culture (Foucault, 1980) we might reflect on the unanimity with which these offenders draw on their apparent problematic, traumatic and 'abused' childhoods, when asked by an interviewer to discuss/explain their (deeply socially stigmatised) sexual practices/offending behaviour.

and Vanstone's (1996) interview data suggest the latter and again the notion of *lack* emerges. She proposes that:

> ... offenders sexually abuse children in circumstances where there are real or perceived challenges to their masculine power, such as direct experience of lack of sexual potency or an experience which constitutes a lack of power as a man in other arenas of life (Cossins, 2000: 126-7).

The language Cossins (2000) uses is problematic as she alternates between 'men' and 'offender' so that the man whose 'sex offending against children' is *explained* by experiences of 'chronic powerlessness' is *already* designated a 'sex offender' (by definition already pre-disposed to offend). So the reader is left wondering whether it is powerlessness experienced by *men* that cause them to abuse, or powerlessness experienced by *offenders* – there is clearly a crucial qualitative distinction. Thus, there is at least a suspicion of a linguistic sleight-of-hand whereby 'men' are transformed into 'offenders' and it is then the pre-constructed *offender* who is caused/driven to offend by perceived challenges to his 'masculine power.' So one is left asking how he became an 'offender,' (through choice or through pre-determination), and whether being an offender precedes feelings of powerlessness or is, in fact, the product of them.

Cossins's response to this seems to be to rely on the difficult childhood experiences with other males recounted by offenders, and to cast these as determining of an adult male who will sexually abuse children when they experience powerlessness in adulthood. Thus, she concludes:

> Some offenders, in particular those who practised homosexual masculinity, appeared to experience chronic levels of powerlessness in their lives ... most offenders discussed how they had been shamed by hegemonic masculine culture (236-7).

As shown above, Cossins (2000) locates evidence for her theory within the narratives of offenders. The clear problem, however, is that these experiences of powerlessness (in childhood and in adulthood) seem to be determining of ('central to understanding': 238) the practice of CSA, yet they could surely also be widely identified in non-offenders (in addition to the fact that these experiences could be interpreted differently) as they are far from uncommon.

Again, the effect of this theorising from psychological inadequacy is to pathologise the man who subjects children to sex and distinguish him, fundamentally, from the 'normal' population. Again, a causal explanation is sought and constructed on the basis that sexually subjecting a child could only be caused by an experience resembling trauma within the experience of the individual.

Thus, it is important to ask (of Cossins, and others) how is social action conceived within this theory? How is choice, resistance and agency theorised within this power/powerlessness scheme? Is all men's action explicable by reference to powerlessness or only the act of sexually abusing a child? If 'experiences of powerlessness, as a result of their relationships with other men, are central to understanding a man's motivation for child sex offending' (Cossins, 2000: 238) does this hold for all 'deviant' male (sexual) practices? Does it hold across cultures and across time? If it does not, it is another theory

where sex offenders are not men but purely and totally *sex offenders*, and as such psychologically distinct from other men as well as pre-conditioned to offend. Also, should female perpetrators also be understood in this way?

In addition, Cossins (2000) relies heavily on Connell's (1995) notion of 'hegemonic masculinity' as the backdrop from which masculine identity and sexuality is formed, emphasising the centrality of power relations *between* men in this formation. However, as Whitehead (1999: 58) argues:

> What hegemonic masculinity does so effectively is exemplify, at a macrostructural level, a masculinist ethos that privileges what have traditionally been seen as natural male traits ... But it still leaves us wondering *what is going on for these men*, and women, as individuals/subjects. For *the concept of hegemonic masculinity goes little way towards revealing the complex patterns of inculcation and resistance which constitute everyday social interaction* (my emphasis).

Whilst the 'power/powerlessness' theory highlights the dynamic nature of gender and *attempts* to explain 'what is going on for these men', in doing so it ultimately falls back onto emphasising notions of weakness generated by problematic early relationships with male authority figures. In other words, whilst her articulation of gender is socio-culturally informed, the explanation for sexual offending resides in an inhibited psychological development and a pathological response.

Whilst Cossins (2000) works hard to locate CSA within normative masculine sexual practice, she ultimately relies on apparent pathological failings within individual men to explain to explain their child sex offending. It must be considered then that, in the final instance, this theory does not advance us

very much further and despite attempting to overcome the division between psychological and feminist arguments it in fact does not. In the following chapter I will suggest an alternative approach that potentially bridges the gap between the macro and the micro without resorting to pathological arguments.

Summary

In this chapter I have discussed key contemporary theories of sexual offending against children. The dominant theorising in this area comes from psychology and psychiatry and builds on work beginning in the 1950s and 1960s (see Howells, 1981). I have drawn attention to the feminist and sociological critique and discussed an 'extended feminist perspective' (Seymour, 1998). Finally, I have considered a recent 'sociological' theory of CSA (Cossins, 2000), elements of which I find persuasive, although I have also pointed out some aspects I consider to be problematic. Particularly, I have tried to emphasise that if it is desirable to theorise CSA from the 'normal' rather than the pathological (Cowburn, 2005) and if the notion of 'choice' is considered to be important, whilst providing the 'theoretical linkage' between the macro and the micro (Liddle, 1993), then a coherent articulation of social action which can meet these requirements must underpin any consideration of this issue. It is this problem that I will now discuss.

CHAPTER TWO

An Alternative Theoretical Framework for Approaching the Problem of Childhood Sexual Abuse

In the previous chapter I outlined weaknesses of current theorising on sexual offending against children. I also outlined the feminist and sociological critique, whilst highlighting shortcomings that prevent such approaches from challenging the hegemony of psychology-based perspectives in the field of sex offending and child abuse studies. In this chapter I will set out the theoretical foundations from which I will propose an alternative approach. These foundations are explicitly drawn from *social* theory, specifically sociology, as it is my contention that what is crucially missing from 'theories' of (M)CSA is an underpinning, comprehensive account of social action or practice, within which to locate the practice of child sexual abuse. That is to say, theories of sexual offending that take 'deviance' and brain-function deficit/malfunction as their starting point are deeply problematic as they view the child sex offender as *inherently* different from that of the 'normal' population.

The following discussion will argue that sex offenders cannot be constituted as social agents carrying out a pre-determined action which is the effect of an original cause, characterised as negative or traumatic. McFee (2009) argues, the idea of identifiable cause-effect relations within the *natural* world is difficult to sustain, but with reference to complex social action it is simply implausible.

Instead, I will argue that men who subject children to sex should be understood through general theories of social action (rather than psychological abnormality) and in a way that is consistent with their general disposition ('normally' functioning men) rather than their crime (sexual abuse/violence).

Sex Offenders, Social Agents and Social Practice

As noted by many researchers, men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of sexual offending; nevertheless, CSA is a practice that cuts across class, ethnic *and* gender boundaries (Corby, 1993). Therefore, it seems apparent that any theory of sexual abuse must first be underpinned by a general theory of social practice. Unless, that is, behaviour that contravenes social and legal norms is considered somehow distinct from all other (socio-historical) behaviour; or if *men's* sex offending cannot be understood on the same grounds as *women's* sex offending. Both these positions seem problematic. As already noted CSA is a widespread and historically persistent practice (Jackson, 2000; Jones, 2000; Radbill, 1968) and is perpetrated by females as well as males (e.g. Elliot, 1993). Therefore, a theory of CSA must first have a clear perspective on how social agents, generally, arrive at action. It is a mistake to focus purely on the act and, by extension, purely on the perpetrator's perspective. Subsequently I will argue that a more comprehensive account of CSA is needed which can also account for the

victim as well as the perpetrator. This necessitates the incorporation of context.

By closing down the argument from deviance, abnormality and disordered pathology, we implicitly open up attempts at understanding and theorising childhood sexual abuse to theories of social practice that view behaviour as products of the relation between agency and structure, freedom and constraint, subjectivity and objectivity. In this opening up, it is possible to imbue the perpetrator of such activity with a sense of agency, rather than constructing them as pre-determined automatons whose action is fully orchestrated by their rabid psychology, itself singularly structured by genetic deficit and/or personal trauma. An opening up of the construction of perpetrators as individuals (and groups), *with* agency and autonomy, allows the conceptualisation of them as *social* agents with divergent identities, multiple subjectivities, fluid yet regulated. In this way the proclivity to engage children in sexual activity becomes an *aspect* of an individual's identity rather than the totality of it. In this way it is possible to imagine CSA as the *only* thing common to a (randomly selected) group of perpetrators (aside from their probable *male-ness*) rather than being viewed as a signpost of pathology indicating a fundamental psychological similarity or singularity.

Similarly, and of equal if not greater importance, it is possible to re-visualise the child/boy in this encounter. Medico-legal, neuro-psychological approaches tend not only to ignore or play-down issues of gender, history, culture and power, but they also construct accounts of CSA where the child is all-but

absent from that account except as a reference point to indicate (or confirm) the inherent deviance/abnormality of the perpetrator or the negative impact and long-term effects of CSA. In this way the context of the encounter is totally wiped from the narrative, as is the child. The only issue, it seems – at least as far as the adult-child relation/encounter is concerned - is the consciousness or subjective identity of the perpetrator, his psychological state, or those aspects of it seemingly born out of trauma, neurological malfunction or genetic inheritance. Brackenridge's (2001) work on the sport context has emphasised characteristics of the athlete, as well as the perpetrator but, crucially, she has called attention to the culture of sport and the role that it may play in facilitating sexual harassment and exploitation. Therefore, in considering children's issues 'we need to highlight the importance of exploring the space in which children gain their knowledge of the world' (Turton, 2008: 69) and evaluate the implications those spaces have for children's action.

'Deviant' sexual activity is considered principally the intellectual territory of psychology and psychiatry, which seems to have had the effect of inhibiting the application of theoretical approaches and concepts at the disposal of *social* science. McNay (2000: 19) argues that the opposition between 'constructionist' and 'psychoanalytic' perspectives on subjectivity 'needs to be overcome if agency is to be understood both as historically variable and as driven by deep-seated and often opaque motivations.'

In the account offered here, sexual offenders are not individuals who are determined, nor can they be retrospectively psychologically divined by their

sex offending. Rather, they are fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, carers, charity workers, police officers, politicians, clergy, teachers, sports coaches, *etc*. That is, they are social agents *equally* as capable of the full range of social action as non-sex-offenders, as opposed to being a group of malfunctioning (but 'clever') individuals who are marked as a psychologically distinct group through their offending behaviour. Therefore, it may be more productive to think of sex offenders as *within* all these other groups rather than constituting a group to sit alongside, and separate from, any other. However, if they are to be constructed as a distinct group - 'child sex abusers' - as in all groups, it might be posited that there are those whose behaviour might be considered extreme or 'abnormal.'

As a group, child sex offenders must be constructed as equally capable of the full range of normal social action as any other social group, quite simply because they are (Parton, 2007; Plummer, 1995). Thus, the necessity to underpin any theory of their offending behaviour with a *general* theory of social action and subjectivity becomes apparent. The neglect of this point within medical, psychological and criminological theories of CSA has led to a focus purely on the 'deviant' aspects of their behaviour rather than on the fact that they are social agents constituted like any other. As Cowburn (2005: 221) argues:

> Forensic discourse relating to sexual coercion serves an ideological function in that it represents the sectional interests of men in that only certain acts of sexual coercion are considered and incorporated into the development of social policy and penal practice in response to the perpetrators of sexually coercive acts. Other acts—the coercive sexual behaviours of a wider (unconvicted) group of men—are excluded and ignored.

A coherent conceptualisation of *subjectivity* - how people understand themselves and come to be who they are; and *agency* - how people come to act and the extent to which they do so freely, is crucial to be able to approach questions about *why* people act as they do (behaviour). In considering Cossins's (2000) theory of sexual offending against children, it is instructive to note, in McNay's (2000) review of the conflict between materialist and symbolic feminists, her critique of material feminism (e.g. Walby, 1990). McNay (2000: 16) argues that the focus of material feminists on macro socio-cultural structures results in a determinist analysis which 'lacks an understanding of how these structural forces are worked through at the level of subject formation and agency.' In other words, what is absent from these accounts is a 'mediatory category such as agency' (16) to enable an understanding of how the structural functions or plays-out, at the individual level.

It is this lack of an appropriate 'mediatory category' within theorising the sexual subjection of children that I seek to address here. This is to specifically recall Liddle's (1993: 105) crucial insight that a sociological account of child sexual abuse must centre on 'processes of gendering and embodiment … [and] allow for a theoretical linkage' between the macro and the micro, and that 'the element of choice is of considerable importance' (1993: 118). Similarly, in this account (and following Cossins, 2000: 88-9), the notion that sexually subjecting a child is a choice that adults make, is central. However, the notion

of 'choice' needs to be carefully considered and must be informed by a discussion of social action, subjectivity and agency.

According to McNay (2000: 22-3) within social theory, there has been an attempt to 'reconfigure agency in terms of the creativity of action' so that agents are theorised as autonomous agents with the capacity to transcend the material context. However, she cautions that 'any theory of agency must be placed in the context of structural, institutional or intersubjective constraints' (23).

This issue is critical to the development of feminist and pro-feminist perspectives on CSA where gendered power relations, and (Connell's (1995) notion of) 'hegemonic masculinity'[12] in particular, have been central to recent theoretical development and understanding (e.g. Cossins, 2000) drawing attention to the fact that male sexual violence and coercion is not confined to 'sexual deviants.' However, drawing on the work of Hearn (2004), Cowburn (2005: 228) argues that whilst 'hegemonic masculinity' was originally intended to be a dynamic and fluid concept, a key weakness 'was that it had potential to become homogenous and of little critical value' and thus to 'distract attention from what men do.' He argues that 'to engage critically with acts of sexual coercion' by men, critical theorists must recognise but move beyond the dominant paradigm within sex offending, and attention must now be focused on 'wider issues relating to men and how they exercise and maintain their individual and collective power' (Cowburn, 2005: 229). However, as I

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[12] See also Connell and Messerschmidt (2005).

have argued, when theorists have gone beyond structuralist perspectives in an attempt to combat the critique of over-determinism, the social agent (perpetrator) ultimately appears as a pathological misfit.

In attempting to respond to these issues I will consider the work of Pierre Bourdieu, who rejects psychoanalytic and phenomenological theories of the subject and also 'attempt[s] to escape from a determinist or instrumental model of agency by reconstruing subjectification as a generative process' (McNay, 2000: 23). According to Crossley (2001: 81) Bourdieu has developed a theoretical framework which attempts 'to steer a way through some of the key theoretical polarities and problems of contemporary sociological theory.' I will argue that Bourdieu offers an account of social action from which a contextualised theory of the adult (male) practice of subjecting children (boys) to sexual activity (or CSA) might be developed, in a fashion that enables the objectification of the perpetrator, and the child, to be circumvented. To this end, it is necessary to summarise Bourdieu's substantial theoretical work and the particular theoretical ideas that I will make use of.[13]

Bourdieu's Sociology

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[13] Fuller critical accounts can be found elsewhere (e.g. Adkins and Skeggs, 2004; Calhoun, 1995; Calhoun *et al.*, 1993; McCall, 1992).

Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French anthropologist turned sociologist who sought to overcome traditional dichotomies between agency and structure within sociology by 'means of a genetic structuralism capable of subsuming both' (Wacquant, 1992: 5). Loic Wacquant collaborated with Bourdieu and was significantly influenced by him (see Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Wacquant, 2004). According to Wacquant (1992: 3):

> The unsettling character of Bourdieu's enterprise stems from its persistent attempt to straddle some of the deep-seated antinomies that rend social science asunder … In the course of this effort, Bourdieu was led to jettison two other dichotomies that recently claimed center stage in the theoretical forum, those of structure and agency on the one hand, and of micro- and macroanalysis on the other, by honing a set of conceptual and methodological devices capable of dissolving these very distinctions.

Thus, it is useful to note that, through his critique of Levi-Strauss, Bourdieu developed a number of theoretical notions which were, he reflects, an 'effort to escape from structuralist objectivism without relapsing into subjectivism' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 61). He goes on to characterise his work as 'constructivist structuralism' or 'structuralist constructivism' (1990a: 123).

Similar to Liddle (1993) and Whitehead (1999) cited above, McNay argues (2000: 24):

> The ontological claim of poststructural theory that identity is socially constructed does not go very far in distinguishing the different levels at which subject formation operates or in explaining the various modalities through which agency is expressed.

She argues that Bourdieu advances the constructionist perspective 'by suggesting that there are necessary aspects to the construction of subjectivity without conferring on them an immutability' (McNay, 2000: 25). Importantly, for Bourdieu, subjectivity and social action is rooted in history and socio-cultural context. A useful starting point, by way of introducing his perspective, is to illustrate how Bourdieu conceived of the 'scientific' or 'sociological' project.

For Bourdieu, the sociologist's task is nothing less than to enable 'social agents … to know a little more clearly what they are and what they are doing' (1990a: 186); and 'to uncover the most profoundly buried structures of the various social worlds which constitute the social universe, as well as the "mechanisms" which tend to ensure their reproduction or their transformation' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 7). It is interesting then to recall Parton's (1985: 169) argument that 'explanations of child abuse need to establish underlying structures and mechanisms and not just patterned regularities' (such as those found within discussions of incidence and prevalence and profiles of perpetrator/victim characteristics) and this is a key task here.

One certainty that can be observed in regard to man-boy sexual activity (or CSA) is that, as Jenks (2005b) points out, it is not a new phenomenon (see also Radbill, 1968; Struve, 1990). Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that societies ('the social universe') persistently reproduce conditions (via their 'various social worlds') that are generative of the practice of adult-child sex and this is, therefore, an activity that many adults (predominantly males) see

fit to engage in (as prevalence studies repeatedly indicate; e.g. Gilbert *et al.*, 2009). The sociologist's task then, in problematising this practice, is to seek out these underlying *structures* and *mechanisms* that, it might be argued, ensure the reproduction of this practice.

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the social agent is central to my account of CSA. For Bourdieu (1998: 75-6) social science must assume that:

> ... social agents don't do just anything, that they are not foolish, that they do not act without reason. This does not mean that one must assume that they are rational, that they are right to act as they do, or even, to put it more simply, that they have reasons to act and that reasons are what direct, guide, or orient their actions. Agents may engage in reasonable forms of behaviour without being rational; they may engage in behaviours one can explain ... without their behaviour having reason as its principle ...

Certainly, *this* account takes the position (or standpoint) that there 'is a reason in what agents do' and that social research must endeavour to make apparently incomprehensible behaviour coherent, including the action of subjecting a child to sex. As may be apparent then, Bourdieu rejects 'rational actor' theories (see Bourdieu, 1990a: 42-51; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 132-3) where 'rational action can have no other principle than the intention of rationality and the free, informed calculation of a rational subject' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 50). He claims such perspectives are:

> Unaware that practices can have other principles than mechanical causes or conscious ends ... There is an economy of practices, a reason immanent in practices, whose 'origin' lies neither in the 'decisions' of reason understood as rational calculation nor in the determinations of mechanisms external to and superior to the agents ... In other words, if one fails to recognize any form of action other than rational action or mechanical reaction, it is impossible to understand the logic of all the actions that are reasonable without being the product

of a reasoned design, still less of rational calculation; informed by a kind of objective finality without being consciously organized in relation to an explicitly constituted end; intelligible and coherent without springing from an intention of coherence and a deliberate decision; adjusted to the future without being the product of a project or a plan (Bourdieu, 1990a: 50-51).

This construction of the social agent, then, stands in opposition to much discussion around sex offenders. Men who sexually abuse children are, as I have shown, constructed either as acting (or reacting) from causes seemingly beyond, or prior to, any notion of rationality (e.g. neurobiological constructs, genetic deficit, traumatic circumstance); or else (in popular discourse) constructed in terms of being 'exceptionally devious' or 'clever,' 'calculating' individuals with 'elaborate strategies' for entrapping children, therefore, as being *wholly* rational, or perhaps, *hyper*-rational. Thus, perpetrators are constructed as either ill or evil.

As I will show, Bourdieu's account enables this dichotomy to be challenged in a fashion that allows for the recognition that perpetrators are not 'ill' or 'mad' and are fully responsible for their actions, whilst also connecting (the crucial role of) the socio-cultural to the individual so that a recognition of the gender dimension to sexual offending can be incorporated but in a way that does not demand recourse to abnormal pathology. Therefore, central to this discussion is the notion that any theory of the practice of adult sexual subjection of children cannot be adequately constructed from notions of 'mechanical causes' or 'decisions of reason understood as rational calculation.' Explicitly, I perceive CSA to be a behaviour that men engage in that has an explicable reason, yet does not have *reason* as its principle. Thus, Shilling (2004: 473-4)

argues 'Bourdieu's writings provide us with a powerful vision of corporeal sociology' which emphasises 'that the embodied actor is indelibly shaped by, but is also an active reproducer of, society.' I will summarise the central aspects of Bourdieu's theoretical framework.

A Theoretical Framework

Bourdieu is critical of structuralist accounts, such as that of Levi-Strauss, which develop a rule-bound notion of practice, signifying instead 'the messy and strategic nature of social life ... [where] rules are often bent and perhaps even broken in practice – albeit in socially recognized ways' (Crossley, 2001: 83). From this critique Bourdieu developed 'a conception of human action or practice that can account for its regularity, coherence, and order without ignoring its negotiated and strategic nature' (Crossley, 2001: 83). Bourdieu summarises the most essential characteristics of his work:

> It is a philosophy of action designated at times as *dispositional* which notes the potentialities inscribed in the body of agents and in the structure of the situations where they act or, more precisely, in the relations between them. This philosophy is condensed in a small number of fundamental concepts – habitus, field, capital – and its cornerstone is the two-way relationship between objective structures (those of social fields) and incorporated structures (those of the habitus) (1998: vii).

I will employ these concepts in my account of MCSA, therefore, I will briefly outline each concept here. The notion of *habitus* is central.

Habitus

The habitus is a 'kind of practical sense for what is to be done in a given situation – what is called in sport a "feel" for the game' (Bourdieu, 1998: 25); 'a mode of knowledge that does not necessarily contain knowledge of its own principles and is constitutive of reasonable but not rational behaviour' (McNay, 2000: 39). Bourdieu's (1977: 78) classic definition of habitus is:

> The durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, [which] produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus.

In somewhat simpler language, habitus is 'a practical sense which reactivates the sense objectified in institutions' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 57). Therefore, for Bourdieu, our sense for how to act, what to do in a given situation is, to some extent, deposited within us as a 'bodily hexis'; thus, 'political mythology [is] realized, em-bodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby of feeling and thinking' (Bourdieu, 1977: 93). A Bourdieuian sociology, in accounting for action, must then endeavour to explicitly reveal the sense of an institution; a sense which is always firmly rooted in history. In establishing his approach Bourdieu refers to Emile Durkheim (1938): '… it is yesterday's man who inevitably predominates in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result' (in Bourdieu, 1977: 79). Thus, the habitus is:

> … embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – [it] is the active presence of the whole past of which it is

> the product ... As such, it is what gives practices their relative autonomy ... produces history on the basis of history and so ensures the permanence in change that makes the individual agent a world within the world (Bourdieu, 1990a: 56).

Thus, a child raised in a rugby league family is likely to develop a 'love' for the game, 'and will acquire the dispositions and know-how proper to "true" appreciation and criticism' (adapted from Crossley, 2001: 83). Such a child, in adulthood, will appreciate and criticise the sport of rugby league and become actively involved in reproducing 'the field' – a 'specialized arena' with 'specific logics' (McCall, 1992: 840). In this way, habitus are both 'structured structures' and also 'structuring structures'; 'or rather they are 'structured structuring structures' (Bourdieu, 2001: 84) durable yet dynamic.

According to McNay (2000: 25-6) 'habitus expresses the idea that bodily identity is not natural, but involves the inscription of dominant social norms or the "cultural arbitrary" upon the body.' For McNay (2000) the strength of this concept is that it refers not simply to embodied norms, but also to the 'moment of praxis' when the individual comes to act through these norms, therefore, there is a 'temporality' within the notion of habitus so that an active sense of agency is built into the concept that is simultaneously tied to the social. McNay (2000: 25) argues, 'in other words, habitus is defined, not as a determining principle, but as a generative structure.' Thus:

> The temporalization of the idea of habitus introduces a praxeological element into the idea of embodiment such that the dialectic of freedom and constraint in subjectification permits the emergence of a concept of agency understood through 'regulated liberties' (McNay, 2000: 26).

The inscription or inculcation of norms upon the (male) body is fundamental to my account of (adult) sexual offending against children. However, the key point is that Bourdieu develops a notion of agency as 'inscribed potential' or as 'regulated improvisation' or liberties, with the capacity to overcome macro, determinist arguments and negative constructions of subjectivity, yet without avoiding the centrality of the socio-cultural that is clearly necessary for a comprehensive appreciation of the practice of CSA.

Field

Unlike other major social theorists that have been utilised within the study of sport (see Giulianotti, 2004, 2005) Bourdieu wrote specifically on sport[14] and explicitly designated sport as a 'relatively autonomous' cultural field (e.g. Bourdieu, 2004). For Bourdieu then, 'modern societies are differentiated into interlocking fields ... some of these fields coincide with institutions, such as the family or the media ... but they can assume sub and trans-institutional forms too' (Crossley, 2001: 86).

According to Bourdieu (1993: 72) 'there are general laws of fields' so that whilst studying one field may result in the discovery of properties 'peculiar to that field' one also furthers understanding of 'the universal mechanisms of fields.' However, 'a field … defines itself by defining specific stakes and interests … irreducible to the stakes and interests specific to other fields' (72). Therefore, this articulation of *field* prioritises the examination of the 'stakes

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[14] 'How can one be a sportsman?' (Bourdieu, 1993: 117-131); 'Programme for a sociology of sport' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 156-167).

and interests' or logic of the field (of male-sport) and centralises the context in any particular formulation of the habitus (the 'feel for the game' or 'durably installed generative principle'). Again, the advantage for social research into sexual offending that rejects pathological arguments, is that it offers a theoretical framework for social action that insists on a profound connection between the practice of social agents (the individual) and the broader social context, without offering a determined (negative) subject.

Bourdieu (1993: 72) continues 'in order for a field to function, there have to be stakes and people prepared to play the game, endowed with the habitus that implies knowledge and recognition of the immanent laws of the field, the stakes, and so on.' Thus, fields are characterised by 'struggles' over 'the monopoly of the legitimate violence (specific authority) which is characteristic of the field' (Bourdieu, 1993: 73), however:

> Another property of fields … is that all the agents that are involved in a field share a certain number of fundamental interests, namely everything that is linked to the very existence of the field. This leads to an objective complicity (Bourdieu, 1993: 73).

This notion of complicity with the interests of the field is one I will draw upon to develop my account of the sexual subjection of boys in organised male-sport.

McNay (2000: 57) claims '[t]he idea of the field potentially yields a differentiated and dynamic model of power relations where each field has its own historicity and logic which may reinforce or conflict with those of other fields', 'a network of fields that Bourdieu calls the field of power' (Schirato,

2007: 45); 'in order for this to happen, a field must have the means and techniques to imagine itself into existence, and then to represent, manifest and valorize itself in a consistent manner to its own members and to other fields' (Schirato, 2007: 45).

By these terms then, organised sport, and I contend, organised *male*-sport, is a complete and fully viable *field*, with its own 'patterned set of organizing forces and principles imposed on all those entering its parameters' (Shilling, 2004: 475) which both reinforces and conflicts with those of other fields. The examination of the relationship between the field of masculinity and the field of sport has been a particularly fruitful area of research within the sociology of sport (e.g. McKay *et al.*, 2000; Messner and Sabo, 1990) and towards the end of his life Bourdieu (2001) set down his own perspective on the field of masculinity. Again, it may be worthwhile recalling that the central task in this work is to examine the relationship between the *field* of organised male-sport and the (socio-sexual) practice of male-childhood sexual abuse and that 'the purpose of Bourdieu's concept of *field* is to provide the frame for a "relational analysis"' (Postone *et al.*, 1993: 5).

Thus, Bourdieu theorises social action from a position whereby historical social structures 'inhabit' the individual, they are embodied, and it is on this basis that individual action is generated, but not determined. Crucially, for Bourdieu (1989) 'there exists a correspondence between social structures and mental structures' (cited in Wacquant, 1992:12). The habitus 'acts within them

as the organizing principle of their action', the 'modus operandi informing all thought and action (including thought of action)' (Bourdieu, 1977: 18).

Similarly, Thompson (1991) argues that, whilst the habitus is the concept Bourdieu uses to articulate the 'generative principles or schemes which underlie practices':

> ... when individuals act, they always do so in specific social contexts or settings. Hence particular practices or perceptions should be seen, not as the product of the habitus as such, but as the product of the *relation between* the habitus, on the one hand, and the specific social contexts or 'fields' within which individuals act, on the other (Thompson, 1991: 14).

Thus, 'to think in terms of field is to *think relationally*' (Bourdieu, 1992: 96). According to Crossley (2001: 87) 'field and habitus are locked in a circular relationship. Involvement in a field shapes the habitus that, in turn, shapes the actions that reproduce the field.' But for McNay (2000: 72):

> Bourdieu extends the idea of symbolic inscription by placing it in the context of the material relations of the field. This suggests a complex dynamic between the symbolic and the material, where the logic of the field may reinforce or displace the tendencies of the habitus. It is this tension that is generative of agency.

However, the more a social agent is engaged with the field the greater the complicity between field and habitus.[15] Therefore, in accounting for historical collective practice, it must be considered that such persistent practice is in some way, bound up with the fortune of the field within which social agents

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[15] Thus, it is apparent that there is at least a danger of the relation between habitus and field being construed as a conservative one that precludes autonomous action and this charge is levelled at Bourdieu (see below).

act. As Bourdieu argues 'every field, as a historical product, generates the interest which is the precondition of its functioning' (1990a: 88). He says:

> The *habitus* is what enables the institution to attain full realization: it is through the capacity for incorporation, which exploits the body's readiness to take seriously the performative magic of the social, that the king, the banker or the priest are hereditary monarchy, financial capitalism or the Church made flesh. Property appropriates its owner, embodying itself in the form of a structure generating practices perfectly conforming with its logic and its demands (Bourdieu, 1990b: 57).

In other words, institutions or fields foster circumstances to enable the regeneration of those practices that will ultimately sustain it because they are, and must be, in accord with the values and principles upon which its enterprise is founded. In considering the sexual subjection of (male-) children in sport then, a key question is whether (and in what way) the regeneration of the field of organised male-sport also positively contributes to the reproduction of conditions generative of the practice of subjecting boys (and girls) to sex? This, possibly unlikely, but central question, will be discussed below.

Thus, for Bourdieu, the relationship between capital, field and the habitus is central to his theory of human practice. In Webb *et al.*'s straightforward language, 'this relationship ... does not completely determine peoples actions and thoughts, but no practice is explicable without reference to them' (2002: 36). According to Crossley (2001: 86):

> The concept of habitus effectively accounts for the dispositions and competence that both generate and shape action. What is added by the concepts of field and capital is an account of the context of action, the resources available to the actor within that context, and the respective role these factors play in the shaping of the action.

Therefore, in considering the relation between organised male-sport and the (adult male) practice of sexually subjecting children, Bourdieu's conception of disposition and action as closely related to socio-cultural context seems well-suited to the task. An additional point to reiterate at this juncture is that 'the actor', in *this* consideration of CSA, does not refer simply to the adult perpetrator, but to both the adult *and* child (and indeed to other social agents in *the field*). The implications of this will be drawn out in later chapters.

Capital

Bourdieu conceives the notion of *capital* and its accumulation, as key to understanding the operations of fields and the actions of individuals and groups. Unlike Marx (1867) Bourdieu's capital takes various forms but principally refers to the logic of a field, that is, what is counted as valuable and what is not. According to Shilling (2004: 475):

> Each field is possessed of a relative autonomy from other fields, and is irreducible to the economy, refracting social forces and evaluating those within it according to its own internal structure or 'rules of the game'. *Capital* exists and functions because of the valuations made by these rules.

Bourdieu utilises the concept in various ways, but argues that within each field:

> Symbolic capital is any property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know it and recognize it, to give it value (Bourdieu, 1998: 47).

Therefore, whilst Bourdieu (1998) emphasises that the social universe is such that all agents attribute, at least implicitly, a monetary value to their labour or time, capital can refer to any number of things (practices, traditions, locations)

that have value within a field that is recognised and valued by the social agents particular to the field. In this way, the unwritten (and sometimes unspoken) rules, evident within many sporting practices which ostensibly have no value for an individual, but which simultaneously 'say everything' about them, are prime examples (e.g. understanding and obeying etiquette on 'playing through' in golf).

Thus, specific capital is 'effective *in relation* to a particular field and ... is only convertible into another kind of capital on certain conditions' (Bourdieu, 1993: 73). In addition, privilege and status within a field are conveyed according to the value of capital one is able to appropriate and 'those with less valued capital are subordinated or marginalized' (Coles, 2008: 234). Furthermore, cultural fields are 'constituted by, or out of, the conflict which is involved when groups or individuals attempt to determine what constitutes capital within that field, and how capital is to be distributed' (Webb *et al.*, 2002: 21-2). For example, the nineteenth century 'split' within rugby football into two distinct 'codes' might be considered a good illustration of such struggle and conflict, whereby the 'gentleman's' ethos of amateurism was rejected (by the industrial North) in favour of professionalism (see Collins, 2006).

Cultural capital exists in three forms: in the *embodied* state (durable cognitive and corporeal dispositions), *objectified* state (e.g. books, equipment) and the *institutionalised* state (e.g. qualifications, titles) (Bourdieu, 1983). Whilst all three forms are relevant to this account, it is the first that is particularly important. Bourdieu (1983: 222-225) states 'cultural capital can be acquired,

to a varying extent … in the absence of any deliberate inculcation, and, therefore, quite unconsciously. It always remains marked by its earliest conditions of acquisition.' Therefore, central to any consideration of social practice is the normative logic or cultural capital of a field which exists in an embodied (or inscribed) state, within the social agents who act within the field, and this process of inscription is most powerful for the young.

Bourdieu offers a theory of social action whereby agents *act* (as opposed to being merely disciplined into behaviour) but their actions are only explicable through reference to the social space. The potential for understanding childhood sexual abuse is that it offers us a way of comprehending the relation between the social structure and its constitutive institutions and the behaviour of individuals without recourse to 'madness,' mental illness, psychological inadequacy, chemical imbalance or genetic inheritance – all of which are extremely problematic when used to account for, in any comprehensive way, sexual offending against children. Importantly (for sociological theory) it also escapes from the determinism of structuralist accounts that mark some feminist articulations of sexual offending. Indeed, it might be said that applying (any) social theory to a problem such as sexual offending presents a particularly rigorous test as there are quite clearly macro-factors at play (i.e. gender, power) in sexual offending, whilst explaining CSA through reference to patriarchal forces and hegemonic masculinity only takes us so far (Cowburn, 2005; Liddle, 1993).

It is the marrying of the macro with the micro that social (and psychological) theory typically has rather more trouble with. According to McNay (2000: 65):

> … the emphasis in the negative paradigm[16] on the symbolic determination of the subject yields a fairly one-dimensional account of agency which does not sufficiently consider other abstract forms of social mediation. A more active notion of agency emerges, however, once its key role in the mediation of symbolic and material relations is understood. In other words, by conceptualizing the relation between the material and symbolic as generative of variable patterns of autonomy and dependence then a more determinate sense of agency emerges.

Through an application of Bourdieu's theoretical perspective, an account becomes possible that locates the origins of abuse outside of the individual (perpetrator) but not in a fashion that absolves them of responsibility, and takes account of choice, autonomy and individual action, but not in a fashion that disconnects their actions from the cultural context in which they act. It also offers the potential of developing a much more 'active' notion of the (sexually subjected) child, without returning to twentieth century notions of the child as a willing accomplice and adult-child sex as harmless (see Kelly, 1988: 55-6; Rush, 1980). Therefore, this thesis argues that through Bourdieu's 'relational' approach to human action, both the micro and the macro can reside in a complimentary, coherent fashion within the same account. The context through which this is examined is organised male-sport.

Critique and Appropriation of Bourdieu

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[16] e.g. Foucault (1977).

Despite Bourdieu's claims that his key theoretical notions (which I have briefly outlined above) overcome problems such as structure and agency, he does have a number of critics.

Given one of the key starting points of this discussion around sexual offending against children - namely that *gender* should be central to any theorisation of it (Brackenridge, 2001; Cossins, 2000; Liddle, 1993; Rush, 1980) perhaps particularly when there is a deliberate focus on the gender of the child – a consideration of the critique of Bourdieu's work in the field of gender is particularly important. I will briefly outline Bourdieu's perspective on gender relations and masculinity, before considering the feminist critique, and extension, of his work.

Masculine Domination

Bourdieu's notions of symbolic power and symbolic violence are key to understanding his view of gender relations. Wacquant notes that, for Bourdieu, 'symbolic systems are not simply instruments of knowledge, they are also *instruments of domination*' (1992: 13) and Bourdieu (1992: 142) states 'linguistic relations are always relations of symbolic power through which relations of force between the speakers and their respective groups are actualized in a transfigured form'. As Thompson explains, Bourdieu 'developed the notion of symbolic violence in the context of *gift exchange* in Kabyle society' (developed from Mauss, (1954/1990)) which he views as 'a mechanism through which power is exercised and simultaneously disguised' whereby 'giving is also a way of possessing' through the obligation of

'indebtedness' created by the giving of a gift that 'cannot be met by a counter-gift of comparable quality' (1991: 23-4). Thus, according to Bourdieu (2001: 42-3) 'symbolic violence is exercised only through an act of knowledge and practical recognition which takes place below the level of the consciousness and will.' In modern industrial societies, such as ours:

> The development of institutions enables different kinds of capital to be accumulated and differently appropriated, while dispensing with the need for individuals to pursue strategies aimed directly at the domination of others: violence is, so to speak, built into the institution itself (Thompson, 1991: 24).

It is worth recalling then Kitzinger's (1997: 185) insight: 'the risk of abuse is built into childhood as an institution itself.' Gender relations are entwined within this process. For Bourdieu (2001: 86) 'the whole of learned culture … makes man the active principle and woman the passive principle.' Thus, symbolic violence is perpetrated through the reproduction of fields that enable glaringly obvious inequities, such as the absence of female sport in the print and broadcast media coupled with the sexualisation and infantilisation of female sportswomen (e.g. Creedon, 1994; Duncan, 1990; Mikosza and Philips, 1999; Wright and Clarke, 1999), and placed alongside, for example, the prohibition (until very recently) of females from many Olympic events, to appear as natural (Hargreaves, 1994). Indeed, it is the very visible nature of sport practice that makes this naturalisation so pervasive and the symbolic violence therein so consuming; the 'belief in the game' brought about by the complicity between field and habitus – a 'hysteresis of the habitus' – renders such inequality (symbolic violence) natural and self-evident, so that it 'goes without saying.' Thus, in sport, for example, the contemporary association

between the sexualised female 'model' and the sports event (e.g. post-race presentation awards in *Formula 1*, *Tour de France*, *Olympic Games*, and the 'soccerette' in *Sky* TVs long-running UK football programme 'Soccer AM,' *etc.*) is considered perfectly normal, natural and self-evident.

For Bourdieu, this process also involves a degree of 'misrecognition' on the part of the dominated, where complicity of an agent confronted by an act of symbolic violence implies a disposition to 'understand their veiled social meaning, but without recognizing them consciously as what they are – namely, as words, gestures, movements, and intonations of domination' (Krais, 1993: 172); as Bourdieu argues 'the dominated apply categories constructed from the point of view of the dominant to the relations of domination, thus making them appear as natural' (2001: 35). According to Krais (1993: 170-1):

> The space of the possible – actions, feelings, evaluations, expressive acts, verbal and bodily behaviour – is restricted for every individual. 'Male' aspects/dispositions in the girl are suppressed, and 'female' dimensions in the boy are suppressed – but they are always related. So, for instance, the phrase 'Boys do not cry,' still a familiar phrase, implicitly has to be completed by 'But girls do'.

Thus, in this process of acquiring a gender identity is the 'paradoxical result that both genders, women and men, are restricted in their potential; and it is in this sense that the dominants are themselves dominated by their domination' (Krais, 1993: 171).

Feminist Critique

Bourdieu's *Masculine Domination* (2001) has been criticised by feminist theorists for 'fail[ing] to bring the destabilizing implications of the concept of

the field to bear upon the notion of habitus as he does convincingly elsewhere' (McNay, 2000: 27) which 'results in a monolithic account of the reproduction of gender relations' (54) which does not account for 'multiple subjectivity' (56).

According to Adkins (2004: 208) 'it is widely recognized that Bourdieu's social theory has much more to say about social reproduction than social change.' It is not difficult to appreciate why, if it is considered a valid criticism, this would particularly be a problem for (pro-) feminist theorists/activists. However, as already noted, the abuse of children has a long history and so it might be argued that what needs to be understood for a comprehension of the phenomenon of adult-child sexual activity or CSA is the seemingly intransient, persistent, durable nature of social practice ('the permanence in change' as Bourdieu (1990a: 56) puts it), particularly where such action is popularly designated as taboo. Thus, in accounting for the sexual subjection of children, perhaps a theory of social practice that emphasises persistence in social reproduction, despite the deep changes that are evident through the processes of modernity and globalisation (Bauman, 2000; Giddens, 1991; Lasch, 1979; Sennett, 1998; Young, 2009), is particularly pertinent.

However, in the context of theorising gender relations, McCall (1992: 847) argues that Bourdieu 'must be accused ... of constructing the universal power of gender symbolism too rigidly and deterministically. For women, individual gender identity varies quite dramatically.' Similar points about the necessity to theorise multiple identities in reference to gender and sexuality have also been made by scholars of men and masculinities (e.g. Kimmel and Messner, 2001)

however, 'despite the evident multiplicity of masculine expression, traditional masculinities ... still prevail in most cultural settings' (Whitehead and Barrett, 2001: 7; see also Frosh *et al.*, 2003). In defence of Bourdieu, Crossley (2001: 88) argues:

> Bourdieu's conception of habitus is not centered upon a 'culturally dopey' model of blind adherence to rules, norms, and traditions. The habitus forms the practical-social basis for innovative and improvised action. It consists of forms of competence, skill, and multi-track dispositions, rather than fixed and mechanical blueprints for action.

It is important to note that the criticisms above are generally perceived as a weakness in Bourdieu's thought as it relates to gender (as set-down in *Masculine Domination*) rather than being a weakness in his theoretical scheme *per se*. It is the concept of *the field* that critics claim is neglected here resulting in a 'hypostatization of relations between men and women' (McNay, 2000: 56). If, however, field *is* considered in conjunction with the habitus, 'a more nuanced view of political agency' can be developed 'in terms of the idea of regulated liberties which escapes from the binary of domination-resistance' (McNay, 2000: 56). The notion of 'regulated liberties' or 'inscribed potentialities' are central to this contextualised account of the sexual subjection of male children. Importantly, criticisms regarding determinism:

> ... fail to recognize fully the force of Bourdieu's insistence that habitus is not to be conceived as a principle of determination but as a generative structure. Within certain objective limits (the field), habitus engenders a potentially infinite number of patterns of behaviour, thought and expression that are both 'relatively unpredictable' but also 'limited in their diversity' (McNay, 2000: 38).

Moi (1999) usefully suggests that gender, rather than being conceptualised as a distinct field, instead should be thought of in the same way that Bourdieu

defined social class – 'as *part of* a field ... that is as dispersed across the social field and deeply structuring of the general social field' (Adkins, 2004: 6), therefore, of specific social fields. This seems particularly useful in considering the field of sport, which, like other social fields (indeed perhaps more so than most) is 'deeply structured' by gender (it's important to add however that this is precisely the point made by Bourdieu (1977; 2001) regarding the gendered nature of social space. As Krais (1993: 159) states 'Bourdieu has used Kabyle [Algerian] society to demonstrate how the division of labor between the genders becomes the foundation of the vision of the world'.

Therefore, despite her criticisms, McNay (2000: 25) claims 'Bourdieu's work on embodiment … resonates strongly with' but also advances feminist theory. She argues:

> For Bourdieu, the formation of subjectivity within a symbolic system involves subjection to dominant power relations, but also involves the institution of meaning. The instantiation of a subject within dominatory power relations does not negate but rather implies agency (McNay, 2000: 47).

This has significant implications for the child as a social agent acting within 'dominatory power relations' and also somewhat resonates with recent debates about the competencies and 'rights of the child'. The notion of the sexually subjected (abused) child as a determined and determining social agent is central to my consideration of CSA (in sport). McNay (2000: 39) goes on:

> To explain gender identity in terms of this notion of 'practical belief' is to suggest that it amounts to something more than the internalization of an external set of representations by a subject. The acquisition of gender

> identity does not pass through consciousness; it is not memorized but enacted at a pre-reflexive level. At the same time, bodily dispositions are not simply inscribed or mechanically learnt but lived as a form of 'practical mimesis': 'the body believes in what it plays at ...' (Bourdieu, 1990b: 73).

Again, this notion of embodied action, bodily belief (e.g. Bourdieu, 1990b: 66-79) will be key to this approach to CSA, and has very clear application to the field of (childhood/youth) sport where the training of the body is an explicit feature. Through such an approach to social action, questions such as: 'what is it exactly that the body is playing at?' and also, 'in doing sport, what exactly is it that the body is trained to believe in?' become accessible. The answers to these questions lie, in part, within the findings of research into gender and sport over the past thirty years (e.g. Hargreaves, 1994; Messner, 1990) that offer an alternative critical description of sport to the one that is constructed within dominant discourse (popular, professional and academic). The strength of utilising Bourdieu's theoretical perspective is that it provides a coherent framework for social practice in which to situate this research and critique.

Summary

The formulation of such an account of social action brings us some distance from notions of action, implicit or explicit, expressed within theories of sexual offending and childhood sexual abuse. However, it is my contention that this is a necessary journey. Regardless of its sexual and/or 'deviant' content or specific motivation, the sexual subjection of a child is a widespread, persistent *social* practice through which social (power) relations and organisation are refracted. For Brackenridge (2001: 239) we should be extremely wary of 'presuppos[ing] simple causality in a problem that is multi-faceted;' therefore,

'rather than necessarily seeking single causes based in individual pathology we should be turning the research question around and asking, "What is it about sport that promotes and condones sexually exploitative behaviour by men?"' (239).

In accounts of CSA that *do* consider historical, social and cultural elements to be crucial (e.g. Cossins, 2000; Seymour, 1998) an eventual focus on the individual perpetrator appears to necessitate the presence of a problematic or traumatic childhood biography and ultimately pathologises the perpetrator of these crimes as abnormal or maladjusted. In this account the social is also central, but through a more explicit articulation of agency, whereby cognitive structures both shape and are shaped by objective structures (fields), but in a fashion whereby:

> Social agents are the *product of history*, of the history of the whole social field and of the accumulated experience of a path within the specific subfield ... social agents will *actively* determine, on the basis of these socially and historically constituted categories of perception and appreciation, the situation that determines them. One can even say that *social agents are determined only to the extent that they determine themselves*. But the categories of perception and appreciation which provide this principle of (self-) determination are themselves largely determined by the social and economic conditions of their constitution (Bourdieu, 1992: 136).

In this way, it is possible to conceive sexual subjection/abuse (of a child by an adult) as an inscribed or embodied potentiality (within the habitus), fundamentally generated from within the symbolic and material organisation of the social universe, activated or realised by a social agent for whom this potential is explicitly elevated by the structure and stimuli of a specific field of practice.

I have outlined above Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical perspective for understanding social practice. He argues, 'sociology must take as its object, instead of letting itself be caught up in it, the struggle for the monopoly of the legitimate representation of the social world' (1990a: 180). It is clear that within the consideration of sexual offending, the psycho-therapeutic disciplines dominate the struggle for legitimacy in representing the problem of adult sexual interest in children, and in doing so prioritise the individual over the social. However, I have suggested that, rather than focusing on theories of abnormality and inadequacy, Bourdieu's approach may offer opportunities for a fuller account of the sexual subjection of children that enables a more substantial focus on socio-cultural factors in a manner that does not lose sight of the individual. I have particularly tried to emphasise the need for any account of this socio-sexual practice to engage with a coherent and substantial notion of action. That is, it is insufficient to reduce the man who sexually abuses a child to an abnormal pathology, mechanistically reacting in a pre-ordained fashion, or even acting without thought or from illness. But in suggesting a sociological approach to the social problem of CSA as others have rightly done (e.g. Cossins, 2000; Liddle, 1993; Plummer, 1981) it is then vital to account for the *encounter* between man and boy, without pathologising the perpetrator or reducing him to a '"culturally dopey" model of blind adherence to rules, norms, and traditions' (Crossley, 2001: 88), or indeed, reducing the child/boy in a similar fashion.

It also might be added that despite the vast over-representation of males in the perpetration of all sexual crimes, it is nevertheless inadequate to construct the perpetrator as *essentially* male, whilst any theoretical account must also explain this dynamic. In this account, I will consider that actions of individual's (such as sex offenders) are not so much the result of a conscious, rational, freely chosen, plan of action, nor a mechanistic, unthinking reaction (cause-effect), but rather as embodied, regulated but improvised, where potential for action is inscribed in the bodies of agents by the fields in which they act and who 'actively determine the situation that determines them'. As Bourdieu (1983: 190) argues in relation to the body, our 'way of treating it, caring for it, feeding it, maintaining it ... reveals the deepest dispositions of the habitus.' In this account, I will consider this proposition in relation to (the bodies of) men and boys in the context or organised sport.

CHAPTER THREE

Organised Male Sport: A Sketch of the Field

In chapter one I critiqued existing contemporary theoretical approaches on sexual offending and childhood sexual abuse, drawing attention to particular weaknesses. In chapter two I responded to this critique by offering an alternative, socio-cultural (Bourdieuian) approach to an understanding of this social problem. In favouring a social science-informed perspective over psychological theories I have argued that in attempting to understand CSA, it is necessary to develop an approach that can potentially incorporate both macro factors, such as those particularly emphasised by feminist theory, and also micro factors, such as individual disposition and choice (Liddle, 1993). However, this must be done in a manner that avoids pathologising perpetrators as inherently deviant, 'sick' or inadequate (Cowburn, 2005), yet theorises their action in a way that does not reduce it to mechanical reaction or detach it from the socio-cultural context. I have suggested then, that the theoretical framework of Pierre Bourdieu meets these criteria and potentially offers a way to approach CSA that does not pathologise either the perpetrator or child (victim).

