

# **Survivors of Male Rape: The Emergence of a Social and Legal Issue**

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## List of Abbreviations

AO	Administrative Officer
BAC	British Association of Counselling
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
DC	Detective Constable
DCI	Detective Chief Inspector
DI	Detective Inspector
DS	Detective Sergeant
FME	Forensic Medical Examiner
IAG	Independent Advisory Group
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
MVSASG	Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group
PC	Police Constable
PS	Police Sergeant
PI	Police Inspector
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RCC	Rape Crisis Centres
RTS	Rape Trauma Syndrome
SOIT	Sexual Offences Investigation Techniques
VSS	Victims Support Schemes

## Abstract

Little is known about the crime of adult male-on-male rape. The present study aims to explore the nature and impact of male rape on men's lives using statistics from SurvivorsUK (1344 cases) and a victimisation survey of 16 men to generate qualitative data for this purpose. The reluctance of men to report rape is explored using this data, as are men's needs in terms of service provision. Semi-structured interviews with seven male rape counsellors are used to further examine these points. A newspaper content analysis over a 13-year period documents the emergence of male rape as a social and legal issue and also illustrates that male rape myths are perpetuated by coverage of this phenomenon. A questionnaire of 93 police officers across seven divisions of the Metropolitan Police Service considers police responses to, and attitudes towards, male rape, and demonstrates that such myths are manifest within the police service. The findings demonstrate that the impact of rape on men's lives is severe and that men experience rape trauma syndrome as identified in female rape victims. This trauma is intensified by rape myths rooted within society, perpetuated by newspapers, and manifest within the police service. An acute information gap in police training on male rape is identified and the research illustrates a strong need for multi-agency support systems for male survivors. The Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group is a multi-agency group chaired by the Metropolitan Police and established to draw information from different agencies to develop research and awareness of male rape and sexual abuse. Current initiatives from this group are presented. The research explores the theoretical positions of positivism, feminism and masculinities and examines the importance of these in understanding the male survivor of rape. In focusing on the experiences of male survivors the study identifies the need for social and cultural change to validate these experiences. It is suggested that these be supported with changes in legislation to include oral and object penetration under existing rape law so as to give legal recognition to these experiences. It is evident that policy changes are therefore needed to reflect the needs and demands for survivors of a very real social and legal issue. The research demonstrates a clear contribution to the theoretical debates in criminology which provide an understanding of rape, and which underpin the empirical work. The empirical work is a contribution to research in terms of understanding the phenomenon of male rape and the findings demonstrate the wider policy implications of that work. As such, the thesis is an advancement of knowledge and research and provides for future policy directions to support male survivors of rape.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

...All human beings are potential rape victims. Spouses are raped. Male and female children are raped. Babies are raped. Physically handicapped persons are raped. Anaesthetised patients are raped. Mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters are raped. Adolescents rape one another as well as older persons and children. Male and female prisoners rape each other. During wars, soldiers have been known to rape entire communities. Males rape females and males. Many rapists are gender and age blind. Females rape other females and males. No person is immune from the human potential to rape or be raped.<sup>1</sup>

Until the 1980s, the issue of male rape<sup>2</sup> was much neglected in the United Kingdom; being conceived either as an aberration of prison life or alternatively a violent outgrowth of the homosexual subculture (Mezey and King, 1989). It was commonly assumed that male rape victims were either children or young adolescents. Male rape within an institutional surrounding was perhaps the first recognition given to the existence of this phenomenon, although official legal recognition has only come about in Britain with the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, which makes it illegal for a man to rape another man. The issue of male rape therefore remained concealed until relatively recently.

Whilst a wealth of feminist debate has focused on the problem of rape against women<sup>3</sup>, very little research has been carried out in the United Kingdom on any aspect of male rape, with much research emanating from the USA where more extensive work has already taken place. It is believed by the researcher that greater recognition and understanding of male rape through research will reduce the stigma of it, thereby creating a climate which is less threatening to victims, encouraging them to come forward and seek support. This is supported by Mezey and King (1989), who stress the need for research in this field. Research by Groth and Burgess (1980); King (1993); and Gregory and Lees (1999) support

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1 McMullen (1990:10).

2 Male rape refers to the rape of one man by another. The problems surrounding definition are discussed throughout the thesis.

3 Brownmiller (1975: 436) suggests that 'It is evident that the social definition of rape is quite incongruous with the legal definition and displays a characteristic set of biases primarily reflecting...the rape-support belief system. Thus the question of 'what is rape?' is not answered by a powerful legal litmus test but through a system of beliefs that drive from a misogynistic social context, the 'rape culture'. While such hatred for women cannot be used to explain male rape, Brownmiller's identification of such a 'rape culture' is useful for understanding the rape of women. Other work by Lees (1996) further identifies problems with the legal definition of rape, and feminist researchers such as MacKinnon (1987) and Smart (1989) argue that while the law outwardly protects women from rape, in reality it is based on sexist assumptions which allow for such violence to continue. These arguments will be developed in chapter 4 and the problems of defining rape are discussed throughout the thesis.

the belief that male rape is a largely under-reported offence although the reasons for this remain unclear. Stanko and Hobdell (1993) suggest that men's unwillingness to disclose victimisation is closely related to their reluctance to admit their vulnerability, while research by Gregory and Lees (1999) indicates that males fear that the police will not believe them and that this prevents them from reporting. It is therefore unclear whether low reporting reflects police attitudes and responses towards male rape or whether this is due to other factors, such as the stigma and misconceptions surrounding male rape, held in wider society. Anecdotal evidence suggests that male rape myths<sup>4</sup> play a major part in keeping this a hidden issue.

One key area identified in female rape is the role of newspapers in dispelling or fuelling rape myths. Researchers such as Soothill and Walby (1991) have suggested that although people do not passively absorb all that they read in newspapers, these nonetheless play an integral role in shaping people's ideas. Other work by McCormick (1995) also asserts that the media help to create and shape public opinion by constructing and selecting 'newsworthy' items for reporting. Work by Lees (1995) looked at newspaper reports on date rape and research by Soothill and Walby (1991) examined newspaper coverage of sex crimes, with a strong emphasis on rape. Both studies found that newspaper coverage of rape is highly selective and more often than not presents a distorted picture of rape, enhancing myths and thereby exacerbating the distress experienced by victims. Other work by Benedict (1992) further highlights the role of the press in shaping public opinions about rape. She argues that rape myths perpetuated by the press exist to displace male offenders' responsibility onto their female victims. However, research by Fairstein (1993) and Cuklanz (1996) demonstrates that the media can be proactive in dispelling rape myths. It is clear then that newspapers have considerable power in influencing people's perceptions and opinions since they are a major source of information to the public. For this reason, it is important for this thesis to examine the role of newspapers in either generating awareness of male rape or perpetuating myths about it. This will be done through a content analysis of UK newspapers over a 13-year period, which is discussed further on in the thesis.

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<sup>4</sup> Burt (1980) defined rape myths as prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists. Other definitions are considered in chapter 2.

There is also a need to explore personal reasons that may influence the victim's decision to report or not report, such as feelings of embarrassment, fear of rejection by friends and family, fear of victim-blame and fear of interrogations into previous sexual history and conduct. To date, there has been no detailed research conducted on the impact of male rape on survivors' lives. Mezey and King (1989) have also emphasised the need for more work to determine the type of support required by male victims of sexual assault. Indeed, it has been suggested by Groth and Burgess (1980:810) that because of the scarcity of data on the victims of male rape due to a 'combination of cultural, social, legal, and psychological issues, male rape remains one of the most unaddressed issues in our society'.

The present research is designed to provide a detailed analysis of the approaches taken by the police and criminal justice system to accommodate victims of male rape; to examine the prevalence of rape myths in newspaper coverage and to explore their presence in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Additionally, consideration will be given to the effect of male rape myths on police reporting and recording practices. The nature and impact of male rape on victims will also be examined, as will their needs for improved services.

The overall aims of the project can be summarised as:

- To explore the patterns and nature of male rape in British society.
- To examine whether newspaper reporting helps to dispel or perpetuate myths about male rape.
- To consider police responses to, and attitudes towards male rape.
- To investigate the role of the police and their experiences of dealing with male rape cases.
- To identify and explore the factors which contribute to the under-reporting of male rape.
- To explore the needs of survivors and the adequacy of existing services in meeting these needs.

The researcher recognises that there is an urgent need for more research in this area. Although it is beginning to be acknowledged as a very real social and legal issue, the general lack of understanding and support for male survivors of rape demonstrates the existence of a serious information gap. The Chronology on page 22 illustrates the emergence of male rape as a social and legal issue, with a

comparison to female rape. Researchers such as Estrich (1987) have suggested that the situation for male survivors is not so different from that of female survivors two centuries ago. The researcher believes that greater research into this subject area will help provide a better understanding of the issue. On the basis of this understanding, consideration can be given to policy directions resulting in more empathetic responses to male survivors and more appropriate service provisions.

### **Victims and Survivors – A Note on Terminology**

This thesis draws from the principles of feminism, which encourage the use of empowering terminology. As such, the word 'survivor' rather than 'victim' is preferred. However, using the term 'survivor' throughout the thesis has a number of practical problems. Firstly, the majority of research studies on male rape use the term 'victim' rather than 'survivor' and it is not thought appropriate to change the terminology employed by other researchers in their work. Similarly, research within the Metropolitan Police Service uses the term 'victim' to identify victimisation and this is true throughout the criminal justice system. Again, this terminology is maintained in the thesis. Much feminist research on rape has adopted the term 'survivor' rather than 'victim' since this is seen to be more positive and empowering, whereas the term 'victim' suggests helplessness. For example, Kelly (1988:163) suggests that the word 'victim' refers to someone who has been killed or destroyed or who has suffered a loss. The term 'survivor' indicates that the individual has survived the victimisation, and has overcome it and recovered. However, this conflicts with the long-term impact of male rape, from which it is arguable that many men and women do not recover. Therefore, the dilemma between using 'victim' or 'survivor' is unresolved. There is therefore some interchange between the use of 'survivor' and 'victim' in the thesis, depending on the research being discussed. The term 'survivor' is preferred when it is practically possible to use it.

### **Theory**

The focus of this research is essentially the experiences of adult male survivors of rape, rather than the perpetrators of this crime. As such, this research study is primarily a contribution to understanding the impact of rape on survivors' lives and considering their service needs. It is anticipated that the greatest contribution will therefore be in terms of policy directions to support male

survivors. However, it is important to present some understanding of male rape in order to fully realise the impact of this crime on survivors' lives.

Theoretical explanations of male rape have been rooted within the field of positivism since work in this area has developed through clinical observations and analysis from a psychiatric model of understanding rape. Such explanations have focused on prison rape since this was historically the only recognition given to male rape. Non-institutionalised rape has been traditionally viewed as consensual homosexual activity (discussed further in chapter 2). The discussion of positivist explanations (chapter 3) will show that the dynamics of prison rape are quite different from non-institutionalised rape and as such, non-institutionalised rape requires explanations beyond those provided by positivism.

Later work from the feminist and social structural positions locate the occurrence of rape within the wider social structure. Here it is argued that a hierarchy rooted within patriarchal relations allows men to dominate and control women. Rape is seen as one form of such social control. Chapter 4 will demonstrate that the feminist position on male rape views this phenomenon as an extension of male power and control over females, suggesting that perpetrators of male rape treat their male victims as weak, subordinate females, thereby demonstrating deep-seated issues of power over women. Rooted in an understanding of female oppression, feminist research on rape has been instrumental in ensuring significant improvements in terms of service provisions, and policy changes, to support female survivors. However, such an analysis does not lend itself readily to an exploration of male rape. It is therefore necessary to examine the limitations of feminist research in light of the existence of male survivors.

Similarly, research on masculinities has identified rape as an act of power and control, developed through different gender-based role socialisation. In terms of this theoretical approach, the notion of male rape is overlooked because of the strong gender stereotypes into which men and women are socialised. Men have traditionally been expected to be strong and dominant and this expectation disallows them to be victims of a sexual offence that fundamentally threatens and challenges their sexuality and manliness. These ideas about masculinities are considered in Chapter 4.

Positivism essentially focuses on violence as being determined by biological, psychological or social factors or then a combination of these multi-factorial elements, and uses 'scientific' methods to determine these factors. These

methods rely on violence being visible and therefore measurable. Mooney (2000) points out that historically there are two positivistic traditions within criminology. There is the sociological perspective and the individualistic one. Both suggest that violence is determined by forces beyond the individual's control. The focus of this thesis will be on individual positivism since early work on rape focused on the pathology of the male offender to explain his behaviour, suggesting he was 'psychopathic', 'disturbed', 'sick' or 'abnormal'. This theoretical position can be located within the 'nature' debate, which presents rape as a consequence of uncontrollable forces within the rapist. Similarly, evolutionary theory is discussed in its explanation of rape as a product of natural and sexual selection similar to that of the animal kingdom. In contrast to this, feminism and social structuralism argues that people are *nurtured* into different behaviours through their socialisation and that their behaviour is not a product of forces beyond their control. Criminal behaviour is thus believed to be learned from social and cultural values.

In considering the theoretical explanations for male rape, these debates will draw on the nature vs. nurture debate to determine which is more plausible in explaining rape. Similarly, the main theoretical contributions within feminism to understanding rape will be discussed and these will then be evaluated in relation to male rape. In summarising, chapter 4 will draw conclusions from the theoretical perspectives discussed and will use these as a basis for conducting the empirical research for this project.

## **1.1 Taking Victims into Account: the Place of the Victim in Criminology**

The victim of crime was largely ignored in criminological research until the 1970's (Maguire and Pointing 1988; Carlen 1996). Primary interest lay in explaining criminal behaviour and consequently, in the motivations of the perpetrator. As Maguire and Pointing (1988:1) state 'The victim was simply a source of information about the offending behaviour, or a witness when the case was heard in court.'

While the main focus of interest in crime victims did not occur until the 1970's, it was in 1948 that the sub-discipline of victimology was first conceived by Von Hentig in his work *The Criminal and His Victim*. Von Hentig provided the first

study of victims of crime in which he sought to understand crime, not by focusing on the offender as previous criminological research had done, but instead by looking at the victim, his/her characteristics and interactions with the perpetrator, and also his/her contribution to his/her own victimisation. Von Hentig focused on the role of the victim in his/her victimisation. Therefore, as Fattah (1994:287) suggests

Through victimology it appeared possible to develop a dynamic model encompassing the perpetrator's motives and the sufferer's attitude, the criminal's initiative and the victim's response; one party's action and the other party's reaction.

The fact that this remains a largely unfulfilled aim is due to the heavy criticism that the concept of victim precipitation, which emerged from Von Hentig's work and was more boldly explicit in work by Mendelsohn (1963), received from advocates for victims' rights and especially feminist thinkers. Mendelsohn (1963) elaborates on his work *Rape in Criminology* (1940) in which he focused thought on the victim from a bio-psycho-social point of view. This work emphasised the extent to which the female victim is able to resist rape based on the topography of the sexual organs in the female body. Therefore, for Mendelsohn, factors such as the hidden position of the female sexual organs, and their protection by the most powerful muscles in the human body established a model for resisting rape. Of course Mendelsohn recognised that there were exceptions to this, such as the physical strength of the perpetrator, the state of unconsciousness of the victim and the element of surprise of the attack. Mendelsohn elaborated on the doctrine of Victimology when considering cases of 'crimes passionnels'. He presents the case example of Stephen Condreanu for which he was defence barrister, to illustrate the concept of victim precipitation. In this case the accused had, with premeditation, killed his former wife and her lover, with whom he had been living for several years after the divorce. The defendant stayed with the family to support his daughter's learning, but his ex wife would shower him with all her sweetness before throwing him out, taking all his money. He maintained that her lover would then ridicule him. He was sentenced for 12 years but released after completing half that sentence, due to mitigating circumstances. Mendelsohn (1963: 5) concludes that 'There can be no doubt that, had it not been for the perversity of his former wife, he would never have been guilty of two crimes'.

This defence of provocation has been criticised in numerous cases by feminist campaigners since it is usually the (female) victim who is blamed for the victimisation. Later work by Amir (1971) blamed rape victims for their

experiences and this brought further challenges to the area of victim precipitation.<sup>5</sup> The work of Amir (1971) and others in relation to victim precipitation is discussed in chapter 3 and requires no further elaboration at this point, except to say that although this concept has fallen into disrepute because of the perception that it removes blame from the perpetrator and instead places it on the victim, it was nonetheless the benchmark for the emergence of the focus on the victim of crime. As such, it does have an important place in demonstrating how the victim of crime has assumed significance within criminology and within the criminal justice system.

As demonstrated above, interest in the victim of crime developed from a shift of focus on perpetrators of crime to explaining offending behaviour in terms of the victim of crime. This shift has been broadly classified within the three different strands of victimology by Mawby and Walklate (1994) as positivist, radical, and critical victimology. A brief discussion of these three positions will follow to contextualise the emergence of the crime victim and to set the tone for a discussion of the development of the victims' movement.

### **Positivist Victimology**

Positivist victimology has been concerned with victim typologies facilitated by scientific patterns, regularities and characteristics of the events, as demonstrated in the work of Von Hentig and Mendelsohn discussed above. Emphasis has been on victims who contribute to their own victimisation (Miers 1989), and on street crimes, rather than private violence such as domestic violence and rape. As Mawby and Walklate (1994) demonstrate, this strand of victimology has received the support of the Conservative Party, which advocated 'social responsibility' and 'active citizenship' as part of its 'victimisation prevention' agenda. The priority here, as Karmen (1990: 11) demonstrates, has been on retributive justice, 'satisfying victims with the knowledge that offenders are being punished for their crimes'.

As Mawby and Walklate (1994) argue, a positivistic victimology fails to challenge the process by which criminal victimisation is socially produced. They maintain

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<sup>5</sup> Earlier work by Wolfgang (1958) on victim precipitation identified patterns in homicide and considered victim precipitation as a defence for battered women who killed their abusive partners. It is thus important to note that while later debates in this area have compared the notion of 'victim precipitation' to 'victim blaming,' (discussed in chapter 3) Wolfgang's work identified victim precipitated homicide as a positive pattern in explaining some homicides.



that this position fails to account for the way in which the law itself, or the state in implementing the law, constructs our understanding of the crime victim. Instead, the term 'victim' is seen to be self explanatory, based on the individual's suffering or his/her processing through the criminal justice system. They also point out that positivist victimology labels the victim as victim, failing to consider the possibility of challenging that label and instead viewing him/her as a survivor of victimisation. These challenges have developed from feminist criticisms of such a victimology which, using typologies, results in shifting responsibility from the perpetrator to the victim.

### **Radical Victimology**

In a bid to address the limitations of positivist victimology, radical victimology sought to incorporate all victims of crime, essentially concerning itself with 'victims of police force, the victims of war, the victims of the correctional system, the victim of state violence, the victims of oppression of any sort' (Quinney 1972: 315). As such, this strand of victimology incorporated the human rights perspective and promoted the relief of human suffering (Elias 1985). This position has sought to question the role of the Capitalist State, and the social construction of the perpetrator and victim within Capitalist societies. Hence, the notion that the powerful and privileged were beyond the criminal law and seldom criminalised, shifted the focus of victimology towards an advocacy of human rights, without diverting attention from crime victims and their rights.

Mawby and Walklate (1994) argue that while radical victimology has gained some support from feminism for its recognition of the considerable power of the law and the state, which is abused in order to oppress, it nonetheless had more of a rhetorical impact rather than one which can be documented through research. However, the birth of radical left realism from this position has had a profound impact in terms of theoretical and empirical research on taking the victim of crime seriously. Young (1986) suggests that radical victimology neglected the real victim of crime and he therefore proposed a victimology based on people's experiences of crime. Radical left realism has therefore provided extensive information on who the victims of crime are at local level and has also provided details on the occurrence of crime.

## **Critical Victimology**

It has been suggested that critical victimology

...constitutes an attempt to examine the wider social context in which some versions of victimology have become more dominant than others and also to understand how those versions of victimology are interwoven with questions of policy response and service delivery to victims of crime. It constitutes an attempt to appreciate how the generative mechanisms of capitalism and patriarchy set the material conditions in which different victims' movements have flourished (Mawby and Walklate 1994:21).

It therefore adopts issues raised by the feminist movement and seeks to demonstrate the connections between policy implementation processes within victims' movements and the wider political and economic processes. As such, it considers the development of state compensation schemes and victim support services for victims who are seen as consumers (discussed below).

### **The Birth of the Victims' Movement**

The neglect and invisibility of the victim of crime has led to interest in this area through two significant developments; the first being the feminist movement, with the opening of the first women's refuge in West London in 1972 and the first rape crisis centre, also in London, in 1976 and the second being the formation of the National Association of Victim Support Schemes in 1973. Before discussing these important developments it is necessary to set the political context which gave rise to the victims' movement.

Concern for the victim of crime is historically rooted in the formation of the welfare state, which proposed care for individuals in society. According to Marshall (1948), in the eighteenth century citizenship in England and Wales was centred around civil rights, in the nineteenth century it was centred on political rights, and in the twentieth century, on social rights. These rights achieved their ultimate expression in the establishment of the welfare state, which developed out of

...inadequate benefits and neglect of special types of needy (people, exposing) serious want caused quite simply by low wages and irregular employment, and was completed by the uncovering of unsuspected depths of squalor and deprivation (Ibid. 40-41).

Therefore, it was the post-war Labour government that built the welfare state and its institutions (which barely survived three decades before a reforming

Conservative government sought to redefine most and abolish many). However, it was this focus on social rights that precipitated an interest in victims of crime. The notion of compensation for the victim of crime was first established under the influence of campaigner Margaret Fry whose commitment gave the first voice to victims, demonstrated through the establishment of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in 1964. Referring to Margaret Fry, Rock (1990: 66) suggests that:

In her last formulation of the problem, compensation would represent a collective insurance provided by society. All taxpayers would be regarded as subscribers. All taxpayers were at risk of becoming victims. Since the state forbade citizens arming themselves, it should assume responsibility for its failure to provide protection.

As such, it implied a contract between the victim of crime and the state. Such a contract assumed a very positive image of the victim of crime as an innocent party. Walklate (2001) uses the title the 'politicisation of the crime victim' to demonstrate the emergence of the victims' movement in terms of political interest in this field. As Shapland, Willmore and Duff (1985) argue, the philosophy of the victims' movement has been based on the principles of the welfare state, with emphasis on the community's responsibility to take much of the burden of hardship suffered by individual citizens.

The establishment of Victim Support Schemes, Rape Crisis Centres and Refuges for battered women demonstrates the rebirth and politicisation of the victim of crime. While Victim Support Schemes were set up as 'neutral' support for crime victims, at the same time, feminist interest in female victims of crime led to a wealth of research and lobbying for more victim-centred policies. The success of Victim Support Schemes has been in the political support they have received since their emphasis on reintegrating the victim into the community was in line with the then government's agenda of non-dependency. Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister at that time, set about eliminating the 'dependency culture' (Walklate 2001) and Victim Support's principles of community support were very appealing for that reason. Furthermore, Victim Support also took on responsibilities, which the government advocated for its citizens. The economic focus on efficiency and effectiveness was also supported by Victim Supports' alternative source of service delivery –the voluntary approach. Therefore, all in all, Victim Support gained considerable influence in formulating government policy and as such, gained a strong reputation for giving victims of crime a voice. Walklate (2001) suggests that through the establishment of Victim Support, not

only did the government's political agenda move forward, it also silenced a potentially highly critical voice by adopting issues raised by the feminist movement under an organisation which it funded. However, as Corbett and Maguire (1987) and Reeves and Mulley (2000) point out, Victim Support had no political aims or agendas but to act as 'a good neighbour' to victims.

The success of Victim Support Schemes has been documented by Corbett and Maguire (1987); Rock (1990); Reeves and Mulley (2000). As suggested earlier, the role of feminist researchers and campaigners has had a profound impact on the rebirth of the victim of crime. Research on domestic violence (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Edwards 1989; Smith 1989; Stanko 1989), rape and sexual violence (Adler 1987; Tempkin 1987; Kelly 1988; Lees 1997, Gregory and Lees 1999), and women's experiences in the criminal justice system (Clarke and Lewis 1977; Hanmer, Radford and Stanko 1989; Kennedy 1992; Tempkin 1995, and Lees 1996) has introduced the female victims' experiences onto the policy agenda. Additionally, the adoption of victim surveys in the 1980's further highlighted the experiences of some of these most vulnerable victims of crime and documented 'hidden crime' and people's 'fear of crime', as well as victims' degree of satisfaction with policing (for example, Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Jones et al. 1986; Mooney 1993).

While feminist campaigners have been concerned with social inequality, political marginalisation and equality in treatment, and victim support began as a voluntary, community-based service provision for victims of crime, more single-issue victim lobby groups have since developed to tackle specific forms of victimisation and to support particular victims of crime, such as hate crime victims which will be discussed in chapter 4.

## **1.2 The Research Project**

The research project examines the emergence of male rape as a social and legal issue, and in doing so, explores newspaper coverage of male rape over a 13-year period. Research by Soothill and Soothill (1993) found that if articles on sexual assaults dramatise stranger-related assaults, then jurors, lawyers, judges and the police formulate sexual assault in a similar way. This then affects public perceptions, which place trust on court decisions. Content analysis of 413 articles is therefore used to discover whether newspapers help dispel myths about male rape or whether they in fact perpetuate them. The contributions of the mass

media and the various roles they have played in the development of male rape as a social and legal issue are outlined and discussed in chapter 6.

The prevalence of such myths within the Metropolitan Police Service is explored using a questionnaire of police attitudes and experiences of male rape cases distributed through seven divisions of the MPS, with a final sample of 93 police officers. The police play a key role in supporting male victims to report rape and to make this a less hidden crime. The questionnaire explores the extent to which rape myths shape and influence police officers' opinions and perceptions about male rape which, regardless of their own professionalism, will inevitably have an impact on the way they perceive and subsequently deal with male victims. The questionnaire also investigates the role of the police and their experiences of dealing with male rape cases.

Research has also been conducted with the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group (MVSASG) in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police and other agencies in order to further explore the needs of male survivors. The work within the MVSASG is further elaborated in chapter 5.

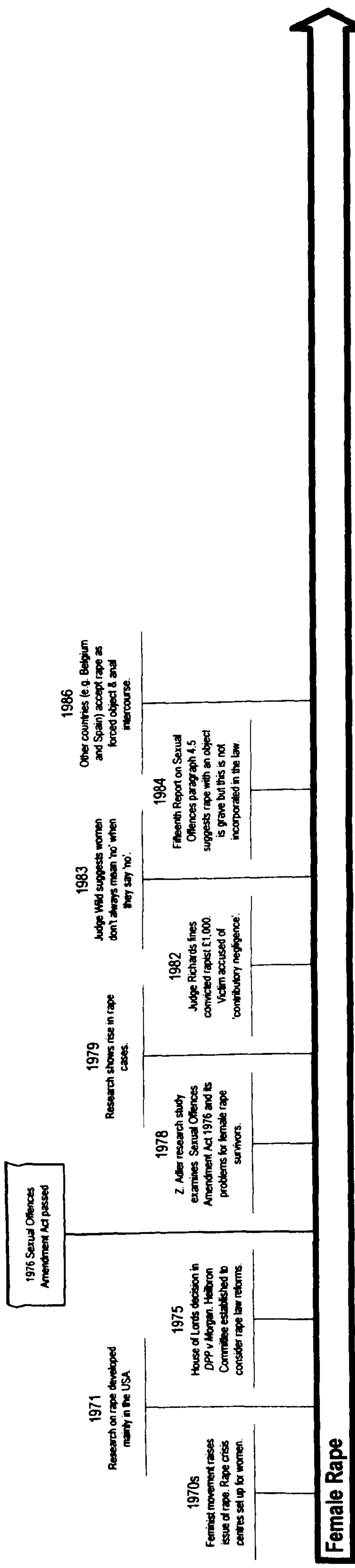
Primary statistical data on a total of 1344 male survivors was collected and analysed in order to explore the experiences of male survivors. The source of this data was SurvivorsUK which is the only national organisation dedicated to offering support to men who have been raped and/or sexually abused (the work of SurvivorsUK is discussed in chapter 8). These statistics are used as a first step in exploring the nature of male rape, in order to address the aims of the research as discussed earlier. The project also aims to identify and explore the factors that contribute to the under-reporting of male rape and these were not explicit in the SurvivorsUK data. A victimisation survey was therefore used to generate more detailed data. A total of 16 male survivors were contacted using a snowballing technique and asked to complete a carefully worded survey about their experiences, including their contact with the police and other agencies. The research method is discussed in greater detail in chapter 5. The survey also explored the needs of survivors of rape and the adequacy of existing services in meeting these needs. The highly sensitive nature of male rape made it essential that each participant was approached in an intensely sympathetic and non-judgemental manner. I therefore undertook training over a six-month period from professional counsellors trained specifically to support survivors of male rape. This was seen to be important to ensure that the well being of the participant remained

paramount throughout the research. It was essential that the participant's recovery process was not compromised at any time during the research.

Semi-structured interviews with seven male rape counsellors were also conducted to further ascertain the needs of survivors as well as the impact that rape has on male survivors.

### **1.3 Thesis Layout**

Chapter 2 discusses existing literature on male rape. Chapter 3 considers the contribution of positivistic explanations in understanding rape and male rape and demonstrates the limitations of these explanations. Chapter 4 provides a discussion of feminist explanations of rape and argues that the social construction of gender roles is particularly significant to understanding male rape. The limitations of feminist explanations are demonstrated, primarily in their failure to recognise male survivors of rape. Research on masculinities, which reasserts the importance of gender role construction and is more inclusive of male victims is also presented in this chapter. In chapter 5, the empirical research and the methodologies employed to carry out the research are discussed. Chapter 6 presents the findings from the content analysis of UK newspapers. Findings from the police questionnaire are presented in chapter 7. Chapter 8 illustrates the findings from the SurvivorsUK data and the victimisation survey, as well as the findings from the counsellor interviews. Chapter 9 discusses the implications of the research findings in terms of the theoretical framework presented in earlier chapters, drawing conclusions and policy recommendations in light of the research findings.



**Female Rape**

Research continues to demonstrate poor treatment of female survivors by the Court Process.

Increase in research on rape trials & their poor treatment of female survivors.

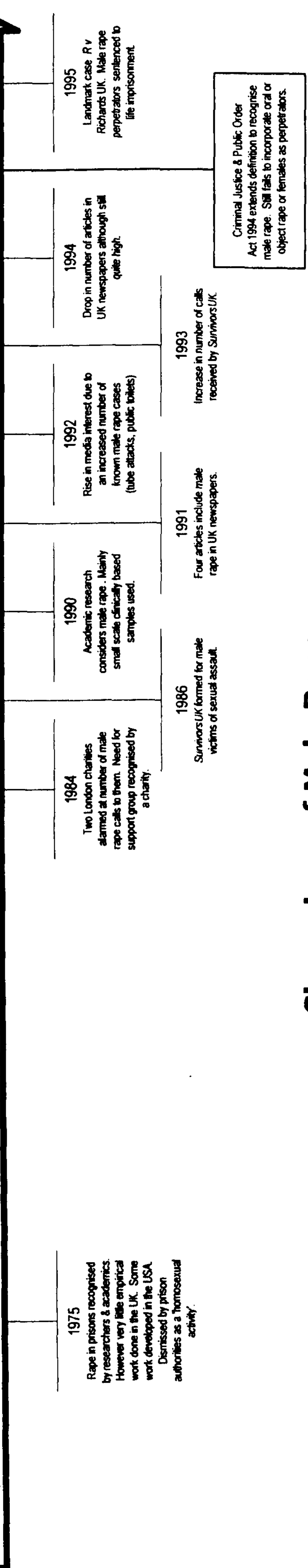
Controversy over treatment of rape survivors. Police interrogations of rape survivors criticised. Sexist attitude of judges reflected in their judgments.

Police set up rape suites and try to improve procedures for women. Problems with court process continue.

The establishment of *SurvivorsUK* raises awareness of male rape in UK.

General increase in newspaper articles, TV, radio coverage and cases leads to better awareness of male rape in society.

**Male Rape**



Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994 extends definition to recognise male rape. Still fails to incorporate oral or object rape or females as perpetrators.

**Chronology of Male Rape**

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

Although my focus is on the rape of women, I do not mean to suggest that men are not raped. The general invisibility of the problem of male rape, at least outside the prison context, may reflect the intensity of stigma attached to the crime and the homophobic reactions against its gay victims. In some respects the situation facing male rape victims today is not so different from that which faced female victims about two centuries ago (Estrich 1987: 108).

In recognising the invisibility of the problem of male rape, Estrich (1987) suggests accurately that this invisibility can be attributed to the stigma of male rape. Embedded in Estrich's statement is one of the most common myths about male rape. That is, that victims of male rape are homosexual, giving little thought to the possibility that *all* men can become potential victims of rape, regardless of their sexuality. This assumption is made with a view to testing it in the empirical component of this study. Additionally, Estrich's (1987) work is used as an opening to this chapter to highlight the invisible nature of male rape and the different myths that surround it. However, it is important to note that Estrich's work focused on female rape, as she clearly states, and it is commendable that at the time of writing, she was able to at least give recognition to the existence and hidden nature of male rape, where much other feminist research has failed to do so (this is discussed in detail in chapter 4).

This chapter provides a literature review on male rape and uses the different research studies to identify the different myths, defined by Anderson (1999) as prejudicial, stereotyped and false beliefs about rape, rape victims and perpetrators, and stereotypes, defined by Fulcher and Scott (1999) as untrue generalisations about different social groups, that keep male rape hidden. It is argued throughout the thesis that at the root of many of these myths and stereotypes lies the gender role socialisation and consequently, the social construction of masculinities, which socialise men into strong and sexually dominant roles (discussed in chapter 4). As such, this socialisation creates what Donnelly and Kenyon (1996:448) call the 'myth of male invulnerability' which prevents society, including men themselves, from recognising that men do become victims of rape. The purpose of this chapter then, is to discuss the literature on male rape and to highlight the myths and stereotypes identified in various work, so that the prevalence of these can be explored further in the empirical research on newspaper coverage of male rape (presented in chapter 6) and the police questionnaire data (see chapter 7). The effects of such myths will be considered in light of victims' experiences (chapter 8). Chapters 3 and 4 will



consider the theoretical explanations for the occurrence of male rape, and in doing so, will draw on the relevant literature.

Literature on male rape is scarce, with very little scholarly work in this area. Research that has been done mainly emanates from the USA where it has received wider recognition. In comparison, very little work has been carried out in the UK. Studies that have begun to examine male rape have used small-scale samples because of the limited number of known cases, and have mainly been clinically based.

## **2.1 Rape in Institutions**

Due to the lack of research carried out in the UK, little is known about the incidence of male rape in UK prisons. It is for this reason that research from the USA is discussed, although it is recognised that the situation in US prisons may differ from that in the UK, since levels of violence are generally thought to be lower in UK prisons.<sup>6</sup> However, as King (1993) argues, while this may suggest lower levels of rape in UK prisons, an absence of strong empirical evidence means that such conclusions remain anecdotal. Nevertheless, research based on US prisons can be used to give some indication of the nature of rape in prisons. It has been suggested that lack of research (in all prison environments) is due to the reluctance of men to report being sexually violated (Rideau and Sinclair 1982), as well as the difficulties of conducting such research within conservative institutional establishments (King 1993).

The issue of male rape was much neglected in the United Kingdom until the 1980's when cases of male rape gained media attention (this is demonstrated in chapter 6). Prior to this point, male rape was being conceived as a phenomenon of prison life and it was within this institutional surrounding that its existence first gained recognition. Outside the prison environment, male rape was regarded as a violent outgrowth of the homosexual subculture. As such, in both instances it was regarded as a minority problem and one that did not require public or research interest. It was commonly assumed that male rape victims were

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<sup>6</sup> Since there is no research that compares prison violence in US and UK prisons, this comment remains speculative. However, research has been carried out on US prisons which suggests that male on male rape is widespread (Davis 1968; Lockwood 1980; Dumond 2000, and Mariner 2001). Research by Edgar and O'Donnell (1998) has also found high levels of assaults in UK prisons although this work did not include male rape within its study (this research is discussed in detail in chapter 3). It may be because more research has been conducted in US prisons that levels of violence are thought to be higher there, than in the UK.

children or young adolescents. The issue of male rape therefore remained concealed until relatively recently.

Research into rape and sexual abuse in juvenile institutions has focused on male needs to prove masculinity, suggesting that in such environments male delinquents find peer pressure is strong, and the need to prove masculinity is therefore crucial. This is illustrated in the work of Polsky (1967), an earlier study which focused on adolescents as victims of sexual abuse. Polsky identified a ranking system based on sexual abuse within residential treatment units for delinquent boys. This research identified the role of violence and aggression in the deviant subculture that was used to rank members, creating rigid, inferior roles for the weaker boys who were exploited by their 'leaders'. Whilst there has been widespread concern over the number of care workers exposed as sexual abusers within such institutions, little research has been conducted on abuse of juveniles, by other juveniles.

As mentioned earlier, the issue of male rape is widely recognised by society as being more rife within the prison system than anywhere else. King (1993) suggests that this is because research on sexual assaults on adult males has focused on institutionalised rape (for example, Goyer and Eddleman 1984 discussed further on). As in juvenile institutions, male rape within prisons can be viewed as an extension of powers forcibly taken by the aggressors, to dominate the victims both physically and sexually. The rape of inmates is not regarded sympathetically, due to the common belief that a 'man' cannot be forced to engage in anything against his will. It is this view that leads many prison officials to deny the problem of male rape within their prisons, with inferences often made that any sexual contact within the institution must be of a homosexual nature (Lockwood 1980). Additionally, the attitude that any weakness on the victim's part invites and even justifies exploitation is common (Scacco 1982). Despite attempts by prison authorities to brush the problem under the carpet (Gunby 1981), research has consistently refuted the claims that male rape does not exist. For example, research by Lockwood (1980) demonstrates the existence of male rape in US prisons and this is supported by Scacco's (1982) research, which also shows that rape in US prisons is widespread.

The opportunity to carry out rape within prisons has also increased with the erosion of the nineteenth-century ideology of prisoners needing strict supervision to avoid corrupting one another. This lack of tight control due to the normalisation of prison life since the 1960's, combined with financial cut-backs

(resulting in staff shortages) and overcrowding within prisons, means that prisoners have more freedom of movement and hence, are more able to engage in illegal activities. This is demonstrated by Gunby (1981), whose findings also suggest that at least nine percent of men in US prisons have been sexually assaulted. This has led one expert to conclude that '...rape and sexual violence are universal in the nation's prisons...(confirming that the) same picture is true of any prison'<sup>7</sup>. Research by Davis (1968) found that sexual assault in the Philadelphia prison system had reached almost epidemic proportions, suggesting that men's reluctance to report rape and sexual assaults means that the extent of its occurrence is likely to be underestimated.

Evidence also suggests that male rape occurs within military establishments and that although these settings are less restrictive than prisons, confinement makes sexual assaults less easy to avoid. Research by Goyer and Eddleman (1984) on a psychiatric out-patient clinic serving a population of Navy and Marine Corporal men in the US, found that sexual assault was more apparent in this military setting than any other non-institutional environment. They concluded that men suffered from the same trauma experienced by other male rape survivors (mood disturbances, problems in relationships with peers, and sexual difficulties) as a direct result of the assaults. This study found similar themes to prison rape were common, including submission to sexual advances due to fear of actual physical violence, gang rape and humiliation.

It can be concluded from US research studies and anecdotal work that male rape is manifest inside institutions, although there has been no work conducted on the levels of male rape within UK prisons. This suggests a need for extensive research to establish its prevalence. Such advances can only be attained if and when authorities in charge of the various institutions admit the existence of a problem and allow research to take place. Explanations for the occurrence of male rape within institutional settings are discussed in chapters 3 and 4.

### **Non-institutionalised rape**

Research by Lockwood (1980) and Scacco (1982) demonstrates conclusively that there could be no such phenomenon as male rape behind prison walls if it did not first exist in wider society. It has been suggested by McMullen (1990) that the taboo of male rape has kept it hidden and under-researched. This taboo, it may

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<sup>7</sup> Dr. Frank L Rundle (Chief Psychiatrist and Director of Psychiatry of Prison Health Services New York) in Scacco (1982:6).

be argued, is a consequence of common myths and stereotypes embedded in society about the nature, causes and impact of male rape. It is clear then that there is a need for research on non-institutionalised male rape. The research project will explore the above mentioned factors in relation to non-institutionalised male rape.

## **2.2 Homosexuality and its Relevance to Rape**

Very little research has considered the sexuality of perpetrators of male rape. The myth that homosexual men are always the perpetrators of male rape stems from beliefs that rape is sexually motivated. Such beliefs are also prevalent in female rape cases. The majority of feminist research (discussed in chapter 4) has challenged the assumption that rape is motivated by sexual frustration and desires and has instead demonstrated that it is motivated by the perpetrator's need to exert power and control over his victim. An exception to this came from MacKinnon (1982) who insisted that sexuality was the first cause of all female sexual inequality. She argued that sexuality is itself hierarchical and that heterosexuality is used as a force for subordinating women. MacKinnon therefore regarded men as sexual predators and women as weak and misguided into accepting their subordinate roles. She also argued that while women may believe that they are free, they cannot exercise freewill. This she illustrated in terms of 'mandatory heterosexuality' in which she argued women are coerced into sexual relations. In MacKinnon's argument, the possibility of consensual heterosexual sex was highly doubtful since she argued, it involves 'penile invasion of the vagina'. For MacKinnon then, all penetration was synonymous to rape.

Since male rape involves two or more men, it is commonly believed that this act is sexually motivated since it is seen as a homosexual act. As Hickson et al. (1994) also point out, while the term 'homosexual rape' is accurate in terms of the sex of the people involved, it confuses their sex with their sexual orientation. This leaves the impression that men who rape other men must be homosexual.

## **The Sexuality of Perpetrators of Male Rape**

Whilst it has in recent years been argued that rape is an act of complete domination, humiliation, violence and control, the notion that it is sexually motivated prevails (this is illustrated in chapter 3). When examining the causes of male rape (discussed in chapters 3 and 4), the relevance of the sexuality of the perpetrator may be disputed, as the connections between domination, humiliation, control and sexuality are complex. If the rape is viewed as a sexual rather than violent crime, there stems the belief that it took place for sexual satisfaction and must therefore be homosexual in nature. Male rape is hence sometimes mistakenly called 'homosexual rape,' allowing the dominant, heterosexual male, as well as society, to distance themselves from it. In this way, non-homosexuals are able to deny that it could possibly affect them in any way.

The distinction between male rape and homosexual rape is clarified by McMullen (1990), who states that homosexual rape involves one or more homosexuals raping another. McMullen (1990) suggests that this is a very rare occurrence but fails to support this belief with any empirical evidence. Contrary to this, Island and Letellier (1991:14) in their research on violence in homosexual relationships state:

There are two men present in a gay couple, which means that either member has the same probability of being a batterer. Therefore, the probability of violence occurring in a gay couple is mathematically double the probability of that in a heterosexual couple.

While this research focuses on domestic violence in homosexual relationships, it is nonetheless important in its demonstration that homosexual men do engage in violent behaviour. Other research by Farley (1996) supports this finding. Male rape within homosexual relationships has not been explored in the present study and remains an under-explored area of research. The occurrence of male rape within such relationships therefore remains unknown.

Research on the sexuality of perpetrators is limited and the data that do exist are inconclusive. For example, Groth and Burgess (1980) used a total sample of 22 men (16 convicted perpetrators and six victims) and found that half of the perpetrators in their sample were heterosexual, six were bisexual, and two were homosexual. Huckle (1995) has presented similar findings in a study of male victims referred to a forensic psychiatric service. These findings showed that in

seven cases, victims believed their attackers to be heterosexual while seven others believed their attackers were bisexual. Four victims believed that their attacker was homosexual while the remaining four did not know the sexuality of their attacker. Using a larger sample of 100 recorded<sup>8</sup> cases of male rape, Hillman et al. (1990) analysed records of men who were counselled by the organisation SurvivorsUK. The findings in this study demonstrate that attackers were reported by the victim to be heterosexual in 50 out of 69 cases<sup>9</sup>, homosexual in 11 cases and bisexual in the remaining eight cases. Research by Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997) used data from agencies in contact with male victims of rape, drawing on 336 agencies across the United States. This study revealed that most of the perpetrators were believed by the victims to be heterosexual.

Research conducted by Canter and Hodge (1998) collected data on 83 cases of male rape from self-report questionnaires and a further 36 cases from police records. The different findings from these two sources of data, with regards to the sexuality of perpetrators, demonstrate the difficulties in generalising. The findings from this work are presented in percentage form in order that comparisons can be made. The self-report questionnaires found that 36% (n=30) of perpetrators were believed by the victim to be heterosexual, 24% bisexual (n=20), and 18% homosexual (n=15). In 22% of the cases (n=18) the sexuality of the perpetrator(s) was not known. In comparison, findings from the police records suggested that heterosexual perpetrators made up 14% of cases (n=5), bisexual perpetrators 28% (n=10) and homosexual perpetrators 22% (n=8). The sexuality of the perpetrator was unknown in 36% of cases (n=13). Therefore, while the victim data indicates that in cases where the sexuality of the perpetrator is known, heterosexual males commit more male rape, followed by bisexual males and then homosexual males, the police data indicates that heterosexual males are the least likely to be the perpetrators of male rape, followed by homosexual males and then bisexual males. This study demonstrates clearly how different samples and sizes of samples, as well as different sources of data generate different results. The differences may also be due to the reluctance on the part of the police to categorise perpetrators as heterosexual or genuinely due to the absence of data necessary to develop such categorisations.

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<sup>8</sup> These cases were recorded by the Agency SurvivorsUK.

<sup>9</sup> The other 31 cases did not identify the sexuality of the attacker, perhaps because 28 of the men were attacked by strangers and would not therefore know the sexuality of their attacker.

Other work by Mezey and King (1989) (using a sample of 22 male victims) found that one half of the perpetrators (11) were believed by the victims to be homosexual, whereas three were categorised as heterosexual and three as bisexual. In the remaining five cases, the sexuality of the perpetrator(s) was unknown. Research by Stermac et al. (1996) used a sample of 29 males seeking treatment at a crisis unit within a hospital in Canada. This sample consisted of men who were victims of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault. The findings from this research revealed two distinct groups of perpetrators, one heterosexual and the other homosexual. The researchers conclude that heterosexual perpetrators are rare. Instead, they suggest that male rape is primarily a result of '...gay males who coerce partners or acquaintances into sexual activity by use of threats or intimidation' (Stermac et al. 1996:62). Further research highlighting homosexuals as perpetrators of male rape has focused specifically on homosexual men and does not therefore consider heterosexual and bisexual males (Waterman et al. 1989; Hickson et al. 1994).

The research studies discussed above demonstrate that data on perpetrator's sexual orientation is inconclusive and findings from each study are dependent on their sample bias. Each study makes a valid contribution to developing an overall picture of perpetrators of male rape, although none uses representative samples from which absolute conclusions can be drawn about the sexual orientation of perpetrators. Instead, from these studies it can be deduced that men who rape other men do vary in sexual orientation. The research studies discussed above challenge the myth that perpetrators of male rape are nearly always homosexual; this issue is further explored in the empirical component of the thesis.

### **The Sexuality of Survivors**

As discussed above, male rape is often mistakenly seen by society to be homosexual rape. While research exists to demonstrate that rape among homosexual males is not uncommon (Waterman et al. 1989; Hickson et al. 1994), there prevails the belief in wider society that male rape is by definition homosexual rape. The following research studies are used to explore the sexual orientation of survivors and to consider whether or not this is significant in terms of their victimisation.

The role of sexuality in male rape has been more widely researched when considering the sexuality of male survivors of rape, than in relation to the

sexuality of male perpetrators. This is because the majority of studies have focused on the experiences of male survivors; more is known therefore about their sexual orientation.

Whilst research on the relevance of the sexuality of the victim largely suggests that men who rape men, like men who rape women, pay little attention to the sexuality of their victim, it has been maintained that some homosexual 'groups' are more susceptible to attack than others. For example, according to McMullen, homosexual males who admit their sexuality more readily are less likely to be victimised than those homosexuals who do not. However, McMullen's work is based on clinical observations rather than empirical work and he does not offer any case examples from his observations to support his ideas. Other work by Miller and Humphreys (1980: 170) maintains that the 'establishment of gay love relationships and involvement with gay community institutions may reduce vulnerability to violent crimes'. This is perhaps due to the fact that belonging to the community institutions provides some security in that the potential victim need not seek sexual relations in a clandestine way.

Research by West (1977) suggests that homosexuals are more susceptible to all kinds of personal victimisation. This susceptibility of homosexual men may be attributed to the fact that they have male sexual partners who may also be the perpetrators of attack. This is demonstrated by Sheridan and Hucker (1994) who suggest that homosexual males may coerce partners or acquaintances into sexual activity using threats or intimidation. Such research findings demonstrate the occurrence of domestic violence in homosexual relationships, as supported by Island and Letellier (1991). Other researchers such as King, Coxell and Mezey (2000) suggest that male rapists sometimes target those who openly identify as homosexual, solely because they are so. Earlier work by Mezey and King (1989) found that in their study, ten victims were homosexual, four were bisexual and eight were heterosexual. While this study has a higher proportion of homosexual survivors than other studies (such as King and Wollett 1997), the researchers themselves admit that this may be due to their biased sample (they placed advertisements in the gay press for victims to come forward). They also suggest that 'in some cases homosexual victims had placed themselves at risk by seeking casual sexual encounters (cruising)' (Mezey and King, 1989: 208). This would again increase their susceptibility to victimisation.

Homophobic attitudes can further increase susceptibility to rape for homosexual men and Mezey and King (1989) conclude that certain cases in their sample



represented an extension of 'queer bashing' (hate crimes are discussed in chapter 4). Other research on male rape presents a mixed picture of the sexuality of male survivors. For example, research by Hillman et al. (1990) (which analysed data from 100 men seeking support from SurvivorsUK) found that 19 of the 37 survivors for whom data were available were homosexual (51%), 14 were heterosexual (38%) and four were bisexual (11%). In contrast, later research by King and Woollett (1997) (which analysed a total of 115 cases of men consulting the agency SurvivorsUK for counselling services) found that of the 41 men who were raped as adults, 18 were heterosexual (44%), eight were homosexual (20%) and three were bisexual (7%). Nine men (22%) could not be sure of their sexuality at the time of assault and no data were available for the remaining three men (7%). These two studies used the same sources of data from the same agency, yet obtained different results. This demonstrates clearly the difficulty in generalising about the sexuality of survivors since data is dependent very much on those men that actually come forward and report rape (whether to the police or other agencies). The reasons for under-reporting are discussed later on in this chapter and then explored in the empirical research.

It is evident from the different research studies that it would be dangerous to generalise about the sexual orientation of both survivors and perpetrators, since all current research is based on specific sample groups, most of which are small-scale. However, these research studies are valid in providing some understanding of male victimisation. Importantly, all the research on sexuality and its relationship to male rape highlights the fact that both perpetrators and survivors of this crime can, and are, involved in the experience of rape, regardless of their sexuality. While sexuality may contribute to making one group more susceptible to attack than the next (such as homosexuals), this does not demonstrate that it is only homosexual men who rape, or are raped. Instead, from the research studies discussed above, it can be concluded that all men are potential rape victims, regardless of their sexuality. The issue of sexuality will be explored in the empirical research.

### **2.3 Cultural Myths about Male Rape**

Whilst it is apparent that the sexual abuse of men is, in many ways, similar to that of women, it may be argued that the response to male rape by society is noticeably different from that of female rape. The women's movement has been instrumental in challenging media misrepresentations of rape victims 'asking for

it', or 'enjoying it'. While such myths are still prevalent in many segments of society, especially within the criminal justice system and specifically within rape trials,<sup>10</sup> it may be argued that the growth of feminist research and debate in this area has sought to challenge such notions, thereby achieving a level of empathy and understanding among many professional organisations and by society.<sup>11</sup> However, the recognition of male rape has lagged behind, owing to the fact that little research has been conducted in this area and few cases are known to the police and other agencies. As a relatively new<sup>12</sup> phenomenon there prevails a lack of understanding and awareness of its existence, and any cultural misconceptions that accompany it are therefore less open to challenge. This is demonstrated by a study undertaken by Whatley and Riggio (1993), in which the researchers used a sample of 160 subjects to investigate whether there were any gender differences in the attribution of blame to male rape victims and whether or not any theories of victim blame could be applied to this field. The study, which took the form of a questionnaire used to assess victim blame in particular scenarios, revealed that males blamed the victim more than females and this remained true even when the victim was male. Similarly, the sample more readily assigned a greater degree of blame to the 'bad' victims who themselves had a criminal record than to the 'good' victims who had no prior arrests.

A similar study by Mitchell et al. (1999) examined the relationship between the sexual orientation of a male rape victim and participants' attributions of the victim's degree of responsibility, pleasure, and trauma associated with the assault, and the differences between male and female participants in their attributions of these variables. The study, which had a final sample of 396 participants (181 males and 215 females) found that the female participants assigned less responsibility to the male victim than did male participants. Additionally, the heterosexual victim was seen to be less responsible for the rape than the homosexual victim, and was also thought to gain less pleasure from the rape than the homosexual victim. The findings also demonstrated that levels of trauma were seen to be less for homosexual victims than for heterosexual victims. From this study, it is evident that sexual orientation is a potentially important variable in people's reactions and responses to male survivors of rape

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10 The existence of such myths and their effects in rape cases are elaborated in chapter 4 and explored further in the newspaper analysis in chapter 6.

11 For example, there has been a notable change in police responses to female victims of rape in recent years, as highlighted by Gregory and Lees (1999). Similarly, Anderson (1999) suggests that attitudes towards female victims of rape have changed for the better.

12 The term 'new' is used here to highlight its recent emergence as a social and legal issue rather than suggesting that it is not historically rooted.

and further illustrates the problems of myths about male rape, on the basis of which individuals make judgements. Clearly, it is beliefs such as those revealed in this study, which prevent male victims from being understood, thus preventing them from coming forward and seeking support.

Other work by Anderson (1999) explored the views of 120 individuals towards male rape and the influence of gender in attributing blame for male rape. This work demonstrates that male subjects tended to attribute more blame to female victims of rape than to male victims. Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) conducted similar research, which also considered the gender stereotypes and their effects on service provisions for male victims. This study found that female subjects attributed more behavioural blame (suggesting for example that the victim should have taken better precautions to avoid being raped) to female victims, than to male victims. It may be argued that such gender differences in attributing blame stem from the different gender socialisation that makes women more aware of their vulnerability to sexual violence. As such, women may attribute more blame to their own gender because they believe that women should be aware of their vulnerabilities and should therefore take more precautionary measures to protect themselves, whereas men are not socialised into being aware of their vulnerability to such victimisation, and as such, cannot be 'blamed' for such attacks.

Research by Schneider and Aronson (1994) compared observers' attribution of guilt towards rape victims and their rapists, and found that female victims were judged more harshly than male victims. It concluded that length of imprisonment considered appropriate for guilty assailants was found to be greater when injury was done to one's own gender. This study revealed that public attitudes are affected by gender stereotypes.

Other work by Struckman Johnson and Struckman Johnson (1992) tested the belief in myths about male rape among university students. The sample of 157 men and 158 women tested the myths that 'male rape cannot happen', 'men are to blame for their rape' and 'male rape is not traumatic to (sic.) men'.

The findings demonstrate an overall low level of acceptance of rape myths, suggesting that students in this sample were aware of, and sympathetic to, the case of male rape<sup>13</sup>. However, this study also highlights important gender differences in acceptance of male rape myths. For example, women were significantly less likely than men to believe in myths about male rape and were more extreme in their disagreements with rape myths. The researchers suggest that this may be because compared to women, men are less aware of, or less emotionally involved with, the rape dilemma, hence reacting less strongly against myths. Similarly, 'victim blame' was more present (especially among the males in the sample) in cases where the perpetrator was female. More sympathy was attributed to men who were raped by other men, rather than men forced into non-consensual intercourse with women. This former group of victims were seen to be more harmed by rape, than the latter. The study concludes that women were less likely to believe in rape myths than men and belief in myths was increased among both sexes in cases where the perpetrator was female.

The findings from this study are supported by later, similar research by Kerr and Holden (1995) which also explored the prevalence of male rape myths among university students and community groups. The study, (which was in two parts, one focusing on university students and the other focusing on community samples) found that males in both studies were more likely to believe in rape myths than females.

Research has demonstrated that men suffer from stigmatisation in a male-dominated society. As argued by Groth and Burgess (1980: 809):

Although it is commonly believed that a male is powerful enough to defend himself from a sexual assault, he is in fact susceptible to the same techniques by which assailants gain control over female victims.

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13 The study found that 22% of men and 18% of women agreed that it was impossible to rape a man, regardless of the sex of the perpetrator and 23% of men and 9% of women agreed that a strong man cannot be raped by another man. This agreement with the myth rose to 30% for men and 18% for women, when the perpetrator was seen to be a woman. Similarly, 22% of the men and 5% of the women agreed that a 'man who is raped by another man is somewhat to blame for not being careful'. This increased to 44% in men and 12% in women when the perpetrator was a woman. Only 22% of the men and 8% of the women in the sample agreed that a man should be able to escape from another man, therefore preventing rape. This number rose to 49% in men and 29% in women, whereby the groups believed that a man should be able to get away from a woman. In terms of trauma, only four percent of the men and three percent of the women agreed with the myth that a man raped by another man is not upset by the incident. However, this agreement rose to 35% in men and 22% in women, when the perpetrator was female. In terms of counselling, only seven percent of men and two percent of women agreed that a man raped by another man does not need counselling although this figure rose to 22% for men and 13% for women, when the perpetrator was seen to be female.

This is supported by numerous other studies (Goyer and Eddleman 1984; King 1993; Huckle 1995; Stermac et al. 1996; Scarce 1997a).

Males are depicted as being intrinsically powerful and therefore able to defend themselves. Such high expectations reinforce the illusion that males are unable to be victims of a crime exclusively seen to affect the female population. It may be argued therefore that gender role socialisation nourishes and upholds gender differences in which rigid masculinities are defined. Such masculinities serve to uphold the notion of men as strong, dominant and capable of defending themselves. At present, our culture is such that men are not permitted to be victims of rape and therefore, they do not expect that anyone will make them submit sexually. This element of shock and surprise adds to the trauma when men are raped. The research studies discussed above have demonstrated that cultural myths about male rape allocate blame to the rape victim. Other studies have demonstrated that victims reflect this in the form of self-blame, thereby further adding to their trauma (Katz and Burt 1987; Frazier 1990; Pitts and Schwartz 1993).

### **The Myth of Physiological Responses as an Expression of Enjoyment**

Research by Kennedy (1992) demonstrates that in female rape trials, defence lawyers may suggest that the vagina of the victim was moist at the time of attack and that secretions occurred during intercourse, indicating that she was sexually aroused and enjoying the rape. Similar to this is the common myth that a male victim's erection and ejaculation express his enjoyment of the act. This ill-informed belief serves to decriminalise the act of rape in the minds of the public at large. However, a considerable body of research exists to refute this idea. For example, Mezey and King (1989) conducted research with 22 male victims of rape and found that extreme anxiety, terror and anger can stimulate an erection in a man. Earlier work by Kinsey et al. (1948) confirms that the physiological mechanism of any emotional response (anger, fright, and pain) may be the mechanism of sexual response. Similar research by Sarrel and Masters (1982) reaffirms that the human male can function sexually in a variety of severe emotional states, including extreme anxiety, terror, and anger. This work is supported by Redmond et al.'s (1983) findings that sexual arousal may be provoked by extreme terror. Additionally, research by Bancroft (1980) cites both animal and human studies in which anxiety-provoking situations can lead to genital responses. His review indicates that the relationship between emotional

states and sexual responses is complex and varied and suggests that sexual response to an attack is part of a generalised body reaction to the emotional turmoil. This work is consistent with Kinsey et al's study (1948: 165) which concluded that:

Slight physical stimulation of the genitals, general body tensions and generalised emotional situations may bring immediate erection, even when there is no specifically sexual situation involved.

This work further illustrates that for some men, anxiety can contribute to sexual (physiological) responses. As Bancroft (1980) argues, while sexual responses are influenced by the brain, they are mediated through the spinal cord and can function independently, as seen among spinal cord injured patients. A sexual response determined by spinal cord discharge without control is therefore possible when one is 'paralysed with fear'.

These studies clearly demonstrate that a man's physiological response is not an indication of enjoyment or consent. Groth and Burgess (1980:809) highlight the purpose that ejaculation may serve during and after the assault. They maintain that:

A major strategy used by some offenders in the assault of males is to get the victim to ejaculate. This effort may serve several purposes. In misidentifying ejaculation with orgasm, the victim may be bewildered by his physiological response to the offence and thus discouraged from reporting the assault for fear his sexuality may become suspect. Such a reaction may serve to impeach his credibility in trial testimony and discredit his allegation of non-consent. To the offender, such a reaction may symbolise his ultimate and complete sexual control over his victim's body and confirm his fantasy that the victim really wanted and enjoyed the rape.

Research conducted by Gregory and Lees (1999) for the Channel Four programme *Dispatches* ('Male Rape' 1994) found that the majority of assailants made attempts to arouse their victims. The researchers reiterate the point made by Groth and Burgess (1980) that this can lead the victim to question his own sexuality and can undermine his feelings of self worth since he may feel that he 'asked for it'. In these circumstances, victims may feel they colluded with their attacker, thereby heightening their trauma.

Hence, whilst there is significant evidence to refute the idea that an erection and ejaculation is necessarily an expression of enjoyment and consent, the normal association with these leaves survivors feeling both disgusted with themselves

and profoundly confused.<sup>14</sup> It is argued that the belief in such a myth by society is harmful to the survivor and may contribute to feelings of self-blame, as well as blame by others, thereby heightening trauma for men.

## **2.4 The Issue of Under-Reporting**

Whilst the importance of reporting male sexual assault is clearly crucial in providing adequate redress and support to survivors, the reality remains that male rape is hidden and taboo. Literature on male rape is in agreement that male rape is largely an under-reported phenomenon (Saragin 1976; Groth and Burgess 1980; King 1990, 1993; Mezey 1993; Scarce 1997b; Gregory and Lees 1999). Research by Kaufman et al. (1980) reported an increase in male rape cases from none to 10% of total rapes in three years. Other work by Hillman et al. (1990) found that from their 100 male sexual assault survivors, only 12% reported the crime to the police. The factors contributing to this lack of reporting need to be explored because social recognition of a problem relies so heavily on official reports of criminal activities before it comes to highlight the problem at hand. For example, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 included the legal recognition of male rape. Prior to this, very little attention was given to the issue, especially in a non-institutional environment. The inclusion of male rape on the Statute Book has generated public awareness,<sup>15</sup> which has contributed to greater demand for better services for male survivors<sup>16</sup>. Official criminal statistics play a crucial role in identifying criminal activities and, importantly, prioritising offences to be dealt with by the police and the rest of the criminal justice system. Therefore, it is important to explore the reasons why men are reluctant to report rape to the police, in order to make changes to encourage reporting so that better services can be provided to survivors. Furthermore, while statutory changes offer some recognition of male rape, the reporting and recording of male sexual abuse and rape means that information on prevalence can be collected. The significance of encouraging reporting to the police is that the police are very often the first point of contact for survivors, and hence are in a strong position to identify their needs. The possible police role in identifying service provisions and support for the survivor can be a crucial one.

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<sup>14</sup> This of course is similar to other sexual offences in which power is used to control victims, as in child abuse cases.

<sup>15</sup> This is illustrated in chapter 6 where the media findings are presented.

<sup>16</sup> This is demonstrated by new initiatives between the Metropolitan Police Service and support agencies to support male survivors, discussed in chapter 5. Appendix 1 illustrates these initiatives.

While much of the literature recognises that under-reporting occurs, there is a lack of empirical research on the reasons why men are reluctant to report rape. For example, McMullen (1990) highlights the point that men do not report to the police and while advancing possible explanations for this, he fails to provide empirical evidence to support these explanations. As King (1993) points out, much work on male rape has been anecdotal. The empirical component of this research project therefore examines the points discussed above, exploring reasons why men are reluctant to report rape, in order to provide some understanding of this. The findings presented in chapters 6, 7 and 8 build on the work presented in this chapter, with a view to increasing our understanding of this issue. Research by Groth and Burgess (1980: 810) used a sample of 22 cases and concluded that:

Existing stereotypes are responsible for males being reluctant to report rape, much as the attitude and atmosphere existed for female rape victims a decade ago.

However, it should be added that such stereotypes are still prevalent for female rape victims. The prevalence of myths and stereotypes in newspaper coverage of male rape is examined in chapter 6.

It is hypothesised that the act of male rape challenges fundamental notions about the masculinity of the survivor and that it is this shock, confusion, disbelief and embarrassment that deters many rape survivors from reporting the crime. It seems likely that fears held by female rape victims of being doubted by the police, medical and other institutions, along with possible accusations of precipitating the rape, add to the dilemmas of reporting for male victims too. Researchers such as Holmes (1991) maintain that males are less likely to report victimisation to legal authorities and professional support agencies because of cultural and legal messages that define who constitutes a legitimate victim of rape. Kennedy (1992) suggests legitimate rape victims are those who are seen to be deserving of protection by the law such as middle class, married women, and exclude prostitutes, women who engage in extra-marital affairs, or promiscuous women. Kennedy further argues that respectable women are treated with greater empathy in rape trials by judges, barristers and consequently, jurors and are less likely to be accused of 'asking for it' than women who are thought to have deviated from their traditional, passive, nurturing roles in society. Similar explanations for the reluctance of men to report rape are plausible and are therefore explored in the empirical research.



In order to give some context to contemporary understandings of male rape in British society, it is necessary to consider the developments of rape law and the ways in which it has proved to be a real obstacle in exposing the problem of male rape and giving it recognition as an important issue.

## **2.5 The Origins of Rape Law**

Sexual abuse as an important issue evolved from the rape model which, although historically rooted, gained public awareness and concern in only the last 30 years or so. The origins of rape law have been documented, in the main, by feminist research which recognises rape as the ultimate violation of women (the vast contribution made by feminist research in this area is discussed further in chapter 4). Like Brownmiller (1975), Clark and Lewis (1995) trace the beginnings of rape law to women as forms of private property belonging to men. They describe how under Anglo-Saxon law, rape was punished by orders of compensation and reparations paid to the victim's husband or father, because it was the male of the family who was seen to have been wronged by the act of rape. They argue that:

The legal system confirmed, supported and perpetuated unequal relationships between individual men, and between sexes. Women simply were not considered to be "persons" under the law. They could not own property; they were denied access to the productive labour market; and within marriage, they and their children were the property of their husbands. Their economic status was determined by that of their father or husband, and their unique status as women within this system was determined by their sexual and reproductive capacities (Clark and Lewis 1995: 152).

The law of rape was developed to regulate the orderly transfer of property. As the researchers demonstrate, rape was simply the theft of sexual property from the owner of that property, namely the male owner of the victim. They argue that:

From the beginning, rape was perceived as an offence against property, not as an offence against the person on whom the act was perpetrated, and it has not lost the shrouds of these historical origins (Clarke and Lewis 1995: 154).

The narrow legal definition of rape as a heterosexual crime committed by men against women has led commentators such as Edwards (1981) to argue that statute law considered that only men were capable of actively committing a sexual offence against women because of the unequal power roles in sexual relations. Therefore, historically, legislation on sexual offences focused on penile penetration of the vagina to protect male property and to ensure that any

children from the marriage were those of the husband, hence securing legitimate heirs. Very little consideration was given to the possibility of men becoming victims of rape.

Statutory definitions of sex-related crimes today have evolved over the past 180 years, with women being excluded from statutes regulating sexual activity during the nineteenth century. From 1900 onwards, the law began to assimilate and reflect the changes in social attitudes with social movements demanding law reforms by the mid-twentieth century. Hence, the development of English rape law can be traced throughout time with penalties for rape varying from death in the biblical times, to castration and blinding under William the Conqueror. It is these laws that were much later refined to give the rape laws that exist today. Male rape law has a history within female rape law as its developments have come about as a consequence of the progress made in relation to female rape (see chronology on page 22).

### **Significant Developments in Rape Law**

Although there have been recent changes in the law to recognise male rape as an offence equal to female rape, the definition of male rape enshrined in the criminal law may be seen as somewhat limiting, as it is arguable that the term should not be restricted to forcible entry of the anus by the penis, but should also include object penetration. Similarly, oral penetration is not included. Furthermore, it may be argued that the law should be gender neutral to account for females as perpetrators of rape. The importance of this is discussed further on in this chapter and in chapter 4.

### **The Law on Rape**

The law on rape in the United Kingdom has only recently been amended to give recognition to the existence of males as survivors of rape, as distinct from perpetrators. Prior to the amendment of s1 of the Sexual Offences Act 1956, rape was limited to non-consensual vaginal intercourse with a woman. Anal penetration of a man was considered non-consensual buggery, an offence carrying a maximum penalty of ten years (where the male victim was over the age of 16), compared to the offence of rape for which the maximum punishment

is life imprisonment.<sup>17</sup> It was therefore defined as a lesser offence. However, s142 (2) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (which came into force on November 3 1994) substitutes a new s1 of the Sexual Offences Act 1956, extending the offence of rape. This provides that 'it is an offence for a man to rape a woman or another man'.<sup>18</sup> This long overdue reform has been welcomed as an awareness of male victimisation as it more accurately reflects the modern understanding of sexual violence (Rumney and Taylor 1994). Added to this, it gives recognition to the concept of male rape within the criminal justice system.

The major significance in the recently revised legal definition of rape therefore, is twofold. Firstly, rape now extends to sexual intercourse by a man with a woman or man and secondly, the intercourse with a woman may be either vaginal or anal whereas previously it was limited to vaginal<sup>19</sup> (the limitations of these changes are discussed further on in this chapter and in chapter 4).

The expansion of this legal definition of rape, to a gender-neutral crime has also resolved the problem of transsexual rape. For example, in the case of *Corbett v Corbett* (1971) and *Cossey v UK* (1991) it was held that it was not legally possible to change one's sex thus, a person born as male will always be male. From this derived the inevitable consequence that transsexuals could not be the victims of rape. The irrelevance of the gender of rape victims similarly resolves the gender issue of hermaphrodites.

Despite these changes, it is argued in this thesis that the new legislation contains many unresolved problems. To begin with, the current law fails to make rape a totally gender-neutral offence as it falls short of recognising females as possible perpetrators of the offence. This is despite evidence that although apparently a rare phenomenon, women can be perpetrators of rape. This can be illustrated with the recent case of an 18 year old woman involved in the gang rape of a 37 year old woman. In this case, the female assailant:

Struck her victim to the ground and held down her arms before another gang member kicked the woman in the head...the victim described how a girl, (believed to be the perpetrator Claire Marsh) laughed throughout the ordeal and rallied the rapists...with the cry 'go on, give her some.'<sup>20</sup>

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17 Sexual Offences Act 1967, s3.

18 s142(2) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

19 Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976 s7 (2).

20 *The Guardian*, 28 February 2001.

The prosecuting counsel advised the jury that:

Obviously being a female, she herself couldn't commit what is defined as sexual intercourse in law, by herself penetrating the victim. But, if she was party to a group attack and if she was actively encouraging, ready to lend a hand, to join in, or she was holding down when the event was taking place, she in law would be guilty of rape, although female.<sup>21</sup>

Two of the co-accused males aged 15 and 16 were found not guilty while two other males (one 18 years old and the other aged 15) were found guilty and sentenced to five years in a young offenders' institution after admitting the rape. The female assailant, who denied the attack, was sentenced to seven years in a young offenders' institution; a longer sentence compared to the male assailants because of her not-guilty plea. Critics of the suggestion that females commit rape would no doubt argue that gang rape, as in the above case, involves a particular psychology of manic group behaviour and as such, cannot be evidenced to support the need for gender-neutrality in rape law. The dynamics of group behaviour in gang rapes are discussed in chapter 4. For the moment, it is argued that while female perpetrators of rape appear to be relatively rare, the fact that some evidence exists to show that they do exist, requires legal provisions so that survivors, both male and female, can be given some protection and redress. This protection is required regardless of whether a survivor is gang raped or raped by an individual. While the discussed case highlights the brutality of rape, regardless of the gender of the perpetrator, it is important to bear in mind that women's involvement in violent offences is comparatively rare to men's violence and it is for this reason that the law has so far excluded the possibility of female perpetrators of rape.

Similarly, sexual intercourse remains narrowly defined within the new reform as whilst it now encompasses penile penetration of both the vagina and the anus, it excludes 'oral rape' and forced penetration of the anus or vagina by a part of the body other than the penis or by some object. These were described in the Fifteenth Report on Sexual Offences by the Criminal Law Revision Committee as 'grave' and 'severely degrading experiences for the victims, with the possibility of psychological damage enduring long after the event.'<sup>22</sup> However, despite the recognition of such injuries, the Committee concluded that these other forms of non-consensual, sexual penetration remain distinct from the offence of rape and should therefore be dealt with, with this in mind.

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<sup>21</sup> Richard Whittam, Prosecuting Counsel, *The Guardian* 28 February 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Criminal Law Revision Committee 'Fifteenth Report on Sexual Offences' (1984, paragraph 4.5 ).

As argued by Rumney and Taylor (1994), such problems of definition would have partly been addressed if the proposed amendment (cl93) to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill, defining sexual intercourse as 'vaginal or anal penetration to any degree by any part of the assailant's body, or any object, and shall include non-consensual oral intercourse,'<sup>23</sup> had been accepted. Similar definitions were accepted in Belgium, France, Eire, Spain and the Netherlands by the end of the 1980's.<sup>24</sup> However, the law in the United Kingdom remains uncompromising in not accepting such a broad definition of rape. At the time of writing, proposals to broaden the definition of rape are being debated although the success of such proposals is not yet known. At present, both male and female victims forced to engage in oral sex or those who are penetrated with foreign objects can only obtain remedy under the law of indecent assault or possibly under laws relating to non-sexual assault.

Whilst problems of definition within the law may be of concern, other areas such as interpretation of the legislation and law enforcement need yet to be addressed. Limited cross-examination under s2 (1) Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976 of the rape victim now includes male victims. This section of the Act was introduced as a method of overcoming the trauma imposed upon victims in court by the cross-examination of defence counsel about their previous sexual encounters. Further attempts to overcome this were made by the Youth and Criminal Justice Act 1999 (discussed below). However, despite such measures, research has evidenced that in practice women continue to be questioned about their sexual histories, leaving them to prove their innocence and inevitably, placing them, rather than the alleged offender on trial (Adler 1987; Chambers and Miller 1987; Tempkin 1995; Lees 1996, 1997; Gregory and Lees 1996, 1999). It is evident that male rape survivors will encounter similar suspicions, as questions relating to previous sexual history with the defendant will be admissible. This would enable defence counsel to imply for example, that as consent to homosexual intercourse was given on previous occasions, it was also granted at the time in question. Further attempts to discredit the survivor may include allegations of previous homosexual behaviour, especially when survivors claim to be heterosexual, often due to the 'shame' they feel they will bring to their families and friends if they admit to being homosexual. Added to this, misconceptions that all male rape survivors are homosexual (despite the prevalence of evidence to the contrary, as discussed earlier, and to be examined

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<sup>23</sup> In Card and Ward (1994).

in the empirical research in chapter 8) may further damage the credibility of the survivor. Homophobic jurors or those confused by the concept of male rape or male sexuality may be easily led by social and cultural myths in court where there may be an intention to overstate any prejudices already held. However, whilst male rape survivors will quite likely suffer the same poor treatment as female survivors, with accusations such as 'he asked for it', 'led him on', or 'consented at the time', it is believed that recent reforms in rape law gives men a stronger position as survivors, than was the case previously.

### **The Duty of the Defence Counsel – The Importance of Safeguards in Rape Prosecutions**

The treatment of the victims in rape trials has come under immense scrutiny in the last 30 years or so as previously discussed, with many researchers, academics and other professionals repeatedly arguing that defence strategies succeed in placing the victim on trial instead of the alleged perpetrator(s). Critics of the criminal justice system have asserted the need for the perpetrator to be brought to justice with minimum distress to the victim. There is no doubt that the act of rape is a forced violation which has traumatic consequences for the victim and it is the sheer brutality and unjustifiable nature of this crime that compels the imposition of a harsh sentence for the perpetrator. Rape, against both males and females, now carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment and this penalty is not exceeded by any other crime, and is the same for murder. It is therefore the severity of the offence and punishment that provides the basis for upholding important safeguards in the prosecution of rape cases. Such safeguards include the 'innocent until proven guilty' notion, as in all criminal trials, with the onus on the prosecuting counsel to prove the alleged perpetrator's guilt, beyond a reasonable doubt. The penalty for rape is harsh and there must be no doubt that the alleged offender is guilty of the crime for which he/she is to be sentenced. For this reason, it is the duty of the defence counsel to challenge all evidence relating to the case, including the testimony of the victim, in order to establish that the rape allegation is not unfounded. It should be remembered that more often than not, there are no other witnesses in rape trials and it is the victim who is the chief witness for the prosecution. The case therefore depends on the word of the victim against that of the defendant. Since the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, the corroboration warning, requiring the judge

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24 *The Guardian* 1 June 1994.

to warn the jury of the danger of convicting on the basis of uncorroborated evidence, is no longer mandatory, but is left to the discretion of the judges.

In trying to stress the importance of safeguards for defendants in rape trials, professionals in the criminal justice system have come under intense criticism for beginning a crusade against rape victims. This crusade has suggested that false allegations of rape are not uncommon, as illustrated by one High Court Judge, who maintained that '...charges of sexual indecency by women without foundation were, in (his) fifty years experience of crime, so frequent' that he came to think of them as one of the commonplaces of crime, concluding that in any sexual case, the evidence of the woman (or man) concerned should be '...watched and probed with the greatest care'.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, other equally biased views have been expressed, for example by Dr. Glanville Williams who, in explaining the need for corroboration in the case of all sexual offences, stated '...these cases are particularly subject to the danger of deliberately false charges resulting from neuroses, fantasy, spite or simply a girl's refusal to admit that she consented to an act of which she is now ashamed' (Williams 1976: 158-160). Writing at the same time, Brownmiller (1975) estimated the number of false rape allegations to be two percent. Other studies have presented similar estimates, based on the fact that rape is a difficult crime to report in the first place, therefore the likelihood of false allegations has to be remote (Lees 1997; and Gregory and Lees 1999).

The issue of consent has also been used to suggest that the testimonies of victims of rape need to be examined. However, as research in this area has demonstrated, the manner in which rape trials are conducted frequently leaves the female victim on trial (Tempkin 1987; Smart 1989; Lees 1997). There is a lack of research to determine whether or not the same is true for male victims owing to the fairly recent legal recognition given to this issue. However, it is likely that men too, will endure disturbing cross examinations from tough barristers, prejudicial attitudes from jurors and ill-informed judges, all of whom will perpetuate the myths about male rape.

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<sup>25</sup> High Court Judge Sir Travers Humphreys in *Du Cann* (1960: 218-9).

## 2.6 Sentencing for Male Rape: The Case of *R v Richards*

It would appear that the changes in legislation to incorporate sentencing of perpetrators who rape men is straight forward enough, given that sentencing guidelines laid down in *Billam*<sup>26</sup> can be applied to either male or female victims. However, as Rumney and Taylor (1994) highlight, notions of male sexuality and myths about male rape may impact on sentencing for male rape. Its actual impact is unknown at present due to the low levels of male rape cases being reported, prosecuted and tried. However, the case of *R v Richards* (unreported, 9 June 1995, CCC- the first case in the United Kingdom in which a man was charged with male rape), provides no indication that the victim was treated with antipathy, leading researchers such as Codd (1996:447) to conclude that 'judges are much more willing to consider the possibility of voluntary consent to an act between a man and a woman, than between two men'. As already discussed, prior to the introduction of male rape as an offence in its own right, a male victim of an assault involving non-consensual anal intercourse could only seek redress under the offence of buggery (which carries a maximum penalty of ten years).

In the *Richards* case, after both parties had consumed alcohol, the defendant (aged 25 years at the time of the attack) led the 18-year-old male victim into a park. The victim was then grabbed by the throat and forced to perform an act of fellatio upon the defendant, who then attempted to rape him. The defendant, claiming the youth had performed sex for money, pleaded not guilty to the charge of rape. In sentencing, the defendant's previous convictions for sex offences (including the rape of a 15 year old girl whom he had kidnapped and threatened with a knife) were taken into consideration by the Judge, who noted that the defendant's '...addiction to drink and/or drugs has often played a part in his previous offences and drink played a part on this occasion' (Rumney and Taylor, 1996:262). However, he stressed that the court's primary concern had to be to protect the public. While there was no evidence to enable him to detain Richards under the Mental Health Act, it was felt that the defendant suffered from a psychopathic personality disorder and as result, it was quite possible that, if not detained and incarcerated, he would commit similar offences in the future. The defendant was sentenced to life imprisonment. At a glance, the life sentence may appear to be significantly high when one compares this to female rape cases. However, sentencing guidelines laid down in *Billam* (1986) 8 Cr App R (s) 48



maintain that although the sentence for attempted rape ought normally to be less than that for the completed attack, aggravating features of an attempted rape may make it more serious than a full offence. In the case of *Richards*, aggravating features included the defendant's previous convictions for sexual offences; excessive use of violence to commit the offence; and his not guilty plea which necessitated the victim giving evidence.

The sentence imposed would suggest that the aims of s142 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act have been achieved, bringing the offence of male rape in line with female rape. However, as Rumney and Taylor (1996) state, it is yet to be seen whether the view that rape between ongoing or former partners is less serious than rape between strangers<sup>27</sup> (as in female rape) is applied to homosexuals. Likewise, it is unknown whether leniency in sentencing will apply to the rape of prostitutes, because 'the hurt she may suffer as a result of the rape is to some extent different from that of another woman who would only be prepared to have sexual intercourse with a man whom she knows and respects'.<sup>28</sup> As Rumney and Taylor (1997a) point out, this approach gives no regard for the rape trauma that both male and female prostitutes suffer.<sup>29</sup> However, the case of *Richards* demonstrates that principles of sentencing have been followed in the first male rape case to reach court. It is hoped that this judgement, which stressed the seriousness of rape, will provide guidance in future cases.

## 2.7 Male Victims and the Rape Trauma Syndrome

The rape trauma syndrome was first identified by Burgess and Holmstrom (1974:4) who clearly define it as:

The acute phase and long term reorganisation process that occurs as a result of forcible rape or attempted forcible rape. This syndrome of behavioural, somatic, and psychological reactions is an acute stress reaction to a life-threatening situation.

The researchers interviewed and analysed 92 cases of female rape and found a variety of reactions to the rape. They highlight that the impact of rape may be so severe that feelings may vary from fear, anger and anxiety, expressed in a

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<sup>26</sup> *Billam* (1986) 8 Cr. App. R. (s) 48. Guidelines developed for sentencing in female rape cases were laid down in this case and were applied to cases of buggery (as in *Stanford* (1990) with an appropriate reduction to account for the apparently, lesser nature of the rape when compared to vaginal rape.

<sup>27</sup> Attorney General's Reference No.7 of 1989 (1990) 12 Cr. App. R (s)1

<sup>28</sup> *Cole* (1993) 14 Cr. App. R. (s) 764 at 765

<sup>29</sup> For example, research by West and DeVilliers (1993) evidences the trauma of this group demonstrating that although the number of sexual assaults against male prostitutes in this study were relatively low, the physical and psychological effects for those who were sexually assaulted, were severe.

variety of behaviours such as crying, sobbing or smiling; they also identified the controlled style in which feelings are hidden and a composed, subdued effect is seen. Hence, symptoms of phobic anxiety, depression, somatic complaints, tearfulness, and behavioural changes following an assault, were common. Emotional reactions to rape ranged from fear, humiliation and embarrassment, to anger, revenge and self-blame. The researchers further use the term 'traumatophobia'<sup>30</sup> to define the phobic reactions of rape survivors which included fear of indoors; fear of outdoors, fear of being alone, fear of crowds; fear of people behind them, and sexual fears. These findings have been used as a basis for illustrating the trauma suffered by female victims of rape in subsequent studies.<sup>31</sup>

Later work by Burgess (1995) demonstrates that the stress response patterns of rape survivors are consistent with the diagnostic criteria of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Using clinical research data from her earlier work (Burgess and Holmstrom 1974), the researcher demonstrates that rape survivor's experiences are consistent with all of the four criteria used for assessing PTSD. These criteria are (1) the stressor is of significant magnitude as to evoke distinguishable symptoms in almost everyone (rape is the stressor in these circumstances) (2) re-experiencing the trauma perhaps through intrusive recollection of the event, dreams and nightmares, (3) a numbing of responsiveness to, or reduced involvement with, the environment (experiences of 'shock', 'feeling numb') (4) two of the following symptoms not present before the rape: exaggerated startle response or hyperalertness, disturbance in sleep pattern, guilt about surviving or behaviour during the rape, impairment of memory and/or power of concentration, avoidance of activities that arouse recollection, increased symptoms in response to events that symbolise or resemble the event.

