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Speaking about Rape and Societal Discourses of Rape in Johannesburg: A Narrative Analysis

By

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Declaration Page

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SENATE PLAGIARISM POLICY

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Abstract

Rape is an important topic of enquiry in South Africa due to the high incidences of rape and the underreporting of the crime to legal authorities. This research is exploratory in nature and is concerned with how the four women interviewed employ specific narratives to aid or inhibit their ability to speak about their experience of being raped, and the ways in which rape survivors position themselves within their own stories and societal discourses of rape. A detailed analysis was done of the research available on hegemonic masculine power, societal discourses and myths about rape, silencing and personal and public narratives. Through this analysis rape is placed within a framework of patriarchy and control. Four female rape survivors living in Johannesburg were found using targeted sampling, and were interviewed using a recording devise and unstructured, one-on-one interviews. These interviews were transcribed and coded, and then analysed using Thematic Narrative Analysis. Great care was taken throughout the research process to ensure that it is ethical and that no harm was done to any of the interviewees or anyone else. It was found that each of the interviewees came to represent three distinct narratives, namely the stranger rape narrative, the date/acquaintance rape narrative and the child rape narrative. These narratives appear to sometimes be in tension and conflict with one another, creating confusion in the positionality and believability of the rape survivor. It was also found that narratives are often employed as ways of defining the experience of rape and challenging rape myths and public narratives of rape. The women interviewed for the purposes of this paper drew attention to various themes within their narratives, such as tensions between their own experience of rape and societal discourses of rape, empowerment, safe spaces to talk about trauma, education, consent and control. Further research could be conducted to explore this topic in greater detail and expand upon the knowledge that was gathered and investigated in this research report.

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Chapter One- Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the Research Area

Rape and its study have been highly contested and this has led to the stigmatisation of issues for most of modern history, despite the prevalence of rape in society (Taslitz, 2005; Garcia-Moreno, 2010). The study of rape has come to be considered a very important topic of enquiry, one that most researchers agree should be studied rigorously in order to explain the behaviour and prevent its occurrence (Taslitz, 2005). Since the 1980s, universities and the media have become spaces in which myths and beliefs about rape are challenged and there has been increasing emphasis on studying the effects of rape, as well as their narratives. However, rape and what constitutes rape is still highly contested in society and this leads to ambiguities in people's minds about rape and consent (O'Neill, 2012).

1.2. Research Questions

1.2.1. Main research question
How do the narratives women employ aid or inhibit their ability to speak about their experiences, and position rape survivors within their own stories?

1.2.2. Sub-questions
- Do women feel silenced/empowered to speak out after being raped?

- How do they experience this silencing/empowerment?

- To which people and in what spaces do women speak about their trauma/healing?

- Why do they turn to these listeners and spaces?

- How do they understand speaking about their experience of rape?

- How do they view legal spaces when choosing to report/not to report rape?

- What affects women's experiences of speaking about their rape?

- How do they make sense of these experiences?

1.3. <u>Rationale</u>

A lot of research has been conducted in South Africa concerning rape and the reporting of rape, as demonstrated in the literature review. This is because South Africa is considered the country with highest incidence of rape in the world (Wojcicki, 2002; Posel, 2005a; Moffett, 2006; Monckton-Smith, 2014). The purpose of this research is to add to the existing bodies of knowledge on rape in South Africa, thereby not only by helping us understand why women don't report being raped to the authorities, as this topic has been researched quite extensively, but to help us by understanding the narratives women employ when describing their experiences of trauma and healing. Although narrative analyses such as this has been conducted in various places, such as research conducted by O'Neill (2012), there is yet to be vigorous narrative analysis studies done on young women's lives in Johannesburg. This research is important because it could open up the path for analysing the subjective experience of reporting and thus aid us in better understanding how the justice system and society may be implicated in particular framings of rape. In other words, how myths, perceptions and beliefs about rape and rape survivors prevalent in society make it possible for rape survivors to construct their narratives of rape and position themselves within these to receive recognition of their experiences and to be heard. Narrative analysis is important as it allows us to access knowledge about the ways in which people challenge and reproduce societal norms and values through the telling of their stories/narratives. Also, it could aid us in understanding women's experiences of silence around issues of rape, sexuality and their body and how this silence is constructed in their narratives of rape and shapes when and how they share their story.

1.4. Chapter summaries

In Chapter Two- Literature Review, I have first outlined what I mean when I talk rape in this report, as there are often multiple experiences of rape (Johnstone, 2016). I outlined the various theories of rape in order to position rape within the framework of power and control of women and their bodies.

Survivors of sexual assault and rape may feel prohibited from speaking about their experiences for many reasons, such the perpetuation of rape myths, a societal acceptant of violence against women, economic dependency on the rapist as well as institutional barriers such as police complacency (Taslitz, 2005; Gunne and Thompson, 2012; O'Neill, 2012; Jewkes., 2005; Posel, 2005a; Whisnant, 2006; La France, 2009; Jewkes and Morrell, 2012; Monckton-Smith, 2014).

Narratives of rape both inform and are informed by discourses and myths about rape that are prevalent in society (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; Bryman, 2012). As such they often reflect the very social norms in which they are embedded. This literature review analyses three dominant narratives of rape that are prevalent in society, namely the stranger rape narrative, the date rape narrative and the child rape narrative. These narratives all exist in tension with one another, as well as separate from one another as people attempt to employ these narratives to create different positionalities and ways of describing their experiences. These three narratives, as well as their consequences for the rape survivor and society, are analysed.

In Chapter Three the Research design, Methodology, Sampling Methods and Ethical Considerations of this research are outlined, for the purposes of this research report I used a qualitative method of analysis (Fossey et al., 2002; Merriam, 2009). I made use of a voice recorder and unstructured interview with open-ended and flexible questions, as described by Greenstein et al, 2003)

This research made use of what Neuman (1997) refers to as targeted sampling to access participants and the Chapter Three includes an in-depth discussion and outline of how interviewees were found using this method. The target sample was relatively broad in order to gain information into numerous experiences and included women, who lived in Johannesburg, were over the age of eighteen and were raped at least once.

I used Narrative analysis, specifically thematic analysis, to find themes and to flesh out what appeared to be important to women when telling their stories (Etherington, 2007; Kohler Reissman, 2007). I then interrogated these themes in order to determine how their analysis was framed and how they were positioned within their narrative. There were five steps to this process, outlined in this Chapter.

When research involves people as the subjects of study, ethical considerations are of the utmost importance (Gray et al., 2007). Chapter Three also addressed what I considered to be three very important ethical issues, namely, informed consent and plagiarism, confidentiality, physical and emotional harm and the personal values and biases of the researcher (Legard et al, 2003; Wassenaar, 2006; Gray et al., 2007; Merriam, 2009).

In Chapter Four- Discussion, the findings of the Research is discussed. Each of the interviewees came to represent three very distinctive narratives of rape, namely the stranger rape narrative the date/acquaintance rape narrative and the child rape narrative. Each of these narratives appears to be in tension with one another which can cause confusion in the positionality and believability of the rape survivor in her own narrative as well as in allowing space for the rape survivor to challenge these tensions. It was found that rape survivors use narratives to place importance on particular themes and incidences and many of these revolve around the inter-connectedness between myths about rape, other narratives of rape and the experiences of the rape survivors.

In Chapter Five- Conclusion I have outlined a synopsis of the findings about the narratives that the rape survivors employ when describing their experiences and feelings. The limitations of the research are included as well as recommendations for future research, including adding men to the sample as interviewees and using a larger sample size.

1.5. <u>Conclusion</u>

This research is an attempt to add to the ever-growing body of knowledge about rape by analysing the accounts of rape survivors from Johannesburg, in order to understand how they position themselves and their experiences within their own narratives and societal discourses of rape. While much research has been conducted on why women don't report being raped, it may be important to look into what reporting means to women and how they perceive their own experiences. I was interested in finding out if perhaps their silence about their own rape is a way of retaining subjectivity and agency over their own story, or perhaps it is stifling. I was interested in opening up questions around whether or not women experience their not reporting to institutional forms of support as silencing and disempowering, as many believe, or if it perhaps has positive or ambivalent meaning in the experiences of the rape survivor. In addition, I also opened up questions about how not reporting rape relates to the rape survivors sense of self and the possible remaking of the self after trauma.

Chapter Two- Literature Review

2.1.   Introduction

Rape is a very serious problem in South Africa, with the country holding the record for the highest instances of rape recorded for any country not at war or in civil conflict in the world (Wojcicki, 2002; Posel, 2005a; Moffett, 2006; Jewkes and Morrell, 2012; Orton, 2013; Monckton-Smith, 2014). In fact, both institutional and interpersonal violence, including group rape, date rape, stranger rape, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexism, are pervasive across South Africa and exist in a continuum of sexual violence (Wood, 2005). Rape is a nuanced topic to study, laden with stigma, connotations and false beliefs (Taslitz, 2005; Garcia-Moreno, 2010). Upon beginning a study on rape it is important for the researcher to first outline what she/he means by rape. The meaning of rape for purposes of this study is outlined in the conceptual framework; it is purposefully kept broad in order to include and reflect the multiple forms that rape takes in society, as there are multi-dimensional experiences of rape.

Despite mounting public awareness on rape in post-apartheid South Africa, it is still a highly contentious topic and there are many theories regarding issues of rape, such as why men rape, why women don't report rape, the ways in which rape is normalised in South African society and so forth, some of which will be discussed in this literature review. High incidences of rape in South Africa are coupled with low levels of reporting; the general consensus is that only 1 in 9 women report being raped but the SAPS reported the number to be as high as 1 in 36 in 2006 (Boyd, 2001; Monckton-Smith, 2014). It is suspected that many rapes go unreported for a number of reasons, such as economic dependency on the rapist and the

normalisation of rape in society and in the media. These reasons will also be discussed during the course of this literature review.

Narratives shape the way in which society understands and describes events and both inform and are informed by society's perceptions and shared beliefs. In order for a narrative to exist it needs a society or people willing to engage and hear it, and as such, the creation and use of a narrative is a collaborative endeavour. Similarly, rape narratives, when shared publically, are deeply embedded in and informed by society's views, myths and beliefs about sexual assault and the forms in which it appears, and are reliant on people willing to engage and de/construct them. This literature review discusses three dominant narratives of rape, namely the stranger rape narrative, the date/acquaintance rape narrative and the childhood rape narrative. All of these narratives, when employed, have different functions and are understood and told in different ways in order for the narrative to be relatable to those listening to the rape survivors account and have different functions and implications when told. The spaces and forms in which they are acceptable differ, but share commonalities. This too is addressed in this literature review.

What the current literature on rape narratives is lacking is an analysis of these narratives and how they inform the individual's experience of talking about rape, and about rape itself in South Africa. This literature review points to a need for a more in-depth analysis of dominant and subversive narratives and the ways in which these affect how rape survivors see themselves and their experiences.

2.2.   Conceptual Framework of Rape

The definitions of rape have been a source of contention in society and academia and even in the law. There have been many conflicting and intersecting definitions of rape over time, such as the belief that prostitutes cannot be raped or that wives cannot be raped by their

husbands. For this reason it is important to outline what this research proposal and research project means by "rape" conceptually and practically. Travis (2003,

116) refers to rape as "any action on the part of one person to violate the sexual autonomy of another by penetration, no matter what the extent of penetration, of the penis, finger, tongue or foreign object into the vagina, anus or mouth of the other. Violation of sexual autonomy denotes the act took place without mutual consent. An absence of consent is the necessary component of rape". However, I feel that this definition is incomplete.

According to Moreland (2014), the South African Constitution and its narrow definitions of rape do not allow for instances of rape that have a coercive nature. In other words, there are instances where the women does not fight due to unequal power dynamics, or disempowerment, or rape where there is an element of coercion (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014). Sex and rape, in this narrow definition, are seen to be actions performed upon the woman and do not take her agency into account (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014). Either a woman says yes or no, and so in this definition, neither involves her active participation (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014). The definition used for the purpose of this research therefore includes instances of submission and coercion as falling under the definition of "rape" (Moreland, 2014).

2.3.   Theories of Rape

2.3.1. Rape as Masculine Power and Identity
While women in South Africa have different experiences due to the wide range of different circumstances they find themselves in, there is one institution that transcends race, class and geography – and that is patriarchy (Gqola, 2007; Frenkel, 2008). Women's bodies, as the locus of reproduction are of great concern to the male Patriarch, who is able to control the female body through various mechanisms that are a part of Patriarchy (Gunne and Thompson,

2012). Rape is not only an expression of patriarchy but also a product of it and the ways in which patriarchal societies control women, their bodies and their movements (Brownmiller, 1975; Bordo, 1992). Young boys and girls, as well as men and women, are socialised into patriarchy and internalise, as well as accept, masculinity as violent; this process of socialisation happens in the family, society and in the media (De Beauvoir, 1997; Armstrong, 1994; Jefferies, 2005; Moreland, 2014). It is these violent masculinities, according to Morrell (2005), which are implicated in much of the violence of South Africa's history, and can account for the increasing problem of sexual violence and rape in South Africa.

Violent masculinities have been a part of South Africa's social and political landscape for much of its colonial history (Armstrong, 1994; Orton, 2013). During conflict periods and times of political turmoil, such as colonisation and apartheid, rape becomes a way in which men assert their male power and authority over women and children, and this has led to an increase both in the incidences and intensity of rape in South Africa (Armstrong, 1994; Orton, 2013). Most communities in South Africa, regardless of race and class, have embraced violent masculinities and have historically assumed patriarchal structures due to the militarisation of young men and the culture of aggression and domination during apartheid (Armstrong, 1994; Wood, 2005; Gqola, 2007). For example, violent masculinities amongst older, white men have been attributed to conscription in the army during apartheid, while in black communities this has been attributed to the absorption of young men into the liberation struggle and the violence of such a struggle (Rape Crisis Cape Town, 2014). All young children are being socialised in communities constituted by violence and have been since as early as the 1800s according to Gqola (2007). This frames masculinity in the context of apartheid and historical periods before, and demonstrates how masculinity is constructed within the structural violence of apartheid and its legacy. In the political landscape of post-apartheid South Africa, there a number of marginalised groups, such as lesbians and women,

whose struggles are largely ignored, as they were during apartheid, as a part of the post-apartheid agenda (Tosh, 2014).

Some scholars have referred to a "crisis of masculinity" in South Africa (Walker, 2005). Masculinity, they suggest, is being challenged in various areas of society and men are feeling disempowered by this and so are reacting by asserting their masculinity through violence (Walker, 2005; Swarr, 2012). According to Swarr (2012) this "crisis of masculinity" is thought to have a number of causes of which she discusses two: butch lesbians who challenge gender norms and expectations, and unemployment. Butch lesbians challenge the construction of masculinity by "mimicking" manhood, undermining and threatening male power by conducting their lives outside of male control and "protection" (Swarr, 2012). Men are thought to react by exerting their dominance over butch lesbian women and do so through the traditional masculine scripts of violence (Swarr, 2012). Additionally, masculinities in South Africa are often framed around a man's ability to provide for his family and some theorists propose that rising unemployment levels are threatening masculinity (Swarr, 2012). Inextricably linked to this is women's increased participation in the workforce and in male-dominated professions, which challenges men's construction of manhood as breadwinners as well as male monopoly on certain industries. Posel (2005a) also refers to the "crisis of masculinity" as being linked to the way in which a discourse on sex and sexuality has been thrust into the public domain after years of repression by the apartheid government as well as the empowerment of women due to the feminist movement that threatens men's sense of power over them. In addition, many believe that men's self-esteem deteriorated and masculinities were challenged during the transition to democracy through racialised and political violence (Jewkes et al, 2010). Many men felt a sense of disempowerment due to the humiliation felt during the apartheid struggle (Jewkes et al, 2010). According to some theorists, all of these reasons and some others led to the perpetuation of violence in South

African men's self-esteems and sense of "manhood", which was directed against women and children (Jewkes, 2005). However, while this theory of the "crisis of masculinity" does hold some truth, it is essentialist and the history of violence of apartheid and the transition to democracy, as well as the social and political activity since, is only a part of the story (Moffett, 2006; Swarr, 2012).

According to Moffett (2006) when rape and violence in South Africa is only viewed from this perspective, this "crisis" begins to sound like an excuse and stifles conversation about the link between patriarchy and violence in South Africa. While it is true that traditional and historically constructed masculinities are being challenged, it is the acceptance of a patriarchal structure of society as well as the patriarchal framework that shapes male identity that are still the main reasons that women are raped (Moffett, 2006; Swarr, 2012). A theory such as the "crisis of masculinity" in South Africa, framed around unemployment and so forth, excludes white men as if they are not capable of rape, which we know not to be the case (Swarr, 2012). By viewing masculinities as racialised we only perpetuate the pathologisation of black men as hyper-sexual, promiscuous and sexually violent while giving white men a free pass (Swarr, 2012).