Clearly, children are integral to the practice of contemporary sport and the child's participation in sport is overwhelmingly considered to be a virtue, in

both political and cultural fields.[17] If, then, as Kitzinger (1997) argues, the 'institution' of childhood is itself integral to the practice of childhood sexual abuse (where the risk is built-in) it is important to consider the role that the closely related institution or field of sport plays, in constructing the child, childhood and adult-child (man-boy) relations. In considering the field of organised (male-) sport in relation to the practice of CSA, it would, appear salient to consider how the institutions of '*childhood'* (boyhood), '*sport'* and '*masculinity*' fit together. That is, the *nature* of this relation must be at the centre of analysis.

However, following Bourdieu (1998a, 2004), analysing social action in any field necessitates an analysis or 'sketch' of the field to which that action pertains. Bourdieu (1990a: 160) states:

> Rather than remaining content with knowing really well a small sector of reality ... one must, then, in the manner of academic architects who used to present a charcoal sketch of the building as a whole within which one could find the individual part worked out in detail, *endeavour to construct a summary description of the whole of the space considered* (emphasis added).

He clarifies this specifically in regard to sport: 'it is impossible to analyse a particular sport independently of the set of sporting practices; one has to imagine the space of sporting practices as a system from which every element derives its distinctive value' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 156). Therefore, in this chapter I map, or sketch, the 'space of sporting practices' as a context from which the empirical data can be framed. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to introduce

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[17] Evidenced by, amongst many other things, the prominent role given to organised sport in fulfilling the government's 'change for children' agenda *Every Child Matters*.

the reader to a critical and empirically informed reading of the cultural context at stake here: the field of organised male-sport, and its relation to the male-child. This 'sketching' or 'mapping' exercise will constitute the back-drop against which the narratives of men sexually abused in sport whilst in boyhood will be presented (chapter five). Following this critical excursion of the field, I will subsequently (chapters six and seven) develop a more focused critique (alongside supporting evidence) and theoretical account utilising the perspectives and conceptual tools introduced in the previous chapters.

Historical origins of organised sport

Contextualised historical understanding is crucial in Bourdieu's sociology. Thus, he states 'through the practical knowledge of the principles of the game that is tacitly required of new entrants, the whole history of the game, the whole past of the game, is present in each act of the game' (Bourdieu, 1993: 74). In sketching-out a picture of the field: 'organised male-sport', it is apparent that the historical origins of what we now refer to as 'sport' must be articulated and established as a crucial foundation for developing this account. As Bourdieu (1993: 118) notes 'the history of sport is a relatively autonomous history which, even when marked by the major events of economic and social history, has its own tempo, its own evolutionary laws, its own crises, in short, its specific chronology.'

Despite the existence, in primitive and ancient cultures, of games and athletic competition (often linked to religious ritual and festival) it is generally acknowledged that the origins of modern sport lie predominantly in nineteenth century England (Huizinga, 1966; Guttmann, 2004) and particularly the Victorian public school (Holt, 1989). Populated by the sons of the dominant classes, 'games' were used to 'develop a form of character, broadly understood as an amalgam of self-reliance, loyalty, endurance, teamwork and self-sacrifice' (Schirato, 2007: 48) in order to equip them for future leadership. Therefore, adherence to the (middle-class) ethos or spirit of the game was also crucial. 'Good form' and 'gentlemanly conduct' was equally important to winning, or even more so, and trying too hard (let alone being a 'professional') was considered vulgar and symbolic of the lower classes 'to the extent that by the end of the Victorian period, sport and the notion of fair play was (almost universally) synonymous with British national character' (Schirato, 2007: 51). However, games, particularly the early form of football and rugby, were marked by brutal physical engagement, aggression and bullying (Dunning and Sheard, 2005).

The particular brand of education offered in the English public school itself developed out of seventeenth and eighteenth century Enlightenment thinking on the nature of childhood. According to Cunningham (1995) the work of John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) offered a new focus on 'the child', but from competing perspectives. Locke (1693) was primarily concerned with shaping the child, through education (including use of corporal punishment if necessary) to become a successful, moral adult.

Rousseau (1762) on the other hand, conceptualised the child as having arrived fresh from God (as opposed to Puritan ideas of arriving in original sin) and being close to nature; crucially, he claimed that childhood was the best part of life (Cunningham, 1995).

Rousseau's romantic ideas of the child had a 'revolutionary impact on thinking about childhood' (Cunningham, 1995: 76) but were lacking in practical advice making them difficult to implement. Additionally and importantly 'there were powerful forces which paid little attention to the idea of the romantic child, for example … education in "manliness" of the English public schools for boys' (Cunningham, 1995: 77). Thus, it is possible to note that Thomas Arnold, one of the key protagonists of 'muscular Christianity' and headmaster at *Rugby School* (1828-1841) for boys, and his successors, aimed to create an enlightened ruling class of educated men based on 'loyalty … [and] self-sacrifice' (Hargreaves, 1987: 39). The largely secular 'cult of athleticism' that grew out of Arnold's approach to education and produced the organisation of sport in the forms that we know them today, can be seen to have resonated (or been put to work) in three important ways:

> It fed into the growing concern for national defence; it met the growing demand among dominant groups for a form of leisure activity which was complementary to work; and above all it was a way of disciplining or 'normalizing' the male youth of the dominant classes to enable them to take their places in the modern social order (Hargreaves, 1987: 41).

As Whitehead and Barrett (2001: 8) point out 'the crisis of masculinity thesis goes back a long way' and informed the character of English public school system, as well as movements such as 'the Boy Scouts of America … and

dominant definitions of race, class and nationhood.' Using a Foucauldian approach, Hargreaves (1987: 42) sums up the rationalist origins of English public schools and the sports to which they gave rise:

> In the public schools a new disciplinary technology was discovered and developed, which was deployed for the first time on the sons of the dominant classes themselves. Like the workhouses, asylums, hospitals, prisons, barracks and factories of the era, these schools closed off the individual from society, subjecting him to the uninterrupted gaze of authority.

Therefore, athleticist discourse and practice constituted a 'new disciplinary strategy' which enabled the 'gaze' of authority to extend its disciplinary gaze into play and leisure. Thus, 'the body was made uninterruptedly visible and control was thereby extended over the 'soul' of the individual' (Hargreaves, 1987: 42).

Thus, through the education system, this new 'athleticism' (a notion I will return to) underpinned by a discourse of control, discipline and surveillance is constructed as 'the means of correct training' (Foucault, 1977) through which to instil those values/characteristics in the male children of the dominant classes thought to be central to maintaining their dominance. It is evident then that the origins of sport were organised around the maintenance of power relations, both those based on class (emphasised by Hargreaves, 1987) and 'race', (Hoberman, 1997) but more importantly for this discussion (and it might be added more comprehensively) those based on gender. As Hargreaves (1987: 56) notes, 'wherever we look … sports culture seems overwhelmingly a masculine culture.' Indeed, this was true, generally speaking, regardless of which social class or ethnic group might have been engaged in sport, and as

Hargreaves (1987) points out, the male working class were co-opted (as were black and minority ethnic groups) into this athleticist discourse early on in the mass organisation of sport (for example, through the *Working Men's Club and Institute Union*, 1863).

Further, Cunningham (1995) argues that whilst in the 1830s the notion of the *un*-gendered, *neutral* child was popular, towards the end of the century this was no longer the case. Therefore, it would seem that the emergence of organised sport, given its deeply gendered order, was instrumental in helping to cement the division of the sexes from childhood into adulthood (Burstyn, 1999). Utilising the enthusiasm for games instilled within upper and middle-class boys, Arnold and many who followed him melded Lockean notions of disciplining the boy into a 'gentleman' through the use of corporeal means. As Roberta J. Park states:

> Whereas earlier callisthenics, gymnastics or simple out-of-door pursuits provided the means by which the body – and morals – were to be developed, by the last decades of the [19th] century it was in the crucible of athletic competition that the male character was to be forged (in Mangan and Vertinsky, 2009: 46).

In addition, Kimmel (2005) identifies the emergence of 'Marketplace Man' as the dominant form of contemporary masculinity in the west that arose in the 1830s, and pushed aside previous models of manhood that had prevailed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (the 'Genteel Patriarch' and the 'Heroic Artisan'). According to Kimmel (2005: 29):

> Marketplace Man derived his identity entirely from his success in the capitalist marketplace, as he accumulated wealth, power, status ... devoting himself to his work in an increasingly homosocial environment

> ... [it] was a manhood that required proof, and that required the acquisition of tangible goods as evidence of success. It reconstituted itself by the exclusion of 'others' – women, non-white men, non-native-born men, homosexual men ... Marketplace masculinity describes his characteristics – aggression, competition, anxiety ...

Therefore, it seems significant that at the very time, immediately preceding the mass codification and organisation of sport, in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, this competitive, athletic, aggressive, materialist, exclusive and anxious masculinity is the dominant model of manhood. Thus, in the mid-twentieth century, Goffman (1963) writes that, aside from other crucial characteristics (e.g. white, heterosexual) it is 'a recent record in sports' that signifies the dominant male (cited in Kimmel, 2005: 30). As Bourdieu (1993: 72) argues, 'there are general laws of fields' as well as 'specific properties ... but we know that in every field we shall find a struggle' and 'a dominant agent who will try to defend the monopoly and keep out competition' (Bourdieu, 1993: 72).

Therefore, the origins of contemporary organised sport lie, in part, within British/western nineteenth century male fears over the feminising effects of industrialisation on male children (Burstyn, 1999). Whilst fathers had played a central role in parenting in the 17th and 18th centuries, particularly in regard to their moral development, their increased absence from the home due to the changing nature of work (agricultural to industrial) as capitalism developed, meant that 19th century childhood was characterised by an 'overpresent' mother and an absent father (Burstyn, 1999). Burstyn (1999: 52) argues that this absence 'created an emotional and pedagogical need for extrafamilial social fatherhood to prepare boys for the competitive, public world of men.'

Thus, according to Messner (1997: 9) 'fathers hoped to initiate their sons into manhood through physical activities that were viewed as masculine returns to 'nature' that they hoped would counterbalance the 'feminizing' effect of modern urban social life.' If the British were to meet the tasks of industrialisation and empire, the socialisation of the future leaders could not be left to the vagaries of the family, especially a female-headed one: 'instead, the professions, armies, and bureaucracies emerged, organized on principles of utilitarian affiliation, exclusively male and profoundly gendered' (Burstyn, 1999: 52). For Burstyn, a 'masculinity market' developed and sports as we know them organised and developed within this climate:

> The impulse to develop ritual institutions with exceptionally strong and dominant masculine models that idealized physical activities 'at the extreme possibilities of the male body' was fed by twin drives: to compensate for the absence of close fathers and men … and to defend against the … residues of 'overpresent' mothers … Sport responded to and fed the attraction and power of hypermasculine symbols, ideals, and fields of endeavour and thus lead to the valuing of excessive instrumentality and aggressive physicality (Burstyn, 1999: 54).

Thus, male children were prepared for the demands of manhood through sport (particularly team games). In other words, vigorous, aggressive and competitive games were seen as essential to healthy masculinity and this is undoubtedly a relation that has endured. This relation was (and is) often facilitated (or legitimised) through the notion that physical activity had strong educational benefits, hence the popular idiom, *mens sana in corpore sano* ('a healthy mind in a healthy body'). The *Education* system continues to distinguish the sexes through *Physical Education* and *School-Sport* (e.g. male and female sports, male and female competitions) thereby naturalising

difference and inculcating values that serve the patriarchal endeavour and its essentialist discourse (Renold, 1997). As Bourdieu states, 'the most important effect of the rite is the one which attracts the least attention: by treating men and women differently, the rite *consecrates* the difference, institutes it' (1991: 118).

Gender Relations, Science and Sport

It can be argued that the association between sport, education and science have had a durable impact on gender relations. Thus, according to Jennifer Hargreaves (1994: 44):

> By the second half of the nineteenth century science was characteristically applied to social situations and, when women were characterized as a 'problem' in response to changes in their lives with the growth of industrial capitalism, they became the subject matter of investigation. Science provided a supposedly 'factual' or 'objective', but in effect conservative, legitimation of patriarchal relations or male domination, and scientific method was viewed as a rational replacement for previously held emotional and uncritical theories about the role of women.

Patriarchal forces within the dominant classes developed and utilised science as an instrument in its service, perhaps the ideal naturalising instrument, for placing the patriarchal organisation of social relations beyond any reasonable doubt. Such discourse continues to permeate contemporary society. Therefore, whilst women were not allowed to even enter the athletic arena of ancient Greece on pain of death because it would insult the gods, in the contemporary version, established in 1896, women were not allowed to enter certain events because, for example, it would damage their ability to conceive, and this was no less than a medical 'fact.'

Organised sport, then, provides a visible articulation of the 'natural' superiority of males over females. The emphasis, in natural ('Sport and Exercise') science, arguably operates to maintain and reproduce difference through its emphasis on the hierarchical ordering of the species. Thus, the explicit *scientific* measuring of all aspects of physical performance - abundantly and explicitly displayed, mediated and meticulously recorded through the powerful collaboration between organised sport and multi-national corporations that control print and audio-visual media (see Wenner, 2002) – can be seen as an effective tool to perpetuate gender difference through the unassailable guise of 'objective' assessment. The exponential growth in sport science within higher education (in the late twentieth, early twenty-first century) might then be considered more critically when placed alongside the exponential growth in public funding for (male) sport and overwhelming emphasis in the media on male-sport (Creedon, 1994) and particular varieties of male-sport whose origins lie within the English public school.

An obvious, recent example from sport is the manner in which the English media treated the success of the men's and women's cricket victories over Australia in the 'Ashes' series'. In 2005 the women's team had won the 'Ashes' some weeks prior to the men's victory However, whilst every 'ball' of the men's test was televised and broadcast on radio, then pored over by expert 'pundits,' the female victory hardly warranted a mention, let alone any broadcast

coverage. Similar treatment was subsequently meted out at the victory parade in London[18] and the annual BBC *Sports Personality of the Year* awards.[19]

The symbolic dominance of men over women in organised sport is considerable but nevertheless has been and is the site of gender-related 'struggle' (Hargreaves, 1986, 2000; Lenskyj, 1986). However, the historic ability of (white, middle-class) males to determine what constitutes capital (in any field, but certainly sport) and how it should be distributed, provides a clear example of how the relationship between agents and capital operates to constitute a field; a field in this case which has been for some time dubbed 'a male preserve' (Hall, 1985; Hargreaves, 1994; Messner, 1988).

In this way patriarchal forces can be seen to generate, organise and utilise science as an instrument to maintain male domination (as indeed it has been used to legitimise class and particularly 'racial' oppression; see Edwards, 1984; Hoberman, 1997), therefore, the influence of 'science' on sport should not be seen as coincidental or natural, nor indeed should the proliferation and dominance of Sport (and Exercise) Science in the academic study of sport (an intellectual enterprise inherently *un*critical of its social context) be seen as unrelated to (or disinterested in) the patriarchal endeavour/discourse. Indeed, in Bourdieuian language, the emphasis on, or interest in, 'disinterested-ness'

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[18] The women's team were allowed to participate but it was abundantly clear who the parade was arranged for, particularly when the men's team *all* received MBEs, something not replicated in 2007 when only the women's team retained the *Ashes*, nor in 2009 when they did so for the third time.

[19] In addition, out of fifty-six *Sports Personality of the Year* awards, only thirteen have been female (including Jane Torville *with* Christopher Dean) and only four in the last twenty years (BBC, 2010).

(or objectivity) in 'Sports and Exercise Science' is itself sociologically significant. It is perhaps unnecessary to make *too* much of the fact that the current (2009) Board of Directors of *BASES* (*The British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences*) is chaired by a male,[20] as are *all* its other 'Divisions' (n=3) and committees (n=6), but the fact remains nevertheless; thus the imprint of patriarchy is evident both in sports practice and its supervision. Therefore, Brackenridge (2002: 256) states 'sport is a sex segregated social institution. The separation of sports into male and female on biological grounds is reinforced by powerful ideological and political mechanisms.'

The influence of the Academy is also evident within the practice of organised sport and exemplified in elite, professional (male) sport where athletes and teams surround themselves with individuals (the 'entourage', the 'medical' team) whose expertise derives from the disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics, as well as psychology, in order to give them the vital 'edge' that engaging with the latest (*scientific*) developments can potentially offer them (the exemplar case *perhaps* being genetic modification). However, this appeal to science is not confined to elite adult sport as Hoberman (1992: 32) notes reports from the US that (two decades ago) 'some American parents began asking paediatricians to administer human growth hormone (hGH) to their children to make them into more imposing athletes'. Therefore, in the sport-project of turning children into athletes (and boys into 'real' men) the rigorous methods of 'science' are employed as a key mechanism of this patriarchal

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[20] It should be noted that three of the eight current 'Board' members are female.

(masculinist) endeavour. Before discussing further the field of organised male-sport, I will make some brief comments on terminology.

Masculinity-Masculinism

Masculinity has been prioritised by feminist and gendered accounts of childhood sexual abuse (e.g. Rush, 1980; Cossins, 2000) including within the sociology of sport (Brackenridge, 2001). According to Brittan (2001: 53) it is important to distinguish between three concepts that are often confused: 'masculinity, masculinism and patriarchy.' Brittan (2001: 53) argues that masculinity 'refers to those aspects of men's behaviour that fluctuate over time', thus:

> Those people who speak of masculinity as an essence ... are confusing masculinity with masculinism, the masculine ideology. Masculinism is the ideology that justifies and naturalizes male domination. As such, it is the ideology of patriarchy. Masculinism takes it for granted that there is a fundamental difference between men and women, it assumes that heterosexuality is normal, it accepts without question the sexual division of labour, and it sanctions the political and dominant role of men in the public and private spheres. [It] is not subject to the vagaries of fashion – it tends to be relatively resistant to change.

In addition to this, Young (2003: 4) develops the notion of a 'logic of masculinist protection' that:

> ... contrasts with a model of masculinity assumed by much feminist theory as self-consciously dominative ... [where] masculine men wish to master women sexually for the sake of their own gratification and to have the pleasures of domination ... an image [which] corresponds to much about male-dominated institutions and the behaviour of many men within them.

This notion of masculinity certainly underpins much writing in the feminist consideration of CSA. Young (2003: 4) however, recalls 'another apparently

more benign image of masculinity, more associated with ideas of chivalry ... the gallantly masculine man is loving and self-sacrificing ... the role of this courageous, responsible, and virtuous man is that of a protector'. However, 'central to the logic of masculinist protection is the subordinate relation of those in the protected position' (Young, 2003: 4) where 'patriarchal right emerges from male specialization in security' (Young, 2003: 6). Therefore, 'the logic of masculinist protection works to elevate the protector to a position of superior authority and to demote the rest of us to a position of grateful dependency' (Young, 2003: 13). It is interesting then to note, in discourse around organised sport and the child protection-safeguarding agenda, that child abuse is perpetrated by 'bad men' whilst 'child-protection-in-sport' is (latterly) heralded and championed by 'good men'.

Children, Sport and the Spirit of Capitalism

By identifying the Enlightenment philosophy of science, coupled with a rigidly patriarchal organisation, as fundamental to the origins and development of sport, arguably, a particular form of logic or reason lies at the heart of this cultural practice. The purpose of competitive sport is singular: to conquer the opposition, to win; a draw is of little interest. This tendency is not negotiable or open to dilution, even taking account of the popular notion of so-called 'gentlemanly conduct,' the 'sporting gesture.'

Bourdieu (1998: 21) makes a similar point in the field of education and the school institution, where 'a high-pressure, competitive atmosphere, inspires submissiveness and presents a conspicuous analogue to the business world.'

I will argue that the field of sport (and indeed *Physical Education*) is well endowed with the rationale and values of the late-modern, capitalist corporation and can be seen to be ideally placed to operate as an efficient discursive (or ideological) instrument that disseminates 'hypermasculinist' and capitalist discourses that 'inspire submissiveness.'

According to Maguire *et al.* (2002: 12) 'sport is arguably one of the most powerful transfer mechanisms for culture and structure ever known to humankind.' Perhaps unsurprisingly then, It is also tightly bound to contemporary 'childhood'. According to Bourdieu (1993: 126) sport was conceived as an:

> ... extremely economical means of mobilizing, occupying and controlling adolescents [and] was predisposed to become an instrument and a stake in struggles between all the institutions totally or partly organized with a view to the mobilization and symbolic conquest of the masses and therefore competing for the symbolic conquest of youth ... sport is an object of political struggle.

Bakan (2004) and Giroux (2000) illustrate how corporations now aggressively market to children through schools in an attempt to make them life-long consumers who perceive few choices in what and how they consume.[21] Similarly, the disciplinary work carried out by organised sport, through the discourse of discipline (obedience), dedication, commitment, drive, achievement and single-mindedness - aimed specifically at children and

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[21] Many schools in the USA are now run by private companies that work with other corporate sponsors, whose primary business is, for example, fast-food, clothing and cars (see Bakan, 2004; Giroux, 2000 for more extensive discussion) to finance children's education and schools in England regularly utilise commercial organisations to deliver school sport.

young people as essential requirements for 'success'[22] - can be seen to be

highly effective in naturalising the corporate message. For Chomsky (2004:

174):

> The goal for corporations is to maximize profit and market share. And
> they also have a goal for their target – namely, the population. They
> have to ... drive out of people's heads natural sentiments like care
> about others, or sympathy or solidarity … The ideal is to have
> individuals who are totally disassociated from one another, who don't
> care about anyone else.

In How's (2003) discussion of first wave Critical Theory, he explains

Horkheimer's position which, 'implicitly draws on Weber's famous account of

the emergence of capitalism in the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of

Capitalism*'. According to How (2003: 92):

> The calculative, instrumental qualities required by the spirit of
> capitalism produce a depersonalised form of interaction and a
> human (male) subject capable of rigid self-discipline, of acting
> independently of others, in effect treating himself as an instrument
> for achieving goals.

As the discussion so far demonstrates, the qualities required by the 'spirit of

capitalism' are also integral to the discourse of athleticism developed in

nineteenth century England. Instrumental reason is one of the central

concepts of Habermas (1984) who maintained that within industrial society,

reason was increasingly being reduced merely to its instrumental function.

This refers to, 'an outlook where the world is made up of *mere* objects, and

reason's task is only to show subjects how best to manipulate these objects,

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[22] For example, see the *Rugby Football Union's* (2009) 'The Core Values project –
the first time a sport has set out to define its value system in formal terms – identified
the following principles that lie at the heart of rugby in England: Teamwork; Respect;
Enjoyment;   Discipline;   Sportsmanship   (see
http://www.rfu.com/TheGame/CoreValues).

be they natural or human objects (How, 2003). For Critical Theory, the demands of capitalism on modern industrial societies have led to the widespread adoption of instrumental reason which emphasises domination and control and 'squeezes other aspects of life to the margins' (How, 2003: 177). Thus, reflecting 'on sport at the beginning of a new century' Digel (2005: 4) argues:

> Life increasingly is becoming an input/output calculation … The 'economization' of our lives goes hand in hand with this rationalization of our basic motives for acting ... Personal benefit and maximization of personal advantage become a rule of human action. Cost-benefit calculations become a characteristic of everyday life … Life is completely capitalized and marketed.

In addition, the strategy of capitalising *everything* is not a gender-neutral process. A field structured on patriarchal interests must necessarily endeavour to capitalise those same interests. Therefore, Bourdieu (1993) argues that orthodoxy within any field is defended and conserved by those who monopolise the specific capital that characterises a field. Hence, Brackenridge (2002: 265) observes 'most of the major sport organizations are run by self-selecting (male) oligarchies who are reluctant to give up their power' and Connell (2000: 35) argues that:

> ... the market operates through forms of rationality that are historically masculine and involve a sharp split between instrumental reason on the one hand, emotion and human responsibility on the other … modern masculinity is deeply connected with industrial capitalism.

Given gains made by feminism, real and imagined (such gains are often wildly exaggerated within masculinist popular opinion[23] and Brackenridge (2002: 257) argues that 'recent empirical studies ... indicate that the gains in gender equity of the past thirty years are probably illusory'), patriarchal forces are perhaps compelled to capitalise their interests more aggressively and comprehensively, although perhaps more surreptitiously, than ever before. Therefore, feminist writers draw attention to a 'backlash' against feminism (Brackenridge, 2002; McRobbie, 2009). Hetero-patriarchal forces continue to prioritise a masculinity based on the notion of conquest and domination, thereby perhaps neurotically attempting to assure its reproduction and resisting (feminist) change with calls for a return to a masculinist nature (e.g. Bly, 1990; see Messner, 1997). Organised male-sport, with its instrumentalist logic and deeply gendered, masculinist, cultural symbolism, can be seen as central to this endeavour. Therefore, Burstyn (1999: 23) argues:

> The actions that the dominant sport forms practise and celebrate are 'higher, faster, stronger,' in the succinct words of the Olympic motto. This is at once an industrial and a masculinist motto, for it condenses within its ideal bodies and activities the technomorphism of industrial capitalism (the ideal of the machine) and the biomorphism of maleness (the muscular superiority of males). It is, in this sense, a hypermasculinist slogan.

Thus, the practice of sport, with all its 'virtuous potential' as Morgan (1994: 138) puts it, is subject to the 'instrumental rational calculus' of the *institution* of sport. This instrumental rationalisation is not only confined to professional or elite sport but also encompasses the practice of sport at lower levels:

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[23] For an excellent example see TV and Radio presenter Michael Buerke's 'rant' against the feminization of society (Channel 5, 2005, reported on BBC News website, 2005).

'because professional sports generally set the moral tone for the rest of the sports world, their narcissistic manner has, alas, rubbed off on sports at all levels' (Morgan, 2002: 281). He includes U.S. collegiate and high school sport, as well as the *Olympic Games*, as examples of sporting practice where we might reasonably expect to find resistance to instrumentalism but instead find that 'they let money rather than morals do their bidding' (Morgan, 2002: 281). However, given the origins of organised sport, Morgan's lament for the demise of 'virtuous' sport seems somewhat romantic; organised sport has continued to regenerate itself, but always in a manner that enables it to maintain the course that its inception prepared it for and alongside those institutions for which it was devised to assist and those discourses from which it was born.

The treatment of other people's bodies (and our own) as instruments to be shaped and used for our own ends, usually linked (in sport at any rate) to mastery of, and domination over, others' bodies (conquest), has implications for organised sport and wider society. According to Digel (2005: 9) 'sport has come to an arrangement with the mainstream of society. It is on the side of those that follow market logic'. However, this 'arrangement' has always been there – it is only a nostalgic, ahistorical notion of sport to believe that it was ever little more than a product of, and symbol for, the dominance of Western patriarchal forces and the dominant groups within that system, whatever it may mean for individual participants or spectators. In a (late-) capitalist system, the end (profit) always justifies the means (exploitation of labour); in the practice of sport, maxims that extol this very perspective - such as,

'winning isn't everything, it's the only thing' (the late Vince Lombardi[24], iconic US football coach); 'football isn't a matter of life and death, it's more important than that' (the late Bill Shankly, iconic Scottish soccer manager) - are commonplace and central to the ethical logic of the field (Pronger, 1999).

Similarly, according to Chomsky, the corporation of late-capitalism is an amoral one that, by necessity, treats people like 'tools':

> If you had to worry about whether the tool was going to be happy it would be inefficient. If the tool can be treated just like a piece of metal you use it if you want, you throw it away if you don't want it … So if you can get human beings to become tools like that it's more efficient by some measure of efficiency. An ideological measure but a measure. A measure of which is based on dehumanisation. You have to dehumanize it – that's part of the system (Chomsky, 2004: 179-180)

In many ways this description is also appropriate for the contemporary field of organised sport, increasingly dominated by large capitalist corporations, where children become objects of value (as well as surveillance and examination) determined through their ability to efficiently produce a specific outcome prescribed and evaluated by 'legitimate' (male) adults; if they are unable to satisfactorily generate this product, consistently and under specific conditions, they are discarded.

The recruitment of secondary (and primary) school age children to professional football clubs is now common practice in the UK (see Barlow, 2009) whereby tens of thousands of children, and their parents, each year

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[24] Also: 'Football is like life - it requires perseverance, self-denial, hard work, sacrifice, dedication and respect for authority' (Vince Lombardi).

respond to publicised invitations to attend 'trials,' during which a handful are selected to attend training camps and progress to the next level where greater expertise and specialised resources are available. The child 'under surveillance' or 'on trial' is thus an institutionalised element of organised sport. Certainly the application of Foucault's (1977) articulation on the modern use of the 'examination' to both normalise and individualise children and young athletes as a technique of disciplinary power is highly relevant here (Johns, and Johns, 2000; Markula and Pringle, 2006; Shogan, 1999).

Similarly, the sponsorship and promotion of sport by corporate marketing aimed specifically at children, more obviously objectifies and commodifies the child. Where, for example, *McDonald's* sponsors youth football (through national governing bodies) and employs football 'stars' and coaches to promote their brand (see McDonald's, 2009) the commodification of children through sport is more blatant – children are reduced to the (dehumanised) role of consumers, valuable for their spending power alone (through their parents). Thus, according to Giroux (2000: 14) 'childhood is being reinvented, in part through the interests of corporate capital' and the role of sport in this reinvention is a significant one.

Indeed, it might be suggested that it is only in a field of practice where winning (at all costs) is the ultimate objective and overriding ethos that self-justifying, (child-friendly) counter-maxims are particularly required – hence school-children are told of the 'character building' properties of sport, and that 'it's the

taking part that counts' by an adult community who persistently demonstrate that this is not the case to children who easily comprehend it as a falsehood.

Masculinist sport seems to represent a context that exaggerates the instrumental nature of late-modern life, perhaps more than most but certainly in parallel with the 'The Corporation' (Bakan, 2004). Conquest is valued far above any other considerations, although euphemism abounds, especially where children are concerned and, as such, would seem to play an active role in the construction of a society where the use (exploitation) of others' bodies in the pursuit of one's own ends is normalised. In sport, as in the corporation, the child becomes a commodity, to be used in pursuit of an arbitrary goal, thoroughly distinct from any notion of well-being or quality of life.

An instrumentalist approach to life, where everything, including human beings, is commodified, works to install in the habitus the notion that other people, including children, are available to be exploited in the single-minded, culturally legitimised, individualist quest to satisfy personal and organisational desires, sometimes with extreme consequences for children (Jenks, 2005b). This is a masculinist habitus based on the pursuit of domination, expressed through the command of capital, where instrumental reason can be seen as a necessary, ever-present feature of the patriarchal endeavour, but also, perhaps, one which is most efficiently enabled through the capitalist system of economic and social organisation. This is a system, in late-modern society, that is perhaps best encapsulated in the form of the global corporation, a

'*psychopathic*' manifestation (Bakan, 2004) that both closely resembles, and is intimately connected with, the field of organised male-sport.

Morgan states, 'the crucial question, then, is not that high-performance sport has transformed our human identity – this is, it is safe to say, a given – but rather what we are to make of its transformation of our humanness' (Morgan, 1992: 105). The dominant pattern or form of masculinity that emerges from the field of organised male-sport, what might be called the 'athleticist habitus,' is shaped by the patriarchal, masculinist values (often associated with physical aggression and violence) that underpin it – fundamentally an instrumentalist approach to human relations.

In the above discussion I have attempted to construct a broad, critical sketch of the field of organised male-sport and the discourses and struggles that have shaped it; that is, I have attempted to articulate its particular historicity and logic. I will now consider some broader issues around boyhood and contemporary sport to facilitate a particular and critical reading of the data presented below.

The Social Construction of Boyhood in Contemporary Organised Male-Sport

As already noted (chapter one), Gil (1975) claims that childhood abuse is directly related to the values and philosophy that underpin cultures, societies

and their institutions, and Kitzinger (1997) argues that the social construction of childhood - 'a social space which is structurally determined by a range of social institutions and mechanisms' (James and James, 2004: 213) - is central to the practice of CSA. The field of sport, however, has been established as a social space fundamental to 'healthy', 'happy', 'normal' contemporary Western childhoods and seemingly indispensable for teaching children 'lessons for life.' For example, Dame Kelly Holmes, double Olympic gold medallist and until recently the UK 'School Sports Champion' states:

> Sport has the ability to give children lots of different skills ... competition is very important because young people have to learn to lose, pick themselves up, brush themselves off and get going again because those are the people who are most successful in life. It is important people get involved for the healthier lifestyles, to feel good about themselves and to gain a sense of achievement from what they do (Price, 2009).

Seemingly the stakes could not be higher. Competitive, organised sport, therefore, plays a major role in the social construction of childhood and this is particularly the case for boyhood, where the relation between performance in sport and dominant or 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell, 1995) is so close as to be almost inter-changeable and therefore has serious implications for a boys sense of worth and self-esteem (Messner and Sabo, 1994; Pringle, 2001; Renold, 1997; Wellard, 2009).

With the emergence of child protection, safeguarding and welfare initiatives and policies within sports organisations, it is perhaps possible to detect something of a sea-change from sport's taken-for-granted position as a highly privileged and unchallenged role in the physical and moral development of

children, to a very recent realisation, at least within public sector bodies, that such a position may also be contingent upon meeting certain obligations and responsibilities to the children it tries so hard to recruit and retain (David, 2005; also see *Sport England/CPSU*, 2006). Unsurprisingly the struggle to identify children who demonstrate rare ability in sport ('talent') at an increasingly younger age is now part of the official organisation of sport in the UK (e.g. *Long-Term Athlete Development*) and is perhaps at its most vigorous in those sports most pervasively represented by either Western capitalist interests - such as soccer, rugby (both codes), football (various international forms), boxing, basketball, motor-sports, cricket, tennis, golf and ice-hockey - or State interests focused particularly on nationalistic success in international competition (e.g. Olympic Games).

However, in understanding that sport plays a significant role in the construction of contemporary childhood (as do other institutional contexts, such as the family and education), it is also possible to acknowledge that in considering childhood sexual abuse, such institutional contexts must be critically evaluated. According to Colton and Vanstone (1998: 522):

> We do not know if there is a link between the culture of an organization and abuse, but it may be helpful to contemplate the fact that critical analysis of the culture of relevant organizations needs to become part of the process of prevention itself. Indeed, in the understanding of why and how sexual abuse of children takes place, a wider consideration of the social and cultural contexts needs to be placed alongside psychological explanations.

Thus, Brackenridge (2001: 82) states 'future research into the normative culture of each different sport will comprise an essential part of our search for

understanding about the sexual exploitation of athletes.' For Bourdieu, there is most definitely a relation between institutional or organisational culture (represented in his scheme by 'the field') and individual habitus (dispositions generative of action). According to Bourdieu (1990a: 165) 'sport is a relatively autonomous field' therefore it can be seen to reproduce the values and interests of the dominant culture but in a somewhat distinct (hyper-masculinist) fashion, as outlined in the previous section. This then has implications for the child in the midst of this field of practice; again, James and James (2004: 13) remind us of this fact, stating that the social construction of childhood is 'the complex interweaving of social structures, political and economic institutions, beliefs, cultural mores, laws, policies and the everyday actions of both adults and children, in the home and on the street.' To this might be added, 'in the pool and gymnasium, and on the pitch, court and rink.'

The positing of children as social *actors* or agents in this process should not be overlooked in this definition. Indeed, James and James (2004: 14) add that the institution of childhood is 'the structural site that is occupied by "children", as a collectivity,' and it is within this space that any one child, as a 'member of the category "children" … comes to exercise his or her unique agency.' Thus, in Bourdieu's language, we can conceptualise childhood, masculinity and sport as interconnecting fields, the product of which might be constituted as 'male sport' or 'boyhood sport,' that both shape the individual habitus, and provide the context for action or practice that shapes the field. In Jenks's (2005b: 90) terms:

> Children are a concrete presence with needs, demands, dispositions and a burgeoning intentionality, but they also constitute analytic trajectories in terms of the psychological projections and collective expectations of the larger, and more powerful, adult group within society. The former is a world created for them through their 'natural' character and the latter a world constrained for them through their 'social' status. The latter is the world that we refer to as 'childhood'.

Clearly the social practice of sport contains significant 'constrained' space for boys; a space which supposedly complements or enhances their 'natural' character (playful, non-serious, corporeal) but which may well be more closely related to the 'collective expectations' of adults based on dominant cultural notions of what boyhood should comprise (discipline, structure, competition, homosocial interaction), as well as the characteristics that boys should display (work-ethic, team-spirit, will-to-win, physical superiority, controlled aggression, heterosexuality).

Thus, organised sport is a historically allocated, *approved* boyhood space (indeed it has consistently been used as an intervention to impart or restore conditions of approved childhood, particularly amongst delinquent male youths) and as such has been largely unregulated or self-regulating, whilst at the same time being a highly-regarded socialisation 'tool'. It is widely understood, virtually *a given*, that sport inherently entails the sorts of practices that are beneficial to a (male) child's 'natural' development. As Wellard (2009: 70) observes 'it is generally assumed that the practices which operate in sport are less problematic than the individuals who would like to participate.' However, as I have demonstrated, social theorists and researchers in the sociology of sport (as well as some journalists) have often painted a very different picture than the one that holds sway in the popular imagination and

is consistently promoted by sports organisations (public or private) and key 'agents' of the field, such as Dame Kelly Holmes and Lord Sebastian Coe. For example, consider Sabo and Panepinto's (1990: 116-7) description of 'American' Football using 'a feminist-informed anthropological framework that assumed that football ritual resembles primitive male initiation rites in fundamental ways':

> First, football is a social theatre with an all-male, intergenerational cast. The older-coach/younger-player relationship develops over many years and, at least in part, is defined as a testing ground for adult manhood. Second, though the individual styles of coaches may vary from authoritarian to facilitative, they exert a great deal of control over their players and insist on conformity. Third, football ritual unfolds in sex-segregated contexts such as the locker room and playing field. Coaches and players most often train, travel, eat and recreate in all-male settings. If women are present, they are usually in subservient positions *vis-a-vis* men (i.e., cheerleaders, stewardesses, fans, and mothers who clean uniforms and serve meals). Fourth, football is also hierarchically structured ... Authority is concentrated almost totally in the coach, and players are expected to obey the rules. And finally, football ritual is filled with pain.

In Bourdieu's theory of social practice, then, agents actively determine their lives but simultaneously 'don't do just anything'; the *field* is central to any understanding of social practice (McNay, 2000). Fields are semi-autonomous and have their own history and logic and social action is related to the context in which it occurs. In developing a Bourdieuian-informed account of the sexual subjection of boys in organised male-sport, it is then crucial, to interrogate the nature of the space that the institution of sport constructs for boys.

If a comprehension of agents' actions can be discerned through the relation between the field, capital and habitus: 'the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, [which] produces practices which tend

to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle ...' (Bourdieu, 1977: 78) or a practical sense or '"feel" for the game,' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 57) then it is possible and necessary to ask: what *are* the 'objective conditions' of the field?; what contribution to the 'generative principle of regulated improvisations' does the field of sport make?; what elements characterise the sort of dispositions that might be 'durably installed' by the field, or (social) game, of sport?; and what features might characterise the habitus that works to (re-) produce and perpetuate sport? In other words, what is the nature of the male-sport world constructed for those actors or agents (male-child athletes, *etc.*) that constitute that space? More simply, how does the field of sport construct boyhood and the man-boy relation? These questions will be central to my consideration of CSA in organised male-sport.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to offer a brief sketch of the major historical and socio-cultural contours of the field of organised sport. This is clearly a significant task: therefore, I do not suggest that this is anything like a comprehensive discussion. However, in considering the sex-offending and sexual abuse literature, especially feminist or pro-feminist research, it is clear that such work considers there to be a strong relationship between patriarchal, sexist, misogynist and homophobic environments and the sexual abuse of children (e.g. Etherington, 1995; Colton and Vanstone, 1996; Mendel, 1995; Struve, 1990). On this basis then it should be clear that the environment of organised male-sport, as articulated above and by many gender and sport

theorists (e.g. Hall, 1985; Hargreaves, 1986; Lenskyj, 1992), should be deeply suspect in this regard (Brackenridge, 2001, 2002; Volkwein-Caplan and Sankaran, 2002). In some ways then this is sufficient; a relationship between organised male-sport (its patriarchal structure and masculinist culture) and sexual abuse is apparent, and (the late) Ray Wyre's assertion that sport is 'an ideal breeding ground for abuse' (BBC, 1993) seems evident. However, as noted above the objective here is to simultaneously consider the sexual abuse of boys and to provide an explanatory account that will underpin any contextual observations. Therefore, if this account is to avoid the shortcomings of overly-determinist, structuralist accounts of social action, it is also necessary to consider the micro-level practices of social agents engaged in this socio-sexual practice. It is also clearly necessary to avoid the opposite view where action is free and spontaneous (Bourdieu, 1993: 56). This returns us to Bourdieu's theoretical approach to action; the above discussion has attempted, in summary fashion, to articulate the *field* of organised male-sport which may be conceived of as a masculinist rite that prioritises physical conquest and domination. Within this field then, the man-boy relation is an instrumentalist one conceived in the oppositional positions of master-servant (subject-object) in which a discourse of control and aggression predominates.

In this regard, it may be possible to reasonably articulate the habitus that constitutes and is constituted by this field as synchronous with these priorities. I utilise the term 'athleticist habitus' to denote this synchronicity. However, this may appear to do little more than repeat, in different terms, the early feminist argument regarding the patriarchal origins of child sexual abuse and,

therefore, to necessitate the critical observation that most men do not sexually abuse children, even if the vast majority of sexual abusers are male. However, habitus is not simply a substitute for free-floating 'character'; at its heart is a notion of social action characterised by 'regulated liberties' and 'inscribed potentialities' where individuals are constituted with a freedom of choice deeply embedded in culture and the logic of fields. As McNay (2000: 38) argues 'within certain objective limits (the field) habitus engenders a potentially infinite number of patterns of behaviour, thought and expression that are both 'relatively unpredictable' but also 'limited in their diversity.' But a key element of Bourdieu's account of social action is that it is 'relational' – agents act in relation to each other as well as their own position in the field. Thus, a key feature of my account is that to speak of the coach-athlete, adult-child, or man-boy relation in sport, is to speak of *two* agents related (even constituted) by their relation to the field.

A key feature of my account then is that any consideration of CSA cannot confine itself to the motivations and actions of the perpetrator but must also consider the position of the child/youth and that both positions must be constructed in relation to the context or field and the social 'game' that constitutes the field. The above discussion has attempted to outline some of the major contours of this field and in the following chapters I consider the *field* through my own empirical research on organised male-sport. I then draw upon this in my development and exploration of a relational account of CSA based on Bourdieu's framework for social practice.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology

In the preceding chapters I have set out criticisms of current aetiological or causal theories of sexual offending and CSA. Following recent critiques (e.g. Cossins, 2000; Cowburn, 2005) I have argued that psychological approaches do not adequately consider socio-cultural elements. I have also argued that even amongst those perspectives that do consider social and cultural factors as crucial, there is a missing component or 'theoretical linkage' (Liddle, 1993) from these approaches, namely, a substantial theory of subjectivity, social action and agency. Thus, Cowburn (2005: 229) has recently argued that 'to engage critically with acts of sexual coercion perpetrated by men attention should be focused beyond the dominant discourse to wider issues relating to men and how they exercise and maintain their individual and collective power.'

In addition, whilst research says a great deal about the impact of CSA on males (Bolton *et al.*, 1989; Etherington, 1995; Mendel, 1995) including the recovery/'healing' process (e.g. Hunter, 1990c; Spiegel, 2003), there has been no attempt to locate the sexual abuse of boys within a broader explanatory account that is sensitive both to the structural aspects of a patriarchal society, the cultural contexts that boys find themselves in *and* the relation between these contexts and boys' subjective or 'cognitive structures.' Addressing this challenge is central to this thesis and to this end I have introduced the work of

Pierre Bourdieu as a theoretical base from which an account may be developed.

Finally, I have argued that the sexually abused male-child in sport has received almost no attention and that this must be addressed. However, this thesis does not represent (only) an awareness raising endeavour, or one that focuses on the impact of the abuse. Instead, my concern is to offer a contextualised, explanatory account, sensitive to the cultural origins of CSA (Gil, 1975; Rush, 1980) but ensconced within a theory of social practice that is also sensitive to, and allows for, human agency and choice.

In light of the preceding discussion then, the aim of this thesis is to attempt to develop a theoretical account of the sexual abuse of boys in organised male-sport utilising a relational sociological perspective on social action. Given the political, disciplinary and theoretical underpinnings of my work (pro-feminist, Bourdieuian) there is both an ethical and an epistemological requirement inherent to the development of such a contribution; namely, the inclusion of: (a) 'survivor' testimony of CSA in sport, contextualised within; (b) a critical examination of the broader institutional culture (field) of organised male-sport. The underpinning aim of this study, and these requirements, generated the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the accounts of male 'survivors' of childhood sexual abuse in organised male-sport support a socio-cultural theoretical account of MCSA in sport?

2. To what extent does the social construction of boyhood in organised male-sport support a socio-cultural account of MCSA in sport?

In this chapter I will describe and appraise the *empirical* elements of the study. In summary, these are essentially two-fold: the principal empirical undertaking of the study was to interview male 'survivors' of CSA in sport (research question 1); the second was to critically consider the discourse of sport 'workers' (whether paid or voluntary, professional or amateur) (research question 2). The latter was achieved through: (a) focus group interviews with rugby league club child protection/welfare officers; (b) qualitative interviews with ex-players and administrators in rugby league and ice-hockey.

The first element constituted exploratory narrative research with male survivors of sport-related sexual abuse and the analysis can be said, in the first instance to be principally data-driven (see chapter five). I then interpret this data through an application of Bourdieu's conceptual framework (*habitus*, *capital*, *field*) in order to develop and illustrate a theoretical account of the sexual subjection of boys in organised male-sport (chapter's six and seven). The data from the second element (qualitative interviews and focus groups) of the empirical investigation is then considered in light of my theoretical account (chapter's seven and eight).

Theory and Method: Researching CSA with Bourdieu

Crucially, Bourdieu's sociology was a sociology of practice. He rejected 'theoretical theory' and argued that an essential part of comprehending the social world and doing sociology, was to do it *in* the actual/real world, empirically. This approach is exemplified in some of his major studies (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu *et al.*, 1999) but obviously presents problems for research focusing on childhood sexual abuse, particularly if questions of causality/aetiology are raised.

According to Bourdieu (1992: 225) 'the division between "theory" and "methodology" ... must be completely rejected, as I am convinced that one cannot return to the concrete by combining two abstractions.' Webb *et al.* (2002: 81) argue that Bourdieu's position is 'that research is (and must be) both empirical (because it is an act of observing social phenomena) and theoretical (because it depends on conceptualising the systems of relations that underpin those social phenomena).' This has guided my approach. In attempting to meet these demands I have drawn upon a range of research and theory from the critical sociology of sport (particularly feminist and pro-feminist perspectives) and beyond, and I have also conducted qualitative empirical research (discussed below). However, the purpose of 'observing social phenomena' has been to conceptualise 'the systems of relations that underpin' the social practice of the sexual subjection of children. Before

discussing the empirical elements in detail, I will say more about Bourdieu's approach to methodology.

For Bourdieu, empirical research is essential for comprehending the relation between *habitus* and *field* but, in terms of choosing an appropriate method, he advocates a pragmatic approach and warns against 'rigid adherence to this or that method of data collection' or school of thought, arguing instead that 'we must try, in every case, to mobilize all the techniques that are relevant and practically usable, given the definition of the object and the practical conditions of data collection' (Bourdieu, 1992: 226). In the field of CSA research, in light of official statistics and quantitative, survey-type research indicating that (M)CSA is a serious and persistent social problem (e.g. Abel *et al.*, 1987; Finkelhor, 1984, 1994; Gilbert *et al.*, 2009), many investigations into CSA have utilised a qualitative, interview or narrative approach to uncover the reality of the experience from the perspective of either the victim or perpetrator (e.g. Brackenridge, 2001; Colton and Vanstone, 1996; Etherington, 1995; Hunter, 2009; Lisak, 1994).

As Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009: 7) state: a 'distinguishing feature of qualitative methods is that they start from the perspective and actions of the subjects studied.' Denzin and Lincoln (2002: ix) argue 'properly understood, qualitative inquiry becomes a civic, participatory, collaborative project, a project that joins the researcher with the researched in an on-going moral dialogue.' Like other research in this field (Brackenridge, 2001; Etherington, 1995; Leahy *et al.*, 2002) I felt it was extremely important that my preliminary

research into this issue centred on the testimony of (or dialogue with) men that had experienced sexual abuse as boys.

Following the (re)discovery of child sex abuse in the latter part of the 20th century, (feminist) researchers have determined that, in opposition to the silence that surrounds CSA and sexual violence generally, research must include the 'voices' of victims who have previously gone unacknowledged or been silenced. As Griffin (1971: 27) observed on the issue of rape 'the subject is so rarely discussed by that unofficial staff of male intellectuals … that one begins to suspect a conspiracy of silence.' Her insight still has considerable resonance today (*BBC Radio 4*, 2009). Three decades later Plummer (2001: 252) argued, 'as many writers have long known, the telling of stories – and especially life stories – goes to the heart of the moral life of a culture.' The voicing of abuse stories tells us a great deal about the moral life, or logic, of our culture(s) and the relatively recent identification of CSA within sports culture(s) raises important and difficult questions for this field of practice as well as the institutions that advocate and lobby on its behalf.

In this vein, then, Brackenridge (2001: 239-40) argues 'avenues for further research … include … life history analysis through athlete survivor and coach perpetrator narratives ... and multidimensional analyses of coach-athlete interactions.' There are a wide range of terms available to describe this type of approach to research (see Cole and Knowles, 2001; Polkinghorne, 1995). According to Cole and Knowles (2001: 20) 'both narrative and life history

research rely on and depict the storied nature of lives; both are concerned with honouring the individuality and complexity of individuals' experiences.'

