

attempted murder and robbery with aggravating circumstances" (CIMC, 1998, p.12), in relation to the other provinces of South Africa. Whilst the overall republic's ratio for robbery with aggravating circumstances was 161.2, the incidence in Gauteng was 421.9 (ibid, p.13), more than double the average across the country. It is clear that rape and forms of assault connected to wife battery affect a majority of women. However, without gender (or race) breakdowns of statistics it is only possible to speculate that if South African gender patterns follow those of other international trends cited above, South African men are at reasonably high risk for exposure to serious and violent crime. It could also be suggested that since in the main men are still primary breadwinners and tend to spend more time in the public domain, they may be at greater risk for crime motivated by financial gain.

## **8.2 PTSD PREVALENCE AND MANIFESTATION IN CRIME VICTIMS**

### **8.2.1 General Prevalence Findings**

In addition to studying demographic patterns of victimization by type of crime and type of victim, surveys have also sought to identify broad trends in victim responses in terms of impact. This has largely been assessed by questionnaires or scales based upon American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual criteria for the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress in various forms (Kilpatrick and Resnick in Davidson and Foa, 1993; Kilpatrick, Saunders, Veronen, Best and Von, 1987). Kilpatrick and Resnick (in Davidson and Foa, 1993) have collated findings in this regard across eleven studies of populations of crime victims. Whilst these studies reflect some bias in focus on rape, Kilpatrick and Resnick's extrapolation from these findings has more general application. They argue that their evidence points to the fact that many crimes are not isolated events and that in many cases crime victims have been exposed to "other" trauma (28.7% in one study), complicating the assessment of the direct impact of one criminal event specifically.

However, Kilpatrick and Resnick do point to broad trends. "In general, rates of lifetime PTSD without the 1-month criterion, ranged from lows of 23.4% in a national probability homicide survivor sample... and 27.8% in a community general crime group..., to higher ratings ranging from approximately 63%... to over 75%... in community agency referred samples" (in Davidson and Foa, 1993, ps.123 and 124). Although clients seeking treatment clearly have higher levels of

PTSD, it is evident that crime victims in general face not inconsiderable risk of developing full blown psychiatric symptoms. Prevalence rates pertaining to a sample assessed in a similar time frame post the traumatic incident to that employed in this research study, reflect substantial vulnerability to PTSD. "Rates observed in populations assessed at from 1 to 36 months post-crime generally ranged from 24% or 25% in a criminal justice system (CJS) exposed sample... to 48.4%... and 70%... in clinical and crisis agency referred samples, respectively" (ibid, p.124). Given that the subjects of this study were accessed through convenience sampling (see method section), it is likely that their PTSD prevalence rates would fall at the lower end of this spectrum.

### **8.2.2 Predisposing Factors**

However, Kilpatrick and Resnick (in Davidson and Foa, 1993) discovered that two within crime criteria significantly distinguished increased risk for PTSD. These were the crime characteristics of "perceived life threat" and "injury sustained". Across almost every sample the presence of these characteristics doubled, or elevated substantially, the individual's risk for PTSD. In fact when these two variables were controlled for, the only crime type that was significantly associated with PTSD was rape, indicating that these are central dimensions in the likelihood that exposure to crime will lead to psychiatric distress. The current research sample was selected on the basis of exposure to a criminal event in which they "perceived their life to be at risk", i.e., an attempt was made to select participants in terms of severity of exposure. In addition, several of the subjects had sustained physical injuries during the event. Whilst these descriptive features of the participant population will be discussed at length later, it is arguable that their risk for PTSD and other forms of psychological distress could be higher than crime victims not subjected to these dimensions. The distinction made by Kilpatrick and Resnick concerning "perception of life threat" also lends greater validity to the employment of this criterion as a basis for selection into the present sample, since the study was concerned to investigate the impact of an experience that was clearly perceived as threatening by male victims.

### 8.2.3 Pattern of Symptoms

Having established that crime victims are certainly at risk for developing PTSD symptoms, especially in circumstances where there is physical injury and threat to life, there has been some elaboration concerning the nature of the symptom constellation most commonly displayed by this population. Norris (1992) found that for robbery survivors the rank order of the major categories of post-traumatic symptoms (1 or more symptoms present) was as follows: Arousal (74.3%), Intrusion (67.4%) and Numbing (59.9%). For physical (as opposed to sexual) assault the order was somewhat different: Arousal (77.4%), Numbing (73.3%) and Intrusion (67.9%) (p.415). Kilpatrick and Resnick (in Davidson and Foa, 1993) rank ordered the presence of more specific symptomology according to life time prevalence. In relation to a study pertaining to 251 direct victims of crime, they identified the following symptom pattern by percentage: Hypervigilance (66), Avoidance of thoughts or feelings (65), Concentration difficulties (60), Anxiety reminders (59), Intrusive memory (56), Constricted affect (54), Startle (53) and Sleep disturbance (52); as well as others in decreasing proportions (p.135). "With respect to mean ranks, it can be noted that the five top-ranked symptoms compose one avoidance, one re-experiencing, and three increased arousal items" (ibid, p.136).

Whilst it is difficult to draw common findings across these studies it appears that arousal symptoms may tend to dominate in the presentation of crime victims, with both intrusion and avoidance related symptoms following closely behind. It seems that research in this area needs further refinement in terms of assessing equivalent populations and also ensuring greater generalizability of findings. It also appears that research is required into possible demographic influences on symptom probability, including research into differences across male and female victims. In one study which does reflect a concern with sex differences in symptomology, (however, conducted on burglary rather than robbery victims), Maguire found the central difference to lie in the emotional domain, with women experiencing more Shock (29:9) and Fear (13:4); and men more Anger/annoyance (41:19) (1980, p.262). However, it is difficult to generalize from burglary to robbery and there was no formal assessment of PTSD symptoms.

Whilst PTSD symptoms provide a useful descriptive measure of the impact of post-traumatic stress, particularly for demographic research purposes, it must be reinforced as previously argued, that psychological responses to traumatic stress and victimization cover a deeper and broader range of phenomena. What little research exists in the area of gender differences and victimization tends to be encompassed within this broader psychological perspective.

### **8.3 GENDER DIFFERENCES AND VICTIMIZATION**

#### **8.3.1 Gender Biased Patterns of Reaction**

In one of the very few articles dealing with the subject, entitled "The Role of Gender in Reactions to Criminal Victimization", Janoff-Bulman and Frieze (in Barnett, Biener and Baruch, 1987) summarize the central findings in the area. Significantly in their fairly extensive reference list there are no other references alluding to material dealing directly with gender differences and responses to crime. Most of their argument is supported by findings on gender differences in related areas: e.g., in depressive reactions and stress management; findings specific to one or other sex group, e.g., battered women; and findings pertaining to sexual abuse across male and female populations. The paucity of published literature on posttraumatic stress and gender appears to be little improved since the publication of their article in 1987 and seems to reflect an unquestioned perception that where men and women are subjected to similar traumatic stress stimuli their responses will tend to be consistent. However, this position is discrepant with general stress and coping literature (referred to in chapter one) in which there has been distinct interest in gender patterns, particularly pertaining to coping styles (Miller and Kirsch in Barnett et al, 1987). In this regard the traumatic stress field appears to be lagging behind the more general stress field.

Acknowledging this lack of gender awareness in trauma research, Janoff-Bulman and Frieze (in Barnett et al, 1987) point out that rape victims have received the bulk of research attention in the crime field and that men have been generally under-researched. They argue that this reflects a bias in gender schemas pertaining to victimization rather than a real difference in exposure to crime.

A review of the literature on victimization provides clear evidence of a gender bias. Women are over-represented in research on victimization, a finding that contrasts sharply with the under-representation of research on women in many other areas of psychological inquiry. Research on the psychological responses of male victims is virtually

absent. This focus on women is far out of proportion to the percentages of women actually victimized by crime. For example, men are nearly twice as likely as women to be the victims of violent crimes (Janoff-Bulman and Frieze in Barnett et al, 1987, p.167).

While this point has been made previously, Janoff-Bulman and Frieze tie this bias specifically to gender stereotypes and schemas. In keeping with others (Howard, 1984; Lisak, 1993; Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994; Stanko, 1995) they confirm the premise that centrally underpins the present study, i.e., that the roles of victim and perpetrator are associated respectively with archetypal feminine and masculine attributes thus rendering the study of victimization implicitly genderized. "Given that victimization is associated with femaleness in our society (Howard, 1984; Schur, 1984), people may have an easier time accepting women as victims since they are not uncomfortable with the notion that women are weak and helpless. They find it harder to accept male victims, given the inconsistency between our gender schemas for masculinity and the experience of victimization" (Janoff-Bulman and Frieze in Barnett et al, 1987, ps.167 and 168).

Whilst this issue will be developed further, it may be useful to present Janoff-Bulman and Frieze's findings about where gender differences have been observed in reaction to criminal victimization. They argue that three key behavioural differences are likely to be reflected in male and female victims: 1) Males are more likely to under-report crime, particularly sexual abuse; 2) Females are more likely to manifest social withdrawal particularly from sexual relationships whereas men may increase sexual contact to reassert male identity, again particularly following sexual assault; and 3) Men are likely to become more aggressive after victimization, whereas, particularly in cases of sexual abuse, women are likely to become more passive (cf. Janoff Bulman and Frieze in Barnett et al, 1987). Whilst these distinctions posed are entirely plausible, the limitation of these findings appears to lie in their over-emphasis on the impact of sexual forms of victimization, particularly sexual abuse. Their chapter may address criminal victimization in general, but the essential findings appear to be biased in this direction, making them difficult to generalize to other forms of criminal victimization. Indeed both the first two identified features appear to rest almost entirely on issues pertaining to sexuality and social taboos, and it is only the discussion pertaining to aggression that appears to have much wider relevance. However, what can be extracted from the central arguments are two premises, the first a suggestion that men's greater shame or

embarrassment at being victimized may predispose them to react in different ways, and the second that men's responses to victimization may be characterised by an exaggeration of male identified behaviours in an attempt to regain a loss of masculine identity.

In addition, given the richness of their introduction to the issues pertaining to victimization and gender, Janoff-Bulman and Frieze's findings are also disappointing in their narrow focus on behavioural manifestation of difference. Whilst this may be the most self-evident criterion to base their summary of the evidence upon, much of their argument is in any case inferential and the focus on behaviour fails to do justice to the complexity of response differences across sex, including for example, subjective perceptions of the impact upon identity. Admittedly Janoff-Bulman and Frieze close their chapter with a reassertion of the need for further research in the area, a need towards which the present study is intended to contribute.

### **8.3.2 Gender Differentiated Responses Identified in the Stress Literature**

Having examined Janoff-Bulman and Frieze's observations on gender differences pertaining to criminal victimization, and therefore located within the field of traumatic stress, brief mention is made of some related differences which have been observed in the general stress field. In a review article on sex differences in cognitive coping with stress, Miller and Kirsch (in Barnett *et al*, 1987), conclude that research thus far has failed to produce many consistent findings in the area. However, the most conclusive dimension of difference pertains to the utilization of broad categories of coping skills. In six out of seven studies reviewed they found substantiation that women are predisposed towards the utilization of emotion-focussed coping, whereas men tend to use more problem-focussed styles of coping. While women employ strategies designed to reduce the emotional impact of stressful events, men attempt to modify the situation in more instrumental ways. "Specifically, males are more likely to use problem-focussed strategies than females, particularly at work, in uncontrollable situations, and in situations requiring more information. To the extent that problem-focussed coping taps such attributes as aggressiveness and achievement striving, this finding is consistent with previous investigations of male-female differences (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974)" (Miller and Kirsch in Barnett *et al*, 1987, p.296). Thus, although tentatively, Miller and Kirsch suggest a similar predisposition towards more aggressive

responses amongst males subject to stress, in keeping with Janoff-Bulman and Frieze's premise. There is some general research evidence that the utilization of problem-focussed coping is more adaptive in situations in which modification of the stressor is possible, whereas emotion-focussed coping is more helpful in situations which cannot be altered (Lazarus and Folkman, 1994). It could be argued that traumatic stress situations, especially those in which the individual is subject to life threat by an armed aggressor, are minimally modifiable and therefore may be most usefully approached by utilizing forms of emotion-focussed coping. It also appears that men are less likely to utilize this form of coping and may feel greater frustration at being unable to exercise problem-focussed strategies, i.e., in being unable to act to alter the nature of the stressful situation.

### **8.3.3. The Role of Control and Self-Esteem**

Connected to these findings pertaining to the utilization of different forms of coping styles may be some of the research related to self-esteem and the exercise of control. In a summary chapter of his edited book entitled: "Efficacy, agency and self-esteem", Kernis (1995) summarizes the contributions of a range of authors' work on self-esteem and their implications for theory and research. Very briefly, he refers to the understanding that self-esteem is integrally connected to efficacy and can be both defensively and expansively generated. For example from the organismic perspective of Deci and Ryan, "self-esteem derives from the extent to which one 'acts agentically within a context that allows satisfaction of the three fundamental psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness...'" (cited in Kernis in Kernis, 1995, p.239). The centrality of these needs bears close resemblance to Epstein's personality theory discussed in chapter two, providing further evidence for the usefulness of this framework for understanding self-esteem and personality functioning. From a contrasting psychodynamic perspective Greenberg, Pyszczynski and Solomon argue that self-esteem stems from the capacity to contain existential anxiety and is connected to: "the extent to which people believe that they are valuable contributors to their world view", i.e., are able to live out a prevailing defensive sociocultural view of the world as meaningful (cited in Kernis in Kernis, 1995, p.240). This latter perspective has interesting parallels with Janoff-Bulman's theory of the basic assumptions, the suggestion being here that holding to these assumptions is an important, if defensively motivated, aspect of self-esteem; as well as encompassing other aspects of personality functioning. Having summarized contributions on the

possible generation of self-esteem, Kernis also refers to the material linking the origins of self-esteem to the exercise of behaviour and self-esteem, the aspect that has most direct relevance for the current section on sex differences in dealing with traumatic stress.

Burger (in Kernis, 1995) argues that there is a complex link between the desire for control and self-esteem. In general there is a positive correlation between a high desire for control and high self-esteem. However the desire for control can be motivated both by high self-esteem and by low self-esteem. "Sometimes a high desire for control indicates a belief in oneself, a sense of mastery, and a desire to express one's sense of personal efficacy. This desire for control comes through what I am calling the high self-esteem route. But sometimes a high desire for control tells another developmental story. Sometimes a high need for control may be an effort to cope with a fear of uncontrollability. This desire for control reflects a lack of confidence in oneself and perhaps a poor sense of self-efficacy" (Burger in Kernis, 1995, p.231). Burger's argument points to a reverse perspective on the inter-relationship between the need for control and self-esteem, in which the former is generated by the latter, rather than vice versa. The implications of this argument for gender are complex and appear to pertain both to within group differences (i.e., to personal histories which have generated low self-esteem), and also to possible between group differences, in terms of how stable/fragile the generation of self-esteem has been for men or women as a group. Thus men's high need for control, inferred from their greater favouring of problem-focussed coping, may be generated by an internalized expectation of mastery *or* by a fragile base of self-esteem. Without further research it is not possible at this juncture to determine whether such gendered group patterns pertain. However, this potential link between gender, esteem and need for control poses an interesting direction for future research.

Whilst it is widely recognized that men in general manifest higher self-esteem than women in general (Bunker-Rorbaugh, 1981; Foreshaw and Shmukler, 1993), gender differences are not addressed in Kernis' text on self-esteem. However, there is one further finding on self-esteem which appears to have useful inferential value for understanding gender differences in responding to the uncontrollable situations characterising trauma.

People high in desire for control '...typically feel that they are capable, efficacious individuals...are eager to demonstrate their mastery over challenging events and typically succeed in these efforts...are more likely than lows to be optimistic and intrinsically motivated. They believe they have the ability to handle themselves in most situations and to make the most of opportunities handed to them.' However, when confronted with uncontrollable events, they may also be more susceptible to depression than people low in desire for control (Burger, 1984; Burger & Arkin, 1980) (Kernis in Kernis, 1995, p.250).

This last statement is of most interest in terms of traumatic stress research, since as emphasized previously, traumatic stress tends to be characterised by its uncontrollability. Thus the complex inter-relationship between the need for control, self-esteem, responses to traumatic stress, and gender; appears to offer an important perspective from which to approach the present research and a fruitful avenue for future quantitative exploration. It is possible to argue a link between identification with masculinity, a high need for control (associated with high/fragile self-esteem), attempts to utilize problem focussed coping even in the face of traumatic stressors, and consequent difficulty in dealing with the impact of the event, associated with a greater vulnerability to depression. This may be an important dimension in explaining why "it is certainly the case that at the level of gender-relevant aspects of the self-concept, victimization threatens males more than females" (Janoff-Bulman and Frieze, in Barnett et al, 1987, p.162). These dimensions of personality functioning may be some of those centrally implicated in the discrepancy between the victimizing experience and the previous sense of self for masculine-identified individuals, a discrepancy which it has been argued contributes to the intensity and the severity of the impact of trauma (ibid).

On the basis of literature somewhat tangential to the present research, i.e., literature on self-esteem and research into general stress, what is being tentatively hypothesized is that issues related to control and self-esteem may be centrally implicated in the difficulties male victims encounter in dealing with traumatic events. However, this is a suggested conceptual link which needs further empirical validation, perhaps in part through the present study.

Having examined some of the broad research pertaining to possible sex and gender differences in dealing with stress and traumatic stress, the final section of the chapter presents research evidence relating to male victims in particular.

## 8.4 FINDINGS PERTAINING TO POPULATIONS OF MALE VICTIMS

### 8.4.1 Background

Numerous authors have fairly recently drawn attention to the dearth of research on male victims (Janoff-Bulman and Frieze in Barnett et al, 1987; Lisak, 1993, Newburn and Stanko in Newburn and Stanko, 1994, Stanko and Hobdell, 1993). The research into men in the field of trauma has tended to focus overwhelmingly on combat veterans, who are seldom characterised as 'victims'. Probably because soldiers tend to be overwhelmingly male, gender does not appear to have been viewed as particularly salient in the study of combatants although rituals and issues in therapy have certainly made reference to masculine stereotypes (Oberchain and Silver, 1992; Parson in Wilson and Raphael, 1993). Generally the operation of these stereotypes has been assumed rather than problematized. Since the focus of the present study is explicitly on civilians faced by trauma, the vast body of traumatic stress literature addressing war-related trauma will not be addressed any further.

The implications of the relationship between gender and victimization for men have only very recently been foregrounded. Whilst gender dynamics relating to the position of women, particularly victims of sexual assault, have been highlighted by feminist authors (Brownmiller, 1975; Lebowitz and Roth 1994; Russel, 1975; Stanko, 1995a), in keeping with the delay in developing a complementary awareness of masculinity in gender studies in general, there has been a dearth of literature on masculinity and victimization. A number of quotations emphasize this lack of recognition of male victims and the associations which have contributed to this lack:

It is easier to recognize a male perpetrator than a male victim. This simple proposition has, I believe, profound ramifications for abused men, for the psychotherapeutic community, and for the field of criminal justice. The cultural stereotype of men as active, violent and aggressive rather than passive, helpless, or victimized, makes it easy to recognize behaviours that fit the former pattern and difficult to perceive the latter (Mendel, 1995, p.20).

Male victims, however, are likely to question their male identity. Men are not expected to be helpless, powerless and vulnerable in our culture. ... Men are ashamed about not being the dominant person in the situation, about not being strong or powerful enough to resist assault successfully. It is generally believed men are powerful enough to defend themselves; yet they are susceptible to the very same techniques used to gain control over female victims - a combination of entrapment, intimidation and brute strength (Groth and Burgess, 1980). In forcing a victim to

experience utter helplessness, victimization challenges a very basic component of male identity (Janoff-Bulman and Frieze, in Barnett et al, 1987, p.175).

Men's actual or potential experiences of violence, whether it be criminally defined or not (Clarkson et al, 1991), have not been the primary target for contemporary sociological explorations of masculinity...Yet men report physical assaults to police and seek emergency medical attention for injury (Shepherd, 1990); but there is no sense of how they feel about these experiences of assault. Nor do we have an understanding about how different men, with their varying relationships to and engagement with hegemonic masculinity (see Cornell 1987) and with the state, respond to violent victimization (Stanko and Hobdell, 1993, p.402).

A common thread is that the culture's definition of masculinity and its expectations for males do not allow expression of feelings of dependency, fear, vulnerability or helplessness in the male. ... Amongst the things males are denied are: being dependent on others, being spontaneous in the expression of feelings, being passive towards aggressiveness other than that from females, or permission to ask for nurturance (3: 42-60). Understandably, these things become difficult for males to do. The result has been that their need to express feelings of fear, vulnerability, helplessness and dependency has gone unmet, and they have suffered silently (Nasjleti, 1980, p.270).

From early childhood boys learn that masculinity means not depending on anyone, not being weak, not being passive, not being a loser in confrontation, in short not being a victim (Nasjleti, 1980, p.271).

There appear to be two common threads running throughout these observations about male victims. Firstly there is agreement that this population has been under-researched and poorly understood, and secondly there is consensus that the basis for this lack lies in the social construction of gender, and of masculinity in particular. Whether this social construction operates to obscure male victimization at the level of social stigma and under-reporting, or at the broader social level of ideology and the maintenance of gendered power relations, there is agreement that it is the construction of gender rather than sex per se that is the basis of this omission of male victims from the social tapestry. A focus on masculinity and victimization thus arguably represents both a clinical and a political intervention. In order to address the position of male victims both perspectives must go hand in hand.

