

**MALE CRIME VICTIMS: THE SOCIAL AND PERSONAL
CONSTRUCTION OF MEANING IN RESPONSE TO
TRAUMATOGENIC EVENTS**

by
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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work, and that it has not been submitted for any degree at another university.

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ABSTRACT

The study was directed at exploring the social and personal construction of meaning of male victims of violent crime. Three inter-related goals were identified: the extension of the nascent narrative/thematic tradition of analysis in the traumatic stress field; the deepening of appreciation of the experience of criminal victimization; and the exploration of the role of social construction in the cognitive schematic adjustment of victims. In this instance the examination of the role of social construction was focussed centrally on the juxtaposition of the subject roles associated with masculinity and victimization. On the basis of both clinical observation and theory, it was postulated that aspects of masculine identification would create difficulties for men attempting to adjust to involuntary exposure to a context in which they were clearly victimized. The thesis provides comprehensive coverage of theory straddling cognitive adjustment to psychological trauma, mainstream and critical social psychological theory on victimization, developmental and descriptive dimensions of theory on masculinity and a range of literature on criminal victimization. The theoretical conceptualization underpinning the study offers a unique integration of this body of knowledge. In order to investigate the research question, ten adult, white, English speaking, South African men who had experienced a life-threatening, criminally motivated attack were interviewed about the event and their subsequent responses. The study was located within the qualitative research tradition allowing for the development of theory, and for depth of description and interpretation. Semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interview transcripts were subjected to a thematic content analysis by means of a computer-aided text interpretation. Frequency figures were calculated, but the emphasis of the analysis was in the area of descriptive and interpretive dimensions. Three central themes emerged as significant; those of Control, Disillusionment and Anger. Multiple facets of each theme are addressed, including centrally the interface between thematic dimensions and the social construction of masculinity. A meta-theoretical discourse analytic commentary is provided, addressing for example, the role of the "hero" discourse in interviewee's reports. In addition, the clinical implications of the data are explored. The study provides evidence of the inter-relationship between social and personal construction of meaning in the aftermath of victimization. It is suggested that in the context of victimization the social construction of masculinity is both more intractable and more permeable than might be supposed.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

This study arose out of both clinical and theoretical concerns and explored an area of interest straddling the clinical and social psychological research fields. During the course of several years of clinical work in the field of traumatic stress it became apparent that there appeared to be gender differences in the manner in which masculine and feminine typed individuals responded to the impact of traumatic stressors. Of particular interest was the degree of decompensation evidenced by several male clients who had been exposed to life-threatening events in a civilian context. This led to speculation about the implications of masculine identification for adjustment to victimization, given the very evident discrepancies in stereotypes pertaining to masculinity and stereotypes pertaining to victimization.

Concurrent with a resurgence of interest in traumatic stress within the clinical community has been a developing interest amongst social psychologists in the interface between social and personal constructions of reality. This interest has been predominantly encapsulated in the social constructionist movement and has focussed centrally on the area of identity and particularly, social identity. A key dimension of study in this area has been the construction of gender identity and the role gender plays within a variety of contexts. Due to the considerable influence of feminist theory in the social sciences, women's gender identity has tended to receive much greater attention than men's. This is understandable given the previous weight of emphasis on male experience as normative, but in certain respects this led to a lack of problematization of masculine gender. However, within the decade of the 1990s there has been increasing interest in masculine identity leading to a proliferation of literature in the area. With the exception of "masculine crisis theory", this literature has tended to address dominance related aspects of masculinity rather than their inversion. The examination of challenges to masculine identity in the form of victimization thus appears to offer a fruitful means of contributing to knowledge surrounding masculinity.

Thus this study on the personal and social construction of meaning of male crime victims arose out of a confluence of interest in the clinical phenomenon of trauma adjustment in men and a social theoretical interest in male gendered experience. The aim of the study was to explore post-traumatic constructions of the experience of trauma by means of in depth interviews in order to highlight those aspects of construction which appeared to be particularly salient for understanding the influence of subscription to masculine gender constructs for victims/survivors.

THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA AND ADJUSTMENT

Brief Background

The recognition of a pattern of psychological distress following exposure to extremely threatening life events has been documented from Greek and Shakespearian times. However, as various contemporary trauma theorists have pointed out, the phenomenon of posttraumatic stress has tended to become neglected and rediscovered at various points in history, and that this is tied to some extent to social and political influences (Herman, 1992; van der Kolk, Herron and Hostetler, 1994). Van der Kolk et al (1994) suggest that periods of loss of interest in traumatic stress may be likened to the kind of dissociative phenomena that have been observed in severely traumatized individuals. At each point of rediscovery theoretical understanding of traumatic stress appears not only to reinforce earlier conceptualizations, but also to elaborate and refine this body of knowledge.

The recognition of posttraumatic stress as a describable disorder is largely attributable to the volume of individuals presenting with symptoms in America following the Vietnam War. The clinical observation of common patterns of disturbance in these war veterans led to the inclusion of the diagnosis of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the Third Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-III) in 1980 (American Psychiatric Association, 1980). This diagnostic category was further refined with the later DSM-III Revised (1987) and DSM-IV (1994). Although the stressor criteria related to diagnosis have always encompassed a range of incidents, including natural disasters, torture, rape and other forms of criminal violence; it has been argued that the

diagnostic description is somewhat biased in terms of the classificatory system's original focus on Vietnam War Veterans (Davis and Breslau, 1994; Wolfe and Kimerling in Wilson and Keane, 1997).

The field of (post) traumatic stress studies has burgeoned within the 1980s and 1990s, encompassing a very broad range of interests in terms of the types of populations studied and the aspects of functioning examined. In addition, diagnostic, classificatory and treatment/intervention debates abound.

Within medicine and psychology the earliest conceptual frameworks for understanding trauma tended to be encompassed within the psychoanalytic and psychodynamic traditions as encapsulated in the work of Janet, Freud, Ferenczi, Kardiner and Horowitz (van der Kolk et al, 1994). However, once PTSD became identified as a classifiable phenomenon there appeared to be somewhat of a shift towards more descriptive psychiatric understandings and an emphasis on behavioural forms of treatment, although previous traditions remained evident. Amongst others, two contrasting current areas of research have emerged in the form of a focus on memory and neurological processes (van der Kolk and Fisler, 1995) and in the form of a field which has been encapsulated under the rubric of "narrative or thematic analysis" (Roth, Lebowitz and DeRosa in Wilson and Keane, 1997). The present study is located within this latter trajectory of knowledge development.

The Trend Towards Narrative Analysis Within The Traumatic Stress Field

Thematic or narrative analysis places emphasis on those aspects of traumatization which are not necessarily encapsulated by symptomatic descriptors and focusses primarily on the construction of meaning in the wake of trauma. In this respect such studies are concerned with cognitive aspects of trauma response; however, the notion of cognition is tied to the exploration of schemata, meaning systems and affectively linked thought, rather than being viewed in a more constrained way. Roth et al (in Wilson and Keane, 1997) make reference to the notion of "cognitive-affective complexes" (p.523). The term that will most commonly be used throughout the thesis to refer to the cognitive dimensions under analysis will be that of schemata (or schemas

in the case of American authors). It has become widely accepted that individuals "actively construct their experience, and this complex process results in representations of both the self and the world" (ibid, p.512). In addition, it has also been widely observed that exposure to traumatic stressors severely disrupts existing frameworks for understanding or prior schemata relating to the self and the world. Theory in this area has been associated with the writings of Lifton (1968), Horowitz (1992), Epstein (in Pervin, 1990), McCann and Pearlman (1990) and the work of researchers at Duke University (Roth et al in Wilson and Keane, 1997), amongst others. However, systematic documentation and assessment of thematic aspects of trauma adjustment is still nascent and lacks a cohesive research tradition. Nevertheless the detailed understanding of the psychological meaning attached to traumatic experiences appears to be of crucial importance in therapeutic intervention. "Furthermore, we would argue that those approaches which most creatively represent the voice of the victim, in as much complexity as possible, will be most likely to inform us about what we are trying to understand" (Roth et al in Wilson and Keane, 1997, p.520). This study aims to contribute to just such a complex and detailed comprehension of a particular group of victims' schematic responses to a traumatic incident, in this instance male victims of violent crime.

In the main, contemporary studies of a narrative character have focussed on the experience of populations of women who have been sexually and physically abused (Dutton, Burghardt, Perrin, Chrestman and Halle, 1994; Lebowitz and Roth, 1994; Roth and Newman, 1993). In addition, with the exception of Lebowitz and Roth (1994) and Wood and Rennie's (1994) studies of rape survivors' constructions of their experience, there has been no clear attempt to investigate the role of cultural beliefs or social constructions in personal establishment of meaning. This absence of focus on the inter-relationship between social and personal constructions of meaning is somewhat surprising given contemporary social science interest in this question and the recognition of exposure to traumatic stress as requiring very evident cognitive adjustment. It is also perhaps surprising given the increasingly public categorization and scrutiny of victims, as evidenced for example, in media coverage of sexual abuse and rape. Such media attention makes it clear that victimization carries currency as a social as well as a personal phenomenon. The current study was thus conducted both to highlight the experience of an alternate group of victims and to enhance understanding of the role of social construction in schematic adjustments to trauma.

Gender and Traumatic Stress

It is notable that until very recently there has been little explicit attention to the topic of gender in the posttraumatic stress literature. Given that the two most prolifically researched population groups have been combatants and rape survivors, gender has tended to be subsumed under other features of such traumas, since it was self-evident that the overwhelming majority of victims in each category were of a particular sex. Whilst aspects of gender socialization have been explicitly addressed in some rape studies (Russel, 1975), the nature of masculinity has generally not been examined with the same complexity amongst war veterans, although Parson (in Wilson and Raphael, 1993) does make reference to a form of narcissistic disturbance in male survivors which is related to aspects of masculine identification. At the 1997 annual conference of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS) two sessions were devoted explicitly to gender related topics and a chapter in Wilson and Keane's text on assessment in the area of posttraumatic stress (Wolfe and Kimerling, 1997) is devoted to "Gender Issues". Thus it is apparent that gender is beginning to gain some attention in the field of posttraumatic stress. However, studies to date have tended to examine demographic characteristics, such as symptom profiles, rather than engaging with gender as a socially constructed aspect of identity which may be implicated in the establishment of meaning. This study is intended to contribute to the study of gender in relation to trauma from a fresh perspective.

The Study of Crime Victims

As indicated above, the main body of traumatic stress literature has been developed around specific populations. Combat veterans are the focus of the majority of studies in the area, followed by rape survivors (Wolfe and Kimerling in Wilson and Keane, 1997). There has also been considerable concern with survivors of natural or man-made disasters and more recently with victims of child sexual and/or physical abuse. Torture survivors have also received specialized attention. In comparison to these traumatized populations, victims of violent crime have received relatively little attention (Davis and Breslau, 1994). What studies have been conducted into crime victims (excluding rape), have tended to focus on large scale surveys allowing for the description of PTSD prevalence and symptom profiles (*ibid*). Exceptions to this line of enquiry are Bard and

Sangrey's (1979) and Niederbach's (1986) texts, which are focussed at the opposite extreme around largely anecdotal material from which theory is extracted. These books both provide powerful treatise on experiential or phenomenological dimensions of falling prey to criminal attack. Janoff-Bulman (1985) also singles out crime victims for particular attention in her discussion of ruptures to basic assumptions following trauma. It would, however, seem that victims of violent crime warrant broader and deeper study as a traumatized population.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

It is well documented that South Africa is a country with high levels of violent crime. Although violence has existed for decades, analysts have suggested alterations to patterns of the enactment of violence with much violence prior to the demise of apartheid being attributable to repression and overtly political conflict, and more violence post the 1994 elections being attributable to broadly criminal activity (Minnaar, Pretorius and Wentzel, 1997). Whilst there are political debates about the nature of violent crime, its demography and its origins (Simpson, 1993); statistics on reported crime do appear to indicate that levels of violent crime are excessively high. International comparisons from 1994, as elucidated in the ICPO-Interpol: International Crime Statistics Report 1994, indicated that South Africa had the highest rape incidence, the fourth highest murder incidence and the eleventh highest serious assault incidence (de Kock, 1997). The head of the Crime Investigation Service presented the following statistics to a parliamentary committee in mid 1996: an average of 52 murders a day; a rape committed on average every 30 minutes; a car stolen every 9 minutes; and an armed robbery committed every 11 minutes (The Sunday Times, 9/6/96). Whatever their limitations, these figures point to a serious crime problem in South Africa which is generally undisputed. This level of criminality means that exposure to violent crime is more commonplace than in many other countries and in this respect South African society offers a distressing natural laboratory setting in which to study the impact of this kind of victimization. Large numbers of clients presenting at traumatic stress treatment settings are seeking help in the wake of exposure to mugging, assaults, armed robberies, car hijackings, attempted murders and murder-related bereavement. The subjects of this study had all been exposed to what was perceived to be a life-threatening incident in which the motivation for attack

was financial gain, i.e., to a serious and violent criminal offence. Locating a subject population of this nature was not particularly difficult within the present South African climate.

Violent crime is not peculiar to South Africa and appears to be endemic to many large cities in the world. It thus seemed important from both a South African and an international perspective to contribute to a more profound understanding of the impact of violent crime in order to improve therapeutic interventions and elaborate existing theoretical conceptualizations.

KEY AIMS

In summarizing the previous discussion, it should be apparent that the study was aimed at addressing three lacunae in the current posttraumatic stress field. To this end the study encompassed the following projects: firstly, the promotion of a narrative analysis encompassing the influence of social constructions of victimization; secondly, the problematization of gender, and masculinity in particular, in schematic adjustments to trauma; and thirdly, deepening the understanding of experiential dimensions of non-rape related violent crime. Given the broad scope of the study and the fact that it straddled clinical and social psychological interests, a considerable body of theory is presented in order to provide a conceptual backdrop for the empirical study. The somewhat unique integration of much of this theory also represents a central aspect of the thesis.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Within the literature review and theoretical argument of the study four major areas of theory are covered. These include a discussion of the manner in which cognition, meaning and/or schema-related adjustment to traumatic stress has been conceptualized, with a particular focus on psychodynamic theory and more recent conceptualizations encompassing constructivist notions such as those of Epstein (in Pervin, 1990) and McCann and Pearlman (1990). Secondly, social psychological theory in the area of trauma and victimization is covered including attributions, assumptions and appraisals (Wortman, 1980). In addition, the contributions of "critical social psychology" to the area are addressed. Having covered most of the background theory pertaining to generalist understandings of cognitive (including social cognitive) models of conceptualizing

adjustment to trauma, the review of literature moves on to engage with the two particular foci to be interrogated in the frame of the study. The third strand of the theoretical presentation thus deals with the construction of masculinity, developmental concerns and descriptive dimensions. Masculinity is also contextualized in relation to historical forces and other aspects of identity such as race and class. The fourth component of the literature review elaborates some of the theory pertaining to victimization and the implications of adopting a victim identity. There is a central focus on research pertaining to criminal victimization and the study of male victims.

Following this extensive review of four fields of theory pertinent to the research, the thesis progresses to a discussion of the method the study employed and the results obtained. Since the study entailed a qualitative design and encompassed both thematic content analysis and discursive analysis, this chapter provides the conceptual rationale for the utilization of such an approach and its implications. The results chapter provides a structured summary of the key themes that emerged in the course of the computer-aided textual analysis of thematic content.

Finally a comprehensive discussion of the data which emerged as of primary interest is provided. The main body of the discussion serves to elucidate the thematic features of the data with particular reference at every point to the interface between emergent themes and masculine constructions of the impact of the traumatic experience. Following this in depth exploration of these themes, two commentaries of a more meta-analytic nature are provided, the first addressing discourse analytic dimensions of the data and the second, explicitly addressing some clinical concerns which emerged from the study. The thesis concludes with a critical evaluation of this research endeavour.

CHAPTER 1

COGNITIVE IMPLICATIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA: THE COMPLEMENTARY PSYCHODYNAMIC PERSPECTIVES OF FREUD, LIFTON AND HOROWITZ

1.1 INTRODUCTION

As has been briefly discussed in the introductory chapter, it is clear that the field of traumatic stress has a rapidly growing literature on theory and practice. It is evident that the experience of traumatic stress impacts at multiple levels from the neurological and the biological to the social and spiritual. Within the psychological domain the areas of soma, affect, behaviour and cognition have all been examined with varying degrees of emphasis. However, in reviewing the field of posttraumatic stress research and theory, it is evident that the role of cognition has occupied a central place. Numerous authors (Herman, 1992; Horowitz, 1992; Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Lebowitz and Roth 1994; Wortman, 1983) have identified the key role of trauma in destabilizing and shaping the individual's cognitive structures and have pointed to the function of cognition in determining the survivor's approach to the traumatic event. It is generally argued "that the ways that people think about a stressful situation affect how they respond emotionally and how they cope" (Folkman, Schaefer and Lazarus, in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.265).

Whilst cognition is certainly inter-related with affect, physiology and behaviour, it becomes particularly salient in responding to traumatic stimuli and offers an access point to observe how trauma is subjectively processed. The cognitive aspects of psychological adjustment to traumatic stress are particularly interesting as they reflect not only the pre-existing schemata with which people approach such situations, but also the possible alterations to these schemata which occur as a result of traumatic exposure. In addition, expression of cognition through language provides a pool of data accessible to an outside observer which reflects subjective understanding of the impact of the experience. Perhaps for this reason, survivors of trauma often choose to describe their experiences from a cognitive perspective, i.e., in terms of alterations to beliefs, assumptions, and other cognitive schemata. This medium thus appears to be a natural avenue of expression for

trauma survivors. For this range of reasons, the primary focus of this study is on cognitive dimensions of trauma adjustment, and the related dimensions of memory, affect, neurophysiology etc. are not directly addressed.

Having established the importance of cognition in the study of trauma adjustment, it must be recognized that this field of study in itself is vast.

1.2 STRESS AND TRAUMATIC STRESS

As well as the more specialized body of work related to *traumatic* stress, there is also a comprehensive body of literature pertaining to cognition and stress in general. Much of this general stress literature has focussed on the processes of primary and secondary appraisal, relating to the demands ascribed to situations and the resources the individual perceives as available to them to meet these demands, (Lazarus, 1966; Folkman et al, in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979). The interactional perspective, highlighting stress as a product of person-environment interaction, has gained prominence in current theory and is reflected to some extent in the traumatic stress literature. However, in reviewing related literature in the field of stress and cognition, it is evident that there is little overlap or integration between stress theory and traumatic stress theory. The two bodies of literature tend to be largely discrete and to focus on different concerns. To some extent this stems from a different temporal focus, the stress literature being concerned primarily with the anticipation and in situ experience of demand, e.g., exam anxiety; whereas the traumatic stress literature, as the diagnosis of *post*-traumatic stress implies, is concerned more with the aftermath of exposure to demand.

The two fields also focus on differing degrees of stress, with traumatic stress literature grappling to define traumatic stressors as distinct from more "normal" levels of demand. Hence in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III-Revised (DSMIII-R), the stressor was notably defined as "outside the range of usual human experience" (American Psychiatric Association, 1987, p.250) and in DSM-IV more specifically, as involving exposure to "an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p.427). Thus it is clear that traumatic stress tends to be

defined more narrowly than stress in general, and places considerable weight on the nature of the demand in the interactional equation. Whilst individual variations in response to traumatic stressors are acknowledged, DSM-III-R recognised that such events would be "markedly distressing to almost anyone" (American Psychiatric Association, 1987, p.250), and DSM-IV that the person's response characteristically involves "intense fear, helplessness, or horror" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p.431). If negative stress is defined as occurring when demand exceeds personal resources, the definition of posttraumatic stress assumes such an occurrence.

The stress literature has recently begun to look at health promoting stress, *eustress* (Selye in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979), a concept which appears to have limited value for traumatic stress although there are some moves in this direction (Tedeschi and Calhoun, 1996). It should be apparent that the focus of the two fields is generally distinct, although greater rapprochement might be useful. Nevertheless, the subject matter of this thesis is significantly limited to traumatic stress literature and will not address general stress issues of styles of coping and appraisal as central concerns. The field of traumatic stress is a comprehensive one, in itself requiring some internal differentiation.

1.3 THE TRAUMATIC STRESS AND COGNITION FIELD

In order to structure the theory to be covered in this and following chapters, a distinction is made between three areas of cognitive theory in relation to trauma. Although these distinctions are somewhat artificial, and indeed one of the central aims of the study is to assert their inter-relationship, the three sections cover material relating to personal/individual aspects of cognition, social/societal aspects of cognition and the level of discourse/ideology and cognition. At present it appears that each of these areas encompasses a fairly distinct body of theory, and thus, despite some overlap, the theory is presented within these respective frameworks.

1.4 PERSONAL AND INDIVIDUAL COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING AND EXPOSURE TO TRAUMATIC STRESS

1.4.1 Freud's Contribution

Freud was one of the earliest writers to conceptualize the psychological impact of traumatic stress on human functioning. His initial writing covered how the psyche deals with aversive and anxiety provoking stimuli, but became more focussed on traumatic exposure specifically in relation to combat veterans of World War II (Freud in Gay, 1920/95). Since his formulation is cogent and has influenced many later theorists in the area of trauma, it is useful to briefly outline his conceptualization in this area.

According to Freud, a central goal of the psyche is to respond to the external environment in a way which optimizes pleasure and decreases pain. This homeostatic balance is maintained in part by controlling excitation levels, with low levels being associated primarily with pleasure, (1920/95). In order to deal with aversive stimuli, the psyche, and more particularly the ego, becomes attuned to anxiety provoking cues in the environment, so as to be able to anticipate, and therefore prepare for, exposure to such anxiety. The psyche thus protects itself from becoming overwhelmed by anxiety/displeasure by optimizing the psychical resources available to deal with stress prior to the encounter. In this way the ego is able to mediate the experience and the person is protected from becoming overwhelmed by such anxiety. However, in the case of traumatic stress, Freud was compelled to acknowledge that there were situations which were so unexpected and so overwhelming that this kind of defensive containment of anxiety became impossible.

1.4.1.1 Rupture in the Stimulus Barrier

In his 1920 paper, "Beyond the pleasure principle", Freud described how certain situations could rupture the protective interface between the self and the external world in a manner which would be experienced as devastating by the individual. He wrote that traumatic stress arises as a consequence of "an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli" (in Gay, 1920/95, p.608). The implications of such a breach were severe in relation to psychological functioning. Waves of stimuli flood the mental apparatus and the capacity to bind the excitation

evoked is severely compromised resulting in “far more comprehensive general enfeeblement and disturbance of the mental capacities” (ibid, p.597) than was the case in classical hysteria. Once such a rupture has occurred the ego is considerably weakened in its ability to maintain the distinction between inner and outer stimuli, and reality contact consequently becomes impaired. In addition, at this level of functioning more primitive regressive defences and adaptations come into play. One possible consequence of this kind of regression is a reversion to more primitive forms of thinking, both developmentally and psychically. Thus more id-driven primary process thinking may become apparent as the individual attempts to relate to the overwhelming stimulus and its aftermath. For example, trauma survivors have described having vivid, highly aggressive, revenge fantasies which are experienced as ego-dystonic. Others have developed unrealistic anxieties about future attacks or conspiracies of a paranoid nature, verging on the psychotic. In some cases experiences of derealization and depersonalization have been reported. All these examples point to aspects of the person’s cognitive processing becoming more regressive and impulse driven.

1.4.1.2 Repetition Compulsion

Freud also noted a further more enduring effect on cognitive functioning in the form of the “repetition compulsion”. In failing to fully process and integrate fear-inducing experiences, Freud noted that patients continued to experience these past traumas as if they were active in the present. Traumatic memories had the distinctive quality of an experience preserved intact which continued to invade the present. The replaying of traumatic memories occurred mostly in the form of intrusive thoughts and nightmares, usually evoking high levels of anxiety. Freud speculated whether the function of repetitive memory was “to work over in the mind some overpowering experience so as to make oneself master of it” (Freud in Gay, 1920/95, p.600), i.e., to translate passivity into some form of active response. In re-living the trauma in memory the individual is attempting to develop the necessary anticipation of anxiety and subsequent mediation of the fearful experience through action which was denied in reality. This notion of the psychical damage of failed enactment became central in some areas of trauma theory and the recognition of the function of repetition compulsion gained wider clinical significance.

1.4.1.3 The Role of the Death Instinct

Freud's argument extended further in terms of instinctual life. Although this is viewed as the most speculative and under-developed part of his theory about trauma, Freud tied aspects of disturbance to challenges posed to the individual's most basic life and death instincts and their inter-relationship. In addition to the goal of mastery, Freud argued that the repetition of traumatic anxiety also represented a return to an instinctual base preceding the life instinct, a kind of primeval conservative instinct to return to an inorganic state. This appears to be related to the notion of the death instinct as containing impulses towards breakdown, destruction and decay in a life cycle sense, counterposed against the life instinct's push towards generativity and vitality. For human beings this return to an inorganic state is generally achieved through a process of natural decay in dying; however, in trauma this pathway is over-ridden by an external threat. Thus for Freud there was an instinctual resistance to the possibility of unnatural death since the psyche is in some way invested in experiencing death in the normal process of the life cycle. Freud hypothesized that the repetition of traumatic memory might represent an attempt to take control of this most basic psychical process. "Seen in this light, the theoretical importance of the instincts of self-preservation, of self-assertion and mastery greatly diminishes. They are component instincts whose function it is to assure that the organism shall follow its own path to death, and to ward off any possible ways of returning to inorganic existence other than those which are immanent in the organism itself" (Freud in Gay, 1920/95, p.614). This component of his argument tends to be viewed as controversial and has received little later elaboration by Freud himself or his followers. However, it is clear that the kinds of cognitive disturbances apparent in the repetition compulsion represent ruptures in both the content and process of mature thinking.

1.4.1.4 Summary

Linking these ideas formulated in his 1920 paper to those outlined by Freud in conjunction with Breuer in "Studies in hysteria" (1895/70), it is apparent that traumatic material may form a core around which a constellation of related psychic material coalesces. Thus related words, images, experiences or metaphors can become contaminated by the anxiety associated with the original

trauma and take on similar neurotic connotations. This constellation of traumatic material may occupy a particular niche in the patient's repertoire of cognitions, or in the psychical apparatus.

It is clear that Freud made a significant contribution to later conceptualizations of posttraumatic stress. In the area of cognition it is the recognition of the disruption of binding mechanisms laying the person bare to anxiety and consequent cognitive disturbances that is important. These disturbances relate to failed mastery and commonly manifest in repetition compulsion, usually characterised by the encapsulation of vivid associative thoughts and memories associated with the trauma. Many of these Freudian premises are elaborated in contemporary theories of trauma and cognitive processing.

While Freud has influenced later conceptualizations of posttraumatic stress, this field of psychological responses to the extraordinary was not a major focus of his theoretical work. Many contemporary theorists with a specific interest in traumatic stress have drawn on analytic theory in a more focussed way. One such author is Mardi Horowitz.

1.4.2 Horowitz's Conceptualization

Horowitz was a theorist who began to investigate the phenomenon of traumatic stress prior to its firm establishment as a category in the psychiatric literature. His text, "Stress Response Syndromes", first published in 1978, became a key reference work in the field for many years and has been republished in a second edition (1992). Although he formulated his theory firmly within psychodynamic principles, Horowitz extended his model to encompass an information processing perspective.

Interpreting Freud's earlier writing, Horowitz concurred that traumatic stress overwhelmed the individual's usual capacity to process information and relate adaptively to the external environment. He argued that for Freud "traumatization occurs as a result of sudden overload of both information and physical energy" and became operative "as controls failed in the face of powerful evocative events. A tension state of high drive characteristics resulted, and the intensification of secondary defences then produced denial states. Episodic defensive failures lead

to intrusions” (Horowitz in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.247). Horowitz thus embraced what he viewed as the information processing aspects of Freud’s argument, while remaining more questioning of the drive aspects. He cites Rangell’s (1967) meta-psychological summary of psychoanalytic theory with regard to trauma at some length:

A traumatic occurrence is characterised by the intrusion into the psychic apparatus of a stimuli or series of stimuli, *the traumatic event*, varying in their qualitative manifest contents, in their quantitative characteristics, and in their time relationships, which set off an unconscious train of intrapsychic events (*the traumatic process*) beyond the capacity of the ego to master at that particular time. The dynamics of the traumatic intrapsychic processes which ensue lead to the rupture, partial or complete, of the ego’s barrier or defensive capacities against stimuli, without a corresponding subsequent ability of the ego to adequately repair the damage in sufficient time to maintain mastery and a state of security. The resulting state, *the traumatic state*, is a feeling of psychic helplessness, in a series of gradations from brief, transitory, and relative, to more complete and long-lasting. As a result of insufficient resources on the part of the ego, there is a feeling of lack of control and a vulnerability to further stimuli, without the expectation of adequate containment, mastery and adaptation. (quoted in Horowitz, in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.248).

This description cogently summarizes the kind of psychodynamic formulation that Horowitz and other trauma theorists have drawn from the work of Freud and his contemporaries. Horowitz’s particular area of exploration lies in the traumatic process, i.e., in the operations that take place to deal with such stimuli.

1.4.2.1 Intrusion and Avoidance

Horowitz argued that two broadly defined states occurred after exposure to traumatic events, the first manifesting in intrusive experiences and the second in a kind of psychic numbing and avoidance. “Underlying these shifts in state are changes in inner models of the self, others, and the world; some due to alterations in dominance among models and others due to formation of new models” (in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.236). Since these alterations to psychic homeostasis are extremely threatening to the individual, the process of information absorption becomes adapted to the level of threat. The vacillation between intrusion and avoidance ideally allows the person to integrate traumatic material into cognitive structures by means of an optimal dosing effect, each process acting to promote and contain the other. Drawing on Piagetian theory,

information processing of this nature can be seen to balance the processes of assimilation and particularly, accommodation, which are required to adapt to new environmental stimuli (Horowitz, 1992). Horowitz understood such cognitive adjustment to occur in the following sequence:

- a. Phase of initial realisation that a stress event has occurred, often with a sharply accelerated expression of reactive emotion.
- b. Phase of denial or numbness.
- c. Mixed phase of denial and intrusive repetition in thought, emotion and/or behaviour.
- d. Phase of further ideation and acceptance (or stable defensive distortion), with a loss of either the denial or the preeminent recollection of the stress event. (1992, p.86).

Thus for Horowitz the stage of resolution would entail either the healthy option of being able to maintain the material in consciousness without feeling overwhelmed or needing to employ distancing mechanisms; or the unhealthy option of denying the validity of the information in some way, yet still moving beyond the employment of vacillating cognitive manoeuvres. He recognized that it was difficult to place a time frame on such phases given variations in traumatic circumstances and individuals. However, the present study aimed to investigate cognitions largely occurring in Horowitz's final phase, post the acute state of vacillation.

Within the trauma field Horowitz's contribution is perhaps best recognised in terms of his understanding of the theoretical basis for the symptoms related to intrusion and avoidance. Together with several colleagues he devised a scale to assess the presence of such symptoms in traumatized populations. Known as the Impact of Events Scale (IES) this instrument has been widely used in trauma research (Horowitz, Wilner and Alvarez, 1980) and subject to later revision (Weiss and Marmar in Wilson and Keane, 1997). However, Horowitz's conceptualisation of the cognitive processing of traumatic stress extended beyond this formulation of parallels between symptoms and cognitive processing modes to a much more complex interrogation of the nature of information processing that takes place in traumatic circumstances. This material is of more particular import for the present study.

1.4.2.2 Cognition as a Substitute for Action

Horowitz argued that cognitive processing of stress needed to be understood as a substitute for action. Under ideal circumstances stress is terminated by action which removes the source of threat. The success of action in reducing arousal can be understood in cognitive as well as drive terms. "The cognitive view is that there is a reduction of emotion because of the completion of a script, the discharge of an intention, or else because of the following sequence: The action alters events; the alteration of events alters representation; the alteration of representations alters cognitive processing; and the alteration of cognitive processing alters emotional responses" (Horowitz, 1992, p.91). Horowitz thus argues that cognition acts as the mediator between action and emotion. However, because of the unavoidable nature of most traumatic stimuli, such action is not possible. "If action cannot alter the situation, then inner models must be revised so that they conform to the new reality" (ibid, p.244). In a sense the process which would have occurred through action now has to be mediated purely cognitively. This cognitive mediation is complicated by the incongruity of the experience with existing schemata.

From an information processing perspective the lack of completion of action and/or cognitive processing in traumatic encounters, leads to information related to the stressor being stored in active memory. Thus it is constantly evoked and remains emotionally charged until it is processed to a point where it can be integrated into the person's cognitive repertoire and regulated by inactive/long-term memory. This process may be experienced as very distressing to the individual. "Serious life events are so different from one's inner models of oneself, one's attachment to others, and one's inner world view that very painful emotional responses result, threatening emotional states of such power that controls are activated to prevent their occurrence or continuation" (Horowitz, 1992, p.100). The more incongruous the experience, the greater the anxiety it is likely to evoke. Much of Horowitz's theory is concerned with constraints on this process and how necessary modification can best be facilitated. His therapeutic method is predicated on this understanding.

1.4.2.3 Cognitive Mechanisms Involved

Horowitz extended his argument from an information processing perspective to describe not only how such change is managed but also the form this might take. He proposed that changes in inner models could involve the incorporation of new information, or the re-ordering of existing schemata. For example, the hierarchical relationship of schemata could change or dormant schemata could replace currently operant schemata. Due to the emotive nature of alterations to cognitive schemata under such circumstances, certain kinds of cognitive controls (or defences) become operative. He preferred the term *controls* to describe defensive manoeuvres since he viewed psychoanalytic defence terminology as describing outcome rather than process (1992, p.101). In his terms controls operate to "modulate reactions to serious life events" (1992, p.102).

The basic controls essentially involve forms of inhibition or facilitation, but can be applied to three levels of abstraction: "(1) the selection of the overall topic and mode of thinking about it, (2) the selection of those self-images and role relationship models that will organize interpretations of information, and (3) the selection of information to form sequences of thought" (in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.252). In simplified terms the three areas appear to define whether one allows oneself to think about the traumatic material at all or which aspects are entertained in consciousness; the framework of existing beliefs which is drawn upon to make sense of the experience; and the kind of cognitive processing that is utilized to achieve recognition of the material, e.g., problem solving versus fantasizing.

The second level, that of selection of self-images and role relationship models, has most bearing on the subject matter of the present study, given that it focusses on the schematic categorization of traumatic material. Controls in this area operate not so much to manage the sequential flow of information, "but the organizing schemata that will be used to pattern that information" (Horowitz in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.255). Generally "multiple self-images and role relationship models are available to every person" (p.255) and tend to alter in terms of their dominance as organizers over time. These alterations are particularly acute following serious life events and according to Horowitz involve different sets of categorisations including: schemata for membership, self-image/self-concept, role relationships and the available hierarchy of world views.

In the case of membership the individual may adopt a belonging or independent position, involving identification or dis-identification with a range of group formations. Horowitz cites the example of the case where a war veteran's identification with his unit may reduce combat stress. Alterations in self-image involve fundamental questioning of identity with the ultimate aim of stabilizing a self-image once such vacillations have taken place. "The failure to select or stabilize a self-concept or the loss of a superordinate self-schema may lead to experiences such as chaotic lapses in identity" (Horowitz, 1992, p.105). There is also often some difficulty with perceiving oneself as subject or object in this context, relating to degrees of depersonalization or self-actualization. Finally, role relationships with others tend to commonly involve issues of dependence and self-sufficiency, and questions of trust pertaining to perceptions of others as all-good or all-bad. These issues all have relevance for each other and in turn for the person's world view.

1.4.2.4 Summary

It is clear that the essential formative structures for integrating significant human experience are severely taxed by exposure to extreme stressors. An important inference to be drawn from Horowitz's model is that the more discrepant the traumatic stressor is with the individual's pre-existing cognitive schemata in these areas, the more difficult it is likely to be for them to integrate and deal with the experience. (This is one of the points of interest in studying male victims.) This schematic aspect of Horowitz's information processing theory appears to be an extremely useful framework for understanding this area of cognition and posttraumatic stress and resonates both with the focus of the present study and much of the theory covered in later sections of the literature review.

Several other authors have similarly attempted to articulate the process of trauma adaptation from a cognitive perspective, and particularly to identify those schematic constellations most affected. Drawing on a similar psychoanalytic underpinning of theory, Lifton has made a significant contribution in this area.

1.4.3 Lifton's Contribution

Lifton's writing on traumatic stress was derived largely from work related to massive scale disasters of World War II. He spent considerable time working with survivors of the Hiroshima atomic bomb blast and also interviewed Nazi doctors who had overseen large scale concentration camp killings. His work is coloured by this exposure to instances of death and destruction of great enormity. A pervasive theme of his writing is the importance of morality in approaching such circumstances and the prevalence of death anxiety, topics which he believes have been neglected in the trauma literature (Lifton in Wilson and Raphael, 1993). The issues are inter-related, since it is generally questions of life and death which confront survivors and trauma workers most starkly with moral dilemmas.