Also, inseparable from this belief that masculinity is being challenged in South Africa, is the belief that homosexuality and anti-rape activism are "un-African" or an influence from the global north. This demonstrates a cultural intolerance for people who challenge "traditions" (Swarr, 2012). This is how conversations about the cause of rape are stifled as rape becomes framed as a cultural norm and not as a consequence of patriarchy. Patriarchy is framed around the control of women's bodies and women's bodies are thought to be open for consumption, kidnapping, beating, raping, mutilating and so forth, and this framing masculinity around men's rights to women's bodies and violence also plays a large part in why women are raped in South Africa (Posel, 2005a; Moffett, 2006; Swarr, 2012).

2.3.2. <u>Rape As Theft Or Property Damage</u>

In Greek and Latin, rape means to tear away, devour, consume or appropriate, similar in meaning to when one abducts or captures children or livestock (Du Toit, 2009). The main focus of the crime in this undertaking of rape was not that of a moral wrong done or of the humiliating and undignified act, but rather a property crime, theft or damage (Du Toit, 2009). Woman's sexuality and agency was of no importance and the control they had over their bodies and states of minds was not of any real importance (Du Toit, 2009).

Colonial patriarchal structures brought with them the idea of the ownership of the body, particularly the bodies of the woman and the slave. Rape was framed in terms of a crime of ownership, a crime against the man who had perceived ownership over the woman, rather than the woman herself (Du Toit, 2009). As it became accepted that women control their own bodies (a belief still not wholly accepted) the notion of the ownership of a woman's body did not disappear, only ownership of it was simply transferred to the woman herself (Du Toit, 2009). Women are seen as objects that are owned by men or themselves and this framing of women's bodies, sexuality and agency as a commodity and object takes away from the trauma that is experienced when a woman is raped (Du Toit, 2009). This framework fails to take into account rape as a crime against the woman's subject, only her body (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014). South African law and the judicial system have a relative lack of concern for women's state of minds and women's subjectivity has not been traditionally acknowledged (Du Toit, 2009). Additionally, this framework of the body as property places blame on the woman – the owner of the property – for allowing it to be damaged (Moreland, 2014).

Du Toit (2009) discusses the terms "aggravated" rape and "simple" rape in terms of this commodification of women's bodies and argue that this problematic framework of women's bodies as property is still common and negatively impacts women. Simple rape, defined in

terms of the commodification of a woman's body requires one to determine if the woman's body, or her property, has been damaged; and if not, it is often difficult for others to see the significance of the damage without this evidence on the body of the women (Du Toit, 2009). According to Du Toit (2009), phenomenologically speaking, the "me", the world and the "other" are never separated ontologically, and constitute a triangle of relations that are never independent of the self. The other and the world in this case are those disbelieving of the story or those listening to the story, and their reactions are important when the rape survivor is thinking about themselves and their story (Du Toit, 2009) Disbelieving and invalidating reactions from the officials within the criminal justice system and others who believe there should be more property damage to show for the trauma further traumatises and disempowers women who seek to report being raped (Du Toit, 2009).

2.3.3. Rape As Control And Punishment
In South Africa, men control women, their bodies' movement and behaviour through rape. (Jewkes, 2005). Indeed, it is the way in which men control women worldwide (Brownmiller, 1975). Rape is not only how individual men control individual women, but also how men control women across societies across the world (Brownmiller, 1975). For example, jackrolling, the commonly accepted practice of abducting young women and raping them, often in a group, was commonly practised in some communities in South Africa during the 1980s (Armstrong, 1994; Gqola, 2007). According to Armstrong (1994) many viewed jackrolling as an attempt to limit women's access in the public sphere and assert male authority as well as limit female empowerment, as many of the young women were abducted from schools. Rape in this context was about control and not sex, evident by the fact that there was often no penis–vagina penetration but instead rape was committed using bottles and other objects (Armstrong, 1994).

In contemporary South Africa, group rape is often justified by and committed in response to some perceived injustice that has been committed by the targeted woman (Wood, 2005). Jewkes (2005) and other researchers have referred to this practice as streamlining. Rape in context of streamlining assumes the form of a legitimate punishment in the eyes of the rapist, and sometimes the rape survivor (Wood, 2005). Punishment is often used as a justification of rape in South Africa as many people have the perception that many women have a certain "place" in society and that men own women's bodies and so have a right to punish them accordingly (Moffett, 2006). Moffett (2006) describes a televised interview with a South African taxi driver who stated that he believed that it was his right, due to his place in society as a man, to punish women for wearing revealing clothing, or displaying any kind of autonomy or subjectivity. The result is that women's movements, dress and behaviour are controlled in society through the constant threat of rape and sexual harassment (Brownmiller, 1975; Moffett, 2005; Gqola, 2007). Similarly, the practice of "corrective rape", in which lesbian women are raped and often murdered by individuals or groups, is seen as punishment for forgoing the "protection" and control of a man and a way of re-establishing patriarchal control over the woman's body (Mwambene and Wheal, 2015; Morrissey, 2013).

2.4.   Rape And Silencing

2.4.1. The Acceptance Of Violence Against Women: Rape Myths And Cultural Essentialism

According to Monckton-Smith (2014), cultural and societal attitudes play a large role in legitimising and sanctioning sexual violence in South Africa. South Africa has had a history of the political regulation of violence, which has led to a normalisation of violence that transcends geography, class and race (Posel, 2005b; Edwards et al., 2011). This normalisation of violence occurs in the family and society, and even in the media, and human behaviour is impacted by these cultural norms (Edwards et al., 2011; Berkowitz, 2004; Wood, 2005;

O'Neill, 2012). Women's bodies are commodified and have become cultural and political capital in contemporary South Africa (Moffett, 2006; Frenkel, 2008). This normalisation of gender violence and rape in society is what is called a "rape culture", according to Green (1999). This is not to say that "rape culture" openly condones rape but rather silences those who wish to speak up about it by disbelief or through various myths in circulation about rape and the circumstances surrounding it (Green, 1999). According to Taslitz (2005) and O'Neill (2012) male violence, male proclivity for sex, female objectification and male indifference for female subjectivity are implicitly accepted bases for these myths and deeply ingrained gender biases, and this can affect the credibility judgements people make when rape survivors disclose their experiences (Taslitz, 2005; O'Neill, 2012). These rape myths, of which there are many, have far-reaching and devastating consequences for rape survivors (Savino and Turvey, 2011). According to Gunne and Thompson (2012; p. 8), "these myths refuse the raped woman any subjectivity as they position her outside a conversation that... takes place between male subjectivities".

One of the main myths that silence women is the popular conception of a "classic" rape scenario (DuMont et al., 2003; Kelly et al., 2005; Monahan et al., 2005; Anderson, 2007; Franiuk et al., 2008; La France, 2009; Oswald et al., 2015). The classic rape scenario is usually what is considered an acceptable narrative of rape in public discourse and usually includes a public place, at night, with a psychopathic stranger who has a weapon and who leaves the woman physically injured (Kelly et al., 2005; Anderson, 2007; La France, 2009; O'Neill, 2012). Also, in this situation there should be no so-called "aggravating factors" such as being drunk or smoking, wearing "provocative" clothing, have a perfect sexual record, not know her attacker and have a very good reason for why she was at that location at that time of the night (Kelly et al., 2005; Anderson, 2007).

This classic rape scenario, or "rape template" as Kelly et al. (2005) and Monckton-Smith (2014) call it, most affects cases that deviate from it and often makes it difficult for rape survivors to relate and describe their experiences as "rape", thus resulting in an inability to speak about their experiences. Additionally, in a lot of cases, if a woman's experience does not follow the script of a classic rape then she is implicated in her own rape by what she wears, her actions or whom she was with at the time (Monckton-Smith, 2014). The rape stereotype is a myth in South Arica and around the world, as most research indicates that a majority of women who were raped in South Africa were not wearing "provocative" clothing at the time of the rape and are raped by men that they know, most of whom are friends, boyfriends, lovers and ex-partners (Posel, 2005b; Anderson, 2007; La France, 2009; O'Neill, 2012).

Another myth about rape that is persistent and pervasive is the belief that there is a model of how a survivor should behave and express herself after being raped, which many theorists call the "ideal victim" (DuMont et al., 2003; Franiuk et al., 2008). Some components that make up this model for the ideal victim are not only untrue but also deeply problematic. Women experience and react to rape in a multitude of ways, including not always calling the authorities immediately and being unable to express their emotions. For example, Patterson et al. (2009) found that a lot of women only report rape weeks, months or even years later due to fear, intimidation, uncertainty or ambiguous feelings towards their rapist. The problem with this notion of the ideal victim is that women may not be taken seriously when they report being raped to legal authorities, friends and family (Franiuk et al, 2008). Once again, this puts the onus of proof and truth on the rape survivor to prove criminality through their actions and descriptions of the event. In addition, as O'Neill (2012) says that this creates a paradox for the rape survivor – either to prescribe to the model of the ideal victim, which can

lead to self-blame, guilt and mental illness or to take on a more subversive model of the rape survivor and be accused of bringing the rape upon themselves, or of lying.

Other myths include the belief that a lot of women who report rape are "whistle-blowers" – vengeful lovers who have set out to sabotage innocent men due to rejection, pregnancy and so forth (Ndashe, 2006; Gqola, 2007; Cuklans, 2010). Very dependable and credible research indicates that only 5–7% of women falsely report rape, which is the same number of people who falsely report highjackings. It is also widely believed that if a woman was raped she would fight back, regardless of the structural, familial or economic positioning of the survivor and the rapist (Robins, 2008; Garcia-Moreno, 2010; O'Neill, 2012). One study found that one in five people excuse the behaviour of sexual offenders based on the belief that men are required by their biology to act on their sexual impulses (Weis, 2009; O'Neill, 2012) The myth that men's biology is responsible for violent masculinity justifies and normalises these masculinities and endorses male sexual aggression so that rapes and murders become justified on the basis of infidelity and jealousy, in addition to absolving the rapist of responsibility by giving him way to view his actions instrumentally as a way of engaging in sex (Taslitz, 2005; O'Neill, 2012; Monckton-Smith, 2014). There are a number of other myths in circulation in South Africa and worldwide that reinforce and entrench patriarchy institutionally and on an everyday individual level, such as the belief that wives can't be raped by their husbands and sex workers can't be raped if they are paid, or that rape is about sex, and not power and control (Garcia-Moreno, 2010).

There are organisations and movements that work to break down these myths with the issue of "baby rape" becoming the most common example used when people try to debunk rape myths (Posel, 2005b). The discussion on the rape of babies, a practice thought to rid one of HIV/AIDs, both breaks myths (such as the idea that people who are raped were asking for it or that fathers don't rape their children) and perpetuates them (Posel, 2005b). The discourse

of the rape of babies gives the rapist the identity of a so-called "uneducated", black man who lives in the rural areas (Posel, 2005bb). This is problematic because once again, white men are excluded from the discussion (Posel, 2005). What of the instances when white men rape women or children? In 1990, a group of women protested in Johannesburg to raise awareness about incestuous rape (and more specifically fathers who rape their children) but the effects were short-lived and had very little efficacy (Posel, 2005b).

These myths about violence, coercion and rape, as well as the patriarchal spaces in which they are reproduced, make it increasingly difficult for rape survivors to navigate many areas of life, including defining their own experiences as rape (O'Neill, 2012). They internalise these myths and find it difficult to locate their experiences within this narrative. The assumption society has about rape is that it is absolute; however evidence suggests that rape survivor's experiences are multi-dimensional and fluid and that they can simultaneously both identify with and refuse to accept the label of rape survivor (Johnstone, 2016). This leads to what Johnstone (2016) called "unacknowledged rape", wherein the rape survivor does not recognise their experience as rape, or both identifies it as rape and consensual sex at once. This is due to a difficulty in navigating the labels and lines drawn by individuals, society and the criminal justice system as to what is consensual sex and what is rape (O'Neill, 2012; Johnstone, 2016). Researchers have found that if you ask women questions about penetration with an element of force (the legal definition of rape in most societies) they are more likely to identify with their experiences with this definition than if they were asked the same question but with the word "rape" (Cuklans, 2010). This indicates a general confusion around what constitutes rape and a conflation between consent and coercion in the minds of women; and there even appears to be a distinction in many communities studied between "forced sex" and rape (Gavey, 2005; Wood, 2005; O'Neill, 2012). In one study completed by Wood (2005), young men and women in the Eastern Cape make the distinction based on who the rapist is

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and where they are raped. For example, it is "forced sex" and not rape if the man and woman know each other and the rape occurs in a bedroom (Wood, 2005). According to O'Neill (2012), this reflects a society that is tolerant of rape and that almost exclusively defines rape in term of stereotypes as well as a society that has normalised unwanted sexual relations. This can be further exacerbated when women are raped by men they know due to greater intimacy and familiarity that can be confusing (Lam and Roman, 2009; O'Neill, 2012).

All these claims and myths can cause cumulative trauma to a survivor, justify the rape as well as stigmatise the previous silence of rape survivors when they try to speak out publically or take legal action (Taslitz, 2005; La France, 2009; Gqola 2007; Franiuk et al, 2008; Garcia-Moreno, 2010; O'Neill, 2012; Monckton-Smith, 2014). According to O'Neill (2012), these function to absolve men of the responsibility of explicitly ensuring they have women's consent, absolve the rapist of responsibility and help in reproducing and reinforcing gender stereotypes and inequalities. Additionally, these myths make the claim that women cannot mean what they say, nor say what they mean, which not only justifies rape (such as through claims that when a woman says no she really means yes) but also silences women who are trying to report the case to loved ones, professionals and the authorities (Gqola, 2007; Garcia-Moreno, 2010). Women come to internalise these fallacies about rape and themselves as survivors, and may eventually blame themselves (Blagden, 2012). According to Blagden (2012), the internalisation of these myths and their effects on the rape survivor can be increased if they were consuming alcohol at the time of the assault.

2.4.2. Hegemonic Masculine Power And Control
According to Posel (2005a), parallel to the history of racialised and gendered violence in South Africa, there is a long-standing history of silence about this violence as well as political marginalisation of survivors' and their advocates' voices. During the struggle for liberation throughout apartheid, women's struggles were largely ignored and politically subordinated

under a nationalist agenda (Frenkel, 2008). Cock (1991) and Gqola (2007) believe that after apartheid the democratic government failed to dismantle hegemonic masculine power under its liberal discourse and in doing so perpetuated the acceptance of violence and silenced discussions around rape and sexual abuse.

What has been startlingly absent from all discussions about rape in South Africa is the conversation on how this kind of abuse is affecting all of us, regardless of race and gender (Gqola, 2007). Additionally, under the democratic government after 1994, there has been a failure to truly empower women (Gqola, 2007; Frenkel, 2008). According to Gqola (2007) empowerment has only really taken place in public spaces such as in some workplaces and has yet to be translated into the family and the home. This is because gender relations are not transformative (Gqola, 2007). Additionally, gender norms and definitions are still embedded in a cultural and historical context entrenched in patriarchy so that there are different norms and expectations when it comes to men than women (O'Neill, 2012). We have yet to challenge masculinity and to confront the violence underpinning South African masculinity across cultures and communities (Gqola, 2007). Society has largely reacted to discussions of rape by silencing rape survivors and anti-rape advocates and activists due to the belief that denial will somehow solve the problem (Gqola, 2007).

The Jacob Zuma rape trial highlights the disjuncture in attitudes throughout South Africa around rape and sexuality (Frenkel, 2008). Zuma, who was Deputy-President of South Africa at the time of the alleged rape, was accused of raping a young woman – a friend's, lesbian daughter (Frenkel, 2008; Du Toit, 2009). He justified his behaviour by saying that she was wearing a Kanga, a sign of sexual arousal in Zulu culture, and that it was his responsibility, as a Zulu man, to satisfy any woman displaying sexual arousal (Frenkel, 2008). According to Morrell (2005) this is just another example of men securing their dominance over women based on "culture". Furthermore, Morrell (2005) believes that this is an insult to the Zulu

culture as it assumes that it is incapable of evolving and changing over time. The courts, when dealing with the Zuma rape trial, attempted to be culturally sensitive and in doing so legally sanctioned patriarchy on cultural grounds (Morrell, 2005). According to Frenkel (2008), this sexualised narrative of black men is nothing new and is the legacy of racism that extends as far as the Middle Ages. It demonstrates the stranglehold racial and colonial stereotypes have on society's imagination. The convenient use of this stereotype justifies rape and silences women who want to speak out against it (Frenkel, 2008). Once again the cultural discourse on rape and sexuality stifles our ability to view rape as a patriarchal, as opposed to a cultural, issue (Frenkel, 2008; Moffett, 2006). In addition, Robins (2008) believes that the Zuma rape trial has directly led to women not speaking out about rape. The discourse around rape at the time and the survivor-blame that was a large part of this discourse silenced many women (Robins, 2008).