#### 8.4.2 Male Victims of Sexual Abuse

Within the research that has begun to develop on male victims, the group that has received most explicit attention, although admittedly only very recently, is the population of sexual abuse victims/survivors. Indeed, as has already been commented upon in relation to Janoff-Bulman and Frieze's (in Barnett et al, 1987) article, writing on male victimization in general carries a bias in this direction as is also evident in Newburn and Stanko's chapter (in Newburn and Stanko, 1994). This seems to reflect the lack of consistent data on any other male victim populations, other than Stanko and Hobdell's research into victims of non-sexual violent crime. The focus on male sexual victimization, whilst centrally important, reflects a biased focus upon male victims in terms of demographics, even taking under-reporting into consideration. Estimates of proportions of male victims of sexual abuse range from 20% (cited in Lisak, 1993) to 1 in 5/7 males (cited in Mendel, 1995). However, it is not disputed that boys are in the minority as compared with girl victims (Lisak, 1993), whereas in the case of general criminal assaults and violence it is very clearly men who are in the majority as presented earlier.

Whilst the literature on male victims of sexual abuse certainly has some relevance for the present study and the population of male victims in general, some of the findings in the field are peculiar to this form of victimization. For example, most of the sexual abuse literature pertains to a context in which the victim is a child victimized by an adult or older perpetrator. Thus the gender dynamics of such victimization are intertwined with age/authority dynamics. It may still be easier for society to entertain the notion of boys (i.e., male *children*) as victims, than the notion of men as victims, even when the research focus is on the long-term consequences of such victimization for adult populations. In this case the genderization of victimization may be represented in an equation of women and children as populations at risk, as opposed to men.

The sexual nature of particular forms of victimization brings with it particular consequences for sexuality as opposed to gender identity (although the two are often linked as referred to in the chapters on masculinity). For male victims of sexual abuse a common consequence is fear of alteration to sexual identity in the direction of homosexual associations. There is also added guilt

around any aspects of arousal which increases doubt about possible complicity in victimization, as well as interference in the spontaneous expression of sexual needs in general (Mendel, 1995; Nasjleti, 1980).

#### 8.4.2.1 Rape-related Findings

In a small scale study of adult male rape perpetrators (16) and victims (6), Groth and Burgess (1980) found that rapists were often pre-occupied with coercing victims into ejaculation. Victims found their sexual orientation often questioned by social and law enforcement agencies, were reluctant to report the sexual assault and experienced consequent sexual difficulties. Whilst these sexualized features of response represent core consequences of sexual abuse upon victims, there are other features which resonate with the position of victimization in general. These aspects are discussed in greater depth because of their relevance for the group of victims addressed in the current research.

Groth and Burgess summarize the immediate impact of rape on male victims as encompassing physical, psychological and social reactions largely conforming to DSMIV Acute Stress (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) symptoms. However, they reported some further long-term features of disturbance, especially in untreated victims. This quotation from one victim seems to suggest fairly pervasive feelings of vulnerability and depressive features associated with the attack: "Even a couple of years after, whenever I'd feel depressed or tired or something, this whole incident would come back to me. I'd think...what could I have done to prevent it?" (quoted in Groth and Burgess, 1980, p.809). They also make reference to strong feelings of anger and impulses towards aggression and revenge. This supports Janoff-Bulman and Friezes' (in Barnett et al, 1987) findings.

#### 8.4.2.2 Nasjleti's Observations

Nasjleti (1980) addresses three themes in her paper on male incest victims: denial of helplessness; impact on self-concept; and feelings about disclosure. She argues that boys have tremendous difficulty in owning to having been dominated, associating this with "unmanly" attributes of

passivity and helplessness. This tends to lead to repression or denial of having been abused since the presentation of oneself as victim leads to fears of being considered a "sissy" and disbelief or ostracization. "Boys fear reporting being sexually abused because asking for help makes them ashamed that they were unable to protect themselves" (Nasjleti, 1980, p.273). This resistance to reporting abuse also confirms one of Janoff-Bulman and Friezes' central observations. While this may be exacerbated in cases of sexual abuse the shame associated with the inability to protect oneself may pertain more generally to male victims and may in turn be associated with a reluctance to seek help of a range of kinds. Nasjleti also makes brief reference to the possibility that cycles of further abuse can be engendered out of men's responses to victimization. "What does it indicate about our society that male children tell us they cannot look for protection because they have been taught that they are responsible for protecting themselves? ...Unrealistic demands and emotional restrictions on boys create a climate conducive to their victimization, and in turn their victimization of others" (ibid, p.274).

#### 8.4.2.3 Mendel's Observations

In his text "The Male Survivor" (1995), Mendel provides a comprehensive examination of the impact of child sexual abuse based primarily on in depth interviews with a small sample of nine subjects, similar to the methodological base of the present study. Although a considerable portion of the book focuses on the correlation between specific attributes of the abuse (e.g., relationship to the perpetrator) and outcome variables including "Trauma Symptoms" and "Malevolent World View" amongst others; the more interesting part of his findings is encompassed under an experiential, thematic analysis. Over and above generally observed consequences of child sexual abuse and incest, including feelings of betrayal, problems with trust and intimacy and powerlessness, Mendel discusses a range of issues which he discovered to be of particular salience for male victims. He divides these issues "into three overlapping categories: the dissonance between and attempt to integrate the male role-expectation and the experience of victimization; shame and gender-shame; and identification with the perpetrator and fear of continuing the cycle of abuse" (Mendel, 1995, ps. 204 and 205). Aspects of each of these themes carrying relevance for the present study will be briefly outlined.

### *Discrepancy Between Masculinity and Victimization*

In relation to the juxtaposition of male role expectations with the victim position, Mendel argues that his subjects had considerable difficulty in integrating the experience of victimization into a sense of self. "Their schemas of what it is to be male do not incorporate feelings of helplessness and passivity. Wayne put this most succinctly: 'The abuse tells me that I'm not a man'" (Mendel, 1995, p.205). Similar concerns to those identified by Nasjleti pertaining to expectations of self-protection were also identified as internalized: "men in this study viewed themselves as deficient, unmanly, and incompetent because they could not provide themselves with adequate protection against the abuse" (ibid, p.206). This was also reflected in an increased tendency towards self-blame associated with social and personal expectations. The "societal equation of males with oppressors" (p.206) also creates dissonance for individual victims. "Struve (1990) refers to the dissonance of being a victim while a member of an 'oppressor class'" (cited in Mendel, 1995, p.207). Mendel links this problem of identification with the class of oppressor to a discussion of the transmission of aggression by one of his subjects, Ron. Ron is quoted as arguing: "Men can't express their pain and grief because they see themselves as oppressors rather than the oppressed in society. Therefore, they identify themselves as oppressors and end up as perpetrators. Men lash out in anger because they cannot express their pain" (quoted in Mendel, 1995, p. 207). This quite sophisticated reflection upon the link between masculinity and acting out appears to validate theoretical premises and to give some basis to understanding the degree of aggression in male victims responses.

Discussing therapeutic approaches to working with male sexual assault survivors, Sepler (1990) (cited in Mendel, 1995) also asserts that such men tend to be almost exclusively aware of feelings of anger as opposed to any other range of emotions. Whilst acknowledging Sepler's finding, Mendel points out that the men in his study did display "feelings of loss, sadness, pain and vulnerability" (p.207) and argues that the ability to engage with such feelings may ameliorate later tendencies to abuse. "I would speculate that a critical distinction between victimized men who go on to perpetrate and those who do not is the ability of the latter to integrate their experience of victimization and access the feelings of pain, loss and vulnerability associated" (p.207). Thus the crucial dimension in the generation of a salutogenic response to victimization appears to lie in the ability to integrate the experience into the self without allowing this to consume identity.

### *Gender-Shame*

Mendel's second interesting thematic focus introduces the notion of gender-shame and its relationship to personal shame, an aspect of psychopathology that has only recently gained some centrality in clinical literature. "Men who were subjected to sexual abuse experience an additional stratum of shame, which Dimock, Hunter and Struve (1991) call gender shame. As the term implies, this refers to a sense of shame about oneself as a member of the class 'men'. It is an example of what Karen (1992) refers to as 'class shame', as opposed to the more personal or narcissistic forms of shame..." (Mendel, 1995, p.209). This sense of shame is associated both with identification with a class that can oppress in this way, and with being placed in a subject position which challenges the hegemonic view of this class. Thus male victims may want to both dissociate themselves from a class of people (men) who commit such abusive acts and dissociate themselves from the position of victim, the one who represents a failure within this class. "Along with shame about being male, many male survivors are ashamed of themselves as males. In other words, they feel that they come up short as men by virtue of having been raped, abused, weak, helpless, passive, victimized, and any other 'unmanly' attribute that may be applied to the abuse experience" (ibid, p.209). In a sense, in being victimized, one forfeits one's right to identify with the class of men. This point around the shame associated with the forced complicity in subjugation in victimization was emphasized previously and is likely to be particularly apparent when the coercion on the part of the perpetrator is strongly evidenced. Whilst domination may be at its height in forms of sexual assault, it is certainly present in other forms of violent victimization, especially where life is threatened. Dealing with the dynamic of shame in clinical intervention with victims requires great sensitivity, perhaps more particularly so in the case of men.

### *Identification With the Perpetrator*

Discussing the final theme, that of potential identification and fear of perpetration, Mendel argues that there are three options available to sexually abused men, identification with victim, perpetrator, and/or rescuer. Although by no means all victims move towards the position of perpetrator, there is some evidence that this pattern predominates.

For numerous reasons, however, it does appear that men are more likely to gravitate toward the perpetrator rather than the victim role. Sources of this tendency include male socialization as active and aggressive; a trend toward identification with the same sex parent, thus perpetuating existing sex-difference in rates of perpetration; the need -

especially salient for males - to master trauma through identification with the aggressor and thus reassure oneself that one is not weak or helpless; the societal equation of males with oppressors and females with victims; and the lack of resources and outlets available to male victims (Mendel, 1995, p. 212).

In this very comprehensive summary of a range of features impacting upon male victims, Mendel makes the point that the engagement in a kind of cycle of violence appears to be a more masculine orientated response to victimization. Once again, although aspects of his observations pertain specifically to sexual assault victims, they confirm previous observations concerning male victims' greater propensity towards the expression of aggression and introduce the important notion of defence through identification with the aggressor. This is a dynamic which warrants further exploration in male responses to traumatization. It may be that particular attributes of victimizer and victim influence the likelihood of such identification, for example Mendel's reference to same-sex parent identification. In the case of the present study, the racial stratification of the sample (all white victims and all black perpetrators) may have influenced the propensity to make this kind of identification with the aggressor. However, this aspect will be discussed in greater detail in the analysis section.

Mendel's work does appear to provide some very powerful observations of men's responses to victimization, many of which have relevance for populations beyond sexually abused men. The final section of the chapter, deals with research pertaining to the population closest to the subjects of the present study, i.e., based upon the experiences of male victims of violent (excluding sexual) crime.

### **8.4.3 Responses of Male Victims of Violent Crime**

#### **8.4.3.1 General Observations**

As will have been apparent from references previously cited in this chapter, one of the central proponents of the examination of the relationship between sex, gender and crime is Elizabeth Stanko, a British sociologist and criminologist. She has written a book on men's and women's responses to "Everyday Violence" (1995) and published other articles, particularly one entitled "Assault on Men" (1993) written in conjunction with Kathy Hobdell of the Victim Support

programme in Britain. This latter article will form the central basis of the ensuing discussion, with additional reference to Stanko's book based on interviews with 51 British citizens.

In examining the impact of crime and violence generally upon men living in Britain, Stanko observes that most men fear for the safety of others rather than themselves, and perceive greater risks to their property than their persons. Her subjects appeared to share conventional social stereotypes that men are not prototypic victims. Stanko argues that men are brought up with greater exposure to the expression of aggression and violence as an integral part of male interaction and as important in identity formation. "Throughout, men's biographies and early self-awareness about violence reflect a dynamic and subjective understanding of masculinity as a site for power struggles" (1995a, p.111). She reinforces the notion that masculinity is something to be attained and constantly re-asserted, particularly in relation to threat from other men and cites interview data to support this. This competitive aggression may be channelled through sport and gang exchanges. In addition, she argues that the exercise of aggression in male interaction is generally regulated by implicit rules. "Moreover, the men made the distinction between what is a fair fight - a confrontation between two boys with more or less the same skills - and an unfair fight - one where one side is outnumbered or when weapons are used against the unarmed" (ibid, p.116). Being at the losing end of an aggressive interchange is associated with feminine attributes as is made explicit in prison inmate sexual abuse: "inmate power and control can be gained by treating other inmates 'like women', essentially keeping the sexual danger associated with being female. By turning some men into 'women', these inmates use sexuality to dehumanize and degrade fellow inmates" (p.124). The prison context thus perhaps represents the extreme of the exercise on male-upon-male power, more explicit in a context in which women are absent.

Stanko argues that in the process of maturation most men learn to avoid violence from other men by means of various strategies, and crime surveys find minimal fear of crime amongst men in comparison with women (1995a, p.122). However, when men have been seriously threatened or severely injured in violent crime it appears that their perceptions change. "Men I interviewed who had been physically assaulted, especially those with serious injuries, suddenly found they could not take their safety for granted. This realisation comes as a surprise and causes a marked change in their behaviour immediately after the assault. Those gravely injured remain concerned on some

level as part of their everyday avoidance of danger" (p.128). Stanko argues: "These men experience the assault and subsequent feelings of vulnerability as an affront to their masculinity" (p.128). In many cases men attempted to come to terms with assault in light of their previous comprehension of male violence and employed such evaluations as whether their response had been that of a "sissy" or loser. Such perceptions appear to make criminal attacks and the individual man's role within this more difficult to define and integrate. Significantly, Stanko's interview based observations confirm Kilpatrick and Resnick's (in Davidson and Foa, 1993) findings that sustaining injury and threat to life are central in determining the severity of impact of trauma. It is also useful to note that the central schema affected for these men was that pertaining to safety, a central traumatogenic schema identified by McCann and Pearlman (1990). Although the identification of preoccupations with safety is a central focus of Stanko's interest, her study provides important evidence that alterations to this schema are not limited to female victims.

#### 8.4.3.2 Stanko and Hobdell's Study

Adopting a broader focus on the impact of violent crime, in this case criminally motivated assault, Stanko and Hobdell describe patterns in the responses of 33 men contacted through a London based Victim Support Scheme. The material was gathered by means of open-ended interviews designed specifically to "explore the men's understanding of the gendered context of their responses to assault" (1993, p. 403).

Perhaps not surprisingly, Stanko and Hobdell found that the majority of men interviewed perceived their responses to their victimization within what they call "The Male Frame". By this Stanko and Hobdell appear to refer to the fact that the perception of themselves as masculine appeared salient in assault victims' descriptions of their responses. In alternative language it could be argued that interviewees' descriptions of dealing with victimization were interposed with discourses pertaining to hegemonic masculinity, although the authors do not make use of this terminology. For example Stanko and Hobdell refer to the fact that: "The men used terms such as 'the John Wayne syndrome', the 'macho-man', 'cave man', 'defender', and 'natural man' to articulate the existence of an ideal image of manhood" (p.404). This kind of observation is

certainly in keeping with the analysis of the masculine discourses informing these subjects' encapsulation of their own experiences. Related to Stanko's previous work on men and crime it seemed that several of the victims evaluated the assault in terms of the conventional rules of male aggressive interaction and were almost naively outraged that the "rules" of the encounter had changed or that the assault was an "unfair fight". "When such confrontations are not voluntary, nor 'fair', then they become transformative events, illustrations of a kind of vulnerability many men do not *consciously* consider when they think about their personal safety" (Stanko and Hobdell, 1993, p.405). In addition to evaluating their assault as throwing these kinds of "fair fight" parameters into doubt, the men in the study also recognized that the stereotype of the strong, capable man was an exaggeration, thus displaying some awareness of contradictions in their own interpolation.

Whilst recognizing the centrality of the male frame, based upon a hegemonic notion of masculinity, Stanko and Hobdell are careful to limit the generalizability of their observations. "The male frame was a core component in making sense of other men's behaviour, and their own reactions/responses to their being targets of other men's unprovoked violence. But men are not a homogenous group to be referred to simplistically as thinking, experiencing, or behaving in a particular way. Rather, their social and psychological worlds are mediated by their age, ethnic origins, sexual orientation, religion, employment, and so on" (p.406). This note of caution is important in contextualizing Stanko and Hobdell's observations about the operation of the male frame within the reports of male assault survivors, but certainly does not invalidate their conceptualizations. Having explored what could be viewed as the social constructionist perspective on masculinity and victimization, the rest of Stanko and Hobdell's paper goes on to explore more clinical manifestations of these male victims' responses within the categories of physical, emotional, behavioural, interpersonal and institutional effects. Interestingly they do not separate out cognitive effects but seem to assume that these are implicit in other areas of response. Their clinically oriented findings, including their contextualization within the male frame, are briefly summarized.

Many of the subjects had sustained severe injuries or *physical* damage with long term consequences and this often appeared to generate self-reflection. The destruction of the body was

also experienced within the male frame. "The body, suggests Connel (1987), is a crucial locus for men's sense of themselves as men. Physical injury transforms what may have been previously healthy and capable of defending one's space in a masculine order to the body of a 'lesser man'. Physical injury due to criminal injury is an affront as much to the masculine order of things as it is to the individual man" (Stanko and Hobdell, 1993, ps. 406 and 407). This may account for the importance of bodily injury in precipitating self-reflection.

The most commonly experienced *feelings* amongst these subjects were those of fear and anger. Many men had been in fear of their lives during the assault and were still preoccupied with concerns about safety and security. In addition many of the men reported experiencing powerful feelings of anger, hatred and a need for revenge. Five of the sample reported what they perceived as fundamental alterations to their personalities in a negative direction "leaving them with feelings of anger, vulnerability, fear and mistrust" (p.408). "Those who were most severely affected all expressed strong notions about how men needed to 'fend for themselves'. Thus these men had difficulty sharing their emotional reactions to being victimized, and reconciling their intense feelings of vulnerability" (p.408). This observation would tend to confirm Mendel's assertion that it is men who are unable to recognize, entertain and integrate their pain and vulnerability who are more at risk for the development of pathology, perhaps in the direction of acting out their rage.

In addition to manifestations of fear and aggression, Stanko and Hobdell also noted the use of humour as a defence and a tendency towards minimization, avoidance and repression of the experience and its emotional associations. The use of humour by men as a defence was noted in a different study context (Kaminer and Dixon, 1995), and may be a common masculine response to threat. Difficulties in acknowledging emotion may well present particular self-presentational dilemmas for men steeped in hegemonic masculinity. "However, for those men who felt that expression of emotion is not 'macho', there is a trap. With a need to retain their masculinity and therefore their self-esteem, they are then left to cope with intense, confusing, and at times overwhelming feelings, as they put themselves beyond the release of sharing with others" (Stanko and Hobdell, 1993, p.413).

In the area of *behavioural* responses men altered their safety related behaviours, sometimes in the direction of arming themselves for self-defence. Men tended to share the emotional impact of the experience primarily with women and in the main reported supportive responses from partners, family and friends. However, they often felt uncomfortable about the overt demonstration of emotion and experienced themselves as regressed and overly dependant. In other cases men reported protecting their partners from the “awfulness” of the experience and believed it would be unmanly to burden their wives or mothers in this way. Thus sex-role stereotypes about male-female dependency in relationships appeared to play a role in many men's responses to potential sources of support. Responses from other men tended to take two forms, the first consisting of promises to retaliate on the victim's behalf, and the second representing some questioning of the victim's competence as men in responding to the assault. Both these kinds of responses produced complicated responses on the part of the victim. *Institutional* responses, primarily in the form of the police were experienced as both positive and negative by different subjects. In some cases police officers appeared to question the victim's role in precipitating the aggression, appearing to embrace some of the notion of male aggression as characterised by “fair fights”. It appears that police officers' own assumptions about male-on-male violence may be a beneficial area for research and intervention, although many officers were perceived as supportive.

In conclusion, Stanko and Hobdell argue that male victims require validation of their experience, empathy, practical assistance without judgement and positive support from family and “mates” in order to best deal with their exposure to victimization. In addition they acknowledge that humour, minimization and avoidance are useful defences for men, cautioning that the repression of emotion and withdrawal from support can be detrimental. Whilst one could observe that these commendations are not specific to male victims, the motivation behind such interventions appears to be informed by an understanding of the particular constraints and vulnerabilities associated with masculinity.

#### 8.4.4 Commentary

Stanko and Hobdell's paper certainly offers a useful basis of comparison for the present study and synthesizes a number of findings from related literature and research. The present study aims to

extend the focus on the male frame by conducting a further thematic analysis and focussing more explicitly on how victims' responses are influenced by the social construction of masculinity. It is clear that male crime victims have received minimal attention as research subjects and that findings pertaining to male sexual assault survivors cannot be easily generalized to this much larger population. In addition, the study is generated from a psychological (as opposed to a sociological or criminological) perspective and draws upon psychological theory pertaining to the interface between social and cognitive psychological theory, with an emphasis on cognitive schemata as representative of personal and social constructions of events. The clinical literature pertaining to posttraumatic stress also serves as a central theoretical backdrop to the study. The location of the study in post-Apartheid South Africa introduces some important race and class parameters which will inform the research findings. Thus the study aims to make an original contribution to the field of posttraumatic stress literature from a clinical and critical social psychological perspective with a focus on a sub-sample of the population of male victims of violent crime. The following chapter explicates the methodological approach to the study.