For the purposes of this study, and remaining cognisant of the focus on cognitive aspects of trauma processing, certain selective aspects of Lifton's writing are addressed.

1.4.3.1 Failed Enactment and Psychic Action

In harmony with the premises of Freud and Horowitz, Lifton also emphasizes the survivor's difficulty in coming to terms with the inhibition of action under the overwhelming circumstances which characterize trauma. Lifton uses the term "failed enactment" to encapsulate this aspect of traumatic adjustment: "I speak of this as failed enactment because some beginning abortive image forms toward that enactment in a positive way that is never possible to achieve. One can then describe the idea of an image as a schema for enactment that is never completed" (Lifton in Wilson and Raphael, 1993, p.12). He argues that this disjuncture between the cognitive blueprint for action and its lack of enactment leaves the survivor trapped with a "residual, traumatized 'self' that is still to some degree in that state of helplessness" (p.12). This helplessness can be both emotional and cognitive: "The inactivation of which we speak is within the image itself and therefore a violation of the kind of psychic flow one can ordinarily depend upon" (p.17). The key means to free oneself from this impasse is to grasp and accept one's inactivation under the circumstances and to find alternative psychic closure. To some degree this aspect of Lifton's

theory appears to be a reconceptualization of the notion of the repetition compulsion as it is operative in trauma survivors particularly. However, his description of this process is particularly rich.

He goes further to argue that not only image formation, but the entire capacity for thought can be damaged in trauma. The kind of dissociation required to cope with death anxiety and, in the kinds of situations he was dealing with, to come to terms with grotesque stimuli, could lead to a deadening of the mind. "The dissociation becomes intrapsychic in the sense that feeling is severed from knowledge or awareness of what is happening... What is more basic is the self's being severed from its own history, from its grounding in such psychic forms as compassion for others, communal involvement and other ultimate values" (Lifton in Wilson and Raphael, 1993, p.19). This kind of dissociation from previous schematic structures and from connections in thinking itself, could result in cognitive separation, stasis and disintegration which Lifton considered psychic death equivalents. "As a consequence, psychic action, the essence of the formative-symbolizing process, is virtually suspended, and the organism is in a state of severe de-symbolization" (ps.19 and 20). Although Lifton is referring to the most extreme forms of disturbance often observed soon after dire traumatic exposure, he makes an important point about the potential impact of trauma on the capacity for thinking in its entirety. Healthy adjustment involves becoming able to re-associate and produce psychic action; to re-animate cognitions.

1.4.3.2 Thematic Alterations

Although the discussion thus far has alluded to both content and process dimensions of Lifton's conceptual framework, process dynamics have been given greater attention. In addition to these process aspects, Lifton also identifies the constellations of cognitive schemata that are most vulnerable to alteration. "When we experience radical discontinuity in an immediate way, in the intrapsychic self, the self is dislodged from its forms" (Lifton in Wilson and Raphael, 1993, p.12). The areas in which this change to the self is most profoundly experienced can be crystallized into five characteristic themes according to Lifton: "the death imprint, death guilt, psychic numbing, conflicts around nurturing and contagion, and struggles with meaning or formulation" (p.16). One can extract several similarities between these themes and those identified by Horowitz, particularly

those pertaining to world view, relationships with others, and survival, which is related to self-concept. For both authors, exposure to traumatic life events throws up preoccupations with mortality and the purpose of life. In addition, interpersonal relationships become the focus of concerns about harm and protection, isolation and solidarity, and issues of dependence and trust. Thus there appears to be consensus about the fundamental questioning of issues pertaining to human existence, the self and others. However as mentioned previously, Lifton's emphasis on the centrality of the death encounter or its equivalents is somewhat unique.

Lifton also remarks on the survivor's tendency to cognitive constriction as a defence against the kind of anxiety produced by trauma and the necessity of "the struggle to assimilate the destructive or annihilating force into prior, or else altered, mental structures" (Lifton in Wilson and Raphael, 1993, p.19). His emphasis on coming to terms with the reality of one's own or other's annihilation or death was particularly pertinent to the populations he worked with. However, his insistence on the fact that traumatic exposure involves radical questioning of one's self concept, human relationships in general and existential questions of meaning and morality, has bearing on most forms of severe trauma. He writes that the survivor's overall task is "that of formulation, evolving new inner forms that include the traumatic event, which, in turn, requires that one find meaning or significance in it so that the rest of one's life need not be devoid of meaning or significance" (p.20). Explicit in this goal is the "creation of imagery that maintains fidelity... fidelity in the sense of remembering what the experience entailed and including its excruciating truths in the self that is being recreated" (p.20). Thus he stresses that working through trauma involves facing and integrating traumatic material, looking backward in time as well as forward.

In the final section of his chapter in Wilson and Raphael, Lifton acknowledges the applicability of theories of the self to the area of trauma, since the "experience of an extreme situation really is an assault on and threat to the entire self" (Lifton in Wilson and Raphael, 1993, p.22). Citing the perspectives of theorists such as Rank, Sullivan, Kohut and Erikson he asserts that "we can look at posttraumatic disorders, struggles and survivor reactions in terms of a self process that is very specific to that traumatic situation... The posttraumatic stress reaction can be understood as an effort to restore or create anew the reintegration of the self" (p.22).

1.5 INTEGRATING COMMENTARY

At this point it may be useful to synthesize the theoretical positions discussed thus far in terms of how they illuminate understanding of trauma and cognition. All three theorists, Freud, Horowitz and Lifton, argue that traumatic stress exposure is such that it represents an attack not only on biological survival, but in parallel an attack on psychic survival, particularly the personality organisation of the individual. This psychic attack is most apparent in the taxing of cognitive processing mechanisms, in Freud's terms the work of the ego in binding and symbolizing experience in secondary processed thought. Likewise, Horowitz and Lifton recognize that the capacity for thought can be compromised by traumatic stress, resulting in disintegration, constriction and dissociation amongst other forms of cognitive breakdown.

All three authors recognize that the survivor is compelled to attempt to process the stimuli in retrospect in order to diminish anxiety and to allow for completion in the sense that the psyche/personality is able to absorb the experience into consciousness and memory. For Freud this need for completion manifests in the repetition compulsion, for Horowitz, in the vacillation between intrusion and avoidance, and for Lifton, in the notion of pre-occupation with failed enactment. Thus all three describe mechanisms by which traumatic material is replayed in consciousness involving expenditure of considerable psychic energy. They seem to agree that this replaying serves the psychic function of attempting to symbolically repair and integrate the experience which carried too much anxiety to coherently process at the time. There is also some agreement that this manifestation of lack of closure can be viewed as potentially healthy as it represents a reparative aim and can be harnessed/facilitated therapeutically.

Where the two later theorists differ from Freud, is in the extension of their theory into an examination of the disturbance of the content and schematic framework of the survivor's cognitions. Freud's primary interest was in the psychopathology of everyday life and his formulations around exposure to traumatic stress related to pre-existing theory around drives and was in turn engaged to throw light on more general forms of disturbance. Horowitz and Lifton were primarily interested in human functioning in response to traumatic stressors, leading them to investigate the kinds of pre-occupations of subjects in these situations in greater depth. They

both theorize that trauma is generally discrepant with the person's existing schematic framework for operating in the world. This schematic framework, acquired over life history, is relied upon to organize experience and adapt to the environment. It is centrally constituted around frameworks concerning the self, relationships to others and the world/life. These core schemata are challenged in a variety of ways by traumatic experiences, requiring the survivor to make fundamental adjustments to existing schema. Since the person's pre-existing personality and behaviour is fundamentally dependant upon such schemata, this kind of profound change is experienced as very threatening. By implication, the greater the discrepancy between the traumatic experience and pre-existing schemata, the more difficult the process of adjustment. However, both theorists recognize that such adjustment can result in healthy and unhealthy developments, depending on a range of factors. Each theorist explores the subject matter most prone to alteration with a different emphasis. For Horowitz it is the three domains outlined previously, and for Lifton questions to do with morality and life and death.

In some senses both Lifton's and Horowitz's work represent a bridge between earlier classically psychoanalytic conceptualizations of trauma and more contemporary formulations. Lifton's work bridges psychoanalysis and self theoretical approaches. Likewise, Horowitz's work represents a bridge between analytic and cognitive understandings, introducing an information processing model into the literature. This cognitive theory aspect has also been developed in more recent trauma literature, for example by Seymour Epstein, who combines cognitive and self-theoretical dimensions into a personality theory called "Cognitive-experiential Self-theory" (CEST) (Epstein in Pervin, 1990), and by McCann and Pearlman in their Constructivist Self-Development Theory (CSDT) (1990). Since McCann and Pearlman's elaboration of the role of cognitive schemata in trauma adjustment provides an important theoretical basis for the study and rests substantively on aspects of Epstein's CEST, these two theoretical models are covered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

MODELS ENCOMPASSING SELF AND COGNITIVE CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVES ON TRAUMA PROCESSING

2.1 COGNITIVE-EXPERIENTIAL SELF-THEORY (CEST)

2.1.1 Background

A contemporary personality theory focussed around a notion of a self constructed through central cognitive matrices, Epstein's cognitive-experiential self-theory (CEST), has informed the work of many trauma adjustment specialists (McCann and Pearlman, 1990; Roth et al in Wilson and Keane, 1997; van der Kolk, McFarlane and Weisaeth, 1996; Wortman, 1983). Although Epstein's theory of personality was not constructed with a particular focus on human functioning in response to traumatic stressors, it lends itself to elaboration in this area, particularly in regard to the cognitive dimensions underlying processing trauma. The model also appears to synthesize some of the structural and schematic aspects of the cognitive models discussed thus far and centrally underpins McCann and Pearlman's (1990, 1992) approach to traumatic stress, which serves as one of the important conceptual frameworks for this study. In addition, the model provides a perspective from which the inter-relationship between personal and social aspects of cognition can be located.

Epstein (in Staub, 1980) asserts the synthetic power of his theory lies in its combining features of a broad spectrum of other personality theories ranging from the behavioural to the phenomenological. "The cognitive psychologist's position can be viewed as an attempt to integrate the position of the objectively oriented behaviourist and the subjectively oriented phenomenologist by focussing on the processes by which the individual through his cognitions, transforms the objective world into a subjective one" (p.84). In addition to this cognitive focus there is also a self psychology core. "It is a theory that is compatible with learning theory, psychoanalysis, Kelly's theory of personal constructs, other cognitive theories, and, above all, with the self theories" (p.102).

2.1.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

In his book chapter in Staub (1980), Epstein locates his understanding of the self in theory derived from Cooley (1902), William James (1907), Mead (1934), Combs (1949), Sullivan (1953), Gordon Allport (1955, 1961), Lecky (1969), Syngg and Rogers (1942, 1951, 1961, 1969, 1972), Hilgard (1949) and Sarbin (1952). His interest lies in four areas: a developmental perspective; the self as an object of knowledge; an integrated phenomenological perspective; and the self as an integrative structure from a cognitive perspective. It is the last conceptual area that has most bearing on the framework for understanding trauma adjustment that is utilized in this study. However, the other categories also deserve some elaboration.

Developmentally, Epstein shares the premise that the formation of the self is strongly interactionally determined and continues to be constructed in relation to external demands and input. At some point in development a particular kind of self-consciousness develops which allows the individual to differentiate between "I" and "me", the "knower" and the "object of knowledge". This in turn allows the person to regard and evaluate themselves as if from an external perspective. Epstein acknowledges that there is still considerable debate about the relationship between the executive and experiencing self. For phenomenologists this distinction has little validity since the "self-system is not an object of knowledge, but is a cognitive organization, which actively influences the experiences an individual seeks out and which determines how the individual interprets experience" (in Staub, 1980, p.91).

Epstein interprets Lecky's (1969) phenomenological work as likening the individual's thoughts about him/herself and the world to a unified scientific theory. The unity and consistency of such a phenomenological framework are crucial to the individual's functioning. "As a result, individual's will go to great lengths to protect the integrity of their conceptual systems" (Epstein in Staub, 1980, p.92). The individual has to strike a delicate balance between maintaining this internal consistency and adapting realistically to the outer world.

Experiences that the individual regards as consistent with his or her evaluation of self are readily assimilated, while those that are regarded as inconsistent produce anxiety and are therefore usually rejected. Should an incongruent experience occur that is not rejected and that influences an individual's overall self-evaluation, his or her entire

perceptual system or personality, would be altered. Expressed otherwise, self-esteem is of such central importance to the organization of the personality that, should it change, widespread changes in personality would ensue (Lecky cited in Epstein in Staub, 1980, p.92).

While the specific focus on self-esteem will be returned to later, it is evident that traumatic exposure could well constitute this kind of incongruent exposure with possible far reaching consequences for personality coherence.

Elaborating on the mechanisms for dealing with exposure to life experiences, also from a phenomenological perspective, Epstein draws on the work of Carl Rogers. Rogers theorized that life experiences can be reacted to in three general ways: "They can be (a) perceived, symbolized, and assimilated into the self-system; (b) ignored because they are irrelevant to the self-system; and (c) denied symbolization or represented in a distorted way because they are incompatible with the self-system" (cited in Epstein in Staub, 1980, p.96). Serious external threats are more likely to evoke the latter two types of processing. "Roger's (1959) speculates that if an individual were faced with a highly significant incongruity between the self and a new experience, and if the latter occurred with sufficient rapidity so that there was not sufficient time to mobilize defences, the individual would become conscious of the incongruity, which would produce overwhelming anxiety and lead to a breakdown in 'the gestalt of the self-structure'" (ibid, p.96). While Rogers was referring to a breakdown of a largely psychotic nature in this formulation, his perspective is not inconsistent with the kinds of presentation in posttraumatic stress disorder, and in its most extreme manifestations with the kind of dissociation found in Multiple Personality Disorder. Whilst this study is not devoted to these extreme forms of psychopathology, it is concerned with its equivalents in possible major personality re-structuring. It is also perhaps useful to remark the similarities in Roger's and Freud's formulations of exposure to traumatic experience, further highlighting the potentially profound impact on core personality functioning. Thus far, the discussion has covered the developmental, subject/object and phenomenological features of self-theory outlined by Epstein as a basis for his model of personality. Those features particularly pertinent to the present study have been highlighted. The fourth background section on cognitive integration perspectives is most central to Epstein's own theoretical framework.

Although recognizing the value of phenomenological perspectives on the self-system, Epstein contends that they are constrained by their notion that behaviour can only be validly understood from the perspective of the person doing the behaving. He asserts that within cognitive theoretical perspectives, the self can still be treated as “an organized conceptual system”, without assuming this subjective stance. He argues that cognitive theory is striving to “include an adequate representation of the objective world, the phenomenological world and the mediating cognitions between them” (in Staub, 1980, p.98).

Epstein reflects on the work of Hilgard in a paper on the self and human motivation. Hilgard (1949) argues that the manifestation of a motive to protect nonphysical aspects of being, such as the self or ego, provides evidence for the existence of an ‘inferred self’. This inferred self has two observable properties. The one is that people “have a feeling of continuity, which contributes to their sense of personal identity... The other aspect is that people can readily become aware of an evaluative tendency in themselves” (Hilgard cited in Epstein in Staub, 1980, p.99). Both these aspects reflect the kind of subject/object interface referred to previously and appear to have relevance for adjustment to trauma. The importance of a central organizing structure and its continuity for human existence is reiterated, and in addition, the evaluative nature of the individual is also given some prominence. All these features are present in Epstein’s self-experiential theory which is now explicated following this extensive examination of its origins in various self theory writings.

2.1.3 Model of Personality Functioning

For Epstein, the self, which he seems to view as synonymous with personality, is essentially predicated on a system of cognitive premises which allow the individual to account for reality in a way that will as far as possible maximize pleasure and minimize pain. “According to CEST, everyone develops an implicit theory of reality that contains sub-divisions of a self-theory, a world-theory, and propositions connecting the two. A personal theory of reality is a hierarchically organized set of schemas and networks of schemas. The most basic schemas in a personal theory of reality are referred to as ‘postulates’” (Epstein in Pervin, 1990). Thus, the most basic comprehension of Epstein’s theory involves understanding the self as a primarily cognitive entity,

similar to Kelly's (1955) notion of the personality as the sum total of a person's constructs. Epstein develops his schema centred view of personality across a number of dimensions.

2.1.3.1 Core Constructs

As quoted, Epstein views the personality as containing two super-ordinate systems of constructs which are inter-related, the one system pertaining to the self and the other to the world. The basic postulates within these systems pertain to four key areas: 1) the degree to which the world is regarded as benign versus malevolent; 2) the degree to which the world is regarded as meaningful (including, predictable, controllable and just); 3) the degree to which others are regarded favourably rather than as a source of threat; and 4) the degree to which the self is regarded as worthy (including competent, good and lovable) (Epstein in Pervin, 1990, p.103). These higher order postulates, once established, are much more resistant to change than situation-specific, lower order postulates with narrow generalization. "It is obvious that minor, or lower order, postulates can be invalidated without serious consequences to the self-system, as they encompass relatively little of the system, but that invalidation of a major postulate has serious consequences as it affects a whole network of other postulates" (Epstein in Staub, 1980, p.103). It is self evident that exposure to traumatic stress poses challenges to these higher order postulates and thus is likely to produce disruption in the personality.

2.1.3.2 Key Needs and Functions

Epstein views this personal theory of reality as serving four key functions or as stemming from four key needs which motivate behaviour. Firstly the individual is motivated by the need to maintain a coherent, accurate view of the world. Secondly, he/she is also concerned to maintain relatedness to others. In addition, the person's need is to maximize pleasure and to minimize pain and lastly to maintain a favourable level of self-esteem (Epstein and Morling in Kernis, 1995; Epstein in Pervin, 1990; Epstein in Staub, 1980). For Epstein it is important to differentiate between the need for maintenance of personality coherence and the need for self-enhancement, since these two goals can sometimes be at odds. "Behaviour, from the perspective of CEST, is a compromise among the four basic motives... Given the simultaneous operation of the four basic

motives, it follows that most people will exhibit a modest self-enhancing bias as a result of a compromise between the motive for self-enhancement and the other motives, particularly the motive to realistically assimilate the data of reality" (Epstein in Pervin, 1990, p.166).

Psychopathology is viewed as stemming from an imbalance in the regulation of the inter-relationship between the four core functions. In keeping with general self psychological theory, Epstein understands the content of the core postulates outlined above and the relative weight of the four functions vis-a-vis each other, to stem primarily from emotionally significant experiences in development, particularly early interactional experiences. The earlier cognitions are acquired, "and the greater the intensity and repetition of the emotional experiences on which they are based, the more likely they are to be incorporated as central postulates in a personal theory of reality" (Epstein in Pervin, 1990, p.173). Although Epstein does not elaborate this developmental aspect of his theory significantly, this view is certainly compatible with later self theorists such as Kohut (1971) and Kernberg (1976). Both these self psychology theorists argue that very early developmental experiences, particularly those that are experienced as emotionally significant to the child, are incorporated into the psyche as part of the sense of self and largely determine one's outlook on the world, particularly one's relational capacity. However, for the purposes of this study, it is not so much the developmental origins of the self system that are important, but rather how it operates to deal with life experience in the adult personality. In this sense Epstein's model of personality functioning is a useful conceptual tool from which to understand cognitive aspects of adjustment to trauma.

2.1.3.3 Conceptual Systems

A further dimension to Epstein's theory is important to explicate - that is the notion of three conceptual systems by means of which stimuli are processed. These include: "a rational conceptual system that operates primarily at a conscious level; an experiential conceptual system that operates primarily at the pre-conscious level; and an associationistic conceptual system that operates primarily at the unconscious level" (Epstein in Pervin, 1990, p167). Epstein explains that his theory incorporates the same two divisions of consciousness which characterise Freudian theory in relation to the conscious and unconscious levels in the topographical model; however, his

emphasis differs in relation to the preconscious. Epstein argues that much of life experience is processed by means of feelings or what he calls 'vibes' and is encoded at the level of concrete images and metaphors. Although this experiential level of processing may seem to operate in a manner which would be associated with the Freudian unconscious, Epstein asserts that this commonly used, subliminal processing of information is accessible to consciousness without much effort if reflected upon by the individual. He describes this experiential system as allowing the person to respond in a fairly automatic way to current reality based on past experience, and in this sense less effortful than the rational system. "The experiential system provides the background for mental activity, whereas conscious thinking is in the foreground" (Epstein in Pervin, 1990). He also argues that this is the level at which emotional responses to events are largely determined based in the notion that "experiencing is believing". For Epstein traumatic stressors are most likely to be processed at this experiential level, as well as possibly at the rational and associationistic levels of consciousness.

2.1.3.4 Self-esteem

One further aspect of Epstein's theory is useful to elaborate for the purposes of this study; his focus on the regulation of self-esteem in the personality. As already mentioned, Epstein differentiates between the functions of self-maintenance and self-enhancement. Relating to the notion of an experiential processing system, Epstein critiques existing questionnaire based measures of self-esteem as one dimensional in their assessment. He argues that such measures tap rational evaluations of self-esteem which may not necessarily correspond with experiential dimensions. The former is based on conscious reflection and the latter more inferential. Indeed, Epstein and Morling argue that the two types of processing correspond to two related, but different, conceptual systems. It follows that "because there are two conceptual systems, there are two evaluations of the self. The rational system contains the person's conscious, verbal appraisal of self-worth, and the experiential system contains the person's schematic appraisals and consequent feelings about the self" (in Kernis, 1995, p. 13). The basic postulates or core schemata are operative primarily at the experiential level. This is consistent with the notion that these central constructs are formed early in life and generally operate at an automatic level unless challenged by unusual circumstances. Self-esteem enhancement as one of the four functions of the personality

system, is derived from the basic postulates operating to balance the relative importance of the other core functions (coherence, pleasure-pain balance and relatedness) in response to environmental input. This processing can take place at both an explicit and an implicit level. Epstein and Morling view this model of personality functioning as consistent with a psychodynamic perspective in the sense that psychodynamic processes can be "interpreted as affectively driven, preconscious cognitive strategies" (ibid, p.14). The implications of such a model of personality functioning for posttraumatic stress responses are complex.

2.1.3.5 Summary

It is evident that within Epstein's theory both process and content dimensions of cognition are raised. CEST asserts that stimuli can be processed at three different levels of consciousness (process); with a view to performing four key functions and regulating their interaction (process); based on the establishment of core postulates related to the individual's self and world beliefs (content). All of these dimensions have a bearing on the consideration of how traumatized individuals relate to their traumatization. Since CEST essentially combines both schema and self theory, it represents an ideal theoretical framework for investigating the impact of trauma from a cognitive perspective which assumes that cognition is central to identity. The theory also offers a bridge between psychoanalytic and cognitive formulations: "Because it draws from both a psychodynamic context and a modern cognitive framework, CEST has the potential to provide a broadly integrative framework" (Epstein and Morling in Kernis, 1995, p.14).

From this discussion of Epstein's theory and its origins, it should be evident that this framework offers an ideal theoretical base from which to pursue further formulations in relation to cognition and trauma, and more specifically from which to examine the specific subject matter of men's responses to violent victimization. Whilst it is clear from the literature that writers in the area of trauma have recognized the relevance of CEST for understanding aspects of traumatic processing, and in turn that Epstein has engaged with this body of literature, traumatic stress is not his primary focus of interest. This chapter therefore progresses to a discussion of the work of McCann and Pearlman, who draw centrally on several aspects of CEST and focus specifically on adjustment

to trauma. McCann and Pearlman's (1990) synthesis of this and several other perspectives offers one of the most comprehensive and penetrating frameworks for understanding adult adjustment to trauma.

2.2 CONSTRUCTIVIST SELF DEVELOPMENT THEORY (CSDT) AND ITS APPLICATION TO TRAUMA

In contrast to Epstein, CSDT places greater emphasis on the self psychology of Kohut (1971) and other more psychodynamically orientated theorists, thus the incorporation of the developmental perspective into the model is stronger as is the interpersonal dimension. McCann and Pearlman's interest lies specifically in the area of trauma adjustment, relying on the personality theory aspects of their model to provide a background context to their formulation of how people respond to trauma.

In addition to the self psychology focus, also implicit in the title of the theory, McCann and Pearlman (1990, 1992) incorporate a strongly constructivist perspective which is where the major link with cognitive psychology lies. They view human beings as actively engaged in making sense of life experience and as constantly developing representational models of the world in keeping with a Kantian philosophical perspective. They quote Mahoney and Lyddon (1988) as encapsulating the kind of theoretical premise they adopt:

The constructivist perspective is founded on the idea that humans actively create and construe their personal realities. The basic assertion of constructivism is that each individual creates his or her own representational model of the world. This experiential scaffolding of structural relations in turn becomes a framework from which the individual orders and assigns meaning to new experience. Central to the constructivist formulations is the idea that, rather than being a sort of template through which ongoing experience is filtered, the representational model actively creates and constrains new experience and thus determines what the individual will perceive as 'reality' (quoted in McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.14).

The implications of adopting this position are worth further exploration. To a large extent this quotation synthesizes many of the theoretical premises discussed thus far, but places them within a specific philosophical framework. For example, the assumptions of Horowitz and Lifton

concerning the schematic frameworks with which people approach life experience, assume that these have been individually constructed on the basis of developmental exposure. They also accept that this scaffolding may require modification as a result of traumatic stress. The constructivist position extends these views by asserting that this schematic framework may actually operate to constrain or even distort the way in which external reality is processed. This has important implications for the present study and offers greater weight to the individual fulcrum of the interactional perspective on stress, placing emphasis on the process of construal.

In addition, to a large degree the above quotation prefigures some of the theoretical premises adopted by discourse analysts, who would also assert that the perception of reality is constrained by the frameworks for its interpretation. However, their emphasis lies in the realm of the political, cultural and social rather than on the individual, i.e., in the ways in which social discourses establish the representational models which are drawn upon by individuals. Whilst this theoretical position will be discussed in greater depth in a later section it is important to note a degree of consistency between this perspective and constructivist theory and thus with CSDT. McCann and Pearlman give credence to the notion that social and cultural forms may shape individual's schematic frameworks and acknowledge that their text does not address this aspect in sufficient depth given the constraints of their enquiry. "We also wanted to include in our work a greater focus on the meanings of the social and cultural context, an area that has yet to be fully developed in the trauma literature" (McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.55). The present study is to a large extent, focussed on this domain. The study is based on the premise that the introduction of a critical social psychological perspective into the trauma literature illuminates and extends the appreciation of trauma and cognition.

2.2.1 Defining Traumatic Stress

Returning to McCann and Pearlman's theoretical base for comprehending trauma, it is useful to understand the domain of stressors within which they define their application. Whilst their definition of traumatic stress dovetails with that of the early psychiatric and stress literature outlined previously, they extend their definition to take cognisance of the role of interpretation of the stimuli. "An experience is traumatic if it (1) is sudden, unexpected, or non-normative, (2)

exceeds the individual's perceived ability to meet its demands, and (3) disrupts the individual's frame of reference and other central psychological needs and related schemas" (McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.10). The first part of their definition distinguishes traumatic stress from chronic stress, the second part incorporates Lazarus' (1966) transactional model and the third part, which is what distinguishes their definition, places emphasis on the subjective aspect of the response and individual differences. It is suggested that all three components are necessary for a stressor to be viewed as traumatic. In order to more fully understand the constructs referred to in the third aspect of their definition, it is necessary to elaborate McCann and Pearlman's understanding of personality functioning and of the role of needs and schemas particularly.

2.2.2 Personality Theory

These two authors view the *self* as essentially representing the personality of the individual. "The self is a hypothetical construct we use to describe the psychological foundation of the individual. We view the self as the seat of the individual's identity and inner life" (McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.16). This position on the self is in keeping with Kohut's (1977) definition of the self as " 'the basis for our sense of being an independent centre of initiative and perception, integrated with our central ambitions and ideals and with our experience that our body and mind form a unit in space and a continuum in time' (p.177)" (quoted in *ibid*, p.15). Thus the self is understood as having continuity and as actualized in integrating and responsive functions. McCann and Pearlman distinguish four characteristic components of the self: "The self comprises: (1) basic capacities whose function is to maintain an inner sense of identity and positive self esteem; (2) ego resources, which serve to regulate and enhance one's interaction with the world outside oneself; (3) psychological needs which motivate behaviour; and (4) cognitive schemas which are the beliefs, assumptions and expectations, both conscious and unconscious, through which individuals interpret their experience" (McCann and Pearlman, 1990, ps.16 and 17). This theoretical model of the self is illustrated in the following table:

TABLE 1
Aspects of the Self and Their Functions within CSDT

Self capacities (Regulate self-esteem)
Ability to tolerate strong affect
Ability to be alone without being lonely
Ability to calm oneself
Ability to regulate self-loathing
Ego resources (Regulate interactions with others)
Intelligence
Ability to introspect
Willpower
Initiative
Ability to strive for personal growth
Awareness of psychological needs
Ability to take perspective
Empathy
Ability to foresee consequences
Ability to establish mature relations with others
Ability to establish boundaries
Ability to make self-protective judgments
Psychological needs (Motivate behavior)
Frame of reference
Safety
Trust/dependency
Esteem
Independence
Power
Intimacy
Cognitive schemas (Organize experience of self and world)
Beliefs, assumptions, and expectation related to psychological needs

(McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.17)

It is evident that McCann and Pearlman's model of the self and its functioning is drawn from the multiple perspectives referred to earlier in this section, and represents an attempt to integrate these ideas into a comprehensive and coherent model. The breadth of understanding that such a

synthesis allows is very clear, however, it seems that the inter-relationship between different aspects of their model requires refining. Whilst each of the four aspects of the self is clearly outlined in their text, the operation of the four parts in conjunction requires ongoing elaboration. This need for greater refinement of their model is acknowledged by the two authors. Their difficulties stem perhaps from the breadth of theoretical coverage they embrace, which both enriches and complicates their formulation. For example, many of the features of their model resonate with that of Epstein outlined earlier, who in turn had synthesized disparate earlier theoretical writings. The four functions of maintenance, self-enhancement, relational capacity and pleasure/pain regulation; appear to be inherent in McCann and Pearlman's formulation, particularly the first three components. The nature of the needs and related schemas are divided into the same two categories of experience, i.e., pertaining to the self and the world, as are Epstein's. In addition, many of the sub-components of these two broad categories are outlined similarly, for example the material pertaining to frame of reference, trust, esteem and intimacy.

Other aspects of CSDT arise from completely different sources. The notion of ego functions, including such capacities as intelligence and willpower, is derived from an ego-psychological perspective. Most of the self capacities could be viewed under the rubric of self soothing mechanisms as outlined by Kohut (1971) and other self psychology theorists. Whether their model can be understood as eclectic or integrative is debatable, given the aforementioned need for deeper formulation of the inter-relationship between components. It is clear, however, that in the application of the theory to case material this perspective allows for holistic diagnosis and treatment, and that dimensions of CSDT can operate in harmony. This goes some way towards validating the conception of CSDT as integrative. Whilst the two aspects of self-capacities and ego resources are given some weight in McCann and Pearlman's text on the adult survivor of psychological trauma, the emphasis of their writing lies in the area of needs and schemas.

Within CSDT needs and schemas are integrally related, the latter representing the cognitive representation of the former. The psychological needs identified as central by McCann and Pearlman stem from Rotter's (1954) social learning theory with application to the particular life circumstances of the trauma survivor (McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.23). They identify seven needs as focal in CSDT.

The seven needs are described as follows:

Frame of reference: the need to develop a stable and coherent framework for understanding one's experience

Safety: the need to feel safe and reasonably invulnerable to harm

Trust/Dependency: the need to believe in the word, or promise of another and to depend upon others to meet one's needs, to a greater or lesser extent

Esteem: the need to be valued by others, to have one's worth validated, and to value others

Independence: the need to control one's own behaviour and rewards

Power: the need to direct or exert control over others

Intimacy: the need to feel connected to others, through individual relationships; the need to belong to a larger community (McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.23).

Depending on the individual's life experience, notably his/her early relational history with significant others, particular needs may predominate or become salient under different circumstances. This notion resonates with Epstein's view that responses at the experiential level are largely determined by past experience. For social learning theorists such needs would have their own reinforcement history from which particular associations and consequent behaviours stem. Thus, the particular salience of core needs can be explained from a number of perspectives. A further important, but less individualized perspective, is that of ideological influences. Socialization into specific cultural, gender, race and class forms will also influence the significance of need structures. In the case of this study the role of gender, and more particularly masculinity, is investigated.

The centrality of schemata to personality functioning and their importance in trauma adjustment is elaborated upon further, as this aspect of McCann and Pearlman's theory is of greatest relevance to this particular study. As indicated previously, for McCann and Pearlman schemas represent the cognitive manifestations of needs and are focal in CSDT.

2.2.3 Cognitive Schemata/Schemas

The term schema has been utilized in psychological literature for several decades with somewhat different emphases in meaning. Commonly the term has been associated with cognitive psychology

and the work of Piaget who viewed schemata as the central building blocks of cognitive systems. It is generally agreed that the term was introduced into psychology in the work of Bartlett, (1932); Piaget, (1926,1951) and Kelly, (1955) (cited in Markus, 1977; and McCann and Pearlman, 1990). More recently the term has become the focus of interest of social psychologists and is often utilized as a conceptual tool at the interface between social and cognitive psychology, i.e., within social cognition. Thus Wortman, an attribution theorist, writes that schemata "are mental organizations of experience that influence the way information is processed and the way behaviour is organized" (1983, p.210). Similarly, Segal defines schemas as consisting "of organized elements of past reactions and experiences that form a relatively cohesive and persistent body of knowledge capable of guiding subsequent perception and appraisals" (quoted in McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.57). The developmental, cognitive and social components of schemata are integrally related and appear to create some consistent core to personality functioning and to influence behaviour. In many senses the schematic framework of the individual becomes synonymous with the personality core and is the mesh through which new stimuli are gauged and processed. "The interaction between new input and previous experience, postulated to be central to self-reference, has been modelled in the cognitive literature under the concept of schema or prototype" (Rogers, Kuiper and Kirker, 1977, p.679).

A further dimension of schematic theory has been the focus on *self-schemata*, representing a link with more clinical branches of psychology. From a purely cognitive perspective, self-schemata can be understood "as cognitive generalizations about the self, derived from past experience, that organize and guide the processing of self-related information contained in the individual's social experiences" (Markus, 1977, p.64). However, for McCann and Pearlman, the language of object relations theory encapsulates their understanding of self-schemata more accurately. Citing the work of Westen (1989), they concur that "the concept of 'schema' in social cognition is similar to the concept of 'object representation' in psychoanalysis" (1990, p.25). Elaborating on this notion, Westen (quoted in McCann and Pearlman) asserts that social cognition theory and object relations theory are both "interested in the way mental representations of the self and other people (whether called 'object relations' or 'person schemas') are constructed and encoded, in the cognitive and affective processes brought to bear on these representations, and in the way these psychological processes mediate behaviour" (1990, p.57). This more clinical interpretation

of the term schema introduces the notion of affective links inherent to cognitive representations and incorporates a relational dimension. Thus schemata pertaining to others and relational aspects of experience are seen as core, along with self-representations and those relating to the external world in general.

For McCann and Pearlman (1990), their utilization of the schema concept incorporates all of the dimensions discussed above. They present a number of assumptions which underpin their application of schema theory to the understanding of trauma survivors. These are summarized as follows:

1. Individuals develop schemas that include beliefs, assumptions, and expectations in fundamental need areas. These schemas are the cognitive manifestation of psychological needs that are affectively laden. Most often, schemas operate at an unconscious or preconscious level of awareness. They develop as a result of one's life experiences, within a meaningful social and cultural context.
2. Schemas develop within the core areas of frame of reference, safety, trust/dependency, independence, power, esteem, and intimacy. They develop in relation to oneself and others. We consider the need for a meaningful frame of reference to be a broader need than the other six. Schemas related to this need, which include attributions about causality of events and one's general orientation to the future, will have a more generalized effect than other schemas upon one's psychological experience.
3. Over time, these schemas become increasingly unique to the individual, and may be generalized across life experiences or specific to certain situations or contexts. This concept is equivalent to Rotter's (1954) notions about generalized versus specific expectancies. The most general schemas for experience are likely to be most resistant to change (Epstein, 1985, in press b).
4. Individual's may develop positive or negative schemas within these areas. Various feelings, thoughts, and behaviours are associated with these schemas.
5. Just as life experiences shape or reinforce the development of positive or negative schemas, so too can these schemas be disrupted by life experiences that are discrepant with them. In the ordinary course of one's life, new information about the self and the world is assimilated into one's existing schemas. When a situation occurs that cannot be 'fit' into existing schemas, an accommodation or change in schemas occurs. If the discrepancy between one's existing schemas and life experience is extreme and perceived as threatening, the event is psychologically shocking. If this discrepancy occurs in a need area that is central to the individual, the event will be experienced as traumatic. (1990,p.59).