2.4.3. <u>Economic Dependency</u>

Many women and children don't report being raped by their husbands, boyfriends and fathers due to their economic dependency on them (Jewkes, 2005; Posel, 2005b; La France, 2009; Jewkes and Morrell, 2012). This is particularly a problem for poor black women who experience the triple oppression of class, race and gender. (Armstrong, 1994; Jewkes and Morrell, 2012). Poor black women frequently experience physical, social, political and economic abuse from both black and white men, as well as white women (Armstrong, 1994). A majority of rape and violence is perpetrated by known offenders, such as friends, family and acquaintances and is rarely racially motivated (Posel, 2005b; Moffett, 2006). However, this does not mean that sexual assault does not have a racialised element as demonstrated by the theory of triple oppression. Black women have been raped by white men because of race – while her societal position as a woman may have made her vulnerable to sexual assault, her position as a black woman meant that she was not protected (Crenshaw, 1994). Another

factor that silences rape survivors is the tendency in South Africa to be secretive about intimate matters (Posel, 2005b). The more intimate the matter, the more secretive people seem to be about it (Posel, 2005b). In some communities there is an awkward inter-generational silence around rape and sexual assault that puts up barriers to a discussion about it (Posel, 200b5). This leads to people being unable to speak about rape or report it to the authorities (Posel, 2005b).

2.4.4. <u>Lack Of Institutional Support</u>

South African law has historically been quite ambivalent about rape, particularly with regard to rape in marriage, the rape of children and homosexual rape (Posel, 2005b; Whisnant, 2013). This has been a significant barrier to women to speaking up about rape, as a large majority of women (62%) are raped by partners and ex-partners (Whisnant, 2006). South Africa has taken action to rectify the definition rape and in The Criminal Law (Sexual Offenses and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, the Act that is currently in use in South African courts when dealing with rape, rape is defined as: "any person ('A') who unlawfully and intentionally commits an act of sexual penetration with a complainant ('B'), without the consent of B". This definition is very broad and inclusive and includes incest, statutory rape, and the rape of children, mentally disabled people, spouses, and homosexual rape as well as compelled rape and forcing someone to penetrate or violate themselves (The Criminal Law (Sexual Offenses and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32, 2007; Chapter 2; Part One). It also now includes anyone who puts any body part, animal part or object into any person's mouth, anus, genitals or any other part of the body. However, despite this very broad definition, this still does not include definitions of rape that include coercion or submission and women still face institutional barriers, such as police complacency and low conviction rates, when trying to report rape (Posel, 2005a). The criminal justice system in South Africa often makes use of the previously mentioned "rape template" when making convictions and

often defines cases as "strong" or "weak" (Anderson, 2007). Strong cases are those that closely resemble the classic rape scenario, while weak cases are those that least resemble it (Anderson, 2007). This leads to low incidences of reporting and silencing and prohibits rape survivors from feeling any sense of justice (Anderson, 2007). According to Monckton-Smith (2014) the current conviction rate of rapists in South Africa is 16% (of those who made it to court).

In some cases policemen refuse to help women who report being raped, and in a number of instances, women have been raped by the very police that they are reporting being raped to (De Klerk, 2013). While there have been cases where a woman is met with helpful policemen and lawyers, the overwhelming majority of rape survivors are ignored and violated (Gqola, 2007; Blagden, 2012). Prostitutes are particularly vulnerable to secondary victimisation due to the illegal nature of their work and due to the belief that because they can be bought they cannot be raped; a belief that many police officers share (Ditmore, 2006). Migrant women are also more vulnerable due to xenophobia or lack of papers that allow them to stay in South Africa (Boyd, 2001). Barriers such as police complacency and violence stop women from being able to speak up about sexual assault and prevent women reporting rape and, as a result, most rape survivors don't seek institutionalised support (Boyd, 2001; Ditmore, 2006; Gqola, 2007; O'Neill, 2012).

In some instances, women are afraid to tell police, lawyers or courtrooms the whole story, or else feel shame, fear or guilt for what happened to them or for what they did (Greeson, 2009; Greeson and Campbell, 2011). What Tangney and Fischer (1995) call self-conscious emotions, such as guilt, shame, fear and embarrassment is not uncommon after one experiences a trauma. In some instances, rape survivors refuse medical tests or police interviews as they are embarrassing and humiliating (Patterson et al., 2009). This is often done, according to Patterson et al. (2009) and Greeson and Campbell (2011) as an act of

agency to protect the rape survivor from further pain, humiliation and loss of dignity, however it places them in the courtroom line-of-fire, so to speak, because it "weakens" their case (Patterson et al., 2009).

According to Moreland (2014), the adjudication of rape is an important moment where criminal law, which condemns and criminalises rape, meets society and the gendered social structures within it, which promote and tolerate rape and condemn those who speak out against it (Moreland, 2014). Courts are spaces that are responsible for perpetuating and reproducing rape culture and rape myths, through the process of the cross-examination and through the patriarchal values entrenched in the very traditions and values of the criminal justice system (Moreland, 2014). The courts and the law become spaces that are responsible for creating, reproducing and reflecting society and by extension, myths and beliefs about rape and sexual assault (Moreland, 2014). Those that make up the judiciary and criminal justice system are products of their society and bring their backgrounds, biases and tainted perceptions into all their judgements and verdicts, and this can greatly impact the trial (Taslitz, 2005; Blagden, 2012; Moreland, 2014). As mentioned previously, this includes determining whether a rape survivor has a strong or weak case (Anderson, 2007). However, more than this, it includes the power to control and dominate the narrative of rape survivors' own lived experience and (re)create the myth that the justice system determines the "truth" (Moreland, 2014; Gunne and Thompson, 2012). For example, there is a common belief that if two people who know each other have two different versions of one event that the case is too ambiguous to make a decision and this belief is reinforced in the courtroom (Cuklans, 2010). Moreover, judges, for example, have the power to determine what is and what is not sexual assault and therefore have the power to determine what is and what is not acceptable sexual behaviour (Moreland, 2014). According to Moreland (2014), this can leave the individual cases of rape survivors, stagnant and steeped in inequality. One of the over-arching social

systems of many societies, including South Africa, is patriarchy and due to patriarchy's omnipotence, it is entrenched in the judicial system and therefore its norms, value and supposed truths are present in courts (Moreland, 2014).

In addition, many defence attorneys try to confuse and discredit rape survivors during the cross-examinations of rape cases in order to win their cases and this can have devastating consequences for rape survivors. In doing so, they use their power and position to dominate narratives of rape and construct them to be more patriarchal in nature and maintain patriarchal power relations (Moreland, 2014). For example, in South Africa in 2013 Frances Andrade was cross-examined in court after she accused her former music teacher of raping her (*The Guardian*, 2013). Shortly thereafter she confided in a friend that the cross-examination felt as though she were being "rape all over again". Unfortunately, three days later Andrade committed suicide and it is thought to be the cross-examination that impacted her seriously enough to take her life (*The Guardian*, 2013).

The cross-examination and judiciary system is designed to confuse women and to create contradictions in their stories (Du Toit, 2009). For example, if a woman is calm, reasonable and not traumatised she is seen to be not credible; and if she is emotional and traumatised she is not credible too (Du Toit, 2009). These instances arise because women are seen as unreliable and treated with suspicion regarding their allegations. This is not an uncommon sentiment, according to Du Toit (2009). In 2000, Jackie Selebi was quoted saying that he believes that most South African women who report rape are lying, for example (Du Toit, 2009).

Narrow definitions of rape in the legal system, the Constitution, as well as in society, normalises coercive, patriarchal, sexual relationships and identities and simultaneously regulates male/female relationships while undermining women's' agency (Du Toit, 2009;

Moreland, 2014). By seeing rape and sex as something *performed on* a woman rather than something she *participates in,* the law and society normalise the notion that male identity and behaviour is active while a woman's is passive (Taslitz, 2005; Du Toit, 2009; O'Neill, 2012; Moreland, 2014). In other words, the woman's body becomes a site of domination, control and sex, initiated and negotiated by the man (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014). This places the responsibility on the rape survivor to say no, or to say it *loud enough*, and not on the rapist to ensure that she not only consents but actively wants to have sex (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014). The onus is therefore not on the rapist to prove her obtained consent (Du Toit, 2009). Furthermore, by viewing a woman's body as property, upon which she must prove damage, the woman becomes an object of suspicion holding more, if not all, of the responsibility for proving the crime happened (Moreland, 2014). Moreland (2014) states that the accused often presents no evidence and blanket denials and yet it is the responsibility of the rape survivor to prove that the crime happened and all the court procedures are shifted from the rapist to the rape survivor. The rape survivor, if viewed from this light always has some degree of blame; if she presents enough evidence she holds less blame, if she does not present enough then she holds more (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014).

These myths surrounding rape that are entrenched in the very institutions designed to protect women means that navigating the spaces within criminal justice system becomes difficult, and even traumatic, for rape survivors to navigate. Charlene Smith, a journalist raped at knifepoint by a stranger in her home in South Africa, described how she was told by officials that she should have fought harder and been more bruised, that then she would have had a stronger case and there would be no presumption of consensual sex, even though she had decided not to fight to avoid alarming her rapist, in order to survive (Du Toit, 2009). The evidence and argument should be overt, rational and coherent at all times in order to convince judges that the rape survivor protested (Du Toit, 2009). This presents difficulties in cases

where coercion, rather than violence, was the main component of the rape or cases where the rape survivor was forced into giving in (Du Toit, 2009; Moreland, 2014). In other words, even when force, fear and domination is present in the encounter, it is the woman's reaction that matters, not the man's and it is up to the woman to present evidence that she behaved like the "ideal victim" (Du Toit, 2009). Women struggle to identify with their agency and subjectivity in this narrative and many rape survivors feel disempowered in a courtroom environment. Some women report feeling as though they are being raped all over again by the critical gaze of the courtroom, especially in cases of acquaintance rape, where there are no obvious injuries to report or when they have been forced to testify and they worry that they won't be able to tell their story properly, or that they won't convincingly portray the pain, humiliation and degradation that they felt/feel (Du Toit, 2009; Gunne and Thompson, 2012).

2.5.   Feminist Discourse and Empowerment

Many feminists have been a key in discussions about rape and have paved the way for a victim-centred approach to viewing gender relations and sexual violence (Cuklans, 2010). Since the 1980s various feminist movements and research have not only had an impact on the legal and social spheres, but mainstream television and culture too, a trend that has increased through the 1990s until today (Cuklans, 2010). Many feminists have attempted to break down many rape myths and as a result of that and other actions taken, such as protest, have begun to challenge collective imagination and change the way we talk about rape (Tomaselli and Porter, 1986). Such myths include the fact that date rape is at least as common as stranger rape, if not more so; that date rape can be as traumatic as stranger rape; and that survivors of acquaintance/date rape are far less likely to report their attack to the police (Cuklans, 2010). In addition, many Feminists, such as Cuklans (2010) have also brought attention to the fact

that hyper masculine environments such as sports meets, gangs and fraternity houses are sites of the expression of violent masculinities (Cuklans, 2010).

These feminist narratives have not only permeated the media, but schools and universities too as more and more institutions are choosing to teach sexuality and consent using a narrative of equality and respect (Taslitz, 2005). Films, TV and other media have attempted to put forward this feminist discourse as an attempt to counteract the myths circulating in society about rape and sexuality and this message has made its way into popular discourse too (Taslitz, 2005).

The created spaces in universities, hospitals, society and in other areas of life in which women feel more comfortable about expressing themselves and their experience of rape and healing (McCombie, 2012). Such spaces are multiplying and more and more are being created all the time; spaces that include church groups, women's groups, feminist reading groups and university classes (Greeson, 2009). In South Africa, *Vagina Monologues* and Slut Walk have also provided public arenas to confront the issues of equal violence that are pervasive in South Africa (Mendes, 2015). These spaces are important as the creation of a narrative of trauma – a way of externalising that event – and having it acknowledged is an important step for the healing of the rape survivor and can empower them as well as educate others (Eichner, 2008; Herman, 1994; Langellier, 1999).

However, despite these progressions toward a more inclusive discourse of rape, the changes have been small and the impact have been quantitatively and qualitatively lacking (Taslitz, 2005; Cuklans, 2010). Conservative and retrograde messages about rape are still prevalent in media and society and more work needs to be done if we are to make a larger impact on society in South Africa (Taslitz, 2005). And women are still met with disbelief, blame and

minimisation when telling their stories of rape, which can lead to them not seeking further support (Orchowski et al., 2009; Ullman, 2010).

2.6. Narratives of Rape

2.6.1. Narratives: Public and Personal

Narratives refer to the way in which a person, or people, tells a story (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011). It refers to the emphasis that the storyteller puts on certain themes, events, people and objects, and the way in which this is organised into pockets of information that are meant to be meaningful to the listener and the teller (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; Bryman, 2012). A narrative often expresses emotions, attitudes, beliefs or interpretations about an event, or a combination of all of these, as a part of the story (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011). A narrative, according to Holstein and Gubrium (2011) is not only a story but also an action, in which a narrative is built and embedded within socio-economic and historical contexts and informed by the teller's own experiences and by the society in which they live. In addition, a narrative not only constructs but challenges, empowers and disempowers (Eichner, 2008; Langellier, 1999). Subversive narratives of rape, particularly such as the date/acquaintance rape narrative, challenge and create societal as well as "ethnic and racial tensions, and the contested boundary between the real and the imaginary" (Horeck, 2004: vi). In other words, a narrative is not only a story, but a construction of reality that is framed from a certain point of view. A narrative is also a collaborative exercise in which the speaker creates the narrative for the listener/s and the listeners in turn create their own narrative and change the teller's through the act of listening (Eichner, 2008; Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; Kohler Reissman, 2013). In order for a narrative to be told and heard, it relies on both an audience and a speaker being willing and able to engage with the story (Eichner, 2008). If there is no receptive audience, a narrative cannot flourish (Kohler Reissman, 2013).

Much of trauma theory is framed on the belief that survivors reconstitute their selfhood through the testimony of violence and by forming a coherent narrative about the violence they experienced (Roy, 2013). According to Roy (2013), this theory is framed around the belief that turning traumatic memory into narrative memory can be soothing, empowering and redemptive, even curative for the survivor. This is because it is believed that through the testimony of violence the survivor receives recognition, acknowledgment and justice from society (Roy, 2013). La France (2009) reported that in some African American communities, women experience isolation from their communities and alienation from their experiences as the result of being unable to speak out about the trauma of being raped.

However, Roy (2013) questions whether legal testimony responds to the need for individual healing. Roy (2013) conducted research in the context of the state violence committed during the Maoist movement in India. The reason that she questions whether or not speaking out is indeed as curative as it seems is assumed to be for the survivor is due to the contradictions in being able to speak out. For example, testifying relies on a receptive listener and as a result the listener often dictates what is said and how it is said (Roy, 2013). This leads to survivors using socially acceptable scripts to narrate their pain, scripts that are more often than not paternalistic (Roy, 2013). Additionally, the collective narrative of trauma could also stifle the voice of the individual as it does not always acknowledge individual pain (Roy, 2013). In Faku- Juqula's (2014) study, it was found, for instance, that people who participated in the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in the aftermath of formal Apartheid found neither justice nor closure, but instead felt invalidated and unacknowledged, despite being able to tell their stories. Similarly, court transcripts are often void of emotion and pain and only describe a series of events. This can lead to people feeling alienated, not only from their own words but from their own experiences (Roy, 2013).

The narratives of and around rape are very problematic and, like all narratives, are informed by both those whose speak about sexual violence as well as the socio-economic and historical context in which it exists (Kohler Reissman, 2013; Edwards et al., 2011) These narratives shift and change over time and are shaped, sustained, perpetuated and justified by the actors, myths and beliefs that inform them (Kohler Reissman, 2013; Edwards et al., 2011). In other words, the myths and beliefs that the listeners hold about rape and sexuality often affect that way in which they perceive the story and understand the narrative, and this will affect the dominant narratives and discourses that disseminates throughout society (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). Narratives of rape in South Africa don't only tell the story of how someone was raped, and by whom, but tells a story of societal attitude, beliefs and notions around sex, gender and sexuality. Scripts of power and myths perpetuated in society are often written into narratives of sex, and as such they are laden with power and inequality (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). For example, popular heteronormative gender and sexuality narratives situate men in positions of power and support male appetite for sex and sexual aggression, while simultaneously positioning women as passive objects of sexuality, denied all subjectivity and ripe for objectification (O'Neill, 2012).

According to Herman (1992), in order for a rape survivor to recover from trauma it is important that her narrative is constructed and spoken; however this is often a difficult process. People have a tendency to blame themselves, especially in the event of trauma, which is compounded by the public belief that the rape survivor is, in some way, to blame for her experiences, especially in the instance of date/acquaintance rape (Blagden, 2012). These public narratives of rape can be internalised so that a woman's internal narratives about sex, rape, sexuality and gender are adjusted and come to reflect these (O'Neill, 2012). In the telling of the story, the survivor refines and recreates her own personal narrative so that it makes sense to the listener and so that it remains speakable. Finding the right audience can

often feel impossible for rape survivors, and they often question if the right audience exists in which they may feel safe enough to speak their narrative without it being called into question (Eichner, 2008). Calling the narrative of a survivor into question can bring their whole identity and self-worth into question as they try to reconcile their innermost feelings and thoughts with those of the people who are listening (Eichner, 2008). Added to this, the survivor often feels that it is her responsibility to tell her story in a way that people will understand it, and if misunderstood and misheard this can cause cumulative and/or secondary trauma (Eichner, 2008).