## CHAPTER 9

### RESEARCH METHOD

#### 9.1 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY: ORIENTATION AND APPLICATIONS

As will have been evident from the literature review and theoretical conceptualization of the research study, the present research was based within a qualitative methodological approach. The epistemological and ontological bases of quantitative and qualitative research traditions in psychology have become the object of overt scrutiny particularly within the past decade. Whilst quantitative methods of research tended to dominate psychological practice for many years there has been a recent upsurge of interest in qualitative methods (Richardson in Richardson, 1996). This development has in part stemmed from a move away from modelling psychology upon the natural sciences to an appreciation of the links between psychology and other social science disciplines and the humanities. Thus instead of laboratory based and positivistically orientated research, the ethnomethodological, hermeneutic, critical and linguistic traditions have tended to begin to influence psychological studies.

Although in some writing the two styles of approaching psychological phenomena have been viewed as oppositional or polarized, more moderate perspectives argue that quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in conjunction and may complement each other (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall, 1994; Hammersley in Richardson, 1996). The stance adopted to this polemic by researchers is to some extent dependent upon their political orientation (Burr, 1995). Richardson (in Richardson, 1996) makes the point that the association of qualitative methodology with political critique has tended to radicalize debates within the area and has been used by some mainstream researchers as an argument to discredit qualitative methodologists. On the other hand many qualitative methodologists argue that the research process is always to some extent subjective, particularly when the domain of study encompasses human experience and the researchers themselves are human, and that rigorous and ethical research practice should attempt to embrace rather than circumvent this aspect of research. Thus

the notion of reflexivity, encompassing the conscious acknowledgement of the role of the researcher in the research process, becomes central in most forms of qualitative research.

Irrespective of the debates around the political stance of researchers, there is little denying that qualitative research methods are gaining greater popularity and recognition within contemporary psychology (Richardson in Richardson, 1996). The choice to utilize a qualitative research method can be both theoretically and pragmatically driven, but tends to stem from the nature of the research question posed.

### **9.1.1 Characteristics of Qualitative Research Methodology**

Although the discipline of psychology has historically relied heavily upon quantitative research, there is one tradition within the discipline that has tended to use forms of qualitative study since its inception. The field of clinical psychology, as exemplified in the work of Freud for example, has placed heavy reliance on the case study approach with its parallel in medical science (Hammersley in Richardson, 1996; Phares, 1984). Much of the theory within clinical psychology has been derived from clinical case material, embracing observation, interpretation and extrapolation from small numbers of subjects. This research tradition is consistent with clinicians' interest in subjective experience. Whilst clinical data has certainly also been derived from large scale experimental studies, the focus upon experiential aspects of human functioning including intrapsychic and dynamic features, has led many clinicians to embrace qualitative research techniques as the most appropriate means of accessing such material. Thus much of the interpretative tradition in qualitative methodology can be linked to a broadly clinical interest in the discipline of psychology.

However, whilst sharing aspects in common with clinical interests, qualitative methodology is certainly not limited to this field and has become particularly influential in the areas of social, and to some extent developmental, psychology. The common focus within such applications of qualitative methodology is the interest in human subjectivity, described by Shotter (cited in Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn and Walkerdine, 1984 ) as incorporating "such phenomena as self-consciousness, responsible action, intention and the ability to participate in society according

to its prescribed rules" (p.15). In addition to this emphasis on a subjectivity associated both with self reflection and incorporation into the social world, qualitative methods have also been concerned with exploring common or everyday perceptions of the world (as in ethnomethodology and grounded theory), and in uncovering the subjective, experiential dimensions of people's worlds (as in the phenomenological tradition). Thus the interests of qualitative methodologists span a broad range of phenomena which tend to share in common an emphasis on subjectivity and contextualization of human experience and problematize our received ways of knowing about people. Banister et al summarize qualitative research as: "a) an attempt to capture the sense that lies within, and that structures what we say about what we do; b) an exploration, elaboration and systematization of the significance of an identified phenomenon; c) the illuminative representation of the meaning of a delimited issue or problem" (1994, p.3). In this case the identified phenomenon or delimited issue is the criminal victimization of men and the sense that lies within that the study sought to capture, how men make sense of such an experience.

The scope of qualitative research outlined above by Banister et al (1994) is carefully worded to encompass the diversity of interests represented within the qualitative tradition. Hammersley (in Richardson, 1996) points out that while qualitative methods tend to be presented in contrast to quantitative methods, there is also considerable differentiation of theoretical premises and methods within the qualitative tradition. "The diversity of what counts as qualitative research should be all too obvious...Nor is this diversity limited to the use of different methods. There are fundamental disagreements among qualitative researchers at a philosophical and political level" (p.172). Since the current research makes use of two different forms of qualitative method, in this case discourse analysis and thematic content analysis, it seems important to briefly address the relationship between these two methodological approaches.

### 9.1.2 Diversity Within the Qualitative Methodological Tradition

It is well beyond the scope of the present research work to undertake a thorough exploration of what at present are cutting edge debates within psychology about human experience and how it is constituted. These debates encompass profound philosophical concerns about epistemology and ontology. However, by way of background to the research techniques employed in this study, an

abbreviated discussion of some of the key points of tension will be elaborated. Although early forms of qualitative understanding challenged the status quo in psychology, they tended to be based upon a modernist understanding of the individual as an autonomous, integrated and coherent being. More recently, post-modernist or what are sometimes interchangeably called post-structuralist, challenges to the social sciences have produced a much more radical interrogation of psychology.

#### 9.1.2.1 Realism Versus Constructionism

Broadly speaking, within the qualitative tradition the two central perspectives can be viewed as differing in the degree to which they embrace a realist as opposed to a social constructionist understanding of the world (Banister et al, 1994). Whilst it is problematic to pose these two positions as polarities, the two stances to research have been variously referred to: as "interpretive and critical approaches" (Neuman, 1997); "grounded theory versus constructionism" (Pidgeon in Richardson, 1996); "realism and constructionism" (Banister et al, 1994) and "structuralism versus post-modernism (or post-structuralism)" (Burr, 1995). Pidgeon (in Richardson, 1996), acknowledging the work of Hammersley on the dilemma of the qualitative method, writes:

Put simply, this dilemma arises from a simultaneous commitment, on the one hand to realism and science (by claiming to reflect objectively the participants' accounts and perspectives) and, on the other hand, to constructionism through a recognition of the multiple perspectives and subjectivities inherent both in a symbolic interactionist world view and in the engagement of the researcher in the interpretive work of generating new understanding and theory (ps.80 & 81).

Burr's exploration of these two perspectives goes considerably beyond this dilemma concerning the relative weight of objectivity and subjectivity in qualitative research methods, to a fundamental questioning of what we consider to be the subject matter of research and what is actually referred to in notions of subjectivity. She characterises the work of theorists such as Freud and Piaget as structuralist in that: "In each case the 'hidden' structure or rule is seen as the deeper reality underlying the surface features of the world, so that the truth about the world could be revealed by analysing these underlying structures" (Burr, 1995, p.13). In contrast post-modernism "is a

rejection of both the idea that there can be an ultimate truth and of structuralism, the idea that the world as we see it is the result of hidden structures" (ibid, p.13).

The interpretive or hermeneutic tradition obviously has its origins in a more realist or structuralist understanding of the world. Hermeneutics can be defined very simply as "the business of interpretation" (Addison in Crabtree and Miller, 1992, p.110). Hermeneutic analysis is "the process of bringing a thing or situation from unintelligibility to understanding" (Palmer, 1969, quoted in ibid, p.110). This understanding resonates with Neuman's distinction between interpretative and critical approaches. In the case of interpretation, involving the process of linking surface manifestation to underlying phenomena, the assumption of the existence of an underlying something is implicit. Much clinical research is based within this kind of interpretive tradition. However, critical approaches adopt a different ontological stance.

Woolgar (in Richardson, 1996) argues that these kinds of debates within qualitative methods tend to constellate around the problem of representation. Whilst acknowledging gradations of perspective he contrasts the premises of traditional science and constitutive positions.

Put most simply, 'traditional' or 'received' views of science operate upon the assumption that the world can be imagined to comprise representations, on the one hand, and underlying objects, on the other hand. The 'ideology of representation' is the set of beliefs and practices stemming from the idea that various entities (meanings, motives, things, essences, reality, underlying patterns, cause, what is signified, intention, meaning, facts, objects and so on) underlie or pre-exist their surface representations (documents, appearances, signs, language, knowledge and so on) (Woolgar in Richardson, 1996, p.16).

The goal of science, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative practices is to uncover these connections as accurately as possible. In contrast, constructivist views invert this understanding arguing that in some sense the surface constitutes the object rather than vice versa, holding "that objects are constituted or created by virtue of the manipulation of representations" (p.17). Thus the main subject of interest for social constructionists is this manipulation of representations. One major research application based within the constructionist paradigm is what has become known as discourse analysis. In some senses discourse analysis can be construed as interested in 'surface' as opposed to hermeneutic or interpretive traditions which are interested in depth.

### 9.1.3 Location of the Present Study Within Qualitative Methodology

This study seeks to entertain both realist and constructionist perspectives. This straddling of both perspectives reflects a simultaneous interest in clinical theory and practice and a commitment to grasping more fully the implications of social practices. Even without adopting the extreme social constructionist notion of the "individual" as an artefact of social construction, it can hardly be contested that people are to some extent influenced by their social world. This socially constituted dimension of the individual has tended to be largely neglected in the clinical tradition as critical commentary directed at a range of theoretical issues within the literature review has argued. The study thus aims to do greater justice to this dimension of the interviewees' experience. At the same time, as a clinician interested in the implications of research for clinical theory and practice, the radical social constructionist view poses certain limitations. The literature on posttraumatic stress covered to provide a theoretical and conceptual basis for the study is clearly located within a realist or structuralist understanding of the world and individuals within it. For example, the concept of cognitive schemata assumes a model of a thinking individual whose thoughts may be structured in particular ways which reflect some underlying dimensions of his/her idiosyncratic experience. Although it must be born in mind that such explanatory models are just that, *viz* representational models, they allow theorists and interventionists to engage with people's experience from an informed perspective.

The present research is thus based largely within a clinical tradition, steeped in modernist and structuralist views of human functioning, but seeks to maintain some critical awareness of the limitations of this position and to offer some reference to an alternate perspective. The study thus utilized the interpretive method of thematic content analysis in conjunction with the critical method of discourse analysis. Since the two methods operate upon different premises and involve different procedures, the analysis encompassed two separate stages based upon each method. However, as will be apparent within the discussion, there is considerable room for dialogue between these two perspectives. Certainly, the discussion of the thematic material is informed by a social constructionist perspective which enriches appreciation of the data. The secondary discourse analysis and clinical commentary on the data offers a further complementary appreciation of thematic issues.

Some background to the theoretical basis of each analytic method is elaborated prior to the explication of the manner in which thematic content analysis and discourse analysis were utilized in the collection and analysis of the data of this study particularly.

#### **9.1.4 Thematic Content Analysis: Theoretical Background**

Content analysis has become a commonly accepted qualitative technique within the social sciences over several decades and has been utilized in numerous psychological studies (Berg, 1995; Henwood in Richardson, 1996; Holsti, 1969; Krippendorff, 1980).

##### **9.1.4.1 Historical Developments and Trends**

Content analysis was first utilized in the 1920s and 30s, primarily in the field of research into the mass media. It thus has its origins primarily in sociological and linguistic traditions. The initial utilization of the method was designed primarily to scrutinize communication content by means of coding and quantifying aspects of the message or text. To some extent content analysis straddles both quantitative and qualitative paradigms and is sometimes viewed as a tool for rendering qualitative data accessible to quantitative analysis. Thus for example, frequency counts of word utilization can be subjected to statistical comparisons and analysis. However, during the second world war content analysis became extended for use in propaganda analysis and further theoretical developments introduced an awareness of the need for deeper levels of inference in data analysis beyond straightforward quantification. "Developments beyond the mainly descriptive, empirical approaches were encouraged for practical reasons too, as researchers became aware of the importance of investigating both latent and manifest meanings" (Henwood in Richardson, 1996, p.34). Krippendorff (1980) argues that this application of the method led to increasing appreciation of the context within which communication took place and the need for more complex models of analysis. He reflects that "the analyst, looking 'beyond the surface' of propaganda messages, makes predictions or inferences about phenomena without enjoying direct access to them" (p.17). This move towards an analysis requiring more inferential skill reflects a move towards what could be termed "interpretive content analysis" (Guba and Lincoln, 1985) or what is also known as "thematic content analysis" (Berg, 1995; Krippendorff, 1980). Content

analysis became a tool to be utilized in a range of psychological research including in clinical settings, for example in analysing clinical interview data and projective assessment responses (Krippendorff, 1980).

At present the field of content analysis still reflects a divergence of approaches with some research lying firmly towards the quantitative empirical end of the spectrum and other research located within a more interpretative paradigm involving deeper levels of inference (Berg, 1995). "The meaning of 'content analysis' is itself evolving" (Guba and Lincoln, 1985, p.240) as reflected in the range of definitions and applications of the method as utilised by different researchers. Key debates about quantitative and qualitative approaches are reflected in an edited book of conference proceedings where George's chapter entitled "Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches to Content Analysis" argues that the presence of a certain feature may be sufficient for interpretation rather than the counting of its occurrence (in Itihel De Sola Pool, 1959). Berg's (1995) chapter on content analysis argues that both quantitative and qualitative approaches are encompassed within the content analytic tradition, sometimes independent of each other and sometimes in combination.

In addition, there has been increasing focus upon the utilization of computer aided analyses, adding to the debates about how best to reduce and code data. One such programme is the ATLAS text interpretation and theory building programme (Muhr, 1994). Even with the introduction of computer aided analyses the range of research continues to reflect divergent interests, from coding open-ended survey questions; detecting the existence of propaganda; reflecting cultural patterns of groups, institutions and societies; to revealing the focus of individual, group, institutional or societal attention (Berelson cited in Weber, 1985, p.9). Weber refers to the example of a study conducted by Aries (1973; 1979) into communication in different types of sex constructed groups using computer-aided content analysis, in which she "found that differential sex-role socialization and sex-role stereotyping affect thematic content and social interaction" (cited in Weber, 1985, p.11). Thus it is clear that content analysis can be applied to thematic and contextual issues of interest. It seems that content analysis is continuing to evolve as a method; however it may be useful to elaborate what do appear to be points of consensus or agreement in defining and practising this form of qualitative analysis.

#### 9.1.4.2 Common Features of Content Analysis

Stone, Dunphy, Smith and Ogilvie (1966) define content analysis broadly as “any research technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics within the text” (p.5). A further definition offered by Weber proposes: “Content analysis is a research methodology that utilizes a set of procedures to make valid inferences from a text” (1985, p.9). Holsti, recognised as the author of a key text in the area, defines the method thus: “Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (1969, p.14). Finally Krippendorff writes “Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (1980, p.2). All four definitions thus encompass the notion of making inferences from a given text utilizing systematic procedures. Content analysis (like discourse analysis) tends to be applied to the examination of texts, be these speeches, films or interviews. The procedures employed are essentially designed to reduce and categorise large volumes of material into more meaningful units from which interpretations can be made. Thematic (content) analysis (Banister et al, 1994; Berg, 1995) is the term used to describe a more clearly interpretative application of the method in which the focus of analysis is upon thematic content which is identified, categorised and elaborated upon on the basis of systematic scrutiny.

Weber (1985) states that the inferences drawn from the data analysis can concern different subjects: “the sender/s’ of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message” (p.9). In the case of this study it was both the content of the message itself and the inferences this led to about the senders of the message, i.e., victimized men, that were of interest to the researcher, although the third category (audience) was not completely neglected.

Guba and Lincoln (1985) identify four major characteristics as common to content analysis. These include the notion that content analysis is a **rule guided, systematic** process which aims at **generality** in order to develop theory or contextual insights and is focussed in the first place upon **manifest content**. Thus the first stage of analysis takes place according to specified guiding principles which are applied to the manifest content of the text, “while at the later *interpretive* stage, it is now generally agreed that it is permissible for the investigator to rely upon his (sic)

insight, intuition and imagination to draw inferences about latent content (decoding process), as well as to draw conclusions about the meaning of manifest content (encoding process)” (p.242). Thus once again it is acknowledged that the inferential dimensions of analysis are gaining increasing weight in many psychological applications of content analysis, as in thematic content analysis.

#### 9.1.4.3 Principles Guiding Categorisation of Data

Krippendorff outlines the complex process of categorising, or what he terms “unitizing”, the data in terms of two principles: the **purposes** for defining them and the **process** needed for defining them. In a sense this could be understood as asking why, what and how questions of the data analysis. In addition these principles are applied to the different domains of **sampling**, **recording** and **context** units. “Recording units are separately described and can therefore be regarded as the separately analysable parts of a sampling unit. While sampling units tend to have physically identifiable boundaries, the distinctions among recording units are achieved as a result of descriptive effort. Holsti (1969: 116) defines a recording unit as ‘the specific segment of content that is categorised by placing it in a given category.’” (Krippendorff, 1980, p.58). Thus the **sampling** unit may be an entire interview, the answer to a specific question or individual sentences. The **recording** unit is usually defined as a subcategory within the sampling domain, such as the use of emotive expression as identified within any of the previous sampling units. In the case of the present study the sampling units comprised each interview transcription since these were derived independently of each other. The recording units within each interview were thematic units comprising a sentence, statement or group of statements about a particular topic. Thus the recording units are of irregular size designated as they are in terms of thematic coherence, or as representing a theme unit as defined by Guba and Lincoln as “an assertion about some subject” (1985, p.246). The third category of **context** units refers to the practice of sometimes defining recording units in terms of their contextual location, for example whether they occur in particular conjunctions or more commonly within larger rather than smaller recording units. “Units are thus distinguished by the function they serve in content analysis. Sampling units are of concern to sampling and provide the basis for statistical considerations. Recording units collectively carry the information within sampling units and provide the basis for analysis. And

context units are of concern to the process of describing the recording units" (Krippendorf, 1980, p.60). Since the present study is located at the thematic rather than quantitative end of the spectrum the definition of the recording units, i.e., themes, was considered most important in the analysis. Some contextual dimensions, such as whether a statement was elicited in response to a leading question, were also taken into account more generally in commenting upon the thematic content identified.

Having discussed the units to which the analysis is applied, it is important to discuss the different ways of delineating and identifying units. Krippendorf (1980) suggests that there are five different approaches to such delimitation including physical, syntactical, referential, propositional and thematic units. Thematic units, as employed within this study, can be identified "by their correspondence to a particular structural definition of the content of narratives, explanations, or interpretations. They are distinguished from each other on conceptual grounds" (Krippendorf, 1980, p.62). While the thematic analysis procedures will be described more explicitly later in the chapter, it will become evident that the nature of the analysis in terms of themes is derived from conceptual bases in the literature pertaining to trauma, victimization and masculinity. Thus for example, the key trauma related cognitive schemata outlined by McCann and Pearlman (1990) provided a central conceptual base for the identification of themes. What is perhaps important to note here is that the term theme is used in two inter-related, but somewhat different, senses in referring to the recording units and the criteria for allocation to a category. A thematic recording unit is a more universal entity designated as a set of communication pertaining to a particular subject, whereas the thematic unit in terms of analysis revolves around a particular subject area. For example, the theme of what McCann and Pearlman term "Frame of Reference" may incorporate a number of thematic recording units derived across each interview in particular, and all the interviews in total. Banister et al (1994) in their chapter on "Interviewing" describe the analysis of such data as "thematic analysis". "A 'thematic analysis' is a coherent way of organizing or reading some interview material in relation to specific research questions. These readings are organized under thematic headings in ways that attempt to do justice both to elements of the research question and to the preoccupations of the interviewees" (p.57). While avoiding the

quantitative constraints associated with historical content analysis, it is clear that this procedure involves a similar grouping and categorization of data as that defined as thematic content analysis (Berg, 1995).

The identification of the thematic categories into which data should be sorted returns us to Krippendorff's original question of the purpose of the analysis. Whilst there does not appear to be much discussion of the epistemological basis of content analysis in texts on the method, it would appear that data categories can be both theoretically and empirically derived. Some categorization may be *a priori* and other categorisation generated within the process of data analysis.

The categories researchers use in a content analysis can be determined inductively, deductively, or by some combination of both (Strauss, 1987). Abrahamson (1983, p.286) indicates that an inductive approach begins with the researcher's 'immersing' themselves in the documents (that is, the various messages) in order to identify the dimensions or *themes* that seem meaningful to the producers of each message. In a deductive approach, researchers use some categorical theme suggested by a theoretical perspective, and the documents provide a means for assessing the hypothesis. In many circumstances, the relationship between a theoretical perspective and certain messages involves both inductive and deductive approaches (Berg, 1995, p.180).