This lengthy quotation is considered important in outlining the essential premises of McCann and Pearlman's understanding of schema theory as applied to trauma. This conceptualization embraces

developmental, cognitive, social and clinical psychological perspectives and is adopted as a central framework for analysis within this study. The seven core schemata identified within CSDT resonate with the categories highlighted as important in the vast majority of trauma related literature. Since these categories for interpreting experience appear both comprehensive and cogent, they offer a rich conceptual framework from which to engage with the experiences of trauma survivors. In the present study the reflections of male victims of violent crime will be interpolated in part through a form of content analysis based on this categorisation of central needs/schemas. A more detailed exploration of each of the seven categories thus appears warranted.

2.2.4 CSDT's Seven Central Schemas

As indicated previously, the most important component of an individual's schematic framework for relating to world is encompassed under what McCann and Pearlman term "frame of reference". Schemas are inter-related and carry different salience for particular individual's and within particular contexts. Each category is briefly described as follows:

Frame of Reference

This is the superordinate schema within CSDT, encompassing several sub-categories. This schema parallels Epstein's category of experience pertaining to world view and similarly concerns notions of controllability, predictability and fairness. It also dovetails with the "assumptive world" premises of Janoff-Bulman (1992), which will be explored in more detail in the next chapter.

McCann and Pearlman assert that one's central framework for interpreting experience relates to three key dimensions including: "customary ways of interpreting events (causality), orientation towards the future (hope), and usual sources of reinforcement (locus of control)" (1990, p.62).

It has been commonly observed that survivors of traumatic events seek causal explanations for such events including questions pertaining to why the event took place at all and why to themselves in particular; "Why?" and "Why me?" questions. Depending on how such questions are addressed, influenced by past and contemporary experiences, there is evidence to suggest that

improved or impaired adjustment to trauma may result (Janoff-Bulman, 1979; Silver, Boon and Stones, 1983). These issues are followed up in more detail in the next chapter. In addition, one's expectations for the future, encompassed in the notion of hope, are also affected by traumatic exposure. The degree of optimism or pessimism individuals evidence in response to trauma is also central to adjustment and potential alterations in frame of reference. Finally, it is argued that individual's have characteristic frameworks for accounting for how events take place, largely related to whether events are perceived as within or beyond personal control, i.e., pertaining to locus of control (Rotter, 1966).

It should thus be clear that the category "frame of reference" encapsulates the individual's world view or framework of meaning accounting for human existence. Within this kind of implicit existential framework issues to do with the cause and purpose of events and their role in a life trajectory are considered central.

Safety

McCann and Pearlman argue that the need for a sense of safety or security is central to human functioning. People need to believe that they are generally free of immediate danger and harm. In exposure to traumatic stressors this need to be assured of safety in the world is disrupted. The survivor has to come to terms "with two harsh realities of life: that the world and other people are sometimes dangerous and threatening, and that regardless of the precautions one takes, one cannot always protect oneself from harm" (1990, p.66). The degree to which experiences of lack of safety become exacerbated or generalized again depends on a number of features, including the circumstances of the event itself, pre-existing schemata and post traumatization support. For example, there is some evidence to suggest that rape survivors who were raped in situations they previously believed to be safe, had much greater difficulty in adjusting than survivors of rapes in situations they considered potentially risky (Scheppele and Bart, 1983).

Trust/Dependency

The development of the ability to trust is viewed as a central human attribute as evidenced in Erikson's first developmental stage and in the work of object relations theorists. Within certain constraints it is functional for human beings to be able to depend upon and anticipate support from

others. This is often viewed as one of the essential precursors to intimacy. In addition to trust of other people, McCann and Pearlman also allude to the development of trust in oneself, an attribute that they view as acquired later developmentally. "The ability to trust oneself, one's own perceptions and judgements, is in our view a more advanced cognitive-developmental task, but an equally important one" (1990, p.68). Traumatic experiences, particularly those involving human agency, can severely undermine schemata related to the trustworthiness and dependability of others. In addition, and often less clearly recognised, trauma can also undermine self trust, as individuals find their usual judgements or coping mechanisms lacking efficacy. Drawing on case material McCann and Pearlman observe that the effect of trauma on trust schema can be far-reaching:

The feelings and behaviours we observe to be commonly associated with negative trust schemas regarding others are bitterness, chronic anger at people, an avoidance of close relationships, a repudiation of dependency needs because of a fear of betrayal or abandonment, and a pervasive sense of disappointment and disillusionment in others. With respect to disrupted self-trust, the individual is likely to display one of two patterns: excessive caution and paralysis in the face of life decisions because of excessive doubt aimed at self-protection, as in the case of the rape victim, or a tendency to make 'bad' decisions because one does not expect to be able to exercise appropriately self-protective judgements (p.70).

Independence

This area of personality corresponds to a large degree with the autonomy pole of Erikson's (1963) developmental stage of autonomy versus shame and doubt. Within the framework of CSDT the need for independence is understood as the need to feel in control of one's daily existence without an over-reliance on external support. McCann and Pearlman argue that the need for both independence and power has been recognized as central by numerous personality theorists such as Adler and Sullivan (cf. 1990, p.70 and 71). They differentiate between the need for independence and the need for power primarily in terms of their focus on the self, or on the external environment. "We define independence as the need to control one's own rewards and punishments or to be in control of one's own behaviour and destiny, while power is the need to exert control over one's environment. In this respect, independence schemas relate primarily to oneself while power schemas relate primarily to others or the world in general" (p.71). This distinction is important in terms of highlighting diverse aspects of trauma adjustment.

Particularly person-inflicted trauma, such as rape or torture, may require that the victim becomes compliant or passive in the face of deliberate and possibly greater threat. In such contexts individuals may feel robbed of their autonomy and command of even most basic life functions. The experience of this kind of degradation and helplessness may also have consequences for self respect and esteem, a further schematic area of concern. This issue is addressed following a brief examination of the theme of power.

Power

As indicated in the previous section, CSDT views the need for power as pertaining to the need to exercise some degree of control over others and the external environment. McCann and Pearlman link this conceptualization of power to other psychological literature.

In *Power and Innocence*, Rollo May (1969) described power as a 'fundamental aspect of the life process' (p.20). Within the literature on trauma there is ample evidence that power and powerlessness are central themes for persons who are traumatized. The 'illusion of control' (Langer, 1975) is a schema that can be destroyed in trauma survivors. Krystal (1978) described the infantile helplessness and psychological paralysis of persons who had experienced catastrophic life events, such as the Nazi Holocaust. The invasion of one's body and personal space against one's will has been described by Finkelhor and Browne (1985) as a central 'traumagenic dynamic' of disempowerment. (1990, p.72)

It is thus apparent that the theme of power and powerlessness is particularly salient in trauma adjustment and schematic alterations. The internalization of loss of power may result in a general attitude of submissiveness which can in many respects parallel Seligman's (1975) description of learned helplessness. This may well manifest in symptoms akin to clinical depression. How penetrating and pervasive alterations to power schemas are, is once again dependant on pre-existing personality factors, the nature of the traumatic event and the recovery environment.

Esteem

Linked to both power and independence schemas, esteem schemas reflect the kind of positive or negative evaluations people carry about themselves. These can be based upon both personal and social judgements and expectations. However, the basis for self-esteem is usually recognised as occurring within the interpersonal developmental matrix and as rooted in "the psychological need

for recognition or validation" (p.73). Self-esteem regulation is both an internal and an interpersonal process and the development of positive self-regard appears crucial to healthy psychological development. "Kohut (1977) focussed on self-esteem regulation as essential to the development of a stable and cohesive self-structure" (p.73).

For McCann and Pearlman one's self-esteem represents one's relational capacity to oneself, albeit based largely upon previous experiences of validation by others. Their conceptualization has a strong existential focus encapsulating as part of healthy self-esteem "the ability to value oneself, to understand and know oneself, to enjoy hope and faith in oneself as one lives one's life" (1990, p.73). This in turn allows for a more engaging relationship with the world: "a sense of connection with all human life is an outgrowth of this valuing of oneself" (p.74). In this sense CSDT's understanding of the concept of esteem is deeper than the positive or negative evaluation of particular abilities or attributes, reflecting rather a core sense of self-worth or existential wellbeing. However, as with the other seven core schemata, each category may encompass different clusters of related schemas that reflect different levels of experience.

Following traumatic exposure many survivors experience alterations to esteem schema. In some cases this alteration may be at the kind of core existential level just described, resulting in a kind of existential despair and profound loss of well being. In other cases particular aspects of the self may be de-valued or negated. There has, for example been considerable interest in the phenomenon of self-blame following trauma (Janoff-Bulman, 1979; Miller and Porter, 1983; Woriman, 1983). While this aspect will be explored further in the next chapter, it is clear that implicating oneself in becoming victimized is likely to impact negatively on self-esteem, although it may serve other functions. Victimization in general carries specific, pervasive social connotations which will also be explored later, and certain kinds of trauma may lend themselves to particular social censure which is likely to exacerbate loss of self-esteem. The case of rape is particularly salient here, given that social mythology in many societies still holds women responsible for sexual assaults and views rape survivors as "damaged goods". This kind of negative social judgement may stimulate or exacerbate problems with self-esteem maintenance.

In addition to viewing self esteem as a core self quality, McCann and Pearlman also view the holding of others in esteem (other-esteem) as an important component of the esteem schematic cluster. They relate this notion to Epstein's schematic category pertaining to the benevolence (as opposed to malevolence), of others and the world. It should be clear that this dimension is in turn likely to be linked to the earlier category of trust. However the esteem dimension of interpersonal relating appears to reflect a valuing beyond basic trust which recognizes the richness in other human beings. For McCann and Pearlman the ability to value others in this way is an important aspect of esteem, however this life attitude needs to be tempered by reality. "We believe that some degree of integration and reconciliation must occur in the dialectic of good and bad, worthiness and unworthiness, both within the self (as suggested by object relations theorists such as Mahler, Pine and Bergman, (1975)) and in relation to other people... Thus, maturity and psychological well-being are also intricately connected to one's internalized and consciously expressed valuations of other people, and are important dimensions to understand in relation to the trauma survivor" (1990, p.75).

Schemas pertaining to other-esteem can be directed at specific individuals or may be generalized to groups or communities. Thus attacks across race group may result in the survivor developing racist generalizations. Returning Vietnam War veterans, knowing the kind of public censure that had developed around the war, came to feel defensive about their status and in some cases to anticipate criticism even when this was not forthcoming. Thus the impact of trauma on esteem can have far-reaching social and inter-group consequences. Of course such schematic alterations do not occur in a vacuum and will be influenced by prevailing attitudes and ideology. White men who have become victims of violent crime at this particular point in South African history are likely to find their self- and other-esteem affected in particular ways. Since it is generally incongruent for men to be perceived as victims, a central theme of this study, it may well be that esteem problems develop around this area. Loss of self-esteem is likely to result in shame, depression and withdrawal, whereas loss of other-esteem is likely to result in alienation, bitterness and anger. This links to an examination of the final schematic category, pertaining specifically to the interpersonal domain, the area of intimacy.

Intimacy

Once again, the acquisition of the ability to be intimate represents one of Erikson's (1963) fundamental developmental tasks. The need for connectedness and closeness has already been implied in some of the previous schemata discussed and for McCann and Pearlman: "People need other people and need to feel a sense of belonging to some place community or person (e.g., Bellah et al., 1985)" (1990, p.77). Thus their notion of intimacy goes beyond the capacity to relate intensely and trustingly in familiar or partner relationships, but also pertains to a broader sense of human connection. Trauma survivors may experience difficulties at both these levels, i.e., in close relationships with partners, family and friends, or in terms of connectedness to a broader community.

The need for intimate connection with others is very fragile and can be easily damaged or destroyed through insensitive, unempathic or cruel responses by others. When human relationships become associated with loss, pain and agony, it is difficult to maintain a sense of connection with others as the risk to oneself is too great to bear... Lifton (1979) described the 'broken connection' that entails the severing of bonds of identification with other human beings that can occur in traumas that devastate the community (McCann and Pearlman, 1990, p.77).

The consequence of the disruption of intimacy schemas in previously psychologically healthy individuals, can lead to distancing, detachment and alienation. Particularly when the trauma involves the loss of loved ones, the capacity for intimacy may be severely constrained by fear of the reoccurrence of such loss. Avoidance of intimacy can in turn produce a kind of psychic numbing and inner emptiness which may leave individuals remote or constantly seeking the company of others to fill an inner void. The ability to be intimate is in part dependant on the ability to trust others and on one's feeling of esteem for the self and others. Trauma survivors who feel ashamed, or who feel damaged by others in a way that has generalized to most human relationships, may find their capacity for intimacy severely impaired.

2.2.5 Commentary

The above discussion of the seven primary schemas within CSDT illustrates that there is considerable overlap between the schemas. In many instances schematic areas are integrally related and complement one another, for example trust and intimacy. In other cases, such as the

categories of power and independence, there are similarities but differences in emphasis. Although it is acknowledged that each of the areas outlined above is covered by a wealth of independent literature in psychology, the heavy reliance on McCann and Pearlman's conceptualization seems warranted given their experience and focus in the area of posttraumatic stress and the fact that their specific formulation serves as an important analytical tool within this study.

While there appear to be some flaws in the model it nevertheless provides an extremely useful schematic backdrop from which to examine the impact of trauma on cognitive systems. The overlap between categories may pose some difficulties for precise categorisation. From this perspective it seems useful to consider each of the seven schemas as a constellation of related material cohering around the kind of content described under each category. The consideration of each of these dimensions of experience in relation to survivors' experiences, should ensure that all the key aspects of impact are given cognisance. In this respect the range of categories provides a kind of conceptual net through which little of significance will escape the clinician or researcher. Any overlap or inter-relationship between categories can be viewed as confirming observations in other areas.

In addition, while McCann and Pearlman refer to the connections between needs and schemas, and in turn their relationship to emotions, behaviour and symptoms; these interrelationships are not always clearly articulated or theorised. For the purposes of this research the inter-relationships are acknowledged but the cognitive aspects are given primacy. From this perspective the seven schematic categories are viewed as poles around which related cognitive material can be usefully categorised and examined. Since the study cannot do justice to all possible linkages, any consideration of affective or behavioural associations is cursory, with the weight of emphasis placed on elaborating cognitive inter-relationships.

In concluding their section outlining the primary characteristics of each need/schema category, McCann and Pearlman make further reference to the contextual and relative nature of schematic material: "The complex relationship among life experiences, schemas, and psychological adaptation must be understood within the context of the whole person and the social and cultural environment" (1990, p.79). This cautionary note demonstrates their commitment to a social

constructivist agenda. However, the focus of their text is essentially clinical and in this regard their consideration of social, cultural and ideological issues is secondary. Given the wide range of traumatized populations they cover, their exploration of such issues remains quite broad. The present study adopts a different emphasis, aiming essentially to understand the impact of the social, and the inter-relationship of this, to the clinical. The focus on crime victims, and white, South African men in particular, allows for an in-depth exploration of a particular socio-cultural dimension in relation to a specific kind of event, allowing for greater intensity and complexity of exploration. Thus McCann and Pearlman's schematic framework is applied in a distinct and focussed manner in the present study.

2.3 OVERVIEW

The first two theoretical chapters have traced a trajectory of theory pertaining to the role of cognition in trauma adjustment beginning with the early work of Freud and ending with an exploration of the schematic dimensions of McCann and Pearlman's Constructivist Self Development Theory. Each of the theorists whose work has been explored has contributed something unique to the understanding of cognition and trauma, be this in terms of emphasis or conceptualization. Common threads run through much of the theory and are picked up and embroidered by different observers.

Freud first brought his formidable intellect to the psychological study of the impact of trauma, and in the formative paper "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (in Gay, 1920/95) gave recognition to the disruptive impact of traumatic events on cognitive processes and systems. The destabilization of the process dimension of cognition was elaborated upon by Horowitz (1992) within an information processing framework and his description of the vacillation between intrusive and avoidant cognitive mechanisms and the parallel in post-traumatic stress symptomatology has gained a central place in the trauma literature. Emphasizing the content rather than the process dimensions of trauma, the work of theorists such as Lifton (1968, in Wilson, Harel and Kehana, 1988, in Wilson and Raphael, 1993) and McCann and Pearlman (1990, 1992) has provided a structural framework through which to examine cognitive postulates. Epstein (1980, 1985, in Staub, 1990) provided a more broad based personality theory on which to build the kind of

schematic framework that McCann and Pearlman employ. The concept of schemata or schemas, drawn from cognitive psychological theory, appears to have offered a useful conceptual building block in the exploration of the impact of trauma on cognition. All of the theorists discussed are in agreement that people create cognitive frameworks on the basis of life experiences which form an important core of personality. They also concur that such schematic frameworks are usually severely tested by traumatic exposure, almost by definition involving disruption and alteration.

Whilst alterations to cognitive schemata may be positive in the wake of trauma, given the life threatening nature of such events, survivors tend to be more at risk for negatively oriented changes. Intervention can go some way towards supporting people through such disruptive periods, optimizing positive growth and limiting damage. It is also generally theorized that the more discrepant the experience is with the person's pre-existing cognitive framework, the more threatening the challenge to existing patterns is likely to be and the more disturbing for the individual. Also the more profound and the more pervasive challenges are to existing schemata, the more the individual's whole sense of identity is likely to be threatened. Thus the accommodation required in cases where traumatization is experienced as deeply discrepant with existing belief systems may be enormously taxing.

The processing of trauma takes place within the context not only of pre-existing personality functioning, but also within particular historical, social, cultural, economic, political and ideological contexts. Individuals are required to deal with trauma at the interface between their own and socially determined perspectives. It is also noteworthy that these personal perspectives are not free of their own social histories.

The thesis now progresses to a deeper consideration of such social influences. Chapters three and four are aimed at examining more clearly social psychological contributions to trauma theory.

CHAPTER 3

MAINSTREAM SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA ADJUSTMENT: APPRAISALS, ATTRIBUTIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter shifts focus from individual and clinical concerns in relation to cognition and trauma adjustment, to a more explicit focus on social psychological theory and findings. The material discussed has its common origins broadly in social psychological theory, but it will become clear that there is considerable overlap between this body of work and cognitive and clinical premises. The field of trauma is such that it lends itself to considerable breadth in research. It is as if parallel trends in research have emerged with little dialogue between theorists engaged in different branches of psychology. The example of the weak interface between stress and traumatic stress theory has already been alluded to. A further example pertains to trauma adaptation. In the area of social psychological research it appears that there is increasing concern with the adjustment implications of specific social psychological findings in relation to traumatic stress (Silver and Wortman in Garber and Seligman, 1980), but little engagement with the clinical literature on traumatic stress symptoms and features. Nevertheless social psychologists have contributed a considerable body of knowledge to the traumatic stress field which warrants consideration. This thesis aims to cover central social psychological findings that have relevance for the study of aspects of adjustment in male crime victims and in so doing to draw together some of these disparate bodies of literature.

Social psychologists have tended to study the impact of traumatic stress under the rubric of "victimization" or responses to "undesirable life events" (Silver and Wortman in Garber and Seligman, 1980; Wortman, 1983). Thus while there is considerable overlap between these categories and that of traumatic stress, the social psychological research has tended to conflate findings regarding stressors such as bereavement and cancer diagnosis with those concerned with rape, criminal attacks and disaster survival. This wider scope of study may account for apparent discrepancies in findings across populations and a tendency to draw on both the traumatic stress literature and the literature pertaining to chronic life stressors, without sufficient differentiation from a clinical perspective. In addition, a criticism of much of the social psychological literature

on dealing with undesirable life events has been that the findings have been primarily extrapolated from laboratory based experiments and have limited validity for real life victims (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995; Wortman, 1983). Experiments involving anticipated electric shocks or eating a worm (in which ethically subjects are informed of their right to withdraw), cannot be equated with undergoing an attack at gun point. However, recent trends in this area of research have attempted to focus on "real" populations, despite the lack of variable controllability, and to draw these findings together with laboratory derived theory (Wortman, 1983). The chapter will attempt to do justice to this field of research, but given the focus on criminal traumatization, the major emphasis will lie in the area of findings pertaining to real life traumatic stress survivors.

3.2 SCOPE OF MATERIAL TO BE COVERED

In a very comprehensive review article entitled "Coping with Victimization: Conclusions and Implications for Future Research", Camille Wortman (1983) draws together central findings from social psychology pertaining to victimization. In summary the article can be viewed as addressing three key topics; those of appraisals, attributions and assumptions. This chapter will cover each of these areas in turn, with the weight of emphasis on the field of assumptions as this has most bearing on the present study. The focus of the fourth chapter will be on the introduction of a more critical social psychological perspective. During the 1970s social psychology underwent a critical revolution in which the legitimacy of many of its theoretical assumptions was questioned from a new critical psychological perspective. This development coincided to some extent with a general shift from modernism to post-modernism in the social sciences. While a more comprehensive analysis of the implications of this shift will be provided in the next chapter, suffice it to say that the primary concern of these critiques was the a-political and a-contextual character of much social psychological research. Not only was it laboratory bound, but social psychology was also uncritical of its own assumptions and location. "Currently, research and theory in social cognition is driven by an overwhelmingly individualistic orientation which forgets that the contents of cognition originate in social life, in human interaction and communication" (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.3).

One branch of social psychology which has attempted to redress these limitations in mainstream social psychology in a radical way is the discourse analytic movement. This and other related trends in social psychology have been gaining an increasing following. At present there is little discourse analytically based research directed specifically at the trauma field. However, chapter four will look at the implications of this critical perspective for understanding traumatic stress and examine what little related research exists. Thus this chapter is designed to present mainstream social psychological findings and the following chapter to introduce the critical social psychological perspective.

3.3 APPRAISALS, ATTRIBUTIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

According to Wortman (1983), most social psychological research into victimization has fallen into two broad areas. One concerns "the impact of various assumptions and beliefs about the world on reactions to stress or victimization" (p.197). The other concerns "the impact of a person's attributions of causality for a victimizing experience on subsequent coping and adjustment" (p.198). In addition to these two topics, Wortman suggests that the appraisal process and emotional adjustment to victimization are important considerations at the interface between social psychology and clinical disciplines.

3.3.1 Appraisal and Traumatic Stress

3.3.1.1 Conceptual Formulation

The importance of appraisal as a component of the stress response was introduced into the field by Lazarus and his colleagues (Folkman, Schaefer and Lazarus in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979; Lazarus, 1966; Lazarus and Launier, in Fervin and Lewis, 1978). The Lazarus model, whilst strictly speaking a social psychological theory, has been widely recognized as the most comprehensive framework for understanding stress responses. Over several decades Lazarus and his colleagues have refined an interactional/transactional and multifaceted model of the stress process which incorporates dimensions from several areas of psychology. Their final model includes the following components as important and interacting dimensions of stress: the nature of the stressor, the personality predisposition of the individual, the appraisals operative and the

coping style employed. There is also recognition of the crucial link between emotion and cognition in the model. Similar to the introduction of cognition to replace the "black box" of behavioural formulations, the role of appraisal as a mediating variable at the interface between person and situational demand, has become a cornerstone of Lazarus' stress and coping model. "The linchpins of our theoretical formulations have been and still are two-fold, namely, cognitive appraisal and coping" (Lazarus and Launier in Pervin and Lewis, 1978).

Within this framework, appraisal is understood essentially as an evaluative component of the person's cognitive response to the situation. "Cognitive appraisal can be simply understood as the mental process of placing any event in one of a series of evaluative categories related either to its significance for the person's well-being (primary appraisal) or to the available coping resources and options (secondary appraisal)" (Lazarus and Launier in Pervin and Lewis, 1978, p.302). Lazarus and Launier point out the similarity of appraisal to information processing but argue that they are not synonymous. The essential feature of their formulation is that evaluative cognitive processing mediates person-environmental transactions in stressful situations in a crucial way. "Cognitive mediation of this sort is what makes a theory of stress psychological as opposed to sociological or physiological" (Folkman, et al in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.267).

3.3.1.2 Categories of Appraisal

Primary Appraisal

The categories of primary and secondary appraisal distinguish between what is evaluated rather than referring to points in time. As indicated above, primary appraisal relates to the significance of the event for the person and can be divided into three basic categories depending on the implications for well-being: irrelevant, benign-positive or harmful (cf. Lazarus and Launier in Pervin and Lewis, 1978). It should be clear that, by definition, traumatic stress encounters would fall into the third category. It is almost impossible to entertain the notion that an attack on one's life and/or physical integrity could be construed as either irrelevant or benign. The harmful appraisal category is further sub-divided into two categories depending on the time frame of the stressor. Potential danger to the self is appraised in terms of threat, and damage that has already occurred, as harm-loss. Stressors appraised at this pole of the fulcrum (harmful) have specific

emotional implications. "Stress appraisals, which include harm/loss that has already occurred, threat, and challenge, produce negatively toned emotions" (Folkman et al, in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, p.267). This observation would be consistent with the kind of emotional distress described in the symptomatic responses of traumatic stress survivors who fall essentially into the category of harm/loss.

Secondary Appraisal

Secondary appraisal refers to evaluation of one's capacity to deal with the situation and the options available. For example, secondary appraisal may involve assessing one's potential resources or the availability of social support as mitigating against the negative impact of the stressor. Such cognitive manoeuvres may produce differing degrees of hope or defeatism and affect self-evaluations. Thus secondary appraisal appears to demonstrate some commonalities with Horowitz's (1992) cognitive "controls" in his information processing model, since both appear to encompass cognitive mechanisms for adjusting to trauma. However, in the Lazarus model appraisal is of interest primarily in the anticipation of, or face of threat, rather than post-threat, although this is also considered important in the model; whereas for Horowitz controls come into operation as a direct consequence of experienced threat. Horowitz also appears to describe the clinical manifestations of traumatic stress in more detail and emphasizes more strongly the possible role of unconscious influences in processing. Thus the two formulations differ in terms of time frame and expansiveness or focus of observations. The Lazarus model appears to encompass a similar notion of cognitive controls under the rubric of the category of secondary appraisal, yet there is no indication that Horowitz's rich conceptualization of these mechanisms has been appreciated in terms of its potential contribution to this area of stress theory.

To continue with stress and appraisal; for Lazarus and Launier the appraisal process can be viewed as cyclical rather than linear. "The important point is that secondary appraisal, oriented as it is to possible coping resources and options, not only influences the primary appraisal process itself, mitigating or enhancing threat or the sense of harm, but it also shapes coping activity" (in Pervin and Lewis, 1978, p.307). This conceptualization allows for greater richness of theory but creates difficulties for attempting to design rigorous empirical research.

Reappraisal

Over and above primary and secondary appraisal, the transactional stress model also includes what is termed "reappraisal". Reappraisal "occurs as new information is obtained from internal psychological changes, changes in the environment (often from coping efforts), and from defensive intrapsychic activity which is a form of coping" (Folkman et al in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979, ps.267 and 268). Thus reappraisal is the process most likely to occur once the event has already been encountered and processed through primary and secondary appraisal mechanisms. This component of the theory seems to reflect Lazarus' (1966, 1982) acknowledgement of the fact that dealing with stress is an ongoing process which cannot necessarily be evaluated or understood at a single point in time. Reappraisal may be based on feedback from the environment, but can also be internally generated. In some cases the outcome can be adaptive and in some cases defensive. Lazarus and Launier cite the example of the person who deals with the appraised threat by denying its validity through, for example, detachment and intellectualization. It is possible that "that which was originally appraised as threatening is now re-appraised defensively as nonthreatening, or even desirable (as in reaction formation)" (in Pervin and Lewis, 1978, p.308). Once again the resonance with Horowitz's control mechanisms is striking and it is clear that intrapsychic forces can play an important role in trauma adjustment. The area of reappraisal begins to overlap somewhat with the variable of modes of coping as is clear in the example just cited. The whole field of coping styles (Lazarus and Folkman, 1994) is even further divorced from the direct object of study in this thesis, thus the focus on the element of appraisal in the transactional model largely to the exclusion of discussing coping.

Although of the three types of appraisal, reappraisal has received least attention in work on the transactional model, it appears to be the kind of appraisal most relevant to the present study. Given that the research is concerned with understanding adjustment after a trauma has taken place, and that subjects were explicitly interviewed post the acute stage of trauma adjustment, it is probable that any appraisal process operative was likely to have been one of reappraisal. It is thus disappointing that this area has received least development in the literature.

3.3.1.3 Applicability of the Concept of Appraisal to Traumatic Stress

In terms of the focus of the study it has already been noted that the stress literature has limited applicability for traumatic stress conceptualizations, given the differences in temporal focus and the specificity of the severity and unexpectedness of the stressor in the case of traumatic stress. In evaluating the contribution of research into stress and appraisal to the field of the social psychology of coping with undesirable life events, Silver and Wortman (in Garber and Seligman, 1980) draw attention to several developments. They note that Lazarus and his confederates' work has shifted over time to greater consideration of "the process of coping with undesirable events of serious magnitude" (p.288). They also note the linkages made between appraisal and emotion as important in directing future research. In addition, they draw attention to the fact that within the transactional model coping can be directed towards emotional regulation as much as towards dealing with the overt demands of the situation. All these developments point to the potential usefulness of theoretical advances in the area for the post-traumatic stress field. It should also become clear that there is a considerable degree of overlap between some of the tenets relating to appraisal and coping and the processes of attribution and development of assumptions people hold.

Wortman (1983) draws attention to the fact that appraisal does not take place in a vacuum, something which is acknowledged by Lazarus and Launier but little elaborated. She turns to the concept of schemata to make the link between pre-existing cognitions and the appraisal process.

For example, a person with the self-schema (Markus, 1977) of 'I am someone who can handle anything that comes along' will probably respond differently from a person with a self-schema of 'I usually go to pieces when something unexpected happens'. Studying the impact of schemata on the appraisal and coping process may be a fruitful area for subsequent research, since it provides the arena for integrating current work in cognitive social psychology with work on victimization and stress (Wortman, 1983, p.210).

The present research study aims to make a contribution to understanding this interface between schematic frameworks for processing information available to the individual and traumatic stress adjustment. However, the interest of the study goes beyond the personal schematic

framework of the individual to take into account more global social schematic frameworks which could perhaps be termed discourses.

Giving some credence to the new critiques in social psychology, what is striking in the exploration of the role of appraisal in coping is the absence of reference to the social context. In looking at the cognitive implications of appraisal, both Wortman (1983) and Folkman et al, (in Hamilton and Warburton, 1979) make reference to the importance of meaning making as part of trauma adjustment. They note:

appraisal is an evaluative process in which information is interpreted in terms of its meaning and significance through the person's experience, values, beliefs, goals and resources. Traditional information processing models do not extend into this interpretive or evaluative domain. Without an understanding of such evaluative processes, of the meanings specific person-environment transactions have for individuals, the reactions to such transactions, including coping, must remain unclear (ibid, p.26³).

While these authors are critical of the limitations of the conventional information processing perspective, it could be argued that their formulation also has clear limitations. In their conceptualization of the person-environment transaction it is implicit that the person is the site of values, goals, beliefs etc. There is no reference to the social world as carrying these aspects of cognition, or even as influencing the individual's personal framework. In this respect the reference to meaning making is divorced from a contextual focus. Whilst it would be unfair to expect theorists to encompass every aspect of human behaviour within their conceptualizations, the transactional model appears to reflect the epistemological framework which is the centre of criticism for critical social psychologists. It could be argued that appraisal processes cannot be fully understood without a comprehension of the kinds of social discourses and power relations which influence how people interface with their social world. This critical focus will be returned to in the following chapter.

3.3.2 Attributions and Traumatic Stress

3.3.2.1 Conceptual Basis

The field of attribution research has occupied a central position in North American social

psychology for several decades and has impacted more generally on social psychological research and theory (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995). An extremely broad range of concerns has been researched under the rubric of attributional processes such that the scope of research and theory is difficult to characterise coherently. As mentioned previously with regard to much of social psychological research, many attributional studies have been conducted under laboratory conditions and the extrapolation of findings to real life contexts cannot be assumed without more field research. For the purposes of this study most of this laboratory based attributional research has limited applicability and the discussion will focus on the research pertaining to serious life events, as opposed to for example, success on problem solving tasks assigned to experimental subjects.

The term attribution can be broadly understood as referring to the process by which people ascribe causality to events. "The attribution theorist is concerned with understanding naive perceptions of the causes of an event" (Frieze and Bar-tal in Frieze, Bar-tal and Carrol, 1979, p.2). To elaborate somewhat further: "Social psychologists have typically conceptualized the attribution process as one in which a naive individual first observes an event and then, on the basis of available information and various background or motivational factors, forms a cognition or attribution about why this event occurred" (ibid, p.2). Thus attribution is viewed as primarily a cognitive mechanism employed in a natural manner by human beings in making sense of occurrences in their world.

Attribution theory is concerned with a range of dimensions related to this ascription of causality. "The ways in which people do this, the reasons why they attribute, how they attribute, the conditions under which they do and don't attribute, all constitute the subject matter of attribution theory" (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.60). In similar vein Frieze and Bar-tal assert that attribution theory has been focussed on 3 major issues: "(1) What are the antecedents of an attribution? (2) What are the contents of the attribution process? and (3) What are the consequences of the attributions?" (in Frieze et al, 1979, p.2). Depending on their focus within this range of concerns, different theorists have been associated with a variety of attributional theoretical premises or positions.

3.3.2.2 A Brief History of the Field

Historically attribution theory grew primarily out of social psychological theory concerned with social perception and social motivation (Frieze and Bar-tal in Frieze et al, 1979). Thus a large body of attribution research has been concerned with social judgements and person perception. More recently the links between social cognition and attribution have been more clearly recognized and this has led to different theoretical outgrowths. "The attributional process involves categorization of information, judgements and evaluation, all of which are cognitive processes" (ibid, p.4) The origin of an interest in attributional processes lies in the work of Heider who articulated the notion of a "common sense psychology" in his book "The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations" (1958) (cf. Augoustinos and Walker, 1995). Heider drew attention to the tendency for people to naturally ascribe cause and effect relationships to events. This tendency to ascribe causal relations was viewed "as a demonstration of the basic desire to make sense of the world (Kelley, 1967) or what might be termed an epistemic motivation (Krulanski and others, 1978)" (Frieze and Bar-tal in Frieze et al, 1979, p. 4). Heider was concerned to elucidate the tendency for people to attribute dispositional properties to people and objects and argued that this kind of understanding "renders the perceiver's world more stable, predictable and controllable" (cited in ibid, p.7). A central tenet of attribution theory that arose out of Heider's observations is the finding that there is a general tendency amongst individuals to ascribe causality to either the actor (dispositional) or the environment (situational), in an ipsative manner (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.62)

From the 1960s onward the concern with attributional processes blossomed. To some extent this field of research dovetailed with the theoretical premise of "cognitive consistency" which became central in the cognitive psychology domain at a similar period. "Heider (1958) was one of the first social psychologists to bridge the gap between earlier concerns with causality and the cognitive consistency theorists" (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, ps.5 and 6). Since the notion of cognitive consistency has some bearing on the present research, and much of the theory broadly covered in the literature review, it is considered useful to briefly digress into an explanation of this phenomenon.

3.3.2.3 Cognitive Consistency

Cognitive consistency refers to the finding in several areas of cognitive research that people have a tendency to adhere to existing beliefs and schemata even in the face of contradictory evidence. Janoff-Bulman refers to the “essential conservatism of our conceptual system” (1992, p.26) and argues that although human beings display flexibility in learning they are remarkably resistant to change. “We are heavily biased towards what we already ‘know’ and believe, for these cognitions provide the lenses through which we receive and interpret new information. Our prior theories or assumptions are insufficiently revised in the face of new, even contradictory, data” (ibid, p.27). In addition to adhering to pre-existing cognitive frameworks it is also postulated that new information is processed in an essentially conservative manner which may involve distorting aspects of the stimulus to fit pre-existing categories. “There is some reason to believe that the processes underlying the organization of our cognitions create ‘balance’ or psychological uniformity in the way we construe events (Heider). In other words, our minds try to fit together all positive events, traits, and attributes in the same ‘object’ or unit... our brains attempt to maintain a unifying harmony among cognitive elements” (Lerner, 1980, p.14). This notion of cognitive consistency has its proponents in both cognitive and social psychology. Although the centrality of the premise has been challenged (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995), it remains a foundational aspect of several areas of social cognition research, including attribution theory and Janoff-Bulman’s work on the assumptive world which will be covered in the next section. Critical social psychologists have argued that the notion of cognitive consistency is belied by evidence indicating that individuals often hold contradictory cognitive positions and assumes an individualized subject as the centre of such knowing, in a way that they find problematic. However, attribution theory appears to adhere to the notion that cognitive consistency is operative in how individuals ascribe causality.