The performance of the narrative by the rape survivor is often not only an act of telling a story about people and an event, but is a way to share a very personal experiences and for this experience to reach beyond the event and the body of the survivor (Eichner, 2008). Courtrooms are spaces where personal narratives become public as a woman recounts her story (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). Through the telling of their experiences the story becomes public, for consumption by the media and the public and open for evaluation – in every aspect, from the credibility of the story to the rape survivor's supposed culpability (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). In spaces such as these where these narratives become public the listeners bring with them their own assumptions and biases and these become a part of the narrative of rape (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). The research interview is also a space in which the personal narrative becomes public (Kohler Reissman, 2013).

The rape narratives people employ are not always misused and subjugated; in feminist and progressive spaces the narratives women use, as well as their deviations from dominant narratives, are often acknowledged, accepted and even celebrated (Mendes, 2015). In these avenues women are given the space to open up their narratives to include their own individual experiences and many experience this as empowering (Kohler Reissman, 2013; Eichner, 2008; Langellier, 1999), According to Eichner (2008), the public rape narrative

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often functions as a way for the speaker to change the injustices of the world and to bring attention to an injustice done to them. Many rape survivors tell their story, not only as an act of disclosure, but as a chance to empower, educate and emancipate about themselves and others (Langellier, 1999). The hope is often to empower others to speak out and to insert one's voice into the cultural and societal discussions and narratives of rape (Eichner, 2008). By creating a public narrative of rape, that is, a narrative that exists for others and not just oneself, there is an attempt to resist inter-personal and societal power relations and to alter these in the hopes of changing general assumptions of rape (Eichner, 2008). In feminist spaces this becomes an increasingly dominant theme (Kohler Reissman, 2013).

2.6.2. The Stranger Rape Narrative

The dominant narrative of rape in society, as we have seen, is that it does not exist and much energy and time is put into this narrative in an attempt to rid dominant public conversation of the topic of rape (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). A dominant way in which this is achieved is through the stranger rape narrative. The stranger rape narrative is not only descriptive but also functional, as it functions to divert attention from the coercive aspect of rape so that dominant discourses state that rape must be violent to be "true rape" (Tosh, 2014). That is, this narrative is flawed as most experiences of rape do not meet this criterion and the meaning of rape becomes catastrophised, synonymous with horrific sexual violence, wherein the sexual violence and coercion committed by ordinary men becomes invisible (Tosh, 2014). In this narrative, public spaces are seen as dangerous for woman and this does not match women's experiences of private spaces in which they are supposed to be safe (Tosh, 2014) Public spaces have, historically, been more dangerous for women than private spaces (Tosh, 2014). There are exceptions to this, such as in the instance of lesbian women vulnerable to "corrective" rape and transgender people, who are often at risk in public spaces in South Africa (Tosh, 2014).

If a woman is raped and makes use of and identifies with the stranger rape narrative in telling her story, she is often given sympathy and greater acknowledgement of her victimisation (O'Neill, 2012). This sympathy is granted because of the supposed randomness of the attack, and for the injuries that may have been sustained (Cuklans, 2010). However, there is no universal experience of rape and sexual assault, and should a rape survivor deviate from this narrative they often open themselves up to public or self-shaming, blame and a loss of sympathy (Campbell et al., 2009; O'Neill, 2012).

2.6.3. **The Date/Acquaintance Rape Narrative**
The date/acquaintance rape narrative challenges the stranger rape narrative and this can create tensions in inter-personal relationships, society and in spaces where rape survivors disclose their experiences (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). Despite the prevalence of date/acquaintance rape in society, it is a subversive narrative; one that is constantly challenged through myths and false beliefs about rape (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). When employing this narrative, women are often faced with disbelief, denial, criticism or minimisation of their trauma, and their rape is no longer about their experiences and the events that occurred or how they felt, but about the rape survivor's actions – her attire, her behaviour, her familiarity with her attacker and her sexual history (Cuklans, 2010; O'Neill, 2012; Gunne and Thompson, 2012). This is due to the fact that society has difficulties in defining rape and framing the experience of date rape as "real rape" due to differences in standards for the behaviour of men and women as well as the so-called ambiguousness of the experience and of the attacker, especially if no weapons or physical violence has used (Cuklans, 2010). This critical patriarchal gaze is internalised and often become a part of the rape survivor's narrative of her own experiences, either through self-blame and guilt, or as the rape survivor attempts to dispel these myths, beliefs and criticisms (O'Neill, 2012). In this way, the date rape narrative is not only about the experience of the rape survivor about rape, but about what the people or

person listening to her story brings to the narrative. For example, according to O'Neill (2012), in colleges across the United States of America, the higher the levels of intimacy and familiarity women had with their rapist, the higher the chances that the victim will be viewed ambiguously and that their experience will be conflated with consensual or unwanted sex, rather than rape (Lam and Roman, 2009). This has often been internalised by women who are raped, and has led to self-doubt about their experiences and their decision-making abilities.

The myth of whistle-blowers is inextricably weaved into this narrative by society. The media and society revel in stories about a rape claim recanted and erased and in a body not violated to the extent that these narratives are over-emphasised in relation to their frequency (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe 1992). According to Mascia-Lees and Sharpe (1992), society revels in the guiltless consumption of female sexuality and the female body and in mimicking, in a sanctioned and perhaps more benign form, the act of rape through the consumption of the female body through a patriarchal gaze. By admitting that a woman's body was not violated, society once again has the chance to gaze at women guiltlessly, in the false knowledge that rape does not exist and that women are lying (Mascia-Lees, 1992). All of this leaves the date rape narrative, for the most part, invisible, hidden and underused (Cuklans, 2010).

The date rape narrative, as it is intended by rape survivors, as mentioned previously, is employed more and more often in society and on television in mainstream media thanks to the dissemination of feminist discourse (Cuklans, 2010). Despite this, creating a narrative separate from stranger rape has proven difficult to do, in the imagination and the discourse of people in society and in the legal sphere, and progress has been slow (Cuklans, 2010). This narrative can feel difficult to employ due to this and due to questions around false allegations, miscommunication and female indecision, which are often brought into the discussion by society and individuals who hold these problematic beliefs (Cuklans, 2010). In addition,

television and mainstream media narratives often make the stories of women of colour invisible (Moorti, 2002).

In many cases, even when individuals in society employ the date rape narrative it is often caught in the narrative of stranger rape (Cuklans, 2010). The rape scene/story may be framed around an acquaintance or partner but authors and journalists often use the story of a surprise attack, extreme violence, weapons and so forth (Cuklans, 2010). This further demonstrates the inability of society to understand and make use of this narrative without falling back on the historical stranger rape narrative or reverting back to retrograde scripts of power.

2.6.4. **The Childhood Rape Narrative**

The narrative of childhood rape is often centred on memory loss, due to a need to distance themselves from trauma or due to memory loss through time (Andermahr & Pellicer-Ortin, 2013). Although a hidden offence in the past, awareness of childhood sexual assault and rape has grown in recent years, garnering attention in the media, government and society (Taylor and Quayle, 2004). The childhood rape narrative, like the stranger rape narrative, is caught within the definition of "real rape", the ideal victim and myths about men who perpetrate childhood sexual assault. The narrative is believable and understandable in courts and society only insofar as it is vigilant about the experience as that of an innocent child, violently coerced and harassed by a violent and disgusting offender.

Childhood rape, paedophiles and paedophilia are seen as inevitable and biological and not as socially constructed, which has been shown to be the case (Meyer, 2007). Despite this, paedophiles are seen as evil and despicable, and remain some of the most demonised people in society (Meyer, 2007). Considering how many paedophiles are fathers, family members and part of the child's larger social circle, this framing of the paedophile as evil and despicable creates tensions in the experiences of women who experience abuse at a young

age. This condemnation of paedophiles by society is seen as protecting children from the awful men who commit these crimes, but this condemnation is often selective and hypocritical (Meyer, 2007). It hides the true motivations behind rape by focusing on certain narratives, victims and perpetrator types (Taylor and Quayle, 2004). Paedophile stories are objects of consumption and fascination in society and the universal narrative is that of disgust and disapproval, yet people are selective about what disgusts them and what interests them. For example, paedophilia is big news in the United Kingdom and sells newspapers, yet stories about Western and British men going to Thailand to find underage sexual partners remains relatively unreported and these men are not classified as paedophiles (Meyer, 2007).

While simultaneously being marked as natural and inevitable, childhood rape and sexual narratives are often framed around the loss or theft of innocence and violation, and this can be problematic for the narrative of childhood rape and for the rape survivors themselves (Meyer, 2007; James and Prout, 2003). In fact, in many instances the loss of innocence is a synonym for childhood rape (James and Prout, 2003). This frames the narrative around what childhood should be and the innate vulnerability and passivity of children and childhood, even if this does not match the experiences of the children (James and Prout, 2003). This is problematic for two reasons.

Firstly, innocence is fetishised in society – not just with regards to children but grown-ups too, from Marilyn Monroe to the fetishisation of Catholic schoolgirls (James and Prout, 2003). According to James and Prout (2003), if the rape of children is a violation of innocence and innocence is erotic, then this narrative reinforces the objectification and sexualisation of children. This has also been demonstrated in interviews with paedophiles and sex offenders who describe their victims as innocent and pure (James and Prout, 2003).

Secondly, this can silence children who do not fit the ideal of innocence and so excludes them from of the conversation (James and Prout, 2003). According to Hussey and Fletcher (1999) rape is the only crime where the character of the victim is considered more pertinent to the case than the character of the perpetrator, and child rape is no different (Waterman and Foss-Goodman, 1984). Children, their council and character witnesses must demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that the child is honest and virtuous and the epitome of sexual innocence, and that they would not make up their account (Hussey and Fletcher, 1999; James and Prout, 2003). Deviation from this can result, like in the case of adults who deviate from ideal victim narratives, in disbelief, blame, silencing and scorn, and can lead to the belief that what happened to the child is in some way a lesser crime than if they were more "innocent" (James and Prout, 2003). This narrative can also serve as the framework for the justification of the rape of children who do not appear or come across as innocent (James and Prout, 2003). The child rape narrative is confusing for those who attempt to use it as it often falls between the lines of stranger and acquaintance rape, as well as the other myths that shroud rape (Hussey and Fletcher, 1999; James and Prout, 2003). This victim-blaming, according to Waterman and Foss-Goodman (1984), creates an atmosphere that contributes to childhood sexual abuse.

Even though the sexuality of the child has often been called into question historically, this is becoming less common as people come to accept more and more that it is should not be a child's responsibility to turn down unwarranted advance (James and Prout, 2003) Additionally, narratives of rape are repeatedly being constructed and framed that represent the actual experiences of rape survivors, such as stories of fathers and "upstanding" members of the community who rape little children. Alternative narratives have been introduced into the scripts that does not only discuss and account for children's disempowerment when it comes to rape, but speaks to the empowerment in face of a society that socialises survivors of

childhood rape into roles of victimhood (James and Prout, 2003). This has been a very necessary and difficult step for society to take, according to James and Prout (2003). However, the blame still appears to be removed from the rapist, as the onus is increasingly being placed on the parents of the children to protect them from "predators". Books such as that written by Friedman (2006) entitled *Inoculating Your Child Against Sexual Abuse: What Every Parent Should Know!* both demonstrate this belief in society, and I would argue, reinforce this notion.

2.7.   <u>Conclusion</u>

Rape in South Africa is highly pervasive and common and exists in a continuum of sexual violence. As such, it is an important point of enquiry for researchers and scientists. Rape is also laden with stigma and myths that are perpetuated throughout society and lead to women being unable to identify with their experiences and to talk about their trauma. In addition, economic dependency, a lack of institutional support and institutional bias make it difficult for women to talk about rape and their experiences.

Despite this, there have been some movements and feminist spaces that have attempted to break down myths and create avenues that empower women to speak out. This has been a difficult process and is still incomplete; however, strides have been made so that this discourse is disseminated by academics, feminists, public figures, the media and individuals in society. More work, however, needs to be done.

The above discussion highlights the way the reactions to the disclosure of rape can influence the perceptions and behaviour of rape survivors who are seeking institutional and inter-personal support. These myths and problematic beliefs, as well as the patriarchal notions in society that entrench and reproduce them, affect and create narratives of rape and the way in which rape survivors internalise their own experiences as their narratives. The dominant

narratives of rape in society, such as the stranger rape narrative, are informed by and exist in tension with more subversive narratives of rape, such as the date rape narrative and these in turn inform the narratives rape survivors employing their stories about their experience. To deviate from dominant, and even subversive, narratives often has severe implications for rape survivors in public spaces and this affects the ways in which the rape survivors seek spaces for disclosure and support. These myths and belief about rape are brought into narratives and can cause confusion.

Chapter Three- Research design, Methodology, Sampling and Ethical Considerations

3.1. Introduction

This research was undertaken within a qualitative framework in order to gather large amounts of in-depth information. This Chapter first describes the qualitative research design of this project and the benefits of using this approach. I used an unstructured/in-depth interview, as outlined by Greenstein et al (2003) and this Chapter also outline the strengths and limitations of this research instrument.

In addition, I have outlined the sample size and target population of this research as well as explained the sample method I used and its strengths and limitations. Furthermore, there is a description of the process undertaken and the events that took place in order to access the sample of women that I interviewed for this research report.

Ethics are of the utmost importance when undertaking research that involves people, and for this reason ethical considerations have been outlined in this Chapter. Such ethical considerations include informed consent, plagiarism, anonymity and the personal values of the researcher. In addition, I ensured that physical and emotional harm did not come to my respondents due to the interview and included numbers for free counselling clinics and hotlines should they need such services.

The data analysis section of this Chapter explains the Method of analysis, namely Narrative Analysis. In addition, it outlines the steps taken to analyse these interviews and present this body of work.

3.2. Research Design

This research has utilised qualitative research methods to gather information on the subjective experiences of rape survivors (Fossey et al., 2002; Merriam, 2009). The aim of this method of research is to gather large amounts of in-depth information on the respondent's memories and experiences for analysis (Neuman, 1997; de Wet & Erasmus, 2005). In qualitative research, such has been used in this study, the experiences of participants and the meanings that they hold for these participants is the research data that is collected and then analysed (Fossey et al., 2002; Willig, 2002; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Stangor, 2010). For this research report, I am interested in understanding and exploring the experiences of rape survivors when speaking about being raped and the various spaces in which they feel comfortable or uncomfortable speaking; where and with whom they feel empowered or disempowered to tell their story. Through the use of qualitative research I was able to observe, understand, describe and explain the individual subjectivities, behaviours and motivations of the interviewees and gain insight into their life experiences (Greenstein et al., 2003).

Rape is a highly emotive topic and can be laden with negative connotations, stigma and trauma. The reasons why women don't report being raped, as well as their experiences of being raped, are often complex and varied, and as such require a thorough discussion on the topic to truly understand someone's point of view (Brownmiller, 1975). By using this method of study I felt that I was able to gain an in-depth understanding of what is often a very complex topic in a nuanced way. I gained a deep understanding of their experiences of speaking to others about being raped and the environments in which the respondents feel most or least at ease talking about their experiences of trauma, healing and violence.

3.3. <u>Research Methodology</u>

3.3.1. <u>Research Instruments and Their Strengths</u>

The research instrument that was utilised for the purposes of this research was an unstructured, or as Greenstein et al. (2003) calls it, in-depth interview. The data collected through these interviews was then be codified into transcripts that were analysed. Through the use of unstructured interviews it is possible to gather large amounts of information about a person, their thoughts and hidden meanings and ambiguities behind statements and ideas (Greenstein et al., 2003). Unstructured interviews are similar to a conversation, allowing flexibility and in-depth discussion that cannot be found in a questionnaire (Greenstein et al., 2003). The only difference between a conversation and an unstructured interview is that the research has a topic and ultimate goal; in this case, it was to find out how these women subjectively experience and understand speaking about rape. The goal of this interview process was to create a comfortable space in which the rape survivors could think and speak about how they felt when speaking about their trauma or healing in certain spaces, and how those spaces and listener/s facilitate that speaking.

The questions in this unstructured interview were flexible and open-ended, in order to allow the respondent time and space to be reflexive and to explain their thought processes and experiences. It also gave the respondent the opportunity to introduce new themes that I may not have thought of (Wengraf, 2001). I used an interview Schedule (Appendix D) to prompt the interviewee to talk and to keep the interview on track. I only interfered when necessary, such as when the interviewees went on tangents, contradicted themselves or when conversation went stagnant and I felt it was crucial to introduce new topics (Macun and Posel, 1998; Barbour & Kitsinger, 1999). I also gave interviewees a chance to expand through spontaneous prompting, by asking them, "Would you like to explain what you

mean?" and "How do you feel about that". This way I could fulfil the role of the researcher in the interview process, which is to be as unobtrusive as possible as outlined by Greenstein et al. (2003), and only introduced broad themes into the conversation by using the Interview Schedule. This allowed the research participant time to respond to prompts and probes. Interviewer intervention should always be kept to a minimum and so I avoided cutting my interviewees off, which allowed them time to elaborate on their thoughts.

This type of interview structure allowed for the clarification of ambiguous ideas and thoughts and gave me a chance to observe non-verbal behaviour that may have been key indicators to emotions (Greenstein et al., 2003). These interviews were conducted with aid of a voice-recording device so that I could devote all of my attention to the interviewee without having to write down notes, which may have been distracting for both my respondent and myself (Legard et al., 2003).