Decisions about the basis for categorisation are always guided by the research question/s to be addressed: "theory, hypotheses, and inquiry questions alone ought to guide the coding process and determine content categories" (Guba and Lincoln, 1985, p.243). In the case of the present study the research interest involved a thorough exploration of men's self reported experience of, and response to, a violent criminal attack, a broad research question which appeared to best lend itself to thematic content analysis. In addition, the design of the study was best served by a combination of deductive and inductive analysis, since the analysis was guided by a considerable body of theory discussed previously and yet remained open to the possibility that the data might generate new insights and theory. Thus the categorisation of the data attempted to do justice to both approaches by relying on some pre-established categories for analysis, for example the McCann and Pearlman (1990) framework, whilst at the same time allowing for the generation of new categories which emerged from the data, for example a category pertaining to "Emotional expression".

Two further points concerning categorisation within content analysis warrant brief mention. In order to ensure rigour in coding it is important that categories are as inclusive and exhaustive as possible. Where different levels or bases of category construction are utilized, analysis needs to be undertaken independently before any comparison can be made. For example, the analysis of the data in terms of McCann and Pearlman's cognitive schemata should not be conflated with a thematic analysis of statements pertaining to masculinity. Krippendorff (1980) refers to a sequential model of content analysis following the successive steps of: unitization; sampling; recording; data reduction; inference; and finally, analysis (p.54). While inferences may be drawn from the two sets of data categorisation given as examples above, it is only at the level of analysis that it may be possible to examine inter-relationships between the two sets of categorisation.

#### 9.1.4.4 Thematic Content Analysis and Grounded Theory

Within the field of qualitative methodology there are constantly points of overlap and divergence between different approaches. In some sense the interpretive or thematic end of the spectrum of content analysis bears a closer relation to grounded theory than it does to mainstream content analysis. In discussing content analysis, Berg (1995) makes a natural link with grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) as a guiding principle in analysis. Since grounded theory is based upon the systematic categorisation of data into meaningful thematic units for the purpose of making theoretical inferences, it could be viewed as essentially a form of content analysis. The intention of grounded theory research is to refine or derive theory on the basis of the collection of empirical data, which is then subject to a process of ever refined categorisation and simultaneous conceptualization. Thus categories for analysis may be derived both from theory and generated from the data as in content analysis. As the term "grounded theory" suggests, the intention is to develop theory out of grounded data. Glaser and Strauss view their approach as combining empirically and theoretically driven approaches to data analysis.

We wish to suggest a third approach to the analysis of qualitative data - one that combines, by an analytic procedure of constant comparison, the explicit coding procedures of the first approach (analysis of data after coding) and the style of theory development of the second (the integration of data and theory). The purpose of the constant comparative method of joint coding and analysis is to generate theory more systematically than allowed by the second approach, by using explicit coding and

analytic procedures. While more systematic than the second approach, this method does not adhere completely to the first, which hinders the development of theory because it is designed for provisional testing and not discovering hypotheses (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.102).

Grounded theory thus combines approaches from both theoretical and empirical research traditions, deriving theory from an active engagement with grounded data. Whilst Berg (1995) appears to have little difficulty in incorporating grounded theory under the rubric of content analysis, there appear to be two points of divergence in the method of analysis in grounded theory and mainstream content analysis. These are manifested in the order in which procedures take place and the exhaustive nature of categorisation. For the grounded theorist, categorisation and analysis can take place simultaneously and cyclically. As insights are generated from the categorisation on the part of the researcher, new categories may be established and further categorisation undertaken. This is referred to as the "constant comparative method of joint coding and analysis" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.102). For example, Glaser and Strauss recommend that the researcher make notes of insights generated throughout the process of coding rather than once the coding is completed, a principle endorsed by Berg (1995) in general content analysis. The process involved is much more fluid than that outlined in strict applications of content analysis. In addition, Glaser and Strauss argue that it is not necessary to subject every bit of data to analysis, since once saturation occurs, i.e., no material requiring the generation of new explanations or new conceptualization is encountered, a category can be viewed as having sufficient validity to warrant presentation and discussion. The process of analysis is recognised as exhaustive and constrained to some extent. This follows from the primary motivation to generate grounded theory rather than to empirically support or refute specific hypotheses. "Since no proof is involved, the constant comparative method in contrast to analytic induction requires only saturation of data - not consideration of *all* available data" (ibid, p.104). Whilst the present study involved the analysis of transcripts in their entirety rather than the saturation principle, the interchange between theorisation and categorisation, including the recording of insights and the recognition of the possibility of new category generation during the coding process, was recognised as a useful dimension in the analysis.

The present study is orientated towards theory generation derived from empirical evidence, and in this sense could be encompassed within the aims of grounded theory. However, the application

of grounded theory has tended to be more ethnographic than clinical, whereas thematic content analysis has been utilized in the field of clinical research as mentioned earlier. Thus the method embraced within the study is that of thematic content analysis, differentiated from conventional quantitative applications, and acknowledging some useful parallels within aspects of grounded theory.

Thematic content analysis assumes a relation between the text and the author of the text or its audience; based in a realist or structuralist understanding of the world. Thus it is assumed that inferences about inner states, intentions and cognitions, for example, can be made from the words or actions that people produce. Discourse analysis is located within a different constructionist epistemological framework, the theoretical basis of which is now elaborated in turn.

### **9.1.5 Discourse Analysis: Theoretical Background**

As discussed in an earlier chapter on critical perspectives within social psychology, discourse analysis is a relatively recent introduction to psychology although its origins in other theoretical developments locates it within a longer history. Within psychological applications of discourse analysis two major schools of practice have developed. Although working in collaboration, the two approaches place weight on different aspects of analysis.

#### **9.1.5.1 Potter and Wetherell's Approach**

The work associated with Potter and Wetherell is derived from speech act theory, ethnomethodology developments and semiology (Potter and Wetherell, 1992). Much of their focus is upon what are known as "interpretive repertoires" and the function or specific ways of speaking about "objects" in the act of communication.

The principle tenet of discourse analysis is that function involves construction of versions, and is demonstrated by language variation. The term 'construction' is apposite for three reasons. First, it reminds us that accounts of events are built out of a variety of pre-existing linguistic resources...Second, construction implies active selection:

some resources are included, some omitted. Finally, the notion of construction emphasizes the potent, consequential nature of accounts...In a profound sense, accounts 'construct' reality" (Potter and Wetherell, 1992, ps.33 and 34).

Thus for Potter and Wetherell the analysis of discourse is directed towards an appreciation of language and communication as a form of construction designed to achieve specific ends. This is not to assume that the act of construction is conscious, but that given the selection of ways of speaking about the world from a variety of possibilities, specific constructions will serve particular purposes. For this reason their analysis places considerable weight on the interactional context within which discourse is produced.

True to the constructionist perspective, it is the accounts or "discursive acts" which are the subject of study rather than the people speaking them *per se*. The interviewees are viewed as demonstrating the use of certain linguistic manoeuvres and interpretive repertoires. "We do not intend to use the discourse as a pathway to entities or phenomena lying 'beyond' the text. Discourse analysis does not take for granted that accounts reflect underlying attitudes or dispositions and therefore we do not expect that an individual's discourse will be consistent and coherent. Rather, the focus is on the discourse *itself*: how it is organized and what it is doing" (Potter and Wetherell, 1992, p.49). This latter statement highlights the subject of scrutiny for Potter and Wetherell; organization and function of language in discourses. However, they also specify that within the psychological application of discourse analysis these dimensions are not investigated in the linguistic sense but from a social psychological stance. Variation within one account or across accounts generated in different contexts, are to be expected within a post-modernist framework and both variety and consistency provide useful pointers in analysing discourse. In a sense Potter and Wetherell's approach can be characterised as emphasizing the "performative qualities of discourse" (Burr, 1995, p.47).

#### 9.1.5.2 Parker's Understanding of Discourse Analysis

In contrast, as mentioned in chapter four, the second school of thought in discourse analysis is that primarily associated with the work of Ian Parker which is derived from a different set of influences, primarily the French philosophical traditions of structuralism and post-structuralism

(Burr, 1995). Thus the work of Althusser (1971), Barthes (1973,1977), Derrida (1976), Harre (1979), Lacan and particularly Foucault (1972, 1977) (cited in Parker, 1992); has been influential in this tradition which Burr reflects as "interested in issues of identity, selfhood, personal and social change and power relations" (1995, p.47). This school of thought places greater weight on the historical location of discourses in keeping with Foucault's notion of genealogy, and demonstrates a greater commitment to interrogating the ideological and power exercising functions of discourse. The interest in power and subjectivity also allows for some researchers within this tradition to draw upon psychoanalytic thinking.

In his text "Discourse Dynamics" Parker (1992) offers a somewhat simple working definition of discourse as "*a system of statements which constructs an object*" (p.5). However, he then elaborates this definition by way of specifying seven criteria for distinguishing discourses, and three auxiliary criteria which he believes are important in maximizing the political role of discourse analysis. Each of these criteria guide the practice or method of analysing discourse which will be elaborated later. The distinguishing criteria are summarized as follows:

- 1) A discourse is realised in texts
  - 2) A discourse is about objects
  - 3) A discourse contains subjects
  - 4) A discourse is a coherent system of meanings
  - 5) A discourse refers to other discourses
  - 6) A discourse reflects on its own way of speaking
  - 7) A discourse is historically located
- and:
- 8) Discourses support institutions
  - 9) Discourses reproduce power relations
  - 10) Discourses have ideological effects

Thus for Parker discourses serve to construct the world in a manner which accords validity and power to particular versions of explanation and description and generally renders these versions the status of 'truth'. "Discourses do not simply describe the social world, but categorise it, they bring phenomena into sight. A strong form of argument would be that discourses allow us to see

things that are not 'really' there, and that once an object has been elaborated in discourse it is difficult *not* to refer to it as if it were real. Discourses provide frameworks for debating the value of one way of talking about reality over other ways" (1992, ps. 4 and 5). In addition, Parker is invested in exploring the implications of discourses in maintaining certain structural power relations, hence his overlapping interest in ideology. However, as described in point 5) above, discourses do not exist in isolation, but may interface with other discourses in complementary or contradictory ways. Thus Parker's version of discourse analysis is invested in exposing 'taken for granted' versions of reality, their historical relativity, the power interests they appear to uphold and the perspectives which they disenfranchise.

#### 9.1.5.3 Discourse and Identity

In her text on social constructionism, Burr (1995) elaborates on the role of discourse with particular reference to the inter-relationship between discourse and identity. She defines discourse as follows: "A discourse refers to a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on, that in some way together produce a particular version of events. It refers to a particular picture that is painted of an event (or person or class of persons), a particular way of representing it or them in a certain light" (p.48). She argues that discourses can be thought of as: "a kind of frame of reference, a conceptual backcloth against which our utterances can be interpreted. So there is a two way relationship between discourses and the actual things that people say: discourses 'show up' in the things people say and write, and the things we say and write, in their turn, are dependent for their meaning upon the discursive context in which they appear" (ibid, p.50). In Burr's view discourses are pervasive and influence any meaningful aspect of human life, including the structure of identity. Identity is structured through the discourses pertaining to different categories within our culture, including centrally that of gender. In a sense identity is an amalgam or "end-product" of the assemblage of the different identity discourses that pertain to us. Thus Burr argues: "A young, black, unemployed man will have his identity constructed out of the raw materials of the various discourses surrounding age, ethnicity, work and masculinity" (1995, p.51). At times these different components of identity will be in harmony and at other times at odds. This view is also in keeping with social identity theory (de la Rey in Foster and Louw-Potgieter, 1991). While purist discourse analysts may perceive this application

of discourse to identity as somewhat over simplistic, this perspective has relevance for the present study.

Burr (1995) asserts that from a social constructionist perspective identity cannot be viewed as arising internally, but from the social realm, and that this might at times pose problems “with combining identities supplied by discourses from different ‘threads’” (p.53). The present study was motivated to some extent by this very notion of negotiation of identity under circumstances where the discourses being drawn upon appear to be in tension or contradiction. It was assumed that the men in this study would to a large extent have negotiated aspects of masculine discourse/s in their construction of identity, although it is acknowledged that this process of negotiation is always to some extent ongoing. However, in the confrontation with violent crime, these men were faced with the negotiation of a further discourse pertaining to identity, that related to victimization. The discourse analytic dimension of the study is thus centrally directed towards exploring this tension around identity and discourse. The question being investigated concerns the manner in which discourses pertaining to masculinity and discourses pertaining to victimization were manifested in the interview texts, and the way in which the interface between these two discourses of identity were negotiated by these interviewees.

Hopefully this brief background to the theoretical underpinnings of the discourse analytic method has elucidated the subject matter of discourse analysis and the particular relevance of the method for the present study.

Having explored the theoretical basis for the study within a broadly qualitative approach, the specific method of the study is now elaborated including the nature of the research question, the subjects, procedures for data collection and method of data analysis.

## 9.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

Within qualitative research it is generally accepted that the research question posed may well be exploratory and open-ended. Whilst all psychological research is theory driven to a greater or lesser extent, qualitative research may seek to elucidate and generate new theoretical perspectives

and in this sense is committed to remaining flexible. "Qualitative enquiry generally begins with theory or understanding that is to be modified and confirmed in the context of the study" (Kuzel in Crabtree and Miller, 1992, p.33). In addition, qualitative research is generally focussed upon describing a phenomenon in depth rather than proving something about it. It is thus unusual to frame qualitative research questions in the form of formal hypotheses, particularly directional hypotheses. "By contrast, qualitative researchers create new concepts and theory by blending together empirical evidence and abstract concepts. Instead of testing a hypothesis, a qualitative analyst may illustrate or colour in evidence showing that a theory, generalization, or interpretation is plausible" (Neuman, 1997, p.420). Research questions thus tend to be phrased in terms of defining the phenomenon of interest to the researcher. In this case the research aim was posed as follows:

*The study sought to explore the social and personal construction of meaning of white, middle class men in the wake of exposure to criminal victimization.*

Within this exploration three inter-related sub aims were identified:

- 1) *The description of male victims' experience and psychological construction of criminal victimization.*
- 2) *The identification of discourses pertaining to masculinity and victimization and their potential interface.*
- 3) *The examination of the possible relationship between 1) and 2) above, i.e., what for the sake of distinction could be termed 1) personal constructions, and 2) social constructions.*

### 9.3 THE SAMPLE OF SUBJECTS OR INTERVIEWEES

#### 9.3.1 Terminology

Within the qualitative research tradition there is a resistance to utilising the conventional terminology of quantitative research pertaining to the people amongst whom the data is collected. The term "subject" is viewed as representing a hierarchical relationship between researcher and researched, objectifying the participants, privileging the researcher's management and interpretation of human experience and denying the commonality of humanity. Thus it has become

the convention within qualitative research to utilize terms such as informant, participant and interviewee to describe what would formerly have been viewed as the subjects of the study (Banister et al, 1994). Since the first two terms seem to have more applicability in ethnographic and other collaborative research, the term of choice which is generally utilized in the study is that of *interviewee*. However, it is recognised that the research process almost inevitably involves a hierarchical relationship which cannot be eradicated by such alterations in terminology, which may merely serve to sensitize researchers to such dynamics.

### 9.3.2 Sample Size

There has been considerable debate within qualitative methodology concerning ideal sample size and composition in terms of the research agenda. Patton (1990) (quoted in Kuzel in Crabtree and Miller, 1992) states: "Qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases ( $n=1$ ), selected *purposefully*" (p.33), i.e., what Berg (1995) also terms a "purposive sample" (p.179). Whilst it is generally accepted that such small samples are characteristic of qualitative research there tends to be a concern with capturing both diversity and commonality of experience across a sample. "(Qualitative) researchers examine patterns of similarities and differences across cases and try to come to terms with their diversity..." (Ragin, 1994 quoted in Neuman, 1997, p.419). As Kuzel citing Patton (in Crabtree and Miller, 1992) once again argues, qualitative sampling is essentially concerned with *information-richness* and thus often relies on extensive data generated from a few subjects by means of intensive engagement with the participants and the data gathered. "In qualitative inquiry, sampling is driven by the desire to illuminate the questions under study and to increase the scope and range of data exposed - to uncover multiple realities" (Kuzel in Crabtree and Miller, 1992, p.33).

Although no hard and fast rules exist about numbers of interviewees in different forms of qualitative research, it is not uncommon for phenomenological studies to make use of samples of 3 or less; articles in the journal "Discourse and Society" are commonly based on research samples of 6 to 8 and Potter and Wetherell (1992) cite studies of 10 transcripts as more than adequate for the purposes of discourse analysis (p.161). Some of the studies previously cited in the thesis have referred to similarly small samples of participants. Kuzel (in Crabtree and Miller, 1992) suggests

that 6 to 8 data sources are often sufficient when studying a homogenous sample whereas numbers between 12 to 20 may be desirable when seeking disconfirming evidence. In the case of the present study the intention was to study a largely homogenous sample looking for trends and similarities primarily, although diversity of response was also of interest. In addition, since the object of the study was to access in depth perceptions of subjects it was felt that rich data from a smaller number of interviewees was desirable. *Thus the study was based upon a sample of 10 interviewees.* An attempt was made to control for homogeneity in the sample in several important respects.

### 9.3.3 Criteria for Inclusion as Interviewees

The interviewees for the study were selected according to the following criteria:

#### 9.3.3.1 Demographic Criteria

*All the men were white, middle-class, English speaking, South African adults between the ages of 25 and 60 years.* Since the study was based upon the analysis of verbatim interviews, with some specific focus on language usage, it was felt to be important to interview English speaking men, hence the language and race stipulation. It was also felt that the race similarity between researcher and subjects would allow for greater ease of communication without introducing both race and gender differences into the equation. The age limits were set in order to control for some aspects of masculine identity. It was intended that the interviewees should not be significantly involved in the process of identity formation (i.e., in the recognised developmental stages of adolescence or youth), nor significantly preoccupied with concerns about aging which may have compounded their experience of dealing with victimization. All the men in the study were physically able and engaged in gainful employment at the time of being interviewed. The description of subjects as middle-class was based on both their educational and occupational backgrounds. Every man had obtained a matriculation pass (minimum 10 years schooling) and was employed either in the professional or business sector in a white collar capacity.

Neuman (1997) makes the point that elites are seldom studied in social science research. Whilst this group of interviewees could not strictly speaking be termed an elite, their gender, race, age and class position are all associated with structural power. Since a major interest of the study was the juxtaposition of the experience of victimization with the experience of occupying a dominant status in society, these men provided an opportunity to research this juxtaposition in a fairly clearly evident form.

### 9.3.3.2 Incident Criteria

In addition to the above demographic criteria, interviewees were selected on the basis of exposure to criminal violence specified across the following dimensions:

*- the interviewee had been exposed to an event in which he felt himself to be in mortal danger, i.e., he was either threatened with death or believed this to be a real possibility given the circumstances of the trauma.* Since it was impossible to ensure equivalence of experience across real life victims it was hoped that this definition would be sufficient to ensure that victims had experienced an event which they recognized to be extremely threatening. This definition also meets the criteria for event exposure specified in the DSM-IV in relation to Acute Traumatic Stress and Posttraumatic Stress (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). In addition, the previously cited study of Kilpatrick and Resnick (in Davidson and Foa, 1993) confirmed that life threat was a significant discriminator of psychological disturbance in crime victims.

*- the attack/assault was perceived to be criminally motivated, i.e., to be motivated by personal gain rather than political affiliation, sexual coercion or interpersonal conflict.* This criterion was designed to ensure that the relationship between perpetrator and victim was not complicated by any prior communication or group affiliation; and that the incident could be incorporated within the theoretical framework of criminal victimization.

*- the trauma had taken place no longer than 2 years previously and not less than 4 weeks prior to the interview.* According to DSM-IV criteria, Acute Traumatic Stress can be defined as occurring within one month after the event (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Thus there is some recognition that the immediate aftermath of the event is generally of about four week's duration. The intention of the study was to interview victims during a time period post the acute or impact phase of adjustment to trauma, but sufficiently close to the experience to allow

interviewees to recall material and to actively engage with the impact of the traumatic event upon their lives. The study of Kilpatrick and Resnick also reflected a similar, if somewhat longer, 36 month cut-off point for the assessment of the impact of traumatic events upon victims. There was no indication of significant differences in recollection between interviewees across this time period.

#### 9.3.4 Finding Interviewees

Interviewees were accessed through three different channels constituting what could broadly be termed a form of *convenience sampling*. Firstly the researcher informed colleagues within the department of psychology and friends about the aims of the study and criteria for inclusion. This generated six subjects who were initially approached by the third party and then contacted by the researcher. In addition, an advertisement was placed in the internal university newsletter, in a local suburban newspaper and at a clinic offering counselling services to victims of violence. (See Appendices A, B and C). The remaining four of the interviewees were obtained from these sources either by direct (self) or third party referral. Thus although not strictly speaking a volunteer sample, the interviewee's participation in the study could be viewed as cooperative. The nature of the study was explained to each person during initial telephonic contact, specifically the interest in men's experiences of violent crime and the fact that data collection would involve tape recording interviews which would then be transcribed. Not one of the men so approached declined to participate in the study, although some interviewees were somewhat self-conscious about being interviewed. Interviews were arranged at a time and place convenient to the interviewee. Some interviews took place in the interviewer's office, some in the interviewer's home and others at the respondents' place of work or home.

(In addition to the data collected from these formally specified interviewees, the researcher also drew upon therapeutic and supervisory experience with clients who fitted the above profile but presented in the therapeutic rather than the research context.)

## 9.4 DATA COLLECTION

The data of qualitative research is most generally comprised of language and in the case of both thematic content and discourse analysis, of texts. Typical forms of material collected include observations, documents and most commonly, interviews. Interviews become texts by way of transcription.