As Rogers (1997) points out, while some research has considered the relationship between trauma and PTSD for female victims of sexual assault, there is significantly less research which considers these links in male experiences of rape. This may be due to the fact that male victims are less likely to seek support. The severity and impact of male rape is therefore difficult to determine given that so few male rape cases are known or brought to the attention of professionals. However, of the scarce literature on the impact of rape on men, all show that they experience extreme trauma as a consequence of rape. Such

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30 A term they take from Rado (1948).

31 For example Notman and Nadelson (1976) observe how rape heightens the victims' sense of helplessness, intensifies conflicts about dependence and independence, generates guilt and self-criticism which devalues her as a person and interferes with partner relationships.

experiences range from rape trauma syndrome to PTSD in varying degrees. Mezey and King (1989) identify the rape trauma syndrome in their sample of 22 male victims. Similarly, Kaufman et al. (1980) found that male victims demonstrated a controlled response in their initial response to rape. Groth and Burgess (1980) found that men in their sample experienced disruption in their lives in terms of physical reactions, psychological reactions and social reactions. They further reported that:

Although male victims made concerted efforts to resume their usual lifestyle as quickly as possible...on long-term follow-up they reported unresolved issues when the rape was not adequately addressed as a trauma at the time it occurred (Groth and Burgess 1980: 809).

Research by Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997) also found that 1669 men in their study<sup>32</sup> experienced symptoms associated with PTSD. Similar findings have been reported by Goyer and Eddleman (1984); Myers (1989); Frazier (1993); and Stermac et al. (1996). Work by Huckle (1995) considered the long-term effects of 22 men referred to a forensic psychiatric service and found that many men reported feelings of shock and humiliation, which often persisted for a number of years. The study also illustrated feelings of embarrassment, behavioural changes and phobias that were rape-related. Increased anger, irritability, conflicting sexual orientation, loss of self respect and sexual dysfunction were among the long term emotional reactions found to be present. Nine of the 22 men fulfilled the criteria for a diagnosis of PTSD and six men were diagnosed as having Borderline Personality Disorder. Additionally, one man was diagnosed with major depression and one with a chronic depressive state. This research demonstrates that men can develop psychiatric disorders following rape. Another study by Kaszniak and Nussbaum (1988) uses a case example to illustrate the severe psychological distress that can result from male rape. The victim in this case experienced amnesia in response to the trauma of being raped; whereby he had no memory of events prior to being found by police and could recall no personal information about himself. After numerous tests, the victim was hypnotised and after four sessions of hypnosis, was able to recount being violently raped by two men. The alleviation of amnesia resulted in increased anger, depression, shame and guilt, after which, the victim began to confront the experience more rationally.

The research presented in this section clearly illustrates the devastating impact that rape has on the lives of survivors. However, as with other aspects of male

rape, research on its impact is severely lacking with many studies having to use small sample groups, due to the largely hidden nature of this crime. Rogers (1997) accurately stresses the need for more research to consider the differences between traumatic groups if recognition and treatment for male survivors is to improve. This work acknowledges that male survivors may develop different trauma from other groups (such as female survivors of rape), such as a loss of masculinity and confusion about their sexual orientation, as illustrated by Myers (1989) and King (1993). From the limited research conducted on the effects of rape on men's lives, it is apparent that men experience a series of complex emotions in the aftermath of rape. More research is needed to consider the impact of rape on men's lives and its long-term effects, if services are to adequately accommodate for their needs.

## **Summary**

In discussing the present literature on male rape, this chapter has highlighted that there exists very little scholarly work on male rape. Of the research that has been conducted, and with the exception of Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997), the vast majority is based on clinical observations and uses small samples due to the largely hidden nature of this crime. Existing research is limited in its exploration of the nature and impact of male rape on survivors. Importantly too, while some research exists to indicate reasons why men are reluctant to disclose rape, much of this work is anecdotal and requires empirical support. Likewise, there exists no empirical research on the responses of key agencies that deal with male survivors of rape. Several themes have been identified by the literature review and these will run through the research and will be explored in the empirical research. The issue of sexuality is discussed further in chapter 4 in light of explanations that have sought to draw links between it and male rape, and this is then further explored in the empirical data in chapters 6, 7 and 8. The importance of gender role socialisation has been discussed in this chapter, highlighting how this creates rigid roles for both men and women, which permeate all segments of society. Such stereotypical roles prevent survivors from seeking support. This will be explored further in the discussion in chapter 4. The effects of male rape are clearly devastating and need to be explored further. These issues will form the basis of the empirical work and findings from this will, where appropriate, be linked to existing research.

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32 This research had a total sample of 3,635 men from 336 agencies that took part in a questionnaire on men they had dealt with who had been raped. Data on 1,679 men was supplied in terms of PTSD.

# Chapter Three: Positivist Explanations for Rape

## Introduction

This chapter will critically discuss the major theoretical explanations presented for male rape within positivism, in order to provide a framework on causality. The vast majority of research on male rape originates from the United States and has a strong clinical basis and has an individual positivist approach. Such work seeks to explain male rape either in terms of psychology, evolutionary psychology or biology and is based on research within prisons, where the existence of male rape was first acknowledged. In critically evaluating this position, the ensuing discussion will demonstrate that it is this key focus of positivistic explanations on rape in prisons which is one of its most fatal flaws, since it fails to provide adequate explanations for non-institutionalised rape. However, the important contributions of individual positivism to explaining the occurrence of rape cannot be overlooked, given that much earlier theorising on rape developed from this model. This chapter will present the major principles of positivism, focusing on individual positivism and more specifically psychology, biology and evolutionary psychology. In doing so, it will critically evaluate these in terms of their suitability to understanding and explaining male rape.

## Positivism

Positivism advocates that individuals are driven to crime by forces that are generally beyond their control and locates such forces within the biology or psychology of the individual. Biological positivism has been grounded in the work of Lombroso (1875), who proposed that criminals existed as a lower form of human evolution than non-criminals, comprising very distinct physical and mental characteristics.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Lombroso carried out post-mortem examinations of prison inmates and made careful comparison with non-criminals as to physical features of the two groups, concluding that there existed four classes of criminals (1) born criminals (thought to constitute one third of all criminals) (2) insane criminals (3) occasional criminals (crime for who was based on opportunity) and (4) criminals of passion (driven by temporary irresistible forces).

While important challenges<sup>34</sup> have been made against Lombroso's assumptions, much subsequent work has focused on other determining factors of criminality.<sup>35</sup> Early work on explaining rape was based on psychiatric research, from which psychological explanations developed. The focus of the ensuing discussion will be on female rape since early theories of rape concentrated entirely on female rape with no attention to male rape. The theoretical positions will be laid out, after which, their relevance to male rape will be considered and applied.

Scully and Marolla (1985) summarise four fundamental causes of rape behaviour, as identified in psychiatric literature, and later developed further by the field of psychology. They are (1) uncontrollable impulses or urges; (2) mental illness or disease; (3) momentary loss of control precipitated by unusual circumstances; and (4) victim instigation. These positions will now be briefly considered.

### **3.1 Uncontrollable Urges**

The suggestion of uncontrollable impulses or urges refers to an overwhelmingly high sex drive that overthrows any normal self-control. Hence, advocates of this perspective maintain that rape occurs for sexual gratification only. Here it is suggested that high levels of sexual deprivation may result in the natural, innate sex drive of an individual reaching explosive levels, if it is not channelled appropriately (this was later developed by Freud's work on psychoanalysis, discussed below). Rape then, is seen as an 'outlet' for sexual gratification, caused by a powerful, biological drive, which is not in the control of the individual. This explanation has dominated the limited research on rape within prisons, which will now be explored. As already mentioned, due to a lack of literature on male rape in UK prisons, work from the USA which has attempted to provide an understanding of this problem will be discussed.

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34 Lombroso's theory fell into disrepute when it became known that many of his subjects had been incarcerated for severe intellectual handicap. Similarly, he has also been severely criticised for his work on *The Female Offender* (1893) in which Lombroso's sexist beliefs were apparent. Despite such criticisms, Lombroso's work prompted further research in this domain and as such, his contributions have been acknowledged in criminology.

35 For example, Hooten (1939) compared the physical traits of over 10,000 convicted male criminals to those of 44,000 non-criminals and concluded that criminals were physically inferior to non-criminals. Other supporting work includes Sheldon (1942); Gibbens (1963); Rees (1973), although as Feldman (1993) points out, many of these are fraught with difficulties with regards to their design, sampling and control groups. Furthermore, research by McCandless, Persons and Roberts (1972) found no links between physical body-build and criminal behaviour in their work and suggested instead that the larger physical attributes of some individuals may make them prone to police attention, resulting in arrest. Other work has used twin studies to explore correlations between hereditary and crime for example, Mednick et al. (1987).

It has been suggested by Rideau and Sinclair (1982: 4) that:

Imprisoned and rendered powerless and without any voice or control in the things that affect him, his personal desires and feelings regarded with gracious indifference, being treated as a child at best and an animal at worst by those controlling his life, the existence of a prisoner is one of acute deprivation and insignificance. The psychological pain involved in such an existence creates an urgent and terrible need for reinforcement of his sense of manhood and personal worth. *Unfortunately, prison deprives those locked within the normal avenues of pursuing gratification of their needs, leaving them with nothing but sex, violence and conquest to validate their sense of manhood and individual worth (italics added).*

The authors therefore argue that rape acts to validate the manhood of men in prisons while also giving them gratification of their needs, which presumably are met by their partners, outside the prison environment. While the authors combine the need for proving masculinities and gaining power and control, with the need for sexual gratification, what is important is that these needs are seen to be innate and beyond the individual's control, described as 'frustrated drives' (Rideau and Sinclair, 1982: 4) thereby demonstrating clearly the biological positivistic approach to explaining male rape. The researchers suggest that rape occurs as,

...a need for a woman-substitute, for the expression and reinforcement of one's masculinity, for a sexual outlet, for income and/or service, for the sense of self-worth and importance' and is a consequence of 'the deprivation of basic human needs (Ibid: 9).

It is clear that the researchers fail to explore the possibility of such 'needs' as developing from the wider social structure that defines masculinities. The researchers recognise that rape is a violent acting out of power relations, in which,

...weaker inmates are made to assume the role of 'women' serving the strong, reinforcing their sense of manhood and personal importance, and providing them with the gratification of their needs that would, in the normal world, be provided by women (Ibid: 4).

In objectifying women in this way, the researchers fail to explore the root of such exploitation, instead accepting it, uncritically, as the norm. Additionally, in truly positivistic style, the researchers move focus away from the perpetrator, who, regarded as having no control over his 'needs', is exonerated from all responsibility, which is transferred by the researchers to the criminal justice system which is held to have created the situation. Rape in prisons is thus seen as behaviour which,

...merely reflects the response of desperate men, locked in a cruel and abnormal situation, exercising the only avenues left them to cling to the very normal need to feel strong, masculine and worthwhile (Rideau and Sinclair 1982:29).

This work also demonstrates an ill-informed, insensitive attitude towards women who are raped and who suffer prolonged rape and other abuse within marriage, as documented by numerous studies.<sup>36</sup> For example, the researchers state that:

Few female rape victims in society must repay their rapist for the violence he inflicted upon them by devoting their existence to servicing his every need for years after, but rape victims in the world of prison must...As with all other wives around the world, he'd also take care of his man's sexual needs, with the only difference being that he could never say 'no' (Ibid: 6-7).

This fails to acknowledge the fact that women too, are often in similar situations (namely within marriage) in which they cannot say 'no'.

Earlier work by Guttmacher and Weihofen (1952) suggested that sexual desire was the primary motive for rape, resulting from 'pent-up sexual impulse' and similarly, later work by Cohen et al. (1971:311) also maintained that in some cases, 'the sexual impulse is the dominating motive and the aggressive aspects of the assault are primarily in the service of the sexual aim'. Similarly, research by Symons (1979) supports the belief that male sexual impulse is part of human nature, suggesting that men innately seek 'impersonal copulation's'. However, despite such beliefs, this perspective lacks empirical support. In fact, research by Amir (1971) has demonstrated that contrary to uncontrollable urges, the majority of rapes are premeditated and not the result of sudden, impelling forces. He found this to be true for 71% of the rape cases analysed, therefore challenging traditional (mainly psychiatric and later psychological) explanations of rape being the consequence of 'uncontrollable urges' in men.

However, despite lack of empirical support, such dogmatic ideas have been strongly held in rape trials in which,

Prosecution and defence lawyers frequently maintain that a rape took place because of sex starvation when the accused's wife was pregnant or ill or otherwise out of action.<sup>37</sup> 'Victim to his libido' is the recurring

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36 For example, research by Russell (1982); Bowker (1983); Freize (1983); Shields and Hanneke (1983); Finkelhor and Yllo (1985) all demonstrate a significant occurrence of rape within marriage.

37 See for example the judgement of Judge Harold Cassell in 1990 who took the view that it was understandable for a man with a healthy sexual appetite to be driven to having unlawful sexual intercourse with his twelve-year old step-daughter, because his pregnant wife had lost interest in sex. The perpetrator was sentenced to probation (see Kennedy 1992).



theme in the mitigation plea for a convicted rapist. If a woman has been in any way familiar, we are presented with the old idea of man, the overheated engine, incapable of switching off. We are to treat him as the functional equivalent of a handgun, something intrinsically dangerous (Kennedy, 1992: 119-120).

The concept of individual pathology has been challenged further by feminist research, which provides an alternative explanation for rape, to be discussed below.

### **3.2 Mental Illness or Disease**

The notion of the rapist as 'mentally ill', or a 'diseased psychopath' is an extension of the argument that he has uncontrollable sexual impulses. For example, earlier work by Karpman (1951:190) argued that:

Sexual psychopaths are, of course, a social menace, but they are not conscious agents deliberately and viciously perpetrating these acts, rather they are the victims of a disease from which many suffer more than their victims.

One of the fundamental criticisms of the disease model is the challenge that perpetrators of rape suffer more than their victims, disregarding the impact that rape has on survivors. As Rada (1978) demonstrates, this belief has led to various medical responses to finding solutions for the problem of rapists, including hormonal and mind-control drug therapy as well as psychotherapy. As Scully and Marolla (1985) and Lanyon (1986) suggest, the idea of the rapist as a 'diseased psychopath' is the dominant view held by the criminal justice system, social service agencies, and the general public, despite lack of evidence for this position.<sup>38</sup>

Linked to this perspective is the belief that rapists must be latent homosexuals who rape in order to prove their masculinity to themselves and others, a perspective commonly held by prison officials who regard prison rape as consensual homosexual behaviour. This of course, is based on the historical belief that homosexual men exhibit pathology in their sexual preference. However, research by Saragin (1976) used a sample of five aggressors and four victims of prison rape to demonstrate that sexuality is the means for the expression of dominance. He argues that the fact that perpetrators return to

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<sup>38</sup>For example, research by Abel et al. (1980) demonstrated that as few as 5% of men are psychotic at the time of their crimes.

heterosexual relationships after release suggests that they were not latent homosexuals, but instead carried out rape to demonstrate and retain their masculinity. Developments based on this perspective have focused on rape and sexual assault as an addiction, similar in nature to other forms of addiction such as alcoholism, gambling and drug abuse.

No research has been conducted on men who rape other men to identify pathological tendencies, owing to the fact that very little work has been done on male rape per se, due to its hidden nature. Research on the possible links between pathology and rape, has, in the main, used incarcerated men and juveniles who rape women, as subjects of inquiry. While such research (see for example Langevin et al. 1985<sup>39</sup>) has attempted to demonstrate causal links between individual pathology and rape<sup>40</sup>, it is inconclusive and inconsistent. One major limitation of such work is the fact that it relies so heavily on samples of incarcerated men who have readily admitted rape in order to receive prison therapy. As Scully (1990) asserts, such subjects of inquiry have an interest in having a positive psychiatric evaluation for parole purposes. She points out that as such, the relationship between the therapist and client is an unscientific one. Samples in such observations and case studies represent only a small proportion of convicted rapists since many more men deny rape. It may be concluded that the positivistic approach to rapists as victims of mental illness and disease relies heavily on study samples of men who are incarcerated, and as such, fails to represent non-incarcerated rapists who are not caught or convicted.

### **3.3 Momentary Loss of Control Precipitated by Unusual Circumstances**

It has sometimes been suggested that unusual circumstances (primarily drug or alcohol intoxication) result in rape. Much work in this area has focused on the rape of women. This discussion will consider this work first, and will then discuss its bearing on male rape, since it can be argued that in terms of drug and alcohol intoxication, there is no difference between male and female survivors since the

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<sup>39</sup> The research used a total sample of 105 sex offenders (40 of whom were admitted rapists undergoing pre-trial evaluations) and concluded that the two groups of violent offenders (one sexually violent, the other non-sexually violent) displayed symptoms of strong emotional disturbances. As Scully (1990) points out, such symptoms may easily be the effect (not the cause) of being arrested, charged for serious offence, undergoing psychiatric tests and awaiting a trial that could result in a long prison sentence. In these circumstances she argues, it is not surprising that men would display symptoms of emotional imbalance.

<sup>40</sup> For a more detailed presentation of research in this area, see Rada (1978).

focus is on the perpetrator, and not the survivor. Research by Canaan (1998), Martin and Hummer (1998), and Polk (1998) highlights the existence of alcohol in male-on-male violence.

Alcohol has been seen to be a contributing factor in rape cases, demonstrated by researchers such as Kanin (1984), who found that two-thirds of male rapists in his study attributed their date rape to excessive drinking, with one-fifth of the rapists insisting that the rape would not have occurred, had they not been intoxicated. Herman (1984) believes that such forms of intoxication may be regarded as facilitators of rape, rather than direct causes, in that they help the rapist to overcome inhibitions prior to the rape. To illustrate the point, the author refers to research by Wilson and Lawson (1976) which compared a group of young men who had drunk alcohol, to a group who *believed* that they were intoxicated. Both groups became equally aroused by violent rape pornography.

Similarly, both groups were more aroused than a comparison group who believed that they were sober. This research clearly demonstrates how the social meaning of drunkenness allows people to cross boundaries and ignore the limits of socially acceptable behaviour. Therefore, the researchers suggest that it is this social meaning of drunkenness, which excuses behaviour that would not be acceptable in sober conditions, rather than any pharmacological effect of intoxication, that rapists use to excuse their behaviour. Similarly, cross-cultural research by MacAndrew and Edgerton (1969) demonstrates how in some cultures, people who are heavily intoxicated do not become more sexually aggressive as a result of this intoxication. This leads the researchers to conclude that individuals learn about drunkenness and act in accordance with the social meaning attached to it. Other researchers have also argued that there is very little empirical support for the idea that the chemical action of alcohol influences sexual and aggressive behaviour.<sup>41</sup>

Research on the presence of alcohol in male rape cases has been inconclusive. For example, Stermac et al. (1996) found that victims had been intoxicated in 46% (13) of cases and perpetrators had been intoxicated in 39% of these cases (11). The use of drugs was present in 18% of survivors (5) and 14% of perpetrators (4). Research by Mezey and King (1989) found that in 13 of the 22 cases in their sample, perpetrators were reported to have been drinking prior to the rape. Eight of the victims in this study had also been drinking, although only

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<sup>41</sup> See for example Carpenter and Armenti (1972).

in one case was alcohol a major factor in incapacitating the victim. Other research by Forman (1982) demonstrated that alcohol and/or drugs were not present in the majority of cases. It is clear that there is a need for further research in this area and the presence of drug and/or alcohol will be considered in the empirical part of this study.

### **3.4 Victim Precipitation**

The assumption behind the concept of victim-precipitated rape is that the victim provoked or instigated the rape, which is seen as a sexual, rather than a violent act. The basic principals of this theory will be discussed followed by a critique in terms of rape. The notion of victim precipitation or contributory negligence has developed from the positivistic approach to explaining crime. Von Hentig (1940) was the first to suggest that if there exist born criminals, there must also be born victims. Later work by Wolfgang (1958) examined homicide cases, which he believed had been precipitated by the victim in the sense that the victim had been the first in the situation to use physical force against the subsequent murderer. This idea was later developed by Amir (1971) who applied it to rape cases. He suggested that offenders and victims are,

...mutually interacting partners...the female partner sometimes encourages rape when (she) uses what could be interpreted as indecency in language and gestures, or constitutes what could be taken as an invitation to sexual relations (Amir 1971 :266).

He gives the example of the victim agreeing voluntarily to have a drink with the attacker prior to the rape and failing to react strongly enough to sexual suggestions made by the attacker. According to Amir, under such circumstances, the female victim is responsible for the offence since she is thought to have provoked the attack. Alarmingly, such notions still prevail within the criminal justice system and more importantly, the trial process of rape cases, despite a firm lack of empirical support for this belief. As Freedman (1989: 211) highlights, the changing perception of the victim in the twentieth century and the redefinition of rape suggests that rape is 'Not only a male psychological aberration, but also an act in which women...contributed to their victimisation'. Freedman's critique of this notion has been supported by Kennedy (1992) who emphasises that the belief that 'no does not always mean no' is one that is held by many men in society. Such perspectives are frequently echoed in rape trials when it is asserted that:

Women who say no do not always mean no. It is not just a question of how she says it, how she shows and makes it clear. If she doesn't want it she only has to keep her legs shut and she would not get it without force and then there would be the marks of force being used.<sup>42</sup>

Indeed, there still exists discrepancy within rape trials today, as to what constitutes 'strong enough' resistance. For example, *The Independent* newspaper in March 2001 reported on a rape case in which the senior judge in a Scottish High Court cleared a student of raping a 21 year old woman, stating that it was not enough that she had said 'no, ' and that a man must use or threaten to use force for the charge of rape to stand. He stated:

To have sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent in itself is not rape. There seems to be a common perception that lack of consent is enough for a charge of rape..the issue in this case is whether there is sufficient evidence of the accused overcoming the will of the complainant by using some degree of force.<sup>43</sup>

Such biased perspectives again fail to take into account the fact that most victims of rape are too afraid or shocked to show physical resistance and many rapists use coercion, intimidation and blackmail to get victims to 'comply'. Such prejudice has been documented to be rife within rape trials, leading researchers to conclude that victims of rape are subjected to 'judicial rape' (Lees 1993).

According to Kennedy (1992), victim-precipitation is further present in rape trials through challenges to the dress code of the rape victim, (the tightness of the fit, the absence of a bra) her sexual promiscuity and why, for example, she was out late by herself. This position is enhanced in cases where the offender is known to the victim prior to the rape (which is the case in the majority of rapes). The concept of 'blaming the victim' in rape has been documented by Kennedy (1992) who maintains that rape victims have been accused by the legal system of somehow instigating, provoking or even enjoying their experiences.<sup>44</sup> Hence, Kennedy (1992: 114) asserts that 'the complainant in a rape case is required to be the ideal victim, sexually inexperienced or at least respectable.'

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42 Judge Wilde directing a jury in a rape trial in 1982, cited in Kennedy (1992: 111).

43 Lord Abernethy quoted in *The Independent* 26 March 2001.

44 One such example of 'blaming the victim' is the rape and murder of 16 year old Yvonne Swaffer in 1975 in which the offender claimed that he had been led on by a young temptress whose death was the result of her own sexual game-playing (cited in Kennedy 1992).

Scully (1990) suggests that victims of other types of assaults are rarely alleged to have an inner need to be victimised, nor are they routinely accused of instigating the offence against them. However, this is not entirely so. Recent work by Edgar and O'Donnell (1998) considers the victim's contribution to their own assaults in prison, using Sparks (1982) framework of explanatory factors for victimisation.<sup>45</sup> The researchers conclude that male victims in prison contribute to their victimisation through facilitation or precipitation, by gaining a reputation for vulnerability, and by increasing the aggressor's sense of impunity. This study considers only six types of victimisation, namely assault, robbery, threat, insult, exclusion and cell theft, and importantly ignores sexual assaults in prisons, which are arguably one of the more serious of assaults in the prison environment.

It is not clear then, whether or not the researchers are suggesting through inference that such victim contribution is also applicable to rape cases, both inside and outside prisons, or whether their omission of such offences is because they believe that such a position cannot be applied to rape cases.

Research by Rideau and Sinclair (1982: 11) has demonstrated that inmates also believe that a man who is raped in prison is not a 'real man' and is 'weak and unworthy of respect from those who are 'men'. Their weakness both invites and justifies exploitation. Therefore rape, both institutionalised and non-institutionalised, has been blamed on the victim.

It is apparent that the suggestion that victims contribute to their own victimisation is a notion that is extended in the treatment of rape victims, without any empirical foundation for such beliefs. The empirical research with police officers in the present study will explore the concept of 'victim precipitation' to determine whether or not such beliefs are held among police officers in male rape cases. The implications of any such beliefs will also be discussed in the findings.

It is not surprising that convicted rapists have held beliefs such as those discussed above, suggesting that their female victims 'ask for it'; that rape is the result of uncontrollable urges; mental illness; or alcohol/drug intoxication. This has been demonstrated by Scully (1990), who interviewed 114 convicted rapists

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<sup>45</sup> Sparks (1982) suggested that the victim of a crime might facilitate it by deliberately, neglectfully or unconsciously placing himself/herself at risk. Additionally, he argued that the victim might have precipitated the offence by initiating the sequence of events, which led to the assault. Furthermore, Sparks proposed that the victim might be a 'suitable target' owing to his/her vulnerabilities. He also maintained that impunity resulting from the victim's own actions (for example, doing something illegal themselves and therefore making them less likely to report the perpetrator to the police) makes assault more likely.

on their motivations, perceptions and afterthoughts. This research demonstrated that the majority of the 'deniers'<sup>46</sup> (69%) were convinced that 'nice girls don't get raped' arguing that their victim had been dressed seductively, was hitchhiking, or was known to be 'loose'. This group also claimed that not only did the victim enjoy herself (in some cases to an immense degree) but that, despite any struggles, the victim was, deep down, having a fantasy fulfilled. As highlighted by Bartol (1995) this view that 'people deserve what they get' belongs to the 'just world hypothesis' which asserts that victims of crime deserve their fate. This suggests that people need to believe that they live in a 'just world' where the undeserving are appropriately deprived or punished. It is one thing for the rapist to believe that the victim 'got what she deserved' in order to justify his own behaviour, but such a 'just world' hypothesis has serious implications for the emotional and psychological well-being of victims, as well as their achieving redress at the hands of the criminal justice system. As demonstrated above, such notions also have serious implications for victims in rape trials when judges, prosecutors and juries hold such 'just world prejudices'.

In the second group of rapists identified by Scully (1990), rapists viewed their behaviour as serious, harmful and morally wrong. However, this group argued that their behaviour was the result of 'uncontrollable circumstances' identifying (1) alcohol and drug intoxication; (2) emotional problems; (3) a 'nice-guy' self-image. Interestingly too, 80% of this group identified an anger-inducing event occurring prior to the rape. They also identified rage caused by an incident involving a woman whom they believed they loved. Scully (1990) concludes that culture provides perpetrators with excuses and justifications for their behaviour, by allowing them to define it in terms of 'uncontrollable urges' 'mental illness' 'victim precipitation' and 'drug/alcohol intoxication'.

Despite a lack of empirical evidence to support the belief that rape victims contribute to their victimisation, the above discussion demonstrates that such beliefs are commonplace. Research by Whatley and Riggio (1993) (discussed earlier in chapter 2) found that cultural myths about rape, such as 'women really enjoy rape' or 'women provoke rape' were present in the sample group used. The findings show that individuals assigned greater blame for the rape to 'bad victims' (those who were thought to have 'asked for it') than 'good victims' (those who were perceived as 'ideal victims') (see Kennedy 1992 above). While perpetrators were held most accountable for the rapes, victims were also held somewhat

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<sup>46</sup> Scully (1990) categorised the rapists as deniers (those rapists who defined their behaviour as wrong, but not as rape) and admitters (those who viewed their behaviour as rape, but not themselves as rapists).

accountable, since it was believed that they could have prevented the rape from occurring. Such perceptions permeate throughout society. They have grown out of psychiatric explanations for rape, enhanced by psychoanalysis, which will now be briefly considered.

### **3.5 Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalysis has developed as a complex set of ideas through the fusion of psychiatric and psychological thought, covering a wide range of work on human behaviour. It focuses on inner, dynamic forces as explanations of human behaviour. This approach suggests that all human beings are, from birth, prone to a build up of aggressive energy, which must be channelled before it reaches explosive levels. For Freudians, this aggressive energy discharges itself in the form of violent behaviour if it is not adequately discharged through legitimate behaviour, such as taking part in sports. For Freudian psychoanalysts therefore, people who engage in violent behaviour do so because they have not had sufficient opportunity to 'let off steam' and therefore manage their aggressive energies to acceptable levels. The theory maintains that all human beings, by their very nature, are prone to violent and aggressive behaviour, which must be channelled in a socially acceptable manner to avoid conflicting with society's rules and values. Hence, this perspective suggests that criminal behaviour is a form in which the mental conflict outwardly presents itself, because it is not being channelled properly.

Aichhorn (1963) first enhanced the psychoanalytic position through the introduction of the idea that criminals have underdeveloped superegos, an addition to Freud's earlier identification of the overdeveloped superego. Aichhorn (1963) maintained that the biological and psychological drives, urges and impulses which regulate all human behaviour (the Id) were unregulated in these cases, due to absent or non-loving parents. Consequently, the children failed to develop loving bonds that would strengthen their superegos. He also identified children who were permitted to do anything because of their parents' overabundance of love; also a small group of individuals who had well-developed superegos but who identified with criminal parents. As Vold and Bernard (1998) demonstrate, subsequent research in the field of psychoanalysis and its attempts to explain criminality, have followed in this direction.

Other work by Storr (1970) proposed that aggressive behaviour had its origins in innate (biologically determined) characteristics, which needed to be challenged



before reaching explosive levels. He suggested that individual manifestations of aggression in humans resulted from unconscious motivations developed through childhood emotional experiences.

Critics of psychoanalysis have pointed out that the perception of the female personality consisting of narcissism, masochism, and passivity places blame on the female victim of rape (Scully 1990). For example, Horney (1973: 24) summarises the psychoanalytic perspective of the female personality in terms of rape, as follows:

The specific satisfactions sought and found in female sex life and motherhood are of a masochistic nature. The content of the early sexual wishes and fantasies concerning the father is the desire to be mutilated, that is, castrated by him. Menstruation has the hidden connotation of a masochistic experience. What the woman secretly desires in intercourse is rape and violence, or in the mental sphere, humiliation...This swinging in the direction of masochism is part of the woman's anatomical destiny.

Other psychoanalytic literature similarly suggests that victims of sexual violence have an inner need to be attacked even though they are unaware of their motivation. Here it is maintained that victims make themselves available to rapists in order to fulfil their own desires.<sup>47</sup>

Other critics of the psychoanalytical explanation of criminal behaviour include Cleckley (1976) who argued that it is unreliable, as it cannot be adequately tested. More specifically in relation to criminality, it has been suggested that while some irrational crimes may be the result of unconscious conflicts developed through disturbances in childhood development, other crimes are rational and conscious and therefore cannot be a result of unconscious conflicts. As Vold and Bernard (1998: 96) suggest 'To date, psychoanalysis has not been particularly useful in either understanding crime or responding to it.'

The evolutionary psychology model for explaining male rape must be considered given that it too, suggests that rape is a 'natural, innate' response.

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<sup>47</sup> For a fuller discussion of this, see Littner (1973).

### 3.6 Evolutionary Psychology

Evolutionary Psychology is rooted in Darwin's theory on evolution which, in short, suggested that ultimately all living things share a common ancestry.<sup>48</sup> Darwin's invention of 'natural selection' considered why all animals<sup>49</sup> did not survive equally well and did not produce equal numbers of offspring. Natural selection focused on the differences between animals, which determined their fitness.<sup>50</sup> Fitness here is determined by different features or traits in each animal, known as adaptations<sup>51</sup>, which are then passed onto offspring. Hence, those animals with good adaptations survive better and reproduce more than those animals of the same species that do not have such good adaptations. Furthermore, adaptations, though features of animals, bear functional relationships to aspects of the environment of that animal, and therefore, are ever changing, like the environment of that animal. Darwin suggested that such gradual changes would accumulate and eventually change the structural and behavioural characteristics of that animal, resulting in the emergence of a different, new species.<sup>52</sup> Neo-Darwinism developed to encompass the role of genetics in determining the process that drives evolution.<sup>53</sup>

The development of evolutionary psychology can now be clarified. According to evolutionary theory, modern human beings are a relatively new species evolved from a family of animals that have undergone immense change in the last two or three million years. Significant to this is the change in our behaviour and brain function, which is of fundamental importance to psychology. Evolutionary theory focuses on the principle of 'natural selection' in all species, arguing that fitness is the essence of survival and reproduction. The process of natural selection is seen to put into place devices that direct spiteful and altruistic behaviours, which are innate in humans.

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48 The concept of evolution developed into an extensive theory, which can only be considered very briefly here in terms of its contribution to the development of evolutionary psychology. For a detailed insight into evolutionary theory see Ridley (1993).

49 The term animal here is used broadly to include human beings too.

50 Fitness is the result of the sum of features, which differ from one animal to another, that increase or decrease the likelihood of survival and reproduction (Plotkin 1997:11). The term has produced a lot of misunderstanding because it has been used in several different senses by evolutionists, none of which correspond to its familiar meaning of physical condition. The term was introduced by Herbert Spencer who summarised the theory of natural selection as 'survival of the fittest' (Daly and Wilson 1998).

51 Adaptations are features or traits such as fitness, which determine the survival and reproduction of the animal. They also bear a functional relationship to aspects of the animal's environment and are therefore likely to change as the environment changes.

52 Plotkin (1997).

As such, these behaviours work without our having to think about them. For Daly and Wilson (1994) violence in humans results from circumstances eliciting threats to fitness, with the targets of violent behaviour being not merely those available but those with whom assailants have substantive conflict. Subduing such individuals is beneficial to the assailant, although the researchers also point out that the costs of violent confrontations can be high even for the 'winner', including risk of subsequent harm to self or relatives from the vengeful relatives of the victim. The researchers highlight the point that competitive conflict predominantly occurs in same-sex individuals because of the desire for similar 'resources', especially when the 'resource' is a member of the opposite sex. Hence, violent conflict between men is explained as a means of competition.<sup>54</sup>

Evolutionary psychology attempts to understand human behaviour in terms of past evolutionary developments as causes that determine limitations on processes and structures. These limitations are seen to have an effect on the relations between species and their environment. Furthermore, evolutionary psychology attempts to understand innate and instinctive behaviour and considers whether or not learned behaviour is in fact a product of nature, rather than nurture. Here, it is maintained that knowledge evolves through species that have in built structures in their brains, which allow learning to take place. As such, evolutionary psychology infuses many of the ideas contemplated in the nature-nurture debate and in doing so, attempts to provide an alternative explanation for the causes of criminal behaviour.

This perspective differs from the individual pathology model in that it suggests that such innate behaviour is a consequence of the evolutionary process. The position that evolutionary psychologists take in the nature-nurture debate is that, to some degree at least, human beings cannot help but be what two million years and more of evolution has made them. The debate on genetics, evolution and crime has recently resurfaced and is promoted by sensationalist cases of brutality

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53 Darwin's theory gave scientific merit to the idea that human behaviour, to some extent at least, is determined by in-built or innate instincts.

54 For example, it is noted that men have frequently formed alliances with other men, (such as in wartime) to acquire wives and more typically, have engaged in lethal conflicts because of competition over material and social resources which in turn can be used to obtain wives. It is also highlighted that men engage in violence against the very resource for which they compete, that is their wives and other women. The source of much of this violence is seen to be the threat to their fitness, which takes the form of 'cues' and 'circumstances' which activate male sexual jealousy mechanisms. The idea presented by Daly and Wilson(1998a) that jealousy (having evolved in humans) is the cause of spousal battering and homicide would be more relevant in explaining rape within homosexual relationships.

highlighted by the media.<sup>55</sup> Much work on evolutionary psychology is based on animal behaviour, which is then applied to human beings (since animal behaviour is seen to be directly linked to human behaviour through evolution. It may be argued that this is one of the difficulties with this theory, and this will be considered below.

Evolutionary psychology maintains that violence is an adaptation, which has evolved in humans over time. It considers how the process of natural selection operates in designing such adaptations. For Lorenz (1966), aggressive behaviour is an instance of evolved adaptation rather than pathology. He maintained that aggression is an inherited instinct in humans and animals, which works to help both species defend their territories.<sup>56</sup> He suggests that any threats to that territory result in the inherited, programmed response of violence which has developed through the complex process of evolution. Such innate aggression acts to protect the survival of the most powerful mates for the young. He considers the way in which animals use ritualised aggression to demonstrate their superiority to members of their own species (such as showing their teeth or size). Through this complex communication, the dominant animal wins while the losing animal displays defeat through certain behaviours (for example cries of defeat), while leaving the territory for the dominant animal. Lorenz applies this to human behaviour, linking it through the process of evolution. He asserts that while animals use ritualised aggression to demonstrate superiority rather than engage in physical violence (which would lead to their eventual extinction), human beings have, through their superior learning ability, developed technological weaponry (as opposed to natural weaponry). They therefore have learnt to kill, maim and destroy rather than merely ward off their rivals.

Importantly, evolutionary psychology highlights male controlling behaviour as part of the complex evolution process. This is illustrated through the example of animal behaviour by Daly and Wilson (1998: 210-211):

When male birds continuously follow their mates closely during the breeding season, for example, ornithologists interpret the behaviour as 'mate-guarding' and its fitness-promoting function as paternity assurance...In some species, mate-guarding has been found to vary in relation to several cues of the onset of female fertility, and in relation to the proximity, abundance, and attractiveness of male rivals; and

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<sup>55</sup> A scientific meeting in London in 1995 on genetics and criminal behaviour instigated much media attention to this topic. Around the same time, a convicted murderer in the US appealed against his impending execution on the grounds that his behaviour was not in his 'control' but caused, unstoppably, by his genes (Plotkin 1997: 63).

<sup>56</sup> This includes the protection of food, water, space and mates.

the male's success in keeping his mate under guard has been found to be predictive of his subsequent level of effort in the care of his putative offspring.

This theory of mate-guarding in animals has been developed further by Mesnick (1997) to apply to human beings. Mesnick suggests that women can reduce the risk of sexual violence by developing a bond with a male partner. This form of 'body-guarding' suggests that the risk of sexual violence by men other than husbands is reduced for married women and is illustrated by the researcher using statistics on sexual victimisation from Canada. The issue of 'mate-guarding' as it is known in animals, or 'body-guarding' in human beings, begs the question 'must women rely on men to protect them from the sexual violence and aggression of other men?' If this is the case, then one is returned to medieval times in England during which women and girls were the property of their fathers, brothers and then their husbands. Any cases of rape were regarded as crimes against the male 'owners' of the victim to whom the perpetrator, if caught, would pay reparations (see chapter 2). Furthermore, as Daly and Wilson (1998b) point out, the use of men as 'protectors' of women can result in women valuing men for their violent capabilities. Hence, the woman, her husband and indeed other people may perceive a reputation for controlled use of violence as a valuable trait in a husband. This clearly ignores the imminent dangers of being with a violent man.

Research on rape in prisons by Rideau and Sinclair (1982) has demonstrated that such 'mate-guarding is commonplace. The study suggests:

...there are a lot of younger, weaker guys who are unwilling to get into the struggle of establishing themselves as strong macho men and who seek out a strong man to protect them, and in that case become a voluntary sort of slave, knowing that that is the only way they're going to survive. The alternative would be to be forced into it by someone else that they don't really want, or become sort of gang property...and that's much less acceptable to a lot of them. (Rideau and Sinclair 1982: 6).

Other research by Davis (1982) supports this position. His work discovered that rape and sexual assault cases were epidemic within the Philadelphia prison system.<sup>57</sup> The study found that

Many of these young men are repeatedly raped by gangs of inmates. Others, because of the threat of gang rape, seek protection by

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<sup>57</sup> The study, covering a two year period, took the form of interviews with over 3,304 inmates, 561 custodial employees, followed up with lie-detector tests to increase the likelihood of getting true statements (those who refused or failed the tests were not included in the final study).

entering into a homosexual relationship with an individual tormentor. Davis (1982:108).

Here it is suggested that 'mate-guarding' is used to ward off rapes by many other prisoners and submission results in protection from other inmates.

Daly and Wilson (1994: 269-270) also consider the act of rape as a form of sexual conflict in which men use violence against women. They suggest that:

Perhaps the most costly threat to a woman's fitness throughout history was loss of opportunity to choose who is likely to sire her offspring, thereby depriving her of the opportunity both to have her children sired by a man with desirable phenotypic qualities and to have her children benefit from the time, effort and resources of a father. Since these are substantial costs, the sexual psychology of women may be expected to manifest adapted design features reflecting the past costs and benefits of accepting or rejecting particular sexual partners. Undesired sexual encounters are resisted by women, and use of violence by men can be a very effective means of controlling the reluctant victim.

It is also argued that the fitness cost for a single sexual encounter has always been less for men than for women, which suggests that men's sexual psychology has evolved to mean that men are less likely to discriminate regarding their choice of partner for a single opportunity for sexual intercourse, than women. Thornhill and Thornhill (1992) also identify men's disregard for women's unwillingness as indicated through use of coercion to achieve copulation, arguing that the ability of men to remain sexually competent in such circumstances presumably reflects the past fitness benefits of pursuing and achieving copulation in the face of female resistance. In terms of male rape, research in prisons has overwhelmingly demonstrated that fitness is one of the fundamental motivations. In this instance, fitness, though not fulfilling reproductive needs, does refer to survival and research has demonstrated that the common theme in prisons is 'rape or be raped' (Drapkin 1976; Lockwood 1980; Davis 1982; Rideau and Sinclair 1982; Scacco 1982; Struckman-Johnson et al. 1996; Knowles 1999). However, if the function of rape is thought to be to impregnate and pass on genes, this implies that male rape should be rare. Conclusive links between male rape and the evolutionary psychology perspective cannot be established on the research available, demonstrating a need for further work in this area.

## **The Male Syndrome**

Evolutionary psychology also attempts to explain why it is males in particular who are prone to violent behaviour. According to Daly and Wilson (1994), the competent use of violent skills contributes quite directly to male fitness. They suggest that successful warriors and successful game-hunters have converted their successes into sexual, marital and reproductive success. They assert that:

Violent behaviour is risky behaviour, of course, but the greater variance in fitness amongst males than amongst females...and the male's greater likelihood of going to his grave without descendants make for a sexually differentiated selective circumstance favouring greater risk-proneness in same-sex competition amongst men than amongst women (Daly and Wilson 1994: 274).

The researchers suggest that men have evolved the morphological, physiological and psychological means to be effective users of violence and have exercised violent behaviour to acquire and maintain status and power. It is argued then, that evolved violent capabilities have been better developed in men than in women, primarily because of sex differential intensity of same-sex competition, giving men superior violent capabilities. This species-typical sex difference in violent aggression, they argue, is one, which we share with other effectively polygamous mammals. Hence, while the researchers recognise that female competitiveness can lead to violence, they maintain that their lesser fitness variance has generally meant that they have little to gain, and at least something to lose, by dangerous tactics whereas for males, greater variance in rewards favours greater acceptance of risk in their pursuit of success. However, the researchers note:

Theoretical modelling and research are needed to determine whether even small sex differences in fitness variance, such as those likely to have been characteristic of our foraging ancestors, could be sufficient to account for large sex differences in risk-proneness and mortality (Daly and Wilson 1994: 276).

Daly and Wilson (1994) also suggest that it is the social demands and agendas that confronted ancestral men and women in particular life stages, which can explain why it is *males* who are the main perpetrators of violence. They suggest that:

Young men are both especially formidable and especially risk-prone because they constitute the demographic class upon which there was the most intense selection for confrontational competitive capabilities amongst our ancestors...In the foraging societies in which the human psyche evolved, the young man who would acquire a wife had to display prowess in hunting and warfare and a capacity to defend his

interests, to women and to any men who might hinder or facilitate his ambitions (Daly and Wilson (1994: 277)).

The researchers assert that in most effectively polygamous animals, the success of a male is dependent upon his continuing competitive prowess. They illustrate that a senior stag must remain as aggressive and dangerous as the young bucks, or he is finished. Within humans they argue, the social interaction between individuals and social groups creates an arena in which individual reputations have a lasting effect. They also argue that the lifetime fitness of men is determined by their competitive success or failure, in a society in which successful risk-taking is admired, with much dangerous and violent behaviour functioning as a social display facilitated by the presence of an audience to impress. This perception is reminiscent of the role of contemporary masculinities and the use of rape by men to prove these masculinities (discussed in the next chapter).

The researchers also stress the possibility of other psychological processes relevant to explaining male violence and risk-prone behaviour, including the intensified desire for the fruits of success; intensified fear of the stigma of non-participation; finding the adrenaline rush of danger pleasurable in itself; underestimating objective dangers; overestimating one's competence; or ceasing to care whether one lives or dies (Daly and Wilson 1994: 279). They further consider age patterns in terms of changes in circumstances, arguing that mated status for example, should inspire a reduction in dangerous behaviour because access to mates is a principle issue which inspires competition. Hence, married men would have more to lose than single men.

The evolutionary psychology theory has not been supported by research on human aggression, perhaps notably because it relies on strong links between animals and human beings without recognising that the human brain is unique. Critics such as Bandura (1983) and Zillman (1983) have emphasised that human beings have distinctive characteristics from animals in that they are able to control their own thought processes, motivation and actions. Furthermore, critics such as Rose et al. (1990), have pointed out that evolutionary psychology promotes the idea that human behaviour is a product of natural selection, suggesting that social arrangements are naturally built into us all. As Mooney (2000: 59) points out, this suggests that 'men cannot help their violence' since this is an 'evolved adaptation'. Therefore, such behaviour is seen to be inevitable and unchangeable, which is perhaps the biggest limitation of evolutionary



psychology. Rose et al. (1990:237) point out that the appeal of such explanations is that they maintain the status quo since if social arrangements are seen to be innate:

If men dominate women, it is because they must. If employers exploit their workers, it is because evolution has built into us the genes of entrepreneurial activity. If we kill each other in war, it is the force of our genes for territoriality, xenophobia, tribalism, and aggression. Such a theory can become a powerful weapon in the hands of ideologues who protect an embattled social organisation by 'a genetic defence of the free market'. It also serves at the personal level to explain individual acts of oppression and to protect the oppressors against the demands of the oppressed.

The evolutionary psychology position for explaining rape and male rape has not been supported by empirical research, leading to conclusions such as those drawn by Bartol (1995: 187) that 'to date...there is little evidence to justify portraying humans as innately dangerous and brutal or as controlled by instinct.'

## **Summary**

The causal explanations for understanding rape and subsequently male rape in terms of individual pathology have been discussed. It is evident that much of the research on male rape has a strong clinical basis and as such, it is this focus on the individual perpetrator's pathology that has dominated the researchers' explanations for the motivation to commit this crime. Importantly, much of this research is confined to US prisons and so presents different dynamics from rapes occurring outside prison. Positivist explanations of the existence of male rape within prisons suggest that prison is 'dehumanising' and that rape within such an environment reinforces that dehumanising process. Individual pathological explanations have been presented by researchers such as Rideau and Sinclair, 1982 (discussed earlier) who have argued that while the initial rape of inmates serves as a demonstration of power and control, subsequent rapes serve to provide sexual gratification for needs that are described as 'innate urges'. Rape is therefore seen to serve a dual purpose. Firstly, it reinforces masculinities for inmates who can use rape as a mechanism for demonstrating that they have control and power over another man, or other men, thereby proving their manhood to other inmates. Secondly, prison rape serves as a sexual outlet for confined men. It is evident that more substantial research into prison rape is needed in order to establish such correlations. The evolutionary psychology perspective may contribute to enhancing our understanding of male rape within prisons since it is here that one's ability to survive is repeatedly tested. The fact

that researchers have referred to it as 'prison: the sexual jungle'<sup>58</sup> demonstrates the way in which rape in prisons is seen to be a reflection of the animal kingdom, where survival is determined by strength and domination. It is important to bear in mind that proving masculinities (which will be discussed more fully in chapter 4) was seen to be the most important factor in prison rapes and that rape as a sexual outlet was secondary to this. The primary motivation was therefore the enhancement of masculinities. To this end, the sexual element is insignificant since it is not the motivating factor to rape. However, empirical research into UK prison rape is needed to further explore these links.

It can be concluded that while positivist explanations may contribute to understanding some cases of male rape, they cannot provide an overall explanation for a problem apparently endemic. While evolutionary psychology attempts to fill this gap, as the above discussion has demonstrated, it too has its own difficulties. Additionally, studies that have considered male rape outside prisons contradict assumptions that rape is a consequence of innate pathology over which the perpetrator has no control and instead provide alternative motivations for male rape. These motivations focus on issues around power, control, degradation and humiliation (Groth and Burgess 1980; Mezey and King 1989; Huckle 1995; Stermac et al. 1996, and Canter and Hodge 1998). This theoretical position is rooted in feminist explanations of rape but seeks to develop the feminist model to make visible the male victim of rape, which feminism does not adequately do. Feminist theory will be considered in the next chapter, along with literature explaining male rape in terms of some important factors, namely the role of masculinity in male rape, power and control.

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<sup>58</sup> Rideau and Sinclair (1982).

# **Chapter Four: Feminism and Masculinities**

## **Introduction**

This chapter will discuss the contributions made by feminist theory and research in providing an alternative to the positivist explanations of rape, discussed in the previous chapter. In doing so, discussion will focus on the policy developments resulting from feminist campaigning for the improvements to the way in which female survivors are treated and perceived throughout society. The different strands of liberal, radical, and socialist feminism will be introduced after a brief summary of first and second wave feminism. Radical feminism will then be considered more closely given that this strand of feminism has dominated most research on rape. The limitations of feminist theory in terms of its ability to explain the phenomenon of male rape will also be examined. A discussion of research on masculinities and its importance to explaining male rape will supervene. This chapter will then demonstrate how principles of feminist theory can be extended to provide a plausible explanation for male rape.

## **4.1 First and Second Wave Feminism**

A central problem within feminist discourse has been our inability to either arrive at a consensus of opinion about what feminism is or accept definition(s) that could serve as points of unification (hooks 1997: 22).

In her essay, hooks points out that this lack of consensus has caused divisions within the feminist discourse. These divisions have led to the different strands of feminism which will be discussed further on. However, despite these differences, hooks suggests feminism can be defined as a 'movement to end sexist oppression' (Ibid: 27). Similarly, Kelly (1988: 107) suggests that:

Feminism is a belief that women are oppressed and a commitment to ending that oppression.

This commitment has been branded within two discourses, beginning with concerns about women's equalities by first wave feminism, which Caine (1982) identifies as being between the mid-nineteenth century, and the first two decades

of the twentieth century.<sup>59</sup> Major important victories were won by the end of first wave feminism. Husbands no longer had the legal right to beat their wives and as Walby (1990) notes, while this does not suggest that violence against women declined, it did provide the necessary basis for challenging this violence. The right to divorce husbands on the grounds of violent behaviour was also won and the introduction of separation and maintenance orders from local magistrates for women whose husbands were convicted of aggravated assault against them also provided important practical and financial means of escape for women from all social classes.

Whereas first wave feminism was concerned with the politics of legal, educational and economic equalities, second wave feminism, identified by Evans (1995) from the 1960's to the 1990's, focused on reproductive rights. As Humm (1992: 53) argues:

It is the institutionalisation of reproduction among other effects by patriarchy which bears down hard on women's opportunity to enter into the sphere of production. This is why the analysis of reproductive power and reproductive technology, by second wave feminism, is of crucial importance because the notion of 'biological fate' still determines many young women's responses to their future roles and encourages their entry into part-time and low-paid work.

She goes on to argue that:

The fight for reproductive rights entails a fight against sexual and domestic violence, and has profound repercussions for gender identity...Feminist theories about the causes of rape and violence connected the development of gender identity to gender power. 'Reclaim the Night', pro-abortion campaigns and the establishing of women's refuges were supported by a questioning of gender identities in relation to race and to class... (Ibid: 54).

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59 Caine (1982) points out that first wave feminism is usually linked to the women's movement in its attempts to increase the access of women in the public and political spheres. This movement was also concerned with the private and domestic lives of women. Campaigns of this time concentrated on reforming the legal status of women as well as educational, suffrage and employment rights. The work of Mary Wollstonecraft in 'A Vindication of the Rights of Women' urged women to become autonomous decision-makers, asserting the importance of education in achieving that autonomy. Later work by John Stuart Mill and Harriet-Taylor Mill focused on marriage and divorce (see Tong 1998 for a detailed discussion of such work). However, as Sarah (1982) points out, timing first wave feminism in this way includes only women's movements in the western world since other countries experienced this first wave later (for example, Forbes 1982 documents first wave feminism in India from the 1880's to the 1940's).

First wave feminism successfully laid down the foundations on which second wave feminists could campaign against violence against women, supported by research on these different forms of violence including domestic violence (for example, Dabash and Dobash 1979; Pahl 1985; Mooney 2000), pornography (Dworkin 1981; MacKinnon 1982) and rape (Millet 1970; Brownmiller 1975; Griffin 1971; MacKinnon 1982, and Lees and Gregory 1996). Such campaigns included for example, the introduction of legal changes to protect women from rape, although these were slow in being implemented. This can be illustrated with the 'Rape in Marriage Campaign' in the 1980's and 1990's, which achieved the legal recognition that a woman's consent cannot be presumed and that sexual violence should be defined in relation to the form of the assault and not the relationship between the man and woman concerned.<sup>60</sup> Prior to this, feminists had campaigned for the introduction of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1976, which attempted to provide anonymity for rape victims and rule out the use of their previous sexual history to prove consent. The use of previous sexual history was only allowed at the judge's discretion and although it has been argued that this discretion is used routinely in favour of the defendant(s) where the question of consent is at issue, it nonetheless demonstrates a minor but significant shift in courtroom power.<sup>61</sup> A similar attempt was made with the Youth and Criminal Justice Act 1999, but early indicators are that this recent attempt at reform may also once again be undermined by judges.

## **4.2 Feminism and Criminology**

Feminist research in criminology has come about from recognition by critics such as Smart (1976); MacKinnon (1982); and Heidensohn (1985) that like many other disciplines, criminological theorising was shaped by male experiences and understandings of the social world, with little regard to women as either offenders or victims of these crimes. Prior to feminism, the position of women in criminology was largely ignored and where it was given some recognition, deviant females were seen as morally corrupt, hysterical, diseased, manipulative, and devious (Downes and Rock 1988). Feminist explanations for the occurrence of rape came as a direct response to the positivist approach of focusing on the perpetrator's innate pathology to explain crime. Feminism has also taken issue with positivism for transferring blame from the male perpetrator to the female

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<sup>60</sup> This was introduced by case law in 1991 and statute law in 1994.

survivor, portraying women as seductresses who invite sexual attack, secretly wanting to be raped; an idea with its roots in psychoanalysis and men as having urgent sexual needs that prevent them from controlling their behaviour (discussed in chapter 3).

Furthermore, feminist theory and research emphasised the importance of the female survivor, whereas prior to this, it was the perpetrator that was at the focus of most research. Feminism has moved away from conventional thought into why women stay in abusive situations to focus more on making the female victims and their experiences of rape visible. The exclusion of women from traditional, mainstream criminology highlighted the need for feminist theory, research and policy, to provide plausible explanations for female oppression. It is for this reason that feminist researchers such as O'Brien (1981) often refer to traditional criminology as 'male-stream' theorising, and Murray and Tulloch (1997) identify liberal, radical, and socialist/marxist feminism as anti-male-stream theory which challenges the material (capitalist) world dominated by the interests of men.

While each strand of feminism has a different focus on female inequality, each position is united in its principal aim, that is, to end female oppression. Feminist responses to rape have been in the area of theory, research and policy and these will be considered in this chapter.<sup>62</sup>

#### **4.2.1 Liberal Feminism**

Liberal feminism is rooted in the liberal position of first wave feminism, concerned with giving women legal and political rights. Unlike socialist and radical feminism, it accepts the social structure, aiming to obtain sexual equality for women within the economic and political framework of capitalism, therefore also being called 'bourgeois feminism' (Gregory 1986). Gregory (1986: 65) suggests that this strand of feminists have:

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61 Adler (1987) examined 80 rape cases heard at the Old Bailey over the course of one year and found that the judge's discretion is used routinely to allow indirect evidence of the victim's sexuality in cases where the defendant claims that the woman consented to intercourse.

62 The contribution of feminism to criminology has been vast. Such a short summary of feminism does not do justice to the wealth of research, campaigning, theorising and policy developments which have significantly improved criminological understandings of so many different areas of research, including domestic violence, female victimisation, male violence against women and how these and other issues are perceived and dealt with by the police, courts and the rest of the criminal justice system. For a more extensive discussion, see for example Dobash and Dobash (1979), (1998); Heidensohn (1985); Hanmer, Radford, and Stanko, (1989); Smart (1989); Mooney (1993).

...drawn attention to the denial of civil liberties that occurs within the criminal justice system whenever those who come under its scrutiny are treated differently on the basis of sex. Their goal is sexual equality (women catching up with men); their strategy is to eliminate sexual ideology from the legal system.

Therefore, for liberal feminism the goal has been to remove sexist stereotypes that are promoted through sex-role socialisation<sup>63</sup> in the family as well as wider social institutions such as the media, the state, and areas of employment and education.<sup>64</sup> It is believed that this would result in the greater integration of women. Consequently, liberal feminist work has concentrated on women's rights rather than women's liberation (Messerschmidt 1993) and in doing so, has focused on the areas of education and employment.

Pateman (1989) maintains that liberal feminism sees gender inequality as emerging from the creation of separate and distinct spheres of influence. These are based on traditional attitudes about the appropriate sex roles of men and women in society, which are reasserted through discrimination against women in the workforce, through education, politics and other areas of public life. For liberal feminism then, the system is not inherently unequal, and allows for the fusion of male and female traits and characteristics to eliminate outdated policies and practices that discriminate against women. Despite arguments by radical feminists such as Smart (1989) that the assumption by liberal feminism of equality before the law is no longer a fruitful enterprise for feminists interested in crime, Walklate (1998) points out that liberal feminism has demonstrated how different themes and factors interact to produce different responses and outcomes for survivors of rape.

Liberal feminism has played an important role in improving legislation and policy reform although it has been criticised by radical and socialist feminism for seeking sex-blind equality. For example, Bryson (1992) asserts that the liberal idea of sex-blind equality ignores the biological differences and social realities of a gendered society.

In considering why men commit overwhelmingly more violent and aggressive crime than women, liberal feminism has proposed an explanation in terms of a combination of sex role socialisation and biological differences, suggesting that:

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63 This refers to the belief that biogenic criteria establish differences between men and women which society culturally enhances. This occurs through the socialisation of sex roles in society.

64 For a more detailed discussion on liberal feminism see MacKinnon (1990).

...this trait (aggression) is stronger among males than among females for reasons that are not altogether explained by culture. More importantly, perhaps, the universal observation that males are naturally stronger and more aggressive, coupled with a strong cultural emphasis on male violence in this country, generates both expectations and rewards that increase the likelihood both of male involvement in aggressive behaviour and of defining male behaviour as aggressive (Steffensmeier and Allan 1991: 74).

Therefore, liberal feminism combines biological differences with cultural norms to explain male violence. However, as Tieger (1980: 957) argues, research into the possibility of biologically based gender difference in aggression 'does not suggest any compelling reason to accept the notion of a biological basis of aggressiveness'. Instead, research by Katz and Chambliss (1991) on the subject of crime and biology concludes that aggression is not a natural state but is in the range of human possibility in the same way that non-violence is also a possible option open to human beings.

Liberal feminism has been criticised for neglecting to understand the institutional and structural basis of gender inequality, assuming instead that a rejection of sex roles will bring about social change in which women will have more rights. However, Gregory (1986:66-67) proposes a non-sexist critical criminology that would not:

...seek to explain male and female criminality in identical terms, but rather a criminology which has the explanatory power to encompass within its framework an understanding of both. This distinction is important, because 'non-sexist' is not used here to mean that gender relations are to be ignored. On the contrary, the analysis of such relations is a crucial component of the approach advocated. A non-sexist criminology would be firmly rooted in the distinction between sex and gender, insisting that gender is socially constructed and not biologically given, recognising that the ideas of masculinity and femininity are extremely powerful in their consequences but refusing to share the assumptions on which they are based.

Gregory's proposal suggests that by successfully challenging theories of biological determinism, it is as important that (feminist) criminology does not deny the existence of any biological differences at all. She illustrates the importance of retaining the distinction between sex and gender with the introduction of pre-menstrual tension as a defence of diminished responsibility, arguing that the relationship between the menstrual cycle and crime is not new and should be allowed since it is clear that some women experience considerable pain and distress at certain times of the month. Gregory therefore warns of the dangers of



demanding formal equality for women, which could lead to the oppression of the most vulnerable groups.<sup>65</sup>

Critics of liberal feminism have suggested that it serves only the interests of white, heterosexual, middle-class women. This is largely due to the fact that the women's rights movement of the nineteenth century (in which liberal feminism is rooted), was led by women from the upper-middle classes. However, as Tong (1998) points out, such criticisms are acknowledged by liberal feminists who assert that liberal feminism has come a long way since the nineteenth century, paying attention to the ways in which women's race, class and sexuality affects their gender discrimination. Tong therefore concludes that even with its limitations, liberal feminism has contributed greatly to women's new-found professionalism and occupational stature. Furthermore, educational and legal reforms to support the end of oppression against women have meant that liberal feminists have been committed to the feminist movement.

#### **4.2.2 Socialist Feminism**

Socialist feminism, (also referred to as Marxist feminism) regards gender oppression as an obvious feature of capitalist societies. For example, Barrett (1980) argues that it is specifically the institution of the nuclear family that enables men to dominate women and not simply their greater economic power over women. She argues that the family institution allows men to control women's access to paid labour by making them reproducers and pleasers of men. It is argued that gender oppression can only be eradicated by constructing a completely different society, one that is free from gender and class stratification. In re-constructing society in this way, socialist feminism has been the most accepting and understanding of the problem of male rape, adopting a 'double vision'<sup>66</sup> on criminal behaviour, suggesting that it is shaped both by class and gender relations. As Messerschmidt (1993: 57) suggests, this double vision of socialist feminism 'was intended to provide an alternative and superior structural explanation of crimes committed by the powerful and powerless, men and women'. Therefore, unlike radical feminism, socialist feminism made two clear contributions to the work on male rape. Firstly, it allowed for recognition of the

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<sup>65</sup> She demonstrates that such equality could lead to the disappearance of leniency and the separation of female offenders from their children. She also points out that 'although it is true that legislation restricting the hours and conditions of work for women has been used to impede their employment and promotion prospects, simply to remove such legislation and thereby free women to work the night-shift without making any other changes, will not be experienced as liberating!' (Gregory 1986:71).

fact that women do also engage in serious violent activity (though this is not made explicit, socialist feminism at least is able to entertain the idea). This is important in terms of the debate on gender-neutrality in rape law, to be discussed below. Secondly, socialist feminism identified two basic groups in patriarchal capitalist societies; a powerless group comprising women and the working classes and a powerful group, made up of some men and the capitalist class. Barrett (1980: 112) has therefore called for a more inclusive feminism, arguing that:

Feminism seeks to change not simply men or women, or both, as they exist at present, but seeks to change the relationship between them. Although the basis of this will be provided by an autonomous women's liberation movement, the strategy must involve political engagement with men rather than a policy of absolute separatism. Socialist men, like other men, stand to lose political power and social privilege from the liberation of women but, more than other men, they have shown now and in the past some political intention to support feminist struggle...Just as we cannot conceive of women's liberation under the oppression of capitalism so we cannot conceive of a socialism whose principles of equality, freedom and dignity are vitiated by the familiar iniquities of gender.

With this model socialist feminism, unlike radical feminism, recognises that men can be a part of the powerless group, providing room for the recognition of male victimisation, a point that radical feminists still struggle with today.

### **4.2.3 Radical Feminism**

Radical feminism maintains that since the oppression of women predates capitalism, it is patriarchy (defined as the domination of women by men)<sup>67</sup> and not capitalism which is responsible for this oppression (Gregory 1986: 64). For radical feminists then, it is male domination not class, which is at the forefront of female subordination.

It may be argued that perhaps the greatest achievement of radical feminism in terms of its impact on theory, research and practice has been in the field of violence against women, importantly in the areas of rape, domestic violence, and other forms of sexual abuse. Radical feminism has thus dominated feminist research on rape. Within feminism, rape is viewed in terms of power relations between men and women and feminist research identifies the complex social

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<sup>66</sup> A term first coined by Kelly (1979: 220).

structure in which power, oppression and inequality serve to keep women in their submissive, socially constructed positions. Rape is seen as a tool used to maintain such power and control over women. It is also regarded as an extension of normal male behaviour, constructed in patriarchal societies to maintain male supremacy. While the term patriarchy has been contested within feminist theorising on male oppression,<sup>68</sup> researchers such as Walby (1987) and Kelly (1988) argue that it is impossible to understand or theorise on women's oppression without it. Kelly (1988) asserts that the definition of patriarchy provided by Rich (1977), together with Millett's analysis (1970), encompasses historical change and cultural differences:

Patriarchy is the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men – by force, direct pressure or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male. It does not necessarily imply that no woman has power, or that all women in a given culture may not have certain powers (Rich 1977: 57).

An important challenge to the historic belief that rape is a sexual act has come from Brownmiller (1975) whose pioneering research was a first in providing an in-depth discussion of rape. Brownmiller (1975) identified rape as power-based, arguing that male violence is culturally constructed to keep women in their subordinate roles. She argues that males are socialised into being macho (the term 'macho' derives from the Spanish word 'machismo' meaning to prove one's masculinity by courageous action) and have been encouraged to use violence to settle disputes. Her work documents this through an exploration of the legitimisation of violent behaviour for soldiers during wartime and astutely argues that male violence is reinforced and hailed as heroic through popular culture.

Contrary to the positivist approach to explaining rape (discussed in chapter 3), feminist work has highlighted that historically, rape has been caused by men's determination to exert power and control over women. Rape has therefore been seen as a weapon to control and dominate women throughout history. Such control as demonstrated by Brownmiller (1975), has been manifest through adopting the role of protector, and this has been both institutionalised and emphasised. As discussed above, Brownmiller (1975) argues that the rape of a woman was seen to be a crime against the male members of her family, rather

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67 Other definitions of patriarchy are also considered in this discussion.

than a crime against the victim herself. Donat and D'Emilio (1997) show that rape cases most likely to come to court in the eighteenth century were those in which the offender was from a lower social class to his victim or in which the victim was either married or showed physical resistance to the rape. Other work by Lindermann (1984: 81) suggests that 'When men of the lower order raped women of a higher social standing, they threatened the prerogatives of other men.' To ensure her safety, the victim needed to comply with male standards for her behaviour by demonstrating her non-consent through verbal and physical resistance. Lindermann (Ibid: 81) asserts that rape was 'an expression of male control over women, regulated by law in a way that serves the men who hold political power more than it protects women'. As such, it may be argued that little has changed since female victims of rape today are still regulated by male laws. The unfounded notion of victim precipitation (discussed in chapters 1 and 3) is comparable to the standards by which women in the eighteenth century were judged, as to their 'suitability' as victims of rape. Likewise, little has changed since then on issues of consent, since, as demonstrated in chapter 3, lack of physical resistance is seen to imply consent.

The landmark book of Millet (1970) *Sexual Politics* also illustrated the social construction of the hierarchical gender system in which women were suppressed by male power. Millet argues that within this patriarchal system force takes the 'form of violence particularly sexual in nature and realised most completely in the act of rape' (Millet 1970: 69). Researchers such as Griffin (1971) and Brownmiller (1975) have argued that the threat of rape serves as a form of social control over women, reinforcing their subordinate roles as vulnerable to male control, maintaining that all women are victims because 'rape and the fear of rape are a daily part of every woman's consciousness' (Griffin 1971: 27). Griffin (1971) also argues that women's movement is restricted through the fear of rape, with precautionary behaviours resulting in isolation. For Griffin, this fear serves to control women, limiting their opportunities and active participation in public life.<sup>69</sup> Reynolds (1974: 62-68) also demonstrates how this social control operates:

Rape is a punitive action directed towards females who usurp or appear to usurp the culturally defined prerogatives of the dominant role...(it) operates in our society to maintain the dominant position of males. It does this by restricting the mobility and freedom of

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68 For example, Barrett (1980) suggests that it should no longer be used.

69 Research by Riger and Gordon (1981) supports this position, demonstrating that women engage in isolating behaviour such as not going out at night or visiting friends because of their fear of attack and vulnerability to it.

movement of women by limiting their casual interaction with the opposite sex, and in particular by maintaining the male's prerogatives in the erotic sphere. When there is evidence that the victim was or gave the appearance of being out of place, she can be raped and the rapist will be supported by the cultural values, by the institutions that embody these values, and by the people shaped by these values – that is by the police, courts, members of juries, and sometimes the victims themselves.

For radical feminists such as Griffin (1971) and Brownmiller (1975) then, rape is the ultimate form of patriarchal power and control. For Kelly (1988), men have this patriarchal power by virtue of being men and this is reinforced through occupations and other social roles of authority such as father, husband or boss. Kelly (1988) also highlights that while some men have far more power than others because of their class or race, they always have more power than their female counterparts. Similarly, the relationship between male violence and sexuality has been emphasised with male control of women's sexuality being seen as the key factor in female oppression. Likewise, feminist theory points out that sexuality is constructed and based on male experiences, which legitimate and validate male supremacy. It is argued that women are defined as sexual objects available to men, which legitimates their use of force or coercion in sexual encounters.

Feminist research on rape has been wide-ranging, highlighting the hidden figure of unreported crimes in official crime statistics (Hanmer and Saunders 1984; Kelly 1988; Lees 1996, 1997), considering attitudes to rape and responses by agencies, all the while, trying to eradicate myths about rape to be replaced with the facts (Tempkin 1987, Kennedy 1992; Gregory and Lees 1996, 1999). Feminist work has therefore made a huge contribution to the research on the causes of male violence against women, and especially with regards to rape. It has also played a major role in unearthing the extent of such violence as well as revealing the impact that it has on the lives of women.

Hence, for radical feminism, rape serves to keep women in constant fear, therefore strengthening male control over them. Similarly, Hanmer and Saunders (1984) and Radford (1987) argue that the threat and subsequent fear of rape makes women more dependent upon the goodwill of their male 'protector', making them more vulnerable to abuse by them. Brownmiller (1975) reaffirmed the relationship between sexual aggression and women's fear, defining rape as 'a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear' (Brownmiller 1975: 15). She therefore argued that all men benefit from the

fact that some men rape women, asserting that rape is a purposeful act of control, and domination over women:

His forcible entry into her body, despite her physical protestations and struggle, became the vehicle of his victorious conquest over her being, the ultimate test of his superior strength, the triumph of his manhood (Brownmiller 1975: 14).

Rape is therefore seen to be socially shaped and constructed. Critics of Brownmiller's work have focused on her biological position that men rape because they are biologically able to do so, suggesting that such assertions are positivistic. Indeed, feminists of this time such as Millet (1970), maintained that biological sex differences (namely in strength, aggression and the capacity for violence) reinforced women's oppression; arguing that men use their physical strength to subdue and maintain their domination over women (Sayers 1982)<sup>70</sup>. Brownmiller has also been criticised for her insensitivity to race and class issues.<sup>71</sup> Brownmiller (1975) and Hanmer (1978) also identify force and the threat of force as a controlling mechanism that hold together social structures and social processes through the subordination of women. Therefore, feminism explores the ways in which social institutions and traditional relationships between the sexes can interact to produce, condone or provoke violence against women. Dworkin (1981) asserts that women are subjected to control first by individual men and that this is reinforced and legitimated by the state, in its failure to recognise sexual violence as 'real crime'.

Researchers such as Bart (1979) and MacKinnon (1987) assert that legal definitions of rape are based on what men, not women, think violates women. For many feminist writers therefore, the law is seen to be male since, as MacKinnon (1987) argues, ideals of objectivity and neutrality are masculine values, which have come to be taken as universal values. Hence, women are judged by male values of objectivity and neutrality. Similarly, feminist work has also pointed out that the law, in differentiating between men and women, is sexist since inappropriate standards are used. For example, it may be argued that males fail to recognise the harms done to women because these harms benefit men, as in the case of rape. Furthermore, researchers such as Smart

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<sup>70</sup> Sayers (1982: 69) points out that more contemporary writers on rape 'regard the relation between men's greater physical strength and their social authority as being socially and historically contingent rather than biologically inevitable'.

<sup>71</sup> See for example, Davis (1981) and Edwards (1989).

(1995) have demonstrated that the law is a process for producing fixed gender identities, which discriminate against women.<sup>72</sup>

While conventional criminology has considered why men are violent, feminist researchers such as Hanmer and Maynard (1987) have asked 'why are men violent towards women?' In attempting to explain why men direct their violence towards women, the feminist perspective makes it clear that:

If patriarchal structures did not give men the power to abuse women and, importantly, to get away with it in large measures then they would not abuse them, regardless of the state of their finances, level of stress or whatever (Gelsthorpe and Morris 1990: 142).

It is argued by Smith (1973) and Smart (1984) that the systematic and institutionalised exclusion of women from academic work and the construction of knowledge, and the political arena of decision-making and economic power results in their unequal participation in interpersonal interactions. As suggested by Clark and Lewis (1977), such lack of power leaves women to be viewed as property for which men compete. Feminist writers such as Metzger (1976) have therefore argued that rape is a direct function of the degree to which women are politically and economically less powerful than men. Here, rape is seen as a consequence of social inequality between men and women.

Similarly, it may be suggested that the fear of rape imposes restrictions on women who will confine themselves to 'safe conditions', often making it difficult to succeed within their occupation. This fear allows male domination in all significant and powerful roles. It is argued by Ellis (1989) that rape is the consequence of a man's decision to behave in a possessive, dominating, and demeaning way towards women.

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<sup>72</sup> Feminism has also challenged the legal and social definitions of different forms of violence such as domestic violence, arguing that these terms fail to identify the gender of the perpetrator and that of the victim. In adopting the term 'wife abuse' feminism has sought to name and identify the offence of domestic violence. Similarly, feminists have campaigned to redefine rape to include rape within marriage as a criminal offence. The abolition of the marital rape exemption was only achieved in 1991 after much campaigning. The Law Commission in October 1990 reviewed the rule of the common law that, except in certain circumstances, a man could not be convicted of raping his wife and decided to abolish it in its entirety since it no longer applied to modern times. In *R v R* (1991) 2 ALL E.R.257 the House of Lords concluded that the time had come 'when the law should declare that a rapist remains a rapist and is subject to the criminal law, irrespective of his relationship with his victim'. The marital rape exemption was removed by statute in 1994. For a detailed discussion see Lees (1997).

#### **4.2.4 Naming the Violence**

Kelly and Radford (1996) make the important point that sexual violence can only be spoken about by victims if they are first able to name and define it. They point out that one of the most significant contributions of feminism has been to redefine and create words that reflect and record women's experiences. This is illustrated for example, by adopting the term 'survivor' rather than 'victim' in rape cases. Women's perceptions and definitions of violent behaviour differ greatly from those of men and this is reflected in feminist research.<sup>73</sup> Feminist research has also challenged distinctions drawn between 'real rape' (an attack by a stranger in the middle of the night and carried out in public, with the use of force, and preferably a weapon) and 'less serious rapes' (carried out by an acquaintance or known assailant) which suggest that the majority of rapes are not traumatic or 'as serious' as stranger rapes. Kelly and Radford (1996) assert that the law plays a pivotal role in constructing 'what counts' as crime, and in the case of sexual violence, it focuses on only the extreme cases, thereby disregarding the experiences of the majority of rape victims. This has led feminists such as Radford (1987) to conclude that it is only these 'real rapes' which provide the focus for reform initiatives in sentencing and police interrogations.

Similarly, it has been demonstrated that women themselves are frequently unable to identify or define their experiences as violent. For example, Mooney (1993) identifies this in her research on domestic violence in which women often disregarded abusive situations and experiences because they believed that domestic violence was systematic physical violence only. Mooney demonstrates how women often fail to identify and recognise emotional and psychological abuse. This is further stressed by Kelly and Radford (1996) who also point out that women who are forced or coerced often say 'it wasn't really rape', and this is more often the case when they have a close relationship with the man. It is therefore clear that the stereotypes of what constitutes 'real rape' confuse victims who consequently, are not always able to name or define their experience as rape. This results in the minimising of women's abuse. Kelly and Radford (1996: 31) also argue that:

When women say 'nothing really happened' they are making a statement about how much worse it could have been. When the law says 'nothing really happened' it implies that a woman has not been violated/abused.



#### 4.2.5 Police Responses to Rape Victims

The revelation by feminist work that police responses to female victims of domestic violence and rape were inadequate led to increased demands for changes in the role of the police and in their handling of rape victims. Police responses to rape victims will be explored in the empirical research (see chapter 7) and therefore requires some discussion.

The lack of support for female victims of violent offences has been illustrated by Johnson (1985) who discovered a reluctance by the police, social workers and medical personnel, to become involved in cases of domestic violence. It has been argued that such reluctance to 'interfere' stemmed from a misguided belief that violent offences against women are part of a private dispute which should be dealt with by the individuals themselves and without police involvement.<sup>74</sup>

Research by Chambers and Miller (1983) found that the majority of rape complainants were critical of the unsympathetic and tactless manner with which the police interviewed them. In response to allegations that the police use harsh methods of interrogation with rape victims,<sup>75</sup> with the assumption that allegations may be false, a Home Office circular (25/83) was issued to ensure that women reporting rape and other sexual attacks would be treated with tact and sympathy. Furthermore, a working group set up to monitor the policy and procedural changes reported in 1985 that the police were beginning to respond to the new guidelines, although much work needed to be done in terms of police training.<sup>76</sup>

Other work highlighted the reluctance of women to report to the police, which resulted in what feminists have termed 'the hidden figure' of crime. For example, research by Faizey (1994) showed that only six percent of rape victims reported to the police. This research identified victims' concerns that they would receive unsympathetic responses from the police and that they had little faith in the legal system. Other research has echoed this view, suggesting that victims of rape and sexual assault are reluctant to report to the police, and of the few that do

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73 These differences are highlighted later on in this chapter.

74 For example, Dobash and Dobash (1979) found that police action only occurred in reports of domestic violence when the injuries were severe, when neighbours complained and when the husband contested the authority of the police. This is supported by Reiner (1992) who demonstrates that the police often view domestic violence crimes as 'private disputes' and will attempt to diffuse a domestic situation rather than make an arrest, even where there is evidence of an assault.

75 This was also illustrated in a 1982 televised documentary of police interrogations of a rape victim, which led to a public outcry at the brutal techniques employed.

76 Violence Against Women (Women's National Conference 1985).

report, many are dissatisfied with the police response. The 'Wandsworth Violence Against Women –Women Speak Out Survey' found that women who reported to the police found that the police were not interested, did not follow up the initial report or inform the victims of what had happened, or that they expressed attitudes that were racist and/or hostile towards women (Radford 1987).

The Metropolitan Police demonstrated a commitment to improve training for detective inspectors to provide them with some understanding of the rape trauma syndrome. Rape examination suites where rape victims could be medically examined in comfortable surroundings were also set up. New training initiatives for rape and the appointment of more female officers, as well as improved facilities for medical examinations, have all demonstrated progress in the police handling of rape cases.

As Gregory and Lees's (1999) research demonstrates, facilities for dealing with rape victims have improved over the last decade although the issue of 'no-criming' is still continuing to cause concern. They also reiterate the point that the majority of rapes that come to the attention of the police (and in their own research) are those committed by strangers, which are easier to detect because of DNA evidence. It may then be that victims of stranger rapes are treated with increased sympathy by the police. Nonetheless, it is apparent that police guidelines resulting from feminist pressure have improved the position of rape victims in terms of their treatment by the police. The need to take sexual assaults more seriously and to keep victims informed through the various stages of the legal progress has been emphasised by Tempkin (1997) and Gregory and Lees (1999), as has the importance of responding efficiently and promptly to calls and having continuous training around rape trauma syndrome and other effects of rape. The empirical component of this research will explore the role of the police in their treatment of male survivors of rape.

Lees (1996) uses official statistics to demonstrate that only around ten percent of men *reported* for rape are actually convicted and since many rapes are not even reported, the real conviction rate can be estimated as much lower. Other work by Gregory and Lees (1996) demonstrates that high proportions of rape allegations were not pursued by the Crown Prosecution Service or were 'no crimed' by the police. Radical feminism has developed this work, arguing that it is impossible to use legal apparatus to confront patriarchal domination and oppression when the language and procedures of these social processes and institutions are saturated with patriarchal beliefs and structures.

While each of the above strands of feminism offer different viewpoints as to the causes of female oppression, they are united on a number of significant levels. These 'anti-male-stream' theorists recognise that women are important when theorising or researching in criminology and they stress the importance of women becoming active researchers themselves. They also assert that women should collectively participate in political activity, challenging the male right to dominance in the public arena. A strong element of this perspective (mainly socialist/marxist) argues that women cannot just be freed from patriarchy but must also be freed from racism and class-based discrimination, because of which they are exploited as domestic and low-paid workers.<sup>77</sup> There is therefore clearly much cross over between the three strands of feminism. Female oppression is seen to be socially constructed and reinforced through all social institutions such as the family, the legal system, the media, the education system, as well as through the structure of language and culture.

#### **4.2.6 The Impact of Rape**

Dobash and Dobash (1998) suggest that the effect of rape on its victims has received limited evaluation since it focuses primarily on medical and psychological frameworks, while failing to account for the social and cultural impact and consequences of rape. It is therefore important to consider both forms of impact, since together they provide a more complete understanding of the consequences of rape.

Burgess and Holmstrom (1974) first identified the effects of rape as 'rape trauma syndrome' (discussed earlier in chapter 2) which illustrated the severity of rape on women's lives. A more recent contribution to understanding the impact of rape is that of Dobash and Dobash (1998) who have considered the emotional and behavioural outcomes at an individual level, suggesting that psychological reactions have been emphasised at the expense of physical injury, social and economic costs and broader health implications. They assert that future work into the impact of rape needs to address the cultural meanings of victimisation for females, in which very often, blame is placed on the victim. Similarly, the researchers highlight that coping strategies employed by victims, vary between cultures. For example, in cultures where 'telling' has negative consequences, victims may employ silence as a coping strategy. Dobash and Dobash also

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<sup>77</sup> Murray and Tulloch (1997:3).

recognise that such strategies are employed within cultures in which speaking about the rape is made possible, as a response to the victimisation. Research by Koss and Burkhardt (1989) demonstrated that some victims simply deny that the experience really happened because this is the only way they are able to 'resolve' the conflict between their subjective experience and the response of their external and internal social environments.

As Dobash and Dobash point out, much work on the effects of victimisation is directed towards developing suitable and effective intervention strategies to support victims through their trauma. They also note that this can often be a long and difficult process with many victims needing support many years after their experience. However, the focus on collective support through self-help groups and political activism by feminists has resulted in more awareness and understanding of rape.

### **4.3 The Limitations of Feminism**

Bryson (1992) argues that the radical feminist theory of patriarchy is descriptive rather than analytical, and therefore unable to explain the origins of male power. She asserts that it is therefore unable to propose suitable strategies for ending it. Furthermore, she points out that radical feminism is based on the false idea of 'man as the enemy' which leads logically only to lesbian separatism and hence has little appeal to the majority of women. She further argues that it is ahistorical and based on 'false universalism', reflecting only the experiences of white middle class women, and obscuring the very different problems faced by working class black and third world women (discussed below). Additionally, Bryson points out that the radical feminist theory of patriarchy as the cause of male power views women as passive victims rather than agents of change in the future. Walby (1990) argues that the theory of patriarchy does not imply that all individual men oppress all women, but rather that the theory allows for a distinction between the structures of male domination on the one hand, and individual men on the other. For Walby then, the enemy therefore is male power (seen to be socially constructed rather than biologically determined) in all its manifestations. Walby (1990) argues that there has been a shift in recent times from private patriarchy (individual control in the home) and public patriarchy (based on structures outside the home).

The failure of some feminist research to consider the significance of class and race relations in explaining male violence against women is of importance, especially since the criminal justice system has a structural bias not only against women, but also against black people and working class people.<sup>78</sup> It is therefore necessary to consider these biases in terms of rape and how it is perceived in society.

At the crux of the feminist position is the identification of males as perpetrators of rape and women as their victims. While the development of this position gave meaning and recognition to females by identifying them as the victims of male violence, little consideration has been given to male victims of rape. Feminist work has developed from the premise that women are dominated and controlled by men and that rape and other forms of violence against women serve to reinforce this dominance. As such, feminist work has ignored the fact that males too are raped, regarding this as a backlash against the success of feminist support services established for female survivors (Gillespie 1996). Such work has attacked suggestions that rape crisis centres are not always helpful to male survivors of rape, as Gillespie (1996: 155) suggests:

While I would not wish to diminish the important work undertaken by the *Survivors* organisation, it is worrying that its spokespersons have at various times expressed ambivalent views about RCCs (rape crisis centres) in interviews with the media. On the one hand, they acknowledge the contribution and work of feminist groups in putting men's violence, rape and sexual abuse on to the public agenda and the setting up of support services for women, while on the other hand, they repeatedly assert that RCC's have been unhelpful, indeed hostile, to male survivors who have called telephone counselling lines for support.