3.3.2. <u>Research Instruments and Their Limitations</u>
Like all research methods there are unfortunately pitfalls to this technique; however, some of these can be overcome if researchers are aware of them. This research took place over a year and a half and due to time constraints only has a small sample size. Interviews are time-consuming and often involve large amounts of travel getting from one respondent to another for a one-on-one interview (Greenstein et al., 2003). Due to the scope and nature of the research this is unavoidable, but the time constraints were managed as were the distances travelled as I was studying full-time and had access to my own transportation. Furthermore in this technique, information cannot be generalised to the greater population, but this is not an issue for this research as the purpose of this inquiry is not to do so. The experiences of individuals are important in and of themselves, and are an important line of inquiry if we wish to begin gaining a greater understanding of the experiences of rape survivors, and other

subjects of study. This is discussed further in the 'Methods of Analysis' section of this chapter.

The nature of this form of interview resembles a conversation and as such the researcher's personality could influence the outcome of the interview (Greenstein et al., 2003). I had to remain vigilant and always aware of how I was affecting the conversation and I avoided leading questions or statements that may have cut off the interviewee's train of thought (Greenstein et al., 2003). According to Greenstein et al. (2003) unstructured interviews rely heavily on rapport between the participants, which takes time; so in order to build this, I spent approximately half an hour with each interviewee getting to know them and talking to them, before officially beginning the interview. This preliminary meeting was primarily dedicated to my interviewee and I getting to know one another- we discussed our studies, our jobs and chatted about the project and what the interviews may entail.

3.4. Sampling

3.4.1. Sample Size and Target Population
One of the qualities of qualitative research and interviews, particularly unstructured interviews, is that they take a long time and so the sample size is restricted (Greenstein et al., 2003). Due to the time constraints of this research project, four women took part in the study. The requirements of participation for the sample had to be relatively narrow to some degree in order to get more consistency in themes and patterns, and to achieve greater accuracy in analysis (Greenstein et al., 2003). For this reason the target population only included women who live in Johannesburg and who were raped in Johannesburg. I chose women who are currently over the age of eighteen, as this is the legal age for adulthood in South Africa and considered the legal age at which someone can take responsibility for themselves. However,

the sample was broad, in that I was not specific about the race or sexual orientation of the women I interviewed.

As mentioned in the literature review, some women are raped more than once, as children and adults (Armstrong, 1994). The women interviewed for this study could have been raped several times or once.

3.4.2. <u>Sampling Methods: Their Strengths and Weaknesses</u>
The sampling method used in this research is what Neuman (1997) calls targeting sampling. This method uses a combination of sampling methods – the chain referral method, stratified sampling and quota sampling (Neuman, 1997). Neuman (1997) recommends this form of sampling for what he calls hidden populations, such as prostitutes, those infected with HIV/AIDs, drug addicts and rape survivors. This relies on a snowball form of sampling, where the researcher finds their respondents from connections at organisations or other such connections and through their social network. Neuman (1997) emphasises that this is not a form of convenience sampling and is legitimated in social research as a valid sampling method. For the purposes of this research I was put in touch with participants by my various connections at clinics and local rape organisations as well as through my extended social network of friends, family and acquaintances by word-of mouth and social media.

First, I wrote out a form that outlined the purposes and participants requirements of my study, which I then posted at various clinics and organisations and online, using forums such as Facebook and Twitter where it was reposted by friends and acquaintances.

Eight respondents had already agreed to speak to me when I handed in my proposal for this research, and all eight of them were found using the above-mentioned methods. However, six interviewees withdrew when the research began. Two initially came from an organisation in Johannesburg that empowers women to speak out about their experiences but they had a bad

experience and, in their words, were traumatised in 2014 when they participated in a documentary about rape in South Africa, and so they pulled out. Three of the respondents were non-contactable at the commencing of this research and did not return my phone calls and emails, and the final respondent said that she did not feel she was able to speak about her experiences after all, as she felt it may inhibit her progress and recovery from the event.

After the five initial women pulled out, two of the original women who had agreed to do the interviews contacted me. The first interviewee was one of the participants in the above-mentioned documentary, yet she still agreed to talk to me. I had gained access to her through an organisation that empowers women to speak out about their experiences of rape, which was introduced to me by a friend who volunteers there part-time and works closely with young rape survivors. The second interviewee was accessed through social media and my social network; she saw my post on Facebook and contacted me thereafter.

It became increasingly difficult to find respondents and it was some time before the final two interviewees were found. The third respondent was accessed in much the same way as the second – she saw the notice on social media and contacted me to tell me she was willing to participate. The last participant was an acquaintance who had heard about the study through a friend and also agreed to participate.

 All of the interviewees contacted me privately through telephone and email and have remained, as they prefer, anonymous. For this reason, I have not outlined exactly which respondent came from where to avoid readers being able to identify the individual respondents.

One of the pitfalls of this sampling method is that it cannot be guaranteed that people will be willing to participate in the research. As LaFrance (2009) and Boyd (2001) have shown, some women are unwilling to talk about rape due to cultural taboos or fear and so this often limits

participation, as was my experience. Interviews rely on people being willing to speak to the interviewer and being comfortable enough to explore its topic, which is never a guarantee. The women who pulled out of interviews all did so because they felt threatened by the implications of speaking about their experience, both socially and psychologically due to perceived treats and past experiences.

The second disadvantage of this form of sampling is that due to the small sample size the conclusions of the final research project cannot be generalised to the greater population (Greenstein et al., 2003). However, despite this it is still valuable research as the individual's experiences are of as much importance as the statistical facts. By comparing the interviews and information gleaned from each, as well as analysing each individual's experiences separately we can understand more about the experience of speaking about being raped and therefore more about the social world.

3.5. <u>Ethical Considerations</u>

3.5.1. <u>Informed Consent and Plagiarism</u>
Informed consent is a really important consideration if research is to be ethical and it is really important that people are not only aware of being observed and recorded for the purposes of the research, but that they are fully informed about the aims and methods of the research (Gray et al., 2007). Not to do so would be unethical, not to mention an invasion of privacy (Gray et al., 2007). All the information about the study, the recording device and the aims of the interview were fully explained in primary meetings and before the interviews took place and the interviewees were given a Participant Information form (Appendix A) that outlined the purposes of the study as well as their right to pull out of the study or to not answer any question. Two consent forms were signed by participants. The first, the Participant Consent Form (Appendix B), was signed in order to prove willing participation. The second was the

Voice Recording Consent Form (Appendix C) for the voice-recording device. Both of these were sealed in an envelope and stored in a safe place in my home. Fortunately, none of the recipients in this study were unwilling to sign the consent forms

For the purposes of this research proposal and the proposed research report any and all academic theorists whose ideas I have used in the literature review and methodological framework as well as the formulation and analysis of this research were referenced in Harvard style referencing, accordingly, as outlined by Wassenaar (2006). Plagiarism is taken to be a very serious offence by all universities, and by the University of the Witwatersrand, and I understand the implications of doing so, even if I were to do so unintentionally.

3.5.2. <u>Anonymity and Confidentiality</u>

When Gray et al. (2007) refer to anonymity they refer to the fact that the interviewer does not know the name of the interviewee throughout the whole interview exchange, from initial contact to the end of the research relationship, and implies that this anonymity is maintained (Gray et al., 2007). Confidentiality, on the other hand, refers to the fact that interviewer knows the name of the respondent but will never reveal it (Gray et al., 2007). Anonymity was not possible for the purposes of this research, as the researcher was familiar with the interviewees' names and/or places of residence and work, as this is where the interviews took place. Confidentiality, however, has been guaranteed for the entirety of this research. This means that the interviewee's name will not be found anywhere in the research from the recordings, to transcripts to the initial report (Gray et al., 2007). Confidentiality also explicitly means that the researcher ensures that nothing will be included in the report that could identify them in any way, such as the names of places, family, acquaintances or any defining physical characteristics or incidents through which the interviewee may be recognised (Gray et al., 2007). Pseudonyms have been used in place of real names in the

transcripts and in the analysis of findings to further ensure the participant's anonymity. These are Emily, Thandi, Naledi and Nina.

Both the Participant Consent Form and the Voice Recording Consent Form were hidden from anyone but myself and will be destroyed six months after the completion of this research in order to ensure that confidentiality remains intact forever.

3.5.3. <u>Physical and Emotional Harm</u>

All ethical standards of research require that no emotional or physical harm be brought on any research participant (Wassenaar, 2006). Firstly, in order to ensure that participants felt comfortable while being interviewed, I met them at the time and place of their choosing. Two of the respondents wished to meet in their homes, while one chose to meet in a restaurant near where she worked. I ensured that we would not be overheard by choosing a table far from other patrons and I asked the waitress not to come near us until the completion of the interview. The fourth interviewee wished to meet at the organisation with which she was affiliated, and the interview took place in a quiet room, far away from other people. It was necessary that the interviews took place in quiet places away from other peoples so that the answers were not compromised and they were able to open up about their experiences (Barbour & Kitsinger, 1999).

Primary meetings were held with two of the interviewees, also at a time and place of their choosing, in order to begin discussing the topic and to establish trust between the interviewer and participant. As mentioned before, it is very important to ensure that the interviewee is comfortable. One of these primary interviews occurred at the interviewee's home, while the other took place at the workplace of the interviewee. The remaining two participants did not feel that a primary interview was necessary and consent was established and research aims outlined in phone conversations before the interview and in person before the interview itself. During these primary and pre-interview meetings I established the participants' willingness

and ability to speak about the topic. This was an attempt to ensure that the participants were not coerced into taking part in the study, would not be emotionally harmed by taking part and were fully aware of the ethics of this study, such as of their right to pull out of the study at any time and their right to confidentiality.

These interviews were conducted in a similar fashion to a conversation, allowing the interviewee time and discretion over what they were willing to share and time to process any trauma and difficult feelings. Three of the interviewees did not exhibit any difficult feelings; however in one case the interviewee did show some emotion when talking about her experiences. I informed all the participants through use of the Participant Information Sheet and verbally that they could stop the interview at any time and need not resume if they choose, and this participant was reminded of this at the time. I believed this to be the most ethical course of action, but she chose to continue with the interview and quickly seemed to feel more comfortable talking again. Absolutely no pressure was put on any person to be part of the research and interviews are conducted only if and when the participant was absolutely willing.

In the event of secondary trauma occurring after the interview took place, the Participant Information Sheet included the numbers of three free counselling services that were available should the interviewees felt the need for more support. The first support group was Lifeline, a counselling service that offers both face-to-face and telephone counselling for free and the second was Emthonjeni Community Counselling Centre at The University of the Witwatersrand, a centre that provides free, once-off or week-to-week, counselling services. The third was South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG), a counselling service that offers short-term and long-term support for those suffering from anxiety and depression.

3.5.4. Personal Values Of The Researcher And Reflexivity

Researchers using qualitative research should always be reflexive and aware of their own biases. My own context and personal values, according to Legard et al. (2003), will inevitably always colour this research and influence the topics and discussion, however there were ways for me to reduce researcher bias and influence during the interviews I conducted. During interviews I avoided loaded questions and allowed the interviewees time to expand on their ideas, thoughts and emotions in their own time, so that the information remained accurate and so that the interview would follow a train of reference that was dictated by their own experience and not my own (Legard et al., 2003).

Additionally, in order to minimise observation bias and contamination that may come from time and through memory processing, I recorded observations and thoughts that I had from the interviews in the hours immediately afterwards (Legard et al., 2003). Furthermore, I practised reflexivity, a practice that is crucial if researchers wish to retain the integrity of their research. Reflexivity is when researchers critically assess their own biases, assumptions, dispositions and feelings (Merriam, 2009; Grich, 2012). I did this by keeping notes of my own feelings and assumptions continuously throughout the research process and read over them often in order to understand and work through my biases and keep them from affecting this research (Holmes, 2014).

3.5.5. Ethics Clearance

During the process of submitting my research proposal I applied to the Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I was granted unconditional approval to conduct this research in the form of an Ethical Clearance Certificate (Appendix E).

3.6. Data Analysis

3.6.1. Data Analysis Method

The method of analysis used in this research project is interpretative and is what is called narrative analysis (Etherington, 2007; Kohler Reissman, 2007). One of the central features of this approach and one of the main concerns of researchers who employ it, according to Etherington (2007), is the meanings individuals ascribe to their experiences and thoughts as these experiences and the meanings behind them are important in and of themselves, and not only as a statistical fact. Narrative analysis is a useful method of analysis for research with small sample sizes, as is the case in this research (Kohler Reissman, 2007).

When using narrative analysis, all aspects of the narrative are taken into account, including emotions and the emphasis put on certain themes, but the main focus is on what is 'told' and how it is told (Etherington, 2007; Kohler Reissman, 2007). Some of the participants showed signs of emotions such as sadness, reluctance to speak, excitement to speak about certain topics and so forth, and I recorded all of these emotions and kept track of the topics that elicited these feelings.

Narrative analysis requires the researcher to interrogate the themes that come up during the interviews for differences and similarities, and to compare these narratives with existing literature and knowledge (Kohler Reissman, 2007). For this reason, this form of analysis was appropriate because it allowed me to acknowledge and recognise patterns and exceptions across interviews and within the sample simultaneously, as well as to thoroughly explore the data gathered from the interviews.

3.6.2. Steps of Analysis

For the purposes of this research, from the research proposal to the research report, I used the Rose-Wengraf method of analysis where I constantly went back and forth between the

research questions, the literature, my understandings of my research and, when relevant, my findings in order to achieve the over-all goal of my research (Wengref ,2001). However, below is the loose structure of the steps that took place in order to analyse the findings of this research.

Step One: Transcribe recordings

It was imperative that the transcriptions be completed as soon as possible: in order to retain the integrity of the data and to remove as much chance of memory decay, on my behalf, as possible. First, I gave each of the interviewees pseudonyms and transcribed the recordings of the interviews verbatim, recording any emotional outbursts and/or emotions exhibited by the interviewees at certain topics, using my notes from the interviews and by listening to the inflections and hesitations in the voices of interviewees. I created a personal key, which I used to record these observations that included emotions such as sadness, anger, excitement, happiness, pride, shame or guilt.

Step Two: Become familiar with the transcripts

Next, I familiarised myself with the transcripts by listening to them approximately a dozen times each and reading through them repeatedly, often doing so simultaneously (Kohler Reissman, 2007).

Step Three: Find common themes and exceptions

Once I was confident that I was familiar with the transcripts I highlighted common themes and differences within them, as well as made theoretical connections to the literature attained in Chapter Two. I then addressed commonalities and divergences in the experiences of the interviewees and continually referenced the interviews in order to make sense of the information (Kohler Reissman, 2007).

I then cross-referenced the data from the interviews with the literature and addressed any new information by researching the topics vigorously and including them in the Literature Review in Chapter Two.

Step Five: Write up

In this final step I divided the information gathered into themes and sub-themes in order to make sense of the information and to present the findings in a concise manner. Quotations were used to describe the findings. Quotes chosen represented and animated the theme best and provided evidence for the finding. During this phase of analysis the findings were written up and the uniqueness and similarities of the interviewees' experiences were analysis and laid out to represent the three dominant narratives in society, that of stranger rape, date rape and child rape.

3.7. **Conclusion**

Using a qualitative research design and unstructured interviews I was able to gather large amount of in-depth information about the experiences, emotions and thoughts of my interviewees. Although there were limitations to this approach and the instrument used, the strengths outweighed the weaknesses and I was able to gather the desired information.

The target population included women over eighteen, who lived in Johannesburg and were raped at least once in their lives. The sample size, although small, gave me the opportunity to spend more time with interviewees and get to know their stories in-depth, and allowed me to establish trust with the individuals. Although there were difficulties in finding participants and I had problems with interviewees resending their offer, this was overcome by asking for

research participants on social media platforms and through my network of friends and acquaintances in and outside the University.

Ethical considerations were considered very important in this research project and I took into account many factors, including plagiarism and researcher bias. I ensured that the participants signed Participant Consent Forms and Voice recording consent forms as well as ensured that they were briefed on the topic of study and what was involved in the interview. In addition, I ensured confidentiality by giving the interviewees pseudonyms in the report and by refraining from mentioning any specific events, places or people that may indicate who the respondents are. I also took measures to ensure that consent forms are destroyed at an appropriate time in order to further protect my promise of confidentiality. I was mindful of my participants emotional states at all time and gave them the contact numbers of support groups and counsellors that they could call if needs be.

Narrative analysis was used to analyse this data and to makes sense of the information gathered. The interviews were transcribed, and I became familiar with their contents. I then highlighted the themes and ideas that came up during the interviews and cross-referenced them with the literature in the Literature Review. Through this process I was able to understand the ways in which these women position themselves within their own narratives of rape and societal discourses of rape.

Chapter Four- Discussion

4.1. A summary of Their Stories

4.1.1. Interview One: Emily

Emily is a young woman in her mid-twenties who lives with her parents in a township house in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In her mid-teens she was abducted by a group of men in a car while walking home from a friend's house. She was accompanied by her friend at the time, but only she was abducted. She was then taken to one of the men's houses where she was raped. She managed to escape and find a police station where she was reunited with her family and was able to press charges as well as receive anti-retroviral drugs. She gave testimony at the court hearing where one of the men was subsequently sentenced for raping and abducting a minor. Emily has since undergone therapy and been involved in youth groups and church groups in which she speaks about her experiences.