### 9.4.1 The Semi-Structured Interview

Interviews provide several advantages for data collection. Banister et al (1994) outline four such benefits: 1) interviews provide access to subjective meaning; 2) they permit investigation of complex phenomena; 3) they allow for reflexivity on the part of the researcher; and 4) they can address power relations in research (ps.50 and 51). The most common form of interview in qualitative research is what has been termed the "semi-structured" approach (ibid) or what Patton refers to as "the general interview guide approach" (1980, p.197). As the description indicates, such an interviewing structure is directed towards studying a specific phenomenon or phenomena (the structured aspect), but allows for flexible exploration of the subject matter in terms of sequence of discussion, relative emphasis placed upon dimensions discussed and the possibility that the interviewee may introduce new or unexpected information (the 'semi' aspect). The aim in conducting a semi-structured interview may be precisely to explore "those areas where your interviewee perceives gaps, contradictions and difficulties" (Banister et al, 1994, p.51). "The interview guide provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject. Thus, the interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style - but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined" (Patton, 1980, p.200). This allows for more systematic and comprehensive interviewing of a range of subjects concerning the same subject matter.

While interviews can be conducted telephonically or by means of other distance technology, most qualitative psychological interviews are conducted face-to-face. This interactional component must certainly be acknowledged as influencing the process of data collection, an aspect of

research that needs to be addressed through reflexivity; however, face-to-face contact allows for direct observation of the interviewee and for greater intimacy in the interview context.

#### 9.4.2 Interview Content and Structure

*The present study made use of semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face by the same interviewer, in this case the researcher.* Drawing upon the method employed in a similar previously cited study (Lebowitz and Roth, 1994), the first general questions pertained to the nature of the traumatic incident and its general impact upon the interviewee. These questions were phrased broadly as follows:

*Would you begin by telling me about what happened to you in some detail? (and thereafter)*

*Please tell me about how you have been affected by the incident in as much detail as possible.*

Following this section of the interview, allowing for the voluntary production of what appeared to be of significance to the interviewee, probing questions were utilized depending upon whether issues had already been covered. These probes concerned; the impact of the trauma across a range of aspects of psychological functioning (e.g., physical, cognitive); the nature of cognitive schemata in the seven areas identified as significant by McCann and Pearlman (1990) (e.g., independence, safety); perceptions of the responses of a range of significant others to the interviewee; and several questions designed to focus specifically on dimensions of masculinity and coming to terms with the trauma. Thus the interview sequence was designed to progress from a more unstructured approach allowing for spontaneous volunteering of information, to a more structured approach allowing for investigation of clinical concerns and the central research aims of the study. An outline of the interview format guide is provided in Appendix E.

Following the semi-structured interview, informants were asked to fill in a revised version of the *Impact of Events Scale (IES-R)* (Esprey, 1996; Horowitz, Wilner and Alvarez, 1979; Zilberg, Weiss and Horowitz, 1982). The scale was derived from Horowitz's theoretical model of traumatic stress and was designed to assess symptoms of avoidance and intrusion. The description

of symptoms also replicates fairly closely DSM descriptions. The South African revision of the scale (Esprey, 1996) took place concurrent with a very similar American revision (Weiss and Marmar in Wilson and Keane, 1997) and involved the fairly simple addition of items designed to assess hyper-arousal symptoms as outlined in DSMIII-R and DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1987; 1994) (See Appendix F). The original scale has been widely used in the assessment of post-traumatic stress and has acceptable psychometric properties. Within the present study the scale was utilized as a descriptive rather than formal psychometric tool, in contrast to many other studies in which the scale has been used as a measure of dependent or independent variables. Subjects were asked to rate the degree to which certain symptoms had been present within the preceding week as specified in the instructions (Appendix F). It was felt that some standardized assessment of the nature and intensity of symptomology present in interviewees at the time of interviewing would provide useful additional descriptive material. The scale was administered at the end of the interview to preclude influencing the interview content in a psychiatric direction and also so as to avoid creating a testee-expert relationship tone during the course of the interview.

The interviews were conducted over a six month period in late 1996. Interviews varied in duration from a minimum of 45 minutes to a maximum of 150 minutes. It was originally anticipated that interviewees might need to be interviewed more than once; however, it became apparent that sufficiently rich data was obtainable from a single interview. The interviews were audio-tape recorded and the interviewer made detailed notes of interactional aspects and observations at the close of each interview.

The interviews were transcribed by the researcher/interviewer and a team of four assistants. The assistants were briefed on the intention of the study and provided with a set of instructions about how to represent the verbal data in written form (Appendix D). Although some qualitative analysts, particularly linguistically orientated researchers, utilize very complex systems of written transcription (Banister et al, 1994), the present study limited transcriptions to verbatim report of utterances as far as possible including dimensions such as strong emphasis, significant pauses, and interruptions and overlaps in speech exchange. This method is in accord with Banister et al's recommendation for typical psychological interview transcription. In keeping with qualitative

research practices both the interviewer and interviewee's speech was recorded in the written transcripts. Those interviews that had been transcribed by assistants were checked and modified if necessary in order to ensure representation of the audio taped material as clearly and accurately as possible. The written transcriptions were between approximately 25 and 50 pages in length and therefore could not be included in full in the appendix. However, one full length transcription is included in Appendix G for illustrative value.

*The data of the study was thus most significantly comprised of the written texts of the recorded interviews, but also included the interviewer's observation notes and the results of the IES-R profiles.*

## 9.5 THE ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTS/DATA

As motivated earlier in the chapter, the data analysis took place within two stages, each involving a different form of qualitative analysis. The thematic content analytic method of analysis, based within a clinical interpretive framework, will be described first and thereafter the discourse analytic method employed. In both stages of analysis sections of the transcriptions were omitted from the analysis where the subject matter did not have relevance for the study. For example, one interviewee spent some time talking about a conference he attended soon after the trauma and another digressed into issues concerning an earlier experience of relationship counselling. The details of this material were deemed inappropriate for inclusion in the analysis. Apart from this minimal exclusion of sections of the data, a selection practice endorsed generally in qualitative research (Neuman, 1994), the data analysis was based upon full interview texts.

## 9.6 THE THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS

As outlined previously thematic content analysis is the term used to describe a more interpretive application of the method of content analysis, in which themes are identified, categorised and elaborated on the basis of systematic scrutiny.

The essential exercise of content analysis is the reduction of data into coherent, manageable categories to allow for the identification and elucidation of central issues. Within the study this process of reduction and extraction, while strongly influenced by the research agenda, was directed by a number of commonly accepted procedural steps (Weber, 1985; Wimmer and Dominick, 1987). In addition the thematic analysis was computer aided, utilizing the ATLAS.ti programme for text interpretation and theory building (Muhr, 1994). The application of these procedures to the present research context is outlined as follows:

1) The recording units were specified, i.e., whether the focus was upon words, sentences or themes. The analysis in this case was based upon the identification of thematic units. Thematic units were defined in terms of their logical coherence around a specific topic as outlined previously, i.e., as "an assertion about some subject" (Guba and Lincoln, 1985, p.246). Thus for example the statement: "I felt terrible because I couldn't do anything to protect my wife", would be an example of a thematic unit. Recording units varied in length from one line to extended paragraphs. In cases where interviewee material appeared to have been specifically prompted by the researcher's intervention, both dimensions of the dialogue were included within the unit. Otherwise units were coded from the interviewee material only.

2) The categories of analysis were defined. The analytic categories of this study were based upon McCann and Pearlman's (1990) seven schematic areas identified as centrally affected by traumatic exposure, i.e.,: **Frame of reference, Safety, Trust/Dependency, Independence, Power, Esteem and Intimacy**. Further categories which appeared significant were also generated from the data guided by the theory covered in the literature review. This involved close reading of three transcripts in order to identify any aspects of the text which appeared relevant to the study which were not encompassed within the McCann and Pearlman framework and assigning these aspects appropriate thematic category labels. It is accepted that analytic categories can be both theory and/or data derived within the qualitative tradition (Banister et al, 1994; Neuman, 1997). Each of the three interviews was computer coded in its entirety, identifying any thematic recording units occurring that had relevance for the subject matter of the study. If a recording unit could not be categorised within any of the pre-existing thematic analytic categories a new generic category would be created. The computer programme facilitated the assignment of units to pre-existing

categories and the generation of new categories when required. In this instance a new theme/category/code was created whenever a piece of interview material could not be encompassed under the categories already established. Thus an attempt was made to ensure that the analysis was as comprehensive as possible.

3) A sample of text was codified to assess the utility and accuracy of the units and categories specified and modifications were made where necessary. Within each interview an attempt was made to systematically record the presence of material pertaining to a particular theme, for example *safety*. Any references to safety were isolated as thematic units and coded in a file of that title with a reference to the interview in which it occurred. The computer programme thus made it possible to determine whether the theme of safety had been mentioned by a particular respondent at all and if so, how frequently. In addition it was possible to determine the nature of the subject matter pertaining to this theme and how it was elaborated and dealt with by each subject and the pool of subjects as a whole. For example, a computer printout could be generated illustrating all the recoding units coded under a specific heading, including from which interview it came and at what set of lines in the text. Following the initial coding of three interviews in order to establish an exhaustive list of headings, two further interviews were systematically scrutinized to ensure that the categories identified up to this point were comprehensive and applicable.

4) Each interview text was then systematically coded according to this framework. Thus for example, each interviewee transcript was scrutinized for any thematic units pertaining to the schematic category of '*esteem*'. These esteem orientated thematic units derived and notated from all ten interviewee texts, were then collated and analysed in terms of their occurrence, content, commonalities and diversity. Thus all ten interviews were subject to within text analysis and these findings and related inferences were then compared across interviewees. It should be noted that ATLAS.ti allows for the assignment of a recording unit (specific piece of text) to more than one heading. Although this practice is precluded in some content analyses which specify that categories should be mutually exclusive, in the case of the present study this facility proved useful in identifying points of overlap and difference between issues. In addition this approach was able to do justice to the fact that units could not always be separated out into discrete and independent

themes since this is not how people naturally speak. Thus for example, a section of text might be coded under the headings "control", "emotional expression" and "intimacy" simultaneously.

5) Following this full scale categorisation a form of analysis triangulation check was introduced by a process of co-analysis. Having been briefed on the central research questions of the study, two fellow academics and clinicians were asked to read through a sample of 3 interviews independently and to assign thematic content according to the pre-defined categories of McCann and Pearlman (1990), as well as to be alert to any unrecognised themes. Following this exercise discussion took place around the consistency of categorisation and inferences drawn. Points of agreement and disagreement were noted. The researcher was satisfied that coding decisions were corroborated in the vast majority of instances. Thematic analysis did not allow for computation of inter-rater reliability co-efficients.

6) The thematic data was then analysed at a higher level of abstraction. For example, trends and highlights were identified and comparisons made with pre-existing findings. This is the point at which the inter-relationships between different categories were investigated, for example, the relationship between the inductively generated category of "expression of emotion" and McCann and Pearlman's "intimacy" category.

7) Conclusions were extrapolated, particularly those relating to the manner in which the findings could be related to masculinity and the masculine subject position. Implications for clinical assessment and practice were also emphasized.

Drawing upon the work of a range of qualitative theorists, Neuman (1997) outlines the process of analysing qualitative data in general as usually involving three stages of coding. He refers to these as open coding, axial coding and selective coding (cf. ps.422-424). The first stage of open coding corresponds to the identification of thematic units and categories. "The themes are at a low level of abstraction and come from the researcher's initial research question, concepts in the literature, terms used by members within the social setting, or new thoughts stimulated by immersion in the data" (Neuman, 1997, p.422). This characterises the first stage of category identification in the present study well. During the second stage of axial coding the focus shifts

to the thematic categories as the subject of exploration, rather than the original data. The researcher is geared towards identifying key elements and conceptual links. "During axial coding, a researcher asks about causes and consequences, conditions and interactions, strategies and processes, and looks for categories and concepts that cluster together" (ibid, p.423). For example, in the case of the present study it seemed useful to create clusters within which to group thematic categories or headings, so as to identify broader components within the data. One such category included "Defences and Coping mechanisms". Thus this stage may involve further extrapolation and refinement of categories. During the final stage of selective coding the researcher returns to the original research question and selects from those aspects identified as important in stage two, "major themes or concepts" (ibid, p.424) which will guide theory and research in the area.

This is the stage at which the principles of "grounded theory" become most relevant. Existing theoretical models in the area are interrogated in terms of their capacity to account for the data, and revision and reformulation are suggested where necessary. In some instances entirely new theory may be generated. In a sense, the third stage involved identifying the most central findings in light of the undertaking of the study. For example, one of the central features to emerge from the interview data was pre-occupation with "anger expression and management". This appeared to have particular salience for men within the domain of control and warranted highlighting as a central dimension of the study. This theme of anger management and expression appeared to interface particularly with aspects of masculine identity and was elaborated as a central feature of the data which required careful examination. The analyses also suggested the need for expansion of existing models of personal construction post trauma.

This broad three stage coding framework for qualitative analysis informed the overall thematic content analytic process of the present study. While the content categories identified during stage one will be mentioned in the discussion of the data, the focus will fall upon the higher levels of abstraction epitomised in stages two and three of coding as outlined by Neumann (1997).

## 9.7 THE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The theoretical background to discourse analysis has already been covered. This section outlines the analytic procedure employed in practice in the study. Several discourse analytic scholars have pointed out the limitations and constraints involved in spelling out how to “do” discourse analysis (Banister et al, 1994; Burr, 1995; Parker, 1992; Potter and Wetherell, 1992). Nevertheless there has been a commitment to informing fellow researchers and students about the application of the method in practice. Both Parker (1992) and Potter and Wetherell (1992) have outlined the bare bones of step by step procedures that can be followed in doing discourse analysis. The study was informed by these perspectives, but drew most centrally upon the method outlined in Banister et al (1994) which appears strongly influenced by Parker’s (1992) earlier formulation. It is important to note that this aspect of the data analysis was focussed most centrally on those aspects of text relating most particularly to masculinity/ties, gender and victimization. The steps are described in order to assist in comprehending the process of analysis, but generally cohere in a more impressionistic account as is the case in this study. However, the identification and commentary on illustrative discourses operating within the data was informed by these kinds of steps in analysis.

The execution of discourse analysis outlined by Banister et al (1994) is described in detail as follows:

- 1) The text is turned into written form bearing as close a resemblance to its origins as possible. This aspect of the data formulation has already been discussed under the data collection section.
- 2) The researcher is encouraged to free associate to the text and if possible to engage others such as colleagues in the same process. This aspect was ongoing during the process of the research as interviews were collected, transcribed and scrutinized. The research supervisor as well as several other colleagues were asked to read and generate associations to several of the texts. In addition the assistant transcribers’ associations were noted and two workshops of interested colleagues were organized in order to generate group associations.

3) The researcher is required to systematically itemize "objects" that appear in the text. Generally this requires looking for nouns, where they are and what they might signify. This process is aimed at exposing how discourses "systematically form the objects" (Foucault quoted in Banister et al, 1994, p.97) of the text, and what type of world such a text presupposes. Some examples of objects identified in the transcripts of the present study were "the gun", "my life", "the government", "my rights", and "my business".

4) The manner in which these objects are organized and reconstituted in particular ways of speaking in this particular text are identified. This allows for highlighting of the central focus of analysis, i.e., the discourses being utilized. This should bring the researcher to the point of being able to identify the discourses holding the objects together. This aspect of the analysis was more difficult since some social discourses, for example, the legal discourse, are easier to identify than discourses in this less constrained area. However, an example of one discourse holding together objects pertaining to the role of provider and the material possessions accrued by the interviewee, seemed to revolve around a sense of outrage at having one's hard earned status and livelihood threatened. Other discourses pertained to the demonstration of emotion, the political "crisis" in the country and racial attitudes. Thus a broad range of discourses were identified as operative.

5) The researcher is required to systematically itemize the "subjects" (the categories of person) who appear in the text. While some reference to this aspect has already been made in the description of a discourse of racial attitudes, the kinds of subjects identified in the research included for example "my wife", "three black men", "the leader" and "the public".

6) The researcher reconstructs what each type of person (subject) may say within the framework of the rules presupposed by the text, as a means to explore differential rights to speak within the discourse. The network of relationships which are constituted in the discourse are examined in terms of how they position the recipient and what rights and responsibilities they bestow on such a recipient. Thus for example, it appeared that women subjects were allowed or even expected to show emotion towards what had happened. The "public" was portrayed in a variety of ways: as a sea of potential victims; as uncaring; and/or as deserving any harm coming to them as a consequence of their apathy.

7) The different versions of the social world which coexist in the text are mapped out. To some extent this involves uncovering aspects of the social world which are assumed in the text. In this respect ambivalent racial attitudes were interesting. In addition, many of the men made some allusion to the "hero" discourse of men facing attack.

8) Speculation as to how each of these patterns would deal with objections to the implicit instructions and the cultural rules implied within them is entertained. The assumptions are revealed in part by examining alternative or oppositional viewpoints, i.e., challenges to these assumptions. For example the reader is asked to consider how the author of the text would respond to those who contradicted him or her. This should become apparent in the discourse analytic commentary section.

9) The contrasts between concordant and discordant voices within the text are highlighted by identifying contrasts between ways of speaking. For example there were discrepancies in how men presented their vulnerability or lack of it across the interviews.

10) The points where these ways of speaking overlap are identified.

11) How these ways of speaking address different audiences, including importantly the researcher, are assessed. This may be done in part by making comparisons with other texts addressing similar issues or with similar intention. Some of the literature reviewed provided this kind of comparative angle.

12) The appropriate terminology to label the discourse/s should now be apparent and should be identified as such. However, it is recognized that this labelling always remains contestable, and in keeping with other forms of qualitative research it is the task of the researcher to render the account plausible. It is recommended that such reports are written in the spirit of polemic and debate. This should be apparent in the discussion chapter that follows.

Depending upon the nature of the study several further additional steps of analysis may be warranted. Although these steps relate primarily to the role of discourses in the life of institutions,

power relations and the transmission of ideology, they appear to have some applicability to the present study in the light of the focus on masculinity and victimization.

13) The origin of the discourses is examined in terms of how they developed. A considerable proportion of this work should have been apparent within the literature review, for example in the discussion of the origins of victimology. However, it is important to link this theoretical background with the data that emerges from the discourses expressed by the interviewees themselves.

14) The researcher attempts to describe how the discourses operate to naturalize the things they refer to, i.e., how they form the objects of which they speak in such a way that it appears perverse and nonsensical to question that they are really there.

15) The role of discourses both in reproducing and subverting institutions is examined.

16) The beneficiaries of the discourse as well as those disadvantaged by it are explored.

17) Those who would want to support or discredit these ways of talking are identified.

18) The reliance upon and links between the discourse under scrutiny and other discourses of power are debated.

19) This analysis is extended to an examination of how these related discourses reproduce or challenge dominant conceptions as to what can change and what may be possible in the future. (Banister et al, 1994, ps.96-103).

These steps of discourse analysis, particular 13 to 19, were applied from an overarching reflective perspective as opposed to forming the primary goal of analysis. For example, having examined aspects of the discourses operating amongst male victims of violent crime, the researcher was interested in linking these findings to debates around symptom expression and recognition and gender stereotypes.

This somewhat lengthy exposition provides the guidelines along which the discourse analytical level of analysis took place. In addition to this central employment of the model outlined in Banister et al, (1994), the analysis was also extended slightly to incorporate explicit engagement with the further discourse perspective provided by the Potter and Wetherell (1992) approach. The analysis thus also entailed some scrutiny of the interpersonal and presentational aspects of the texts.

### 9.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher was cognisant of the ethical concerns posed in working with human subjects in general, and traumatized subjects in particular. The usual guarantees of anonymity and rights to refusal to participate in the process were extended to interviewees. Thus no real names are referred to and as far as possible identifying details have been slightly altered in the text, for example, details as to where the men were employed. These issues, including possible publication of findings were discussed with each interviewee at the outset before taping began and all of the men were amenable to these conditions, (in some cases appearing somewhat puzzled that the issue was being negotiated at all).

It had been anticipated that discussion of the traumatic incident and its impact might prove emotionally distressing to participants and could potentially evoke or re-evolve negative associations or symptoms. It had been decided to monitor participants closely in this regard and to offer therapeutic referral if this seemed necessary in any of the cases. It has already been mentioned that interviewees were only interviewed after a time period of at least one month had elapsed since the incident. This ensured that in most cases the intense psychological impact of the trauma had subsided.

At the end of each interview the researcher spent some time discussing how the interviewee had experienced the interview and his feelings upon termination of the interview. The majority of participants appeared to have found the experience cathartic and volunteered this spontaneously to the researcher. While interested in the study in most cases interviewees did not see any need for ongoing contact with the researcher. However, in a few cases the interviews did appear to

elicit psychologically distressing material both relating to the traumatic incident and in some cases to further (largely unrelated) psychological problems. For one or two men it appeared that the open listening atmosphere of the interviews and the connection with psychological aspects of their experience enabled them to engage with other difficulties. For example, one man began to discuss the impact of his mother's death during his late adolescence. Whilst all these issues will be discussed more fully later, it is important to note that attempts were made to allow, but simultaneously contain, such information during the course of the interviews. Four subjects had received prior traumatic stress debriefing and one had received short term relationship orientated psychotherapy. Of the ten interviewees, it appeared ethical to suggest, or make available, therapeutic services to three subjects. Of these three, two chose to avail themselves of such services and appropriate referrals were made. The third person was left with the option to contact the researcher at any time in the future should he so wish. Interviewees were also sincerely acknowledged for their participation in the study.