While SurvivorsUK has worked closely with RCC's<sup>79</sup>, some male survivors have been turned away from some centre's when looking for support.<sup>80</sup> Research by Donnelly and Kenyon (1996: 447) found that, along with law enforcement personnel, feminist-based rape crisis centres were the least likely to acknowledge and deal with the sexual assault of men, doubting that men could be raped and seeing male rape as unproblematic. Perhaps the biggest concern for feminists

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78 The disproportionate number of black people being arrested and receiving custodial sentences has been well documented by Genders and Player (1989); Reiner (1992); Gelsthorpe and McWilliam, (1993); Smith (1994). Similarly, class bias within the criminal justice system has been highlighted by Box (1987); Murray (1996); and Croall (1998).

79 For example, shared venues for telephone counselling have been discussed by London Rape Crisis and SurvivorsUK, and conferences have been organised between SurvivorsUK and Derby Rape Crisis.

80 I myself can recount at least two men who have told me that they received hostile receptions from rape crisis centres, during my training at SurvivorsUK. Gillespie (1996) herself provides evidence for this suggestion using Sampson (1991) in which a male survivor states that he was refused help from a RCC because he was a man.

like Gillespie (1996) is the perceived threat of male survivors competing for funding. She suggests that:

Since the extensive media coverage of, albeit a small number, of male rape cases...it has become apparent that RCCs are experiencing pressure to extend service provision to men, both from statutory services, who are also often funding bodies, and who may be on the management or executive committee of RCCs, and also from male survivors of sexual assault. While RCCs are generally supportive of the need for male rape survivor groups, they do not on the whole wish to divert hard won resources and to dissipate energies needed for running female support services in the pursuit of setting up separate services for men. Centres do not, in any case, receive many calls from genuine (male) rape survivors (Ibid: 157-158).

Such a perspective lacks empathy towards male survivors and suggests a lack of understanding of the problems faced by male survivors, despite the fact that RCCs have experienced similar hostility in trying to set up their services for female survivors. Gillespie also argues that the prevalence and incidence of male rape is unknown and uses this to suggest that there exists no demand for RCCs to include support for male survivors. While it is not odd that campaigners competing for the same pot of money will argue that the bigger share ought to go to the bigger social problem, the extent of male rape is as yet unknown. As such, clearly it is important for resources to be put into place to consider the extent of the problem. Furthermore, while also aware that the nature of rape keeps it a hidden crime (she recognises this in terms of female rape), she fails to consider that similar reasons may prevent male survivors from reporting rape. While on the one hand she argues that the incidence and prevalence of male rape is unknown, on the other hand, she is critical of a proposed national survey of 10,000 men being funded to discover the nature and extent of male rape, arguing that no similar study has been conducted of female rape. Her criticism fails to recognise that perhaps such a study is vital to produce evidence to persuade thinkers such as herself, that male rape does happen. It is important then, for all those working to help the victims of rape to pull together and to ensure that more resources are available for both male and female victims.

Gillespie (Ibid: 162) also argues that:

Developing services for men who need or want them should not be achieved *at the expense* of what is now 20 years of developing knowledge and expertise within the rape crisis movement (emphasis added).

It would be progress if writers such as Gillespie (1996) and Rush (1990) did not see male rape as a competitor to female rape and allowed it to benefit from their experiences in setting up services which, ultimately, would be supporting survivors of rape. However, the reality of limited resources means that organisations are forced to compete for funding to keep their services running. While Gillespie (1996) strongly argues that RCCs are not willing to share their funding to support male survivors as well, centres such as Portsmouth Rape Crisis and Derby Rape Crisis have in fact recognised the demand to provide services for male survivors and have been very forthcoming in the support extended to them. This demonstrates that while the Rape Crisis Federation is determined not to accommodate male survivors, more and more centres do recognise the need, and provide support to men. The argument for retaining all-female space for women to feel secure is important when considering that women using RCC's have been badly hurt (emotionally, psychologically as well as physically) by men. However, this does not impede parallel services for men, joint campaigns and joint demands for funding.

There is an urgent need to develop a suitable model to explain male violence against both men and women in order to validate the experiences of male survivors. While feminism emerged as a challenge to male-stream explanations for crime, it too has been guilty of excluding victims and failing to give them a voice. In its determination to validate women's experiences of violence by labelling males as perpetrators of this violence, feminism has isolated the many male survivors of rape and sexual abuse from its agenda. For this reason, it is important to consider research on masculinities, which has contributed to our understanding of male rape.

## **Summary**

The contribution of feminism to developing an accurate understanding of male violence against women has been substantial. First wave feminism in the late nineteenth century began to highlight male sexual use and abuse of women, and this aspiration to 'make visible' the crimes of violence against women, has continued with second wave feminists such as Millet (1970), Griffin (1971) and Brownmiller (1975).

Much radical feminist work has exposed the nature and extent of men's sexual violence against women and served to dispel many of the myths around rape, in order to develop an accurate understanding of it. In challenging individual positivistic explanations for rape, feminist research has demonstrated that rape is an act of power and control, used to hurt, humiliate and destroy victims. Feminist research has also identified it as a mechanism for maintaining social control through suppressing women, whether as direct victims of rape or indirect victims controlled through the fear of rape. Prior to feminist theorising, rape was seen to be an act of uncontrollable sexual desire on the part of the offender and accusations of women 'really enjoying it' or 'asking for it' were not uncommon. Importantly, feminist theory helped to dispel such myths while also clearly identifying and 'naming' men as the offenders of this crime. In validating the victim's experience and taking away the blame from victims and placing it rightfully with the offender, feminism has been successful in enabling women to speak out and report their experiences to the police and other support agencies. In doing so, it has allowed women to be believed by the public, the police and other agencies, generating a more empathetic response to victims, although there are still major problems in this regard, as discussed above.

Whilst there is a constant reminder that much work is yet to be done,<sup>81</sup> feminism has successfully exposed rape as a crime of violence, highlighting the fact that all rape, whether by a known offender or a stranger, is traumatic to the victim. Feminist work has called for reforms in the judicial system,<sup>82</sup> all the while being aware that the root causes of violence against women can be located within female oppression.

It is clear that the challenge to rape can only be truly successful when these roots, embedded within all segments of society, are exposed and the imbalance of power remedied. The beginning of achieving this end has been through feminist research into the causes and extent of rape and the impact it has on victims' lives. This has been supplemented by practical support for victims in the way of rape crisis centres, and refuges being set up, as well as policy and attitude reform for the police, the medical profession, the media and the judicial system. While an argument exists for maintaining the all-female space where women who have been badly hurt by men can feel safe and secure, the pooling of knowledge,

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81 For example, the sexist and outdated attitudes of judges, barristers and juries in rape trials have been discussed throughout this thesis and are well-documented by feminists such as Kennedy (1992) and Lees (1996).

82 See for example, Lees (1997) who highlights the decrease in rape convictions in recent years and argues for a fairer system which encompasses (broader) female definitions and perspectives on rape.



resources, services and joint campaigning and demands for funding, would give greater strength to the ending of such violence against both women and men.

Feminist research has been successful in exposing the unjust treatment of women in society, whilst also highlighting the exclusion of women from mainstream criminology. Consequently, feminism has successfully developed its own alternative, and more appropriate theories to consider women in criminology. The development of feminist research has been greatly influential to criminology giving feminism its own unique place within this discipline. The vast amount of data covered in this section demonstrates clearly the considerable impact that feminism has had on exposing rape for the violent, controlling crime that it is.

Opposition from feminists concerning the issue of male rape has been primarily against the threat of men raping men being seen as a more serious problem than men raping women. As Lees (1997) points out, this has been the reason for the resistance by feminism to regard rape as a gender-neutral crime. Likewise, to regard rape as a non-gendered crime raises problems for the feminist explanation of rape as a coercive process by which women are kept subordinate to men. However, as Lees (1997) argues, recognising male rape does not deny the relationship between rape and male domination (whether of women or men). In fact, all research on male rape has demonstrated clearly that the primary motivation for rape has been domination, power and control, concepts first identified by feminism to explain rape.

#### **4.4 The Importance of Masculinities in Explaining Rape**

The construction of masculinity is central to understanding male rape because the problem of rape is a problem of masculinity. Writing on female rape, Russell (1974) suggests that being sexually aggressive is masculine behaviour, therefore rape is masculine behaviour. The ways in which men perceive themselves, and the processes, by which these perceptions are developed, are paramount to understanding why men rape. Lees (1997) demonstrates that the rape of one man by another serves to enhance the masculinity of the offender. This has also been demonstrated by earlier research.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, while radical feminist research into rape has argued that rape is an act of power in which men use sex

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<sup>83</sup> Groth and Burgess (1980); Scacco (1982); Mezey and King (1993).

to control, humiliate and subordinate women, research on masculinities identifies rape as a means of dominating and subordinating marginalised masculinities.<sup>84</sup>

If one is to begin from the premise that masculinities are socially constructed and not a manifestation of innate, biological make-up, one can view masculinities in a very positive way. The constant changes in masculinities, the different meanings they have to different people at different times<sup>85</sup>, supports the notion that gendered identities are actively created by societies and within cultures. This supports the view that men, both individually, and collectively, *can* change.

As discussed earlier, feminist research has argued that rape is related to the power relationships between men and women. It has been argued that this power functions along socially constructed gender lines in a system that uses violence to exert control over women (Hanmer and Maynard 1987). The ensuing discussion will begin with consideration of what are perceived to be the two most important elements of masculinities-those of gender and power. As identified within feminist research, these two elements are crucial in understanding rape. The construction of sexuality is also important to the discussion on masculinities and will be drawn upon appropriately.

From the onset then, feminism carefully identified gender differences as constructed and shaped by historical circumstances and social discourses, and not simply the consequence of biological differences.<sup>86</sup> For feminists, the subject positions we occupy in society are constructed from a complex set of influences. It is the identification of this social, ideological construction of gender differences, by feminism, which provided the basis for research into the concept of masculinity.

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84 This has led to some dispute between researchers of female rape and those focusing on male rape, about whether or not rape should be seen as a gender-neutral crime. This debate is considered further on in this chapter.

85 A vast amount of research has demonstrated the breadth of masculinities and the different meanings individuals as well as groups (whether cultural or institutional) place on these. For a more detailed discussion on the diversity of masculinities see Kaufman (1994); Kimmel (1994); Collier (1995) and Edley and Wetherell (1995).

86 The debate on violence as the consequence of innate differences has been discussed earlier in chapter 3 and does not therefore merit a lengthy repetition. Suffice to point out that writers such as Bly (1990) promote 'natural gender differences' based on biology and suggest that modern men have lost touch with their 'Zeus energy'. He therefore recommends all-male retreats to restore this natural order. Kimmel (1994) points out that advocates of loading up 'Zeus juice' in men wilfully forget that Zeus (a mythic figure used by mythopoetic leaders as a hero) was "an incessant rapist, molesting both mortal women and ancient goddesses", suggesting that this makes for bad gender politics. In the light of such work, it is important to reiterate the point made firstly by feminist research, and later supported by work on masculinities that to suggest that male violence is biologically determined, is to understate the power of patriarchy. Importantly, this also suggests that to entertain the notion of a natural masculine fierceness and an inborn 'need' to validate masculine violent behaviours carries the very real danger of accepting and even promoting such violence. As Coltrane (1994) argues, this suggests that such violence cannot be eliminated from society, thus denying any opportunity for social change.

While this section is in the main concerned with the impact of masculinities on male rape, researchers such as Brod (1994) have highlighted the dangers of considering masculinities solely in terms of male-male relations, and it is for this reason that masculinities research is being considered alongside feminist explanations of rape. Brod (1994) points out that a separatist scholarship on men's studies which excludes women would be regressive in light of progress made on including women in criminological debate. Furthermore, it is clear that any reasonable debate on the social construction of gender cannot neatly separate the two, nor can it exclude feminist thinking on the construction of gender roles, since it was this, which first gave merit to this area of interest.<sup>87</sup> Gibson (1991: 133) suggests that

To move the study of gender forward, the new masculinist scholars need to engage in a more direct dialogue with their feminist predecessors and contemporaries. Otherwise, the real danger of fragmentation and stagnation will hurt everyone's work.

It is with this point in mind that I begin my discussion on masculinities.

MacInnes (1998) argues, as the central focus of his research on masculinities, that masculinity does not exist as the property, character trait or aspect of identity of individuals. He therefore argues that an attempt to define masculinities is a fruitless task because, for him, masculinity exists only as various ideologies or fantasies about what men *should* be like. However, it is important to give some foundation to the concept of masculinity. In trying to capture the essence of masculinities, Goffman (1963: 153) asserts that:

There is only one complete unblushing male in America: a young, married, white, urban, northern, heterosexual Protestant father of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight, and height, and recent record in sports. Every American male tends to look out upon the world from this perspective...Any male who: fails to qualify in any one of these ways is likely to view himself...as unworthy, incomplete, and inferior.

Craib (1987: 723-724) considers the literature on masculinities and concludes:

The qualities of masculinity, however, seem invariable, and are associated with the male as breadwinner, provider, worker, the active and public half of the species: (quotes thus) "a man is strong,

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<sup>87</sup> Stacy and Thorne (1985) further highlight the 'functional' role of developing 'male' and 'female' roles through socialisation as does Cott (1990).

aggressive, rational, independent, task orientated, invulnerable and successful" (O'Neill 1982). Such qualities are listed whether the work is based on attitude surveys or whether it is theoretically derived, whether it is concerned with identifying a cultural stereotype, a sex or gender role or the male identity-a man's sense of himself.

Other researchers such as Connell (1987) and Christian (1994) use the term 'hegemonic masculinity' to describe such male chauvinistic attitudes which regard male superiority as an innate difference between instrumental, violent men and expressive nurturing women. It is argued that within these attitudes, men believe that they are naturally superior to women and therefore more capable of ruling both the private and public sphere. This power is extended with their belief that sex is the only non-demeaning way to be intimate with women. In contrast to hegemonic masculinity, working-class masculinity, ethnic minority masculinity and homosexuality are seen as subordinated or marginalised by the dominant (hegemonic) masculinity.

It has been widely recognised that masculinity is historically<sup>88</sup> and culturally variable, hence the popularity of the plural term 'masculinities' which has been adopted in much of the research in this field.<sup>89</sup>

Messerschmidt (1993) argues that while major theoretical works in criminology have been written by men and have been primarily about men and boys, they have been alarmingly gender-blind. He points out that while men and boys have been the main subjects in criminology, the gendered content of their legitimate and illegitimate behaviour has been virtually ignored. Messerschmidt's work points out that feminist criticism of criminology's overall masculine nature and its misrepresentation and exclusion of women has served to increase the attention given to women in criminological theory and led to a consideration of gender in terms that included women and girls. He accurately asserts that gender within criminology focuses exclusively on women with little or no attention to the impact of gender on men arguing that 'In short, when it comes to men and masculinity, the discipline of criminology is, quite simply, inept' (Messerschmidt 1993: 2).

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<sup>88</sup> Liddle (1996) provides a comprehensive account of masculinity in early modern England, identifying the concepts of blood, honour and aristocratic masculinity to locate the historical roots of masculine culture in England. Daly and Wilson (1994) demonstrate that traditional masculine values were evolutionarily necessary for survival and reproduction in pre-state communities. This has been discussed in chapter 3.

<sup>89</sup> For example, research by Gilmore (1990) demonstrates the structure of masculinity in different cultures although the study is limited in its failure to recognise the plurality of masculinities within these cultures. The pluralising of masculinity to masculinities is further discussed by Carrigan, Connell and Lee (1985) who emphasise difference and diversity among men and the need therefore to use the plural term to include such non-uniformity (that is, to show differences in age, class, race, religion and sexuality).

Furthermore, Newburn and Stanko (1994) highlight the neglect of criminology in understanding male victimisation, pointing out that even when male victimisation is mentioned, it is supplanted by attention to women's experiences.

While it is understandable that any discussion of male violence should focus on the main victims of male crime (women), to ignore the male experience is to deny an understanding of male vulnerability. This view is echoed by Kersten (1996) who points out that criminology has a record of ignoring gender, highlighting that criminal practices of masculinities are traditionally located in subcultural life worlds and neglected elsewhere. She argues that criminology tends to employ masculinity as a taken for granted, essential category, requiring no further deconstruction. However, recent theorists such as Kimmel (1994) and Kaufman (1994) have attempted to redress this balance. While the debate largely accepts that men do hold virtually all positions of power as argued by feminism, it also highlights the essential point that this power does not translate into feelings of being powerful at the individual level. Research on masculinities therefore considers the disjunction between the aggregate social power of men, and men's individual experiences of powerlessness (Kimmel 1994). In doing so, while feminist discussion focuses on male oppression of women, masculinities research provides room for discussion of male-on-male victimisation, providing explanations in terms of masculinities.<sup>90</sup>

Goodey (1997) highlights the point that masculinity cannot be viewed only in opposition to femininity, but must also be understood in relation to other types of oppression such as class, race, and sexuality<sup>91</sup>, since as Kimmel (1994) argues, male demonstration of masculine behaviours and attitudes involves discriminating against other groups.<sup>92</sup>

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90 The impact of modern feminism has led to the emergence of the men's movement, which has two strands to it. The first is the mythopoetic men's movement (enhanced by Bly 1990) which has focused on men's pain (and in doing so has had an antifeminist tendency) while the second is the pro-feminist men's movement which begins with the acknowledgement that men have power and privilege in a male-dominated society, and that this social and personal construction of power is the source of confusion and alienation as well as being a source of homophobia among men. It is the latter that has focused on men's violence and highlighted the negative impact of contemporary patriarchy on both men and women, and is therefore the focus in this discussion.

91 Delgado and Stefancic (1995: 211) point out that while the social construction of masculinity is problematic, the social construction of men of colour is even more troublesome and confining than that of men in general, because 'Men of colour are constructed as criminal, violent, lascivious, irresponsible, and not particularly smart'. Race and sexuality are considered in this discussion as there is evidence of a relationship between these and male rape. For an interesting discussion of class-based masculinities see Messerschmidt (1993) and Pyke (1996).

92 Kimmel's (1994) contributions are discussed further on.

Coltrane (1994) stresses the importance of studying gender in order to understand men's power over women. He points out that most feminists agree that gender is socially constructed and its form and relative importance are subject to change. In order to reduce this importance or transform gender relations to make them more equal, Coltrane suggests that it is necessary to study it since it is one of the most organising principles in societies throughout the world. He carefully distinguishes between sex (which is biologically determined) and gender (which is socially constructed), arguing that historical portrayals of so-called natural gender differences (authoritative males and nurturing females) are inaccurately used to establish masculinity and femininity, which is supposedly innate. He asserts that the oversimplified "man-the-hunter" interpretation of human evolution (discussed earlier in chapter 3) ignores important evidence in its quest to rationalise women's domesticity.<sup>93</sup> Hence Coltrane concludes that the belief in essential gender differences helps men to maintain inequality.

Kaufman (1997) also attempts an understanding of male violence in terms of masculinity. He asserts that rape is a crime that not only demonstrates physical power, but does so in the language of male-female gender relations. Lees (1997) supports this view, maintaining that gender relations are socially constructed within a number of different social, legal and institutional contexts, although her focus is more on the way in which these processes develop and legitimate male domination through their construction of male vs. female sexuality. Researchers such as Lipman-Blumen (1984) have argued that both men and women have been taught through 'control myths' to believe that male/female differences are innate so as to prevent challenges to them. For Lipman-Blumen, control myths assert that men are more capable and knowledgeable than women, and that they always have women's best interests at heart. This she argues contributes to the social climate in which women who say they have been raped are not believed. Central to the feminist theory on rape is the belief that control myths of male superiority and female inferiority are taught through socialisation practices for both men and women.

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<sup>93</sup> In his extensive cross-cultural studies on the social construction of gender, Coltrane (1994: 48) found 'significantly fewer displays of manliness, less wifely deference, less husband dominance, and less ideological female inferiority were evident in societies where men participated in child rearing and women controlled property'. This led Coltrane to assert that 'In societies where men develop and maintain close relationships with young children, hypermasculine displays, competitive posturing, and all-male enclaves are rare. These societies allow both women and men to hold office and participate in public decisions, rarely require women to publicly pay homage to men, and tend to conceive of men and women as inherently equal' (Ibid:49).

Similarly, Weis and Borges (1973) have argued that the socialisation process teaches and prepares women to be 'legitimate' victims of male violence while Herman (1984) concludes that the United States is a rape culture because it socialises both men and women into accepting that male aggression plays a natural role in human sexual relations.

Kaufman (1997) identifies a 'triad' of men's violence, highlighting that while men's violence against women is one corner of that triad of violence, their violence against other men, and their violence against themselves, makes up the other two corners. Kaufman asserts that the first corner, that is violence against women, cannot be successfully challenged without giving consideration to the other two corners of the triad as they feed on each other. Kaufman's discussion begins with the premise that while many characteristics associated with masculinity are important human traits such as strength, daring, courage, intellect, rationality and sexual desire, the distortion of these traits in the masculine norm along with the exclusion of a whole range of human emotions, (the repression of fear, hurt and sadness) deemed feminine, are oppressive, destructive and lethal to violent tendencies. He therefore argues that 'masculinity' is a social construction which all men find difficult to fulfil, whether they are conscious of this difficulty or not. He argues that men cannot release such emotions (by way of crying for example), which they build up and transform into anger and hostility. This anger and hostility is then directed partly at themselves in the way of guilt, self-hate or other symptoms, partly towards women and partly towards other men. Kaufman (1997) also highlights the essential role of society in shaping or limiting violence and gives the example of accepting some types of violence, such as corporal punishment of children, while not accepting physical attacks on presidents or others. Kaufman's analysis argues that it is not possible to determine conclusively the roots of aggression (that is whether they can be located within the psychology or biology of the individual, or his social environment) simply because male subjects of study are always within a society. Kaufman therefore argues that the important question is not where the origins of violence and aggression in men can be found, but why so many forms of such violence are sanctioned or even encouraged by society.

Kaufman uses the words of Brecht (1965) 'No man is born a butcher' to demonstrate the importance of masculinities in explaining male violence, asserting that males do not simply *learn* gender roles but become *part* of that gender. He argues that the process of developing gender differences from birth is twofold. Firstly, he focuses on the shaping, limiting and repression of human

desires through the process of maturation, necessary to meet the demands of the natural and social world. Here the role of sexuality is important, as unlike in animals, human sexuality is not simply based on instinct, but is individually and socially constructed. The second factor determining gender is the powerful attachments formed with parents in a small family in which traits associated with the 'opposite sex' are suppressed. The immediate environment of a child is the family which has been described as a 'vigorous agency of class placement and an effective mechanism for the creation and transmission of gender inequality' (Barrett and McIntosh 1982:29). For Kaufman, masculinity is reinforced through all stages of human development, and especially during adolescence when each moment of interaction with females reinforces the acquisition of different gender roles. It is this deep-rooted concept of what it is to be male, which causes tension between maleness and masculinity because,

...masculinity requires a suppression of a whole range of human needs, aims, feelings, and forms of expression. Masculinity is one half of the narrow, surplus-repressive shape of the adult human psyche. Even when we are intellectually aware of the difference between biological maleness and masculinity, the masculine ideal is so embedded within ourselves that it is hard to untangle the person we might want to become (more "fully human", less sexist, less surplus-repressed, and so on) from the person we actually are (Kaufman 1997: 39).

Maleness is therefore biologically determined, whereas masculinity is socially constructed.

As discussed previously, much feminist research has stressed the limitations in social and legal definitions of what constitutes violent behaviour, asserting that definitions of violent behaviour need to encompass female survivor's definitions (Brownmiller 1975; Kelly 1988; Smart 1989; Kelly and Radford 1996). Another important consequence of limited definitions of rape by society and hence within the legal system too, is that male perpetrators of this violence fail to define it as such. This point is made well by Hearn (1996: 28) who argues that:

For most men, what is usually called 'sexual violence' is not included in accounts of violence known to women. Except for the special case when a man has been arrested and charged for rape, men rarely define coercive sex and pressurised sex as violence to women.

Hence, while feminism has highlighted that men and women differ in their definitions and perceptions of violent behaviour and what constitutes rape, research on masculinities emphasises these differences in terms of victims and



perpetrators, demonstrating that men too are victims of masculinities. With reference to male violence against women, Hearn (1996: 29) explains that:

Men's generally narrower definitions are partly a product of men's structurally dominant social position and partly a consequence of the form of the particular social relationship with the woman in question. They show that the process of violence involves how violence itself is constructed. Thus naming and definitions of violence are themselves a social, not a natural, process.

This is also supported by Scully (1990) who demonstrated that male convicted rapists were unable to define their behaviour as violence (see earlier discussion on Scully 1990 Chapter 3). This study demonstrated that as well as believing in rape myths, rapists also believed that they were demonstrating their maleness and reaffirmed this by bragging that they were real men because women found them attractive and desirable, claiming that they had superior sexual capacity and technique over other men. This again shows how men use rape to prove their manhood.

The role of masculinities in explaining male rape has been profound. While prison rape can be regarded as unique because of the unique dynamics of confinement, its foundations have been located within the community. It therefore merits some consideration in relation to the debate on masculinities. Rideau and Sinclair (1982) demonstrate that rape within male prisons (an ultra-masculine environment) is an ultra-masculine crime with little to do with homosexuality or heterosexuality and almost always a matter of power, control, life or death. They argue that the ultimate setting for male-on-male aggression and male rape is within prison, as it is in this 'sexual jungle' where the extreme test of one's strength and manhood can be applied. They illustrate that within prison culture, there is an exaggerated emphasis on being a 'man' and proving manhood.

Similarly, Lockwood (1980) in his study *Prison Sexual Violence* suggests that men do not rape other men out of a sexual desire but do so to manipulate, punish or degrade the victim. He argues that for some reason, they find picking on men even more satisfying than picking on women.

While these studies have focused on rape within prisons, other research by Groth and Burgess (1980) has further demonstrated the importance of masculinities in explaining male rape. Their research on 22 subjects (16 perpetrators and six victims) indicates that while the gender of the victim was of little importance to some of the rapists, others seemed to specifically target males as their victims.

They maintain that the assaults were an attempt to deal with unresolved and conflicting aspects of the rapist's lives. Groth and Burgess (1980) found that for all offenders, rape was an act of retaliation, an expression of power, and a declaration of their strength and manhood. Therefore, the motivation behind rape is not to release sexual frustration, but is primarily to humiliate, hurt and destroy; as one rapist in their study stated: 'I wasn't really interested in sex. I felt powerful, and hurting him really excited me' (Groth and Burgess 1980: 808). This view has been supported by Canter, a specialist in offender profiling who maintains that 'the rape of one man by another is not an act of sex, it is an act of violence.'<sup>94</sup>

From their research, Groth and Burgess (1980) identified five major motivational components of male rape, which demonstrate the importance of masculinity in male rape cases. The first of these motivations was conquest and control, in which all assaults served as an expression of power and mastery on the part of the perpetrator. The researchers illustrate that all rapists expressed excitement at being in total control of their victims during the rapes. Secondly, they identify revenge and retaliation, demonstrating that in some cases the offence is activated by the assailant's anger towards his victim and is regarded by him as a form of retaliation. In this instance, proving masculinity becomes the paramount reason for the rape. The researchers point out that rape occurs to prove to the victim, that firstly the rapist is not a homosexual and secondly that the victim is. They identify sadism and degradation as the third motivational component in male rape cases, suggesting that for some assailants, aggression itself becomes eroticised, and they find excitement and gratification in the sexual abuse and degradation of their victim. Once again, the concept of power over the victim is illustrated. The fourth motivational component in rape is that of conflict and counteraction. Here the rapist attempts to punish the victim as a way of dealing with his unresolved and conflicting sexual interests. As the researchers point out, rapists do not feel comfortable with themselves in regard to their sexual identity and in some cases project these feelings onto their victim, whom they see as a temptation. Anger is generated for arousing such feelings and rape is used to punish the victim. Kaufman (1997) asserts that homophobia and confusion with sexuality, because of the demands of masculinity, can result in male rape. The fifth component was that of status and affiliation in which peer pressure to participate in gang rape to maintain status, membership, acceptance and recognition by one's peers was present. It is suggested that mutual participation

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<sup>94</sup> Professor Canter, D quoted in *The Independent* 29 May 1995

in the assault serves to strengthen and confirm the social bond among the assailants.

This also demonstrates that the rape is an attempt by the offender to show himself to be more dominant, more masculine, strengthening his male identity among other males. As Groth and Burgess (1980) and Kaufman (1997) demonstrate then, rapists harbour great personal doubts, strongly negative self-images and have difficulty in coping with daily feelings of powerlessness. The act of rape is therefore an attempt to regain power and to demonstrate masculinity. However, Kaufman asserts that such behaviour only serves to reconfirm the negative self-image and feelings of powerlessness that demonstrate the artificiality and fragility of masculinity.

Kaufman (1997) argues that the construction of masculinities involves the promotion of power relations, not only between men and women, but also between men themselves. He argues that the construction of masculinities involves the realisation that all men are potential humiliators, enemies or competitors to other men. Hence as demonstrated above, research on masculinities emphasises that rapists describe feelings of inferiority, powerlessness and anger, and, in order to prove their masculinity, express and vent these feelings on those with less social power and weaker physical strength. It is evident that such themes are constructed to legitimate their behaviour and are used to make sense of it, as well as to aid its accomplishment (Plummer 1984).

Other work by Martin and Hummer (1998) considered the social construction of masculinities in fraternity life and its impact on female rape. The researchers concluded that fraternities are a physical and sociocultural context, which encourage the sexual coercion of women. Consistent with earlier research<sup>95</sup>, this work demonstrated that fraternities were more concerned with masculinities than with anything else, trying hard to:

...create a macho image and context and to avoid any suggestion of "wimpishness", effeminacy, and homosexuality. Valued members display, or are willing to go along with, a narrow conception of masculinity that stresses competition, athleticism, dominance, winning, conflict, wealth, material possessions, willingness to drink alcohol, and sexual prowess vis-à-vis women (Martin and Hummer 1998: 159).

This subordination of 'marginalised' masculinities ("wimps, swots or homosexuals") has also been identified by Connell (1995). The important links between sexuality and rape have been further explored by Kaufman (1997) who suggests that homophobia is socially constructed to help maintain masculinity. Kimmel (1994) supports this position, demonstrating that masculinity is defined more by what one is not rather than who one is. Hence, he describes the 'chief test' of masculinity as 'not being like women'.<sup>96</sup> Therefore, this notion of anti-femininity lies at the heart of contemporary and historical conceptions of manhood. Kimmel (1994) also points out that women have been traditionally regarded as inferior by men, on the social ladder, and it is therefore useless for men to try to define themselves in terms of women. Hence, it is men who judge the manhood of other men. As Kimmel (1994: 129) argues, 'Masculinity is a *homosocial* enactment. We test ourselves, perform heroic feats, take enormous risks, all because we want other men to grant us our manhood'.

The importance of masculinities in explaining antigay violence requires some discussion since it can include rape.

#### **4.4.1 Hate Crimes: Rape as a Consequence of Antigay Violence**

The term 'hate crime' was first coined in the US in the 1980's to name violence and discrimination based on race, sexuality and gender. It has been adopted in the UK by activists as a result of interest in the crime victim and also by the police in their efforts to combat crimes motivated by hatred. The recent attacks on the World Trade Centres in New York and the Pentagon in Washington DC (11 September 2001) have further fuelled interest in this area and opened up debates around definitional issues; motivations and future directions.

Definitions of hate crimes have been varied, ranging from being inclusive of religious, racial, ethnic, nationality, sexual orientation, gender or disability discrimination in the US and Canada, to being more restricted to racial prejudice in the UK. Garofalo and Martin (1993: 17) suggest that:

A bias-motivated crime is a crime in which the offender is motivated by a characteristic of the victim that identifies the victim as a member of some group towards which the offender feels some animosity.

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<sup>95</sup> Such as Kanin (1967).

<sup>96</sup> This has also been demonstrated by Lockwood (1980); Davis (1982); and Sinclair and Rideau (1982) on their work on prison rape, discussed in chapter 2 and also in this chapter.

Jacobs and Potter (1998) point out that hate crime is a complex area of discussion since it is a potentially expansive concept that covers a great range of offenders and situations.

The ensuing discussion will concentrate on homophobic hate crimes, which may result in the rape of the victim because he is homosexual or is perceived to be homosexual. The majority of research on male rape does not demonstrate that male rape is a consequence of homophobic attitudes. However, as West (1993) argues, violent attacks against homosexuals can be precipitated by homosexual panic. That is, that a man may react with frenzied violence when another man attempts sexual contact, which threatens the self-image of pure heterosexuality. West suggests that to relieve discomfort, the idea of personal involvement is violently rejected and all blame is put onto the offending 'queers'. Consequently, this threat to sexuality may manifest itself as contempt and hatred, which may be expressed through rape. Similarly, Jukes (1993) suggests that female rape can also be explained in terms of the perpetrators' unconscious prejudice and contempt for women. It is therefore important to give publicity to the discussion of the motivations and consequences of hate crimes against homosexuals, in order to encourage homosexual victims to report rape to the police and to address homophobic attitudes that can result in rape.

While antigay violence is not always sexual violence (for example, research by Comstock (1989) demonstrates that gay men experience being punched, kicked, chased and beaten), this discussion will focus on sexual violence as a consequence of hate. Research by Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) suggests that homosexual men are especially vulnerable to sexual assault. They argue that homosexuals are vulnerable to date and acquaintance rape as well as to sexual assaults within their gay relationships. Their research indicates that homophobic violence committed by 'heterosexual' men against homosexuals is probably the biggest problem for the gay community. For Kimmel (1994: 131):

Homophobia is a central organising principle of our cultural definition of manhood. Homophobia is more than the irrational fear of gay men, more than the fear that we might be perceived as gay...Homophobia is the fear that other men will unmask us, emasculate us, reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men...We are afraid to let other men see that fear...Our fear is the fear of humiliation. We are ashamed to be afraid.

He argues that such shame leads to the silencing of men when sexist, racist or homophobic jokes or comments are made by other men, suggesting collusion with those derogatory ideas. Similarly, he proposes that men often exaggerate masculine behaviours and attitudes precisely so as to avoid being labelled as homosexual or unmanly. Other researchers have demonstrated that boys place great importance on being tough and aggressive, enhancing their masculinity by using insulting language to claim that those amongst them, who do not display stereotypically masculine behaviour, are homosexual (Beynon 1989; Eder 1995).

Lehne (1976: 77-78) asserts that:

Homophobia is used as a technique of social control by homosexual<sup>97</sup> individuals to enforce the norms of male sex role behaviour...homosexuality is not the real threat, the real threat is change in the male sex role...Men devalue homosexuality, then use this norm of homophobia to control other men in their male roles...Homophobia is a threat used by homosexual individuals to enforce social conformity in the male role, and maintain social control. The taunt 'What are you, a fag?' is used in many ways to encourage certain types of male behaviour and to define the limits of acceptable masculinity.

Berrill (1990) suggests that antigay violence is based on traditional sex role attitudes in which male superiority is promoted. Here, homosexuals are regarded as ideological renegades who have rejected the 'normal' hierarchy of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. In this way, antigay violence can be seen as a manifestation of stereotypical social rules resulting from social and historical processes. Herek (1992) expands on this idea, suggesting that antigay prejudice, which can lead to violence, is rooted within a social heritage in which cultural practises, social norms, values, beliefs and attitudes are learned within the parental family. He suggests that while traditional sex role attitudes are transmitted by parents to their children, larger social forces legitimate certain groups as suitable targets for deviating from those traditional roles. Therefore, researchers such as Ehrlich (1992) argue that antigay violence does not persist solely because of the individual pathology of the perpetrator, but also because of the structure of society, which defines social norms and implements them through major social institutions such as the family, mass media, the church and education system.

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<sup>97</sup> The homosexual individual can be defined as one who is prejudiced against his own sex.

This is particularly applicable when one considers that research by Berrill (1992); Ehrlich (1992); and Stermac et al. (1996) identifies antigay violence as frequently occurring in a gang situation. As discussed earlier, Groth and Burgess's (1980) study identified status and affiliation as a motivational component in male rape cases in which they argued that some perpetrators felt pressured to participate in gang rape to maintain status and membership with peers. They assert that mutual participation in such assaults serves to strengthen and confirm the social bond among the assailants. The fact that perpetrators may believe that they are implementing traditional sex roles by punishing the deviants of these roles (homosexuals) serves to strengthen the social bond among the gang members.

Research by Comstock (1989) and Berrill (1990) indicates that between five and ten percent of victims of gay bashing report experiencing sexual assaults by heterosexual male perpetrators (gay bashing in such cases is identified through antigay verbal abuse). These researchers identify a number of variables that characterise antigay violence. For example, they suggest that antigay violence most frequently occur during night-time and at week-ends, and in gay-identified locations such as gay 'cruising areas'. They also suggest that antigay violence is perpetrated by multiple assailants (usually youth gangs) who are unknown to the victim and who use antigay or AIDS-related verbal abuse (including name-calling such as 'queer' 'faggot'). They further highlight that antigay violence is demonstrated through malicious, gratuitous physical violence with weapons (such as baseball bats, as well as other objects used for anal penetration).

In identifying motivational components for male rape, Groth and Burgess (1980) suggest that in some male rapes, the perpetrator attempts to punish the victim as a way of dealing with his unresolved and conflicting sexual interests. In such cases then, perpetrators are on the one hand, unable to admit to their interests in sexual encounters with other men and on the other hand, are unable to abandon pursuing such interests. The researchers suggest that perpetrators are insecure with regards to their own sexual identity and regard their victim as a temptation. They then become angry and violent in a bid to punish the victim for arousing such feelings in them. As Stermac et al. (1996) suggest, this is thought to be a motive operative in antigay violence or 'gay bashing'. Mezey and King (1989: 208) in their study of 22 male victims of sexual assault observed 'that in certain cases the sexual assault represented an extension of 'queer bashing''.

Additionally, research on prison rapes has identified homophobia as a motivational factor and research in this area needs to also be considered. Harry

(1992) suggests that antigay violence is motivated by a need to prove heterosexuality or then an attempt to purify secret homosexual desires. Research by Canter and Hodge (1998) found that of the 34% of gang rapes in their study, 17% were gay-bashing incidents where the sexual assault was seen as an expression of heterosexual anger and power against homosexual victims.

Research by Stermac et al. (1996), which analysed 29 cases of male sexual assault, demonstrated that while several men reported being sexually assaulted in gay cruising areas and with multiple assailants in some cases, these were not homophobic assaults since both perpetrators and victims were homosexual and had initially consented to a casual pick-up. Likewise, the majority of stranger attacks were not suggestive of antigay violence in this study. Stermac et al. conclude that antigay sexual violence is a rare phenomenon and suggest that sexual violence between homosexuals (including date rape as well as domestic assault) is more prevalent and therefore requires more detailed examination. This finding is echoed by Hickson et al. (1994) who found that 25% of their sample of homosexual men had been raped by their casual sexual partners. This study maintains that while research has identified heterosexual perpetrators, there is a lack of recognition that gay men also rape other gay men. Other work by Canter and Hodge (1998) also evidences that gay men perpetrate sexual assaults against other gay men. The researchers suggest that there is a need for both the gay community and support services to recognise this fact in order that gay victims of rape can be better supported. Franklin (1998:20) demonstrates that antigay violence is primarily,

...an extreme manifestation of pervasive cultural norms rather than as a manifestation of individual hatred. This distinction explains why assailants typically express little remorse despite the fact that their expressions of cultural hostility are experienced by gay men and lesbians as vicious terrorism.

Franklin goes on to suggest a need for better education in this field since perpetrators of antigay violence do not recognise themselves as the stereotypical hate-filled extremists.

Matza (1964) suggested that adolescents are pressured to prove their commitment to the male gender role and participating in sexual and violent acts was one way in which they could demonstrate this commitment. According to Harry (1992: 115):



Gay-bashing serves to validate one's maleness in the areas of both violence and sexuality. It is a sexual, but not homosexual act because it reaffirms one's commitment to sexuality exclusively in its heterosexual form. Occasionally, gay-bashing incidents include forcible rape, either oral or anal. Given the context of coercion, however, such technically homosexual acts seem to imply no homosexuality on the part of the offenders. The victim serves, both physically and symbolically, as a vehicle for the sexual status needs of the offenders in the course of recreational violence.

Sykes and Matza (1957) identified 'techniques of neutralisation' which perpetrators use to legitimate their behaviour. Among these techniques, the researchers identified the 'denial of the victim', which can be applied in antigay violence in which the perpetrators are able to deny the moral worth of the victim as a human being. The victim is seen to be worthy of punishment for having violated traditional sex roles, which the perpetrators use to justify their violence towards him. The perpetrators see themselves as redressing the problem of breaking traditional sex roles and reaffirming the natural order of normal sex-role behaviour. Therefore, it has been suggested by Levin and McDevitt (1993: Preface x-xi) that:

Crimes motivated by bigotry usually arise not out of the pathological rantings and ravings of a few deviant types in organised hate groups, but out of the very mainstream of society.

In summarising causal factors of antigay violence, Harry (1992) suggests firstly that the 'institution of gender' dictates social norms on gender, and homosexuality is a deviation from that norm. This deviation is condemned through social institutions of the family, schools and the wider social structure, creating prejudice against the deviants (homosexuals). Additionally, he identifies groups of immature males who engage in antigay violence as a way of validating their status as males as those who at the same time disengage from the conventional moral order. Lastly, Harry (1992) identifies the opportunities created for antigay violence such as gay neighbourhoods for the activists and visibly homosexual men for opportunist perpetrators.

Harry suggests that there is a lack of sound data on antigay violence, partly because it is often difficult to identify whether or not a particular incident is antigay. While he suggests possible attributes of antigay violence, such as number of perpetrators since antigay violence usually involves more than one perpetrator; location (gay cruising areas); verbal abuse/language used (for example, faggot, queer), he argues that there remains an absence of well-documented research on which to draw sound conclusions about the prevalence of such violence. However, the current research does demonstrate that cultural

heterosexism (defined by Herek 1992: 150 as an ideological system that denies, denigrates and stigmatises any non-heterosexual form of behaviour, identity, relationship of community through social customs and institutions) influences psychological heterosexism (the manifestation of heterosexism in individuals' attitudes and actions) which condones antigay violence. It is clear therefore that psychological heterosexism can be eroded through targeting change in social and political institutions, since it is these institutions which breed and promote cultural heterosexism.

Other research by Lees (1997) highlights the importance of language in developing and enhancing different gender roles. Similarly, Brownmiller (1975) argues that rape is legitimated in warfare and Lees (1997) suggests that male rape can be used as part of a military strategy to enhance masculinities within battalions, while at the same time strictly controlling sexual relations between men, in order to maintain a strong hierarchy. Such work demonstrates the strong relationship between the social construction of masculinities and the ways in which violence is legitimated and explained.

In considering anti-gay violence, Harry (1992) also highlights that sexual and violent acts are often the means for adolescent males to prove their commitment to the male gender role. He argues that gay bashing validates maleness in the areas of violence and sexuality, since violent acts are defined as masculine and violence against homosexual men reaffirms the perpetrators commitment to heterosexuality. This has also been highlighted by Matza (1964).<sup>98</sup>

Similarly, Lees (1997) further demonstrates that a significant proportion of male rapes are homophobic and she argues that by raping men who are homosexual or who are perceived to be weak, men are able to enhance their masculinity, while also defending against homosexual feelings. Research by Hickson (1994) and Stermac et al. (1996) also supports this position. Earlier work by Ward (1957) also argued that the survival of a delinquent male within an institutional setting was dependent on his ability to demonstrate his masculinity at all times. While this may be seen as an obvious feature of institutionalisation (the need to constantly prove manliness within prisons, for example, is well documented by Saragin 1976; Buffum 1982; Scacco 1982; Mezey and King 1993) other work by Groth and Burgess (1980) has demonstrated that the need to prove 'manhood' has been central in non-institutionalised male rape cases.

Hence, researchers such as Groth and Burgess (1980); Mezey and King (1993); Lees (1997); Canter and Hodge (1998) all conclude that male rape can be seen as a way of taking away manhood, emasculating other men and hence enhancing the power of the perpetrator.

The importance of masculinities to explain gang membership is important since research has identified that male rape can involve more than one assailant. For example, Kaufman et al. (1980) found that seven out of their sample of 14 cases involved multiple assailants. Similarly, Doan and Levy (1983) also found that the sexual assault of males frequently involves multiple assailants. Research by Hillman et al. (1990) found that 43 of 100 male rape cases analysed had involved more than one assailant. Likewise, Stermac et al. (1996) found multiple assailants in 41% of their case studies. Polk (1998) identifies the importance of gang or peer support in violent male conflicts, demonstrating that in some violent situations, the social audience plays a crucial role in providing social supports for violence, as a way of dealing with challenge. He demonstrates that:

It is not uncommon...for members of the audience to do more than provide a backdrop for the violence, since they in fact come to play an active role in the unfolding combat (Polk 1998:94).

#### **4.4.2 Subcultures, Masculinities and Gang Rape**

Gang violence has been explained in terms of a delinquent subculture or more specifically as part of a lower-class male subculture (Williams 1991). Subculture theorising has focused mainly on street crimes such as physical attacks, criminal damage and theft, identifying three areas of explanation: Albert Cohen's 'Middle class measuring rod'; Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin's 'differential opportunity structure theory', and Walter Miller's 'Lower class value system' work. The following discussion will briefly discuss the group process in gang rapes specifically.

Research by Blanchard (1959) has examined the group process in gang rape and has identified the importance of 'proving masculinity' within gang-rape situations. The object of the rape is identified as proving masculinity within the gang. Subjects in the study exhibited a need to defend against feelings of weakness,

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98 Matza's (1964) research highlighted 'techniques of neutralisation' which delinquents used to view the victim as worthy of punishment for violating, in the case of homosexuality, gender roles.

inadequacy, or a lack of masculinity, which they did through physical fighting. Blanchard's research also found that sexual feelings present in the rape situations occurred largely between male gang members rather than between them and their victims. He therefore suggests that sexual feeling is stimulated by the presence of a group, but is not obviously homosexual (this is because any obvious homosexuality would be a challenge to the masculinity which the gang-members are trying so hard to establish and prove). The important role of the gang leader in the group process of rape is also highlighted. He is seen to channel, crystallise, and otherwise direct the gang's attention to sexual matters. Likewise, Groth and Burgess (1980) and Lees (1997) have also demonstrated that in pair or gang rape, assailants' camaraderie is enhanced. Other work by Polsky (1967) demonstrates that juvenile delinquents who are institutionalised find themselves in an environment in which peer pressure is high and the need to prove masculinity is therefore crucial. Polsky's (1967) research identified a ranking system based on sexual abuse within residential treatment units for delinquent boys. This work identified the role of violence and aggression in the deviant subculture, which was used to rank members, creating rigid, inferior roles for weaker boys to be exploited by their 'leaders'.

Research by Canaan (1998) considers the construction of masculinities in youth subcultures and argues that the males within these subcultures come to value fighting, defending territory, 'acting and being hard' as all fundamental masculine traits. The focus on violence and heterosexuality are seen to be central to the values of such groups, although the researchers identify conflicting and contradictory notions of masculinity within these groups, suggesting that young men construct distinct forms of masculinity. However, the subjects in the study all demonstrated a strong commitment to physical might over male subordinates and this has led Canaan to question whether or not this would be extended to their relationships with young women, because they consider the female gender subordinate to their own. However, the fact that Canaan's research demonstrates that masculinity can take several forms, leads her to conclude that masculinity is not a unified entity and that violence against women is not central to all forms of masculinity. However, like Martin and Hummer's (1998) research, Canaan's work also clearly demonstrates that the social construction of masculinities does emphasise and promote aggressive and violent behaviour in men.

Wolfgang's (1958) research demonstrates the importance attributed to masculinities in male-on-male homicides and this is further supported by Polk

(1998) who examined male-on-male killings, primarily resulting from confrontations over honour or reputation. Polk identifies the 'challenge to manhood' as precipitating violent fights, which appear as trivial but quickly escalate to life-threatening situations. This has also been highlighted by Daly and Wilson (1988: 69), who suggest that trivial insults:

...may appear petty, but it is usually a deliberate provocation (or is perceived to be), and hence constitutes a public challenge that cannot be shrugged off. It often takes the form of disparagement of the challenged party's "manhood": his nerve, strength or savvy, or the virtue of his wife, girlfriend or female relatives.

#### **4.5 The Masculine Occupational Culture of the Police**

The masculine occupational culture of the police has received much attention within criminology (Skolnick, 1966; Reiner 1978, 1992; Bryant et al. 1985; Heidensohn, 1992). Given that part of the empirical research is on police attitudes, it is necessary to look at the masculine occupational culture of the police since it is important in terms of understanding police attitudes on issues such as sexuality, which can play a significant role in determining attitudes about male rape (explored in chapter 7). The relevance of masculinities in developing police attitudes on male rape will underpin the empirical work on the police (chapter 7) and therefore requires some discussion.

Messerschmidt (1993) highlights the way in which masculine gender is socially constructed and consequently institutionalised within the police service, pointing out that policing remains a masculine-dominated workplace. Smith and Gray (1985) demonstrate that the semi-military structure of the police promotes very masculine traits, emphasising dominance and control within the police culture and commanding respect and assertiveness.

Messerschmidt (1993: 175) identifies the gender division of labour in policing as contributing to the construction of masculinity by policemen, pointing out that:

Police work is defined culturally as an activity only 'masculine men' can accomplish.

Other researchers (Morris 1987; Reiner 1992) have demonstrated that police work is viewed by both the police and the public as a masculine pursuit, enhanced by media images of heroic men fighting crime and criminals. Hence, for

Messerschmidt (1993) police work is a resource for masculine construction in which masculinity and femininity are distinguished through the actual practice of policing. He suggests that policemen frequently exercise their gendered power to maintain control over perceived masculine practices (dominating partnerships with female officers, driving the patrol car or conducting interviews with suspects/victims) while policewomen engage in more feminine practices (such as taking statements or doing routine paperwork). In maintaining such gender divisions of labour and power, Messerschmidt maintains that both male and female officers actively construct masculinity and femininity.

The perception of policing as a masculine culture has also had a profound affect on the way in which discretionary decision making powers have been exercised.<sup>99</sup> As discussed earlier, heterosexuality is used to define and identify 'real men' and Messerschmidt identifies normative heterosexuality as constructed within police agencies and regulated by the police in society. He suggests that proving heterosexuality helps confirm masculinity within male-dominated institutions such as the police. Likewise, Messerschmidt's argument suggests that the existence of female officers serves to weaken the gender separation since it is believed that if women can do what 'real cops' do, then the masculinity of male officers is challenged. He therefore suggests that policemen create clear distinctions between female and male police officers in order to maintain the peculiar masculinity of male officers. Messerschmidt also points out that normative heterosexuality is constructed within the police service through repressing homosexuality. As with other male-dominated environments, Messerschmidt points out that physical violence is often used against homosexuals by police officers in order to reaffirm their commitment to natural and masculine sex-heterosexuality. He therefore suggests that the police seek to control the 'deviant' behaviour of homosexual men who represent subordinate masculinities.

#### **4.6 Shattering Masculinities: The Impact on the Male Rape Victim**

The discussion on masculinities has explored the relevance of socially constructed masculinities to explaining why men rape other men. Another important concern is the shattered masculinity of the male rape victim. As demonstrated above,

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<sup>99</sup> Stanko (1989) highlights the use of discretionary decision making in domestic violence situations to demonstrate the construction of masculinities within policing. Kinsey, Lea and Young (1986) also highlight the masculine nature of 'steering clear of domestics' and similarly, Buzawa and Buzawa (1990) demonstrate that policing domestic assaults does little to enhance masculinity and is not therefore regarded by police as important or serious.

central to a discussion of masculinities is the role of power in enhancing masculinities. As the discussion in this chapter has illustrated, masculinities are defined by male domination (regardless of whether that domination is over females or marginalised males) and power which is demonstrated through aggression, strength and violence, legitimated throughout all segments of society, including mass media, education, the criminal justice system and other institutions, as well as the family and interpersonal relationships.

The wealth of literature on masculinities suggests that masculinities are therefore socially constructed in a society which nurtures and supports male violence, with male rape being one consequence of this need to 'be a man'. Aspiring to masculine traits is a challenge to all men, and this challenge is at the crux of male existence. Consequently, the rape of one man by another can have devastating consequences on the victim's perceptions of his masculinity.<sup>100</sup>

As McMullen (1990) points out, it is in the interest of the offender to discredit the victim's account of rape and this process begins during the attack, whereby the offender(s) uses name-calling (queer, faggot) to suggest that the victim is not a 'real man'. Groth and Burgess (1980) also maintain that rapists create a fantasy to believe that the victim really wanted and enjoyed the rape. This has also been illustrated by Scully (1990) for female rape. In doing so, victims are made to feel guilty if they are homosexual, or homosexual and 'less manly' if they are heterosexual.

Feelings of 'loss of masculinity' are compounded for victims through their physiological sexual response, which exasperates their confusion about their sexuality, which they may feel is linked to the rape. As demonstrated by Groth and Burgess (1980); Mezey and King (1989) and others, (see discussion in chapter 2) perpetrators may make the victim ejaculate to confuse the victim into questioning his own sexuality and whether perhaps he invited the attack. Consequently, in male rape, victims may question their masculinity and doubt their manhood. This may be enhanced if no actual physical violence was used in their rape. Research presented in chapter 2 has shown that coercion is often used as a means of controlling victims. They may view their freezing-in-fright as weakness deserving to be exploited. Hence, as well as experiencing feelings associated with rape trauma syndrome (discussed above and also in chapter 2), men can experience 'a crisis of masculinity' as a consequence of rape, believing

that they are not 'real men' since they were unable to defend themselves from rape. These factors will all be explored in the empirical component of the research.

## 4.7 Gender Neutrality

Gender neutrality is the belief that the law should apply to men and women as both perpetrators and victims. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) has made rape law partially gender-neutral in that it has come to recognise men as possible victims of rape. However, there has been some strong opposition to the suggestion that rape law should be completely gender neutral since it is argued by feminists such as Rush (1990) that gender neutrality implies that women also rape, and it is her assertion that they simply do not. While it is known and accepted that men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of rape, it is naïve to suggest that women simply do not rape since research by Hillman et al. (1990) found that 15 cases (out of 100 in their research) included women, and 12 of these were in combination with men. Similarly, research by King and Woollett (1997) also found that in seven cases, (out of a sample of 115) men had been assaulted by a man and a woman, and in a further eight cases, men had been assaulted by only women. The recent case of an 18-year-old woman convicted of rape<sup>101</sup> (see chapter 2) also demonstrates that while this is a rare occurrence, the fact that it does happen, requires legal recognition of this, in order to give protection to men and to women.

Rush (1990: 169-170) asks whether a demand for gender neutrality in rape law is:

...simply looking for equal protection under the law or was it telling us that male rape is not an issue of sexism because women also rape men? We know and they know, of course, that it is gay and heterosexual men, not women, who rape men. This fact however, does not make male rape gender neutral. Men rape other men because they feminise their victims within heterosexual patterns of dominance and subordination. When men treat other men as women, humiliate and shame them in the same way, then male rape is indeed rooted in sexism...gender neutrality is rooted in the idea that both genders, male and female, are equally oppressed and that any attempt

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100 Numerous studies have identified the different effects of male rape on victims and these have been discussed in chapter 2.

101 Under s8 of the Accessories and Abettors Act 1861, a person who aids, abets, counsels or procures the commission of a criminal offence (i.e. an accomplice) is liable to be tried and punished for that offence as a principal offender. Where the principal offence is proved, it is immaterial that it is an offence that the accomplice could not have committed as a principal - so a woman can be tried for rape as an accomplice, and the conviction is for rape, as demonstrated in *Ram and Ram* (1893). 17 Cox CC 609.



to hold men and male institutions accountable for transgressions against women is no longer fashionable nor acceptable.

This process of 'feminising' male survivors has been evident in prison rape research. For example, research by Rideau and Sinclair (1982: 5) suggests that 'The act of rape in the ultramasculine world of prison constitutes the ultimate humiliation visited upon a male, the forcing of him to assume the role of a woman'. Research by Lockwood (1980) on prison sexual violence suggests that rape in prisons is a result of violent values learned in communities, families and peers. He argues that the individual acts of rape emerge from favourable attitudes and beliefs about sexual exploitation.

However, other work on prison rape suggests that issues of race and sexuality are factors that motivate rape (Buffum 1982; Carroll, 1982; Scacco 1982). Therefore, while the majority of research on prison rape suggests that it is motivated by power and control which is executed through the act of rape (rape therefore is a means to an end), no research on rape outside prisons has demonstrated that perpetrators 'feminise' their victims before or during the rape.

Additionally, as Rumney and Taylor (1997a and 1997b) point out, even if male perpetrators of rape do feminise their male victims, does this mean that victims of these perpetrators should not be given equal redress under the law? I would argue that such a notion offers no understanding or validation of male victims' experiences of rape.

It may therefore be argued that a wealth of research demonstrates that rape is motivated by power and control, and not by sexual desire, and that this power and control can be exercised over any vulnerable person, male or female. As such, it is important that recognition be given to all victims of rape.

Radical feminism has not been forthcoming in recognising that men do also get raped. For example, Tempkin (1982: 400-401) suggests that:

Given man's greater physical strength and women's consequent vulnerability, the overriding objective which, it is submitted, the law of rape should seek to pursue is the protection of sexual choice—that is to say, the protection of women's right to choose, whether, when and with whom to have sexual intercourse.

However, it is important that both women *and* men have the right to make this choice. It may be argued that in an attempt to give women equal rights under rape legislation, such a view fails to recognise or protect vulnerable men who are

not able to protect themselves against rape. Furthermore, Russell (1990: 358) argues that 'few women have the physical strength to rape a man', thereby failing to acknowledge that rape involves many different processes used to control victims into submission, other than physical force (such as blackmail, coercion). Research on male rape has demonstrated that men are often unable to put up physical resistance against an attack because of shock, fear and disbelief (Groth and Burgess 1980; Mezey and King 1989; Canter and Hodge 1998). This will be explored further in the empirical research. Hence, legal reform needs to be more inclusive of male survivors of rape and in recognising that rape is committed using non-physical as well as physical control over the victim. Failure to recognise this is more typical of beliefs manifest in rape trials in which judges have notoriously suggested that rape does not occur if physical violence is not present (see for example the discussion in chapter 3).

Other work on gender-neutrality by Naffine (1992) argues that rape is a crime of men against women since it is still men who are raping, and women who are being raped. While it is evident that the vast majority of rape victims are women, such work again fails to recognise that men do also become victims of rape. It is a curious point that while feminism sought to make visible the experiences of female survivors, rightly recognising and emphasising the detrimental effect of rape on their lives, the same feminism is able to deny the existence of male survivors' experiences of rape. Such beliefs do precisely what feminism criticised positivism for doing, that is, trivialising the experience of survivors of rape and focusing on the perpetrator instead of the victim. As argued by Rumney and Taylor (1997a: 203):

A more appropriate approach is one, which recognises that men also have an equal right to enjoy "the protection of sexual choice" and to be protected from coerced sexual activity.

What advocates such as Rush (1990) and Naffine (1992) fail to realise is that gender specific rape law (as it currently is) is not only harmful for male survivors of rape, it also fails to protect other women from being raped by women (as in the infamous canal side rape discussed above), and ignores oral and object rape, which affect both men and women. By advocating a policy of exclusion, radical feminism promotes the belief that the rights of some female survivors are more important than the rights of everyone else (Rumney and Taylor 1997b).

Furthermore, while researchers such as Leidholdt and Raymond (1990) suggest that gender-neutrality does not reflect the gender reality of rape, they nonetheless fail to state how this is harmful to female survivors of rape. In

contrast, it may be argued that a failure to provide equal redress for male survivors results in a lack of reporting (King 1990) and trivialises the problem of male rape. This prevents men from coming forward and seeking the help and support they need.

## 4.8 Changing Masculinities

As this chapter has demonstrated, both feminist and masculinities research has illustrated that different gender roles constructed and developed through socialisation encourage and facilitate male violence. For feminism, this violence is perpetrated against women, whereas masculinities research highlights that men too become victims of this gender role socialisation, which leads to rape against other men. Goodey (1997) rightly points out that progress can only be achieved when change ensures that boys are not nurtured into the socially constructed masculine gender, which promotes violence in men. Hence, Hearn (1987) suggests that men need to recognise their responsibility to each other to change relationships with both women and other men. Adopting a similar perspective, Snider (1998) suggests that while masculinity promotes a need for men to create identities that are distinctively *different* from women's, there is no need to hate, devalue or dominate women. She suggests that the latter are necessary components of patriarchy, not masculinity.

Jefferson (1996: 339) maintains that:

...the ideology of masculinity supported the range of practices and institutions that collectively constituted *the* all-embracing system of male domination that was the patriarchal society.

Consequently, Snider (1998) proposes that both women and men have a role to play in creating and defining less violent masculinities. She suggests that women too play a role in reinforcing violent masculinities; as mothers they reward violence and toughness in their sons and weaknesses in their daughters, or devalue emotionality and vulnerability in men with negative labels.

Kaufman (1994) emphasises that the feminist challenge to male power has the potential of liberating men and helping more men discover new masculinities that will be part of demolishing gender altogether. He asserts that by deconstructing masculinities and losing any power or privilege as a consequence, men will be compensated in the end for the pain, fear and dysfunctional forms of behaviour.

He concludes that by reconstructing masculinities, violence by men experienced against men *and* women can be eradicated.

## Summary

One of the core challenges to the research on rape, both within feminism and masculinities, is the universally accepted belief that:

...the biological difference in the functions of females and males in human reproduction lies at the core of the cultural organisation of women's and men's relations (Yanagisako and Collier 1990: 141).

Therefore, in order to understand the process of male violence and provide room for social change, it is fundamentally important to recognise the *social* construction of different gender roles, rather than blindly accept that these are a consequence of innate biology, which force men to violent-prone behaviour. It has been argued that this social construction is significant in making males constantly struggle to prove themselves in a society that rewards violent and aggressive behaviour.

The research into the social construction of masculinities differs from feminist work primarily in its theorising regarding who the main victims of masculinities are, since feminist researchers argue that women are the victims of male violence and cultural theorists and masculinities theorists recognise that men too are victims of their own masculinities. Furthermore, it is clear that while men are the main perpetrators of violence, they are also the main victims.<sup>102</sup> While extreme violence has been linked to preserving masculinity, Polk (1998) rightly points out that not all males feel compelled to defend their reputations or honour using such violence. Hence, while research on masculinities provides some important insights into male violence, it does not adequately explain why some men do not resort to such violence. However, it does provide a plausible explanation for rape.

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<sup>102</sup> This refers, not to rape, but other forms of violent behaviour including assault and homicide and has been demonstrated by Wolfgang (1958); Wallace (1986); Silverman and Kennedy (1987); Archer (1994).

The challenges to subordinate or marginalised masculinities by hegemonic masculinities has been demonstrated and it is clear that ideas of homophobia and racism<sup>103</sup> are used as a means of social control. While acute differences in feminist and masculinities research have been highlighted, it is clear that at this point, there is room to fuse together some of the important progress made in both fields of work, as both are ultimately concerned with creating a better system in which victims can find support, redress and protection from further abuse.

Prison rape can be seen as unique because of the confines and unique structure of prisons. However, the important contribution of research on prison rape and masculinities has been documented. Such research has demonstrated the underlying need for men to prove or defend their masculinity and this has been coexistent with other means of expressing masculinity such as racism or sexuality. For example, Carroll (1982) regards rape by both white and black inmates as an expression of manhood and a means of proving their masculinity. It is suggested that the rape of white inmates by black inmates is also racially motivated and that this race element further proves manhood when black inmates rape white inmates. This does not seem to be the case for white inmates raping black inmates, which is a relatively rare occurrence in comparison. Research by Davis (1968) points out that the causes of rape within prisons are rooted within the wider community in which men are deprived of any effective way of achieving masculine self-identification through avenues other than physical aggression and sex. This leads him to conclude that the causes of sexual assaults can only be eliminated when changes are made in the outside community. Carroll (1982) upholds this view, arguing that the motivating force behind rape in prison has its roots deep within the socio-cultural conditions laid down in wider society.

This chapter has demonstrated that while men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of rape as demonstrated by feminism, they do also become victims of these rapes, a fact overlooked by feminism. While feminist research began as a reaction against positivist explanations of rape and demonstrated the impact of rape on women's lives, it too, has adopted a policy of exclusion in relation to male survivors of rape. The effects of ignoring male victimisation in rape are

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103 There has been no research to date suggesting that non-institutionalised male rape has any racial factors of motivation. However, some research on racism and masculinities has been conducted by Carroll (1982); Scacco (1982); Starchild (1990) in prisons, and has concluded that racism in prisons is used as a central point to prove masculinities, giving perpetrators of rape a sense of control and proving manhood over different racial groups.

detrimental to male survivors. Denying that males can and do become victims of rape fails to validate their experiences, thereby increasing their trauma and preventing practical and emotional support being provided to them. The importance of masculinities has been discussed at length and it is evident that men rape to demonstrate their socially constructed masculinities, thereby gaining power by proving their manhood. It is also clear that male victims feel a loss of manhood and identity because of rape, thereby heightening their trauma.

Some studies have tried to compare levels of impact of rape on male and female survivors and have argued that the impact on males is 'worse' since, as well as experiencing symptoms of rape trauma syndrome, the 'crisis of masculinities' intensifies this trauma (Mezey and King 1989; Dyer 1994). However, it does not seem purposeful to engage in a debate (as Gillespie 1996 does) as to which of the two groups experience rape as more detrimental, since 'measuring' levels of trauma is not an appropriate response to survivors of rape. Instead, as research by Adler (1993) illustrates, male survivors may have even more difficulties in reporting rape to the police and other agencies because of the fear of challenges to their sexuality and masculinity. Research into this area would benefit survivors of rape more if it identified the impact of rape, without trying to make unsuitable comparisons, given that each experience is individual. To suggest that one group suffers more impact than another is to belittle the effect of rape on the other group. Hence, research into the impact of rape is more helpful. While the impact of rape on female survivors is known, comparatively little work has been done on the impact of rape on male survivors. Research by Goyer and Eddleman (1984) and Mezey and King (1989) illustrates that the effect of rape on men's lives is devastating (for a fuller discussion of this and other research see chapter 2).

The empirical research in this study will further explore the impact of rape on male survivors in order to give recognition and understanding to this. As Rumney and Taylor (1997b: 354) so fittingly conclude:

For the work of some feminist scholars on gender neutrality to remain credible it needs to respond to new research and understandings of rape, this includes issues of male victimisation. To accept the fact that women do sometimes rape or that male-male assaults produce traumas which are equal to those suffered by women does not we believe, have to mean the rejection of feminist explanations of rape given that most rapists are male and most victims are female. However, what it does mean is that male rape as a problem should be taken seriously and discussions should take account of the research on the subject.

## **Chapter Five: Research Methods Employed**

### **5.1 Researching Male Rape: Background to the Empirical Research and Methods Employed**

This chapter explains the choice of research methods, illustrating that while some quantitative data was collected, the empirical research largely adopted a qualitative approach. The value of employing qualitative research methods is discussed, as are the methods of data collection and analysis. Triangulation allowed for the collection of data from various sources since some data sets were incomplete. This is also elaborated further in the discussion. The sensitive nature of male rape requires giving some consideration to the literature on researching sensitive topics and this is also provided, together with a discussion of the importance of locating oneself in the research process.<sup>104</sup> This chapter begins by introducing the different components of the empirical work, which are then elaborated upon.

Three main research strategies were employed. Firstly, a content analysis of newspaper reports on male rape over a 13-year period was conducted.<sup>105</sup> The Nexis Database was searched in the UK newspaper directory from the period 1989-2002<sup>106</sup> in order to ascertain the level of media interest in male rape, and importantly, to explore the nature and quality of this coverage. The search began in 1989 since there were no reports in the database prior to this date.

Secondly, a questionnaire of 93 police officers was conducted to explore the prevalence of myths and misconceptions about male rape among officers, since the police are often the first point of contact for male victims.<sup>107</sup> The questionnaire also looked at police experiences of dealing with male victims to further identify gaps in existing services for male victims.

Thirdly, primary statistics were collected from SurvivorsUK, the only national organisation dealing with male survivors, and these were used to develop some understanding of the nature of male rape in contemporary British society. A total of 1344 calls to the organisation's help-line over a 7-year period were analysed. Using data from the same source, a victimisation survey of 16 male victims of

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<sup>104</sup> Identified by feminist researchers such as Kelly (1988) and discussed further on in this chapter.

<sup>105</sup> A summary of newspaper articles is presented in Appendix 2

<sup>106</sup> Up to April 2002.

<sup>107</sup> A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 3

rape was conducted.<sup>108</sup> Seven interviews with counsellors of male rape helped to ascertain the nature and impact of rape on men's lives and the adequacy of service provisions. This part of the research explored the experiences of male victims and compared them to police ideas and newspaper coverage about male rape. Therefore, the reality for victims was compared to perceptions about male rape.

The issue of male rape is emotionally sensitive and has been identified as a taboo topic. Therefore, literature on researching sensitive topics requires some consideration in order to set the tone for a discussion on methods employed in the project.

## **5.2 Ethical Considerations and Doing Sensitive Research: the Importance of an Interactive Methodology**

A significant difference between feminist research and traditional criminological research has been the role of the researcher within the study. Feminist researchers have emphasised the importance of locating themselves within the research process, considering their own identity and how this has influenced their choice of study and/or methodology. McRobbie (2000) highlights that feminists conducting research draw on, and are constantly reminded of, their own experiences. The importance of being honest about the research and answering questions fully, including personal questions, as well as locating oneself within the research process has led to the questioning of the objectivity of feminist research. However, as Du Bois (1983) argues, this rejection of the notion of 'objectivity' does not mean a rejection of a concern for being accurate.

When researching the topic of male rape I realised early on the sensitive approach it required. Ethical considerations focused not least on making sure that participants in the research were not harmed by the work and mechanisms were employed to ensure this throughout (these are discussed throughout this chapter). As the research developed and knowledge into the area began to increase, my initial curiosity developed into a strong passion to offer support in an area of immense personal importance. The recognition of its importance became compounded after direct contact with male survivors of rape.

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<sup>108</sup> A copy of the victimisation survey is included in Appendix 4.



The need to 'do something' can be located within feminist research methods, which emphasise the importance of 'getting and staying involved' (Kelly 1988:2). It may be suggested that this notion is based on the commitment to end female oppression. As highlighted by Kelly (1988), literature on research methods has no terminology to describe this contribution, which she terms 'active participation'. She therefore identifies the purpose of feminist research as being 'to understand women's oppression in order to change it...Feminism is therefore, both a mode of understanding and a call to action' (Kelly 1988:4). It is thus clear that the work of feminists such as Kelly (1988) and others emphasises the oppression of women by men. While the present study is informed by feminist work, locating rape and sexual violence within the dynamics of power and control, there is a shift from focusing on the oppression of women, to highlighting the oppression of men, by other men.<sup>109</sup>

Feminists such as Gillespie (1996:151) have challenged such a shift. Referring to the proposal to change legislation to recognise male rape, she asserts:

For feminists, while acknowledging the degradation and brutality of male rape, to refer to 'non-consensual buggery' as the same as female rape (i.e. that the crime is gender neutral), is to render invisible the gendered power relations between men and women expressed through men's sexual violence to women. Feminists were concerned that in changing the legal definition of rape, the only gender specific crime in British law would disappear from the statute book.

Gillespie's position comes from direct concern for the survival of female services, as discussed in the previous chapter. However, despite this reluctance to include male victims, feminist theory nonetheless provides the framework for understanding the oppression of all vulnerable groups. As such, while the rape of men has not been regarded as a political priority for feminist thinkers, feminist theory can be applied to provide a clear understanding of male rape. Therefore, the present research draws heavily on the principles of feminism, both in theoretical terms in accounting for male violence and in applying the principles of feminist research methods. In doing so, it acknowledges the limitations of

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<sup>109</sup> The sexual assault of adult men by women has been identified by Struckman-Johnson (1988) who suggests that this occurs more often than was previously assumed. Other work by Johnson and Shrier (1987) demonstrates that serious sexual assaults of men by women are rare. More recent research by King et al., (2000) found that of their sample of 71(3%) men who had been sexually assaulted as adults (out of a total of 2474 participants), almost half were assaulted by women. While the researchers suggest that none of the men in these cases was raped by the female perpetrators, at least one put an object in the victim's anus, 13 were forced to give the female perpetrator oral sex and 14 were forced to have intercourse with her. This study focuses on sexual molestation of adult males but nonetheless demonstrates that men do become victims of female-perpetrated sexual assaults albeit in a minority of cases. The focus of this thesis is on men raping men and since the rape of men by women is such a rare occurrence, this requires no further elaboration.

feminism in overlooking the victimisation of men, and falling short of recognising the male victim of rape.

Ethical considerations, together with direct contact with those affected by male rape, also increases the need to 'give something back' to the organisations and individuals that have taken part in the work. My voluntary work with SurvivorsUK has been on going for three years. During this time, I was able to offer my skills and empathy to the work of the organisation and help raise awareness of the issues of male rape. My work with SurvivorsUK ranged from giving help and support to male victims, being research co-ordinator for the organisation, management committee member, and director. The work involved late working hours and importantly, required a strong commitment from all team members, in order for the valuable work to continue. As with most charitable organisations, problems of funding meant that there were times when services to men had to be reduced and lack of volunteers and paid staff meant that extra working hours were imposed on those willing to continue the work. The need to stay involved in the work overrode the problems encountered on a daily basis.

It is essential that male survivors taking part in the research are given adequate support to ensure that the research does not in any way hinder or otherwise interfere with their recovery process. Feminist research methods involve not exploiting subjects and not regarding them as sources of data only. In trying to do this, it is necessary to consider the welfare of the participant as paramount to the study and this must always be the priority of the researcher. In order to ensure this, it was essential to undertake counselling training to understand the issues and experiences of the men. It was hoped that this trained approach would offer invaluable support to them. Hence, experience of the issues was seen to be important in aiding the survivors through their recovery as well as guiding the research process, giving due thought to the ethics of conducting this research.

Survivors were also offered more in-depth support in the way of one-to-one counselling and were referred to trained counsellors where needed. This was to ensure that participants were not harmed in any way as a result of the research. The agencies involved in the research were offered detailed reports on the research findings relevant to their participation and these were seen to be important contributions to their work. At the time of writing, a report for the Metropolitan Police had been submitted to the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group. A report for SurvivorsUK is in progress. The voluntary work with the relevant agencies is continuing to promote the issues and to make further

progress. A commitment to ending male oppression led to direct, active participation in the work on male rape. Work on male rape is on going and the researcher aims to stay involved with it.

Radical feminists such as Stanley and Wise (1983) have argued that researchers ought to make explicit their own values; that is make clear their commitment to ending the oppression which their work challenges. It may be argued that by considering their personal roles and how they could be affected by the topic they are studying; researchers empathise with the research subjects, thus breaking down barriers between themselves and the subject. The hierarchical relationship between the researcher and the subject is broken down, allowing the researcher to become closer to the subject. Hence, in the case of interviews, rather than minimising the personal involvement of the interviewer as in traditional interview techniques, the method relies on forming a relationship between interviewer and interviewee. This becomes an interactive process. Whilst radical feminism was directing this approach towards the project of ending female oppression and to researchers working within subject areas in which women are the primary victims, it was felt that such an interactive methodology was just as appropriate to researching the abuse of males.

It is important to realise that male rape affects both men and women as whilst victims are men, their friends, partners, and family include women, who very often find it extremely difficult to understand and deal with. The subject of male rape is highly sensitive and, viewed as a problem that only affects a small segment of the male population,<sup>110</sup> is 'closed off' from the rest of society. As such, the presence of a female researcher in this field can appear peculiar. Traditional criminological research has by and large ignored the importance of personal details about the researcher such as gender, sex, age or experience, when considering the role he/she plays within the research. The relevance of being a female researcher conducting work in an all-male environment and the influence that gender, experience or age may have on the research have been dismissed by traditional thought. However, these important issues prove to be a core element in the research process. As Gelsthorpe (1990) notes, her research in an all-male prison environment led to suspicion from inmates and staff with questions arising as to what a 'nice' girl would be doing in a place such as a prison. Similarly, I also encountered questions about why I (as a woman from a 'nice' family) was interested in such a 'distasteful' subject area.

It is also important to consider whether or not a male researcher would be accepted within an all-female environment to conduct research. Indeed, feminist research has highlighted the need for female researchers to carry out work on areas of female oppression (Kelly 1988), with little enthusiasm for male researchers, and it is female researchers who conduct the vast majority of research on 'female-issues'. While it is true to state that a female researcher is more likely to be accepted within an all-male research area, than a man in an all-female environment, this is largely due to safety issues for females within that environment.

For example, feminist advocates would deem the presence of a male researcher in female rape research highly inappropriate since this would create a climate of fear for women and would inevitably affect their recovery since their attacker will also have been male. Similarly, some feminists would argue that only women could empathise with oppressed women, so that it would be regarded as inappropriate for men to research this area even if the safety issue were to be resolved.

### **Researching a Sensitive Topic**

It is important to recognise that the issue of rape per se is a sensitive and emotionally charged area of research. If one is to consider the feelings of shame, embarrassment, loss, guilt, helplessness and fear that many survivors of rape encounter, it is not difficult to understand the reluctance they may feel in participating in research. The idea of being 'studied' may result in the survivor feeling that his/her personal trauma is belittled and its effects not adequately understood. The emotional and psychological state of the survivor must remain paramount to the inquiry.

The treatment of female rape victims has come under close scrutiny in recent years and is well documented (Chambers and Millar 1986, Tempkin 1987, Smart 1989, Lees 1996, Gregory and Lees 1999). Female rape victims have identified feelings of being doubly victimised or raped by rape trials, procedures and the criminal justice system's mechanisms for law and order. Research has

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110 As demonstrated throughout this thesis, there exists a deep-rooted misconception in society that men who are raped must be homosexual or not 'real men'.

highlighted how rape victims have been accused by defence lawyers and judges of enjoying the rape, or 'asking for it' (Kennedy 1992 see chapter 4).

Similarly, in their study of sexual assault trials, Chambers and Millar (1986) found that women felt that they were as much on trial as the accused. The researchers considered transcripts from rape trials to ascertain why women felt that they were being victimised. The research gave an account of strategies used by defence counsel to try and demonstrate that the victim had not in fact been raped but had perhaps consented and even enjoyed intercourse. The levels of resistance displayed by the victim, her behaviour after the incident, including her promptness in reporting the attack were all closely scrutinised. Chambers and Millar highlight how the defence counsel suggest that in sustaining physical injuries, the victim in fact enjoyed the violence and that this was 'part of the love-making process'. Lack of physical injuries was often interpreted as consent as it was implied that a 'real' victim would have resisted fully rather than suffer the 'dishonour' of a sexual attack, even at the risk of sustaining severe injuries. Hence, the issue of consent, which is at the heart of any rape trial, puts under scrutiny the honesty of the victim, who is often blamed for the rape.

Signs of hysteria and emotional distress as well as immediately reporting to the police were seen to be 'normal' reactions to rape. This lack of empathy ignores the fact that many victims of rape feel shocked, confused, afraid and unsure about what to do, and often speak to friends or family before being able to report to the police. Women, who are seen to engage in risky behaviour by being out alone late at night or in the company of strangers, are seen to be blame-worthy for the attack. Similarly, women who were divorced, unmarried mothers, had criminal records or were in the habit of drinking excessively or with strangers were regarded to be of bad character, implying that they were again blame-worthy. Whilst it is at the discretion of the judges to decide whether or not character evidence, including previous sexual history, can be admitted in contested rape trials, as Adler (1982) demonstrated, 75% of the cases in which the admission of such evidence was requested, and where consent was a key issue, the judges allowed the introduction of such evidence. The recent House of Lords rejection of the most recent legislative<sup>111</sup> attempt to limit sexual history evidence in rape trials has once again fuelled debate in this area.

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<sup>111</sup> S41 Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999.

Researchers such as Adler (1982) and Tempkin (1983) have argued that statutory changes cannot adequately address the concerns that women are doubly victimised by the courts, while judges with old-fashioned and deep-rooted stereotypes hold discretionary powers in rape trials. Such concerns can be extended to male victims who face strong prejudice because of the stigma and shame attached to the crime of male rape. Myths that victims are homosexuals who have perhaps 'asked for it' by being in gay venues or by not showing physical resistance and who are therefore blame-worthy, are all-important considerations when conducting sensitive research. It was therefore important to recognise that males too could become subject to feelings of being doubly victimised. This coupled with the taboo of male rape, which I felt would contribute to the reluctance of men to take part in the research, made it essential to ensure that the inquiry was conducted in a sensitive and carefully considered manner.

When researching a sensitive topic, a number of important issues arise. Before considering the methodological aspects, it is necessary to look at the nature of the topic that makes it crucial for every researcher to carefully develop a viable research strategy. This must incorporate all the important aspects of the research whilst also approaching the subject in a genuinely sensitive and empathetic way. It has been noted by Lee and Renzetti (1990) that the phrase 'sensitive topics' is often used in literature as though it is self-explanatory, hence is not defined. An exception is the work of Sieber and Stanley (1988:49) who define socially sensitive research as:

...studies in which there are potential consequences or implications, either directly for the participants in the research or for the class of individuals represented by the research.

This somewhat broad definition allows the inclusion of topics that may not normally be considered as 'sensitive' whilst also focusing the researcher's attention on the wider implications of his/her work. However, as suggested by Lee (1993) such a definition, by failing to identify the scope and nature of consequences and implications, can include a wide spectrum of research, which would otherwise not be thought to be sensitive. Lee (1993) also points out that this definition, whilst importantly recognising ethical issues, perhaps overlooks the technical and methodological aspects of conducting research on sensitive topics such as gaining access to subjects who may be unwilling to participate because of the sensitivity of the topic.

## **Researching Taboo Topics**

Research by Farberow (1963) considers sensitive topics in terms of issues that are taboo. For Farberow, taboo research is that which is riddled with emotion or then inspires feelings of awe or dread. This includes work on sex and death. The problems with such a definition of taboo subjects have been demonstrated by Lee (1993), who suggests that such a narrow definition does not allow for the possibility that research may be sensitive for situational reasons (Brewer 1993) or because it is located in a particular socio-political context (Rostocki 1986). Similarly, as Lee (1993) also points out, research into deviant behaviour, thought sometimes to be sensitive work, does not always fall into Farberow's definition; other areas thought to hold disputed scientific merit (such as parapsychology), are also included by Farberow as taboo subjects. As Lee (1993:4) argues, it may be appropriate to simplify the definition of sensitive research to say that the difficulty with sensitive research is that 'it involves potential costs to those involved in the research, including on occasion, the researcher'.

Here it is also recognised that whilst all research involves some cost (whether in terms of time, finance or inconvenience) the distinction for sensitive research areas is that potential costs go beyond the unplanned. Sensitive research then, may be:

...research which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved in it (Lee 1993:4).

The research into male rape proved to be no exception. Whilst careful thought and background research played a crucial role before the research project could commence, it became apparent that the research itself could be regarded as a threat. Much work at the early stages had to concentrate on overcoming the concerns of those involved in the research in terms of how potential participation could have personal as well as public implications. Assurances of complete anonymity were given to relieve some of these concerns. Furthermore, participants were assured that data presented would be non-attributable. Pseudonyms have been used throughout the thesis and any potentially identifying information has been either changed or omitted.

Whilst the study into male rape is a sensitive one, it is also a taboo topic of research. Whilst taboo topics are nearly always sensitive, sensitive topics are not always taboo. For example, Brewer's (1993) study on policing in Northern Ireland may be seen a sensitive issue of research, without being taboo.

To identify taboo subjects, it is perhaps appropriate to consider that which is permitted and that which is prohibited in society and whilst some taboos may benefit society,<sup>112</sup> others are in danger of imposing feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment simply because they are taboo. Whilst researching taboo issues, it is especially important that the researcher is aware of the potential harm that may come to the subjects in the study and of the ethical considerations of anonymity and privacy, as well as the need for accurate representation of the facts. As noted by Allport (1963) the motives of the researcher come under close scrutiny by both lay persons and professionals, making the barriers of inquiry ever more strong:

And just why are *you* so much interested in the occult, in sexuality, in perversions, in suicide, in death, in hypnosis, in religion or whatever?  
(Allport 1963:XI)

McMullen (1990) has identified the area of male rape as taboo. It may be suggested that male rape is a social taboo because of the conflict it poses in terms of conventional belief systems and gender-role expectations. The notion of male rape challenges the role of man as dominating, strong, powerful and controlling; ideas that are strongly rooted in the earliest of civilisations. Male rape challenges the very core characteristics that society has developed to measure 'real men' against. The feeling of having failed to fulfil such characteristics and expectations result in shame, guilt and embarrassment, preventing men from seeking the help and support which they desperately need, but which because of the social constraints imposed upon them, they are unable to seek. Hence, male rape is an emotionally charged area of inquiry, which, because of the stigma attached to it, becomes a difficult subject area to research.

Taboo topics are those which are stigmatised, socially disapproved and indeed; unpopular. Research into a taboo area often involves dealing with fundamental social problems that people may choose either not to recognise or to avoid. The idea that 'proper' people would not wish to become involved in researching topics that are stigmatised can often lead to suspicious questioning of the researcher's motives for conducting the work.