4.1.2. Interview Two: Thandi

Thandi is a young woman in her late twenties who lives in an apartment in the suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. In her early twenties a man with whom she was on a date raped her. She had back pain and was unwilling to have sex, yet he raped her anyway. He left and they have never spoken again.

It took years for Thandi to talk about her experience and she never pressed charges or sought any medical or psychological help. She is now an advocate for speaking about rape and is a willing discussant should the topic come up. She has not spoken to a professional and does not belong to any groups where she discusses her experiences.

4.1.3. Interview Three: Naledi

Naledi is a young woman in her late twenties who lives with her son, sister and parents in a house in the suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. Naledi was molested as a child but has little recollection of the experience, which remains unreported to the police or legal authorities. She was raped again at 21 years of age at a party at which she was staying the night. She did not tell anyone for several years afterwards, and still tells only very few people- almost exclusively monogamous partners. She has seen her rapist a handful of times since the incident. She never reported the rape to the Police or any legal authorities; neither did she seek psychological help. She does not belong to any groups in which she speaks about her experiences.

4.1.4. Interview Four: Nina

Nina is a young woman in her late twenties who lives in an apartment with her husband in the suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. Nina was raped as a small child by a family friend in her home. She did not tell anyone until years later when she told her family. A decision was made by her immediate family not to report it to the police and she has seen him a few times since.

She has spoken about it with her husband, sister and friends over the years and performed in the *Vagina Monologues*. She is an activist and advocate for speaking out and reporting and is a member of numerous organisations although she does not belong to any group where she regularly speaks about her experiences.

4.2. Introduction

In the course of these interviews what became apparent was that each interviewee's narrative was representative of three types of narratives, namely the stranger narrative, the date/acquaintance rape narrative and the child rape narrative. Each narrative is characterised by its own discourse and tensions that exists within and between them, and in society.

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Emily, who was raped and abducted by a stranger, employs a narrative in which she falls directly within the stranger rape narrative with her emphasis on the scenario as the "classic" rape scenario – the one that society considers least ambiguous – and her behaviour as the "ideal victim", framing her experiences in such a manner that she receives sympathy. There is a less influential but still dominant discourse in society that would challenge her experience of her trauma and so many spaces become safe for her to speak, and become environments that welcome her story, due to its lack of ambiguity.

The date/acquaintance rape narratives often exist in opposition to the stranger rape narrative and rape survivor's experiences of this are numerous and reflect a multitude of experiences. Thandi and Naledi's stories represent these tensions and challenges to dominant discourses, and demonstrate how these tensions can be used to simultaneously place one's narrative in a space that is recognisable, and create ambiguity so that even the rape survivor herself comes to view her experiences as inconsistent and confusing.

The child rape narrative is often characterised by confusion, due to the young age of the victim. This confusion around the exact details frame much of the narrative when Nina tells the story of what happened to her and the years directly afterwards. Her narrative points to ambiguity of her role as the "ideal survivor" of childhood rape, who subsequently chooses not to talk about her experiences in situations that may be hostile or in which people may not understand her experiences. Her narrative reflects dominant discourse and myths around the "ideal victim" by referring to myths about her own subjectivity, such as the belief that Indian women don't tell the truth about rape, and including these as a part of her own experience and story of rape. This does not mean that Nina's narrative is wholly restrictive as it challenges the traditional narrative of victim-blaming and refuses to acknowledge any myths that may hold her directly accountable for what happened to her. Despite this, she is "triggered" emotionally by some instances and stories where rape myths are employed to discredit

survivors and this is the dominant theme in her narrative of rape. She feels controlled by her rapist and this challenges her personal narrative, when she discusses her experiences of rape.

4.3. Stranger Rape Narrative: Emily's Story

4.3.1. The Classic Rape Narrative

Emily addressed what is referred to as the "ideal victim" stereotype several times during her interview, as a way to ensure that she remain positioned within this dominant discourse (DuMont et al., 2003; Franiuk, 2008). She did this through the way in which she positioned herself in her narrative, and in the points and themes that she continuously focused on in her interview. For example, Emily was emphatic that she did not know her rapist, restating that point several times throughout the interview and that she fought off his attack repeatedly. She stated:

> *I really don't know what came over me but, then, that... because the guy who was having a gun over my head, I was fighting the guy that day. I was really fighting until the other guy helped him, I was really fighting.*

Her reiteration of how much she fought her rapist can be seen as her attempt to place herself directly within this narrative of rape and ensure that she is given sympathy for her trauma (Eichner, 2008; Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; Kohler Reissman 2013). This is an attempt to prevent me from viewing her rape and her relationship with her rapist ambiguously and therefore ensure that her experience is not confused with consensual sex (Eichner, 2008; Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; Kohler Reissman 2013). In addition, Emily stated that she only stopped fighting when she felt that not doing so would result in injury or death. She complied with tests, took anti-retroviral drugs and testified in court, and so behaved, in society's view, like the "ideal victim" in every step of the process (DuMont et al, 2003; Cuklans, 2010; O'Neill, 2012). It is reasonable to assume that she reiterated these points to impress upon me

the randomness and violence of the situation, reinforcing this notion and placing herself within a narrative that is recognisable to society.

During the interview, Emily justified her actions and behaviour on the day of rape, thus continuously reinforcing her position within her story (O'Neill, 2012). Upon first telling her story Emily stated that she was walking home with a friend from a birthday party when they were first harassed and then held up at gunpoint, at which point she was adducted. In this narrative she is justifying her actions, giving me good reasons for why she was out of the home at that time of the night and impressing upon me her lack of blame in the situation. According to Kelly et al. (2005) and Anderson (2007), this is a dominant theme of in stories such as this, as women internalise rape myths in society. It seems to me that Emily is addressing certain myths about rape and rape survivors as an attempt to pre-empt any accusation of wrong-doing and questions regarding her culpability (Blagden, 2012; O'Neill, 2012; Gunne and Thompson, 2012).

In addition, when asked how she feels speaking about her experience she stated:

> *You just have to know that it is not your fault. It's that person's fault. I...*
> *You were just in the wrong place at the wrong time but then you don't have*
> *to blame yourself and speaking but helps you to heal and just know who you*
> *are.*

She is reinforcing, with little prompting, her lack of blame in the situation, once again and assuring us that what happened to her was due to no fault of her own. By repeatedly assuring me that she fought her unknown rapist she is calling attention to certain facts that she believes are important and ensuring that she maintains sympathy and recognition. Her narrative allows her the position of the "ideal victim", which allows her to be viewed in unambiguous and

empathetic ways, which makes it easier for her to speak about her rape in a way that is understood and acknowledged (Cuklanz, 2010; O' Neill, 2012).

This translated to her experiences in the courtroom too. She stated that she did not find her experience in the courtroom to be scary, as she felt that it was a clear-cut case. It fit into the definitions of a "strong case" as described by Anderson (2007) and which made it possible to speak about her experiences without feeling that her story is in doubt.

> *I think because these guys took me by force and he wasn't dating me I felt*
>
> *brave. That guy deserves to be there, he deserves to be in prison.*

In her narrative there is no ambiguity. He raped her, it was not her fault and he is a criminal who should be punished.

Additionally, Emily was talking about her experiences of disclosure and stated that:

> *Speaking out helps you to heal and just know who you are.*

Her usage of the phrase, "know who you are" indicates that she can recognise her own experiences and narratives in those reproduced by society and when speaking to others. Furthermore, she feels recognised and acknowledged through these experiences. Emily is part of a group in which women share their stories, as well as a church group with whom she regularly talks about what happened to her. She states that she feels that these environments provide a safe place for her to speak. Although she did not find the courtroom to be a particularly hostile environment, she feels though her church group and rape survivors group are important environments for her to express who she feels and be "healed" by speaking out about what happened to her, and helping other young women find clarity in telling their own stories. This is her description of the research interview too, as she views this as a space in which her narrative can flourish.

She feels that this recognition heals her and that it is important for her that she has the chance to speak about her experiences (Eichner, 2008; Langelier, 1999; La France, 2009). This healing is possible because of the narrative that she employs, as she is accepted in spaces that consider her case unambiguous, like courtrooms – spaces in which other narratives would be called into question and criticised but in which she feels safe. While other may have difficulty in locating and telling their narrative in various spaces, Emily appears to experience little difficulty in doing so due to the lack of ambiguity in her case (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011).

4.3.2. The 'Other' Experience

Despite the lack of ambiguity in her rape narrative, her experience of stranger rape is often in tension with alternative and more subversive narratives through Emily's acknowledgement with the "other" (O'Neill, 2012). This other, in Emily's mind, takes the form of date/acquaintance rape (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; O'Neill, 2012). This is reflected in her acknowledgement that these experiences exist, but that they are far more ambiguous and that her narrative falls within a discourse that is easier to understand. By stating that she felt brave reporting her rape because her rapist was a stranger she brings attention to the fact that if he weren't, her story may have been called into question and her credibility questioned (Taslitz, 2005; O'Neill, 2012). She is acknowledging these alternative narratives, while simultaneously distancing herself from them in order to maintain her position within the dominant narrative of stranger rape.

Similarly, Emily juxtaposes her experiences with those of a friend, whose experiences, she claims, are questioned in the same public spaces in which she feels accepted and acknowledged– a community organisation dedicated to empowering young women. I asked Emily: "Is there any specific instance of speaking out that has stuck with you, and what was it about that incident that you remember?" In response, she told me about a friend of hers who was raped three times by three different people. She had never reported these incidents to the

police or any family and friends. Emily, who believes her friend's account of her rapes, also states that she can understand why her friend is fearful of speaking out. In Emily's mind, her friend's not reporting all three of the rapes puts doubt in the mind of those who may listen to her story that it is true. Her friend experiences the very same spaces that Emily sees as welcoming and healing as hostile and Emily attributes this to their differences in their experiences. DuMont et al (2003), Taslitz (2005) and O'Neill (2012) describe society's difficulty in distinguishing between rape and consent due to stereotypes about rape and rape survivors. I believe she is alluding to this and how it affects the types of narratives that are available to them as survivors of different "kinds" of rape, and the ways in which these are received by society and different listeners (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). In this instance I believe that Emily's narrative is not only defined by what it is, but by what it is not. In this case, what it is "not" is a story that can be misconstrued as potential consensual sex, unlike others.

4.4.   The Date/Acquaintance Rape Narrative: Thandi And Naledi

4.4.1.   The 'Alternative' Narrative And Response To Rape

There are constant tensions and ambiguities within Thandi's narrative that challenge and reflect the stranger rape narrative and the various beliefs about rape that are circulated in society, and this greatly impacts the way that she tells her story. This takes place in two forms.

In the first instance, Thandi's rape narrative framed her story in a way that she acknowledged society's general dismissal of an experience such as hers (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). The critical gaze society points at so-called ambiguous stories such as hers appeared to be internalised and mediated by her own experiences and reproduced within her narrative (O'Neill, 2012). For example, Thandi said that she had not contacted the police since she

realised that she was raped because she did not have the evidence that she believed was needed to get a conviction, such as semen and documented injuries and so she did not think people would believe her. Indeed she stated that at first she did not take her own experiences seriously either. Here we see a reflection of how society minimises a narrative such as hers due to their so-called ambiguousness of her experiences of rape/sex and leaves it hidden from public spaces (Johnstone, 2016; O'Neill, 2012). Her story, and the form it takes, shows that she has internalised these views of her experiences so that in certain spaces she can no longer inhabit a position of sympathy and recognition for her trauma.

However, she does make use of this stereotype and identify with it in certain instances as a way of relocating her narrative within dominant discourses, as she frames herself as an "ideal victim" (Cuklans, 2010; O'Neill, 2012). In Thandi's view, there are elements of her behaviour that make the rape seem less ambiguous, such as that she was in a lot of pain because of whiplash, and said "no" clearly to his advances. Her position as a victim of rape is solidified through this acknowledgements of her actions and her conformity with the ideal victim role. Thandi's experiences and the ambiguity and confusion in naming her rape appear to centre on the rapist and her feelings about him, as well as the fact that she was dating him, rather than on her actions at the time, which she clarified were consistent with societal notions of the rape survivor. In this way she absolves herself of blame within her narrative, while putting emphasis on his role in the assault. She appears to release herself from the dominant date rape narrative of victim-blaming in this sense (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe, 1992; Cuklans, 2010).

In the second instance, Thandi's narrative emphasised challenging these dominant stranger rape narratives in order for society to get a better understanding of what rape is (Langellier, 1999). For example, Thandi went against typical scripts of what rapists are in society by

describing her attacker and putting emphasis on the ways in which he was not what you'd expect a rapist to be. When describing her rapist she stated:

> *He was very funny and very jovial, a very chilled guy...Professional.*
> *Manager-level, so you don't think about it. And we hit it off. He was funny*
> *and we had a good time... it was cool, it was fine, I felt comfortable to invite*
> *him to my house.*

She emphasised this diversion from dominant stereotypes repeatedly, and saw this as a way of adding her voice to the discussions on rape in educating people about the diverse experiences women have of rape and speaking about it. She sees speaking out about her experience as a part of responsibility she has as a survivor to educate people, a sentiment shared by Nina. Thandi believes that her experience as a rape survivor, and particularly as someone who did not realise she was raped for some time afterwards, means that it is her duty to inform people of the consequences of rape as well as to remind people that rape comes in many forms, some that may sometimes be unrecognisable to the rape survivor herself at first (Gunne and Thompson, 2012; Holstein and Gubrium, 2011). She states:

I feel comfortable with [speaking about my rape]. Completely comfortable... It's part of the... *education job that needs to happen because another thing is I am quite an empowered* *individual... So any way for me to assist in that way, to make it a little bit more aware, will* *make people a little bit more aware and to assist I'll do it.*

This can be a common way in which women make use of a subversive narrative when trying to insert their voices into societal discussions of rape and challenge injustice (Eichner, 2008; Langellier, 1999). For example, when asked how people react to her talking about her experience, she stated:

I think they get quite shocked. Because they expect rape to be something

hard and physical and violent and whatever. So they get a bit shocked and I

think quite bewildered and they don't really believe it also because when I

speak about it I pretty... I speak about it quite factually like this. It's not...

I'm not dramatic and crying and... You know?

Here, in a similar way, she is challenging the dominant view of what a rape survivor should be and how they are expected to behave, and in so doing places herself in opposition to such a stereotype. In doing so, she challenges ways of speaking about trauma and places herself within conversation about rape and giving herself a voice.

4.4.2. Aggressive Male Sexuality and The Unintentional Rapist

While simultaneously putting emphasis on the rapist's culpability in his actions, Thandi's narrative also represents and acknowledges the pervasive belief and justification that male sexuality is aggressive and coercive by nature (Weis, 2009; O'Neill, 2012; Gunne and Thompson, 2012). This creates a paradox and tensions in her narrative with regards to how much culpability men, and particularly her rapist, hold when committing rape. Thandi reverts back to society's dominant discourse of male biological urges, thus justifying rape and the rapist is absolved of any real responsibility. In this narrative, all men come to be viewed as potential aggressors, particularly men with whom Thandi has relationships. She stated:

And I didn't realise it at the time, but actually it was rape, to be honest...

Even though I had said [no] numerous times and he still was aggressive

because a lot of men just carry on, they do that until you.... they coerce you

until they wear you down so I didn't realise that that was what had

happened.

Later she stated:

> *The biggest thing I realise is that... One, he probably does not think it was*
>
> *rape. Two, I didn't realise it was rape.*

This confusion is expressed later and indicative and reflective of society's confusion between sex and coercion and inability to define rape in the absence of stereotypes (O'Neill, 2012; Johnstone, 2016). In order to demonstrate this, I must elaborate. Thandi refers to a second experience she had in early 2015 that is almost identical to her original story of rape, the one that was the focus of her interview. Similarities are: she was sick and the man in question was drunk and aggressive; in addition, she felt there was a definitive element of coercion in the encounter. She described the experience as this:

> *I think having had such a similar situation with him, because it was pretty*
>
> *similar. I was unwell. That was this year. I was unwell and he was a little*
>
> *intoxicated. And... But quite... little... aggressive in a sense. Then I also sort*
>
> *of just like gave in. But fully aware of what I was doing, fully aware of the*
>
> *fact that I could've just been like, "no, I don't want to". So it was my choice*
>
> *that I made, it wasn't... a coerced decision. Having been in such a tight, or*
>
> *similar, situation again it was difficult talking to him because it was going*
>
> *to make him feel uncomfortable because he could realise how easy it is to*
>
> *rape someone. And I know that that is his strategy when he has sex with*
>
> *people. Is that he sort of just... and he does not realise that that's rape... It*
>
> *was a sensitive topic.*

Despite this confusion in this instance between what I think she considers unintentional sex and rape, there is little ambiguity in Thandi's eyes that the initial incident to which she referred in her interview "absolutely was rape". However, she simultaneously acknowledges

victimisation in one case and denies victimisation in the other, despite the similarity of the two cases. There is evidence in her interview to suggest that the ambiguity of these two rapes is due to her closeness to her rapist (Lam and Roman, 2009). The man who raped her on their date was someone she did not know very well. The intimacy they shared on those two dates created an ambiguity in her experience, enough that she was not sure whether she was raped until much later. Despite this, she did not know him very well and so once she had realised what had happened she was able to see him as an aggressor. The second incident involved someone she felt very closely connected to and for whom she cared a great deal. She stated that it wasn't rape because she decided to give in. In her eyes her rape is minimised to an experience of "forced sex" rather than what it was. This indicates that she has internalised society's stereotypes about rape and is influenced by her intimacy with her rapist (Johnstone, 2016; Lam and Roman, 2009). In addition, her closeness allowed her to talk to him and "educate" him about what had happened and how he could become an unintended rapist. However, I believe that her role as educator is assumed defensively as a way of distancing herself from the experience, and as a way of justifying his actions, and she is falling back on dominant rape myths in order to do so (Tosh, 2014; O'Neill, 2012; Cuklans, 2010).