Having outlined the method employed in the study, the following chapter presents a summary of the results of the analysis prior to a discussion of the findings.

## CHAPTER 10

### SUMMARY OF RESULTS

#### 10.1 INTRODUCTION

Given that the data of the thesis have been primarily subjected to a qualitative analysis as outlined in the previous chapter, the thesis results represent a summary of the material to be discussed in far greater depth in chapter twelve. The material in this chapter is divided into four sections representing the more quantitative dimensions of the study and providing the background information against which the discussion of results should be read.

A: The first section presents the demographic features of the subjects and describes the events they were subjected to. In addition the context of the interviews is elucidated so as to provide some appreciation of how the data was derived.

B: The second section covers the symptom profile of subjects as assessed by means of the Impact of Events Scale-Revised and is presented in tabular form. Elaboration and interpretation of this information is provided in the discussion chapter.

C: The third section provides a summary of the main features of the content analysis.

D: The fourth section highlights some of the key areas of overlap between specific codes identified in the thematic content analysis.

The discourse analytic aspect of the analysis cannot coherently be presented in result form independent of discussion, given that it represents a kind of theoretical and conceptual commentary on the data. This section of the analysis is thus presented entirely within the framework of the discussion chapter as is the convention in discourse analytically based research.

## 10.2 SECTION A: LOCATING THE FINDINGS

### 10.2.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Interviewees

**TABLE 2**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWEES**

| <u>Interviewee*</u> | <u>Age</u> | <u>Education</u>                           | <u>Occupation</u>       | <u>Relationship Status</u>     | <u>Religion</u> |
|---------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Miles               | 34         | B.Pharmacy                                 | Professional            | Single                         | Atheist         |
| Garth               | 32         | Technical                                  | Professional<br>Diploma | Married<br>(2 children)        | Jewish**        |
| Paul                | 37         | Matriculation                              | Manager                 | Girlfriend of<br>Several years | Catholic        |
| James               | 26         | Matriculation                              | Manager                 | Married<br>(1 child)           | Jewish          |
| Matt                | 34         | B.Comm<br>Commerce<br>Degree               | Manager                 | Married<br>(1 child)           | Jewish**        |
| Justin              | 45         | L.L.B.<br>Law Degree                       | Professional            | Divorced<br>(2 children)       | Anglican        |
| Len                 | 45         | Matriculation<br>and Technical<br>Diplomas | Manager                 | Married<br>(2 children)        | Anglican**      |
| Roger               | 51         | C.A.<br>Accountancy<br>Degree              | General<br>Manager      | Married<br>(4 children)        | Anglican        |
| Nigel               | 25         | B.Comm<br>Commerce<br>Degree               | Professional            | Girlfriend                     | Jewish          |
| Hilton              | 54         | M.Arch<br>Architectural<br>Degree          | Professional            | Married<br>(3 children)        | Atheist         |

\* Pseudonyms are employed throughout the dissertation    \*\*Actively Practising

TABLE 3

**SUMMARY OF DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

|                                        |           |   |                                               |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|---|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Age:</u></b>                     | Range     |   | 26 -54                                        |
|                                        | $\bar{x}$ | = | 38                                            |
| <b><u>Education:</u></b>               | 2         | x | Matriculation<br>(School Leaving Certificate) |
|                                        | 2         | x | Technical Diploma                             |
|                                        | 6         | x | University Degree                             |
| <b><u>Occupation:</u></b>              | 4         | x | Professional                                  |
|                                        | 6         | x | Business at Management Level                  |
| <b><u>Relationship<br/>Status:</u></b> | 1         | x | Single                                        |
|                                        | 1         | x | Divorced                                      |
|                                        | 2         | x | Girlfriends                                   |
|                                        | 6         | x | Married                                       |
| <b><u>Religion:</u></b>                | 2         | x | Atheist                                       |
|                                        | 1         | x | Catholic                                      |
|                                        | 3         | x | Anglican                                      |
|                                        | 4         | x | Jewish                                        |
|                                        |           |   | (3 Actively Practising)                       |

As is illustrated by the tables outlining the central characteristics of the men interviewed for the study (Tables 2 and 3) and the nature of the incidents they were involved in (illustrated later in Table 4), the sample adheres to some common parameters but also reflects the diversity of most human populations. The commonalities were largely determined by the sample inclusion criteria outlined in the method chapter and included race, age, educational and occupational dimensions.

#### 10.2.1.1 Age

All of the men could be viewed as falling into adulthood (early, middle and late) and were financially self-supporting and engaged in relationships beyond their families of origin. They had thus all attained a degree of independence and autonomy and had assumed adult roles in society.

Most of the men were white collar workers involved in management or related positions in industry (6), and four interviewees were in professional occupations. Thus the work status of these men was such that they appeared to hold positions of authority and social responsibility, with potential for advancement and growth in financial reward. They could be considered middle class in their access to and holding of wealth, although no attempt was made to establish individual income. It seemed that most of the men were financially adequately well off rather than wealthy, although such evaluations are relative. However, loss of property or money appeared to be of significance to all the interviewees and some men were preoccupied with this aspect of their victimization.

#### **10.2.1.2      Relationship Status**

In terms of relationships, six of the men were married, one was divorced and currently unattached, two were in committed relationships with girlfriends and one was single. All except one interviewee (divorced), reported close family and friendship networks. Of the married men all of them had children, ranging from 1 to 4 in number and infancy to late adolescence in age. About half the sample were primary breadwinners and responsible for the financial and physical welfare of others. This role appeared to be assumed by all those with children. All of the men viewed themselves as responsible for their own support and for the support of women and children they were involved with. In general all of the interviewees had made long term relationships separate from their families of origin at some point and they all appeared capable of establishing interpersonal bonds.

#### **10.2.1.3      Cultural and Religious Orientation**

Almost half (4) of the men interviewed were Jewish, a bias that may reflect the middle class distribution of Johannesburg or the convenience sampling employed, although the researcher is not Jewish. The remainder of the interviewees had been brought up in various Christian denominations. Only three of the men reported that their religious beliefs were of central importance to them and that they observed religious practices. It was originally thought that spiritual belief might play a significant role in the trauma adjustment of the interviewees.

However, as emerged in the interviews, existential and spiritual belief systems appeared to operate in many cases independent of formal religious affiliation. Cultural differences amongst the sample were observed to a minor extent. Since all the men were English speaking South African citizens, variations in nationality of family of origin did not appear to be of great significance in influencing manifestations of masculinity and adjustment to traumatic victimization. Some men did make reference to possible differences in the typical expression of masculinity in Afrikaans as opposed to English speaking South African men and clearly identified themselves with the English speaking norm. In sum there was no reason to understand interviewees as significantly culturally different within the group or in relation to other English speaking, white South Africans.

#### 10.2.1.4 Related Life Experience

The men varied quite widely in personality-related dimensions and previous life experience. Two examples of such areas of difference pertained to previous traumatization and the influence of common gender stereotypes upon their attitudes. Some subjects had experienced personal losses (e.g., the death of a parent), previous forms of abuse (e.g., sexual and physical assault), and traumas such as motor vehicle accidents or burglaries. In addition previous exposure to aggressive encounters and to military training also differed quite broadly. In terms of gender attitudes, the impact of feminist and anti-sexist information dissemination also appeared to have influenced interviewees differently, with some men holding to conventional stereotypes, and others entertaining more fluid perspectives. (These issues will be raised in more depth in discussing the implications of the findings). In this sense there was considerable diversity amongst the interviewees, a factor recognized in much qualitative and case study oriented research. This diversity can be viewed as enriching the study in highlighting how both difference and commonality contribute to interpretations of masculinity and victimisation. The subjects certainly gave credence to the notion that the term masculinities, rather than masculinity, represents the ways in which masculinity is lived out more accurately. Although these men occupied common social categories in the demographic respects discussed above, it was clear that their lived experience of being male and their relationship to gender stereotypes was quite varied. An attempt will be made to do justice to this variation in the discussion. Nevertheless it was possible to identify common trends and tendencies, sometimes with alternate manifestations. Whilst historical and personality

dimensions must be acknowledged, particularly working within a clinical paradigm, the central intention of the discussion was to highlight common tendencies, taking care to qualify generalizations as far as possible.

### **10.2.2 The Nature of the Traumatic Event**

Since the traumatic event specifications for inclusion in the study have already been spelled out in the method chapter, this section offers a brief, but more elaborated description of the characteristics of the traumatic events these men encountered summarized in Table 4.

**TABLE 4**  
**NATURE OF TRAUMATIC INCIDENT**

| <u>Interviewee</u> | <u>Brief Description</u>                            | <u>Injury</u>                  | <u>Presence<br/>of Others</u>           | <u>Approximate<br/>Time-Elapsed<br/>Since Event<br/>Occurrence</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Miles              | Armed robbery at place of work                      | Mild Assault                   | Work colleagues                         | ± 9 weeks                                                          |
| Garth              | Armed robbery at home                               | Tied up                        | Wife, baby and domestic worker          | 16 months                                                          |
| Paul               | Car-hijacking, and attempted murder at intersection | Gun to head misfired. Bruising | Alone                                   | 9½ months                                                          |
| James              | Armed robbery at place of work                      | Nil                            | Work colleagues                         | 13 months                                                          |
| Matt               | Armed robbery at place of work                      | Assaulted and stabbed          | Father                                  | 6 months                                                           |
| Justin             | Caught up in armed robbery in grocery store (café)  | Mild assault                   | Proprietors of shop and other customers | 5 weeks                                                            |
| Len                | Car hijacking at home                               | Nil                            | Son present, wife in house              | 6 weeks                                                            |
| Roger              | Attempted car hi-jacking at home                    | Nil                            | Alone (Wife and children in house)      | 5 months                                                           |
| Nigel              | Car hi-jacking at home of girlfriend                | Nil                            | Alone (Girlfriend and family in house)  | 2½ months                                                          |
| Hilton             | Caught up in armed robbery                          | Sustained gunshot wound        | Son present                             |                                                                    |

As specified, all of the interviewees had been subject to what they perceived as a life threatening event. Common to all the attacks was the use of guns and the presence of more than one attacker, thus the perception of risk was based in a reality which posed threat of injury or death and in which the odds were heavily stacked against the victims. None of the men interviewed were themselves armed at the time at which they faced attack.

#### 10.2.2.1 Type of Criminal Incident

The traumatic events included one attempted car-hijacking, three executed car-hijackings, one of which also involved what could be viewed as an attempted murder, and six armed robberies. In two cases robbery victims were caught up inadvertently in robberies at small local shops (cafes), one was attacked in his home and three at their place of work. In all cases the motive for the attack was financial gain through the acquisition of motor vehicles, household and other goods or money. Further, in all cases the robbers were young black (African) men, a pattern consistent with general crime statistics in South Africa over the period of the research.

#### 10.2.2.2 Nature of Violence

The degree of violence employed in the hijackings and robberies differed across interviewees. One of the men had been shot, one had been assaulted and stabbed, one had been pistol-whipped and kicked, another had been hit in the face, one had been bound and pushed onto the floor and one had escaped death when the gun fired at his head apparently jammed. Of the remaining four all of the men had guns pointed at them and in some cases explicit threat of death if they displayed non-compliance. Most of the traumatic incidents took place within a short period of time, generally less than 15 minutes. The one exception was a household robbery which lasted close to two hours, but generally the traumatic exposure period was not protracted. In none of the cases was there any extended or comprehensive discussion with their assailants, communication appearing limited to directing robbers to the goods/money they required and ensuring survival as far as possible.

### 10.2.2.3 Presence of Others

There was also some variation across the group of men with regard to whether they faced the trauma alone or with others present. In three cases family members ( a wife, child and domestic worker; a son; and a father) were also victims of the event, in a third case the man's shooting was witnessed by his son and in a fourth case a man who was hijacked in his driveway escaped into his home where his wife and children were present and also feared further attack. Two men were robbed together with work colleagues, although they were the primary targets of aggression, and one man was assaulted and threatened together with the shop owners and other customers. Only two hijack victims were alone at the time of the incident, although they all accessed assistance fairly immediately. All of the interviewees, however, saw themselves as the primary or central target of the traumatic incident.

### 10.2.2.4 Utilization of Post-trauma Services

Secondary traumatization with regard to police, security, workplace and medical intervention also varied across the sample. In the main victims had received support and comfort from others and medical and psychological assistance in some cases. Four of the men had received one or two sessions of debriefing post the event. Perceptions of police, security and political intervention tended to be much more negative and warrant further discussion as part of the general response to criminal victimization, and the operation of these aspects of South African society at this particular juncture in time. All of those who had suffered physical injury had recovered well at the time of interviewing and none of the interviewees had been significantly re-traumatized in the interim between the event and the research interview.

### 10.2.2.5 Time Elapsed Subsequent to Incident

The period of time that had elapsed since the event up to the time of the interviews varied across a range from a minimum of 5 weeks to 16 months. Whilst this spectrum of time may seem somewhat broad it was interesting to note that the time elapsed did not necessarily correspond to the intensity of symptoms reported amongst interviewees. In some cases recently traumatized

men evidenced fewer symptoms than those who had had longer to recover from the event. It appeared that all of the men had gained sufficient distance from their experiences to be able to reflect upon them without acute anxiety. There was also no evidence of the kind of psychic numbing or sense of unreality that sometimes accompanies acute responses to trauma. From the complementary perspective of distance from the event, all of the interviewees could remember their experiences quite vividly and in considerable detail and none of them felt the effects to be insignificant or no longer operative. In a pilot interview with a man who was interviewed two years post the experience, he indicated that he would probably have been unable to discuss it in detail previously because of the intensity of the emotional impact of the incident. Thus the time span did not appear to pose problems in terms of eliciting relevant material from the interviewees.

In sum, it appears that the nature of the traumatic exposure that all the men suffered, clearly meets the diagnostic criterion of DSM-IV pertaining to life threat. Whilst seldom using the term "victim" themselves, the interviewees clearly recognised their experiences as life threatening and highly significant. They appeared to receive the notion that the experience was likely to have altered their personal and world views as entirely valid, although the changes they identified differed in intensity and breadth. Whilst it is impossible to do justice to the nature of their traumatic exposure in summary form, it should be apparent that these men had faced extremely difficult, violent and potentially harmful situations in which the threat to their survival was very real. The reality of their victimization was brought home in their descriptions of the events that had occurred.

### **10.2.3 The Interview Context**

#### **10.2.3.1 Attitude To Interview Process**

As indicated in the method section, all the interviews were conducted by the researcher at times and venues convenient to the interviewees. Interviews differed in length and ease of disclosure. The shortest interview took just over 45 minutes and in one case the interview took 2 hours, but was followed by a further hour's conversation around issues stemming from the discussion but not directly related to the study. None of the men displayed any overt anxiety about being tape recorded or about issues of protection of identity and confidentiality. This seemed to suggest that they did not view their experiences as private or exposing in respect of others knowing about the

material. Somewhat surprisingly, despite this lack of concern, some of the men volunteered information which was deeply personal and in some cases very sensitive. For example, one man referred to an experience of early sexual abuse and another made reference to a previous suicide attempt. Two others discussed material related to relationship difficulties and tensions. Whilst this might suggest some particular vulnerability to psychological distress in the sample it seemed that it was the nature of the traumatic experience and the attention to psychological dimensions of their lives in the interviews that lead these men to relate these kinds of experiences. The degree of rapport with the interviewer also appeared to facilitate this level of disclosure. There was no suggestion that they represented a particularly pathological group and the spectrum of experiences described is probably not atypical of any such sample of men given the opportunity to relate personal insights and difficulties. It is possible that the men were willing to participate in the study with some unconscious motivation towards making therapeutic contact, and as mentioned previously, two men did make a decision to enter psychotherapy following discussion subsequent to the interviews.

Stanko and Hobdell (1993) in their study of male crime victims make the point that men may be more willing to discuss traumatic experiences in the context of research than that of counselling, viewing the former as assisting others rather than seeking assistance themselves. This suggestion seemed to be substantiated in the present study, although several interviewees were open about having received debriefing or counselling prior to the interview. However, one subject had been unwilling to seek counselling despite urging from a family member, but was willing to be interviewed, and another indicated that he had little faith in the counselling process. It appeared that most of the men took some satisfaction in discussing the nature of their experiences in some depth and many of them volunteered further information if necessary.

#### 10.2.3.2 Perception of Interviewer

None of the interviewees were known to the researcher prior to the interviews taking place and it was apparent that some aspects of the interview were directed towards establishing rapport and a degree of comfort with disclosure. There were some dynamic issues observed in relation to interactional patterns between interviewer and interviewee that warrant brief comment. It was

evident that the researcher represented three salient categories to the interviewees, that of woman, psychologist/clinician and academic/researcher. This led to the emergence of varied patterns of response. Many of the men appeared used to taking charge in relation to women and made some efforts to direct the pace and content of the interviews. Three men took some interest in and responsibility for ensuring that the recording equipment was working and advised the researcher on technical matters and several discussed the wording of the IES-R somewhat critically. However, in apparent response to the interviewer's role as clinician and expert, several subjects sought reassurance around the normality of their presentation and advice about how to deal with their's or others psychological distress. These different expressions of the recognition of power differentials within the relationship varied both within and across interviews. It is also likely that the kind of material presented as salient was generated not only in response to the researcher's questions, but also in relation to what the interviewee anticipated would be of interest in the research context.

#### 10.2.3.3 Display of Emotion and Disclosure

In the course of conducting the interviews six of the men became emotional and potentially tearful, as evidenced by non-verbal behaviours such as sniffing and eyes becoming moist, particularly when describing the traumatic incident in detail. It seemed that these men were somewhat surprised by their own emotionality and generally attempted to control or disguise it. Only one man made direct reference to this manifestation and in so doing assured the interviewer that he had now come to terms with the experience despite such occasional emotionality. The interviewer was aware of a corresponding need to allow interviewees the semblance of composure, as a consequence not only of the need to maintain a research as opposed to an overtly therapeutic stance, but also perhaps in recognition of men's difficulties in displaying such forms of emotion. In addition to manifestations of sadness and anxiety, most of the men interviewed at some point displayed anger in some form or another. For example, several men became very animated or cynical in discussing crime and the political context in general and at times it felt as if the researcher was being challenged to confirm or disagree with specific views. The interviewees appeared to feel more comfortable with these angry emotions, although they

sometimes sought confirmation for their feelings from the researcher, suggesting that these men were not as comfortable with their anger as appeared on the surface.

### 10.3 SECTION B: SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTION OF SYMPTOMS AS ELICITED BY THE IMPACT OF EVENTS SCALE-REVISED (IES-R)

The following tables present a summary of the responses of the interviewees to the IES-R by person and item indicators. Both overall (Table 5) and individual items scores (Table 6) are illustrated.

**TABLE 5**  
**TOTAL SCORES OF SUBJECTS ON THE IES-R**

| <u>Interviewee</u> | <u>Scores</u> (Out of possible total of 105) |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| (1) Miles          | 74                                           |
| (2) Garth          | 21                                           |
| (3) Paul           | 43                                           |
| (4) James          | 24                                           |
| (5) Matt           | 64                                           |
| (6) Justin         | 93                                           |
| (7) Len            | 60                                           |
| (8) Roger          | 42                                           |
| (9) Nigel          | 25                                           |
| (10) Hilton        | 14                                           |

Range 14 → 93  
 $\bar{x} = 46$

**TABLE 6**  
**SYMPTOM PROFILE OF INTERVIEWEES ON THE IES-R**

|                                 | <u>Not at all</u> | <u>Rarely</u> | <u>Sometimes</u> | <u>Often</u> | <u>Present</u> |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1.Thought about it              | 2                 | 1             | 4                | 3            | 7*             |
| 2.Avoid upset                   | 4                 | 1             | 3                | 2            | 5              |
| 3.Difficulty<br>concentrating   | 5                 | 1             | 1                | 3            | 4              |
| 4.Remove from<br>memory         | 5                 | 2             | 1                | 2            | 3              |
| 5.Trouble sleep                 | 4                 | 3             | 2                | 1            | 3              |
| 6.Strong feeling                | 3                 | 2             | 3                | 2            | 5              |
| 7.On guard                      | 0                 | 1             | 3                | 6            | 9              |
| 8.Dreams                        | 7                 | 3             | 0                | 0            | 0              |
| 9.Stayed away from<br>reminders | 5                 | 2             | 2                | 1            | 3              |
| 10.Hadn't happened<br>unreal    | 6                 | 1             | 2                | 1            | 3              |
| 11.Startled                     | 1                 | 1             | 5                | 3            | 8*             |
| 12.Not to talk<br>about it      | 6                 | 2             | 2                | 1            | 3              |
| 13.Pictures popped              | 1                 | 2             | 2                | 3            | 6              |
| 14.Kept thinking                | 2                 | 0             | 4                | 4            | 8*             |
| 15.Body reacted                 | 2                 | 1             | 5                | 2            | 7*             |
| 16.Lot of feelings              | 1                 | 3             | 4                | 2            | 5              |
| 17.Irritable                    | 0                 | 2             | 2                | 6            | 8*             |
| 18.Not to think                 | 2                 | 3             | 2                | 3            | 5              |
| 19.Reminder lead<br>to feelings | 1                 | 3             | 4                | 2            | 6              |
| 20.Falling asleep               | 4                 | 2             | 2                | 2            | 4              |
| 21. Feelings numb               | 3                 | 3             | 1                | 3            | 4              |

\* (Indicates where symptoms were present [sometimes or often] in seven interviewees or more)

From Table 5 it is apparent that interviewees varied considerably in their overall acknowledgement and manifestation of symptoms with overall scores ranging from 14 to 93. There appeared to be some items which were more commonly endorsed than others across the sample as illustrated in Table 3. Those items which were endorsed as occurring "Often" or "Frequently" by 7 or more of the sample are highlighted with an asterisk. At this point the findings are presented purely for information and will be discussed at greater length in the clinical commentary section of the discussion chapter.