There are also, as with most research areas, methodological difficulties. In some ways these may be issues common to everyday non-taboo topics such as obtaining a sample or gaining access to data. However, the pervasive questions

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<sup>112</sup> For example, the act of suicide as socially taboo may be prevented because it is so labelled.



of reliability of the data, (because subjects may find it difficult to be truthful), as well as the drive, on the part of the researcher, to collect and present raw data, add to the problems of conducting such research. Furthermore, the researcher must collect the data while keeping within ethical boundaries in order to protect the subjects.

The problems of researching male rape are compounded by the fact that this area has two readily identified taboo topics within it. Under the umbrella of male rape lies the general taboo area of human sexual behaviour; also the potential connections between male rape and homosexuality, another area recognised as taboo.<sup>113</sup> Problems identified with researching human sexual behaviour include limitations to inquiry in that traditional scientific approaches such as observation are restricted. Ethical, moral, and legal obligations, on the one hand to the subjects, and on the other to society, are important and preserving confidentiality is of utmost importance if honest participation is to occur. As noted by Pomeroy (1963), because human sexual behaviour is such an emotionally charged subject, research on it brings a strong public reaction, which can be critical and suspicious.

Whilst attitudes towards sexual behaviour and indeed investigations into it have relaxed somewhat since Pomeroy's observations, to a lesser extent, attitudes have also become more accepting of male homosexuality. Strong legal and social prohibitions have contributed to male homosexuality being a taboo topic. It may be suggested that prejudicial attitudes, suppression and control of the male homosexual community have driven homosexual behaviour 'underground', with society regarding it as abnormal and wrong. It is for this reason that gaining the co-operation of male homosexuals to participate in research is so fraught with difficulties. Fears of prejudice, breach of confidentiality, being identified and genuine concerns for safety, contribute to vulnerable groups such as homosexuals being reluctant subjects of inquiry. It is also important for the researcher to be aware of 'the self' in the research process and the implications of perspectives held which may inevitably influence the research process (this is discussed in more detail further on in the chapter).

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113 As identified by Farberow (1963).

### 5.3 The Research Project: Introduction to Empirical Work

Although some cases of male rape have been brought to the attention of the police and the criminal justice system, these have by no means been exhaustive. Data from SurvivorsUK indicate that a greater number of male rape victims have come to their attention, than to the police. For example, data from SurvivorsUK show that from 1996 to 1997 only four percent of the callers to the help-line reported the incident to the police while 14% did not.<sup>114</sup> From 1997 to 1998, of the callers who stated whether or not the police had been told one percent said they had told the police compared to 18% who did not report to the police.<sup>115</sup> The very high 'not known' category makes this finding of limited value, providing a limited indication of reporting rates.

Research suggests that male rape is probably one of the most underreported serious crimes in Britain (Groth and Burgess 1989; Mezey and King 1993; Gregory and Lees 1999). Its hidden nature has led others to suggest that male rape may be even more under-reported than female rape (Hillman 1990; McMullen 1990; Mezey and King 1993). However, Gregory and Lees (1999) point out that comparisons between the under-reporting of female rape and male rape are unhelpful, since the hidden nature of these crimes makes it impossible to estimate the number of actual rapes. Hence, while it has been frequently suggested that 'What is beyond dispute is that men who become victims of rape are less likely than women to report it to the police'<sup>116</sup> there is a lack of substantial research to make such comparisons meaningful. However, it is clear that men are reluctant to report rape and reasons for this include most commonly, fears about not being believed by the police officer or being ridiculed. Also, anecdotal evidence has highlighted victim's fears about the medical examination that follows a rape, about appearing in court, about publicity and about friends and family finding out. Concerns have also been expressed about being labelled gay and accusations of 'asking for it.'<sup>117</sup> It is thus unclear from this and other existing work whether low reportage reflects police attitudes towards male rape or whether this is due to other factors such as the responses to male rape by the wider society. It is therefore necessary to explore the way in which male rape is portrayed, and this will be done through a content analysis of

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<sup>114</sup> It is unknown as to whether or not the remaining 82% of callers reported to the police as SurvivorsUK stress the importance of allowing the callers to give information as they wish. Callers are not pressured to divulge data and it is therefore dependent upon the individual caller's needs.

<sup>115</sup> It is unknown as to how many of the remaining 81% did or did not report to the police.

<sup>116</sup> Stephenson, T 'Men Suffer Too' *The Inside Job* May 1998: 10-11.

newspaper coverage of male rape. Police responses and attitudes will also be explored, as will personal reasons that may influence the victim's decision to report or not report, such as those identified above.

### **5.3.1 Methods Employed**

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:2) suggest that:

A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions surround the term *qualitative research*...

(It) implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry...They seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning (Ibid. 8).

While Mason (1996) also asserts that due to its wide variation, qualitative research cannot be reduced to a set of principles, she nonetheless identifies common elements within qualitative research. She suggests (1996:4) that qualitative research is firstly,

...grounded in a philosophical position which is broadly 'interpretivist' in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced.

Secondly, that it is,

...based on methods of data generation which are flexible and sensitive to the social context in which data are produced.

And thirdly, is,

...based on methods of analysis and explanation building which involve understanding of complexity, detail and context. Qualitative research aims to produce rounded understandings on the basis of rich, contextual, and detailed data.

While quantitative measures can provide important information on prevalence these do not give access to the meaning and impact of rape on men's lives. A thorough prevalence study would require considerable resources and would still face problems of people's reluctance to report. Hence, qualitative methods can be used to explore reasons why men are reluctant to report rape and the impact

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117 Sergeant Iain Ferguson in *The Inside Job* Ibid.

of male rape in a rich, detailed way which quantitative methods cannot. Similarly, qualitative methods make it possible for researchers to engage in the research process rather than stand on the sidelines.

Qualitative approaches are particularly suitable to research which aims to increase understanding of the *meaning*, for participants, of the situation in which they are involved, the particular *context* within which they act, and the *process* by which events and actions take place (Maxwell 1996:17). For these reasons, qualitative methods were most suitable for achieving my research aims. In adopting a qualitative research approach, it was necessary to give consideration to validity, which Maxwell (Ibid. 87) suggests is 'the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account.' He maintains that this does not 'imply the existence of any objective truth to which an account can be compared' (Ibid. 87) but is rather concerned with employing strategies to eliminate 'validity threats'. Hence, while methods do not guarantee validity, he asserts that 'they are nonetheless essential to the process of ruling out validity threats and increasing the credibility of your conclusions' (Ibid. 92). He therefore argues that the fundamental task for researchers is to try to find 'evidence that challenges your conclusion, or that makes the potential threat implausible' (Ibid. 92). In order to eliminate validity threats to the research, the data were kept as complete as possible using verbatim transcripts of interviews rather than simply notes on significant information (Maxwell, 1996) and the survivor's own words of their experiences, where possible, were also utilised. This provided a detailed, complete and accurate illustration of the experiences discussed, keeping statements in context. A triangulated method of research was also adopted since,

...this strategy reduces the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method and allows a better assessment of the generality of the explanations that you develop (Maxwell 1996:93).

Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) point out that the use of multiple methods reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question, adding breadth, richness and depth to the inquiry.

It was decided that data triangulation would be employed since, as Jupp (1989) further highlights, crime is a multi-faceted phenomenon, which can be quantified while also being a way of life requiring detailed and sensitive description. It was therefore felt that using different types of data in the research would improve

validity. Additionally, it was felt that variations to the survey method could be employed to generate statistical data and also qualitative accounts. Jupp (1989) suggests that such a 'within method' in methodological triangulation allows for the use of structured questions to generate quantitative data while more qualitative information can be obtained by presenting more open-ended questions. Combinations of open-ended and more quantity-generating questions were used for both the victimisation survey and the police questionnaire (see appendices 3 and 4).

As Jupp (1989) illustrates, the use of multiple methods within criminology is highly desirable, primarily because social phenomena such as crime have different dimensions to them. It may be argued that crime is not only something that can contribute to official statistics but is also a phenomenon that has important meaning for the perpetrator, the victim, and society. The quality of such meaning cannot be given justice by being presented as statistical information only. It was therefore decided that a variety of methods would be employed in order to maximise the theoretical value of the research, since this would reveal aspects and issues on male rape, which the use of one method alone would miss. This was particularly important given that the statistics from SurvivorsUK had a high category of 'not known' answers, as discussed above. These answers were supplemented using the victimisation survey and the interviews with counsellors. By obtaining data from various sources and by using different methods, each set of data could be checked and used to interpret the other, which, as Jupp (1989) points out, is very important, when there are incomplete data sets.

Qualitative research has been challenged for being 'unscientific' and 'subjective,' often contrasted with quantitative research, which is deemed more 'scientific' and 'objective'. It may be argued that when researching people, it is not possible, nor desirable, for the researcher to adopt a 'detached' approach from the topic of investigation, as prescribed for an 'objective' and more 'scientific' approach. Qualitative research demonstrates a commitment to 'some version of the naturalistic, interpretive approach to its subject matter' (Denzin and Lincoln 2000:8) and as such, is well suited to this research project.

In considering the nature and impact of male rape it was essential to capture each survivor's point of view in order to 'make visible' their experiences. Similarly, it was important to generate qualitative data on the experiences of

counsellors of male rape to further ascertain the impact of rape on men's lives, and their needs.

### **5.3.2 Background to the Empirical Research**

The empirical research was based on achieving the aims outlined in chapter 1. The emergence of male rape as a social and legal issue was examined through a content analysis of newspaper coverage over a 13-year period. This analysis sought to discover whether or not newspaper coverage has helped to dispel male rape myths or has contributed to perpetuating them. A total of 413 articles were analysed.

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) was identified as a primary agency with potentially direct contact with male victims. As discussed in chapter 1, anecdotal evidence suggests that male rape is under-reported and that the existence of rape myths within the MPS prevents victims from coming forward. It was therefore important to explore the prevalence of rape myths that may influence police perceptions about male rape. A questionnaire of 93 police officers across seven divisions of the MPS made up this part of the research. In addition, research with the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group (MVSASG) was also conducted, and this is discussed further on.

Primary statistics over a seven-year period from SurvivorsUK were analysed to discover the experiences of victims, and the nature and impact of rape on victims' lives. A total of 1344 calls were examined.

Due to the incomplete nature of the SurvivorsUK statistics, a victimisation survey of 16 men and interviews with seven male rape counsellors were also conducted to supplement the data from SurvivorsUK.

## **5.4 Content Analysis of Newspaper Coverage**

It was thought that the best method to determine the extent and type of newspaper coverage of male rape would be conceptual content analysis in which,

...a concept is chosen for examination, and the analysis involves quantifying and tallying its presence...the focus here is on looking at the occurrence of selected terms within a text or texts.<sup>118</sup>

The method of conceptual analysis consisted of selecting a sample of texts; a search for the term 'male rape' in any part of the articles in all UK newspapers over a 13-year period was conducted, and these were then saved onto disk for retrieval. I created what Ryan and Bernard (2000) term key-words-in-context (KWIC) lists, by locating the particular place in the text where the term 'male rape' appeared and printing it out in the context of some of the words before and after it. I then read the texts to identify common themes and ideas, which were used as a foundation to explore the context in which the articles discussed male rape. Each article was then checked against the original complete article to ensure that data were interpreted accurately. Once this process was complete, the content of each article was checked and repeat articles (valuable because they give an indication of media interest in that particular aspect of male rape) were categorised separately so as to avoid misrepresentation. The lists were then placed into manageable categories through selective reduction. Selective reduction involved reducing the text to categories consisting of a set of words or phrases, based on identifying male rape myths. For example, each article was searched for words such as 'homosexual' and 'gay' to determine links made by the articles between sexuality and male rape. These were then quantified to examine their presence in respect of identifying male rape myths.

Each article was also examined to check whether it was non-stereotypical (presenting representations that conform to academic research) or stereotypical (those that reproduce stereotypical views shown to be inaccurate by academic research) in its coverage of male rape. Articles were also categorised as 'neutral' where they did not clearly fit into 'non-stereotypical' or 'stereotypical' categories in order to reduce the problem of reliability, which refers to the stability of being able to reproduce and re-code the same data in the same way over a period of time.<sup>119</sup> As Gottschalk and Bechtel (1993) point out, coding errors can only be minimised and not eliminated due to the fallibility of researchers in interpreting data. For this reason, data were categorised as clearly as possible. Similarly, to ensure validity, a number of different terms were used to explore the occurrence of one theme. As illustrated in the above example, the terms 'gay' and 'homosexual' were both used to explore sexuality links with male rape. These multiple classifiers were used to increase the validity of the analysis.

It has been suggested that content analysis can too often simply consist of word counts, can be extremely time-consuming and can also be difficult to

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118 Conceptual Analysis: <http://writing.colostate.edu/references/research/content/com2b1.cfm> accessed 18/04/02

119 Conceptual Analysis: <http://writing.colostate.edu/references/research/content/pop3a.cfm> accessed 18/04/02

computerise.<sup>120</sup> While the latter two points were accurate, I was able to avoid doing a word count analysis only, by coding text into manageable categories. Due to problems of computerising the text, all coding was done manually which was extremely time-consuming. However, the advantage of using content analysis for this stage of the research was that it allowed for both a qualitative and quantitative approach.

## **5.5 The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)**

Whilst it is through reporting its occurrence to the police that male rape has become recognised as a legal issue, there has been very little attention in current research given to the responses of the police in dealing with this phenomenon. When victims do decide to report rape, the police are very often the first agency that they contact. It was therefore important to consider their role.

This part of the research investigated the role of the police and their experiences of dealing with male rape cases through a questionnaire of 93 police officers in seven divisions of the MPS. Interest in law and order issues has led to an increase in research and wide ranging debate on the role of the police over the last decade. Academic work has ranged from investigating the role and effectiveness of the police (Punch 1979; Chatterton 1987; Hough 1987) to police discrimination in areas of race and gender (Reiner 1985; Lea 1986; Radford 1987; Jefferson 1988; Brown 1998). Furthermore, debates around police accountability, exercise of discretion and police corruption have been fuelled through public concern and media representations of the police in their various roles. It was therefore anticipated that the research into the police would perhaps be viewed with caution and suspicion with subjects erecting barriers to protect themselves from a questioning researcher. Given that police officers may feel it necessary to keep their closed institution protected from scrutinising research which may criticise their work, infiltrating police culture and practice can be a difficult task, as demonstrated by Punch (1979).<sup>121</sup>

Whilst criminological research into the police has varied from covert participant observation to in-depth interviews, the main purpose of the present research with

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120 Conceptual Analysis: <http://writing.colostate.edu/references/research/content/com2d3.cfm> accessed 18/04/02

121 Punch employed observational methods as a means of bypassing possible social defences put up by the officers being studied, in his research on the Amsterdam City Police. The study noted the absence of corruption and deviant practices and it was only on closing fieldwork that it became apparent at a party (through some officers who had had too much to drink) that his informants had been engaging in impression management. Hence, the deviant sub-culture of the police had remained hidden from the researcher throughout his study. As Punch himself later recognised, he had been struck by the absence of deviant behaviour by the police, which had in fact been going on all around him (Punch 1985).



the police was to consider their views and experiences in dealing with male rape. There was therefore little need for deception and the elaboration of misleading cover stories. Central to the police participation in the research was the need to detail valid, honest experiences of those involved in dealing with male rape, whether directly or indirectly. The questionnaires were kept anonymous and it was made clear that the research aimed to improve services for male survivors of rape rather than scrutinise the police service. Contact with officers trained in Sexual Offences Investigation Techniques (SOIT), as well as findings from the pilot questionnaire, clearly demonstrated that officers felt that much could be done to improve existing services for male victims and it was these experiences that provided the basis for the investigation. Whilst the level of honesty in questionnaires can never be truly measured, it was felt that anonymity, coupled with the opportunity for officers to provide their views on developing possible changes in policy and procedure, would provide a strong insight into their experiences. It was felt that this would provide an invaluable contribution to the learning process of dealing with male rape survivors.

The questionnaire also aimed to consider police attitudes towards male rape and survivors of male rape. Myths surrounding male rape were presented in the questionnaire to consider whether or not the police were fully informed of the issues on, and related to, male rape. The problem of possibly misleading or dishonest responses was felt to be more apparent when challenging such myths, as officers could have felt the need to answer in a 'politically correct' way, rather than an honest one. However, it was hoped that assurances that the questionnaire was strictly non-attributable to the individuals taking part would help alleviate some of these concerns, providing genuine responses.

### **Pilot Study**

A pilot questionnaire of 20 police officers was conducted in 1997 at a separate location from those used in the final study. The purpose of this study was to test the design of the questionnaire and to identify any modifications and amendments needed. The pilot study highlighted problems for analysing the data and consequently, the questionnaire was revised to avoid these problems in the final study.

## **The Police Questionnaire- Design, Distribution and Response**

The police questionnaire was designed subject to the changes identified in the pilot study. It was decided that the questionnaire would benefit from combining a series of open and closed questions. Closed questions would identify if the respondents had thought about, or were aware of, the issue of male rape and would serve to identify specific aspects of this issue, while open questions would give an indication of general feelings about it. Similarly, it was felt that by combining the open and closed question method, respondent's reasons for their opinions could be explored, which would help keep them accurate and in context.

Access to seven police divisions was gained through the support of one police officer's enthusiasm for the research. Additionally, the profile of the research was raised by my contributions to the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group, since the research was presented as a joint project between Middlesex University and the MVSASG. This allowed for less scepticism and more enthusiasm to participate. Furthermore, it was clearly stated that the purpose of the research was to develop understanding of officers' experiences in dealing with male rape, in order to improve the services for male victims. A total of 130 questionnaires were distributed to a random sample in seven divisions in order to obtain a representative sample (20 each to divisions A-E and 15 each to division F and division G<sup>122</sup>) and a response rate of 72% was achieved.

### **An Introduction to the Process of Data Analysis and Interpretation Employed**

The data analysis and interpretation was developed from the grounded theorist approach, formulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) since the research aimed to understand people's experiences in a detailed manner, which the grounded approach accommodates. This approach seeks to iterate the mode of analysis, 'grounding' the analyst more and more into the data to develop increasingly richer concepts on how the phenomenon at the centre of enquiry works. To achieve these, verbatim transcripts are read, usually line by line, and key phrases are highlighted in the process of 'open coding', whereby the analyst draws out key themes using real examples from the text. As Ryan and Bernard (2000:783) illustrate:

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<sup>122</sup> Fewer questionnaires were distributed to the two smaller divisions.

The end results of grounded theory are often displayed through the presentation of segments of text-verbatim quotes from informants-as exemplars of concepts and theories. These illustrations may be prototypical examples of central tendencies or they may represent exceptions to the norm.

Analysis focuses, not simply on putting masses of data into order, but on organising the different themes that have emerged from that data. It was decided that since this type of data analysis would allow a detailed understanding of male rape and its effects on individual's lives, it would also be employed for analysis of the counsellor interviews, and victimisation survey. Of course each component required variations to this method of analysis and interpretation and is therefore discussed separately. For example, the police questionnaire generated a combination of qualitative and quantitative data (as did the victimisation survey though to a lesser degree) and this is therefore analysed using the grounded approach with computer software for ease of managing the data.

Since the police questionnaire was a variation of the survey method, generating both qualitative and quantitative data, it was important to organise it coherently. The process began by reading each questionnaire in order to draw out common themes and issues that were present in each answer. The grounded theory approach was used once all data had been inputted into a database spreadsheet using the software package Microsoft Excel. The data were inputted using numeric codes for the responses received to each answer, followed by the actual text (verbatim) for the open-ended answers received. Each respondent was listed in an Excel row and separate columns were used for each response so that broad filtering could be done to maximise use of the data. This allowed for cross correlation of data. The programme also allowed for different points, themes and ideas to be linked in the text (hypertext links), which increased my understanding of the phenomena in the data. Data were then extracted and summarised in relation to the aims of the research project. The final analysis and interpretation of the data adopted the principles of the grounded theory approach, as discussed above.

## **Male Victims<sup>123</sup> of Sexual Abuse Steering Group**

Research has also been conducted within the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group in conjunction with the MPS and other agencies.

### **Background**

A chaperone meeting of officers trained in sexual offences, in New Scotland Yard initially raised the question of support for male victims of rape and chaperone training to deal with this phenomenon. Subsequently, questions around the low reporting levels of male rape were raised at the Sexual Offences Steering Group, where it was revealed that statistics for reports of male rape and sexual assault were very low while anecdotal evidence suggested a much higher figure in reality. It was decided that a multi-agency forum be established to investigate and therefore clarify the position.

The Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group (MVSASG) was established in 1997, comprising representatives from the MPS, SurvivorsUK, The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, Victim Support, The Probation Service, Gay Men Fighting Aids and a number of other support, health and academic individuals and organisations.

The aim of the group is:

To protect men from sexual abuse.

This multi-agency initiative was developed to understand and develop the support that is needed to enable male victims to feel confident that they can report to the police without fear, ridicule or disbelief. This work sought to develop a structure that ensures male victims of rape and sexual assault are treated seriously within the criminal justice system and given appropriate support. It was anticipated that the work generated by the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group would be a first positive step towards raising awareness and considering the needs of male survivors. The group focused on identifying and addressing key

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<sup>123</sup> The group has discussed the problems of using the term 'victim' as opposed to 'survivor' and has decided to use the term 'victim' in the sense that men are victims of a criminal offence. However, this is a 'working title' which has, at various stages been changed to 'Male Abuse Steering Group' 'Forum' (Focus on Rape of Men) and other titles. In this thesis I intend to use the title which was used at the beginning of this research to keep consistency during the discussion. However, I am aware that this 'change' from 'survivor' to 'victim' is not a progressive one but one which is used for the sake of clarification when referring to the work of the group. The dilemma of using 'victim' or 'survivor' is discussed in chapters 1 and 9.

issues related to this area of work and consequently seven problems were identified in relation to Male Victims of Sexual Abuse:

- Male sexual abuse is a crime, but is not always recognised as such either by victims or society.
- Many perpetrators of male sexual abuse are not brought to justice.
- Victims of male sexual abuse are not reporting to the police.
- Male sexual abuse goes undetected; perpetrators unpunished and free to re-offend.
- There is a lack of qualified support to meet the emotional needs of male victims of sexual abuse.
- The judicial process does not encourage the reporting of male sexual abuse.
- The reasons why men do not disclose sexual abuse are complex and not fully understood.

Consequently, 12 objectives were collated into themes to be addressed by four working groups. These themes were as follows:

#### *Training and Awareness-Raising Working Group*

- Create awareness with the public, police and agencies within the criminal justice system of the fact that men are victims of sexual abuse and that sexual abuse is a crime.
- Increase the detection and successful prosecutions rate.
- Identify and promote good training practice.

#### *Funding Working Group*

- Explore sources and secure funds to support strategic aim.

#### *Support Working Group*

- Identify methods and availability for supporting witnesses and victims.
- Identify agencies that provide or wish to provide support.
- Encourage multi-agency co-operation.

#### *Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group*

- Establish and address the reason why victims are not reporting to police
- Identify emotional needs.
- Specify aspects of the judicial process, which do not encourage the reporting of male sexual abuse.
- Identify and increase understanding of why men do not disclose sexual abuse.
- Identify reasons why men do not perceive themselves as victims of crime.

It was decided that when the above objectives had been achieved, the findings would be linked into the MPS's mainstream policy. This would be done by linking into the Sexual Offences Steering Group to ensure that all working practices, procedures and support are complimentary to the overall work on sexual offences.

### **My Role in the Group**

My contribution to the group was as an academic researcher, examining the nature and impact of male rape and the responses by two key agencies. That is to say, I informed the group of my research project and was asked to feed in any relevant research to contribute to the work on male rape. Consequently, I participated in establishing an aim for the group and deciding on and developing its main objectives. My contributions and suggestions came as a direct result of my research project from which I had already identified some key issues in the area of male rape (presented as the aims of my project in chapter 1). Thereafter, sub-groups were established to address the various objectives and my contributions were primarily in the Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Group, which consisted of two additional members.

I produced a report for the group, presenting my preliminary research findings and those of the two other members in order to address the objectives. At the time of writing, a second report is also being produced on the progress of the working group. It is my aim to provide a final report of my research findings to the group in order for it to contribute to mainstream policy.

### **Outcome of the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group**

The group has had a number of successes in raising awareness of male rape. These have included the opening of the Haven Centre; which provides a comfortable and safe environment where male victims can go for advice, medical help and counselling support, and a leaflet and poster campaign raising awareness of male rape (see Appendices 5, 6 and 7 - these are discussed further in chapter 9).

In December 2000, the Metropolitan Police Service proposed a merger between the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group and the Sexual Offences Consultation Committee (a group focusing on sexual offences against females) and a meeting between the two groups in January 2001, resulted in the

establishment of the Independent Advisory Group on Sexual Offences (IAG). It was decided that the focus of the IAG would be on adult victims of rape and serious sexual offences, in the London area. The aim of the new group is 'to provide the best quality advice to police, focusing their activities on the needs of victims and best quality investigations.' This group has been established since it is the first time the issue of rape has formed part of the policing plan as a priority for the Metropolitan Police; the two main objectives are to improve victim care and investigation and to increase the judicial disposal to 25% of all reported cases. The MPS, to whom the group is directly responsible, decided membership of this new group. It was suggested by the MPS that this group could have its own sub-groups in order to receive comprehensive advice on the different specialist areas. As a consequence, a chair was elected for the new IAG from the former Sexual Offences Consultation Committee (female group) and it was proposed that one representative from the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group join the group of 20 members to make up the IAG. The remaining members of the MVSASG can opt to be a sub-group to the IAG, presenting issues specific for male victims.

## **5.6 SurvivorsUK**

The fact that male rape has only recently emerged as a problem in the United Kingdom has meant that data are scarce. In fact, there exists only one organisation, called SurvivorsUK, which is dedicated to offering support to men who have been raped and/or sexually abused. SurvivorsUK is a voluntary charity, established in 1986. Its services include a telephone help-line, which is open for support, information and counselling two nights a week between 7-10pm. In addition, SurvivorsUK runs a self-help group as well as one-to-one counselling. All counsellors are trained specifically in the area of male rape and one-to-one counsellors are British Association of Counselling (BAC) qualified. SurvivorsUK is dedicated to offering a non-judgemental, empathetic service to male survivors of rape, their families and partners.

The name *Survivors* is essentially a statement focusing on the positive strength of individual men who have survived rape. The shift within feminism between the concept of 'victim' and 'survivor' in the 1980's has greatly influenced the work of SurvivorsUK. As suggested by Kelly (1988:162):

Survival is therefore, continuing to exist after the life threatening experience that is a part of many instances of sexual violence. It is the positive outcome of coping and/or resistance.

With reference to the term 'victim' Kelly highlights that:

The word 'victim' refers to someone who has been killed or destroyed or who has suffered a loss. It is vital to acknowledge that many women are killed by men; many more may feel aspects of their selves are destroyed and many of them experience losses. The term 'victim', however, makes invisible the other side of women's victimisation: the active and positive ways in which women resist, cope and survive (Kelly 1988:163).

This demonstrates that the term 'victim' is often inappropriate. However, as discussed earlier, since much of the work in this thesis looks at victimisation, it is difficult to use the term 'survivor' consistently throughout. While Kelly's work here was referring to the resistance of women against their rape, SurvivorsUK has adopted this philosophy from feminism to support and empower men who have survived rape.

### **Gaining Access**

On beginning my voluntary work with SurvivorsUK I made my research proposals explicit to the management committee and to the chairperson. Regular commitment to the work allowed for a strong level of trust to be developed between myself and the other team members who, having worked in the area of male rape, recognised the need for more research in this field. As research co-ordinator, I proposed compiling statistics on service users in order to raise the profile of male rape. The management committee welcomed this since potential funding bodies require evidence to demonstrate a need for the services provided by the charity. Data had already been gathered on males seeking support through this voluntary organisation although much of it was incomplete, due to SurvivorsUK policy of recording only that information which men volunteered. Statistics, which had been gathered for monitoring purposes, were used to ascertain the nature and impact of male rape on men's lives. A total of 1344 calls were analysed over a seven-year period. It was known for certain that 39 men were survivors of adult rape and it was unknown as to how many of the remaining 1305 were survivors of adult male rape or childhood sexual abuse (since SurvivorsUK also provides support for adult male survivors of childhood sexual abuse). Therefore, these men were separated into two different groups and data was considered for each group. Themes and issues around sexuality, relationship between perpetrator and survivor, place of assault, police reporting, and impact were considered from these statistics. These statistics have been



used as a first step in exploring the patterns and nature of male rape in order to address the aims of the research project (discussed in chapter 1). However, as discussed earlier, it was necessary to triangulate data sources because the data from SurvivorsUK had a high number of 'not known' categories and were therefore incomplete. A victimisation survey and interviews with counsellors were used to supplement this data (discussed below). The statistics collected were also used by the organisation to apply for funding and to raise awareness.

### **Data Analysis of SurvivorsUK Statistics**

A phone log, which contained information on calls received and used for monitoring purposes by the organisation, was used to extract statistical data. Since these data were collected by SurvivorsUK for monitoring purposes only, there were some data missing from the different calls. For example, the organisation has a policy of not asking callers questions since this can be seen to be intrusive. As a result, the data collected contain only that information which callers choose to impart. From a research perspective, this clearly limits the value of the data. However, it was explicitly decided at the beginning of this research project that the wellbeing of survivors was paramount. Therefore, the ethical position of the organisation is respected and accepted. Data that were incomplete have been presented as such, so as to avoid any misunderstanding of the facts. Despite this limitation, it did not jeopardise the aim of this part of the research, which was to provide an indication of the facts surrounding male rape. It did however clearly mean that some facts were missing or inconclusive. The victimisation survey and counsellor interviews were therefore used to supplement these findings.

The process of analysis began by firstly filtering out, using the excel database, all those calls which came through to the help-line which were of an administrative nature and non-client calls. This left a total of 1344 calls from adult survivors. The calls were then filtered further to identify those men for whom the age of first assault was known. Thirty-nine callers were identified as having been raped as adults through this process. It was unknown whether the remaining 1305 were survivors of adult rape or child sexual abuse. However, analysis of the total 1344 survivors generated similar findings to those for the 39 survivors, suggesting that the 1344 survivors are representative of adult survivors (see chapter 8 for further discussion of these findings). All data in the file were codified and standardised and general trends were extracted with particular attention to sexuality, place of

attack, relationship between survivor and perpetrator, police reporting, and impact of rape. These findings are presented in chapter 8.

## **5.7 Victimisation Survey**

A victimisation survey was used to identify and explore the factors that contribute to the lack of reporting as well as to consider the nature and impact of rape on men's lives. The questions were carefully formulated in light of all the counselling training received at SurvivorsUK in order to be sensitive and non-judgemental. While some of the respondents had received some support, others who expressed an interest in receiving help, were sent information on counselling and support services. Most of these respondents followed up the support links. This was paramount to the researcher's commitment to supporting men; counselling training as well as an understanding of the issues involved in male rape helped to facilitate this commitment.

A good rapport developed with some of the counsellors during the course of the research and this led to three counsellors agreeing to send out my questionnaires to known male survivors, after I had fully explained the purpose of the questionnaire and provided them with a copy. It was agreed that the counsellors would approach men whom they believed might be willing to share their experiences (this judgement was based on the counsellor's experiences with each man) and that completed questionnaires would be posted to myself. A cover letter explaining the aims of the research as well as assurances of complete anonymity and confidentiality was attached to each survey. A stamped, self-addressed envelope was provided to improve response rates and the university address was given for safety reasons. This snowballing technique generated 12 respondents. A further four respondents contacted me directly at the university after hearing about my research from different people with whom I had been in contact. These respondents were also sent questionnaires after the aims of the research were explained to them. Therefore, a total of 16 male survivors of rape made up this part of the research. These men were by definition not typical of the population of men who have been raped and are those who have been willing to come forward and speak about their experiences. They have self-selected or been selected by their counsellors and are therefore those least likely to be adversely affected by the research process. It should also be noted that while this is a relatively small sample, the purpose was to explore the *experiences* of males and to develop an in-depth understanding of the impact of rape on their

lives. As such, the sample provided a good indication of this as well as throwing some light on the reasons why men are reluctant to report rape to the police and other agencies. The respondents completed the carefully worded questionnaire about their experiences, including their contact with the police and other agencies. The questionnaire also explored the needs of male survivors and the adequacy of existing services in meeting these needs.

The highly sensitive nature of male rape has made it essential that every respondent is approached in an intensely sympathetic manner. It was for this reason decided that men would feel safer to be approached by people known to them (and importantly people who already knew about their experiences and had supported them through these). Interviewing male survivors was not deemed appropriate by the researcher since this could be a lengthy process in which respondents could feel uncomfortable at having to speak directly about their experiences. This could compromise the recovery of the men. Therefore, I decided that respondents would feel more comfortable completing an anonymous questionnaire rather than participating in an interview, which would be less anonymous, for the simple fact that I would be present.

### **A Note on Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Victimisation Survey**

The data were analysed and interpreted using a coding strategy which allows for data to be read, re-read, and arranged into categories and themes which can be compared in each case example (Strauss 1987). However, some data that were seen to be quantifiable without loss of quality (such as the number of assailants involved in the rape) were inputted into a database in order to be illustrated as charts. It was essential to keep the richness and quality of the men's experiences in order to present an accurate reflection of these. Common themes and issues were drawn out of the data, and verbatim quotes were used to illustrate the points made. The aim was to present the data in a friendly, coherent manner, with complete accuracy and without loss of quality.

## **5.8 Interviews with Counsellors**

Seven counsellors of male rape were identified during the research and semi-structured interviews were conducted with them since this research technique would allow a detailed understanding of the subject matter without 'imposing any a priori categorisation that may limit the field of inquiry' (Fontana and Frey

2000:653).<sup>124</sup> The rationale for interviewing counsellors is that they are key people in contact with male victims and as such, have a core understanding of the impact of rape on men and the factors that contribute to the under-reporting of male rape. They are also able to provide information concerning the needs of victims and the adequacy of existing services in meeting these needs. As such, they are good data sources.<sup>125</sup>

Counsellors were contacted initially by telephone and then follow-up informal telephone conversations and emails were used to explain the research to them. Counsellors were told that they would be sent a copy of the full transcript once the interview was complete for them to check to ensure that everything they said was kept in context. They were also given the choice of retracting any statements made, after reading the interview transcript. They were then invited to participate in the research. Interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the counsellors and copies of the full transcripts, along with the context in which they would be presented (that is the themes that they would be used to address), were sent out. It was felt that counsellors would be more willing to participate in the research process if they were given some control over the data being used. This not only gave assurance to participants that the data would fully reflect their opinions, but also proved valuable in ensuring that data were not distorted. All counsellors were satisfied with the results of the interviews and gave permission for them to be used in this research. No counsellors wished to make changes or delete or add anything said during the interviews. Due to the sensitive nature of the subject area, counsellors were promised anonymity at all times. Since counselling services for male survivors are extremely limited, it was necessary to withhold details on the organisations to which they belonged in order to ensure that data collected was non-identifiable. This was particularly important in terms of the victimisation survey, which employed a snowballing technique using the counsellors, as discussed above.

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<sup>124</sup> A structured interview schedule in contrast aims to capture precise data, which can by nature be coded in order to explain behaviour in pre-established categories.

<sup>125</sup> Obviously male survivors themselves are the primary people who can address these issues and research with them was also conducted, as discussed above.

The focus of the interviews was to explore counsellors' experiences of dealing with male survivors and an appropriate interview schedule was developed based on qualitative interviewing techniques.<sup>126</sup> One interview took place at the respondent's place of work and a further two took place at the respondent's home. The remaining four interviews were conducted over the telephone due to the interviewee's time constraints. Kahn and Cannel (1957) have suggested that it is not enough for the interviewer to understand the mechanics of interviewing. They assert that an understanding of the respondent's world and the forces that might stimulate or retard response are essential to the interview process. The counsellor training with SurvivorsUK supported an understanding of these dynamics. Likewise, the interviews were seen as a social interaction and as Mason (1996:40) points out,

It is inappropriate to see social interaction as 'bias', which can potentially be eradicated. From this point of view you cannot separate the interview from the social interaction in which it was produced, and you should not try to. It is better to try to understand the complexities of the interaction, rather than to pretend that key dimensions can be controlled for.

This proposal was first introduced by Gouldner (1970) who argued that the practice of social research should focus not only on the *object* of enquiry, but also on the *subject* conducting the enquiry. Hoggett et al. (1994) point out that, with the exception of some feminist research, such 'reflexivity' has been largely ignored in research practice. An example of such an exception is to be found in the work of Stanley and Wise (1983:50) who, argue that:

Our experiences of the research process should become explicitly present within research reports, as these are experientially central to the research process... the researcher's own experiences are an integral part of the research and should therefore be described as such. The kind of person that we are, and how we experience the research, all have a crucial impact on what we see, what we do, and how we interpret and construct what is going on.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation of Interviews.**

The initial step in analysing the interviews began by transcribing them and then reading and re-reading them, in order to understand what had been said. From this, a coding strategy was developed which, Strauss (1987:29) suggests allows

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<sup>126</sup> Mason (1996:38) suggests that these are characterised by the assumption that data are generated through interaction and can take a variety of forms ranging from topics, themes or issues which the interviewer wishes to cover, to open-ended questions. The interview schedule presented in this research used open-ended questions that were based on relevant themes.

the researcher to 'fracture' the data and rearrange them into categories, themes and issues that allow for comparisons between each interview. Each respondent's answers to the questions from the interview schedule were organised so that each answer could be categorised together with the answers by other respondents. This helped summarise the data, illustrating common issues that ran through the interviews. As such, this helped maintain the context and quality of quotes that were then 'lifted out' (Regan-Smith 1991:131) from the interviews and used as examples to explain different points made by respondents.

Since most of the themes in the interviews were the same as those in the victimisation survey, these have been presented together.

## **5.9 Structure of Findings**

Chapter 6 presents the content analysis from the newspaper data and discusses these in relation to myths about male rape.

In chapter 7, the findings from the police questionnaire are presented to continue consideration of myths that surround male rape and to explore reasons why men do not report rape. The responses by the Metropolitan Police to the issue of male rape are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 8 presents all the victim data, including the SurvivorsUK statistics, as well as the victimisation survey findings and the counsellor interviews. The SurvivorsUK data are analysed as two groups. One group considers 39 men who are known to be survivors of adult rape while the second group is the total 1344 survivors who may be survivors of adult rape or child sexual abuse. These two data sets are illustrated using charts. The work of the organisation is also discussed, including its contribution to raising the profile of male rape. The findings from the victim data (16 survivors) and interviews with counsellors (seven participants) are used to interpret and complement the data from SurvivorsUK, as suggested by Jupp (1989). Together, the data in this chapter are used to highlight the nature and impact of rape on victim's lives and explore reasons for not reporting; also to examine the service needs of men and the adequacy of current services in meeting these needs.

The empirical findings from the research are discussed in light of the literature review (chapter 2) and the theoretical discussions in chapters 3 and 4, and are used to test the different cultural myths that have been hypothesised in this literature.

## **Chapter Six: Challenging Myths? Male Rape in the News**

I'm sure male rape is an age-old problem, but it has been a relatively taboo subject until recently. Recent articles in the media have only highlighted a problem that has always been around.  
(Male PC –Questionnaire Response see chapter 7)

The media-crime link within criminology has been described by Howitt (1998) as 'the silent discipline', emphasising the relative neglect of criminological research in this area. Howitt identifies four main areas of questioning which have developed within criminology, in respect of the media. The first is whether the mass media, particularly television, through depictions of crime, violence, death and aggression, can be proven to have a causal impact on criminal or deviant behaviour. This view was highlighted in early work by Tarde (1912) who maintained that newspaper coverage of Jack the Ripper resulted in identical crimes being committed. More recently, the copycat theory was applied to the murder of two-year-old James Bulger in 1993 who was brutally murdered on a railway line by two young boys. The judge in this case suggested that videos like *Child's Play* might have stimulated this imitative crime (Young 1996). However, as Howitt (1998) summarises, while copycat crimes may occur, the evidence is more than occasionally flawed and cannot therefore be used to draw firm conclusions.<sup>127</sup> The second question to receive attention has been whether 'real' crime and fictional crime impact on the viewer in the same manner, particularly in the electronic media. Thirdly, focus has been on whether the mass media, particularly the press, construct and present our social world in ways that distort reality, and unjustly stereotype particular groups or individuals, labelling them as 'outsiders', eliminating their credibility, and in the process exploiting and furthering the media's own privileged access to powerful state institutions. Finally, the question of whether the mass media engender 'moral panics' and cause people to be fearful by over-reporting criminal and violent events, misrepresentation, and looking primarily for sensation above accuracy, has received much academic and public interest.

The last two of these points are demonstrated firstly in Young's (1971:28) work on 'the role of the police as amplifiers of deviancy, negotiators of reality and translators of fantasy' in which he maintains that moral panics engendered by

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<sup>127</sup> Gauntlet (1995) surveyed all recent studies on the impact of television and concluded that there exists little solid evidence to support the belief that media violence has an effect on criminality. For a more detailed discussion of other similar studies see Howitt (1993: 75-90).

media fantasies amplify the deviant act (the marijuana smoker in West London in this study) until there exists 'a translation of stereotypes into actuality, of fantasy into reality'. Young's study illustrates how the media can misrepresent an individual's lifestyle, thereby presenting it as a social problem which, in turn creates a 'moral panic' leading to increased social control from law enforcement. Cohen (1972) developed Young's concepts of 'moral panics' and 'deviancy amplification' in his research on the Mods and Rockers. Cohen describes how the mass media very quickly sensationalised some minor damage done to a seaside resort by youth, creating a public reaction, which escalated events. He maintains that once the deviant behaviour had been exaggerated and the two groups widely publicised, youths who had never been involved began to take sides, escalating the situation and increasing the scope for moral panic. Cohen's work identified the media as purveyors of social constructions of reality rather than objective reporters. This led to increased interest about misrepresentation and 'the manufacture of news' (Cohen and Young 1973).

It is within this general framework that the content analysis in this chapter is conducted.

## **6.1 Sex Crimes and the Media**

Howitt (1998) demonstrates that there is little relationship between crimes, which are researched, and the number of victims they affect. For example, while property crimes affect more victims than any other type of crime, research, as well as media attention in this area is sparse. Instead, sexual and violent crimes dominate both media output and research on crime. According to Canter and Strichland (1975) this is due to political influences on research, with funding in this area coming from government and media institutions. As Howitt (1998:3), referring to sexual and violent crime suggests, 'Few other psychological or social scientific research issues have attracted quite so much public attention'.

According to Soothill and Walby (1991), media interest in sex crimes and particularly rape has coincided with, and been fuelled by, the feminist movement of the 1970's which drew urgent attention to this issue, as discussed in chapter 4. However, there is some dispute among researchers as to the quality of such coverage. For example, Soothill and Walby (1991) identify two important trends in newspaper reporting of rape during this period. Firstly, they suggest that prior to the 1980's, newspapers selectively concentrated on the stereotypes of the



stranger rapist or the evil psychopathic 'sex beast,' thereby masking the fact that most sex crimes were committed by ordinary men.<sup>128</sup> Newspaper representation of rape as a sexual attack committed by strangers in public places was therefore a gross distortion of the facts. Such misrepresentation was in direct conflict with the campaigns of the feminist movement that sought to highlight the true facts of rape. The second trend identified by Soothill and Walby (1991) was the rise in dramatic coverage of a select number of cases that attracted much publicity. These included the 1993 Donnellan date rape case which led to an outcry in the national press that all men's reputations were at risk of accusations of date rape despite the fact that the number of cases reaching court is low and conviction rates are even lower (Lees 1995). This has led researchers such as Lees (1995:125) to conclude that:

Press reporting of rape is often biased, inaccurate and irresponsible and presents a totally distorted picture of the nature of the allegations, the victims, the perpetrators and the conduct of rape trials. It is deeply partisan, makes no attempt to put trials in any context and appears to be directed at discounting women's allegations of rape, and justifying the masquerading of rape as seduction.

However, researchers such as Cuklanz (1996:114) are more optimistic, arguing that while it is of concern that newspaper coverage of rape and rape trials do not include coherent and complete depictions of rape victims, 'mainstream news about rape trials has increasingly incorporated elements of the reformed understanding of rape'. She concludes that:

The issue of rape is receiving unprecedented attention through the coverage of trials, and victims' experiences are gradually making their way into mainstream discussions. The national discourse about rape trials is changing, and it increasingly includes expressions of support for ideas that just thirty years ago were not heard in public forums (Cuklanz 1996: 115-116).

Such work focuses on the positive aspects of newspaper coverage, maintaining that while information may be distorted, it nonetheless draws attention to the issue and that this increased attention eventually increases awareness of the facts surrounding rape rather than the myths.

While existing research has focused on newspaper coverage of female rape, there is no equivalent investigation of male rape. This chapter seeks to address that shortcoming by exploring the quantity and quality of newspaper coverage of male

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<sup>128</sup> This is demonstrated by Lloyd and Walmsley (1989) in their statistical analysis of convicted rapes in 1973 and 1989. They found a decrease in the number of stranger and gang rapes and an increase in the number of rapes by intimates.

rape. In doing so, it explores the role of the media in generating awareness of male rape and considers whether coverage has negative consequences (as argued by Soothill and Walby (1991) and Lees (1995) or whether such coverage is nonetheless a positive step in making the voices of victims heard, as argued by Cuklanz (1996).

### **The Content Analysis**

The newspaper analysis that follows has two primary purposes. Firstly, it is used to consider the role of the British print media in developing awareness of male rape and in bringing it to the public's attention. The period covered is 13 years and 4 months in duration.<sup>129</sup> However, it is also important to consider the *quality* of this coverage. This is done by highlighting the key *issues* raised. The analysis focuses on whether these issues are presented accurately or whether they present a distorted picture. A summary of the articles for each year is presented in Appendix 2.

Research was carried out on leading newspapers within the United Kingdom to see how much attention has been given to male rape and whether or not this has increased over time. The Lexis-Nexis Database was searched in the UK newspaper directory with the subject as 'male rape'. Newspapers within this directory include *The Times* (including *The Sunday Times*), *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Herald*, *The Mirror* (including *The Sunday Mirror*), *The Daily Record* (including *The Sunday Record*), *The Belfast Telegraph*, *The Daily Mail* (including *The Mail on Sunday*), *The Scotsman*, *The Evening Standard*, *The Observer*, and *The People*. As from January 2000 *The Sun*, *The Daily Star* and *The News of the World* were added to the research since data were unavailable for these newspapers prior to this time. A total of 413 articles were found from January 1989 to April 2002.

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<sup>129</sup> The four months is for the period January 2002 to April 2002 and is up to the time of writing this thesis.

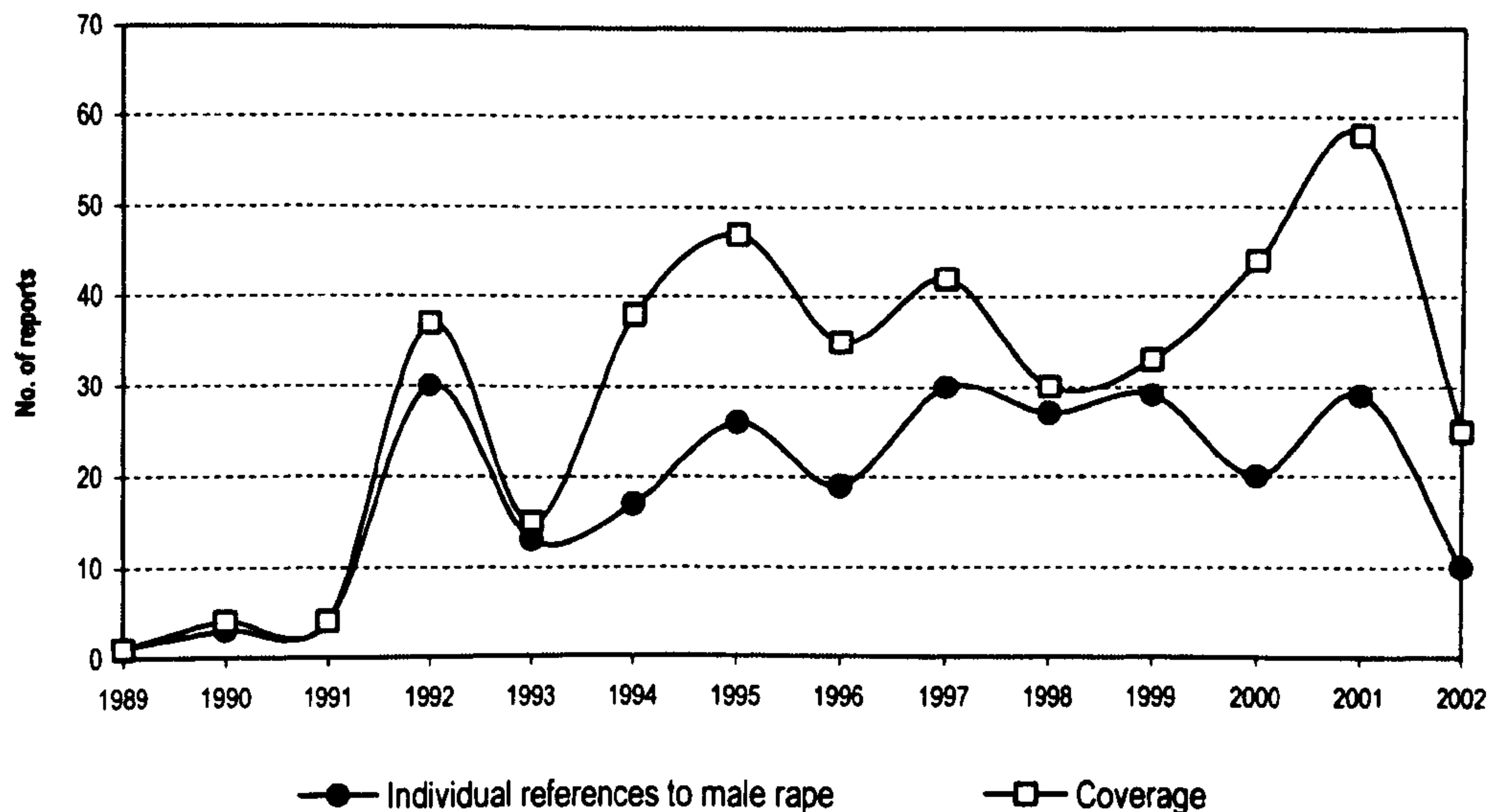


Figure 6-1: Newspaper coverage of male rape

N.B. 'Individual references to male rape' in the graph and analysis refers to the number of separate incidents or reports in each newspaper whereas 'coverage' refers to the amount of coverage given by the various newspapers on male rape. It was necessary to distinguish between the two categories to avoid the problem of one story being reported in several newspapers, which could have resulted in an over-representation of male rape reports.

## 6.2 Content Analysis and Discussion of Nexis Findings – Key Issues

The 413 cases were categorised as 'non-stereotypical' (representations that conform to academic research), 'stereotypical' (those that reproduce stereotypical views shown to be inaccurate by academic research) and 'neutral' (representations which are neutral) in terms of their representation of male rape. Academic research (discussed in chapter 2) has demonstrated that stereotypes and myths such as male rape cannot happen; is not traumatic to victims; and victims and offenders must be homosexual; are misleading and prevent victims from reporting to the police and seeking support (Mezey and King, 1989; Groth and Burgess, 1980; King, 1993; Huckle, 1995; Kerr and Holden, 1995; Gregory and Lees, 1999).

The 'non-stereotypical' category in this study refers to those reports that presented the facts about male rape and challenged male rape myths in their discussion. This category also includes articles that provided information on help-lines and other support services for male victims. In contrast, the 'stereotypical' category includes reports that distorted the facts about male rape, for example,

by presenting it as homosexual rape and thereby creating an image of it as an exclusively homosexual issue. Other articles in this category were those that were insensitive to the issue or were misinformed. The 'neutral' category was for those articles that did not immediately fit into the 'non-stereotypical' or 'stereotypical' categories. For example, case reports that presented the details of the case without implying blame to victims. The majority of neutral articles were brief.

	Non-stereotypical	Stereotypical	Neutral
Number of articles 1989-2002	110	208	95

Figure 6-2: Category of newspaper articles.

### 6.3 Non-stereotypical Coverage

From figure 6-2 it can be seen 110 (almost one third) of the articles were categorised as non-stereotypical.

#### Cases

A number of cases discussed presented the facts of male rape and in doing so, helped to dispel some of the common myths and problems. For example, in 1990, an article titled 'Adults haunted by memories of repeated rape'<sup>130</sup> presented case examples from a Male Survivors Training Unit and identified the limitations which disabled victims face when trying to give evidence in court. The article raised concerns that such vulnerable victims were not considered to have the mental ability to give evidence, making it even harder to secure convictions. This article is important in bringing attention to vulnerable victims and highlighting the limitations of the legal system.

#### Challenging the Myths about Male Rape

Many of the non-stereotypical articles challenged the myths about male rape. For example, one headline seemed to suggest that male rape is about the sexual

preference of the perpetrator: 'I'm male, 55 and overweight. Why rape me?' The body of the article begins with the words 'I could understand it if I was a woman, a child, or a good-looking young man, but why me? I'm 55 years old and overweight.'<sup>131</sup> The article then goes on to dispel some common myths and offers academic research studies to demonstrate the facts about male rape. Within the discussion is the recognition that all men can be raped, regardless of their sexuality, size, age, or background. In fact, the headline presents a common question, which men may have in relation to male rape. This was also demonstrated in the police questionnaire responses in which police officers sometimes felt that their size, build, sexuality or looks could prevent them from becoming victims (see chapter 7). This article also identifies motivations for male rape as identified by Groth and Burgess (1980) (see chapters 3 and 4) and discusses the traumatic effects of male rape. The article is particularly helpful in highlighting reasons why men may be reluctant to seek support and also emphasises the positive steps taken by the police to support men who may wish to report an attack. As such, it is an informative article that successfully presents the issues in an empathetic manner. Other similar articles challenged assumptions that rapes are 'crime of passion'<sup>132</sup> (referring to male and female rape) and that they are about power.<sup>133</sup> Another article challenged other newspaper reports of male rape cases stating that headlines by tabloid newspapers such as *The Sun* stating 'A Gay Gang Rapes Boy' and 'The rape is the eighth indecent assault by homosexuals in the Capital since April' (*The Daily Express*) were more than likely inaccurate.<sup>134</sup> This article goes on to argue that research by Mezey and King (1989) demonstrates that perpetrators of male rape can be heterosexual or homosexual.

One other very powerful article detailed at length the problems with 'homosexual panic'. The headline was:

A queer verdict; It happens time and again. The killings are vicious, but the killers escape a murder conviction. Why? Because they field

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130 *The Independent* 17 March 1990 Home News p. 4 (472 words)

131 *The Independent* Tuesday 20 August 1991 Health Page (1381 words)

132 *The Daily Telegraph* Monday 9 March 1992 p.18 Letter to the Editor 'Wrong View of Rape'(174 words)

133 *The Herald* (Glasgow) 23 January 1992 'Silent victims of the last taboo. Two recently published books strip away the notion that sexual abuse is about sexual need and state unequivocally that all sexual abuse is about power' Kay Carmichael (1414 words); *The Guardian Society* 9 November 1994 'Counselling: Crime that strikes at the heart of masculinity' p.7 Stephen Ward (854 words)

134 *The Independent* Sunday 18 October 1992 Home News p.5 'Gang rape of men 'seldom by gays' Jason Bennetto (508 words)

the 'homosexual panic' defence; they claim they lost control when their victim made a pass at them. And juries go along with it.<sup>135</sup>

The article illustrates how homophobia prevents victims from gaining justice in criminal cases of rape and murder. It is an informative article that challenges many of the myths about male rape.

### **Exposing Lack of Empathy for Male Victims**

Numerous articles highlighted the lack of sympathy for male victims of rape, as this example illustrates:

When South East news, a London news agency that serves most of the nationals (newspapers) sends out a report on a rape case, it usually gets published. That's when the victim is a woman. When the agency sent round a story about a male rape two weeks ago, it was turned down by every paper except for *The Independent*. Still, there aren't many woman news editors, are there?<sup>136</sup>

### **Reports on Occurrence of Male Rape**

Some articles reported on research that highlighted the existence of male rape. For example, *The Independent*<sup>137</sup> detailed a study by the Aids Education and Research Trust, which found that incidents of male rape were present in UK prisons. Another report suggested 'For many prisoners it (male rape) is a fact of life'<sup>138</sup> but that victims are 'Sentenced to silence'<sup>139</sup> since UK prison officials fail to recognise its occurrence, despite inmates' evidence to the contrary. Other headlines included 'Male rape figures 'are only the tip of iceberg'; Reports of attacks double in London'<sup>140</sup> in which myths about sexuality are exposed with information from support groups, the police and counselling services. Another lengthy article exposed the existence of domestic violence against men, by other men, and talked about male rape within homosexual relationships.<sup>141</sup>

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135 *The Guardian Weekend* 25 November 1995 p.T14 Kevin Toolis (7840 words).

136 *The Sunday Times* 16 September 1990 Features (403 words)

137 Thursday 6 June 1991 Home News 743 words

138 *The Guardian* 21 July 1994 Features p.T14 Martin Walker (3840 words)

139 *The Guardian* 21 July 1994 Features p.T15 Claire Armitstead (960 words)

140 *The Independent* 14 March 1994 Home News p.6 Peter Victor (614 words)

141 *The Independent* 8 March 1995 Life p.23 'Battered men come out of the closet; domestic violence is not confined to men against women; men abuse men too' Nick Kirby and Beverley Kemp (2107 words).

## **Calls for Reforms to Rape Law to Recognise Male Victims**

Some articles categorised as non-stereotypical called for reforms in rape law to offer men equal redress to that offered to female victims. Examples of such articles' headlines included: 'Indecent anomaly: the rape of men should be punished more seriously';<sup>142</sup> 'Rape reform urged';<sup>143</sup> and 'Bid to change rape law launched'.<sup>144</sup>

### **Service Information**

There was some information on services for male victims, which were advertised in articles dispelling myths about male rape. Such articles included help-line numbers, and support group and counselling services.<sup>145</sup>

## **6.4 Stereotypical Coverage**

### **Male Rape as Sex**

In 1989 *The Daily Telegraph*<sup>146</sup> ran an article with the headline 'Church censures festival play over sex scenes' in which it suggested that scenes of 'naked men indulging in simulated sexual acts' in the 'most sexually explicit play' caused offence and could face private prosecution similar to 'The Romans in Britain' which portrayed male rape scenes. The article draws parallels between the male rape scenes in one play and acts of buggery and oral sex in the other, presenting male rape as a sexual act in which men voluntarily participate. There is clearly no distinction made between voluntary sexual acts between consenting men and the involuntary violent act of male rape. As such, this presents a distorted picture of male rape.

It is clear that cases covered by newspapers are highly selective as argued by Soothill and Walby (1991). They suggested that the national press display the

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<sup>142</sup> *The Times* Thursday 29 October 1992 Features (442 words).

<sup>143</sup> *The Times* Thursday 29 October 1992 Home News (80 words).

<sup>144</sup> *The Herald* (Glasgow) 29 October 1992 p.6 (174 words).

<sup>145</sup> For example, *The Independent* Sunday 6 December 1992 'Inside Story: When man rapes man' Feature Page 17 (2601 words); *The Guardian* 14 November 1992 'Male Rape Help-line' Home Page 4 (53 words); *The Daily Telegraph* Friday 30 October 1992 'Modern Times: It could happen to any man, any time' p.15 Mick Brown (1206 words); *The Evening Standard* Tuesday 3 August 1993 'New help offered to male rape victims' p.16 (814 words); *The Guardian* 30 November 1993 'Rape help-line set up for men' Home Page 8 (120 words); *The Daily Telegraph* 'Male rape help-line' p.4 (28 words).

<sup>146</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, Tuesday August 15, 1989 p.2 (644 words).

fantasy of the 'video-nasty' sex beast.<sup>147</sup> This, they assert, is not a gross misrepresentation, but a case of being very selective in portraying facts. This then masks the reality of sex crimes; instead developing an 'image' of rapists based on a few atypical cases.<sup>148</sup> This has certainly been demonstrated in newspaper coverage of male rape cases that sensationalise atypical cases. For example, one case of a man raped on the tube while travelling home alone one night received wide coverage with headlines that would fuel panic and fear, including 'Aids test for man raped on tube train';<sup>149</sup> 'Tube safety warning after man is raped';<sup>150</sup> 'Man's rapists may have struck before'.<sup>151</sup> Other similar headlines included 'New male rape terror'<sup>152</sup> 'Man raped at knifepoint in Underground lavatory'<sup>153</sup>; 'Male rapes linked after sixth attack'<sup>154</sup>; 'Confronting last taboo of male rape; Catalogue of assaults includes knifing and abduction.'<sup>155</sup>

While such cases receive coverage, it is important to keep such attacks in perspective. For example, repeat coverage of the fact that the victim was travelling alone (whether on the underground or in a public lavatory), and was attacked by an armed gang, suggests that this is the typology of such offences. As such, it of course perpetuates the myth of 'stranger danger' and fails to recognise that acquaintance rapes are more common than stranger rapes.<sup>156</sup> Another headline was 'Thugs gang-rape man yards from a police station; three sex beasts gang rape man yards from police station,'<sup>157</sup> portraying this as a crime motivated by sexual desire and carried out by multiple assailants. Another article headline stated 'Male rape trio hunted; man raped by 3 men as he walked home from beer festival,'<sup>158</sup> illustrating that multiple assailant cases are more likely to be reported, thus encouraging the view that men are at most danger from multiple assailants (these issues will be explored in chapter 8).

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147 The rapist as a sex beast was also present in the current research study with headlines such as 'Pool perv caged for 8 years' *The Sun* 20 June 2001 (202 words); 'Two sides of the law for pervert: they caged pervert Andrew Richards last week for attempted male rape' *Daily Record* 13 June 1995 p.12 (530 words) and 'Prison rape beast gets 8 years' *The Mirror* 16 June 1998 p.13 (296 words) see Appendix 8.

148 For example, 'Pervert makes history' *Daily Mirror* 10 June 1995 p.9.

149 *The Daily Telegraph* Tuesday 12 May 1992 p.3 -Robert Bedlow (194 words).

150 *The Independent* Wednesday 13 May 1992 Home News Page 3 -Rachel Borrill (295 words).

151 *Evening Standard* Wednesday 13 May 1992 p.15 Geoff Garvey and Gervase Webb (1107 words).

152 *Daily Mail* Wednesday 22 July 1992 p.18 (147 words)

153 *The Independent* Thursday 20 August 1992 Home News p.2 Charles Oulton (201 words).

154 *The Daily Telegraph* Saturday 22 August 1992 p.2 Sean O'Neill (250 words).

155 *The Guardian* 24 August 1992 Home p.2 (374 words).

156 As demonstrated by Mezey and King (1989) and explored further in the empirical data in chapter 8.

157 *Daily Record* 6 November 1996 p.11 (907 words).

158 *The Mirror* 20 May 1997 p.20 (174 words).



Similar articles that contain support information for victims nonetheless present it as a sex crime, rather than one of violence and abuse. For example, one headline read: 'Rape centre help for male sex crime victims.'<sup>159</sup> The suggestion that rape is a sex crime perpetuates this myth and does not give recognition to it as a violent act with sex used as 'a means to an end' as asserted by feminists such as Kelly and Radford (1996). The focus of newspaper reports of male rape is on stranger rapes carried out in public places and usually with more than one assailant. As research on male rape has demonstrated, the reality is more often that men are raped by acquaintances in a private place (also explored in the empirical data in chapter 8).

### **Homosexuality and Male Rape**

It is evident that newspaper reports privilege heterosexuality over other sexual practices that are regarded as deviant or dangerous. Researchers such as Smart (1989) have argued that the media are a powerful means of reinforcing understandings of sexuality which are produced within a culture which prioritises Western, heterosexual and male social practices. She therefore argues that such knowledge is specific, gendered and subjective rather than neutral and objective. It has also become clear from this newspaper analysis that heterosexual primacy is validated and maintained by newspaper coverage of male rape while non-heterosexuality is marked as deviant. As Davies (1998:105) suggests 'It is only on rare occasions that the mainstream media presents the voices and perspectives of non-heterosexuals as valid and as deserving of prolonged attention'. She suggests that headlines that identify the 'gay community' or 'gay men' distinguish them from the heterosexual norm, and also that 'The distinction drawn between heterosexuals and homosexuals is value laden and assumes the naturalness of heterosexuality' (Ibid. 110).

The association of homosexuality with male rape is present in headlines such as 'Triple male rape rap; a gay bar manager has been charged with 3 counts of rape.'<sup>160</sup> Even when the perpetrator may be homosexual, headlines such as these are unhelpful since they promote the notion that male rape is a sexually motivated act, and not one of power and control over the victim. Emphasis on homosexuality perpetuates the myth of male rape as an exclusively homosexual issue. Articles making such links included headlines of 'Jail warder in male rape

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159 *The Northern Echo* 20 February 1997 p.3 (301 words)

160 *The Mirror* 19 March 1997 News p.15 (134 words)

quiz; police question guard over string of gay sex attacks';<sup>161</sup> 'Man raped at gay meeting place';<sup>162</sup> 'Gay rapist hunt arrest';<sup>163</sup> and 'Raped by gays'.<sup>164</sup> Homosexual men are therefore portrayed as dangerous victimisers by the mainstream newspapers.<sup>165</sup> Additionally, almost all plays incorporating male rape scenes discussed in the newspapers presented it as homosexual rape.<sup>166</sup> While it is clear that homosexual men are also victims of rape, and within relationships, such portrayals again suggest that this is exclusively a homosexual problem. Davies (1998: 105) has argued that the construction of homosexuals as 'undesirables' and 'deviants' may partly explain why gay men are more readily seen as perpetrators of sex crime, rather than as likely victims.

### **Victims as Liars**

Two headlines, referring to the same incident, both read: 'Male rape victim' lied'.<sup>167</sup> The first, in *The Daily Mail*, states that a boy who claimed he had been abducted by three men and taken to Hampstead Heath (a notorious meeting place for homosexuals) had in fact been telling 'a pack of lies'; that he had in fact confessed to having gone to the Heath of his own accord 'to try it out, and decided he didn't like it.' This article suggests that the 19 year old had consented to sexual intercourse with three men but simply didn't like it and therefore 'cried rape' to his girlfriend who alerted the police. However, the second article in *The Times* newspaper reveals that the Detective Inspector dealing with the case regarded the 19 year old as the victim of a serious sexual assault, even though he had gone to the Heath of his own accord. The report added that the officer made no comment on the boy's reasons for not telling the truth originally, and that the search for his attackers was continuing.

The contrast in the emphasis of these two articles is striking. The headlines and the details in *The Daily Mail* suggest that the young victim lied about the entire situation, inferring that it was instead consensual activity, which he simply did not

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161 *Daily Record* 24 May 2001 p.7 (271 words).

162 *The Herald* (Glasgow) 20 August 2000 p.14 (563 words).

163 *The Mirror* 13 January 2002 p.9 (163 words).

164 *The Sun* 22 February 2001 (152 words).

165 It is likely that the gay press would challenge such stereotypes and present a more accurate picture of male rape. However, the gay press was not included in this newspaper analysis.

166 Alastair Muir's 'The Car Man' shows male rape as homosexuality. It was described as 'funny, tense, lively and bold' (*Evening Standard* 14 September 2000 p.6 (468 words)).

167 *Daily Mail* Monday 9 November 1992 p.13 (214 words) and *The Times* Saturday 17 October 1992 Home News (114 words).

enjoy. Such articles perpetuate the myth that rape is a sexual act between consenting homosexuals and is also reminiscent of suggestions that women 'cry rape' when, for example, they fear they may be pregnant after sleeping with someone. This branding of the male victim as a liar suggests that he has fabricated the entire rape, which is clearly inaccurate. Instead, it is important to question why he did not feel able to state that he had gone to the Heath willingly and was then raped. One can speculate that he probably felt that he would not be taken seriously if he stated he had gone willingly and that he would have been accused of 'asking for it'. Again parallels can be drawn with female rape cases in which victims, who admit to having invited the perpetrator into their homes or to having had sexual relations with him in the past, are accused of 'asking for it'. This also suggests men's wariness of the police, which may be due to fears of having their sexuality challenged. Focus on their sexuality rather than the assault itself may prevent men from being completely honest with the police with regards to the details of the case. However, it is important to recognise that despite such lies, the victim is still a victim of rape, something both articles fail to emphasise.

## 6.5 Neutral Coverage

The content analysis revealed that the majority of coverage on male rape was case based. That is, most reports focused on specific incidents of male rape or allegations of it. For example, the first conviction for male rape in 1995 received much coverage by all the newspapers.<sup>168</sup> There was also extensive coverage of a boy aged 11 accused of raping a 12-year-old.<sup>169</sup> These reports were followed by accounts of the 'not guilty' verdict,<sup>170</sup> although the perpetrator was found guilty of sexual assault.<sup>171</sup> While such accounts were not entirely neutral since selective perception is always at work in newspaper reports, these were cases that did not overtly either challenge or enhance myths about male rape.

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<sup>168</sup> This was the case of Andrew Richards (1995) convicted for raping an 18 year old in Regent's Park, London.

<sup>169</sup> *The Independent* 9 April 1997 'Boy, 11, accused of male rape' News p.2 (62 words); *The Daily Record* 16 April 1997 'Boy, 11, on rape rap' p.2(160 words); *The Guardian* 9 April 1997 'Boy, 11, facing male rape charge' Home p.5 (120 words); *The Times* 3 June 1997 'Boy on male rape charge' Home news (63 words); *The Mirror* 3 June 1997 'Male rape by boy; 11 year old charged with male rape' News p.11 (53 words).

<sup>170</sup> *The Mirror* 23 October 1997 'Boy cleared of male rape' News p.17 (77 words); *The Guardian* 23 October 1997 'Boy cleared of male rape' Home p.4 (94 words).

<sup>171</sup> *The Independent* 25 October 1997 'Boy, 11, guilty of sexual assault' News p.4 (126 words).

## Coverage of Changes in Legislation

A number of articles presented information on the proposed changes in rape law to recognise male rape, prior to 1994,<sup>172</sup> with many subsequent articles discussing the new legislation.<sup>173</sup>

## Popular Culture and Sensationalism

A number of reports focused on shocking scenes from plays such as 'Blasted' in which male rape, child sex abuse and cannibalism of a dead baby are used to shock the audience.<sup>174</sup> Such plays use trauma to shock and gain attention, at the expense of victims' traumatic experiences. Such reports have been classified as neutral since they report on other media images (such as plays) and do not dispel or perpetuate myths about male rape. However, they demonstrate some of the rape myths promoted in these plays.<sup>175</sup> Other coverage is of male rape scenes introduced on television in programmes such as *The Governor*.<sup>176</sup>

## Crime Statistics

Many of the articles included in the neutral category reported on official criminal statistics and the rise in violent offences, (including an increase in rape and cases of male rape).<sup>177</sup>

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172 *The Independent* 20 June 1990 Home News (330 words); *The Herald* (Glasgow) 12 July 1994 'Peers back law on male rape' p.6 (614 words); *The Independent* 12 July 1994 'Male rape to be made an offence' Home News p.2 (180 words); *The Guardian* 12 July 1994 Home News p.1 'Male rape recognised in law' (614 words); *The Guardian* 12 July 1994 Home p.2 'Rape law helps male victims' (827 words); *The Times* 12 July 1994 'Law is reformed to recognise male rape' Home News (488 words).

173 For example, *The Daily Telegraph* Tuesday 12 July 1994 p.1 'Male rape to be punished by life' Phillip Johnston and Anthony Looch (561 words).

174 *The Evening Standard* 19 January 1995 p.5 'Walk-outs at Royal Court 'atrocious' play' Robin Stringer (694 words); *The Daily Mail* 19 January 1995 p.5 'The disgusting feast of filth' Jack Tinker (667 words); *The Mail* 20 January 1995 p.3 'The *Blasted* playwright is lying low; woman under attack for staging a feast of filth refuses to answer back' Grace Bradberry and Steve Doughty (787 words); *The Daily Mirror* 20 January 1995 News p.4 'Cash fury at 'vildest ever' play; play funded by taxpayers and charity branded vile' (280 words); *The Herald* (Glasgow) 24 January 1995 p.20 'Taking a blasting' Carole Woddis (507 words).

175 For example, they detail how male rape in the plays is presented as rape among homosexual men which suggests that it only occurs between this group.

176 *The Daily Record* 19 March 1996 p.21 'Prison male rape shock on t.v.' (454 words).

177 For example *The Times* 25 September 1996 Home News (680 words); *The Independent* 18 March 1997 News p.8 'Rise in violence overshadows fall in crime' (577 words); *The Times* 18 March 1997 'Highest rise in violent crime for seven years' Home News (644 words).

## Other Categories of Coverage

### Young Offenders

A number of articles focused on a few cases of young boys being charged with male rape. Headlines included: 'Schoolboy, 12 jailed for raping 10 year old lad';<sup>178</sup> 'Rapist, 14 locked up';<sup>179</sup> 'Rapist, 12, held for 3 years';<sup>180</sup> 'Male rape by boy; 11 year old charged with male rape'.<sup>181</sup>

### Shock Tactics

It is evident that shock tactics help sell newspapers.<sup>182</sup> The contribution that newspapers make to fuel moral panics has been discussed earlier in this chapter. The coverage of male rape is no exception to this with headlines such as 'Alert over male rape';<sup>183</sup> 'Male Rape Shocker';<sup>184</sup> 'Male Rape Cases Soar'<sup>185</sup> and 'Rise in Male Rape Victims: sex attacks on men are on the increase.'<sup>186</sup> Such articles present selective statistics to justify these headlines, without taking into account the difficulties with such data. For example, there is no evidence that male rape is on the increase; it is more likely that men are more willing than in the past to report such cases and to bring them to the attention of the police or other agencies. However, newspaper accounts may succeed in fuelling fear and panic without real evidence of an increase.

### Celebrities and People in Power

It is clear that celebrity status combined with an emotive subject such as male rape helps to sensationalise and sell newspapers. Wherever possible, newspaper headlines seek to grab the attention of the reader by making such links. For example, headlines in this category included 'Police quiz Charles aide over male rape claims';<sup>187</sup> 'Councillor charged';<sup>188</sup> 'Spielberg faces man accused of plot to

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178 *Daily Record* 29 June 2000 p.19 (203 words).

179 *The Mirror* 29 June 2000 p.22 (132 words).

180 *The Times* 29 June 2000 (62 words).

181 *The Mirror* 3 June 1997 p.11 (53 words).

182 This is demonstrated by Soothill and Walby (1991).

183 *The Daily Record* 15 March 2000 News p.13 (80 words).

184 *The Sun* 15 May 2001 (135 words).

185 *The Sun* 15 March 2000 (98 words).

186 *The Sunday Mirror* 25 February 1996 p.14 (240 words).

187 *The Daily Mail* 24 November 2001 p.20 (303 words) This article referred to an incident between two employees working for the royal family.

rape him';<sup>189</sup> 'BBC DJ on 31 sex charges';<sup>190</sup> 'Priest on (male) rape charges is named'<sup>191</sup> and 'Star faces life for boy rape; hot chocolate star guilty of male rape'.<sup>192</sup> The growing interest of the media in celebrities and their lifestyles is also demonstrated for example, by the immense interest in Michael Barrymore, his sexuality, and the death of a man in his home after a party, in which alleged homosexual activities and possibly, sexual assault took place (March 2001).

## Summary

Figure 6.1 shows that there has been increased newspaper interest in male rape since 1989, with no coverage prior to this time. Significant points of interest have included the increased coverage of male rape cases in 1992 (discussed earlier) and changes in legislation with the introduction of male rape as a criminal offence with the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Over the 13-year period of this analysis, a number of theatre productions, television programmes and films have received widespread coverage, the majority of which has been critical of these depictions. For example, the controversial play 'Blasted' was condemned by all newspapers as disgusting and filthy.<sup>193</sup> The Hollyoaks story-line of male rape also received much negative coverage being described by one newspaper as 'deeply disturbing and frankly, sickening'.<sup>194</sup> However, another article took the view that 'The much hyped and harrowing male rape in Hollyoaks was portrayed with the right amount of sensitivity'.<sup>195</sup> Interestingly, this story-line by Hollyoaks is being adopted by the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group as a training video for raising awareness to professionals who may come in to contact with male survivors.

Newspapers remain a major source of information. Soothill and Walby (1991) asserted that the relationship between what newspapers print and what people come to believe is a complicated one. It was suggested that people do not passively and uncritically absorb all that they read. However, reports are used as

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188 *The Daily Mail* 20 November 1998 p.17 (100 words).

189 *The Mirror* 27 February 1998 p.7 (732 words).

190 These included charges of male rape *The Daily Record* 5 August 1999 p.22 (46 words).

191 *The Independent* 15 August 1998 p.4 (40 words).

192 *The Mirror* 3 July 1998 p.23 (40 words).

193 A large number of articles discussed this play. Some example headlines include 'The Disgusting feast of filth' *The Daily Mail* 19 January 1995 p.5 (667 words); 'Walk-outs at Royal Court 'atrocious' play' *The Evening Standard* 19 January 1995 p.5 (694 words); 'Cash fury at 'vilest ever play' *The Daily Mirror* 20 January 1995 p.3 (787 words).

194 *The Belfast Telegraph* 18 March 2000 (416 words).

195 *The Daily Record* 2 May 2001 p.14-15 (1033 words).

a basis for discussions and are interpreted by readers to form opinions. Newspapers are conventionally regarded as generating representations about reality, albeit a highly constructed version of reality (Davies 1998). The information presented is therefore important. Half of all coverage over the 13-year period was stereotypical and perpetuated myths about male rape. Similar to female rape, research on male rape has demonstrated that the typical rapist is not the sex crazy stranger or serial rapist who lurks in dark alleys but is more than likely a person known to the victim. Despite this, the newspaper analysis demonstrates that most coverage on cases is given to the few atypical rapists, presenting a highly distorted overall picture of the nature and incidence of male rape. Such portrayals keep the public ill informed. These findings are similar to Soothill and Walby's (1991) work, which also found that sexual violence was ineffectively represented in newspapers. Other negative representations included presenting male rape as a homosexual problem or then linking it to erotica and sex. Many headlines focused on sensationalising male rape by using shock tactics and alarming, bold statements. Nearly one third of articles were seen to be non-stereotypical and accurate in their discussion of male rape and most of these were articles based on academic research findings that dispelled the myths of male rape. Such quality articles did not appear on the front pages of newspapers where they would have had the most impact. Additionally, tabloid accounts were more sensationalist and reinforced existing opinions, than the broadsheets, which were more challenging of such opinions. These differences reflected their appeal to a different readership. The next chapter explores whether police views mirror those in the wider society, as reflected in the newspapers we read.

The politicisation of rape by feminism and the victims' movement (discussed in chapter 1) has successfully drawn interest to this area, placing it on the political agenda. However, the focus has been primarily on female rape with little attention given to male experiences of rape. The increase in newspaper coverage of male rape since 1989 to date demonstrates greater interest in this issue although much of this has been negative. The nature of reporting conceals the reality of male rape, focusing on unusual cases of stranger rapes taking place in public places. Perpetrators and victims are more often represented as homosexuals, reinforcing the myth of homosexuality as a determinant of male rape victimisation. The problems of such misrepresentations and distinctions between heterosexuals and homosexuals are highlighted well by Davies (1998:117):

By ignoring difference, is to reinforce the limits of liberalism and democracy. Within such a framework (of ignoring), there is little space for recognising that race, class, gender and sexuality are inextricably linked to social positioning and moreover, that they affect profoundly peoples' ability, both individually and collectively, to participate and be treated as equals. The silencing, marginalisation, condemnation and criminalisation of homosexual bodies in the past and in the present provide just one example of the limits of democracy. While liberalism might tout equality as a principle goal, it operates to deny recognition of the very differences, which in ideology and practice stifle its achievement.

Feminist theorist Scott (1990:144) maintains that this perspective assumes that equality can only be based upon sameness without considering that equality might instead depend upon the recognition and valuing of difference. Despite this, it is clear that the newspaper reports on male rape present heterosexuality as the cultural norm and homosexuality, stereotypically in negative terms, which may invite condemnation.

While on the one hand it may be that increased coverage is better than the previous silence of newspapers on the issue of male rape, it remains that newspaper accounts are distorted in their representation of this issue.



# Chapter Seven: Empirical Findings from the Metropolitan Police Service

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the police questionnaire, based on questionnaires distributed to seven divisions of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). One hundred and thirty questionnaires were distributed and there were 93 responses, a response rate of 72%. Some of the data has been presented in charts to give an indication of the distribution of responses, although the main emphasis is on a qualitative analysis; the main findings have therefore been summarised using example verbatim quotes to represent the beliefs, ideas and perspectives of officers in the sample.

It can be seen that 29% of the respondents were female (n=26) and 71% male (n=67). MPS figures show that at the end of May 2001 there were 25,615 persons employed as police officers; 21,575 (84%) of these were men and the remaining 4,036 (16%) were women (see figure 1 below). Therefore, the present questionnaire reflects the overall gender imbalance within the MPS although there is a slight over-representation of female respondents in the sample. This was in fact beneficial as it ensured that female officers' views were well represented in the study.

Gender	Percentage of police officers employed by the metropolitan police service*	Percentage in the sample
Male	84%	71%
Female	16%	29%

Figure 7-1: Gender of sample in relation to overall gender distribution in the MPS

\* Data obtained from The Metropolitan Police Service (2001)

## 7.2 The Role of the Police – Force or Service?

Respondents were asked who they thought should deal with sexual assaults against males, and subsequently, their perceptions of whether male rape is a social or legal issue, in order to establish how they perceived their role in relation to this issue. It has been demonstrated by Punch and Naylor (1973) that the police frequently do not see themselves as service-providers and instead believe that other agencies such as social services or the voluntary sector should provide support to victims. They demonstrate that the police consider themselves as law enforcers rather than service providers.

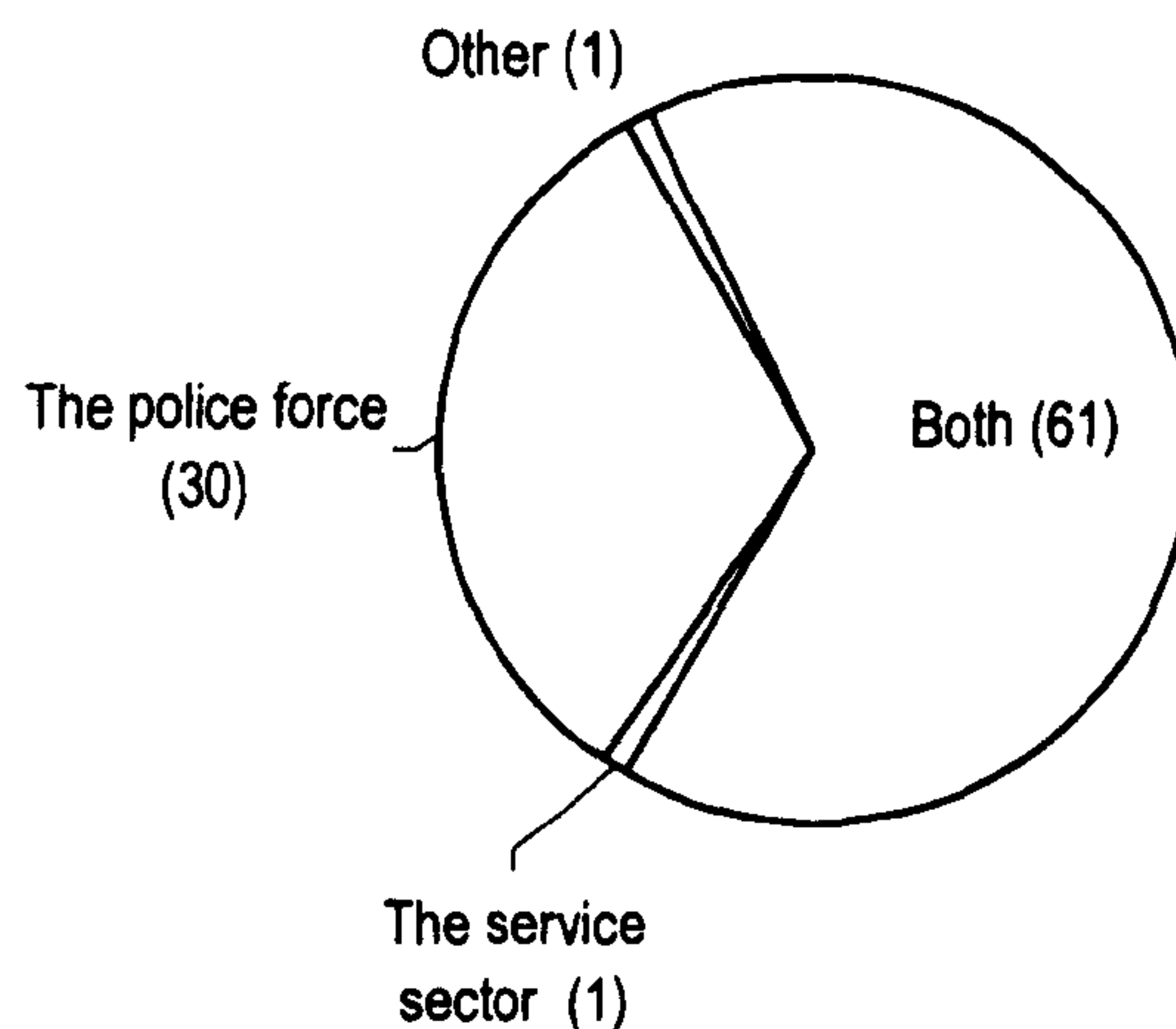


Figure 7-2: Officers perceptions of who should deal with sexual assaults.