4.4.3. Female Agency and Sexuality

Women often internalise society's view of their bodies as commodities, which is something out of their control (De Beauvoir, 1975). Thandi indicated that her control of her own body has always been in question in her mind, and that it continues to be throughout her narrative. When asked about her experience of rape, she stated that the feeling a loss of control over her body was not isolated, that her body had been "violated" her whole life. Thandi felt as though she could not control her own body and that what happened to it was not a new experience, and that this feeling barely shocks her anymore. Moreover, she does not believe this is

something that is likely to change and attributes this to spiritual causality. She makes sense of this by attributing the rape to something she herself is doing by saying:

> *It's all part of the sex sort of story. I think it probably just brought it up again... having to work with it because clearly I was still attracting the same sort of scenario again... Spiritually. So it's not a matter of 'fault', it's a matter of mind frame and where I am, where I hadn't dealt with things because as soon as you deal with things... The same things will manifest, or similar things manifest. So the fact that similar things were manifesting just means that I hadn't quite finished dealing with it.*

This indicates an internalisation of the culture of victim blaming that is reproduced and reinforced during the course of her narrative that creates tensions between the definition of rape/sex and what are/are not normal gender relations.

4.4.4. Finding Spaces for the Date Rape Narrative

Naledi rarely talks to anyone but her monogamous partners about her rape, which indicates that this is because she is nervous that people will not recognise her experience as rape or worries that there, are those that may doubt her version of events and accuse her of lying. Upon listening to Naledi's description of her rape and her experiences, it is clear that the experience itself and her relationship with her rapist is not what she believes will be in doubt, but rather her behaviour leading up to and after the rape that she fears may be brought into question.

She pointed to this several times and indicated that she has internalised some of the myths perpetuated about how rape survivors "should" behave. She indicated that she had regulated herself in response to these myths and the perceived or real threats that they posed to her disclosing her experience. Naledi believed that her friends would not believe her because she

did not confide in them the morning following the incident as a few of them were with her and she was unable to express what had happened at the time. In addition, her rapist had left "hickies"[1] on her neck and she was concerned with covering them up as her boyfriend at the time was flying in from another province that day and she was concerned that he would see them. She questioned whether she screamed "loud enough" or fought hard enough" for people to believe her account of her rape. Her narrative indicates the ways in which she has internalised dominant myths about the "ideal victim" and how she falls short of that perceived norm (O'Neill, 2012; Kohler Reissman, 20013). When asked why she had not told her friends about it, she stated:

> *Not really cause I think I feel a bit sheepish talking to them because a lot of*
> *them were there, like... And the next day especially because everyone slept*
> *over there.*

In her eyes, by not telling her friends immediately the story was now in doubt. In addition, Naledi was drinking that night which, in her mind, would also lead people to doubt her story and think that she "wanted it", which were her words of choice to describe the situation. She stated that she believed all of these factors would be used to dispute her claim and that she wasn't then, nor is she now, ready for her narrative to be challenged in such as way, for fear that it would traumatise her further. For years, she questioned whether she had fought hard enough, or shouted loud enough, and I believe that this called her whole story and identity into question.

When asked why she speaks to boyfriends Naledi stated:

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[1] Small red marks, usually caused by someone sucking on the neck, making blood vessels burst.

Maybe I feel some sort of safe... like I've used that word, a safe space with them but also in a weird sort of way protected by them so that's probably why I've only told them.

In addition she stated that she spoke to me and agreed to an interview because she felt that this space would be comfortable and that she knew enough about me to feel comfortable talking to me about her experiences. This is indicative of the difficulty she has in finding spaces in which she feels that her narrative is not in contestation or misunderstood (O'Neill, 2012; Eichner, 2008).

This "safe space" that she speaks of is a space where her experience is recognised as rape and in which she finds some form of healing. Naledi has been traumatised in the past when people did not believe her experiences, yet still believes that speaking out is cathartic for her. I believe that this cathartism is due to the recognition she receives in the spaces in which her story is welcome and understood, such as the research interview with me and with boyfriends (Eichner, 2008; Langellier, 1999; La France, 2009). This is demonstrated when she states:

I think maybe also telling boyfriends, you know, sometimes you doubt yourself' like, maybe I really did... Maybe I... I dunno... Lead him on in some way or I... Ya, maybe I did something... So to hear I from a man saying "Babe, you did nothing wrong; that is wrong, that was wrong"; whatever, I think it's part of the reason I only told them.

Naledi stated that she did not immediately tell anybody what had happened to her and it took years for her to tell someone and that she feels that perhaps she could speak to other rape survivors given the chance, but that in the past other survivors have acted as if their experiences are commonplace and ordinary, rather than traumatic, and this hinders Naledi from being able to express her trauma:

You know, it's strange because women will say these things in passing they wouldn't want to discuss further. I know a couple of my friends who have gone through similar experiences and they kind of just say it in passing where you don't even get a chance to say anything back. I don't think this is something that is in passing kind of thing; it's something you live with everyday.

By not acknowledging how "life-changing" her trauma was other rape survivors do not provide this space for her experiences to be recognised and validated in her experience (Kohler Reissman, 2013; Eichner, 2008).

It appears that she has internalised all of these myths, and this in turn has had a regulating effect on her behaviour and how she views her sexual assault and herself. Like Thandi, her narrative is in tension with the stranger rape narrative, and her experience becomes ambiguous in the eyes of others, but in a different way. Rather than internalising myths about her rapist, she has internalised myths about herself and her own behaviour (Mascia-Lees and Sharpe, 1992; Cuklans, 2010). She said that she experienced self-doubt, that she may in some way be responsible for her own rape, and that she often turns to partners for assurance that she is blameless. Like O'Neill (2012) described, Naledi experiences periods where she internally attributes the causality of her rape and trauma to herself, making her vulnerable to the effects rape myths have on individuals and these fears are framed within her account of her rape and the spaces in which she is willing to speak about her experiences. These spaces feel unavailable to Naledi and do not appear to give her the validation of her experiences that are important to her for her healing

4.4.5. The Acquaintance Versus the Stranger Rapist

Contrary to Thandi, Naledi's narrative about the actual rape experience and the rapist himself is quite decisive. What she places emphasis on shares certain similarities with the stranger rape narrative as she contextualises the event (Cuklans, 2010). Naledi had emphasised in her

narrative to me that she was not close to her rapist and that he had pursued a relationship with her, even though she was not interested in him. She also emphasised the fact that she had a boyfriend and was not sexually attracted to the rapist. She made use of the stranger rape narrative in that she described a man following her to her room and attacking her unsuspectingly (Cuklans, 2010). She paints a scene that bears similarities to that of the stranger rapists who follows women home and surprises them in their homes. She said that the rape felt planned, and that she did not think she was the first or last victim of this man, contextualising herself firmly in the role of the unsuspecting women, pursued by a criminal and cunning man for whom she felt no interest; she places herself in a position of sympathy and acknowledgement of the trauma she experienced (Eichner, 2008; Kohler Reissman, 2013; Holstein and Gubrium, 2011). She stated:

At some point of the night I decided... I've had enough I am going upstairs to go sleep. [I said] Goodnight to everybody and I still had a boyfriend then but he lived in Durban and he was coming to visit the next day. I went to sleep upstairs in the... one of the rooms because they had a huge-ass house and this guy must have followed me there because... I think he waited a couple of minutes; I slept because the next thing I woke up, this guy was on top of me... like, on top of me. And I think I was just so paralysed... I do remember saying "What the fuck are you doing?" but he just carried on.

4.5. Child Rape Narrative: Nina's Story

4.5.1. Spaces for her Narrative

Nina's narrative is restrictive in the sense she does not feel comfortable expressing herself in spaces that are unfamiliar or hostile. Like many experiences and narratives about trauma and abuse, particularly those that are hidden and subversive such as this one, rape survivors can

feel as though these may be misinterpreted (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). In safe spaces, where she feels her story is recognised, Nina feels comfortable with expressing herself, and feels comfortable telling her story, yet questions whether or not there are many of those spaces available.

I believe this demonstrates that her narrative is in conflict with other dominant discourses of rape, and that it is caught up within stereotypes about and subject to various myths about rape (Gunne and Thompson, 2012; O'Neill, 2012). She is acknowledging that people who listen to her story bring with them preconceived biases, ideas and definitions of rape and that affects the way in which her story is understood; and she avoids experiences and spaces that she views as holding the potential for this to happen (Gunne and Thompson, 2012; Holstein and Gubrium, 2011; Eichner, 2011; Roy, 2013). For example, she stated:

> *So who's receiving the information, rather than and how you're delivering it, rather than the content of what you're talking about, because the content can be the same across all platforms. It's just the context is incredibly important as to how the information gets out there... And once you can control your own narrative you can decide what to do with the action and its consequences.*

By stating that it is important to her to be able to "control her own narrative", she is placing her experiences within dominant discourses of rape and acknowledging that it is open to interpretation and that her telling her story may not always have the intended consequences. Public stereotypes about women, gender and sexuality affect the way a rape survivor tells her story, who she tells her story to and how this story is interpreted (O'Neill, 2012).

This is not to say that Nina finds the narrative of child rape entirely restrictive. Many modern narratives of child rape have incorporated various aspects of feminist discourse around rape

that debunk the victim-blaming culture (Tomaselli and Porter, 1986). There is no indication in Nina's narrative of the conflation between sex and rape in her experiences and she exhibits no doubt that she was not to blame for her experiences. She rejects historical debates about childhood sexuality in favour of alternative discourses of victimisation (James and Prout, 2003). She indicates that she does this, like Thandi, due to a need to educate people about the complexities of rape and to challenge dominant rape narratives. She states that she has taken part in the *Vagina Monologues* and spoken out about rape and reporting in the hopes that it will "empower" others to do the same. Later, in this regard, she stated:

> *One of the things that my grandfather always used to say is once you're in a position where you're not wondering here your next meal is coming from your life should be dedicated to others and that's the entire ethos of my family. That you don't concentrate on the self.*

Nina was also quite emphatic about her experiences speaking to individuals or small groups of people as opposed to larger audiences, such as in the Vagina Monologues, and the experiences she has had speaking to individuals. She states:

> *It's not always the act of speaking about it that helps, but it's the person that your bouncing off that helps the most. With my parents, my sister, my best friend, my husband it's easy.... I think I would have found it incredibly difficult to report in a courtroom. Knowing the person that I am I probably would have clammed up and not spoken. Speaking in terms of a play, a monologue, a creative kind of piece, was easy to do in terms of getting up on stage and saying it because it was just like any other performance I've done but it wasn't helpful.*

While educating people is important to Nina, it is also the act of recognition that she receives from her narrative that makes the act of speaking cathartic and this recognition is found through the way she speaks her narrative so that they become understandable to those listening (Eichner, 2008; Langellier, 1999; La France, 2009). In other words, who is listening to the rape survivor tell her story is just as important as what the survivor is saying. In feminist spaces and in one-on-one conversations, Nina finds this narrative easy to locate and employ, but the recognition she seeks appears to be somewhat missing in some public dialogues.

However, this narratives does not appear to always be available to Nina, or at the very least she is not always comfortable with them all of the time; only in certain situations where the listener/s are receptive and believing (Roy, 2013; Faku-Juqula; 2014; La France, 2009). This does not only refer to openly hostile environments, but more supposedly benign forms of misunderstandings. For example, Nina compares her experiences of speaking to male and female psychologist, for instance, and stated:

> *I found it a lot more difficult to talk to him [the male psychologist] about just random stuff, even. [Be] cause I do feel that there's a level of understanding coming from your same... gender... That a person can relate and rather than psycho-analyse you, they actually empathise.*

Her parents, her best friend, her sister and her husband provide this space for Nina through intimacy. They are what she refers to as "progressive" people, and in her mind this creates a progressive space in which her narrative is recognisable. Similarly, the interview space, for Nina, became a space where her narrative felt acknowledged and understood and this is indicated by the lack of tension in her story around her place as the victim and survivor in her

story, and by the fact that she said she found the interview process easy and the space comfortable.

In contrast, other spaces are perceived to not create an environment in which her narrative flourishes, such as the courtroom and in her relationship with her parents-in-law (Roy, 2013; Faku-Juqula, 2014; La France, 2009). She views her parents and her husband's parents as polar opposites. She states that she only gets along with her in-laws on the "surface", when she described her family as warm and affectionate, and as mentioned previously "progressive". In spaces where people understand her experiences and come from a place of intimacy, she feels safe to employ her narrative with very few tensions, and to speak about her trauma.

4.5.2. The Believable Child Victim

Nina's experiences, according to her, have placed her narrative in spaces that have left it contested in the past. When asked why she did not report her rape she stated:

> *All of them [the lawyer, the psychologist, the psychiatrist and the social worker] said there's absolutely no point especially being Indian because courts don't take Indian women seriously and that's something that to me is incredibly scary that people are just so blasé about saying, courts don't take Indian women seriously.*

Child rape narratives are often caught up in the stereotype of the perfect child victim, the believable child (Waterman and Foss-Goodman, 1984; Hussey and Fletcher, 1999; James and Prout, 2003; Gunne and Thompson, 2012; Meyer, 2007); and Nina demonstrates this. In her eyes, her story is not believable in the eyes of the court because she did not match this ideal of the believable victim, being an Indian woman. She believes that because of this, the courtroom, or at least parts of the criminal justice system, would have been very

unwelcoming places. Her narrative is restricted in these spaces that have certain expectations of rape survivors and survivor's of child abuse (Waterman and Foss-Goodman, 1984; Hussey and Fletcher, 1999; James and Prout, 2003; Gunne and Thompson, 2012; Meyer, 2007). She doubts her own believability again by stating:

> *It was a grown man's word over the memory of a thirteen-year-old of her*
>
> *six-year-old self which is in the eyes of the law viable but in courts its [not].*

She indicates an acknowledgement that rape myths play a part in how her narrative is perceived and negotiated by people in the criminal justice system, and how this may lead to her feeling misunderstood and unrecognised (Tosh, 2014; Cuklans, 2010;Gunne and Thompson, 2012). She is indicating a possible failure on the part of her narrative to do justice; an acknowledgement that what happened to her was an injustice and a crime, but that the ways in which people recognise this may not match her experience of trauma and may be minimised, criticised or ignored (Eichner, 2008; O'Neill, 2012). Her narrative and experiences, although not indicative of self-blame, are in constant tension with dominant narratives and myths about rape and rape survivors (Gunne and Thompson, 2012).

Nina explains that she is often 'triggered' by stories in the media, in South Africa and in the world, that employ rape myths to discredit the survivor of trauma. The New Delhi rapists, a group of men convicted of the murder and rape of a woman in India and was given a death sentence (BBC News, 2013 & 2015) is one such 'trigger' for her. She explains:

> *One of the perpetrators, he is sentenced to death, he is on death row and*
>
> *he's still not remorseful. He says she deserved it and all of that. It just, it*
>
> *opened up so many things...But when that came up it stirred up a lot of shit*
>
> *for me.*

Later, she stated that many of these triggers feel as if they are coming from the fact that in many ways she feels as if her rapist is still in control of her. She implied several times that this lack of control is also associated with losing control of her narrative, and being unable to control what happens to her story once others have heard it. Rape myths, as described by O'Neill (2012) seem to be internalised by Nina to the extent that she views her story in terms of believability in the eyes of the listener. This lack of control is also indicated when Nina describes the part she played in the decision to report her rape to the authorities. Her parents decided not to, because of advice given by lawyers and psychologists. Although she does not blame her parents, she expresses a sense of guilt during certain periods of her life at having not reported it. She stated:

> *For a while... I felt like I was kind of being hypocritical being part of the one in nine campaign and doing all this activism surrounding it when I got to varsity, saying 'speak out', 'report your cases'. When I didn't do it myself and it felt really really hypocritical but once I realised that I didn't make that decision myself and it wasn't that I was silenced I was being protected. I realised that actually I don't need to feel this way, as an adult I would have stepped up to the plate and said, 'fuck this shit, I am going and reporting it.*

In addition, her parents chose her psychologist, who was a man; even though she felt she would have been more comfortable with a woman. Her narrative expresses a restriction of agency in her own story, and in her own experiences. She states that she only told her parents what had happened to her out of necessity, as not doing so would have resulted in her seeing her rapist regularly. This framework in the narrative of a loss of control restricts her narrative as well as their ability to speak about her trauma.