In the area of child sex abuse research, methods available to social scientists for investigating not only 'what happened' but also the meanings that social agents give to their experiences are limited, even in comparison to investigating other (criminal, deviant) cultural phenomena, say 'football violence' – there is obviously no way to 'be there.' Therefore, victim/survivor and perpetrator testimony are not only desirable methods for ethical reasons, they are also crucial in order for social science to construct and interpret the object of analysis, that is, to understand more clearly what it is being referred to when terms such as 'child sexual abuse in sport' are used.

Therefore, theory-building work that draws upon qualitative, narrative interviewing methods (e.g. Cossins, 2000) most often utilises the testimony of either perpetrators or victims in a fashion that is largely sympathetic to (but not unquestioning of) the accounts given (Brackenridge, 1999, 2001; Etherington, 1995). The interview method is treated as a data collection tool and perpetrator or victim accounts are generally treated as means of 'constructing the object of analysis,' that is, as a way of documenting and understanding what CSA consists of, as well as the impact it has (e.g. Mendel, 1995; Spiegel, 2003). As Schutze (1976) argues 'in the retrospective narrative

of experiences, events in the life history are reported on principle in the way they were experienced by the narrator as actor' (cited in Flick, 2009: 180).[25]

According to Flick (2009: 184) in the narrative interview 'interviewees are allowed to unfold their views unobstructed by the interviewer as far as possible.' Therefore, a narrative approach potentially facilitates an ethical approach to this (highly sensitive) research topic by allowing the participants to speak with their own voice and express issues that *they* see as important (Plummer, 1995). In keeping with 'narrativity' (Lawler, 2002: 253) Bourdieu's relational approach also then demands that these voices are understood to be situated within, emanating from, and key to constructing, the *field*.

Drawing on the work of Paul Ricoeur, Lawler (2002: 245) argues that 'the central element of a narrative is its plot. Plots are not selected a priori, but are produced through the process of *emplotment'* (emphasis in original). She continues:

> It is emplotment which turns disparate events into 'episodes' which have a part in the beginning, the end and the movement of a plot. Even if the events seem unrelated they will be brought together through the overall coherence of the plot (Lawler, 2002: 245-6).

For Lawler (2002) the significance and value of the narrative approach is its ability to link the past to the present, and the individual to the social. In utilising victim testimony on CSA, researchers are engaged in what Hacking (1994)

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[25] It should also be noted that issues of (false/recovered) memory have been central to recent debates around CSA and 'survivor' narratives (see Turton, 2008; Woodiwiss, 2009).

calls 'memero-politics,' 'a process by which the past is interpreted in light of the knowledge and understanding of the subject's 'present' (Lawler, 2002: 248). Thus, there is no direct or 'unmediated' access to the past, instead in the process of remembering, individuals interpret and reinterpret (Lawler, 2002).

> However, people are not free to fabricate narratives 'at will' ... Narrative links together with the individual and collective in two ways: first, because narratives of individual lives must always incorporate other life narratives: hence … the connectivity of personal narratives comes to the fore. Second, narratives are not only produced by individuals but also circulate socially (Lawler, 2002: 251).

As I will illustrate below, the narratives presented are also interesting for what they reveal about the way men (sexually abused in a sport-related context) perceive and construct (tell) their stories of childhood abuse and the way these narratives may then be considered and located within broader cultural narratives (for example, hetero-patriarchy, masculinism, paedophilia) within and beyond the field. As Bruner (1987: 15) argues:

> Eventually the culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes that guide the self-telling of life narratives achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organize memory, to segment and purpose-build the very 'events' of a life. In the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we 'tell about' our lives. And … we also become variants of the culture's canonical forms … How a culture transmits itself in this way is an anthropological topic and need not concern us directly.[26]

There is a clear congruence between Bruner's (and others') narrative methodology and Bourdieu's theoretical framework of social practice. Through

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[26] This early discussion of narrative social inquiry is interesting as it closely resembles the arguments being developed by Bourdieu (e.g. Bourdieu, 1977), an anthropologist turned sociologist. Clearly, the transmission of culture *is* a concern for Bourdieu.

the interplay between the notions of narrative and canon, and 'self-telling' and 'purpose-build,' Bruner gestures towards the situated but creative, *improvising* agent constituted between the two-way relationship of subjective (cognitive) structures and objective (social-cultural) structures that speak to Bourdieu's *habitus*. As Shacklock and Thorp (2005: 156) argue 'by locating stories of experience with descriptions of the contexts in which they occur, we build a sense of how lives are not free floating but socially constructed …' Lawler (2002: 252) argues 'it is important to stress that public narratives are powerful in structuring the kinds of things that can be said (and, conversely, foreclosing certain kinds of story).' In developing an account of MCSA in sport, this theme is explicitly taken up in regard to the survivor narratives presented.

Ultimately, then, with reference to the 'survivor data,' I adopt what Silverman (2004) refers to as, both a 'realist approach' where the stories told give some access to experience, but also a 'narrative approach' where the stories themselves demand analysis. Both approaches are instructive and necessary elements in the task of constructing the object of analysis (MCSA in sport). My later discussion and theoretical account of MCSA in sport is shaped by these two approaches.

The Research: 'Survivors' of Childhood Sexual Abuse

Ethical Dilemmas and Considerations

In research on sensitive topics with potentially vulnerable populations ethical considerations must be paramount at all stages of research design and

implementation. In designing this research particular attention was given to the *British Sociological Association's* (BSA) 'Statement on Ethical Practice' (BSA, 2002). I will now discuss the key ethical dilemmas I confronted during the research.

According to Mkandawire-Valhmu (2009: 1732):

> Our history as a human race indicates that, although research has undoubtedly contributed to the advancement of scientific knowledge, it has also in many instances contributed to gross abuse of human rights and has led to the suffering of vulnerable populations.

As a potentially vulnerable population, studies with adult 'survivors' typically emphasise the necessity for anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent (e.g. Brackenridge, 2001; Crowley, 2007). For example:

> Prior to the interview, detailed written information was given to the informants, emphasizing confidentiality, voluntary participation, the right to refrain from answering questions and what the research findings would be used for (Træen and Sørensen, 2008: 379).

These issues were all attended to in this study (see Appendix 3), however, my consideration of ethical issues went beyond these practical measures. According to Israel and Hay (2006: 3):

> Social scientists do not have an inalienable right to conduct research involving other people. That we continue to have the freedom to conduct such work is, in large part, the product of individual and social goodwill and depends on us acting in ways that are not harmful and are just.

In research on childhood sexual abuse, where participants are 'victims' or 'survivors,' this imperative is accentuated by the fact that the individual has

already been exploited and so much harm has already been done. In such cases, *non-malfeasance* or ensuring that the research process does not contribute further harm or exploitation must obviously be the central and overriding consideration within the research design stage. Nevertheless, 'survivor' studies that rely upon qualitative interviews frequently make little or no reference to ethical dilemmas regarding the collection of data (e.g. Alaggia, 2005; Durham, 2003; Etherington, 1995; Træen and Sørensen, 2008) beyond informed consent and anonymity.

A key ethical decision in researching CSA is whether the data collection involves victimised *children*. Following other research in this area (e.g. Brackenridge, 2001; Etherington, 1995; Fasting *et al.*, 2002) the decision to seek the testimony of *adult* 'survivors' was taken very early in the development of the research. Aside from a lack of experience or qualifications in working with abused children, to avoid (or at least ameliorate) the risk of coercion or exploitation, it was decided that participants must be self-identifying based on as full an understanding as possible of the research project, the criteria for inclusion, and the potential impact and outcomes of the study. On this basis, the research population was confined to *adult* participants only. In fact, all the participants were mature, professionally accomplished individuals (see below).

Central to the principle of non-malfeasance is the choice of method used to gather data. According to Holloway and Freshwater (2007: 709):

> Vulnerable people are sometimes at risk of being exploited in questionnaires or semi-structured interviews because their voices are not predominant, their thoughts are disrupted, as are their identities. The narrative method carries with it the potential to empower individuals to see beyond the boundaries of their vulnerability and – to some extent, regain their normal self by enabling them to take control.

Therefore, ethical conduct and choice of method are not separate categories but closely related ones. Træen and Sørensen (2008: 378) argue for a similar approach in their survivor research:

> Through the in-depth interviews we are able to elucidate how the women reflect upon and understand what they have experienced. The in-depth interview makes it possible to present the ways in which the women understand themselves, interpret what happens to them and create meaning from it. It explores stages of the informants' life, which makes it possible to generate new theory about the relationship between the individual and her social structures and culture.

This closely resembles the approach taken here (discussed further below). As already noted above, a key feature of my approach was to allow, or enable, the participants to tell their stories, in their own words using their own language, rather than to demand they answer my questions, generated from *my* categories and *my* (mis-) conceptions of their experiences. But like other research in this area (e.g. Brackenridge, 2001; Brackenridge and Fasting, 2005; Etherington, 1995) I wanted to know something of the abuse experiences these men had encountered - what happened to them, how they reacted to it and how they now reflected on it – as well as the context in which they experienced abuse. In addition, my interest in their experiences was shaped by my reading of Bourdieu's *habitus* (individual and collective dispositions) and *field* (the character of the socio-cultural space).

For Byrne (2004: 182) the in-depth interview:

> … allows interviewees to speak in their own voices and with their own language. Thus [it] has been particularly attractive to researchers who want to explore voices and experiences which they believe have been ignored, misrepresented or suppressed in the past.

Short of actually being there, it seemed that speaking to such men would be the most ethical and effective way of 'getting at' or 'seeing' the man-boy sexual encounter in sport in order to begin the construction of a theoretical exposition.

Therefore, whilst a schedule of questions was initially drawn up, this was not referred to during the interviews and my main role was to prompt and encourage the men to tell their stories in their own way. Aside from initial broad questions, such as, 'can you tell me about your early family-life?' I generally employed a conversational-style where they led the conversation and I prompted and encouraged them for further detail or asked questions related to their line of thought. Bourdieu *et al.* (1999: 609) refer to this as 'active and methodical listening' (a style employed in order to 'reduce as much as possible the symbolic violence exerted through that relationship'); whereby the researcher 'engages in conversation and brings the speaker to engage in it' (Bourdieu *et al.*, 1999: 619). For example:

> Will: The only problem was that of course with the captaincy came sexual abuse, but nobody knew.
> MH: *Confined to captaincy?*
> Will: Well actually - no ...

This also applied to the email correspondence with Jack, although clearly I had much more time to consider his responses and prepare my questions

(and *vice versa*). For example, the following exchange occurred some weeks into the data collection phase with Jack:

> MH: You seem to attribute strength and fortitude to your mother whereas your father appears, for the most part, as self-centred and weak. Would you agree with this? Would you want to elaborate further on the (possible) complexities of this?
>
> Jack: Good catch – my father was a very weak man in my eyes. He was afraid of taking risks and allowing himself to grow as a person. He was very intelligent but refused to finish his education. He didn't graduate from high school. He was expelled in his senior year in the last semester. He hit a male teacher for being too friendly with my Mom ...

Bourdieu *et al.* (1999: 621) argue that the 'craft' of sociological research 'disposes one to improvise ... strategies of ... encouragement and opportune questions, *etc.*, so as to help respondents deliver up their truth.' To this end, a simple interview structure with a chronological emphasis was employed: pre-abuse – abuse – post-abuse. Within this frame we discussed their childhood experiences and contexts (family, school, sport) gradually leading to when the sexual abuse began. Following their articulation of the abuse experience and its cessation, the conversation gradually moved away from the abuse towards their present circumstances (although as can be observed from the extract above, the email correspondence with Jack afforded me the opportunity to return to ground already covered). As is often noted, it was 'a conversation with a purpose,' however, the lack of structure was intended to enable them to lead the conversation and take ownership of it with the intention that the interview was not experienced as a dis-empowering one.

Again, it must be noted that within this loosely structured conversation my questions were nevertheless informed by Bourdieu's framework for social

action – *habitus*, *capital* and *field*. I was interested then, not only in their experiences of abuse and their individual dispositions towards that experience, but also in enabling them to evoke the situated or context-specific character of that abuse; in other words, *field*. For example:

> **MH***: So did sport really start for you at [school]?*
> **Will**: For me it really started at [school] yes, that's when sport really started to kick off. So I was about eight when I was at [school] ... I just, suddenly, I don't know where it all came from I don't know where all the bits started arriving ... but the athleticism suddenly, whilst I wasn't fast around the field - I started doing things right ...
> **MH***: Can you tell me perhaps a bit about how, those early times, what it meant to you?*
> **Will**: Ah! This was a *thing*, this was a culture at this school. That's what you have to realise, the culture was rugby ... he would go and watch the start of the Colts matches before the first XV kicked off because he wanted to see the boys who were really showing potential, who were going to be the high-flyers on the sports front ...

It was anticipated, then, that this approach would facilitate a 'richer' conversation and one in which the participant felt comfortable and able to speak freely, without feeling overtly pressured within the research process to conform to expectations about their experiences that may be conveyed through more rigid questionnaire-style data collection. Of course, the fact that this research encounter/conversation involved two men talking about sex, or more explicitly, one man telling another about his sexual victimisation, should not be forgotten.

However, Bourdieu *et al.* (1999: 610) argue 'social proximity and familiarity provide two of the conditions of "nonviolent" communication'. He continues:

> When a young physicist questions another young physicist … as someone sharing virtually all the characteristics capable of operating as major explanatory factors of that person's practices and representations,

> and linked to them by close familiarity, their questions spring from their dispositions, objectively attuned to those of the respondent. Even the most brutally objectifying questions have no reason to appear threatening or aggressive because the interviewee is perfectly well aware of sharing with the interviewer the core of what the questions induce the other to divulge, and of sharing, by the same token, the risks of that exposure (Bourdieu *et al.*, 1999: 611).

The notion of sharing risk seemed important for a project of this nature. Whilst I would not want to overstate this point (the risk for the participants was far greater than mine) my own experience of male youth sport at all levels, from local club to elite, and within a number of different disciplines, including team and individual sports, perhaps afforded me something of the advantage suggested by Bourdieu. Within the context of a common experience questions of a deeply intimate nature may appear less threatening and enable a fuller account of the conditions surrounding the experience. Indeed, it was certainly my experience that 'common ground' assisted in making these interviews a mutual exchange, perhaps reducing the power imbalance potentially at play in the interviewer/interviewee exchange, (perhaps especially so when the research discourse is structured around such differentiated positions as 'interviewer', 'researcher', and 'academic' versus 'victim', 'sexually abused male' and 'survivor'); the 'richness' of the data gathered is, I think, a reflection of the conditions in which the interviews were conducted. However, it is also important to record that all four participants are mature, 'successful,' articulate men who appeared very self-assured and confident in their exposition and certainly not in the least intimidated by the process.

Confidentiality, Anonymity and Guilty Knowledge

As noted, anonymity for participants is a key concern in social research, especially where the research population may be considered vulnerable or the topic sensitive. This certainly applies to the issue of childhood sexual abuse (Brackenridge, 1999). The stigma and myths associated with CSA (see Mendel, 1995) and the shame and guilt experienced by 'survivors' (with some evidence that this is heightened for (some) male survivors: see Allagia, 2005; Hunter, 2009) means this must be carefully considered in research design. With a notable exception, the identities of all participants in this study, whether victims of CSA or not, remain confidential.

An issue related to confidentiality and anonymity is 'guilty knowledge' (Brackenridge, 1999). In research of this nature it is very possible that participants will pass on information about perpetrators of child sexual abuse that could be used by the judicial services for prosecution. In such a situation a researcher holds knowledge that could lead to a reduction of abuse (most likely through prosecution and conviction) and potentially protect other children from sexual abuse. Clearly this presents a significant ethical dilemma for the researcher (Brackenridge, 2001). Prior to interviewing, a decision had to be taken on a course of action (and articulated in an institutional research ethics committee) in the event of such a situation. After deliberation it was eventually decided that there could be no alternative but to pass on the disclosed details to the relevant authorities. A strategy for managing this position was clearly required.

Yorganci (2003: 160) states she would 'proffer guidance … at the completion of the interview' if the interviewee was distressed, but goes on to say, 'if during my research I discover that a number of young people are being sexually harassed, then I would either report it to some form of authority or, if possible, draw it to the attention of the parents.' However, the participants in this study were not children but mature adults. This does not, of course, mean that their abusers will not still be abusing children, however, it was clearly crucial that they remain the 'owners' of any information they disclose. That is, to use their testimonies in ways that they objected to would risk doing further harm. Conversely, to withhold information that may lead to the prevention of further abuse is clearly unethical.

Individuals generally do not (officially) disclose sexual abuse because they have fears about what that disclosure/allegation will mean for them (including those close to them). Whether these fears are well founded or not is immaterial here – they are experienced as real for the individual and must be taken as such by the researcher. Therefore, I decided that the appropriate course of action would be to direct participants towards professional guidance which would view disclosure to authorities as positive. Yet I also felt strongly that I should not propel or coerce the participant towards a course of action. There are several reasons for this that all centre on possible outcomes that could jeopardise the health and well being of the participant. For example, following disclosure to the authorities the participant may experience negative consequences that they did not or could not anticipate. If this occurred the

impact of the research on the individual concerned, despite being well-intentioned, would clearly have been negative, possibly severely so.

In addition, other victims may be inadvertently 'outed' by an official disclosure (even if their names do not reach the authorities and are not included in any investigation) and this could have a negative and serious impact on them. Alternatively, parents who discover their son's or daughter's childhood was blighted by sexual abuse, often by someone known to them, may experience serious emotional/psychological reactions.

Finally, if a case *is* brought to trial as a result of research, a conviction is far from guaranteed; the subsequent prosecution may fail and the perpetrator remains free. This not only has the potential for serious emotional repercussions for the victim, but could also place them in a physically dangerous situation.

In short, there are a whole host of outcomes (of which the above are just examples) that the researcher could not foresee, that may have negative and serious consequences for the research participant. Thus, researchers should be wary of assuming that a disclosure to the authorities will result in a happy outcome for all where the abuser is convicted for a lengthy sentence and the participant experiences the process and outcome as a positive one. Hunter's (1990: 118) cautionary point, should be carefully considered by researcher and participant, 'since telling your story publicly is such a powerful experience, it also carries the possibility of harming you. As a sexual abuse victim you

already know about loss of control … you don't need another lesson in it.' In all likelihood it will be much easier for the researcher to detach from the research relationship than the participant. The individual who has divulged their story remains within that 'story.' Propelling research participants towards an official disclosure may seem to be in their best interests but researchers must be extremely cautious about making such an assumption; it is not they who are left to deal with the aftermath. The research will have unalterably affected the life of their participant, but not necessarily for the better.

The potential for doing harm exists, then, within research of this nature and this is impossible to fully eradicate. Harm may be caused by the exercise of talking to men who have experienced CSA (even by the act of contacting them); harm may be caused by falsely interpreting their stories; and harm may be caused by the mere action of putting into concrete text (written word) an expression of their experiences that had previously remained (forcibly) hidden and unspoken (see Brackenridge, 1999).

The nature of this harm is potentially multiple and diverse (see Spiegel, 2003) and is not confined purely to the individual participant. There is no avoiding this potential. There are perhaps ways to mitigate this harm as suggested here (below), but no certain way of preventing it. Even to suggest mitigation is precarious as there is no definitive strategy or collection of safeguards to assure participants are not harmed. Indeed, it would be wrong to create such an impression by way of amassing and highlighting such strategies so that the sheer scale of the attempt to avoid causing harm permits the illusion that harm

will either not be done or *probably* avoided. *All* strategies are of the order of intention and hope rather than certitude. The argument from potential harm versus potential benefit should also not be overstated; whatever wider benefits may accrue from research of this kind may well be immaterial for the individual who is damaged as a result of the research experience (Brackenridge, 1999).

That said, all attempts to prevent harm must be made, thus, a number of conditions were established prior to contact with potential participants based on my consideration of the ethical dilemmas involved in conducting such research. First, it is essential that participants are *self-identifying*. This requirement has obvious implications for the nature of the sample. As research has shown, many men, perhaps especially those that adhere to more traditional notions of masculinity, do not recognise themselves as abused, therefore, clearly cannot identify themselves as such. For those who do, guilt, shame and repression are common characteristics that make them unlikely participants. However, perhaps contemporary society provides a more hospitable climate for men to disclose their intimate, secret sexual selves than anytime previous (Plummer, 1995). Certainly the emergence of such stories outside (and very occasionally inside) the sports world, provide tentative evidence of this.

Thus, the sample is a biased (purposive) one: the participants are men who were able to identify themselves as individuals sexually abused as boys by men in a sport context and also feel able to divulge this fact to a (male) 'stranger' (white, heterosexual, middle-class academic) who has expressed a

specific interest in this aspect of their lives in order to, ostensibly, use their stories to complete a research project. However, the other side of this fact is that all these men were *ready* to tell their story. Clearly, in narrative research this is essential.

Second, participants must be able to withdraw at any time in an unquestioning but supported fashion and this was conveyed to participants on a number of occasions. Third, they must be able to read and have *veto* over the transcript of any and all interviews/conversations that take place. This was done in all cases.

The final condition is more complex. Confidentiality and anonymity was guaranteed for all participants,[27] but this guarantee was not without caveat. That is, anonymity could not be guaranteed for anyone else whose name might arise in the course of the research who may have abused, or may still be abusing, children. Thus, I informed the participants that specific details (i.e. names) may be passed on to the police *if* disclosed, but I emphasised that this was not the objective of the study and I would not be seeking this sort of disclosure.

This strategy potentially creates a space for the participant to decide for themselves whether to include incriminating detail of perpetrators within the interview process in the full knowledge that this information would be passed

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[27] Whilst this also pertained to Sheldon, as noted he expressed a preference for his name to be included. This was verbally agreed prior to interview. This subsequently facilitated use of his autobiography but this does have implications for his testimony that will be discussed below.

on and may become the subject of a judicial inquiry. Actually passing disclosed information to the police was considered to be a last resort if the participant decided unequivocally that they did not wish to do this themselves. In the event, such action was not required as perpetrators were already known to the authorities or identifying details were not disclosed.

That said, sexual abuse is perpetrated through silence and I did not want this research to contribute to that silence and thereby perpetuate abuse and protect those that abuse. Arrangements were made for participants to be provided with access to appropriate support materials, including contact details of supportive agencies (e.g. *Survivors UK*). Such materials included information on the importance of reporting abuse to the relevant authorities. In offering and providing advice, the comments of Brackenridge (2001: 153) were taken very seriously:

> No researcher should overstep the limits of her professional training or skills by giving counselling or advice which lies outside her competence. I worked with a qualified social worker before commencing my first set of interviews … It is good practice to prepare in this way before embarking on potentially dangerous work where distress may be caused to the researcher and harm to the participants.

I adopted Brackenridge's method of working with a qualified and experienced child protection social worker for a considerable period, prior to starting the interview process. She also agreed to act as a consultant on the project during the interviewing phase if required. However, it transpired that all the men had either already officially disclosed their abuse and/or had been through professional counselling. The implications of this are discussed in the 'limitations' section below.

Ultimately, there was (and has been) no indication that any of the participants experienced discomfort or adverse affects from the process: rather the contrary. Unfortunately, however, none of the participants took up the offer to document their reflections on the research process.

Whilst the above represents my key concerns, ethical considerations were a feature of all stages of the research. This is discussed below.

Access and Sample

In many studies, addressing the issue of *locating* a sample is relatively straightforward, even if recruitment of participants is not. However, as Brackenridge (2001: 51) points out, 'victims of harassment, and more particularly of abuse, are difficult to locate and may be reluctant to reveal their experiences.' Thus, access to participants ('survivors') was always anticipated as a challenge. From all perspectives, the literature refers frequently to the shame, guilt and long-lasting negative psychological impacts associated with the experience of childhood sexual abuse, so it was evident that male survivors would not be rushing to tell their stories of abuse to a (male) researcher they did not know. Equally, however, given the epistemological and ethical position already expressed it was not my intention to construct a sample from which statistically significant generalisations could be made.

Recent studies by clinical psychologists have accessed small samples of male 'survivors' from clinical and therapeutic contexts for qualitative research

(Etherington, 1995; 2000; Mendel, 1995; Spiegel, 2003). In such research, the experience of CSA (regardless of context) is the singular defining factor for recruitment purposes. This is generally the case for qualitative research into CSA. Brackenridge's (1994) investigations in sport necessarily took the step of delimiting the parameters according to the context (see also Kirby *et al.*, 2000; Leahy *et al.*, 2002). This was in a similar fashion to the attention being given to organised religion (e.g. Isely and Isely, 1990) and other extra-familial institutional spaces (such as 'care homes') as attention began to shift away from a focus on the family in the 1990s (Corby, 2000). This research clearly does the same but with the additional provision that the victim/survivor is (only) male. These parameters, along with the lack of access to clinical samples, make the recruitment process considerably more difficult.

Within the 'publicity' for the study, I defined a 'child' (according to law) as anyone under the age of 18 years, and sexual abuse as a 'child being engaged in sexual activity with an adult' where 'sexual activity includes only contact behaviours, such as, kissing, touching, fondling, masturbation, oral sex and anal intercourse'.[28] Therefore, on the web page set-up to publicise and recruit participants (see Appendix 4) I delineated potential participants as adult males who considered themselves to have been sexually abused as a child (under 18) within a sport context.

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[28] Goode (2010: 10) offers a similar definition of CSA: 'adult sexual contact with children below the legal age of consent.'

A further issue regarding the sample is the nature or 'level' of sport participation that is to be investigated. Brackenridge, in her work on sexual harassment in sport has, generally speaking, focused on the performance or elite end of the female sports world. Similarly, Kirby *et al.* (1999) based their study on a representative sample of ex-Olympic or national level athletes. However, Leahy *et al.* (2002) also targeted a wider sport community including both local club and elite level sports people. For my purposes, rather than identify and target a particular sport population, say male rugby league players, due to the paucity of research in this area as well as the anticipated difficulty of securing participants, I was not concerned with either type or level of sport (or any sort of 'representative sample') and instead cast my net as wide as possible by delineating suitable participants as men who had experienced sexual abuse in sport as boys.

As noted above, it was also felt that for the recruitment process to avoid, as much as possible, doing harm, any potential participant must be self-identifying. Therefore, it was decided that the central recruitment strategy would be to 'advertise' the project as widely as possible so that men, with the requisite history, could choose for themselves to make contact with me, rather than the other way around. To this end, a commercial sector media relations company (*Communications Management*), in the employ of *Edge Hill University*, was utilised in order to try to gain a national audience through the major news outlets. This was unsuccessful and no 'national daily' took the story on. I also wrote to several specialist sports publications (for example, *Rugby League Express*) asking if they would be interested in covering the

research, or even including an article on the issue of child abuse in sport written by me, but I received no reply. An article did appear in the local press (*Ormskirk Advertiser*) but without response. The 'men's magazine' sector was also approached via emails to appropriate journalists or editors but again without success. Details of the research were also circulated electronically amongst various interest groups such as a Physical Education organisation (*BAALPE*) e-newsletter. Prior to, and in addition, to this activity I also established a web-page within the institutional on-line domain (www.edgehill.ac.uk). This provided details of the project and myself (see Appendix 4) including a photograph.

In addition, the assumption that most people have more pressing things to attend to than participating in someone else's research, especially where that research requires a considerable expenditure of their time, seems a reasonable one even when the topic is fairly benign. Thus, it seemed reasonable to anticipate that the vast majority of those men that did hear about the project *and* would be suitable participants would, nevertheless, not endeavour to take-part, very possibly for no other reason than they had better (more appealing) things to do. In addition to this, of course, is the distinct possibility that the research experience may well have been perceived as potentially uncomfortable, distressing, even traumatising, therefore further mitigating against self-identification and recruitment. Further, as previous research has found, many men who would qualify as 'sexually abused' may be unable or unwilling to recognise themselves in such terms (Hunter, 2009; Mendel, 1995). Eventually, however, through various means, I did secure the

participation of four men with histories of sexual abuse as children in a sport context.

Participants

My first participant, the retired Canadian ice-hockey player, Sheldon Kennedy, was recruited through my association with the *Child Protection in Sport Unit's Research Task Force Committee*. Following introductions from colleagues in the UK who already knew Sheldon, I established email contact with him and shortly after we spoke on the telephone. During July, 2008 I visited Sheldon at his home outside Calgary, Alberta in Canada and, following considerable discussion, conducted a recorded, semi-structured interview with him. In many ways Sheldon was the ideal research participant as he was articulate and had been speaking publicly, and writing, about his experiences of abuse for some years and was very comfortable doing so. In addition, his recently published auto-biography provided a rich source of supplementary data (Kennedy, 2006). There are also, however, significant limitations with this case study that will be discussed below.

The remaining three participants took part under the agreement that their involvement was anonymous. All are English-speaking as their first language. Two of these participants (Will and Simon) agreed to face-to-face interviews and these were conducted during the spring of 2009. The third (Jack) was conducted entirely by email, commencing towards the end of 2008, yet this constituted the most substantial narrative, totalling over 31,000 words of

communication over a five month period. Email contact was also made with two other potential participants who initially agreed to participate but then eventually declined. Summary details of the participants are provided below.

Jack

Jack was born in the mid-1960s and raised by his mother and father in a reasonably affluent setting. His father is no longer alive. He maintains a close relationship with his mother. As a teenager and young man he was an elite figure-skater. He was subjected to sexual activity as a boy by a mature adult male (approximately early to mid-thirties) who worked as an ice-hockey coach at the rink where Jack trained and received coaching. This coach also arranged for other adult men to engage in group sexual activity with Jack at his residence on a regular and clearly organised basis. Jack was twelve years old when this activity began and seventeen when it finished. Jack had also been sexually abused (forced anal intercourse) by his teenage male cousin on an infrequent but regular basis (school holidays) from the age of five until shortly before the abuse began at the hands of the hockey coach. In adulthood, whilst experiencing a brief period of homelessness following the breakdown of his marriage, Jack was violently raped by three men at knife-point in a rented room.

As an adult he has had sexual relationships with both men and women. He married briefly (and has a daughter from that marriage) but is now divorced and later was engaged to be married. He now lives with his male partner and

they have been together for a number of years. Jack is employed in a professional position.

Sheldon

Sheldon was born in 1969 in Canada and raised by his mother and father, mostly in farming communities. He remains close to his mother, brother and sister. Sheldon played ice-hockey at the highest professional level, the *NHL* (*National Hockey League*). He was subjected to sexual activity as a boy by a mature adult male in his thirties who coached him. He was twelve when this abuse began and in his late teens when it ended; this activity constituted his first substantial sexual experience. Like many victims of abuse Sheldon has struggled with drug and alcohol addiction (amongst other issues) and kept his experiences of abuse secret for many years after it had finished. However, in 1996 he reported the abuse to the Calgary police and Graham James was subsequently tried and convicted of 350 counts of sexual abuse against a minor in 1997.[29] The case received a great deal of media attention and was pivotal in raising the profile of the problem of childhood sexual abuse in sport. Sheldon has a daughter who lives with him, and he remains close to his ex-wife. Sheldon published his story in 2006 (Kennedy, 2006). He now owns and manages a stables/horse-farm.

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[29] Although he continued coaching children in Spain after his release from prison (see Monchuk, 2001).

Will

Will was raised, with his brother, by his mother and father in an affluent household. Both his parents are deceased. Will attended a private boarding school from the age of eight. He was subjected to sexual activity as a boy by a mature adult male who taught/coached him rugby. He was eleven when this abuse began and twelve when it ended. He has experienced significant negative consequences as a result of the abuse and received therapy/counselling for these. He is heterosexual, in a long-term relationship and has two children. He has disclosed his abuse to the authorities.

Simon

Simon was raised, with his older sister, by his mother and father in an affluent household. Similar to Will, Simon attended a boarding school and was also abused by his PE/rugby teacher. He was nine when the abuse began. It lasted several years. Simon was coerced into sexual activities with other men and other boys. As a mature adult he has sought out counselling and therapy for his experiences of abuse and disclosed these to the authorities.

By coincidence then, the principal perpetrators of sexual abuse in the accounts of these men were either ice-hockey coaches or rugby teachers/coaches (and all were ex-players). However, I am obviously making no general claims about perpetrators in relation to specific sports and it should be noted that sex offenders have been recorded in a diverse range of sports (Boocock, 2007; Brackenridge, 2003).

Establishing a Research Relationship

As already noted, the primary concern in research of this nature is that, by asking participants to talk about difficult and sensitive experiences, the researcher may cause additional distress and harm, thereby perpetuating the abuse. As Plummer (2001: 224) warns:

> Telling their stories could literally destroy them – bring them to suicidal edges, murderous thoughts, danger. More modestly, they may be severely traumatized. The telling of the story of a life is a deeply problematic and ethical process in which researchers are fully implicated … in practice life story research always means you are playing with another person's life: so you had better be careful. Very careful indeed.

Thus, ethical and methodological concerns overlap. In conducting narrative research, according to Lawler (2002: 253-4) researchers must first 'set in place the conditions in which people are likely to produce narratives.' For Etherington (2000: 283) 'if the research is to be a process of discovery and starts from a place of "not knowing," those interviews are most helpfully in the form of conversations between participants and researcher.' This suggests a certain degree of familiarity between researcher and participant and this is something that had to be granted by the participant. In each case then, to varying degrees, participants were interested in why *I* was interested – in other words, 'what was my angle?' For example, following some initial discussion and disclosure, Jack asked:

> If I may be so bold to ask and here are my questions - why your interest in this? The reason, one of three things come to mind - being a survivor always leaves one a bit suspicious and curious so forgive me, here goes. 1. I can only think that something happened to you or somebody close to you that compelled you to this; 2. you were assigned this for a grant or educational requirements from a superior, or 3. you (and if I

am over stepping and offending, sorry but I am going to ask) derive some sexual gratification from accounts like this.

My authenticity was questioned and certainly not taken for granted and in the early stages of communication (this was a telephone conversation except in Jack's case) I experienced a keen sense that anything less than absolute truthfulness would result in rapid termination of contact. This sense was no doubt heightened by the fact that recruiting *any* participants had been in some doubt for approximately twelve months after I publicised the study, as well as some 'leads' leading nowhere. Hence, the fear of 'frightening' them off was considerable. According to Kirsch (1999):

> As researchers and participants get acquainted, establish trust and friendship, they become vulnerable to misunderstanding, disappointment and invaded privacy. It can lead amongst other things to false intimacies, fraudulent friendships, a deceptiveness over equal relationships, and a masking of power (in Plummer, 2001: 212).

This seemed to be one of the greatest dangers of the research, thus great care was taken, upon initial contact, to establish exactly what the likely and potential (including unlikely) outcomes of the research might be and how their story would be used. As Plummer puts it, motivations must be considered carefully, 'yours and your subjects … at the outset it is necessary to come fairly clean with the subject, who will very likely sense a whiff of exploitation unless you do' (2001: 136). One advantage of communicating entirely by email (as with Jack) is that these early context-setting, informal exchanges are also documented and which reveal something of the relationship-forming process:

> **Jack**: ... Thank you for filling in the blanks for me, not taking offense to my questions, and also for your honesty on all levels with an opening to ask personal questions, which I more than likely will not ask routinely... Murky, blurry lines can impact the outcomes of a study and no need to explain the roles of researcher and participant ... I concur, it is best for the outcome to remain clear and distinct within the respective and appropriate roles. Interestingly enough, and this brought a smile to me, I was a ravenous reader of Stephen King when he hit the markets followed by, and just about as fanatical for, anything on film that carried his name. I digress and moving along here, I am fine and feel reassured with your response to my previous email. Shoot, ask away, and I will do my best to fill in the blanks.

Following discussion all the participants agreed, with similar enthusiasm, to take part. Again, however, the fear of frightening the men away was compounded by the fact that what I was asking for was a not a 'quick chat' about their experiences, and in Jack's case, as he wanted to communicate by email, the investment of time was even more substantial.

Involvement and Disengagement

During the planning of the study consideration had to be given to the management of the research relationship. This seemed particularly important given the highly sensitive nature of the study and the potentially vulnerable status of the men involved. Plummer (2001) suggests there is a 'continuum of involvement' for the researcher that characterises the varying levels of involvement a researcher might have with their research participants. These are the 'Stranger Role', the 'Acquaintance Role' and the 'Friendship Role' (he also adds a 'controversial' fourth – the 'Lover' role). It seemed clear to me that for the process of gathering information to be successful for *all* involved, it would be inappropriate to simply conduct an interview and then automatically terminate the relationship on the grounds that the research was concluded –

or that I had what I wanted. In my submission to the Research Ethics Committee (*Edge Hill University*, see Appendix 3: 3) I wrote:

> ... it is my intention to seek to develop a genuine relationship with the men who agree to participate, therefore, multiple meetings/interviews will be requested and the research will be terminated through a process of mutual consent. This seems essential if the research is to attempt to develop from an ethically sound position. That is to say, to contact individuals who had experienced CSA and request of them details of the most intimate and disturbing nature, only to 'dismiss' them when I had what I wanted (to achieve my own ends) would be morally vacuous and resemble the original abuse.

Thus, in my preparation of the study and in my deliberations over ethical issues I gave considerable thought to the research relationship (see Appendix 3: 2). I was particularly concerned that the familiarity and related 'feelings/emotions' that might be fostered by the experience of the research should negatively affect the participant. In actual fact, possibly because of the maturity of my participants and the fact that they had all had considerable years to 'work through' their abuse, including with professional therapists and counsellors, my concern was perhaps misplaced.

However, the potential for a relationship to continue beyond the term of the study was anticipated. Indeed I stated:

> It is anticipated that if a genuine relationship develops, albeit originally based upon the *ostensibly* instrumental objective of eliciting information, then this will be to the benefit of both the research(er) and the participant; it is also anticipated that if these relationships were to continue beyond the duration of the study, this would be entirely correct and to that extent should not be discouraged (if, at the same time, not actively sought) (Appendix 3: 3).

Only in relation to one participant (Simon) do I feel that the interview, whilst generously and enthusiastically engaged with, was felt to be the final contact. The remaining three have taken a rather 'natural' course where contact on both sides is welcomed but rarely made. Plummer (2001: 210) warns that intimate friendship between the researcher and a participant, 'can create an enormous tension between the professional role of the researcher and the personal commitments of friendship' and despite my original comments I have sought to maintain an appropriate and respectful distance with my participants, whilst maintaining contact on the progress of the study where necessary, and I feel confident this has been a reciprocated sentiment.

Interviewing and Transcription

According to Bourdieu *et al.* (1999: 614):

> By offering the respondent an absolutely exceptional situation for communication, freed from the usual constraints (particularly of time) that weigh on most everyday interchanges, and opening up alternatives which prompt or authorize the articulation of worries, needs or wishes discovered through this very articulation, the researcher helps create the conditions for an extra-ordinary discourse, which might never have been spoken, but which was already there, merely awaiting the conditions for its actualization.

Three interviews were conducted in person at the participants' homes (with the obvious exception of the email interview). All the participants had been fully informed in writing following initial contact and written consent was given by all. Each interview began, prior to recording, by explaining again what the project was about and the potential outcomes of it. All were very happy to proceed. Anonymity was agreed, aside from Sheldon. Sheldon expressed a preference for his name to be included. In addition, as his story is so well

known (via an autobiography and film) it was felt that to render it anonymous would have been highly distorting. The implications of this are discussed below. The meetings lasted between 2-3 hours and the interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. The recordings were transferred to my home computer and all transcribed *verbatim* within a few weeks of the interview by me. All interviewees were sent copies of the full transcription for comment.

My contact with Jack was limited to email, therefore, the transcription process was unnecessary. This method proved extremely useful and resulted in the most fully developed narrative. This clearly involved, and was dependant on, a considerable time commitment from Jack but it allowed for a close collaboration over a period of months during which time we developed a good rapport finding common-ground on topics such as literature and employment and gradually sharing more personal information on matters unrelated to the study. For example, we would typically begin an email with an aside about the weather, economy, or family issues. I was also able to go back over old ground after taking time to consider Jack's dialogue and this was extremely useful and a process not really available, or at least not to the same extent, with the other participants (although I did check facts with them after transcription). Fortunately Jack was tolerant enough to indulge me, despite having to repeat himself on several points. I also frequently (possibly too frequently) asked Jack to confirm that he remained comfortable with the process and the information he was divulging at my request. As I obviously could not see, or

hear, him the usual cues from body-language and voice were absent so I had deemed this persistent checking important.

The transcription process of the oral interviews involved transferring the digital file to my password-protected home computer, then transcribing to a word document. All data was anonymised at this point. This process was time consuming but required me to listen to each sentence at least twice, but usually four or five times and often more. This enabled me to become very familiar with all the data and meant that I analysed as I transcribed. Thus, as I listened, typed, read, listened again, edited, etc., I was also able to ponder the words the men had spoken. Certainly, on more than one occasion I was struck by the relevance or importance of a statement or phrase only on the fifth or sixth time of listening. As Bourdieu *et al.* (1999: 622) state 'transcription means writing, in the sense of rewriting.' In transcribing the interviews I tried to remain as faithful as possible to both the words spoken and the way in which they were spoken. Therefore, when a participant utilised humour or sarcasm, as is often the case in informal dialogue/conversation, I indicated this in the transcript so that meaning and intent that was evident in the oral was translated (as faithfully as possible) to the written.[30] My analysis (and narrative themes) emerged both from this sustained engagement with the interview material, but also from my deployment of the theoretical perspective and conceptual framework (Bourdieu) I chose to work with.

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[30] This does not, however, constitute a 'conversation analysis' (see Rapley, 2007).

Presentation of the Narratives

From Bourdieu's perspective, understanding and explaining attitudes and behaviour (social practice) requires an analysis of 'both structural position (within the field, the field's position vis-à-vis other fields, *etc.*) *and* the particular historical trajectory by which an agent arrived at that position (habitus)' (Benson and Neveu, 2005: 3). In considering the 'survivor' stories (chapter five) it was these concepts that shaped my re-construction and presentation of the participants' narratives. I was particularly concerned to examine the prominent features of their boyhood circumstances and trajectories within and through the family, the school and sport. The details of these circumstances can certainly be read/interpreted from different perspectives indeed, in many ways, the narratives I present would provide rich sources of data for the psychology-based perspectives I considered above, and this is discussed within the analysis. However, as the reader will note (chapter six, seven and eight), my analysis is concerned to persistently oscillate between habitus *and* field. That said my initial priority was to reproduce as faithfully as possible the stories the men told.

In order to avoid the weaknesses inherent in individualist and structural determinist accounts (of CSA), the oscillation between habitus and field is imperative. Similarly, Lawler (2002: 254) argues:

> Researchers have to analyse [narrative] accounts in terms of narrative. Narratives do not have to be lengthy or full accounts of a life: they simply have to incorporate the processes of emplotment … researchers need to consider the kinds of publically circulating narratives on which social actors draw, and which operate as constraints on the kinds of narrative they can produce ... they have to consider the relationship between these public narratives and the personal narratives produced.

Thus, I consider the narratives in light of both wider research findings and dominant cultural narratives, such as those around sexual abuse, sport, masculinity, *etc.*, I then go on to use these narratives to construct contextualised notions of *habitus* and *field* in relation to the practice of MCSA. In considering the socio-sexual interaction between men and boys (through the narratives presented here) I have been particularly mindful that practice (and narrative) is 'the product of a habitus that is itself the product of the embodiment of the immanent regularities and tendencies of the world' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 138).

In my initial presentation of these interviews, I utilise four themes with which to facilitate a telling (or re-construction) of these narratives side-by-side. This approach was used to enable the various shades of contrast to be drawn out and discussed whilst also unfolding the narratives. My initial concern is to accurately depict the four stories, to remain faithful to the stories told (and entrusted) to me, whilst being clear that I interpret them through my own perspective and with my own objectives. In subsequent chapters, in order to fully respond to my research question, I then utilise these narratives (and extracts from them) to provide the 'flesh' for my theoretical 'bones' as I introduce and develop other concepts from Bourdieu's work (e.g. *illusio*, symbolic violence) in order to build my theoretical account.

The following chapter is given over to the presentation and discussion of these narratives; much of the data, however, remains outside of the thesis as my

concern is to utilise these narratives for my wider theoretical project rather than present them in full.

Additional Empirical Research with Sports 'Workers'

The second element of my empirical research was designed to address the second research question: *to what extent does the social construction of boyhood in organised male-sport support a socio-cultural account of MCSA in sport?* Following on from the critical literature within sport studies (chapter three) and underpinned by the sociological perspectives discussed in chapter two (e.g. Gil, 1975; Jenks, 2005b; Kitzinger, 1997; Parton, 1985; Prout and James, 1997) my objective was to critically consider (in light of my theoretical perspective) the social conditions of organised male-sport, particularly with respect to the 'cultural politics of childhood' (James and James, 2004) as they are manifest within the institution (field) of male-sport .

To assist with this task I chose to investigate and utilise (beyond the narrative testimony of men that had been sexually abused in sport) the views of those who are central to the youth-sport endeavour, and thus perhaps most enthusiastic about it, the adults that organise and deliver sport to children/boys. My principle concern was with the common-sense, everyday constructions of boyhood/male-youth-sport as expressed by adults in the field. In Bourdieu's terms, I wanted to uncover that which 'goes without saying,' the

logic of the field. In short, I wanted to investigate the way in which 'sport-workers' constructed the adult-child/man-boy relation in male-sport.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Data Collection

Focus group data had originally been collected for a separate but closely related project that arose out of a previously cultivated relationship with the *British Amateur Rugby League Association* (*BARLA*) (see Hartill and Prescott, 2007). The focus for this study was on how rugby league clubs had been coping with the implementation of child protection policy, therefore, a full discussion of the data is not presented here. Focus group research meetings (*N* = 10) were organised at *Super League* venues across the north of England. Those individuals designated with some responsibility for 'child protection' or 'safeguarding children' (sometimes designated as 'Child Protection Officers', *N* = 38) in rugby league were invited to participate in a focus group, looking at child protection issues (see Appendix 2 and 2.1). The focus groups were convened by *BARLA* and two officers from the 'Equity and Ethics' division facilitated each session. Participants were informed that their views, whilst anonymous, may be used for research purposes by *Edge Hill University* and distributed both within and without the rugby league community. With the exception of the first focus group (not included in the analysis), all were digitally recorded.

In addition, in order to contribute to a fuller sketch of the field, I conducted qualitative interviews with three recently retired elite male athletes (rugby league professionals in the *Super League*), one of whom is a *Super League* club youth development manager,[31] as well as two senior male administrators in North-American ice-hockey. Although I am obviously making no claims to representativeness I considered these men to be key stakeholders, or agents, in the field of organised male-sport, therefore, in generating a theoretical account of MCSA in sport, their contextual (or sub-cultural) insights were deemed valuable. This is perhaps especially the case as they represent the same sports as the 'survivor' participants.

The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. All interviews were preceded with a telephone conversation to provide an initial explanation of my research and how the data might be used. This was then covered again in more depth when I met with the participants and prior to recording. Guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity were given and written consent was given to use the data for research purposes. All identifying detail has, therefore, been removed. Audio files and anonymised transcripts were stored on a password-protected home-computer.

The ex-player interviews were also in the narrative tradition (as discussed above) and lasted between one to three hours. The administrator interviews were largely opportunist (as I was in Canada to meet with Sheldon) and both

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[31] In addition, I am also very familiar with this sport. I was born and raised in what is often referred to as a 'Rugby League Town' and played the sport for several years, including a season training with a professional club in 1990.

were completed in just over one hour. Given their professional positions these participants concentrated on policy developments in their sport with regard to 'child protection' and 'athlete welfare' (as did the *Super League* youth development manager). However, my focus during all these interviews was the character or culture of the sports environments the men had been, or were, part of. My specific objective was to elucidate *field* (organised male-sport), particularly in relation to masculinity and boyhood. This data is largely used to corroborate and illustrate themes that emerge from within my analysis and critique of organised sport. Again, I adopted a conversational approach as discussed above.

For the individual interviews, confidentiality and anonymity was assured in all instances; however, in the focus group research, whilst anonymity was assured by the governing body, it is obviously important to emphasise the fact that all discussion was facilitated by the governing body and the majority of participants belonged to clubs that were affiliated to the governing body. It was, therefore, emphasised to participants that they should not feel constrained or intimidated and to speak openly and freely without fear that their comments may be used to their, or their organisations', detriment. However, *BARLA* had little, if any, direct control over the day-to-day activities of voluntary clubs therefore the power relation is perhaps not overly significant. Furthermore, discussion was often animated, and occasionally confrontational, therefore, it did seem as though participants felt able to voice their opinions fully. However, this is obviously not a 'natural' rugby league/youth sport setting but, rather, a contrived one for the purposes of

'child protection' research. Clearly the presence of other 'rugby league people' with whom they were unfamiliar and who represented rival clubs, as well as the presence of governing body representatives (with responsibility for child protection policy), may well have inhibited a full articulation of participants' views in contrast to a more naturalistic setting or ethnographic approach.

The focus group recordings were subsequently transcribed *verbatim* by a research assistant with experience of transcription (employed by *Edge Hill University*). The individual interviews were transcribed by myself.

Discourse Analysis

The focus group data was then analysed in the tradition of 'discourse analysis.' I will make some general comments on discourse analysis as it relates to this study before describing more closely the steps taken. According to Baker (2006: 3) 'the term discourse is problematic, as it is used in social and linguistic research in a number of inter-related yet different ways' thus there are many different approaches to discourse analysis (see also Jørgensen and Philips, 2002; Paltridge, 2006; Schiffrin *et al.*, 2003). Jørgensen and Philips (2002: 1) propose the following 'preliminary definition of a discourse as *a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)*' (italics in original).

The approach adopted here is referred to by Tonkiss (2004: 375) as 'social' where discourse refers to 'ways of speaking about and understanding an

issue.' Generally 'discourse analysts are interested in language and texts as sites in which social meanings are formed and reproduced, social identities are shaped, and social facts are secured' (Tonkiss, 2004: 373). According to Paltridge (2006: 9):

> The view of discourse as the social construction of reality sees texts as communicative units which are embedded in social and cultural practices. The texts we write and speak both shape and are shaped by these practices. Discourse, then, is both shaped by the world as well as shaping the world. Discourse is shaped by language as well as shaping the language that people use.