3.3.2.4 Scope of Attribution Research

The development of attribution theory since Heider’s writing has led to several distinct theoretical positions which are briefly mentioned rather than elaborated. Two theoretical developments are those of Jones and Davis (1965) on correspondent inference theory and Kelley’s (1967) work on

covariation (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995; Frieze and Bar-tal in Frieze et al, 1979). In addition, theory has noted differences in actor and observer attributions. Much of the early work on attribution was derived from assessment of observer evaluations and it was only with time that it became apparent that these could not be equated with actor attributions. The degree of engagement in the situation appears to have considerable bearing on how and what attributions are made (Silver and Wortman in Garber and Seligman, 1980). This has important implications for trauma survivors whose own attributions may not match those of others in their environment.

Over and above conceptual progression in attribution theory, there has also been differentiation in terms of the contexts to which attribution theory has been applied. Weiner, Nierenberg and Goldstein's (1976) work has investigated attributions for success and failure introducing useful dimensions against which causality can be attributed. Weiner et al (1976) argue that attributions tend to be made across key dimensions, notably whether events occur as a result of internal versus external factors (internality) and whether causes are perceived as enduring, i.e., stable versus unstable (stability). A third category concerning the generalizability of cause, global versus specific (globality) has also been introduced (Abramson et al, 1978). These categories are commonly used in contemporary attributional research, for example into attributions made by wives for domestic violence (Frieze in Frieze et al, 1979). Dovetailing with some of these developments has been Shaver's (1985) work on attributions of responsibility for events. Attribution theory has also been crucial to the elaboration of Seligman's work on learned-helplessness. The introduction of an attributional component to the model allows for a more sophisticated understanding of how depression develops: "helplessness may stem not from the uncontrollability of an aversive stimulus, but from the way in which the stimulus is interpreted by the subject" (Dweck and Wortman cited in Silver and Wortman in Garber and Seligman, 1980, p.286). In the reformulated learned-helplessness model the attribution of causality is viewed as the crucial intervening component in the development of a passive, helpless and depressed position in the world. The three orthogonal dimensions of internality, stability and globality are identified with this learned-helplessness reformulation (Abramson et al, 1978).

With more direct application to the posttraumatic stress field, Wortman's central concern with the inter-relationship between causal attributions and the sense of personal control (in Harvey, Ickes and Kidd, 1976) and Janoff-Bulman's work on self blame (1979) warrant presentation.

3.3.2.5 Attribution and Control

Wortman's work in the area of attribution and responses to serious life events is based on the premise that the need for control over the environment is a strong determinant of how people make attributions (in Harvey et al, 1976). She cites a range of psychological theorists as reinforcing the notion that control is a strong motivational factor in human functioning. "The importance of a controllable, predictable world is evident in many of the theories that social psychologists have advanced in recent years. For example, cognitive-consistency models of behaviour (see Abelson, Aronson, McGuire, Newcomb, Rosenberg, and Tannenbaum, 1968) are based on the assumption that people are motivated to believe that events follow from one another in a predictable orderly fashion" (ibid, p.23). In addition she cites the work of Lerner (1980), whose "Just World Theory" will be elaborated later in the chapter, as also arguing that people are predisposed to maintain a view of the world as predictable and controllable. Attributional research has pointed to a somewhat consistent pattern of attribution for negative events. Generally negative events are ascribed to dispositional rather than situational factors, although there are circumstance where this may not be the case, for example, when the observer identifies strongly with the subject. In addition, there is some evidence that the more serious the negative consequence of the event the more likely others are to attribute blame to the actor (Wortman in Harvey et al, 1976). These findings tend to confirm the view that people will make attributions so as to offer least threat to their own sense of the world as predictable and fair. People generally skew attributions in such a way that they can dis-identify with victims and identify with those experiencing positive or desirable outcomes (Coates, Wortman and Abbey in Frieze et al, 1979; Silver and Wortman in Garber and Seligman, 1980; Wortman in Harvey et al, 1976). Although this is a somewhat simplified summary of complex and ongoing research, it is clear that the implications of social attributions for victims of undesirable life events are largely negative.

Research into the attributions of victims themselves has produced some interesting findings. One set of arguments proposes that "there is a pervasive tendency for actors to attribute their actions to situational factors while observers tend to attribute the same actions to stable personal dispositions of the actor" (Jones and Nisbett cited in Wortman in Harvey et al, 1976, p.41). Whilst this premise may be operative in some situations there are a number of other variables which appear to influence how victims make attributions. Attributions linked to the need to maintain a sense of control may be influenced by the assessment of the person of the degree to which circumstances are malleable.

If the desire for control is important to the subject, his (sic) willingness to make attributions to personal traits or situational factors will depend on the perceived controllability of these factors. People may be willing to attribute their behaviour to situational factors if they believe they can influence the situation; similarly, attributions to traits should not threaten a person's sense of control if the traits are modifiable (for example, 'I had the accident because I was careless but can prevent it in the future') (Wortman in Harvey et al, 1976, ps. 42 and 43).

This has important ramifications for people exposed to traumatic stressors in which their degree of control is de facto very limited, and more particularly for people having to live in contexts of ongoing threat. Attributions may be very different in a situation in which the source of threat can be eradicated as opposed to a situation in which for example, ongoing criminal victimization is rife and victims are subject to repeated exposure to such eventualities. In addition, personal attributions and control needs are also affected by predispositional factors. There is evidence to suggest that "people with exaggerated notions of personal control, or with considerable past experience at controlling the important events in their own lives, may find uncontrollable outcomes all the more difficult to accept when they occur. Furthermore these people may not recognize such outcomes as uncontrollable and may waste considerable effort trying to alter the situation" (Wortman in Harvey et al, 1976, p.45). It is suggested that men, and more particularly white, middle class men, may be particularly vulnerable to this kind of over-estimation of personal control and for this reason may find dealing with victimization extremely difficult. Their emotional responses to such events may also be viewed as "out of control" and arouse further negative attributions. These suggestions warrant further exploration in a consideration of the data of the study. A further issue which complicates conceptualizations of victim attributions is the phenomenon of self-blame.

3.3.2.6 Attribution and Self-blame

The perhaps unexpected tendency for victims to attribute self responsibility for undesirable life events, even in the face of contradictory evidence, has been documented in a number of studies of populations as diverse as accident victims and rape survivors (Wortman, 1983). Wortman suggested that "this may reflect a desire on the part of the victim to gain some measure of control over the victimizing experience" (1983, p.203), a hypothesis that is supported by other writers (Janoff-Bulman, 1979; Lerner, 1980; Miller and Porter, 1983). Taking this notion further, Janoff-Bulman (1979, 1982) has argued that victims can manifest two types of self blame, characterological or behavioural, which have different implications for consequent adjustment. She proposes that characterological self-blame is more detrimental to recovery since it impacts on self-esteem and suggests a more pervasive and permanent basis for victimization. Behavioural self-blame on the other hand, allows the survivor to circumscribe the cause of the event and to entertain the belief that she/he can exercise control over any future recurrence of the event by altering behaviour. In her study of rape, Janoff-Bulman (1979) found support for this premise and observed that there was a greater likelihood for rape survivors to manifest behavioural rather than characterological self-blame. Those who did evidence characterological blame appeared to fare worse in terms of recovery (Janoff-Bulman, 1979). Whilst this distinction still awaits generalization to other traumatized populations and has not been consistently replicated (Kartz and Burt in Burgess, 1988), it has been useful in emphasizing the need for refinement of theoretical assertions. Brickman, Rabinowitz, Karusa, Coates, Kohn and Kidder (1982) have also made a useful contribution to the refinement of attribution theory suggesting that it "is important to draw a distinction between attribution of responsibility for a problem (i.e., who is to blame for a past event), and attribution of responsibility for a solution (i.e., who is responsible for future events)" (cited in Wortman, 1983, p.205). The implications of this distinction for future trauma and attributional research remain to be explored.

3.3.2.7 Applicability of Attribution Theory to Traumatic Stress

It should be clear from the above discussion that the study of victimization and exposure to negative life events has been of considerable interest to attribution theorists. As stated initially the

application of attribution theory to traumatic stress survivors has been limited by its laboratory base, its focus on serious stressors as opposed to traumatic stress and its tendency to focus on observer rather than subject/actor ascriptions. However, the work of Wortman and others has been more firmly focussed in the area of victim responses and has emphasized the centrality of control issues in attribution and the particular relevance of this element in victim attributions. The work of Janoff-Bulman (1992) on the assumptive world and Lerner's (1980) "Just World Theory" display obvious parallels with this focus on attribution and control issues. These theoretical positions will be elaborated further.

In addition to the limitations outlined above, Augoustinos and Walker (1995) offer a further critical commentary on attribution theory which echoes some of the critiques of appraisal theory outlined previously. These criticisms address more epistemological concerns. They argue that "attribution theories are articulated at the individual and interpersonal levels only" (p.93) and thus "are overwhelmingly individualistic and cognitive" (p.94). To support the need to contextualize attribution theory more broadly they point to findings that attributions are not universal. "There is also strong evidence that people in non-western cultures do not attribute in the ways described by dominant attribution theories, and that patterns of intergroup relations affect attributions for success and failure as well as for cause. There is evidence that the process of seeking causal understanding of the world is deeply rooted in cultural practices" (p. 94). In addition they argue that key tenets of attribution theory "are restricted to, and are a product of, the dominant ideology of individualism in western societies" (p.94). Whilst this kind of meta-criticism may not question the inherent validity of attribution theory, it exposes the uncritical acceptance of certain normative assumptions in theory derivation. With specific reference to the present study it is important to examine the likelihood that certain structural groups in society may be predisposed to hold certain attributions rather than others, or to be ascribed certain value in the attributions of others. The consequences of holding specific attributions may also differ across social groupings. As Augoustinos and Walker point out, the process of attribution making is not neutral and surely cannot be divorced from the social and ideological forces which exist and are likely to shape its forms. This concern is little attended to by attribution theorists at present. Some of these issues will be more thoroughly addressed in the next chapter.

3.3.3 Fundamental Assumptions

One of the most widely accepted contributions to the field of traumatic stress research has been the work of Ronnie Janoff-Bulman on the assumptive world of the individual (Herman, 1992; McCann and Pearlman, 1990; van der Kolk; McFarlane and Weisaeth, 1996; Wortman, 1983). Over and above numerous articles on the subject, Janoff-Bulman has written a book entitled "Shattered Assumptions" (1992) in which she outlines the theoretical basis and psychological ramifications of her theory at length. It is obviously impossible to describe the full contents of the text but major principles of her theory will be discussed as a further basis for illuminating the experiences of the subjects of the present study.

3.3.3.1 The Three Core Assumptions

Janoff-Bulman (1992), similar to McCann and Pearlman (1990), asserts that human beings develop a conceptual framework for dealing with the world from the point of birth onwards. This kind of conceptual base can be likened to what Parkes termed the "assumptive world", Bowlby termed people's "working models" and Sandler called a "representational world" (cf. Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.5). This notion of the construction of a kind of overarching framework for making sense of the world is also encapsulated in Epstein's "personal theory of reality that includes a self-theory and a world-theory" (cited in Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.5). In keeping with Epstein's formulation, it is accepted that certain postulates of the perceptual system are more abstract or overarching, whereas others are more specific and limited in scope. There is thus a hierarchical organization to this representational system. "Our fundamental assumptions are the bedrock of our conceptual system; they are the assumptions that we are least aware of and least likely to challenge" (ibid, p.5). Janoff-Bulman argues that beliefs pertaining to ourselves and our relationship to the external world form our most core assumptions. From theoretical and empirical study she postulates that the three most basic assumptions can be encapsulated as follows:

The world is benevolent

The world is meaningful

The self is worthy (ibid, p.6)

Each of these premises will be briefly explored.

Benevolence

The notion of the benevolence of the world reflects our understanding of the relationship of both other people and the external environment and events towards us. For most people, accepting that there are exceptions, the fundamental comprehension of the world is based on the notion that it is a good place free of harm. "It appears that we maintain a kind of implicit base-rate notion about goodness and badness in the world; in general, we believe we live in a benevolent, safe world rather than a malevolent, hostile one" (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, ps.6 and 7).

Meaningfulness

In addition to viewing the world as benevolent we also have a core belief in the world as a place in which events are explicable and meaningful rather than random. Several notions are tied to this view of the world as meaningful including ideas of predictability, controllability and deservingness. The nature of what is considered meaningful may differ across cultures. "In Western culture, the social laws most likely to be invoked to explain the 'why' of events are those of justice and control; these enable us to believe that misfortune is not haphazard and arbitrary, that there is a person-outcome contingency" (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.9). Thus the assumption of meaningfulness dovetails with aspects of attribution theory outlined earlier in which it is apparent that links are made between outcome and cause and notions of fairness and control. "When we view the world in terms of justice, negative events are viewed as punishments and positive ones as rewards" (p.9). Janoff-Bulman makes an interesting observation related to her previously cited distinction between character and behaviour. She suggests that generally ideas of justice are linked more strongly to characterological attributions whereas assessments of control pertain more directly to behaviour. In Western society the assumption of meaningfulness tends to be supported by Judeo-Christian religions which associate deservingness with certain prescribed practices and attitudes. To this extent Janoff-Bulman appears to recognize the cultural location of this basic assumption, but there is little further exploration of these contextual features and the developmental origins of assumptive beliefs seem to be viewed as largely universal as will be discussed later. In summary it appears that the notion of meaningfulness encompasses ideas relating to both justice and control. "The distributional principles of justice and control imply a sense of order and comprehensibility" (p.11). There are obviously strong links between this

particular assumptive premise and Lerner's "Just World Theory" which will be discussed in greater depth later.

Self-worth

The third assumption of self-worth, while obviously linked to the other two, is the premise most directly linked to the individual/self. It pertains to the notion that generally one is a person who is "good, capable and moral" (p.11). The parallels to the other domains relate as follows. "Thus, justice generally entails judgements of one's character, and one dimension of self-worth involves evaluations of one's essential goodness, decency and morality. Similarly, control entails judgements of one's behaviour, and another dimension of self-esteem involves evaluations of the wisdom and effectiveness of one's actions... These self-evaluations include judgements of one's competence as well as of one's willingness to engage in appropriate behaviours" (p.11). There is also some evidence that we manage our self-evaluations in such a way as to enhance this perception of ourselves as worthy. Whilst it is recognized that there are individuals for whom this is not a core belief, Janoff-Bulman asserts that, in general, people hold such a core assumption of self-worth.

These three positive assumptions lie at the centre of our belief systems and are highly emotionally charged. "Our basic beliefs do not exist independent of emotions; rather, positive feelings are inextricably tied to our fundamental assumptions" (p.12). For this, and other reasons which will be explored later, people are very resistant to having these basic assumptions challenged. Traumatic stress almost inevitably places tremendous pressure on the maintenance of these assumptions. However, before the impact of trauma is addressed it is important to examine Janoff-Bulman's explanation of the origin of these beliefs.

3.3.3.2 The Origins of the Basic Assumptions

Although primarily a social psychologist, Janoff-Bulman's work straddles both the social and clinical fields in psychology. Thus her discussion of the development of basic assumptions draws both on psychodynamic and object relations theory and on information processing concepts. How

is it that most human beings come to incorporate these common assumptions at the core of their conceptual world, and this despite everyday experiences which may tend to refute these premises?

Citing the work of psychodynamic developmental theorists such as Erikson, Fairbairn, Winnicott and Bowlby, Janoff-Bulman (1992) points to the central conceptualization that the infant's world is experienced largely on the basis of interactions with significant caretakers. "The child's view of self, world, and their relationship originate in the infant's early experiences, which centre around interactions with a caregiver (or caregivers), usually the mother. In these early preverbal interactions, we begin to establish expectations about our world, about the nature of our caregivers, the nature of ourselves, and the nature of the interaction between the two" (1992, p.13). In this sense she argues that the blueprint for our basic assumptions is implicit in our earliest life experiences. Different authors have encapsulated disparate aspects of this early development of a kind of life attitude, ranging from Erikson's (1963) notion of "basic trust" to object relations theoretical premises of the formation of internal objects. Almost in keeping with Winnicott's (1965) concept of "good-enough mothering", Janoff-Bulman posits that for most infants their early life experiences are such as to confirm a general notion that others are nurturing and that since one's needs appear to be largely anticipated and fulfilled, it follows that the self must be worthy, or even in Kohut's (1971) terms, experienced as somewhat omnipotent. In a world in which these kinds of relationships between need and fulfilment, and self and others exists, there is an inherent sense of meaningfulness. Thus, other than in the case of severely abusive or neglectful relationships, infants acquire a set of basic assumptions in keeping with Janoff-Bulman's three basic premises.

The idea that the infant develops cognitive blueprints early in life is particularly well elucidated in the work of Daniel Stern (1985) who appears to straddle both an experimental and a psychodynamic approach to early development. Bowlby made reference to the idea that children develop working models of their world, an idea which was developed by Stern in the concept of representations of interactions (RIGS). Stern argues that the infant is exposed to various repetitive experiences over time and begins to encode these in memory. These "generalized episodes" or repetitive memories take on a generic quality over time and begin to be encoded in the infant's cognitive repertoire. This idea resonates with Piaget's notion of the development of cognitive

schemata, the earliest schemata encoding primarily sensory-motor experiences and gradually becoming more refined. For Stern these somewhat more sophisticated experiential constructs can begin with the infant's very early interactive encounters. He argues that these interactive experiences consisting of episodic memories "are also averaged and represented in the subjective world of the infant. Stern labels these higher-level generalizations, RIGs - representations of interactions that have been generalized. RIGs constitute the basic units for the infant's representation of a core self" (cited in Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.16). These RIGs are then combined into more complex working models over time. Thus the infant develops a core, subjective, conceptual base for understanding and relating to the world. Janoff-Bulman asserts that the basic assumptions are inevitably an integral part of these core representations, given their centrality to human life experiences. Early pre-verbal experiences of feeding and cuddling become translated into later verbal equivalents of a benevolent, meaningful world and a worthy self.

This early representational world, formed primarily within the mother-child matrix, also becomes elaborated and reinforced by cultural input. "Within society, people create a shared symbolic world that provides communal expectations about our daily existence. The complex interweaving of individual and society suggests that, generally, each mirrors and strengthens the other, such that beliefs held at the level of individual psyche are also largely apparent at the level of group or culture. Culture and society begin to both shape and reinforce the child's internal representations" (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.17). What Janoff-Bulman appears to be arguing is that there is a vital interrelationship between individual and society. Perhaps because of some universalities in upbringing, determined in the first place by cultural practices, individuals who make up societies stimulate certain common expectations and beliefs. These cultural norms in turn act to shape particular notions of reality. If one accepts that some beliefs are more commonly held and acceptable socially, we can begin to appreciate some of the links between this developmental conceptualization of the acquisition of an assumptive world and the kinds of attributional patterns identified in the research discussed earlier. Many of the attribution findings concerning victims appear to be linked to the need for society to maintain a generic belief in the core assumptions of benevolence, meaningfulness and worthiness.

Returning to the developmental origins of our core assumptions the final important part of Janoff-Bulman's argument concerns the primacy of these early representations in shaping later cognitions. Whilst there are debates about the degree of plasticity in development, within psychodynamic theory there is a clear emphasis on early life experience as a strong shaping force. Janoff-Bulman argues that this tendency can be understood from more than one theoretical perspective and draws on the more experimental base of cognitive psychology to illustrate this. "What comes first in general has a greater impact on the conceptual system than what comes later; for me, this view is derived not from clinical theories on psychopathology but from social psychological theories on information processing" (1992, p. 17). The primary aspect of theory that she refers to here is that of cognitive conservatism.

As discussed previously, cognitive conservatism or consistency refers to research evidence demonstrating a general tendency for human beings to assimilate new experiences into existing reference systems with as little alteration as possible. In other terms people prefer to assimilate rather than accommodate in responding to environmental demands. Janoff-Bulman also draws on the concept of schemas to describe the kinds of cognitive frameworks into which new information must be fitted. She quotes Goleman's definition of the operation of schemas as follows: "Schemas embody the rules and categories that order raw experience into coherent meaning. All knowledge and experience is packaged in schemas. Schemas are the ghost in the machine, the intelligence that guides information as it flows through the mind" (quoted in Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.28). It is clear that cognitive conservation takes place at the level of schema preservation. Janoff-Bulman acknowledges that the schema concept is a somewhat loose one with variations in application and precise meaning, but her understanding of the term appears to complement that of McCann and Pearlman (1990) elaborated in the previous chapter. There are also obvious overlaps with the notion of RIGs and working models. The core assumptions are also in terms of this understanding, schematic representations. "Our fundamental assumptions about the world are essentially our grandest schemas, our most abstract generalized knowledge structures" (p.29).

Not only does cognitive conservatism operate to retain our earliest representations, it also strongly resists any challenges to what can be understood as the most core or fundamental premises upon which other aspects of the schematic system are predicated. Thus resistance to

challenges to the basic assumptions represents both the dominance of the past (in terms of the individual's history), and the intractability of overarching schemas with broad applicability. This assertion by Janoff-Bulman resonates with the work of Seymour Epstein (in Staub, 1985, in Pervin, 1990) who maintains that within the hierarchical organization of the cognitive beliefs synonymous with personality, beliefs higher up in the hierarchy are those with most general applicability and therefore most resistant to change. When change does occur, which is necessary with ongoing development, it is likely to be at the level of more specific or peripheral schemata and it is also likely to take place gradually over a considerable period of time.

In summarizing the importance of the origins of our fundamental assumptions it is useful to re-emphasize the primacy effect, i.e., the "undue influence of early thoughts and beliefs. The implications of the primacy effect are particularly relevant to our fundamental assumptions, whose potency is largely attributable to their earliest development in our conceptual systems. We generalize from our earliest interactions in the world, and these representations serve as guides and selective filters for our subsequent experience" (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.38). This view is compatible both with clinical observations and information processing research. Janoff-Bulman argues that it is essential to understand how deeply these core assumptions are held in order to fully appreciate the impact of traumatic life stressors on human consciousness.

3.3.3.3 Implications for Trauma Adjustment

Janoff-Bulman's understanding of trauma adjustment is based in both intensive interview data and quantitative research. Similar to McCann and Pearlman (1990), she embraces the psychiatric classification of posttraumatic stress as outlined in the diagnostic and statistical manuals of the American Psychiatric Association, but argues for a deeper subjective psychological definition. Her definition of what constitutes a traumatic stressor includes the notion of an attack on the person's fundamental assumptions as characterising trauma. In this sense Janoff-Bulman also places considerable weight on the subjective interpretation of the event. "Simply stated: traumatic events - those that are most apt to produce a traumatic response - are out of the ordinary and are directly experienced as threats to survival and self-preservation" (p.53). This definition can be unpacked into its component parts including the features "out of the ordinary", "directly experienced" and

"threatening survival". Each of these components places extraordinary pressure on our basic assumptions since one is talking about events for which there are no pre-existing schemata, experienced in such a way as to have immense impact as experiential learning is one of the most powerful forms of knowledge acquisition. The nature of the threat, i.e., at the level of survival, forces an awareness of vulnerability and mortality. "These are occasions when we are forced to recognize the real possibility of annihilation, of serious injury, and our own mortality" (p.56). It is almost impossible to maintain a belief in a benign world under these circumstances.

Janoff-Bulman refers to Lifton's work on the "death imprint" as evocatively capturing this deep awareness of potential annihilation experienced by trauma survivors. Even in situations in which serious injury or threat of death was not immediate, victims often confront the possibility of this occurring. For example, many crime victims refer to the fact that they "could have been killed" (cf. Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.58). The confrontation with one's physical vulnerability is an experience which tends to evoke regressive associations. Threats to biological survival may be encoded somatically rather than purely symbolically, but there is an inter-relationship between the two. "What generally begins as a threat to victims' physical integrity becomes a threat to their psychological integrity as well" (p.61).

This psychological threat is epitomized in the rupture in the basic assumptions following trauma. The world now appears to be an unpredictable and dangerous place. "Suddenly the victim's world is pervaded by thoughts and images representing malevolence, meaninglessness, and self-abasement" (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p. 63). Both the internal and external world are unfamiliar. Particularly in cases where the trauma takes place as a result of human agency, as in torture, rape and criminal attacks (as is the case in the present study); the loss of trust in other people becomes a central aspect of the questioning of the benevolence assumption. If other human beings can enact such destruction on one, then it is difficult to view humankind as benevolent. Alterations in the sense of meaningfulness and benevolence in turn affect assumptions of self-worth. The status of victim is one which is largely antithetical to a sense of self-worth and self-esteem. Whilst victims may evoke some positive responses such as compassion and support, their position is still one of abjection in a world which values control and mastery. The conscious shift to the term "rape survivor" rather than "victim" in some feminist literature (Wood and Rennie, 1994)

illustrates the awareness of the negative connotations of victimhood. The generic characteristics of “victims” will be discussed more fully in chapter seven, but it is clear that becoming a victim can seriously undermine one’s sense of self-worth. This may occur both internally, as a kind of reversal of developmental learning associating nurturing with self- value; and externally in terms of being exposed to the kinds of negative social attributions discussed earlier. The dual challenges to external and internal survival, in the form of one’s conceptual universe, can produce great anxiety in trauma survivors. “Victims cannot derive any equilibrium from prior assumptions, for they are no longer adequate guides to the world. The result is cognitive disintegration, which according to James Averill, is the defining characteristic of anxiety” (p.65). This notion appears to elaborate Freud’s earliest description of traumatic stimuli overwhelming cognitive capacity, giving the disintegration a particular content focus around the basic assumptions. The rupture in the case of trauma, as argued by Freud and endorsed in Janoff-Bulman’s descriptions of trauma impact, is particularly severe owing to its suddenness. As indicated earlier, changes to cognitive systems usually take place gradually with a modicum of control. In the case of trauma ruptures to cognitions are unanticipated and accelerated.

The task of the trauma survivor in recovery is the reintegration of his/her cognitive universe. “In the end it is the rebuilding of this trust - the reconstruction of a viable non-threatening assumptive world - that constitutes the core coping task of victims” (Janoff-Bulman, 1992, p.69). Most victims have experienced some form of loss in the challenge to their basic assumptions and initially victims may well display depressive features associated with a profound sense of disillusionment. Whilst different individuals experiencing different types of trauma with a variety of subsequent support are likely to show a range of responses differing in nature and severity, studies indicate that almost all victims of life tragedies display alterations in their assumptive worlds as opposed to non-victims (ibid, ps. 75-78). The duration of such alterations also depends on a variety of factors, but it seems that therapeutic intervention can be of benefit.

3.3.3.4 Overview of Janoff-Bulman’s Contribution

It could be argued that Janoff-Bulman’s encapsulation of the role of the assumptive world in trauma adjustment represents a consolidation of previous clinical and research observations rather

than a completely new innovation. However, her identification and conceptualization of the basic assumptions represents a very significant contribution to the trauma literature borne out by the frequency of reference to her work in the field. An added strength of her theoretical contribution lies in its empirical validation in experimental studies derived from a background in social psychology. Janoff-Bulman continues to conduct and stimulate research into refining understanding in this area of trauma adjustment. For example her work into self-blame, relating to the assumption of controllability as a dimension of meaningfulness, has already been cited (1979). She has also made comparisons between criminal and non-criminal victimization (1985) and other features of self-blame (1982).

The validity of Janoff-Bulman's theoretical assertions lies to some extent in the broad scope of the assumptions. It is difficult to conceive of individuals who do not to some extent hold aspects of these premises. However, the breadth or range of subject matter encapsulated by each of the three major assumptions might also benefit from refinement in certain instances. Interestingly, in a footnote to her book, Janoff-Bulman makes reference to McCann and Pearlman's seven primary schemata and the relationship they bear to the overarching assumptions of her theory. She suggests that the following inter-relationships exist:

Their trust/dependency and intimacy schemas are reflections of assumptions regarding the benevolence of the world; the schemas they label 'frame of reference' reflect assumptions about the meaningfulness of the world; and independence, power and esteem schemas are essentially assumptions about self-worth. The safety schema discussed by McCann and Pearlman has elements of assumptions about the benevolence of the world (i.e., the world is dangerous and threatening) and meaningfulness of the world (i.e., there is nothing I can do to protect myself) (1992, p.205).

It would seem that the frameworks of Janoff-Bulman and McCann and Pearlman are highly compatible and differ in level of abstraction rather than substance. Within this study the more differentiated schematic framework of McCann and Pearlman appeared to be of greater value in interrogating the data, but the three assumptions of Janoff-Bulman certainly formed part of the conceptual base for the data analysis and discussion.

A further important characteristic of Janoff-Bulman's work is its integrative quality. The location of the theory within social, cognitive, developmental and clinical theory is clear. The origins of the basic assumptions are explored both in terms of clinical developmental theory, primarily from an object relations perspective, and in terms of cognitive psychology, primarily from an information processing perspective. The nature of the assumptions, their prevalence across populations and the conditions which appear to govern their functioning are explored within more social psychological paradigms, with reference to attribution theory and the utilization of experimental and survey data. However, much of the research into the assumptions is also clinically based and has clinical application. Similarly to many of the other theorists whose work has been discussed thus far, it seems that in order to do justice to the impact of traumatic events on cognitive and related functioning, it is necessary for Janoff-Bulman to draw on informational bases across these related fields of psychological study.

While Janoff-Bulman's work addresses the social context of the assumptions to a greater extent than much of other mainstream social psychology, it could be argued that this aspect of her theory needs further exploration. Janoff-Bulman (1992) makes reference to the fact that the interpretation of an event as traumatic, based in the notion that it is out of the ordinary, requires an understanding that what is experienced as traumatic may be culturally and historically located (p.53). For example, in a culture in which clitoridectomy is a accepted part of socialization into womanhood, this genital mutilation may be experienced totally differently from a girl encountering such an event in Western Eurocentric society, although the physical act might be the same. In addition Janoff-Bulman develops the understanding that different groups of victims with differing social locations may experience trauma differently. However, this analysis tends to be limited to comparing, for example, individual rather than group victims, or victims of human-inflicted trauma as opposed to natural disasters, rather than examining the impact of social constructions in any depth. She does not appear to question the universality of the basic assumptions to any significant degree either. From a critical social psychological perspective, Janoff-Bulman's work goes some way towards acknowledging broader social influences, but remains encapsulated within a mainstream social psychological paradigm assuming a largely autonomous individual subject as the centre of study.

Before moving on to a deeper exploration of the critical social psychological contributions to trauma studies, one further social psychological perspective is important to elaborate, that of Lerner's principle of the "Just World".

3.3.4 Lerner's Just World Theory

Representing in some respects the mirror image of Janoff-Bulman's three assumptions, "Just World Theory" argues that there is a pervasive social belief in the existence of justice in the world. Simply put, such a belief is based on the premise that within everyday life people generally get what they deserve and deserve what they get.

Lerner describes how his theory was derived from observations of the tendency for people to distort information of a painful nature across a range of contexts such as working with terminally ill children and dealing with impoverished, minority groups. "As social psychologists,... we try to build a model, a general theory, and then we do experiments so that we can examine the phenomenon and the explanation a little more closely. The Just World Theory is one such effort" (Lerner, 1980, p.7). In this respect Lerner's work parallels that of Janoff-Bulman with the development of a conceptual model based on empirical observation which is then tested by means of experimentation.

Although acknowledging that they are related, Lerner argues that a "'Just World' is different from, and more than, a 'predictable world', or a 'controllable world'" (1980, p.9). In such a world there is an implicit notion of the appropriateness of events and outcomes which allows people to relate to the environment as if it were meaningful. In addition to the quality of predictability such a belief also has a kind of value judgement attached to it: "one of the most commonly observed characteristics of social existence is that people imbue social regularities with an 'ought' quality. The way we live our lives is the 'right' way. And we become angry, indignant, and outraged, when these 'correct' ways are violated" (p.10). Thus it appears that the belief in a "Just World" carries certain moral overtones.

Lerner argues that within each society certain implicit and explicit rules are generated which determine deservingness. "Typically, in our society and some others at least, there are two general bases for entitlement or deserving: one's behaviour and one's attributes" (1980, p.11). There is a clear link to Janoff-Bulman's distinction between behavioural and characterological self-blame attributions. Certain attributes, some of which may be based on group membership, entitle one to certain kinds of benefits. For example, physically attractive people are evaluated differently from unattractive people. In a patriarchal society it may be assumed that men are entitled to outcomes representing their greater status and control in society. "In a complex modern society such as ours, the rules for entitlement become organized in complex and interesting ways" (Lerner, 1980, p.11). When people are subject to misfortune these kinds of rules serve as basis from which others evaluate and respond to their predicament. Just World Theory is a powerful determinant of such responses.

Lerner also argues that at the level of the individual Just World Theory is based in the need to maintain cognitive consistency and cites the work of Heider (1958) in this regard. However, he also draws on other social and cognitive theory pointing to the complement of this, i.e., the resistance to making conceptual changes.

Others such as Rokeach (1971), assume that the disconfirmation of a 'belief', elicits a negative state. The more central and important the prior confirmation associated with the belief, the greater the emotional disturbance. Similarly, Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance holds as one of its basic propositions the assumption that a negative-drive state results whenever a person holds two beliefs which are contradictory in their implications. In other words, whenever an expectation about oneself or the environment is disconfirmed, people are upset, and motivated to remove that undesirable state of affairs. The negative state elicited by the dissonant cognitions may be the sense of injustice - the violation of that which is judged to be 'appropriate' (1980, p.10).

Presumably then, the person will act to retain or restore their previous judgement of deserving, even if this involves distorting the information available. Just World Belief allows people to "go about their daily lives with a sense of trust, hope, and confidence in the future" (Lerner, 1980, p.14). The resonance with Janoff-Bulman's propositions concerning the need to maintain a belief in a meaningful, benevolent world in which the self can be perceived as worthy, is very clear in this quotation. In order to maintain this sense of well-being in the world individuals may confuse

reality and fantasy or use other kinds of cognitive defences such as distantiation and denial. Information concerning both cause and victim can be distorted. For example, a victimized high status individual may be viewed as having displayed "unworthy" behaviour and therefore as having got his/her "comeuppance" (cf. Lerner, 1980, p.21).

In discussing the social location of Just World Theory, Lerner addresses the function of various socio/cultural forms, including status, and what he calls "politico religious ideologies" which he views as contributing to the holding of such normative beliefs. He postulates the existence of three *implicit social worlds in Western society*, that of the "beautiful people", a privileged elite; the "Just World" in which "by and large" people get what they deserve; and thirdly the "world of victims", the "losers" in society (cf. Lerner, 1980, p.25). This notion conforms to typical middle class values. Although he does not explore this in great depth, he argues that children are socialized into this kind of belief system and tend to retain it as adults.

In summary then, it is proposed that the Belief in a Just World is too central a part in the organization of the human experience to be given up simply because the child learns that there is not an all-seeing, all-powerful adult figure who meets out punishments and rewards in direct response to how 'good' or 'bad' someone has been. The child's belief in a world of 'immanent' justice is not simply abandoned. It is modified by the experiences of a rational mind in a world of natural causes, so that its functional components remain as firmly based as ever, if not more so, while its form is altered- to that of the unassailable assumptions of 'ultimate justice' (Lerner, 1980, p.26).

3.3.4.1 Responses to Victims

The implications of Just World Belief for the treatment of victims are largely those that have been documented by attribution theorists. In general, beyond some circumscribed charitable response to victims, people act to minimize any sense of distress to themselves. This is directed both towards preventing the distress associated with identification with the victim and at maintaining cognitive consistency. The desire to reduce distress can manifest in "'irrational' strategies... that redefine the 'blame', the outcomes, or the 'characteristics' of the victim. The desire to reduce the observer's distress and the implicit threat to his security appears as an attempt to blame the victim or anyone who can be punished, so that at least the sense of control, if not the belief in justice, can

be reestablished (Wren, 1971)" (Lerner, 1980, p.28). Generally in making assessments about the victimization of others, people will make evaluations that produce the greatest gains and the fewest costs to their cognitive repertoires (p.28). Thus the pervasive belief in a Just World, although functional to human existence, appears to hold negative consequences for victims. In the main, in order to preserve this belief, people will distort information about victimization in such a manner as to allow them to justify distancing themselves from, or blaming the victim. Lerner (1980) cites a range of experimental evidence which tends to support this proposition.

3.3.4.2 Commentary on Just World Theory

It is evident that Lerner's theory pertains primarily to the response of observers to victims rather than to the victims themselves. Any reference to victims' reactions is cursory and largely underdeveloped. However, in some respects Janoff-Bulman's work extends Just World Belief Theory to the domain of the victim. Lerner's emphasis on empirical research is both a strength and a weakness, as although this provides empirical validation for his theory it is very difficult to replicate real life tragedy in the laboratory as pointed out earlier. Also, as previously discussed as a general limitation of mainstream social psychology's contribution to the trauma field, Lerner's theory applies to victimization in the broadest sense. Thus it is difficult to establish whether attitudes towards beggars, for example, can be generalized to attitudes towards rape victims.