\*The service sector includes local authority social services departments as well as the voluntary sector.

Of those who believed that sexual assaults should be dealt with by social services, only one officer felt that the public would find social services more approachable:

Initially social services should deal with sexual assaults on males. Their personnel will, to the public, appear more approachable. In reality the professionalism of a police officer, specially trained and willing to deal with such matters, is superior. May be used once the victim is forwarded by social services (Male PC).

Even this response was qualified to suggest that the police might be used after the initial involvement of social services. Thirty respondents believed that sexual

assaults against males should be dealt with primarily by the police force. The officers in this group believed that convictions for male-to-male sexual assaults are extremely difficult without forensic evidence/medical evidence and that criminal assaults are therefore best dealt with by those with the necessary authority and expertise. They also argued that male rape is a serious crime, which should be investigated as any other such incident; that rape is a serious offence and should be given the same attention by police as any other offence and that it should be dealt with in the same way as for women complainants.

Overall, it was felt that the police service has responsibility for the initial investigation of assaults and once all evidence has been gathered, voluntary groups can deal with the aftermath of the rape, so long as the overall control remains with the police. Similarly, it was felt that the police were best positioned to know the legal requirements and to investigate, having the expertise and experience in gathering and presenting evidence.

The importance of treating male rape as a serious criminal offence and the need for a sympathetic approach is expressed in the following quote:

Police should investigate such assaults and provide support to victims in the same way that female victims are supported. Voluntary agencies, the NHS, Victim Support and social services may have a role in cases where the victim wants their help (Female DI).

Most officers highlighted the need for a multi-agency approach, suggesting that police intervention was needed in order for the offence to be recorded on a criminal level while other services needed to be involved. As one officer commented:

Other services (are) needed as many police officers seem to have a mental problem with it. They either think it's funny or don't believe it. I have seen this in practice (Female PC).

The data on victim experiences (discussed in chapter 8) explores reasons why men are reluctant to report to the police and examines victims' fear that they will be ridiculed or not believed.

While male rape was seen as a crime many officers felt that, depending on the trauma suffered by victims, they may need assistance from Victim Support and social services as well. Other officers felt that the police were better trained to

deal with sexual assaults than the service sector, so long as officers were trained as chaperones.

The official practice with regards to the treatment of female and male victims of rape is the same in that all victims of rape are given the choice of having other agencies involved in the care process, in addition to police chaperones.

On the whole, male rape was seen to be a serious offence that should have the police and voluntary support services supporting men. The majority of the respondents (n=61) felt that both the police force and the service sector had important roles to play in responding to male rape survivors and that liaising between the two would improve the service to the victim. The role of the police was perceived as a priority for investigating the offence, while voluntary groups were acknowledged as having an important supporting role. It was also recognised that some male victims may not wish to be dealt with by the police and should be given the option of having support from other agencies such as SurvivorsUK or Victim Support. It was also felt that male rape is as serious as female rape and should be dealt with in the same way, although the sex of the chaperone was seen to be important, suggesting that male victims may not wish to have male chaperones either. As one officer commented:

It is not and cannot be considered lesser than female rape  
(Female PC).

Male victims do have the choice of having a male or female chaperone at present. It was also recognised that while male rape is a criminal offence, male victims may need support that only other agencies could provide, such as medical support regarding possible disease or infection. As one officer commented:

... I don't think we are experienced enough to deal with the after effects of the victim (sic.) by ourselves (Male PC).

Additionally, the majority of officers recognised that since a criminal offence had been committed, the police needed to investigate, while other support agencies could provide valuable counselling, advice, support and aftercare to victims.

Because working in partnership with other agencies will enable the victim's needs to be dealt with thoroughly (Male PS).

It was also suggested that some men would be more likely to report the offence to the police if they felt that they had the support of both the police and other agencies.

Overall, it was recognised that the effects of rape are traumatic and that male victims may present an outward impression of strength because this is what they have been nurtured into doing, although emotionally they may feel devastated. Support was seen to be essential from the very beginning. It was also felt that the police are not trained to give the specialised support which male victims need, recognising the importance of a multi-agency approach in supporting male victims of rape. It was felt that there was a need to use,

...as many trained personnel as possible to provide the best possible support. (Male PC)

### 7.3 Male Rape: a Social or Legal Problem?

Officers were asked to categorise male rape, in terms of a problem. This question was designed to see how seriously they regard this issue and its relevance to police work.

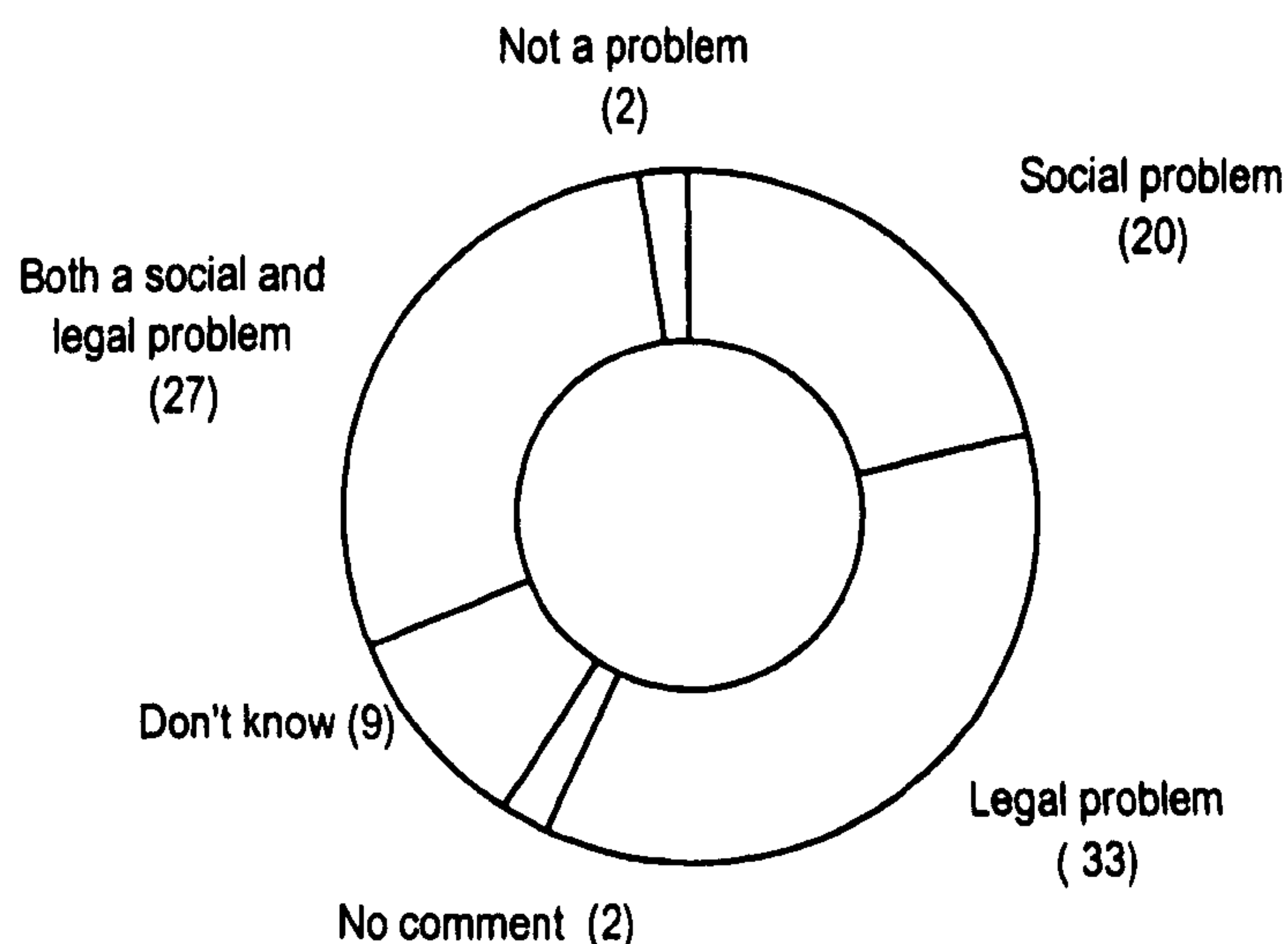


Figure 7-3: The problem of male rape

Twenty respondents believed that male rape is a social problem, suggesting for example, that it is:

...Regarded as a social stigma where everyone hears about it but does not know what to do (Male AO).

I feel any rape is a social problem reflecting the general moral collapse of society (Male PS).

It was also identified as social behaviour and a social problem since victims and perpetrators are members of society:

All sexual offences against either sex are a social problem as the victims and perpetrators are members of society. I do not feel that male rape should be identified as a separate issue with regards to this (Female PC).

Another important point made was that it is a social problem because the public does not understand it, nor does the public give it recognition:

Male rape is very serious and has laws to deal with it. The social problem is due to public concepts - a man who has been raped is very unlikely to report (Female PC).

Not understood by public and not recognised (Male DC).

Likewise, other officers commented that public opinion is unsympathetic towards male rape victims, since,

...it is seen as socially unacceptable for males to admit that they have been raped - whether they are gay or straight making it very unlikely that a male victim would report such an offence to the police (Female PC).

I'm sure male rape is an age-old problem, but it has been a relatively taboo subject until recently. Recent articles in the media have only highlighted a problem that has always been around (Male PC).

A third of officers held that male rape is a legal problem because it is a criminal offence, as one officer commented:

A serious offence cannot be relegated to a social problem (Male PC).

It was also felt that male rape is the same as female rape and that it,

... would have to be happening on a larger scale before it became a social problem. (Male PC)

Twenty-seven officers asserted that male rape is both a social and legal problem because it is society's problem, which the law punishes. Similarly, it was believed that while it is against current statute law, it remains a social problem because of society's lack of recognition of it, especially in comparison to female rape. The impact on society was another important consideration since it was felt that male rape has an effect on the victim, his family and his associates. For example, it was asserted that:

It exists within society though for any man to report it would be rare due to the stigma attached. You will never get rid of that stigma. Males are more dominant than females. If they discover a male rape then that lowers the status of the male victim; he is perceived as being less of a man, a pushover, a target of fun (Male PC).

Whilst some officers demonstrated confidence and a positive attitude, suggesting that reporting has increased due to open-mindedness, the following quote is typical of a particular group of officers with negative attitudes, suggesting that male rape,

... is quite difficult to deal with (and) although I have no real expertise I would add that I have no desire to develop any expertise in dealing with this or child abuse either (Male PI).

It was also suggested that male rape is a,

...social problem due to nature of the offence, the nature of the assailant and the social stigma attached to the victim. Legal problem due to the ambiguous legislation and credibility such offences may hold with juries and may find such an offence difficult to comprehend without believing that the victim was partially responsible (Male PC).

Two respondents felt that male rape is not a problem:

I do not feel Male Rape is a problem it is simply victims are now able to come to police and be treated as fairly and compassionately as female victims (Female PC).

...Is no more a problem to cope with than female rape, apart from the stigma men feel about it. (Female PC)

It seems that the respondents in this category considered whether or not male rape is more problematic for the police to handle than female rape. It is

interesting to note that both respondents who believed that male rape is not a problem were female officers.

Nine officers answered 'Don't know' to the question, giving their reasons for this answer that they had no experience of any male rape cases, or did not know enough about male rape to comment, suggesting that greater awareness of male rape is needed within the police.

It was also felt by this group of respondents that a social or legal problem does not adequately describe a serious sexual offence and that it was difficult to assess what type of problem it is, although one officer in this group commented that it is clearly an offence like female rape.

In summary, it can be stated that overall, officers believed that while male rape is a criminal offence and one that therefore requires a legal remedy, it is a social problem since it affects and impacts on society. The problems of stigma and lack of understanding of this issue were also emphasised. It was also apparent that officers were keen to have male and female rape treated as equally serious by the police.

#### 7.4 Increases in Male Rapes

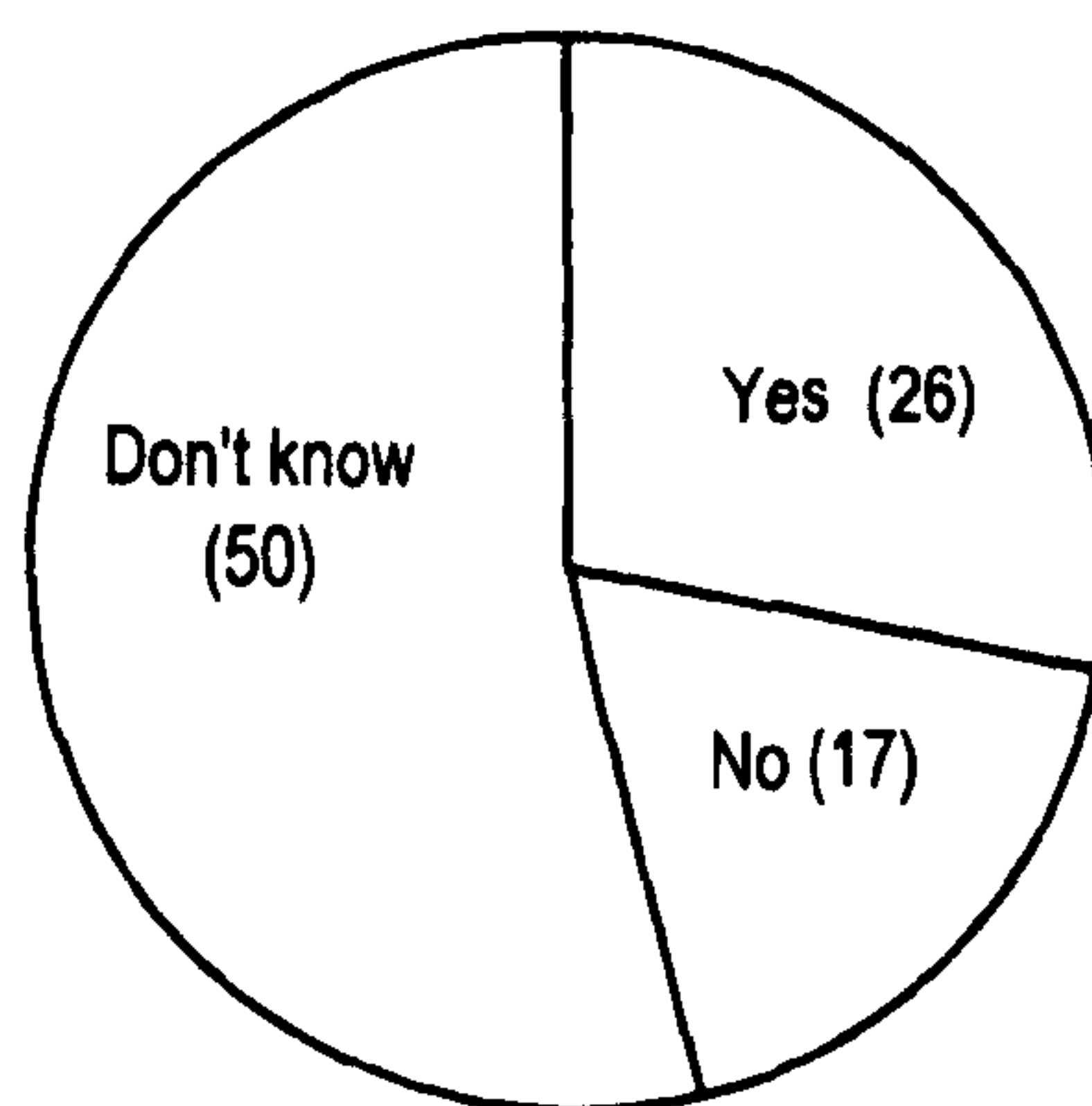


Figure 7-4: Do you think male rape is a growing problem?

In order to provide an indication of their awareness, respondents were asked whether or not they believed that male rape is a growing problem within society.



Twenty-six respondents answered that male rape is a growing problem within society, highlighting the increase in reporting and media attention, which has further generated awareness. Additionally, one officer suggested that:

People's attitudes and morals are a lot slacker than they used to be so any way people can get their kicks or feel power is becoming more and more common (Male PC).

Interesting too was the view that male rape is a homosexual problem with frequent suggestions that it is on the increase because,

Society has accepted more liberally the "gays" (Male PC).

Males now not always ashamed/embarrassed to report or admit being gay (Female PC).

I think the homosexual lobby in this country is increasingly vociferous and my perception that male rape is a growing problem might just be an indication of the success of the lobby (Male PI).

The gay community is growing, becoming more vocal and some gay men are becoming more violent (Male PI).

This demonstrates that the police also believe the common myth that male rape is exclusively a homosexual problem.

One female officer stated that it is only a problem for male victims, suggesting that females are already aware of the problem of rape:

It is a problem only for those getting raped. In my experience reports of male rape are 'on the up' and what it has to do with a growing problem in our society I don't know. It is a problem that men will need to be aware of (Female DC).

Three respondents suggested that male and female rapes are both growing problems. Interestingly, this point was made by female officers only.

There was some disagreement as to whether more men are now reporting to the police than before, with some respondents suggesting that victims are unlikely to report:

Few victims come forward; I think the problem has always been there for males, however I only think now they're being reported (Female PC).

Seventeen respondents did not believe that male rape is a growing problem, suggesting that statistics may show an increase due to re-classification, rather than an actual growth. Other respondents suggested that male rape has always been a problem and that there is more willingness to report and more awareness of it, as the following examples demonstrate:

Greater awareness and openness means that victims have become less reluctant to report a matter, which might have gone unreported in previous years (Male PI).

More reports are now being received due to the implementation of vulnerable person's units etc. (Male PS).

Has always taken place. People now have more confidence in being accepted due to published cases and more positive homosexual profile (Male DI).

I don't believe the offence is any more widespread than ever before, but that the taboos surrounding the offence are not a problem (Male PC).

Just over half of the respondents did not know whether or not male rape was a growing problem. Here are some examples of the responses in this category:

Whilst more male rapes are reported I don't know if that indicates a rise in the assault or a rise in the reporting (Male PC).

I believe that victims have greater confidence in the police than before and may be more willing to report offences (Female PI).

It may be reported more as has rape on women. This is unlikely to indicate that suddenly there has been a new crime wave. It is more likely to be that today, victims are more likely to report their assaults (Male PC).

This uncertainty also stems from having no statistical data available to hand as well as the belief that the media has made people more aware of the problem of male rape. However, it is clear that the increase in male rape is attributed to the increase in reporting to the police.

## **7.5 Accommodating for the Needs of Male Victims**

In order to discover their perceptions on what is already being done and what further provisions need to be made for male victims, respondents were asked

whether or not they believed that the police adequately accommodate for the needs of male rape victims.

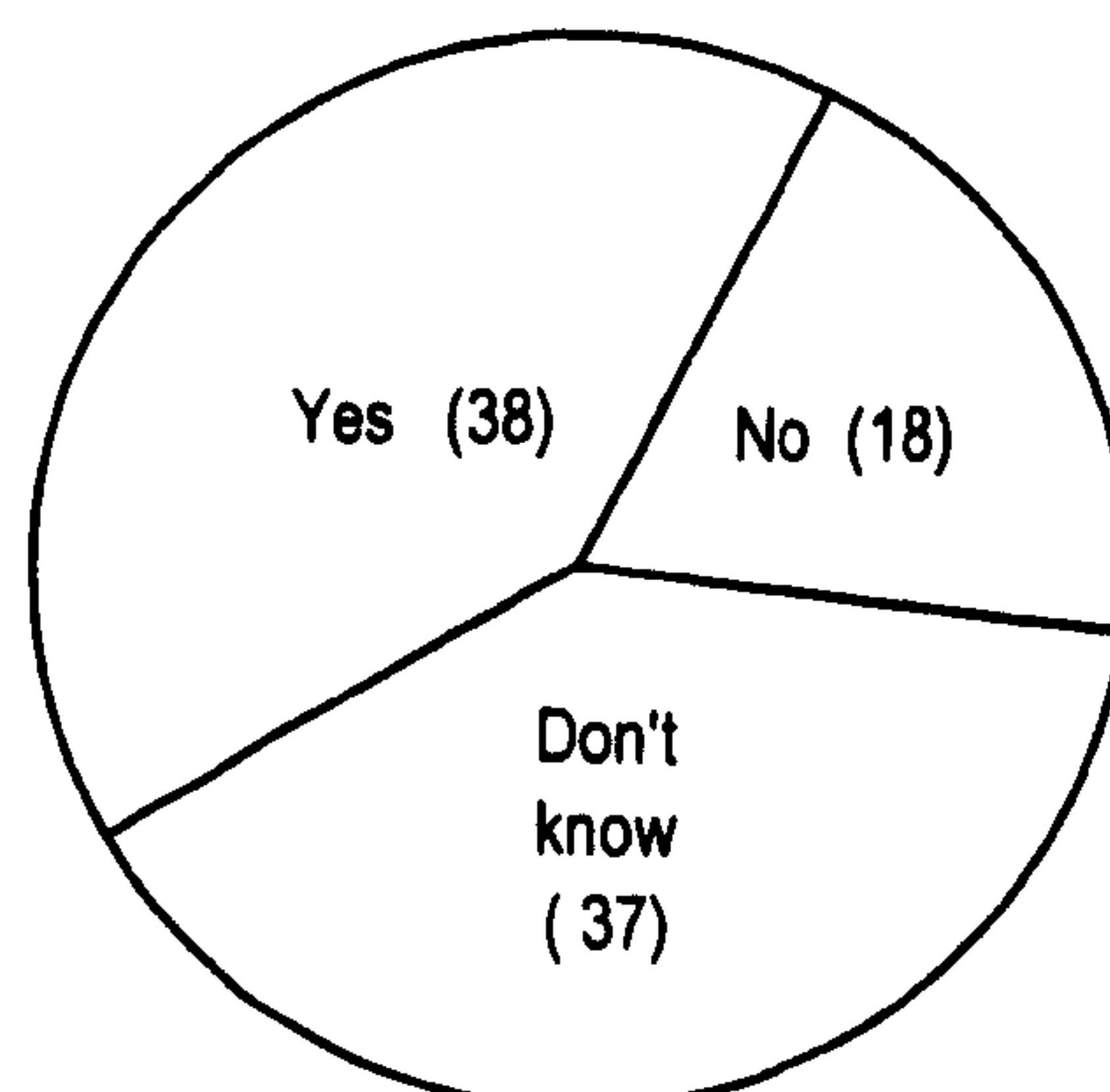


Figure 7-5: Accommodating victim needs

Thirty-eight respondents believed that the police adequately accommodate for the needs of male rape victims, while eighteen believed that they do not. The remaining thirty-seven officers did not know.

Of those who felt that the police did accommodate to the needs of victims, the role of the Sexual Offences Investigation Techniques (SOIT) officers and chaperones, was seen to be essential, as the following quotes illustrate:

SOIT officers deal with the victim as in female rape-in my experience all other facets of the investigation are also dealt with (Male DS).

Male SOIT officers available if required-male and female victims suffer trauma potentially to an equal level (Female PC).

We now have both male and female SOIT officers - gives the victim the choice (Male PC).

I am trained in dealing with sexual offences (SOIT). I know male rape is dealt with properly, or at least procedures/training is in place for this to happen (Female PC).

Those officers less confident stated:

Dependent on which division in the MPS. Some divisions hold numerous male SOIT officers with units designed to investigate these crimes. Most divisions do not (Male PS).

Others in this group suggested that there was still room for improvement, as the following quotes illustrate:

To a certain extent but would suggest that we are some way behind in comparison to female victims, but will improve with female officers (Male PS).

In most cases but I would question sometimes the support to all victims male/female. The role of chaperones etc. (Male DI).

Financial constraints and the problems of resources were also highlighted:

We can always do more but generally the response is adequate in a competitive world for resources (Male DI).

Yes, given that we are a public organisation trying to deal with an unlimited demand, with limited resources (Male DI).

We have limited facilities for female rape victims so I guess even fewer to cover sensitivity of male rape (Female PC).

The need for further training for all officers was also identified by some officers:

I believe the police have SOIT officers who are both male and female however, further training should be given to officers (all officers) (Male PS).

The need for further training is emphasised among those who believe that the police do not adequately provide for victims' needs, even where SOIT training is given, with suggestions that more specialist training is needed. As one officer stated:

I don't think officers have had sufficient training (Male PC).

Other identified concerns were the lack of chaperones available as well as the failure of encouraging reporting to the police as these quotes illustrate:

There are not enough male chaperones or even female chaperones and there are still 'stigmas' attached to those men who are raped (Female DC).

Not encouraged to report. No contact made with gay bars (Male PS).

Another reason given for the lack of adequate support provided by the police is the fact that male rape is,

...such a new thing that has come to light (Male AO).

Other less optimistic views suggest that:

No one can cater for the needs of each rape victim whatever the gender-Everyone has their own needs and react differently (Male PS).

Of more concern is the suggestion that male rape is,

...an insignificant part of one percent of reported serious crime (Male PC).

This suggests that it does not warrant specialist provision for victims.

Other respondents recognised a problem for rape cases generally,

Due to lack of experience and at present procedures for rape of all sorts is still very poor (Male DC).

It was also suggested that the police do not adequately meet the needs of both male and female victims:

But I don't believe we adequately accommodate needs of female rape victims either. Too much time is spent waiting for doctors and SOIT officers adding to the victim's considerable trauma (Female PC).

Police do not in the majority of cases cater at all well for victims of any crime (Male PC).

Another point of concern was the view that,

...most male officers (not all) don't believe it or think it's funny or (that the victim) asked for it (Female PC).

The occupational culture of the police was also seen as problematic:

It is a comparatively 'new' offence and it is one, which a male heterosexual organisation finds difficult to deal with (Male PI).

Another officer highlighted the practical problem of having more female SOIT officers than males, since male victims in some cases may prefer to speak with a male officer:

Rape still perceived to be a 'female' issue, consequently more SOIT officers are female and male victims do not always want to talk to females (Female PC).

This demonstrates the importance of giving consideration to individual preference, since some male victims may prefer to speak with female officers,

feeling that females would be more sympathetic and understanding. It is therefore apparent that there is a need to have both male and female SOIT officers available in order to provide maximum care and comfort to men.

Importantly, 37 officers did not know whether the police adequately provided for male rape victims, with the majority in this category maintaining that they lacked the knowledge or experience of dealing with male rape cases. They frequently pointed out that they were not aware of current trends, identifying a need for training and improved awareness in this subject. At best, officers were able to identify that male victims should receive the same treatment as females:

On balance we are getting better - but what has to be improved is the understanding (Male DI).

We have trained male chaperones in recent years and this has probably improved the service to victims. I suspect there is still room for improvement (Female DI).

## 7.6 The Importance of Male Rape within the MPS

Respondents were asked whether male rape is considered to be an important issue within the police. This question was asked in order to discover whether or not there is a basis for the concerns of male victims that they will not be taken seriously by the police if they do decide to report an incident.

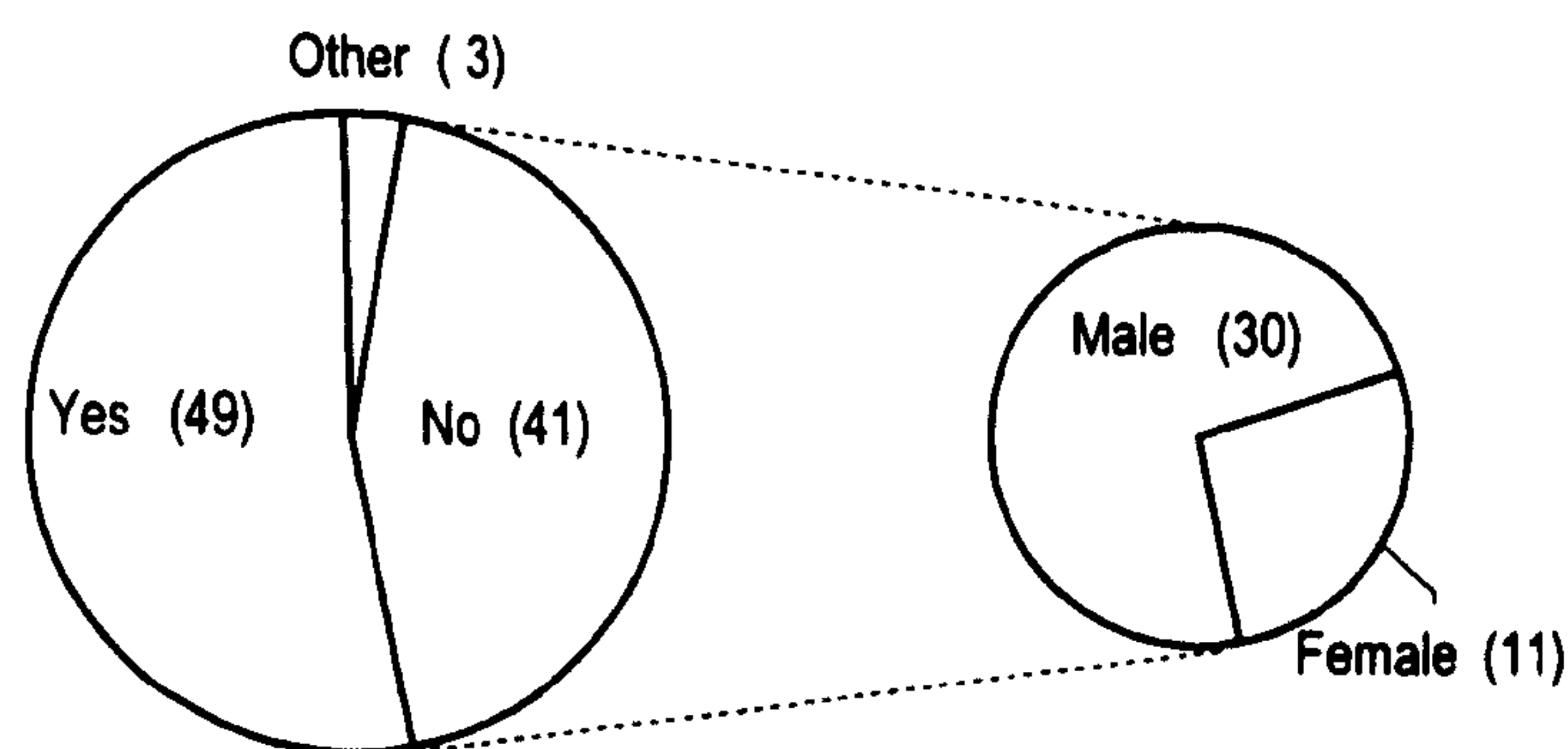


Figure 7-6: Do you think male rape is considered an important issue in the police?

The majority of respondents believed that male rape is considered to be an important issue within the police force, maintaining that all rape is serious and should be treated as such. The provisions of male SOIT officers, special training and proper investigations of allegations were suggested as indicators that the police do deal with male rape as an important issue. Some officers believed that it is:

Even more (important) than female rape because it is less widespread (Male PC).

Such a suggestion brings into question the extent of male rape, since no prevalence studies have been done to date, to ascertain whether or not it is less widespread than female rape. It is therefore not known whether male rape is reported even less than female rape, which could account for such perceptions. Additionally, as Gregory and Less (1999) have argued, it is unhelpful to suggest that rape is more important for one gender and not the other. Such suggestions illustrate the concerns that Gillespie (1996) raised in relation to male rape being regarded as more important than female rape (see chapter 4 for this discussion). It was also suggested that increased publicity has ensured that male rape is treated as important:

I don't believe the investigator etc would treat a victim of rape differently because of gender (Female PC).

A similar number of officers (41) asserted that the police did not consider male rape to be an important issue. Reasons for this included the fact that not many cases are reported to the police and that the offence therefore very rarely comes to light, keeping it as a low profile offence. One female officer also suggested that it is not considered as important among male officers. This has been illustrated through other comments made by male officers (see below). It was commonly asserted that there is a lack of awareness and understanding among officers, which could be overcome by training and education, which is seen to be seriously lacking at the moment. It is suggested that this lack of awareness belittles the problem, as the following quotes illustrate:

We don't join to deal with rape on females - rape on a male is not something that I will consider (Male PC).

Not enough people are aware of the problem. Education would overcome that problem (Male PS).

Few offences reported and not well publicised (Male PI).

Not much input i.e. training for ordinary PC's as opposed to specialised units. Could be better advertised i.e. posters, flyers etc. (Male PC).

Another male officer asserted that:

I believe male rape may be considered as a homosexual "he was asking for it" attitude (Male PC).

The importance of prevalence is constantly pointed out by officers, suggesting that male rape reporting needs to be improved in order for it to be taken more seriously:

I believe that each offence is taken seriously but there are other more prevalent crimes and more general issues of race and homophobic crime, which are issues for the force as a whole (Female PI).

This reiterates a similar suggestion that:

Concentration of efforts only on the criteria by which each force is judged to be effective by the Home Office result in many other problems being marginalised (Male PC).

In explaining this marginalisation, one officer asserted:

I believe male rape is not reported by the victims as they don't trust the police - Officers rarely deal with this crime as a result (Male PS).

Other male officers suggested that male rape is not considered to be an important issue within the police because there exist,

Bigoted views through the service (Male PC).

I think there may be a perception that it has been overblown by the gay lobby, to get attention and resources (Male DI).

It has also been emphasised that the male heterosexual police organisation has difficulty in dealing with such offences, which many men in the police organisation cannot accept or understand:

It is difficult for officers to see how an adult male can let himself get into a situation where he can get raped and be unable to physically protect himself (Female PC).

Of the three 'other' respondents, one did not know, but believed that it should be dealt with using the same discretion as in female rape cases. Another respondent in this category had,



Never come across it and wouldn't necessarily know how it's dealt with or treated (Female PC).

The third respondent commented:

It is something that I have not really considered. Therefore it is unlikely that many other officers feel any different unless they have been directly affected either through dealing with a victim or know one (Male PC).

In summary, officers' responses exposed the need for further training and awareness of male rape, this being stressed by the 37 respondents who indicated a lack of knowledge in this area. Although the provision of SOIT officers as well as chaperones was seen to improve the situation for victims, this was seen to be inadequate overall. More specialist training was also seen to be needed. Likewise, service provisions for both female and male victims were thought to be equal, although this was sometimes still seen to be inadequate for both genders. Male officers' homophobic attitudes were identified as key factors in preventing male rape from being taken seriously, as was the lack of reporting by victims. It is evident that many officers believed that this lack of reporting was due, in part, to such homophobic attitudes.

## 7.7 Police Perceptions on Reporting Levels

In order to ascertain their views on reporting levels, respondents were asked to consider whether or not, in their opinion, official police statistics reflect the reality of male rape.

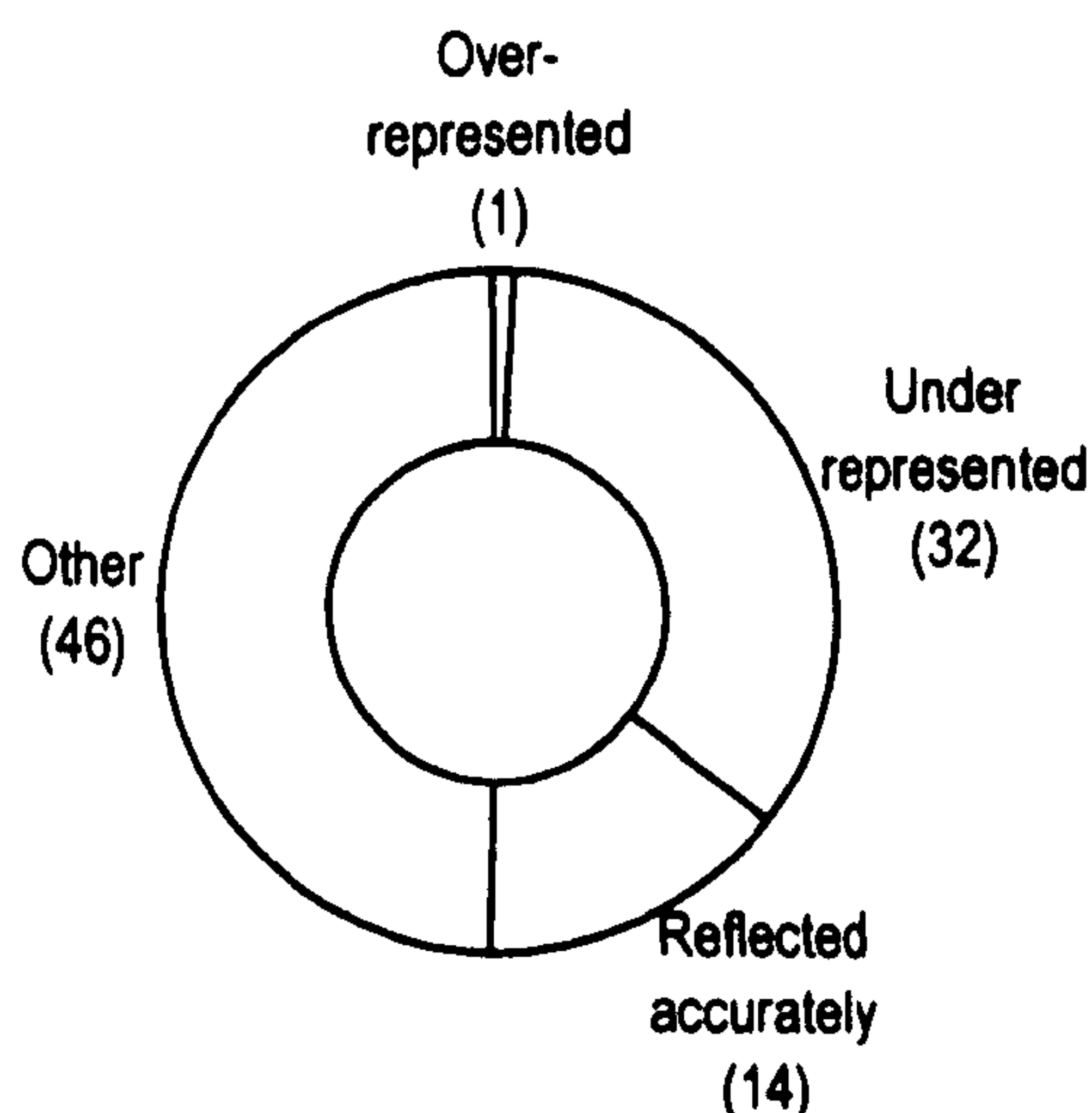


Figure 7-7: Police perceptions on reporting levels

One respondent believed that male rape is over-represented in official police statistics, stating:

I think in our eagerness to appear 'on-side' in this issue we will probably over-represent the occurrence of this offence (Male DI).

Thirty-two officers believed that male rape is underrepresented. The problem of under reporting male rape was frequently stated. A selection of quotes from officers who believed that male rape is under-represented in official statistics is given below:

Probably under-represented because I doubt that it is reported as often as it occurs (male taboo) (Female PC).

Social attitudes to male rape and a perception of homophobic attitudes in policies are likely to produce similar under reporting by men (Female PI).

The offence should be on an equal level in terms of seriousness as female rape but greater emphasis is still placed on female rape statistics (Male PS).

It was suggested by 14 respondents that statistics on male rape are accurate according to reporting rates and that any misrepresentation is therefore due to under-reporting. As one officer suggested:

As far as male rape is reported it is included in statistics. It is still fairly rare for it to be reported and very rare for a straight male to admit to (Female PC).

Turning to the 46 officers who answered 'other,' their answers demonstrated that they were not familiar with statistics on male rape. This represents a significant number of officers who feel that they do not know about either the subject area or the reporting levels. Respondents were also aware that many cases of male rape might not be reported to the police, highlighting the hidden figure of male rape.

Of the six officers who did not offer an answer to this question, one officer felt he could not comment without having police statistics present. However, he added:

Police statistics are bias, (sic) false and designed to improve the public's perception of the police (Male PC).

## 7.8 The Treatment of Male and Female Victims

Respondents were asked to consider how male victims of rape are treated in comparison to female victims of rape, in order to discover officers' perceptions concerning any differences in treatment.

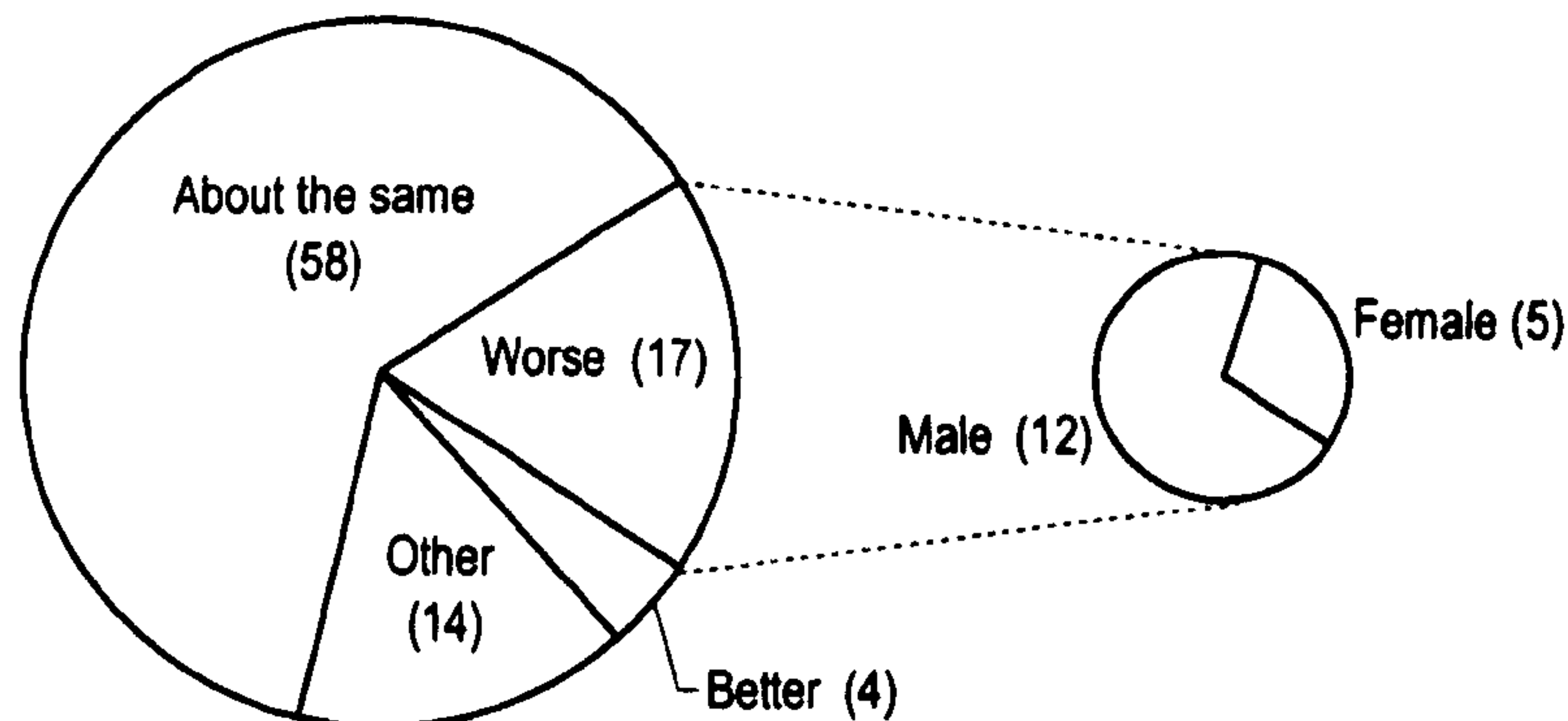


Figure 7-8: Comparing treatment of male and female victims of rape.

On the basis of the one and only case he had encountered, one male officer believed that male victims are treated better than female victims, because they are more demanding:

On the occasion I dealt with, the victim was probably more demanding than a female victim (Male DI).

Another officer suggested:

We are probably trying harder with men (Male PS).

Similarly, other officers suggested:

Even more (better) than females because it is less widespread (Male PC).

Because they are few compared to female rapes. They are treated differently because it is so rare (Female PC).

Such positions are reminiscent of the concerns identified by Gillespie (1996) in relation to female rape being marginalised by male rape (see chapter 4).

Seventeen officers believed that male rape victims are treated worse than female rape victims by the police, identifying as a problem the fact that many officers are unsympathetic and do not take male rape seriously.

One male officer stated that he was:

Unsure if officers would know how to cope with the victim (Male AO).

Other male officers commonly suggested:

Unsympathetic attitude by majority of officers (Male PC).

Others suggested that males were treated worse than females:

Because of the nature of the offence and the general homophobic attitudes of police officers (Male PC).

I am unable to judge properly but I feel the perception would be worse and certainly the investigation of rapes is fundamentally geared towards women (Male DC).

It doesn't have the same sense of gravity as female rape (Male DC).

The lack of police understanding was also frequently mentioned:

Lack of understanding by the people dealing (with the cases) (Male PC).

One female officer asserted that:

There is a definite problem with this male issue. A man is a man and should be able to look after himself. This is how I feel policemen see it. Therefore little sympathy (Female PC).

Other explanations were provided:

Because historically we tended to treat females very poorly, there has been a lot of bad publicity and we had to improve our service. Male rape is still fairly low profile in the public perception, and probably does not rate highly the public's sympathy (Male PI).

Although things are improving, I feel there is still room for improvement and officers of grass roots level probably through

ignorance more than anything else are unaware of the importance attached to the treatment of victims and education is required (Male PS).

Lack of training and awareness among officers was again identified as a common problem in dealing with male rape:

Officers are unsure of how to deal with the victims possibly through lack of awareness and training (Male PI).

It is difficult to gauge a male reaction to something as serious as rape. Possibly there is more than an element of doubt when dealing with the first complaint made by a male (Female PC).

Over half of respondents felt that male and female victims are treated the same by the police, with the majority highlighting the professionalism of SOIT officers and chaperones, in dealing with both male and female officers equally. Some officers used their experiences of male rape cases to highlight that all victims of rape are treated equally,

I was a SOIT officer and dealt with male rape victims and treated the victims the same as a female victim (Male PS).

Having worked with SOIT officers I believe they act very professionally and don't treat any victim male or female any differently (Male PS).

Others pointed out that the act of rape was equally horrendous, regardless of the sex of the victim and hoped that they would be treated the same. Some officers suggested that the police deal with all rape victims professionally:

Because we as police officers treat everyone fairly and professionally (Male PC).

I have seen officers deal with this on division and their attitude is very good, their approach very professional (Female DC).

However, other officers pointed out that the attitude of officers can be problematic:

...General attitudes of persons (police officers) feelings may give male rape victims a bad impression (Female PC).

While another officer suggested that the way a male victim is treated is,

... dependent on where it is dealt with and by whom (Male PS).

Another point of concern was raised in a comment made by one male officer:

In the one case I've dealt with there was a bit of sniggering but everyone dealt generally professionally as in any other case (Male PC).

Among the critical comments was the following from a female officer:

I believe in my experience as a police officer, victims of rape are not treated very well. I'm not SOIT trained but have been left on occasions with female victims of sexual assaults/rape for a considerable length of time before a SOIT officer/FME/Suite can be arranged. The victim is then passed onto another police officer and any trust gained has to be regained as they are passed on (Female PC).

Of the remaining 14 officers, most did not have any experience of dealing with male victims, although they hoped that victims would be treated equally. One officer commented:

...Never came across a case-However, I suspect they are treated equally as they would soon be out of a job if they let their beliefs treat victims differently (Male PC)

It is evident therefore that over half of the officers believed that male and female victims are treated equally by the police. Problems identified in relation to poor treatment of victims included lack of empathy and understanding by officers as well as homophobic attitudes, although many officers believed that the police were professional enough not to allow their personal beliefs and ideas to influence their judgement as to why the rape occurred. It is important to note that personal beliefs surrounding male rape can and will contribute to the manner in which victims are received by the police, and the sniggering identified by one officer in this section evidences this. Attitudes deeply embedded within the minds of some male officers need to be challenged. It is also important to note that both male and female officers identified male officers as having masculine ideals, which prevent them from taking male rape victims seriously. The masculine occupational culture of the police has been discussed in chapter 4 and the questionnaire findings presented here illustrate the problems of such a culture when it comes to dealing with male rape victims.

## 7.9 Legal Recognition of Male Rape: The Impact of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

Respondents were asked to consider whether or not the legal recognition of male rape has significantly improved the situation for male rape victims. This question was asked in order to ascertain the impact that such recognition has had on the work of the police.

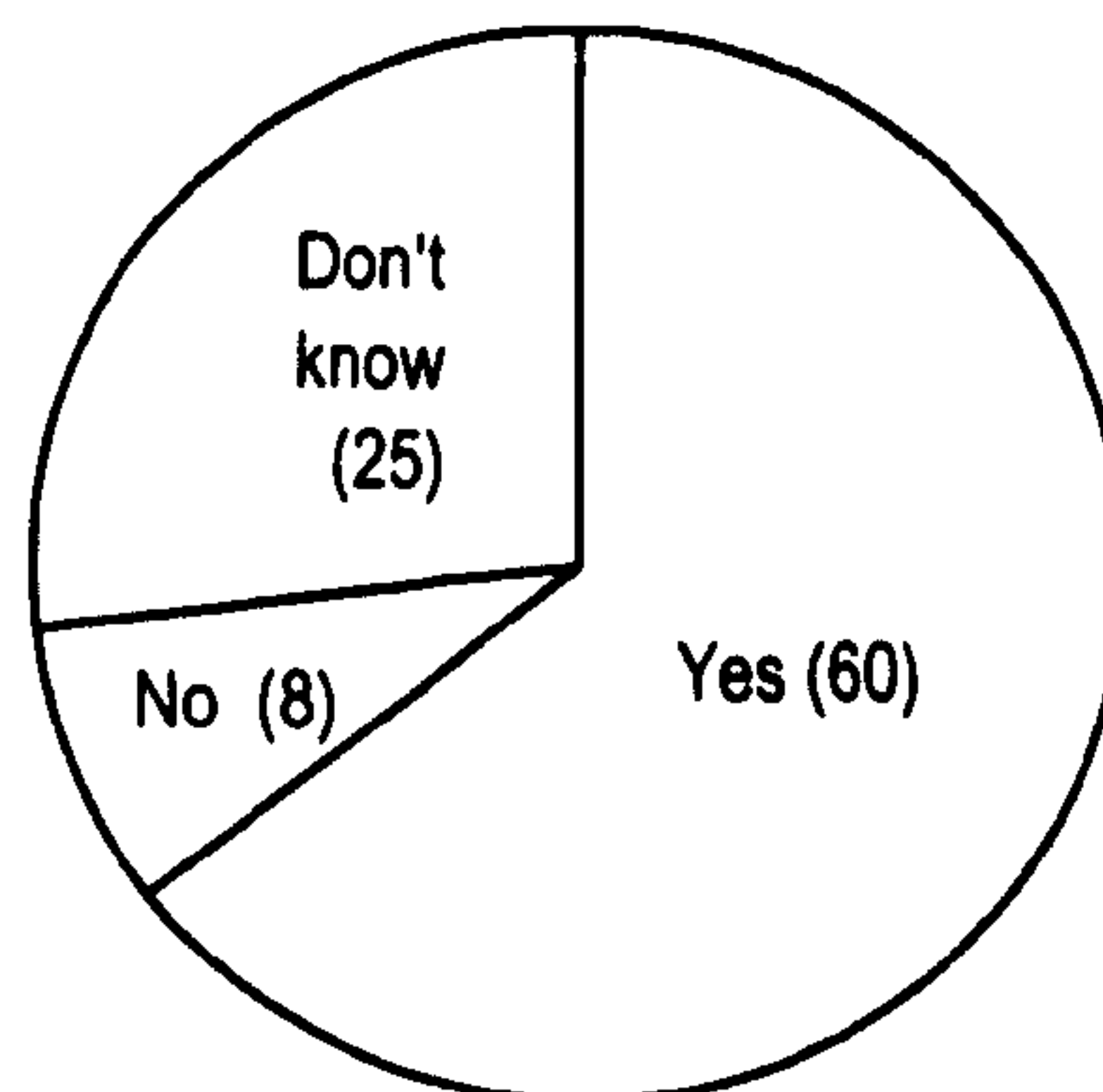


Figure 7-9: Do you think the legal recognition of male rape has significantly improved the situation for male rape victims?

Sixty respondents believed that the legal recognition of male rape has significantly improved the situation for male rape victims, many suggesting that it was long overdue. Some officers remarked that legal recognition has,

...raised public awareness of the problem (Male PS).

Although it is recognised that,

...public knowledge and perception is not good on this point (Male DC).

But that it is now,

Taken more seriously (Female PC).

It was also believed that legal recognition has helped reporting rates because,

It does appear to have assisted more people to complain (Male PS).

...less stigma attached to reporting (Female DS).

There is greater willingness to report offences (Male DI).

Victims will know it's being treated seriously as a crime (Female PC).

Some officers observed that the offence of rape is now more clearly defined and regarded more seriously:

The backing of the law enhances the situation although any subsequent lack of appropriate sentence will undermine its credibility (Male PS).

The offence of rape carries a heavier "weight" than indecent assault and buggery. It now means that male victims are dealt with the same way female rape victims are and they are taken seriously by those who before may not have wanted to believe (Female DC).

Improved awareness must improve care (Male PC).

More positive response to allegations (Male DI).

Other officers attributed legal changes to,

...recent media hype and an increase in pressure from gay activists demanding recognition of crimes against men. Probably a knock on effect whether straight or gay. (Male PC)

Of the eight officers who believed that legal recognition of male rape has done little to improve the situation for male victims, it was suggested that public attitudes have not changed. The affects of this throughout the criminal justice system were also highlighted, as the following examples illustrate:

It is still largely unreported and I do not believe that the CPS/courts are sympathetic to victims (Male DCI).

By nature juries have difficulty in accepting this as a crime! It is similar to female rape in a domestic situation (Male PS).

The legal system still struggles to come to terms with 'date rape' with females. There is a long way to go with male rape (Male DI).

This is a matter that receives far less coverage than it should by national press/media (Male PC).

Males are not aware of the legal changes until rape becomes a reality for them i.e. until they've been raped the situation is not going to affect them (Female PC).

Another officer mistakenly asserted that:

Buggery probably catered for the legal recognition in the first place (Male DI).



Of the 25 officers who responded 'don't know', one officer suggested that legal changes have not significantly improved the situation for male victims. Others reported that they had no experience of dealing with male victims while others still were not familiar with male rape as a subject. Another officer commented:

I think the acts to deal with sexual offences against males are weak (Male PC).

Some officers highlighted the lack of reporting:

Having only dealt with one victim of male rape I do not feel enough male victims are coming forward to report the assaults on them (Female PC).

The majority of officers believed that legal changes have significantly improved the situation for male victims since these have given recognition to the problem and demonstrated that male rape is now taken seriously, thereby encouraging males to come forward and report incidents to the police. Of those who believed that the situation has not been improved for male victims, some felt that the Crown Prosecution Service/Courts/Juries were not sympathetic towards male victims since they have very little understanding of this offence. Parallels were also drawn with the way in which 'date rape' is regarded by these services, suggesting that male rape is not seen as a crime.

## 7.10 A Case for Greater Awareness

Respondents were asked whether or not they believed there is a need for more awareness of male rape.

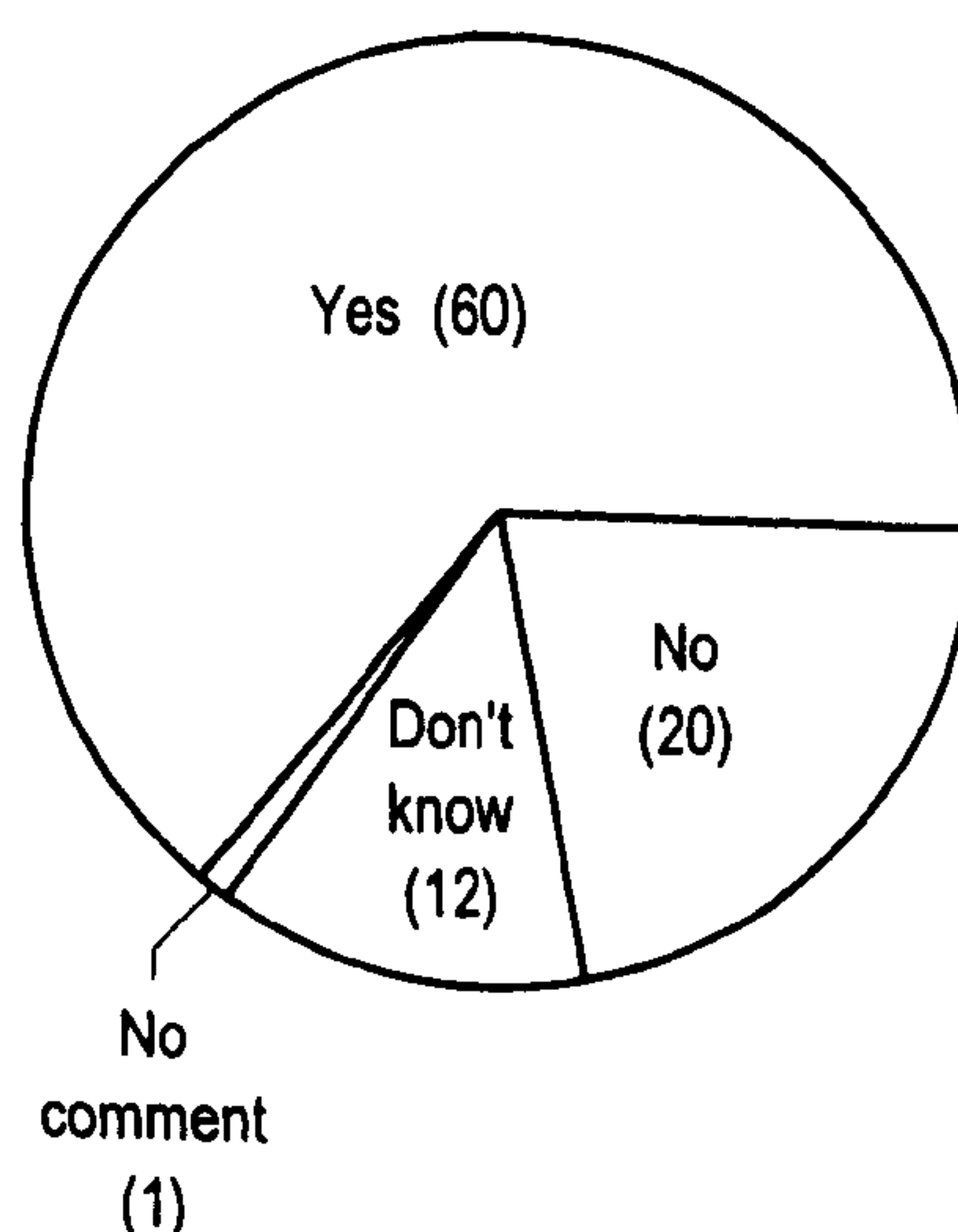


Figure 7-10: Do you think there is a need for more awareness of male rape?

Over half of respondents believed that there is a need for more awareness of male rape, both within society and within the police service. Reasons given included the belief that greater awareness would encourage victims to report to the police, as the following examples illustrate:

(There are) obviously more male rapes occur than are actually reported to police. If we can make people aware that it is happening and to come forward to report it, then in turn more people will become aware that there may be a problem (Female DC).

... because your average citizen is not made aware of this crime. It's a bit like domestic violence towards men (Female PC).

Still a very taboo subject that many people believe does not happen (Male PS).

Other officers identified their personal lack of knowledge/awareness of male rape as the following examples illustrate:

I have heard no reports/statistics relating to this issue recently. It is not an issue widely reported in the press (Male PC).

It is only since having this questionnaire that I was fully aware of the changes in law etc. (Male PC).

Male rape among male officers is a sensitive issue and has stigma attached. However, it is not something that is encountered frequently (Male PC).

I don't know as much as I think I would need to know if I had to treat a male rape victim (Male PC).

Because the majority of males including myself believe it will never happen to them (Male PC).

Officers are unsure of how to deal with the victims possibly through lack of awareness and training (Male Inspector).

Some of my colleagues have received no training in this and their attitudes may be unenlightened because of this (Female PC).

In terms of improving awareness, one officer suggested:

I think the training video, which shows the American PC recounting his rape should be widely shown (Female DC).

This refers to a training video used by the MPS for chaperones and SOIT's. The video presents a well-built police officer who discusses his rape experience. The

video challenges many male rape myths and illustrates the important point that anybody (including police officers themselves) can be raped.

It was also observed that greater awareness would improve service to victims:

I think there is a need for greater recognition in society that such offences can occur and that they are not an indication that a victim is homosexual (Female PI).

There is nothing out there for men - and if it is it certainly doesn't get the publicity female rape does (Male PC).

It is only recently that men have come forward. It is not acceptable to suffer in silence (Female PC).

Awareness of rape within the so-called 'gay' community is very weak (Male PC).

Of the 20 officers who felt that there was not a need for more awareness of male rape, some suggested that because of the low reporting levels, male rape is a very low priority and does not therefore need more attention. It was also suggested that this would change only when reporting levels increased. As one officer asserted:

I think we are all aware of what it is - Under-reporting is due to male victims failing to come forward to police - Not because police are not recording it correctly (Female PC).

It may be argued that while such a statement is accurate in its belief, it poses the question of why male victims fail to come forward and report to the police, with previous discussions highlighting that this lack of reporting is partly attributable to police attitudes and responses towards male rape.

It was also believed that awareness levels of male rape are comparable to female rape, (which are thought to be high). Some officers in this group suggested that the police are aware of this problem and the legal issues connected to male rape, and that public awareness is as good as it could be.

In terms of training, officers in this group suggested that:

Sufficient training is given for the amount reported (Male DCI).

Another officer commented:

I feel that the awareness level is good but the change is needed in people's attitude towards the offence (Male PS).

Twelve respondents were undecided about the need to increase awareness about the issue of male rape. Questions arose about where, (if any) awareness needed to be increased, whether among the police or the general public. Others in this group were unaware of how much the public already knows about male rape. A common statement made was,

I don't know how widespread the problem is (Male PC).

One officer asserted that:

You must be careful that by promoting awareness you don't make the offence more prevalent (Male PS).

Similarly, one other officer questioned,

Is it really happening enough to scare the public on yet another issue? (Male PC).

Another officer stated:

I am undecided. I already think the media contains too much about gay issues generally. I get tired of being preached to about such issues constantly (Male PI).

Of those who believed that perhaps greater awareness of male rape was needed, it was suggested that as well as the police and the public, educational institutions could be targeted. It was also suggested that any awareness raising should consider all rape victims. One officer offered no response to this question.

Overall, the majority of respondents expressed a need for further awareness of male rape in the police as well as the public, in order to eradicate the taboo and stigma attached to it. Officers observed that many of them would not know how to deal with male victims, identifying a need for better training and information. Likewise, officers identified a need to promote services that are already available to male victims. It was felt that improvements in these areas would encourage male victims to report cases.

Of those who believed that there is no need for greater awareness, some suggested that training is sufficient, given the low levels in reporting. Greater awareness and understanding of the issues would give the police a more proactive role in encouraging reporting levels.

## 7.11 Perceptions of Trauma

Respondents were asked to consider the levels of trauma they believed males suffer as a result of rape, in comparison to the trauma suffered by female victims. This question aimed to explore the prevalence of rape myths in relation to both male and female victims and the relative seriousness with which officers regard both crimes.

Seventeen respondents believed that male victims suffer greater trauma than female victims because of issues around sexuality and masculinity. The following quotes are typical examples of the beliefs of this group:

The suffering will be more in my opinion simply because if a victim is not a homosexual, the attack could severely damage his male perception of himself and he may question his own masculinity. Females don't have this added trauma (Female PC).

Especially if male is heterosexual must be more traumatic (Female PC).

The vagina is a made receptive (sic) of the penis- the anus has thin walls and doesn't receive foreign objects. Also AIDS is common in homosexuals (Male PC).

Greater social stigma attached to male rape (Male PS).

Female rape is degrading. Male rape goes beyond degrading because few people will help a male victim - He will be less inclined to seek help (Male PC).

Because men are supposed to be stronger than women (Female PC).

I think a straight male would suffer worst trauma due to the inevitable homophobic slur as well as the assault and the trauma of "not defending yourself so you must have wanted it" (Male PC).

On top of the 'dirtiness' feeling etc. a male will have loss of male ego etc. (Male DI).

The implication that males suffer more trauma than females for the reasons given above, seem to support Gillespie's (1996) concern that male rape will be regarded as more traumatic than female rape. For Gillespie, this would consequently result in resources and awareness-raising being dominated by male, rather than female victims, which she suggests, marginalizes female victims and their experiences (discussed in chapter 4). Feminist writer, Almanac (2000) points out that rape is an act which affects both men and women and that policies

for improving services should be inclusive of this fact. Furthermore, as the findings demonstrate, the majority of respondents recognised that female victims suffer the same levels of trauma in rape cases.

Two officers believed that male victims suffer less trauma than female victims although both of these respondents suggested that each case was individual, with some victims suffering the effects of rape more than others. One of the officers in this group was a female PC while the other was a male sergeant.

Just over half of the officers believed that both male and female victims suffer the same levels of trauma in rape cases. To summarise the views of this group, these respondents believed that rape is equally traumatic for all victims, regardless of gender and sexuality.

It was suggested that the stigma and shame attached to male rape might compound feelings of loss of masculinity in male victims, suggesting that male victims may suffer different types of trauma compared to female victims. These respondents recognised that each case is individual and that each response to the rape would therefore be unique, regardless of gender. Four officers did not offer any comment. Eighteen respondents were categorised separately since they were undecided in their views. It was clear that respondents in this group recognised that each victim would react differently. Some respondents were of the opinion that heterosexual males were likely to suffer more trauma than homosexual males since they believed that the former would find the rape a direct challenge to their manliness and would be more shocked in a rape situation and therefore suffer more trauma than homosexual victims. The research on victims' experiences in chapter 8 examines trauma resulting from male rape. It is important to recognise such trauma, and work towards providing better support for all victims of rape.

## **7.12 Gender Differences in Reporting Rape**

Respondents were asked to consider differences in reporting rates between male and female victims of rape in order to explore ideas about under-reporting and reasons for this.

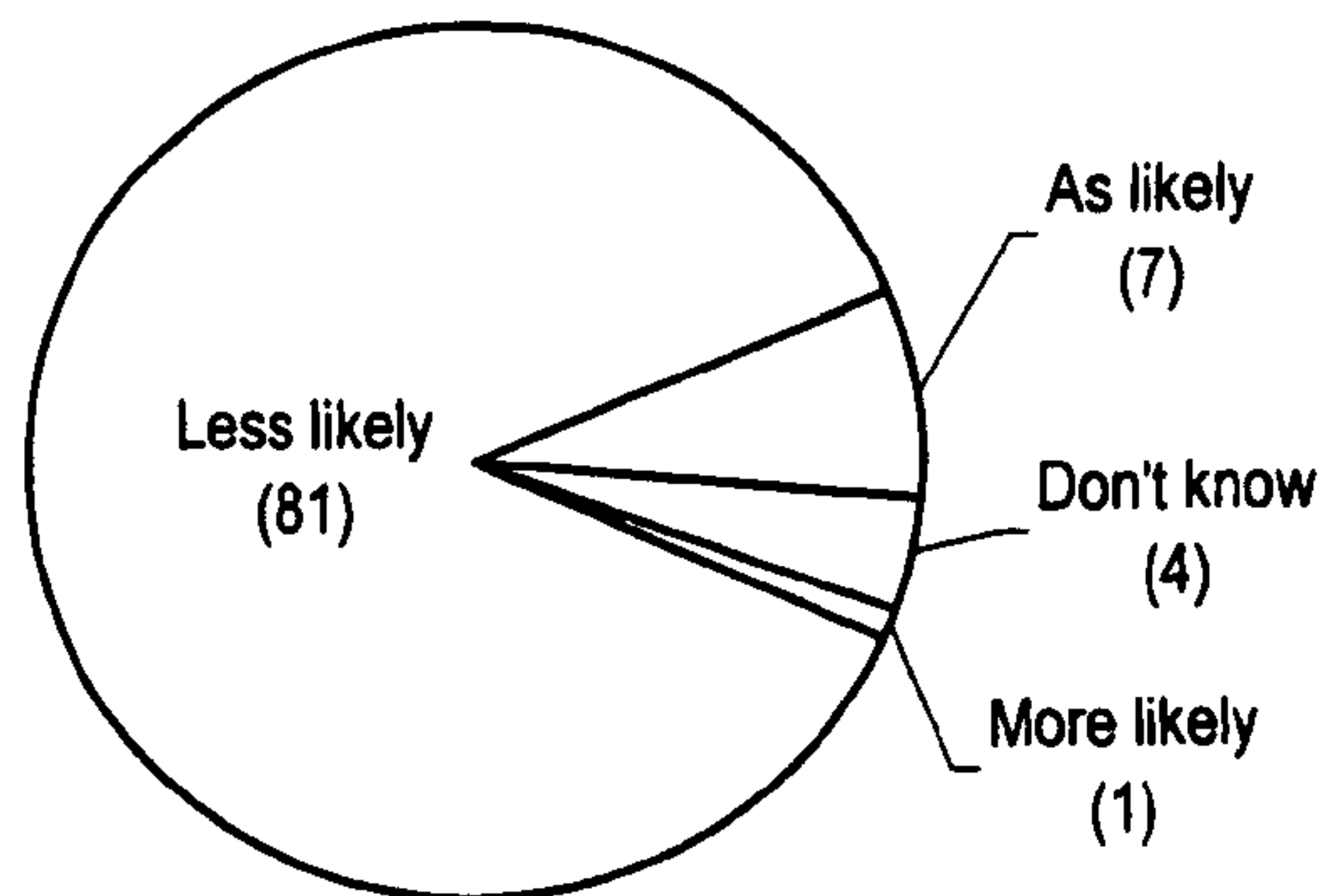


Figure 7-11: The likeliness of male victims reporting rape, compared to female victims.

Only one male PC believed that male victims of rape are possibly more likely to report rape to the police than female victims, stating that:

This may be a very ignorant view but I would imagine - I don't know - that a lot of rapes happen in the gay community. Gay people I would imagine - once again I don't know- are a far less prejudiced group of people than any number of equivalent heterosexual men. I therefore think they would be more open to talk and conscious of what had happened than females. I also think they would be less tolerable (sic.) about the incident than females because of a. their open-mindedness or b. sheer repulsion (sic.) (Male PC).

Four respondents did not know and only seven respondents believed that male victims are as likely as female victims to report rape to the police. Statements included:

It depends on the individual (Male PS).

I think the same fear and prejudices act on victims of both sexes (Male DI).

...It must take a very brave person to go ahead with it (reporting). It doesn't just finish with the police it has to go to court and I think this stops lots of people going ahead with reporting (Female PC).

It is not as well publicised (Male PS).

Both sexes fear the same when the attacker is known to them, in my opinion, i.e. did I ask for it? Will anyone believe me? (Female PC).

The vast majority of officers believed that males were less likely to report rape to the police with major emerging themes of stigma, shame, embarrassment, guilt,

as well as questions surrounding sexuality and police attitudes. The most common reason identified for this was the social stigma attached to male rape (24 respondents gave this reason) as the following quotes show:

General attitudes that the public have and what people's reaction to him would be - stigma. Due to (some cases) ejaculation after penetration men may feel he is to blame and that perhaps he enjoyed it! All to do with involuntary reaction (Female PC).

Because of the added stigma of it having been 'gay' sex (Male PC).

Because of the stigmas attached by society and because of the attitudes of some police officers. The Met. does not publicise enough what it can do for male victims of rape so therefore they are less likely to report rape compared to female victims (Female DC).

There is more of a stigma attached to a male who has been raped. Several I have known of are family men who have visited "cottages" and been assaulted. They could never disclose this (Male PS).

Social stigma - feeling of perhaps being labelled homosexual when heterosexual (Male PC).

Less due to the stigma of male rape, men being able to 'defend themselves' and telling police. Will they understand how he feels? (Male PS).

Still stigma - overcoming problems women have faced before - not being believed, shame etc. (Female PC).

Twelve of the 81 in this group identified Victims' fear/belief that the police would not respond sympathetically to their situation as these quotes show:

The problem still has a great social stigma and victims may feel that they would not be readily believed (Male PC).

Due to the possible insensitivities of police (mostly male officers) (Male PC).

The fear of having to say they allowed somebody to do this to them (Male PI).

It takes a police officer with particular skill to want to deal with a male victim. The majority of officers would want nothing to do with it. The concept of male rape is disgusting. All this and more will be going through the mind of the male victim. He will feel a great rage that he could not adequately defend himself. Also shame for the same reason (Male PC).

Police is a "very macho" type organisation (Male PS).

...fear of being laughed at by police and not taken seriously (Male PC).



Probably expect the macho police to not take it seriously. Females are worried about how they will be treated so males probably would expect ridicule and would fear aspects of their masculinity to be challenged, covertly if not openly (Male PC).

Lack of police understanding, which might reflect public perception and lack of legal awareness. The confidentiality aspect is bound to play a part (Male DI).

Perhaps victims of male rape have a perception that their reception at a police station would be hostile - I think they are probably wrong (Male PI).

Eight identified victims' feelings of shame:

Males are more likely to feel ashamed-they've lost their 'masculinity' particularly if heterosexual (Male PC).

Embarrassment-Ashamed for not being able to defend themselves. (Female DS).

I think that a lot of men could not handle the perceived "shame" and any possible conclusions that other people could draw (Male PC).

Another eight suggested feelings of guilt, for not reporting to the police as the following quote illustrates:

Due to the added feeling "I should have been able to stop it". I also have heard that victims suffer involuntary erections. If this is true, the guilt of thinking it was in any way "enjoyed" must be awful (Female DC).

Six officers pointed to the victims' embarrassment about the rape:

I think a lot of men are still too embarrassed to come forward. Male pride and ego comes into it (Female DC).

Men may be more embarrassed and feel more stigmatised as a victim of this crime (Male DC).

The remaining 23 officers in this group offered a variety of explanations including the following:

Homosexuals are promiscuous by nature and are more likely to report. Heterosexuals are less likely as they may be thought of as homosexual (Male PC).

It is less natural for a man to be the receiver of sex than a woman, traditionally, although attitudes are changing (Male PS).

I would imagine most males would never want it known that his anus had been penetrated (Male DC).

Especially when it is a stranger attack on a heterosexual male (Male DC).

Male attitudes differ greatly despite current political correctness (Male PC).

Female rape has been catered for, for a number of years there are procedures established. Cases have gone to court and successful prosecutions have attracted noticeable publicity this has encouraged more women to report. Men have a more macho image and it is less likely for a man to report a rape as it is new territory and socially less acceptable. If a woman reports a rape she could be condemned for a promiscuous life style. A man would be condemned as being gay, which is more likely to prevent reports (Male PC).

Because of it being less heard of than female rapes. And it is ...most unreported crime (Female PC).

They do not think they will be believed as it has arisen out of a situation that they should not have got into or one that has been misread. They tend to feel more ashamed and also the majority of police are male and 'canteen culture' will know outside the police - this may put male victims off coming forward (Female PC).

Many reasons- but the main one being, education in society, fear of being laughed at by police and not taken seriously. Not much input i.e. training for ordinary PC's as opposed to specialised units. Could be better advertised i.e. posters, flyers etc. (Male PC).

In this section the majority of officers identified important reasons why male victims are less likely to report rape. Issues around the social stigma of male rape were seen to be important in contributing to feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment. These, together with victim's fear of police responses and lack of empathy, were seen to be factors that make male victims less likely to report to the police. These will be explored further in the victim data (chapter 8).

### **7.13 Homosexuality and Male Rape: an Examination of Popular Myths, Prejudice and Fear**

Another important theme to explore was the existence of rape myths with regards to sexuality. Respondents were asked a series of questions to identify prejudice and myths held in this category. The first was to consider whether or not undue attention on male rape would encourage homosexual behaviour.

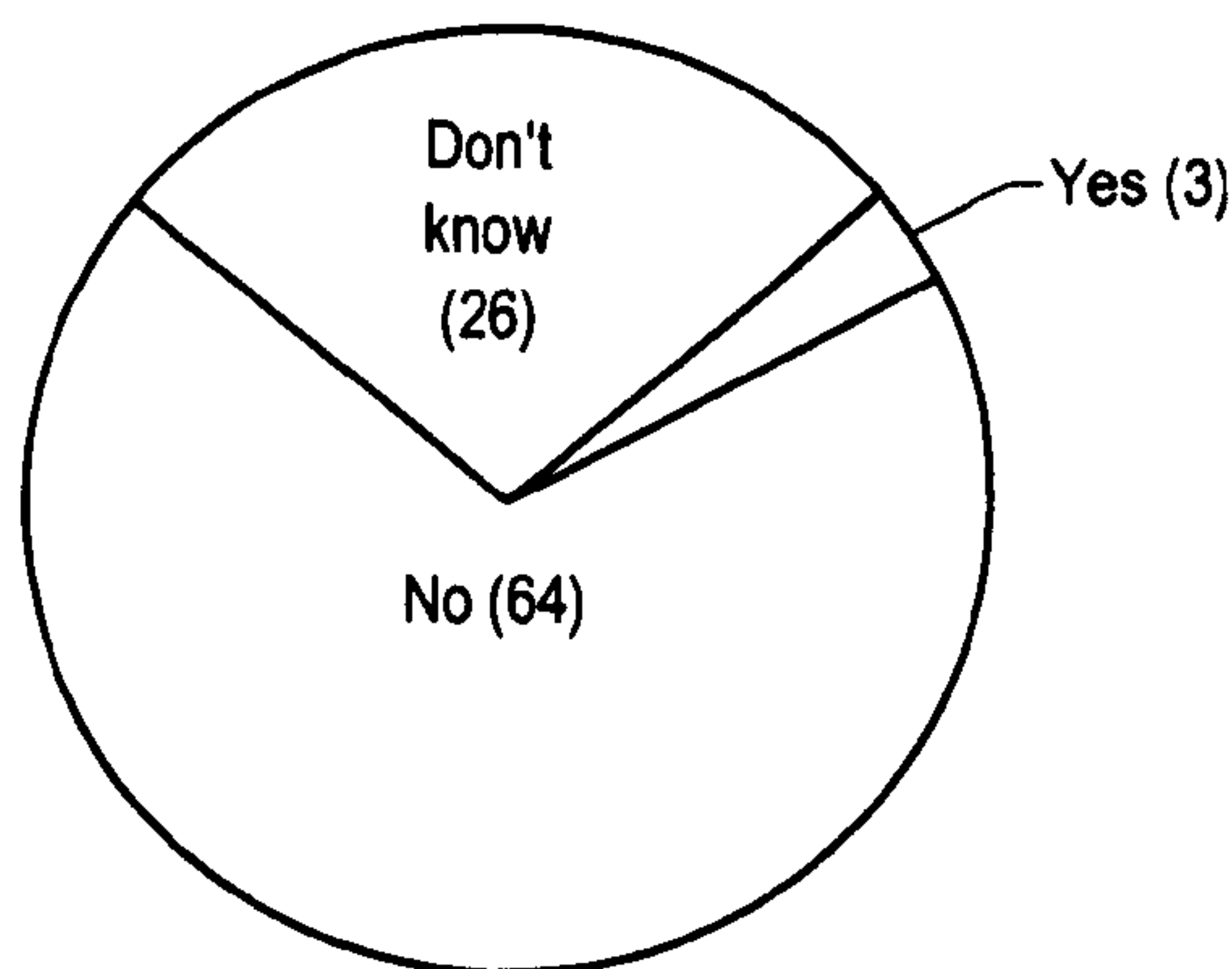


Figure 7-12: Do you think undue attention on male rape would encourage homosexual behaviour?

Three respondents believed that undue attention on male rape would encourage homosexual behaviour, suggesting,

Homosexuals would report more rapes as they are (a) more likely to be raped (b) enjoy the attention and drama (c) may be antipolice regarding police as homophobic (Male PC).

In my view it would put such behaviour on a legitimate basis (I am well aware that it is not offence to be homosexual) but as a father I am concerned that as a society we seem to promote 'unconventional' life styles (Male PI).

The majority of officers believed that undue attention on male rape would not encourage homosexual behaviour but would instead support victims to come forward and report to the police, as the following sample of quotes illustrate:

It has nothing to do with homosexuality-it is a crime of violence (Male PC).

If it was brought more into the open more victims would report and this coupled with better training/understanding with the police service would increase chances of arresting offenders. This would have a deterrent effect (Male PI).

I believe this would only encourage victims of this crime to report this offence to police (Male PS).

Twenty-six officers did not know.

## 7.14 Who are the Victims of Male Rape?

Officers were also asked who they believed are most likely to become victims of rape. This question was again included to test the popular myth that male rape is a problem affecting the homosexual community only. As such, the question was also used to explore the level of awareness of male rape with regards to sexuality.

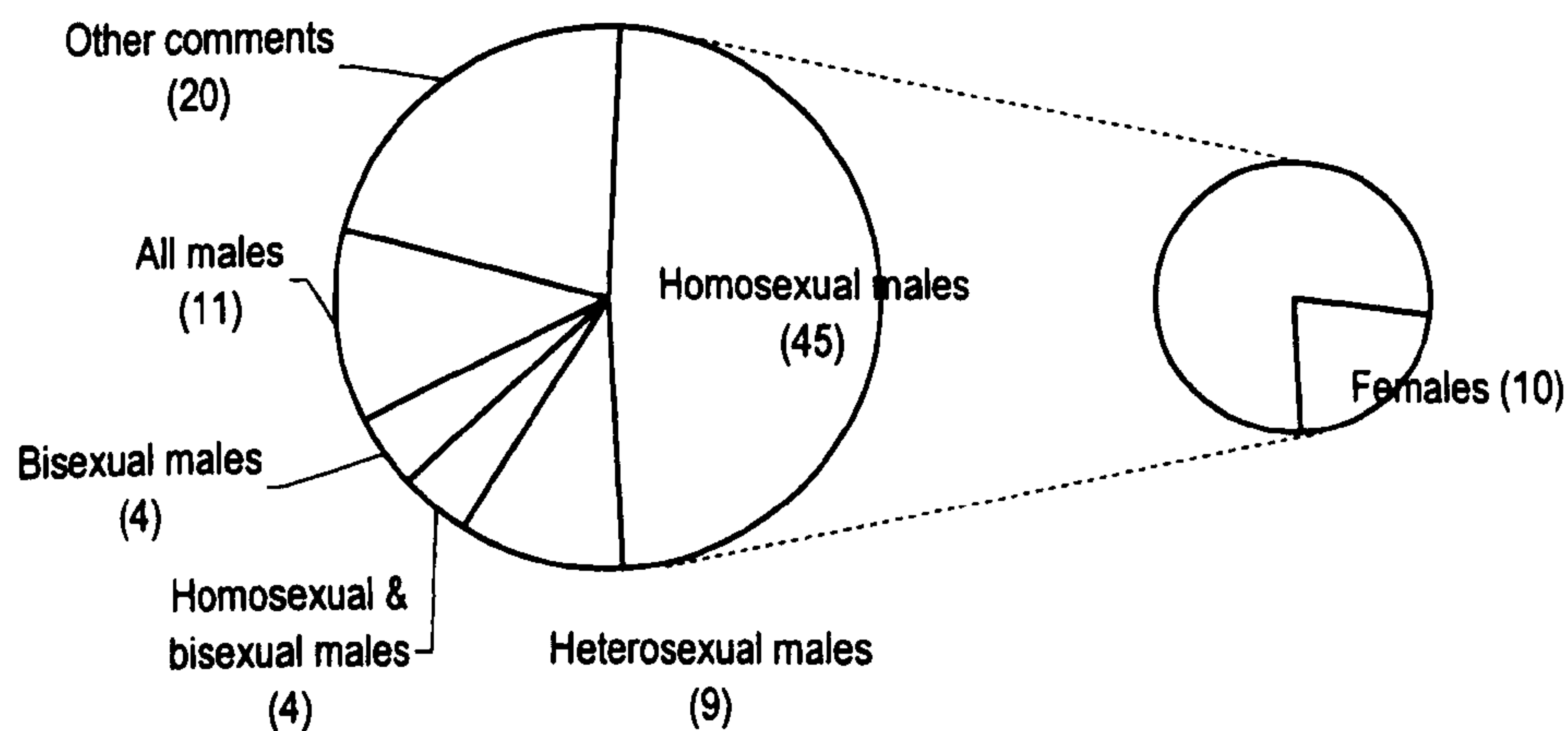


Figure 7-13: Who do you think are most likely to become victims of male rape?

Nine respondents believed that heterosexual males are most likely to become victims of male rape, as the following quotes illustrate:

I think there are less homosexual rapes than heterosexual (Female PC).

Because of the 'power' aspect of the offence there would be less of that feeling if the victim was used to the act! (Male PC).

From personal experience, the victims I dealt with were both 'heterosexual' (Male PS).

Articles I have read and programmes I have seen indicate that it is mostly heterosexual males that are raped (Female PC).