This sense of discourse is frequently described as having developed from the work of Michel Foucault (Baker, 2006). Thus, discourse refers to 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault, 1972: 49); 'it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together' (Foucault, 1978: 100) and 'discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it but also undermines and exposes it' (101). According to Tonkiss (2004: 374) 'Discourse, in Foucault's sense, does not refer simply to language or speech, but to the way language works to organize fields of knowledge and practice.' Parker (1992) argues that discourse is a 'system of statements which constructs an object' (cited in Baker, 2006: 4) or 'language-in-action' (see Markula and Pringle, 2006). Importantly, 'discourses are not valid descriptions of people's "beliefs" or "opinions" and they cannot be taken as representing an inner, essential aspect of identity' but 'they are connected to practices and structures that are lived out in society from day to day' (Baker, 2006: 4). It is possible then to talk in terms of a discourse of sport, or a discourse of rugby league (as I do here), but the 'act of defining a discourse is … an interpretative

one' and necessarily constructed from the discourses 'we already (often unconsciously) live with' (Baker, 2006: 4).

Researchers conducting discourse analysis then are 'interested in how language is used in certain contexts ... how specific identities, practices, knowledge or meanings are produced by describing something in just that way over another way' (Rapley, 2007: 132). Markula and Pringle (2006: 103) focused upon rugby union and gender in New Zealand. They considered this sport to be 'an important but potentially problematic *discursive space* within which people participate in the construction of gendered identities and games of power' (my emphasis). Specifically, then, in attempting to 'sketch out' the field of organised male-sport, I was interested (in light of previously stated perspectives on the origins of child sexual abuse, e.g. Kitzinger, 1997) in how childhood (boyhood) and the adult-child relation is constructed within sport (research question 2). Or, to put it another way, I was interested in how sport-workers in rugby league *discursively* produce boyhood and the man-boy relation.

As Hemrica and Heyting (2004: 449) point out 'even between different discourses within the same culture, constructions of childhood will vary.' Therefore, through the sport-worker data I examine the discursive space of rugby league, as a specific instance of organised male-sport, and consider how it *institutes* or constructs childhood, specifically boyhood, by focusing on how participants speak about (or 'enunciate') *boys* in rugby league (and ice-hockey) and by considering what may be inferred from their statements about

the cultural politics of boyhood in these contexts. Extracts (chapter eight) are presented in light of, and as illustrative of, my thesis on the sexual subjection of boys in sport.

Procedure

Each transcript (interviews and focus groups) was assigned a code, as was each participant. The original transcripts (between 7,500 and 12,000 words each) were gradually sorted and reduced into more manageable chunks through reading the transcribed text and 'applying codes, key words or notes to highlight specific, distinct themes' (Rapley, 2007: 126). I then re-read the transcripts according to the 'constant comparison method' (Glaser, 1965) 'where, for each new piece of "data", you constantly make comparisons within and between existing themes' (Rapley, 2007: 126) until no new themes emerge. Themes included, for example, 'touchline/parental abuse', 'lack of governing body support', 'fear of false allegations', 'photography policy'. These represented the focus of statements made by the participants. A page number was also added so that all extracts could be referenced back to their original transcript. For example, for the focus group data: 'BR-KB: 12' where BR refers to the focus group, KB refers to the participant speaking and 12 to the page number on the original transcript. This initial sorting of the data reduced the sample considerably. In this undertaking I was particularly interested 'with the things said and those concealed, the enunciations required and those forbidden' (Foucault, 1978: 100) but more specifically 'in the presumed common ground authors implicitly appeal to [regarding children and

childhood] in order to make themselves understood' (Hemrica and Heyting, 2004: 451).

As noted above, this task was explicitly theoretically informed by James and James' (2004) notion of the 'cultural politics of childhood,' central to which is the recognition that:

> ... childhood is a developmental stage of the life course, common to all children and characterised by basic physical and developmental patterns. However, the ways in which this is interpreted, understood and socially institutionalised for children by adults varies considerably across and between cultures and generations ... and most importantly ... childhood varies with regard to the ways in which concepts of child-specific 'needs' and 'competencies' are articulated and made evident in law and social policy, as well as in the more mundane and everyday social interactions between adults and children (James and James, 2004: 13).

It is the examination of the cultural politics of childhood (boyhood) in sport, that is, the way that childhood is articulated in sport or by sport that drove the analysis of the sports-worker data. In other words, through an examination of this data, I begin to draw out the discursive construction of male-sport and the specific construction(s) of boyhood within it.

Given this focus, much of the data could be discounted as irrelevant. For example, themes drawn from comments on the politics between 'club and governing body' or the 'burden of [child protection] administration' were discounted, whereas themes such as 'specific Issues/examples of child abuse,' 'tackling abuse/good practice' and 'culture of rugby league' were retained for further consideration.

As Tonkiss (2004: 376-7) notes, when doing discourse analysis 'it is usually more appropriate and more informative to be selective in relation to the data, extracting those sections that provide the richest source of analytic material.' Accordingly the remaining data was 'sifted' further and illustrative extracts are presented according to the discourses identified. However, it is important to recall that consideration of this data was informed by my second research question as well as the development of a theoretical account. The selection of data for presentation is, then, theory-driven. That is, given the theoretical perspectives on the (socio-cultural) origins of child abuse drawn out within chapter one (e.g. Gil, 1975; Parton, 1985) (and the subsequent arguments I make in chapters five, six and seven), these extracts are included as supportive (or otherwise) illustrations of my theoretical account of (male) child sexual abuse/subjection in sport. That is, the theoretical account I present did not emerge from the focus group/player/administrator data and the vast majority of the data remains outside the thesis. Rather, the data was drawn upon in order to contextually illustrate or empirically construct Bourdieu's conceptual framework (*habitus*, *capital* and *field)* in relation to (my theorisation of) the practice of subjecting boys to sex, within which the social and cultural construction of childhood is central (Kitzinger, 1997).

As Mason (2002: 234): states 'all research has some kind of theoretical orientation, as do all forms of asking, listening and interpretation.' Thus, I make no claims to a value-free evaluation of the field of rugby league or male-sport. Instead, my aim has been specifically 'to provide a persuasive and well-

supported account, offering an insightful, useful and critical interpretation' (Tonkiss, 2004: 380) of the problem of MCSA in sport.

Limitations

Some problems and limitations of the research design and data have already been discussed within this chapter. Below I deal with those not so far mentioned or those that require to be drawn out further.

The use of the focus group data was deemed desirable, in conjunction with extant research in the field of sport sociology/sport studies, in order to fulfil the theoretical and methodological requirements of Bourdieu's conception of social inquiry. In particular, in establishing and interrogating 'the field of organised male-sport' it was crucial to draw upon the testimony of agents within male-sport in order to more explicitly articulate contextualised notions of *field* and *capital*. The ex-player and administrator interviews were intended to add further detail to the empirical picture. However, the focus groups were conducted and transcribed by others. Aside from the inability to follow-up on points of interest certain limitations in the analysis of the data must be raised. As I did not meet the participants I was obviously unable to observe them in interaction and attend to issues such as body language, facial expression, speech volume, aborted attempts to speak, *etc*. Particularly, I could not know how participants who were not speaking reacted to what others were saying, for instance, the degree to which they offered non-verbal support and agreement or otherwise. However, I did have access to the audio recording and listened to all the focus group interviews at least once. Nevertheless, I did

not engage in the transcription of these recordings and so was not as familiar with the data as I might have been. Undoubtedly something is lost from the capacity to interpret meaning when such audio-visual cues within interaction are not accessible.

Perhaps the most important limitation of the study is that the perpetrators voice is absent. In research that evaluates the impact of abuse (e.g. Mendel, 1995) or the *survivor* experience of abuse, the perpetrator voice is largely irrelevant. However, as the key objective is to offer an explanatory, theoretical account (developed in subsequent chapters) it may be argued that voice of the other significant person in this encounter, the perpetrator, would contribute greatly to the overall picture. Thus, Cossins (2000) develops her theory of CSA from, and tests it in relation to, perpetrator testimony (from research interviews). Notwithstanding the critique of Cossins's work I have already offered, this does not seem unreasonable, but there are certain factors that made this an unrealistic and ethically problematic objective for this study.

Generally, theory on MCSA has not fully acknowledged the fact that if something resembling a *full* understanding of this practice is to be developed, it is necessary to know what the man-boy relation entailed. This does not mean simply in a generalised sense, for example relating to 'grooming' *strategies*, or the sexual activities that are *commonly* employed (as vitally important as this may be, especially for early theory-building, prevention work or developing treatment), but in the sense that we can only move towards a thorough comprehension of this practice through coming to a thorough

comprehension (theoretical account) of what actually happened in a *specific* case. That is, if theoretical tools are to have any value, they must be able to account for (explain) an individual case in its entirety. This is undoubtedly recognised by much research in this area that draws upon survivor or (less often) perpetrator testimony; although very few include both perspectives (Turton's (2008) work on female offenders is one exception). However, the crucial point is that gathering and analysing *general* perpetrator testimony and *general* victim testimony, and then somehow adding them together, whilst extremely valuable for establishing general trends and patterns, is also limited. At best, this approach offers only a partial account of what we mean when we refer to 'child sex abuse' and, thus, will only facilitate, at best, partial understanding, but at worst a misunderstanding. In fact, the *least* that is required for a socio-cultural analysis of abuse are all the relevant 'facts' of *one* case; the minimum requirement for such an enormously difficult (indeed probably impossible) task is access to both victim *and* perpetrator.

In other words, analysis has generally proceeded upon the object of study before the object has been properly, theoretically, constructed. In fact, from a sociological viewpoint, in the study of childhood sexual abuse, research has collected many disparate pieces of data and then proceeded to draw general conclusions from it without acknowledging fundamental problems (Cowburn and Dominelli, 2001).

Nevertheless, a serious limitation of the current study is that access to the perpetrators is not possible. It is also apparent that this is not something that

could be easily, or even reasonably, overcome. That is, to expect a victim of abuse to engage with a study in which the man who abused them was also being given a 'voice' (even if practical difficulties such as access could be overcome) is to expect too much, and to build the likelihood of further emotional harm into the study. In other words, it would be unethical. Researchers and theorists of CSA, then, are left to reconstruct the object of their analysis from necessarily partial and limited perspectives.

In mitigation, it may also be reasonable to consider that within the prevailing social climate, in comparison to perpetrators, mature-adult victims of CSA have considerably less at stake in recounting the abuse than their abuser. This is not to suggest that victim testimony is somehow value-free, it is of course not.

This issue relates specifically to the data utilised for this study. As already noted, the issue of CSA is extremely emotive and can have serious emotional/psychological repercussions for victims. Therefore, the notion that the participants in this study can offer impartial, objective accounts of their abuse experience cannot be sustained and I do not represent them as such. This is not to suggest that they are in any way false, but simply to recognise that the only access to the detail of this phenomenon is through the testimony of individuals who have experienced it; an accompanying effect, and weakness, of this type of research is that the (often significant) duration of time between the abuse and the telling of it, as well as the deeply emotional (potentially traumatising) nature of the experience in question, will impact on

what is told and how it is told (Plummer, 1995). Furthermore, the fact that these men had all been through professional counselling for sexual abuse related issues should be acknowledged. This includes Jack, however, this was the first time he had spoken of his sport/coach abuse.

Like other research in this field (e.g. Fasting *et al.*, 2002, 2007), I approach the 'survivor' stories of abuse I draw upon as honestly given narratives that not only reveal the meanings individuals give to these experiences but also something of the reality of the experience: what was done to them and what they did. However, as Alvesson and Skoldberg (2009: 10) argue:

> The research process constitutes a (re)construction of the social reality in which researchers both interact with the agents researched and, actively interpreting, continually create images for themselves and for others: images which selectively highlight certain claims as to how conditions and processes – experiences, situations, relations – can be understood, thus suppressing alternative interpretations.

This notion of reconstruction must be considered as central when considering narratives on an issue as emotive as childhood sexual abuse. This is particularly true in this study as I utilise the autobiography of one of the participants (Sheldon Kennedy; Kennedy, 2006) in which he provides a detailed account of his childhood experiences of his abuse in ice-hockey. Other participants' narratives are anonymised, however, it was agreed with Sheldon immediately prior to the interview (at his request) that his testimony would not be anonymous. Doubt may be expressed over the reliability of such a source, however, I would argue that in researching the sexual abuse of boys in sport, for which this constitutes the first study, drawing upon such testimony

is not unreasonable as long as it is transparent, thereby enabling the reader to apply the appropriate cautions and caveats such as those expressed here.

There must be a sense, then, that all narratives, but perhaps particularly those where the author is not anonymous, are told *to* an audience and with an audience in mind. The narratives we tell are constructed expressions of ourselves and as Flick (2009: 184) argues 'what is presented in a narrative is constructed in a specific form during the process of narrating, and memories of earlier events may be influenced by the situation in which they are told.' Certainly, (as already noted) gender must be factored in. Research has recognised gender distinctions within victim-/survivor-hood, particularly in terms of the ways men and women deal with and talk about their experiences (e.g. Hunter, 2009). In this regard, it must be recognised that the gender of the researcher may well impact on the account given by victims and this may be especially true within the (hyper-) masculinist sport context that this research engages with.

It is crucial to note that whilst I feel the gathering of qualitative data from survivors is vital to further knowledge of this hidden social practice (and crime), in developing a theoretical account of this phenomenon, my argument does not rest on the details of any one case. Rather, I have attempted to explain this socio-sexual practice through (development of) social theory. Thus, whilst the veracity of my argument can be evaluated by the degree to which it is plausible in the face of these actual accounts, these narratives do not, in any straightforward way, simply add-up to my theoretical account. Of course, the

strength of this account will be judged in light of future research, including case studies, of MCSA in sport.

Finally, this is a qualitative study and consists, inevitably, of a small sample: however, the lack of response must be noted. On reflection, I do feel that the terms in which I framed the project may have contributed further to a low response. I was initially very tied to the nomenclature of 'childhood sexual *abuse*' and this was the main characterisation of my project within any public discourse. However, given that research indicates many men do not recognise themselves as 'abused' (Spiegel, 2003) or are not willing (or able) to construct themselves in terms of victimhood (Hunter, 2009), it may have been wiser to reflect this in the way I represented the research.

Before proceeding with the 'survivor' narratives some discussion of further key concepts and how I define them is necessary.

Definitions of Key Concepts

The Child and Child Sexual Abuse

According to Lansdown (2001: 87) the dominant 'model of adult-child relationships constructs children as the passive recipients of adult protection and goodwill, lacking the competence to exercise responsibility for their own lives.' Recently, however, this construction has been questioned, particularly within the sociology of childhood or 'childhood studies' (e.g. James and Prout, 1997; Jenks, 2005b) and most notably through the introduction of children's

rights within international legislation (United Nations, 1989). Thus, 'children are not just social actors, playing a multitude of roles ... they are also social agents in that they shape those roles, both as individuals and as a collectivity' (James and James, 2004: 214).

Therefore, I will argue that the sexually subjected child/boy must also be theorised as a social *agent* in relation to his sexual encounter, rather than substantively overlooked by theoretical accounts (e.g. Cossins, 2000).[32] This broadening out of the theoretical account beyond the dispositions and motivations of the perpetrator, as well as a narrowing to counteract the weaknesses of structural approaches, is essential but also challenging, both theoretically and empirically. Essentially, it is necessary to consider the sexual subjection of the child as a socio-sexual encounter between (principally) two *agents* - rather than an act perpetrated by an individual - acting within a cultural field. This is the logical evolution of an approach that focuses on the socio-cultural space whilst rejecting a conceptualisation of action based on abnormality.

This position also invites a definition of 'the child.' Whilst I am invoking a particular sense of agency (that is a capacity for autonomous action according to Bourdieu's theoretical position) within all social agents, including the child, this is a *relative* and *evolving* capacity for each social agent (James and James, 2004). Relative, that is, to others around him/her, especially adults, and developing as the individual (child) increasingly experiences and expands

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[32] Kelly (1988) makes a similar point in relation to sexual violence against women.

their capacity for understanding, acting within and shaping the social world. In Bourdieu's framework power is unevenly distributed amongst social agents according to the cultural capital they are able to wield and clearly this marks children as relatively power*less*, or dominated. But this should not be converted into an absolute inertia, even in regard to the child who is experiencing sexual abuse. It is vital then to be precise about what is meant by 'childhood sexual abuse.'

Defining Childhood Sexual Abuse

A key issue within debates on and research into CSA is how it is defined. This is particularly important for investigations on the extent of abuse (incidence and prevalence studies; see Goldman and Padayachi, 2000) as the particular definition employed will determine the extent of abuse found. Therefore, the relevance for the debate over definitions is perhaps not central to this study; nevertheless, participants were asked to identify themselves as having experienced 'childhood sexual abuse.' My operational definition is given below.

According to Wilson and James (1995: 1) determining what actually constitutes 'child abuse' 'is of central importance,' but Pritchard (2004: viii) claims '"neglect" and "abuse" are big labels, which cover a multitude of sins.' As a social construct (Parton, 1985), the way in which child abuse is defined has critical implications for children. Corby (2000: 67) highlights the lack of clarity in this area, arguing: 'there are a bewildering number of such definitions

emanating from a wide range of sources. It is important to know who the definers are, and what are their aims, goals and interests.' According to the *Department of Health's* 'Working Together' guidelines (1999) there are four categories of harm: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Sexual abuse is defined as:

> Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways (Department of Health, 1999: 6).[33]

Corby (2000: 78) commends this definition but says 'there are still many gaps to be filled. For instance, it makes no distinction between intra-familial and extra-familial abuse, and it says nothing about the age of the perpetrator.' Corby regards Glaser and Frosh's (1988) definition as 'more comprehensive':

> Any child below the age of consent may be deemed to have been sexually abused when a sexually mature person has, by design or by neglect of their usual societal or specific responsibilities in relation to the child, engaged or permitted the engagement of that child in any activity of a sexual nature which is intended to lead to the sexual gratification of the sexually mature person. This definition pertains whether or not it involves genital contact or physical contact, and whether or not there is discernible harmful outcome in the short-term (Glaser and Frosh cited in Corby, 2000: 78).

The *DCFS* (2010) has now issued updated guidance that extends its original definition, principally to include '… grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)' and to note that 'sexual abuse is not solely

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[33] This definition is also used by the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU, 2010).

perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children' (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2010: 38).

Whilst the child is referred to in these definitions, there is a clear focus on the act of abuse and, therefore, on the perpetrator. Thus, whilst clear definitions are important, according to Jack (2004: 369) 'the emphasis is placed on individual cases of abuse, with far less consideration given to the wider social, economic and environmental circumstances.' According to Donnelly and Oates (2000: 61) David Gil presented a more radical, but 'largely unheeded' approach to child abuse as early as 1975. According to Gil (1975):

> Any act of commission or omission by individuals, institutions, or society as a whole, and any conditions resulting from such acts or inaction which deprive children of equal rights and liberties and/or interfere with their optimal development, constitute, by definition, abusive or neglectful acts or conditions (in Donnelly and Oates, 2000: 62).

Clearly, the implications of such a definition are much more far reaching than other narrower definitions that focus on accurately defining the individual act (of sexual, physical, emotional abuse or neglect). However, the necessity to retain a focus on the act, but couched within a structural and contextualised analysis is central to the core thesis of this work.

Sexual Abuse: Grooming and Coercion

Brackenridge and Fasting (2005: 35) define sexual abuse as: 'groomed or coerced collaboration in sexual and/or genital acts where the victim has been entrapped by the perpetrator.' Spiegel (2003) prefers the term 'subjection'

meaning 'to predispose; to cause to submit.'[34] I will return to the notion of 'subjection' in later chapters as I ultimately preference it over 'abuse' (but for 'political' reasons rather than conceptual). However, the dominant (hegemonic) nomenclature is that of abuse and Brackenridge and Fasting (2005: 35) argue that 'grooming is central to the abusive relationship':

> It involves slowly gaining the trust of a potential victim before systematically breaking down interpersonal barriers prior to committing actual sexual abuse. This process may take weeks, months or years with the perpetrator usually moving steadily so that he is able to maintain secrecy and avoid exposure. Grooming is important because it brings about the appearance of co-operation from the athlete, making the act of abuse seem to be consensual.

Brackenridge and Fasting (2005) prioritise gender over age and focus on the (female) 'athlete' rather than the (female) 'child' in sport. This makes sense as relations of power would seem to be at the heart of any form of abuse or exploitation. However, a distinctive focus on 'the child' has been established as important and necessary (James *et al.*, 1998; Jenks, 1982; Prout, 2005) especially in terms of 'abuse' and 'protection' (Parton, 1985; 2004) and this guides the focus here.

Whilst a close consideration of the people who subject children to sex is undoubtedly important, as the discussion in chapter one has shown, research (arguably) must be careful not to create the impression that the men (and women) who do subject children to sexual encounters are fundamentally psychologically distinct from those that do not. The use of the term 'grooming'

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[34] 'Subjection' is the first stage in his 'model'; he then refers to 'abuse' - the contact behaviour - as 'take by assault; lay violent hands on ...' (Spiegel, 2003: 256).

risks doing this, principally as it strongly suggests, if not absolutely requires, a 'groom*er.*' This language immediately and fundamentally separates the man who abuses from those who do not and seems to implicitly suggest a distinct capacity - devious, furtive, clever - within the groomer ('moving steadily so that he is able to maintain secrecy') that separates him and his behaviour from the 'normal' man. In other words, whilst it is important to identify the processes and behaviours involved, the term 'grooming' ('a term taken from the social work and clinical sex offending literatures' Brackenridge and Fasting, 2005: 35) and its corollary 'groomer,' seems to risk pathologising the man who abuses, thus potentially camouflaging commonplace and widespread sexually exploitative, adult, masculine practices, as well as the 'normal' man who does abuse children.

Returning to Brackenridge and Fasting's (2005) definition of sexual abuse ('groomed or coerced collaboration in sexual and/or genital acts where the victim has been entrapped by the perpetrator'), whilst the stress is perhaps on the perpetrator, and the quality of his/her action, this definition essentially describes a *relation* between *two* agents. Brackenridge and Fasting (2005) make this explicit by reference to 'collaboration' and entrapment. They further emphasise the disempowered status of the victim by adding that the grooming process 'brings about the *appearance* of co-operation from the athlete, making the act of abuse *seem* to be consensual' (35). This clearly infers that co-operation and consent were illusory - and this seems to accurately describe many children's experiences (and their adult reflections) of being subjected to sex by an adult – but also further reinforces the concept of a relation, albeit a

seriously uneven one. Therefore, I adopt Brackenridge and Fasting's (2005) definition of sexual abuse, with the provision that I am referring to child victims (under 18 years), and in later chapters I explore the notion of CSA as a *relation* as opposed to (simply) an act.

However, given the testimony of the research participants here (see below) it also seems important, within accounts of CSA, to retain a strong sense of agency on the part of the boy who experiences sexual abuse, whilst firmly acknowledging his relatively powerless position. This is chiefly to avoid objectifying the child further but, in offering a contextualised account, I will argue that the child's capacity for autonomous action is strongly connected to context rather than purely determined by age/maturity. It may also enable an account more reflective of the experiences of those men who reiterate their boyhood complicity without detracting in any way from the responsibility of the adult perpetrator. In other words, I argue that the child-as-agent can be fully acknowledged without running the risk of reducing the responsibility (guilt) of the adult but this requires a thorough articulation of subjectivity and agency.

Foley (2001: 103) argues for a 'child standpoint' approach (rather than a 'child-centred' one) which may facilitate the need to resist and 'counteract processes that position the child as object' and instead 'project children as "knowers" ... It is the day-to-day lives of children that implicitly determine what it means to be a child, taking us closer to more accurate conceptualizations of what children can be and do and what "childhood" is.' Therefore, whilst acknowledging the UN definition of childhood as life prior to age 18, I do not

intend to distinguish children further into age categories through which capacities and abilities may be ascribed (and thus to which my account of CSA applies or not) but rather understand childhood as a period where capacity for agency is continually evolving in relation to their interaction with their environment.

That said, I would acknowledge that my account of CSA, defined by *coerced collaboration* rather than violence, is not appropriate for young children/infants who are more or less *totally* dependent on adults for their basic survival needs. However, as children develop their cognitive and physical capacities at different rates and in different environments, it seems unwise to suggest clear age-group related distinctions as to when children can be considered sufficiently autonomous for the transition from violence to coercion to be applicable. For some, the notion that the sexual abuse of children should be considered as anything other than sheer (sexual) violence will be deeply unpalatable. For the men in this study, from whose accounts my analysis is developed, their abuse commenced between the ages of 9 and 12 years and this is within the age range when the majority of sexually abused males first experience abuse (Spiegel, 2003).

Summary

The focus of this work is boyhood sexual abuse and the data collection strategy was principally designed to enable the gathering of the narratives of men sexually abused as boys in a sports context. In addition, I also conducted interviews with men, as well as organising focus-groups with men and women,

who were in a position to offer a 'rich' and privileged perspective on the field of organised youth sport, chiefly rugby league. However, it is crucial to emphasise again the central project and contribution of this study: to develop and consider a socio-cultural, theoretical account of the sexual subjection of boys in organised male-sport.

Finally, research into child sexual abuse, as discussed above, has particular features that must be recognised. This is especially so where the objective is to develop a theoretical, explanatory account. The construction of the object of analysis is extremely difficult as all research evidence/data is collected some distance from the actual event and is inevitably based on the interpretation of those involved in what is certainly a highly emotive, possibly traumatic encounter as well as a socially 'demonised' practice/activity. In other words, it is not possible to observe this phenomenon, only to reconstruct it, second hand, through the narratives of others. For this reason, it seems that whilst a theoretical account must be plausible in the face of survivor/perpetrator narratives, it also should not be confined by them. The empirical aspect of this study was conducted both in order to generate the material from which the object of analysis can be reconstructed but with the twin purpose of providing the grounds on which my theoretical account can be critically examined, in light of the 'facts' as they are available to me.

CHAPTER FIVE

Narratives of Boyhood Sexual Subjection in Organised Male-Sport

This chapter presents the stories of four men who were sexually abused during boyhood in a sport-related context. These are not presented as unproblematic factual accounts but rather as stories individually constructed and told through, and in relation to, cultural narrative frameworks. In keeping with Bourdieu's perspective, the habitus, as generative principle, is generative of the stories we tell which are, in turn, intimately connected to the social worlds we occupy. According to Woodiwiss (2009: 63) 'we live in a society of story-telling in which we constantly tell and retell our life stories ... to make sense of our lives and who we are, to justify or explain our actions, and to guide us through life.' Thus, researchers must acknowledge that participants 'sift out, from their wealth of experience, stories to tell us … their revelations to us are always constrained or limited' (Cole and Knowles, 2001: 119). In addition, I am acutely aware that what follows, is *my* portrayal of the stories told to me, it is my 'retelling, a re-presentation, filtered through time and enhanced by articulation and interpretation' (Cole and Knowles, 2001: 117).

In this re-telling, I include the words of the participants as much as possible whilst acknowledging that much has been left out. I will then offer some analytical discussion. As Bruner (1987: 15) argues, 'one important way of characterizing a culture is by the narrative models it makes available for describing the course of a life.' Therefore, following a presentation of the

men's accounts of their 'abuse' histories – what happened to them - I draw attention to four narratives identified within their accounts: 'family dysfunction' (or 'bad father' narrative); an 'athleticist' narrative; an 'abuse/paedophilia' narrative; and finally, a 'boyhood sex' narrative.

Boyhood Sexual Subjection in Organised Male-Sport

I will start with a focus on the initial experiences of CSA, that is, the descriptive accounts of how the sexual subjection began.

Sexual Subjection

Between the ages of ten and twelve, all the boys had reached the point where their lives were organised around and heavily influenced by their participation in sport. Their sporting success gave them influence in their respective communities (whether it be peer group or otherwise) and brought them status, with adults and peers alike, of the kind which would otherwise have been inaccessible to them. The practice of sport consumed the lives of these boys at this time in their life. Sheldon had been 'spotted' by Graham James, a widely respected scout and coach, who offered to take Sheldon 'under his wing' and further his career. This involved travel and staying away from the family-home (something Sheldon had been enthusiastic about) and James was only too happy to 'inconvenience' himself to assist the development of his protégé, and so offered him accommodation during a training camp. Sheldon's parents 'couldn't get me on the bus quick enough'; on the first night Sheldon stayed in

his apartment, James sexually abused him for the first time, using a shot-gun to enact a hunting scene in a menacing fashion in order to encourage the boy to put aside his initial reticence:

> **Sheldon:** He set up a cot for me beside his own bed, which also seemed a little odd to me at the time, but I didn't say anything. He put the lights out ... I was almost asleep when I heard Graham crawling around near the end of the cot. He started rubbing my feet, telling me that a foot rub was the best thing for the body after a hard day. I felt very uncomfortable but let him do it for awhile. Eventually, I couldn't take it anymore and pushed him away ... I heard him looking for something ... he flicked on the lights. When I opened my eyes in the sudden brightness, I saw Graham sitting in bed cradling a shotgun. He was smiling ... he looked crazed. His eyes were almost glowing in his head. He was out of his head but ... he looked like a man in total control of the situation. As he sat in bed cradling the shotgun, he began talking about how he loved going out and getting them in his sights and shooting them ... he didn't have to say anymore ... when he came to my bed, I didn't resist ... Graham pulled my underwear off and tried to perform oral sex on me but I pulled away. He didn't try that again that night. Instead, he touched me all over until he'd satisfied himself, then he finally went to bed (Kennedy, 2006: 35-6).

For Jack, the macho, misogynist, heteronormative culture of male ice-hockey (Robinson, 1998) also featured significantly in his subjection to sexual activity. In his case homophobic bullying and violence from hockey players with whom he shared 'ice-time' provided an opportunity for his (soon-to-be) abuser (a hockey coach) to offer his services to protect Jack from the players who were victimising him at the ice-rink.

In the aftermath of a physical assault on the ice-rink by several (adolescent) hockey players, the hockey coach approached and comforted the twelve year-old in the empty changing-room he had staggered to:

> **Jack**: He sat there on his haunches with my socks in his hands holding onto my foot, stroking it while he talked with me. He asked if I was hurt

and I told him that I didn't know; I just felt really sore and it was difficult to move. He just sat there and looked at me with these very piercing eyes that I could not read. He then put my foot down onto the ground and took my hands as he gently pulled me to my feet. He then offered to help me change out of my wet practice clothes. I didn't know what to say or do. He seemed to be such a kind and gentle man.

My shirt was the first to go and then my sweat pants. As I stood there in my underwear he turned me to the side to check the damage. I was red with some swelling down my one leg and arm with some markings on my back. He took a towel and gently wiped the wet and red areas. I was so cold and I started to shiver. He told me I was going to be okay; he will make sure these guys would not hurt me again as long as he was on the property with me. He will take care of it.

As he wiped my back he pulled my underwear down a bit in the back. He told me that I was going to have some bruises all over. He pushed on the muscles of my gluteus and I flinched. It hurt. He then proceeded to gently massage the spot and after a short while asked me to sit down. I did and he then proceeded to inspect my red and swollen elbow and arm which also hurt and he rubbed and massaged it. Next was my knee and thigh with more rubbing and massage. It felt good and I felt safe. I started to cry for no reason other than the relief of feeling safe with the promise of being protected.

What happened next came totally unexpected. As I was sitting there crying, he simply stood up, pulled me up and held me close to him. He was warm and he felt strong. That's when I started sobbing and he did his best to comfort me. He rubbed my back and kissed my head while telling me "it is okay", "let it go", he is "here to protect me". I was so grateful for him coming to my rescue. I thanked him and apologized for crying. He was so understanding and gentle. He continued to rub my back, his hands moved down to my buttocks ...

A short sexual encounter followed where the coach first stimulated Jack to ejaculation, and then himself. This was only the second time the coach had spoken to Jack, on both occasions he gave assurances that he would not let Jack be hurt by the hockey players. This marked the start of Jack's sexual subjection by this adult male:

Jack: Our relationship continued for the duration of my stay at that rink. He did develop it into more than just masturbation. I did learn about fellatio and sodomy – from both perspectives of giving and receiving. When we had school breaks I would stay with a friend for a few days

who also skated. During these times he would sometimes pick me up for the afternoon and I would go to his flat. We generally had sex and on a few occasions he brought over a friend or two who would participate. This went on till I was almost 18 and my coach left for [different country].

Will did not want to discuss the abuse in detail: however, he was prepared to disclose that he had been subjected to kissing, mutual masturbation and oral sex with his rugby teacher for approximately twelve months while aged twelve to thirteen. In fact, he relates his abuse directly to his level of success on the rugby (and cricket) pitch – the captaincy brought special attention; essentially the better you were at sport, the more likely you were to be sexually abused:

> **Will**: It was quite strange, there was no unusual touching, nothing like that at all. No evidence of anything like that at all *on* the rugby pitch, but there was *off* the rugby pitch, because when you became one of these guys [holding up first team photo] – here we are now, you've got a slightly different cross-section of faces – [pointing] abused, abused, abused, abused ... if you became part of the elite you were allowed into his room ... He'd then share smutty stories with you about how he'd been 'poking' mothers. And so it became, almost became acceptable behaviour, but actually with all these barriers being dropped, your defences were down, and then of course the abuse started. That started in all sorts of different ways.

Both Simon and Will were coerced into sexual activity with other boys (although for Will it was a surprise encounter with another boy, in the bed of his abuser, which triggered his rejection of the situation and the sexual activity promptly stopped). Simon, however, reports a principal abuser and also two other teachers in the school that also abused him, but to a 'lesser' extent:

> **Simon**: ... [name of abuser] who was my primary abuser, there were two other guys who did abuse me. This guy kind of abused me every day – I used to go and wake him up in the morning and have sex with him in the morning. I've not been a morning person since then. I still wake up with terrible forebodings in the morning ... a young lad called [name] who I used to go to [name of abuser] room with and we had

threesomes together. We were ten or eleven at the time ... so I'd do the normal stuff but actually "I've got a secret world" and my secret world was sexuality and fantasy, and masturbation, and having sex with other boys and being abusive to other boys at school ...

Will and Simon were both abused by rugby teachers (who were also players) within boarding schools. Whilst the focus here is on the sports context, it is evident that for Will and Simon, the school/education context was also a factor in their abuse. However, the depiction of the logic of sport outlined in chapter four would also apply to the all-male boarding school. Indeed, given the origins of organised sport within the very institutions such as those attended by Will and Simon, it might be argued that the ethos of masculinism and instrumentalism is equally deeply embedded within the logic and practices of such institutions.

Sheldon's abuser also abused other boys simultaneously. Another ex-*NHL* player has also recently reported that he was abused by James at the same time as Sheldon (see Fleury, 2009) although this was not public knowledge (yet it was widely rumoured) at the time of interview. In addition, Sheldon reports that he, along with other young hockey players, was regularly coerced by Graham James to engage females in sexual intercourse, whilst James observed them covertly.[35] Such practices are documented within the sociology of sport literature (e.g. Curry, 1998). Jack's abuser, however, 'introduced' him to approximately seven other men, during Jack's teenage

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[35] Somewhat at odds with his courtroom claim that he was a persecuted and fearful homosexual man in a homophobic environment.

years. These men, clearly part of an organised group, mostly white and conspicuously affluent, engaged Jack in group sex:

> **Jack**: Initially I was very fearful and was fearful each time a new person was there. However, each time, he pretty much kept the routine familiar and he always showed he was in control and that he did set limits for these men. My role in these encounters was an object for display, I think ... It felt as if he was showing me off to these friends.

Whilst the terms in which Jack recounts his 'relationship' is somewhat distinct from the others (as I will discuss below), fear coupled with feelings of helplessness to resist their subjection, as well as a determined endeavour to retain a veneer of normality – to appear as if there was nothing wrong – features in all the men's accounts of the early stages of their abuse:

> **Simon**: I was absolutely terrified of this guy. This guy must have been 6'2", he was *big*, he was overweight, this huge guy. I was absolutely terrified of him. I went in to this completely fear filled mode and – but I pretended that everything was ok ... He put me in a situation where I knew I was doing something profoundly wrong. That didn't escape me, but I was helpless ... I'm sure I never felt more frightened in my life than when I first had sex with this guy. I'm sure of that.

These boys then were all subject to non-familial, contact sexual abuse for a period of not less than one year by men who occupied positions of authority within the sports context that they were engaged in. In the following discussion I will explore their stories in more depth through the framework of four central narratives from the men's oral accounts of their lives.

Dysfunctional-Family Narrative: 'bad' fathers, good 'sports'

All four participants were raised in a traditional, nuclear family by their biological parents with their sibling(s). I began all the interviews by asking about their early life experiences. All four men began their narratives by emphasising familial difficulties, including between their parents (only in Sheldon's case did these lead to divorce later in his youth). Sheldon and Jack report some domestic violence (as well as some physical abuse at the hand of their fathers) although this seems to have been more frequent for Sheldon. Jack's mother reported her husband to the police for hitting her after she intervened in her husband's physical punishment of Jack. He was arrested and charged: '[she] let him know she wasn't playing when it came to protecting her children,' [Jack]. However, Jack was then despatched to a boarding school for six months to give his parents space to sort out their problems: 'they were at divorce and separation's door on numerous occasions' [Jack].

Will's mother fled to Australia with her son, aged seven, in search of her brothers, despite attempts by his father to legally prevent it. However, after six months they returned: 'I mean it had been an adventure yes, but also terribly confusing. I have no clue what was going on to this day ... clearly there was a dispute' [Will]. Simon reports a rather austere, 'cold' household with very distinct and traditional gender roles: 'My mother was always doing room service. She served dinner or lunch to my father separately, she'd feed my sister and I separately, and feed herself separately' [Simon].

Whilst Jack's mother developed a professional career that gave the family a comfortable lifestyle, all the participants characterise their family-lives as centred around a father who fulfilled the role of dominant, 'breadwinning' patriarch – the 'masculinist protector' (Young, 2003). Thus, within all the households there appears to have been a clear division of labour with the mother as carer/nurturer and all four men explicitly reported challenging and often difficult relationships with their fathers, who all conformed, in one way or another, to very traditional notions of masculinity:

> **Simon**: He was a very uncomfortable, edgy guy anyway ... there was very little interaction ... *extremely* hard working, extremely driven ... he had a huge work-ethic ... my father was *always* shipping me off to school, as soon as he could ... I always felt he just wanted us out of the house so he could get better room service, from my mother. There was never a great feeling around my dad and you know – he was - he was an obnoxious sort of guy, that's just the way he was ... I was really frightened of him. And when I got into rebellious mode, I was scared of him.

> **Will**: My relationship with my dad at a very early stage was non-existent, very sadly. He was always working, he was a busy guy. When he wasn't working he was boozing and going out. I never really saw him drunk but I'm sure he was quite a lot. He enjoyed his wallop, loved his food, and then started having heart attack after heart attack after heart attack. And that meant no sport, no play ... I was really, frankly at that stage, in the way. It wasn't until a year before his death that I started to get to know my father. [Q: *when was that*?] I was seventeen when he died and we did a lot of fishing ... I got to know him during those fishing trips, it was fabulous, we became really very, very close, quite inseparable, and that was very lovely. But prior to that, very distant.

> **Sheldon**: I was treated like a man by the age of ten. I took the blame for what went wrong. It was pretty rough at times, and I often felt more like my dad's hired man than his son ... He was a very angry man around the farm ... All I know is that he took a lot of that anger out on me ... I always seemed to be getting on his bad side and earning myself a smack or a full-on beating. Nothing I did was ever good enough ... the whole family walked on eggshells while he was around ... It was better to be quiet when he was around, so we were most of the time ...

> Dad liked to play the role of the boisterous fun-loving guy around other people, pretending that everything was great on the farm and in the family. When people came to visit, we pretended that we were living the Canadian dream: a happy family safe behind their picket fence (Kennedy, 2006: 16-17).

> **Jack**: [I was] overprotected by a loving mother and pushed to conform by an overly masculine father to play sports he excelled in ... He was a man's man, admired by most men for his abilities as an athlete, his general physical strength (he had 20" arms), his athletic body – big; he played hard with the boys, fought and won every fight he was in, short tempered and easy to provoke to fighting. He settled his battles with his fists ... my father was a very weak man in my eyes.

Within the literature there is a clear discourse regarding child victims of abuse. According to Etherington (1995: 230) 'children who are identified by abusers as emotionally deprived or in need of adult attention and care are most likely to be singled out for such attention.'

The men's accounts can be seen to be concordant with this prevalent narrative whereby a problematic, poor or (occasionally) physically abusive relationship with their father underpins a dysfunctional family narrative.

> **Sheldon**: I felt like I had no choices after being abused and not really having that closeness with my family at all. You know it was weird I wanted out of home, because of my dad, but yet I got put into the arms of this guy, so as a kid I think at thirteen I felt trapped.

However, despite these father-son difficulties, it would not be accurate to describe the men's childhoods as characterised by neglect or abuse (emotional, physical or sexual). They were well cared for, indeed, (perhaps) aside from Sheldon they enjoyed reasonably privileged, affluent childhoods. Will reports: 'I'd been bounced around to quite a few schools ... by this stage I was about seven, next door neighbour was a boy named [name], still a great

mate of mine. Life was great'. And whilst Sheldon's early boyhood involved considerable manual labour, this was far from untypical for the farming communities in the Canadian Prairies ('the climate was harsh, the work days were long') and there is little sense that he was unloved or unhappy.

For Sheldon, as is often the case, it was through sport that his father's paternal role was manifest (Coakley, 2006) via a home-made hockey rink in the back garden where he would practice with and teach his two sons. Whilst Will's, and particularly Simon's, relationship with their fathers seems somewhat distant and disengaged, Jack's father became increasingly disapproving of his son's early disposition due to his lack of interest and aptitude for traditional sports, such as rugby[36]:

> **Jack**: My favourite past times were reading anything and everything with elements of fantasy, science and horror. I also engaged myself in the arts such as painting and drawing. That must have been one of the reasons I had a great doll collection my mom got for me – another secret that my father was so ashamed of that we kept at home under wraps. I must say he did make wardrobes and such for me for my dolls but he did eventually take it all away from me. Boys did not play with dolls … Only later when the word homosexual came about and I think he felt the pressure of raising a freak, did he try to convert me, if you will, by exposing me to boy stuff – like karate class.

Notwithstanding the single incident of physical abuse, it is difficult to discern here a father who has an unequivocally abusive disposition towards his son, and this seems the case with the other boys. It is of little surprise to learn that a son who enjoyed a doll collection would not sit well with a man who

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[36] His experience is similar to that of Martin (in Etherington, 1995: 273-292) who was sexually abused as a ten year-old by his father's friend as well as a 17 year-old brother of a play-mate: 'being a "real man" in my family was someone who played football very well. It meant no affection with other men. It definitely meant a hardness' (Etherington, 1995: 276).

apparently went to considerable lengths (far from untypically) to demonstrate his (hyper-) masculinity. As Etherington (1995: 33) states 'a little boy who plays with dolls may be seen to be a "sissy"; it seems that boys may be boys and nothing more' (see also Ronholt, 2002). As will be shown, such labels resonate explicitly with Jack's early schooling. However, we also learn that his father in fact went to the trouble to construct furniture *for* Jack's doll collection, albeit before 'eventually' confiscating it. Jack seems well aware of the conflict within his father:

> **Jack**: I initially did not think he loved me, true. I tried as much as I could to avoid him because I didn't like him, loved him, but didn't like him. In my own journey it did eventually dawn on me that he too kept his distance from me and chose to not have much part in my life. If he was asked to do something, like take me to the rink or pick me up, he would but he did avoid me and the reason was he was working very hard to break the cycle of abuse. He was very much an abused child by a merciless father and he knew that was the only thing he knew and he also realized that if he did harm me in any way, he would end up in prison; my mom would see to that. So, he knew he had the potential to be an abuser, and he did his best to break that cycle with me because of fear. He did in his later years before he died and after I had left to come to the US, tell my Mom how much he loved me and how he had wanted a different relationship with me but he didn't know how. Sadly for both of us – or even all three of us – I fully understood how this all fit into the dynamic of our family's lives. I know now he had exhibited unacceptable behaviours and these were the direct result of his own abuse and all of the unacceptable things he did, stemmed from that – not that those events should be an excuse for him, but it was the cause of it. He coped the best way he could by embracing his sexually deviant side [extra-marital affairs] ...

Again, the dysfunctional family (and cycle of abuse) narrative comes through strongly. For all of the men there seems to be a sense of regret about the quality of their relationship with their fathers and perhaps a simultaneous acknowledgement of the restrictions that their patriarchal role may have placed upon them. However, it is only Will that seems to have managed to

develop a truly close relationship with his father, albeit in the final year of his life. It seems evident, however, that the fathers of all four participants very much embodied the role of the traditional male (Connell's (1995) 'hegemonic masculinity', Kimmel's (2005) 'Market-Place Man' and/or Young's (2003) 'Masculinist Protector') with the attendant patriarchal, heterosexist/homophobic disposition.

In varying degrees the fathers of these boys might be described as austere and reserved; sociable and successful; rugged and abrasive; or bullying and distant. However, it is important to note that (from the limited research available) incarcerated, extra-familial, male, child sex offenders, *also* identify a poor relationship with their father when interviewed about their perpetration. According to Colton and Vanstone (1996: 6) in their influential qualitative study of seven incarcerated (male) perpetrators, 'all of them refer, to a lesser or greater extent, to poor relationships with other significant adult male figures in their lives'. Consider the similarity of Jack's situation with that of 'Dafydd' in Colton and Vanstone's (1996: 49) study:

> Nothing at all got his approval. Certainly a failure in high school; my biggest achievement in High School, sports-wise, was making the third football team ... I couldn't make the first or second team, just the third team. And this didn't endear Dad to me, nor me to Dad either (quoted in Cossins, 2000: 223).

Cossins (2000) draws heavily on problematic childhood relationships with significant males, (highlighted by the offenders interviewed by Colton and Vanstone (1996)), and the subjective feelings of powerlessness this apparently inculcates, to explain adult male sex *offending* against children

(that is, mainly *female* children, despite the fact that six of Colton and Vanstone's sample of seven perpetrators abused *boys*). Given the emphasis on the poor father-son relationships referred to by all the participants here, it might be considered that a possible reason (risk-factor) for both perpetration *and* victimhood is a poor boyhood relationship with fathers/significant adult males? Whilst it would be very difficult to confirm such a hypothesis, such an explanation seems overly-simplistic and rather too convenient for a comprehensive account.

Postulations that regard certain childhood experiences or relationships as significant factors in rendering individuals susceptible to certain behaviour should be viewed with caution. That is, when considering what separates boys who are sexually abused from those who are not (factors of risk), much emphasis is placed on problematic personal circumstances and related psychological disposition (weakness) of the boy (by which they are supposedly identified as potential victims, for example see Spiegel, 2003). This perspective is now well established in the lexicon of childhood sexual abuse and paedophilia (see also Matravers, 2008, on female sex offenders). However, according to Will:

> **Will**: Of course ... [abuser] would go and watch the start of the Colts' matches before the First Fifteen kicked off because he wanted to see the boys who were really showing potential, who were going to be the high-flyers on the sports front. And, believe you me, for any child going to [school], you wanna be in the First Fifteen. For any child going to [school] who was good at sport, you want to be captain. The only problem was that of course with the captaincy came sexual abuse, but nobody knew.
> *Q: Confined to captaincy?*
> Well actually - no, ahm, no. Confined to the front row of every rugby and cricket picture - and very few others. You might get the odd boy in

the background, but, not many. See there we are, god [pointing to a school rugby team photograph] – [name of teacher], [name of teacher], *me*. Looking along this row here [front row of photograph] ... From what I know ... [points to faces of young boys in front row of photo]. Sexually abused by [name of abuser]; sexually abused by [abuser]; sexually abused by [abuser]; sexually abused by [abuser]; sexually abused by [abuser]; [abuser] was screwing his *mother*, but sexually abused both his brothers; *not* sexually abused by [abuser].

The point being made here then is that vulnerability, or risk, in this instance, was seemingly increased according to skill level at sport (or position in the 'field'); the better the boy performed, or the more prominent his position in the team, the more likely he was to be subjected to sex. They were perhaps distinct, not by virtue of being especially emotionally vulnerable, but by being a *sportsboy*, an athlete.

As Bourdieu (and others) have noted, whilst our individual habitus is far from fixed, our earliest experiences are significant (Bourdieu, 2007). The dominant narrative with the CSA literature is that child victims were especially psychologically vulnerable to victimisation/abuse and this narrative seems to be identifiable within all the accounts here. I will, however, present an alternative analysis that focuses upon the (dominant) mode of masculinity and the fields or cultural contexts in which the boys found themselves. Clearly, for these boys, this relation was closely tied to their developing athletic identity. This will be explored further. However, it is important to note at this stage that my interest in setting out the participants' recollections of early family/parental relations is not so much to acknowledge their (not unusual) difficulties with their fathers but rather to draw attention to the man-boy relation and the mode of masculinity they encountered in their early lives.

However, it is also important to note that I regard the separating out of the socio-sexual encounter into perpetrators and victims (as the research literature generally does), as though each occupies entirely distinct spheres of existence, to be problematic and will suggest that a more holistic approach to this socio-sexual encounter, in which *both* agents are encapsulated within habitus, is preferable.

Narratives of Athleticism

All of the boys then, to varying degrees, had fathers who were enthusiastic about their sons' sporting endeavours. For Sheldon, born in 1969 and raised in the farming communities of the Prairies of Canada, the ice-rink was 'the real centre of the community' (Kennedy, 2006: 14) '... just about everyone, young and old, participates in some form of winter sports. Most kids are strapping on a pair of skates shortly after they learn to walk' (Kennedy, 2006: 11). In Sheldon's case this was literally true – he excelled from a young age and recalls being selected to present a bouquet of flowers to his teacher on the ice at age three. His father made him and his brother a small ice-rink in their 'backyard to practice skating and handling the puck' (Kennedy, 2006: 12).

Again, as a great deal of writing in the sociological study of sport and masculinity shows, (e.g. Coakley, 2006; McKay *et al*., 2000; Messner and Sabo, 1990; Messner, 2009) the early socialisation experiences between

father and son are intimately entwined with the practice of sport. Indeed, despite Sheldon's father's ambivalence and occasional physical violence towards his son, when it came to hockey he was heavily engaged and took on a voluntary role with his son's team. This is somewhat typical of Western societies (see Coakley, 2006).