To his credit, Lerner very consciously points to the need to locate Just World Theory in its socio-cultural context. However, although he refers to the role of ideology in religious forms, it seems remarkable that he does not address this concept more directly given the inferences of class location in his notion of the three worlds. In failing to address the issue of ideology more comprehensively, Lerner also fails to locate the function of Just World Theory in maintaining certain power, social and economic relations; and instead locates the maintenance and origin of Just World Theory in individual upbringing and the tendency to cognitive consistency. In this sense he is also susceptible to the criticism that mainstream social psychology fails to give primacy to the social, or to sufficiently examine its epistemological foundations.

CHAPTER 4

THE CONTRIBUTION OF CRITICAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

4.1 BRIEF BACKGROUND TO THE FIELD

In order to locate some of the recent trauma related research conducted within the critical social psychology paradigm it is necessary to give a brief history of the introduction of this perspective into social psychology more generally.

In 1967 Kenneth Ring published a controversial paper in which he criticised the whole field of social psychological research as engaged in self-serving experimentation as opposed to addressing more critical social issues. His article produced a spate of further criticisms along related themes (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995). The three central problems with social psychological theory and research centred around its laboratory base, its failure to truly locate the subject in the social domain and its tendency to individualism. For example, Gergen (1973) cited in Augoustinos and Walker "claimed that social psychology could never be a science because the subject matter with which it deals (human social behaviour) is largely culturally and historically specific... Social psychology is, therefore, predominantly an 'historic enquiry'" (1995, p.1). In addition social psychology was accused of treating the human subject as a self-contained individual, this individualism being attributed to the "joint forces of experimentation and positivism" (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.2). This kind of criticism can be directed at social cognition, e.g., attribution and attitude theory, along with other branches of social psychological research. "Currently, research and theory in social cognition is driven by an overwhelmingly individualistic orientation which forgets that the contents of cognition originate in social life, in human interaction and communication" (p.3).

Whilst this critical perspective failed to revolutionize mainstream social psychological practices, it produced several significant theoretical outgrowths, mainly in European social psychology. Augoustinos and Walker argue that this new development of the "social" in social psychology is exemplified in three main bodies of theory: Social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1986); social

representations theory (Moscovici, 1984); and discourse analysis (cf. p.4). Although the former two developments are central in critical social psychological theory, it is the field of discourse analysis which will be elaborated as holding greatest relevance for the present study. What little critical social psychology application there has been to the trauma field tends to have been conducted broadly within the discourse analytic perspective and this study aims to add to this new contribution to the field.

4.2 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discourse analysis as a theoretical position and method arose out of the philosophical premises of post-modernism (Burr, 1995). Postmodernists reject the modernist notion of a universal reality based on beliefs about "truth, knowledge, power, individualism and language" (Collier, Minton and Reynolds quoted in Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.263). Postmodernists have:

questioned the notion of a knowable reality by emphasizing the socio-historical and political nature of all knowledge claims. By analyzing the socio-historical determinants of concepts and theories, especially those in the social sciences, postmodern analysts have been able to demonstrate how specialist disciplines of knowledge maintain and reproduce the dominant social relations and institutions of society; relations and institutions which are shaped by capitalism, patriarchy and racism (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.263).

This position was taken up by a number of different disciplines and theorists across the arts, humanities and social sciences. An area of central focus in this critical perspective was that of language. Language became understood as the vehicle through which social practices were reproduced and as contestable as a site of absolute meaning: "words and language do not have independent objective meanings outside the social and relational context in which they are used" (p.264). From this perspective omissions, dialogic manoeuvres and the form of texts, all become of interest. A strong postmodern linguistic tradition has grown out of this interest.

Within psychology postmodernism has clearly had its strongest influence on social psychology. Related to the interest in language has been the development of what has broadly been termed the "social constructionist" (Burr, 1995) movement. Associated with the writing of Gergen, "social constructionism regards psychological knowledge as socially constructed via the negotiated socio-

cultural meanings which are historically prevalent" (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.265). This position has been pursued by feminist and hermeneutic researchers and in the work of discourse analysts. "Discourse analysis, in a generic sense, describes a number of social psychological approaches which are predominantly concerned with analysing the socially constitutive nature of language" (p.265). The two major positions in the social psychological discourse field are those developed by Potter and Wetherell (1992) and Ian Parker (1992; Parker and Shotter, 1990).

Within both positions there is an interest in the speech constructions of individuals and particularly in the use of certain conventions and the contradictions inherent in these. For example, their research is often used to demonstrate that specific language usages (e.g., arguments, terms, metaphors) are associated, and represent what Potter and Wetherell call "interpretive repertoires" and Parker refers to as "discourses". However, their emphases in analysis and theoretical premises differ at other levels. Potter and Wetherell are primarily concerned with the use of language in action and argue that language can be understood as a tool to achieve certain ends. They are interested in "how categories become constructed in different social contexts and how the method of construction creates a subjectivity for oneself and for those defined as 'other'" (Potter and Wetherell quoted in Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.269). Thus they place strong emphasis on the interactional and contextual basis of discourse.

In contrast, Parker is more interested in the way in which discourses tend to exist as linguistic batteries in social intercourse, acting to control specific practices and maintain existing power relations. In a sense he views a discourse, "a recurrently used 'system of statements which constructs an object'" (quoted in Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.277), as something which exists out there with a material base, which acts to interpolate the subject. His work is influenced by writers such as Foucault and Derrida and in this tradition the subject can be seen as being spoken by the text as much as speaking the text. "Discourses primarily function to 'bring' objects into being', to create the status of reality with which objects are endowed. They also position us in various 'subject' positions, so that discourses invite us, even compel us, to take on certain roles and behaviours" (Parker cited in Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.278). Although Potter and Wetherell are concerned with the social consequences of discourses, as in studying racist conversations, they do not embrace the kind of political activism of Parker's theory. Parker's

discourse analysis is aimed at exposing power relations in society, often encapsulated in ideology, in order to illustrate the way in which language and subjectivity are shaped to serve particular interests. "The political edge to Parker's approach is that some discourses function to legitimate and buttress existing institutions, reproduce power relations and inequities in societies, and have certain ideological effects (Parker, 1990)" (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.278). Examples of what Parker would understand as discourses are the "medical discourse" which might be viewed as validating alternative methods of healing, or the "patriarchal discourse" which asserts that the subjugation of women is a biological given. Discourses are interrelated and may act both in concert or contradiction to one another.

For the purposes of analysis in the present study, aspects of both Parker and Potter and Wetherell's positions appear useful. In some respects discourses of masculinity and victimization exist as widely held social constructions which may be viewed as sustaining particular ideologies and power relations. In addition, in the course of the interviews it was important to follow how language linkages or interpretive repertoires were used and their function for the participants in the context of being interviewed about a traumatizing experience. Thus aspects of both analytic methods were utilized in the data analysis.

4.3 COMMENTARY

Both Parker's and Potter and Wetherell's theoretical positions insist on the social location and primacy of language. From this perspective much of social cognition theory holds no validity. In fact at its most extreme, discourse analysis contests the existence of cognition as it has been studied in psychology in the form of internal mental representations. Language and discourse exist, rather than cognition, and cannot be understood as mediated by cognition. Augoustinos and Walker (1995) argue against what they view as this somewhat extremist position. They assert that it is possible to retain social cognition in a manner which does justice to its social origins and location, a "reconstructed" notion of cognition which is compatible with the political and reflexive concerns espoused by many researchers within the discourse analytic school" (p.284). In many ways the categories of analysis utilized by discourse analysts are cognitive derivatives and it is

difficult to imagine a framework for describing discursive practices which does not draw on any aspects of cognition.

The employment of categories in talk and thought, the tendency to reify and objectify groups, objects and events, to perceive and interpret information according to cultural expectations and personal needs, and to provide accounts and explanations for events and experiences are all socio-cognitive tendencies which have been researched in the mainstream and which find some calibration when analysing everyday talk. While discourse theorists would claim that these principles have been reified and therefore smack of 'cognitive universalism' (and we would agree), certain general assumptions also flow from the discursive approach about what it is to be human: the need to communicate, to have one's voice heard, to reflect and to understand and explain the world around us (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, ps. 284 & 285).

From a clinical perspective this moderate position seems more compatible with understanding individuals in the context of dealing with serious life events. The literature discussed thus far in the dissertation could be viewed as falling largely into the social cognition domain and is certainly flawed in some respects, as has been pointed out. However, the limitations in terms of socially locating the theory do not appear to justify dismissal of the significance of these conceptualizations as part of a comprehensive framework for understanding trauma survivors. What the discourse analytic perspective can contribute is a self-consciousness about taken for granted assumptions concerning universality and impermeability of theory. In addition it introduces the significance of language as a tool for processing experience and re-emphasizes that "human cognition is always socially situated" (Augoustinos and Walker, 1995, p.285). The impetus provided by the advent of discourse analysis into social psychology provides the opportunity to reintroduce the social into social psychology.

4.4 THE APPLICATION OF CRITICAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY TO THE TRAUMA FIELD

The introduction of this perspective into the posttraumatic stress literature is very new and therefore the existing body of theory is scanty. Nevertheless the implications of this perspective will be explored in relation to two significant articles. The first is a paper on constructions of rape identities by Wood and Rennie (1994) and the second a paper on cultural context and rape by Lebowitz and Roth (1994).

4.4.1 Rape Survivors and Social Construction

It is not surprising that the trauma field first explored from a social constructionist perspective is that of rape. Much of the literature on rape has incorporated feminist understandings which have highlighted the relationship between rape and broader gendered power relations. An offshoot of this conceptualization has been the interrogation of what could be called rape “myths” which have served to obscure the social basis of rape and in particular to have located responsibility for the act with the women who have been victimized. Not surprisingly, women who have been raped struggle to position themselves in relation to these social judgements in the light of their own experiences. These two papers represent some of the first systematic attempts to explore just how rape survivors do negotiate these contradictions by means of analysing in depth interviews with rape survivors.

4.4.1.1 Wood and Rennie’s Study

Wood and Rennie explicitly locate their study within the discourse analytic tradition. They argue that much of the existing research on attributions of blame and responsibility have failed to understand that the negotiation of such positions is a process negotiated through interaction.

Much of the research on attribution fails to recognize the way in which the central terms (e.g., blame, responsibility) are used in discourse to accomplish social purposes (cf. Edwards and Potter, 1992). A major problem is the reliance on artificial dichotomies: pathology vs resilience; self vs other blame; characterological vs behavioural self-blame; victim vs non-victim... Such research serves to perpetuate these categories, rather than examining their social, cultural and historical roots, and especially their use in discourse (Wood and Rennie, 1994, ps. 127 & 128).

Their subject of interest, derived from reading through broad based interviews with eight women on their rape experience and subsequent adjustment, focussed on the issue of the construction of identities; both as one who has been raped and on the rapist himself. Their analysis encompasses a number of categories including: Formulating rape (relating to definitional issues, consent and control, and feedback from others); formulating implications (including considerations of agency, victimization and its implications for identity and social comparisons); and rapist identities.

A useful categorisation they draw on is that of Harre's (1974) SPJ(R) paradigm. This refers to a matrix of factors that can be considered in relation to most events, incorporating situations(S), personas(P), arbiters(J) and rules(R). Each row in the matrix consists of a definition of a situation, the persona(s) appropriate to that situation, the appropriate person(s) to judge the propriety of an individual's actions in that situation, and the rules relevant to the individual's actions and to the interpretation of these actions. The definition of the situation constrains the possibilities for other elements. Thus, when the situation is defined as rape, the persona of the woman is victim; that of man, criminal; the arbiters are members of the medical and legal professions; the rules for action include going to the police, avoiding contact with the rapist, testifying against him in court and possibly obtaining therapy; and the rules for interpretation frame any actions of resistance or the utterance of 'no' as the denial of consent (cf. Wood and Rennie, 1994, ps. 134 & 135). Any deviation from this kind of socially defined matrix may render the experience invalidated as an instance of rape. This kind of social prescription can be applied to other contexts of victimization. For example, there must be very specific factors in a matrix which allow for a man to occupy the persona of victim. This kind of theoretical perspective and other discourse analytic tools, including linguistic practices, serve as a basis for exploring this theme of rape. Since the present study is not directly concerned with rape *per se*, the content of their findings will not be elaborated further. However, several extrapolations from their discussion are useful.

Wood and Rennie highlight the constantly changing nature of constructions and assert that Harre's matrix is a useful framework from which to observe the recursive nature of formulations, some of which may be inconsistent with each other. They also note that while this can be observed across the course of an interview, the researcher's perspective is limited in its time frame. They are clearly able to demonstrate the active nature of formulating one's experience as an essential part of adjusting to trauma. "The present study suggests that formulation can be a highly complex and difficult task, that it may be an important part of coping in the aftermath of rape and that it deserves attention as a focus of research" (1994, p.144). They also point out that how one's experience is named and comprehended reflects prevailing power relations. In sum, their article certainly appears to contribute an entirely new perspective to trauma literature emphasizing the fluid, socially located nature of conceptual adjustments post-trauma.

4.4.1.2 Lebowitz and Roth's Study

The Lebowitz and Roth (1994) article is not as clearly located in discourse analysis, although much of their theorization can be understood within this framework. Their theoretical base is in part phenomenological, with the added component of placing considerable weight on the role of cultural or social interpretations in the formulation of rape experiences. They argue that this aspect has been largely neglected in the trauma literature which has hitherto focussed on the characteristics of the event and the individual as determining meaning.

Another critically important source of the meaning attached to a traumatic event derives from the broader sociocultural context in which the individual lives and is traumatized. By sociocultural context, we mean the ideas, beliefs and metaphors which emerge from our cultural productions and institutions (e.g., literature, media, religion, law), which form a recognizable and coherent ideology and which are relevant for a particular event. The ideas and beliefs which emerge from this ideology are easily and generally recognizable, rather than individual and idiosyncratic (Lebowitz and Roth, 1994, p.364).

This description of sociocultural forms seems to fit very easily with the notion of discourses and carries marked similarities to Potter and Wetherell's and Parker's conceptualizations as well as Harre's framework cited by Wood and Rennie.

Lebowitz and Roth, however, recognize the role of cognition in the form of schemas as the means by which such sociocultural constructions are carried. Acknowledging the work of Horowitz, Epstein, McCann and Pearlman and Janoff-Bulman, they adopt the premise that people hold internal frameworks of representations which can be called schemas. They also hold that these schemas are disrupted by traumatic exposure involving a search for alternate schemas, some of which may be re-activated older, latent schemas (Horowitz cited in Lebowitz and Roth, 1994, p.365). "This model can be used to understand the relationship between cultural constructions of women and the process of responding to a rape. Ubiquitous, culturally located ideas about women and rape are likely to have been internalized, at some point, by many women, and these ideas, insofar as they 'fit' with the advent of a rape, are likely to be activated in its aftermath" (Lebowitz and Roth, 1994, p.365). Their study aimed to assess the contribution of such culturally derived

beliefs to the process of meaning making after rape. This was achieved by detailed content analysis of intensive interviews with fifteen women who had been raped.

The results of their study confirm the premise that social constructions indeed play a central role in the way in which these women attempted to find meaning in their experiences. For example, in many cases the participants in the study spontaneously made reference to socialization practices which had placed them at risk for rape and also discussed notions of stigmatization and the contradictions surrounding female sexuality. In many instances they appeared to be struggling with the contradictions inherent in fulfilling social expectations of women and the avoidance of rape, and in their own and other's constructions of the rape event. Once again, without going into content in any more depth, the generic implications of their study are fascinating.

Their theoretical conceptualization of the re-emergence of latent schemas in the face of trauma has implications at a number of levels. Their elaboration of how this process appeared to operate in the case of rape provides a useful basis for exploring this idea.

The culture may also exert an effect on meaning systems even on women who have long since relinquished (at least consciously) some of these schemas. For example, several women described prior conflicts related to sexuality which revolved around sexual rights, sexual agency and how to be both sexual and a 'good girl'. Assuming for a moment that these conflicts had been resolved, for example in the direction of asserting sexual rights, one could also assume that the resolution would have left psychic residues in the form of now inactive or latent schemas (Wherein sexual rights would be more constrained than in the 'resolved', i.e., dominant schema). In this instance the dominant schemas may be seen as a somewhat fragile bulwark against the press of more negative schemas which have been internalized but which are not being used actively. A rape, which abrogates one's sexual rights, might deactivate the dominant schemas because they would no longer have explanatory power. Instead, the latent schemas would be called forth because of their compelling explanatory capacity in the aftermath of trauma (Lebowitz and Roth, 1994, p.387).

This conceptualization of latent and dominant schemas and their possible evocation under situations of extreme stress, such as trauma, warrants further exploration in the literature and research. It links to the kinds of regressive phenomena characteristic of victims' responses to themselves and the environment and may explain why social stereotypes such as racist and sexist assertions, tend to come to the fore in the aftermath of victimization. In some respects this notion

contradicts Janoff-Bulman's claim that our primary assumptions of a largely positive nature, are derived from early experience and tend to dominate as core assumptions throughout development. The whole area requires further exploration in terms of refining understanding of what processes lead to the primacy of some schemas rather than others, in trauma adjustment.

It is important not to lose sight of the political bent of Lebowitz and Roth's argument. Their hypothesis concerning dominant and sub-dominant schemas relating to rape is very obviously culturally located, and the inferences they draw about social discourses around sexuality and gender are engaging. In commenting on what the data suggests about the internalization of gender stereotypes, Lebowitz and Roth argue that women may be socialized to anticipate certain forms of victimization. The difficulty for these women in defining themselves as raped echoes some of the findings of Wood and Rennie, suggesting that in situations which do not match stereotypic portrayals of rape (e.g., date rape), women may struggle to legitimate their experience. Legitimization is linked to preconceived cultural definitions of rape and in some cases it appears that "the nature of the labelling difficulty implies that the nature of the violation is being defined more in terms of male rights (there is no confusion when it is a strange man of lower class for example, only when it is a known man of the same class), rather than the experience of the woman (i.e., being physically subdued and forced to have sex which is a constant)" (Lebowitz and Roth, 1994, ps. 387 & 388). Thus even the definition of an event as rape appears to give precedence to the male role in gender relations. These kinds of ambiguities, related to the interface of social constructions with the direct experience of victims, can lead to serious problems in adjustment. Lebowitz and Roth argue for the importance of acknowledging both intrapsychic and social forces in clinical intervention with rape survivors.

4.5 SUMMARY

It is clear that Lebowitz and Roth, although making crucial claims about the impact of the socio-cultural on psychological functioning, still recognize the validity of cognition and concepts such as the internalization of schemata and the existence of an intrapsychic reality. This recognition does not appear to have compromised their critical analysis and in this sense seems to validate Augoustinos and Walker's (1995) contention that embracing social cognition is not antithetical

to critical perspectives in psychology. The present study is formulated within a framework very similar to that of Lebowitz and Roth. However, the focus on male victims represents an entirely new contribution to the area, and in addition, the focus on discourse is more closely tied to the theoretical conceptualizations outlined earlier.

The study aims to present a comprehensive analysis of the experience of white, middle class, South African, male crime victims drawing on both mainstream and critical psychological perspectives. An attempt is made to examine the interface between individual and socially located frameworks of understanding. From a discourse analytic perspective it can be argued that discourses relating to masculinity and discourses pertaining to victimization are generally incompatible. A central interest of the study lies in understanding how men who have been victimized position themselves in relation to these contradictory discourses. To this end the following chapters will explore social constructions of masculinity and victimology respectively. In addition to this critical focus, the second broad aim of the research is to elucidate the experience of men as individual victims more clearly. As remarked in the introduction, most of the research thus far on men and trauma has focussed on combat/war veterans. These experiences differ in important ways from criminal victimization. The clinical, cognitive and social theory covered thus far will provide the basis for this descriptive aspect of the analysis; the schematic framework of McCann and Pearlman being used as the central guide.

CHAPTER 5

MASCULINITY AND SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE: DEVELOPMENTAL AND CONCEPTUAL CONCERNS

5.1 LOCATING THEORY ON MASCULINITY

The topic of masculinity has recently gained the interest of the psychological community with a burgeoning output of literature since the 1980s. Donaldson (1993) writes that over fifty books written in English about men and masculinity have been published in the last decade. Several authors have remarked on this trend, linking it to the challenges to the understanding of gender initiated by feminist scholarship and the impact of other sociopolitical and historical factors (Brittan, 1989; Christian, 1994; Clatterbaugh, 1990; Edley and Wetherell, 1995; O'Neil in Solomon and Levy, 1982). "For some at least, 'masculinity' has replaced 'femininity' as the problem of our time - a threat to civilisation itself" (Segal, 1990, p.60). Prior to this scrutiny, the masculine or male prototype was considered the norm in psychological research, with women often being studied as the exception to this norm (Squire, 1989). The feminist movement spawned a more critical evaluation of gender relations including the inter-relationships between men and women. One offshoot of this critical interrogation of gender was the problematization of masculinity along with femininity.

The interests of writers in the field of masculinity span a number of agendas ranging from the notion of a masculine crisis or role strain (Solomon and Levy, 1982), to the reclamation of archetypal masculine qualities (Steinberg, 1993), to psychoanalytic explorations of masculine development and related therapeutic dilemmas (Frosch, 1994). Over and above this psychologically based literature, there has also been a marked interest in masculinity in the fields of sociology and cultural studies (Segal, 1990). The interest in discourses of masculinity has been particularly strong in those dimensions of cultural studies focussed on the arts and the media. Thus the portrayal of men in literature, art and film has been one strand of the interrogation of masculinity. The exploration of masculinity has also spanned three types of literature, including popular texts and academic texts based on both theoretical treatise as well as reports on research studies into men (O'Neil in Solomon and Levy, 1982). This chapter draws on the academic literature in the area.

Whilst recognising the overlap between other social science explorations of masculinity and psychological dimensions, this study is focussed particularly on psychological theory. In addition, the intention of the chapter is to explore masculinity primarily with a view to understanding how it is subjectively experienced by individual men. Thus the considerable territory of psychological theory surrounding masculinity will be negotiated in relation to the focus of the present study, i.e., towards an appreciation of how discourses of masculinity and their emergence in the subjective accounts of men, inform an understanding of their adjustment to trauma. The chapter thus aims to explore psychological conceptualizations of masculinity, its development, maintenance and manifestations, with a constant emphasis on the implications of this for living out masculinity.

Defining this focus further, it is useful to indicate some exclusionary as well as inclusionary criteria for the material to be covered. The focus on masculinity is essentially a focus on a gender category informed by the differential understanding of *sex* and *gender* articulated by Oakley. "Popularized by Ann Oakley in the early seventies, the distinction served to highlight the cultural construction of 'gender' as the psychological phenomenon of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', as opposed to the biological construction of 'sex' as the physical reality of genes and genitalia with their differing hormonal states and secondary sexual characteristics" (Segal, 1990, p.66). Working within this definition the consideration of biological sexual characteristics will be excluded from the discussion, except where it has some bearing on social constructions. Most contemporary writing on masculinity, other than sociobiological and moral conservative positions (Clatterbaugh, 1990), recognizes the complex interaction of nature and nurture in the area of gender development and the pre-eminence of cultural/environmental forces in gender formation. "Numerous authors indicate that cultural and societal learnings are likely to override most biological predispositions of men and women toward certain behaviour patterns" (O'Neil in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.9).

In addition, the exploration of *sexuality*, as opposed to *gender identity*, will also be precluded from any detailed examination. Many texts on masculinity focus on the strong association between masculinity and heterosexuality and the expression of male sexuality in general. Indeed part of what appears to define conventional masculinity is sexual prowess and an aversion to homosexuality (O'Neil in Solomon and Levy, 1982). Whilst this certainly appears to be a central

dimension of masculinity, this area of study has little direct relevance to the present project. The focus of the present research lies particularly on those aspects of masculinity which are likely to have some bearing on dealing with criminal (as opposed to sexual) victimization, and on men's relationships to their internalization of masculine stereotypes (rather than to women or other men as sexual objects). Thus issues of sexual expression and orientation will not be addressed.

5.1.1 Sex and Gender Terminology

The discussion of gender identity as differentiated from sexuality, illustrates the need to clarify certain terminology before proceeding with an elaboration of masculinity. The distinction between *sex*(biological) and *gender*(socially constructed) is fairly clear and widely accepted. The notion of *gender identity* pertains to the internalization of a sense of being masculine or feminine and is based in subjective experience.

Gender identity is the internal and subjective sense in an individual's psyche as to whether he or she is a man or a woman. This is a core belief and a major component of a person's total identity. It includes other such subjective concepts as body image, self-esteem, and self-concept. ...Gender identity is hypothesized to be *unchangeable* by age 2 or 3. Knowledge about a person's gender identity is indirect, coming through what that person tells us about him/herself and through the behaviours associated with gender roles (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.49).

In contrast the categories of *sex and gender roles* are more externally based and reflect the enactment of masculine and feminine stereotypes carrying both individually and socially located expectations. Thus *sex/gender roles* may be descriptively located in the social expectations of a culture as reflected in the kind of overlap between anthropological and psychological observations of society. For example, a typical sex role expectation in middle class, Western society is that men should be primary breadwinners and women the primary caretakers of children. These socially defined roles may also be viewed as sex role stereotypes. In addition to these more occupationally related roles there are also role aspects that reflect both internalized and social expectations and in this sense bear some relationship to gender identity. Thus for example, men are expected to initiate sexual contact and may measure their potency in terms of their ability to fulfil such sex role expectations. It will be clear from this discussion that there is considerable overlap between the

terms sex and gender roles. Strictly speaking in terms of the sex/gender distinction raised above, *gender roles* should be the term of choice (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982), since role expectations and enactment are almost inevitably the product of culture. However, the convention in the psychological literature has been to employ the term sex role. For the purposes of this study the terms will thus be used interchangeably, as they tend to be in the literature. "Many psychologists have used the terms gender and sex role synonymously" (O'Neil in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.9).

In the area of sexual expression the distinction between sex and gender is operative. As indicated above, *gender identity* refers to the entire subjective sense of oneself as masculine or feminine, whereas *sexual identity* pertains to the expression of sexuality per se, including sexual orientation, e.g., heterosexual or homosexual. Thus sexual identity is encompassed within gender identity and represents a specific aspect of this identity. As emphasized previously, the primary focus of this study lies in the area of gender identity. In addition the expression of gender identity in the form of sex/gender roles is also of relevance.

5.1.2 Masculinity or Masculinities?

Despite entitling his book "Masculinity and Power", Arthur Brittan (1989) makes a useful conceptual contribution to the study of masculinity in highlighting the problems inherent in reifying masculinity into a definable entity. He argues that since masculinity is socially constructed and historically and culturally located, it is spurious to talk of masculinity and in fact that the study of *masculinity* should be recognised as the study of *masculinities*. "Since gender does not exist outside history and culture, this means that both masculinity and femininity are continuously subject to a process of reinterpretation" (Brittan, 1989, p.1). The use of the plural form "masculinities" makes explicit the variety of interpretive forms that masculinity can take. This perspective has been supported by a number of writers in the field. "An area of agreement has emerged among North American, British and Australian writers in recent years that we no longer talk about masculinity but about 'masculinities'" (Christian, 1994, p.187). The field of men's studies is characterised by the "study of masculinities and male experience as specific and varying social-historical-cultural formations. Such studies situate masculinities as objects of study on a par

with femininities" (Brod quoted in Christian, 1994, p.187). The value of this perspective lies in the critical awareness that assertions about masculinity need to be limited in their generalization. Within the category of men, a number of intersecting parameters such as race, class, sexual orientation and feminist consciousness; influence the ways in which masculinity is interpreted and played out.

5.1.2.1 Hegemonic Masculinity

There is also considerable agreement that some forms of masculinity can be identified as common, centralized or even hegemonic. A variety of terms such as conventional masculinity, traditional masculinity, the masculine mystique, masculinism and hegemonic masculinity, have been used to describe this central thread (Brittan, 1989; Donaldson, 1993; Gilmore, 1990; Hoch, 1979; Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982). Brittan distinguishes between masculinity, masculinism and patriarchy.

Those people who speak of masculinity as an essence, as an inborn characteristic, are confusing masculinity with masculinism, the masculine ideology. Masculinism is the ideology that justifies patriarchy... Moreover, the masculine ideology is not subject to the vagaries of fashion - it tends to be relatively resistant to change. In general, masculinism gives primacy to the belief that gender is not negotiable - it does not accept evidence from feminist and other sources that the relationships between men and women are political and constructed (Brittan, 1989, p.4).

Thus the ideology surrounding masculinity is seen to represent core power dynamics and to some extent to be reflected in the kinds of essentialist notions advocated by the proponents of the nature side of the nature/nurture debate. As will become apparent in the course of the discussion, texts on the topic of masculinity have in many cases obscured the structural power relations between men and women, and have tended to extract masculinity out of its location in such social relations. For Brittan, gender is always ideologically and politically located: "At any given moment, gender will reflect the material interests of those who have power and those who do not" (1989, p.3). Thus psychological theory needs to remain cognisant of its ideological location.

Donaldson takes these arguments further, locating the notion of hegemonic masculinity within a class analysis. "A developing debate within the growing theoretical literature on men and masculinity concerns the relationship of gender systems to the social formation" (1993, p.643). In parallel with the feminist debates concerning the primacy of gender or class relations and their potential inter-relationships, the literature on masculinity also reflects tensions concerning the relative weight of gender and class forces in influencing human subjectivity (Donaldson, 1993). Related pitfalls in the gender literature are evident in the lack of psychological sophistication in primarily class analyses of gender and the lack of political insight in much psychological theory. From a slightly different angle, Segal (1990) asserts the need for a perspective which does justice to both the psychic and the social and their interrelationship. She opts for a conceptualization of gender which incorporates both psychoanalytic and realist understandings.

I would argue for a form of realism wherein we must analyse the structures which generate the discourses and practices of phallogentrism and male power - while accepting that these structures cannot be identified independently of the way they manifest themselves in discourse. Reality is symbolically mediated, but we can nevertheless try to reconstruct that reality. Once we ask what social processes underlie gender relations and representations, we must move towards a complex integration of psychoanalytic accounts of family dynamics and unconscious motivations, on the one hand, and sociological analysis of social structures practices and relationships, on the other (ps. 93 and 94).

From a more clearly materialist perspective, Donaldson appears to come to a similar conclusion that masculinity needs to be interrogated in terms of its ideological function from a class perspective, informed by psychological theory. His exploration of hegemonic masculinity draws on many psychological stereotypes and he argues: "What in the early literature has been written of as 'the male sex role' is best seen as hegemonic masculinity, the 'culturally idealised form of masculine character' which, however, may not be 'the usual form of masculinity at all.' To say that a particular form of masculinity is hegemonic means that its exaltation stabilizes a structure of dominance and oppression in the gender order as a whole" (1993, ps.646 and 647). Donaldson's analysis is based in a Gramscian notion of hegemony which manifests in "persuasion of the greater part of the population, particularly through the media and social institutions in ways that appear 'natural', 'ordinary', 'normal'" (1993, p.645). Popular understandings of masculinity tend to reflect these kinds of influences. Thus Donaldson is also particularly critical of essentialist

psychological perspectives on masculinity. However, he appears to view psychological perspectives on masculinity as a lens through which to illuminate our understanding of hegemonic masculinity and gender relations.

These debates will be returned to where relevant throughout the chapter. Their introduction at this point is intended to underline the complex fabric within which the psychological theory on masculinity is located. The multiplicity of forms which masculinity can take, and its interface with other structural features of identity, must inform more mainstream psychological perspectives. However, in order to present a coherent picture of the psychological theory on masculinity, aspects of this critical reflection need to be suspended. The clinical and experiential focus of the study also requires an exploration of particular strands of the literature. The intention of the chapter is primarily to highlight those explorations of masculinity which will enable an understanding of the forms of masculinity that the white, middle class men, who form the subjects of this study, are most likely to have internalized or which are most likely to emerge in their discourse as a manifestation of their social construction. In addition, this focus will be informed by the specific clinical interest in a population of traumatized men.

5.1.3 Range of Material to be Addressed

The two chapters five and six, embrace three areas of psychological research, which interestingly parallel the fields covered broadly in relation to trauma in previous chapters. The first part of this chapter presents material located within mainstream cognitive and social psychological theory, including developmental theory and the description of sex roles. The second perspective presented encompasses psychoanalytic and psychodynamic theory on masculinity, gender development and identity, including the work of Freud, later object-relations theorists and Lacanian perspectives. The following chapter (6) introduces more critical social psychological perspectives. Historical and cultural perspectives will be briefly discussed, as well as issues of race and class and their interface with masculinity; including some comments on the social location of men in South Africa. Findings of discourse analytic research on masculinity will also be addressed. Finally an attempt will be made to synthesize the common stereotypes, myths and /or discourses and ideologies that seem to characterize current white, middle class masculinity.

5.2 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL AND COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVES ON MASCULINITY

5.2.1 The Acquisition of Sex Roles: Gender Role Socialization

One of the primary interests of psychologists in the area of gender has to been to understand how gender identity is acquired in the course of development. Two central parallel theories have been put forward to explain this, the one based in psychodynamic theory and the other broadly encapsulated under the socialization model. The latter perspective draws on strands from social-learning theory, cognitive developmental theory and aspects of sociological theory. This theoretical position gained popularity in the fifties and sixties (Segal, 1990), and served to counter previous biologically deterministic conceptualizations on gender development. In this regard it represented a progressive challenge to biological conservatism and located the development of gender identity clearly within the social sphere.

Essentially the socialization position maintains that gender is acquired through the process of development by means of learning influences including modelling, imitation and differential reinforcement of behaviours through operant conditioning principles. "Based upon the principles of conditioning and reinforcement, social learning theorists such as Walter Mischel and Albert Bandura argued that people acquire and perform sex-typed behaviour, like any other, through a combination of observation, imitation, indoctrination and conscious learning (Mischel, 1966;1970; see also Bandura, 1977; Bandura and Walters, 1963 for more general descriptions of social learning theory)" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, ps. 78 and 79). Thus for example, little boys are negatively reinforced for crying and positively reinforced for engaging in active play. They also model themselves on older boys and men and incorporate masculine attributes by learning to imitate stereotypic male behaviour. This kind of learning begins almost at the point of birth and reflects societal expectations placed upon infants from the first identification of their sex. These learning influences are pervasive in acculturation, initially primarily located in the family and later in the media, schools and other social institutions. Considerable research has been conducted into differential conditioning of boys and girls within education systems, and other institutions, such as the military, have also been studied in this regard. This tends to be where sociological and psychological research overlap. The central premise is that biological sex becomes transformed

into a related, (but by no means synonymous), cultural form on the basis of socialization. This cultural form is what is recognized as masculinity or femininity and it is perpetuated through the mechanisms of socialization.

A more sophisticated understanding of the social-learning process of socialization has been achieved through the incorporation of cognitive factors into this model. Cognitive factors, as understood by Kohlberg in an extension of Piagetian schema theory, can be viewed as playing a mediating role in the gender socialization process. In order to act in accord with sex role expectations, the child needs to have acquired some sense of their own gender categorization. "Kohlberg (1966) argued that the process of gender socialization begins some time between the ages of two and five years when children learn to categorise themselves as either 'boys' or 'girls'" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.82). In keeping with Piagetian stages of cognitive development it takes time for the child to appreciate the constancy of gender categories and their own assignment to such a category. However, once the child has acquired this gender constancy in the operational stage of development, s/he is motivated to behave in accordance with this awareness. For cognitive developmentalists: "once the boy becomes aware of his gender status, the impetus for performing sex-appropriate behaviour originates from within the child himself" (ibid, p.82). Whilst behaviourists and cognitive developmentalists may continue to debate the primacy of these influences, most contemporary socialization theory acknowledges the mutually reinforcing impact of both cognitive and learning aspects of influence.

There is also considerable evidence that boys are socialized more harshly into the masculine gender role than are girls (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982). There appear to be far greater prohibitions on boys displaying "sissy" behaviour than on girls behaving as "tomboys", and a narrower and less flexible range of behaviour tolerated in masculine socialization. This may have some resonance with analytic theory concerning separation from the mother, which will be covered later, but appears to result in internalised expectations in men that deviance from masculine roles deserves harsh censure. This censure may be enacted both against other men and against the self for role deviance. Gay bashing is one manifestation of this punishment of deviance, as is for example, the inordinate amount of shame men appear to feel at crying in public. The strict prohibitions and injunctions surrounding masculinity are likely to make it extremely difficult for

men to deal with circumstances which solicit "unmasculine" responses, such as facing overwhelming threat.