Just under half the respondents believed that homosexuals are most likely to become victims of male rape. It was commonly believed that homosexuals were most likely to be in situations/locations where such attacks occur, increasing their

vulnerability. The following quotes are typical of the views of officers in this group:

Homosexual males rather than heterosexual males are far more likely to be in environments where a desire for homosexual sex is wanted and therefore are at greater risk of rape (Male PC).

There is probably more non consensual sex i.e. rape among homosexuals as homosexuals are more likely to be in situations where other males, if inclined to assault would be able to take advantage of vulnerability (Male PC).

They mix with other homosexual males who may 'go too far' just like women get 'date raped' after nights out at clubs etc. EXCEPT in prison/care homes when the victim may be any vulnerable male and the attacker a dominant male (Female PC).

Due to likelihood of misreading situation or actually getting into a situation. Also the fact that if someone is going out specifically to rape a male they are most likely to find 'friendly' males to approach in a homosexual environment i.e. gay pub/club/known gay haunt (Female PC).

The majority of officers in this group also believed that homosexual males are most vulnerable because assailants are attracted to them, suggesting that assailants are also homosexual, as the following quotes indicate:

Homosexuals attract each other, frequent areas, clubs and are out late at night when rapes are likely to occur (Male PC).

Most other men would be repulsed by the thought of sex with another male (Male PS).

Because I believe that homosexual males are attracted to other homosexual males (Male PC).

Homosexuals engage in anal intercourse and the word 'no' may be mistaken for pleasure etc. -this explains why so many heterosexual rapes (male v female) remain unsolved or no crimed (Male PC).

It was also suggested that male rape is about sexual preference, contradicting the theoretical perspectives presented in chapter 4, and supported by research studies such as Groth and Burgess (1980) (chapter 2) that rape is an act of power and dominance:

The assailants would be more attracted to this group but any of the groups could be vulnerable depending on likes/dislikes of the rapist (Male PI).

Other officers in this category drew parallels with female rape, suggesting that homosexuals were most likely to encounter date/acquaintance rape:

I would imagine date rape amongst gay men is just as prevalent as with women (Male PC).

Males are more likely to lower their defences in these situations in the same way as a lot of female rapes occur after initial meetings in social circumstances. Also if there is 'female date rape' then there must be the same for men (Female DC).

Some officers also believed non-homosexuals could also become victims of male rape:

I am aware that attacks have been made on heterosexual and I guess bisexual males in the past. This is a crime against a male. No badges worn to tell the suspect what sexual orientation they are (sic) (Male PI).

I think they are most likely to be victims but I believe that they are not the only victims. As I said previously, I don't feel a homosexual male would report it (Male PS).

Promiscuity among homosexuals was also provided as a reason why homosexuals were seen to be more likely victims of male rape:

Homosexuals are very promiscuous (Male DC).

The 'gay' community is known to be over friendly and very open which could lead people into dangerous positions, which they would never have dreamed of (Male PC).

The findings from this question demonstrate prejudice and misconceptions about male rape and highlight the need to change attitudes and challenge such assumptions, which has been a key argument of this thesis.

Four officers suggested that bisexual males were most likely to become victims of male rape although they did not give reasons for their thoughts.

A further four officers believed that homosexual and bisexual males were most likely to become victims of rape with one officer stating that this was common for date rape, while two other officers in this group asserted:

Because of the kind of people they mix with-Dark commons, wooded areas, away from public eyes, are ideal locations for rapists lying in the wait, knowing the victim is unlikely to report the offence (Male PC).

I think it is less likely that a heterosexual male would frequent particular locations, where such offences are more likely. I am also

aware that bisexual males are treated with suspicion by homosexual males (Male PI).

Eleven respondents recognised that all males can become victims of rape.

Typical statements from this group were:

Any male- I think that male rape has no individual circumstance. It could happen to any victim who is unfortunate enough to be in a certain place at a certain time (Female PC).

All men are potential victims (Male PC).

I think this crime could happen to any member of the public (Male PS).

Any person can become a victim of rape - media may suggest male rape is a homosexual problem but I don't believe the rapist is particularly interested in what preferences the victim has (Female PC).

## 7.15 Sexuality and Male Rape

Respondents were asked to consider whether or not they believed there is a strong link between homosexual behaviour and male rape. The purpose of this question was again to explore the existence of rape myths regarding homosexuality.

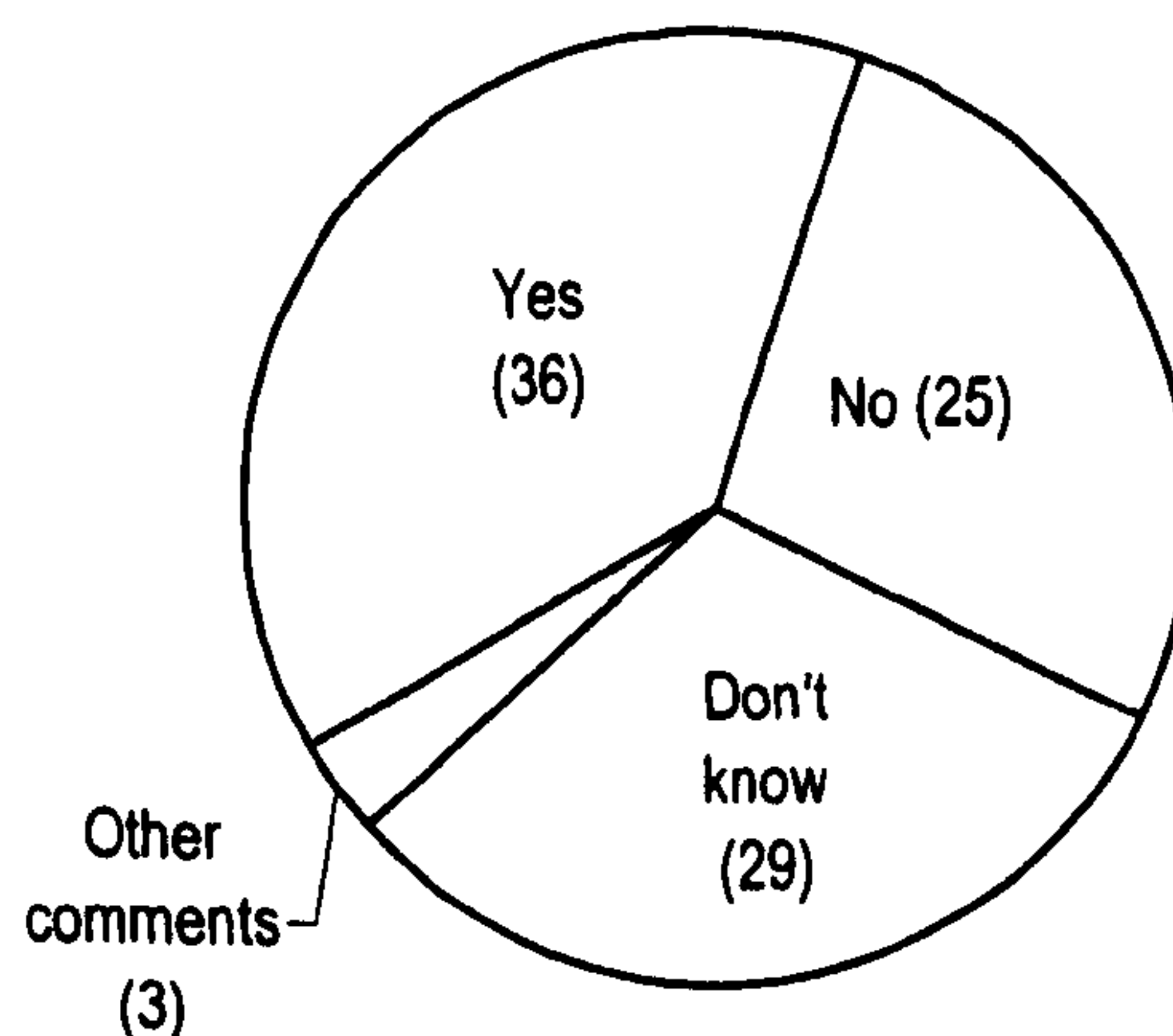


Figure 7-14: Do you think there is a strong link between homosexual behaviour and male rape?

Interestingly, over a third of officers believed that there is a strong link between homosexual behaviour and male rape, suggesting that homosexuals are both perpetrators and victims of this crime:

I don't think that a heterosexual male is likely to commit such an offence (Male PC).

I cannot conceive how a straight male gets pleasure from anal sex with a male (Male PC).

The act of male rape is, in itself, a homosexual act (Male PS).

Males are more violent especially ex prisoners/homosexuals (Male PC).

A lot of victims are homosexual (Female DC).

This link between sexuality and rape was qualified by some respondents in terms of seeing homosexual males as more vulnerable to becoming victims of male rape because of their social environment, as the following examples illustrate:

Because of the kind of people they mix with- dark commons, wooded areas, away from public eyes, are ideal locations for rapists lying in the wait, knowing the victim is unlikely to report the offence (Male PC).

Males are more likely to lower their defences in these situations in the same way as a lot of female rapes occur after initial meetings in social circumstances (Female DC).

Because homosexuals are at high risk of meeting a man who wants to commit this offence and are easier targets than heterosexual men (Female DC).

I think there has to be (a link) by definition (Male PC).

More likely to face situations of date rape (Male DI).

With victims, because homosexual males I believe put themselves in dangerous situations - if promiscuous and therefore making them more vulnerable (Female PC)

Due to the likely source of victim location by potential offenders (Male PS).

I think it is more likely that a homosexual male would frequent the locations/ venues where such an offence might take place (Male DI).

Probably but not exclusively as most common rape is encounter rape - as with heterosexual female rape (Male DC).

One respondent in this group also stated:



But I am aware that both suspects and victims can be heterosexual (Male DC).

Other more naïve responses included:

That is the sexual activity (i.e. buggery) that homosexual males practice. (Male PC)

It is obvious isn't it? (Male PS).

Just over a quarter of officers did not believe that there is a strong link between homosexual behaviour and male rape with the majority identifying rape as an issue of power and control rather than sexual gratification:

I don't believe that all male rapists are homosexual (Male PC).

A lot of male rape may well be carried out by non-homosexuals (Male PC).

Rape is a dominance thing not sexual (Female PC).

Like female rape it is about power over a person (Male DCI).

Homosexuals want consenting partners just like straight men. Possibly male rape is perpetrated by violent men with the need to humiliate and dominate other males. Not many ways better to do that than rape anyone, male or female (Male PC).

Rape is about force and power over another it is not really about sex so neither party many homosexuals or would describe themselves as such (Female PI).

It could happen to anybody. In any circumstances (Male PS).

Any person can become the victim of rape-media may suggest that male rape is a homosexual problem but I don't believe the rapist is particularly interested in what preference the victim has (Female PC).

Of the 29 officers who did not know, some suggested that they did not have enough information or knowledge, although two officers suggested there were possibly strong links between the two.

Perhaps, but I can't see any reason why it would definitely be. That doesn't go to say that there isn't (Male PC).

I don't know but I would presume that homosexuals make up the assailants in total but the victims could be either (Male PI).

Of the remaining three respondents, two did not wish to answer the question, while the third thought that it was possible that there were links between homosexual behaviour and male rape since the rapist is also a male:

The only link I think is the fact that homosexual men are more likely to report it as the actual act is not so disgusting to them as it is to straight men. They can come to terms with it better (Female PC).

In summary, it is apparent that a large number of respondents believed that homosexual behaviour contributes to the rape of a man. While some respondents in this category believed that this was because homosexual males are more vulnerable because they frequent places where possible rapists may be looking for victims, other officers believed that homosexuals are both the offenders and victims of this crime. Such alarming beliefs perpetuate the myth that heterosexual men cannot be raped and that this is a crime that affects the homosexual community exclusively, as the above quotes demonstrate.

Research presented in the literature review (see chapter 2) demonstrates that all men, regardless of sexuality, can become victims of rape. Similarly, it suggests that rapists are heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual, maintaining that the sexual preference of the offender is of no consequence when he chooses a victim. Sexuality links are explored further in the empirical findings from victim experiences (chapter 8).

The myth that male victims and perpetrators are homosexual only is fixed in the minds of many police officers, as the above research has demonstrated. It is further evident that such misguided beliefs may contribute to the lack of reporting of this crime since victims (in this instance especially heterosexuals) are unlikely to have confidence and trust in the police if such views exist. This will be explored further in the victim data (chapter 8). Greater training and awareness into the realities of male rape could help eradicate such views, since it is clear that many respondents in the sample did not have accurate information on male rape.

The research identifies the need to inform police officers of the fact that victims and offenders cannot be identified in terms of their sexuality. Such recognition would result in the police addressing this issue with empathy and real understanding, which in turn would encourage male victims to come forward and report, without fear of prejudice and discrimination.

## **7.16 Attributing Blame or Identifying Vulnerable Victims?**

Respondents were asked to consider what circumstances they believed contributed to the rape of a man, to explore whether or not there existed attitudes of 'victim blaming'. The most common themes emerging from their responses were the time and place of the offence; that is, it was commonly believed that being in the wrong place at the wrong time contributed heavily to male rape; alcohol and drug abuse (whether taken by the offender or victim, or both) and other circumstances similar to those in female rape cases. Some examples given by respondents are presented below:

The same factors that can contribute to the rape of a woman i.e. Alcohol, drugs, being in the wrong place at the wrong time for no obvious reason (Female PI).

If a man frequents the wrong areas such as public toilets. If a man became drunk or uses drugs to the point where he loses control he is more vulnerable (Male PC)

Bad luck. Just like women. Straight males who are in the wrong place at the wrong time. Rapes on the tube are reported. Some psychopath who decides to rape a man will inevitably find someone vulnerable enough or unable to defend themselves. Inexperienced "newly out" young men in the gay community could present a target for this sort of violence just as females in the wrong circumstances do. Lonely location, being drunk, being naive about people's intentions all could contribute (Male PC).

The social environment of the victim was also seen to be significant by the respondents, as it was frequently suggested that the sexuality of the victim would contribute to vulnerability to sexual assault, as the following quotes demonstrate:

Frequencing locations favoured by homosexuals (Male DI).

Social circles they mix in - areas frequented (Female PC).

A combination of factors were presented by most of the respondents such as imprisonment, prostitution, homosexuality and other circumstances which would make men more vulnerable:

Mixing in homosexual circles -being in prison (Male PC).

Their social life, i.e. what times of day they go out-where they go-if they are in prison-if they are sexually active (Female PC).

Immature /youths unsure of their sexuality becoming involved in homosexual circles (Male DC).

Social contacts/drink/drugs/rent boys/prostitution (Male DC).

1) Those serving terms of imprisonment. 2) Visiting areas frequented by homosexual males "cottages". 3) Those that are vulnerable i.e. in care, mental institutions. 4) Homeless i.e. drink and substance misuse (Male PS).

"Gay" promotions (Male PC).

The sexual needs of the offender were also believed to contribute, as was the naivety of the victim:

One or more men with the urge, a victim being in the most appropriate place as dictated by the circumstances (Male PS).

Sexual frustration - the inability of the rapist to satisfy his sexual needs (Male PI).

Drunkenness-drugs-openly flirting (homosexuals) frequenting homosexual haunts (Male DC).

That he is unfortunate enough to attract the attention of a male rapist (Female PC).

Possible leading on (flirting) - walking in lonely places - possibly using public toilets - drink and drugs (Female PC).

Victim being unaware of a circumstance he may find himself in, or not been conscious of the threat (Male PC).

The same as with a woman. The most likely circumstance is where the victim is physically weaker than the offender (Male DC).

Another important point raised concerned the offenders' belief that he/they would get away with the offence, combined with the opportunity to commit it, as the following examples suggest:

The perpetrator believing that he/she is more likely to get away with the rape because the victim is less likely to report the crime to the police (Male PC).

1. Alcohol 2. Victim alone 3. Sexual encounters in un-policed areas 4. Offenders have done it before and feel it will not be reported and they will 'get away with it' (Male DC).

Same as a female rape - Opportunity location and ability to commit and get away (Male PC).

Mental illness was also identified as a contributing factor as was misunderstanding between men as to whether or not the victim consents:

A friendship between two or more males where the expectations of one are not shared by the other, who then becomes the victim of rape (Male PS).

Misunderstanding - someone giving the wrong signals (Male PC).

Rape is a violent crime, so an attacker expressing his domination e.g. in prison. Also, promiscuous behaviour, courting couples going too far too quickly, one party thinking he's got the go ahead for sex but misreading the signals (date rape) (Female PC).

The need of the offender to dominate and control his victim to gain power was identified by two respondents:

A heterosexual male may wish to over power/ dominate another male. A homosexual may misconstrue consent by another (Male PC).

Drink, revenge, and need to control. This is the ultimate degradation of a male, and the suspect does not need to be homosexual to use this method. How many males would want to report this type of attack, the suspect is more or less sure of not being reported, and at the same time has committed the most vile act he can on his victim. These attacks are not sexual, just about control and power (Female PC).

In summary, while respondents identified place and time of offence, alcohol and drug abuse and the sexual preference of the perpetrator as circumstances that contribute to a rape situation developing, existing research is inconclusive about the effects of these in creating a threatening situation. For example, research by Forman (1982) found that the majority of rape cases in this sample did not involve drug or alcohol abuse. Other work by Stermac et al. (1996) found some presence of drug and alcohol intoxication in the rape cases in their study. This was consistent with earlier work by Mezey and King (1989). The use of drugs and alcohol in male rape will be explored in the victim data (chapter 8). The belief that homosexual men may be more vulnerable as victims is supported by Hickson et al. (1994) and Stermac et al. (1996) (discussed in chapter 2). The suggestion in the present findings that the sexual preference of the rapist contributes to rape is not supported. Research by Groth and Burgess (1980) and Mezey and King (1989) demonstrates that rape is an act of violence, power and control and has little to do with sexual preference (see chapter 4). Additionally, as Mezey and King (1993) point out, children, elderly people and those that are

mentally disabled all become victims of rape, clearly demonstrating that perpetrators target vulnerable people.

Significant to these findings then, is the belief that men may 'contribute' to their situation through significant factors, identified by Edgar and O'Donnell (1998) as facilitation, precipitation, vulnerability and impunity. These factors are echoed in the police officers beliefs presented above. For example, facilitation, according to Sparks (1982: 27) suggests that the victim may facilitate the offence 'by deliberately, negligently or unconsciously, placing himself or herself at special risk'. A typical view of police officers in my study suggested such special risk factors:

If a man frequents the wrong areas such as public toilets (Male PC).

Victim being unaware of a circumstance he may find himself in, or not been conscious of the threat (Male PC).

Sparks (1982) suggests that precipitation refers to the victim initiating the sequence of events that led to the assault (parallels can be drawn to date rape in which women are accused of initiating rape by going on the date in the first place). This view is demonstrated by some officers' views on contributions to male rape, discussed above. Sparks (1982) defines vulnerability as the perception by the perpetrator that the victim is a suitable target. Such vulnerability factors were present in the beliefs of many police officers, included imprisonment, prostitution and homosexuality:

...Rape between two homosexual males where one obviously does not consent. Suspects with the intent to commit the crime on a vulnerable male (may be late at night, alone on train) (Male PI).

Impunity refers to the absence of negative consequences for the perpetrator, perhaps because of the likelihood of the victim reporting being low. This would be especially applicable in rape cases where the victim may fear that he himself was doing something illegal, by for example, being a prostitute, as this example illustrates:

The perpetrator believing that he/she is more likely to get away with the rape because the victim is less likely to report the crime to the police (Male PC).

The research by Edgar and O'Donnell (1998), which considered male assaults in prison, does not suggest that men cause their own victimisation. The researchers

propose that analysis of victimisation can 'reveal how the victim's attributes, attitudes or behaviour significantly increase the likelihood of assault' (Ibid. 636). They used a total sample of 1,566 male inmates and focused on assault, robbery, threat, insult, exclusion and cell theft. It is interesting that there is no reference to sexual assaults, perhaps because research in this area would challenge some of the assumptions of the 'victim's contributions', and as the researchers themselves point out:

To discuss the contribution made by victims is to enter contentious ground. The suggestion that characteristics of victims, or their actions, might contribute causally to a crime is taken by some to mean that the victim is being blamed for his or her victimisation. However, explanation of an event does not necessarily entail the distribution of blame or responsibility. An adequate explanation of interpersonal crime requires some knowledge about the parts played by each participant, including the victim (Ibid. 635).

While excluding rape from their empirical study, Edgar and O'Donnell (1998) do nonetheless make a clear distinction between rape cases and victim blaming in other research studies and their own analysis. For example, they argue that research by Amir (1971) which blamed the victim for rape, did so without considering important factors such as who was the first to use force, which is the focus of the concept of vulnerability as used in their own study. Their research also focuses on prison assaults, which have different dynamics from non-prison assaults. However, it is interesting that police officers in the present empirical work identified these factors of victim contribution in male rape cases.

### **7.17 Recognising Vulnerability and the Possibility of Rape**

Respondents were asked whether or not they feared that they could become victims of male rape. This question was designed to elicit further information on police officers' views about 'typical' victims.

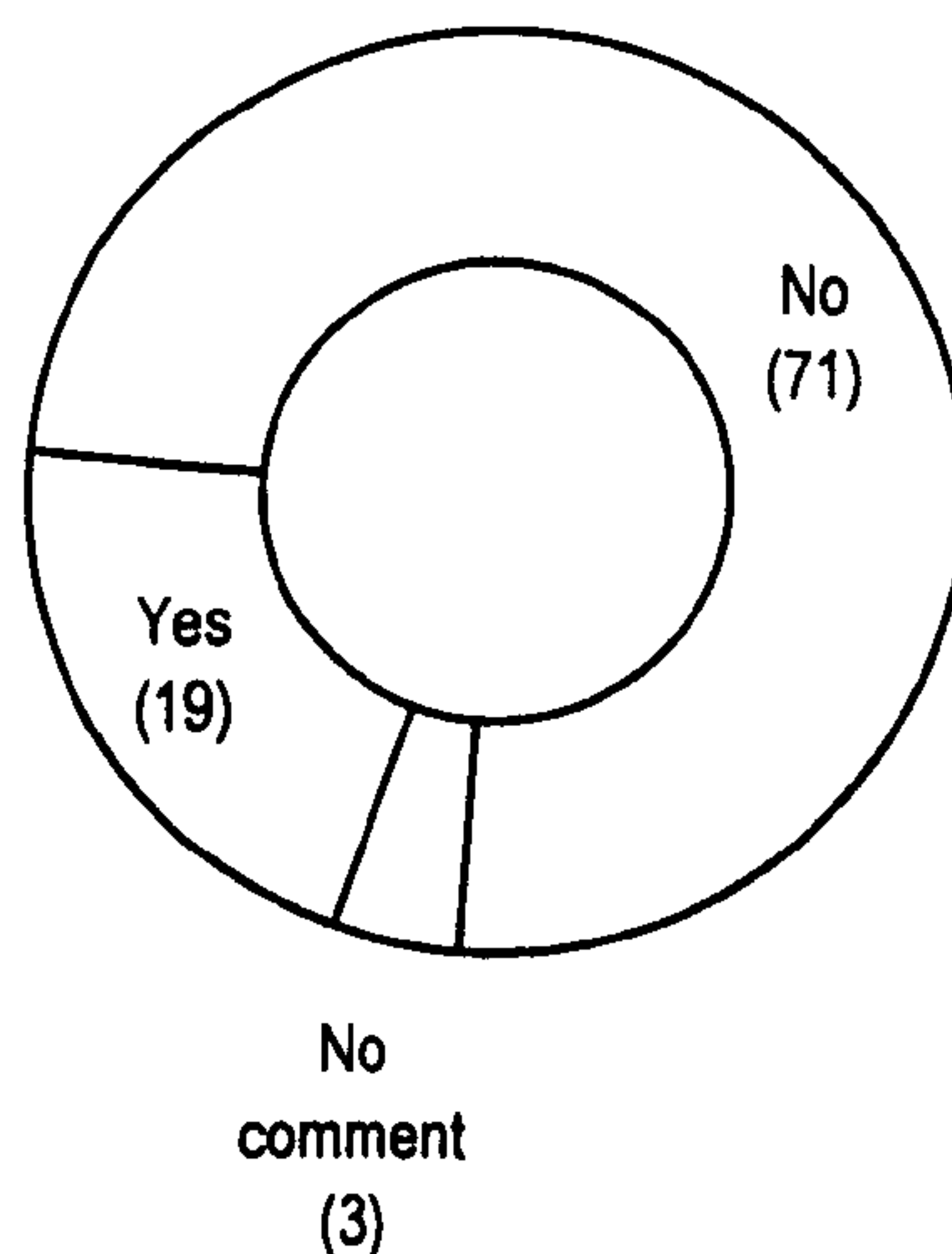


Figure 7-15: If you are male, do you ever fear that you could be the victim of male rape?

Of the 19 officers who did fear that they could become victims of male rape, the majority acknowledged the possibility of their victimisation. The quotes below are typical examples of the views of respondents in this group:

It is a modern problem of western society-in the same way as I fear being burgled, mugged, assaulted (Male PC).

Only in situations where I could be robbed, I wonder where it might lead (Male DC).

Because I travel alone on public transport late at night (Male PI).

Because it's the same type of back of the mind fear as it is for a woman or the thought it might be cut off etc. etc. (Male PC).

Anybody can be a victim of rape (Male PC).

It's always a possibility (Male PI).

I cannot think of anything else worse for a male to endure (Male PC).

Frightening to think a male(s) could look at a person and have thoughts, which could lead to violence as if it were a male/female (Male PC).

Walking alone late at night I have feared for my safety when approached by two males (Male PS).

An overwhelming majority of respondents did not fear being victims of rape. Some respondents linked male rape to certain circumstances and asserted that they would never find themselves in such circumstances:



No way would I allow myself to get into that situation (Male AO).

Don't go to the places where I would meet potential attackers (Male DC).

I try to avoid dangerous places likely to produce rape or robbery (Male DCI).

Because of my social circle (Male PC).

I would avoid putting myself in a vulnerable position where I could be the victim of this or any other crime e.g. robbery (Male DI).

It's never occurred that I would get into such a situation (but I'm not naïve enough to realise it's impossible) (Male DC).

Others linked male rape to homosexuality and therefore believed that since they were not homosexual, they were at less or no risk:

Don't mix in homosexual circles (Male PC).

Heterosexual and not courting or likely to be in situation alone with unknown men (Male DI).

Because I do not frequent gay clubs etc. where potential victims may frequent (Male PS).

Some respondents believed that their physical build, size or intelligence would protect them, presenting very macho responses:

I believe my size, strength, intelligence would deter such a person (Male PC).

6 foot four inches, 17 stones, very large fists (Male DS).

Not feared-aware of possibility (but probably now too old and ugly to worry!) (Male PC)

I'm ugly (Male PC).

I would remove their heads from their shoulders first (Male PC).

I can kick and punch very hard. I keep a very calm and clear head. I am mentally strong (Male PC).

I feel that I would be able to avoid that situation, using my size, strength and knowledge of martial arts (Male PC).

Other officers had not thought about the possibility of being raped as the following quotes illustrate:

I hadn't thought too much about it (Male DS).

It has never crossed my mind before; I worry more about getting mugged (Male PC).

I do not consider victimisation of any crime (Male DCI).

It's always possible but I don't live in fear of it (Male PS).

I never fear crime (Male DC).

Although underreported, I believe it is a rare event (Male PS)

A general awareness of potential crime along with the fact it appears not to be a wide spread crime (Male PC)

The probability of being a victim is very small (Male DS).

It will not happen to me! (Male PS).

Just something you imagine could never happen to you (Male PI).

Because the majority of males including myself believe it will never happen to them (Male PC).

Never felt threatened (Male PC).

I could easily fear such assault. - I hope and feel I could defend myself however the wrong circumstances etc. Better stay out of prison!! (Male PC).

Not in a great way but as a police officer I consider myself perhaps more careful than others (Male PS).

Police officers are aware - street wise (Male PS).

The remaining two respondents did not answer the question and one stated that he did not think about it.

The findings from this section demonstrate the masculine culture of the police, (discussed in chapter 4) and reflect beliefs held both by men, and about men, in wider society. The majority of officers did not believe that they could ever become victims of rape. The above quotes demonstrate that males in this category believed that they would be able to defend themselves. Some officers stated that they had never thought about whether or not they could become victims of rape, illustrating that when men do become victims of rape, they are often overcome with shock and/or disbelief because they have never previously considered the possibility. Others stated that they would not be vulnerable because they are not homosexual, again indicating their misconceptions that only

homosexual males are raped. Overall, this question highlighted some extremely macho responses, in which some officers also believed that their strength, body size or intelligence would prevent them from becoming victims of rape.

Similarly, some officers linked rape to sexual attraction, suggesting that offenders would not find them attractive enough as victims. Chapter 4 challenged links between rape and sexual attraction, demonstrating that rape is an act of power and control, rather than uncontrollable sexual desires (discussed in chapter 3). The victim data in chapter 8 explores this further.

The research findings in this chapter illustrate the problem that males do not entertain the idea that they could become victims of rape and often do not take the issue seriously. The problems with such attitudes are increased when they are held by police officers that are often the first port of call for male victims of rape.

### 7.18 False Allegations of Male Rape

Respondents were asked for their opinion on the number of false allegations of male rape. This was intended to throw light on their perceptions of men who report rape, perceptions that could well affect their treatment of such men.

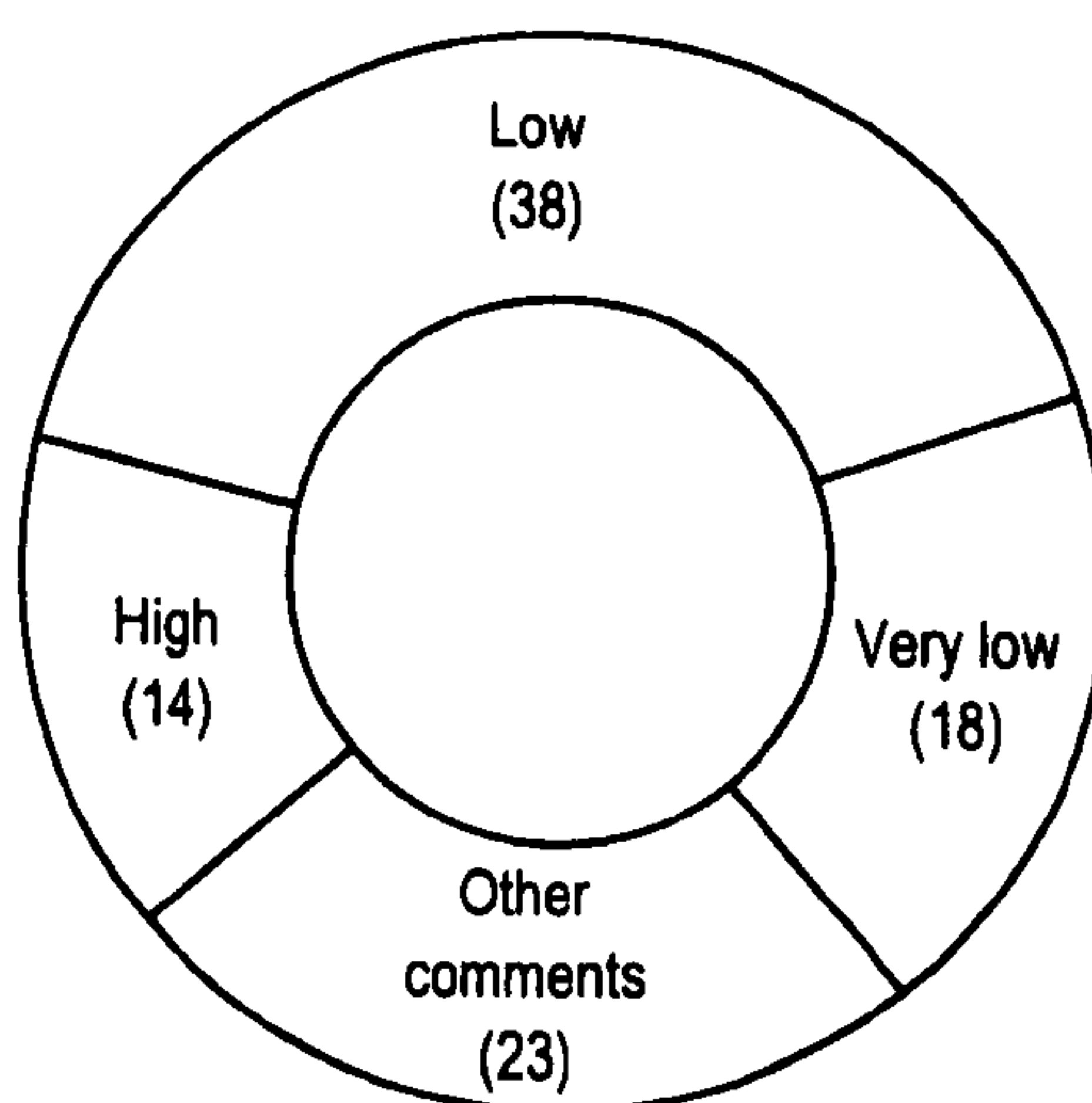


Figure 7-16: Perceptions on false allegations of male rape.

Fourteen respondents stated that they believed that the number of false male rape allegations were high, with some officers drawing comparisons with female rape allegations, suggesting that they are:

No different from female rape (Male PC).

My experience with all rapes is that there are many false allegations so I assume that male rape conforms to that rule (Male PI).

I think you would automatically think it would be low. I think the number of false rape allegations in men would be the same as women, which is quite high (Male PC).

... because I have dealt with a high number of false female allegations (Female PC).

This viewpoint contradicts the research data discussed in chapter 4 on female rape, which demonstrates that the numbers of false allegations made by females are low. Other reasons given for this belief were:

False allegations made by people seeking help/attention and male rape is the latest area for concern and thus has the 'latest fad' attraction (Male PC).

Rent boys, blackmail, vagrant on vagrant revenge (Male PC).

I don't know the answer truly but in my two previous experiences both allegations have proved false (Male DC).

Again promiscuous homosexuals (Male DC).

Thirty-eight respondents believed that the number of false allegations of male rape were low. Some reasons given for this focused on the fact that men would find it difficult enough to report such a horrendous crime and would therefore be very unlikely to make up an allegation, as the following examples illustrate:

It's not the sort of thing you expect people to wish to say has happened to them (Male PS).

I know that a lot of female rape allegations are false or confused but to come forward as a man to make a false allegation is in my opinion below average possibility (Male PC).

There will always be false allegations - both male and female but these all tend to be low (Male DC).

Because I don't believe that it is the type of allegation that a victim would lie about (Male PS).

Not something a man would want hanging over him if it were not true i.e. stigma and sense of helplessness (Male PC).

It must take great courage to report this type of crime and to make a false allegation must be just as difficult (Female DC).

It is probably hard enough to report it in the first place (Male PC).

I suspect the crime is under reported and don't believe false allegation would be common (Female PI).

I would suggest most are genuine due to the sensitive nature of the allegation in the first instance (Male PI).

serious matter - not taken lightly (Male PS).

As the offence becomes more openly accepted fake allegations will rise accordingly. At the moment the instance of male rape is low (Male PI).

It is a difficult matter to report. It is not common for men to report rapes (Male PC).

So few are probably reported, I find it hard to believe that a male would initiate this sort of allegation falsely (Female PC).

Other officers based their ideas on their dealings with male rape cases, as illustrated:

I have only dealt with one allegation of male rape at Ealing - I'm not aware of any fake allegations (Female PC).

Low due to low number reported - Probably same as female false allegations for number of reported rapes (Female PC).  
I've investigated about eight allegations probably two were false. Medical evidence supported some allegations (Male DI).

I have not had this allegation reported to me. I believe when it is reported it is of a serious nature (Male PC).

Eighteen respondents believed that false allegations are very low and reasons given were the same as for the above. Officers believed that men would find it extremely difficult to come forward and report rape, suggesting that the number of false allegations would therefore be very low. Others stated that the numbers of male rape reports were low and false allegations would also therefore be low:

Reporting in genuine incidents are very low - false allegations I would think are even lower if not at all (Female PC).

I find it hard to believe that your average male would want to subject himself to that kind of scrutiny (Male PC).

I think by the time any male screws up the courage to report a rape he is unlikely to be lying (Male PC).

It is not something you'd lie about (Male PC).

It probably takes a lot for these victims to come forward in the first place (Female PC).

Other comments included:

I have not heard of any false allegations being made (Male PI).

Few from rent boys but why would a man lie (Female PC).

The remaining 23 respondents did not know although some were prepared to make a guess:

I think they are probably the same levels as the number of false allegations of female rape (Male PC).

Don't know. My experiences show both males and females make allegations later discovered to be false for a number of different reasons (Female PC).

### 7.19 Victim Responses in Rape Situations

Respondents were asked their opinions on how they believed victims would respond in a rape situation. This was to discover their perceptions of victims' responses and to explore the accuracy in their expectations, to be able to compare these with how victims actually respond.

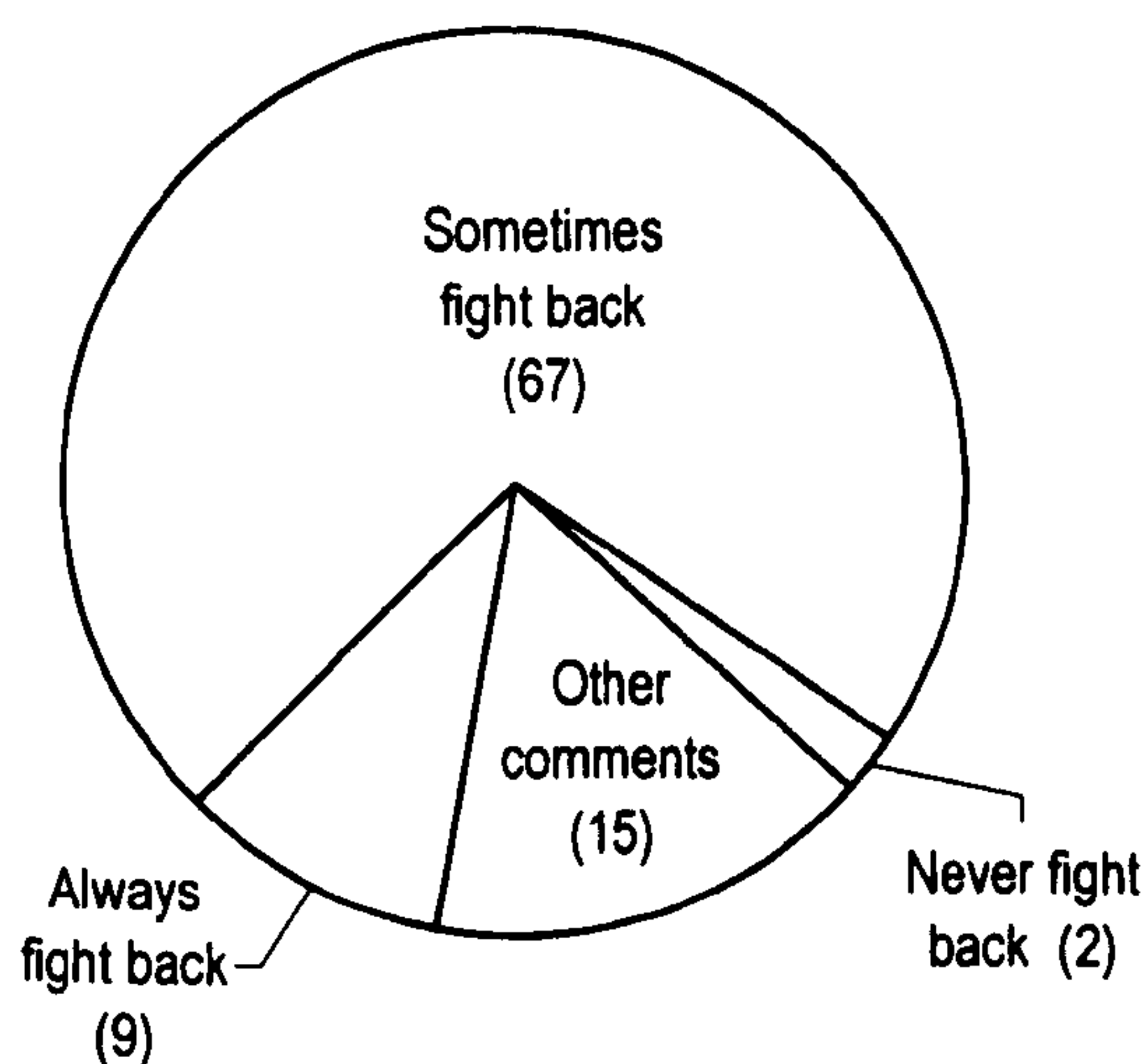


Figure 7-17: Officers views on victim responses to attack.

Of the nine respondents who believed that male victims of rape would always fight back, the reasons given included:

I don't think anyone would like to be assaulted like that without a fight (Male AO).

Only if unarmed-it would be better to risk a few bruises than AIDS (Male PC).

It's in our nature (Male PC).

Due to the degrading nature of the attack (Male PS).

I believe victims would fight back to protect themselves and if they were raped it would harm the male image of 'protecting yourself' (Male DS).

Almost three quarter of respondents believed that victims would sometimes fight back, commonly asserting that victim's reactions were dependent on the circumstances surrounding the situation. The level of violence (whether used or threatened), the number of assailants and the use of weapons, were identified as important in determining a victim's reactions as the following quotes illustrate:

It would depend upon the circumstances - the violence threatened or used, the size and stature of the assailant etc. (Male PC).

Depends on number of attackers and the abilities of the victim (Male PS).

Obviously there are always going to be different circumstances, gang rape and rape at knifepoint etc. (Female PC).

May not always be possible to fight back and threats may be made of what will happen if person resists (Male PC).

Depending on circumstances, the number of suspects (together), the physical issues involved and the character of the victim must all affect this statement (Male PI).

It depends on the level of threat - a knife to the throat usually leads to compliance (Male DS).

These respondents also identified drug and/or alcohol intoxication as affecting victim's responses in a rape situation. Examples of some comments are given below:

May be physically incapable due to size, drink or drugs (Male DI).

Usually fight (1) I would (2) maybe too drunk/drugs (Male PC).

Everybody is different. They may have been drugged or tied down (Male PS).

People react differently; they have different opportunities to fight back. They may be drugged, drunk, in fear of their lives and might therefore have no chance to put up a fight (Female PI).

Other officers identified fear and shock as factors that could prevent victims from fighting back as these examples demonstrate:

Is it is a violent crime - some people would try to defend themselves - others may not if they were too frightened (Female DS).

Sometimes you can be so scarred that your body freezes even if your mind tells you something different (Male PC).

Either too frightened, shocked or just overpowered (Male PC).

Because everyone acts differently in that sort of situation (Fight or Flight Syndrome) (Male PC).

Depends on the perpetrator-victim may be too frightened to fight back (Male PC).

I've read the initial shock of the attack may freeze a person totally, especially a sexual assault. If a weapon isn't used I think any police officer would fight back. People unused to any sort of violence threatened could be shocked into compliance (Male PC).

Shock would probably paralyse men in some instances - as it would in females. If they are fully aware of what's happening - i.e. they are not drunk or on drugs I think they would fight back (Female PC).

Some officers in this category believed that reactions by male victims would be similar to those of female victims, again stating that these would be dependent on the individual circumstances:

Depends on the circumstances of the attack, as with female rape whether the victim felt if they fought back they would be more seriously hurt/killed (Female PC).

I guess for the same reasons female sometimes fight back - fear of further violence or shock (Male PC).

Just as in female rape if the victim feels he can report his attack, he will do. However, some will retract fearing physical violence and intimidation from their attacker (Male PI).



I do think male rape bears similarities to female rape. More submission is not consent. When in fear of violence, fighting back cannot always be the sensible option (Female PC).

Going through same trauma as female victims (Male PC).

Because of the cases I have dealt with and fear has prevented victims from fighting. This could apply to males also (Female PC).

One officer believed that:

Most, especially heterosexual would fight (Female PC).

Such a view could be very destructive for a heterosexual male reporting rape to an officer holding such beliefs. Victims' reluctance to report rape to the police because of fears that they may be ridiculed or not believed will be examined in the next chapter.

Beliefs such as the above need to be changed if victims are to come forward and report. Two other officers stated that they believed that male victims would sometimes fight back to avoid being victims and to defend their masculinity. One officer highlighted the fact that having seen a training video in which a well-built police officer is raped, he had changed his views, illustrating the important impact that training and awareness raising can have on individual attitudes and beliefs:

Depends on circumstances - Having seen the 'America Cop' video I've changed from 'Always fight back' (Male DC).

Two respondents believed that victims would never fight back. The majority of the remaining 15 respondents did not know, again suggesting that reactions to rape would depend on the individual and the circumstances, as one officer commented:

... just because the victim is male doesn't mean any of the above can be stated as right. Reaction to rape is an individual thing. Society may 'assume' men should/could fight back - I don't agree (Female PC).

Other comments included the following:

All victims respond differently depending on the place, person(s) involved, is it an acquaintance etc. (Male CI)

It depends on the circumstances. Fight, flight, fright, weapons etc. (Male PC).

...It depends on the person and what is happening at the time. How many are involved, where it's happening, whether weapons are used (Female DC).

In summary, the nine officers who believed that male victims would always fight back exhibited very macho reasons for their answers, implying that real men would always fight back. The majority of respondents (67 officers) believed that male victims would sometimes fight back, depending on the circumstances. This group identified fear, shock, alcohol/drug intoxication, and number of assailants, weapons present and threat of violence as well as actual violence, as determining factors to victims' responses in a rape situation. Research on victims' responses in male rape situations will be presented in chapter 8. The literature review in chapter 2 demonstrates that the circumstances identified by police officers were also present in some rape cases in these research studies (see for example Mezey and King 1989; King 1990).

## 7.20 Police Officers Views on Male Rape Conviction Rates.

Respondents were asked about their experiences and views on securing convictions in male rape cases. Again respondents were asked to qualify their opinions so that any possible problems observed with securing convictions could be identified.

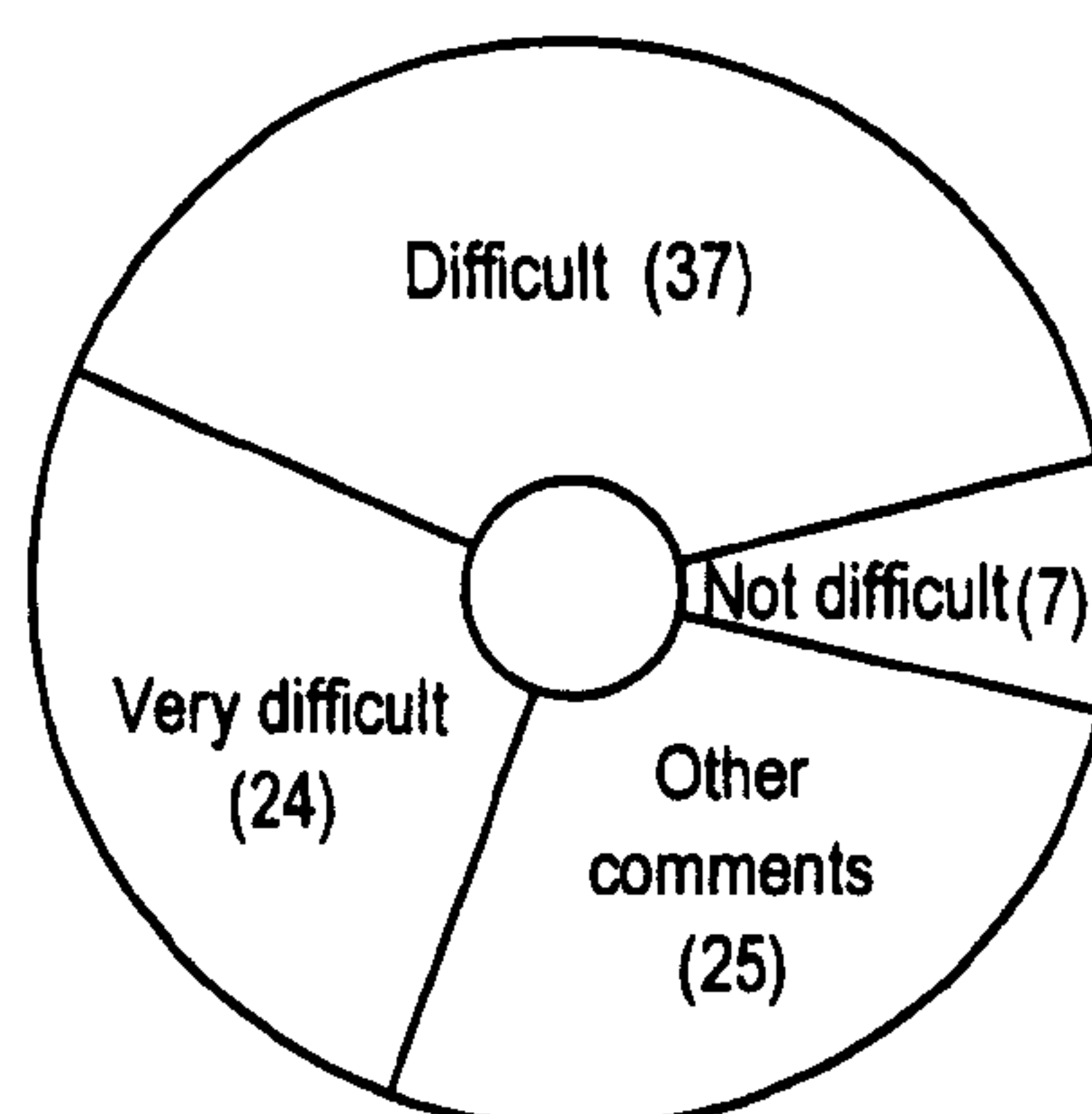


Figure 7-18: How difficult is it to get a conviction for male rape?

Just over a quarter of officers believed that it was very difficult to get a conviction for male rape. Some officers stated it is difficult to get a conviction for any rape, regardless of the gender of the victim, as these quotes illustrate:

Same as female rape-so many legal technicalities to get off on (Male PC).

Difficult to get convictions for any rape (Male DC).

It is very difficult to get a conviction for any rape (Female PI).

It was also believed that male rape is a taboo and one which judges and juries find difficult to understand:

I would imagine very difficult due to the unwillingness of the victim and the actual nature of the offence (Male PC).

It is very TABOO subject and people including courts don't know how to deal with these issues (Female PC).

As previously mentioned, juries cannot come to terms with it!! (Male PS).

Rapes of any kind are difficult to prove. I would imagine that male rape still endures a negative climate and lack of sympathy from juries (Male PI).

Some officers also believed that victims rarely know their assailant while others are unwilling to go to court, making convictions impossible. Other experiences suggested:

Unless you have injuries and DNA it is one-on-one in court (Male DCI).

Out of two I dealt with, one went to court found not guilty. Second didn't make it to court (Male PS).

Because the CPS are useless (Male PC).

Never got one (conviction) (Male DI).

A further 37 respondents believed that getting a conviction for male rape was difficult, suggesting that it was similar to female rape cases. The issue of consent was frequently mentioned as the following examples illustrate:

I believe getting a conviction in cases of rape is always difficult as it often becomes a case of one word against another concerning consent (Male PC).

Depends if the victim has had consenting sex before hand (Male AO).

As with female victims-unless it is a 'stranger' attack the crime depends on consent (Male CI).

As with all rape consent is the problem area (Male DS).

There will probably be the doubt over the nature, or consent, particularly where a friendship has developed between offender and victim (Male PS).

The evidence required to get a conviction was also identified as essential:

The same as female rape - it is always difficult to get a conviction - Due to the evidence required (Female DC).

Expect assailant to have DNA on record (Male PC).

Depends on forensic evidence (Male DC).

I would imagine it is harder than you think as I reckon there have been only a small number of convictions from a small number of cases. We are still coming to terms with male rape (Male PC).

Other officers stated that the court process itself, fears of 'going public' and police and juries 'lack of empathy' all contributed to the victim's lack of willingness to go to court, as the following examples highlight:

Unwillingness of victim to (especially straight) allow facts to be public knowledge. Also due to involuntary ejaculation (even though it is a fact) (Female PC).

Same problems face all victims re. reliving crime, going to court daunting (Male PC).

Male making himself available in time for forensics - Cross-examination by scumbag barristers would be particularly painful and "going public" would be horrendous (Male PC).

As with female rape. A high level of proof is required and being cross examined for victim would be a considerable additional trauma (Female PC).

Lack of understanding of victim, on behalf of police and juries (Male PI).

Convince jury that such assault was likely (Male PC).

Possibly the idea of going to court and going through the details of the attack again would prevent cases ever getting to court. If the evidence is good I don't see why securing a conviction would be difficult (Female PC).

Seven respondents believed that it is not difficult to get a conviction for male rape and typical examples suggested:

If the investigation is completed thoroughly and professionally then there should be no difference between male or female rape (Male PC).

I don't see why, the evidence of physical abuse must still be present (Male PC).

Provided the evidence is there, why difficult? (Male PC).

The remaining 25 officers were unsure or did not know how difficult it is to get a conviction for male rape. Some respondents in this group stated that they had never prosecuted for male rape while others commented on the difficulty in securing convictions:

Experience demonstrates difficulty to secure convictions generally (Male PC).

Others still believed that prosecution and conviction were dependent on the individual case. Some officers in this group compared male rape convictions with female rape suggesting that it is,

Probably as difficult as it is for a female victim (Female PC).

No more difficult than getting a conviction for female rape (Male DI).

I do not know but feel it's probably on a par with female rapes (Male PS).

I feel it is as difficult to get a conviction for male rape as female rape. Each case would be dealt with on its own merits (Female PC).

Overall, respondents believed that getting a conviction for male rape is difficult or very difficult, suggesting that this is the same for female rape cases. It was highlighted that juries and the police do not have the required empathy for male victims, which prevents many from going through the legal process. Likewise, it was suggested that victims fear 'going public' and that this, together with horrendous cross-examinations and challenges around consent, deter them from proceeding in rape trials. Similarly, it was believed that the stigma and taboo of male rape further prevents juries from making unprejudiced judgements. It is therefore clear that a lack of understanding of male rape, within the legal system

and within society, compounds the trauma for male rape victims, deterring them from reporting and continuing in the legal process.

## 7.21 Gender Differences in Rape Convictions

Respondents were asked to consider conviction rates in terms of male and female rape cases to discover whether, in their opinion, male rape cases are treated differently from female rape cases, in the criminal justice process. They were therefore asked to assess whether it is easier or harder to secure convictions in male rape cases, compared to female rape cases. Again, they were asked to qualify their responses in order to generate a better understanding of their experiences.

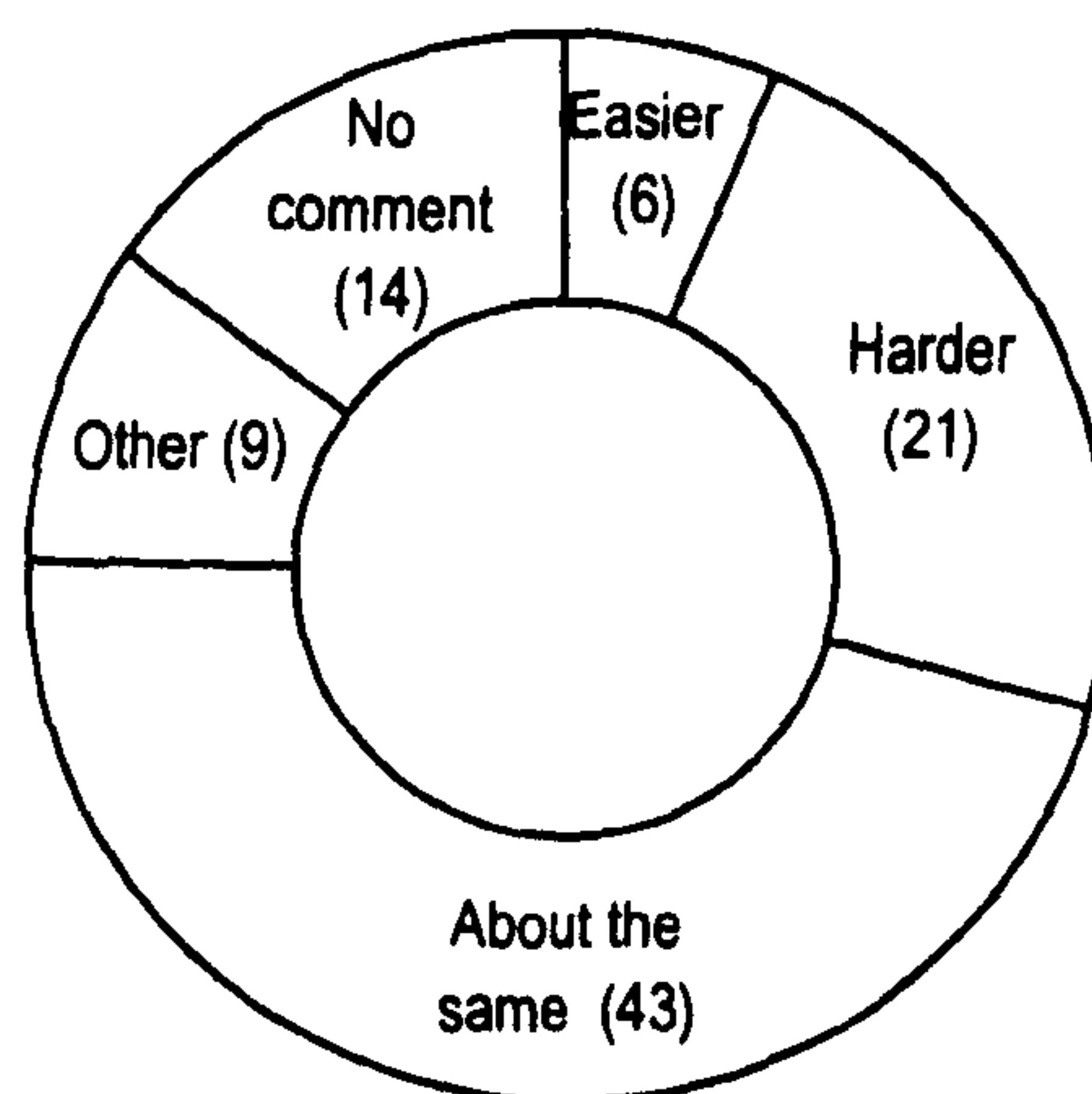


Figure 7-19: Differences between getting convictions for male rape and female rape.

Six respondents believed that it is easier to get a conviction for male rape than for female rape with typical observations being that:

Men normally believe men and most judges and jurors are men (Female PC).

If rape is proved it is easier as more forensic evidence would be left and males in jury would sympathise more for a fellow man than woman (Male PC).

There may tend to be a belief that it's not something a man would allege because of the stigma attached (Male PS)

Not easy by any means but public opinion would think it less likely for a man to agree to sex with another i.e. less likely to believe false allegations (Female PC).

Twenty one respondents believed that it is harder to get a conviction for male rape than for female rape, commonly highlighting the belief that society has a lack of awareness and understanding of male rape, as the following quotes demonstrate:

Society I feel would be more sympathetic to the female victim than the male victim, again coming back to social issues and also the sexual persuasion of the male victim (Male PC).

Many juries would be bias (sic) against male victims (Male DCI).

We are still coming to terms with male rape (Male PC).

Many people would say (and a defence barrister would encourage) males are big and can defend themselves hence there must have been an element of consent hence no conviction (Male PC).

I suspect juries have less sympathy for victims and less understanding of the concept of male rape (Female PI).

The general public thinks that this only happens in films (Male DI).

Because the victim would be unwilling to go to court, for fear of embarrassment (Female PC).

Rapes of any kind are difficult to prove. I would imagine that male rape still endured a negative climate and lack of sympathy from juries... I would imagine that juries are slightly prejudiced against male rape victims and to some extent (believe they are) deserving of what happened to them (Male PI).

Lack of understanding of victim, on behalf of police and juries (Male PI).

The jury may find it difficult to visualise a male getting into a situation where a rape ultimately takes place. Social stereotyping has a lot to do with it. The traditional attitudes to why women get raped cannot be applied to male cases. Male rape appears to be more difficult to explain than female. There are always the same levels of criteria that can be applied to female rape - i.e. walking alone at night/wearing the wrong clothing/getting drunk/sending the wrong signals, "asking for it". In the cases of domestic rape - the female can leave but often doesn't and endures many rapes. None of the above reasons can be given for male rape. I would guess that stranger MR is very rare or very under-reported. I would imagine that the question of homosexuality is raised whenever a male reports rape, even if it is not raised by the victim themselves. It is still difficult for many homosexuals to admit to their choice of sexuality so it would be made doubly difficult to admit to being raped. It would possibly make them question in depth their reasons for being homosexual. The answers in this questionnaire are based on my experiences and knowledge. I

certainly found the male rape that I dealt with more emotionally challenging and complicated, especially as the victim did not initially want to speak to me but to a male officer. However we did establish a rapport, which helped later on in taking a statement (Female PC).

Almost half of the officers believed that getting a conviction for male rape is the same as getting a conviction for female rape and that the same factors apply in determining conviction such as consent, level of evidence, injuries sustained, and relationship between victim and perpetrator, as the following quotes illustrate:

As with female victims - unless it is a 'stranger' attack the crime depends on consent (Male DCI).

It's very hard for either unless everything i.e. swabs, clothing, verbal evidence is of a high standard (Female PC).

If reported in the first place, there is same level for male and female (Male DC).

Again the normal defence is that it was consensual so it depends on who is more plausible, victim or suspect (Male PS).

For a female rape it requires a stranger to be the suspect, with injuries to the victim, forensic evidence etc... (Male PS).

As with female rape. A high level of proof is required and being cross examined for victim would be a considerable additional trauma (Female PC).

Same offences, same damage (Male PS).

I feel it is as difficult to get a conviction for male rape as female rape. Each case would be dealt with on its own merits (Female PC).

No evidence to back this (statistics etc.) but the level should be the same - if this is not the case then 'people's' ideas re men being raped need to be changed - society needs to realise that male rape happens the same as female rape (Female PC).

Nine respondents offered other comments, with some stating that they didn't know. Some officers said they had no direct experience of prosecuting for male rape, while others suggested that conviction is dependent on circumstances. Some suggestions about sexuality were also present as these examples show:

I feel if a homosexual relationship was involved it may be more difficult as the court may not look favourably on the victim (Female PC).

Not sure - possibly harder as more people would think 'oh men can fight them off' (Female PC).



Both are extremely difficult and often come down to the issue of consent (Male PC).

Fourteen officers did not answer the question.

## **Summary**

The findings from this research illustrate, overwhelmingly, the need to improve understanding of the complex issues surrounding the offence of male rape. It is clear that while police officers are often in direct contact with male victims, they are often ill prepared to deal with them in a sensitive and empathetic manner, due to a lack of understanding and awareness.

The research has demonstrated that while the majority of officers have some knowledge of male rape, this is often inaccurate and incomplete. Officers themselves recognised a need to improve their awareness and understanding in order to encourage male victims to report the offence of rape.

Some officers in the sample displayed homophobic attitudes, suggesting that male rape affects only the homosexual community. Such ill informed beliefs intensify the problems of under-reporting, since heterosexual males would find it extremely difficult to report rape to officers who hold such views. Similarly, it is clear that homosexual male victims would encounter prejudice from homophobic officers who may believe that, as homosexuals, they have somehow invited or initiated the attack.

The research also illustrates that the issue of male rape is not always taken seriously by the police, who may 'think it's funny, or don't believe it', as one female officer indicated. This demonstrates the 'culture of masculinity' within the police service (discussed in chapter 4) and supports similar findings by Donnelly and Kenyon (1996).

Some officers also believed that rape was dependent on the size, looks, and intelligence of the victim, as well as the sexual preference of the offender. This has been strongly contested and proven to be untrue by numerous research studies on rape (see chapters 2 and 4). This will be explored further in the findings from the victim data discussed in chapter 8.

Liasing with other support agencies was also identified as important in providing adequate feedback to the police as well as support for victims. Importantly, at the core of many problems highlighted as preventing male victims from reporting rape to the police, was the lack of training for officers on the subject of male rape. It was clear that officers who had received some training, whether through conferences or police training (SOIT), were better informed of the facts of male rape, as one female PC stated:

I have been to lectures on male rape as part of my SOIT training, and this has affected my opinion (Female PC).

The service provisions within the police, for both male and female victims, were seen to be inadequate. A large number of officers (37) – (see figure 7.5 above) did not know what the provisions were for male victims, exposing a huge information gap.

Officers also stated that in their experiences, juries/judges and the general public were unsympathetic and did not have much understanding of male rape, identifying again the need for greater awareness.

It was also commonly believed that heterosexual male victims suffer greater trauma than homosexual males, which is examined in the testimonies of male victims (chapter 8).

Officers in this study identified shock, fear, alcohol and/or drug intoxication, number of attackers, threat of violence and/or actual violence used, as well as the victim's individual characteristics as all factors which would determine whether or not a male victim would fight back in a rape situation. Many officers believed that they themselves would fight back. The data on survivors' responses explores these issues further and considers whether men do fight back (chapter 8).

## **Chapter Eight: The Nature and Impact of Male Rape: Empirical Findings from SurvivorsUK, Victimization Survey and Counsellor Interviews**

This chapter presents the empirical findings of men's experiences of rape, drawing together data from SurvivorsUK, the victimisation survey and the interviews with counsellors. This part of the research project aimed to explore the nature and impact of rape on men's lives. In doing so, it sought to identify factors that contribute to the under-reporting of male rape, considering whether or not the myths surrounding male rape (discussed throughout this thesis) have an effect on reporting practices. Additionally, the research considered the needs of survivors and how adequate existing services are in meeting these needs. The data from SurvivorsUK are presented alongside the victimisation survey where common themes could be compared, and verbatim quotes from the counsellor interviews are used to complement the discussion.

As discussed in chapter 5, some of the statistical data from SurvivorsUK was limited since the organisation is essentially a counselling and support system for men who contact them. As such, information gathered is very much dependent on that which men reveal. They are not probed for answers or asked question for research purposes, since this could be intrusive and uncomfortable for the individual. The information nonetheless provides an important insight into the experiences of men who have been raped and is used to challenge stereotypes and myths about this crime. Data triangulation was used to supplement the findings from SurvivorsUK in order to provide a more complete analysis of the nature and impact of rape. A total of 16 men completed a carefully worded survey about their experiences, including their contact with the police and other agencies. Section 1 of this chapter presents the findings from the victimisation survey alongside the data from SurvivorsUK up to the point that information was available for the SurvivorsUK sample. Section 2 provides the findings from the victimisation survey only, since this data was not available for the SurvivorsUK sample. Information from the counsellor interviews is presented with the relevant themes throughout this chapter.

## **8.1 The Work of SurvivorsUK**

SurvivorsUK was established in 1986 as the only national charitable organisation to work with male victims of rape and sexual abuse. Its mission statement is as follows:

SurvivorsUK supports and provides resources for men who have experienced any form of sexual abuse.

We aim to actively promote awareness of both the prevalence and the effect of sexual abuse and rape on boys and men.

As an organisation SurvivorsUK believes that the experience of male survivors is non-specific in society, existing regardless of sexual orientation, class and race. A strong element of the work of the organisation is to raise awareness of male rape and sexual abuse.

### **Service Provisions**

The organisation operates a help-line two nights a week to support men who have been raped or sexually abused, taking hundreds of calls each year, many from men talking about their experiences for the first time. The help-line is run by trained counsellors, many of who are volunteers. Additionally, men are offered one-to-one counselling to talk over their experiences in a non-judgemental and safe environment. This service is charged to men who are able to pay towards the sessions since counsellors are not volunteers. The organisation contributes towards one-to-one counselling costs where individuals are unable to finance the support. Furthermore, the organisation facilitates support groups, which allow men to meet other men who have had similar experiences. As one spokesperson for the organisation stated:

Emotionally I think men need to have their feelings acknowledged by others...I would say to start with, it would be someone who they could trust...could be a counsellor, or a group facilitator or someone close to them, family, partner. The emotional needs, for me brings up ideas around support. Without support men can't get their emotional needs met... and the point of our service is really to allow men to have some space to explore what emotions they have, quite often that's anger, pain and frustration, mainly anger and pain I suppose. ...the emotional needs won't come out unless there is significant support around...before those things can be expressed (CR Interview).

## **The Data from SurvivorsUK**

Primary statistics from the *Survivors* help-line were analysed covering a seven-year period (July 1994-June 2001). A total of 1344 calls were analysed. However, in its capacity to provide support for adult male survivors of rape and sexual abuse, the organisation receives calls from both men who have been raped as adults and men who have been raped/sexually abused as children. The data in its raw form included both category of survivor.

While data on child sexual abuse are important, it was felt important to try to separate this from adult male rape when analysing the data since these are two separate issues. It was felt that this would allow for a more accurate illustration of the nature and impact of rape on men who have been raped as adults. Other studies have used similar data from SurvivorsUK but have not tried to separate men raped as adults from those raped as children in their analysis (Hillman et al. 1990; King and Woollett 1997). The importance of doing a separate analysis is highlighted by the Hillman et al. (1990) study, which, for example found that in 72 cases, the survivor knew his assailant and in 28 of these cases, the assailant was a family member. These data are somewhat misleading, given that only 28 men were over the age of 16 at the time of their first attack. The findings do not clarify whether those that were raped/abused by family members were adults or children at the time of assault. This is important when trying to present an accurate illustration of adult male rape. In fairness, the authors do not claim to be addressing only adult male rape and sexual assault. However, the combination of adult and child abuse in their analysis makes it difficult to understand these two quite separate areas of study. Additionally, unlike the present study, both Hillman et al. (1990) and King and Woollett (1997) used data on survivors who were receiving one-to-one counselling from the organisation.

As discussed earlier, it is important to note that data collected from the help-line is collected for monitoring purposes and was not collected specifically for this research study. The organisation's policy is to record information voluntarily given by callers and callers are not questioned or probed to give information for monitoring purposes, given that callers may feel uncomfortable answering questions. Therefore, complete data are not available on every individual call on the phone log. However, the purpose of using the data is to explore the nature of male rape and the experiences of some men who have been raped. To this end, the data are very valuable.

The number of calls for which it was known whether the assault took place during childhood or adulthood totalled 309. Calls for which it was known that men were raped as adults totalled 39 (the calls were identified as adult rape or child abuse when the caller had provided information about the age of first attack). In other words, 270 calls were from survivors of child abuse.

The data analysis using the SurvivorsUK data will first present the findings from the 39 survivors for whom it was known that rape happened during adulthood. These findings will then be compared to the overall findings from the 1344 calls received over the seven-year period, since it is not known how many of these are childhood abuses and how many are adult rapes. It is felt a separate yet complementary analysis will help to provide a clearer picture.

## **SECTION 1:**

### **Survivors UK data, Victimization Survey and Counsellor Interviews**

#### **8.2 Background Information of Male Survivors in SurvivorsUK Data.**

##### **8.2.1 Age at First Attack**

Survivors' ages at first attack ranged from 17 years to 45 years. The average age of survivors at first attack was 25 years.

##### **8.2.2 Callers to the Help-Line**

Of the 39 callers who were known to be raped as adults, 36 were first time callers (92%) while the remaining 3 (8%) were repeat callers. The majority of men in this group were first time callers since they would have been put in touch with someone to help them after their first call, (such as a one-to-one counsellor or group). There would therefore be less of a need for them to call again.

Of the 1344 callers in the overall group, 67% were first time callers, 32% were repeat callers, and for 1% data was not available. The number of repeat callers is higher in the overall group, possibly because men who have been sexually abused/raped are unsure about whether or not they have been victimised. This is especially applicable in situations when the perpetrator is known to the survivor, which can create confusion for the survivor around whether he in fact consented to the act. In such cases, confusion results in the survivor having to call the help-line repeatedly before being able to take the next step in his recovery.

### 8.2.3 Gender of Callers

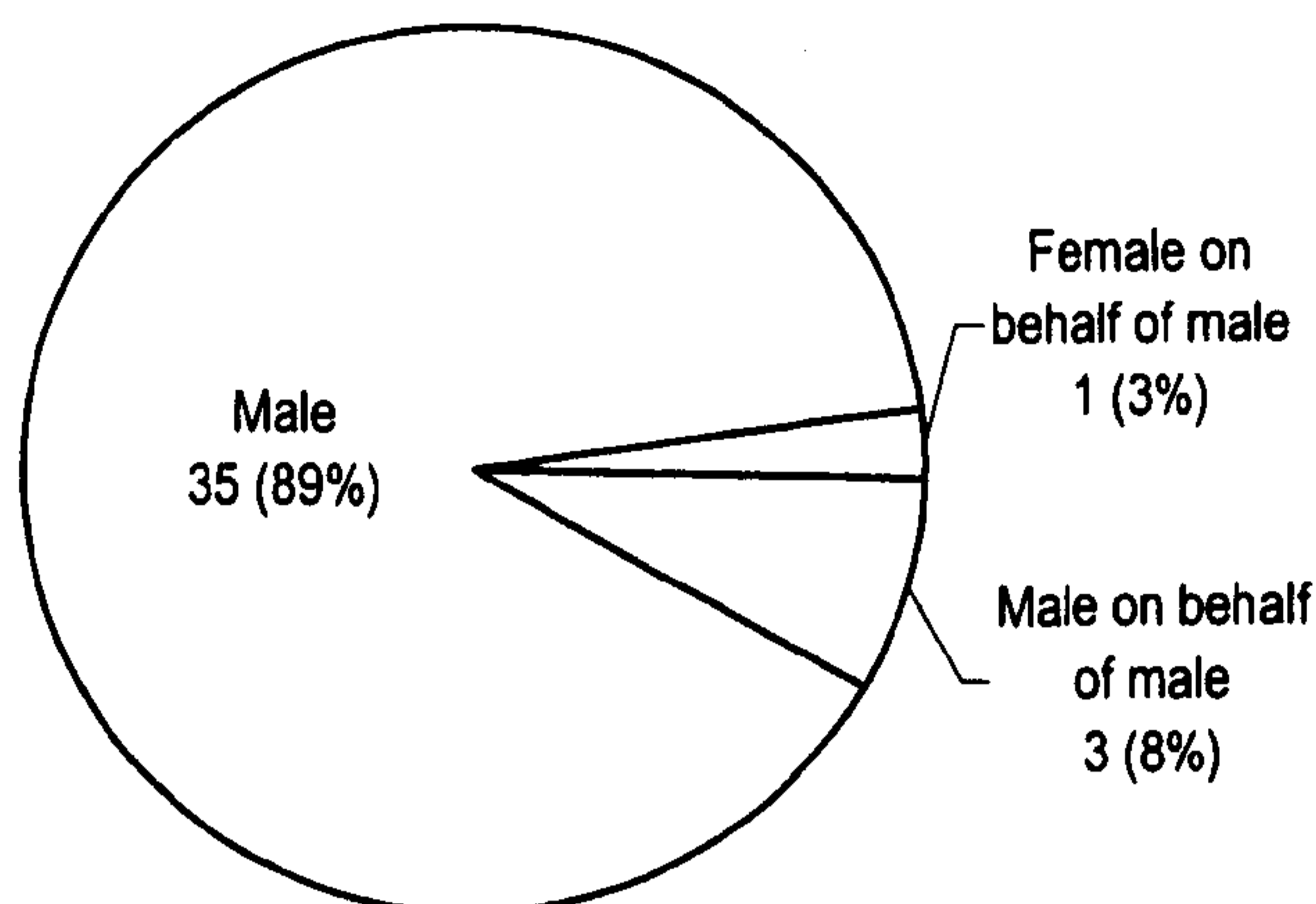


Figure 8-1: Gender of callers (total sample 39).

Thirty-five of the callers were male survivors themselves (89%) while three calls were from men calling on behalf of other male survivors (8%). One call was from a female calling on behalf of a male survivor (3%).

Of the 1344 callers, the majority were male (69%). However, eight percent of calls were from women calling on behalf of men while three percent were from men calling on behalf of other men. One percent of calls were from men calling on behalf of women and data were not available for the remaining 13%. These findings illustrate that while SurvivorsUK works with male survivors, support to female survivors is given when requested. The organisation also makes referrals to other support agencies for female rape as necessary.

## 8.3 Background Information on Male Survivors in Victimisation Survey

### 8.3.1 Ethnicity of Male Survivors

Two survivors were African-Caribbean while six described their ethnic origin as White UK/Irish. A further two were white European while two others described their ethnicity as 'White Other' but did not elaborate further. One survivor was of Asian origin and two described themselves as being of Mixed Race. One respondent did not state his ethnic origin.



### 8.3.2 Ethnicity of Survivors Compared to Ethnicity of Attackers

Ethnic origin of survivor	Number of survivor	Ethnic origin of attacker(s)	Number of attacker(s)	Additional information
African-Caribbean	1	African-Caribbean	1	-
African-Caribbean	1	White	2	More than 1 attacker
White	10	White	14	2 cases involved more than 1 attacker
Asian	1	Asian	1	-
Mixed Race	2	White	2	-
Not known	1	Not known	1	-

Figure 8-2: Ethnicity of Survivors and Attacker(s)

The above table illustrates that the majority of men were raped by attackers of the same ethnic origin as themselves. One African-Caribbean survivor was attacked by two white attackers and both mixed-race survivors were also raped by white attackers. It is difficult to draw any conclusions with regards to racial elements in the rapes because of the small sample.

### 8.3.3 Age of Survivor at the Time of the Attack

The men were asked how old they were when they were raped. Half of the men were aged between 18 and 25 years while four were aged between 26 and 33. These findings are consistent with those from the SurvivorsUK data, which illustrate that the mean age of men in that sample was 25 years (as discussed in 8.2.1). The remaining four respondents were aged between 42 and 49. The time elapsed between the attack and the survey ranged between 18 months and 22 years with the exception of one case in which two months had elapsed. The mean time elapsed between the time of attack and the survey was approximately nine years. This indicates that recovery can be a long process for survivors, and one that may not be fully reached even at the time of participating in the research. Additionally, the fact that in most cases many years had elapsed since the attack may have some bearing on the findings. For example, the response by the police may be notably different in cases where less time has elapsed due to the changes in attitudes and better training in recent years. However, it is not known how much time elapsed between the attacks and reporting to the police, in cases that did involve such reporting.

### 8.3.4 Police Reporting

	SurvivorsUK (39 men)	Victimisation survey (16 men)
Police Informed of assault	3 (8%)	7 (44%)
Police not informed of assault	34 (87%)	9 (56%)
Unknown	2 (5%)	-

Figure 8-3: Number of survivors reporting rape to the police

From the SurvivorsUK data, it can be seen that in 34 (87%) of the 39 cases, survivors did not report their experience to the police while three (18%) did inform the police (8%). It was not known whether or not the other two survivors had reported to the police. This demonstrates a staggering number of callers who did not report rape to the police, confirming the hidden nature of this crime. SurvivorsUK does not have a policy of encouraging reporting to the police since the organisation's aim is to support men in their trauma and not create what may be perceived as an additional burden. However, when callers state an interest in reporting they are given all the information about the process and, if they wish, given the contact details of police officers known to the organisation, who will deal with the survivor with good care and understanding. The data from the victimisation survey also illustrate that the majority of men did not report rape to the police (9 out of 16), although the levels of reporting are significantly different between the two groups. It may be that the men in the victimisation survey were more likely to report rape since they revealed their victimisation to other people such as friends, GP's and counsellors who may have encouraged and supported them to report to the police (disclosure to other groups is discussed a little later on in this chapter).

Similar findings were present for all the calls to the help-line (the remaining 1,305 callers). Ninety-three percent in this group had not reported rape to the police while only three percent had. For four percent of callers it was unknown whether or not they had reported. This data collectively illustrate clearly that levels of reporting rape or sexual abuse remain low.

These findings are consistent with studies discussed in chapter 2 and undisputedly demonstrate that there exists a hidden figure of male rape survivors

who may never disclose rape. For example, Mezey and King (1989) and Hillman et al. (1990) found that few men in their samples reported rape to the police. It is more probable that the sample of men participating in my research have at least begun to come to terms with their experience since most, if not all, have received some kind of support as a result of their disclosure. For every survivor who has participated, there are numerous others who do not report rape, whether to the police or to others. Counsellors were asked what they believed were the reasons why men do not report rape to the police. Challenges to sexuality and homophobia were frequently mentioned, along with the macho-type organisation that the police service is, which suggests that the police would challenge survivors' masculinity, be unsympathetic and uncaring. It was also believed that survivors fear that they will not be believed, or will be ridiculed and/or not taken seriously, as the following quotes illustrate:

Re. the police, I think two things, one is, with the best will in the world, they are not going to turn it around. It's going to take a long time to turn things around and get the Met. Police to be understanding and sympathetic towards male rape victims. By and large, it's like a lucky draw, depends on who's on the desk when you walk in. I've heard guys have had good receptions and unbelievably bad receptions. By its nature, the police is a masculine, macho-type organisation. Males fear police will think 'Oh another bloody queer'...homophobia by police. Not all police officers are like that, but a lot of them are (WE).

They are also afraid of the police as an overtly male organisation who would not treat male rape with the same sensitivity as female rape is treated, but might call them 'queer' and 'put them through an experience worse than the rape itself'. Men are also in a state of shock and denial after the abuse and do not wish to report as not reporting allows them to side-step their deep feelings for as long as possible. Men perceive the police are a bastion of society, obsessively male and narrow-minded and certainly non-containing... Men are frightened of the feelings that may come up for them when faced with a group of men who would undermine their masculinity with the usual clichés commonly experienced by women, 'why didn't you fight back?' (MB)

They may feel that they will not be believed or taken seriously and/or the police will have the same attitudes as others (perceiving the victim as weak, gay, asking for it/deserved it, likely to abuse others)... Fear of not being believed and/or being dealt with insensitively (CR).

Fear that the police won't believe them or will think they asked for it, especially if the victim is homosexual. Heterosexuals fear police won't understand and will think they're homosexual. Shame; guilt; embarrassment; are all factors which increase reluctance to report... Shock and disbelief too. (AN)

Police stations are stereotypically scary places/not conducive for a disclosure such as reporting rape (SM).

It was also suggested that homosexual men fear that they themselves may be arrested, as this quote demonstrates:

Gay men (statistically) least likely to be raped, are afraid that the police are going to have an oppressive attitude to their homosexuality... and arrest them for the activity that led to the rape as outdoor sex in groups and toilets is illegal for men (MB).

Other themes to emerge from the interviews included survivors' fears around relationship break-up, publicity, having to go to court, fear of the abuser(s) as well as other emotional reasons. The following quotes give examples of these:

Men don't report that they have been raped/sexually abused because they are afraid of the break-up of relationships with partners and with family (MB).

... fear of publicity, should the case go to court (SM).

(Men not always) aware that what has happened to them was a crime (SM).

Fear of standing up in court (CR).

Fear of the abuser, anxiety of how they might be received and what the outcome of their report might be (EV).

Other issues are also present-men are aware that reporting may create feelings that they may be unable to cope with, hence they may topple the castle that is their life; their job, friends, their inner life...best leave things alone (BM).

They may also fear losing the control they have i.e. the police will take things further than the man will want (to court) (CR).

The views of the counsellors regarding men's reluctance to report rape to the police, can be summarised by the following quote:

All of these perceptions of male survivors are held by all sections of society (fear being seen as weak i.e. not a man, shame of not being strong enough to stop it etc.) The police aren't any different. There may well be individual policemen or women who don't hold these views (...I make the assumption that these are in the minority) so it appears that it may be easier for a man, not to disclose and not have to face all the humiliation of uninformed and bias perceptions (BJ).

Research by Groth and Burgess (1980); Mezey and King (1993) and Gregory and Lees (1999) supports these findings, demonstrating that while homosexual survivors fear police prejudice, heterosexual survivors feel ashamed and fear that

the police will question their sexuality (see chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion on these and other studies).

### 8.3.5 Sexuality of Survivors: Exploding the Myth that Male Survivors are always Homosexual

	SurvivorsUK data (39 men)	Victimisation data (16 men)
Heterosexual	15 (38%)	5 (31%)
Homosexual	13 (33%)	6 (38%)
Bisexual	1 (3%)	1 (6%)
Unknown	10 (26)	-
Unsure	-	4 (25%)

Figure 8-4: The sexuality of survivors

Figure 8-4 indicates that the distribution between heterosexual and homosexual men is roughly equal. These findings challenge the myth that men who are raped are invariably homosexual since the number of homosexual and heterosexual survivors is very similar. Interestingly, the data from the police questionnaires presented in the previous chapter show that nearly half of police officers believed that homosexual men were most likely to become victims of rape (see chapter 7 figure 7-13).

For the overall calls to the help-line, information on sexuality was unavailable for a large percentage (69%). However, where data were available, again the distribution between heterosexual and homosexual survivors was very similar. Heterosexual survivors made up 18% while homosexual callers made up 13% of the total. One percent of survivors were bisexual.

This data support findings from previous studies that all males, regardless of sexuality, are potential rape victims (Forman 1982; Mezey and King 1989; Hillman et al. 1990; King 1990; McMullen 1990; Gregory and Lees 1999; see chapter 2). In addition, there was one bisexual male in the victimisation sample and one in the SurvivorsUK data. Additionally, four men in the victimisation survey were unsure about their sexuality. This uncertainty can stem from the rape itself, since men often question their own sexuality as a consequence of rape, mistakenly believing that perhaps they somehow initiated the rape (as demonstrated by Mezey and King 1989; Canter and Hodge 1998).