Perhaps unsurprisingly then, Sheldon (and his brother) exhibited an early 'love' of hockey and 'from a very early age ... dream[ed] about playing in the NHL' (Kennedy, 2006: 19).

> **Sheldon**: Our team played up to 100 games a year ... we did a lot of travelling ... we had a great group of kids. It was a blast ... I had a passion for the game and never felt better than when I was out on the ice on my skates (Kennedy, 2006: 20).

A disposition towards sport and boyhood as synonymous is explicitly evident for Jack despite his lack of aptitude for the team sports he played. Simon's relationship with his father seems particularly distant and difficult but he reports that his father was a frequent golfer and his rugby endeavours were supported by his parents although, in the context of the experience he was faced with, this also appears to have compounded his torment:

> **Simon**: The other thing around the sports field that was sort of really, really depressing was that my parents, and other parents of boys who were also being systematically abused by the same couple of teachers; their parents used to show up at every bloody rugby match and wander up and down the touchline clapping the children – my head's going 'what are they doing here, what are they doing here, they sent me to this place, they threw me to the lions, I'm being devoured by the lions, and here they are watching me, why don't they just f-off and leave me alone'. I don't - maybe you understand that feeling of just – 'this does not compute in such a big way that I can hardly stay standing up'. *So confusing* ... So there was this horrible duality of splitting off, and I think that's because there's no way I could express any of this. I couldn't go

up to my mother and father when we're playing the big fixture of the year against [school name] [laughing], or whatever the hell it was, and stand in front of them and say look 'what are you doing here? This one here is abusing this boy, this one is abusing me, he's abusing this one, this one and this one, *and why are you here clapping*? What is going on, *are you mad or what*? That's what I would have liked to have said - and then called the police [laughs].

Will said, 'I really was the ultimate sporting chap. Fishing! You know, I'd fished since I was god-knows-when, I've shot since I was god-knows-when, I've played golf since I was god-knows-when.'

Sheldon's exceptional success and 'potential' on the hockey rink had many positive repercussions for him. However, he reports: 'There were years in high school that I didn't even write most of my final exams, but the teachers just looked the other way and gave me passing grades' (Kennedy, 2006: 91). In this sense, Sheldon's experiences resonate closely with those of Simon, Jack and Will who all report that their academic studies suffered when their ability at sport was recognised. However, it is also clear that, in comparison to Will, Simon and Sheldon, Jack occupied a very different place in the social hierarchy of boyhood and school-life, and this difference is very closely related to his relative lack of enthusiasm and aptitude for traditional team sports.

It is perhaps interesting to note that, from the abuse literature, when either victims *or* perpetrators of CSA want to emphasise that, as boys, they did not really fit-in, that they were not like 'normal' boys, sports are frequently used to illustrate the point. For example, Martin, a homosexual Priest sexually abused by an adult male as a boy says: 'I was a very, very sensitive young boy … I was lonely … I wasn't sporty' (Etherington, 1995: 278). Similarly, George,

convicted of sexual offending against children and also sexually assaulted as a ten year-old in a cinema by an adult male, states: 'maleness definitely wasn't a particularly attractive thing to me as a child … I've always eschewed the macho image. I don't give a damn about a football, or a golf ball or cricket ball really … I always went off by myself' (Etherington, 1995: 121).

As frequently pointed out in the sport and masculinity studies literature, participation in and success at sport plays a defining role in the lives of many boys. It is a key narrative structure of western boyhood and is often a key factor in the early development of their self-image that revolves around the poles of normal/abnormal (Messner and Sabo, 1990). Again, the father-son relationship is often defined through the narrative of sport/athleticism (Coakley, 2006; Connell, 1995). Sheldon's enthusiasm and potential in hockey was clearly something that was actively endorsed and encouraged by his father (and also his mother) from a young age, although Sheldon is keen to explain that his father was not a typically 'pushy parent':

> **Sheldon**: He always pushed us to excel at the game but he wasn't like a lot of the hockey fathers, whose only goal in life seemed to be to make their sons into NHL stars ... he never tried to force us to become professional athletes (Kennedy, 2006: 18).

From Jack's account it seems his father would have liked nothing better, but was frustrated by his son's lack of application and ability:

> **Jack**: Initially I was afraid of him and would partake in activities that he would have me partake in such as playing rugby. I would imagine I was trying to emulate him – perhaps to win his approval ... He was not going to be embarrassed by a son who could not do what the rest of the boys in the family naturally did and excelled at. Unfortunately for him and for me, it was not a good fit.

Simon demonstrated considerably more prowess, significantly in one of the traditional team-sports closely associated with successful masculinity. He articulates what the experience of being a successful sportsboy/athlete meant for him at school:

> **Simon**: ... sport is the thing, you're not a hero at that kind of school for being clever, in fact you're a swot, but if you're in the first fifteen or first eleven you're one of God's creatures, you are the elite of the elite. I was just good at rugby, for whatever reason, I could just do it. I was in all the first teams at all the age groups.

> **Will**: For me [sport] really started at school yes, that's when sport really started to kick off. So I was about eight ... I'd never played rugby before, and I played cricket ... And I can remember virtually my first day on the field ... These two guys were on the pitch, and I can remember [teacher 1] booting the ball and I came across the field, it was on a slight slope, and I got in front of [teacher 1] and didn't fall on the ball but was down on one knee and gathered the ball and I remember [teacher 1] going like this to [teacher 2] [makes pointing gesture] 'this boy's got something about him' … I had a talent for this game ... and I practised insanely – kicking, drop goals, punting, I could punt it farther than anyone in the school in no time flat, and that included the first fifteen.

For Sheldon, Will and Simon then, their inauguration into sport had been most successful and they all clearly enjoyed the status and privilege amongst their peers and the local community that success on the rugby field and ice-rink brought. As Simon stated, 'because I was good at it [rugby], I got kudos'. These boys then were exactly in the mould of 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell, 1995) – physical, brave, skilled, aggressive and committed to the principles of team over individual – and for this they received many plaudits throughout their youth-sport endeavours. Indeed it was these endeavours that defined them as boys. However, as already indicated, Jack's early experience

was starkly different. He labels the group that he would socialise with as the 'fatties and nerds', a sort of misfit group on the edge of school existence:

> **Jack**: There were others like me and we would find each other and simply hang out and play our own versions of games that we enjoyed. These games generally were fantasy driven and enabled us to play in areas that were not popular. Those hot areas were the rugby/cricket fields. The fields were for the "players" and the other areas were for the girls ... Our areas were the "dead zones" where the bike terminals were and the area where the undeveloped land was ... We were not permitted to partake in general play activities and not invited to functions outside of school. We were never picked to be on a team such as during Physical Education periods. I had little choice but to participate; rugby, cricket, athletics, etc.

The exclusive and selective character of sports participation is clear. In response to his father's overtures to encourage his son to embrace more 'masculine' activities Jack did take part in rugby. However, the consequences of combining his independent and non-aggressive perspective with the traditions and culture of rugby union had consequences for the young boy:

> **Jack**: Later in the playground one of the boys confronted me because I wouldn't play and scrum next to him and again I told him I thought it was stupid and he hit me in the mouth. I chipped some teeth and was bleeding some. He thought he was all that. I kept silent and didn't tell the teaching staff. I knew if he got into trouble it would get worse later. I got home and my Mom caught on that I was hurt. She asked what happened and I told her I got kicked in the mouth playing rugby. Dentist was next and a year of metal caps in my mouth to fix my teeth.

In response to bullying and name-calling (sometimes of a homophobic nature) Jack was encouraged to take up martial arts by his father, which he did with some success, but reports he was 'not a fighter'; yet he continues to 'float in and out of martial arts classes.' But it is quite clear that Jack's early interests were some distance from those encapsulated in traditional team sports for boys.

> **Jack**: I enjoyed playing with dolls, dressing-up, reading, cinema, roller-skating – solitary, non-masculine pursuits. Anything I could do alone, I enjoyed by myself and it kept me even more occupied and away from much peer interaction.

Whilst Jack clearly rejected the tenets and practices of traditional masculinity, espoused with particular vigour by his father, it would be wrong to assume he was unaffected by this. He was acutely aware that his father's evaluation of him as a boy/son was dependent upon his enthusiasm and ability in sport. Indeed, it could be surmised that Jack had an equally explicit socialisation in the relationship between successful boyhood and organised sport. Acceptance and dominance within powerful peer groups was apparently closely tied to doing gender – masculinity – successfully, and sport was clearly the cornerstone of this for all the boys, albeit for Jack it came a little later (see below).

For all the boys, their successful endeavours in sport were to bring them, one might say deliver them, directly to the men who would subject them to prolonged sexual activity. Jack soon found a sport that perhaps chimed with his apparent rejection of traditional masculinity, yet simultaneously enabled him to acquire significant cultural capital within the masculinist field. This endeavour, then, within which they had been acculturated and which held the promise of the accumulation of significant capital (cultural *and* economic) was swiftly to become virtually indivisible from their 'relationship' with their abuser. Sheldon describes his situation shortly prior to meeting his abuser:

> **Sheldon**: I was twelve years old and junior teams were already trying to make plans to get me and Troy on their rosters. I started dreaming

more and more about making it to the NHL ... Every summer, my parents managed to scrape together enough money to send me and Troy to hockey camp for a couple of weeks ... Being spotted at hockey camp was one of the best ways to catch the eye of the men who decided who would climb to the next hockey tier ... To even get to the minors, you had to catch the eye of a scout. In a system where word of mouth and reputation decides the fate of a young player, the opinion of a scout can either make or break your career. These men ... are like gods in the eyes of the young players.

Will: I was enjoying sport, I wasn't enjoying academics. I could prosper at sport I couldn't at academics. So of course, I was off on the sporting – it was like following a drug trail, for me it's just sort of, you know, just what I did. I was in this high profile position ... I was leading the team ... You know - I *wanted* to go down that route.

The cultural significance of organised sport to boyhood clearly provides the back-drop from which to comprehend the significance of sporting achievement for these boys. In a similar fashion, the hierarchical, instrumentalist economy of the field of sport is the backdrop from which to simultaneously comprehend the power and influence wielded by the men who were seen as the gate-keepers to success – both in boyhood and sport.

Jack had been introduced to ice-skating at the age of about twelve. This had come about after regular trips to a distant roller-rink had apparently become tiresome for his father, so the somewhat closer ice-rink had been preferred. Very quickly, Jack showed enthusiasm and aptitude and was soon spotted by a female coach whilst competing in and winning the first tournament he entered. She duly became his coach and he began a punishing physical regime that would eventually lead him to international competitive status: 'I was snagged in the world of figure skating. It was wonderful' [Jack]. However, as he began training and competing with increasing success there was also a

significant spin-off for him in terms of his self-image and identity amongst his peers that resonates closely with the experiences of the other boys:

> **Jack**: Socially I was asked by females to attend parties and these were very popular girls. My male peers would not bother me although I was subjected to "looks" and under-breath comments ... Generally I ignored them because I felt they were not able or capable to match me intellectually and frequently physically. These boys also did not attempt to bully or hit me because I was protected by the principal and the staff because of my sportsman status and the prestige my accomplishments brought to the school's athletic department. This was the period I discovered that I was not as ugly as I thought I was and I discovered that I had a talent that was unique and set me apart from any other of the males in my family and my school. I did not apply myself as a student because I had to skate – I had to conquer myself and be a success with this and I put everything into it ... I knew that was my destiny. All I did was eat, sleep, school and skate.

Thus, sporting achievement provided access to resources that had previously been closed to Jack who identified a self-imposed 'loner' status. This clearly did not come without a price as, like Simon, Sheldon and Will, he set aside his studies and previously strong academic record to pursue success in figure-skating. As is often the case, this was supported by the school leaders/managers, with his successes being met with some fanfare, including school announcements and local press releases.

Narratives of Abuse/Paedophilia and Shame

Clearly any comments regarding the perpetrators come from the men they abused; therefore, descriptive discussion of the perpetrators is limited by the absence of the perpetrators own testimony. I will briefly dwell on the characteristics of the perpetrators as relayed to me. The perpetrators in this study are all male, non-familial, 'professional' perpetrators (Sullivan and Beech, 2002). According to Spiegel (2003: 26) 'childhood sexual abuse perpetrators of boys tend to be well-educated, employed, and socially-economically diverse' and Brackenridge (2001) suggests a similar model, 'the predator,' that reflects perpetrator descriptions from reported cases in sport. Interestingly, then, in this study all the primary perpetrators were mature adults, white, socially competent, affluent or reasonably so, influential, educated (two were employed as teachers) and in a position of power over the boys they abused by virtue of their occupation (in addition to their age difference/adult status). Will and Simon were abused by rugby teachers and Sheldon and Jack were abused by ice-hockey coaches (all of whom were ex-players). These men all performed, publically, a heterosexual role in an overt manner. With the (possible) exception of Graham James[37] (Sheldon's abuser) these men were characterised as almost the essence of the dominant heterosexual; a persona no doubt entwined and enhanced by their involvement and expertise in hyper-masculinist pursuits. Indeed this appears to be more than simply a performance for public consumption:

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[37] According to Sheldon his homosexuality was an 'open secret' and James pleaded he was the victim of a homophobic environment at his trial.

> **Jack**: He was the epitome of heterosexuality and didn't have to do anything other than just be himself to be perceived as being heterosexual ... he had such a large following amongst the girls at the rink ... From what I do recall, he did date two or three females and one was a speed skater and one of them was one of the other guys on the hockey team's sister and about his age ... The only rumours that, on occasion, circulated were those of other girls the current girlfriend was not comfortable with. He was known or labelled as a 'player', not a womanizer, but a player who was afraid of commitment, but it was said that he would eventually settle down.[38] I do recall that he was very well liked, polite, outgoing, and very professional as far as his interaction with clients went.

> **Will**: A rake, a charming rake, alluring, a bit of a chap about town, with a flat in [affluent area] which he'd call - 'oh that's my fuck box' ... [39]

It is now well documented that popular labels regarding sexuality appear of little relevance when considering and accounting for the sexual subjection of children. If there is a correlation, it would seem that a heterosexual identity could be considered more of a risk factor than a homosexual one (Spiegel, 2003) (and also that a self-ascribed 'paedosexual' identity does not necessarily result in offending behaviour, see Goode, 2010) and this study provides some anecdotal support for this in the context of organised sport.

It is also apparent that the participants in this study were far from the only victims.

> **Simon**: I'm not sure how many kids they abused simultaneously but I would say it was probably up to ten at any one time ... I thought I was kind of special … but a close friend of mine said 'no he has sex with everyone, he's had sex with me'. So then I felt, the specialness of being chosen to be a sexual partner of this heroic rugby teacher was suddenly totally devalued.

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[38] In fact he did marry and have children.
[39] Will also vividly recounted a boy who was removed from the school after his father discovered an affair between his wife and Will's abuser (see below).

> **Jack**: I have a notion that he may have participated in some sexual activities similar to the activities he had me involved with, with his friends but I am not sure. The reason I say this, when he had me over and his friends were there, it all seemed too familiar and routine like this was not something new. I think each of these guys had their own "boy bitches" they on occasion shared with their friends or group.

> **Sheldon**: The police estimate that Graham molested 75 to 150 kids who were under his care during his time as a coach, manager and scout. Many of those players were great talents but almost all of them dropped out of minor hockey before they had a chance to be drafted ... Even while Graham was involved with me, he was preying on more of the players under his care.

It is interesting to recall then Abel *et al.*'s (1987) research with non-incarcerated offenders which found that 153 male subjects targeting extra-familial males had sexually abused 22,981 individuals, an average of 150.2 people per abuser. As Spiegel notes, this study indicates that *extra-familial* perpetrators 'abuse boys with an incidence that is five times greater than the molestation of young girls' (2003: 28). Finally, it is important to explicitly record that in this small study of four participants, approximately twelve abusers are noted in the accounts of the victims. Following these brief notes on the men who subjected these boys to sex, I will now focus on the ways in which the men articulated their abuse experience.

For Sheldon, the sexual activity was an abusive act perpetrated on his childhood self by a 'sick' individual:

> **Sheldon**: No, they're all very arrogant, paedophiles are just arrogant, right ... like they're trying to teach these people ... they're trying to teach them how *not* to be bad, not to be a paedophile, well I believe either you're a fuckin' paedophile or you're not a paedophile, and it's in your blood and you can't teach these people anything.

It is important to note that Simon, Will and particularly Sheldon's articulation of what happened to them fits closely with the popular perception or narrative of sexual abuse by 'predatory' (paedophile) men. In Sheldon's case, here was a young 'all-Canadian' boy, who epitomised the very essence of Canadian (we might as well say 'Western') male identity: physically strong, 'good-looking', hard-working, eager to better himself and fantastically good at (the national) sport. The retrospective view of his abuser, Graham James, was that he fitted none of these characteristics except he was a competent hockey player and a successful youth coach, that is, he 'got results' and occupied a very powerful/influential position. He was considered, following conviction, as a sexual deviant who had 'preyed' on young boys and 'groomed' them for his own sexual gratification whilst using hockey coaching as a convenient cover.[40] Sheldon was deeply emotionally affected by the experience and continues to suffer and deal with the aftermath of his experiences with James:

> **Sheldon**: ... like it's not just 'fuckin get over it', it takes a long time, and does one ever get over it? Hmm? '*No*'! But you can deal with it on a daily basis and find a way to move on. But there's certain things in my life every day that, you know certain fears that I have of certain things, you know that fear of trust, that fear of letting people close to me and that fear of getting fuckin' hurt again, and er you know that self-questioning, 'Am I good enough?' or ... and you know it's all that stuff that I have to learn to deal with or I *do* learn to deal with, but it's a daily basis, I think about it daily to get rid of it, so I don't go there ... I try to live life and be happy, but before I could never do that cos I just drank and I drugged and I hated, there was too much pain there. I had to take a real, real honest honest fuckin' look at what really went on, and understand how it went on, how it happened and understand that, fuck this is the way that everyone who's abused feels, you're not alone, like I wasn't alone and I had to understand that, I wasn't this fuckin alien from outer space that couldn't understand why I wanted t'fuckin die, you know what I mean? Like, I couldn't understand why – why the fuck

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[40] See Kirby *et al.*, (2000: 12-18) for an account of the media coverage of the case.

> do I just want to get outta here [commit suicide], why can't I just wake up and want to be here and have fun?

This type of account is well documented in the abuse literature; however, whilst it is vital to acknowledge the long-lasting negative impact that such an experience can hold for the abused boy (Mendel, 1995), this speaks to the point I want to prioritise here. That is, Will, Sheldon and Simon's reflections on the impact of their abuse fits perfectly into the popular narrative or 'storying' of paedophilia/CSA. This is how a boy/man *should* feel; it is right, that is to say rational, according to popular/common understandings, within the therapeutic (e.g. Lew, 2004) and research literature (e.g. Lisak, 1994; Spiegel, 2003), of what CSA should mean for the child. That is, the experience was so traumatic that the individual male should be profoundly affected and suffer all his life from the aftershock of such horrendous, abusive (and 'homosexual') activity. According to Bruner (1987: 15) 'the tool kit of any culture is replete not only with a stock of canonical life narratives (heroes ... *etc.*) but with combinable formal constituents from which its members can construct their own life narratives: canonical stances and circumstances, as it were.' The 'evil paedophile' narrative now seems firmly entrenched within this stock of cultural narratives (Critcher, 2002).

Thus, within the dominant cultural narrative, for the boy who has encountered such an individual, there must be tangible negative consequence, no doubt deeply buried, which must be duly brought to light. In short, this is perhaps the 'abuse story' the public-at-large (especially the sports/rugby/hockey community) will accept – it is, perhaps the 'acceptable' story of the abused

boy. This is in no way to be dismissive of the impact of CSA, nor to diminish the original hostility, denial and 'NIMBYism' reported by Brackenridge (2001) regarding the reluctance of sport governing bodies to accept that abuse may happen in sport.[41] However, now abuse stories (even in sport) *are* (to a degree) 'in the open' – if they *have* to be told, this is perhaps the story that *can* be told, that we *expect* to hear, that we are willing to hear – and this may be instructive for a deeper understanding of this problem. The fact that Sheldon's story has also been told through the medium of film - *The Sheldon Kennedy Story* (1999), and that Will is currently considering an autobiography that will document his abuse - is perhaps further testimony to this fact.[42]

Indeed, Sheldon took it upon himself to roller-blade across Canada ('ocean-to-ocean') to raise awareness and funds for survivors of CSA. Thus, he continued to live up to the hyper-masculinist ideal of heroic, courageous, selfless, physical endeavour. It might be speculated then that this also enabled his story to be consumed with relative ease. That is, if all boxes relating to masculinism are ticked (including the impact of the abuse), there is a story to be told that does not transgress masculinist discourse. As Plummer (1995) indicates, there is something of a set formula to such stories – suffering; contest; journey; consummation of a goal; establishment of new home – thus, the outcome must refer to an overcoming of adversity, a

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[41] See Bruni and Burkett (2002) for an account of denial and cover-up in the Catholic Church.

[42] In addition, Thoren Fleury (ex-*NHL*) has recently published his autobiography (Fleury, 2009) in which he disclosed that he was also abused by Graham James. He has also accepted a position on the board of directors for *1in6* (a web-based organisation to support men who have experienced sexual abuse). Also, at time of writing Brian Moore, ex-rugby union international, has published his autobiography (Moore, 2010) also including a disclosure of boyhood sexual abuse by a teacher.

courageous fight to survivor-hood.[43] It is interesting to note then the titles of Fleury (2009) and Moore's (2010) recent autobiography's - 'Playing with Fire' and 'Beware of the Dog: Rugby's Hard Man Reveals All' respectively – where they disclose their own abuse.

Similarly, in research with men and women who voluntarily reported a sexual experience prior to age 16 with someone over age 18[44] 'participants told four narratives … titled narratives of silence, ongoing suffering, transformation, and transcendence' (Hunter, 2009: 395). As Will succinctly puts it: 'I've been in a very big black hole ... and I'm now where I am, which is a jolly sight better'.[45] Thus, the corollary of this narrative of abuse, is a narrative of shame: 'I was abused and I had to live my life with that shame' [Sheldon].

Of course, where sexual coercion occurs, the major concern, often implicit, regarding the sexual subjection of children is the impact (short and long-term) that it may have on the individual and the negative impacts have been widely documented for some years (e.g Lisak, 1994; Lew, 2004; Mendel, 1995; Stainton-Rogers *et al.*, 1989). However, where boys are abused by a male, the issue of homosexuality is also a prevalent concern, often fuelled by homophobic attitudes. Jack, Simon, Sheldon and Will are (arguably) typical of adolescent boys who are engaged in sexual activity by other (older) males – they keep it secret and if they do disclose, it is usually many years later

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[43] Masculinist or hyper-masculinist (i.e. aggressive) victim responses to childhood sexual abuse are documented elsewhere also (see Spiegel, 2003).
[44] In recruiting participants the term 'child sexual abuse' was deliberately avoided.
[45] In fact he was detained in a mental health institute following concerns over attempted suicide.

(Etherington, 1995; 2000). Sheldon is perhaps untypical in one regard in that when he did disclose, as a relatively young man, he did eventually (with the encouragement of a partner) also make an *official* disclosure and criminal proceedings were successfully brought against his perpetrator (he served 'less than two years' [Sheldon]).[46]

The shame associated with CSA is well documented and it is widely postulated that this shame may even be more severe for males than females and play a significant role in the under-reporting of abuse (e.g. Donnelly, 1999; Hunter, 2009; Mendel, 1995). This is again evident from Sheldon's reasoning (below) regarding why he could not tell his father about the abuse. Heteronormativity and the naturalised homophobia inherent within a masculinist culture, exemplified in traditional male team-sports (see Anderson, 2005) is at the heart of this issue:

> **Sheldon**: I was plagued by all kinds of irrational fears. Did the fact that Graham chose me mean that I was gay? It was obvious that he wasn't giving this special attention to the other boys, so why had he chosen me? He knew so much about people and the way the world worked, maybe he had seen something in me that I wasn't able to admit to myself ... and by saying no to one form of sex but allowing another to happen, was I really showing a preference and therefore giving Graham my consent? (Kennedy, 2006: 40).

The stigma of homosexuality in a field of practice where heteronormative and homophobic discourse often goes unchallenged, means that for many male

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[46] A very similar situation occurred in 1999 where an Olympic level figure skater brought a complaint against his former coach for sexual misconduct, both as a minor and as an adult (Longman, 1999). In this case, however, the governing body did not uphold the complaint and no subsequent criminal investigation was instigated.

children, the 'homosexual' nature of the sexual activity brings an additional element to the manner in which they perceive their experiences and actions:

> **Will**: You see most of us, erm, most of us have this problem with, you know ... not all of these processes are bad. By which is meant, you know you have this, I mean for me, for me, you know ejaculation – the first time I've ever ejaculated – I'm sorry to use these terms – but the first time I ever ejaculated was at the hands of this man. Whatever one says, the process of orgasm is quite pleasurable. And of course when that happens – you know, you have this immense guilt that comes with it. You know ... are you encouraging the man? Are you – I mean – I felt complicit, and that silenced me.

The heteronormativity implicit within this account is without doubt a highly useful tool for men who engage boys in sexual activity, perhaps especially so in the context or social space of traditional team sports where homophobia is normalised and accepted and boys are constantly and openly 'measured' for their conformity to heterosexist norms and ideals (Connell, 2000; Kane and Disch, 1993; Pringle, 2001). It does not seem unreasonable to suggest that if the adult in Will's account had been a female, the 'immense guilt' he experienced may not have materialised, or at least not in the same manner.[47] In such circumstances then, young males simply do not want to tell.

Research on disclosing CSA shows that such fears are well-founded. Draucker and Martsolf (2008) conducted research with 74 participants (male and female) who had been sexually abused as children. They found that responses to the telling/disclosure of their abuse were often negative and 'reinforced the participants' beliefs that they were responsible for the abuse, or at least responsible for preventing it from happening again ... a negative

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[47] However this is not to suggest that other adverse effects would not be experienced.

response often led to years of not telling anyone about the abuse (Draucker and Martsolf, 2008: 1041). Thus, according to Spiegel (2003: 48) 'adolescent boys ... when compared to girls and when compared to younger boys, are significantly less likely to disclose under any conditions.'

Furthermore, 'males with histories of CSA tend to keep the abuse concealed for decades, with 27 as the mean number of years since the abuse began to when it was disclosed to anyone ... the mean delay in years tends to be less for females' (Spiegel, 2003: 49). For Will the delay was thirty-eight years: 'I felt as though I was motivating some of it. Why on earth are you going to own up to that?' In addition, 'upon disclosure, adults tend to disbelieve the boy and often attempt to silence him ... in fact, a majority (68%) of disclosing males state that nothing was actually done about the abuse or the perpetrator' (Spiegel, 2003: 50). In fact, parents of disclosing males seem more preoccupied with concerns about their sons (homo-) sexuality (Davies, 1995). However, the abuse narrative was not the only story of man-boy sex told by these men; Jack told a very different story.

Narratives of Boyhood Sex

For a (mature) adult-male who is engaged in a homosexual relationship and embraces his sexuality, the process of reflecting on the 'non-violent,' ('homo') sexual boyhood activity is perhaps something done from a very different viewpoint – different that is from hegemonic notions of masculinity. Much of the stigma around the 'mechanics' of the sexual activity is (arguably) removed.

Certainly, Jack disclosed a great deal more detail regarding the sexual encounters in comparison to Simon, Sheldon and Will. Again, this may partly have been related to the 'distance' between (male) researcher and (male) participant facilitated by email communication. However, I do not think that this format would have elicited the same level of detail in the accounts of the other men.

In other words, Jack seemed more at ease with disclosing details of the sexual encounters. However, this is not to suggest any connection whatsoever between severity of impact and sexuality. In this regard, it is vital to emphasise the differing nature of the coaches' relationship to the boys. Simon, Sheldon and Will's 'relationship' with their abuser(s) was clearly predicated on authoritarian control and fear, whereas Jack's relationship with 'Coach' was of a different order where security and pleasure (even gentleness) were ostensibly prioritised.

Whilst Will said little about the actual sexual abuse, it is clear that for Simon, Sheldon and Will, their sexual subjection was prolonged due to the fraternity and comradeship fostered by their abusers (indeed, they (reluctantly) kept up the facade of friendship well beyond the end of the sexual 'relationship' when faced with 'friendly' non-sexual advances by their abusers). Violent rape or sexual assault, in a manner of speaking, may have been easier to walk away from, but for an adolescent boy (child) faced with 'love', 'affection' and camaraderie (albeit sexualised) from a powerful, controlling, revered, even 'heroic' idolised figure (this latter point is very evident in all the accounts), the

path to resistance is much less apparent – what exactly is being resisted? Simon reports: 'it's beyond good or bad, it's just entrancing, it takes you over ... being sexually stimulated by a big and powerful man is really a compelling experience.'

Nevertheless, Sheldon, Simon and Will identify as heterosexual; this is not the case for Jack: 'My sexuality and defining that is a bit problematic for most individuals. Personally I don't care for wearing a label of any sort. I don't consider myself gay but then I also don't consider myself straight either.' To be clear though, when he was first subjected to a sexual encounter by 'coach' he claims no firm commitment to a particular sexuality aside from the fact that he adamantly rejected the 'gay label,' largely through fear of being thought abnormal. It may be, however, that the men's mature sexual orientation should be considered in the analysis of their *reflections* on the sexual activity with their abusers. However, as Jack's account is distinct from the narrative of abuse, I will consider it separately:

> **Jack**: In truth ... I think for the duration of that relationship, I only viewed it as some arrangement to meet our individual needs. I never hated having sex with him and whenever he had a new girlfriend, I would see less of him and I didn't mind not seeing him as much and I was not jealous of these girls. I think this was because I knew he would not let go and if the, and when the, girlfriend did leave, he would seek me out.

There seems little prospect of Jack's story being immortalised in a fashion similar to Sheldon's. Quite aside from the appeal of celebrity that 'big-time sport' like the *NHL* affords, victim/survivor narratives that do not claim a 'lost childhood' or a 'stolen innocence', where victims do not refer to their life as deeply blighted by the experience, or to their abuser as evil, depraved, sick or

suchlike, are perhaps deeply incongruous and inconvenient. Such narratives contradict everything we 'know' (or want to know) about man-boy (sexual) relations.[48]

Yet similar accounts exist, for example, Etherington (1995) tells the story of Len, a heterosexual man who was subjected to abuse (reciprocal masturbation) as a boy of sixteen by a Chaplain who was also a family friend (indeed 'family hero'): 'How I feel about it now is that (long pause) – it seems fair enough ... I feel sorry for the guy ... he had a good war record and came from a landed family ... I liked him, I loved him and I still do' (Etherington, 1995: 252). Of course, the fact that men who perceive (or construct) their sexual subjection as non-abusive or non-traumatising, may also have subjected children to sexual abuse in adulthood cannot be discounted, although there is absolutely no reason to believe this is the case for Jack.

According to Jack's narrative, here is a boy who encounters same-sex abuse and rather than be reviled by it (then or now), not only sees it as an acceptable trade-off against services (apparently) rendered, in the form of protection and safety, but also enjoyed it and considers it harmless. The masculinist persuasion ('the ideology that justifies and naturalizes male domination' Brittan, 2001: 53) that runs through much organised male-sport (illustrated in the previous chapter and often epitomised in a plethora of autobiographies, e.g. Dallaglio, 2009; Hadley, 2001; Long, 2009 and sport films) and much of

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[48] Although the same can perhaps *not* be said about man-girl sexual relations, as can be seen through the public debate and widespread condemnation of the decision to expedite a thirty year-old arrest warrant outstanding against film director Roman Polanski for 'unlawful sex with a 13 year-old girl' (see *BBC*, 2009b).

the professional analysis of it (e.g. media 'pundits') leaves little room for accounts such as Jack's and is perhaps simply unable to comprehend such a disposition. First, it does not sit comfortably alongside the narrative of ('homosexual') abuse that dominates contemporary discourse within (and without) sport on man-boy sexual relations (a narrative underpinning the current child protection/safeguarding/welfare agenda); a narrative that might ask: 'how can you *not* be irreparably damaged'? Second, it does not sit comfortably alongside the masculinist, or perhaps more specifically *athleticist,* narrative of male-sport that prioritises heteronormativity and excludes or stigmatises homosexuality; a narrative that might prompt the question: 'how *could* you have enjoyed it'?

Jack's refusal to frame his experiences in the language of abuse (of which he is well capable) is perhaps frustrating. So it might easily be concluded that he is wilfully (or subconsciously) avoiding (suppressing) such a victimised construction of himself. However, Hunter (2009) suggests that to dismiss this perspective as 'in denial' would be easy or convenient, but perhaps not sufficient. She identified a 'narrative of silence' amongst her participants (*particularly males*) in instances where their sexually abusive experiences:

> ... had begun when they were adolescents and had been with men that they knew rather than with family members. They came from relatively functional family backgrounds, were able to develop satisfying careers, managed to avoid drug or alcohol dependence, and had not felt the need to seek professional help (Hunter, 2009: 396).

It's important to note that Jack is fully aware that he was a victim of a 'predatory' male sex-abuser. He does not seek to deny this and is content to

label his experience as such, or at least he was for the purposes of this research. However, this understanding (or perhaps accommodation) has not changed his description of his experiences or his reflections on them:

> **Jack**: I have long since worked through that ... I was a victim ... I never told anybody about the Coach. Even when I was going through therapy I left it out. In my mind I didn't think of it as being particularly traumatizing or physically harmful/painful …

So to dismiss his view of what he experienced as 'in denial' would surely be inappropriate. The notion of rights, whether it be children's or otherwise, requires us to take seriously the self-articulation, -expression and – identification of individuals. This is Jack's story, his voice, his narrative and his alone. Whilst he readily recognises his victim-status based on his age/maturity, he did not experience sexual activity with this man (or even his like-minded cohort of 'friends') as a traumatic episode in his life, even if elements of it were clearly frightening for him and despite the fact that he came (in adulthood) to recognise fully the 'predatory' and inappropriate nature of his encounters (based on age difference or generational discordance rather than the nature of the sexual activity). In sum, it is clearly a period of his life that he cherishes.

Clearly, this should not be taken as any sort of justification for the coach's actions – it is quite apparent that sexual activity and gratification was the intended objective of his interest in Jack and that this had nothing whatsoever to do with Jack's well-being. That is, the label of sexual abuse absolutely still pertains. However, simultaneously, we must accept the complexity and heterogeneity of the *subjective* experience of man-boy sexual relations. In

attempting to generate a comprehensive account of the sexual subjection of children by adults in the sports community, we must be prepared to validate *all* abuse histories/narratives equally.

This may be uncomfortable. However, it is clear from Jack's story that the 'abuse narrative' that encapsulates the discourse of 'victim-survivor', or 'wounded healer' (see Etherington, 2000) does not adequately capture *all* man-boy sexual subjection, or the narratives that individuals construct out of such experiences. Potentially, this means that (at least some) young males are not provided with the vocabulary with which to locate and understand their experiences, and, therefore, we might reasonably question the utility of such a narrative in preventing abuse of future generations. On this basis the term 'sexual subjection' (Spiegel, 2003) may be preferable over sexual *abuse*, as it potentially provides more 'space' for the individual to define their own experience without having to negotiate the emotive nomenclature of 'abuse' and the considerable assumptions that go with it. 'Subjection' retains the notion of a power relationship and the domination of one agent over another, but without the implicit inference about the way an individual (victim) *should* experience, feel about or react to the experience (I will return to this point below).

Yet the 'abuse narrative' *is* exceptionally important (and certainly has been crucial to establishing the problem within policy-making and agency agendas). Children who are subjected to sexual activity are damaged by it and they need to know that what they are being subjected to is indeed *abuse*, regardless of

whether or not they perceive it as unwanted; that they do not have to tolerate it and they should not feel guilty for rejecting it, nor indeed ashamed for disclosing it. Their abuser will of course not use this language and will determinedly steer the boy away from such notions.

Hunter (2009) also notes, however, that for some men, their 'narrative of silence' ('no harm done') was beginning to unravel in the face of the overwhelming pervasiveness of the abuse narrative – that is, they were beginning to feel guilty and ashamed of *not* feeling shame or damaged over their childhood 'abuse' and were now feeling obligated to voice their stories through the narrative of abuse, due to societal pressure to recognise themselves through this frame. This raises the difficult problem of requiring men, who did not previously see themselves as victimised or damaged, to articulate their experiences through this frame – to narrate their subjectivity/self in a way that distorts their actual perspective and perhaps causes a level of distress that had not previously been felt. So perhaps sexually abused males also need to know that it is okay to be 'ok'; there should be no compulsion to feel damaged or to narrate one's life through the frame of abuse. As Woodiwiss (2009: 22) states:

> It may turn out to be that it is our contemporary storying of CSA, with its emphasis on perceived damage, secrecy and guilt, that is traumatic, possibly more traumatic than the abuse itself, and it is this that damages children who are sexually abused.

The rise of the 'victim-survivor narrative' has undoubtedly been a crucial step in recognising childhood sexual abuse and the effects it can have. However,

there is perhaps a gendered dimension to this only now being recognised. According to Hunter (2009: 403):

> … women are more likely to find the victim and survivor discourses empowering, whereas men are more likely to find them stigmatizing and unhelpful … this may enable more women than men to have a voice and to work through their experiences more openly, leading to better long-term adjustment than for male sexual abuse victims.

In the hyper-masculinist world of competitive sport, it is a reasonable assumption that this will be especially true and leaves us with the problem of potentially missing a great deal of man-boy sexual abuse because of the pervasiveness and limitations of the dominant narrative. To explore this issue further I shall re-visit Sheldon Kennedy's experience in light of the above discussion.

Sheldon Kennedy – Narratives of Athleticism/Masculinism

Sheldon's development in hockey progressed almost naturally as an extension of his introduction to skating at a very young age, encouraged and supported by a family, community and culture that held male-hockey achievements in extremely high regard. According to Sheldon 'every summer, my parents managed to scrape together enough money to send me and Troy to hockey camp for a couple of weeks' (Kennedy, 2006: 29). So by the time it came for 'trying out' on a larger scale in front of 'scouts' that could recommend him for the transition to the next level of hockey competition, his immediate future went without saying – Sheldon was a hockey-boy with great potential; therefore, he would pursue a career in hockey with the ultimate objective being

to play in the *National Hockey League* (*NHL*). This was the natural course of things and it was to this course that Sheldon would adhere through adolescence into early adulthood; a course that led him to Olympic success and indeed to the professional league (the *NHL*). There was seemingly no dissent in Sheldon's early life from the dominant messages that he received about his enthusiasm and skill in hockey, except, that is, from himself following the first abusive sexual encounter:

> **Sheldon**: ... the first time it happened to me, when I was abused for the first time I wanted to get out of there – I didn't want anything to do with sport, I hated it and I just didn't know how to get out of it cos I was supposed to be the next David Beckham right. And so how does a guy quit, how do I just up and quit sport? Cos you know what - everybody's going to ask me questions: 'what was wrong'? So as far as my will ... I felt trapped, and I felt like my choices were gone at that point, I felt like I had no choices after being abused ... so as a kid I think, at thirteen, I felt trapped.

For Sheldon, the 'abuse narrative' that automatically denotes the boy as a victim (of a 'sex beast'), did not provide a context (or narrative) that he could relate to or identify with. It is reasonable to suppose that this was also the case for Will and Simon (and also for Jack but perhaps for different reasons). The shame associated with CSA is well documented and 'in the homophobic world of macho sport' (Donnelly, 1999: 121) it is not unreasonable to assume that this shame may be so contrary to the narratives that are accessible and appealing to the sportsboy that he is thoroughly silenced by it (see also Alaggia, 2005).

The centrality of the father-son relationship to this masculinist narrative is highlighted by Sheldon:

> It's hard to say what my mom and dad would have done if I'd told them ... but it was partially my fear of my father that made it so hard for me to tell anybody. I was afraid that Dad would be ashamed of me. I was afraid of looking weak in his eyes. I was afraid that he would somehow blame me for bringing this shame on myself and the family by not being strong enough to resist ...

The narratives that run through male-sport define contemporary boyhood – to be a sports-boy means to be an *ideal* boy. The narratives of male-sport are the narratives of masculinism (Messner and Sabo, 1994) including a masculinism that emphasises the protection of women and children (Young, 2003). These narratives do not include *abuse*, *victimhood* or *vulnerability*.

The boy who is abused in sport by his coach is simultaneously being taught the rules of masculinism – you don't cry, you don't give in, you don't let others get the better of you; you are not a loser, you are a winner, you are strong, you will succeed and dominate. In an environment where winning really matters, *losing* matters even more, and victims are certainly 'losers'. This is the discourse of male-sport and these are the narratives with which the sports-boy is taught to identify with, indeed it is because of this narrative that sport is such a pervasive choice for parents; that is why fathers send their boys to football or rugby or cricket, at increasingly younger ages. So these narrative markers are the tools at his disposal, from which he forges his identity and character and generates his own narrative. At eight-years-old many children are 'the next' David Beckham – or Johnny Wilkinson, or 'Freddie' Flintoff or Andy Murray; but for the boy who has been identified as having 'real potential', 'belief in the game' is much more serious and can have serious consequences well beyond those he could envisage.

Summary

In this chapter I have offered a 're-presentation' of the stories told by these four men. I have (I hope) also done justice to their stories as they recounted them to me and, in doing so, also provided the reader with considerable detail of the lives of these men. This will facilitate alternative readings of the data. I have run their narratives alongside each other to illustrate the similarities and the differences between them and I have offered some thoughts on the relation between the stories the men tell and the dominant constructions or narratives of this 'social problem.' I have suggested that all the men offer a 'dysfunctional family' or 'bad father' narrative and that three of the four construct a 'narrative of abuse' that is concordant with the dominant construction of (homosexual/man-boy) sexual abuse. I have also argued that Jack constructs a very different narrative which challenges this dominant construction. In addition, I have highlighted an athleticist narrative that is, more or less, constant throughout the stories of sexual subjection the men disclosed, despite the disparity in their constructions of the abuse experience and its aftermath.

In the following chapters I will consider these narratives more closely through the theoretical framework of Bourdieu, in order to develop a theoretical account of boyhood sexual abuse in sport.

CHAPTER SIX

Boyhood Sexual Abuse and Organised Male-Sport: A Relational Account

In the previous chapter I considered the abuse histories of the participants and characterised their narratives within four themes: 'family dysfunction' (or the 'bad father' narrative); 'athleticism'; 'abuse/paedophilia'; and finally, 'boyhood sex.' This chapter will set out an explanatory framework within which these narratives can be considered, and in the following chapter I will discuss the field of organised male-sport more generally in light of this account. I will continue to draw upon the stories the men told, as well as other interview data, in order to develop my articulation of the relationship between organised male-sport and the sexual subjection of boys.

Athleticism and the Masculine Libido

Echoing earlier feminist perspectives (e.g. Herman, 1990) regarding the normality of sex offenders and the rejection of the notion that sex offenders are inherently deviant (e.g. Cowburn and Dominelli, 2001; Plummer, 1981), Cossins (2000: 124) states:

> I think it is important to ask, why should child sex offending be treated as deviant from those normative sexual practices that are considered to conform to the masculine sexual ideal, given the fact that the relationship of adult/child is a relationship of differential power *par excellence*? Whilst such a question may be, in some people's minds, unpalatable, the question appears to be particularly salient, given the prevalence of child sexual abuse in some Western countries.

Following Cossins (2000) it is important to proceed (for an account of CSA that refuses the argument from abnormality and deviance) from an understanding of 'normative sexual practices.' According to Bourdieu (2001: 20):

> A political sociology of the sexual act would show that, as is always the case in a relation of domination, the practices and representations of the two sexes are in no way symmetrical. Not only because, even in contemporary European and American societies, young men and women have very different points of view on the love relation, which men most often conceive in terms of conquest (especially in conversations between friends, which give a prominent place to boasting about female conquests), but also because the sexual act itself is seen by men as a form of domination, appropriation, 'possession' … men are inclined to compartmentalize sexuality, which is conceived as an aggressive and essentially physical act of conquest oriented towards penetration and orgasm.

Whilst such analysis may well fall foul of some of the criticisms regarding 'determinism' and a lack of appreciation for multiple gender/sexual identities (referred to in chapter two), it also bears a strong resemblance to much feminist writing on sexual violence (e.g. Brownmiller, 1975; Bryson, 2003; Griffin, 1971; Rush, 1980) and accords with the overwhelming prevalence of males as perpetrators of sexual crimes (Finkelhor, 1994; Pateman, 1988). It also resonates strongly with critical accounts of male sexual practice within the sociology of sport literature (e.g. Benedict, 1997; Brackenridge, 2001, 2002; Curry, 1991, 1998; Messner and Sabo, 1994) as well as documentary evidence of all-male environments (e.g. Schwartz, 2004). Whilst the emphasis here is on the man-*boy* relation, Bourdieu's (2001) point is that it is possible to identify a *masculine habitus* (in the sense of a template with particular features), and that a *core* feature of that habitus is a view of sexual practice that prioritises conquest and domination.

However, it is necessary to refine Bourdieu's thesis slightly, in line with feminist critique (chapter two). That is, it is necessary to mobilise the 'destabilising' aspect of 'the field' to facilitate a discussion of a differentiated masculine habitus (McNay, 2000) rather than a stagnated one; and in considering Brittan's (2001) observation that masculine and masculin*ist* should not be confused, it would seem that the notion of a 'masculinist habitus' perhaps more appropriately reflects Bourdieu's (2001) argument. In considering the (*hyper*-masculine) field of organised male-sport this seems particularly apt. However, to reflect distinct features of the particular context/field and to assist a *mobilisation* of 'field' that reflects Bourdieu's emphasis on history, I have designated a contextualised version: the *athleticist* habitus.

Before developing this further, the notion of a *masculinist habitus* of late-modernity, underpinned as it is by patriarchal interests, does not immediately sit comfortably with the contention that one outcome, or 'inscribed potentiality,' of this habitus is the sexual abuse of *boys*. It may be argued that masculinism promotes the structuring of a habitus (or masculine subjectivity) that views femininity (and 'alternative' or non-hegemonic masculinities) as subordinate and that the dominant construction of sexual practice (dominant male-submissive female) plays a key strategic role in this project. This reflects a well-established position on sexual exploitation and violence (Cossins, 2000; Kelly, 1988; Pateman, 1988; Rush, 1980). However, it is perhaps less clear that this project should also result in the widespread sexual abuse of *male*

children, perhaps particularly 'athletic' male children (those that perhaps signify most closely the repository for the determined inculcation of the masculinist ideal). That is to say, the homophobic, heteronormative sentiment, deeply embedded in the *masculinist habitus*, exemplified in the field of male-sport, might be seen to offer some form of protection against such practice. Further, the features of the masculinist habitus that may characterise the sports-boy, might also be thought to afford him the means to protect himself and, indeed, this is a well-documented aspect of 'abuse mythology' (Donnelly, 1999; Etherington, 1995).

However, as Bourdieu (2001) and others indicate (e.g. Connell, 1995), masculinity (incorporating sexuality), in accord with the patriarchal endeavour, is constructed to assure the reproduction of gendered power relations in favour of males, but not equally so. As Bourdieu always insists, each field is constituted by 'struggles' for power and the dominant agents will endeavour to impose their version of the field upon all others. The field of masculinity is dominated by the masculinist vision and is thus productive of a masculinist habitus predisposed towards 'conquest.' As Bryson (1999: 47) argues 'to learn masculinity or femininity is, therefore, to learn about subordination and domination.' Therefore, whilst in no way permanent, neither is the *habitus* analogous to a switch, to be voluntarily turned off when it suits. That is, fields generally, and perhaps particularly the field of masculinity, do not promote a highly reflexive disposition. Rather they promote, or durably install, the interests which are the pre-condition of their functioning.

Thus, whilst individual social agents, as repositories for the interests of a range of fields, have the capacity to determine their action on the basis of a range of interests, the masculinist habitus (as a 'feel for the game') has little capacity to strategically choose between different orders of weaker agents. Instead, its disposition towards domination is '*durably installed,*' thoroughly pervasive and naturalised 'incorporating the objective structures [history] produces in the second natures of habitus' (Bourdieu 1977: 78). It is an embodied understanding, a practical sense, 'a feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1990b, 1998), yet it remains a sense, a feel, a *potentiality* that, whilst installed, requires activation in the process of social action.

Generally speaking then, the desire for conquest (manifest more generally as the desire for command over symbolic capital – indeed to determine what counts *as* capital[49]) can be identified as the central disposition ('second nature') of the masculinist habitus. This ability to direct capital varies between agents and is represented as 'the struggle to impose the legitimate principle of vision and division' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 134). However, this central disposition can be said to pervade masculinist action, and this pertains whether the field in question is economic, political, spiritual, cultural or sexual, indeed, perhaps especially in sexual relations. Thus, according to Bourdieu (2001: 21):

> Penetration, especially when performed on a man, is one of the affirmations of the *libido dominandi* that is never entirely absent from the masculine libido. It is known that in a number of societies homosexual possession is conceived as a manifestation of 'power', an act of

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[49] Illustrated well in the historic representation of sport as unsuitable for females.

domination (performed as such, in some cases, in order to assert superiority by 'feminizing' the other).[50]

This is demonstrated from research in male prison populations where ('heterosexual') sodomy (or perhaps possessing a 'wife') is the ultimate symbol of domination as well as part of the 'economy' of an all-male environment (e.g. Schwartz, 2004). Similarly, reports of widespread rape and sexual humiliation in war/conflict zones (e.g. Bosnia and Rwanda, the US army's 'interrogation' practices of male prisoners in Abu-Graib prison during the Iraq occupation), and totalitarian regimes (e.g. see recent *BBC* (2009d) reports of rape and threats of rape by state officials in Iran) confirms the traditional view that sexual activity (forced or otherwise) with either the wife (or women) and children of one's adversary, or most potently, the adversary *him*self, is a demonstration of power that symbolises the ultimate (masculinist) conquest – to feminize the other (Bourdieu, 2001). In other words, it can be observed that the *libido dominandi* is a central disposition of the *masculinist habitus*, and, as a hyper-masculine form, the *athleticist habitus*. Thus, I contend that (whilst not inevitable for the individual) sexual subjection is a persistent manifestation of the powerful within (hyper-) masculinist cultural contexts, rather than the result of abnormal pathology or sexual desire.