4.6. **Conclusion**

These narratives all represent the different ways rape survivors make sense of their stories and experiences, and frame them within a public discourse. Each narrative provides a way of speaking about rape and delineates that which can and cannot be said, and this affects how the narratives are told.

The stranger rape narrative is one of the most accepted narratives in society and people whose experiences match this are often granted sympathy for the supposed randomness and aggression of the attack, especially considering that it involves a stranger rather than an acquaintance as the aggressor (Cuklans, 2010; O'Neill, 2012). By framing oneself within this discourse of rape one ensures that their own story is relatable and that those who listen to their story understand and recognises the trauma experience (O'Neill, 2012). Emily's experience of being abducted at gunpoint and raped, as well as the ways in which she frames the telling of her story is very indicative of this narrative. This narrative, in the case of Emily, enables the telling of her story, by acknowledging her experiences and recognising her narrative in mainstream conversations about rape. However, this narrative is restrictive, as it requires that it constantly be acknowledged and reiterated in order for it to retain believability. It also requires the scenario to be clear-cut and demands certain behaviour from the rape survivor (Anderson, 2007). Emily's narrative employed during the interview was set within the framework of the stranger rape narrative, situating her in the role of the unsuspecting victim of random, violent crime. Emily's narrative is focused on dispelling misgivings and rectifying any ambiguities in the mind of those listening. She does this by reiterating certain facts about her experience, and by evaluating the believability of her story with that of others, and thus creates a way of speaking about her rape that leaves little doubt and ensures recognition.

Despite its prevalence, the date rape narrative is often in constant tension with the stranger rape narrative, by virtue of it being more subversive (Gunne and Thompson, 2012). Thandi's and Naledi's stories, and the ways in which they tell them, show how these tensions manifest and the different experiences of this within the date/acquaintance rape narrative. Thandi's narrative reflects the critical patriarchal gaze that society points at seemingly ambiguous stories such as hers and this appeared to have been internalised by her and reproduced within her own story. This creates an ambiguousness in her narrative about the difference between rape and sex that led to her not reporting her rape, which left it hidden within the public discourse (O'Neill, 2012; Johnstone, 2016). At a certain point, Thandi employs use of the stereotype of the ideal victim in order to contextualise her experience within the narrative of rape. Her position as a victim of rape is entrenched through the descriptions of her actions and her conformity with "ideal victim" behaviour. Many of Thandi's ambiguities and tensions in her narrative appeared to centre on her rapist and her relationship with him. This confusion is expressed in her difficulty to describe her experience as rape. Later, Thandi displays a similar confusion in an experience she had with a man with whom she was close and this I believe is reflective of society's confusion between sex and coercion. She simultaneously acknowledges her victimisation in one case and denies it in the other, despite the similarity of the two incidences. She reflects society's attitude as a defensive mechanism in order to make sense of her experiences. Thandi indicated throughout her narrative that her control of her own body has always been in question, and that it continues to be, and that perhaps it is something she "brought on" herself. This reflects and reproduces an internalisation of the culture of the victim blaming prevalent in society that creates tensions between the definition of rape/sex and what are and are not normal gender relations.

Naledi expresses concerns that people will not recognise her experience as rape and worries

that there are limited spaces in which her narrative will be accepted and believed. She pointed to this several times and indicated an internalisation of some of the myths perpetuated about how rape survivors "should" behave, which policed her behaviour and ability to speak about her experiences throughout her life. Naledi's narrative both deviates from and correlates with the dominant discourse and narratives of rape, and this created doubt in her mind about what her experiences mean and how they will be perceived by society.

Nina's narrative appears to be in conflict with other dominant discourses of rape, subject to various myths about rape, and this determines the spaces in which she chooses to disclose her rape and how she experiences this disclosure. She states that it is important to her to be able to "control her own narrative", and in doing so is acknowledging that her experiences are open to interpretation. What is apparent is that there is no indication in Nina's narrative that she or anyone else was confused as to whether what happened to her was consensual sex and exhibits no doubt that she was not to blame for her experiences and in so doing she rejects historical debates about childhood sexuality that include victim-blaming. However, this narrative has not always been available to Nina, especially in situations in which those listening are hostile. Nina acknowledges the stereotype of the believable child, as she points to an acknowledgement that rape myths play a part in how her narrative is perceived and negotiated by people in the media or courtrooms, for instance, and how this may lead to her experience being rendered unrecognisable. As mentioned previously, her narrative, although not suggestive of self-blame, is in tension with dominant narratives and myths about rape. Rape myths appear to be internalised by Nina in that she views her story in terms of believability in the eyes of the listener.

The position of each narrative in dominant discourse affects the way in which the narratives are perceived by the listener and framed by the speaker. All of these experiences of rape

represent the complex and intricate relationship rape survivors have with their narratives of trauma and the way in which society views their experiences of rape.

Chapter Five- Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This final Chapter begins with a synopsis of the findings of this research project, the implications of this research and the ways in which this research adds to scholarly knowledge about rape. In addition this outline describes the limitations of this research project as well as recommendations for future research, such as conducting research with a greater sample size or using one that includes men.

5.2. Synopsis Of The Findings And Implications For The Research

An analysis of the interviews with Naledi, Emily, Thandi and Nina found that these four rape survivors represent three dominant narratives in society: the stranger rape narrative, the child rape narrative and the date/acquaintance rape narrative. The narratives exist in conflict with one another and often challenge the popular discourses and myths around rape and rape survivors. Depending on the experience of the rape survivors their narratives allow them to inhibit different positionalities in their story. In addition, they also allow her to take on certain positions that make it possible for her to get sympathy.

Emily's narrative fits within the dominant and well-accepted classic rape scenario and "ideal victim" scenario and as such she does not struggle to find spaces in which her narrative is not acceptable and recognised. She is still aware of the various tensions between her narrative and that of the date/acquaintance rape narratives, and acknowledges these tensions, but it is not – in and on of itself – part of narrative except as an alternative.

The date rape narrative, as indicated by Thandi and Naledi's experiences, is consistently shifting and changing, and is both challenged and challenging of the stranger rape narrative. Thandi's experiences of ambiguity in her feelings about her rapist both stem from and are

reinforced by society's ambiguity around rape and consensual sex. She draws on this narrative in order to justify her rapists' actions, while simultaneously drawing on the same narrative in order to educate and affect a multitude of experiences. She draws on the date rape narrative, in this instance, in an attempt to disprove it and release herself from its critical gaze. Naledi, on the other hand, internalises the myths about rape and the ideal survivor and the result is that she does not speak about her experiences with anyone but monogamous boyfriends. She experiences this as restrictive of healing and as a silencing mechanism. These myths about rape act as a policing mechanism, restricting and inhibiting her actions and the spaces in which she discloses her experiences.

The "ideal" child rape survivor is an important theme in Nina's narrative with regards to her own experiences of rape. She feels this ideal is restrictive and inhibits the spaces in which she is able to talk about her experiences, as she believes this is an important thing to do. Her and her family's belief that courts don't believe Indian women has repercussions for Nina and resulted in her restricting her behaviour and reporting her rape. She views this as restrictive and indicates that it is this discourse of rape that is to blame for this. However, more than only seeing the narrative of child rape as restrictive, Nina seems to embrace it as liberating in some aspect. She makes use of common modern narratives of a blameless survivor and there is little indication of the internalisation of these kinds of belief on her psyche. In this way her narrative is both in opposition to, and influenced by society's interpretations of rape and other dominant narratives of rape in society.

The implications of this are that we have a greater understanding of these common narratives and how they affect women in Johannesburg. Societal discourses of rape greatly affect how these women viewed their own experiences and their narratives are framed around and reflect common myths and beliefs about rape that are prevalent in society. Through analysing the narratives of these three women it is possible to determine the process in which that happens,

and how this internalisation of dominant narratives can affect women and their interpretations of their experiences and the spaces that they inhabit. This research has important implications for social research as it adds to our understanding of how women position themselves in society and in their narratives of rape in Johannesburg. Rape myths greatly impact women's subjective experiences and views of themselves and the spaces in which women disclose their rape experiences. By understanding women's experiences we can work toward creating new spaces for disclosure and creating spaces in which narratives of rape are recognised and understood as they were intended by the rape survivor. This provides us with greater understanding of how myths and beliefs about rape, as well as the narrative that challenge and internalise these beliefs, affect women and how they view spaces of disclosure, such as courtrooms and more intimate one-on-one gatherings.

5.3. <u>Limitations of the Research</u>

One of the limitations of this research is the characteristics of the sample with regards to class, race and sample size. This project attempted to explore the individual experiences of women who had been raped on a very deep level, rather than obtain generalisable results and thus the characteristics of the sample (with regards to race and circumstances) were not criteria included in the methodology and sampling process. It is possible that the data yielded from the research would have more depth and breadth if participants had come from backgrounds that were diverse. There may have been additional aspects and interesting nuances found if the sample included participants from more diverse class, race and sexual backgrounds as well as different orientations.

Given that narrative analysis typically requires a small sample and due to the time constraints of this research, I made use of a small sample size. However, this could be considered to be a

limitation of the current research as a larger sample size could have furthered the depth and breadth of data gathered.

5.4. <u>Recommendations for Future Research</u>

Based on the results of the research as well as the strengths and limitations of the research and methods mentioned above, I have the following recommendations for future research projects:

The current research focused on women who had been raped and the ways in which they frame and understand their narrative of rape and healing. It seems to me that there may be some value in focusing on how men's narratives of rape frame their experiences and affect their behaviour and interpretations of certain spaces. Gender differences could provide an interesting framework from which to view these narratives, as men's experiences and socialised understanding of rape and their bodies are often different to women.

Given the limitations highlighted above regarding the sample size and characteristics of this research, it may be useful to increase the sample size and incorporate more racial and socio-economic groups into the sample. Different races and cultures may further contribute to the richness to the data gathered. This could be achieved by using a larger sample size, and perhaps using some form of quantitative analysis in conjunction with qualitative methods of narrative analysis in order to achieve more generalised results. In these ways future research projects could build upon the findings of the current research.

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APPENDIX A: Participant Information Sheet

Researcher's name: Ciara Gatonby

Researcher's phone number: 0823343101

Researcher's email address: Ciara.gatonby11@gmail.com

To whom it may concern,

This information sheet is for those participating in Ciara Gatonby's Master's study currently titled: 'What are the experiences of rape survivors living in Johannesburg?'

The information included here consists of information about the researcher; participation requirements; the nature of the research being conducted; information on the research instruments used, namely, the interviews and written testimonials; confidentiality/anonymity; and legal and psychological information about the study.

The interviewer will read through this consent form with the interviewee so as to ensure that they understand everything and to answer any questions the participant may have.

Participant's requirements:

All participants must be women above the age of 18 who are currently living in Johannesburg. Additionally, participation requires you to have been raped during your life.

Nature and purpose of the research conducted:

I am interested in understanding your experience of rape and speaking about rape. I am also interested in who you choose to talk to and why, and how you understand that.

<u>Confidentiality/Anonymity:</u>

If I know your name I guarantee that:

Your name will not be written down in diaries, transcripts, or on written testimonies (by me) and that names will not appear in final proposals or any academic and personal document or endeavour I undertake. Instead, your name will be substituted with a pseudonym.

If I do not know your name:

I guarantee that if you do not wish to tell me your name I will not ask, nor will I ask who it was that referred you to me.

Under both circumstances:

The names of anyone you mention in your testimony and/or written testimonials will be substituted with pseudonyms.

Any places, events and people you mention in interviews and testimonials that may reveal your identity will be left out or substituted with pseudonyms.

All voice recordings will be kept on an external hard-drive with a password that is accessible only to me. Six months after the research is completed all voice recordings will be deleted to ensure your identity is protected. Transcriptions will not have names of places, events and people so that should anyone comes across them your identity will be unknown. This is extremely unlikely as they will be kept under password, accessible only to me.

Participant consent will be collected through consent forms. The forms will be signed by you and put in a sealed envelope and will be destroyed 6 months after the completion of the research in order to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

Should you wish to take part in this study you will also be asked to sign a form that states that you are aware that you are being taped on a voice-recording device throughout the interviews and that you have consented to this. This form will be sealed in an envelope immediately to

ensure confidentiality. Both the voice-recording consent forms as well as the tape-recordings will be destroyed six months after the completion of this research.

Legal and psychological:

Please note that none of this is for legal purposes. No legal action will be taken on your behalf or by anyone regarding what you have said. There are no lawyers, policemen or government interventions involved or taking place thus you retain your right to not report the incident, free of judgement. You will not be judged if you did not report being raped. Also, if you do not feel strong enough to talk about it, then please be aware of this before agreeing to an interview. If you feel you are at risk of secondary trauma then it is very important that you don't take part. Hopefully this will not be the case as the interviews will be at the pace that you want and, as mentioned later in this information sheet, you can decide what topics you would rather speak about. However, should you feel that you need more support, I have enclosed the numbers of three free counselling centres that can offer you assistance and psychological support:

Life-line Johannesburg

0861 322 322

Emthonjeni Community Counselling Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand

011 717 4513

South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG)

011 262-6396

Information about interviews:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You should not have been coerced,

paid, bribed or manipulated in any way into taking part in this study.

Interviews will be conducted like a conversation. Although I will have to guide the conversation and we have an objective in mind, you have the option to talk about what you think is important in your experiences. If you feel uncomfortable talking in-depth about a certain topic you have the liberty of not elaborating. You also have the ability to stop the interview at any time should you feel uncomfortable or unwilling to go on.

Interviews could take up to an hour and one or more follow-up interviews may need to be conducted but that is also at your discretion.

Interviews will be recorded and then transcribed. A transcription is a written version of an interview. If you mention someone's name in an interview I cannot help that it is in the voice recording, but in the transcription it will be changed for a pseudonym as will events and places that may reveal your identity.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated and your anonymity will be ensured throughout the process. Thank you!

Kind regards,

Ciara Gatonby

APPENDIX B: Participant Consent Form

Upon signing this consent form the participant in question agrees to take part in Ciara Gatonby's study currently titled "What are the experiences of rape survivors living in Johannesburg?".

This form states that the participant received information about the researcher as well as the research and participation requirements. Also it states that the objectives of the study have been outlined and the participant has been given time to ask questions. Information on the research instruments used, namely, the interviews and written testimonials, has been provided and confidentiality and anonymity have explained with regards to this study. Legal and psychological information about the study has also been provided in addition to a participant observation sheet.

In addition, this form states that the participant has taken part in this study according to her own free will and has not been coerced, manipulated, bribed or incentivised. This form states that the participant is aware that she has the right to withhold information that she sees fit and that she can pull out at any time.

Signed of my own free will and under no duress,

_____

Signature

Date: _____

[This form will be sealed immediately after signing in order to ensure anonymity. It will be destroyed six months after the completion of the research]

APPENDIX C: Voice Recording Consent Form

Researcher's name: Ciara Gatonby

Research Topic: What are the experiences of rape survivors living in Johannesburg?

Upon signing this consent form the participant is consenting to her voice and subsequent narrative being recorded and analysed for the purposes of this research.

This consent form states that the participant is aware that if she wishes to she can stop the interview, including voice-recording devices, at any time. Also, it states that she has been given time to ask any question related to the study and the voice recording device, before the interview begins and the device is turned on.

In addition, this form states that the participant understands anonymity and confidentiality related to any voice recording, and that she understands that the recordings as well as related consent forms will be deleted six months after the completion of research.

Signed,

_____ at _____

Signature

Date:_____

[This form will be sealed immediately after signing in order to ensure anonymity. It will be destroyed six months after the completion of the research]

APPENDIX D: Interview Schedule

1. Could you tell me as much as you're willing to share about your assault?

2. What memories stand out for you about your experience and the time afterwards?

3. Who did you talk to when you first told someone about being raped?

4. What was your experience of talking about it for the first time?

5. Did you report the assault to the authorities?

    5.1.   If so, tell me about that experience?

    5.2.   If not, why did you choose not report it?

6. Do you talk it about it with people or groups of people? Do you talk about it often?

    6.1.   If so, with whom and why do you choose this person/these people to talk to?

    6.2.   If not, why do you choose not to talk about it?

7. Why did you agree to being interviewed by me?

8. Do any memories stand out for you about confiding your experiences to people? Perhaps a person whose reaction stands out for you?

9. How do you feel now when you talk about being raped?

10. Did you ever see attend therapy or counselling? And what were your experiences of this?

11. Have you ever seen the man/men again? How did you feel?

12. Is there anything else you would like to add?

APPENDIX E: Ethical Clearance Certificate

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49   Gatonby

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	PROTOCOL NUMBER H14/09/21
PROJECT TITLE	What are the experiences of women in Johannesburg who have not reported rape?
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Ms C Gatonby
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Social Sciences/Sociology
DATE CONSIDERED	19 September 2014
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved Unconditionally
EXPIRY DATE	12/10/2016

DATE   13/10/2014

CHAIRPERSON   _(Professor T Milani)_

cc: Supervisor : Profs S Roy & B Kenny

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10000, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. <u>I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.</u>

Signature

22 / 07 / 2016
Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

110