### 8.3.6 Place of Assault

	SurvivorsUK (39 men)	Victimisation survey (16 men)
Private place	11 (28%)	13 (81%)
Public place	4 (11%)	3 (19%)
Unknown	22 (56%)	-
Other	2 (5%)	-

Figure 8-5: Place of Assault

Eleven of the men in the SurvivorsUK data stated that they had been raped in a private place. This category included the home of either the perpetrator or the survivor, hotel rooms, place of work and private parties. Four men were raped in a public place (changing room, public toilet, park and woods) while the remaining two attacks took place in prison. The place of attack was unknown for over half of the men.

The majority of men (13) in the victimisation survey stated that they were attacked in a private place (attackers home, survivors home, a friends flat, and the home of both an attacker and the survivor) while three were attacked in public places (the street and public toilets).

With regards to the data for the total population of callers to the help-line, (which possibly includes survivors of adult male rape as well as adult survivors of childhood rape and sexual abuse) 80% did not state where the assault took place. Thirteen percent stated that it happened in a private place (home of perpetrator or survivor, at barbecues/parties), while three percent stated they had been attacked in a public place (holiday camp, swimming baths, park, woods, public toilets, sports clubs, bus-stops, golf courses and inside vehicles). From the data it was apparent that the remaining four percent had been raped in other places including institutions (prisons, army, school/boarding school, children's homes, university, mental hospital), police stations, a vicarage, hospital and place of work. The data for the total population of callers demonstrate that survivors were vulnerable targets for assault, including children, mentally disturbed men and even police suspects.

The data together demonstrate that the majority of rapes took place in private. When concentrating on those cases for which the place of assault was known, it is evident that men are more likely to be raped in a private place, rather than a public one.

### 8.3.7 Stranger Danger or Acquaintance Rapes?

	SurvivorsUK (39 men)	Victimisation survey (16 men)
Perpetrator known to survivor	14 (35%)	10 (63%)
Perpetrator unknown to survivor (stranger)	4 (10%)	6 (37%)
Connection between perpetrator and survivor unknown	19 (50%)	-
Other*	2 (5%)	-

Figure 8-6: Connection between perpetrator(s) and survivor.

From the above table it can be seen that where the connection between the perpetrator and survivor was known, the majority of attacks were carried out by men who were known to the survivor. This is in line with research on female rape, which also demonstrates that stranger rapes are less prevalent than acquaintance rapes (discussed in chapter 4). Also significant is the fact that four of the five heterosexual survivors in the victimisation survey knew their attacker(s) before the rape. This again challenges the common belief that only homosexual men are raped and that any heterosexual man who is raped, will necessarily have been raped by a stranger.

Turning to the homosexual survivors in the victimisation survey, three knew their attacker(s) prior to the rape while the remaining three homosexual survivors were raped by strangers. This again challenges the assumption made by almost half the officers in the police questionnaire that homosexual men are the most likely to be raped because they place themselves in situations/locations where such attacks occur, thereby increasing their vulnerability (see chapter 7). This demonstrates the lack of information and the false sense of safety that heterosexual males may have, since there exists a common assumption that it is homosexual men who are raped because they are most vulnerable. It may be

\* The men in this group were raped by multiple assailants, one by an ex-partner and strangers, and the other by strangers and an acquaintance.

that because heterosexual males do not recognise their own vulnerabilities that they are in fact *more* vulnerable to rape.

Three of the men who also knew their attacker(s) were unsure of their own sexuality.

These findings also demonstrate that homosexual males are more likely to be raped by strangers than heterosexual males, perhaps because they frequent places where attacker(s) will look for potentially vulnerable men, such as gay clubs, and other venues.

The findings therefore confirm that all men are vulnerable to rape, for different reasons and in different ways and places.

### 8.3.8 Relationship between Survivor and Perpetrator

	SurvivorsUK (39 men)	Victimisation survey (16 men)
Unknown	19 (50%)	-
Stranger	4 (10%)	6 (38%)
Acquaintance	5 (13%)	5 (32%)
Friend	3 (8%)	1 (6%)
Partner	3 (8%)	-
Relative	1(3%)	3 (18%)
Lover	-	1 (6%)
Prisoner	2 (4%)	-
Other*	2 (4%)	-

Figure 8-7: Relationship between survivor and perpetrator.

For 19 of the 39 men in the SurvivorsUK data, their connection to the perpetrator was unknown (54%) since the data were not available. However, four men were raped by strangers (11%), five were raped by acquaintances (14%) and three were raped by a friend (9%). Additionally, three men were raped by their partner (9%), and one was raped by a relative (step-father). Two survivors had been raped by prisoners during their confinement (5%). Furthermore, two men were raped by multiple assailants (categorised as 'other' in the above table), one by an ex-partner and strangers and the other by strangers and an acquaintance.

From the victimisation survey data, six men were raped by a stranger while five of the men stated that their attacker(s) was an acquaintance. It is not known



how long they had been acquainted. One man was raped by his lover while another was raped by a friend. The remaining three men were raped by a relative. The one respondent who was raped by three attackers was acquainted to them, and is therefore also represented in the above chart, as one of the five men raped by an acquaintance.

The majority of survivors knew their attacker(s) prior to the rape. These findings are consistent with earlier work by Mezey and King (1989) who found that 18 of their sample of 22 men (82%) knew their attacker(s). Other work by Hillman et al. (1990); Huckle (1995); Stermac et al. (1996) and Isey and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997) also found that in the majority of cases, perpetrators were known to the survivors prior to the rape.

### 8.3.9 Number of Attackers

Number of assailants	SurvivorsUK (39 men)	Victimisation survey (16 men)
1	34 (87%)	13 (81%)
2	1 (3%)	2 (12%)
3	2 (5%)	1 (7%)
Unknown (more than 1)	2 (5%)	-

Figure 8-8: Number of Attackers.

Five of the 39 men were raped by more than one assailant (13%). Similarly, in the victimisation survey, the majority of attacks involved one assailant. These findings are similar to research by Canter and Hodge (1998) who found that 64% of their sample involved one assailant. Other work by Hillman et al. (1990); Frazier (1993); Huckle (1995); and Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997) also illustrates that the majority of rapes involved only one assailant.

Of the five men in the SurvivorsUK data raped by more than one man, two were raped by three assailants and one was raped by two assailants. Two other men had been raped by prisoners but it is not known how many prisoners were involved in each case. It is of interest to note also that three of the 16 cases involved more than one attacker. These numbers of multiple assailants are similar to Mezey and King's (1989) study in which four of their 16 cases involved multiple assailants. Two men in the victimisation survey stated that they were

attacked by two assailants and one man stated that he was attacked by three assailants. In one of the cases involving two men, the respondent was approached by both. One physically held him down while the second raped him. Both attackers were unknown to the survivor and the attack took place in a public place. The second case in the victimisation survey involving two assailants also took place in public and the survivor did not know the assailants. In the victimisation survey incident that involved three assailants, the respondent was raped by all three. In this case, the rapes took place in a private place and the respondent knew all three assailants.

These data demonstrate that the majority of men were raped by one assailant although rape by more than one assailant also occurred.

### **8.3.10 Effects of the Rape on Survivors**

The 39 male survivors of adult rape experienced feelings of vulnerability, anxiety, frustration, anger, and fear, as a consequence of the rape. Some men stated that they were having relationship problems because of the rape and others described feeling depressed. Nightmares, eating disorders, drug and alcohol misuse were all common consequences of rape. Some men reported feeling confused about their sexuality since the rape and one man stated that he felt suicidal. One man also expressed difficulty in speaking about the rape. Some of the men were on medication because of the rape.

Among the total group of 1344 callers, in addition to the above experiences, men frequently mentioned fearing that their rape/abuse would make them go on to become rapists/abusers and one man who said that he had been abused by his neighbour, identified himself as a paedophile. A number of men also stated that they fantasised about abusing children, believing that this was a result of their own abusive experiences. Homophobia was another common reaction to rape and abuse, with men believing that their perpetrator must have been homosexual. Many men in the sample believed that they had post-traumatic stress disorder (as identified in chapter 2) and others stated that they had mental health problems including paranoia, and were receiving psychiatric treatment. Panic attacks, trust issues, self-harming behaviour, feelings of self-blame and relationship problems were present in many of the cases. Some men became involved in the sex industry as a result of their experiences. Shock, low self-

esteem, nervous breakdowns, avoidance behaviour, and violent outbursts were also common after rape/abuse.

The 16 survivors in the victimisation survey were asked about the effects the rape had on them and their lives, in order to determine the impact and types of trauma they had experienced. The chart below illustrates the different emotions and experiences of men, as a consequence of rape. The numbers exceed 16 because all men experienced more than one type of impact, with most men experiencing a range of emotions and problems.

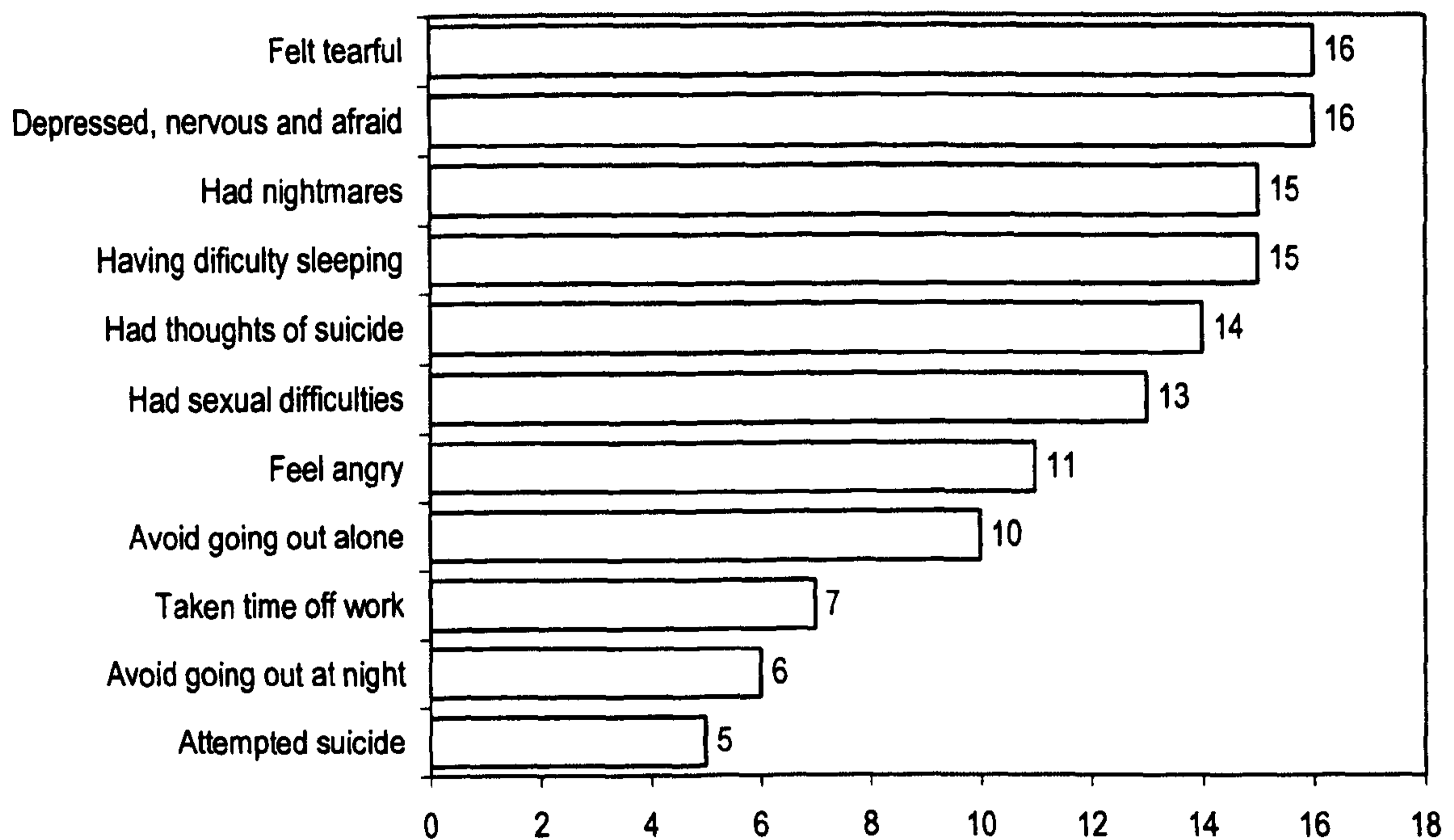


Figure 8-9: Effects of rape: victimisation survey data

It can be seen that all 16 survivors experienced feeling tearful, depressed, nervous and afraid since the rape. Additionally, nearly all men stated that they had difficulty sleeping, and had suffered from nightmares. Fourteen survivors had thoughts of suicide while five had already attempted suicide; 13 experienced sexual difficulties and 11 expressed feelings of anger. Avoidance behaviour was also present, with ten of the men stating that they avoided going out alone and ten avoided going out at night. Seven of the men had taken time off work, as a consequence of the rape. Four men in the victimisation survey were unsure about their sexuality. This uncertainty can stem from the rape itself since it has been demonstrated in chapter 2 and the above findings that men often question

their own sexuality as a consequence of rape, mistakenly believing that perhaps they somehow initiated the rape. This is further supported by the interviews with counsellors who also highlighted that men may doubt their own sexuality as a consequence of rape, as the following quote demonstrates:

...There's also the general issue around sexuality...for a heterosexual man there may well be issues around the possibility that maybe they did something or gave off some kind of signals to provoke this attack or whatever, or they may well think that because it happened to them, it might make them gay or something like that...I know that sounds strange but I've heard people say that before...after having been sexually assaulted they question - their sexuality would come into it and (there is) some kind of crisis but that's more so for younger men I would say, and even more so for children, I think. But definitely adults go through some kind of experience of that...and on top of that, in society, people do link together that...you know, if you've been sexually assaulted and you're a man, then you're probably gay...or you probably did something to ask for it in some way (CR).

Therefore, confusion around sexuality is not uncommon for men, after a rape, as demonstrated by this research, and supported by male rape literature discussed in chapter 2. Additionally, the survivors were asked to further elaborate on the long-term consequences of rape. The following quotes give details of the types of trauma present in men's lives, because of rape experiences:

I had to have an HIV test and general VD test (Dave, 55, Unemployed).

At one time I thought I might be bisexual because of the attack but I stopped about five minutes into it before it went any further. I'm glad I did it because I now know for sure, I like women - because of what happened and all the dreams I was having, I felt like I needed to know ...I became distant from my partner. I thought I was over it but I'm not. I sometimes feel at the end of my tether. My world's fallen to bits. I've lost a lot of friends and two or three girlfriends because I've been so open with them about it (Paul, 40, Builder).

I took an overdose after it happened. I hit the Vodka and was sacked from my job for taking time off. I had a Doctor's note while in hospital but was still sacked. I've started drinking lots. It's hard to come to terms with. You always think 'I went to that person's place and I didn't want it to happen and it did.' It's all I think about (Toby, 30, Unemployed).

I get feelings of suffocation. I can't breath, pain and the greatest feeling of loneliness. Sexually, it gets in the way of things. Sometimes it crosses my mind that do they really want me to do this? I also have medical problems. Tight muscles. I wonder how much is to do with the rape and perhaps some is psychological. Being a gay bloke who isn't 'out' people don't know the real you and I feel angry about it. Part of me says I decided to go to his room so I feel

responsible even though logically I know I said 'please don't do this, I don't want this'. I feel the loneliness, the isolation, the fear, the shame. I feel resentful that I get negative thoughts about this individual (because I've had a Christian up bringing I sometimes want to forgive him). I feel out of control. Guilt has been a large part of my life. I feel guilty for putting myself in that position where it could happen (Alberto, 40, Clerical Worker).

I still get flashbacks and memories and find it very hard to trust people. I get a lot of times when I withdraw and find it difficult to carry on at times. I still have times when I feel like ending my life. I still have difficulties sexually. I broke off with my previous boyfriend because I couldn't cope with a committed relationship. Sex brought flashbacks. When I'm on my own I find it very tough. I also had a breakdown (Patrick, 27, Social Worker).

It was in the daytime, on the street. There were so many people and no one helped. I'm supposed to be this big macho man and I'm not. It's not a sex crime. It's a crime of degradation and humiliation. I don't understand how one human being can do that to another human being. I feel like a wasted man (Alex, 42, Nurse).

I feel confused. I think maybe I'm bisexual because I let it happen. I'm still very much attracted to women. I never had thought of men before. I definitely didn't want anything to happen. I think about men sexually and having sex with men which I never had before. It crosses my mind a lot. I haven't had sex with another man but I think about it. I also worry about STD's (John, 22, Student).

It's affected me permanently. I've been scarred for life. I can't get girlfriends. Relationships are a no-go even though they enjoy being with me but things don't get any better. I feel angry. I get flashbacks. It's horrible. I've tried taking my life. I feel nobody cares. When I go for medicals I tense up. I hate it when they touch me but I can't say 'don't touch me' because I need help. If I use toilets I hate it because it reminds me (Adrian, 35, Machine Operator).

I can't seem to get on with life or relationships. It affects everything I do. I feel depressed all the time. I find relationships really difficult. I feel I've become very introvert; can't love. I feel cold and with no emotions. I feel dirty and I feel like killing the person. I feel used, second best. It just plays on your mind. I have mood swings. I've become very introvert. I always want to be on my own to think, and then get that depressing feeling (Jaz, 30, Invoicing Clerk).

He was so outgoing but not any more. He does absolutely nothing. He is so unhappy. He doesn't talk to people because he mistrusts them (Jo, 40, Teacher).

I hit the drink-lots of memories and nightmares. Also taking Vallium. Had a medical problem since it happened (Eddie, 30, Tradesman).

I feel guilty all the time. I'm in a suicidal state most of the time. Tried overdosing. I find it difficult to report to the police. My sense of judgement has been affected. I can't judge another person's personality. Hurt converts itself into guilt as if I deserved it. No feelings of hurt or anger, just guilt. I never stop feeling anxious or guilty or fearful (George, 28, Unemployed).

These examples powerfully illustrate the different types of trauma that men go through after being raped. They demonstrate that questions around sexuality, feelings of self-blame, guilt, fear, all play a major part in men's lives. Medical problems, alcohol and drug abuse is also identified by some survivors as problems resulting from rape. Men described behavioural, somatic and psychological responses identical to components of the rape trauma syndrome, first identified in female survivors of rape by Burgess and Holmstrom (1974) as discussed in chapter 2. The severe impact of rape on men's lives is echoed by other research on male rape including Groth and Burgess 1980; Kaufman et al. 1980; Goyer and Eddleman (1984); Myers (1989); Frazier (1993); Stermac et al. (1996) and Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997).

## **SECTION 2: Victimization Survey and Counsellor Interviews**

### **8.4 The Experiences of Survivors**

The remaining findings are from the victimisation survey and counsellor interviews only since these data were not available for the SurvivorsUK men.

#### **8.4.1 Survivors' Awareness of their Vulnerability Prior to the Rape**

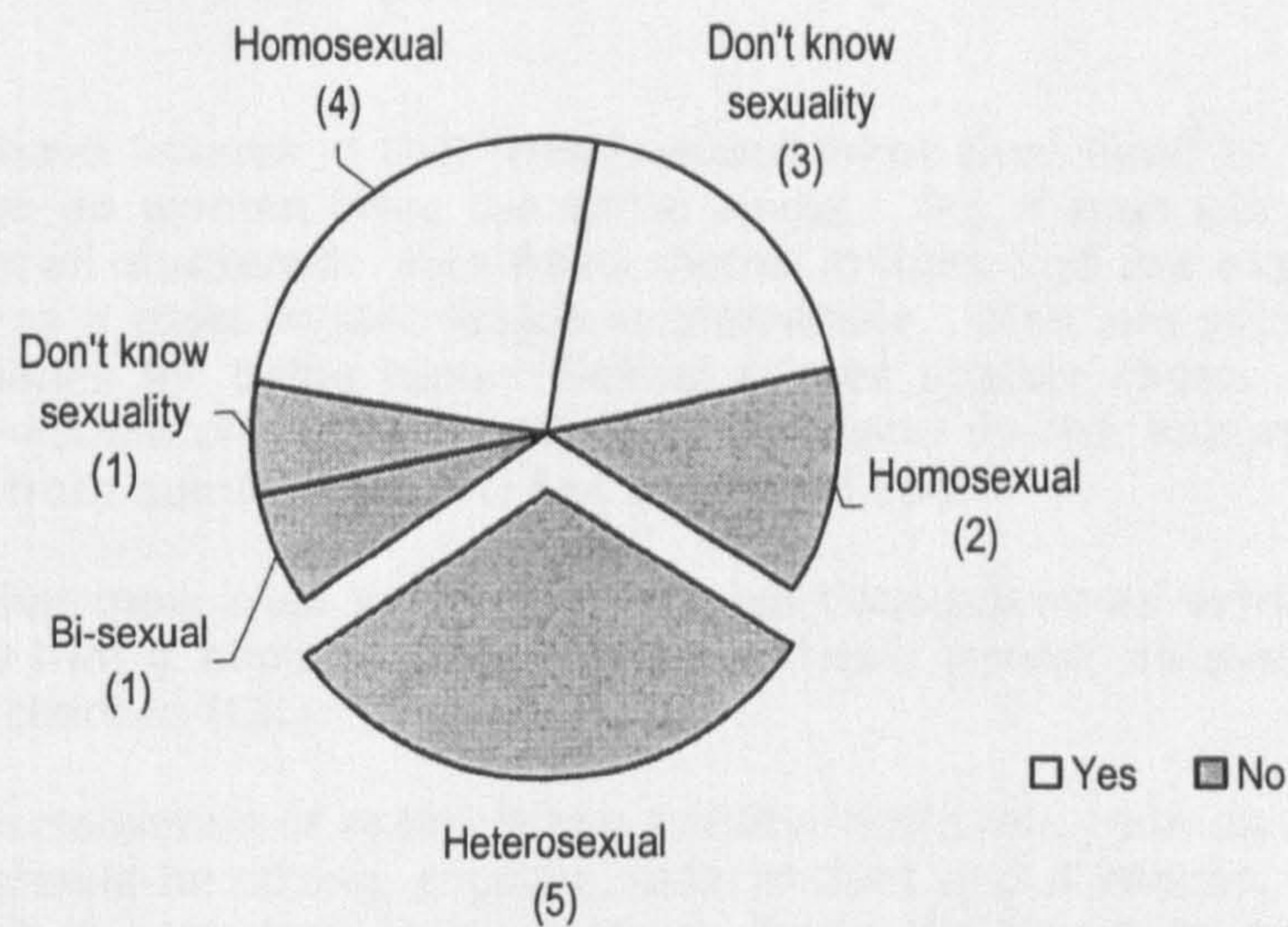


Figure 8-10: Survivors awareness of vulnerability to rape.

The 16 survivors in the study were asked about their awareness of their potential vulnerability to being raped, prior to the attack(s). The majority of men did not perceive themselves as potential victims of rape, prior to the rape(s). This lack of recognition of men's potential vulnerability, by men themselves, can compound the shock and trauma after a rape.

It is interesting to note that all five heterosexual males in the sample were not aware that men could be raped, prior to their attack. In comparison, the majority of homosexual males in the sample (four out of a total of six) were aware that males could be raped. This indicates that homosexual males are more aware of the existence of male rape, perhaps owing to their vulnerabilities as homosexual males.

The majority of men in the victimisation survey did not perceive themselves as vulnerable to rape prior to the incident. The interviews with counsellors further explored whether or not men perceive themselves as victims of sexual crimes to consider male vulnerability to such victimisation. Six of the seven counsellors believed that men do not perceive themselves as vulnerable and potential victims of rape or other sexual crimes. The one counsellor, who had a different view, stated that some men do, and some don't, depending on how supported they might feel within themselves and within their social environment. The social construction of masculinities and the focus of society on this is demonstrated in all six of the seven counsellors interviews, as to why men do not perceive themselves as vulnerable to rape. Their views have been summarised and presented in the following examples:

(No) Men have images in their minds about what they need to be, to be male, so do women have the same model. So, if men get raped then this is all shattered. Men have macho images and are expected to live up to a male model, which is impossible. Men are socialised with guidelines for being men. Sexual crimes shatter these. Even police are victims of sexual crimes but they have macho images that stop them from admitting that it has happened (WE).

I believe that most men would not perceive themselves as vulnerable but (think) that it happens to a very few others, almost always when they were children (CR).

(No) The socialisation of males in our society instils into men an image that they should be strong, capable, independent and a winner. In all situations it is important to be seen as being the victor so being a victim is difficult to envisage and the consequent showing of feelings and emotions scary. This applies very strongly to the area of sex. Mainstream media reinforces this with sensationalism over sexual crimes committed against women and implication that it is because they are women that these crimes are committed against them. There is very little for a man to identify with if he has experienced sexual assault/abuse so feels isolated and alone and perhaps the only person this has happened to so must be to blame in some way due to his inability to be a complete/real man (SM).

(No) On the whole men see themselves as being physically and physiologically invincible and this pertains especially to the area of sexual abuse. It is a real shock to a man when he is raped and can often destroy his sense of self, and change his path of growth (MB).



### 8.4.2 Survivors' Definitions of Rape

The men were asked to consider their definitions of rape. It is important to consider survivors' definitions of rape in light of the wide-ranging definitions presented in the wealth of literature on rape, discussed in previous chapters.

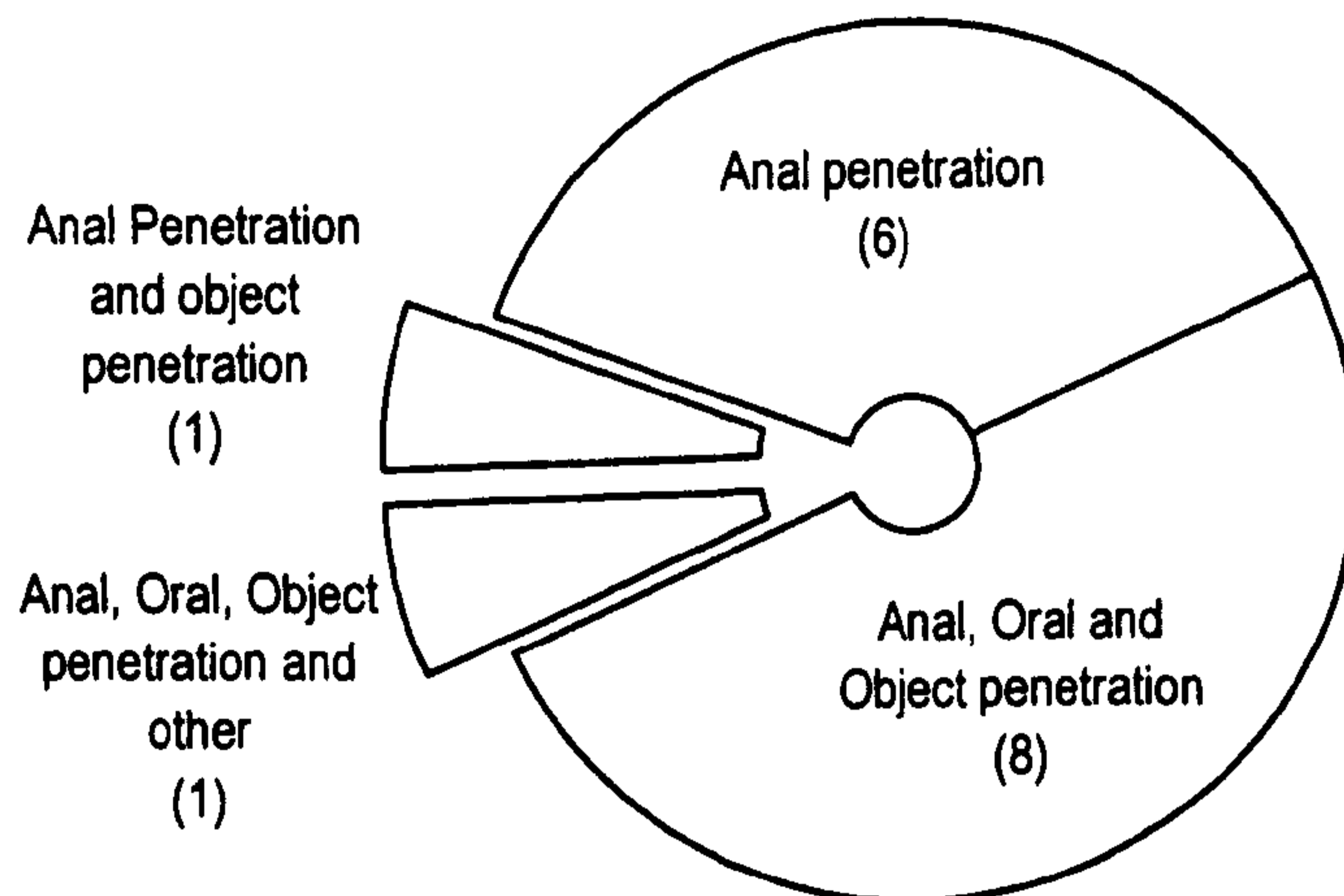


Figure 8-11: Survivors' definitions of rape.

Respondents were given a list of definitions and asked which they believed best-defined rape. Half of the men believed that rape includes anal, oral and object penetration, despite the fact that legal recognition of male rape in the United Kingdom only defines rape in terms of anal penetration. Six men defined rape as anal penetration only, in line with the current legal definition. The one male who believed that the term rape includes anal, oral, object penetration and other, included forced sex games to the list of definitions.

### 8.4.3 Marital Status of Those Attacker(s) Known to the Survivor

The ten men who knew their assailant(s) were asked about the marital status of these assailant(s). Six men stated that their attacker was single, while two stated that he was married and one survivor stated that his attacker was living with a female. The survivor who was raped by three attackers stated that one of his attackers was single while the other two were married.

#### 8.4.4 Sexuality of Those Attacker(s) Known to the Survivor

The ten men who knew their attacker prior to the rape were also asked about the sexuality of their attacker. Four of them believed that their attacker was heterosexual. This fundamentally challenges the myth that men who rape other men must be homosexual. Two of the survivors knew their attacker to be homosexual while one believed that his attacker was bisexual. Two of the survivors did not know the sexuality of their attacker. Additionally, the one man who was raped by three men stated that all three of his attackers were heterosexual.

Heterosexual	5
Homosexual	2
Bisexual	1
Don't know	2

Figure 8-12: Sexuality of attacker(s)

These findings show that men who rape other men do so regardless of their own sexuality, further highlighting the fact that rape has little to do with sexuality and everything to do with exerting power and control over the victim.

The findings also suggest that an overwhelming number of rapes are carried out by heterosexual men, challenging the myth that only homosexual men perpetrate male rape. Similarly, the counsellor interviews revealed that it is heterosexual men, in the main, that rape other men, as the following quote illustrates:

On the whole, it's heterosexual men, as far as I can understand, (who rape other men) not the common myth that it's gay men wandering around who rape other men whether they are gay or not...as far as I'm aware, it's heterosexual men and...I don't know if I can make the profile any more distinctive than that (CR).

These findings are consistent with previous research studies (Groth and Burgess 1980; Mezey and King 1989; King 1990; Stermac et al. 1996 – see chapter 2).

### 8.4.5 Violence Used

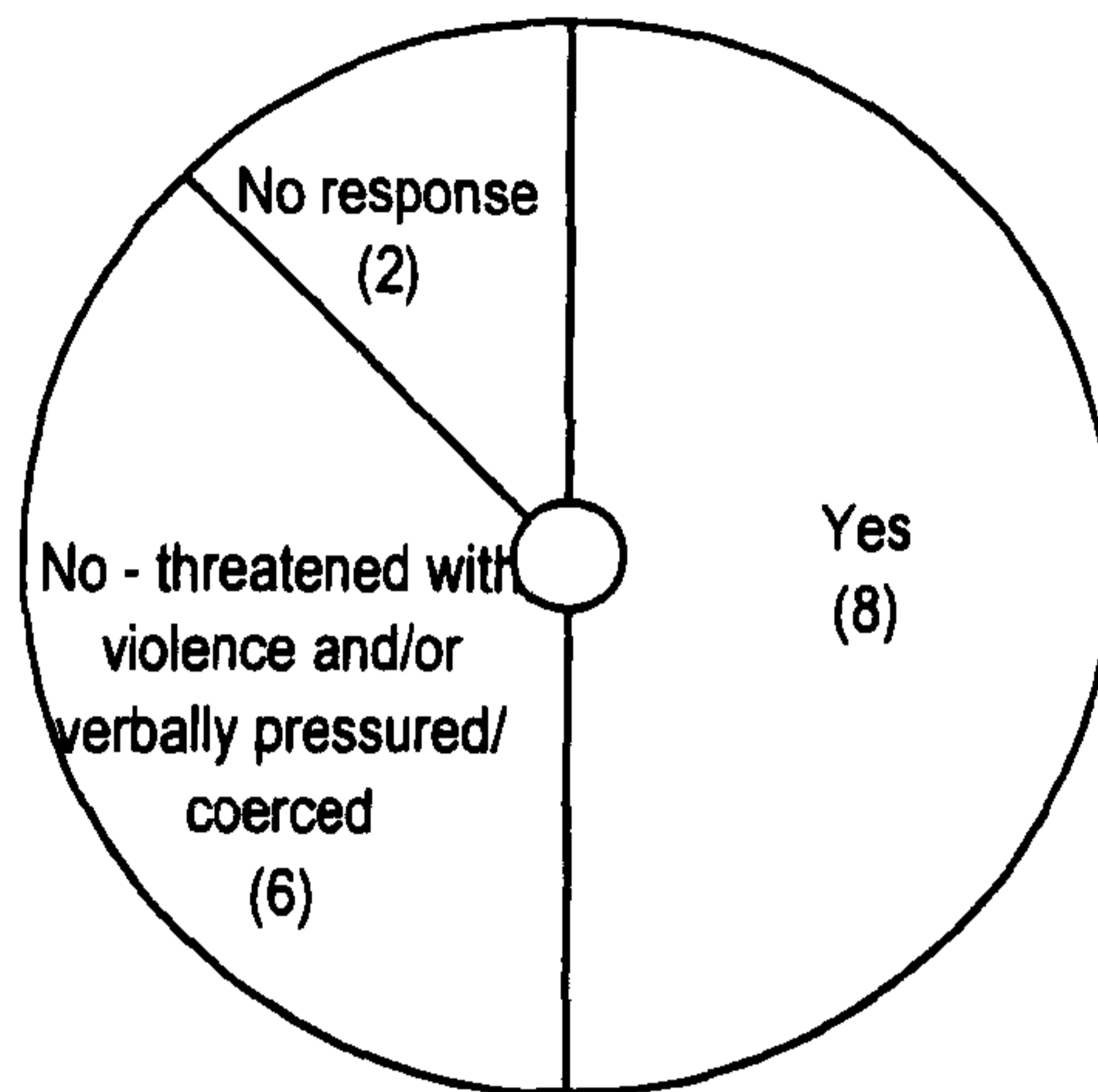


Figure 8-12: Was Violence used during the attack?

The above chart illustrates that in half of the cases, the men experienced some form of physical violence. Two respondents did not comment on the use of violence. The remaining six survivors stated that while physical violence was not used, they were either threatened with violence, verbally pressured or coerced. Any lack of physical violence does not however, indicate that violence was not present since rape is of course, in itself a violent act. The threat of violence is insufficiently acknowledged in the criminal justice system and has been a major feature of female rapes too (this has been discussed in chapter 4). The recognition of rape as an act of violence has been overshadowed by the perception that it is a sexual crime, as discussed in chapter 3. However, the following findings clearly demonstrate that rape is an act of violence.

### 8.4.6 Type of Attack

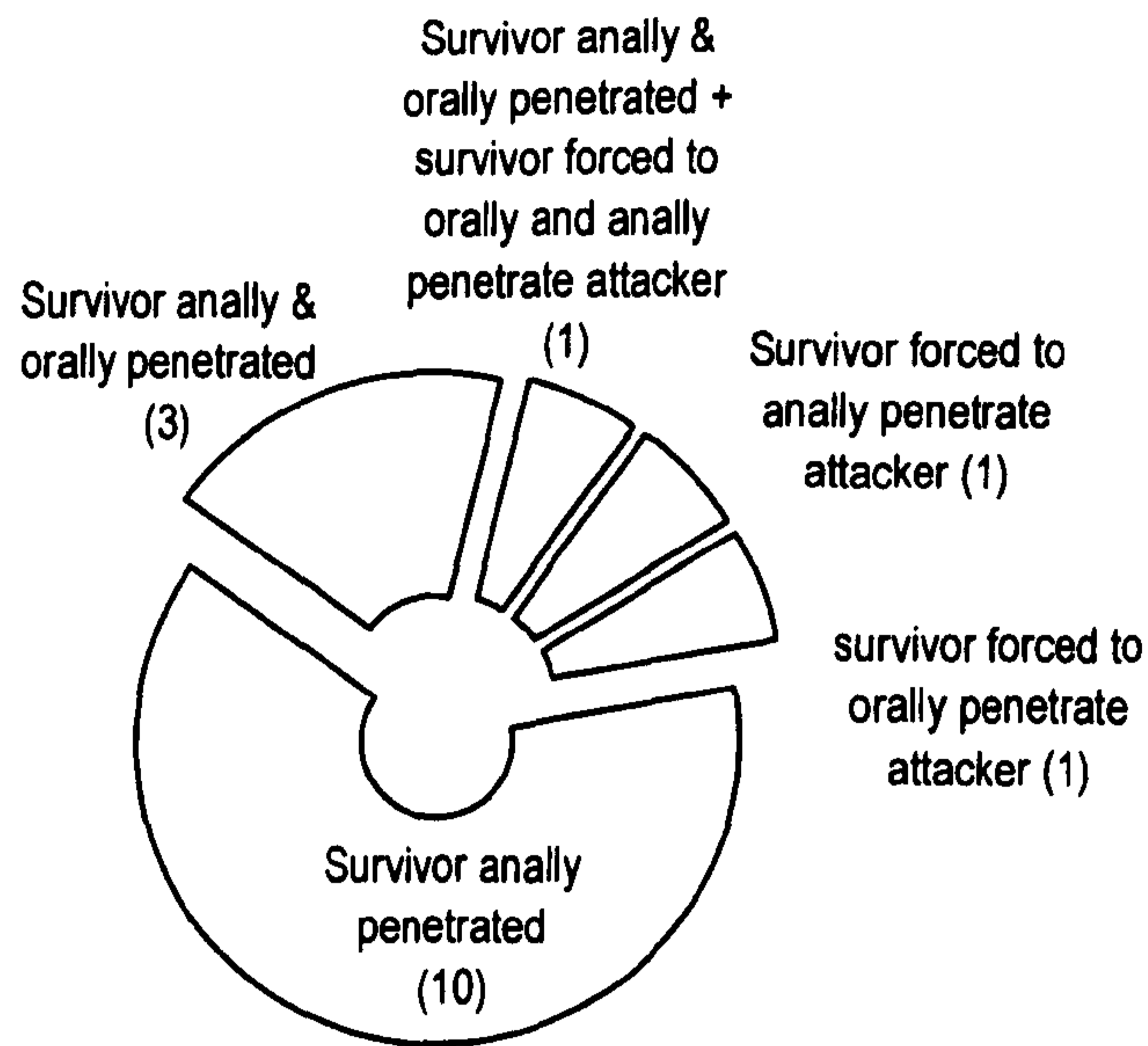


Figure 8-13: Type of Attack

The men were asked about the types of violence experienced during the rape and the above figure illustrates these findings.

One man also stated:

I was forced to “play sex games” (Patrick, 27, Social Worker)

Research by Huckle (1995) found that forced or attempted anal penetration was present in 19 of the 22 cases in their sample. Similarly, King and Woollett (1997) found that forced anal rape was present in 80% of their cases of men raped as adults.

### 8.4.7 Forms of Violence Used by Attacker(s)

The men were asked about the forms of violence used against them.

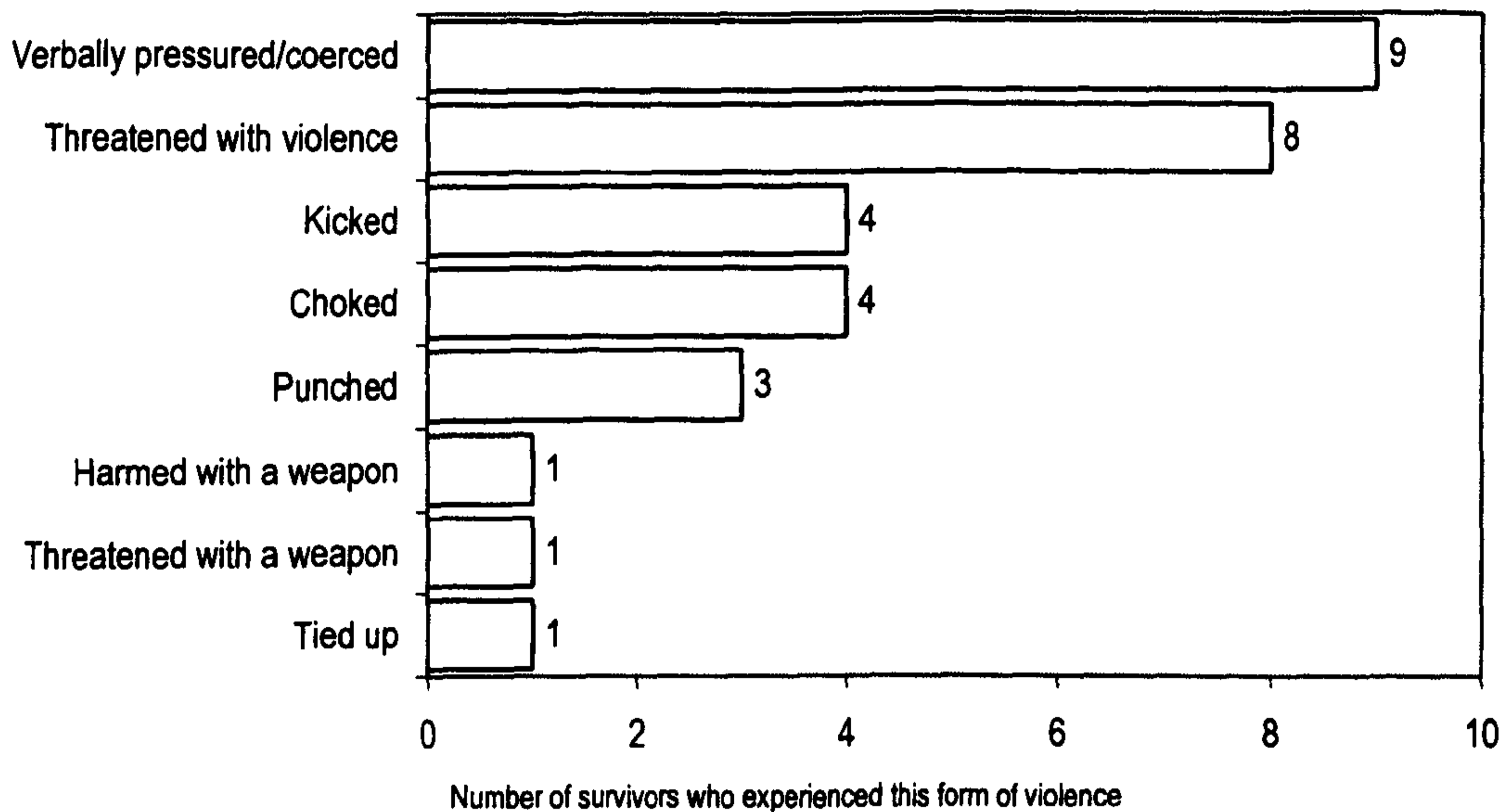


Figure 8-14: Forms of violence used during the attack.

The above chart illustrates the forms of violence /aggression used during the attacks. The numbers exceed 16 because some respondents experienced more than one form of violence.

One man was punched, choked and kicked by his assailant. Another was punched, choked, kicked and threatened with violence. Yet another man was punched, kicked and threatened with violence. One man was choked, threatened with violence and verbally pressured/coerced. Another man was choked, threatened with violence, verbally pressured/coerced and threatened with a weapon (a knife). One man was kicked and threatened with violence while another was tied up, threatened with violence, verbally pressured /coerced and harmed with a weapon (bamboo canes and large sticks). Two men were threatened with violence and verbally pressured/coerced. Four of the men were verbally pressured/coerced and one was grabbed and pushed. Two men did not respond to the question. These findings illustrate that apart from the rape itself, which is of course a violent act, verbal coercion and the threat of violence were

the most common experiences. This is also the case for women who are raped (see for example Kelly 1988; Gregory and Lees 1999).

Stermac et al. (1996) reported that all 29 survivors in their research experienced coercion by perpetrators while verbal threats were used in six cases (21%). Additionally, physical violence was used in three of the cases (11%) while a further 11 survivors (39%) were confined or restrained during the attacks.

The men in the present study were asked about any physical injuries they sustained as a consequence of the rape. The following responses were given:

I had a bout of diarrhoea and passing wind. My head was pushed against the wall and both my arms held from behind (Michael, 34, Unemployed).

Broken nose, broken collarbone and broken jaw. I was hospitalised. I had to have my anus stitched up (Alex, 42, Nurse).

These findings are similar to those of Doan and Levy (1983) who found evidence of extra-genital trauma in a third of their 29 patients who had been raped, and rectal trauma in one patient in the sample.

Comparisons between male and female survivors' experiences of rape, and particularly with reference to severity of assaults, have been made by Frazier (1993). Findings from this study suggest that female survivors experience greater physical harm than male survivors, although it may be argued that it is unhelpful to make such comparisons since each experience of rape is different. To suggest comparisons between levels of violence implies an unethical hierarchy between survivors, based on their sex.

#### 8.4.8 Medical Attention

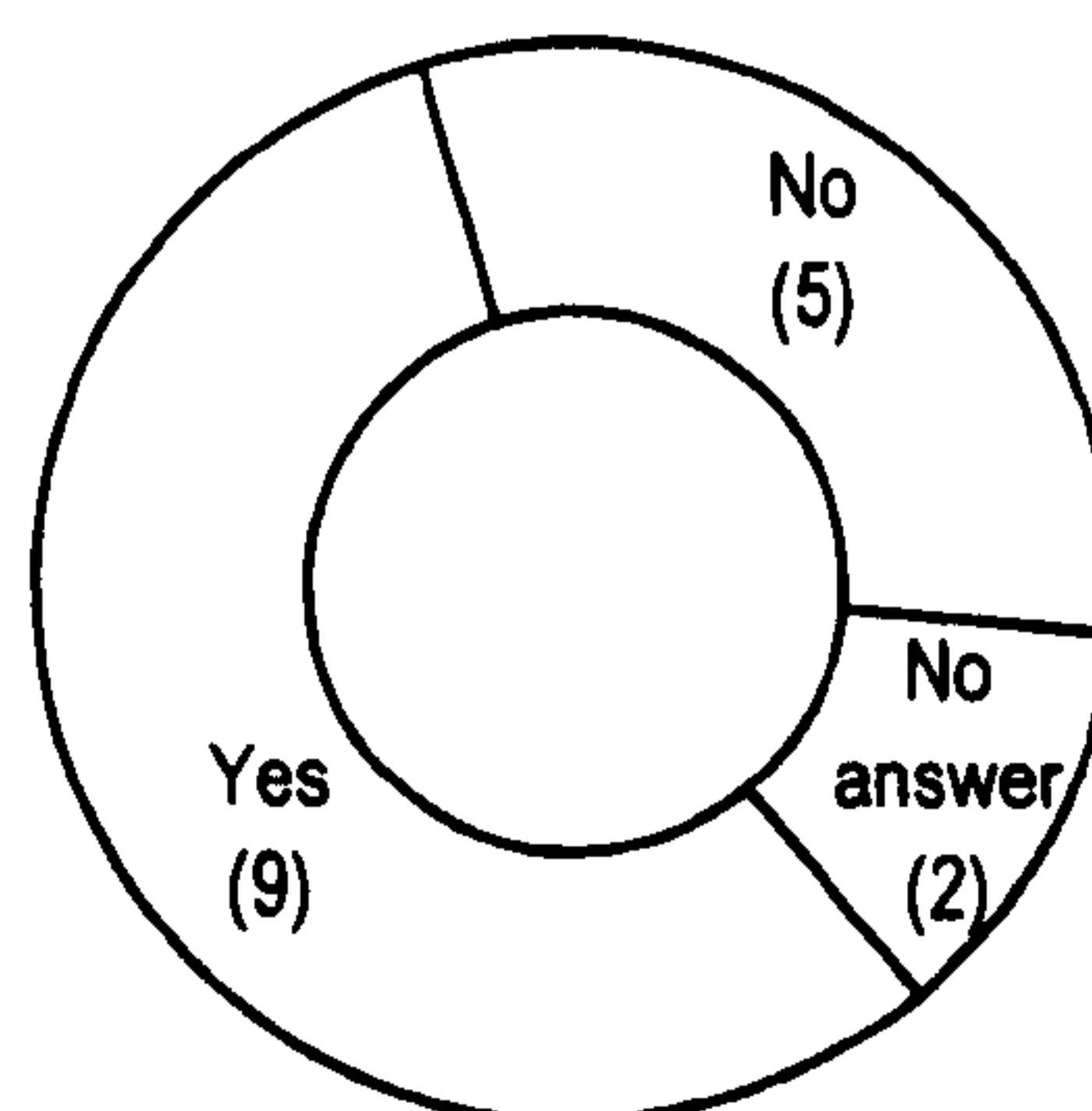


Figure 8-15: Did you need medical attention for your injuries?

The men were asked about whether or not they required any medical attention because of the rape.

Over half of the men required medical attention as a consequence of the rape, demonstrating clearly the degree of violence sustained. Research by Mezey and King (1989) found that five out of 22 survivors sought medical attention for their injuries, while a further ten were injured as a result of rape, but did not seek medical help. In Hillman et al's. (1990) sample of 100 men, 17 sought medical attention for their injuries and 12 had infections thought to be attributable to the rape. In 20 cases the threat of HIV was used by perpetrators and in one case, an HIV test proved positive.

#### **8.4.9 Survivors' Responses during the Attack**

<b>Too afraid to resist in any way</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Tried to physically and verbally resist the attack</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Tried to physically and verbally resist and tried to reason with the attacker</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Co-operated and did everything the attacker(s) wanted</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Froze</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Tried to physically and verbally resist and tried to reason and negotiate with the attacker</b>	<b>1</b>

Figure 8-16: How survivors responded during the attack.

The men were asked about how they responded to the attack. Two major groups emerged in considering the survivors' responses to the attacks. The first group consists of those who tried to resist the attack in some way, including physical and verbal resistance as well as more passive resistance such as trying to reason with the attacker(s), and trying to negotiate with him/them. The second group consisted of those men who did not resist or put up a fight. The survivors in this group stated that they were either too afraid to resist or fight back, or they froze with fear. The following quotes are from those men who did try to put up some kind of resistance:

I was screaming and screaming (Alex, 42, Nurse).

I agreed to sex in the end but never to anal penetration (Tony, 48, Unemployed).

(I said) Please don't do this; I don't want this (Alberto, 40, Clerical Worker).

One of the men who did not put up resistance to the attack(s) made the following comment:

I remembered how my fear and struggles at the hands of previous rapists gave them a buzz, "turned them on" so I stopped struggling and making noise and my body as if limp and dead. It worked; he stopped anal rape (Marco, 48, Unemployed).

All the men in this group stated that they were too afraid to fight back, as the following examples illustrate:

I was really frightened and didn't know what to do, whether to shout or yell out loudly. I said nothing. I didn't struggle because I was afraid. I began crying and was very upset. I was worried about my safety and what might happen when it was over (Michael, 34, Unemployed).

I froze. I pretended I was asleep (John, 22, Student).

Additionally, comments from survivors who stated that they were too shocked to resist or fight back, included:

I just froze, shocked (Jaz, 30, Invoicing Clerk).

My drink was spiked (Eddie, 30, Tradesman).

It can be seen that the majority of the men (9 out of 16) were either too afraid to resist or fight back, or froze with fear. This demonstrates that contrary to widely held beliefs that 'real men fight back'; in fact men often do not or cannot fight back. Seven men put up some form of resistance. These findings therefore explode the myth that men who are raped would always fight back, and are consistent with findings from Mezey and King (1989), who found that only eight of their sample of 22 survivors tried to put up physical resistance, while a further 12 tried to dissuade their attacker. In this study, two men appeared to offer no resistance at all. Similar findings have been presented by Gregory and Lees (1999) who found that 60% of male survivors in their sample offered no resistance to their assailants.

#### **8.4.10 Attacker(s) Response to Survivors' Resistance**

The seven men who wrote that they put up some form of resistance to the attack(s) were asked about their attacker(s)' reactions and responses to this



resistance. One survivor reported that his attacker became more violent as a result of the survivor's resistance, while another commented that his attacker became more violent and more verbally abusive. The remaining five survivors stated that their attacker(s) became more violent, more verbally abusive and more turned on, at the men's resistance. Evidence from other research studies has also demonstrated that attacker(s) often become more violent and aggressive if they are challenged by their victim, or in some cases become more sexually aroused. For example, there has been some work focusing on the role of fantasy in sexual excitement, bringing consideration to issues such as use of force, the presence of danger, the emotional states of fright and anger. Researching sexual excitement, Stoller (1976: 890) concluded that 'sexual excitement depends on a scenario that the person to be aroused has been writing since childhood.' Other work Groth and Burgess (1980) and Mezey and King (1989) demonstrated similar findings (see chapter 2). None of the rapists stopped as a result of the men's fighting back, or resistance.

#### **8.4.11 Other Tactics Used by Attacker(s) during Attack**

The men were asked whether their attacker(s) said anything else during the attack.

The following quotes illustrate that perpetrators in these cases used blackmail, threats, manipulation and coercion in order to overpower and control their victims. They also demonstrate that homosexual males are threatened with exposure as homosexuals if they do not comply with the attacker(s)' demands. Also, attacker(s)' assertions that the victim enjoyed the rape and must therefore be homosexual, lead to confusion around sexuality and guilt for perhaps 'asking for it'. Such confusion and guilt adds to the trauma of the situation, for the male victim:

He said "You should not have trusted me. I am an evil bastard; I planned this when I phoned you yesterday" (Marco, 48, Unemployed).

I lived in a rented house share and had not told my housemates I had sex with men. I was blackmailed to be 'outed' to all if I did not shut up as he raped me (Tony, 48, Unemployed).

Shut up. If you make a noise or move "I will kill you" (Dave, 55, Unemployed).

"This is good, this is good." When he withdrew he said again "that was good" (Michael, 34, unemployed).

He said I must be gay as well as I didn't stop him. He said he'd tell people I was gay. He said 'you obviously enjoy it' (John, 22, Student).

Research by Gregory and Lees (1999) also found that the threat of violence was usually sufficient to gain compliance from the survivors.

#### **8.4.12 Threats to Life**

Survivors were asked if they felt that their life was in danger during the attack. Half the men believed that their life was in danger during the attack while two men believed that there was no danger to their lives. Five of the men did not know whether or not their life was in danger and one man could not remember. This inability to remember could be due to the shock of the attack. These findings are similar to work conducted by Mezey and King (1989) which demonstrated that half the men in their sample believed that their lives were in danger during the attack. Similarly, research by Hillman et al. (1990); Frazier (1993); and Canter and Hodge (1998) all found that half the men in their sample believed that their life was in danger during the attack. In Huckle's (1995) research, all of the 22 men in his sample believed that their lives were in danger.

#### **8.4.13 Alcohol Intoxication of Attacker(s)**

Survivors were asked whether they believed their attacker(s) had been drinking before the attack.

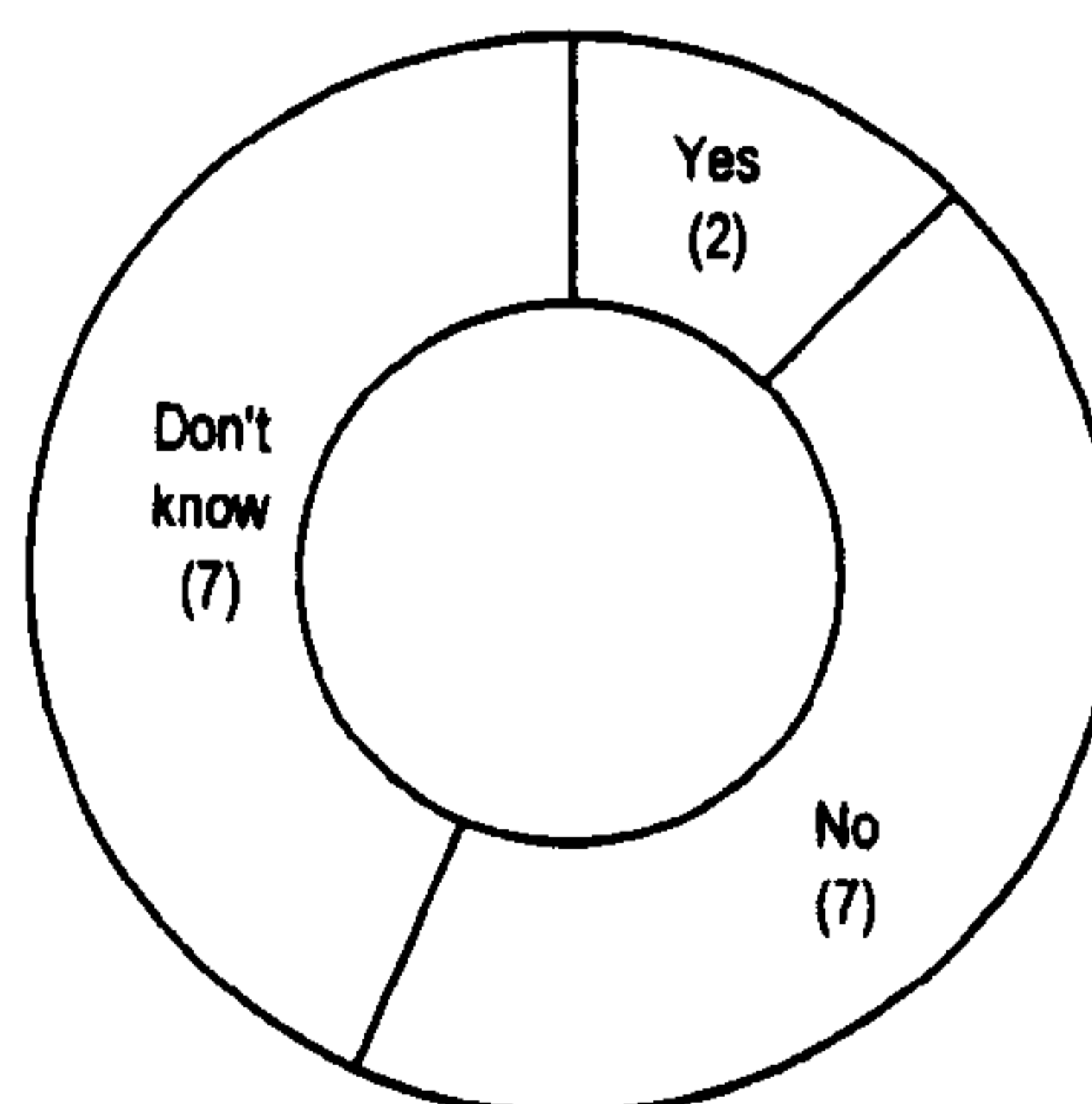


Figure 8-17: Do you think the attacker(s) had been drinking prior to the attack?

Two survivors believed that their attacker had been drinking prior to the rape while seven did not believe this was the case. The remaining seven men did not know whether or not their attacker had been drinking before the rape (in other words, in almost half the cases, attackers were not intoxicated with alcohol).

#### **8.4.14 Drug Intoxication of Attacker(s)**

Survivors were asked whether they believed their attacker(s) had taken illegal drugs before the attack.

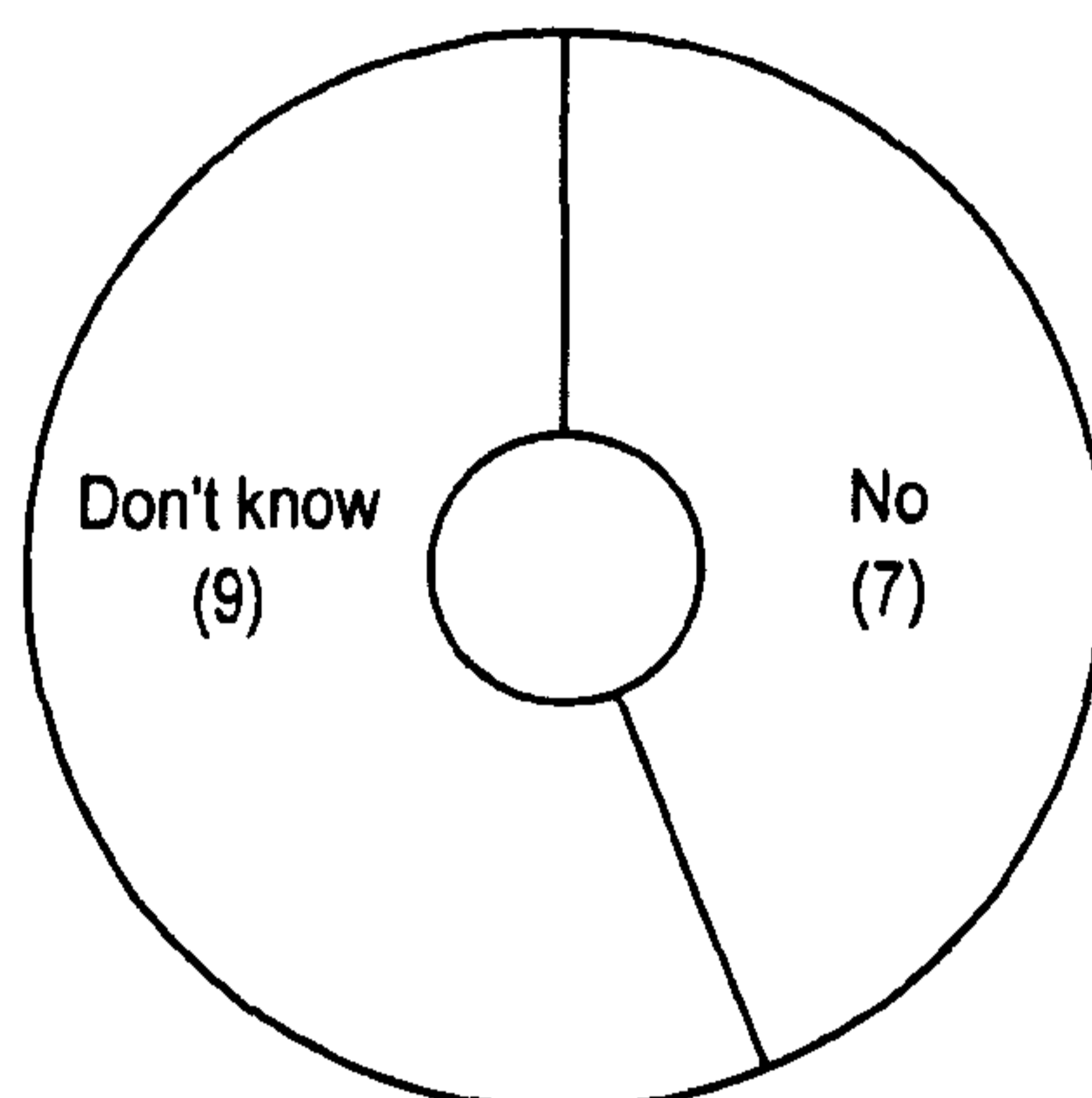


Figure 8-18: Do you think the attacker(s) had taken any illegal drugs prior to the attack?

As the above chart illustrates, nine of the respondents did not know whether or not their attacker(s) had taken illegal drugs prior to the rape. It is significant to note that no survivor believed that his attacker had taken illegal drugs before the rape; nearly half the men gave this response.

It is important that in considering both alcohol and drug intoxication almost half the men believed that their attacker(s) had not taken either of these substances prior to the rape. This suggests that while it is always possible that the men may have been mistaken, the rapes in these cases seem not to be the result of alcohol and/or drug intoxication. Alcohol was definitely present in two of the cases. These findings are consistent with research by Stermac et al. (1996) who found that neither alcohol nor drug intoxication was present in the majority of the cases in their study (alcohol was believed to be present in 13 cases while illegal drugs were believed to be present in four cases. The total sample used in the study was 29). Work by Forman (1982) also concludes that drug and alcohol use was

not a major factor in their sample. Research by Mezey and King (1989) found that in the majority of cases (13 out of 22) perpetrators had been drinking prior to the rapes. Research on the possible links between drug and/or alcohol intoxication and rape remains inconclusive and further research is needed in this area before firm conclusions can be drawn.

#### 8.4.15 Survivors' Disclosure of the Attack(s)

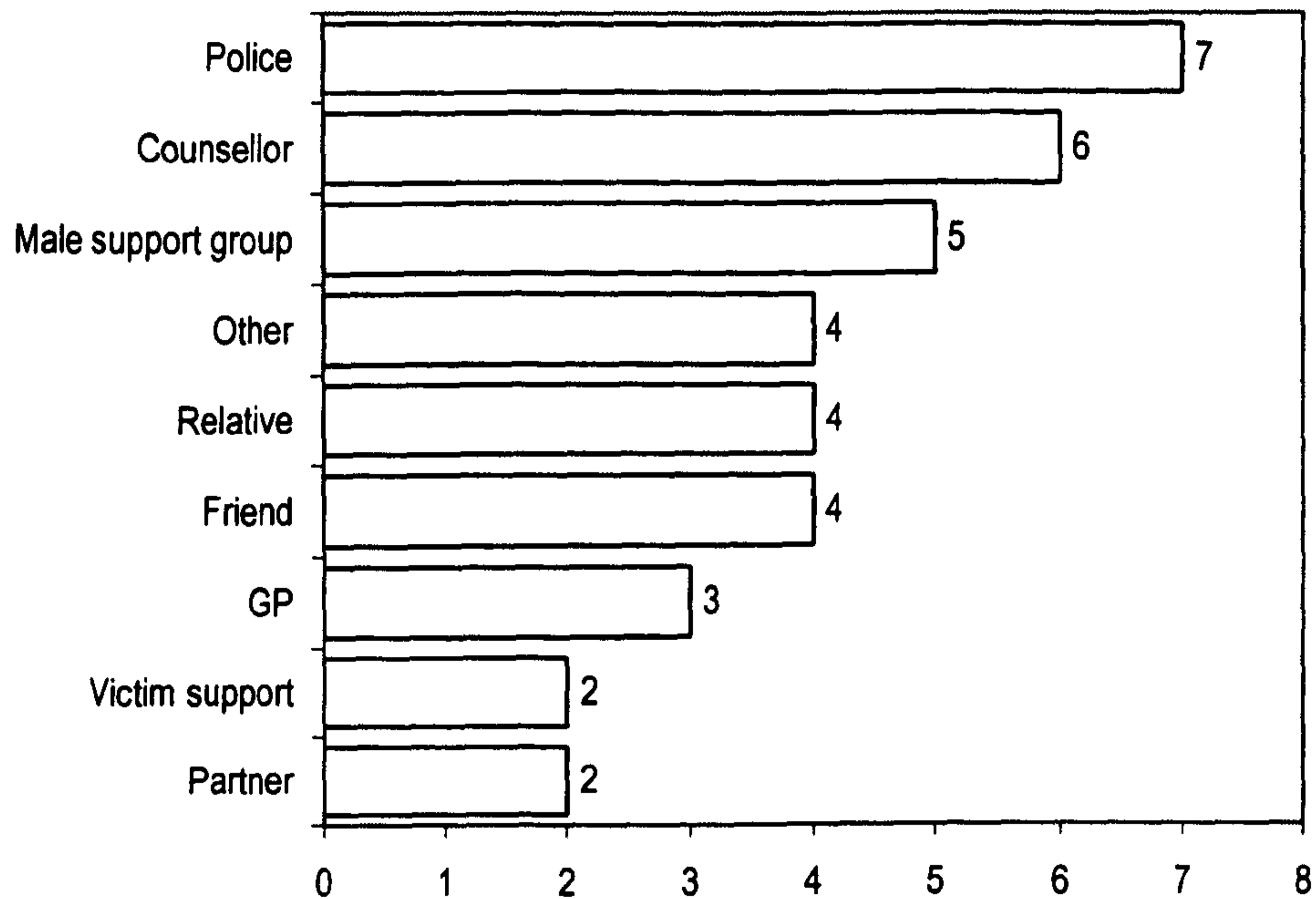


Figure 8-19: The men were asked whom they had told about the attack.

The numbers exceed 16 because some respondents told more than one person or group of people about the rape.

#### The Police

Of the seven men who reported the rape to the police, six were satisfied with their response, as the following examples illustrate:

The police were brilliant (Alex, 42, Nurse).

I was taken to the police station where I reported the incident to a female police officer who was kind (Michael, 34, Unemployed).

Policeman was very understanding (George, 28, Unemployed).

...the police... were kind but not sufficiently helpful (Marco, 48, Unemployed).

The one respondent dissatisfied with the police response stated that they responded:

"Terribly" (Eddie, 30, Tradesman).

### **Counsellors**

Of the six survivors who told counsellors about the rape, three stated that counsellors responded badly, as the following quotes demonstrate:

Alcohol counsellor said I needed to deal with the alcohol first and then the rape (Toby, 30, Unemployed).

...Badly (Marco, 48, Unemployed).

Counsellor while in prison...it was hard (Paul, 40, Builder).

One survivor found his counsellor:

...very supportive (Alex, 42, Nurse).

The remaining two survivors who also confided in counsellors highlighted their counselling difficulties:

Counselling is difficult for practical reasons. I find it difficult to get time off work and go (Patrick, 27, Social Worker).

I am unable to make myself understood to therapists because of guilt. I've tried to talk to people but I feel I've been slapped in the face so I've felt more guilty because the person hasn't understood me. (George, 28, Unemployed)

This demonstrates that some counsellors do not provide the best support to men who have been raped, which demonstrates a need to ensure that specialist training is provided.

### **Male Support Groups**

Five respondents told a male support group about the rape. One man felt they responded "badly" while four felt they responded reasonably or kindly, with one stating:

Reasonable by the Survivors Group but not that good. (Dave, 55, Unemployed)

Support group helped (Paul, 40, Builder).

### **Family, Friends and Partners**

Of those respondents who told their family and friends or partner (a total of ten respondents), generally it was felt that they responded badly, as the following examples demonstrate:

Family said "let it lie" and "Don't bring it up again. Friends said, "You need help" They think it's not enough just telling them (Paul, 40, Builder).

My friend got angry (Michael, 34, Unemployed).

Parents have gone completely over the top...rushing round copies of the Gay Times and saying 'it's okay to be gay' (this respondent was not gay) (Toby, 30, Unemployed).

The one respondent who participated on behalf of someone else stated she felt:  
Angry, very sad, guilty, "where was I?" (Jo, 40, Teacher).

One respondent, referring to his wife, stated:

Wife left me (Jaz, 30, Invoicing Clerk).

Only two respondents in this group were satisfied with the responses they received, both suggesting that their family/friend/partner were supportive, as the following quote illustrates:

They were all very supportive (Alex, 42, Nurse).

### **GPs**

Three men stated that they told their GP about the rape. All three expressed dissatisfaction with GPs responses, as the examples illustrate:

...Badly (Marco, 48, Unemployed).

My GP (responded) appallingly (Dave, 55, Unemployed).

I've had my trust betrayed by doctors and hospitals. My last GP said that those that were abused, bullied, raped, they deserve it because they never stopped it. I reported him. I have been told to 'get a life and get on with it'. They don't understand (Adrian, 35, Machine Operator).

## **Victim Support**

Two respondents told Victim Support about their rapes, stating:

Victim Support did not know what to do. (Dave, 55, Unemployed)

...Badly (Marco, 48, Unemployed).

## **Other**

Four respondents stated that they told 'other' people about the attack. These included hospital staff, a solicitor, and work colleagues. One respondent was satisfied with the response he received from hospital staff:

Hospital staff took me into a room and we had a chat about what happened. She then got a policeman who was at the hospital and she told him (Michael, 34, Unemployed).

Referring to hospital staff, one respondent stated that they responded:

Terribly (Eddie, 30, Tradesman).

Both respondents who told work colleagues and a solicitor found their reactions very insensitive and disbelieving.

Two of the 12 men in Mezey and King's (1989: 207) study revealed unsympathetic responses, for example; 'I was politely disbelieved and urged to come to terms with the homosexual side of myself'. Research by Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) investigated the responses of law enforcement officers, medical professionals, rape crisis centres and mental health professionals to male survivors of sexual assault. This study found that gender role socialisation and stereotypical beliefs about different roles for men and women resulted in many agencies failing to recognise male victimisation and therefore failing to offer responsive services. It is evident that agencies and individuals in contact with male survivors can react with disbelief and hostility to disclosures of rape. Such reactions heighten the trauma for male survivors.

### **8.4.16 Reasons for Not Disclosing**

Two of the 16 survivors stated that they were unable to tell anyone about the rape because they felt ashamed, embarrassed, humiliated, and felt that they would not be believed or understood. Furthermore, they feared that they would be labelled as homosexual or that they 'asked for it'. They also expressed feeling frightened, and also afraid that others would find out. The data from the

interviews with counsellors also suggested that reasons for not disclosing included fear of the perpetrator; fear of not being believed; guilt for not being able to prevent the attack; fear of challenges to sexuality and/or masculinity; shock; disbelief and embarrassment. These are illustrated in the following extracts from the interviews:

There are a number of reasons...including: fear of not being believed... embarrassment over talking about sex-related abuses... fear that they will appear weak, that their masculinity will be questioned... fear of being thought of as homosexual, worries over confidentiality – ‘if people know I’ll lose my job’, ‘have to move’, etc. (SM).

Society doesn’t allow men to be victims of such a crime. They’re expected to be strong... capable of protecting themselves. There’s a lot of stigma that comes with being raped as a man. Loss of manhood is so destructive and adds to all the other traumas (AN).

Shame, guilt, fear of being labelled homosexual or fear of being “outed” if they are homosexual. Expectations of males within our society mean it is not accepted that males can be victims (WE).

Fear of the police, consequences for their families (how they’re all going to react). ...Lack of knowledge about the procedure in reporting, insecurity as to where this disclosure might lead...it is then out of their hands. And fear of the abuser (EV).

Fear, shame, guilt. Fear of being seen as weak (not a man). Shame of not being ‘strong enough’ to stop it. Shame of being sexually violated by another man or woman. Guilt at ‘maybe’ have led somebody on (maybe they could see something I can’t) (BJ).

...there are loads of reasons I’m sure, but, generally I would say it’s because men don’t want to be seen as weak...there are stereotypes around men being strong, powerful and in control and, if you’ve been sexually assaulted or raped, those stereotypes no longer seem to apply, and therefore men are reluctant to come forward and talk about having been in a position of weakness or being in a position of out of control...because they’re worried about what people might think of them...Because they feel ashamed. They may feel they won’t be believed. They may feel that others will think they are (1) weak (2) Gay or unsure of their own sexuality (3) were asking for it or deserved it... (4) likely to go on to abuse others (CR).

#### **8.4.17 Previous Sexual Abuse**

The 16 men in the victimisation survey were asked about previous sexual abuse. Seven of the 16 men stated that they had previously been sexually abused while the remaining survivors had not experienced any previous sexual abuse. Here are some examples of the experiences of the group of seven survivors who had been previously sexually abused:



For about two years - under 18 I ran away from a broken home to live on the streets where I was forced to be a prostitute (Marco, 48, Unemployed).

I was sexually abused in homes. I told senior staff who said if I mentioned it outside the home I'd be out. That was to do with the boys that abused me. I was punched in the face by a staff member and told that if I told anyone it'd be worse (Adrian, 35, Machine Operator).

Abused at age 15 (Clive, 50, Unemployed).

I was sexually abused as a child by the same man (Paul, 40, Builder).

First abused when I was four years old. Psychiatrists ask 'how do you know that?' Then when I was 16 I was raped again. And again at 20 (Eddie, 30, Tradesman).

When I was younger (Tony, 46, Unemployed).

Research by King and Woollett (1997) found that of the men in their sample that had been raped as adults, 61% had also been assaulted as boys. They suggest that the assault as an adult may have reawakened the distress suffered in childhood, making the men in this group more likely to seek help. It has also been suggested by Myers (1989) that childhood sexual abuse may increase vulnerability to repeated assault as adults, and research by West and Woodhouse (1990) and Washington (1999) suggests that such childhood abuse results from deprived social conditions and poor sexuality socialisation. This suggests that lack of responsible sexual education in childhood leaves individuals vulnerable to adult sexual assaults since they are ill prepared for recognising abusive situations, and boundaries are often blurred.

Other findings by Frazier (1993) demonstrate that 41% of survivors reported a prior rape and 27% reported experiencing incest in childhood. She therefore suggests that early sexual abuse may be a risk factor for subsequent assaults for men (as has been demonstrated for female survivors; see Koss and Dinero 1989). Such studies are supportive of the victimology ethos that suggests that some individuals are more prone to victimisation than others. Clearly, such a position has come under immense criticism, being regarded as victim blaming (discussed in chapters 1, 3 and 4). While further research into the possible links between childhood abuse and vulnerability to adult rape is needed, such theories are nonetheless supportive of the fact that all men are vulnerable to rape.

### **8.4.18 Emotional Needs of Male Survivors**

Counsellors were asked what they believed are the emotional needs of men who have been raped. Overall, counsellors believed that men need acknowledgement that their experiences and feelings are real. It was also highlighted that:

Men need support for issues around guilt, self-blame, a sudden lack of masculine identity, confusion around their sexual orientation (possibly) and support in their relationship (MB).

The importance of having someone to listen to them and to be able to make contact with other men with shared or similar experiences was also stressed. This indicates a need for group work. The importance of men being given support (usually by someone they trust, for example, a friend, partner, counsellor) was emphasised by all counsellors. Similarly, the role of professionals working in the area of male rape was seen to be paramount in terms of supporting men through their recovery. The following examples summarise the views of the counsellors with regards to the emotional needs of men:

Men need to be able to talk about their experiences without fear of ridicule, embarrassment or loss of masculinity. The socialisation of males in our society makes this very difficult for a lot of men resulting in suppression of feelings and denial (SM).

Men need space and time to come to terms with their experiences (CR).

The range and feelings that may need to be expressed are manifold, but include anger, hurt, rage, sadness, confusion, shame, guilt; all these feelings need to be expressed and contained in an accepting non-judgemental environment. Men need to be believed, heard and understood. They may need to question their sexuality. Their reality needs to be affirmed at all times. They may need to be in denial at times if they choose. This may last weeks, months or years (whilst they're in therapy or not). These men (as much as is possible) need to be in control of their therapeutic process (BJ).

To be listened to, understood, supported...when expressing confusion, sadness, panic, despair, anger, fury, fear, mourning. Effects on their relationships with family, friends, partner- how to ask for and receive support, how to protect themselves and build internal support. Expressing feelings (EV).

Male victims need better support networks within their family or friends. Men need to be understood, believed and allowed to work through their different emotions and feelings (anger, hurt, guilt) (WE).

## **8.5 Summary of Findings**

This part of the research project considered the nature and impact of male rape on victims using data triangulation. In summary, the SurvivorsUK data<sup>196</sup> and the victimisation survey findings demonstrate that:

1. There are a similar number of heterosexual victims as homosexual victims, challenging the myth that victims of male rape are always (or nearly always) homosexual.
2. Prior to the rape, heterosexual men were the least aware that they could become victims of rape, whereas the majority of homosexual victims were aware of this possibility.
3. Half the men in the victimisation survey believed that rape includes anal, oral and object penetration and one man believed it also includes being forced to play sex games. The definition of rape given by victims is therefore broader than the one currently offered by UK legislation.
4. The majority of men were raped by one attacker. In combining the data, three men were raped by two attackers and three were raped by three attackers. A further two men were raped by more than one attacker although it is unknown how many.
5. The majority of rapes were carried out by men known to the victims. Additionally, the vast majority of heterosexual males in the victimisation survey were not raped by strangers, as is commonly believed, but were also raped by men known to them. Equal numbers of homosexual males were raped by strangers, and by men known to them.
6. Of those who knew their attacker(s)<sup>197</sup>, almost half indicated that their attacker(s) were either married or living with a female, again demonstrating that the rapes were not used as a sexual outlet, as suggested for example, in institutionalised rapes (see chapter 3).
7. While eight of the men in the victimisation survey did not know the sexuality of their attacker(s), five identified them as heterosexual, again disproving the myth that men who rape other men are always homosexual. Homosexual

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<sup>196</sup> Some of the themes were only explored in the victimisation survey since data on these was not available in the SurvivorsUK statistics. Some of the summaries therefore only refer to findings from the victimisation survey.

<sup>197</sup> Data only available from the victimisation survey.

attacker(s) made up two of the known attackers in the victimisation survey while one attacker was bisexual.

8. The majority of rapes were carried out in a private place.
9. Physical violence was used in half the cases and those who did not experience physical violence were threatened with violence, verbally pressured or coerced. The forms of violence experienced were severe. Victims were kicked, punched, choked, harmed with weapons and tied up.
10. The majority of men did not put up a resistance to the rape, being either too afraid to fight back or then froze with shock/fear. Again this challenges the belief that 'real men fight back' as illustrated by some police officers in findings for chapter 7.
11. Of those who did put up a resistance, it was evident that attacker(s) either became more violent, verbally abusive and /or more turned on. None of the attacker(s) stopped the attacks as a result of the men's resistance.
12. Rapists used blackmail, threats, manipulation and coercion to control their victims as well as physical violence.
13. Half the men believed that their lives were in danger during the attack(s) while only two men did not (the remaining men either did not know or could not remember).
14. Almost half the men believed that their attacker(s) had not been either drinking alcohol or taking illegal drugs before the rape while half were not sure. Of all the men, only two identified alcohol intoxication in their attackers, indicating that the rapes were not related to drug or alcohol intoxication.
15. Men experienced violent and grave violations and the majority needed medical attention.
16. Fourteen of the 16 men were able to tell someone about the attack while two were too ashamed or embarrassed, or afraid that they would not be believed or understood, to tell. These reasons were supported by the data from the interviews.
17. Responses received were various - overall, men who confided in the organisation SurvivorsUK found their response supportive and helpful. The police were, in the main, seen to be kind although not sufficiently helpful. Likewise, agencies such as Victim Support were identified as not knowing

what to do. Counsellors (for non-rape issues) were at times helpful although some men experienced difficulties in going to counselling while another found his counsellor's attitude unsympathetic. Group therapy was identified as helpful. Responses and reactions by friends, family and partners were, in the main, unhelpful. Responses by some GP's were deemed as uncaring and appalling. These findings highlight a need for better, more sensitive care for male victims by service providers.

18. The impact of rape on men's lives is severe. Men experienced tearfulness, depression, nightmares and sleeping difficulties, flashbacks and memories of the attack. Sexual difficulties and relationship problems, as well as medical problems were also highlighted as a consequence of rape. Additionally, they also experienced feelings of anger, guilt, fear, and confusion around their sexuality and masculinity. Some men revealed thoughts of suicide while others indicated actual suicide attempts. Men also adopted avoidance behaviours since the rapes, including avoiding going out late at night and/or going out by themselves.

19. Seven of the 16 men revealed experiences of previous sexual abuse, predominantly in childhood.

## **8.6 Summary Discussion**

The findings in the research emphasise a number of key points. The average age of men who were raped as adults was 25. This is consistent with findings from Groth and Burgess (1980) and Mezey and King (1989) who showed that young males are more likely to become victims of rape. Other research by Stermac et al. (1996) found that the mean age of survivors in their sample was 26 years. As Canter and Hodge (1998: 231) state 'clearly it is young adult males who are particularly vulnerable to male sexual assault'.

Importantly, the majority of men in the empirical data did not report rape to the police, confirming the belief that male rape is very under-reported. These findings are consistent with research by Mezey and King (1989) and Hillman et al. (1990) who found reporting levels to be low.

The sexuality of the survivors was almost evenly distributed between heterosexual and homosexual men. This is also consistent with other research studies (Mezey and King 1989; Hillman et al. 1990) and supports the fact that all men, regardless of sexuality can become victims of rape. This strongly challenges the myth that only homosexual men get raped.

The majority of rapes were carried out by men known to the victim including friends, partners and acquaintances. Most of these rapes took place in a private place. The rapes that occurred in a public place were carried out by strangers with only one acquaintance rape being in a public place. These findings are consistent with research by Huckle (1995); Stermac et al. (1996); and Isey and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997), which found that the majority of stranger rapes occurred in a public place whereas perpetrators known to the survivor tended to carry out their attacks in private places.

The majority of cases in the empirical research involved one assailant, which is consistent with findings from Hillman et al. (1990); Frazier (1993); Huckle (1995); and Isey and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997); Canter and Hodge (1998), all of who found that the majority of male rape cases involved one assailant. However, these studies also indicated that multiple rapes were not uncommon. The findings in the present study confirm this.