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[50] This is in no way to confuse homosexual relations with child sexual abuse, or to limit CSA to acts of penetration only.

The Athleticist Libido

According to Curry (1991: 119) 'the men's locker room is enshrined in sports mythology as a bastion of privilege and a center of fraternal bonding.' In an ethnographic study, Curry collected 'talk fragments in locker rooms from athletes on two teams participating in contact sports' in the USA. He found that talk about 'sex and aggression ... [were] of paramount importance in the locker room':

> Locker room talk about women, though serving a function for the bonding of men, also promotes harmful attitudes and creates an environment supportive of sexual assault and rape. Competition among teammates, the emphasis upon women as objects, sexual conquest as enviable achievement, peer group encouragement of antisocial comments and behaviour, and anxiety about proving one's heterosexuality – all of these ideas are combined ... to promote a selfish, hostile, and aggressive approach to sexual encounters with women (Curry, 1991: 132).

My investigation of the sexual subjection of boys (in sport) is based on an understanding of social action whereby 'there is a reason in what agents do' (Bourdieu, 1998: 75-6) and that 'there is an economy of practices, a reason immanent in practices, whose "origin" lies neither in the "decisions" of reason understood as rational calculation nor in the determinations of mechanisms external to and superior to the agents' (Bourdieu, 1990a: 50-51). In this account the sexual subjection of a boy falls within the boundaries of embodied dispositions intimately connected to the cultural field, articulated here through the notion of the *athleticist habitus*. At the core of this habitus is the *libido dominandi*, where sexual practice is constructed by the social agent in a myriad number of ways, but always in a mode that accords with this generative core or principle. Therefore, sexual activity with a boy, whilst in no way an

inevitable or determined manifestation (at the level of the individual) is, nevertheless, in no way contrary to the *libido dominandi*, indeed, it is in perfect accord:

> **Jack**: The only rumours that, on occasion, circulated were those of other girls the current girlfriend was not comfortable with. He was known or labelled as a player ... Generally he always washed me, as in a bathtub washing a child, or we showered together. This was followed by drying and putting lotion all over me. I rarely touched him during these activities. He preferred I be passive and I would only comply with something if he had a request. He did however enjoy it when he was busy putting lotion onto me (for example as he was squat down and his head was in reach) for me to stroke his hair. Other times he would simply have me lay down on his bed and he would lotion me that was very much like a massage and that generally led to more intimate touching and rubbing. He was also very orally fixated and he would very often during these massages kiss and lick my body all over till he eventually would perform fellatio on me and/or he would also 'rim' me. When he chose to rim me, he generally would have anal sex with me and almost always missionary position. He almost always wanted to look into my eyes when he had an orgasm. On rare occasions did he perform fellatio on me at the rink and he did ask occasionally for me to do the same for him. The other variation he had was to drive me to his place and have me straddle him on his bike or he would bend me over the bike and have sex with me.

As Cossins (2000) points out, CSA (man-boy sex) does not implicitly threaten the subjective process of successfully attaining or doing masculinity; it is not contrary to the narrative of masculinism. However, to be clear again, the suggestion here is not that organised sport somehow generates, in any straightforward, necessary fashion the desire to engage *children* in sex – that is, I do not consider sport to be somehow generative of a *paedo*-sexual desire (or 'Minor-Attracted Adult' Goode, 2010). But boyhood-sport, born out of the patriarchal endeavour and ensconced within the masculinist tradition, *is* generative of, and generated by, the *athleticist habitus,* fundamental to which is the *libido dominandi*. The risk inherent within a field that revolves around

the master-apprentice (or servant) relation, where boyhood and masculinity collide and reside, differentiated yet in tandem, is therefore considerable and brought into sharp relief by Jack's candid account of the experiences he was subjected to.

The above might be considered a pre-cursor to a psychological offender profile – a sort of typical sports offender. The offenders described in the accounts offered here certainly lend support to previous studies in sport (Brackenridge, 1997; Kirby *et al.*, 2000; Toftegaard-Nielsen, 2001) which found 'sexually abusing coaches [to] have good social skills, high visibility, popularity and a high level of sexual confidence and assertiveness' (Brackenridge, 2001: 109). Brackenridge (2001: 108) therefore, suggests 'the predator cycle' (developed from and as a mirror-image to Wolf's (1984) 'paedophile cycle of offending') and this model seems an accurate descriptor of the men described here. Certainly the notion of a *libido dominandi* seems to resonate with the 'predator' model.

However, Brackenridge (2001: 112) also advocates caution in attempting to classify or profile perpetrators (as does Cowburn, 2005, in addition to much feminist theory on sex offending) and draws attention to the 'trusting relationship' between coach and athlete (and sport conditions). Therefore, she develops an 'explanatory model, a contingency model of sexual exploitation in sport' based on three contingent risks: coach inclination, sport opportunity and athlete vulnerability (Brackenridge, 2001: 136-140). Thus, in this account CSA is not based solely on a construction of 'exploitative masculine sexuality'

(Cossins, 2000) but on a contextualised relation between the man, the field and the boy encapsulated in the notion of the athleticist habitus.

Therefore, the 'social agent' is not simply the perpetrator, but both the man *and* the boy (as well as associated others) acting within a specific cultural context or field. That is, through habitus and field a relation is constructed. Crucially, however, the child is *also* constituted as a social agent whose agency is more closely related to his adjustment to the field than say his chronological age or stage of maturation. For the child/boy there is also a position (or a route to a position) that is clearly, if not strongly, delineated in organised male-sport - apprentice/servant – that 'extorts submission.'

CSA can be considered as an encounter/relation that a boy is forced or coerced into succumbing to, by virtue of his lesser physical, cognitive and social capacity (or capital). However, I construct it as a position or pathway, not determined so much as strongly advocated by the field and, therefore, in the absence of alternative narratives or schemes of action, not unreasonably adopted, or even pursued, by the boy. Thus, according to Bourdieu (2001: 79-80):

> Because differential socialization disposes men to love the games of power ... masculine charisma is partly the charm of power, the seduction that the possession of power exerts, as such, on bodies whose drives and desires are themselves politically socialized. Masculine domination finds one of its strongest supports in the misrecognition which results from the application to the dominant of categories engendered in the very relationship of domination and which can lead to that extreme form of *amor fati*, love of the dominant and of his domination, a *libido dominantis* (desire for the dominant) which implies renunciation of personal exercise of *libido dominandi* (the desire to dominate).

Boys in sport, from their first entry into the field, are closely instructed in and through the narrative of a *libido dominantis*. In their apprenticeship (or servitude) they are taught to value domination and, therefore, to desire the dominant (the 'heroic rugby teacher,' a 'player,' 'gods' no less). By the terms of the *athleticist habitus* then, correct boyhood practice demands that they exalt the dominant.

For Bourdieu (1977: 87) 'the child imitates not "models," but other people's actions. Body *hexis* speaks directly to the motor function.' Therefore, it is possible to observe the plethora of low-level corporeal actions the boy is explicitly offered in sport (quite aside from the more obviously physically aggressive features evident in some sports), for example, in the importance placed on a firm handshake, the inevitable exhortation to 'look them in the eyes,' and to 'stand tall.' Bourdieu's point, however, is that much of this work is done through 'schemes that are able to pass from practice to practice without going through discourse or consciousness' (Bourdieu, 1977: 87). As Will remarked about his abuser's skills as a rugby coach: 'I believe he could impart that theory to us lot, who were *like thirty pieces of blotting paper on a pitch*' (my emphasis). Boyhood in sport, then, perhaps under the euphemisms of 'discipline' and 'respect' engenders a *bodily hexis* disposed towards the desire for, and exaltation of, the dominant.

And the more 'invested' (see below) a boy is, the more likely and full will be his embodiment of this disposition. Therefore, when I say that there is a reason

in what agents do in relation to CSA in sport, I am not only referring to that done by the man who sexually subjects a boy, but also to the boy who has the capacity, an embodied disposition, to find virtue in the necessity to engage in sex with a man. Therefore, the sportsboy finds himself in the highly dissonant position of engaging in sex with a *man*, yet at the same time this relation is very 'natural' so that there seemed nothing else to do.

This emphasises my earlier point on the child (chapter three); a degree of sustained engagement with a field, in such a fashion that the child is not only cognisent of it but also makes a persistent cognitive/emotional effort towards it, is presumed. Thus, the child not only intuitively perceives the field but is capable of acting with some autonomy on that perception. As such, my account of CSA precludes the child who does not possess that capacity; certainly babies, toddlers and very young children. However, research has recorded that the most likely age period for boys to experience sexual abuse is between 9 and 13 years (Spiegel, 2003). This age range, generally, would be well capable of this type of engagement and all the boys in this study were within that range when they were first abused.

The *athleticist habitus*, then, (instrumentalist and masculinist) represents a particular expression of sexual practice, represented by the *athleticist libido* (a *libido dominandi*) the necessary corollary of which is the *libido dominantis*. The *athleticist libido*, then, is a contextualised expression of sexual practice structured, according to the logic of sport, on a zero-sum, binary game. Thus, there are two libidinal *moments* to this habitus - *dominandi* and *dominantis*:

the desire for domination and the desire for the dominant.[51] The men's accounts help to illustrate this. For example:

> **Will**: ... going back to the James [pseudonym] brothers ... Mr. James got to find out that [perpetrator] was screwing his wife ... they could hear the screams of Mrs James as Mr James beat her. Neither of the two older boys knew that each of them had been abused ... They were all [team sport] stars ...

Whilst the *athleticist habitus* is pervasive, most men do not subject children to sexual activity. However, as Bourdieu (1990a: 167) states:

> It is perhaps by thinking what is most specific about sport, that is, the regulated manipulation of the body, about the fact that sport, like all disciplines in total or totalitarian institutions, convents, prisons, asylums, political parties, etc., is *a way of obtaining from the body an adhesion that the mind might refuse*, that one could reach a better understanding of the usage made by most authoritarian regimes of sport ... 'The Soldier's Tale' reminds us of the old popular tradition: making someone dance means possessing them (my emphasis).

The masculinist vision, from which (male-) sport was born and is thoroughly occupied, is manifest in the *athleticist habitus* central to which is the *libido dominandi* (sex as control, domination and conquest). Sport is centred on the principle of manipulating the body, of obtaining from it that which the mind would refuse. Sport instrumentalizes the (child's) body and makes a virtue out of this necessity. Whilst 'making someone dance' indicates possession of them, under the terms of the *athleticist libido,* possession is always a sexualised engagement. Thus, Pronger (1999: 382) argues:

> Boys raised on competitive sport learn to desire, learn to make connections according to the imperative to take space away from others and jealously guard it for themselves. Competitive sport trains desire to conquer and protect space, which is to say it simulates phallic

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[51] A conceptual formulation not dissimilar to that of Seymour (1998).

and anal desire on the playing field. The most masculine competitive sports are those that are the most explicitly spatially dominating … players invade the space of others and vigorously guard the same from happening to themselves … this is the conquest logic of competitive sport: to penetrate the other as an expression of the impenetrable self.

Pronger's point is not principally that sport is an erotic domain (it undoubtedly is) but that there is an ethical dimension to the logic of sport that has significant implications for those who have been compelled to invest in it. He goes on:

> The triumphant pleasure of competitive sport is the violent phallocentric pleasure of adding to oneself by subtracting from another. By its very construction as a system for the simulation of desire, it is an essential brutal economy. One takes one's delight in the vulnerability of one's competitor, in one's phallic ability to pry open their otherwise closed openings against their will, and specifically because it is against their will ... The convention of most players consenting to play also serves to legitimate sport's brutal libidinal economy ... Competitive sport, therefore, is a profoundly unethical way to organize desire (Pronger, 1999: 386-7).

The man who sexually subjects a boy in sport might, then, be considered 'the field made flesh' constitutive of an *athleticist libido*, 'profoundly unethical,' that subtracts from others in order to add to himself and takes 'delight' in 'taking' others.

This can be observed very clearly in the common, phallocentric, 'hazing' practices conceived for 'new recruits', 'freshers' ('fresh meat'), 'virgins' or 'rookies' common to many male-sports (Johnson and Holman, 2004). Such 'rites' are of the same order and their design, of which the aim is 'initiation,' – effectively a buying-in of the values of, and submission to the will of, the group - is far from accidental. Bryshun and Young (1999: 269) argue 'throughout sport-related rituals veterans 'test' rookies and evaluate whether they have

sufficiently adopted behaviours and beliefs required for membership.' Similarly, Brackenridge (2001) notes such 'testing of the water' amongst the 'grooming' techniques of perpetrators of CSA in sport; interestingly, one convicted abuser remarked that 'boys were much better at keeping quiet' (Brackenridge: 2001: 106). As Bourdieu (1993: 74) argues 'one of the factors protecting the various games from total revolutions, which could destroy not only the dominant agents and their domination, but the game itself, is the very size of the investment, in time, effort and so on, presupposed by entry into the game.' I will consider this in more depth in the following chapter.

That there is a sexualised element to this entry (aside from being generally understood) is evident from the cases of 'hazing' that are officially documented. For example, Bryshun and Young (1999: 273) cite a number of cases; in one instance: 'four members of a male hockey team in Chatham, Ontario, reported that they were forced to masturbate publicly. Thirteen people were charged with over 100 sexual offences.' In September 2008, it was reported that six high school football players in the USA were accused of sodomizing younger boys on the team, one youth later pleaded guilty to rape (*NBC Sports*, 2008). What such cases demonstrate is that sexual subjection is recognised as a legitimate practice within the panoply of domination-strategies available to the athleticist habitus; that is, it is a normative element of masculinist socialisation practices within sport.

The notion of *athleticist habitus,* then, is used to depict a 'generative principle of regulated improvisations' that reactivates the *sense* found in the institutions

that comprise the field of organised male-sport. As discussed in chapter four, this sense, in my argument, is characterised broadly by instrumentalism and masculinism, whereby the man-boy relation is constructed through discourses of domination, control, discipline, respect, aggression and pain in a field where sexuality (and the regular performance of the correct form) is a fundamental point of reference (Anderson, 2002) if not a condition of entry and acceptance. My claim, then, is that this *athleticist habitus*, in reactivating the sense found in dominant sporting institutions (perhaps most obviously in the various 'national sports' across the globe) constitutes a *generative* principle. That is, a principle generative of an *athleticist libido* constituted by two embodied moments: the *libido dominandi* – the desire for domination, conquest and adding to oneself by the taking from (or simply 'taking' *of*) others; and the *libido dominantis* – a desire for, and to do the will of, the dominant. Through this *libido*, in the context of boyhood-sport, the *athleticist habitus* is generative of the sexual subjection of boys.

Therefore, the sexual subjection of a boy, by a man, in the field of organised male-sport is a *regulated improvisation* or *inscribed potentiality,* a bodily *hexis*, whereby the man *and* the boy are social agents in the encounter acting within the field and according to its logic. That this applies to the adult (male perpetrator) will, perhaps, be less contested than the notion that it also applies to the child. The following discussion will set out my argument more explicitly.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The *Athleticist Habitus*, Symbolic Violence and Children's Sport

As noted above, CSA is a persistent and widespread social practice, predominantly practised by men: therefore, any theoretical formulation must be able to account for the historical and masculine aspects of this practice. One approach has been to locate the cause within the (persistently) malfunctioning human psyche (or brain). An alternative approach has been to consider the socio-cultural world and its deeply gendered organisation of social agents. Recent accounts have attempted to unify previous theory into a 'global theory,' (e.g. Ward *et al*., 2006) or to overcome weaknesses in feminist arguments by applying new sociological arguments about masculinity to men's sex offending against children (Cossins, 2000). I have argued that these approaches ultimately pathologise the perpetrator and that Bourdieu's framework of *habitus*, *capital* and *field* offer the theoretical linkage required to bridge the psyche-society dichotomy. In this chapter, I utilise Bourdieu's formulation of 'fields of practice,' and the means by which they reproduce themselves, to facilitate a closer examination of the 'world of sport' and its particular role in creating conditions whereby the sexual subjection of children is a persistent and widespread practice.

Illusio

The notion of *illusio* is central to Bourdieu's theoretical formulation of social practice and field. According to Bourdieu (1998: 77):

> *Illusio* is the fact of being caught up in and by the game, of believing the game is 'worth the candle,' or, more simply, that playing is worth the effort ... If your mind is structured according to the structures of the world in which you play, everything will seem obvious and the question of knowing if the game is 'worth the candle' will not even be asked ... the *illusio* is the enchanted relation to a game that is the product of a relation of ontological complicity between mental structures and the objective structures of social space. That is what I meant in speaking of *interest*: games which matter to you are important and interesting because they have been imposed and introduced in your mind, in your body, in a form called the feel for the game.

The field of sport is very clearly imposed upon boys; it is introduced in their minds and their bodies. Whilst it might be said that other fields, such as literature, television or *IT* are also widely imposed upon children (in gendered formats), the field of sport is introduced to boys as being intimately related to their male, masculine identity – their *boyhood* – itself (Connell, 1995; Pringle, 2001). The notion that there is something more at stake than physical development in the training of boys in sport is evident from its earliest formats in the English public school where the pre-occupation was to develop *character*, rather than sporting skill. However, consider the comments of Paul, a recently retired rugby league professional with a reputation for aggression and 'hard' play at the very highest level:

> *Was the aggressive side encouraged by coaches?*
> Oh no, nothing like that. I was very aggressive anyway - in the games. I think that comes from doing a lot of weight-training, stuff like that, d'you know, where you're doing a lot of grind. I think that's where it came from, that part of my game. Cos I was a very quiet lad. I was

taken to sport - like Judo I did first - because my mum and dad wanted me to get more confidence in myself, cos I was a really quiet, shy lad so they wanted me to get going an' that - and I took to it. *So I don't think I'd be naturally that way* (my emphasis).

The centrality and overwhelming dominance of fathers/men in male youth sports, as well as the vast sums of money families commit to their son's sporting endeavours,[52] testifies to the importance placed upon the introduction (or imposition) of the field of sport to young, male minds. According to Coakley (2006: 157):

> Youth sports ... have since the 1950s provided fathers with a context in which they can be involved with their children without challenging dominant gender ideology ... Youth sports [is] a context that has been organized and controlled by men in ways that reaffirm traditional gender ideology ...

This is absolutely evident in the early childhoods of all the participants interviewed. Whilst Jack was enabled to reflect *more* critically upon his early introduction to sport (perhaps through his mother's independent stance and critical attention to his father and rejection of male-sport), all the participants (abused *and* non-abused) were raised in an environment which encouraged them to feel, from a very early age, that *the game* was definitely 'worth the candle.' In Sheldon's case, the complicity between mental structure and objective structure seems almost absolute from his earliest years. For Simon and Will, their school existence was punctuated with powerful symbols related to sporting achievement from which they derived their identity and status; it's what they 'danced for' (as Will put it) and it's what they desired above all else:

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[52] According to Coakley (2006: 159) in North America 'parents routinely spent between $5000 and $20,000 per year to support their sons' participation in hockey alone'.

> **Will**: Coaching - sport - was very serious, *very* serious. There wasn't much chuckling in sport, it was a serious business, you wanted to be the best, because what you wanted was praise from this man. We were all slaves to praise, you know. We were willing to do all sorts of things because we wanted praise from this man because it meant so much.

Perhaps here the 'game' is rugby or ice-hockey or figure-skating, but if it is, it is simultaneously the 'game' of boyhood – of masculinity. And this sport-boyhood-masculinity nexus is productive of corporeal practices – a *bodily hexis* (Bourdieu, 1977). This was a 'game' introduced in very explicit terms in the early childhoods of all the boys. They had a *feel for the game*, that is, not just the actual sport-game (rugby, etc.) but the *social* game of boyhood-sport; they were 'caught up in and by the game' so that it might be said there was an ontological complicity between their mental structures and the objective structures of the field. They had been taught explicitly and bodily to respect and obey (in) the field.

However, according to the participants (reflecting dominant public discourses of CSA and sex offenders), their abusers were both 'sick' and devious in that they carefully selected them: 'perpetrators know how to pick a victim' [Jack]. Importantly, however, all the participants recounted their childhoods, particularly their relationship with their fathers as hard, abusive, distant, deprived, abnormal and/or difficult. In doing so, as noted above (chapter five) I suggest they are indicating, in accord with dominant narratives, that their 'difficult' childhood circumstances and problematic paternal relations, made them vulnerable, perhaps especially so, to abuse. Thus, Etherington (1995: 230) states 'children who are identified by abusers as emotionally deprived or

in need of adult attention and care are most likely to be singled out for such attention'; and Brackenridge (2001: 106) states: 'the most willing victims are likely to be those who ... lack self-confidence.'

Alternatively, rather than claiming that perpetrators are able to cleverly identify and select ideal ('weak') victims, the claim here is that an adult male, characterised by the sport *illusio*, whose psychological structures are structured according to the objective field of male-sports - an *agent* of the field - implicitly understands (has a 'feel' for) the fact that a sportsboy is *also* defined by the sport *illusio*, that is, captivated by the game. It is through this *illusio* that the man understands and comprehends the boy. Regardless of his personal/emotional background or psychological 'state', according to the 'durably installed dispositions' (inculcated through his sustained exposure to the tenets of the field) of organised male-sport - that is, through what I refer to here as the *athleticist habitus* - the boy's complicity is not so much secured, as intuitively comprehended. In this account the perpetrator is neither imbued with an especially devious (criminally astute) psychological capacity to identify vulnerable children, nor is the child-victim designated as emotionally impoverished or especially psychologically vulnerable – that is, pathologically pre-disposed, in contrast to any other child.

Thus, whilst the narratives the men told regarding their difficult father-son relationships are important (indeed I have illustrated their feelings about such matters at length), these were not neglected, unloved children or (especially) unhappy children. They cannot reasonably be described as abnormally

'emotionally deprived' or intellectually deficient. In fact, in many ways these were all *relatively* privileged children who appear to have had well developed cognitive, social and physical capacities. They were, however, distinguished by their 'love' of, and immersion in, organised male-sport.

> **Sheldon**: Most kids are strapping on a pair of skates shortly after they learn to walk, and Troy and I were no exception. In fact, most of my earliest memories seem to occur on a long, white ice surface. My parents brought me to one of the outdoor rinks when I was two years old (Kennedy, 2006: 11).

From early in life, the masculinist game of sport had been introduced to their minds and prioritised in their boyhood. Unsurprisingly, they had invested in it to the extent that, it might be said, they resembled it.

Investment and Dis-investment

Therefore, as boys, at some point, they all had a trenchant belief in 'sport'. As Bourdieu states:

> *Illusio* is thus ... the fact of being invested, of investing in the stakes existing in a certain game, through the effect of competition, and which only exist for people who, being caught up in that game and possessing the dispositions to recognize the stakes at play, are ready to die for the stakes ... (Bourdieu, 1998: 77).

Boys abused in sport have been drilled, not only in the technical aspects of their sport, but also to recognise the stakes of the game in which they are caught up:

> **Will**: What was coaching like? *Serious*! No fun. But you see if you *made it* - all very worthwhile, all very hard work, all very diligent. You know - 'Scrum here', bang, 'there's a ball over there', whistle would blow when you made your ruck to get over to the ball they were standing next to, then they were off to another one. Three-quarters had to form up, we had to pass properly ... And if you fucked up he'd put you through circuits, circuit training. So you knew if you played crap – to play well and lose was *ok* - to play badly and lose, you were put through the mill, it was *hell*.

Anyone who has played sport competitively, regardless of level, will recognise this account. To profess a 'love' for the game, is the staple diet of any serious sportsman (or woman); watch or read just about any interview with (even autobiography of) an elite sportsperson. To speak out, or act, against the game would be to 'crack the game asunder,' to disregard or discard the stakes of the game (and risk the fall-out this would entail – not least in financial terms). This is close to impossible for the boy characterised by the *athleticist habitus* – a boy who has been taught to recognise the stakes of the game and is ready to die for the stakes. That is, it simply would not occur to him to do such a thing, such is the manner in which the game has been introduced to his mind – such is the sport *illusio*:

> **Sheldon**: I was alone in a strange place with a strange man who held the keys to the world that I had wanted to be part of since I was a little kid. He was a man who I'd been told to look up to and obey.

For this reason, boys sexually abused in sport are only able to speak of their experiences, if at all, many years after the abuse[53] – that is, once they are able to recognise that the game is (and was) *not* 'worth the candle'; thus,

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[53] 27 years is the average duration between abuse and disclosure for males (Spiegel, 2003).

'when the adjustment between habitus and field is broken increased possibilities may arise for critical reflection on previously habituated forms of action' (Adkins, 2004: 196). Therefore, once they are no longer singularly or overwhelmingly characterised by this habitus and thus an echanted relation to the game (the sport *illusio)*, critical reflection becomes more possible. No doubt for many this never occurs, and even so this disjuncture or disinvestment, could only be regarded as a potential *pre*-condition that would permit the *possibility* of talking about one's experiences, but far from a cause-effect relation. Other fields, only relatively autonomous, also have a stake in any individual habitus (not least the 'structuring structure' of gender – that is, masculinity and masculinist logic) (Bourdieu, 1977).

As already noted, the *game* of male-sport cannot be divorced from the *game* of gender and masculinity (or at least only artificially so), which also incorporates the *game* of boyhood. In this way, all participants demonstrated, to varying degrees, a reflexive critique towards the hyper-masculine culture of organised male-sport – that is to say, it is possible that for all these men, to some degree, and possibly because of their experiences of sexual subjection, the game is no longer worth the candle:

> **Sheldon**: See, I think there's a myth – the rugby clubs, the soccer clubs, the hockey clubs, whatever – 'we're fuckin tough man, we're a team,' and you know what? They're fuckin not tough. It's a lot more tough to fuckin talk about your feelings, right, than it is to just blow it off and go for a beer and talk about whether it's going to sunshine or rain ... So when I look at hockey and stuff like that I go 'you fuckin bunch of fuckin pussies ... you guys have no idea what fuckin tough is.' It's the gang mentality, it's this ... like [mimicked aggression] 'one do all and all do one'. It's like the lead cow with the bell, 'ding, ding, ding', right. Like

the coach gets off the bus and the rest of the guys – durrr? ... Have they ever had to think for themselves?

This perspective is in stark contrast to participants in this study who do not identify as having experienced sexual abuse (see below).

Arguably, for Jack, the immersion (investment) into the field of organised sport came later in his childhood than for Will, Sheldon or Simon, largely because of his mother's critical perspective on masculinist pursuits and her close relationship with her son, but also because of his early lack of aptitude:

> **Jack**: I wanted to play sport that I did on my own. I found organized group sport stupid because it was not logical to me. It made no sense to be forced into something that didn't have an equal outcome for all the players. There was always the one person who was the star of the show and since I was not capable and too fat, I was not fast enough to play in those hot slots ... I never understood why a bunch of people would run around chasing a ball back and forth. Nothing comes out of it and one has to rely on others to be successful. I feel the same way today.

However, his father's ever-present masculinist ideology or logic, and over-bearing desire to fully initiate him, from a very young age, into traditional team sports such as rugby, and Jack's attempts to submit to, or fulfil, his father's desires, cannot and should not be ignored.

So despite his early school experiences of being ostracised from the 'cool crowd' for his reticence towards sport (not to mention being bullied/assaulted within a sports-related context) – a disposition that doubtless lay at the heart of his detached and critical perspective on the hyper-masculine culture of

organised team-sports, such as rugby and hockey – as soon as Jack identified a sport through which he could attain a previously elusive (masculinist) status, he quickly became thoroughly immersed in it. It became nothing less than his 'destiny.' Interestingly then, this immersion in the field coincides with his sexual subjection by a 'sexual predator.' It might be said that at *this* point he becomes vulnerable to such a person.

For Sheldon, an outstanding young athlete, there was no way of articulating his desire to follow his father into farming in a convincing fashion. Despite having been sexually abused by Graham James prior to leaving home (whilst on 'camp'), when offered the 'opportunity' of joining James again, to develop his hockey career, despite his trauma about what had already happened, he simply did not have the vocabulary to say 'no' – that is, it would have been unthinkable for him to refuse such an opportunity: 'I was supposed to be the next David Beckham right, and so how does a guy quit, how do I just up and quit sport?' Such a potentially straightforward action simply did not exist for Sheldon. As noted in the previous chapter, the narrative of sport constructs a context whereby victimhood is, and must be, anathema to the sportsboy and this sport-gender double-bind is doubtless at the heart of the absence from public discourse of male-athlete narratives of sexual abuse.

According to Bourdieu (1998) 'knowledge' presents a potential source for social agents to resist the force of 'social games' but he argues that this is far from a simple process: 'one does not free oneself through a simple conversion of consciousness' (Bourdieu, 1998: 79).Where children are concerned this is

surely an even more complex process and where the child is constructed or labelled as (and aspires to be) an 'elite athlete' it is clear that their (new) identity demands that they be 'an athlete' and nothing more. That is, it is not simply the case that the child desires to *be* an athlete, rather, they have been explicitly depicted, often from a very young age, *as* 'an athlete' and this imposed identity (and status symbol) requires considerable maintenance. This is made abundantly clear from recent 'evidence,' influential within UK sport at least, that claims 10,000 hours of practice are required to reach professional/elite status (Balyi and Hamilton, 2004; Gladwell, 2009). Thus, according to Malcolm Gladwell 'the tennis prodigy who starts playing at six is playing in Wimbledon at 16 or 17' (*Daily Mail*, 2008).

Developing (Talent) a 'Feel for the Game'

The *Long-Term Athlete Development* programme (LTAD) noted above, has been widely applied across UK sport. Calling upon a Nobel Laureate as well as various scientific (psychological) research, Balyi and Hamilton (2004) argue that to excel in anything requires three hours of practice a day for ten years and this is nothing less than 'a rule.' Hence, in a recent position statement on 'strength training for young rugby players,' the *Rugby Football Union* state: 'research has concluded that it takes eight to twelve years (10,000 hours) of deliberate practice for a talented athlete to reach elite level' (RFU, n.d.). In swimming, Richard Gordon, *Amateur Swimming Association* (ASA) 'Coaching and Talent Development Co-ordinator', states 'scientific research has identified that it takes at least 10 years, or 10,000 hours for

talented athletes to achieve sporting excellence. There are no short cuts!' (*ASA*, 2009). Therefore, *LTAD* dictates that the most promising children should be committing between '12-24 hours per week in water' plus '2-3 hours land work' (*ASA*, 2009) at age 11 for females and 12 for males. Therefore, the *ASA* recommend nearly four hours per day engagement in swimming through the high school years. In a separate document on the *ASA* website (see ASA, 2009) Bill Sweetenham (ex-British 'National Performance Director') in a document titled 'Break Point Volume') states:

> The ability to absorb and adapt to training is largely acquired during the 'learn to train' stages [11-14 for girls, 12-15 for boys] of one's career ... up to and through the maturation years, quantity counts more than quality …

He goes on to say 'the age of an athlete is perhaps the least considered factor in advancing athletes from one training squad to another.'

Unsurprisingly, given the highly organised efforts made to shape their minds to the interests of the field (exemplified in the *LTAD*) they have an acculturated comprehension of these interests, they have 'a feel for the game.' Consider the comments of a *Super League* Youth Development Manager:

> I think you can develop that ['toughness']. I think you can develop it. Some people are born with it, you know possibly the social environment and the background of the individual plays a part in that. But you *can* develop toughness. How far you can develop it I'm not so sure. A lot of it is in the preparation, leading in to a game and obviously the pre-season and how hard you push them. You know if you push somebody to their limits in training, in pre-season, as well as give them enjoyment and understanding of what they're trying to achieve and a good skills base, you will see an improvement in them, even if they've got tendencies to be a little bit soft at times. You know the more you get hit usually the more you come back. If someone keeps hitting you and

hitting you and hitting you eventually you're going to snap and say 'right I've had enough of this, *I'm* gonna start doing it'. Again, that's in a controlled and disciplined manner.

MH*: Do you see kids going through that process?*

Yeah I see many, lots, lots. You know that come and they've got loose edges and they're a little bit soft and you get them into a disciplined – a *healthy*, disciplined environment – you know that's controlled and progressive, that will improve them. You tend to find they actually buy into that and they become better people and better players and their standards do improve.

Thus, the feel for the game that agents possess is far from accidental (or indeed natural). Great effort is exerted to condition or *discipline* the individual into the correct way of being – that is, narrowly defined boundaries (the 'breaking point' where 'training volume becomes a critical factor influencing long-term improvement' Sweetenham, nd) that are believed to be optimum for development to elite performance which itself forms the bedrock of youth sport, the engine that drives the machine. Those children, especially those that demonstrate 'talent', who are not able to realise such ways of being in a sufficiently sustained fashion, are considered a wasted opportunity. For example: 'Elite junior to elite senior is very poor, we have a massive drop-out rate and a large talent pool wasted' (*UK Athletics* Website, 2003, in Martindale, *et al.*, 2007).

The uncritical desire to 'produce winners' is evident here, indeed the inability to exploit (or 'develop,' obviously preferred by sports agencies) children's physical capacities for sporting ends (or sporting capital) is something of a pre-occupation (at least) within the UK, and increasing volumes of resources and effort are poured into the production of elite athletes and the search for a

magic formula that will turn (in the most efficient manner) physically capable - 'talented' - young people into highly proficient sport performers. Of course the precise ingredients of this formula are open to wide interpretation, yet much greater guidance now exists for coaches and development officers. Martindale *et al.* (2007: 189) for example, claim that (emerging from the literature on talent development) a key method in *effective* talent development is to 'de-emphasize winning as success at developmental stages.' Such perspectives have gained popularity amongst certain fields (particularly academic and government-related organisations) as it suggests a rather more egalitarian environment which fits into the wider 'children's agenda' (often with larger economic resources) with considerably more ease than the traditional, exclusive and exclusionary, emphasis on winning.

However, in a field which is organised on competition, a 'zero-sum' enterprise (Brackenridge, 2001), from the very youngest of competitors, I would suggest that we should be skeptical about whether such expert (academic) guidance accurately reflects childhood/youth sport in practice. In addition, it seems apparent that in the context of a 'Talent Development Environment' (TDE) the 'de-emphasis on winning' is a strategy designed to ultimately produce more winners - that is, to reduce 'waste' - rather than an initiative with (all) children's well-being at heart. Consider the following comment from Wayne, a rugby league professional, recently retired from the same *Super League* club as the above *Youth Development Manager*:

> I remember a training session and er - I wouldn't want to be quoted on this like - but a training session ... we'd won, and I was injured but sort of fifty per cent training – [I] couldn't play, I was nowhere near being

able to play - and had to step into a training session because drug testers arrived at the stadium and they [coaches] said, 'listen if anyone's taken anything, testers are here, get yourself off to rehab and we'll put a squad in who's here'. And I think out of a squad of twenty-five there was like twelve of us still there ... and it's like fuck … It's rife mate, it's like - they get no knowledge, so-called, other than a notice period of 'right we've arrived, where are the lads training?' and 'we want a list of who's training'. So literally someone comes in the changing room, 'listen testers are here, get yourself off now if you can't be tested and we'll put the names forward of the people that can' ... Cos your players who disappear from drugs tests are your high profile, highly paid players, whereas you've got younger lads and general people there who think 'I'm fuckin working my plums off here and whenever a drug tester turns up you fuck-off and the club do nothing about it. You've fucked off because you know you're gonna fail your test but the club aren't fining you, they're not making an example of you, and the lads all know you're taking drugs.' After a game there's nothing you can do, even though I've seen one lad fake concussion. And I've been so against it. Cos it's not just the performance enhancing it's the social drugs.

It is clear that, in organised male-sport, the ends are far more important than the means, demonstrated here in explicit fashion by the reactions of club officials to a 'surprise' visit from the *Rugby Football League* drug-testing authorities at one *Super League* club with an extensive engagement in youth development. As McNamee (2008: 205) argues, the global community of elite sport has 'an interest in surpassing limits' and this interest is prioritized well above the potential 'unmooring of ethical ends.'

Those with responsibility for 'developing children' in sport are extolled to 'develop [the child's] intrinsic motivation and personal commitment to process' as a way of generating an 'effective TDE' (Martindale *et al*. (2007: 189). Sport organisations do not want children to 'drop-out', especially 'talented' children. This is not new, however, it seems it is no longer sufficient for sports agencies and personnel to provide technical expertise in their sport(s) and the

resources required for participation; those with responsibility for developing talent, perhaps an implicit obligation of everyone within children's sport, are now also required to engender within children a greater 'personal commitment' to 'the process'. This 'personal commitment' (enshrined formally in the 'scientific' notion of '10,000 hours') is explicitly part of a strategy to reduce the numbers dropping-out of sport and, in addition, to increase the numbers likely to turn into elite performers.

To use rather different language, it is a strategy to bring the child (athlete) cognitively (or emotionally) closer to *the field* – to believe in 'the process', to be committed to it, 'long-term,' and thus to the field. Within this acculturated comprehension of the field, that is, within the boys' embodiment of the field (be it rugby, hockey or whatever), resides their obedience and their submission, or rather their 'immediate adherence'. Thus, according to Bourdieu (1998: 109):

> In order for intergenerational exchanges to continue despite everything, the logic of debt as recognition must also intervene and a feeling of obligation or gratitude must be constituted. Relations between generations are one of the sites *par excellence* of the transfiguration of the recognition of debt into recognition, filial devotion, love.

Sport, since its inception, has always been a (non-familial but paternalist) site of intergenerational 'filial devotion' and 'love' amongst males where the initiated (adult males) have constructed certain practices (or rites) as central to the achievement of status (recognition) for the un-initiated (boys). There have, thus, always been large numbers of young males committed to *the process*. However, with the persistent and growing emphasis on elite

performance and increasingly 'scientific' investigations into the field, it is now apparently well-documented that early success is a weak indicator of later elite performance (Martindale *et al.*, 2007). Hence, it now seems that progressive thinkers amongst those interested in 'youth development' and 'talent development' in sport, alongside the realisation that many young males can be turned-off ('lost to') sport, through failure, rejection and exclusion, are now focusing upon increasing the (pyramid) base in order to elevate the pinnacle. Thus, winning should be 'de-emphasized' in order that more young males might come to believe in 'the process' – a process or 'game' that is in fact entirely centred on a logic of (masculinist) conquest (Burstyn, 1999; Pronger, 1999).

Thus, in the contemporary drive towards a 'scientific' evidence-base for all aspects of sport in an increasingly professionalised environment, it seems likely that increasing numbers of children will be recruited and retained in sport lest 'those with potential [are] missed and deprived of opportunities' (Martindale *et al.*, 2007: 194), in the hope that there will be less waste and more (elite) product. That is, that their physical capacities will be exploited and commodified more efficiently for elite/international sporting success. Consider the comments of 'expert talent developer[s]' with 'a record of success in the development (from a maximum age of 16) to elite status of athletes':

> … we try to take a more long-term approach to keep them in the sport longer.

> When dealing with a young person you are laying the foundation both physically and mentally for them to take on the world for the rest of their life. We look to produce a senior international player if they have the ability. If not, the aim and objective is to get them to be competent

enough that they can join a club, the senior part of a club, and enjoy the 'sport' for the rest of their life. And that's just as worthy an aim (Martindale *et al.*, 2007: 194).

There is, then, a determined and organised strategy to produce sportspeople, that is, agents who, even if they are not capable of competing at the elite level, will remain in the game, 'enjoy' the game, for the full duration of their lives. In rejecting its exclusionary history, through the promotion (euphemisation) of sport as an ambivalent, non-ideological opportunity for fun and enjoyment, sport may considerably expand its capacity to enthral children and turn them into 'athletes.'

According to Bourdieu (1998: 79) 'agents well-adjusted to the game are possessed by the game and doubtless all the more so the better they master it.' This perhaps speaks directly to Brackenridge and Kirby's (1997) 'Stage of Imminent Achievement' (SIA) whereby 'there is a higher risk of sexual abuse to an athlete ... just prior to the elite level' (Brackenridge, 2001: 117). Considerable resources are mobilised in the name of athleticism - finance, personal effort and technical/scientific expertise - are committed to enabling boys to master 'the game.' The suggestion here, however, is that the opposite occurs – it is the game that masters the boy. In asking or requiring the boy who aspires to elite status to train for 3 hours-a-day for ten years, it is not unreasonable to suggest that these governing bodies of sport are asking children, not just to play their sport, but to 'become' their sport. Nor is it unlikely that those parents who want their children to have an advantage (however slight) over other children (competitors) will consider such general statements

to be a *minimum* requirement. The extent of this adjustment to the game is perhaps well-illustrated by Simon when he recounts being given the explicit opportunity to disclose his abuse:

> **Simon**: Anyway, so I walk in and my dad's there and I go 'oh my god what's going on here?' … 'oh, I need to talk to you,' so we walked out ... and he said 'so did [abuser] ever interfere with you?' ... and without really much of a second thought I said 'no he never touched me.' So something had gone so wrong with my brain that I was prepared to defend the abuser against my own flesh and blood. And that makes no logical sense to anybody who hasn't been abused, but everybody who's been abused goes 'yeah I absolutely understand that.'

According to my account there was nothing wrong with Simon's brain, at least nothing that could not be explained by the hold that his adjustment to *the game* had on him. That is, through the investment he had made in the game and thus, it in him.

Gift Exchange

In addition to *Illusio* and *Investment* and central to Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence is 'gift exchange' (chapter two). According to Bourdieu (1998) the giving of a 'gift' is a social practice central to constructing and establishing relations of power where the gift creates an obligation to reciprocate. For Bourdieu (1998: 94):

> ... the initial act is an attack on the freedom of the one who receives it. It is threatening: it obligates one to reciprocate ... beyond the original gift; furthermore, it creates obligations, it is a way to possess, by creating people obliged to reciprocate.

Like *illusio*, Bourdieu's insight enables critical observation of cultural fields so that the construction of relations of power can be observed within the taken-for-granted, micro-practices of 'normal' activity, that which 'goes without saying.' It offers the opportunity to understand relations of power between adults and children, not simply as a fixed value (capital), or as large-scale social forces, but also as a persistent engagement *in practice*, as alive within the normal, unremarkable exchanges of everyday cultural practice, 'in what men do' (Cowburn, 2005; Hearn, 2004).

Bourdieu provides a critical perspective with which to understand adult-child, man-boy relations. He offers analytical concepts that can be applied to children's engagement in sport – a practice (for boys at least) almost wholly constituted and facilitated by men. This allows for a problematisation of man-boy relations in sport where boys find themselves in a deeply obliged state simply by virtue of their engagement in the field. Sport is constituted as a gift, a culturally valuable gift, and increasingly so the deeper the nature of the engagement – the stronger the *illusio*.

Therefore, the more engaged/invested a child is, the greater the obligation. In other words, sport constructs the child in an obliged state. The gift of sport must be repaid and this is well understood as social agents are 'immersed from childhood in a universe where gift exchange is socially instituted in dispositions and beliefs' (Bourdieu, 1998: 95). Therefore, it can be observed that the provision of physical activity through the medium of 'sport,' whilst perhaps providing children with an opportunity for physical self-expression,

imposes very specific margins upon the range of that expression (Shogan, 1999). Therefore, rather than an endeavour that encourages creativity and autonomy, sport places very specific demands (prohibitions) upon children. Thus, the correct modes of physical skill are instituted by adults who will impart (give) such culturally valuable knowledge to those who are 'prepared to listen,' 'do as they are told' and dedicate themselves fully and without complaint. In other words, this is a conditional relation – conditional upon the boy embodying the disposition to obey without question, understanding that what they are being given can also be withdrawn, thus, to appreciate fully the value of the 'gift.'

This perhaps allows us to de-mystify social practice as 'such [gift] exchange shares none of the paradoxes that are made to emerge artificially when ... one relies on the logic of consciousness and the free choice of an isolated individual' (Bourdieu, 1998: 95). Thus, when Will says 'we were willing to do all manner of things' to secure praise in rugby training, it is possible to view this not as illogical or inconsistent with the notion of an athlete or rugby player, but as perfectly logical.

The 'logic of consciousness and free choice' underpins much contemporary thought on social behaviour, indeed, I would argue that this logic underpins the silence of victims of CSA. The well-acknowledged shame associated with CSA is the shame of inconsistency felt by many survivors; that is, the inconsistency of feeling appalled by the activities they engaged in (or understanding that they *should* feel appalled) with the simultaneous

knowledge that they 'willingly' went along with it, even enjoyed it or encouraged it. But as Bourdieu points out, such paradox *only* emerges when 'one relies on the logic of consciousness' as it rests on the notion that they were *free* to decide *not* to engage in the sexual encounters, or to disclose their predicament - as though they really could have just walked away from it, or as though they really could have just told someone (an adult) about it – clearly they were physically able to, but obviously they could not; their cognitive structures resembled the objective structures - the field - thus, they were intrinsically obligated not to say anything through the 'ontological complicity' of habitus and field. As Will says, he did not have to be told not to say anything, it was 'understood.' To claim no more than that they were coerced (by a deviant adult) because of their relative powerlessness (childhood status) is insubstantial and strengthens pathological arguments.

The childhood histories of the recently retired rugby league professionals who participated in this study are littered with references to those who assisted them – teachers, fathers, scouts, coaches – men who *gave* them a chance in rugby league. We can only speculate at the effect of each instance of giving in the boys life, but it would not seem unreasonable to assume that with each 'gift' the boy was drawn further and further into the culture of the field and the debt of those field agents that gave so generously. With each further descent into the field, perhaps very tangibly represented by the extrinsic rewards that youth sport is so visibly and ritually adorned (trials, representative honours, trophies, *etc.*), so his habitus is shaped increasingly according to the structures of the field, until he is truly 'possessed by the game,' not just in debt

to the game but *of* the game - 'the field made flesh'. Thus, a social agent, from childhood, comprehends and obeys intuitively, or rather *embodies* 'the logic of reciprocity.' The gift (however it is constituted) is something to be given back. Therefore, contrary to popular notions of adult-child relations in sport as wholly beneficial to the child (albeit with the occasional exception of a 'bad man') the adult-child-sport exchange can be viewed as 'an act of giving beyond the possibilities of return, which puts the receiver in an obliged and dominated state' (Bourdieu, 1998: 100).

Sport is, then, (like other fields) an exchange of symbolic goods and this is very evident within childhood/youth sport. However, for Bourdieu (1998: 100) 'the dominated must apply to the acts of the dominant (and to all of their being) structures of perception which are the same as those the dominant use to produce those acts.' It may be argued then that the 'structures of perception' of the man and the child are ultimately, not identical, but rather 'of a kind,' and that all agents (particularly - like Sheldon, Will, Jack and Simon - those *immersed*) in the field of organised male-sport emerge and act with structures of perception that are intuitively connected to each other, 'wired' in the same way, cognitively in-tune. That is, whilst children are social agents capable of shaping the world around them (James and James, 2004) it might be said that their developing cognitive capacities are structured according to the interests dominant in the field. Thus, in their sexual subjection, the cognitive capacities boys have at their disposal have been determinedly structured by a particular logic – one which the men who abuse them might be said to perfectly represent.

Alchemy and Enchantment

Bourdieu uses the term 'alchemy' to refer to an enchanted relation which masks or 'transforms the truth of relations of domination'. If nothing else there is certainly an enchantment with sport in contemporary society and as Bourdieu (1998: 101) argues, for this enchantment to work 'it must be sustained by the entire social structure, therefore, by the dispositions produced by that social structure.' I argue then that sport is a cultural site in which children are perpetually dominated and exploited but that this goes thoroughly unacknowledged within a society for which sport resides in an enchanted relation.[54] In instances where a boy is sexually violated yet the perpetrator is rarely faced with the consequences of his actions because of the silence (-ing) of the victim and the complicity of other adults who refuse to believe or act upon what they observe (or are told) – effectively pretending not to see – alchemy and enchantment are perhaps very accurate descriptors. But the key point is that this enchanted relation could not persist except through the sustenance provided by the entire system. Bourdieu (1998: 102) elaborates on this mechanism:

> One of the effects of symbolic violence is the transfiguration of relations of domination and submission into affective relations, the transformation of power into charisma or into the charm suited to evoke affective enchantment ... The acknowledgment of debt becomes recognition, a durable feeling toward the author of the generous act,

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[54] This enchantment might also be considered in relation to organised religion, particularly given the extent of the covering-up of CSA in the Catholic Church reported recently (Isely and Isely, 1990; The Murphy Report, 2009).

which can extend to affection or love, as can be seen particularly well in relations between generations.

It may be argued, that 'youth sport' is an ideal vehicle for this transfiguration of relations of domination and transformation of power. Ideal in the sense that a moral judgment is built-in to the coach-athlete/man-boy relation or exchange, indeed, the very terms 'sportsman' and 'athlete' are *a priori* moral designations ('he's a good sport', 'he's *very* athletic'). Even in the professionalised (paid) role of coach, teacher or development officer there is implicit the act of 'giving', of generosity. In the case of (rugby league) volunteers (below), 'we're here for the kids' was a common refrain amongst focus group participants. In this regard, consider the recollections of this *Super League* youth development manager on how he first began his post-playing career in rugby coaching:

> It [coaching amateur rugby league] were a great challenge. The social environment around the club was very tough and was quite intimidating as well, but once I got to know all the lads I actually really enjoyed coaching them and putting some *good values* in and around the club. You know, discipline has always been at the top of my list, discipline and being as honest as you can and preparing for games and trying to have a decent lifestyle as well, even at amateur level, I don't see why you shouldn't be as close to the professional game as possible ... I get a lot of pleasure watching young men develop into talented rugby players and improve as people and hopefully get an enjoyable livelihood as well. And I value people as well and I think if you value people and you want people to achieve something then you'll always enjoy what you're doing.