#### 10.4 SECTION C: SUMMARY OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

Given that the length and content of the interviews was variable and that thematic statement units could be coded under more than one category, as discussed previously, it made little conceptual sense to quantify material exactly across interviews. The content categories/ themes derived from the analysis are thus presented in terms of the following dimensions:

i) The **name** and a **description** of the theme is provided with some **example** of the kind of thematic unit that was coded under this particular heading. (Since most statements/thematic units were coded under more than one heading, any further content categorisations are presented in brackets following each quotation). The range and nature of the content categories that emerged as important from the data should thus become apparent through this descriptive elaboration of the content categories coded.

ii) The **number** of statements coded under a particular theme is identified. The volume of statements coded under a specific theme heading can be viewed as representing the degree to which this issue appeared salient within the data field and the degree to which this aspect represented a central preoccupation for participants in the study. Thus the overall number of statements can be viewed as some guide as to the intensity of a particular issue for the interviewees. A cautionary note is warranted in this regard. It is possible that a particular issue may have been of disproportionate importance to a particular interviewee and thus skewed the volume of the data set. However, this over-representation could occur across themes and subjects and appeared to be evened out across the data pool. In order to gauge the frequency of coding of a content category across interviews the **range** and **mean** of numbers of statements coded per interview is presented. Thus some indication of the relative weight of an issue across interviews is available in this form.

iii) The **absolute presence or absence of a content category across the ten interviews** is represented, i.e., whether any statement from a particular interview qualified for categorisation under the heading at all. This aspect of the data can be viewed as representing the generality of the particular theme for participants across the sample.

(Section D provides an illustration of particularly important **interfaces between categories** presented within Section C.)

In addition to the descriptive aspects of the content categories outlined above, the content analysis material is also divided into conceptual clusters, representing groups of thematic issues that appeared to have some relevance in combination. Within each of these conceptual groupings the content categories are presented in rank order. Thus two criteria influence the order of presentation of content categories within the chapter, the first conceptual grouping and the second rank order in terms of overall frequency. This presentation scheme will become clear in the unfolding of the specific results.

In total there were 50 content categories, i.e., **themes**, coded as emergent from the data. The largest category comprised 434 (coded/thematic) units and the smallest 16 units. The themes were derived from a comprehensive categorisation of all the data relevant to the subject matter of the study solicited from the interview transcripts as already described in the method chapter. It is important to reiterate that recording units could be coded under more than one heading as described in the previous chapter. This multiple coding of some pieces of text meant that the total number of coded units was considerable. The total of coded units thus far exceeds the number of discrete pieces of text (recording units) in the data set. Table 7 provides an illustration of the complete content categories in rank order, so as to provide an overview of the data prior to more detailed discussion of themes.

**TABLE 7**  
**COMPLETE LIST OF CONTENT CATEGORIES IN RANK ORDER BY TOTAL**  
**NUMBER OF UNITS CODED**

|                        |                      |                       |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Masculinity 434        | Support 90           | Flight 41             |
| Control 361            | Loss 90              | Fantasy 39            |
| Frame of Reference 330 | Fear 89              | Self-doubt 39         |
| Power/less 294         | Esteem 87            | Physical 36           |
| Independence 253       | Mortality 87         | Image 36              |
| Victim 249             | South Africa 87      | Personality change 34 |
| Trust 205              | Disruption 75        | Growth 34             |
| Symptom 196            | Hero 67              | Just world 34         |
| Anger 171              | Gender 61            | Weapon 30             |
| Intimacy 161           | Race 57              | Shame 25              |
| Discourse 135          | Displacement 56      | Empathy 25            |
| Express Emotion 130    | Contradiction 48     | Failed Enactment 25   |
| Responsibility 110     | Past associations 47 | Disbelief 23          |
| Safety 105             | Work 46              | Regression 21         |
| Coping 104             | Adversary 46         | Humour 18             |
| Disillusionment 101    | Counselling 46       | Contamination 16      |
| Meaning 97             | Co-operation 44      |                       |
| Minimization 94        | Intervention 43      |                       |

It is clear from the above list that a considerable number of codes were generated in order to process the data in its entirety. The categories were generated from the material of the actual interviews, but also reflected the researcher's theoretical background in the field. Thus for example the code "Failed enactment" was generated in relation to data content, but labelled in terms of a theoretical construct. Given the volume of data coded and extensive categories generated it seemed necessary to focus the results and discussion on the most important aspects of the data set. Thus the ensuing discussion will cover only those codes into which more than 50 units were categorised, generally termed central themes. Whilst this may seem a somewhat arbitrary cut-off point, it would appear to do justice to the most significant emergent themes. Descriptions of all those codes comprising less than 50 recording units are provided in Appendix H. In particular cases, these smaller coding categories (secondary themes) may be referred to in the results and discussion chapters, particularly where they have illustrative bearing on the larger code dimensions. In addition, two categories, those of "Meaning" and "Image", were dropped from the code list because of their extremely high overlap with the categories of Frame of

Reference and Masculinity respectively. It appeared that these two codes did not warrant separate categorisation since they were satisfactorily encompassed within these alternative overarching categories.

Having illustrated all the Codes/Themes/ Headings which emerged as salient in the coding of the data, a summary of the conceptual clusters into which the codes were grouped for ease of analysis and discussion is also presented prior to the more detailed examination of those content categories containing 50 or more units.

#### **10.4.1 Synopsis of Conceptual Clusters**

The conceptual clusters elucidated as follows were generated out of a synthesis of theory and research praxis. The researcher scrutinized the range of codes that emerged as significant from the data analysis and sought to ascertain where conceptual links could be made between groups of codes. This conceptual linking was largely theoretically generated and reflects the capacity of theory to assist data to become coherent. There are obviously other possible options for clustering the codes generated, however the following groupings seemed to provide a comprehensive framework for interpreting the data. The clusters are initially presented in inclusive summary form, those categories containing less than 50 items being indicated in italics.

##### **Cluster 1: Core Cognitive Schemata Affected By Exposure to Trauma: McCann and Pearlman's CSDT and the Theme of Control**

Control

Frame of Reference\*

Power/less

Independence

Trust

Intimacy

Safety

Esteem

##### **Cluster 2: Reactions to Traumatization**

Symptom

Disillusionment\*

Loss

Fear

Disruption

*Co-operation*

*Flight*

*Self-doubt*

*Fantasy*

*Physical*

*Personality Change*

*Shame*

*Failed Enactment*

*Disbelief*

*Regression*

*Contamination*

### **Cluster 3: Psychological Defences and Coping Responses**

Coping

Minimization\*

Displacement\*

*Contradiction*

*Past associations*

*Growth\**

*Empathy*

*Humour*

### **Cluster 4: Meaning Related Themes**

Frame of Reference\*

Disillusionment\*

Mortality

*Just World*

### **Cluster 5: Context Specific Issues**

South Africa

Race

*Intervention*

### **Cluster 6: Masculinity**

Anger

Express Emotion

Responsibility

Minimization\*

Hero

Displacement\*

*Adversary*

*Work*

*Weapon*

*Humour\**

#### **Cluster 7: Miscellaneous**

Victim

Support

*Counselling*

(\* Indicates where code pertains to more than one cluster)

#### **10.4.2 Cluster 1: Core Cognitive Schemata Affected by Exposure to Trauma: McCann and Pearlman's CSDT and the Theme of Control**

The first set of themes to be presented have in common their centrality as broad categories of cognition (schemata/schemas) which allow individuals to entertain a sense of relationship to self, others and the world as outlined in Cognitive Self Development Theory (CSTD) (McCann and Pearlman, 1990). This cluster of themes emerged as highly salient within the data as indicated by the elevated frequency of responses assigned to these categories. The seven schematic categories identified by CSDT as significant to survivors of trauma comprise: Frame of Reference, Safety, Trust/Dependency, Independence, Power, Esteem and Intimacy. All of these themes encompassed large portions of the interview data as indicated by the frequency of thematic units coded under these headings. In addition, a more encompassing theme of Control, related to several of the other CSDT themes, but most particularly to Power and Independence, is also presented under this cluster since it seemed to also refer to a core set of schemata that appear to be impacted upon by trauma. The category of Control was employed in addition to the McCann and Pearlman's CSDT categories since it appeared to be a necessary category to capture the full range of data emergent within this broad domain.

#### 10.4.2.1 Control

This category comprised 361 units across all 10 interviews ranging from 16 to 59 units per interview with a mean of 36.1. It is clear that preoccupation with this issue varied quite substantially across the sample, but that even in the case of the interviewee for whom this had least salience, concern with control manifested in at least 16 thematic units.

The theme of control encompassed all those statements related to material pertaining to the exercise or loss of control. The word control was used explicitly by almost all the subjects. In addition sentiments pertaining to the conscious or volitional exercise of functioning were also coded under this theme. The category carried both connotations of mastery and the exercise of restraint or regulation of behaviour. The theme appeared to relate to the disruption of "normal" functioning and the subjective sense of being able to retain or regain this functioning, as opposed to being unable to exercise such command. Three typical statements coded under this heading read as follows:

*"Basically tracing that back to this that happened is the thing that I couldn't come to grips with was that, this is probably the only time in my life that I can remember where I've been out of control, or eh..., something has been beyond my control and that I have fully internalized that," (Miles)*

(Also coded under Independence, Power, and Victim).

*"I: So it sounds like you sort of quite out of control of what was happening?*

*S: Oh you weren't, ... I was out of control, um, we had, we had drinks, (mmm), .... started drinking more (mm hmm). All these things kept changing (mmm mmm mmm). Try and sort of ... um, couldn't sleep at night (mm mm), you know what I mean (yeh, yeh), and you still try and put on a face, you don't like want it to affect your work. But that all came out, you know, after hours (mm) ... you throw out terrible comments (mm), you know we don't know about this." (Paul)*

(Also coded under Anger, Esteem, Shame and Symptom).

Related to the theme of control and encompassing the next largest categories of response were those encompassed under McCann and Pearlman's seven core schemata. These seven categories are presented in rank order in terms of overall frequency of statements coded.

#### 10.4.2.2 Frame of Reference

Comprised 330 units across 10 interviews ranging from 17 to 51 with a mean of 33.

According to McCann and Pearlman this category relates to the person's existential beliefs about the world and contains material pertaining to comprehensibility, hope, locus of control and causality. Thoughts related to the questions "Why?" and "Why me?" were encompassed under this theme as well as expectations about the future and the degree of optimism or pessimism the person evidences. There is clear overlap with Janoff-Bulman's fundamental assumptive category of "The World as Meaningful", i.e., as functioning predictably and justifiably; and "The World as Benign". The latter assumption also has relevance for the category of trust described later and in some cases statements required coding under both headings.

Typical statements coded under this theme are illustrated as follows:

*"It's not what one wants to think you know, a lot of people will create personal tragedies in order to create attention, but there is no attention, though it isn't a revealing fact (mmm). If someone died really it is of no consequence to anybody else. I don't know if I'm getting through to you what I'm trying to say (mmm). The whole event has brought the sense of vulnerability into a more , a realistic level, uh ... it's something now which is completely within my contemplation (mmm), it's no longer an infinity type of perception (mmm) where it's impossible to comprehend. It's now clear, (mmm mmm), it's like someone has given me the solution to the puzzle. Once you know how to work out the puzzle it becomes a very simple exercise (mmm), and the whole vulnerability of my existence and my importance (mmm) in the universe is now quite clear in plain terms (mmm mmm). It's totally insig... I'm totally insignificant to uh ... this world."* (James)

(Also coded for Esteem, Independence, Intimacy and Victim)

*"I'm, I'm a regular guy at the synagogue and that type of thing (mmm mmm). Uhhmm, I've been going every weekend and every week for I don't know how long (mm). Uh, but if I look at the last year ... what they call the*

*New Year (mm), where your fate is decreed for the year (mmm). Uhhh, you know maybe someone does want me around. The night of the accident and the break-in there; was the night we figured out that Tessa fell pregnant."*

(Matt)

(Also coded for Mortality and Power/less)

#### 10.4.2.3 Power/less

There were 294 units coded across all 10 interviews ranging from 22 to 44 units per interview with a mean of 29.4.

According to McCann and Peariman this set of schemata pertain to the capacity to exercise a degree of control over others and the external environment. The category thus carries some overlap with **control** as will as be illustrated in Section D. However, control was a more encompassing category. The **power/less** code was used to categorize information that pertained specifically to interpersonal subjugation or exercise of authority. The category is differentiated from independence in the sense that it relates to exercising control over external forces rather than over self-functioning. The theme was viewed as encompassing both power and it's antithesis, powerlessness, and was hence coded under the heading power/less.

Typical thematic units coded under this theme are illustrated as follows:

*"I mean they were just making fun of me (Yah, yah). Do you know what I mean? So I told him 'You've already taken it.' So then he says .. and he just sort of like pushed me back towards the storeroom and he said 'Lie down, lie down!' You don't know if they're going to shoot you, you don't know what they're going to do."* (Justin)

(Also coded for Independence, Mortality, Trust and Victim)

*"That time... five or six years ago? But again helpless in knowing that bloody something was going to happen (mmm mm). Here it happened so fast that there isn't time to feel helpless or anything else (mmm mm). It just happened. (Mmm mm)"* (Matt)

(Also coded for Control and Past Associations)

#### 10.4.2.4 Independence

This category comprised 253 units across all 10 interviews ranging from 16 to 36 with a mean of 25.3.

This category, related to Erikson's developmental construct of autonomy, is described by McCann and Pearlman as the need to feel in control of one's daily life and functioning without over-reliance on external support. Independence is thus associated with notions of self-reliance, self-sufficiency and lack of constraint. Synonymous with both notion of autonomy and independence is the idea of self-determination. Thus although McCann and Pearlman distinguish between themes of power and independence as elaborated previously, there tends to be a close relationship between the two categories of response in many cases. For example, the deprivation of autonomy may be related to the exercise of power by others. However, the relative weight of emphasis of the two constructs was recognised in the coding as illustrated in the following examples of units coded for independence:

*"She's got enough hassles you know, without getting more worried that every time you go to work she must worry about this and that (Mmm mm). So it's easier for me to keep quiet than to be doctored (mm mm). Same as my old man. Uh, you think he's been put under more stress by having a gun pulled out on him you know"* (Matt)

(Also coded for Control, Express Emotion, Intimacy, Regression and Trust)

*"Before I was sort of the kind who thinks, oh alright there's another thing gone wrong, let's carry on (mmm) finding our way through this maze (mm mm). But now I react against that (mm, mm), I say why should it happen, why must I be subjected to this nonsense? You know it's anger."* (James)

(Also coded for Anger, Disillusionment, Loss and Symptom)

#### 10.4.2.5 Trust (Dependency)

This category comprised 205 units across all 10 interviews ranging from 7 to 48 units per interview with a mean of 20.5. It is evident that some subjects were much more strongly preoccupied with this particular issue than others, based on the difference in the range of number of units coded.

McCann and Pearlman describe this schematic category as comprising cognitions about the reliability and trustworthiness of others. This category contains both material related to the fact that others can be perceived as benign or harmful/threatening and material relating to the degree to which others will offer one support and sustenance. In light of the latter component of the category, McCann and Pearlman add the qualifying notion of dependency to the area of trust. Whilst dependency could be understood as in some sense the opposite of independence, for McCann and Pearlman the schemata of trust and dependency are related to Erikson's conceptualization of the earliest phase of development with dependence connoting the capacity for "basic trust". This category also has some resonance with Janoff-Bulman's "Benign World" assumption as previously discussed. The emphasis in coding material under this category was primarily upon interpersonal trust. McCann and Pearlman point out that an absence of trust may be specific to individuals or groups, or more generalized. In the case of generalized distrust in groups/types of people these schemata may form the basis for racial or other forms of stereotyping and prejudice. These kinds of statements were encountered within the study and coded accordingly under trust. Typical trust coded units are illustrated as follows:

*"It's a problem that, cause you're going to be, I mean the guy's selling newspapers at the corner, you're going to be suspicious of any guy. (Mmm mm, So it's still there?) It sounds racist, it's too bad, it's the fact hey (mm mm), it's the fact of the matter. But one learns also not to trust in my kind of field, one learns not to trust, not to be so trusting with anybody, never mind." (James)*

(Also coded for Race and Symptom)

*"That's what I mean when I say I'm not the same person (mmm) and I've never been able to think about it in the same way as I have just now (mmm). It's the first time that I've crystallized it like that (mmm). What do I mean by that? It's a very blank term (mmm). I'm ... I'm a different person (mmm mm) kind of is it bright lights? Is it you know.... (mm) no it's not, it's something far... very fundamental... I've lost my belief that people are fundamentally good (mmm) and that circumstance makes them bad (mmm). I don't believe that anymore." (Miles)*

(Also coded for Esteem, Intimacy, Support and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.2.6 Intimacy

There were 161 units coded under this heading occurring across all 10 interviews ranging from

4 to 26 units with a mean of 16.1. There was thus evidence of considerable variation across the group with regard to preoccupation with this issue.

For McCann and Pearlman intimacy has to do with a more intense form of relating than basic trust or the capacity to be dependant. Intimacy pertains to a feeling of connectedness and closeness to others, involving the ability to identify and empathize with and reveal oneself to others without fear of rejection or censure. McCann and Pearlman extend the notion of intimacy beyond the notion of systemically close relationships, e.g., with family and friends, to the notion of a sense of communion with an extended community. For the purposes of this study, the extension of the construct of intimacy to broader community relations appeared to conflate the categories of trust and intimacy to too great an extent. The categorisation of units to the theme heading of intimacy in this study was thus largely limited to more immediate interpersonal relationships. This distinction is hopefully illustrated by the following thematic units, although it is conceded that there were points of overlap between the two categories (elaborated in the final section of the content analysis results).

*"I: I mean does it change how close you can get to people though?*

*S: Yes, I think so.*

*I: Have you noticed that in yourself?*

*S: Yes, I think the... you don't give yourself fully to the relationship. You've got this sort of protective cocoon now (mmm). But then you don't want to get hurt, you know the temporary nature of the relationship now becomes immanently possible (mm mmm) .... to the extent that you know that if you throw yourself headlong into a relationship and give yourself completely to that relationship you'll open yourself up to be hurt (mmm mm) which I may ... am unable to do at this time, (mm mmm), much to the confusion of other people."* (Justin)

(Also coded for Power/less and Trust)

*"I: I mean do you have any.. Made you think about the purpose of living or any of those sorts of?*

*S: No, all it's done on that level for me is I just um...I made a conscious effort not to leave things unfinished, um...when I'm upset with someone I tell them I'm upset with them, um...if I'm pleased with someone I tell them I'm pleased with them. I phone my parents everyday to ask how they are."* (Miles)

(Also coded for Coping, Growth and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.2.7 Safety

This theme comprised 105 units across all 10 interviews ranging from 5 to 17 units with a mean of 10,5.

This theme description is fairly self-evident since the schematic category contains material pertaining to a sense of being free of, or exposed to, immediate danger and one's sense of security in the world. Much of one's sense of safety pertains to one's vulnerability to risk involving potential harm to one's physical or psychological well-being, although fears for physical safety tend to predominate. A sense of lack of safety may stem from either natural environmental, or human, potential sources of threat as encompassed under Janoff-Bulman's 'Benign World Assumption'. In the case of crime victims, perceptions of safety, or lack of it, tend to be directed at people, due to the human agency implications of the trauma. However, statements coded under this heading tended to pertain specifically to perceptions of risk and potential danger as opposed to more broad perceptions of others as trustworthy or not. Illustrations of units coded under this heading are:

*"I: Mmm. So it's like living with... with a certain amount of risk all the time?"*

*S. That's living in this country. And if you're prepared to ... if you know that you want to live here you must accept that risk. Because that's the way it is. It's a fact of life."* (Garth)

(Also coded for South Africa and Frame of Reference)

*"A week or two, you're walking up the street and your heart fails you know (mmm mm). I mean you don't trust anybody anymore, you know. I've had incidents at traffic lights and you see someone walk past the car and uh (mm mm), you know they'll hijack you or something like that. Your heart just drops. You don't live normally again (Mmm mm mm). I mean that's the paranoia of being held up."* (Matt)

(Also coded for Fear, Symptom, Trust, Victim and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.2.8 Esteem

Interestingly for the study, of the seven categories proposed as significant by McCann and Pearlman the category of esteem was least frequently coded with an overall frequency score of

87. The category was relevant across all 10 interviews with a range of 1 to 23 and a mean of 8.7. From the range, particularly the fact that one interview evidenced only one unit pertaining to esteem, it can be seen that there was a fair degree of variation in preoccupation with issues of self-esteem across the sample.