5.2.2 Sex Role Theory

Gender socialization theory has been integrally connected with sex role theory since it is primarily concerned with the acquisition of sex typed behaviours. Role theory draws on the metaphor of performance and is located at the interface of sociological and psychological theory. To do justice to role theory would require a different focus within this study, but several key aspects of role manifestations are useful to outline. Solomon refers to the distinction between institutionalized, informal and tenuous roles; and argues: "much of the masculine role falls into the category of institutionalized roles" (in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.51). These roles are clearly defined and legitimated by social institutions. However, masculinity operates at all three role levels. Edley and Wetherell (1995) report that roles tend to be comprised of two constituent elements; social positions and social expectations. Both these have some salience for gender, since gender appears to be reflected in the hierarchical relations of society and in the roles which men and women are expected to play in interaction. Roles can be engaged with at different levels of internalization. In analytic language some roles may be experienced as ego-syntonic and others as ego-dystonic. However, gender role tends to be a core aspect of identity and is seldom questioned once acquired. Most men "would sense themselves as 'being' masculine rather than 'playing' masculinity" (ibid, p.73). In terms of role assimilation, masculinity manifests at the level of role identity as opposed to role-taking or enactment (cf. Hargreaves in Edley and Wetherell, 1995) and operates "at the most basic, subconscious level" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.74). Thus for most men gender role is not something that enters self-conscious awareness, but rather is synthesized into the personality as an automatic aspect of identity. It is only when aspects of this identity are called into question by life experiences that the individual is likely to become aware of their role assumptions and identity. It is hypothesized that confrontation with trauma, and more particularly with the experience of victimization, is likely to be one such challenge for men.

5.2.3 Sex Role Descriptions

5.2.3.1 Instrumental versus Expressive

In elaborating the kinds of role expectations associated with masculinity it is difficult to do justice to the myriad of positions proposed. One central thread associated with the work of Talcott Parsons (1954), concerns the broad differentiation of masculine and feminine roles into the categories of *instrumental* and *expressive* respectively. Although psychoanalytically influenced, Parsons' distinction gained great popularity in the sex role literature (Edley and Wetherell, 1995; Segal, 1990). Broadly speaking this distinction suggests that it is men's role to plan and do, and women's role to feel, relate and say. Although the distinction has been criticized for over-generalization and a lack of clarity (Segal, 1990), it has informed a range of other role perspectives and research in the area. For example, black American women have been viewed as differing from white women in terms of playing a more instrumental role in society (Bunker-Rorbaugh, 1981).

Following on from this role distinction, a number of other sex role related stereotypes can be identified in the psychological literature. Although largely presented as normative, these stereotypes tend to pertain to white, middle class, Western men, socialized within a capitalist environment. However, since this bias informs much psychological theory, this is where the bulk of findings concerning masculinity is derived from. Given the composition of the sample of this study, it can be assumed that many of these stereotypes will have relevance for their identifications.

5.2.3.2 Solomon's Descriptions

One attempt to define masculine role stereotypes is exemplified by Farrel's "Ten Commandments of Masculinity" paraphrased by Solomon:

1. Thou shalt not cry or expose other feelings of emotion, fear, weakness, sympathy, empathy, or involvement before thy neighbour.
2. Thou shalt not be vulnerable; thou shalt honour and respect the logical, practical, and intellectual as thou defineth them.

3. Thou shalt not listen except to find fault.
4. Thou shalt condescend to women in all ways, big and small.
5. Thou shalt control thy wife's body and all its relations, occasionally permitting it on top.
6. Thou shalt have no other egos before thee.
7. Thou shalt have no other breadwinners before thee.
8. Thou shalt not be responsible for housework before any body.
9. Thou shalt honour and obey the straight and narrow pathway to success: job specialization.
10. Thou shalt have an answer to all problems at all times.
11. And, above all, thou shalt not read *The Liberated Man* or commit any other form of introspection. (in Solomon and Levy, 1982, ps. 58 and 59).

Although written in humorous vein and oriented towards particular agendas, Farrel's parody rests on the correct assumption that most members of Western society will be able to relate to these injunctions. The first two "commandments" as well as number 10 are likely to have particular salience for dealing with traumatic victimization.

Drawing on a further set of stereotypes, Solomon refers to Davis and Brannon's (1976) more complex differentiation into four major dimensions of the masculine role (cited in Solomon and Levy, 1982). These dimensions are summarized as: (1) *No Sissy Stuff*, (2) *The Big Wheel*, (3) *The Sturdy Oak* and (4) *Give 'Em Hell* (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.59). Each of these stereotypic role complexes is explored further.

"No Sissy Stuff"

"No Sissy Stuff" as the label indicates, relates to a constellation of behaviours which mark a man as "unfeminine", i.e., represent masculinity as defined in contradistinction to what is considered stereotypically female. This includes the display of confident, assertive, active, power-driven behaviour. It incorporates "a hard, confident, and aggressive approach to people instead of a soft, persuasive approach" (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.60). One of the primary dictates of this stereotype concerns emotional expression. "Emotionality is the province of women. Expressiveness is evidence of vulnerability, weakness and femininity. It means that one can 'break down' under stress. Men who are upset are usually told to 'get themselves together' rather than to ventilate their feelings about the source of their upsetting feelings" (ibid, p.62). However, not all feelings are inhibited from expression. Rather there is a narrow range of feeling expression that

is encouraged in men: "feelings of anger, contempt, hostility and aggression are not commonly avoided by men. Indeed, expression of these affects, especially by physical means, is an expected part of the masculine role... Feelings of love, tenderness, trust, fear, shame and vulnerability are kept to oneself. Men do not cry in public because that is feminine" (ibid, p.63). A further prohibition on "sissy stuff" relates to the issue of dependency. It is accepted that women demonstrate emotional and physical dependency on others at times. "However, dependency is seen as distinct from masculinity by most men, and is avoided, leading to solitary activity and problem solving, especially under stress" (ibid, p.63). It should be apparent that conforming to the "No Sissy Stuff" dictate of masculinity is likely to pose particular difficulties for a man trying to cope with the disruption evoked by exposure to a traumatic stressor.

"The Big Wheel"

The second constellation, "The Big Wheel", pertains largely to stereotypes evoked in the world of work and achievement. Men are expected to aspire to power, status and wealth and to employ whatever means at their disposal to achieve this. This includes developing a competitive approach to interpersonal relationships, particularly in relation to other men. "Adler defined one aspect of masculinity as the will to power. Power is a masculine prerogative in our society. Power is a direct result of success" (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.64).

Power is indeed associated with status and with the related rights to make demands of others (Eagley, 1983). In general men occupy greater status than women (ibid), but class differences may also influence the stratification of status and power. Middle class men are used to assuming the double benefits of their gender and class position, and in many cases this is further bolstered by whiteness, in societies where other ethnicities are disenfranchised. Enjoying the privileges of race, class and gender, the men in this study are likely to have acquired some of the attributes associated with "Big Wheeling" within society.

"The Sturdy Oak"

The third dimension of masculinity, "The Sturdy Oak", in many respects reinforces the first category, but spells out what it is that men should portray. "Men carry themselves with an air of toughness, confidence, and self-reliance at all times... No matter what the stress is, and no matter

how difficult the stress is to cope with, the man is expected to stand up to it and survive. If he does not survive, he is expected to go down fighting" (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.65). A degree of heroism is associated with this stereotype, as is physical and mental toughness and the ability to withstand pressure. "Part of the image of 'The Sturdy Oak' is inexpressiveness and an inability or refusal to show fear or vulnerability. Another part of this image is the man exuding an aura of invulnerability in case he must dish out (and be prepared to take) tougher things to another man, in the competition for success" (ibid, p.65). Solomon makes the point that this image assumes a kind of "omnicompetence" which places a premium on rational problem solving" and omniscience. "Coupled with this expectation of omnipotence and omniscience is the need for a man to be self-reliant" (ibid, p.66). Positioning these expectations against the kind of rupture in one's sense of control and omnipotence described by Janoff-Bulman's "Shattered Assumptions" (1992), it is clear that this form of masculinity is likely to be severely challenged by traumatic stress exposure.

"Give 'Em Hell"

The final dimension of masculinity, "Give 'Em Hell", depicts a kind of extreme enactment of male resilience and toughness. "Daring, violence, aggression and risk-taking are part of this dimension... Boys are taught that once confronted with a potentially violent situation, they are expected to use violence rather than other methods of potential problem solving in response... One is always expected to fight to protect an external part of one's masculinity, including one's money, business or wife" (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, ps.66 and 67). This stereotype is embodied in many popular film and television heroes such as the famous "Rambo" and is present in the warrior/fighter/hero myths of most cultures. This image also represents an extreme masculine role model to which many men aspire and which can only be lived out in situations of risk and danger. "This dimension forces the man to always prove his masculinity" (ibid, p.67). Confronted with real, and particularly unexpected situations of threat, this stereotype is likely to be evoked for both victim and witnesses. Thus self and other judgements of men's responses to violent threat are likely to be informed with reference to these implicit and explicit expectations. Prescriptions for masculine behaviour in situations of danger tend to be more demanding than those for women, and male victims are more likely to be found lacking in this respect.

These four constellations of masculine role expectations represent one extrapolation from the range of sex roles described and manifested. There is also clearly overlap and mutual reinforcement between categories. However, this framework of David and Brannon's (cited in Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982), resonates with most of the literature on common male role expectations and appears to offer a comprehensive synopsis of these. To some extent these stereotypic constellations could be considered common discourses of masculinity, cohering as they do around a common set of representations and expectations, which in many instances serve to maintain key power relations and discredit alternate explanations for gender functioning. However, research investigating masculine discourses in a more rigorous way will be referred to later.

5.2.3.3 Bem's Contribution

A further central thread in the description of gender roles relates to attempts to measure gender attributes psychologically. The measurement of masculinity and femininity is primarily associated with the work of Sandra Bem (1974). Prior to Bem's theoretical contribution to gender research, masculinity and femininity had been considered as dichotomous or mutually exclusive variables/qualities. Thus the higher the amount of masculinity evidenced, the lower the amount of femininity present. Bem reconceptualized the notion of gender, arguing that the two gender statuses represented independent sets of behaviours which could co-exist in different relationship strengths in each individual. Bem's work is based in schema theory, "the internal (i.e., mental) conceptual frameworks that an individual builds up on the basis of past experience" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.82). In keeping with Kohlberg's work, "gender schema theorists argue that the male/female distinction is one of the most important classificatory systems in human social life (Bem, 1987)" (ibid, ps.82 and 83). Children position themselves against pre-existing gender schemata with differing degrees of flexibility in their identifications and this in turn determines how strongly sex-typed they become. Thus the internalization of gender schemata and the degree of match between self schemata and gender stereotypes determines the person's gender type.

Bem developed a scale, the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), to measure the degree to which people identified themselves with masculine and feminine sex role stereotypes. On the basis of

their responses individuals could be described as occupying one of four gender positions: Masculine (high masculinity and low femininity); Feminine (high femininity and low masculinity); Androgynous (high masculinity and high femininity); and Undifferentiated (low masculinity and low femininity) (Bem, 1974; Spence, Helmreich and Stapp, 1975). In examining masculine gender role stereotypes it is useful to elaborate the qualities endorsed as masculine on the Bem scale. Qualities typified as masculine on the basis of statistical analyses of social desirability measures included: Acts as a leader; Aggressive; Ambitious; Analytical; Assertive; Athletic; Competitive; Defends own beliefs; Dominant; Forceful; Has leadership abilities; Independent; Individualistic; Makes decisions easily; Masculine; Self-reliant; Self-sufficient; Strong personality; Willing to take a stand; and Willing to take risks; (cf. Bem, 1974, p.156). These are the qualities significantly more strongly associated with masculinity in American society. They appear to replicate to a large degree the kinds of stereotypes embodied in the four typologies previously discussed. Whilst there has been some debate about what exactly the Bem scale is measuring and the universality of its masculinity/femininity measures, it has become probably the most widely used measure of these qualities in psychological research (Edley and Wetherell, 1995; Foreshaw and Shmukler, 1993).

A study into a range of measures of gender, including the BSRI, found that prototypic masculine and feminine expectations could be identified amongst a broad sample of subjects (Helgeson, 1994). This research confirmed that several dimensions of masculinity appeared consistent across a range of assessments, including a core focus on ambition and aggression, restricting or concealing emotions, and preoccupation with sex. There was also some evidence of a theme associated with "antifemininity". This tends to support the notion that clear social stereotypes are associated with gender and sex roles.

5.2.4 Critical Commentary on Socialization Theory

Several criticisms have been directed at this mainstream social psychological research perspective on gender, two major criticisms concerning its reductionism and its lack of awareness of the sociopolitical location of gender. With regard to the first major criticism, it is clear that in describing masculinity and femininity as observable, and particularly as measurable attributes, some of the complexity of the categories and their subjective valence is lost. Gender identity is

not something static, although it may have a degree of stability for an individual. It is constantly negotiated on the basis of influences and experiences and undergoes transformation through development (Brittan, 1989). Segal (1990) argues that socialization models "leave no room for conflict, tension and contradiction vis-a-vis gender identity" (p.66), and "bring us no nearer to understanding anything about people's anxiety, tension, comfort or delight in their experiences as masculine or feminine" (p.67). She views the psychodynamic perspectives, which will be discussed next, as allowing for greater richness of understanding of the subjective experience of being gendered. Furthermore social role theory tends to conflate the issue of whether norms are descriptive or prescriptive categories, marginalizing alternative forms of gendered behaviour.

In addition to falling short in relation to accounting for the lived experience of gender identity, socialization theory and particularly role theory, has been criticized for its lack of attention to structural relations of power which inform gender relations. Feminist and Marxist analyses of gender stereotypes have highlighted the vested interests in particular constructs which perpetuate directional power relationships (Edley and Wetherell, 1995; Segal, 1990; Silverman, 1992). For example the assignment of breadwinner and domestic roles to men and women has been beneficial to the capitalist enterprise and the division of labour (Althusser cited in Silverman, 1992). Any comprehensive analysis of gender identity needs to be located within this broader framework although it may be focussed at the level of the individual and the psychological. "Thus socialization is not simply about the acquisition of roles, but rather it is about the exercise of power by one group over another group" (Brittan, 1989, p.45). In relation to gender, the psychological is clearly interpenetrated by the social. The attempts to do justice to this perspective within discourse analysis and critical social psychology will be explored in the following chapter.

In addition, an uncritical acceptance of socialization theory produces a model of society which is essentially unchangeable in its replication of itself. Brittan quotes Connel on this point: "Socialization theory, supposing a mechanism of transmission and a consensual model of what is produced, has been credible to the extent that social scientists have been willing to ignore both choice and force in social life. I would argue, with Sarte and Laing, for seeing them as constitutive. 'Agencies of socialization' cannot produce mechanical effects in a growing person. What they do is invite the child to participate in social practice in given terms" (1989, p.23). The

notion of human agency is excluded as is the idea that institutions of socialization may at times operate in contradiction to each other. For Brittan, in keeping with other critical social theorists (Potter and Wetherell, 1992), it is crucial to recognise these potentials for subversion and change if we are to engage with the present gender order.

5.3 PSYCHOANALYTIC AND PSYCHODYNAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON MASCULINITY

Within psychology the first person to propose a comprehensive theory of gender acquisition was Freud. Although controversial, his ideas still carry tremendous weight and have been modified and elaborated by later theorists. Object relations perspectives have deviated quite strongly from Freud and have offered fresh perspectives on gender identity. This section will attempt to summarize key theoretical developments with an emphasis on their implications for the construction of the male psyche.

5.3.1 Freud and Gender Identity

Freud viewed sexuality and its relationship to gender as central to psychic functioning. His theoretical position on gender development has been accused on the one hand of biological determinism, and on the other hand, has been embraced as a truly socio-psychological account (Segal, 1990). Freud argued that at the earliest stage of development the infant can be conceived of as essentially bisexual, with both boys and girls sharing the mother as the first exclusive love object, "passively enjoying and actively seeking the sensual pleasures of her ministrations. Freud saw these active ('masculine') and passive ('feminine') components of libido or sexual drive as constitutive of its inherent 'bisexuality', alongside its capacity to form attachments to people of either sex" (Segal, 1990, p.70). This conceptualization can be viewed as progressive in its recognition of primary bisexuality, but does underscore Freud's association of masculinity with the active position and femininity with the passive. In a sense Freud's differentiation prefigures Parsons' instrumental/expressive distinction, although for Freud the terms carried particular psychoanalytic meaning. For example masculinity/active is associated with the

development of obsessionally-related displacement pathology, whereas repression-related hysterical symptoms are associated with femininity/passivity (Christiansen, 1996).

Within Freudian theory the oedipal stage of development is pivotal in the establishment of gender identity and sexual orientation. Simply summarized, the negotiation of the oedipus complex involves the following:

At the phallic stage, the penis begins to become symbolic for the boy of his identity and self-hood. The boy begins to fear damage and imagine harm which might occur to this symbol of himself. These unconscious fears of castration become particularly salient as the boy becomes aware of sexual difference and the fact girls and women appear to be without a penis. Indeed, the boy becomes anxious that his main rival, the father, may do the same to him and his fear of damage becomes acute. For Freud, this anxiety is sufficient to explain why boys at this age begin to turn away from the mother, repressing their desire for her and begin, instead, to turn to the father, identifying with the father's power, and idealising his characteristics (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.42).

Although this model of masculine development has received considerable attention in psychological literature, simplified versions tend to ignore Freud's insistence that the negotiation of the oedipal phase was fraught with pitfalls resulting in a multiplicity of possible outcomes (Christiansen, 1996; Segal, 1990; Wong in Solomon and Levy, 1982). "In Freud's view, masculinity is neither biologically determined nor a simple product of social stereotypes and expectations. It is a complex and difficult process of psychic construction, ineluctably marked by tension, anxiety and contradiction. It has no single and consistent set of attributes or essence" (Segal, 1990, p.72). This psychic construction occurs primarily through two related processes, identification and introjection. In this sense Freud's is a truly patriarchal theory, assuming as it does the transmission of masculinity from father to son by a process of identification, incorporated most clearly in the form of the super-ego. Resolution of oedipus "occurs through the boy making a powerful paternal identification, effectively choosing the father and hence phallic strength and power in relation to other men, over the strength of the maternal bond" (ibid, p.71). Both the processes of identification and dis-identification are salient in the development of the masculine psyche.

For Freud the positive resolution of oedipus resulted in the acquisition of certain key personality characteristics for both boys and girls. Christiansen (1996) points to two opposing positions in Freud's theory of male identity formation, the first of which is more deterministically and nomothetically orientated, and the second of which is closer to the cautions raised above, related to the "instability of all sexuality and the always unique intrapsychic and intersubjective unfolding of gender and sexual identity" (p.102). However, it is from the former position that Freud appeared to describe central characteristics as associated with "normal" masculinity and femininity. The centrality of castration anxiety in male oedipus signified for Freud the development of a strong super-ego or conscience, with the associated features of "idealism, competitiveness, assertiveness and emotional detachment" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.43). He viewed men as the superior sex seeing the "biological primacy and the superior anatomy of the male as providing him with a more solid foundation on which to build gender identity" (Wong in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.80). "He argues that not only are men more active, assertive and aggressive than women, they also possess a greater capacity for idealism, civilisation and 'world-building' not associated with the feminine (cf. Frosch, 1987, Ch.2)" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.43). Thus Freud's conceptualization of masculinity has much in common with the role stereotypes of socialization theory, although his argument about the origins of masculine qualities is bound up in the much more complex notion of the negotiation of oedipus.

Some feminist writers have slated Freud's theorisation of gender development for giving primacy to male anatomy and failing to locate gender positions within patriarchal relations, including his own (Segal, 1990). Clearly Freud did give primacy to masculine development and by his own admission understood female development less well (Freud, 1931/91). However, aspects of his theory have been reclaimed by feminist writers, primarily those influenced by Lacanian interpretations (Segal, 1990), which will be examined later. In terms of this study it is important to emphasize that for Freud masculine development involved not only identification with a powerful male, but also repression of much of what is feminine identified in a man. Both these psychological tasks resulted in typical personality characteristics, for example, active assertion and the repression of passivity and avoidance of displays of emotion.

Interestingly, although Freud viewed male development as the more healthy trajectory and problematized female development, contemporary writers (Christiansen, 1996; Frosch, 1994) have reversed this assumption. Christiansen points out that gender identity related pathology, such as transvestitism, is much more prevalent in men than women, and reconceptualizes masculine sexual identity formation as deeply problematic. Men's developmental difficulty is largely tied to difficulty in separating from early identification with the mother and the integration of their early helplessness and dependency. "The ways in which the earliest, universally human experiences of helplessness and dependency become gathered into particular, gender specific defensive structures can only be seen as a result of deferred action effected by particular, gender specific developmental processes" (Christiansen, 1996, p.105). Christiansen argues that these developmental processes may be more constraining, and the defensive structures more fragile, for men. Although, he directs his attention primarily to sexually related pathology, it is possible to argue that men's difficulties in integrating these infantile anxieties may also be evoked in situations of danger and terror. The influence of pre-oedipal relations with the mother on gender identity development has gained increasing credibility with the burgeoning of the object relations school within psychodynamic theory.

5.3.2 Object Relations Perspectives on Gender Identity Development

Although aspects of gender identity development were first given an interpersonal perspective in psychodynamic theory by theorists such as Sullivan, Mahler, Greenson, Fairbairn, Erikson and Winnicott (cf. Segal, 1990; Wong in Solomon and Levy, 1982), it is the work of Nancy Chodorow that has become most clearly associated with an object relations theory of gender development. Object relations theory is essentially concerned with the "mechanisms by which the child in interaction with its environment constructs a mental universe of 'objects' or 'part objects' (the psychic internalizations of people or parts of people) with which s/he comes into contact" (Segal, 1990, p.74). Thus the emphasis shifts away from the Freudian preoccupation with drives and their expression, to the relational aspects of the child's world. The primary and most central relationship is the relationship with the mother or equivalent caretaker, in almost every society a female figure.

For object relations theorists differentiation from the mother at Mahler's separation-individuation stage (1975), presents different dilemmas for male and female children.

The special liability for boys is the different fate of the primal psychic unity with the mother. The self-awareness of being a separate individual carries with it a parallel sense of gender identity...The special problem the boy faces at this point is in overcoming the previous sense of unity with the mother in order to achieve an independent identity defined by his culture as masculine - an effort functionally equivalent not only to psychic separation but also to creating an autonomous public persona (Gilmore, 1990, p.27).

This separation is at tremendous cost and leaves the male psyche vulnerable to regressive fantasies related to return to the original symbiotic dependence on the mother (or symbolically the "feminine"). Chodorow located the source of this object relations difficulty to a great extent within the institution of mothering.

In her book "The Reproduction of Mothering" (1978), Chodorow presented an innovative perspective on gender development located primarily within the mother's attitude to the infant, rather than the infant's biological predisposition. Essentially Chodorow maintained that being female herself, the mother makes different identifications with her male or female child and correspondingly unconsciously responds to their needs and attachments in a differentiated manner. This subtle difference in relating to babies of different sexes produced differing constellations of object relations/introjects for male and female infants. Like most object relations theorists, Chodorow asserted that this internal object formation took place during the early pre-oedipal phase of development, between the ages of 18 to 36 months, and consequently that the basis of gender identity is established at this time.

The major consequences of the mother's differentiated relating to sons and daughters centres around issues of attachment and identification. Since the mother recognizes the boy child as "other" and defines him as "not like me" she establishes a more "anaclitic" (as opposed to "narcissistic") relationship with her son in that "she loves and experiences him as someone separate from herself" (Segal, 1990, p.80). She consequently encourages him to separate more strongly and more quickly from her, thus creating anxiety around dependency. She also tends to implicitly value his maleness more highly, encouraging him to dis-identify with herself and the

feminine. Thus "the boy must repress and deny the intimacy, tenderness and dependence of the early symbiotic bond with the mother if he is to assume a 'masculine' identity" (Segal, 1990, p.79). Since mothers are the products of the patriarchal societies in which they live, they enact relationships with their infants which tend to reflect the differential values placed upon masculinity and femininity. "Mothers treat male children as though they were already masculine, and thus, says Chodorow, they become so" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.50). In this sense the mother is perceived as playing the primary role of transforming sex into gender. Unlike the mechanistic conceptualizations of conditioning theory, this process is seen to take place through unconscious processes related to dis/identification and attachment, resulting in the introjection of different sets of object relations.

Although, Chodorow's theory also has negative potential consequences for female identity, the focus here is on masculine identifications. Two key masculine features arise out of Chodorow's mothering hypothesis. The first pertains to the difficulty masculine identified men are likely to have with dependency, given the mother's early attachment patterns. The second relates broadly to the compulsion to dis-identify with the maternal or the feminine. "Boys create their own fantastical idealisation of masculinity by inverting their earlier identification with the mother into a fear and abhorrence of femininity: 'A boy represses those qualities he takes to be feminine inside himself, and rejects and devalues women and whatever he considers to be feminine in the social world'" (Chodorow quoted in Segal, 1990, p.79). Thus masculine identity rests on a rejection of the feminine both internally and externally. "Femininity is associated in both sexes with feelings of powerlessness and is experienced as a backward state to be transcended" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.51). Dinnerstein (1978), who has elaborated on aspects of Chodorow's work, argues that "the entire fabric of male-female relationships depends on the overpowering influence that women have in the socialization process" (cited in Brittan, 1989, p.31). This theoretical perspective pertains to both internal and external relationships of men to the feminine.

Both Freudian and object relations perspectives give considerable weight to the fact that masculine identity is tied to repression of, or dis-identification from, the feminine. In this sense masculinity is to a large extent defined in the negation of the feminine, in contradistinction to a category that exists in the affirmative (the feminine embodied in the mother), and consequently,

ironically accords the feminine considerable power. The insistence on rejection of the feminine, particularly internally, leaves men particularly threatened in dealing with situations which evoke the feminine and for some theorists lies at the basis of male extremes of aggression and misogyny (Christiansen, 1996; Edley and Wetherell, 1995). Interestingly, although arising from a different theoretical base, psychodynamic theory seems to support the existence of the stereotypes "No Sissy Stuff" and "Give 'Em Hell". It is notable that this first category of acceptable masculine attributes is defined in the negative. It is apparent that there is a powerful injunction precluding men from experiencing or displaying feminine attributes.

The observations of men's difficulties in psychotherapy (Christiansen, 1996; Frosch, 1994) tend to confirm psychodynamic theory on gender identity ruptures and frailties. Psychodynamic theory, emphasizing as it does the association of masculinity with rationality, activity, assertiveness, rejection of dependency and non-femininity (including emotionality, tenderness, passivity and powerlessness); provides further support for the hypothesis that masculine identified men are likely to have great difficulty in dealing with victimization. There are clear theoretical grounds for proposing that current constructions of masculine gender identity place masculine identified individuals in an impossible bind when faced with circumstances which, by definition, will produce responses counter to this ideal. The impotence, fear and loss of control associated with traumatic events will almost inevitably produce considerable tension when juxtaposed with ideals.

Chodorow's premises have not been accepted uncritically, although it tends to be the implications of her theoretical position, rather than its substance, which are questioned. For Chodorow and related feminist psychodynamic theorists such as Eichenbaum and Orbach (1983), the solution to gendered development problems lies in the greater involvement of men in child-rearing. However, critics have argued that whilst this may go some way towards altering gender patterns this solution fails to challenge the essential gender power relations of society which may still be replicated in such parenting arrangements. This solution also tends to ignore the social conditions which make men's involvement in child-rearing unrealistic. The theory has also been criticized for a degree of determinism and for indirectly placing the blame for gender relations yet again at the door of the female. The theory needs to be more strongly anchored in a recognition of broader social relations. "Feminist object relations theory, like its more orthodox parent, has no grip on

the symbolic power and meanings attached to 'men' and 'masculinity'... For mothering to create, in Chodorow's words, 'the psychology and ideology of male dominance', we need to presuppose a society where femininity is already devalued and masculinity already more highly valued" (Segal, 1990, ps.81 and 82). Once again, the location of psychological theory within a politicized understanding of society is emphasized.

5.3.3 Jungian Perspectives on Masculinity

Although probably one of the least materially located branches of psychodynamic theory, Jungian notions of masculinity have had considerable influence on some streams of the current "men's movement". Since the theoretical base for Jung's understanding of gender tends to be both quite mystical and mythological, and in this sense departs from the major focus of this study, this section is somewhat cursory.

In similar vein to Freud, although somewhat differently conceived, Jung also viewed human beings as essentially bisexual in potential. He posited the existence of two gender associated archetypes, the anima (feminine) and the animus (masculine). In keeping with other active/passive or instrumental/expressive distinctions, the animus is associated with "a tendency towards abstract analytic thought" whereas the "female archetype was primarily a 'connecting' one" having a "tendency toward the development of interpersonal relationships" (Wong in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.82). Jung stressed that while men and women were likely to be more closely identified with the archetype of their own gender, healthy psychological functioning required the integration of aspects of the complementary archetype. In this sense his theoretical formulation can be viewed as progressive in that it allowed for the expression of the feminine in the male and the masculine in the female. However, in other respects his theory is essentially conservative, embracing as it does existing stereotypes of masculinity and femininity and bestowing on them archetypal origins and stature with an absence of recognition of inherent power relations or social determinants. This leaves his theory open to the naïve adoption of archetypes as ideals to be rediscovered as epitomized in the popular writings and workshops of Robert Bly (1990). "Bly has no sociological understanding of gender and how it varies. He makes the spurious assumption that there is an eternal innate 'masculinity' which modern men have lost touch with and which is expressed in

ancient myths" (Christian, 1994, p.193). This search for essential masculinity is guilty of the same kind of reductionism demonstrated by biological and moral conservatism (Clatterbaugh, 1990) and may create a further set of prescriptions for the men it is aimed at liberating.

A more critical Jungian based approach is adopted by Steinberg (1993). He argues that the "tendency to develop roles is archetypal" (p.43) and that these roles become incorporated into the persona. Typical masculine roles involve the display of aggression and competition. In American society the form that the masculine archetype takes "means being instrumental and active: a leader, confident and self-reliant, nonexpressive of feelings, logical and rational, competitive, ambitious and successful in one's work" (Steinberg, 1993, p.46). A remarkably similar constellation of characteristics emerge as masculine identified. In contrast: "Women are weak, frail, submissive, and lack assertion: they prefer to take a passive position toward those who have more power and do not like to act aggressively" (ibid, p.46). Steinberg argues that the problem for men lies not so much in the content of these archetypes, but in the over-identification with the persona which is the embodiment of these archetypes. Thus he insists on distinguishing between the "Man and the Mask". "The development of an adequate masculine persona - the characteristics of the instrumental/active dimension - is critical for the male. Competence in that dimension is the route to collective acceptance, value, and feelings of adequacy. Identification with the persona is also a danger, however; it results in a loss of individuality. Rather than developing into his own person, the boy becomes a replica of his masculine role model (typically his father) and the collective that his role model represents" (p.63). Although still positing the existence of a true self, "his own person", Steinberg's writing does recognize the social pressure of the collective and he is careful to limit his assertions to American culture.

What we appear to have in Steinberg's book is a further description of male crisis theory located within a Jungian framework. His problematization of masculine over-identification with the persona lends further weight to empirical observations that boys are more fiercely subject to socialization than girls (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982), and to the premise that masculinity is more strictly and rigidly bounded than femininity. Part of this confinement rests upon the exclusion of the feminine. Although Steinberg's work fails to do justice once again to vested

power relations, it does lend support to aspects of both socialization and psychodynamic theory and offers an alternate conceptualization.

8.3.4 Lacanian Extensions of Psychoanalytic Formulations on Gender

Whilst located also in the realm of the symbolic, Lacan's writing on gender represents a radical departure from Jungian or object relations theory in its understanding of the relationship between gender, consciousness, language and the symbolic. Lacan is recognised as an obtuse theorist and it would be impossible to do justice to his work in this chapter without considerable digression. However his writing has influenced contemporary gender theorists in both psychoanalytic (Frosch, 1994; Mitchell, 1974) and cultural studies fields (Segal, 1990; Silverman, 1992), and serves as a bridge to some strands of discourse analysis. Segal (1990) provides a useful synopsis on Lacanian gender theory which will form the basis for the discussion of this perspective on masculinity in this chapter.

Lacan locates his work firmly within original Freud, but was also influenced by the French structuralist school, branches of philosophy and linguistics, and the work of anthropologist Levi-Strauss. He rejected biological interpretations of Freud's ideas and insisted on understanding Freudian theory in terms of its symbolic associations. "His goal was the depiction of how subjectivity is constituted through its insertion into the phallic order" (Segal, 1990, p. 84). Lacan understood language as essential in producing this insertion and within language gave primacy to particular signifiers, noticeably the phallus or symbolic representation of the penis. From this perspective his work has been perceived both as anti-feminist and as potentially illuminating in terms of sexual politics. "Lacan seemed to be the quintessential phallocentric analyst: the analyst who reduced the mystery of Woman to what She lacks, Her existence as Not-man" (p.84). However, in locating the interior structural relations of gender, Lacan could act as a guide to those seeking to interrogate the subjectivity of gender relations.

For Lacan, "Human subjectivity and human sexual identity, it is argued, are produced simultaneously, as the child enters language: the symbolic order" (Segal, 1990, p.84). Through the process of development, initially encompassing the pre-symbolic mirror stage (6 to 18

months), the child becomes alienated from his/her essential being and establishes an identity based on an awareness of his/her representation to others and on the acquisition of language. This formation of "a self-for-others, always 'referential to the other'" (p.86) means that human identity is always predicated on lack. Lacan implies that the self is an illusion and that individuals desire to return to the undifferentiated experience of symbiosis with the mother and submersion in sensation. Their insertion into the social order is thus predicated on loss and illusion, "and the human subject will continue throughout life to look for an imaginary 'wholeness' and 'unity'" (Segal, 1990, p.86). The child is not only inserted into the symbolic order of language, but also into a patriarchal order in which the "father" is seen as possessing the central object of desire, the "phallus". Lacan's theoretical exposition thus represents a reformulation of Freud's oedipus complex in which the penis/phallus becomes more symbolically represented in language and power. In coming to terms with lacking the father's phallus: "the assumption of identity in relation to the phallus is thus itself a loss and a castration for both sexes, and an index of the precariousness of sexual identity" (ibid, p. 87). Lack is thus related not only to the relinquishing of early fusion with the mother and alienation from essential being, but also with the absence of the phallic authority and desire associated with the "father". This lack is in turn compensated for by the insertion of the phallus into this symbolic space, thus the phallus becomes both the signifier of the lack and its substitute. In this framework the phallus is understood as the symbolic representation of the penis and as the prime signifier within patriarchal societies. "Drawing on structural anthropology and post-Saussurian linguistics, Lacan proceeds to assert that the reduction of sexual difference to the presence/absence of the phallus is a symbolic law which in turn is a product of patriarchy or the Law of the Father" (p.84). Segal (1990) continues: "The subject, Lacan thus argues, can only assume its identity through the adoption of a sexed identity with reference to the phallus, for 'the phallus is the privileged signifier'" (p.85). This understanding appears to be inherent in human consciousness.

Segal (1990) points out that the notion of a privileged signifier runs counter to Saussurean linguistics and that Lacan's justification for according the phallus this privileged status is problematic, based as it is primarily in the visibility of the physical organ (p.85). In this respect Lacan seems to be guilty of the same degree of biological determinism of which feminists accuse Freud. However, although the motivation for the significance of the phallus represents a weakness

in Lacanian theory, he does clearly locate the process of gender identity acquisition within the social order.

Lacan also insists, however, that the idea of the phallus, which constitutes women in terms of a lack, and men in terms of the threat of a lack, creates a sense of difference from a power which is illusory - the fantasied possession of the phallus. For the phallus is not the penis, but its representation as symbol of power and desire - less a product of biological possession, than of patriarchal discourse. The phallus is not something men possess, but a seemingly timeless symbolic order, representing sexual difference and the law of the father, which holds women and men alike in its thrall (Segal, 1990, p.87).

From this reading it is apparent that although advantaged in relation to the symbolic order, men's sense of their privileged gender identity is also fragile and requires the repression of the awareness that the penis is only a substitute for what is lacking. In cultural studies extrapolations from Lacanian theory, this denial of lack is manifested in hyper-phallic images of masculinity. "It is only too easy to present the dominant male image which saturates our culture, from Westerns to Y-fronts, as one which portrays and appeals to men as active, tough, desiring, omnipotent. It seems inevitable that these ruling, invasive images of the 'male', with the 'female' as their subordinated object, form part of the construction of our identities" (p.89). However, this assertion of masculinity precludes other identifications and once again renders masculinity prescriptive. "The strain and instability of a masculinity which must forever remain tough, hard, and active, even in repose, as the object of our gaze, is almost comical" (p.89).