But 'the gift' (Mauss, 1954[1990]) of sport (skill, techniques, strategy, team selection, family/fraternity, etc.) is something which has great importance for the boy in terms of capital (status and identity) (Coakley, 2006; Messner, 2009) and thus is immediately acknowledged as such, indeed perhaps as a

gift beyond all others, 'the keys to the kingdom' [Sheldon] so that, despite the situation they faced, the boys were nevertheless appreciative of what their relationship with their abusers could offer:

> **Simon**: I was helpless … but one side of me was quite happy ... I had good status at the school - I was in the *Colts*, and I was in the *First Fifteen* and …

Thus 'symbolic violence is instituted through the adherence that the dominated cannot fail to grant the dominant (and therefore to the domination)' (Bourdieu, 2001: 35) and is 'exercised only through an act of knowledge and practical recognition which takes place below the level of the consciousness and will' (Bourdieu, 2001: 42). Bourdieu insists that social analysis, to understand domination, must pay attention to the symbolic effects of social practice and the (symbolic) capital accrued by social agents within those instituted forms. He argues that it is particularly important to recognise where the unexceptional is transformed into something symbolically powerful. According to Bourdieu (1998: 102):

> Symbolic capital is an ordinary property (physical strength, wealth, warlike valor, etc.) which, perceived by social agents endowed with the categories of perception and appreciation permitting them to perceive, know and recognize it, becomes symbolically efficient, like a veritable magical power.

Symbolic capital, then, can be mobilised to observe the organisation and practice of sport. Titles such as 'coach,' 'captain' 'sportsman' and 'athlete' but also 'fly-half,' 'centre-forward,' and 'quarter-back' are terms heavily laden with symbolic capital, capital accrued instantaneously (almost magically) by those adopting such roles and permitting them to 'exert symbolic effects' through,

for example, peer group status as well the ability to impose 'good values' and discipline.

Recognition of this process can perhaps be detected amongst the participants' reflections: 'there was that whole thing of *mindlessly* complying [in rugby]' [Simon]. Ordinary properties - such as an ability to perform certain sports skills to a proficient level (and the symbolic ('professionalised') credentials that support them, e.g. coaching awards) or the ability to teach such skills, and implement strategies that result in (team or individual) success in sport - when perceived by others endowed with the 'durably installed dispositions' to value such features, are indeed transformed through a kind of social alchemy into a 'magical power.' What could be more ordinary than say throwing, hitting or kicking a ball, even proficiently? What could be more ordinary than teaching children how to knock each other down or explaining the 'off-side' rule? Yet it is interesting to note, in the participants' narratives, their references to the *charismatic* nature of their abusers:

> **Sheldon**: ... he was known as a hot-headed coach who understood the game and knew how to motivate his players and improve their skills. He could quote Shakespeare and curse the players and refs with the best of them ... he exuded confidence. He had a funny and interesting way of saying things that you'd heard a thousand times before so that you thought about them in a new way. He was very popular with the players and staff ... (Kennedy, 2006: 31).

> **Simon**: [he] was an *extravagant* man – he used to get the stars of the day – you know the rugby internationals – to come to our *Sevens'* competitions and things like that. He was always doing things in larger than life, grandiose sort of way ... a lot of us tried to excel in the sport, and in the training, and in the coaching and in the whole thing, to be more and more attractive to our abusers ... when you did something good, you did a good tackle or something, and [abuser] would give you

a smile or pat you on the back, it would be like 'oh my god' that's just like, that thing.

Again, I do not intend to indicate an offender profile, but victims of CSA talk of the inexplicable hold that their abusers had over them and often, almost as a footnote, reaffirm that despite everything, he really *was* a very good coach/teacher. 'Why didn't I say something?' is perhaps a perpetual question of the adult survivor; they knew they could have, yet when they say, 'I just couldn't,' this is in fact exactly the point – 'saying something' was theoretically possible, yet *literally* impossible. This is the symbolic violence - a kind of magic - of which Bourdieu speaks, the symbolic violence that, of course, permits very real violence and abuse (not least sexual) on generation after generation of children. According to Bourdieu (2001: 39):

> It is quite illusory to believe that symbolic violence can be overcome with the weapons of consciousness and will alone ... because the effect and conditions of its efficacy are durably and deeply embedded in the body in the form of dispositions. This is seen, in particular, in the case of relations of kinship and all relations built on that model, in which these durable inclinations of the socialized body are expressed and experienced in the logic of feeling (filial love, fraternal love, etc.) or duty, which are often merged in the experience of respect and devotion ...

Brackenridge (2001) then likens sport abuse to 'virtual incest' due to the familial role that sport often plays in the lives of 'promising' athletes. Therefore, 'symbolic violence acts ... to maintain a relation of domination ... it works when subjective structures – the habitus – and objective structures are in accord with each other' (Krais, 1993: 172).

The young male athlete, successful and ambitious, is perhaps a perfect exemplar of accord between subjective and objective structures. Indeed, it

might be argued that the objective of sport (any sport) is singular - to turn the child into an athlete/player – and that this single, coherent, totalising objective has the effect of rendering the child in a dominated state by providing him with the cognitive capacity to do little else other than apply the categories of the dominant. According to Bourdieu (1998: 103):

> Symbolic violence is the violence which extorts submission, which is not perceived as such, based on 'collective expectations' or socially inculcated beliefs ... on a theory of the production of belief, of the work of socialization necessary to produce agents endowed with the schemes of perception and appreciation that will permit them to perceive and obey the injunctions inscribed in a situation or discourse ... the belief I am describing is not an explicit belief, possessed explicitly as such in relation to a possibility of non-belief, but rather an *immediate adherence* ... achieved when the mental structures of the one to whom the injunction is addressed are in accordance with the structures inscribed in the injunction addressed to him. In this case, one says that it went without saying, that there was nothing else to do [my emphasis]

In such a fashion we may be able to understand the responses of men subjected to sexual abuse as a boy – 'what *could* I do'?; 'I *couldn't* tell anyone' 'I felt helpless' [Simon].

> **MH**: *Were you told not to say anything?*
> **Bill**: *No, never!* Never, never. That was never, ever suggested. He knew perfectly well I wasn't going to say anything.

Boyhood-sport extorts the submission, complicity and silence of young males to their own exploitation. Of course the participants in this study *could* have done/said something. That is, if we considered that social agents (including children) operate from the basis of unshackled, autonomous rationality. This is not the argument here. Did they freely choose *not* to speak out? Of course not, yet neither were they, nor should they be (theoretically) reduced to inertia,

somehow non-cognisant of the events engulfing them. As Simon stated: 'He put me in a situation where I knew I was doing something profoundly wrong. That didn't escape me.' Undoubtedly, they acted in myriad ways: to 'manage' their abuse and their abuser – to calm them, to appease them, to resist and challenge them, to please them, to reduce the impact on others (especially parents), to maintain the status quo. Indeed, the scale of the challenges facing them meant that they had to bring all their powers of ingenuity, creativity and thought to bear on their action.

They did act, they were agents in this encounter and they could have acted differently. Their complicity was coerced – but not simply through the persuasive efforts of a criminal/evil/'sick' individual, but through their initiation and training in the field of athleticism - it was virtually preordained:

> **Simon**: ... there was kind of a - what could be better than being a rugby hero? It's literally a *Faustian Pact*. But you have to sign you know, it's not a choice, you have to sign ...

Ordination is both an entry requirement and a condition of the boy's sustained engagement in the symbolic economy (the brotherhood) of organised male-sport. Thus, all the participants, whilst perhaps articulating a notion that they were somehow *likely* candidates for abuse (because of parental relations or family background), refer to the fact, or strong likelihood, that their abusers subjected many other boys to the same experience. That is, they were, in fact, *not* distinct, with the exception that they occupied a deeply enchanted relation to the field, characterised here by the notion of *athleticist habitus*. Therefore, what happened to these boys should be considered examples (albeit perhaps

extreme) of the effect of the symbolic violence perpetrated by the field of male-sport on the male-child.

Summary

According to Bourdieu (1998: 111):

> Soft relations of exploitation only work if they are soft. They are relations of symbolic violence which can only be established with the complicity of those who suffer from it, like intradomestic relations. The dominated collaborate in their own exploitation through affection or admiration.

As an aside, I feel that the participants in this study – Sheldon, Will, Simon and Jack – will all recognise their childhood situation in this passage. However, it is through these necessarily 'soft relations of exploitation' – perhaps epitomised in the 'it's all for the kids' discourse - that belies a highly organised economy driven to 'develop' talent, underpinned by a seemingly insatiable desire for elite success regardless of costs to health or well-being. Thus, boys are persistently urged, increasingly, not only to enter sport, to *play* sport, but to become *sports-like* – to become sportsmen, athletes; to embody sport, to believe in it, to *be it*.

This is the symbolic violence perpetrated through 'youth-sport.' In the increasing intensity of the urging of children into sport on the basis of well-worn (moralising) claims about character, physicality and health (Coakley, 2006) they are quickly subjected to a field disposed to searching out and exploiting their 'talent' (their bodies) in a relentless pursuit of 'success' and which in doing so, not only requires of them that they engage in sports

practice, but that they embody the 'values of sport', in short, instrumentalism and masculinism; in other words, that they become the field – that they are *the field made flesh* – the *athleticist habitus*. Therefore, the contemporary call to 'listen to children' and 'give children a voice' in sport (e.g. 'Child Power – Your Voice': *British Swimming* and the *ASA*, 2009) must be weighed against the field-forces and strategies that seek to homogenise the sportsboy/girl and reduce his/her capacity for critical thought. Therefore, in light of the sexual abuse of boys in sport, it is incumbent upon adults to ask: what capacity for autonomous and critical thought can the highly (relentlessly) trained child reasonably be expected to have developed towards the field which they resemble? Similarly, in the objectification, commodification and exploitation of children's bodies, and its demand that they embody the field, children are taught to relate to their own bodies in this way and to intuitively understand that they are objects to be used according to the demands of the agents of the field.

Through the sexual abuse of a child we can see very clearly the embodied nature of this complicity. Indeed, in organised sport it is perhaps more evident than any other field how children are trained to succumb physically to adult (male) authority – the sportsboy is trained rigorously and relentlessly, 'day-in day-out,' to submit his body utterly to the will of adult men. Bourdieu (1990b: 73) argues 'the body believes in what it plays at ... It does not represent what it performs, it does not memorize the past, it *enacts* the past, bringing it back to life. What is 'learned by body' is not something that one has, like knowledge

that can be brandished, but something that one is.' This is no doubt especially true for the child.

Boyhood in sport is about learning to push one's body beyond its normal limits, learning to cope with physical discomfort and corporeal pain, learning to see one's body as a tool to be exploited for ends that may principally serve others, to sacrifice oneself without complaint, at the behest of adult men and to learn the strategies of domination. This is the 'game' introduced to the minds of young boys and this is what the body believes in. Manhood in sport is simultaneously to execute this masculinist discourse, to assume responsibility for the boy in his entirety, not only his body and physicality, but his 'character,' his mode of thinking, his cognitive structures, 'body and soul' (Wacquant, 2004); this is the lived reality of - the reason or logic *immanent in* - the man-boy relation in organised sport.

In the hyper-masculine, ultra-instrumentalist world of organised male-sport, where children's bodies are valued hierarchically according to their execution of arbitrary physical skills, *all* things sexual are utterly denied whilst simultaneously constituting a 'rite oriented towards virilisation' (Bourdieu, 2001: 25). Thus, male-sport is an often erotic, sexualised environment that denies itself as such, and thus denies *de facto* the sexual objectification/fetishisation of children's bodies (see Brackenridge, 2001 on political denial of CSA in sport) – *it couldn't happen here because this is sport*. Yet central to the masculinist (and especially hyper-masculine) version of masculinity is an ideal of sexual promiscuity and entitlement, a *libido*

dominandi, that, quite naturally requires and inspires a *libido dominantis* and a 'fraternal love.' I will explore the field of male sport and its mechanisms in more detail in the final chapter.

In the following chapter, I will develop this argument and consider mechanisms through which the field denies its symbolic economy and reproduces itself in a manner that ensures children are perpetually recruited to its cause in order to secure the continuation of the field according to the (masculinist) interests of the dominant.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Reproducing the Field

In the previous chapters I set down my explanatory account of boyhood sexual subjection in sport. In this final chapter I will explore my thesis further by considering the broader socio-cultural and political context of organised sport in light of the notion of an *athleticist habitus* and symbolic violence. In particular, I will consider how sport as a field reproduces itself as a wholesome and virtuous activity through processes of denial and misrecognition (Bourdieu, 1998). I will argue that the *athleticist habitus* (the field made flesh) and its corollary, the *sports illusio* (an enchanted belief in the game) serves to facilitate a denial of the symbolic economy of sport – the logic of sport – and thus to deny the symbolic violence done to (male) children in its midst; a symbolic violence that facilitates, amongst other things, the sexual subjection of the male child. I will argue that the resulting 'misrecognition' is productive of a field with an untroubled representation of itself as a context and institution that operates in the best interests of children – a 'fact' perhaps only enhanced by its engagement with child protection/safeguarding agendas. Yet as one rugby league club representative, with training in and responsibility for child welfare, remarked on the introduction of child protection policy: 'I do feel this is a bit of a sledgehammer to crack a nut situation in rugby league' (Hartill and Prescott, 2007: 244).

A field operates to reproduce the interests which are the precondition of its functioning; therefore, it works to reproduce agents who embody the field and prioritise its interests. I will argue that the effect of this is an inability to see or acknowledge the actual conditions and logic that are characteristic of the boyhood-sport context and the persistent reproduction of conditions that support the field at the expense of the interests of children. The focus of this chapter, then, is to articulate, in a contextualised fashion, some general mechanisms of fields that operate to ensure their reproduction. I argue that the logic of sport embodied in the *athleticist habitus* – a logic that objectifies and commodifies children and socialises them towards an enchanted relation to the field – goes largely unchallenged. Therefore, I argue that organised male-sport is a socio-cultural field that operates to reproduce social conditions in a manner that ensures that the sexual abuse of children is a persistent and widespread male practice. In support of my argument I will present data from my empirical investigation into boyhood rugby league.

Denial and Misrecognition in Reproducing the Field

The overwhelming silence around sexual issues in organised male-sport is productive of a sexually charged environment (sexual storytelling, jokes, sexualised banter, sexualised rituals, *etc.*, see Curry, 1991, 1998; Messner and Sabo, 1994; Pronger, 1990; Young, 1999). Sex is simultaneously ever-present and utterly denied in dominant discourse where sport is resolutely about character development, teamwork, discipline, brotherhood,

responsibility, achievement, personal goals, health, etc. Indeed, organised sport is about anything (and everything) *but* sex. Despite decades of feminist and pro-feminist critique, advocacy and policy development, arguably, the hypermasculinist sports enterprise has never been stronger. Yet whilst (homophobic, misogynist, racist) sex-talk is central to the male changing-room/bar-room environment, such talk remains *within* sport – in this way the rules are clear: what happens in the dressing room/locker room stays there. The unwritten locker-room law of 'Omertà' prevails and to be a sports *man* is to understand this implicitly, to incorporate it and embody it; as one child protection officer at a rugby league junior club said, 'I don't think you tend to get issues like bullying and things like that cos it gets sorted in-house' (Hartill and Prescott, 2003). This is a code central to the *athleticist habitus*.

It is useful to consider Bourdieu's comments on 'the Church' in relation to such denial in sport. For Bourdieu (1998: 113) the contemporary social universe is characterised by 'the generalization of monetary exchanges [where] the maximization of profit has become the basis of most ordinary practices' so that all social agents implicitly or explicitly place a monetary value on their work or time. He argues that the 'Catholic Church [is an] enterprise with an economic dimension founded on the denial of the economy' so that those agents of the church (but not confined to the church) simultaneously play 'the religious game' by thoroughly rejecting any possibility of an association between the religious enterprise and the economic one (113). Although the forces of commercialism are evident in abundance within sport; nevertheless, where 'youth sport' is concerned, the 'sports game' might be considered in a similar

light. For Bourdieu this is not necessarily a disingenuous rejection. Agents in fact believe, bodily, in the games they 'play.' Instead, he argues:

> Here again we find the problem which is provoked by the making explicit of the truth of institutions (or fields) whose truth is the avoidance of rendering their truth explicit. Put more simply: rendering explicit brings about a destructive alteration when the entire logic of the universe rendered explicit rests on the taboo of rendering it explicit (Bourdieu, 1998: 113).

Adult-organised, youth/childhood/boyhood sport displays very clearly these characteristics. That is, it can be argued that the 'truth' of youth sport is the avoidance of rendering its truth explicit. From its inception sport has been constituted as an economy of symbolic goods constructed according to the (economic) interests of the dominant, most obviously in terms of class and gender as well as ethnicity. But this symbolic economy, fundamental to its endeavours has been, and must be, denied because the whole functioning of the field (the logic of that universe) rests on the denial of that truth and would risk radical, if not destructive, alteration if that truth were rendered explicit. Thus, is youth sport resolutely anchored in the discourse of public good – community cohesion, social inclusion, equality, health benefits, including psychological (e.g. increased confidence), crime reduction[55] – it is about children's *welfare* (thus Brackenridge *et al.*, 2007 refer to sport as the 'sixth social service').[56]

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[55] Not to mention international cooperation and peace in the form of the Olympic Games which seems to conveniently ignore the determined hierarchical ranking (medal tables) which is now so significant it determines a nation's perception of its own 'success' or 'failure' as well as determining future (funding) policy.

[56] All of which, it might be said, are brought together under the emergence, in recent years, of the charity event 'Sport Relief' (in the UK).

Therefore, the symbolic (and actual) violence done to children through rendering their bodies as objects, instruments and commodities to be trained in the pursuit of adult-generated goals is thoroughly denied, as is the highly sexualised (and sexist, misogynistic and homophobic) environment of the (male-) sports universe (Anderson, 2005; Brackenridge, 2002; Burstyn, 1999; Curry, 1991, 1998; Lenskyj, 1986; Pronger, 1990, 1999). In other words, the notion of an *athleticist habitus*, a deeply limited and prohibitive mode of masculine socialisation, constitutes a symbolic violence which must be persistently denied by the field and reconstituted as a public 'good.' Yet boys are initiated (at increasingly younger ages) within this athleticist frame. As the proud Thai-boxing coach of nine-year old Connor said, shortly after he had fought, and won, in a 'cage-fight': 'The earlier the better. Get them when they're young. Show me the boy at seven and I'll show you the man' (*Channel 4*, 2008a).

These achievement-performance goals are more accurately represented as symbolic capital which is accrued by adults in various ways through children's sports participation. Such capital is clearly manifest as both economic and cultural (*Channel 4* 2007, 2008a, 2009; Messner, 2009). As the father of another child boxer said: 'I always wanted to be the champ … but it's as good them saying it to my son' (*Channel 4*, 2008a). Thus, in the wake of *Lawn Tennis Association* coach Claire Lyte's 2007 conviction for sexually abusing a 13 year-old girl in her charge, Alan Jones, a successful tennis coach in the UK, observed:

> I don't think all these scandals will harm tennis' image, because what drives the sport is money. These scandals make no difference to making money. A lot of parents look to possibly making money from their children. That's the real scandal, that children are being denied a childhood. Children are pushed early, and often don't have the talent, but parents won't listen if you say that. There are graveyards out there full of children's childhoods. Parents put their children into the hands of these mentors, and too readily. They allow their kids to be mentally and physically bullied just to keep the dream alive of making it. Everyone is obsessed with making money. Money has corrupted tennis (Hodgkinson, 2007).

Such breaking of ranks within organised sport is relatively rare (albeit only to decry the faults of parents who are corrupting the (pure) game with their greed) yet helps to demonstrate that the role of the institution's of sport (*The Lawn Tennis Association* for example) is thus to perpetually work to deny such ideas.

Thus, according to the *LTA*'s website guide for parents (*LTA*, 2009) 'tennis provides opportunities to develop a healthy attitude towards oneself, opportunities to achieve and accomplish things, the potential to improve skills and develop relationships.' Nevertheless, in the context of this 'health/social benefits discourse' parents are quickly informed (on the same page) that 'competition is an important part of playing tennis,' and then (via a linked page) 'players of all ages and levels should compete just about every week.' This is typical of the largely taken-for-granted discourse around sport; that is, exactly *why* competition is an important part of playing tennis or why children 'of all ages should compete just about every week' goes unquestioned. This does more than hint at the performance principle at the heart of organised sport, but does so in the context of good, healthy, sociable activity with 'fun' serving almost as a mantra (most explicit in the *FUNdamental* stage aimed at young

children (6-9 years) in the *Long-Term Athlete Development Programme*, LTAD). Of course, what the *LTA really* means is that competition is an important (essential) part of becoming/being a tennis *player*, as opposed to someone who simply *plays at* the game of 'tennis.'

Euphemisation and the Logic of Volunteer Work

Thus, a 'structural double game' occurs – 'a double consciousness' (Bourdieu, 1998) - in which the economic and sex/gender dimensions of the symbolic economy of the male sports enterprise is 'denied as such through a systematic usage of euphemism' (Bourdieu, 1998: 115) so that a game of tennis becomes an 'opportunit[y] to develop a healthy attitude towards oneself.' Similarly, the English *Football Association* informs parents that they 'recognise' that 'involement [*sic*] in football can greatly influence the development of children, both in the football envirnment [*sic*] and in their overall lifestyles' (*The Football Association*, 2009a). Given that organised male football has long been the arena for adult male aggression and violence, not to mention sexism, racism, xenophobia and homophobia (to name a few negatives) we might reasonably ask about the nature of this influence in children's 'development.' Thus, by acts of euphemism, football authorities are able to distance (deny) such aspects of their sport and re-package (or market) it as, for example, the 'beautiful game,' (even 'the more beautiful game' in the case of *Euro2005* women's tournament) thus in rather more appealing (child/family friendly) terms.

The notion that at the heart of the 'game' is an *athleticist habitus* generative of a *libido dominandi* – a sexuality based on instrumentalism, domination and conquest and the fulfilment or realisation of oneself by the subtraction from others – is so far removed from the popular (and very powerful) discourse, narrative or script of organised male-sport, that it is inconceivable that such an argument would be considered. Thus, despite cases of high-profile sportsmen regularly exhibiting the key characteristics of this *athleticist libido* (e.g. Aldred, 2004; *BBC*, 2009c; *Daily Mail*, 2004; Fickling, 2004; O'Riordan and Wilson, 2005; Robinson, 1998) male-sport is continually represented in terms of a healthy and moral masculinity; the ideal man is an athlete, and if possible, a clean-shaven, clean-living, articulate one (e.g. Tiger Woods).

Yet for Bourdieu, this denial and misrecognition should not be regarded as a cynical act because 'agents believe in what they are doing and they do not accept the strict economic definition of their action and their function' (1998: 115), however:

> … to be able to do what one does by making people (and oneself) believe that one is not doing it, one must tell them (and oneself) that one is doing something other than what one is doing, one must do it while saying (to oneself and others) that one is not doing it, as if one were not doing it (Bourdieu, 1998: 115).

Therefore, whilst adult's (overwhelmingly, but not exclusively, men) train children to fight other children,[57] or whilst they teach them how to use their bodies as weapons to defeat other children (as is the case in the major

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[57] For example, see 'Siwatnoi Marshal Arts: Lil Dragons' for 4-6 year olds where 'you can arm your kids with confidence' and where they 'emphasize non-violent conflict resolution' (Siwatnoi, 2010).

sporting forms for males, see Messner, 1990, 1992) they must tell themselves and others that they are doing something very different, so that to all intents and purposes, they *are* doing something different. Hence, rugby union's 'core values' are 'teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline, and sportsmanship' (*RFU*, 2009).[58]

Like religious institutions, sport institutions 'work permanently, both practically and symbolically, to euphemise social relations, including relations of exploitation, by transfiguring them into relations of spiritual kinship ... [particularly] through the logic of volunteerism' (Bourdieu, 1998: 116). Thus, the *FA* (2009b) states: 'volunteers … make up the backbone of grassroots football' and their 'importance cannot be underestimated.' It is also perhaps worth noting the many agents of sport (paid and unpaid) who will sign off a communication 'yours in sport,' that is, the *family* (kinship and fraternity) of sport, a label of goodwill and honesty, and so 'exploitation is masked' as sport-acts are ends in themselves, necessarily moral ends, because sport is in the (best) interests of children.

Therefore, the field presents adults with the moral duty to organise 'youth sport.' Thus, the *FA* (*Volunteer News*) highlight the case of George, a 69 year old ex-miner 'who had dedicated over a decade's service to Blyth Town' his grandson's team, during which time 'the club has gone from just one team to

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[58] Coincidentally produced in the wake of 'blood-gate' where one of the sport's iconic figures (Dean Richards) was found guilty of instructing one of his ('Harlequins') players to bite on a blood capsule in the last minutes of a major cup game in order to fake a blood-injury so they could substitute him for a goal-kicker in an attempt to win the match. After the plan was discovered he then instructed his assistants to lie to a disciplinary panel to cover-up his involvement (see *BBC Sport*, 2009a).

24 teams, from boys' Under-6 to men's and girls' U10 to two women's teams' (The *FA*, 2006). Thus, (masculinist) virtue is secured through the association of an agent beyond reproach, in terms of age, occupation and (charitable) disposition: a kindly, mature yet solid (i.e. heterosexual) man who gives his time and labour freely to children (in need). Such images - strong, good men giving selflessly through the gift of sport - are prevalent within contemporary discourse.

It might be argued, then, that national organisations (e.g. governing bodies, *Sport England*, *Youth Sport Trust*) have a clear (economic) interest in engaging the maximum number of children, yet no interest in reflecting critically on the specific nature of that engagement. They thoroughly deny this aspect and represent themselves as wholesome advocates for children. When the *Youth Sport Trust's* website opening page explicitly directs readers to the *Sky Sports* website (sky.com) 'Living for Sport' which states: 'Sky Sports Living for Sport uses Sport to inspire all 11-16 year olds to be the best they can be. It helps improve health, develop self esteem, increase attainment and achievement and encourages young people to reach their full potential;' there is apparently no conflict of interest or questioning of such generalisations. Even if we accept at face-value the veracity of these claims, the positioning of this message above a large graphic of a 'wrestler' advertising the opportunity to 'win tickets for the family' to see 'Wrestlemania: Revenge Tour Raw' and the entitlement to fifteen *Sky Sports* t-shirts upon registration, perhaps places the whole enterprise in a different light (Sky Sports, 2010). As Morgan (1994:

129) argues, the 'steering media [of] money and power imbue practices with their own instrumental brand of rationality' and thereby defile them.

According to Bourdieu (1998: 118) 'we are thus dealing with enterprises which, functioning according to the logic of volunteer work and offering, have a considerable advantage in economic competition (among these advantages, the effect of the label.' So just as in religious enterprise 'Christian' or 'Vicar' has 'the value of a guarantee of quasi-domestic morality' (Bourdieu, 1998: 118) so the label 'sport' and 'sports coach' is similarly imbued with notions of those who give freely, of a charitable element that denotes a moral character grounded in the spirit of fraternity and selflessness. In a similar fashion 'sportsman' or 'athlete' speaks to endeavour, dedication, obedience, abstinence and bodily discipline, all of which denotes moral discipline and fortitude. Coakley (2006: 160) suggests that 'the achievements of children in an activity as visible and highly publicized as sports come to symbolize proof of one's moral worth as a parent. Talented child athletes, therefore, become valuable moral capital.'

According to Bourdieu (1998: 119):

> These objectively economic enterprises can only benefit from these advantages provided that the conditions of the misrecognition of their economic dimension are continually reproduced, that is, as long as agents succeed in believing and making others believe that their actions have no economic impact.

It might be argued, that like 'religious work,' sport work 'includes a considerable expenditure of energy aimed at converting activity with an

economic dimension into a sacred task' (Bourdieu, 1998: 119). Thus, sporting events are converted into seemingly sacred rituals, at the centre of which, in extending the religious metaphor, it might be said, is the pilgrimage, where hugely profitable rituals (e.g. *The Olympic Games*, the *FA Cup*; the *Challenge Cup* in rugby league; the *Ashes* in cricket; the *Six Nations* in rugby union, *etc.*) are imbued with the sanctity of the holy, and agents of the field are transformed into quasi-religious spiritual leaders (sometimes commanding the devotion of huge congregations or followers) whose wisdom must be sought and carefully considered.

The tools or strategies operationalised in this process of *misrecognition* would include the ritualised initiation ceremonies (formal and informal, explicit and implicit) prevalent in organised male-sport (especially team sports) where young initiates are endowed with a clear understanding of what that universe entails and what it means to be a part of it. Thus are rank and privilege bestowed – to be 'in the club', 'one of the boys', in 'the team' – processes that seek to cement or fraternalise relations of power so that each member implicitly recognises another and understands ('it goes without saying') that retaining membership depends on abiding by, and actively maintaining, the codes (written and unwritten) of the game. Certainly, the men in this study had a deeply felt understanding of this. The following situation, if not typical, is certainly indicative of a common mind-set (habitus) within masculinist youth sport:

> Because, I had a, had a lady phone me this year. Right now I am kinda handling all those calls and I'm not really, I don't feel professional enough to do it. She had her 12 year old son - went to an *Adam*-team

[junior hockey category], um, birthday party, and they were watching hockey [TV], and then they started playing this game where you basically just choke the other kid until he passes out; and her son had been choked unconscious three times in one evening, at the coach's house. And so she was phoning me asking like what I felt they should do. And the parents are still really scared of - 'if I get blacklisted as being a potential troublemaker here, will my kid's entire career in hockey be done?' And there's still a lot of problems with that. And I told her, I said, 'Look lady, if like, if that was my kid going over to my coach's team and I heard of that', I said 'I'd be going over and knocking him out!' But it is, it's totally, it should be completely unacceptable and here she is, phoning me asking and just sobbing on the phone describing this situation but then with the caveat of, 'well, please don't tell him because I don't want anything to happen to my son's career', and I mean, I was like, 'holy … how about your kid's life?' (Ice-Hockey City Programme Youth Leader, North-America).[59]

It is not by chance then that the initiation rite or ceremony is at the heart of organised male-sport and that this resembles almost exactly the religious ritual or ceremony. Indeed, commentators often remark on the 'sanctity' of distinguished sports venues, 'inner sanctums' of powerful sports organisations, and the 'religious fervour' displayed by sports spectators (especially in traditional games). Again, it is also crucial to acknowledge the gender-sex dimension of these symbolic 'mythico-ritual' practices – they are overwhelmingly male dominated, explicitly heterosexualised and often misogynist. They are absolutely not for girls or 'gays' yet simultaneously highly sexualised, homoerotic encounters (Bird, 1996; Burstyn, 1999; Pronger, 1999).

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[59] Despite his concern, this General Manager with official responsibility for child welfare in youth ice-hockey in a North American city appeared happy to acquiesce to the parent's request that the incident go unreported.

Sportsmen

Bourdieu (1998: 119) claims 'what is valid at the lay level is true to the nth degree for the level of the clerics who are always in the logic of self-deception.' For the sport field we would replace 'cleric' with any number of official roles in the discourse of organised sport, but perhaps above all we would say 'athlete,' or perhaps 'sportsman'. Such is the coherence between mental structures and objective structures (of the field) that it is possible to observe how those agents, usually ex-athletes, such as sports coaches, would not even think to consider the activities (training) they devise and arrange in the language of banality or arbitrariness, let alone as de-humanising.

For such agents, the question of whether the game is 'worth the candle' would never arise; the game and all it comprises is paramount and an end-in-itself. To ensure the continuity of the game is the chief and overriding disposition of (the *athleticist habitus*) every 'sport agent' and this is the singular driving core of the field. It can be noted that there is a vast amount of popular commentary and criticism of sport (drugs and sex 'scandals' and-the-like) without any of it coming close to damaging the character or endeavour of the field. Children must be perpetually recruited and initiated into the universe of male sports so that the game is fed and sustained – those who fail this initiation are discarded although, as noted above, the reduction of such 'waste' or 'drop-out' is the target of policy development.

In late modernity the task of sustaining the field has become much more vital as so many move from the position of interested lay-person (volunteer) to professionalised agent, financially remunerated in the explicit service of 'the game.' Sports coaching and administrating is no longer simply a 'calling' but a vocation, a profession.[60] When 'the game' or field sustains livelihoods (as well as identities) it might be argued that there can be little or no room afforded to a questioning of whether it is in fact 'worth the candle' or whether in fact it is in the best interests of children. This would be to explicitly risk destroying the game (and the immediate fortunes of the individual agent). And so we can note the immense amount of energy that goes into securing the future of the game. Thus, organised sport has now been re-constructed as a handy panacea for all manner of social ills and moral panics around childhood; for example: health (e.g. 'childhood obesity'); crime (e.g. youth delinquency, e.g. *Positive Futures* initiative, see Home Office, 2009), and poor transition to adult sport (*PESSCL* - Physical Education and School Sport Club Links, now Physical Education and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP): Youth Sport Trust, 2010).

Thus, following the 'Every Child Matters' (2003) consultation and the *Children Act* (2004) sport was part of a wide ranging strategy to achieve 'five outcomes' identified for (and to some extent by) children. According to *Sport England* (2005):

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[60] For example, the British government (*Department for Culture, Media and Sport*, DCMS) directed £60 million to support *Sport Coach UK* in 2008 to recruit '2289 Community Sports Coaches' who coached 'over a million people' and 'a network of 45 Development Officers to recruit, train and retain coaches' as well as provide professional development (DCMS, 2009a).

> The focus on the 5 outcomes gives sport a tremendous opportunity to make its case to a wider audience ... Sport needs to be proactive, making its case by building on the foundation of the new Act. The door is officially open and now it is time for sport and leisure to rally its people and its arguments and march through.

Organised sport, identifying a powerful vehicle to support its enterprise, can marshal its arguments, rally its troops and proactively march forward unencumbered by doubt or reflection – sport is good and must be delivered. Indeed, it has 'a case' - and this case must in no way be perceived to be related to negative practices let alone the sexual or erotic. As long as the field can be said to serve wider social policy agendas, we need not trouble overly about the precise nature of that field. As Bourdieu (1998: 121) argues:

> To speak of self-deception may lead one to believe that each agent is responsible for deceiving himself. In fact, the work of self-deception is a collective work, sustained by a whole set of social institutions of assistance, the first and most powerful of which is language, which is not only a means of expression, but also a principle of structuration functioning with the support of a group which benefits from it: collective bad faith is inscribed in the objectivity of language (in particular euphemisms, ritual formulae, terms of address) ... and also in the bodies, the habitus, the ways of being, of speaking, and so forth; it is permanently reinforced by the logic of the economy of symbolic goods which encourages and rewards this structural duplicity.

I argue, therefore, that the field of sport cannot be constructed as a neutral force, simply providing healthy opportunities for children to interact and learn. In fact, it employs a whole language, a nomenclature, of morality and virtue (especially with regard to children) within which 'bad faith' is inscribed. Therefore, when brought forward to condemn (usually in very opaque terms) the latest revelation of (sexual) misconduct, it is possible to note the unflinching resolve with which any number of 'sport agents' will simultaneously *defend* sport. It is perhaps instructive, then, to consider the man-boy sexual

encounter in sport from this perspective. Indeed, it may tell us a great deal about the initial 'collective denial' within sport to concerns raised about child abuse (see Brackenridge, 2001). The recognition that the abuse was known about but not acted upon by other adults is often very difficult for 'survivors' to come to terms with:

> **Sheldon**: Players and coaches on other teams constantly accused me of being gay during games ... I was taunted ... The other coaches would shout, 'Hey it's Graham's girlfriend!' The opposing players called me 'faggot' and 'Graham's little wife' every chance they got. After news of Graham's abuse became public, everyone in the league acted surprised, as if they'd had no idea what was going on. Well they sure had *acted* like they knew what was going on. Everyone seemed to know I was shacked-up with Graham (Kennedy, 2006: 89-90).

> **Will**: ... [perpetrator] ended up coaching the under 14s at the [name] Rugby Club, which is a very good rugby club, a mile down the road. I said to the President of the club ... I said to him '[name] used to coach the Under 14s at [name of club]. You may not know this but he's a career paedophile and has been cited in complaints to the police. Were you aware of that?' 'Don't know [name]' I said, 'but John, it's in the papers', 'No we've never had anyone called [name]' I said 'Oh John ... all one has to do is speak to [name] on the local paper, *he* remembers [perpetrator]. 'No we've never had anyone called [name]'. That immediately, when you hear the president of a club speaking like that - don't they realise that all they're doing is completely discrediting the organisation. But they don't. Which is why I have no respect for people in authority at all, because very few of them have the moral fibre to say, 'well we've got a problem here, let's get to the bottom of it.' Until you let the light in onto the problem it will never heal. *Why? I don't get it*. It makes no sense. I can't even argue it. It's beyond me – *why*? It's about surely the people ... the children who are there. *It's about them*! It's not about reputation.

I argue then, organised sport goes to great lengths to ensure that the male-sports universe is one that remains fully accessible only to its privileged (fully initiated) agents upon whom it has bestowed the task of maintenance and reproduction – those agents who will 'make the case.' The male in sport, from a young age, understands that bodily exploitation is an essential part of the

game, that in the hierarchical relations that constitute sport, rank denotes entitlement to exploit and the real struggle in male-sport is to *maintain* rank (Burstyn, 1999) which in turn is awarded to those that most closely resemble the field. He understands, for example, that to express pain or weakness is to risk forfeit of membership, or at least to be revealed as a subsidiary member, tolerated perhaps but not really 'one of the boys' (Messner and Sabo, 1994). In Bourdieu's terms 'the group only fully accepts those who publicly show that they recognize the group' (1998: 142).

Such injunction, or discourse, perpetually polices the boundaries of male sport, vigilant against dissent, just as the whole field simultaneously invests heavily in the process of collectively denying that such an economy of symbolic goods even exists ('an interest in disinterestedness'). Thus, it is the symbolic violence done to a boy in organised male-sport such that when faced with the (often highly disturbing) reality of being subjected to a sexual encounter with an adult male, he automatically, instinctively, understands that acquiescence, silence and denial is the correct course of action and this is of course already understood by his abuser. For it is this disposition towards silence and fortitude, infused with hyper-masculinist narrative ('be a man', 'run it off', 'suck it up', 'crying is for girls', 'don't be so gay', 'don't tell tales', 'what-goes-on-tour-stays-on-tour', *etc.*, *etc.*) that he has been trained for, often for years; as Bourdieu (1998: 142) points out 'groups always reward conduct that conforms universally to virtue' and 'they particularly favour real or fictitious tribute to the ... subordination of the *I* to the *us.*' Under such conditions then, as Will stated, boys characterised (or rather conditioned) by the *athleticist*

habitus, are willing to do anything to demonstrate their commitment to the field: they are literally enslaved by it. In this respect they are the perfect expression of the *libido dominantis.*

In order to evidence further my argument on symbolic violence, in the final section I will present some data from the field of boy's rugby league.

Man-Boy Relations in British Rugby League

A Brief History of Rugby League

The origins of rugby lie within the tradition of folk-football of seventeenth and eighteenth century England, but more particularly within the English Public School where football took on a somewhat more organised form in the early nineteenth century but where the 'roughness inherent in folk-football was reinforced' (Dunning and Sheard, 2005: 50). At these schools, 'folk-football', 'a rough and violent' affair (Dunning and Sheard, 2005: 39) was adopted by pupils (in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century), often beyond the control of their school-masters. Within a bullying and exploitative environment:

> Football was a means by which older boys and prefects asserted their dominance over younger boys and fags. For the former, it was a recreation but also a means of symbolizing their power and prestige. For the latter, it was partly a recreation but also partly a duty which expressed, often painfully, their subordinate position … Since football was rough and physically dangerous, it expressed the virtues of 'manliness' and physical courage prized by the English ruling classes (Dunning and Sheard, 2005: 51).

The specific origins of rugby are contested but Dunning and Sheard (2005: 51) argue that rugby developed at *Rugby School* 'some time during the 1820s

or 1830s' and the *Rugby Football Union* (RFU) was founded in 1871 by enthusiasts emerging from the public school system. However, there was almost immediate class-based conflict as the lower-classes enthusiastically engaged with the sport. This conflict was brought to a head over the issue paying players; in 1886 the *RFU* 'banned all forms of payment and inducement … The aim was explicitly to curtail the influence of the working-class player' (Collins, 2006: 2). As proposals by northern clubs for 'broken-time payments' to reimburse working-class players were rejected by the *RFU*, further unrest was inevitable and on 29th August 1895 the *Northern Union* was established by twenty-one leading clubs in the north of England (Collins, 2006). Rule changes introduced in 1906 'marked the birth of rugby league as a distinct sport' (Collins, 2006: 6) but from its inception, rugby league was deeply connected to 'the North' and 'northernness', where, 'in particular, the ability to withstand extremely high levels of physical pain was ingrained in the ethos of the sport' (Collins, 2006: 149-50). In addition:

> There was an undercurrent of self-conscious fear of femininity and homosexuality within the sport. The insults 'you tackle like a girl' and the more general 'you big woman', shouted as a player who drops a ball or misses a tackle, show how the culture of league, like that of all major team sports, based much of its self-esteem on its hostility to femininity … (Collins, 2006: 154).

By Bourdieu's definition then, rugby league constitutes itself as 'a field' but by no means a *fully* autonomous one. It has its own historical struggles but these are connected to the development of football and sport in general in the nineteenth and twentieth century's, itself connected to wider socio-economic developments. It is useful then to see it as a field within a broader field (organised male-sport). In Bourdieuian terms the field of rugby league informs

and shapes the habitus of those agents who are engaged in its practices and who, simultaneously, shape the field in which they are engaged, but not in equal measure.

For Bourdieu there is an economy of symbolic goods within each field and this symbolic capital is dispersed throughout the field but not evenly. Those who most closely represent the interests of the field tend to have more capital (social, cultural and economic) at their disposal through which to shape (and reproduce) the interests of the field. Therefore, as already noted, when interrogating the culture of the field of sport, those agents who are centrally engaged in the field tend most accurately to represent the fundamental culture or character of the field. For example, the highly respected (ex-national) coach Brian Noble, addressing the national squad, said 'they talk of a warrior race – well we're it gentleman' (*League of Their Own*, 2006).

The small scale, qualitative, focus group research, presented below, focused upon such agents of the field – players, coaches, referees, youth development officers (*N* = 38) (all with training in, and some responsibility for, child protection). In considering the nature of the space that sport, here rugby league, provides for boys, the comments of those who work with boys on a weekly or daily basis - whilst by no means constituting a full analytical description of all the points or positions within the field - are nevertheless particularly interesting, relevant and important.

Boyhood Rugby League

Developing the discussion above, it can be argued that a key struggle within contemporary children's sport is between a traditionalist, masculinist discourse based on the reproduction and maintenance of what can be termed a 'discourse of control,' against more recent (feminist and pro-feminist) attempts to impose a 'discourse of welfare' (Hendrick, 2003). For example, a ground-breaking Canadian study on sexual harassment of athletes called for a greater 'ethic of care' in sport (Kirby *et al*., 2000) whilst other studies have pointed out that rugby is about 'making men' (Nauright and Chandler, 1996). Child protection in sport (more recently 'safeguarding') has been at the heart of this struggle through its advocacy of a welfare discourse and (perhaps more tacitly) a children's rights perspective. Consider then the following exchange within a focus group:

> **Focus Group 1**
> **Participant (B) (Male)**: ... I mean I've been down here twenty years and [*Super League* team name] had been coaching, you know - children, I'll put it that way - and it's completely different now, completely different. Twenty years ago, you could get a whack at back o' head, d'you know what I mean, which obviously, you know, is not acceptable, and you know ... [interrupted]
> **Participant (A) (Male)**: Can I just say that it's a shame, sometimes, that it's not accepted.
> **Participants (C) (Female) & (D) (Female)**: Yeah.
> **Participant (B) (Male)**: Oh you're right, you're right ...

The tension within rugby league over the best way to raise, or socialise, boys through the sport is evident here. Maintaining discipline through physical punishment (including punitive 'drilling') as well as preparing boys for the physicality (brutality) of the game is at the core of the (historically generated) logic or symbolic order of the field manifest as a hierarchy based on physical domination or mastery; being able to 'handle yourself' is central. Thus,

disciplinary maxims such as 'no pain, no gain' are characteristic, yet also at odds with the new discourse of welfare and 'rights' where children are afforded the right to protection from violence and abuse, as well as a voice in decision-making (David, 2005).

The following extract reveals not only the tension between these positions but also the fundamental nature of the characteristics that 'child protection' and 'safeguarding' seek to challenge and change:

> *Focus Group 6*
> **Participant (D) (Male):** You're never gonna rule Rugby League anyway are you, there's always going to be - if you lose the swearing, if you lose the referee abuse, if you lose the aggressiveness from parents and coaches and everybody, then you might as well pack RL up and call it a day cos it's, it's a physical and aggressive sport isn't it.

Within the focus groups there was a great deal of anecdotal evidence to support this characterisation (see following extracts); therefore, alongside the discourse of control, it is also necessary to speak of a discourse of aggression and violence within rugby league. The following participants, however, demonstrate a more critical stance in relation to the more obvious manifestations of this discourse:

> *Focus Group 1*
> **Participant (A) (Female):** ... the attitude you get to that [confronting violence on the pitch during children's matches] though is 'toughen up' and this is rugby and it's a man's game.

> *Focus Group 1*
> **Participant (B) (Male Referee)**: ... and at the end of the day, the abuse, I'm not saying it were [team name], I'm not saying it were the opposition, I'm saying the whole area, you can go to any game, and it's just, verbal abuse … the parent actually went onto the pitch to stop two children actually physically beating each other up, because the referee

couldn't control it, and when this parent went onto the park, one of the parents from the opposition went on and hit this parent.

Focus Group 3
Participant (C) (Male): There's some clubs they must coach it [aggression and violence] into their players, they must coach it into them ...
Participant (D) (Male): ... every time you go they're shouting and swearing, not just at their kids but at your kids, and I've actually seen parents fighting at an under 8s game ...

Focus Group 4
Participant (B) (Male): I must admit though, through refereeing ... when those teams come over here their coaches absolutely amaze me, cos they do, like he says, eff and blind at the kids – 'you can't be doing that on touchline' – 'I'm the fucking coach, I'll do what I want' … some of it's horrendous ...

Focus Group 6
Participant (B) (Female): Same with me ... disgusting. Some of the things he was saying to get his kids going you know, it was vile, and I was like 'I've got to go round the other side, I can't deal with this'. But really I suppose he should be reported for his behaviour.

Given these (illustrative) reflections on what *actually* happens at (male) children's and youth's rugby league matches, it is then unsurprising to note the conclusions reached by Markula and Pringle (2006: 474) following their in-depth investigations of adult rugby *union*:

> Rugby players situationally do masculinity by reproducing rigid hierarchical images of what a "real man" is in terms of who is strongest, who can withstand the most pain, and who relationally distances himself from all aspects of femininity through forms of misogynistic denigration ... Rugby, like other sporting events, is literally a practice field where the actors learn how to use force to ensure a dominant position relative to women, feminine men, and the planet itself.

In the USA, Don Sabo was captain of his high school football team and became an 'inside linebacker and defensive captain' at college level. He reflects:

> I learned to be an animal. Coaches took notice of animals. Animals made first team ... The coaches taught me to 'punish the other man,' and to secretly see my opponents' broken bones as little victories within the bigger struggle (Messner and Sabo, 1994: 84).

The discourse of organised male-sport is replete with such sentiments and reflections. Masculinist sport in late modernity means caring about winning and the means by which victory is secured, but not caring about anyone else, at least anyone who might adversely affect the possibility of winning, least of all pain (one's own or that of others). In this regard, Sabo was indeed, the 'field made flesh,' the embodiment of the field and this is exactly what his coaches desired.

What this research also reveals is that rugby league, and doubtless other sports of a similar ilk – which constitute the vast amount of male youth sports participation in Western societies – is an environment, cultivated specifically to attract male children and adolescents, that requires physical aggression (and often pain) between male children (Sabo and Panepinto, 1990) and in which the abusive treatment of boys by (male) adults is widespread and far from uncommon. Therefore, for the following participant, the observation that children and adults engage in violent conduct at rugby league competitions/matches is only unusual because the children are *so* young:

> *Focus Group 6*
> **Participant (A) (Female):** I mean unfortunately there's been a few incidents with some of the other clubs where we've had under 8s actually brawling, and parents brawling at under 8s [matches] and I've thought well 'this is getting really serious stuff' you know, usually you could expect that at 14s, 15s, 16s upwards, but not at an under 8s ...

This is not, however, to claim that involvement in children's sport is (necessarily) a cynical act, but rather that agents have a 'feel for the game', an installed instinct for appropriate action, agreeable to the field – in this case a deeply masculinist field characterised as 'hard' and 'aggressive.'

Nevertheless, where a field is articulated as crucial to a child's health and well-being it seems legitimate and important to indicate where there is an evident preference of adult interests over those of children, especially where those interests might be at odds with those of the child. However, the generation of symbolic capital can only succeed if accompanied by a 'narrative of self-denial' (Webb *et al.*, 2002: 15). Therefore, the notion that adult involvement in children's sport could be about the accruement of capital (symbolic, cultural, economic) based on the pursuit of adult-designated (masculinist) ranking has to be thoroughly and persistently denied. If not, the illusion is exposed and thus rendered defunct and fraudulent - in short, the logic of the field would be shattered – hence the persistent refrain 'we're here for the kids' (Messner, 2009). In this way, sport, here rugby league, can be seen to draw its moral authority from the involvement of children, almost as though children were a purifying element to enable the euphemistic work (denial and misrecognition) to continue. Thus, in the extract below the chief concern (over child protection policy) is for what the *adults* have 'lost', or had taken away from them:

> ***Focus Group 4***
> **Participant (E) (Male)**: The thing, from that question for me is, before all the child protection [policy] came out I were a very, I liked to be with the kids and I liked to get with the kids and I liked to be able to sit with them and put my arm round them, you know, there are kids that want a cuddle and there are kids …
> **Participant (B) (Male)**: Course there is ...