The impact of rape was devastating for all men. Symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder were commonly present among the sample group. Many men experienced feeling confused about their sexuality and relationship difficulties were not uncommon. In addition, men experienced nightmares, eating disorders, and drug and alcohol misuse as a result of rape. As one survivor stated, there is 'no end to the pain' (Survivor 333). In addition to these consequences, men in the overall sample also described homophobia, mental health problems and suicidal thoughts. Additionally, men in this sample also expressed fears and fantasies about raping/abusing others. While there is no evidence to demonstrate that survivors of rape or sexual abuse themselves become abusers, the fact that male survivors have these fears and fantasies suggests an immediate need to provide appropriate support for these men. While many of these men were receiving therapy, the hidden nature of male rape means that at present, the potential threat of survivors becoming abusers themselves is unknown. It is apparent from all the data that greater support is needed to help these survivors channel their feelings in a safe environment.

## **Conclusion**

It is evident from the findings in this chapter that men, due to their socialisation, do not perceive themselves as potential victims of rape, supporting the literature

on the social construction of masculinities and the impact this has on male rape, discussed in chapter 4. The data, taken together, contradict the widely held assumption that men do not become victims of rape, and that those who do, are homosexuals who are raped by other homosexuals. Contrary to this myth, the research demonstrates that all men are potential victims of rape and are raped by heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual men. Likewise, the data supports the belief that men can 'react to extreme personal threat with frozen helplessness' (Mezey and King 1989:208), therefore shattering the myth that 'real men fight back'.

The research also demonstrates some important similarities between male rape and female rape. For example, more men are raped by men whom they know rather than by strangers. This of course is the same for women, who are more likely to be raped by men known to them, than by strangers. Likewise, the severe levels of violence used, along with the fact that attacker(s) were heterosexuals in the majority of cases, support the feminist position that rape is a crime of power, dominance and control (see chapter 4). It has also been found that when men do become victims of rape, they fear reporting to the police or revealing their experience to others for fear of ridicule, shame, embarrassment, or questions challenging their masculinity or sexuality. Victims perceive the police organisation as unsympathetic; fearing that they will challenge their sexuality, ridicule or disbelieve them, or will be homophobic and judgmental. Some of the findings in chapter 7 illustrate that such fears do have some foundation.

Furthermore, the data also illustrate that the impact of rape on men's lives is grave. Men need to be believed, understood and supported in a non-judgemental environment, and without fear of ridicule, embarrassment or loss of masculinity. These factors need to be addressed if men are to be encouraged and supported in coming forward and reporting rape to the police. It is clear that existing services for male victims are inadequate and that there is a lack of quality information and training of professionals who come into contact with male victims. It is evident that the quality of counselling is important since appropriately trained counsellors (such as those who participated in the research) provide important support to survivors', whereas victim support and alcohol counsellors were not as appropriate, as the data illustrated.

## **Chapter Nine:**

### **Policy Recommendations**

This chapter considers the policy implications of the research project and is based on the findings from the fieldwork and from the theoretical work that underpins it. The project essentially focused on the nature and impact of rape on men's lives and as such is principally a contribution to policy developments to support male survivors. The importance of male rape myths was also examined. The final chapter draws on the research findings to re-examine the main theoretical explanations presented for male rape in order to provide a better understanding of this phenomenon. The theoretical discussion will be revisited in light of the findings and the implications of these findings will then be considered to draw appropriate conclusions.

#### **9.1 Policy Directions**

##### **Multi-Agency Responses to Male Rape**

The research project has demonstrated an acute need for a multi-agency approach in dealing with male rape and supporting male victims of rape. It is evident that men disclosing rape need the benefit of services from a wide range of agencies. The empirical component of this project has demonstrated that men are reluctant to disclose rape and these findings have been supported by the literature on male rape. It has also been shown from the victim data that when men *do* disclose rape, they are often met with totally inadequate responses from professionals working in the different supporting agencies. Exploration into these reactions and responses suggests a lack of understanding and denial of the existence of male rape, which mirrors prejudicial perspectives in the wider society. It is therefore clear that there is a fundamental need for education, training and awareness, not only for the members of society from whom negative perspectives are formulated, but more immediately, for important service providers who may come into contact with male victims.

##### **The Future of the Male Victims of Sexual Abuse Steering Group**

While it is clear that the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) have recently given due priority to sexual offences, by proposing initiatives such as the IAG to assist their work in this area, (see chapter 5) it is of some concern that such a group



may result in the issue of male rape being pushed out of the public eye, since the group is primarily made up of members addressing female rape and sexual offences. Hence, while improvements to female rape victims are likely as a result of the work of the IAG, it has been the concern of members of the MVSASG that their voice will no longer be heard. After managing to develop an independent group specifically to represent male victims, it is now of some concern that this group is being pushed aside in favour of female rape, which has more reported cases, and therefore more police priority.

Additionally, it has been the argument of the MPS that the initial two groups (one working for female victims and the other working for male victims) can be merged, owing to the fact that they have some common issues to work for, such as rape trials, lack of reporting, and forensic examinations. While it is true that there are some common issues for the two groups, I maintain that there are also some important differences between male and female rape, which need to be given independent consideration. However, this does not seem to be significant enough for the MPS to continue with two independent groups or one equally represented group.

### **The Role of the Police**

The police have a crucial role to play in dealing with male victims of rape. The empirical research has shown that although most victims do not disclose rape to anyone, when they do decide to disclose, the police are often the first agency with which the victim makes contact after a rape attack. The findings from the police questionnaire illustrate that male victims can encounter hostility and insensitivity from officers when reporting a male rape. However, findings from the victim data suggest that victims have, on the whole, found the police to be supportive and kind when dealing with male rape, although a few victims did state that the police react badly to males reporting rape. Furthermore, the data from the police questionnaire demonstrates that the root of hostility from male officers lies in the stereotypes, myths and prejudicial attitudes that manifest themselves in the masculine occupational culture of the police. For example, victims typically asserted that a main reason for not reporting to the police (or indeed disclosing to anybody) was fear that they would be either thought of as homosexual (if they were heterosexual) or then would encounter homophobic attitudes if they were homosexual. The data from the police questionnaire demonstrated that officers did link male rape to homosexuality (see chapter 7, figures 7-13 and 7-14) with only 11 officers recognising that all men could

become victims of rape. The findings from the victim data illustrate that almost equal numbers of victims were homosexual as were heterosexual, further emphasising that men are raped regardless of their sexuality (see figure 8-4).

### **Police Training Needs**

The findings from the police questionnaire illustrate that victim's fears about police responses to their disclosure are very real. While many officers have a good understanding of male victims' needs, these officers are often those who have received specialist training to support male victims. However, it is the officer at the front desk of a police station that is often the first officer in contact with male victims. Training and awareness raising initiatives therefore need to be targeting *all* police officers to avoid insensitive responses towards male victims reporting rape.

The findings from the police data unearth a huge gap in information about male rape, a gap which respondents themselves readily acknowledge. It is clear that the police organisation replicates many of the misconceptions and stereotypes held in wider society and promoted by the print media, with regards to male rape. While specialist training is given to some officers for dealing specifically with victims of rape, it is apparent that a basic understanding of the facts surrounding male rape would benefit *all* officers so that they are prepared to support victims with whom they may come into contact. This would create a safe environment in which male victims could report rape. Currently, it is clear that chaperones and Sexual Offences Investigative Techniques officers (SOIT's) are well informed and trained to deal with male victims of rape. Advancements such as the 'Good practice guide for investigating serious sexual offences' introduced across the metropolitan police organisation launched at a chaperones' seminar in November 1999, sets out the role and responsibility of each officer in dealing with an alleged rape. In doing so, it aims to improve the quality of service provided to victims. However, findings from this research project have demonstrated that the police themselves recognise that while chaperones and SOIT's are well trained and offer a high level of service to male victims of rape, the problem of lack of reporting lies with those officers who have received no such training since victims anticipate a poor level of service.

Therefore, training and awareness of male rape is needed not just for specialist officers, but also for the rank and file officers who, on a day-to-day basis may be

the initial contact point for male victims, since it is with these officers that the problems of misconceptions and myths surrounding male rape persist.

## **Reporting**

It is clear that male victims are reluctant to report rape to the police for all the reasons identified in this research project. In order to encourage male victims to report rape, it is apparent that police initiatives need to address these reasons and make changes to ensure that men are treated with respect and equality, regardless of their sexuality. While rape has been identified as a priority crime within the metropolitan police organisation, its initiatives have resulted in a strong focus on all victims of rape, at the expense of male victims. That is to say, initiatives to prioritise rape focus on both female and male rape with a greater emphasis on female rape due to the fact that its prevalence appears to be higher. This could be because more research has been done on female rape so the police have attempted to improve services for female victims, which may have resulted in more cases being brought to their attention. Therefore, while on the one hand, male victims will benefit from the services being proposed for female victims, the different dynamics of male rape are not given due consideration. The issue of joint services for men and women has come under much criticism by writers such as Gillespie (see chapter 4), since it is thought not to be appropriate to have shared services that may involve male participation (such as counselling services). However, other less controversial joint services such as increasing help-line support for male victims of rape have already begun to emerge from some rape crisis centres such as Derby Rape Crisis.

Additionally, public campaigns such as those recently developed in joint projects between the metropolitan police and London's lesbian, gay and bisexual communities<sup>198</sup> to tackle homophobic crimes, need to be developed for male rape in order to encourage male victims to come forward and report rape to the police. These would have to be done in a way that did not create a further deterrent to heterosexual rape victims already reluctant to report. Other initiatives aimed to encourage the reporting of homophobic crimes have included: a phone-line reporting service in West End Central and Charing Cross divisions; a police surgery for gay people in Soho; regular liaison with the Gay Business Association looking to set up gay pub-watch and business watch schemes as well as training for the division's officers on gay policing issues. Also, leaflets and posters have

been printed in different languages to tackle hate crimes of domestic violence, racism and homophobia. Investment of £287,000 has boosted the campaign in a bid to arrest more offenders, and to encourage victims to report to the police. It is clear that if male victims are to be encouraged to report rape to the police and other agencies, large-scale campaigns similar to the ones discussed above need to be developed for male victims of rape.

### **Third Party Reporting Schemes**

Third party reporting schemes have recently been established for people who are uncomfortable reporting hate crimes to the police. This new scheme allows people to visit selected community bases as an alternative to reporting in police stations. The initiative, set up as a result of recommendations made by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, aims to increase information about homophobic and racially motivated crimes. While the scheme has been launched as part of the metropolitan police's campaign against hate crimes, such a scheme would greatly benefit male victims of rape. While some male rapes are the result of homophobic attacks, a separate scheme specifically set up for male victims of rape could provide support to male victims and their families. Such a multi-agency approach would allow victims to access support from specially trained staff and volunteers from organisations dealing with male victims, such as SurvivorsUK, as well as receiving medical and police support. Currently, third party schemes for hate crimes are supported by the metropolitan police and could be extended to benefit male victims of rape.

### **Haven Suites**

The pilot referral centre established by the Metropolitan Police and Kings College Hospital to replace rape suites in the southeast London area, needs to be extended to other boroughs and, if successful, developed on a national level. While the new Haven is still in its pilot stages, it is clear that specially trained clinical staff at the centre provide better support and help to victims of rape as well as gathering evidence for potential prosecution. The Haven allows for disclosure of sexual violence in a safe and comfortable environment. For male victims it is particularly important, since it can help overcome some of the fears of reporting to the police, as identified in the research project. As well as providing medical, emotional, and practical support for victims, the Haven also

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198 This poster campaign aims to encourage victims of homophobic crimes to come forward and report these crimes to the police (see Appendix 1).

encourages reporting to the police and full support is given to victims throughout the process, should they decide to report. This alleviates the pressures of having to walk in to a police station and disclose rape. Such a scheme therefore has three primary benefits. Firstly, it provides medical, emotional and practical support to male victims in one place, making disclosure as comfortable as possible for the victim and ensuring that the most appropriate support is given. This is achieved through a multi-agency approach. Secondly, it raises awareness of the need for good service provisions for male victims and highlights the victimisation and rape of males, emphasising the need for better training and information in this area. Thirdly, it strongly assists the police in gathering evidence for potential prosecutions without compromising the recovery process of the victim (see Appendix 5 for details of the scheme).

### **Forensic Medical Examiners**

Forensic Medical Examiners (FMEs) carry out a medical examination after a rape has been reported to the police, and look for forensic evidence as well as treating any injuries sustained. FMEs are specially trained for Sexual Offence Examinations (SOE) and are supposed to conduct their examinations with understanding and sensitivity. Similarly, police photographers who take photographs of any injuries for evidence are also trained to be sensitive to victims' needs. There has been much criticism from feminist researchers about the conduct of FMEs in female rape cases. Due to the recent criminalisation of male rape it is not yet known whether or not male victims have similar reactions towards FMEs. Victims are supposed to be able to choose the gender of the FMEs and photographer, although police officers state that this is often difficult in practice. It is important that every effort be made to ensure that the victim is provided with the FME and photographer of his choice. Additionally, it is the FME who decides where the examination will take place (whether at the police station, at a clinic or surgery). Victims should be given the choice of having the examination at their preferred place. Every effort needs to be made to ensure that victims are seen immediately, as currently the estimated time of arrival of the FME is dependent on his/her other commitments. Having full-time FME's would be one way to resolve this issue.

### **Sexually Transmitted Diseases**

Genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinics offer anonymous and confidential screening services against sexually transmitted infections such as HIV, hepatitis,

gonorrhoea, chlamydia and others. Victims reporting rape to the police are referred to clinics at the request of victims; although it is unknown whether or not the service provided is good enough. Anecdotal evidence from the MVSASG suggests that victims are generally satisfied with the service received, although there is no supporting evidence of this. Counselling and support services are also offered by clinics and feminist researchers have been critical of such services for women on grounds of appropriateness. The findings from this study demonstrate that male victims can also receive inappropriate counselling and that there is a strong need for specially trained counsellors who have a firm understanding of the issues surrounding male rape.

## **HIV**

Male victims of rape may or may not be HIV positive before the rape. The re-infection of HIV positive victims with a different strain of HIV may accelerate the progression of the disease, thereby creating more medical as well as psychological stress to the victim. The effects of rape trauma syndrome may have a severe effect on the victim's immune system since emotional trauma can have a huge impact on physical well-being. Loss of appetite, nausea, and insomnia can all weaken the immune system, compromising rates of recovery. Similarly, men who were not HIV positive prior to rape face the trauma of being tested for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases on top of having to come to terms with the rape. It is essential that HIV campaigns and education initiatives demonstrate sensitivity towards men who have been raped; while public health campaigns promote safe sex to prevent HIV infections, it is essential that they recognise that not all men infected with HIV have acted irresponsibly. As Scarce (1997b: 147) suggests:

With the large number of men (and a percentage of them being male rape survivors) seeking HIV testing, a great deal of misplaced blame and insensitivity has become institutionalised as common practice. Greater collaboration between rape and AIDS prevention movements might foster the mutual understanding necessary to chip away at these damaging, albeit well-intentioned, protocols. A more interdisciplinary approach to sexual health, including sexual violence, is desperately needed to provide quality, integrated education, prevention and treatment to survivors and non-survivors, HIV positive and HIV negative.

## **Publicity Around Improved Services**

The work undertaken by the metropolitan police in conjunction with other agencies to support male victims of rape, such as the establishment of the Haven

and information leaflets for male victims of rape, needs to be publicised through the media in order to generate awareness of the services currently available to men. At present, the information leaflet for male victims, developed by the MVSASG forum has been distributed around accident and emergency rooms in hospitals, doctors surgeries, health clinics, counselling and support agencies and police front desks (see Appendices 6 and 7). It is only through the publicity of services that men will be able to fully utilise them and the public will recognise the reality of male rape.

### **Changes in legislation**

The introduction of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gave legal recognition to the existence of male victims of rape. However, while the limitations in the definition of rape have been reduced, they have not been removed entirely. For example, this thesis has shown that the legal definition of rape<sup>199</sup> falls short of victims' definitions, which extend to penetration of the mouth and penetration by any object. It is evident from the findings that men are forcibly penetrated with objects and fists, and that rape is seen by survivors to include forcible oral penetration. Present legislation fails to acknowledge these sex acts. The forcible oral penetration or penetration by objects has been described by The Criminal Law Revision Committee as 'grave' and 'severely degrading...for the victims, with the possibility of psychological damage enduring long after the event'.<sup>200</sup> Changes in legislation to recognise this fact are much needed.

Likewise, the findings in this project have demonstrated that men are also forced to penetrate their attacker(s), whether by anal or oral penetration. Again, a broader definition of penetration is required since it is clear that men are extremely traumatised by such forced acts and therefore need legal protection from them.

It has also been illustrated by the findings of the police questionnaire that the success of rape cases often relies on the issue of consent in cases where the offender denies the charge. Non-consent needs to be clearly and categorically defined so as to include recklessness on the part of the offender as to whether or not consent was present. The law needs to be made clearer. Similarly, with

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199 It is an offence for a man to commit rape; with sexual intercourse within rape now being defined as penile penetration of the vagina or anus (Section 142(2) Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994).

200 CLRC, Fifteenth Report Sexual Offences (1984), para.4.5.

regard to judge's directions to juries, it is recommended that the facts surrounding male rape be included since juries are ill informed and unable to have a clear perspective on what has occurred. It is also clear from discussions at the MVSASG that judges also need training to dispel the myths they believe about male rape. The MVSASG has made proposals for conferences and training days for judges to challenge such beliefs and make them more informed. It is evident that such projects need to take place on a large scale in order to make a real impact.

Current legislation needs to reflect the social attitudes of men and women in present day society and to do this, legislation needs to take account of victims' needs. Hence, the suggested definition of sexual intercourse within rape to include,

...vaginal or anal penetration to any degree by any part of the assailant's body, or any object, and shall include non-consensual oral sex.<sup>201</sup>

made by the House of Commons during the debate on the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 offers a gender neutral definition and includes those sexual acts which can have traumatic effects similar to those proscribed by law as rape. A more comprehensive definition such as this needs to be introduced into current legislation.

### **The Court Process**

It has been argued in this project that the legal process can replicate the dynamics of rape for victims. The decision to prosecute in a rape case lies with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and is based on the Crown Prosecutor's assessment of whether or not there is enough evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction and whether or not it is in the public interest to prosecute. Findings from the police questionnaire highlight police discontent and frustration with CPS decisions not to prosecute in rape cases. It is clear that the CPS does not always understand the problems and traumas experienced by male victims.

The police questionnaire further highlighted the difficulties that male victims experience when faced with going to court. The issue of consent conjures up notions of contributory negligence in the minds of ill-informed jurors and judges. Furthermore, Rumney (2001) has expressed concern that male rape complainants may be treated in the same way as female complainants in rape trials (discussed in chapter 4). As many of the respondents in the police questionnaire argued,



unless there exists DNA evidence in a rape case, the focus is one-on-one, between the statement of the offender and that of the victim. While DNA evidence does not resolve the issue of consent, it would nonetheless bring more evidence on which the case could be heard. As some officers in the police study suggested:

It is a very TABOO subject and people including courts don't know how to deal with these issues (Female PC).

As previously mentioned, juries cannot come to terms with it!! (Male PS)

Rapes of any kind are difficult to prove. I would imagine that male rape still endures a negative climate and lack of sympathy from juries (Male PI).

Unwillingness of victim to (especially straight) allow facts to be public knowledge. Also due to involuntary ejaculation (even though it is a fact) (Female PC).

Cross-examination by scumbag barristers would be particularly painful and "going public" would be horrendous (Male PC).

While the research project has demonstrated that in reality, men become victims of rape regardless of their sexuality, the belief held in society that only homosexual males get raped raises issues around the sexuality of the victim. It is not surprising therefore that homosexual males are more likely to encounter accusations of 'asking for it' while heterosexual males are more likely to be accused of being homosexual. Likewise, the research project has demonstrated that the majority of assailants are known to the victim prior to the rape, and this can pollute the reality of the situation in the minds of jurors and judges. It is apparent therefore that the ordeal of going to court is compounded for the victim who may find himself 'put on trial'.

### **Video Evidence**

The use of video evidence<sup>202</sup> in vulnerable cases has been introduced by the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act in April 2002. After discussion at the MVSASG forum, it has been proposed that the metropolitan police review the proposals for video evidence for possible use in male rape trials. Although the use of video evidence has obvious benefits, such as reducing the traumatic

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201 HC Deb Vol.241, col.174 April 1994 (Clause 93)

202 The video-recorded statement of the victim.

experience of male victims having to repeat details of their statement to the investigating police officer, the limitations of such evidence need to also be carefully reviewed. For example, while taking the initial statement of a victim followed by a more detailed one can be time-consuming and tiring for the victim, it is arguable that such a process allows for more disclosure than having the statement video recorded once. Importantly too, it should be noted that while victims can give video evidence, in cases where the offender pleads not guilty, the victim can still be called into the courtroom for cross examination. Also, guidelines for using video evidence in rape cases would need to consider the trauma for victims of having their video evidence viewed in the public gallery. Similarly, this could lead to more victims refusing to continue with a case, perhaps because of pressure from family or friends. Therefore, while the use of video evidence is appealing for vulnerable victims, it nonetheless must be employed with discretion to ensure the welfare and protection of the victim.

### **Mental Health Services**

The victim data illustrate that male victims experience mental health problems as a consequence of rape and therefore come into contact with mental health workers and service providers. The initial response by, and subsequent actions of, mental health workers can have a profound effect on the recovery of male victims. It is important that workers in this field are aware of the issues surrounding male rape, as this can help to establish a trusting environment in which men can seek support. Mental health professionals can help to end victim's feelings of isolation by having the correct information and knowledge to hand, and developing a sensitive approach to all men disclosing rape. It is important that mental health workers do not simply 'turn away' or 'refer on' male victims because of lack of experience or information. The trauma of being raped can result in many different reactions by victims, such as self-destructive behaviour or alcohol/drug abuse, as data from victims and counsellors in this project has demonstrated. It is therefore important that men are not penalised but are supported to find more appropriate coping strategies to aid their recovery.

### **Medical Professionals**

The victim data demonstrates that men encounter varied reactions to their disclosure and this is especially apparent with medical professionals. For example, men stated that while hospital staff were generally well informed,

empathetic and helpful, GPs' reactions to men disclosing rape were always appalling. For example, one respondent stated:

My last GP said that those that were abused, bullied, raped, they deserve it because they never stopped it. (Adrian, 35, Machine Operator)

This example clearly illustrates the kinds of responses to men's disclosure, which make men reluctant to come forward and report/disclose rape. It is essential that medical professionals receive training in the area of male rape since they are on the front lines in dealing with male victims. Men need to feel that *all* medical professionals will support and understand their trauma. Responses such as the above are alarming and unacceptable and changes in this area are urgently needed.

### **Counselling and Support Services**

Multi agency work at the MVSASG has confirmed the vital role that counselling and support agencies play in supporting men who have been raped. It is clear that such agencies are essential in supporting men and provide services that are sometimes literally lifelines for men. It has been illustrated in chapter 8 that more men contact agencies such as SurvivorsUK than the police. It is clear then that more agencies need to be established to support specifically men who have been raped and that the aims of such services should include helping survivors to separate the facts of male rape from the myths, so that they are able to understand, for example, that they are not responsible for the rape. The discussion in chapter 4 illustrates the important role of masculinities and power relations in understanding male rape and these should play an integral role in supporting male survivors through their recovery. Furthermore, it is clear that existing services need proper funding to continue providing the much-needed services such as counselling, group work and help-lines. At present, charity organisations such as SurvivorsUK do not have sufficient financial resources to extend their services, although this has been attempted by the organisation a number of times. With more financial support, services such as the help-line could be extended to run more than twice a week. As a charity, the organisation is constantly struggling to keep afloat. The work by organisations such as SurvivorsUK is indispensable in supporting men in their recovery. They are also the key agencies in raising awareness into the extent of the problem and at the forefront of supporting the police, the criminal justice system, the health service and all other sectors in their training needs. The following quote from one

counsellor interview illustrates some responses of other agencies, received by male survivors:

It obviously depends where they've been to... people tend to get quite a good response from Samaritans, and from Victim Support, if they know they're going to refer them on to us ...so obviously I'm only really talking about people who have managed to get to us...bad experience obviously, not so much now, don't really hear about it that often, but, rape crisis federation member organisation's have in the past been very short with men when they've called up...and been very unsupportive and 'we don't work with men here' and 'we can't help you' and worse than that as well, but I can't remember exactly what was said (CR).

### **Therapeutic Needs of Men**

The therapeutic needs of men who have been raped or sexually abused have been documented by Etherington (1996: 225-226) who asserts that:

Recovery will entail cognitive work which permits the processing of abusive incident/s, identification and changing unhelpful beliefs and attitudes related to responsibility, trust and self-concept; exploration and discharge of feelings; and identification of useful behavioural changes and the provision of a safe environment in which these changes can be supported and rehearsed.

The counsellor interviews generated the following response in terms of service needs of male survivors.

I think, more women services working with men, I think provision in, more closer working relationships between mental health organisations and the voluntary sector, because I think that a lot of men will come through via their GP's and their GP's don't really know what's going on, what's out there. They need to be told and kept up to date with the changes. I think that, because it's so patchy around the country, there's services like in a few areas, much more partnership working and much more support for other organisations to get off the ground, because there are men who've had these experiences and are around the country and haven't been able to find anything in their area and have a lot of energy to make something happen but have been unsupported in that...some way of supporting these men to do, help set up local support groups, that kind of thing. More money from groups like social services (CR).

### **Public Awareness and Gender Neutrality in Rape**

It has been demonstrated in this research that a lack of informed public awareness into the area of male rape is the root problem in preventing men being supported in rape experiences. This leads to multiple additional problems, not only for victims but also for agencies trying to support them. It is also clear that

society is very much affected by the problem of male rape both directly and indirectly. Male victims have partners, friends, family, and colleagues, all of whom become affected by the victims' experience, and both offenders and victims interact with, and are a part of, that same society. It is therefore important that public campaigns are supported to highlight the facts of male rape and to raise awareness that male rape happens. More proactive work and investment needs to be aimed at public awareness to highlight the *realities* of male rape in order to eradicate the myths. It is important that anti-rape movements move beyond sexist thought and progress to recognise rape as a gender-neutral crime. While the majority of rapes are committed by men on women, men do also become victims of rape and a better understanding of this can only strengthen progress for rape victims. Therefore, it would be desirable to work alongside feminist provisions wherever possible (such as having separate but related facilities with shared expertise), as there are many parallels between the experiences of both sets of victims. Similarly, feminist experiences of campaigning for resources over several decades and attempting to raise awareness could be utilised for male victims although in reality, this of course is dependant on feminists' willingness to support male victims. At a minimal, cross referrals would be helpful. A combined onslaught against aggressive masculinities against any person, whether male or female, would benefit all victims.

## **Chapter Ten: Conclusions**

### **The Unresolved Dilemma of 'Victim' and 'Survivor'**

Throughout this research it has been clear that the 'victim'/ 'survivor' terminology has been a real problem. On the one hand, the victim-focused approach among academics and activists in recent times has introduced the term 'survivor' as a means of not only empowering the individual who has been victimised, but also to demonstrate that he/she has survived and coped with the experience. As discussed in chapter 1 and chapter 4, Kelly (1988) suggests that the term 'survivor' be employed since the label 'victim' has negative connotations and suggests the individual has not coped with loss. For writers such as Kelly (1988), this label fails to acknowledge the strength and courage of individuals who have survived. While Kelly's work focused on female survivors of sexual violence, campaigners for male survivors have also adopted the term 'survivor'. For example, this is evident with the organisation SurvivorsUK who also refer to men who have been raped as 'survivors'. However, it is also important to bear in mind that many victims do not 'survive' or 'cope' with their loss. Additionally, the long-term trauma of rape also contradicts the definition of 'surviving' given by Kelly (1988) as 'coping,' 'resisting,' and 'surviving'. The term 'victim' is used more in the criminal justice system and by researchers and policy-makers to identify those who have been victimised. The study of victims has been called 'victimology', again identifying people as victims of crime. While there has been some interchange in using these terms throughout the thesis, the term 'survivor' was preferred although it was not practical to adopt this in many instances. These difficulties are discussed in chapter 1. The dilemma between using 'victim' or 'survivor' is unresolved. Both terms are seen to be appropriate, depending on the context in which they are used. Kelly, Burton and Regan (1996: 94) have also emphasised this, suggesting that while feeling strong, courageous and resourceful, individuals can, at the same time, experience feelings of powerlessness, vulnerability and hurt. They therefore call for a model that combines these two sets of meanings, integrating awareness of both victimisation and survival.

### **Research**

It is evident that there is a need for male rape research in all environments where it occurs such as the general community, prisons, military organisations and

warfare situations, psychiatric units and other institutional settings, to develop a greater understanding of it. Scarce (1997b) calls for more research into male rape motivated by racism and homophobia and argues that such work would determine if men of colour and homosexual men are at particular risk of victimisation. It would be an important contribution for research on male rape to consider race and sexuality as a power dynamic, as while some research has explored these factors, this has been limited to prison rape in the USA.<sup>203</sup> While the data in the present study point clearly to the fact that a considerable proportion of rapes are about power and masculinities and often involve heterosexuals, thus supporting the theoretical approach taken in this thesis, the data also indicate that homosexual men also become offenders and victims of male rape. It is therefore suggested that future work in this area explores explanations for male rape in light of the sexuality of offenders and perpetrators, to consider for example rape male rape in homosexual relationships and date rape. Similarly, while explanations for the occurrence of male rape in prisons and also rape by female perpetrators, has been debated theoretically throughout this thesis, future research would benefit from exploring these areas empirically. The importance of more research into male rape is summarised well by Scarce who maintains:

As a more comprehensive body of work begins to develop in this area, solid findings will facilitate better prevention and treatment of the rape of men. These studies will hopefully allow social scientists and public health professionals to translate resulting theory into practice. As male rape becomes extensively documented and analysed, society will have less and less grounds on which to deny its existence (Ibid. 34).

## **10.1 Theoretical Debates Reconsidered**

The emergence of interest in victims of crime has been rooted in a number of important developments. Firstly, the rise of the feminist movement developed interest in female victimisation and set the platform for research into the needs of women victims. This developed alongside a more general victims' movement concerned with the impact of the criminal justice process on victims. The establishment of Rape Crisis Centres for women and Victim Support Schemes for all victims of crimes in general, paved the way for making victims' voices heard. Whereas traditional government policy and academic interest had focused on offenders of crime, this interest by campaigners and activists brought awareness

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<sup>203</sup> Scacco (1982) considered rape cases within prisons in the USA and found some power dynamics relating to race. His work indicated that white male prisoners were more likely to become victims of rape by black prisoners. This was seen to be some kind of redress/payback for their oppression and subordination in wider society.

to the experiences and needs of victims. This shift in focus was also taken up by the sub-discipline of victimology. Whereas criminologists had concentrated largely on the offenders of crime and their motives and backgrounds to explaining the causes of crime, victimologists questioned why some individuals are targeted while others are not. Research in this area centred on discovering the sources of vulnerability to attack and the reasons why some victims may act carelessly or behave recklessly or even instigate trouble. Therefore, in the same way that criminologists have suggested that aggressive criminal behaviour may be learned, positivist victimologists have proposed that victims may have been taught to accept their subordinate roles (Karmen 2001).

Such views have come under strong criticism from feminist thinkers and critical victimologists who have argued that this form of 'victim-blaming' takes blame away from the offender and places it with the victim. However, victimologists have argued that victim-blaming is not the essence of victimology but that victim typologies can be used in the same way as offender typologies are used by criminologists, to identify factors which make certain individuals more vulnerable to victimisation. Despite this, research such as that carried out by Amir (1971) on rape, clearly demonstrates the concept of victim blaming. Karmen (2001: 23) rightly asserts that notions of victim-precipitated rape forces the question 'who or what has to change: how women behave in the company of men, as victim blaming contends, or how boys are raised to treat girls and women, as victim defending emphasises?' Victim-blaming fits well with the positivistic argument presented in chapter 3 that men rape due to forces beyond their control, implying that victims need to modify their behaviour accordingly to avoid rape. The victim-defending notion focuses on the social construction of gender roles discussed in chapter 4 and how these need to be altered. Here, aggression is seen not to be triggered by desire and uncontrollable urges, but motivated by anger and hatred. It is therefore essential to draw some firm conclusions on the causes of male rape in order to consider policy directions.

The issue of male rape was first recognised within the field of psychiatry and later in psychology since male survivors became known of through 'medical' intervention (for example, those survivors requiring medical attention as a result of injuries from rape or those requiring therapeutic intervention). As such, initial understanding of this phenomenon has developed through clinical observations. In focusing on the offender, individual positivism maintained that rapists were driven by forces beyond their control. Later work on evolutionary psychology has argued that male violence can be explained in terms of the social demands that



confronted ancestral man (Daly and Wilson 1994). Here it is suggested for example, that sexual prowess is a key demonstration of masculinity. Such a focus on inherited traits reduces the potential for changing violent behaviour. Researchers such as Pollard (1994:187) have concluded that:

Most rapes are committed by 'psychologically normal' males whose aggression may be both tacitly condoned by their immediate peer group, and more indirectly condoned by attitudes that are prevalent in society generally.

Such work suggests that men engage in damaging behaviour because of society's understanding about how they are entitled to behave, or should behave. It is for this reason that researchers such as Archer (1994) and Gilbert (1994) have pointed out that violent behaviour needs to be understood in terms of gender constructions as a social and learned phenomenon rather than an inherited one.

Feminist and masculinities research has together provided more plausible explanations as to why men rape. These positions maintain that within our society, men are expected to demonstrate and prove their masculinity and integral to this challenge is their engagement in toughness and physical aggression. For feminists, such toughness and aggression is directed towards women who, by virtue of a patriarchal system, are regarded as subordinates to men. Within this perspective then, gender relations are constructed to maintain male power and superiority over women. The main limitation of feminist theorising and research identified in this thesis is the lack of recognition given to the existence of male rape victims. This reluctance of feminist researchers to consider male victims of rape has been discussed in chapter 4, where it is suggested that this unwillingness stems in part, from a fear over competition for resources. Despite this, feminist work has been valuable in providing a more accurate explanation for rape and provides a strong foundation on which to understand the dynamics of male rape. Research on masculinities has furthered our understanding of rape where feminism has been limited. Whereas early feminist research has ignored the problem of male rape suggesting that it is insignificant, research on masculinities has identified the important and complex social construction of masculinities, which promote violent and aggressive behaviour in men. Explanations of rape derived from research on masculinities suggest that male vulnerability is disallowed, intensifying trauma when men do become victims of rape, resulting in a 'crisis of masculinities'. This has been supported by the empirical data presented in this thesis, which demonstrates that male rape clearly is a significant problem. The social construction of masculinities

is damaging to men as well as women since, as this thesis has illustrated, men also become victims of other men. Here it may be argued that male rape is used by the perpetrator to enhance his own masculinity, which is done by exerting power and control over another man. For example, one rapist in Groth and Burgess (1980: 808) study asserted 'I wasn't really interested in sex, I felt powerful and hurting him really excited me'.

The empirical findings of this thesis have demonstrated that the social construction of masculinities is damaging to men who have been raped. Stereotypes about real men being physically tough and able to protect themselves along with myths about male rape rooted within such stereotypes prevent victims from disclosing and reporting rape. Stanko and Newburn (1994: 165) illustrate the neglect by criminology to deal with the issue of male victimisation. They point out that:

In order to think about the victimisation of men we have to confront some difficult political questions. Accepting that men also suffer as a result of criminal victimisation is not to deny that men continue to occupy an advantaged position in relation to women, or that women are 'unequal' victims of crime. However, what it requires us to do is to give up our essentialist models of gender, which undifferentiatedly present women as victims and oppressors, and confront the social reality in which men not only routinely victimise women, but also victimise each other.

Additionally, the discussion in chapter 4 has illustrated the need for feminist thinkers to recognise the importance of male rape. Almanac (2001) sums up this position well:

Feminists must recognise the importance of male rape. First and foremost because unknown thousands of men are suffering, and our decades of anti-rape knowledge and experience might be able to help them. But also because the fact that men rape other men, for the same kinds of reasons they rape women, proves what we have been saying about rape all along: that it's not about the sexuality of the victim, but about the violence of the rapist.<sup>204</sup>

In reviewing explanations for violent crimes, Maguire and Levi (2002: 834) point out that violent offences are a complex phenomenon 'resistant to attempts at single or simple explanations,' concluding that while socio-biological, psychoanalytical and other sociological theories combined can provide a better understanding of violent behaviour, 'no existing clear theoretical model can make

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204 Almanac, K (13 February 2001) 'Male rape is a feminist issue' <http://katesfeminist.info/almanac/greer.html> (accessed March 2002)

sense of all the data or account for all violent crime; neither should we expect to discover that it will (Ibid.). Similarly, this thesis suggests research from feminism and masculinities combined can enhance understanding of the complex issue of male rape.

## **10.2 Project Aims Revisited**

This project's principal aims were to examine the emergence of male rape as a social and legal issue and to explore the patterns and nature of male rape in contemporary society. Newspaper coverage of male rape was examined to discover whether reporting helps to dispel or perpetuate myths about male rape. The existence of male rape myths within the MPS was also explored, as was the role of the police and their experiences of dealing with male rape cases. Additionally, the research sought to identify and explore the factors that contribute to the under-reporting of male rape and to explore the needs of survivors and the adequacy of existing services in meeting these needs. The impact of rape on victim's lives was also examined.

From the available data it was difficult to get a full insight of 'scenarios' of rapes and consequently, to produce a broad typology which would have been useful in trying to increase knowledge of the nature and extent of the phenomenon of male rape. The data therefore was limited to providing descriptions of the characteristics of offenders, survivors and locations and future research would benefit from more detailed typologies. Such typologies could also be useful to provide empirical support for the theoretical explanations provided in chapter four. While these have been discussed and theoretically analysed, the research project did not aim to empirically test such explanations given that the focus of the data analysis was a survivor-centred approach, rather than one based on offenders. However, it is clear that future research could also benefit from taking an offender-centred approach to provide empirical data on why men rape other men. The present study has offered some contributions to any such tasks for the future by taking the important first step of debunking myths about male rape.

The thesis has drawn upon and developed feminist theory to highlight that the root causes of male rape lie first and foremost with the perpetrator's need to demonstrate power and control over their victim. It has also used the theoretical contributions of masculinities to argue that social definitions of what it means to be a real man stigmatise men. Masculinity is characterised by strong, dominant

behaviour, capable of preventing victimisation through sexual violence. Expectations around masculinity lead to myths and misconceptions developing when men are seen to not uphold their roles as men in society, by for example, not being able to defend themselves from being raped. The rape of a man is seen as contrary to these expectations and the victims' trauma due to rape is intensified by society's reactions to him as a male victim. The research findings demonstrate that much work needs to be done to challenge the social fabric that constructs, nourishes and upholds this masculine identity. As such, these social constructions of what it means to be a real man, silence male survivors of rape who feel too ashamed, afraid and embarrassed to speak out and seek support and redress. Therefore, myths around male rape are at the core of preventing men from disclosing rape and seeking support.

This thesis has demonstrated that agencies such as the media, the police, the courts, the medical services and non-male rape specific counselling services often replicate these attitudes, thereby heightening the difficulties that male survivors experience. Currently, men are trapped in the myth of male invulnerability, which can only be eradicated through better understanding and awareness of male rape in all segments of society. This myth of invulnerability raises important concerns that need to be addressed in future work. The work has focused on theory to draw some understanding of male rape and has used empirical findings to separate the facts from the myths of male rape. It has also explored the impact that rape has on men's lives and in doing so, has identified the importance of policy in creating change on both national and local levels. In achieving its aims, this project has thrown out a research agenda for future work in the area of male rape.

While service provisions and initiatives to support male survivors of rape have slowly begun to surface, these primarily deal with the aftermath of rape. An integrated approach involving change in all the different areas discussed in this chapter, and located within an advanced feminist position, which recognises men as survivors of rape, is much needed. The neglect of male victimisation by both criminology and victimology has been illustrated. While mainstream criminology has been accused of writing 'for men and about men', by feminist researchers, this has focused on male offenders of crime, rather than male victims. The limitations of feminism for excluding men from research have also been discussed. It is evident that it is time to develop more inclusive policies, which recognise that both men and women can benefit from research explaining and supporting survivors of rape.

While services for men need to be established and readily available to *all* men, to help deal with the aftermath of rape, it is only through challenges to more deep-rooted social attitudes located within the debates on masculinities, that social and cultural change will occur. In achieving the aims of the research project, the work undertaken has gone some way to make visible the male survivors of rape. In doing so, it has contributed to raising awareness into this important phenomenon, highlighting the need for change.

### **10.3 Empirical Data**

The empirical aims of the research (presented in chapter 1) were addressed using a variety of data sources and methods to maximise the quality of information generated. As discussed in chapter 1, the empirical elements of the study were two-fold. The first explored the nature of male rape and the prevalence of rape myths in newspaper coverage over a 13-year period. Rape myths were also explored in the police questionnaire, which considered the role of the police and their experiences in dealing with male rape cases. Focus was on their responses to, and attitudes towards, male rape. A questionnaire of 93 police officers in seven divisions of the MPS made up this part of the research. The second element of the empirical work considered the experiences of survivors and the impact of rape on them. This was done using primary statistical data from SurvivorsUK (1344 cases) as well as a victimisation survey of 16 men and seven semi-structured interviews with male rape counsellors.

The findings from the research identify a number of key problems that need to be addressed to achieve social, legal and political change.

### **10.4 Summary of Findings from the Study**

#### **Newspaper Coverage of Male Rape**

The newspaper analysis revealed a steady increase in newspaper interest in male rape since 1989 to 2002 (see chapter 6, figure 6.1). The content analysis demonstrated that there was almost twice as much stereotypical than non-stereotypical coverage, over this period (see chapter 6, figure 6.2). Non-stereotypical articles were often lengthy and drew on quality academic research to dispel myths about male rape. These were present more in the broadsheets than the tabloids. Prior to the introduction of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, non-stereotypical coverage concentrated on calling for legal

reform to recognise male victims of rape. Other accurate coverage included information on help-lines and support for male victims. Half of all coverage was stereotypical. For example a few atypical cases would be used to portray rapists as sex-crazy beasts. Focus was also on stranger rapes whereas this thesis has demonstrated that men are more likely to be raped by someone they know. Sensationalism grossly misrepresented the facts of male rape and instead fuelled myths about this issue. Additionally, victims were labelled as homosexuals, or then liars, (see chapter 6 and Appendix 8) again contributing to keeping male rape hidden and taboo. Much of the neutral coverage was short in detail and illustrated changes in legislation. The findings were similar to those of other studies on newspaper coverage of female rape (Soothill and Walby 1991; Lees 1995).

### **The Police Questionnaire**

The police questionnaire highlighted a need for better training and awareness of male rape, demonstrating that the masculine occupational culture of the police prevents an overall understanding of this issue. The research demonstrated that myths around male rape, replicated from the wider society, are prevalent within the police organisation. For example, only 11 of respondents in the police questionnaire believed that *all* men could become victims of rape with the majority believing that only homosexual and bisexual men can be victims (see figure 7-13). The victim survey showed that almost equal numbers of victims were heterosexual as homosexual. Officers also believed that greater public awareness of male rape was needed. There was also recognition of the need to support male victims and multi-agency work was seen to be essential in providing that support. The 'culture of masculinity' was present in the majority of police responses.

For example, alarmingly, a vast majority of male officers (71) believed that they could not become victims of male rape; suggesting that they did not make themselves vulnerable or that they were physically large enough to defend themselves. This again demonstrates a lack of awareness of the realities of male rape and illustrates their own needs to validate and prove their masculinities by, for example, denying that they, as men, could be vulnerable to rape. The victim data further demonstrated that all heterosexual victims had not believed that they could become victims prior to the rape. These findings suggest that heterosexual males are less aware of the possibility of being raped and as such, may in fact be more vulnerable to such attacks.

The police questionnaire further found that officers believed that drug/alcohol intoxication led to circumstances that increased the likelihood of a rape situation arising. While drug-related rapes have recently become more known,<sup>205</sup> the victim data demonstrated that almost half of the men believed that their attacker(s) were not intoxicated with either drugs or alcohol. The police and victim survey along with the interviews with counsellors illustrated that men feel unwilling to report rape due to fears of police ridicule/disbelief, shame, and embarrassment.

### **Victim Data**

The findings from the victim data show that the majority of rapes involved one assailant, although more than one assailant were also present in some cases. Additionally, victims are more likely to be raped by someone they know and most attacks took place in private places such as the victim or attacker's home. Of those victims in the victimisation survey who knew their attacker(s) prior to the rape, five identified them as heterosexual compared to two who identified them as homosexual and one as bisexual.<sup>206</sup> Similarly, the findings from SurvivorsUK of 39 male rape survivors demonstrate that 15 were heterosexuals, 13 were homosexuals and 1 was bisexual (the sexuality of the remaining ten was not known). Similar results were found for the overall group of 1344 survivors (see chapter 8, figure 8-4).

The victimisation research also shows that violence was used in most cases, while threats of violence, coercion, blackmail and manipulation were used to control victims in the rest of the cases. Forms of violence ranged from anal penetration, oral penetration, object penetration, forced sex games and victims being forced to penetrate their attacker(s), whether anally or orally. Physical injuries sustained were severe with over half of victims requiring medical attention. Half the respondents believed their lives were in danger at the time of the rape. The majority of respondents in the victim survey were either too afraid to resist or fight back or froze with fear. Of those who did offer some resistance, attacker(s) became more violent, verbally abusive or more aroused. Attempted resistance did not stop rape in any of the incidents.

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205 The Sturman Report (2000) is the first research project funded by the Home Office into the use of drugs to facilitate rape and other serious sexual assaults. One hundred and twenty three complainants of drug rape were interviewed and the researcher DCI Sturman concluded that "while not of epidemic proportions, drug assisted sexual assault is occurring in the UK" (DCI Sturman *The Job* Friday June 30 2000).

Rape is clearly traumatic, regardless of the victim's gender or sexuality. Responses to men's disclosure varied significantly. Victim's experiences with the police were generally positive, as were their experiences of male support groups. Abhorrent responses were identified from GPs and non-rape counsellors. Mixed responses were received from hospital staff, friends, family and partners. It is evident that victims need support from counsellors trained appropriately in male rape issues.

It is clear that men experience post traumatic stress disorder as identified in female rape victims. Tearfulness, depression, fear, nightmares, insomnia, sexual difficulties including confusion around sexuality, loss of manhood, attempted suicide, anger, fear of HIV, avoidance behaviour, loss of employment, alcohol and drug problems, as well as medical problems were all identified as consequences for men's lives (see chapter 8). The findings indicate that the impact of rape on men's lives is severe. Men need strong support networks in which they can be listened to and believed in non-judgemental and safe environments.

This chapter has demonstrated the important contribution that the research project has made to understanding male rape. The theoretical debates discussed in chapters 3 and 4 have led to some strong theoretical conclusions about the importance of masculinities in understanding male rape and how such an understanding can be used to provide effective support services to male survivors. Additionally, while the focus of the empirical research has been male victims, it is also evident that such theoretical considerations have implications for perpetrator programmes that may be explored in future work on male rape. Overall, the implications of the theoretical conclusions for explaining male rape are very significant in terms of providing a strong understanding of this phenomenon. Likewise, the empirical component of the project set out to address a specific set of aims focusing on male victims and these have also been successfully achieved, as discussed above. Importantly, the project has identified some critical questions, which may provide a strong agenda for future research.


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206 The remaining eight did not know the sexuality of their attacker(s).



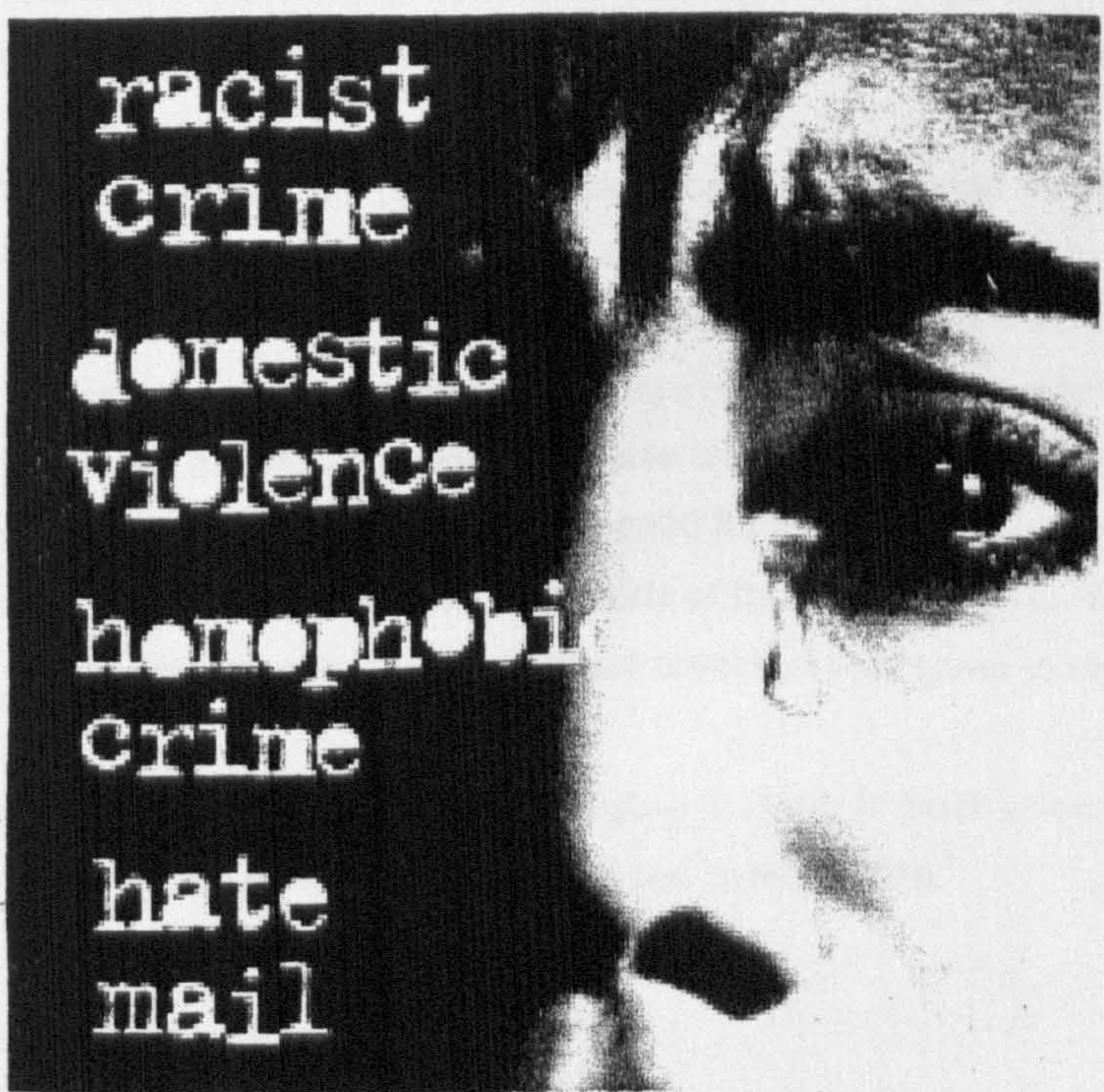
## **List of Appendices**

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- Appendix 2    Summary of Newspaper Reports**
- Appendix 3    Police Questionnaire**
- Appendix 4    Victimisation Survey**
- Appendix 5    Promoting the Haven and Other Projects**
- Appendix 6    Leaflet Campaign by the MVSASG**
- Appendix 7    Poster Campaign by the MVSASG**
- Appendix 8    Selection of Newspaper Headlines on Male Rape**



help stop  
hate crime

it's your call



racist  
crime

domestic  
violence

homophobic  
crime

hate  
mail

## Appendix 2

### Summary of Newspaper Reports

**1989** There was only 1 article found for 1989 reporting on church reactions to the play 'Hanging The President' which featured male rape scenes<sup>1</sup>. This finding shows that the issue of male rape was not apparent in this year.

**1990** In 1990 there was a small increase in attention to male rape, with a total of 3 different reports in 4 newspapers. Two of these reports referred to actual rape occurrences (one in prison<sup>2</sup>) while the third was a small article on advertising nudity. (One story was covered by two newspapers.)

**1991** In 1991 there were 4 articles on male rape. The quest to extend rape law to include male rape was reported in one article<sup>3</sup> while another reported on findings from a major research study on HIV and Aids in prisons conducted by the Aids Education and Research Trust which found incidents of male rape in prisons<sup>4</sup>. The case of one victim was reported in a lengthy article (1381 words) which also gave advice and information on male rape.<sup>5</sup>

**1992** The findings for this year are particularly significant as there was a sharp increase in male rape coverage. To begin, the number of separate cases featured increased to 9 and these cases were reported 12 times in total. This increase in offences (one of which was later reported to be a false allegation) prompted a huge newspaper coverage of male rape with a total of 15 general discussions, 2 informative articles on support available to victims, and single articles on homosexuality and male rape, prison rape and the need for law reform. The total number of separate articles on male rape was 30, with 37 reports of these discussions. The mean length of the articles was 583 words. This shows that detailed coverage was given to the reports.

This year showed the first peak in coverage (see figure 6.1) when much attention arose from 9 incidents of male rape on the London Underground and public toilets.<sup>6</sup>

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1 *The Daily Telegraph* 15 August 1989 p.2

2 *The Independent* 17 March 1990 Home News p.4

3 *The Independent* 20 June 1991 Home News p.5

4 *The Independent* 6 June 1991 Home News p.9

5 *The Independent* 20 August 1991 Health Page p.15

6 Headlines included 'Tube safety warning after man is raped' (*The Independent* 13 May 1992 p.3); 'Man raped in the West End' (*Evening Standard* 21 July 1992 p.15); 'Male Rapes linked after sixth attack' (*The Daily Telegraph* 22 August 1992 p.2); 'Rape

**1993** The total number of different articles on male rape was more than halved from 30 in 1992 to 13 in this year. The number of cases dropped to 5 while concern about increased cinema, theatrical, television and radio features of male rape grew. While there was a decrease in coverage of the issue compared with 1992, this figure was still higher than previous years.

**1994** In this year, judging from the media reports, interest with the issue of male rape was high, with a total of 38 articles concentrating on this subject. Nineteen reports focused on the new rape legislation. This huge increase in male rape law discussions resulted from the introduction of male rape as a criminal offence in its own right under the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act 1994. There was also an increase in the number of individual discussions to 17, from 13 in 1993. Statistics on male rape were used to illustrate a rise in cases of male rape. General discussions on this issue, including the prevalence of male rape in prisons also increased in this year. Details of three support groups also gained coverage in four articles. Links between child abuse and male rape were discussed in 1 article<sup>7</sup>, while 2 others considered the links between homosexuality and male rape<sup>8</sup>.

**1995** In this year there were 47 reports relating to male rape of which 26 were individual (the remaining 21 were repeats of the original reports). Eight of the 26 articles were of incidents and cases of male rape including one case of a schoolboy aged 14 years old who raped a 3 year old boy he was baby-sitting because he wondered what sex was like.<sup>9</sup> This particularly horrifying case involved 1 of the youngest reported cases in terms of the ages of both the victim and the attacker.

One article in *The Guardian* newspaper described the anguish of a male survivor, raped in a London department store toilet<sup>10</sup> while another report focused on the rape of a 13 year old boy held at knife point.<sup>11</sup> However, the most reported case of male rape in 1995 was that of Andrew Richards, the first man to be imprisoned for male rape in the UK. This was an attack on an 18-year-old runaway, raped by Richards in London's Regent Park. The case received national coverage.<sup>12</sup>

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terror of man kidnapped on tube train by armed gang' (*Daily Mail* 15 October 1992 p.5); 'Male Rapes linked after sixth attack' (*The Daily Telegraph* 22 August 1992 p.2).

7 *The Independent* 2 May 1994 Comment Page p.13

8 *The Observer* 23 January 1994 Review Page p.24 and *The Independent* 19 March 1994 Home News p.8

9 *The Herald* (Glasgow) 21 October 1995 p.4

10 *The Guardian* 31 August 1995 p. T15

11 *The Daily Telegraph* 15 June 1995 p.3

12 *The Daily Mail* 10 June 1995 p.2; *The Independent* 10 June 1995 p.2 *The Times* 10 June 1995 Home News; *Daily Record* 10 June 1995 p.13

The rising concern about male rape as a feature in plays, cinema and television reports was also evidenced in this year. For example, 7 theatrical performances attracted critical attention for male rape scenes including *Craig Charles Speaks* (Duke of York Theatre, London), *Our Theatre Company* (Café Royal Theatre), and *Skin*. The opening of 'Blasted' at the Royal Court, London, prompted condemnation and a huge public outcry at explicit male rape scenes with many members of the audience walking out during the performance.

Two separate discussions expressed opinions on the changes in legislation relating to male rape, while male rape in prison was also discussed after a prison patient in Brixton was charged with the rape of an inmate.<sup>13</sup> The problem of the hidden nature of male rape was also discussed in a lengthy article,<sup>14</sup> while awareness of support groups for male survivors increased with reports advising survivors on where to go for help.

Demands for more services to help male rape survivors cope with their experiences also appeared. Additionally, there were general discussions of violence against males by their male partners.

**1996** During the year 1996, there were 19 individual references, with a total coverage of 35 articles. These articles related to actual cases of male rape (5)<sup>15</sup>, academic conferences and research (4)<sup>16</sup>, television coverage of male rape (12)<sup>17</sup>, statistics on male rape (5)<sup>18</sup>, cinema, theatre and music (7)<sup>19</sup>, homosexuality and male rape (1)<sup>20</sup> and information on support for male survivors' (1)<sup>21</sup>.

**1997** In 1997 there were 30 individual references to male rape, with a total coverage of 42 reports. Many of these reports were on the case of an 11 year old school boy charged with raping a 12 year old boy in Nottingham (charges in this case were later changed to indecent assault)<sup>22</sup> and accusations that the former president of Zimbabwe, Canaan Banana, raped a male

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13 *The Herald* (Glasgow) 19 July 1995 p.11

14 *The Independent* 29 May 1995 Home Page p.9

15 For example, *the Scottish Daily Record* 6 November 1996; *The Guardian* 27 July 1996 p1. *Sunday Mirror* 25 February 1996 News p.14

16 For example, *The Daily Telegraph* 17 August 1996 p.16; *The Independent* 3 July 1996 p.3; *Sunday Telegraph* 30 June p.32

17 For example, *The Independent* 22 November 1996 p.3; *The Scotsman* 3 September 1996; *The Sunday Times* 23 June 1996 Home News

18 For example, *The Times* 27 March 1996 Home News; *The Times* 25 September 1996 Home News; *The Independent* 27 March 1996 p.5

19 For example *The Independent* 3 May 1996 p.9; *Daily Record* 19 August 1996, p.19 *The Herald* (Glasgow) 7 February 1996 p.10

20 *The Herald* (Glasgow) 3 July 1996 p.7

21 *Sunday Mirror* 25 February 1996 p.14

22 For example *The Independent* 25 October 1997 p.4; *The Guardian* 23 October 1997 p.4; *The Mirror* 23 October 1997; *Scotland on Sunday* 20 October 1997 p.2

police Inspector.<sup>23</sup> Other articles focused on support for male survivors of rape<sup>24</sup> and statistics on violent crimes including male rape.<sup>25</sup> Other reports centred on television<sup>26</sup>, theatre<sup>27</sup>, and film<sup>28</sup>.

**1998** There were 30 reports in this year which ranged from MP's debating lowering homosexual age of consent and the introduction male rape as a crime,<sup>29</sup> theatre productions showing scenes of male rape;<sup>30</sup> films<sup>31</sup>; and cases of male rape (including prison rape).<sup>32</sup>

**1999** Thirty three articles appeared in this year ranging from research articles;<sup>33</sup> public and policy issues for male rape;<sup>34</sup> theatre productions;<sup>35</sup> films;<sup>36</sup> and television.<sup>37</sup>

**2000** Forty-four articles were present in this year, with much coverage on the Hollyoaks male rape scenes in March of this year. Additionally, cases of male rape were covered<sup>38</sup> as were statistics on male rape;<sup>39</sup> legislation;<sup>40</sup> films<sup>41</sup> and theatre.<sup>42</sup>

**2001** There were 58 articles in this year which ranged from focusing on television programmes such as the Bill and Hollyoaks which included male rape<sup>43</sup> to cases of male rape such as the

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23 *The Herald* (Glasgow) 26 February 1997

24 For example *The Northern Echo* 20 February 1997 p.3; *The Guardian* 21 May 1997 p. 6

25 For example, *The Independent* 15 October 1997 p.10; *The Times* 15 October 1997 Home News; *The Times* 18 March 1997 Home News.

26 *Daily Mail* 06 March 1997 p.12

27 *The Independent* 26 February 1997 p.4

28 *The Guardian* 21 June 1997 (Guardian week-end page T11)

29 for example, *Daily Telegraph* 23 June 1998 p.9 702 words

30 *Evening Standard* 13 October 1998 p.13 1071 words

31 *The Times* 7 December 1998 Features 905 words; *The Guardian* 7 December 1998 Features p.19 737 words; *The Guardian* 19 November 1998 p.6 1044 words.

32 *The Guardian* 23 May 1998 p.9 282 words; *The Independent* 15 August 1998 p.4 40 words and *Mall on Sunday* 12 July 1998 4864 words; *Mirror* 27 February 1998 p.7 732 words; *Mirror* 16 June 1998 p.13 296 words

33 For example, 'Social change: suffering in silence' *the Guardian* 3 March 1999 Society p.2 (1497 words); *The Guardian* 26 March 1999 p.9 (581 words)

34 *The Guardian* 28 April 1999 Home p.13 (612 words)

35 *The Guardian* 17 August 1999 Features p.13 (716 words); *Mall on Sunday* 21 February 1999 p.3 (917 words)

36 *The People* 28 March 1999 p.14 (109 words); *The Guardian* 11 September 1999 p.3 65 words); *The Independent* 28 November 1999 p.27,28, 30 (3536 words)

37 *The Times* 29 January 1999 (216 words)

38 *The Guardian* 28 June 2000 p.22 (152 words); *The Mirror* 3 August 2000 p.2 (129 words); *News of the World* 30 April 2000 (221 words)

39 *Daily Mail* 18 July 2000 p.2 (382 words)

40 *The Guardian* 'Suffering silences' 10 May 2000 p.8 (1001 words)

41 *The Guardian* 20 April 2000 p.17 (834 words); *Evening Standard* 17 March 2000 p.10 (571 words)

42 *The Guardian* 15 April 2000 p.4 (768 words); *The Guardian* 20 June 2000 p.15 (657 words)

43 *Daily Mail* 25 July 2001 p.12 (1123 words); *The Guardian* 7 May 2001 p.8 (1231 words)

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43 *Daily Mail* 25 July 2001 p.12 (1123 words); *The Guardian* 7 May 2001 p.8 (1231 words)

## Appendix 3

Metropolitan Police Service  
Memorandum

To:	From: DCI Jerry Alford
	☎ 48804
	14 October, 1998

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### Re: Male Abuse Questionnaire

Research is currently being conducted through Middlesex University in conjunction with the MPS Male Abuse Steering Group as to the reasons for the under-reporting of such crimes.

Seven divisions across the MPS, including West End Central, have been chosen to carry out the research. CD has 20 questionnaires to complete and these are distributed randomly across the ranks and service bands.

This is an important issue. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire, which can then be returned to PS at

Thank you in anticipation of your cooperation.



Survey on Sexual Assaults On Males.

**This survey is about your views and opinions.**

**Please take a few moments to answer the given questions. Please answer all questions even though you may not have had direct dealings with sexual assaults on males, as your views count. You do not need to back up your opinions with statistical or other evidence. The survey remains strictly confidential. Your participation is much appreciated - Thank-you.**

What is your rank in the force?-----

Are you male or female?-----

Below are a list of statements. Please consider how you feel about each one and then tick the appropriate box. Please also state your reasons for each answer (Please use the blank paper at the end to continue with any of the answers, if necessary, and clearly indicate which question you are referring to).

1. Sexual assaults on males should be dealt with by
- The service sector [social services, or voluntary support groups etc.]
  - The police force
  - Both
  - Other
- Please give reasons why you think this :

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2. Male rape is:
- a social problem
  - a legal problem
  - not a problem
  - Don't know
- Please give reasons why you think this:

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3. Do you think male rape is a growing problem within our society?  
Yes  No  Don't know

Please give reasons why you think this:

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4. Do you think the police adequately accommodate for the needs of male rape victims?  
Yes  No  Don't know

Please give reasons why you think this:

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5. In your opinion, do you think male rape is considered an important issue within the police?

Yes  No

Please give reasons why you think this:

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6. Do you think male rape is :   
Over-represented in Official Police Statistics   
Under-represented in Official Police Statistics   
Reflected fairly accurately in Official Police Statistics   
Other

Please give reasons for your answer:

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7. Do you think male victims of rape are treated:

Better than female victims of rape

Worse than female victims of rape

About the same as female victims of rape

Please give reasons why you think this:

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8. Do you think the legal recognition of male rape has significantly improved the situation for male rape victims?

Yes  No  Don't know

Please give reasons why you think this is:

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9. Do you think there is a need for more awareness of male rape?

Yes  No  Don't know

Please give reasons why you think this:

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10. Do you think male victims of rape suffer:

More emotional trauma's than female rape victims

Less emotional trauma's than female rape victims

The same level of emotional trauma's as female rape victims.

Other (please specify)

Please give reasons why you think this:

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11. Do you think male victims of rape are:

more likely to report rape to the police than female victims

less likely to report rape to the police than female victims

as likely as female victims to report rape to the police

Please give reasons why you think this:

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12. Do you think undue attention on male rape would encourage homosexual behaviour?

Yes  No  Don't know

Please give reasons why you think this:

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13. Who do you think are most likely to become victims of rape?

- Heterosexual males
- Homosexual males
- Bisexual males

Please give reasons why you think this/If you have any other comments on this please include them

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14. Do you think there is a strong link with homosexual behaviour and male rape?

- Yes  No  Don't know

Please give reasons for your answer:

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15. In your opinion, what circumstances may contribute to the rape of a man?

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16. If you are male, do you ever fear that you could be the victim of male rape?

Yes

(please state why)

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No  (please state why)

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17. Do you think the number of false allegations of male rape are:

Very High

High

Low

Very Low

Please give your reasons why you think this (you do not need statistical data to support your opinion)

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18. Do you think genuine victims of male rape would: always fight back

sometimes fight back

never fight back

Please give reasons why you think this:

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19. It is very difficult to get a conviction for male rape

difficult to get a conviction for male rape

not difficult to get a conviction for male rape.

(Please tick only one box)

Please give reasons for your answer:

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20. Do you think it is:

easier to get a conviction for male rape than female rape

harder to get a conviction for male rape than female rape

about the same level to get a conviction for male and female rape

Other (please specify)

Please give reasons for your answer:

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21. Do you have any comments regarding this survey or male rape that you wish to add?

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Thank-you for your participation.



## **Appendix 4**

### A Survey of Sexual Assaults Against Adult Males

This survey aims to look at the sexual assaults of adult males by other males.

It is important to obtain information on this largely hidden crime in order to make policy recommendations as well as campaign for support for victims. The lack of data currently available on the offence of male rape is an obstacle to change, both within the criminal justice system and within society. This survey is being carried out in order to bridge an understanding of this crime, to generate awareness without prejudice, and to explode the myths that have surrounded this issue for so long. In order to do this successfully, some of the questions are very personal and may prove distressing to address. However, it is only through your participation that important information can be obtained and the complex issues of male rape be addressed. An information leaflet on support available is enclosed.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it as instructed. The questionnaire is completely anonymous and will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

Your participation is much appreciated.

A Survey of Sexual Assaults Against Adult Males

For Official  
Use Only.

1. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your present occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your ethnic origin? Please tick

African Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
White UK/Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
White European	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian other	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed Race	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Other {please specify} \_\_\_\_\_

4. How would you describe your sexuality?

Heterosexual   
Homosexual   
Bisexual   
Don't Know

5. Have you ever been the victim of a sexual attack? Yes   
No

If no, are you responding on behalf of someone who has? Yes   
No

If yes, please answer the remaining questions on behalf of that person.

6. Before the attack, were you aware that men could become victims of rape?

Yes   
No

7. What do you think the term rape includes:  
(Please tick as many or as few as you think apply)

anal penetration   
oral penetration   
penetration by object   
Other   
(please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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8. How long ago were you the victim of the sexual attack? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How many men were you attacked by? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Did you know your attacker(s) before the attack?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

If yes, was he

Attacker 1

Attacker 2

Attacker 3

(a) A friend

(b) A relative

(c) An acquaintance

(d) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

(If there were more than 3 attackers please continue on the back of this page)

If yes, at the time of the attack, was he/they:

Attacker 1

Attacker 2

Attacker 3

(a) Single

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(b) Married

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(c) Divorced

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(d) Separated

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(e) Living with a female

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(f) Living with a male

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(If there were more than 3 attackers, please continue on the other side of this page)

11. In your opinion, was your attacker(s):

Attacker 1

Attacker 2

Attacker 3

(a) Heterosexual

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(b) Homosexual

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(c) Bisexual

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(d) Don't know

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

(If there were more than 3 attackers, please continue on the other side of this page)

12. How would you describe the ethnic origin of your attacker(s)

Attacker 1

Attacker 2

Attacker 3

Black

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

White

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

Asian

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

13. Where did the attack take place?

(a) In a private place: Your home

[ ]

Attackers home  [ ]  
Other please specify \_\_\_\_\_

(b) In a public place: Car park  [ ]  
Public toilets  [ ]  
On the street  [ ]  
In a park  [ ]  
Other please specify \_\_\_\_\_

14. Which of the following applied to your situation:  
{Please tick as many or as few as are applicable}

You were punched  [ ]  
You were choked  [ ]  
You were kicked  [ ]  
You were tied up  [ ]  
You were gagged  [ ]  
You were threatened with violence  [ ]  
You were verbally pressured or coerced  [ ]  
You were threatened with a weapon  [ ]  
You were harmed with a weapon  [ ]  
Please state which weapon \_\_\_\_\_

15. Please use the space below to write about any other physical injuries you sustained: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. Please tick as many or as few boxes as apply to you:

You tried to physically resist the attack  [ ]  
[E.G by struggling, kicking, or punching]  
  
You tried to verbally resist the attack  [ ]  
[E.G by shouting, swearing, screaming, pleading]  
  
You tried to reason with the attacker(s)  [ ]  
  
You lied to the attacker(s)  [ ]  
[E.G by saying you had an infectious disease]  
  
You tried to negotiate with the attacker(s)  [ ]

[E.G by agreeing to some acts and not others]

You co-operated and did everything the attacker(s) wanted [ ]

You were too afraid to resist in any way [ ]

You did or said something else [ ]  
please specify what you did or said \_\_\_\_\_

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17. If you did resist in any way, what was the attacker(s) response to this?

Became more violent [ ]

Became less violent [ ]

Became verbally abusive [ ]

Became more turned on [ ]

Became panicked [ ]

Tried to reassure you [ ]

18. Did the attacker(s) say anything else to you during the attack?

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

19. Did you feel that your life was in danger? Yes [ ]

No [ ]

Don't Know [ ]

Can't remember [ ]

20. Do you think the attacker(s) had been drinking before the attack? Yes [ ]

No [ ]

Don't know [ ]

21. Do you think the attacker(s) had taken any illegal drugs before the attack? Yes [ ]

No [ ]

Don't know [ ]

22. Please tick as many or as few boxes as are applicable:

You suffered anal penetration

You suffered oral penetration

You were penetrated with an object

(Please specify what object was used) \_\_\_\_\_

You were made to perform anal penetration on the attacker(s)

You were made to perform oral sex on the attacker(s)

You were made to penetrate the attacker(s) with an object

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

23. Did you need medical attention for your injuries? Yes   
No

24. Did you tell any of the following about the attack:

Please tick all those that you told:

Partner

Friend

Relative

Police

Male Support Group

Please specify which one: \_\_\_\_\_

Victim Support

G.P.

Counsellor

Other

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

25. How do you feel they responded? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

26. If you were unable to tell anyone, why do you think that is?

Please tick as many or as few boxes that apply to you:

Felt ashamed/embarrassed/humiliated

Felt they would not believe me

- Felt they would think I was gay
- Felt they would think I had asked for it
- Felt they would not understand
- Felt frightened
- Felt afraid of other people finding out
- Other please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

27. Please tick as many or as few boxes as apply to you  
Since the attack:

- I have had difficulty sleeping
- I have felt depressed, nervous or afraid
- I have had thoughts of suicide
- I have attempted suicide
- I have felt tearful
- I have had nightmares
- I avoid going out [a] alone
- [b] at night
- I have taken time off work
- I have had sexual difficulties
- I feel angry

28. Please write any additional affects the attack has had on you  
and your life:

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29. Have you ever suffered from any other kind of sexual abuse  
(This can include being touched as a child, being made to have or perform  
sex against your will, experiencing unwanted sexual advances)

- Yes
- No

Please give details \_\_\_\_\_





RICHARD SUMRAY TELLS THE JOB THAT THE MET IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF WORLDWIDE RAPE INVESTIGATIONS

# New approach to sex cases praised

**CHAIR** of the Met Police Authority's professional standards and performance monitoring committee, Richard Sumray, is praising the MPA priority of improving both investigations of sexual offences and treatment of victims.

"Over the year, the Met has pushed out the boundaries dealing with serious sexual offences and supporting vic-

tims from a very low level 20 years ago, but there is still demonstrable room for improvement," he said.

The MPA has established a scrutiny working party, which Mr Sumray heads, with the aim of making positive changes in the level of service victims receive and to provide an improved and consistent approach across London.

"We have already taken some oral evidence including

from a victim and have learnt about the Canadian approach. I believe the Met is very much at the forefront of the way police worldwide handle rape investigations - but that should not lead to us be complacent."

Visits to the Camberwell-based sexual assault referral centre, The Haven, and making a comparison with station-based victim examination suites, illustrated the need to provide all victims with appro-

appropriate facilities, said Mr Sumray.

"We need a suitable, friendly environment with access to health services where there are skilled staff and a consistent approach. We need to give all victims the opportunity to be able to access these facilities."

Issues surrounding the investigations of sexual attacks by strangers on children also need to be resolved. There is a strong case for child protection

teams to take on this work as they are well equipped to work with children, he said.

Handling victims more appropriately should gradually lead to a reduction in the rate of attrition and mean more victims see the charge through to court, he said. Mr Sumray said the MPA was highly impressed with the principles of Project Sapphire, the recently launched operation that focuses on sexual offences.

*The Job 30/11/01*

# Investigations quality check

**THE Metropolitan Police Authority is instigating a scrutiny to consider the quality of services the MPS provides to victims of a sexual offence by focusing on the investigation of rape crimes.**

A scrutiny working party made up of five MPA members is inviting written evidence from all interested parties and seeking oral evidence from relevant groups involved in rape investigation and victim support. The aim is to make positive changes in the level of service victims receive and to provide an improved and consistent service for the whole of London.

"Our scrutiny is in direct support of the Policing and Performance Plan 2001/2002 objective to improve victim care and investigation in cases of rape. Rape is an area where it is difficult to assess levels of victim care and where targets for getting offenders to court are currently not being met," said

chair of the Scrutiny Working Party, Richard Sumray.

The scrutiny is viewed very positively said Supt Jim Webster, the co-ordinator of the newly-launched MPS Project Sapphire strategy to improve both services to victims and investigations of sexual attacks.

● A NATIONAL conference for police officers and other professionals dealing with the aftermath of a sexual offence began yesterday.

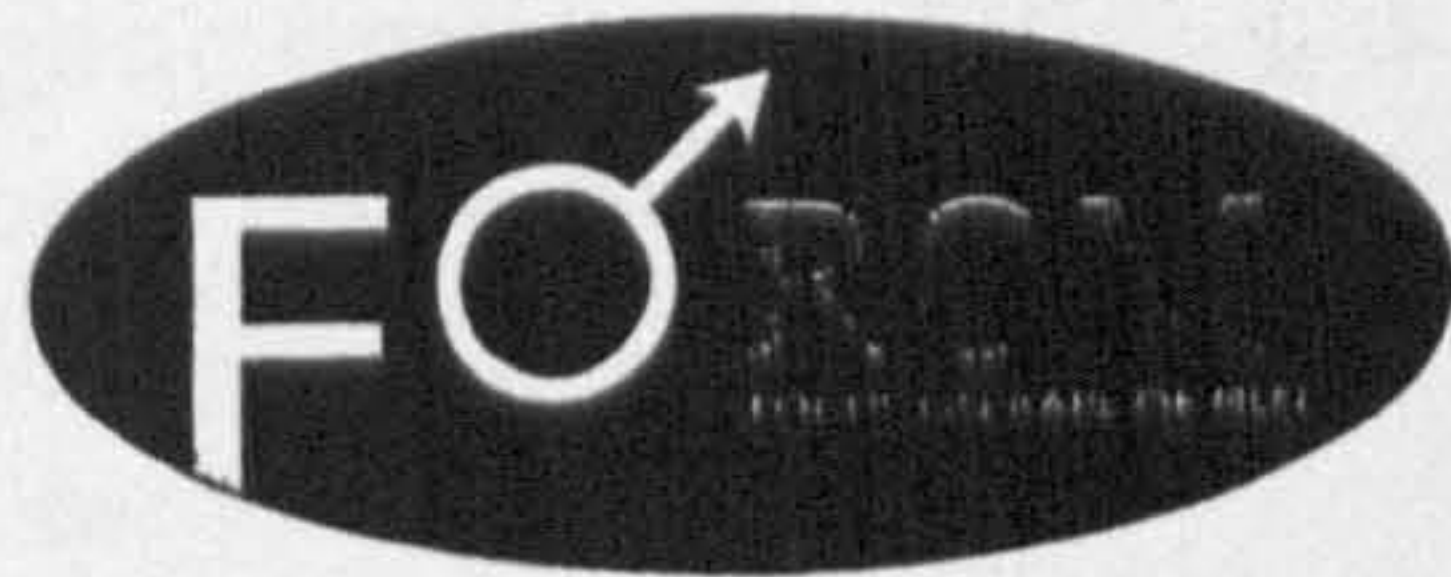
The two-day conference - Best Practice in Rape Investigation and Victim Care - is organised by private company Infolog Training, with support from the MPS.

Chaired by Lord Mackenzie of Framwellgate OBE, conference speakers will include Director of the ESRC Violence Research Programme, Professor Betsy Stanko, and Deputy Commissioner Ian Blair.

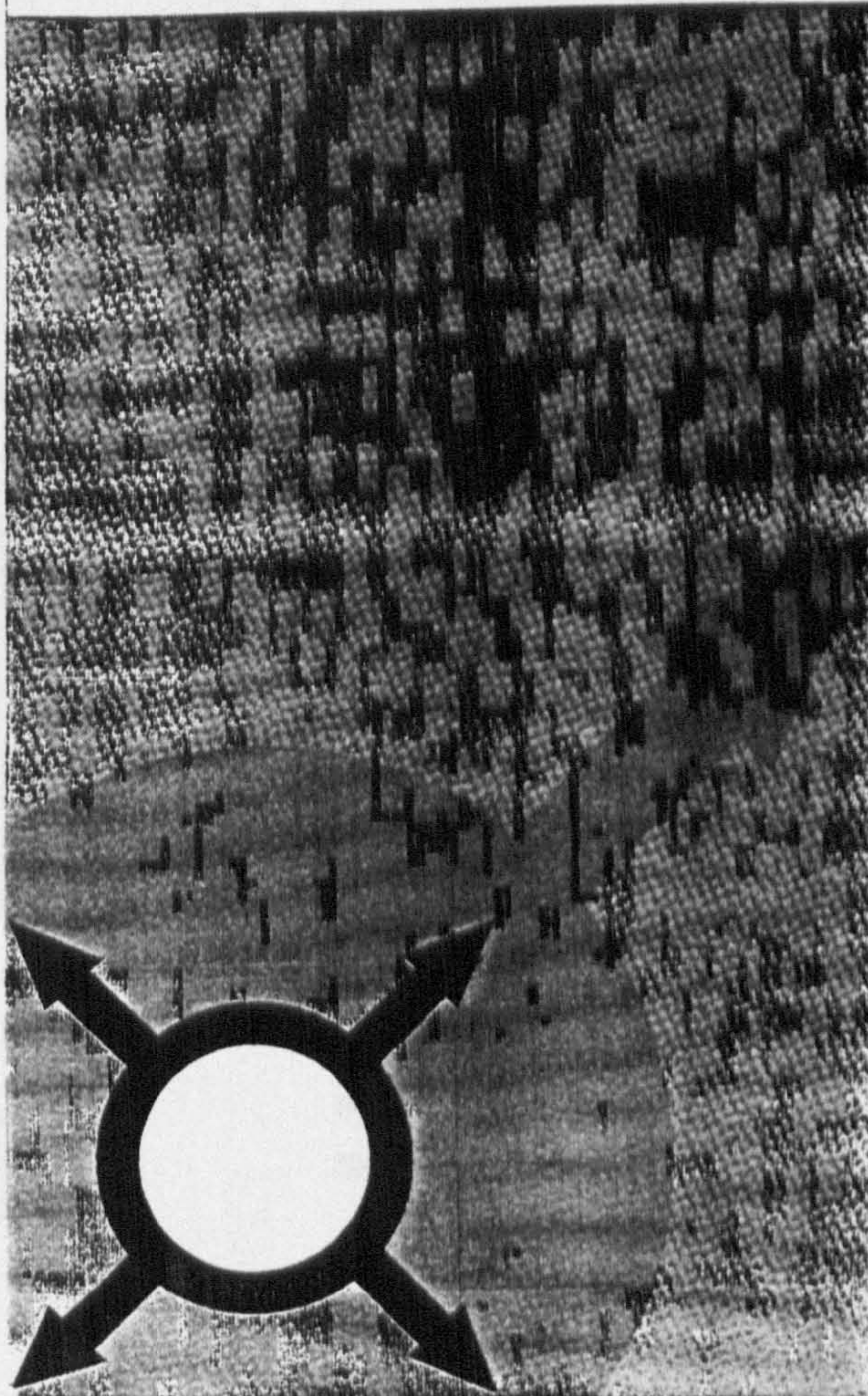
*The Job 16/11/01*

# Anti-hate drive achieves results

*The Job 30/11/01*



# Men and Sexual Assault



AGENCIES WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP





Appendix 7

# MEN AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

**FOROM** is a multi-agency group looking at issues for adult men who have experienced rape, sexual assault or childhood sexual abuse. Based in the Metropolitan Police area, it aims to focus attention on the under reporting of sexual crimes against men and the provision of support services.



Reporting the crime

Support and counselling

Legal representation

Medical care

## AGENCIES WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP



**SURVIVORS** UK  
HELP FOR MEN WHO HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ABUSED  
Support • Counselling • Training  
020 7613 0808  
website [www.survivorsuk.co.uk](http://www.survivorsuk.co.uk)

Victim Support London  
Phone: 020 7928 0498

See accompanying leaflet for more information on support and services available.

## Rape reform urged

A radical revamp of rape legislation is needed for male and female victims, the Commons was told yesterday. A ten-minute rule bill, sponsored by Harry Cohen, Labour MP for Leyton, proposes changes in the law to provide more rights for victims and to recognise male rape and rape within marriage as offences. The bill was given a formal first reading. However, unless adopted by the Home Office, it has no chance of becoming law because of lack of parliamentary time.

Leading article, page 21

The Times 29/10/92

## Raped by gays

### Dear Deidre

I AM a lad of 18 and I was raped as I walked home from a nightclub.

The trouble is that I feel it was my fault.

It happened a few weeks ago when a couple of lads about the same age as me grabbed me in a back street and ordered me to take off my jacket.

They had a knife so I did as I was told. Then they commented on my white-socks and said: "Let's do it."

They pinned me to the

ground and took it in turns to rape me. I feel very confused about what happened and feel it was my fault. Should I go to the police?

■ **DEIDRE SAYS:** What happened was certainly not your fault. Please find the courage to tell the police and if you feel anxious about talking to officers, the Victim Supportline on 0845 30 30 900 can talk you through what will happen.

I'm sending you my free leaflet on male rape (also available on e-mail) which details sources of understanding support.

The Sun 22/02/01

## Two sides of the law for pervert

**T**HEY caged pervert Andrew Richards last week for attempted male rape.

The Daily Record 13/06/95



RICHARDS ... beast

judges then do too little, too late as his per versions continued?

Or do we stick with the inescapable conclusion?

That, as far as our predominantly male Judiciary is concerned, the attempted rape of a man is a much more serious offence than the rape of a woman or a sex attack on a child?

## ~~Pervert~~ makes history

A SEX attacker made legal history yesterday when he was jailed for life on the first-ever charge which recognised male rape.

Goatee-bearded Andrew Richards, 26, had been out of prison for only four months last December when he assaulted an 18-year-old male runaway in London.

Under the old law, he would have been charged with attempted buggery without consent which had a maximum of 10 years jail.

But the 1994 Criminal Justice Act recognised male rape for the first time and raised the maximum sentence to life.

Richards, from Neath, Mid-Glamorgan, was said to be a danger to young people of both sexes.

He was found guilty of attempted rape, two counts of indecent assault and actual bodily harm

The Daily Mirror 10/06/95

## 'Male rape victim' lied

The Daily Mail 09/11/92

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