It is clear that the appeal of Lacanian theory for cultural studies lies in his interest in the realm of the symbolic and the role of signification. Segal argues that few cultural theorists engage with Lacanian theory in depth, rather applying his ideas at a fairly descriptive level. However, Lacan's interest in signification and language does provide a bridge to discourse theory.

Like Lacan, discourse theorists emphasize that masculinity and femininity refer neither to any collection of traits, nor to some set of stereotypical roles, but rather to the effects of discursive practices - conventional ways of conceiving and representing reality which serve to produce sexual difference in specific contexts of knowledge...Discourse analysis thus seeks to substitute for Lacan's universal and eternal symbolic order a less ambitious emphasis on historically specific discourses (Segal, 1990, ps. 92 and 93).

Over and above some of the criticisms of Lacan already alluded to, Segal's major problem with his theory lies in its omission of historical and material location. Lacanian psychoanalysis may explain how phallogentrism is internalized but it does not explain its origins. Whilst challenging biologically determinist views of gender acquisition, Lacan has been accused of a parallel linguistic determinism which loses sight of the social location of language; "language also interacts with other power relations in social life" (1990, p.91). Segal's harnessing of Lacanian readings of gender identification appears to encapsulate a truly socio-psychological perspective on masculinity.

'Masculinity' can only be illuminated through study of the relation of language and meanings to subjectivity and consciousness. In my view, however, what we need to explore is how meanings - especially the significance accorded to the phallus - intersect with the historically specific and changing power relations between men and women within the wider social structures and practices which produce them. Masculinity is more complex, though fortunately less abstract than Lacan would have us believe. Masculinity and femininity cannot be understood separately from the wider concept of gender, which I would define, along with Mary McIntosh, 'as the individual, cultural and institutional ways in which biological sex is given social existence in any particular context and period' (Segal, 1990, p.92).

5.3.5 Critical Commentary

Although a variety of flaws in specific aspects of psychodynamic theory have already been addressed, some general criticisms have been levelled at analytically based conceptualizations of gender. Whilst perhaps doing greater justice to subjective components of gender identification than socialization theory, almost all these psychodynamic perspectives carry within them a degree of determinism. Thus similar arguments about the neglect of human agency and contestation can be levelled at analytic perspectives. In addition, analytic theory has also failed to locate itself sufficiently within the sociopolitical context. Thus theoretical relationships tend to be presented as universal and a-historic. In addition, the fact that partisan interests are served by the presentation of reality and gender relations in particular forms, also tends to be ignored. For example Segal (cited in Edley and Wetherell, 1995), suggests that men's flight from femininity may arise "not because of the experience of an engulfing mother, but because they rightly perceive the association between femininity and powerlessness" (p.68), within patriarchally structured societies.

Despite these limitations, many analytic theorists have attempted to engage with the impact of social relations and have argued that there may be some value in distinguishing between the form and the content of theoretical propositions (Edley and Wetherell, 1995). Psychoanalytic postulates are embraced by much critical psychological theory, including discourse analysis, and appear to offer some invaluable insights in the interrogation of masculinity. "Psychoanalysis is seen as providing some of the intellectual tools to analyse masculinity and gender development, but these analyses will need to state their boundaries of applicability clearly" (ibid, p.69). It is to a greater comprehension of these boundaries of applicability that the discussion now turns in examining the historical and cultural location of masculinity/ties.

CHAPTER 6

MASCULINITY: HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

In examining masculinity from a psychological perspective it is difficult to do justice to the writings of theorists in related disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, history, philosophy; and cultural, religious and political studies. Yet all these disciplines have insights to contribute to the conceptualization of masculinity in different contexts over time. Edley and Wetherell (1995) and Segal (1990) have summarized some of these contributions, to some extent separating out cultural/historical findings from those pertaining to the social relations of class and gender. This chapter will employ the same broad divisions and serves to introduce the central findings in the area without much elaboration. The intention is to locate the theory on masculinity covered in the previous chapter broadly within a socio-political context. In addition, the chapter covers some of the discourse analysis research into masculinity.

6.1. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL OBSERVATIONS ON MASCULINITY

6.1.1 Historical Perspectives

Historically masculinity has taken different forms depending broadly on environmental demands and the process of civilization, with increasing focus on the development of knowledge and technology. Approaching “man through the ages” with the broadest brush strokes it is possible to characterise different aspects of masculinity. In his chapter “A Brief History of Manhood”, Keen (1992) invites the reader to “take a whirlwind tour through the museum of man and look at some of the most formative images of essential manhood and the conditions that evoked them” (p.89). He argues that these metaphors form a kind of bedrock for stereotypes of masculinity, each new historical formulation building on previous conceptualizations. Thus he begins with “Man as Hunter” (associated with physical strength and animal power) and progresses from there to “Man as Planter” (settled and located within a matriarchal culture), “Man as Warrior” (embracing conflict and domination), “Homo sapiens” (or the man of reason), “Dionysian man” (embracing passion), “Prophetic man” (with a transmoral conscience), “Man as the Image of God”

(related to willpower and renunciation), "Man as Power" (a central metaphor involving control and agency), "Scientific-technological Man" (harnessing natural resources and controlling through measurement), "The Self-made Man" (of even temperament and strong ego), "Psychological Man" (aware of the unconscious) and "Postmodern Man" (with an ironic, amoral stance to the world) (Keen, 1992, Chp.8). Whilst it is clear that there are historical and philosophical inconsistencies in Keen's spectrum, the categories he alludes to appear to have considerable resonance with aspects of the masculine psyche identified as common within contemporary observations. Historical forces appear to have left their residue in masculine archetypes still present in contemporary stereotypes. Two central themes within this archetypal journey appear to relate to domination; associated with "toughness, struggle and conquest" (Segal, 1994, p.104) and rationality; associated with lack of emotion, willpower and scientific progress.

Hoch's (1979) work on historical trends pertaining to masculinity adds a further dimension. He suggests that two broad trends in the enactment of masculinity can be identified over the last 3000 years of Western history. "On the one hand, there is an identity which Hoch calls the Puritan; a 'hard working, hard fighting hero who adheres to a production ethic of duty before pleasure'. Alternating with the Puritan is a very different form of masculinity which Hoch labels the Playboy. He is much more of an aristocratic figure, one 'who lives according to the ethic of leisure and sensual indulgence' (p.118)" (in Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.136). These two types of masculinity have manifested at different historical periods to differing degrees, at times co-existing in different class or social groups. However, Edley and Wetherell argue that although useful, Hoch's conceptualization is a very over-simplified version of historical masculinity. Rotundo (1987) is viewed as offering a more complex model in his categorisations of "The 'Masculine Achiever', 'Christian Gentleman' and the 'Masculine Primitive'" (cited in Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.139). Each of these blueprints for masculinity placed differential emphasis on self-advancement, self-control and physical strength, and echo some of the themes identified in Keen's work. However, once again these broad categorisations of masculinity are flawed by virtue of their very breadth. What they do point to are common historical threads which are likely to be incorporated into masculine ideology and cultural representations.

Embracing a more rigorous and limited historical exploration, Western historians have begun to locate the history of modern conceptualizations of gender within the nineteenth century: "the crucible in which our contemporary understandings of masculinity and femininity were forged" (Kimmel quoted in Segal, 1990, p.104). During this period there has been considerable vacillation between images of men involving physical strength, endurance and prowess and alternative models of intellect, scholarship and emotional fortitude and integrity. Colonialist and imperialist ideologies also supported representations of masculinity involving, superiority, subjugation and dominance; both of a physical and moral nature. Segal links both the glorification of a kind of male heroism associated with mastering untamed continents (frontiersmen) and the appeal of fascism, (involving aggression, discipline and authoritarianism) to these imperialist and nationalist trends in history. The industrial revolution and the introduction of capitalism have also affected portrayals of masculinity. Some authors (Edley and Wetherell, 1995; Hodson, 1984) have pointed out that more technologically sophisticated societies have little need of the physically superior strength embodied in men and that even wars are now fought at an increasingly technological level. Such developments, and the increasing participation of women in the workplace (the public domain), have led to considerable contestation of what has traditionally been considered masculine. This contestation has been recognised in feminist literature and underpins much of masculine crisis theory (Brittan, 1989; Hodson, 1984; O'Neil in Solomon and Levy, 1982).

Historically then, a number of key trends have been identified in relation to portrayals and embodiments of masculinity. While pointing to the diversity of models and roles available, and their interdependence with historical forces and events, it is also evident that common strands exist. It is also quite clear that many of these strands underpin current masculine stereotypes. For example, the motif of rational man, or the "Christian Gentleman" still exists in the form of prohibitions on emotional expression and reward for emotional restraint, the prizing of reason over feeling or intuition. In fact, Sattel (cited in Balswick, in Solomon and Levy, 1982) argues that "to wield power effectively, one must convince others that one's decisions are based upon reason and not emotion" (p.137), and that male inexpressiveness may be linked to this prerequisite for power. If this is the case, this historical masculine attribute still appears to carry great weight.

6.1.2 Cultural Perspectives

Turning to culture, the work of Gilmore (1990), an anthropologist, has been considered central in contemporary explorations of masculinity. Gilmore considers his analysis a functionalist one based in both individual psychological theory and materialist perspectives: "taking into account the way that intrapsychic dynamics relate to the social organization of production" (1990, p.3). His study of a vast range of cultures has lead him to an interest in what he perceives to be a ubiquitous (if not universal) tendency in the "concepts, symbolizations and exhortations of masculinity" (p.3) across cultures. Gilmore argues that in almost every culture, regardless of their gender role definitions and degree of aggression, masculinity is a status which has to be achieved at far greater cost than femininity. Indeed in many cases where femininity can be assumed to be acquired as a natural process of maturation, manhood involves the participation in social rituals or rites of passage which are much more strictly prescribed. Masculinity represents the *achievement* of gender identity rather than its assumption. Gilmore cites numerous examples of manhood initiation rites including harsh physical punishment, combat, endurance, circumcision, skills testing and renunciation. Interestingly, these rites of passage appear to reflect the kinds of themes identified as associated with masculinity in the historical literature. Even in so-called civilized, Western, middle class societies, Gilmore argues that rites of passage are present in the form of school and college initiation practices, and expectations placed on demonstrations of virility in relation to sport and sexual prowess.

Gilmore questions the origins of what he perceives to be a remarkably similar pattern of injunctions concerning masculinity across cultures. He questions both radical feminist and Marxist explanations denouncing gender oppression as a form of exploitation; and biologically and psychologically reductionist theories which posit essentialist features. Instead he turns to post-Freudian theory, amplifying some of the object relations conceptualization that has been covered already. Essentially he argues that it is the universality of the process of dis-identification from the mother which the boy child must negotiate, that results in the kind of cultural reinforcement of this separation enacted in male initiation rituals. These rituals are about shoring up individual and social defences against the temptation towards more primitive identification with the mother, or the female. "The special problem that the boy faces at this point is in overcoming the previous

sense of unity with the mother in order to achieve an independent identity defined by his culture as masculine - an effort functionally equivalent not only to psychic separation but also to creating an autonomous public persona" (Gilmore, 1990, p.27). For Gilmore the cultural emphasis on the acquisition of masculinity is located in the fear of regression related to the early symbiotic pull of relatedness to the mother. For men, the achievement of an autonomous identity is predicated on separation, (an idea reinforced by Lacanian theory). Consequently this separation is vital to a social existence which requires the attainment of independent selfhood. This accounts for the commonality in "manhood ideologies", both as intrapsychic formations and as "collective representations that are institutionalized as guiding images in most societies" (p.29).

Although it could be argued that Gilmore's formulation does not go far enough in questioning why independent selfhood and the need for gender differentiation are so highly valued in most societies, his theoretical formulation is fascinating in accounting for the prevalence of gender patterns. His theory also adds considerable weight to aspects of analytic theory in demonstrating the commonality of such practices across societies and offering empirical evidence for the existence of such intrapsychic conflicts. From a cultural perspective, his interrogation of masculinity allows for an appreciation of the ubiquity of masculine ideology, identifying a central core despite the different cultural forms this may take. In terms of the present study, Gilmore's formulation is particularly useful in pointing to the precarious or hard won achievement of masculinity, rendering it a status to be constantly reaffirmed rather than assumed. This active project of continually being called upon to demonstrate masculinity may lead men to perceive situations challenging masculinity as particularly threatening. The fear of regression to a more feminine identification carries with it both social censure and personal fears about identity achievement and maintenance. These risks are likely to be perceived and heightened in situations of traumatic stress. Thus further weight is added to the proposal that the intersection of masculinity and trauma warrants exploration.

6.2 GENDER, RACE AND CLASS

Continuing with some elaboration of the social location of masculinity, and attempting to do justice to the concept of *masculinities*, the discussion now turns to the interface between

structural relations in society and masculinity. The notion of "hegemonic masculinity" referred to in the introduction to chapter five relates to the understanding that some forms of masculinity enjoy greater legitimacy than others. Thus hegemonic masculinity draws its status not only from cross-gender relations but also within gender categories. "This hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to subordinated masculinities as well as to subordinated women. It presents a public model of masculinity which may not be what most men are, but is very generally a model which is consented to" (Ramazanoglu, 1992, p.343). It is generally agreed that hegemonic masculinity is conflated with middle class, heterosexual, white masculinity. Thus ascendant/dominant views of masculinity tend to be located within the power differentials of patriarchy, capitalism and racism. Critical theorists influenced by Marxist and feminist orientations place considerable "emphasis on the close connections between expressions of masculinity and power relations in broader society" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.96). In order to appreciate these perspectives it may be useful to digress briefly into some exploration of the concept of power, since in locating masculinity within social relations one is essentially investigating the interface between different forms of power, gendered power being only one dimension amongst others.

6.2.1 Power: Its Forms and Manifestations

The term "power" has already been used with some frequency in this discussion of masculinity, as it is generally in the literature. The word has multiple colloquial connotations, however as a central dimension of masculinity, it may be useful to give some coherence to its usage in this context. "Power" carries both psychological and structural connotations. Thus it is possible to recognize power as both personal and political, carrying commonalities and divergence in meaning. (The understanding of power discussed here excludes conceptualizations of "productive power" and tends to focus on repressive or material forms of power.)

Centrally concerned with the operation of power in gender relations, Lipman-Blumen (1984) offers a definition of power which appears to straddle both domains:

we shall use power to mean the process whereby individuals or groups gain or maintain the capacity to impose their will upon others, to have their way recurrently, despite implicit or explicit opposition, through invoking or

threatening punishment, as well as offering or withholding rewards. When power is firmly established, the explicit use of punishments or rewards is hardly necessary. The knowledge that one controls such social resources is usually sufficient to evoke compliance from the less powerful (Lipman-Blumen, 1984, p.60).

Within this definition rests the inherent notion that power is defined relationally, i.e., by asserting dominance over somebody/something and that power arises out of controlling desired resources. There is also reference to the fact that control can be exercised at an overtly repressive structural level or at a more implicit ideological level. In capitalist societies access to resources is controlled by those who control production and in most racially divided societies, white people also tend to control resource access. Until very recently, South Africa was characterised by a form of racial capitalism in which race and class privilege tended to co-exist. Whilst there is considerable alteration in social relations post the first democratic elections of 1994, the race and class stratification of the past still tends to predominate over other formations.

Continuing with an elaboration of power, it is also important to understand power as a psychological construct. Power in psychological terms is very much bound up with the notion of control: "the possession of control, authority or influence over others or events" (Steinberg, 1993, p.135). "With power a person can exert control over circumstances, give direction, or resist the unwanted influence of others; with power an individual can make decisions and compel obedience; with power a person can obtain what he or she wants" (ibid, p.135). Not only is this sense of control outwardly directed, it is also connected to an inner sense of efficacy and consequently to self-esteem: "the person who can wield power successfully will possess higher self-esteem than the person who is powerless" (p.136). Steinberg argues that in American society (as in many others) "the achievement of power is one of the defining characteristics of the masculine persona", and that: "failure to appear powerful can be a source of great anxiety" (ps. 136 and 137). Keen (1992) reiterates the importance of power as a leitmotif in the psychic construction of masculinity. "Arguably the very confused notion of 'power' has been the central metaphor that has most dominated the psyche of men during the last several centuries. Consider the various kinds of power men sought as the defining characteristic of their existence: muscle power, political power, sexual power (potency), military power, firepower, financial power, the power of knowledge, the power of positive thinking, personal power" (p.103). In addition he confirms: "By definition they are able to feel their manhood only when they have the ability to make things happen, only when

they can exert control over events, over themselves, over women" (p. 103). As an addendum one could add that control over other men may also be significant. Thus in the area of the psychological, power appears to be strongly associated with active mastery and control. These dimensions of psychological functioning seem to be crucially associated with masculinity. However, as was substantively argued in the first two chapters, trauma is quintessentially associated with the experience of powerlessness, helplessness and loss of control. The exercise of power tends to be precluded when confronted by overwhelming threat and in this respect masculinity is subjugated in the face of survival. Power and powerlessness are central themes in the exploration of masculinity and victimization.

When gender power is enhanced by class and race privilege, the assumption of a masculine identity which embraces expectations of control, mastery and domination is more likely. White, middle class, South African men have been in a position to incorporate this kind of exercise of power into their sense of identity, although they have done this to differing degrees depending on a range of further factors. The manner in which power differentials affect interpretations of masculinity across race and class is now returned to briefly.

6.2.2 Class Relations and Masculinity

By implication middle class masculinity has already been addressed throughout the chapter. There have however, been some specific observations about broad differences in the manner in which masculinity is interpreted in working class and middle class culture. Tolson (1977) and Seidler's (1989) work in this area has highlighted the "complex of experiences based on the splits, divisions, specialisations and alienation which they see as intrinsic to modern industrial life. Capitalist production is organised around a series of divisions between home and work, between work and leisure, private life and public life" (cited in Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.101). Divisions are thus created between people within the work force and between aspects of everyday life. The aspects of masculinity which capitalism appears to promote are those related to competition and acquisition of power and influence. Middle class men become to a large extent identified with their job status and carry strong injunctions to discipline themselves in this regard. "The bureaucratic

masculinity linked to a middle-class work culture, ...emphasises duty and self-discipline. It is a more lonely inner struggle to achieve and assert one's will and authority over others" (Segal, 1990, p.95).

Working class culture calls for a different emphasis in masculinity, "directed towards physical toughness, endurance and male-bonding" (Segal, 1990, p.94). Working class men also tend to be more emotionally inarticulate and more male oriented in their social relations. Related to their subordinated worker status Tolson argues that "working class men are more likely to adopt, as compensation, an exaggerated masculine culture within the workplace, a language of brotherhood, a chauvinistic sexuality, blatant machismo, and to invest in forms of resistance which involve direct confrontation with authority" (cited in Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.105). Thus both class positions though somewhat grossly characterised, call for prescribed expressions of masculinity which invite different interpretations of similar injunctions. Many of the features described as characterising working class masculinity are also present in portrayals of black youth culture, although racism carries with it additional and alternate connotations.

6.2.3 Race and Masculinity

Once again, assuming that most literature on masculinity is based in the experience of white men, it is important to briefly outline some of the features which appear to differentiate black men from white in their expression of masculinity. Hoch's extended text, "White Hero, Black Beast" (1979) examines the inter-relationship between masculinity and race in considerable depth. His analysis is located within both feminist and Marxist theory. He links the origins of racism to the initiation of status distinctions in society based in models of conqueror versus conquered, predicated initially on combat between societies. "Racism thus begins as an assertion of masculinity - the claim that the superior warrior manhood of the conquerors justifies their economic exploitation of the conquered" (Hoch, 1979, p.115). Along with this sense of might-won superiority there is an assumption of a kind of godlike, moral superiority. Thus the conquered (or slave equivalents) are seen as a source of both physical/strategic inferiority and the stigma of being more primitive or less civilised. Thus racial, international, and even interclass conflicts thus take on some overtones of a struggle for masculinity justified ideologically in terms of every in-group male's white heroic

need to assert his dominance in work and war - as well as defend 'his' women, the white goddesses of civilisation, against the barbarian beasts who are, by definition, the enemy (not only of his group, but of civilisation itself)" (ibid, p.116). Whilst critics have questioned the logical connections of aspects of Hoch's argument, his elaboration on assumptions of superiority in racism offers some insight into these issues.

Linked to the notion of a kind of moral superiority of white over black culture (associated with the primitive), other writers have pointed to the childlike status often imposed on black men. "The fact that black men were never really accepted as men was indicated by the tendency of whites to refer to them as 'boys' (Wallace, 1979)" (Edley and Wetherell, 1995, p.150). Although, much of the writing on black men and racism has been based in America, this phenomenon of referring to black men as boys was certainly common in South African Apartheid society. "The first 'fact' about the 'black man' which the white man knew was that he was not really a man at all - a child rather than an adult, a body not a mind" (Segal, 1990, p.169). Thus black men had the added difficulty of differentiating themselves from a child identity as well as from a female identity, in negotiating their manhood.

In addition to associations with children, blackness also carried connotations of hypersexuality, sensuality and licentiousness. Segal cites Kovel (1988) and Greene (1948) as postulating that these associations to "blackness" represented the projection of the id or instinct life into other race groups who were then perceived as dangerous. "The image of Africa as dark and malevolent, primitive and unchanging is with us still" (Segal, 1990, p.174). Such perceptions were rooted in colonial discourses but appear to resonate with current stereotypes.

In contemporary examinations and portrayals of black masculinity there are a multitude of complex threads. There is a considerable body of literature asserting that young black men represent an "at risk" population, evidenced for example in alarmingly high homicide rates (Segal, 1990, p.185). There is debate about whether this stems from an emasculation or a hyper-masculation, or a combination of the two. Some writers have argued that because of their devalued racial status black men are compelled to adopt a masculine identity which hyperbolizes machismo. However, black feminist writers have been concerned that such arguments justify

forms of sexism which are every bit as problematic in terms of gender relations. "Black masculinity is contradictory because, while it carries some elements of power, dominance and authority, it is also a subordinated form of masculinity which conflicts with a 'normative definition of masculinity' (Mercer & Julien, 1988). Macho attitudes develop in response to the dominant definitions of masculinity as a form of negative resistance to white men, while oppressive of women and children" (Ramazanoglu, 1992, p.342). Black men, particularly young black men, "are stereotyped as feckless, violent, criminal, and oversexed and dangerous" (ibid, p.342).

It is clear that masculinities are also established in relation to each other. In some respects white masculinity is defined in terms of its differentiation from a black masculinity characterised by the childlike, the primitive, the beastly, the nakedly aggressive and the hypersexual. Although, like other ideological constructions, these characterisations are subject to ongoing contestation, the contestation takes place against this backdrop of colonialism and racial oppression. In her survey of "Masculinity and Feminism", Ramazanoglu (1992) observes that the study of masculinity lags behind that of femininity as interrogated by feminism. One important gap lies in the area of the development of a greater appreciation of forms of masculinity lying outside the scope of hegemonic masculinity.

If internationally there is a paucity of literature relating to masculinity and race and class, there is virtually no literature available on forms of masculinity pertinent to the different experiences of South African men. What literature there is tends to be anthropological and sociological, concerned with roles rather than subjective experience. However, wherever possible extrapolations from other contexts have been made to the South African context within the course of the discussion. Given the commonalities in experience between white, middle class, English speaking men living in capitalist economies in the Western world, it can be assumed that the bulk of the literature covered in this chapter has relevance for the present sample. However, the interrogation of the data is informed by an awareness that there may be some particularly South African characteristics to these men's experiences.

Interestingly some of the little South African psychological research into masculinity that has been conducted has been framed within a discourse analytic paradigm. Although much of the subject

matter pertaining to masculinity covered thus far has considerable relevance for constructing theoretical perspectives from which to reveal discourses of masculinity, the following section of the chapter discusses discourse analytically based research specifically.

6.3 MASCUINITY AND DISCOURSE ANALYSES

Given that masculinity is a fairly recent topic of interest and that discourse analysis is a new methodology in psychology, there is not an extensive range of research into masculinity using this method. It is perhaps important to distinguish between discourses of masculinity and discourses of men, or male discourses. Most of the studies in the area have tended to study the conversations of men on issues related to their identity, role and structure. In this sense they have interrogated *men's* discourses on *masculinity*. However, it is important to note that women can also engage in discourse about masculinity, the generic category of masculinity exists out there in social interaction, not necessarily tied to sex or gender. Different subjects may interpret or be interpreted by discourses of masculinity differently, as demonstrated in their language and behaviour. Thus it is important to be cautious about assuming the relationship between men and masculinity in analysing their discourse. As has already been emphasized, predominant discourses about masculinity tend to reflect hegemonic masculinity or the dominant ideology (Brittan, 1989; Donaldson, 1996) and may operate to disenfranchise alternative interpretations of masculinity. The subject positions of the persons producing discourse will influence the degree to which they engage with dominant and subjugated versions of masculinity. In reality, it seems valid to argue that men will reflect predominant discourses of masculinity more strongly than women in their engagement with the world, since this is the identity with which they are most familiar. Thus the exploration of masculinity discourses through the products of men, as in the interviews which form the data base for this study, has considerable validity. However, it is important to remain cognisant of the distinction between the subjects and the discourse.

Edley and Wetherell (1995) who have conducted some of the discourse research in the area of masculinity, also point to the complex relationship between constructing and being constructed by discourses. Referring to their chapter on the cultural domination of men, they write: "In this chapter we have seen masculinities described as a collection of 'theories' which are handed down

from one generation to the next. Men, it is argued, come to imagine themselves through these different discourses; in a sense they are 'told' by them. Yet, at the same time men are also the authors of these narratives. It is they who decide what the meaning of masculinity shall be" (p.168). Throughout history there has been contestation between and across societies about which versions of the concept of masculinity gain prominence. An important question in studying models of masculinity is "who stands to benefit from a particular formulation? Who does it privilege and who(else) does it serve to marginalize or degrade?" (ibid, p.168). Studies of men's discourse on particular topics have sought to identify both the "constellations of theories" or discourses of masculinity, and the social and political interests they reflect and serve.

Most of the research into masculine discourses has focussed on the issue of sexuality and sexual practices, reinforcing the notion that this aspect of men's identity is central, but also precluding the exploration of other important aspects of masculine identity. Studies by Hollway (1983; 1984; 1989;) (cited in Edley and Wetherell, 1995); Kottler and Swartz, (1995); and Miles (1992); have investigated men's discourses related to intimacy and sexual expression, sexual harassment, safe sex negotiation, and sexual practices more generally. Broadly speaking these studies have found allusions to notions of entitlement, possession and appeals to the "natural" sex drive of men.

6.3.1 South African Research

Adopting an alternative focus, a study by Kaminer and Dixon (1995) analysed the conversations of white South African men in a same sex group about drinking behaviour. Their overarching finding was that men adopted two key positions in discussing such alcohol use, an *essentialist* position which posited that such practices are natural, and a *normative* position which framed such behaviour as common practice. Engaging in drinking considerable amounts of alcohol is portrayed as part of being a man, an assertion often supported by aggressive humour. By implication men who do not participate in these practices are 'not normal' and tend to be labelled pejoratively. "The respondents' use of the categories 'nerdish', 'heavy religious guys' and 'queer' suggest that hegemonic masculinity is something which must be achieved; it is not automatically conferred on all men" (Kaminer and Dixon, 1995, p.173). Thus normative masculinity is defined both in relation to what is not feminine and against alternative interpretations of masculinity.

"This suggests that masculinity is constantly reconstituting itself by way of contrast, a process which occurs largely through language" (ibid, p.173). Kaminer and Dixon (1995) on the basis of this exploratory study confirm: "Through the *essentialist* and *normative masculinity* repertoires, real-seeming versions of masculinity are constructed" (p.173). These two discourses are identified as central in underpinning traditional versions of masculinity.

In a study focussed on men's ideas about gender more broadly, and therefore of greater relevance to the present research focus, Harris, Lea and Foster (1995) also investigated the discourses of South African white male academics and students in same sex focus groups. Based largely on an analysis of the rhetorical manoeuvres employed by men in these groups they identified two similar features to Kaminer and Dixon. Prevalent in discussions of gender roles and interaction, were discourses relating to "gender as social norm" (normative) and "gender roles as natural" (essentialist) (ps.176 and 177). Harris et al (1995) argue that the two discourses are largely inter-supportive and represent different versions of essentialism, the one based in biology and the other in historical/cultural practices. These two discursive positions appear to mirror what Clatterbaugh refers to as biological and moral conservatism (1990, p.9), the central positions which most pro-feminist and social constructionist perspectives seek to challenge. "Conservatism...As the most influential perspective in both nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ...constitutes the legacy from which other perspectives either borrow ideas or try to distance themselves" (ibid, p.15). It is noteworthy that this contemporary South African research still identifies these discourses as prevalent. In commenting on their findings Harris et al (1995) make reference to the apparent ubiquity of such discourses on masculinity and their relationship to femininity. "In conclusion, it is clear that, in the context of men's only talk, the explanations of gender and gender interactions are primarily stable and supportive of traditional patriarchal perspectives of the world. That this was the case in the speech of university students and graduates, traditionally considered progressive, is particularly worrying and points to a linguistic resource shared by men in general rather than some men to the exclusion of others" (p.182). Thus their research seems to support the notion of a hegemonic version of masculinity.

In scanning the discourse analytic research orientated towards masculinity it is interesting to note that the focus has been largely on men positioned in relation to women (rather than other men)

and in relation to their structural power and its exercise. The present research thus offers a fresh focus on discourses of masculinity by almost inverting the subject of study. What are the discourses of men as victims, (occupying the oppressed position), as opposed to the discourses of men in positions of assumed dominance and control (occupying the oppressor position)? One text that appears to approach the construction of masculinity from a similar angle, i.e., in terms of divergence from the norm, is Silverman's "Male Subjectivity at the Margins" (1992).

6.3.2 Silverman's Contribution

Located within a cultural studies perspective, the discursive material which Silverman analyses is the imagery and dialogue of the cinema, represented in several key films. Her theoretical base is Marxist and Lacanian, substantiating her analysis of ideological forms and conceptual representations of the "phallus" and its absence. In essence her concern is to counter the hold of what she terms the 'dominant fiction' of masculinity, by revealing its reversals and limitations. The marginalised masculine identities she chooses to illustrate her argument include homosexuality, fetishism, masochism and war traumatised men. The examination of masculinity through these lenses allows for "dismantling the images and undoing the projections and disavowals through which phallic identification is enabled" (1992, p.51). Simply expressed, the examination of these portrayals of non-dominant versions of masculinity corresponds to the acknowledgement of lack which is central to Lacanian theory. The phallus represented in the dominant fiction of masculinity, can only ever represent a substitute for the lack, although it may be taken for the essence. Silverman's interrogation of a range of men's subject positions illustrated in popular film illuminates this vulnerability. It is in the focus on war trauma that her text carries some resonance for the present study.

Silverman writes: "Finally, history may manifest itself in so traumatic and unassimilable a guise that it temporarily dislocates penis from phallus, or renders null and void the other elements of the dominant fiction with which it is closely imbricated" (1992, p.47). She draws on Freud's description of war trauma in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" and other papers, and embraces the notions of psychic rupture, repetition compulsion, the need for mastery and the existence of the death drive. She also views these psychological processes as interfacing in particular ways with

the construct of masculinity. "Masculinity is particularly vulnerable to the unbinding effects of the death drive because of its ideological alignment with mastery. The normative male ego is necessarily fortified against any knowledge of the void upon which it rests, and as its insistence upon an unimpaired bodily 'envelope' would suggest, fiercely protective of its coherence" (p. 61). In addition, she argues "It is not surprising, then, that when the male subject is brought into a traumatic encounter with lack, as in the situation of war, he often experiences it as the impairment of his anatomical masculinity. What is really at issue, though, is a psychic disintegration - the disintegration, that is, of a bound and armoured ego, predicated upon the illusion of coherence and control" (62). Here is a rich reinforcement of the central interest of this study. However, there are important differences in emphasis.

Silverman is interested in the portrayal of war trauma in film rather than its existence in experience. Her focus is on culture and its interrogation, rather than on the clinical needs of the individual. Thus her analysis is geared towards uncovering a social facade or construction rather than its interpretation in the individual psyches of men. From this perspective her focus on war, the collective site of traumatization, is quite different from the present focus on criminal victimization of the individual. Whilst Silverman's theoretical observations and justifications provide further focussed substantiation for the present project, her endeavour is a very different one and the main body of her text of little further relevance to the understanding of the experiences of individual male victims. Nevertheless, it is exciting to note parallel explorations of masculinity through the lens of inversion, in other bodies of work such as this.

Having addressed some of the central discursive analyses of masculinity, a summary of the key theoretical issues pertaining to masculinity is provided. Given the scope of material covered in chapters five and six it seemed important to extract the most significant features which appeared to characterise dominant conceptualizations of masculinity.

6.4 THE MASCULINE MYSTIQUE ENCAPSULATED IN DISCOURSE

Drawing upon the understanding of discourse as "a structure of knowledge" (Henriques, Hollway, Unwin, Venn and Walkerdine, 1984; Macdonell, 1986; cited in Kottler and Swartz,

1995, p.184), or a "pattern of communication, reflecting a set of attitudes, meanings and beliefs" (Kottler and Swartz, 1995, p.184), it is possible to identify a range of discourses pertaining to masculinity. The author would argue that over and above the kind of overarching discourses of gender represented in essentialist and naturalist positions, there are a number of sub or lower order discourses which can be identified within hegemonic versions of masculinity. A summary of these subsidiary discourses is now presented with the intention of identifying the central subject positions into which men are interpolated. In a sense this summary serves to describe those constructs most commonly and intensely associated with masculinity throughout the body of literature reviewed. These constructs, related to commonly held understandings of masculinity, could be variously termed stereotypes or schemata. In addition, it is argued that at times these constructs may take the form of a discourse, encompassing a powerful set of related associations which operate to interpret reality in terms of vested interests. It is clear that masculinity as an overarching category for describing human functioning carries particular associations in terms of an hierarchical construction of social relations. The category of masculinity is underpinned by a range of sub-constructs which co-constitute "Masculinity". It is these foundational constructs which are elucidated in summary form. Each construct appears vital to the construction of masculinity and in this sense they could be considered the lynchpins of masculine identity. Whilst there may be some overlap between dimensions, and mutually sustaining relationships, each aspect encapsulates a core attribute of the category. The central features of masculinity as defined within this study incorporate the following :

- **The exercise of power:** entailing domination of self, others and the environment. This is closely tied to:
- **The demonstration of control:** pertaining also to control over others and the environment, but also importantly to control over one's own emotions and impulses.
- **Emotional inexpressiveness:** whereby emotional experience and display is restricted primarily to aggression and anger. Avoidance of emotions associated with fear, helplessness and vulnerability particularly.
- **Independence/Avoidance of Dependence:** involving self-sufficiency and problem solving in isolation. Precludes physical and emotional dependency.
- **Rationality:** demonstrated in detached engagement with the world from an 'objective' stance

precluding irrational and regressive behaviour.

- **Toughness/Hardiness:** in both physical and emotional terms associated with endurance, courage and stoicism, and possibly even self-sacrifice.
- **Competitiveness:** in relation to other men particularly. Connected to achieving work and social status.
- **Aggression:** willingness to engage in conflictual or combative situations at both a physical and intellectual level.
- **Active engagement with the world:** involving energy, initiating and proactivity as opposed to passivity and responding or following.

In addition masculinity involves:

- **Rejection of the feminine:** involving dis-identification with a gamut of feminine stereotypes including many of those identified above as well as those associated with mothering, such as nurturing and interpersonal attunement.
- **Active and constant demonstration of such:** since masculinity has to be achieved rather than assumed.
- **Domination over, and rejection of, disenfranchised men:** such as gay, black, effeminate and feminist men.

In analysing the reflections of men upon their experiences of traumatization and subsequent adjustment, these sub-constructs will serve as useful markers in highlighting the operation of masculinist discourses. There are some interesting overlaps with some of McCann and Pearlman's categories (e.g., those pertaining to power, independence and dependancy), suggesting that several of these dimensions are likely to centrally interface with psychological aspects of trauma adjustment. However, the central difficulty for masculinity with reference to trauma is hypothesized in this thesis to lie in its juxtaposition to victimization, the final theoretical area to be addressed.

CHAPTER 7

CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION: HISTORY, DEFINITION, LOCATION AND IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSES

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Having examined the central literature pertaining to the cognitive adjustment to exposure to trauma from both an individual and social psychological perspective, and having explored theoretical perspectives on masculinity, this chapter focuses on the population of crime victims. In addition to outlining some of the commonalities in occupying the subject position of victim, the chapter addresses the specific issue of criminal victimization. The following chapter then covers what little research exists on gender differences in victims' responses to traumatic stressors with a particular focus on studies reflecting a concern with male victims.