Participant (E) (Male): … that want to sit on your knee, *and that's been taken away from me*, and I feel …
Participant (G) (Male): It's a shame ...
Participant (E) (Male): I mean, I've had one on each knee, just talking and having a laugh, and I feel that, that I'm being … I'm being put in a position, that, you know, I can't do that, because of other people are going to ….
Participant (B) (Male): Say summut, yeah …
Participant (E) (Male): About paedophiles - it's those people that they should look at and really, when they're found out, should do something against them. I'm being victimised for other people, and it's something that does, it's something that really gets to me that.
Participant (C) (Male): I mean, I've seen coaches change how they are, like you've just said there, from being, when they're training kids, physically, you've got to hit this bag, and literally picking them up and dumping them into the bags, whereas now, they'll just stand there and say 'you've gotta do that' they won't physically get involved with the kids as they would have done, 2 or 3 years ago.
Participant (E) (Male): Everybody is getting tarred with the same brush - and everybody is to fall into that line.
Participant (B) (Male): End of day we're here for the kids…
Participant (A) (Male): Yeah, that's the tricky thing…
Participant (B) (Male): End of day, we're here for t'kids, that's all we're here for, *and this* [Rugby League Child Protection Policy] *is starting to take it away from us*. (my emphasis)

Finally, consider a report of a 'child protection incident' in a rugby league setting:

Focus Group 5
Participant (A) (Male): We've only ever had one case where we had to you know, refer to the child protection policy, but it weren't really a child protection thing if you know what I mean. It didn't warrant any further action you know, we did it internally as a club, which we got sorted, you know, *when a father hit his lad on the pitch*, it's still – nevertheless, it was a child protection thing so we had to do it.

It is difficult to know what is more troubling in this last account: the act of violence against a child itself, the reluctance of the club to recognise it and address it, or the internal sweeping under the carpet (despite reference to a child protection policy) that evidently concluded the role of other (male) adults who had witnessed it and were responsible for child welfare in that context.

The point I wish to make here is not that adults in rugby league are especially or necessarily abusive towards children; indeed, the examples above could be (somewhat) countered by comments from the focus groups that constitute resistance to the traditional construction of man-boy relations in rugby. For example, one coach recalled an exchange with a father during a training session:

> ***Focus Group 7:***
> **Participant B (Male)**: He [boy's father] said 'he won't listen to you', I said 'I don't care I'm not having these kids seeing you hitting him … If he's not listening I don't mind, but I'm not gonna accept you hitting him … it's not acceptable. Would you like me to hit your kid?' 'well no…' 'well don't you hit him then,' and he just walked away.

However, the key point is that these examples are just particularly obvious illustrations of a construction of the boy, and the man-boy relation, in organised male sports such as rugby league, that I argue is prevalent. It is not only that there is an accepted and expected culture of control, aggression and regular physical violence within these spaces organised by adult men for male children – indeed, if the aggression is lost 'you might as well pack RL up and call it a day' - but that the boy is almost inconsequential in these accounts. It is not the *children's* well-being that is prioritised by the man who feels he is being deprived at not being able to bounce children (well beyond the baby/toddler age) on his knee, or the club committee that feels a man hitting a boy requires no further action – 'it weren't really a child protection thing if you know what I mean.'

Boys here are clearly constructed as belonging to the men. That is, not as social actors but as social *things*, objects to be controlled, even playthings. The notion that a boy may not like to be physically assaulted by his father or might want other adults to intervene to prevent it happening again (in any setting including the home), seems far less important than the fact that it *had* to be dealt with because seemingly, on reflection, it perhaps *was* a 'child protection thing' after all; therefore, the club was obliged to do something, even if that was really nothing at all. Indeed, the 'cover your back', be-seen-to-be-doing-something approach was common-place amongst club representatives in this research whilst, simultaneously, those who find the more aggressive practices in rugby league distasteful or upsetting (often females) also feel intimidated and prohibited by the hyper-masculine culture of the sport that is the bedrock of its history and traditions: 'it's a man's game.'

An Ethic of Care

In *getting with the programme* it is this disposition towards instrumentalism and (hyper-) masculinism - that the male in sport has been socialised to value and seek out (and how to do so – the 'rules of engagement') and has accordingly learnt that such endeavour – in *being with* the programme, *on* the team, *in* the gang - can generate great reward. This is the (heavily gendered) cultural capital of boyhood sport. According to Bourdieu (1998: 121):

> Symbolic violence rests on the adjustment between the structures constitutive of the habitus of the dominated and the structure of the relation of domination to which they apply: the dominated perceive the dominant through the categories that the relation of domination has produced and which are thus identical to the interests of the dominant.

What are the implications of this for recent appeals for 'an improved ethic of care [which] would benefit all of sport' (Kirby *et al.*, 2000: 167)? It might be said that such sentiment fails to recognise the symbolic economy in which agent's 'trade' within organised male-sport. Indeed, it might be said that the ethic of care is paramount in the field of organised male-sport, perhaps more so than in other fields. That is, agents' care for each other is rooted in the essence of the field: fraternity, brotherhood, camaraderie. Consider the reflections of Barry, a recently retired rugby league professional:

> **MH***: What is the value of Rugby League for kids?*
> A lot of people don't have a chance of being academic so having a sports career - is superb, I mean it's – I mean it was brilliant. I'm getting what I want out of life now but playing rugby, I still miss it ... cos I know what it's made up of, I know what a good win feels like, when you go back in the changing rooms, when you're out with your mates, I know what that feels like. And I know what it feels like putting a big shot on ['big' or incapacitating tackle], and things like that, so I miss it, I *do* miss it. I miss it when I see it. All the team spirit, the camaraderie that you've got. [former team-mate] who used to play for [*Super League* club], he said that's the most important thing, you don't get it in *any* other sport apart from team sports. Being a rugby player you're putting your body on the line. He said the only thing close to it, is being a soldier. See a hard sport like boxing, you're on your own aren't you, so the hardest team sport is rugby. That's because you're getting together, you can't - *that feeling*! - I go into a normal job now like teaching. You don't get that bond as you do with your mates as you do when you're a teacher. I've got friends like who are teachers in the department but – you know, you're not scrumming down together, you're not doing stupid things and you're not like putting your body on the line for each other are you. So I just recommend being a sportsman just for the camaraderie.

Agents are expected to go through any amount of physical discomfort, pain, even disfigurement or paralysis (Howe, 2004), for the most part without financial remuneration, in the name of brotherhood, and readily do so in the pursuit of aims and objectives that have little or no value beyond the

boundaries of 'the game' or 'field.' This is the moral imperative of male/masculinist sport: that there are and can be no limits or caveats on the (often unspoken) declaration of fraternity; one must be ready to die for the stakes. Thus, it is noteworthy that all the participants were well versed in this ethical order through their early experiences of traditional male team games (rugby and ice-hockey).

But this ethical order is geared towards the sustenance and reproduction of the field. It is because sport agents (the field made flesh) implicitly *care* about each other, that is to say, about the field, that it is not unreasonable to consider that they are almost unable to engage in practice that would disrupt the field or seriously threaten its enterprise. In terms of sexual exploitation Kirby *et al.* (1999) refer to this as the 'dome of silence' in sport.

> **Sheldon**: ... *that's* the problem in organised sport because you've got ninety-five per cent, the people that are bystanders right, like you look at these organisations, if any of them went to court there'd be a lot of people that weren't abusing the kid but didn't do anything about it ... look at my case, people knew forever what Graham was doing and in most cases they do.

An *unspoken* of act (sexual abuse of a child) is (clearly) no threat to the field; a *declaration,* on the other hand, most certainly is. So it must be understood that extolling sport agents to a greater care for each other (in order to 'eliminate' sexual abuse) is, at best, sufficiently ambiguous so as to enable such an ethic to be vigorously engaged without signifying even the slightest impact on efforts to reduce children's suffering in organised sport. As Sheldon notes 'Graham was known to tell his players "You need to do well in school and give something back to your community."' (Kennedy, 2006: 31).

The field of organised male-sport is *built* upon an ethic of care, sport agents would not be recognised as such if they were not characterised by the *athleticist habitus*, that is, if their cognitive structures were not organised according to the interests of the field, the game, if they were not able to recognise and value the game, the 'camaraderie' (a euphemism for all manner of practices), the fraternity. This is the same as saying the interests of other agents in the field; agents with sufficient symbolic capital to be recognised *as* agents of the field. Therefore, suggesting some reflexive, ontological rupture with the field so as to reconstitute it (which is the real point of Kirby *et al.*'s recommendation), whilst perhaps possible at the level of the individual, is exceptionally difficult and unlikely at the level of collective action, *because* of the ethical order which is central to being an agent in the field. This is to do no more than recognise the 'universal anthropological law that there are benefits (symbolic and sometimes material) in subjecting oneself to the universal ... those who act according to the rule have the group on their side' (Bourdieu, 1998: 142).

But equally, the recent move by sports organisations to provide children with the means to report abuse through various empowerment initiatives, whilst essential and certainly to be welcomed, is also based on the idea that the child – the abused child – has the capacity to view the world through a different perspective than his abuser. That is, it perhaps takes an overly optimistic view of the relation of domination, and its effect, within which the sportsboy (or girl) acts. It does not perhaps consider the view that the perspective of the abused

child may be more-or-less synonymous with the abuser, and that the agents central to the field, those charged with doing the listening, principally (but not cynically) embody and thus act according to the interests of the field. In other words, efforts to empower the child through the notion of 'voicing' may well provide sports organisations with a useful nomenclature of empowerment, modernisation and equity, but may do little to disrupt, or even divert attention away from, the everyday, 'normal' practices that require the deference and obedience of a child in an activity moulded around the interests of (male) adults.

CONCLUSION

Sexual abuse in childhood has blighted the lives of many males, and continues to do so. Following on from recent groundbreaking work (e.g. Brackenridge and Fasting, 2002a) on sexual exploitation in sport, I have attempted to further understand this phenomenon through a consideration of the sexual subjection of boys by men in sport. Within sport studies, whilst research has focused, for some time, on masculinity and men's issues (e.g. Messner and Sabo, 1990), the sexual abuse of boys by men has been neglected as a topic for research. The prevalence study by Leahy *et al.* (2002: 29) is an exception; they argue:

> It might be suggested that the male respondents in this sample provide a poignant reminder of the silence that generally shrouds their experiences of victimisation, and the lack of accepted space for men to speak thereof. Perhaps it is we the researchers, and indeed welfare professionals in sport, who have sometimes failed to ask, and therefore failed to make such space available, effectively marginalizing this vulnerable group.

Whilst the voices of sexually abused male athletes have appeared in the literature (Brackenridge, 2001; Leahy *et al.*, 2002), there has been no sustained focus on the experiences and stories of sexually abused boys in sport. Indeed, in the world of sport, sexually abused children constitute silenced voices. The public and political work of key scholars and the activist work by 'survivors,' such as Sheldon Kennedy,[61] have been extremely important in this regard. Therefore, facilitating the telling of these abuse stories has been central to this work.

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[61] See *Respect in Sport* (www.respectinsport.com)

However, the main task of this thesis has been to develop a theoretical account through which the sexual abuse of boys in sport can be comprehended. Celia Brackenridge (2001: 127) set out the central problem facing researchers of sexual exploitation in sport:

> The prominence of medical and allied sciences in the current diagnostic literature about severe forms of sexual exploitation, such as rape and child sexual abuse, places undue emphasis on individualised behaviour and treatment, whether for the abuser or the victim. This pathologises sexual abuse, drawing attention away from important cultural, situational and power dynamics ... All of these detach the perpetrator from responsibility for his actions and overlook how human agency is accounted for ... Sexual exploitation is neither an excusable social abnormality nor an unavoidable genetic urge ... [however] it is also necessary to point to limitations elsewhere. Socio-cultural analyses of power often lack the specificity of understanding that can come from looking at individual perpetrator and victim experiences ... within specific sporting circumstances.

Developing an account of CSA is then, no straightforward matter. However, in approaching the issue of boyhood sexual abuse in sport I have focused upon these fundamental issues. This directed a principal task as the identification of a theoretical and methodological approach which could adequately overcome the problems Brackenridge (2001) refers to. In response, I have utilised and developed the theoretical framework of Pierre Bourdieu to articulate the relationship between the sexual subjection of boys and organised male-sport.

Theoretical development towards an explanatory account

In this thesis I have proposed that organised male-sport is generative of the sexual subjection (abuse) of boys by men. I have explored the narratives of men who experienced sexual subjection as boys in a sport-related context and through the application and extension of Bourdieu's framework for social practice, I have offered a socio-cultural, relational account of this social problem. I have suggested that the advantage of this approach for an understanding of CSA is that it avoids the problems identified by critics of earlier psychological, feminist and sociological theories by facilitating an explanatory account of CSA that avoids pathologising the perpetrator yet connects sexual subjection to the socio-cultural context and normative aspects of masculinist social-sexual practice in a manner that incorporates an 'active and determinate sense of agency' (McNay, 2000: 71).

Through the notions of habitus and field I have argued that men who sexually subject children should be considered as social agents, like any other, who are both determined and determining; that is, as social agents who are self-determining individuals shaped by the socio-cultural universe. I have argued that a comprehensive account of sexual abuse must be able to account for its historical persistence as well as its gendered form. Therefore, I have argued for a relational account that prioritises neither structure nor agency but locates them both at the centre of any explanation of social practice whilst enabling a sustained focus on the cultural character of the social field(s) in which practice is played out.

Thus, the field of organised male-sport is constitutive of and constituted by the *athleticist habitus*, an instrumentalist and masculinist habitus at the core of which is the logic of conquest and domination. It is from this habitus that the man-boy relation is shaped – a relation of symbolic violence that I argue is well represented by the positions of master-and-apprentice (or servant), where boys' bodies are both subjects to be exalted (fetishised) and tools to be exploited in the pursuit of adult ends. However, I have also argued that the 'child as social agent' must not be abandoned simply because he/she is victimised, but that it is imperative to consider how children's agency is shaped by the fields in which they engage.

I have argued that the relation between the field of male-sport (a homosocial field both non-sexual and deeply sexualised) and the *athleticist habitus* is generative of an *athleticist libido*, a *libido dominandi*, to which there must always be an accompanying underside, a *libido dominantis*. Thus, it is through the *athleticist habitus*, a series of durably installed, embodied dispositions generative of regulated improvisations, that the man-boy relation in sport is constituted. The field reproduces itself through mechanisms and processes (investment, *illusio*, gift exchange, denial, misrecognition) that ensure a permanence in change so that masculinist practices remain relatively static and secure, so that social agents (particularly the dominated) act within categories constructed by the dominant.

I have argued that an explanatory account of childhood sexual abuse cannot be narrowly conceived as one that focuses on the (psychology and behaviour of the) offender. Context is essential and any account that detaches the offender, and child, from both the socio-cultural universe and the specific landscape in which the abuse occurred does not properly construct the object of analysis.

Therefore, this thesis proposes that a socio-culturally sensitive account of child sexual abuse, that goes beyond structuralist theories of patriarchal oppression, so that the social agent can be located, without resorting to individualist, pathological models, is possible. Through utilising the theoretical framework and conceptual tools of Pierre Bourdieu, I have attempted to provide the 'theoretical linkage' between the macro and the micro that is required for a more complex, sophisticated and comprehensive understanding of this social problem (Liddle, 1993).

In proposing a sociological approach based on Bourdieu's relational theory of social practice, I suggest that social agents should be conceived of, not as 'cultural dupes,' nor as fully autonomous ('the philosophy of consciousness', Bourdieu, 1990b), but as determined and determining agents whose actions can be understood from an understanding of the cultural field(s) within which they have been shaped and within which they act. That is, from an understanding of the relation between habitus and field. Nor do I present them as acting from weakness, powerlessness, lack, abnormality or illness (although this does not preclude this possibility within a specific individual),

but rather as social agents for whom there is a reason immanent in what they do. It is in Bourdieu's sense of subjectivity that I operationalise agency – as an inscribed *potentiality* or a regulated *improvisation*. In line with socio-cultural perspectives then, I suggest that it is the 'reasonableness' of offenders that should be the focus of social investigation, not their 'deviance.'

Following Bourdieu, I have prioritised the habitus as the source of the practice of CSA whilst presenting the social agent as one who determines the field that determines him; in other words, as an agent with the capacity for choice which is intimately connected to the socio-cultural universe. This not only seems to represent accurately what is known about offenders from 'survivor' testimony such as that presented here, but also seems necessary for an accurate representation of the historically persistent practice of childhood sexual abuse.

I have also argued that the boy/child who is subjected to a sexual encounter with an adult must be accounted for. I have shown how cultural context and field, here sport, is crucial to the sexual subjection of the child. I have argued that organised male-sport extorts the submission of the child through the determined and strategic inculcation of its own objective structures into the cognitive structures of the social agent. I have argued then, following Bourdieu, that social agents (sport agents) have a 'feel for the game' (the athleticist habitus) and the game of male-sport is principally founded on the pursuit of domination and exploitation and an embodied understanding of the 'rules' of the game where fraternity and brotherhood demand belief in, and love of, the game; a bodily or embodied belief, the principle of which is that

the weak are required to submit to the strong and that one adds to oneself by subtracting from others (Pronger, 1999).

Ultimately I argue that there is a toxic mix in sport that presents a significant danger for the male child. Sport is a field where an *athleticist libido* (constitutive of a *libido dominandi* but always with its opposite, a *libido dominantis)* is simultaneously exalted and denied (and indeed any relation to sex). Thus, sport is a field where a boy is rigorously trained (targeted and objectified as 'talent' - raw material - by immensely powerful organisations) to recognise and respect the *athleticist libido*; to be a sportsboy means to believe in it bodily, therefore, to respect and relinquish to the dominant. Boys in sport then are trained into a *libido dominantis* in preparation for the *libido dominandi*. Thus, the sexual subjection of boys by men in sport is not just something that, coincidentally, happens in sport - because 'these men are very clever' – rather it *is* the field, *made flesh*.

In this socio-sexual encounter between man and boy, all the elements of the field, as I have identified them, can be seen to be present. It is a field which structures a perception of boys' bodies as means-to-an-end, things or *tools* to be used, 'talent' or material to be recruited and exploited in the pursuit of adult ends; a field underpinned by patriarchal interests that structures the perception that the masculine is primary and that masculinity is principally demonstrated through bodily conquest and domination (masculinism) and is thus entitled, *de facto,* to the bodies of women and children; a homosocial field that is thoroughly immersed in sexualised symbolism and homoerotic

discourse yet denies any relation to sexuality or sexual/erotic practices, simultaneously imposing the perception that, certain forms of sexual activity (thus sexual identity) are incompatible and unacceptable and not to be spoken of, except in denigration or prohibition; a field where hierarchy and rank is central and the relation between man and boy is one of master-to-servant, where the servant's body may be idolised or fetishised but where his 'voice,' which can on occasion be heard, is generally in-valid; a field where the adult role (coach, *etc.*) is consecrated by the scientification and professionalization of the sport environment, and the infantilisation and disempowerment of the child-athlete position, whilst simultaneously blurring otherwise rigid generational boundaries by authorising a child's access to (masculinist) adult spaces and discourse (and *vice versa*); and a field that works hard to keep itself separate from wider political structures, that revels in and exhorts its idiosyncrasies and mythologies and that jealously guards its autonomy and exclusiveness, and patrols its boundaries vigorously, encouraging clear separation between members and non-members, where everyone is welcome but only the initiated have access to its privileges and 'secrets.'

Thus, for the boy (if not also his mature self) to speak out about the violation, an act that would risk revealing the true nature of the logic of the universe that has structured his cognitive structures, would be tantamount to further violating himself, this time by his own hand. In revealing the 'truth' about himself, the revelation would place him at odds with, oppose him to, the (masculinist) symbolic economy that is so fundamental to his being, his habitus. Such an act, for the young male, characterised by the sport *illusio*,

enchanted by the game, is virtually unthinkable. This may also be instructive in considering those non-perpetrators that, despite knowledge of abuse, are complicit by their inaction. This leads to the conclusion, if my argument is correct, that organised male-sport is generative of the sexual subjection of boys *and* the narratives of silence that allow it to persist.

Narratives of Silence

The narratives presented constitute the 'abuse' stories of four men who perceive their boyhood sexual experiences with an adult-male in different ways. Crucially, however, they were equally silent about those experiences. On the one-hand, Jack, for whom the 'abuse narrative' simply did not match his experience – he was not traumatized by it and reflects on that time in his life with a degree of fondness; on the other Simon, Sheldon and Will for whom the 'abuse narrative' was thoroughly incompatible with the way they had been trained to think of themselves from a very young age, thus equally inadequate. It might be said, then, that for different reasons, all of these boys had no way of telling their tale – that is, no narrative tools with which to gain a purchase on their experiences so that they would be able to speak about them in a way that did not stigmatise them, either as *victims* of a traumatic, 'perverted' experience perpetrated by an evil monster/sex beast, or as *homosexual* ('pervert'/'queer') and therefore not a 'real' male, weak and potentially 'deviant' themselves.

This analysis suggests two problems: (1) the 'abuse narrative' is simply not reflective of the subjective experience of some man-boy sexual activity; and (2) the abuse narrative is incompatible with the *athleticist* narrative (habitus) of male-sport, therefore, anathema to the sportsboy. Either way, the outcome is the same – the boy (and often the man) does not speak about his experience. This leads to two conclusions.

First, an alternative nomenclature, to that of 'abuse' is needed. Sexually abused boys (in sport) should not be forcibly denied their complicity in the act of man-boy sex. That is, their agency should not be taken from them, foreclosed, by a language that does not represent their subjective perception of the experience. In other words, the narrative of man-boy sex needs to be expanded beyond the current narrow limits of 'abuse.' The notion of 'sexual subjection' perhaps facilitates a shift that retains a dominant agent and a subordinate one, yet removes the stigma inherent in the abuse narrative.

One role of social science in the investigation of this problem is to provide the language - discourse - which accurately represents the boy's situation and disposition. Through developing our understanding of the practice and experience of adult-child sex, social scientists must provide the language or narrative frames for children (and adults) – especially those currently being abused – to speak of their experiences, not decades later, but now. Therefore, the notions of a 'sexually subjected child' and a 'sexually abusive adult' may provide a more appropriate frame.

Second, unless male-sport, including (and perhaps especially) elite sport, develops means to articulate (or construct) boyhood and masculinity in a way that provides for a much greater range of legitimate modes of being a boy – modes that do not prioritise physical domination and do permit vulnerability and weakness (including non-heterosexual identities), sportsboys will continue to be subjected to sexual activity by sportsmen, and continue to *not* speak about it. That is, boys (and men) subjected to sexual activity in sport will continue to engage a 'narrative of silence' (Hunter, 2009). As Will states: 'Massive secret, massive! *Unscaleable secret ...*'

Concluding Remarks

The child protection/safeguarding agenda, in attempting to engender cultural change within sport (Boocock, 2002) potentially sets itself against deeply entrenched historical beliefs on gender relations and boyhood/masculinity that receive widespread support from powerful agencies and corporations, within and without sport. We should, then, perhaps not be too optimistic about its ability to significantly alter the dominant messages and narratives that boys are provided with every day, on the sports field (from sport experts), from their parents and through the media. However, it is imperative that advocates for children within the sports world work to engender social and cultural change so that the dominant sporting narratives offered to boys permit a range of ways of being male that do not prioritise a logic of conquest and domination. It will be evident, however, that such is society's enchantment with these dominant

sport forms, that such a task would require a radical shift in national and international consciousness.

Currently, the perpetrators of this practice are predominantly understood as either psychologically damaged ('ill') or wholly rational ('evil') individuals acting from a psychology structured by *ab*normal (childhood) events. In other words they are pathologised (e.g. Bonnici, 2008). This is overwhelmingly the case in organised sport where 'good' men are charged with keeping 'bad' men (paedophiles) out. Thus, perhaps counter-intuitively, it may be the case that the establishment of a child protection and safeguarding agenda within sport (Boocock, 2002; CPSU, 2003, 2007) also provides a convenient symbolic distinction through which to polarise 'good' men and 'bad' men, thereby, giving an official stamp of 'child-centred' approval to all manner of (masculinist) practices that I argue constitute a symbolic violence towards children.

Recently, the call to 'give children a voice' within their environments, including sport, has become frequent and somewhat commonplace and is now enshrined within UK sport policy (Sport England/CPSU, 2006). The argument is that giving children a voice and enabling them to participate in the decision-making process will empower them. This is certainly an important development. However, in calling for children to be listened to, it is also vital to give much more critical attention to the narratives that adults construct for children, including through the medium of organised (male) sport. It is necessary to consider more carefully - given the prioritisation of sport in our

young children's lives - the 'linguistic' tools and narrative frames we offer them and through which we then expect them to speak.

Finally, if my analysis seems a *particularly* dis-enchanted one, this is partly because I believe that this is the role of academics/sociologists and because I believe that a dis-enchanted view of sport is precisely what is required if children's quality of life is to be improved and if children are to be allowed to pursue physical pursuits, indeed to develop a physical culture, that contributes positively to the quality of their lives. Therefore, the political task of the social scientist and activist is to disrupt the synchronicity between habitus and field and to effect social transformation through destabilising the inertia or 'hysteresis' of the *athleticist habitus* so that, for both man and boy, 'increased possibilities may arise for critical reflection on previously habituated forms of action' (Adkins, 2004: 196). Therefore, those interested in children's welfare must argue for a broadening of children's opportunities for, and experiences of, physical culture and corporeal endeavour, whilst eroding the determined inculcation of belief in the dominant sport forms within children's lives. The current enchantment with these masculinist rites and practices generally does not serve children well.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Notes on Personal History

My own personal history of youth sport, as an 'elite junior' across a range of sports, but most substantially in tennis, resonates strongly with the participants in this study. In particular, traditional team sports formed a major element of my early boyhood and my gradually increasing success, marked objectively against peers and subjectively against my other childhood endeavours, received strong support and enthusiasm from my parents and other significant adults; for example, I attended 'Sunday School' until I was deemed old enough (approx. eight) to start playing football every Sunday for a local team. I then captained this team once it comprised other boys of my own age rather than older boys, and I went on to play for the 'town team' whilst at junior school.

I was a 'promising footballer', but following forced lay-off due to a knee problem (related to excessive wear on undeveloped joints), it was through junior tennis that my aptitude for sport was most clearly manifest (and recognised) leading to a high national ranking throughout my teenage years. There was, then, general acknowledgment that I was a 'gifted sportsman'. After 'quitting' tennis in my later teenage years, citing lack of enjoyment and a need to concentrate on my (A level) academic studies, I continued to play (compete at) team-sports, particularly those 'hyper-masculine' versions, such

as Football, Rugby League and Rugby Union, where it could be said I represented well the interests of the field (see discussion in later chapters). After joining a local Rugby Union Club in my early twenties, I maintained that this was due to a desire to have 'a social life' following the relative isolation of pursuing a career in an individual sport.

The coinciding of the start of my sociological studies (aged 17) and a greater ambivalence towards competitive sport, including abandoning ambitions towards 'professional' status I had held since early childhood, should perhaps not be viewed as entirely coincidental, although certainly this was only one of many contributory factors; a manifest inability to fully realise those ambitions not least amongst them. Yet despite my developing 'sociological imagination' my submersion in the field of sport from a young age cannot be overlooked and I can readily identify my younger self, and indeed (perhaps to a lesser extent) my more mature self, as fully conversant in, engaged with, and approving of 'the ways of sport.'

Therefore, the study I embarked on was not analogous to a natural scientist exploring, say, the migration patterns of the Blue Whale or even a male, white, middle-class, middle-age social scientist studying the leisure practices of black, working-class young women; that is to say, the context for my study was not one that was alien to me, rather, it was very familiar, or, one might say, all too familiar.

Appendix 2

Ref: SF/JD

12th May 2005

<div align="center">

<u>Child Protection Focus Group</u>

</div>

Dear

In reference to our conversation I would like to formally invite you to the Child Protection Focus Group meeting to be held at 7.00pm on 6th June 2005 in the restaurant at 'The Jungle', home of Castleford Tigers RLFC.

The focus group has been planned in conjunction with our partners, Edge Hill College, and is aimed at exploring the views of the people with direct responsibility for Child Protection at their Rugby League club/Referees' Society, and specifically the implementation of the Rugby League Child Protection Policy.

The focus group should last no longer than an hour.

I have enclosed a questionnaire for you to complete and to bring along with you to the focus group meeting.

I would appreciate it if you could complete and return the reply slip below, in the SAE provided, or alternately e-mail me with details as to whether or not you will be attending. I can provide directions if required on request.

Yours Sincerely

Jo Drapier
Equity & Ethics Assistant
The Rugby Football League
Jo.drapier@rfl.uk.com

— —

I will/will not be attending the Child Protection focus group meeting
Directions required ;   Y / N – please delete as appropriate

Name   ……………………………………………………………....
Club/Society   ……………………………………………………………
Venue: Castleford Tigers RLFC
Date and time of meeting: 6th June 2005, 7.00pm.

Appendix 2.1

<u>FOCUS GROUP: POTENTIAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE</u>

How has the policy affected your awareness of child protection issues?

How has the policy affected your understanding of the club's responsibilities towards children?

Has the policy affected your practice with children?

Has the policy affected other members practice with children?

How and when did you receive the policy?

Have you undergone any training with regard to the policy and what did you think of it?

What effort has gone in to understanding, adopting and delivering the policy in your club?

What recommendations would you make to improve the policy, the training or the dissemination/adoption of the policy?

What outcomes would you expect as a result of the introduction of this policy?

Appendix 3

**Document for consideration by the Post-graduate
Research Ethics Committee**

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief discussion and statement of intent with regard to the ethical considerations for the above research project. I begin with an introductory summary of the project. The standards and requirements of Edge Hill's Research Ethics Code of Conduct (particularly sections 3 and 5) and the Research Ethics Framework of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) have been considered in the preparation of this discussion.

Summary

The overall aim of this research is to provide an account of the role of organised male-sport in the perpetuation of male-child sexual abuse. Particularly, my focus is on the specific culture of organised male-sport in Britain and how it functions to perpetuate social conditions that are facilitative of and conducive to the practice of childhood sexual abuse (CSA). In addition to a theoretical construction or critique of organised male-sport I will be employing a modest empirical study focusing on the recollections of men who have experienced sexual abuse in a sport context. Clearly this raises a number of ethical considerations, principally around the avoidance of further harm to the participant.

Primary Ethical Concerns

Vulnerable Groups and Research Relationships

Asking participants to talk about difficult and sensitive experiences may cause additional distress and harm, thereby effectively perpetuating the abuse. As such it can be 'deeply problematic' and is an 'ethical process in which researchers are fully implicated' (Plummer, 2001, p.224). Interviews will be 'in the form of conversations between participants and researcher' (Etherington, 2000, p.283). Any conversations of this kind will need to be based on a degree of trust (formal arrangements for anonymity and confidentiality notwithstanding). This context will have to be established over time and it is likely that this may involve considerable preliminary contact (e.g. letters, telephone conversations, initial meetings) prior to recording conversations (if consented to). The well-being of the participant and their willingness to continue will be frequently established throughout the process and offers to terminate an interview will feature regularly. To help facilitate this, each interview will commence with a period of reflection about the participant's feelings towards the research process, particularly how it is impacting on them away from the research environment.

Plummer (2001) suggests a 'continuum of involvement' for the researcher that characterises the varying levels of involvement a researcher might have with their research participants from 'stranger' to 'friend'. If the process of gathering information is to be successful (non-harmful) for all involved, it would be inappropriate to simply conduct an interview and then terminate the

relationship, whenever I saw fit, on the grounds that the research was concluded, or I had enough data. Certainly terms and conditions of initial meetings must be almost entirely determined by the participants, but it is my intention to seek to develop a genuine relationship with the men who agree to participate, therefore, multiple meetings/interviews will be requested and the research will be terminated through a process of mutual consent. This seems essential if the research is to attempt to develop from an ethically sound position. That is to say, to contact individuals who had experienced CSA and request of them details of the most intimate and disturbing nature, only to 'dismiss' them when I had what I wanted (to achieve my own ends) would be morally vacuous and resemble the original abuse. Given the nature of the information required, a research relationship must develop from sustained contact based on genuine feelings of empathy and a desire to contribute, in whatever measure, to the reduction of suffering; the familiarity and related 'feelings/emotions' that this may foster should not be ignored or treated as unfortunate or unintended consequences. Indeed, to regard such outcomes as unintended would be entirely disingenuous as they are wholly foreseeable, if far from certain or prescribed. This raises the potential that relationships may continue beyond the term of the study. However, it is anticipated that if a genuine relationship develops, albeit originally based upon the ostensibly instrumental objective of eliciting information, then this will be to the benefit of both the research(er) and the participant; it is also anticipated that if these relationships were to continue beyond the duration of the study, this would be entirely correct and to that extent should not be discouraged (if, at the same time, not actively sought). However, some authors point out that trust and

friendship in research relationships can lead, 'amongst other things to false intimacies, fraudulent friendships, a deceptiveness over equal relationships, and a masking of power (Kirsch, in Plummer, 2001, p.212).

Thus, considerable effort will be made to establish mutually agreeable relationship boundaries with the participant, without imposing fixed rules. In addition, great care will be taken at the outset to establish (through discussion) what the likely and potential (including unlikely) outcomes of the research might be.

Gabriel (1999) offers guidelines for minimising practitioner-researcher role conflict, some of which are useful to consider here when designing the research in a manner that considers and includes participants at all stages (see Appendix 3.1). In her work on sexual harassment in sport, Brackenridge (2001) strongly advocates setting down the 'research rules' which meant that she could not only, 'break down the work of each contact into manageable chunks', but also, 'check that each person involved had been offered the same care (or omissions) within the same ethical boundaries' (p.155-6) (Appendix 3.2).

Initial Contact & Informed Consent

When contact is made, it is anticipated that a telephone conversation will enable a more personal (but still anonymous) form of contact, hopefully resulting in an initial meeting where further information can be given and, assuming the participant is happy to continue, arrangements made for

interviewing. Informed consent must be obtained when conducting interviews (see Appendix 3.3). However, beyond this I will attempt to secure what Etherington calls, 'truly informed consent,' 'a process involving lengthy discussion with the participants about exactly what the research entails; not simply the process of doing the study, but also a thorough and open examination of what the outcomes may be, even those that the researcher does not intend (2000, p.268).

Gaining access to participants will not be a straightforward task: 'victims of abuse are difficult to locate and may be reluctant to reveal their experiences' (Brackenridge, 2001, p.51). It is imperative that all participants are self-identifying, therefore, my strategy for recruiting participants is to disperse information about the study and myself, via as many appropriate outlets as possible, so that individuals matching the criteria for the study (i.e. adult males with a history of sexual abuse in sport) will then be able to make an informed choice about whether to participate. A key source for further information will be a number of web pages that provide details about the study and myself (see Appendix 4) and will serve as an initial point of information prior to any personal contact. This web page will provide all contact details for me, including a photograph. Apart from conveying information, this is, 'intended to empower the research participant and counter any perceived power imbalance, as it allow[s] the participant to identify the researcher but not vice versa' (Leahy et al., 2002, p.25).

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity will be upheld as far as is possible. All data will be anonymised during the transcription process (which I will conduct myself) and stored securely, electronically and/or in hard-copy. However, absolute anonymity cannot be guaranteed as confidentiality cannot be guaranteed under all circumstances. That is to say, it is possible that participants will pass on information about perpetrators of child sexual abuse that could be used by the judicial services for prosecution. In such a situation a researcher may hold knowledge that could lead to a reduction of abuse (most likely through prosecution and conviction) and potentially safeguard other children from sexual abuse. In such a situation there could be no alternative but to pass on the relevant details to the police. Whilst the name of the participant will under no circumstances be divulged and every effort to maintain the participant's anonymity will be made, it is not possible to guarantee that their name will not be raised by a third party in any ensuing investigation. Under these specific circumstances then, there is the potential for a participant's name to be revealed to investigating authorities.

Participants will therefore be informed that specific details (i.e. names, events) may be passed on to the police if disclosed, and to emphasise that it is not the incriminating detail of the abuse that I am interested in. This creates a space for the participant to decide for himself whether to include potentially incriminating detail within the interview process in the full knowledge that this information may become the subject of a judicial inquiry (and the potential implications of this). However, actually passing information to the police will be a last resort in the event that the participant decides unequivocally that he

does not wish to do this himself. The participants in this study will not be children but they may be considered vulnerable. For their own well-being the information they may pass on must continue to be owned by them above any others, including the researcher.[62] It is very easy to view the commencement of a criminal investigation as an inherent 'good' and ignore the numerous negative effects that such action may have for the individual, very possibly after (and for long after) the researcher has concluded the study. For this reason, every effort must be made to ensure that any decision to commence a criminal investigation is thoroughly owned by the individual on whom it will inevitably centre and every effort will be made to avoid propelling the participant towards a course of action that they are not comfortable with and that may have negative consequences for them. Researchers should be wary of assuming that a disclosure to the authorities will result in a happy outcome for all where the abuser is convicted for a lengthy sentence and the participant experiences the process and outcome as a positive one. Hunter's cautionary note should be carefully considered by researcher and participant: 'since telling your story publicly is such a powerful experience, it also carries the possibility of harming you. As a sexual abuse victim you already know about loss of control … you don't need another lesson in it' (1990, p.118). That said, sexual abuse is perpetrated through silence and I would not want this research to contribute to that silence and thereby perpetuate abuse and protect those that abuse.

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[62] Participants must be able to read the transcript of any and all interviews/conversations that take place, as well as the resultant analyses and have the power to discuss and ultimately remove any aspect pertaining to themselves from the final piece.

Participants will be provided with appropriate support materials, including contact details of supportive agencies (see Appendix 3.4). Such materials will include information on the importance of reporting abuse to the relevant authorities and this will be emphasised to the participants.

Potential for Harm

Researchers will, in all probability, detach from the research relationship with more ease than the participant (my comments on research relationships notwithstanding). The individual who has divulged their story and perhaps been moved to take a course of action because of their participation in the research, remains within that 'story' and inevitably is left to deal with the aftermath. The research will have unalterably affected their life, not necessarily (although certainly hopefully) for the better. The potential for doing harm exists within research of this nature, and this is impossible to fully eradicate. Harm may be caused by the exercise of talking to men who have experienced CSA (even by the act of contacting them), harm may be caused by falsely interpreting what they tell me or by putting their story (life) into my words, and harm may be caused by the mere action of putting into concrete text (written word) an expression of their experiences that had previously remained (forcibly) hidden and unspoken (Plummer, 2001). There are perhaps ways to mitigate this harm as suggested here, but no certain way of preventing it.

The self-identifying nature of the participants may be a strong indicator of their resolve and desire to tell their story for the purposes of wider distribution and

the generation of knowledge that may prevent further abuse. Thus, it is not unreasonable to consider that those who agree to take part will see the process as a positive one despite having to reveal and to some extent relive very distressing experiences. Therefore, the sample will be a biased one but this will ensure that the participants will be men who are able to identify themselves as individuals with histories of childhood sexual abuse[63] in a sport context, and also feel able to speak about their experiences to a stranger (at least initially) who has expressed a specific interest in this aspect of their lives for the purposes of research. But caution must be exercised in suggesting mitigation as there is no definitive strategy or absolute safeguard to assure participants are not harmed – all strategies are of the order of hope (albeit based on extensive review of literature and current practice) rather than certitude. The argument from potential harm versus potential benefit should also not be overstated; whatever wider benefits may accrue from research of this kind, they will be immaterial for the individual who is damaged as a result of the research experience. However, it is important to note that contemporary society now provides a somewhat more hospitable climate for men to disclose their intimate, secret sexual selves than at anytime previous. Certainly the emergence of such stories outside (and very occasionally inside) the sports world, provide tentative evidence of this.

Training

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[63] Research has shown, many men, perhaps especially those that adhere to more traditional notions of masculinity, do not recognise themselves as abused, therefore, clearly cannot identify themselves as such.

Another main ethical concern is the ability of the researcher to cope with issues that may arise during the research process such as the participant becoming distressed. According to Brackenridge:

No researcher should overstep the limits of her professional training or skills by giving counselling or advice which lies outside her competence. I worked with a qualified social worker before commencing my first set of interviews … (2001, p.153).

Very little opportunity exists for formal training in this area at the level I require, therefore, I will work with an experienced child protection social worker prior to commencing interviews.[64] In addition, a qualified and experienced social worker[65] will be 'assigned' to each participant and take part in at least the preliminary discussions.

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[64] My colleague and research collaborator Phil Prescott is an experienced child abuse case worker.
[65] Sue Wilkinson (a child protection consultant with the DCSF) has agreed to assist me, including travelling to meet participants if required.

References

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Appendix 3.1

Guidelines for minimising practitioner-researcher role conflict	Requirement met via (where applicable):
1) provide clear information for participants about:	
(a) details of the research;	❑ Edge Hill web pages ❑ Pre-interview discussions ❑ Informed consent form
(b) informed consent;	❑ Informed consent form
(c) information on the possible consequences of participating on them, the relationship and maybe others too;	❑ Pre-interview discussions
2) form an effective research alliance by:	
(a) negotiating a clear contract with good boundaries;	❑ Research rules
(b) keeping a compassionate distance in the research role;	❑ See main document (pp.2-4)
(c) outlining the tasks and goals of participant and researcher;	❑ Informed consent form ❑ Pre-interview discussions
(d) striving to achieve a balance between impassioned and impassive responses;	❑ See main document
(e) communicating limits to the relationship (e.g. what happens when the research is over?);	❑ Informed consent form ❑ Pre-interview discussions
3) have a clear policy on confidentiality:	
(a) point out the context of what is disclosed in the research interview is not subject to counsellor/supervisor codes of ethics;	❑ Informed consent form ❑ Pre-interview discussions
(b) be clear about the limits of confidentiality and when you might have to discuss the information with others;	❑ Informed consent form ❑ Pre-interview discussions
4) cultivate self-reflexivity by:	
(a) regularly reviewing the researcher role/research process;	❑ Pre- & Post-interview discussion ❑ Research diary ❑ Supervisory meetings
(b) using code of ethics for researchers and moral principles etc. for guidelines for consultation	❑ Edge Hill's *Research Ethics Code of Conduct* ❑ *Research Ethics Framework* of the ESRC

Adapted from Gabriel (1999).

Appendix 3.2

Research Rules (Adapted from Brackenridge, 2001, 156-157: table 8.1)

With participants:

1) Contacting
    a) Publicise study through various means
    b) Individual makes contact directly or through third party
    c) Check he understands the nature of the study and direct to sources of further information/confirmation
    d) Arrange preliminary meeting at a time and place to suit participant
2) Putting at ease/gaining credibility
    a) For preliminary meeting find somewhere quiet and as discreet as possible
    b) Introduce myself including background as an athlete, academic and researcher
    c) Explain what I am researching and why
    d) Explain anonymity and confidentiality (and imposed limits)
    e) Explain how raw material will be gathered (recorded interviews) and arrangements for secure storage
    f) Explain informed consent form and request signature if participant agrees to continue
3) Gaining trust/giving control
    a) Check they are still happy to talk;
    b) Explain that interview does not have to take place now if they would prefer to make a different arrangement
    c) Explain that they can control pace and content, take a break or leave at anytime
    d) Explain right to veto any information relating to them
    e) Explain schedule/format (*see Appendix 7*): 3 stages over at least several hours of interviewing anticipated – can be organised in whatever way suits them
4) Listening
    a) Invite them to begin their story (or discuss/reflect on involvement and impact on them if not first interview)
    b) Prompt on particular issues if necessary (early interviews may be less structured than later ones)
    c) End by encouraging reflection on the experience
    d) Check whether happy to continue (when applicable) and arrange next meeting
5) Follow up
    a) Write soon afterwards to thank them
    b) Complete pro forma with descriptive details of the participant, their age and sex, age and sex of abuser, age at time of abuse, date and method of my first contact and subsequent contacts, whether parents knew of the abuse, whether and to whom the abuse had been reported, and any official consequences (legal charges, internal disciplinary enquiry, etc.)
    c) If participants wish, correspond afterwards and provide sources of professional support if required and reporting procedures

With data:

6) Writing up
   a) Write up notes and transcribe all data making clear distinction between my words and theirs
   b) Separate into distinct statements and code each statement to enable easy identification later and to ensure that statements are not incorrectly attributed – thus P3ii/19 = Participant 3, second interview, nineteenth statement (colour coding could assist)
   c) Acknowledge the influence of my own verbal and non-verbal behaviour on the interviews, and of my 'editorial' work
   d) Prepare an anonymised transcript (changing names, place names, dates, sport names and any potential identifying features)
   e) Keep Research Diary to detail the research process and personal feelings about the work
7) Analysis
   a) Read all transcripts and case notes until familiar with content
   b) Consider possible major themes
   c) List themes and sub-themes as systematically as possible and number each one
   d) Go through each anonymised transcript line by line coding each statement
   e) Iterate between the list of codes and the transcript statements/meaning units until satisfied that the codes are distinct and accurate
   f) Prepare a matrix of participant numbers against major codes: allocate every number into each code to reveal gaps and clusters
   g) Open separate computer files for each code and allocate every statement to the appropriate code (or sub-code)
   h) Check the whole pattern of data against the emerging theoretical models to examine gaps, contradictions and uncertainties
8) Storage
   a) File all original material, case by case with a summary catalogue at the front recording basic descriptive details (age, sex, etc.)
   b) Include all letters, notes from meetings and supplementary data plus the pro forma with basic information
   c) Lock all files away in a location completely separate from other research material and keep this location secret (anonymised data may be kept in the public domain)
   d) Keep chronological archive of all correspondence with other academics and interested parties, notes on telephone calls, press comments, papers from agencies, etc.

Appendix 3.3

<u>INFORMED CONSENT FORM AND INFORMATION SHEET (EXAMPLE)</u>

The title of this project is: *Organised male-sport and the sexual abuse of boys.*

This project is led by **Mike Hartill**, Edge Hill University.

The project supervisors are:

***Paul Reynolds* (Director of Studies)**

Department of Social & Psychological Sciences
Edge Hill University
Tel: 01695 58
Email: reynoldp@edgehill.ac.uk

Dr Leon Culbertson

Department of Sport & Physical Activity
Edge Hill University
Tel: 01695 584212
Email: culbertl@edgehill.ac.uk

Please feel free to contact either person to discuss any details of the project further.

Background Information:

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. This is obviously a sensitive piece of research and I hope I have already answered any queries or concerns you may have. The information included here is intended to be a recap and written record of our previous discussion(s). However, please read all the information carefully and take further time to consider your participation in this project. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign this form. As already discussed, you do not have to take part. If you decide that you do not want to participate, there will be no disadvantage to you nor will you be asked to explain your decision.

What are the aims of the project?

The main aims of the project are to develop understanding about:

- the nature of child sexual abuse in male-sport;
- the impact of sexual abuse on males who experienced abuse in sport.

Procedures

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to take part in interviews with myself and (at least initially) an experienced social worker. The topic of these interviews will be your life history, particularly your childhood experiences of sport and sexual abuse. The amount of time spent on this is entirely up to you. You can change your mind and decide not to take part at any time. If you decide to stop, you do not have to give any reasons for your decision, and you will not be placed at any disadvantage whatsoever.

I anticipate several meetings of approximately 1-2 hours, but potentially this could be a conservative estimate. The time and location of the interviews is entirely up to you. I anticipate travelling to meet you, but if there are any travel costs incurred by you, you will be fully reimbursed.

Risks and Benefits
There is the possibility that you may experience distress through your involvement in this research and you should consider this carefully before proceeding to the interview stage. We have discussed available sources of professional support as well as your feelings towards participating in this study and how it might impact upon you.

There are no direct rewards from this study, however, by taking part, it is anticipated that you will help to increase knowledge of an issue that has been mostly ignored by research and sport governing bodies. It is intended that this knowledge be used to help develop understanding of this issue and ultimately to help prevent children from suffering abuse in the future.

What information will be collected, and how will it be used?

The points below illustrate the type of information I am interested in:

- family background and general childhood experiences;
- what sport(s) you were involved in;
- how the abuse began;
- who the perpetrator(s) was (their relationship to you);
- how you dealt with it;
- how it affected you and those around you;
- whether you told anyone;
- whether you received any help.

Every effort to maintain anonymity will be made. All transcripts resulting from interviews will be securely stored and any identifying information will be removed. Any work that results from your participation in this study will be available for you to read and you will have the power to remove any information that pertains to you.

Any and all resulting publications will be thoroughly anonymised, however, I can't absolutely guarantee confidentiality. That is, if incriminating evidence is given that might be used by the police to prosecute someone who has sexually abused children (and possibly continues to) I will be ethically bound by the terms of my research to report this to the authorities – however it is entirely your choice to provide such evidence, but this is not the purpose of the study.

Statement by participant

- I have volunteered to take part in this project
- I know I can stop taking part at any time without being disadvantaged
- I understand that any information disclosed by me that might be used in a criminal investigation may be passed on to the relevant authorities
- I am satisfied that the interview data will be stored securely
- I know that the research may be published, but it will not be linked to me
- I know I will be given access to all information and written notes that relate to me
- I know that I have the right to veto results of interview material that may be submitted for publication where that work relates to me and the information I have given
- I have been able to discuss the possible risks involved
- I have been provided with contact details for sources of professional support
- I agree to inform the researcher immediately if I feel distressed
- I have had the chance to ask questions

I have read this form and I understand it. I agree to take part in the project.

Signed (Participant):   **Date:**

Signed (Project Leader):   **Date:**

Appendix 3.4

<u>Sources of Support and Information</u>

Survivors UK
(support and counselling for men who have been raped or sexually abused)
Helpline 0845 122 120 (7pm-10pm Mon/Tue/Thu)
www.survivorsuk.org

Survivors Swindon
(Offers two helplines, group support and counselling for survivors of sexual abuse
and their partners as well as training for outside agencies)
Helpline: 0845 430 9371 (Advice, information and listening support for adult male
survivors of sex abuse and adult rape)
Partners Helpline: 0845 430 9372 (Help, education and support for female partners
of survivors)
www.survivorsswindon.com

Fire in Ice (Male Survivors of Abuse)
Helpline 08452 572 645
www.fireinice2005.co.uk

NAPAC (National Association of People Abused in Childhood)
Helpline 0800 085 3330
www.napac.org.uk

Help for Adult Victims of Child Abuse (HAVOCA)
http://www.havoca.org/HAVOCA_home.htm

**The British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse &
Neglect** (BASPCAN)
http://www.baspcan.org.uk/

Supportline
(provides a confidential telephone helpline offering emotional support to any
individual on any issue)
Helpline 020 8554 9004
www.supportline.org.uk

The Child Protection in Sport Unit
Telephone 0116 234 7278/7280
http://thecpsu.org.uk/