To some extent much of the material pertaining to the social construction of victimization has been covered within the social psychological literature on traumatic stress. Thus, for example, attribution research and Lerner's "Just World Theory" reflect important aspects of how victims are viewed within a general social framework. Implicit in these theoretical positions is the understanding that victimization in many cases tends to be construed pejoratively with associations of at best pity, and at worst blame and stigmatization. These perspectives will not be re-examined but should serve as a backdrop against which the research pertaining to the impact of criminal victimization in particular is elaborated. In addition, the introduction of a criminological perspective offers further alternative evidence of the difficulties inherent in the location of victims in social discourse. The chapter reflects both conceptual debates and the findings of empirical research, and integrates these perspectives.

7.2 VICTIMOLOGY

7.2.1 Conventional Perspectives

The field of "Victimology" is a relatively recent outgrowth of Criminology and reflects its location

at the interface between the legal and sociological disciplines. There appears to have been little engagement of psychology in the victimology field and emphasis seems to be placed on identifying broad sociological trends in patterns of victimization, for example the relationship between victim and offender. Other demographic features such as race, class position and geographical location have also been researched, including gender. However, gender tends to have been an under-researched variable (Stanko, 1995a). Intervention needs within criminology are usually addressed at the level of social policy reform, or by the disciplines of psychiatry or social work at the level of individual offenders. Yet again there appears to be little engagement between the body of theory relating to victimology and the social psychological literature on victimization, reflecting disciplinary splits and differences of emphasis.

The field of criminology has historically been overwhelmingly focussed on the perpetrators of crime, i.e., on the "doers" (Barkas, 1979; Newburn and Stanko, in Newburn and Stanko, 1994; Reckless, 1973). However, there was initial interest in victims in the early 1940s with increasing recognition of the position of the victim since the 1970s giving rise to the full blown development of the field of victimology (Schafer, 1968). "The term 'victimology' was first used in the late 1940s by Frederic Wertham" (Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994, p.154). The origin of the interest in victims within criminology was essentially conservative and is centrally associated with the work of Von Hentig (1948), Benjamin Mendelsohn (1937) and Wolfgang (1958) (cited in Barkas, 1979, and Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994). These victim theorists argued essentially that many crimes were victim precipitated and placed considerable responsibility on the victim for his or her own suffering. In its most extreme form this vilifying of the victim led to a reversal of roles in which the victim became viewed as the original perpetrator of the crime. In more moderate forms this theorising, designed to contribute to some master perspective from which to understand criminal acts, postulated an interactional pattern between victim and offender. "Over the years this relationship has been described variously as the 'penal couple', 'the duet frame of crime', and 'the victim-precipitated homicide'" (Barkas, 1979, p.30). Such perspectives tended to justify the stigmatization of groups of 'potential victims' such as women and minorities, and also to reinforce a "Just World" perspective which suggested that people only became victimized if they invited this in some way and consequently got what they deserved. Although these victim blaming perspectives have lost favour, residues of this notion

persist in contemporary responses to victims. As recently as 1973 a chapter in Reckless' text on criminology subscribes to the notion that criminology "is trying to find ways of identifying what kind of persons become victims of what kind of offenses, discovering the role the victim played in the offense, and postulating explanations of victim involvement" (p.215).

Alternative formulations of patterns of victimization such as the "conventional criminology" or "lifestyle" perspectives, while adopting a more benign stance, have tended to oversimplify dynamics inherent in such situations (Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994). These perspectives, based on survey data, postulated that exposure to potentially victimizing situations corresponded with particular groups of people's daily activities thus placing them at greater risk. For example, children walking to school unaccompanied because of parental circumstances might be more at risk for sexual assaults.

Whilst this constituted a significant advance on the work of von Hentig, its dependence upon survey methodologies meant that such an approach failed (indeed was unable) to take account of those structural constraints which were not easily observable or measurable. Furthermore, in its concentration on the public domain and its avoidance of the private, it merely reinforced conventional views of victimization and through its policy emphasis on individual lifestyle engaged in, at least implicitly, victim-blaming once more (Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994, p.155).

Peterson and Seligman confirm the limitations of victimology's survey based approach: "Many studies have employed victim surveys, which are plagued by sampling and reporting difficulties and provide little insight into the psychological processes involved in victimization" (1983, p.113).

7.2.2 Critical Perspectives

More recently there has been the development of a "feminist criminology" arising particularly out of a concern with sexual violence and its gender base. However, feminist perspectives have challenged criminology more generally, for example, arguing that survey based theoretical perspectives failed to do justice to experiential dimensions of victimisation or to uncover power relations inherent in most such encounters. Newburn and Stanko also argue that the recognition of particular actions or encounters as criminal, is historically and culturally based (in Newburn and

Stanko, 1994), as illustrated in the condonation versus condemnation of wife beating at different sociohistoric junctures (Dobash and Dobash, 1979). Two related critical perspectives are exemplified in the "radical victimology perspective" (McShane and Williams, 1992) and the "Left realist perspective" (Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994). Although differing in emphasis, both these perspectives are concerned with the fact that the specific individual/victim's position and needs may not be fully recognized when subsumed within the operation of the criminal justice system. Victims may experience their treatment as impersonal and alienating within legalistic criminological models.

Radical victimology asserts that the position of victim has been usurped by the state to serve largely ideological and political functions. Since the introduction of a formal legal system the role of the victim has become diminished (Schafer, 1968). "In addition to being banished from a major role in the criminal process, victims lost the important right to determine the essence of a transgression and the state began to use law to define offenses independent of the victim's sense of harm" (McShane and Williams, 1992, p.260). Victims thus came to occupy a role status, that of "victim" which carried legalistic rather than personal connotations. Furthermore the victim's role became modified "from a person who has been harmed in some way to one who provides emotional credibility to the prosecution" (ibid, p.260). For example, rape survivors are viewed as witnesses for the state rather than as the wronged party in criminal as opposed to civil court cases. Barkas confirms that previous systems of punishment and retribution (private law) have been replaced by legal substitutes (public law). "This was the turning point for victim and criminal alike, for the criminal forfeited the opportunity to make a private peace with the victim or his relatives. Crime became a public affair and the victim could neither punish the criminal nor absolve him of guilt" (Barkas, 1979, p.176). This transition from private to public law while carrying certain advantages also seems to have led to a degree of objectification of victims and a more impersonal censure of transgression.

Whilst this aspect of critique is directed largely at the position of the victim who has entered the criminal justice system, McShane and Williams argue that legal perspectives on victimization illustrate a broader social bias, depicting crime within a middle-class frame. "Removed from the reality of crime as an endemic feature of American life, most middle-class citizens can only

understand crime and their own victimization, as irrational senseless phenomena" (1992, p. 261). These perceptions of crime adhere to the assumption of a sharp dichotomy between victim and offender with each party characterised in contrast to the other. It is assumed that victim and offender cannot share characteristics, obscuring the complexity of interpersonal violence and social conflict. "From this perspective, our popular conception of victims is derived from a simplistic middle-class framework where all victims are innocent characters in a morality play" (ibid, ps.261 and 262). "In the ideal, an offender must partake of an image that exemplifies evil and, conversely, the victim must exemplify moral purity" (ibid, p.263). The historical transformation from victim-blaming to the portrayal of victims as exemplifying innocence appears to have been associated with the popularization of humanistic values and the ascendancy of a legal system which required clear differentiation between victims and offenders in order to regulate society and mete out punishment. McShane and William's central premise is that these portrayals, based in normative definitions of victims, represent the cooption of individual victims into a more cynical social agenda which reinforces particular political and class interests. "Once the concept and image of victim is fixed, social order is not only maintained but actors within order-maintaining systems may benefit from the victim's presence. As long as the victim is 'pure', those manipulating the victim may also partake of that symbolism and enhance their positions" (ibid, p.263 and 264).

The intention of McShane and Williams' (1992) argument is not to deny the suffering or legitimacy of individual victims, but rather to highlight that some victims may also be perpetrators in a different context and that the social representation of groups of victims is not a neutral process. Although the arguments of radical victimology developed thus far derive from the American context, it is not difficult to apply aspects of this critique to Western legal and political systems in general, including those of South Africa. Political and social relations are particularly complex at this historical juncture in South Africa, with the recent transition to democracy, the emphasis on a human rights culture in the new constitution and the changing face of race and class relations. However, the white middle class subjects of this study have lived with a middle class consciousness in many ways similar to their American counterparts. Much of this populations' response to elevated levels of crime in the country, as depicted in the media, reflects a sense of outrage at the victimization of the "innocent" by aberrant, evil offenders. Whilst one cannot

expect victims to adopt a distantiated perspective on crime, such polarized depictions of victim and criminal fail to locate crime within socio-economic conditions and contribute to a brutalized depiction of all criminals. It can thus be argued that much of McShane and Williams' critique is applicable to the position of particularly, white, middle class crime victims in South Africa.

Whilst they do not employ this terminology, it appears that McShane and Williams' article is concerned with exposing the socio-legal discourse surrounding criminal victimization and the manner in which individual criminals and victims become constructed through the operation of this discourse. Thus for example, the subject position of the victim is one which represents innocence, disassociation from the perpetrator and the likelihood of permanent psychological scarring (McShane and Williams, 1992). This is not to suggest that victims may not indeed experience or manifest these characteristics, but that this typical depiction may act to constrain or render illegitimate, victims whose position or response is discrepant from this typification. Several authors have made the point that the stereotypic portrayal of victims has tended to be genderised and has overwhelmingly obscured the experience of male victims (Lisak, 1993; Mendel, 1995; Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994; Stanko and Hobdell, 1993). In failing to acknowledge the victimization of men, male victims' experiences have been denied, and aspects of the interrelationship between victimizers and offenders have been neglected. For example, boys who have been victims of sexual abuse show some propensity to become later perpetrators of abuse themselves (Mendel, 1995). These issues will be addressed further in the chapter on gender and victimization.

It should be clear that the field of victimology has tended to encompass a largely conservative position on victimization and has generally promoted a climate in which victims are vulnerable to perceptions of complicity in their own victimization, and in becoming victimized, lose their claim to an individual response and become the "unfortunate" representatives of society. Where victims have not been blamed they are almost caricatured into an identity of innocence in order to prove their blamelessness. For example, virgins who have been raped attract much greater sympathy than less chaste women, irrespective of distress evidenced. This identification of "good/pure victims" may also serve social/political rather than entirely personal ends.

There have been some alternative developments in the stature of victims as a group. Since the early 1970s there has been a growth of victim based constituencies in many countries; pushing for recognition, recompense and social reform. Often spontaneously formed around common experiences or events, these groups have focussed on the psychological and social support needs of victims. Some of these structures have been formalised into service delivery organizations such as "Victim Support" in the United Kingdom (Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994). In addition some of these constituencies have viewed their role as social pressure groups promulgating policy reforms. In order to draw attention to the "plight" of victims many of these groups have also subscribed to the discourse of the innocent victim injured at the hands of aberrant sectors of society. Whilst this is certainly an improvement on the injury done to victims in the portrayal of them as blameworthy, the portrayal of victims as damaged casualties of society is not unproblematic as Levett's (1987) work on discourses surrounding child sexual abuse has argued. Such portrayals of victims may operate to obscure structural power imbalances and the complexity and range of victims' responses. However, it cannot be denied that the concept of victim automatically conjures up such associations.

7.3 THE TERM "VICTIM"

The status of victim has a particular social meaning. "Victimization refers to the abrogation of expectations of the social contract within or outside the family. A victim is sanctioned to assume a social role that warrants restitution and/or special treatment and to expect society to bring the perpetrator to judicial accountability. Thus, victimization differs from other experiences in which violence may be anticipated, expected, and socially sanctioned - for example, athletic competition or military combat" (Pynoos, Soreson and Steinberg in Goldberger and Breznitz, 1993, p.573). Inherent in this statement is the notion that the victim is someone who has been wronged and that the interaction in victimization represents a transgression of the social contract. This reinforces the notion that the victim's position is both personally and socially defined, and to some extent historically located. Interestingly the contexts in which violence is presented as socially sanctioned (athletic competition or military combat), are both strongly male domains. This sanctioning of male violence in many contexts appears to complicate the identification of victimizing experiences as distinct from other forms of violent interchange for men particularly (Stanko and Hobdell,

1993). The claim to victim status carries both advantages and disadvantages. As Pynoos et al (in Goldberger and Breznitz, 1993) point out, the victim is viewed as entitled to restitution and sympathy, however this position is essentially one which represents a loss and powerlessness in the face of violation.

The etymological root of the term "victim" has its origins in early antiquity. "It originally meant a beast selected for sacrifice, and it is intimately tied up with the concept of the scapegoat. The sacrifice of the victim or the exclusion of the scapegoat would symbolically make the rest of the community safe from harm...To this day the word victim has unpleasant associations, and people usually have feelings of uneasiness when they associate or are identified with victims" (Symonds, 1975, p.21). Interestingly this linguistic cultural meaning to the term "victim" and its corresponding associations, parallels the stigma associated with victimisation identified in attribution research. Although such sacrificial practices are obsolete in most contemporary societies, unconscious associations to the historical origins of the term may persist as Symonds suggests.

Howard (1984) confirms that victims are regarded with a curious ambivalence in societies. "While pity and concern are the normatively prescribed responses to victims in our society, we may also derogate victims, holding them at least partly responsible for having been victimized" (p.27). Silver, Wortman and Crofton (in Sarason, Sarason and Pierce, 1990) refer to the self-presentational dilemma that such social contradictions present for victims. "If they display their distress and report difficulties in coping, they may drive others away. But if they fail to exhibit their distress, they may not signal a need for support" (p.398). Given the gender expectations placed upon men discussed in previous chapters, this self-presentational dilemma is likely to be heightened for male victims. While Silver et al (in Sarason et al, 1990) suggest that the withholding of social support is primarily linked to feelings of impotence on the part of potential supporters, it is also credible that such avoidance is connected to the more unconscious fears of contamination and identification alluded to above.

It is not entirely clear what the relationship is between these social constructions of victimization and individual victims' responses. The discussion thus far is intended to provide an overview of

the manner in which victimization has been portrayed and taken up by societies. This social depiction of victimization will inevitably inform the understanding of victims of their own victimization, as already illustrated in Lebowitz and Roth (1994) and Wood and Rennie's (1994) previously cited studies on rape. In the main, however, descriptions of victim responses to criminal victimization have tended to focus on more descriptive or phenomenological aspects. Much of this writing on the psychological impact of victimization reflects common patterns of response which are useful to outline.

7.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL CORRELATES AND CONSEQUENCES OF CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION

7.4.1 Common Thematic Responses of Crime Victims

Although literature pertaining to victimization straddles a number of contexts, a central self-evident category of victim is the victim of a criminal offense. Whilst the coverage of criminal victimization, other than rape, has been somewhat sparse in the posttraumatic stress literature (Bard and Sangrey, 1979; Janoff-Bulman, 1985; Niederbach, 1986; Symonds, 1975), there is an alternative body of literature pertaining to the psychological consequences of such victimization. Within such descriptions of responses it is possible to identify parallels with the more socio-cultural associations with victimization.

7.4.1.1 Bard and Sangrey

Describing the impact of criminal victimization Bard and Sangrey assert: "Every crime against a person is an act of violation...whatever the mode of attack, the victims suffer a common underlying injury: the violation of the self. They are wounded in the very essence of themselves, the centre from which every person integrates life" (1979, p.10). Central assumptions and self capacities undermined by victimization include trust, security, control and autonomy. In essence two of the most important developmental acquisitions as epitomized in Erikson's (1963) developmental theory, namely trust and a sense of autonomy, are compromised. These attributes are viewed as crucial foundations for other aspects of social and personality operation. These aspects of psychological functioning are particularly undermined in face-to face encounters where

submission is obvious and enacted in the interaction. In keeping with earlier theory presented on alterations to cognitive schemata, particularly basic assumptions, the core position of the victim seems to embrace powerlessness and associated regression. Bard and Sangrey write: "the message to the victim is the same: 'You are not your own person. Right now you belong to me. I'm taking over, and there is nothing you can do about it.' For some moment of time, however brief, the victim is powerless" (1979, p.15).

7.4.1.2 Krupnik

In similar vein Krupnik (1980) identified several common themes in 21 clients who sought therapy after exposure to violent crime. She identified core concerns of such victims as centring around: Fear of repetition, Feelings of responsibility, Rage at the source of their upset and Discomfort over vulnerability. Elaborating on these common themes, Krupnik suggests that crime victims experience alterations to their self-image as alluded to by Horowitz.

Some of the problematic views of the self which may emerge after rape, robbery or assault are: images of the self as weak, frightened, needy or helpless. Signs and symptoms,...may lead to a self-concept of being out of control. For persons who see themselves as organized, this can be very threatening. For individuals whose self-esteem is based on their self-reliance and independence, increased feelings of dependency after victimization may be intolerable. This will be particularly true when this sense of independence is brittle, unintegrated, and when it serves as a defence against powerful, underlying wishes to be taken care of. In such a case, the intensified need to rely on a temporarily stronger other person may be experienced as a humiliating defeat (Krupnik, 1982, p.349).

Although, she does not make any overt reference to gender dynamics, it is clear in the quotation just cited that masculine identified individuals are more likely to struggle with the kinds of self schema alterations referred to. Given some of the analytic theory proposing that masculine independence represents the repression of strong unmet dependency needs, men (particularly those strongly masculine identified) would appear to be at greater risk for the kind of outcome described in relation to dependency.

In addition, exploring the theme of "rage at the source of the disruption", Krupnik argues that there is a need for the victim to place blame at some source and that characteristic patterns of

anger management will affect how individuals demonstrate their anger. "When someone is victimized, he usually feels a sense of outrage and an intensification of aggressive impulses. For persons who typically direct their anger outward, rage responses may be anticipated. For more intro-punitive individuals, feelings of responsibility may be the more likely response" (1980, p.349). Yet again, although drawing attention to powerful dynamics in responses to victimization, Krupnik does not address some of the ideological or demographic features which may predispose individuals to more externally expressive, as opposed to intrapunitive styles. It is likely that gender patterns identified in this regard will create a bias in men towards the former style of expression. It has been noted, for example, that where women who have been raped often suffer from feelings of guilt and disgust, their partners are likely to direct their energy towards retribution and punishment of the aggressor (Russel, 1975). Thus victimized men may have greater difficulty in management of their enactment of aggression. These possible gender differences will be explored further. However, Krupnik's identification of these themes tends to confirm related studies and to offer a useful synthesis of key issues precipitated by criminal victimization.

7.4.1.3 Symonds

A further perspective on responses to victimization is offered by another psychodynamic therapist, Martin Symonds. In keeping with other authors, Symonds (1976) argues that different types of crime involve different levels of exposure to threat and violence. Thus theft/burglary is distinguished from robbery in that it is only in the latter case that the perpetrator is in direct contact with the victim (Bard and Sangrey, 1979; Barkas, 1979; Symonds, 1976). In the case of robbery or assault this contact is more extended than in the case of a mugging. The severity of victims' responses tends to parallel the intensity of contact and attack (Symonds, in Ochberg and Soskis, 1982). Considering that a British study of burglary victims found a considerable degree of psychological distress within a sample of 322 individuals (Maguire, 1980), it is possible to assume that the consequences of robbery on victims is likely to be even more severe. Common emotional responses identified by Maguire included shock, upset, disbelief, fear and anger, with men displaying more anger and women more fear. A considerable portion of the sample (19%) indicated serious and/or long term effects as a consequence of the burglary, with women in the majority.

Symonds elaborates the responses of victims as occurring in three phases regardless of the nature of the offense; namely denial, reality and traumatic depression. The first two phases form "the acute response to sudden, unexpected violence" (in Ochberg and Soskis, 1982, p.95) and represent the initial shock and disbelief at the event, followed by the recognition of what has happened (reality). Interestingly, although Symonds writes of these as sequential phases, the phases of denial and reality closely parallel Horowitz's formulation of avoidance and intrusion as key components of response to trauma. Symonds argues that the intensity and duration of responses in each stage, particularly that of traumatic depression, is a consequence of the nature of traumatic exposure. In situations of extended contact with the criminal, victims' responses are likely to be complicated by the nature of the forced interaction. "Criminals use violence, or dramatic threats of violence to induce extreme fright or terror in victims so that they will be rendered helpless, powerless and totally submissive" (ibid, p.97).

Writing from the alternate perspective of the victimizer or person enacting violence, (Marsh and Campbell, 1993) confirm that robbery represents a progression from theft or mugging in that it entails face to face confrontation, necessitating the exercise of direct control over the victim on the part of the criminal. "In declaring the crime, the robber declares himself to be in charge, and insubordination by the victim is a direct challenge to that control. He feels himself bound to see it through to the bitter end, even when that involves violence" (Marsh and Campbell, 1993, p.101). This exercise of power requires a degree of confidence and implacability in the perpetrator. The choice of victim, whether male or female, requires the intimidation of the other in the encounter. "This pervasive sense of competition, of the immanent exploitation of vulnerability, of the dangers of ever letting down one's guard, have a uniquely masculine flavour" (ibid, p.101). The victim, by inference, becomes the emasculated or feminized complement to this exercise of control. The power dynamics of perpetrator-victim are inescapably demonstrated and enacted.

7.4.1.4 Janoff-Bulman

A further and final perspective on the impact of criminal victimization, relates to the overarching level of beliefs captured in Janoff-Bulman's (1992) theoretical premise of the basic assumptions.

Janoff-Bulman has investigated the implications of her theory for particular groups of victims, including victims of criminal attacks.

In keeping with Symonds (1976) and Marsh and Campbell (1993), Janoff-Bulman asserts that it is the particular interpersonal nature of the event that distinguishes robbery or violent crime from other forms of victimization, such as natural disasters or inadvertent injury to another. In criminal violence the act is almost invariably planned, certainly intentional, and involves the direct exercise of aggression against another. "In the case of criminal victimization, the actual design of the perpetrator is to harm another, either by taking something away or physically hurting the victim. Victims of crime have been singled out for injury (physical, psychological or material) by another person, and this has implications for the reaction of crime victims" (1985, p.501). The implications explored are those pertaining to the basic assumptions of meaningfulness, the benign world and self-worth.

In the first place the crime victim's sense of invulnerability is severely questioned. Most victims experience anxiety about vulnerability and loss of control in the world, but in the case of crime these feelings are exacerbated. Citing the work of Bard and Sangrey (1979), Janoff-Bulman asserts that not only is general well-being in the world questioned, but the "world of people" becomes viewed as potentially malevolent and hostile. This challenges assumptions of basic trust in other human beings. "The entire world view of the victim gets coloured by the experience of victimization, and the perception of the world of people in particular gets tainted by the rude awakening of the victim to the malevolence of others" (Janoff-Bulman, 1985, p.503). This disturbance of trust may have deeper ramifications in terms of meaning, in the questioning of a "moral universe". The intentionality of the harm inflicted on a crime victim places the act in the realm of evil. The presence of evil may have been theoretically apprehended, but direct confrontation with malicious intent renders this a reality. "Unfortunately, it is not until its existence is made hedonically relevant to us that our assumptions about order and morality become truly disrupted...For victims of crime, the loss of perceived meaningfulness stems not only from these factors, but also from a recognition of evil and immorality as undeniable elements in one's world" (ibid, p.504).

In addition to the confrontation with a world that is perceived as potentially malevolent and in which evil is experienced to exist, the crime victim is also confronted with attributional beliefs which tend to impact negatively on self-esteem. Once again, because of the interpersonal nature of the event, Janoff-Bulman argues that the search for the basis of the crime assumes a greater degree of responsibility on the part of the victim: "chance is unlikely to be invoked as a causal attribution. Rather, it seems that there is a tendency for people to view human behaviour as rationally based; that is, people's actions are not whimsical, but are largely dependant on cues from others" (1992, p.505). This pertains to victimization as much as any other interchange; thus both observers and victims themselves are more likely to question their role in criminal victimization than in impersonal/natural disasters. The examination of the role of the victim resonates with the victimology perspective discussed earlier, suggesting that victims are part of the design of their own traumatization. Janoff-Bulman (1979) has researched the differences in behavioural as opposed to characterological self-blame as referred to in an earlier chapter. Whilst there is some indication that behavioural self-blame may be less damaging to self-esteem, characterological self-blame appears to be correlated with low self-esteem in victims (Janoff-Bulman, 1982).

Janoff-Bulman asserts that it may be more difficult to entertain behavioural self-blame in the case of crime, because of the negative social stereotypes associated with this form of victimization and consequent stigmatization. Because criminal victimization arises within rather than outside the social system (as opposed to war or natural disasters) (cf. Reiff, 1979 cited in Janoff-Bulman, 1985), there is an increased tendency for the public to disassociate from such individuals in an attempt to retain the belief in their own relative invulnerability. Janoff-Bulman cites a range of work as confirming this tendency towards harsh judgements of crime victims. "Crime victims, on the other hand, are generally regarded as blameworthy, as having been capable of averting their own victimization, as losers who are to be ignored (Bard and Sangrey, 1979; Frederick, 1980; Ryan, 1971; Reiff, 1979)" (Janoff-Bulman, 1985, p.506). This perspective may seem somewhat extreme but can be viewed as representing both conscious and unconscious response to victims, based in the need to avoid the anxiety associated with too close an identification with the situation of the victim. The earlier discussion pertaining to the stigmatizing etymological roots of the word victim appears to be reinforced by the evidence of such social responses to crime victims. One

consequence of this kind of implicit or explicit judgement is likely to be a sense of shame on the part of the victim.

Questions pertaining to their "fall" into the role of victim are likely to plague the victim, as well as a possible sense of having in some way compromised the fabric of society by becoming party to a violation of the social contract. Although all trauma victims "come face to face with their own powerlessness, helplessness, and neediness, and these perceptions are constituted into more negative views of themselves" (Janoff-Bulman, 1985, p.507), crime victims are likely to experience greater challenges to self-worth. Negative public judgements play a part in this, particularly in societies which celebrate winning and individualism (Bard and Sangrey cited in Janoff-Bulman, 1985, p.507). Perceptions of the victim as a loser may be internalised, "particularly in the case of criminal victimization in which one has 'lost' to another human being" (Janoff-Bulman, 1985, p.507). In Bard and Sangrey's text, "The Crime Victim's Book", they refer not infrequently to particular American stereotypes which render the acknowledgement of victimization particularly difficult and shameful. These stereotypes include the need to achieve, competitiveness, emotional control, independence, self-reliance and toughness; represented in the celebration of the depiction of America as the "Home of the Brave" (Bard and Sangrey, 1979, p.27). "A crime victim is a dependent person - he/she is in trouble, in need of help. Victims are likely to be seen in our culture as weaklings and failures, especially if they express their needs emotionally" (ibid, p.27). Whilst their argument is directed to American culture in general, one cannot help observing that the injunctions referred to are particularly masculine and perhaps also particularly middle class. This may reflect the masculine bias inherent in American cultural forms in general, but is certainly likely to pertain particularly to masculine identified individuals, rendering their subjection to the position of victim more socially alienating.

In addition to the possible sense of shame associated with victimization there are further ways in which the crime victim's self-worth may be threatened. Perloff (cited in Janoff-Bulman, 1983) argues that where victims of natural disasters or "acts of God" are likely to perceive themselves as "universally vulnerable", crime victims are likely to perceive themselves as "uniquely vulnerable", as singled out for victimization.

While the experience of non-criminal victimization is likely to be humbling to say the least, the experience of criminal victimization would more accurately be characterised as humiliating. In large part, this is because the powerlessness and helplessness of the crime victim are perceived in relation to the acts of another human being. The world is recognized as lacking order and predictability, but in addition the crime victim is rendered helpless before another person;...Criminal victimization involves a direct 'violation of the self' (Bard and Sangrey, 1979) by a malevolent other who has in effect overpowered the victim. The direct contrast of power and powerlessness may not only lead to enhanced feelings of shame, but to decreased self-esteem and loss of self-respect (Janoff-Bulman, 1985, ps.507 and 508).

A confirmation of this perspective lies in Bard and Sangrey's observation that crime victims often employ the metaphor of "rape" in describing their experience. They quote the words of a man who had been beaten and robbed in his apartment: "My home was taken over; my body was taken over; I was violated; I mean I was literally raped. It's an incredible feeling of impotence, when your body is in somebody else's control, and you're the slave. It's an incredible outrage." (in Bard and Sangrey, 1979, p.20). The nature of the subjugation is epitomised in the metaphor of rape, a crime which is explicitly associated with gender domination. The consequences for the victim's self-image are particularly difficult: "The complicity that comes from helplessness is extraordinarily painful...When criminals confront their victims directly, the victims submit because survival seems, rightly, more important than self-assertion. The fact is an innocent victim cannot help being victimized" (Bard and Sangrey, 1979, p. 59). However, the consequences of this impossible choice may haunt the victim as an experienced aspect of identity with long term impact.

Thus for Janoff-Bulman the shattering of the basic assumptions in criminal victimization has several particularly severe consequences including: the loss of interpersonal trust, the confrontation with evil and immorality, the exposure to public scrutiny and stigma, and possible self blame and loss of self-esteem/self-worth. In addition both Janoff-Bulman and Bard and Sangrey's work highlight the potential shame and humiliation which such subjugation can produce and the range of psychological losses that may be experienced.

7.4.2 Summary

Summarising the central features of the subject position of victim and its psychological concomitants, it is possible to draw together common threads from the literature referred to within this section including primarily the work of Bard and Sangrey (1979); Janoff-Bulman, (1985); Krupnik, (1980) and Symonds, (1976; in Ochberg and Soskis, 1982). The psychological dimensions of victimization in general, and criminal victimization in particular, appear to include:

- 1) Difficulties with trust and mistrust, particularly within the interpersonal realm
- 2) A compromising of basic autonomy as evidenced centrally in:
 - 2.1) Loss of control over their own and the perpetrator's actions
 - 2.2) Acute feelings of helplessness
 - 2.3) Regression to an earlier more childlike mode of functioning associated with "basic anxiety" and primitive fears of annihilation
- 3) Questioning of the world as generally meaningful and/or benign in the direct confrontation with the exercise of evil and amorality.
- 4) Exposure to a new public status involving possible:
 - 4.1) Sympathy and support
 - 4.2) Stigmatization and ostracization associated with fears of contamination and over-identification
 - 4.3) Pity and infantilization
 - 4.4) Loss of individual identity in association with the exercise of the criminal justice system and the social representation of victimization
 - 4.5) Blame and social censure for their victimization
- 5) Loss of self worth including:
 - 5.1) Feelings of shame and humiliation
 - 5.2) Loss of self-esteem and self-respect
 - 5.3) Questioning of own blameworthiness
- 6) Aftermath experiences including:
 - 6.1) Ambivalence about increased dependence on others

- 6.2) Emotional and symptomatic responses which are experienced as ego-dystonic
- 6.3) The need to express outrage either intrapunitively or externally

7.5 COMMENTARY

These descriptions of areas of functioning affected by victimization also bear a close resemblance in many respects to the core schemata identified as significant by McCann and Pearlman (1990) in traumatic stress exposure generally. Thus approaching victimization from a different angle the dimensions of frame of reference, safety, trust/dependency, esteem, power, independence and intimacy all seem to be implicated in victimization. This provides further support for the usefulness of McCann and Pearlman's schematic framework as working model through which to elaborate the experience of victimization

Whilst almost all victims will be exposed to several features of the above composite picture, there will be situational, individual and demographic features which will contribute to the intensity and pattern of these responses. There appears to be some evidence that the more discrepant the circumstances of the victimization are to life expectations, the more severe the rupture in psychological functioning. "Further, there is evidence that the more invulnerable one feels to misfortune prior to victimization, the more difficult the psychological adjustment will be" (Scheppelle and Bart, 1983; Perloff 1983; cited in Janoff-Bulman, 1985, p. 500). Whilst these findings have been extrapolated largely from research on rape victims, it is possible to extend their import to male victims. Men in general do not live with the same fear of victimization as women in general, largely because of different patterns of sexual assault (Stanko, 1995a). Thus men who become victims will experience a greater breach in their basic assumptions and identities as a consequence of the discrepancy of the experience with their expectations. The features of helplessness, loss of control, dependency, emotionality and passivity in the face of interpersonal aggression are likely to be particularly threatening to masculinity, since they represent the complete antithesis of the masculine ideal.

Interestingly these expectations of invulnerability to victimization are not an accurate representation of statistical findings (Howard, 1984). Howard argues that public perceptions of

vulnerability to crime on both the part of men and women tend to assume that women (and the elderly) are the primary targets of criminal victimization. Citing a research study conducted with student raters, 84% indicated that the victim of a robbery was likely to be a woman, whereas only 3% said the victim was likely to be a man (1984, p.272). She affirms that the stereotype of the typical crime victim is a genderized one. Social psychological research on reactions to such victims, as well as recent work in victimology, points to the relationship between gender stereotypes and the perceived probability of victimization, as well as attributions of blame for such experiences. While Howard's emphasis appears to lie with the implications of this perceptual bias for female victims, this same premise forms the basis for the examination of the position of male victims by theorists with a different focus (Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994; Stanko and Hobdell, 1993) and for the present study. The next chapter examines gender patterns in criminal victimization and research pertaining to the experience of male victims in particular.

CHAPTER 8

GENDER PATTERNS IN CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION AND THE STUDY OF MALE VICTIMS

This chapter initially examines some of the demographic and descriptive material pertaining to gender and criminal victimization and then progresses to a deeper exploration of research which has been orientated towards highlighting the experiences of male victims in particular.

8.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS OF CRIMINAL VICTIMIZATION

8.1.1 Criminal Victimization: Statistics and Gender Patterns

It must be stated at the outset that there are limitations to statistical indices of victimization which tend to be based either on reported crime or on community surveys. The stigma associated with victimization (particularly sexual assault), accessibility and credibility issues, and differences in self-attribution of victim status, may all influence the accuracy and generalizability of such findings. Nevertheless they can provide a useful backdrop against which to study victimizing experiences.

Much of the demographic data on criminal victimization reflects a greater risk to men of exposure to violent crime. Howard cites U.S. Dept of Justice statistics published in 1983: "robbery (female victims, 5/1000; males, 10/1000); Assault (females, 18/1000; males, 36/1000); and rape (females, 2/1000; males, too few to report)" (1984, p.273). These figures indicate that men are twice as likely to be assaulted and/or robbed than women and that the overall incidence of rape is considerably less than these other two forms of crime. In a more recent study into the epidemiology of trauma generally, Norris (1992) summarizes her findings as indicating: "lifetime exposure was higher among Whites and men than among Blacks and women" (p.409). However, there are interesting patterns within this broad trend: "Although women were more likely to have been sexually assaulted, men were more likely to have been in motor vehicle crashes, to have been

physically assaulted, or more generally to have experienced a violent event" (Norris, 1992, ps. 411 and 412). These findings appear largely consistent with those cited by Howard (1984).

Stanko (1995) points out that "While the British Crime Survey continues to find that on the whole men, particularly young men, report higher levels of violent crime, safety advice is geared to women" (p.4). Further official statistics from the U.K. indicate that men are the "typical targets of physical violence (Hough and Mayhew 1983; Hough and Mayhew 1985, Gottfredson 1984; Shepherd 1990)" (cited in Stanko and Hobdell, 1993). Traumatic injury risk assessed in a Dutch study, confirms that young males (15 - 24) are most at risk for injury consequent on violence and traffic accidents (Kingma, 1994, p.920). Men in the 20 to 39 age bracket accounted for the overwhelming majority (70%+) of trauma cases treated at an emergency service attached to a general hospital (*ibid*). The difference in male to female victims treated in the category labelled "violence" was 80.7% to 19.3% (*ibid*, p. 921). Thus statistics from several varied sources tend to confirm that men are in the majority as victims of violent crime.

The Crime Information Management Centre (CIMC) of the South African Police Service (SAPS) unfortunately does not keep a gender breakdown of crime statistics. However, the CIMC does provide some useful figures against which to assess overall frequency of crime. Statistics on the incidence of serious crime for the period between January 1st and December 31st 1997 indicate that the twenty most serious crime tendencies (showing an annual incidence of more than 20 cases per 100 000 of the population) included amongst others: murder, attempted murder, robbery with aggravating circumstances, rape, assault GBH (serious), common assault, house-breaking and motor-vehicle theft. The incidence of murder per 100 000 of the population was 56.9, for attempted murder 65.1, for robbery with aggravating circumstances 161.2 and for rape 120.6 (CIMC, 1998, p.8). These indices are high and reflect the prevalence of violent crime in South Africa. The men interviewed for the study could be categorised under the category "robbery with aggravating circumstances", the "violent crime" of highest incidence in terms of CIMC categorisation. Although, as will be described later, some of the men had been injured in the context of the attack, the motive in all cases was connected to robbery. The study was conducted in the province of Gauteng which was demonstrated to occupy "first position with regard to housebreaking at residential premises, other robbery, theft of motor vehicles, other thefts, fraud,

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