McCann and Pearlman describe the category of esteem as pertaining to self-judgements or the positive or negative evaluations people carry about themselves. In many instances esteem is related to issues of independence and power, as acknowledged by McCann and Pearlman, but appears to carry particular significance for self-worth, the third basic assumption of importance for Janoff-Bulman. The attribution of esteem tends to involve individuals in some self-scrutiny, i.e., a part of the self takes on the role of observer and judge of another part of the self. Within the present study issues of esteem were often not overtly expressed but tended to emerge more indirectly in the reporting of the responses of others to the interviewee and in statements reflecting self-doubt. There tended to be a greater emphasis on negative as opposed to positive self-evaluations in the data and hence in the units so-categorised. Units typical of those categorised under esteem are illustrated as follows:

*I: Was that unusual for you? (Yah)... being instructed? (Yah) Was that part of the frustration?*

*S: Mmm Definitely.*

*I: Did you feel humiliated at all?*

*S: Definitely.*

*I: So it was as strong as that?*

*S: Yah. Humiliation. I mean you're thrown on the floor and...." (Garth)*

*(Also coded for Independence, Power/less, Shame and Victim)*

Note: Despite having described the traumatic incident in detail at the beginning of the interview, Garth had left out these specific details until this point of enquiry.

*" Well (before) I felt a sense of security (mm). I felt a sense of well being, not well being, but importance (mmm) within my tiny pathetic little world (laughs). You know I felt as if, well you know I was an integral part of society and I was doing certain good and so on and so on." (Justin)*

*(Also coded for Disillusionment, Independence, Power/less, Symptom and Frame of Reference)*

### 10.4.3 Cluster 2: Reactions to Traumatization: Key Codes

This cluster of categories broadly subsumed the responses and reactions of the interviewees to the experience of their criminal victimization. Whilst the term “responses” is a broad one, the cluster is constellated around the more immediate or direct impact of the trauma as opposed to relating to broader questions of meaning and social aspects of victimization. Although the categories were generated from the data pool, their clustering reflects an appreciation of the theory surrounding common responses to traumatization, including psychiatric symptomology and key psychological “symptoms”. Thus this cluster includes the primary codes: **Symptom, Disillusionment, Loss, Fear and Disruption** (as well as secondarily: Co-operation, Flight, Fantasy, Self-doubt, Physical, Personality Change, Shame, Failed Enactment, Disbelief, Regression and Contamination; described in Appendix H). Important categories are presented in rank order in terms of overall frequency of codes.

#### 10.4.3.1 Symptom

This code included 196 units across all 10 interviews ranging from 9 to 37 coded units with a mean of 19.6.

The theme encapsulated all those statements relating to the description of symptoms as described in the DSM-IV as pertaining to Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, and retrospective descriptions of what was consistent with an Acute Stress Disorder presentation. Such units reflected experiences of symptoms across the three core categories of intrusion, avoidance and hyper-arousal and are illustrated in the following quotations:

*“... and of course I started having difficulty sleeping (mmm mmm), um, not getting to sleep um, but more staying asleep. I would go to bed at 12 o'clock, pass out, and be wide awake at 3.30 in the morning, (mmm, uh huh) ... 2 o'clock, 3.30, whatever. I also had a dream that came back twice, only twice, it was a dream I haven't had since I was about 8 years old. I can't tell you what happens (mmm), all I know is that it's a dream that I'm being um, .... (longish pause), a mixture between crushed and asphyxiated at the same time (mmm). But it's a nothingness, there's nothing there even in the dream while I'm dreaming it.” (Miles)*

(Also coded for Past Associations)

*"I've got that vision in my mind. When I think about it I know exactly, I can see their faces and the shock of coming outside and seeing there were these guys standing there." (Garth)*

#### 10.4.3.2 Disillusionment

There were 101 units coded under this theme across all 10 interviews ranging from 2 to 27 with a mean of 10.1. It is apparent that there was a wide disparity in preoccupation over this issue.

This category was defined around sentiments expressed which reflected a sense of ennui or loss of vitality, enjoyment or purpose that the person appeared to have been previously accustomed to. Whilst the sentiments coded under this heading bore some relation to depressive symptoms, they tended to reflect negative cognitions rather than other depressive symptoms. These cognitions tended to conform to the negative triad associated with depression involving negative beliefs about self, others and the world, but in some cases represented a broad, pervasive negativity which is/was best captured under the term "disillusionment". Synonyms for disillusionment include being "disabused, disenchanted" or "becoming sadder and wiser" (Collins Pocket Reference Thesaurus, 1988) and it is this sense of loss of previous equanimity and resignation that the category reflects. There is some overlap between this category and those of Frame of Reference and Loss, as will be discussed later, however, as in other such instances the category appeared of significance in capturing the data comprehensively. Several illustrations follow:

*"I: ...you wouldn't have felt like that before?*

*S: Not at all (mmm). I really have lost interest in ... the drive that was behind me (mmm) seems to have dissipated (mm, mm) like a puff of smoke you know (mm mm) been burnt up (mm) because the whole point of this thing, you know, uh... seems to be that life is very fragile." (Justin)*

(Also coded for Independence, Power/less, Symptom and Frame of Reference)

*"I think uh, the hatred I have is the sense of, you know, there's no, life is not worth anything. It's my perception of, of black men. You know they'll do anything just for a buck." (Garth)*

(Also coded for Anger, Race and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.3.3 Loss

This code was made up of 90 units across all 10 interviews ranging from 3 to 20 with a mean of 9, and once again reflecting quite broad variation across interviewees.

The category of loss encompassed both loss in the sense of loss of meaning/belief/faith and in the sense of physical or material loss. Two examples follow:

*"It actually took me over a month at that stage, a month and a half to get back to working (Really?). Yah, I felt an extreme loss and emptiness and then I just, I couldn't explain it. I just couldn't get going again."* (Matt)

(Also coded for Disillusionment, Disruption, Symptom, Victim and Frame of Reference)

*"S: There aren't that many people/*

*I: Sort of comfortable with?*

*I: That we feel comfortable with and the other thing is that there's also been a sense of uh, insecurity, (mmm), where if I lose my job and I'm with no money, there's really nowhere I can turn to, you know that type of (nm) fear, um, ... so I think that this is sort of permeated right throughout my life."* (Justin)

(Also coded for Fear, Independence, Power/less, Trust and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.3.4 Fear

There were 89 items coded under this heading across all 10 interviews ranging from 2 to 14 with a mean of 8.9.

This category fairly self-evidently reflected comments about feelings of fear, terror and sense of immediate threat. In contrast to McCann and Pearlman's category of Safety which was used to code preoccupations with ongoing or resultant feelings of risk and preoccupation with harm avoidance, this category tended to be comprised of overt/immediate sense of fear, usually tied to the traumatic experience itself rather than its aftermath. The sense of danger and potential harm to oneself and the emotional apprehension attached to this was resonant with this theme. Illustrations follow:

*"S: I suppose, I, I don't know, I suppose you, you just see how it works, you, you understand the emotions of it (mmm mm). I, I mean you always knew how, if someone put a gun to you, you know, but I think it's, I think it's movies or something to that effect (mm mm), you know you become so desensitized (mm). It's, it's a piece of metal (yah), which you don't realize the, the fear that the other person has and standing (mm) with a gun pointed at you (mm mm).*

*I: It's more an awareness of, of how frightening it is?*

*S: Yah, I think so." (Nigel)*

(Also coded for Displacement, Empathy, Mortality, Victim and Frame of Reference)

*"And my okies (guys/staff) there, whatever they experience in the townships they are no more heroic than you or I, trust me. Because those guys... I, we've got a side door in the storeroom that comes out into the shop and they hadn't opened it till the okes (guys/robbers) had gone yet. My okes were still lying, sitting on the floor (yah), shit scared as, as anyone else would be." (James)*

(Also coded for Race, South Africa and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.3.5 Disruption

This code encompassed 75 units across all 10 interviews with a range of 1 to 23 and a mean of 7,5 and a wide variation in emphasis upon this issue across interviews.

The category of disruption contained material relating to a sense that the trauma had created disjuncture or rupture in the person's life. The theme reflected a sense of unanticipated shaking up of existing patterns of existence, be these beliefs, practices, relationships or future plans. The terms "disarray, disturbance and interference" (Collins Pocket Reference Thesaurus, 1988) aptly capture further the sense of this category. Typical illustrations follow:

*"(Long pause) ... I don't know that one ever copes with it. I will never be the same again (mm) I know that (mm, mmm). Um ... I, mean I am more nervous than I used to be, I'm more careful than I used to be, um ... I'm yah, so in that regard ... it's a fundamental experience ... it happened (mmm) and it has ... I'm not the same person I was (mm). Aside from all the psychological interpretations about things that have been spiralling out from it, um, I, yah, I'm just ... I'm just more sensitive to everything going on around me, um, yah, I'll get up out of bed and I'll go check that every door in the house is locked (mmm)." (Miles)*

(Also coded for Fear, Image, Safety, Symptom, Victim and Frame of Reference)

*"But I mean you should be able to live a life of calm and tranquillity, you shouldn't be... why should you have to live the life of a person on the edge?" (Paul)*

(Also coded for Loss and Frame of Reference)

The range of further categories identified under this cluster all comprised less than 50 units in total and tended not to be generally present across the entire group of interviewees. Thus they may be viewed as having less clear significance than the categories of response discussed thus far and will not receive elaboration.

#### **10.4.4 Cluster 3: Psychological Defences and Coping Responses to Trauma**

The third major cluster of codes also relates to responses to the trauma but contains a group of codes which reflect more classic psychological defences and defensive responses to traumatization rather than the kinds of reactions more broadly described under cluster 2. In addition to those strategies which could be viewed as defensive, the code also encompassed what could be seen as more constructive or healthy forms of coping and adaptation. As will become evident in the discussion of each code, some of the defensive styles can be viewed as falling within a psychoanalytic conceptualization. In this respect they may be viewed as operating largely unconsciously. These clinical dimensions of the coding system will be discussed at greater length in the discussion chapter. At this point the intention is to provide a clear description of each code and its numeric properties. Cluster Three included the central categories of **Coping**, **Minimization** and **Displacement**; (and in addition secondary themes of Contradiction, Past Associations, Growth, Empathy and Humour), listed in rank order. The characteristics of each of the central codes are described.

##### **10.4.4.1 Coping**

This category encompassed 104 units across all 10 interviews. The range of incidences across interviews was 3 to 18 (quite considerable) with a mean of 10.4.

The theme of coping coalesced around material related to forms of dealing with the trauma which might be understood as forms of coping within the general stress literature. The category

encompassed both emotion and problem focussed forms of coping and tended generally to reflect attempts to deal with the aftermath of the event constructively. Coping refers largely to conscious and demonstrable attempts to come to terms with and weather the impact of the trauma. Some of the categories elaborated further within this cluster could be understood as more specific categories of coping response, sometimes less overt or conscious. However, several illustrative examples of content categorized under Coping follow:

*"Yes, I jog every morning (yah) and for the first couple of weeks I jogged without my, I had another watch that I had on (yeah, yeah, yah). I took that off, you know, in case I was, and made sure I had nothing valuable on me (mm, mm). But other than that..." (Roger)*

(Also coded for Disruption)

*"...couldn't remember who I'd spoken to, what I had to do. Nothing (mm), um, I actually trained the staff to actually as soon as I answered a call, they'd say 'who is it?' and I'd shout the name and they'd write down the name of whoever I was talking to (mm,mm) so if I forgot I'd have something to actually latch onto (mm, mmm) to trace it back, um." (Miles)*

(Also coded for Control and Symptom)

#### 10.4.4.2 Minimization

The Minimization code contained 94 responses across 9 interviews ranging from 1 to 21 with a mean of 10.3. It is evident that there was considerable variation in the utilization of this defence, with one interviewee evidencing no usage of minimization at all and another using this style in 21 instances across the course of the interview.

This style of response to trauma reflects an attempt to diminish or temper the impact. Statements coded under this heading reflected a tendency to view the impact as "not that bad". In some cases such discounting statements would follow more intense statements of distress, whereas in other instances this reflected a more general approach to the situation. Further descriptions of the category are that it represented attempts to make light of, or downgrade, the severity of the situation. Some illustrative examples are as follows:

*"I worry about it, but I don't hey, it's not even there anymore, it's just, I wouldn't like it to happen to anybody, I wouldn't like it to happen to me again," (Paul)*

*"And um, Basically they um, held me up at gunpoint, they didn't put the gun to my head or anything like that, if they did, it would have been a lot worse (Laughs nervously)." (Nigel)*

#### 10.4.4.3 Displacement

This category comprised 56 coding units across all 10 interviews, ranging from 1 to 11 per interview with a mean of 5.6.

Drawing from fairly classic psychoanalytic theory this theme pertained to what were perceived as defensive attributions of response to others, which in all probability reflected the emotions or thoughts of the interview themselves. Displacement as the term reflects, represents an attempt to place or locate a dimension of experience elsewhere away from the self. Hopefully the illustrations provided as follows will provide some embodiment of displacement in operation, although it is recognised that this category perhaps requires a greater degree of inference on the part of the coder than some others.

*"... and one builds up a lot of hatred (Yah, yah) and anger in general. I mean my wife was a lot more affected by it than me, (mm)." (Garth)*

(Also coded for Anger)

*"Oh, I can't tolerate that. But not even victims, it's just generally. People who can't stand up for themselves, whether it be in the workplace or the home, you know if somebody pushes them down all the time. It doesn't have to be, you don't have to be a victim of violence or anything, just the situation of somebody being overpowered and they're not prepared to stand up for themselves, I can't tolerate it." (Garth)*

(Also coded for Anger, Control, Esteem, Independence and Intimacy)

#### 10.4.5 Cluster 4: Meaning Related Themes

This fourth cluster represents a sub-group of themes related to the kinds of existential issues that facing trauma threw up for these men. Issues to do with life and death and the purpose of human existence were salient within this cluster. The cluster has much in common with what Janoff-Bulman and Epstein refer to as the person's "World-View".

##### 10.4.5.1 Mortality

This code encompassed 87 units across 9 interviews ranging from 2 to 13 with a mean of 9.7.

The Mortality code could also be viewed as a specific sub-dimension or elaboration of Frame of Reference. The code was generated out of the need to represent the number of statements which explicitly dealt with the interviewee's perception of their life as being at risk, i.e, their recognition of their own mortality. Such units reflected a perception that death had been imminently possible in the context of the trauma and reflections upon this awareness.

*"I, my immediate reaction when we were in the shop, this was when I was in the front, I didn't sort of react and sort of run out and try to get away from him. I think that upset him enormously (mm) and then he came, cause he hesitated before the shop but he came to, to kill me. Because I, I was (inaudible),, the two of us were close, as close as we were with others (mm). And because I could recognize him before an identity parade for instance (mm, mm), ahh, he came back again. Um, 20 mill, 20 millimetre difference and I would have been dead (mm), because (inaudible) in the head and it was all kind of stuff that happens here, likely to do a hell of a lot of damage (mmm), or in this region of the chest (mm) especially in the aorta and that kind of stuff." (Hilton)*

(Also coded for Adversary, Co-operation, Physical, Power/less, Trust Victim and Frame of Reference)

*"S: And yah, you had a fight but... uh nothing where, you know its a life or death situation.*

*I: Mmm, and that's what it would have been?*

*S: Yah, yah, that's what it was. It was if I make that decision, if you strike, well you gotta, you have to be prepared, because the worst could happen." (Garth)*

(Also coded for Control, Independence, Power/less, Victim and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.6 Cluster 5: Content Specific Codes

This cluster comprised material that emerged that had specific relevance for these South African men existing in a particular political climate and context. Thus while the subject matter of this cluster might have broader relevance, the nature of the statements coded here reflected a preoccupation with the place of crime and its aftermath in the context of South Africa post the

1994 elections. The three themes grouped together within this cluster were importantly those of **South Africa and Race**; and less significantly, Intervention.

##### 10.4.6.1 South Africa

There were a considerable number of statements, 87, coded under this heading. Units occurred across all 10 interviews ranging quite broadly from 1 to 15 statements per interview with a mean of 8.7.

Any material pertaining to the nation state of South Africa, its characteristics and politics, was coded under this heading. Such statements were frequently couched within the frame of "this country" and indicated perceptions that what was being asserted pertained specifically to South Africa. Although there was little direct allusion to the temporal nature or the context, this was sometimes implicit in such statements.

*"S: People expect you to pack your bags and leave that minute (mm), maybe that's the only way of dealing with it. It's, it's the way out, but it's not a way of dealing with it unfortunately.*

*I: Did you think about it?*

*S: Yah, all the time.*

*I: You still do?*

*S: Yah,.... (Pause). This is not a society for kids to grow up in. And it's a matter of, we've unfortunately been affected by it, we've got to benefit as much as we can from the situation, take what we can and when it suits us we'll leave. (Pause)" (Garth)*

(Also coded for Disruption, Flight, Symptom and Frame of Reference)

*"But um, another thing that struck me was the ... South African public, you know (mmm), it was unbelievable, because after this, when the police were there, and this woman, you know, was lying on the floor and, you know, the blood was streaming down (mmm), there were four people standing at the till with their newspapers waiting to pay."* (Justin)

(Also coded for Disillusionment, Trust, Victim and Frame of Reference)

#### 10.4.6.2 Race

This theme was comprised of 57 units across 9 interviews with a range of 3 to 9 and a mean of 6.3.

Self-evidently material coded under this heading pertained to racial or ethnic attitudes and other such statements. Generally the broad categories used were those of Black and White with the term black used to refer to people of African origin. Any overt references to race were coded under this heading, which had some overlap with South Africa as will be elaborated in the final section of the chapter. Some examples are provided:

*"It's my perception of, of black men. You know, they'll do anything for a buck."* (Garth)

(Also codes for Disillusionment and Trust)

*"... you can't trust anyone basically, but as far as armed robbery goes, you're a bit more, you're leaning towards a black male, 'cause of what's happened, do you know what I mean?"* (James)

(Also coded for Trust)

#### 10.4.7 Cluster 6: Dimensions Related to Masculinity

Cluster 6 consisted of those aspects of the coding which appeared to have specific relevance for Masculinity. The grouping was established largely on the basis of theoretical trends identified within the literature review. Thus while the codes themselves were generated out of the data, their grouping reflects a conceptual coherence which is theory driven, as is the clustering of other material. As in other cases, there were codes under which Masculinity were also coded under previous clusters. Only those themes not yet described are presented here. Masculinity included

significantly **Anger, Emotional Expression, Responsibility, Minimization, Hero and Displacement**; (with Adversary, Work, Weapon and Humour comprising less salient codes).

#### 10.4.7.1 Anger

A very substantial number of coding units, i.e., 176, were coded under this heading indicating a central preoccupation with this issue within the data set. Such statements occurred across all 10 interviews, but with considerable variation ranging from 2 to 37 and with a mean of 17.6.

All statements relating to the experience of anger and aggression were coded under this heading. This involved a considerable range of material including statements reflecting irritation and impatience to those involving expressions of hatred and fury. In some cases such anger was related to revenge fantasies and in other cases it reflected what could be viewed as symptom expression directed at others or even the self. Anger related units also encompassed both physical and verbal expression, including the carrying of weaponry and aggression expressed in a range of encounters.

*"But I will, if there was a tight situation (mm, mm) make me a raging bull you know, (mm, mm), for nothing, raging bull, raging bull for 5 minutes, go blank, that's the way it happened."* (Paul)

(Also coded for Control and Power/less)

*"...well just fed up you know, with everything (mmm, impatient), impatient you know, I, I when I think that things are going wrong in my life I actually get furious (mm) I get furious with the situation (mm) and why is my car not starting and why is the gate's lock uh, stuck? Why? You know, Why? (Inaudible) ...all becomes a major thing (Yah)." (Justin)*

(Also coded for Symptom)

#### 10.4.7.2 Emotional Expression

This code was made up of 130 units which also represented a considerable weight of emphasis in these men's verbalizations concerning their experiences. Such material was present in all 10 interviews with a range of 5 to 26 and a mean of 13.

As suggested by the heading this code was generated in order to encompass all those statements that related to the expression of emotion. Furthermore, the code Emotional Expression was concerned with the **expression** aspect of emotion, i.e., the revealing or demonstration of feeling, rather than the nature of the specific emotion per se.

*"Yah I went back in on the Wednesday, and ah, yah, it was a bit rough because you relive it hey (What/), because you're very jumpy I mean I nearly, I nearly cried a few times (mm, mm). I took that stuff, what's it... Rescue Remedy. I don't think it did anything, anyway for eighteen rand you may as well give it a bash, hey (mm,mm), whatever it costs hey."* (James)

(Also coded for Control, Fear, Independence and Symptom)

*"I'd say still that (pause) say tenseness at times does come up. The first time when I spoke to Joy(counsellor), I must say I got, I was surprised... Timothy (son) was far more calm than I was. I was more emotional than he was and... (Tearful?) Yes, yes. And (pause) I couldn't believe that, you know, that this was sort of happening to me. I thought 'well I'm supposed to be strong.' It's not the way that things happened. You're supposed to be able to just talk. But I couldn't actually control it. I was actually quite tearful."* (Len)

(Also coded for Control, Counselling and Gender)

#### 10.4.7.3 Responsibility

In total 110 units were coded under this heading across all 10 interviews ranging from 4 to 26 with a mean of 11.

This theme pertained to expressions which reflected a sense of responsibility for the welfare and safety of others, usually family members. The roles of protector and provider and expectations of such role fulfilment tended to emerge in such statements. Thus the term Responsibility was used to convey the sense that these men evidenced of a need to take care of others, rather than the notion of responsibility in the sense of conscientiousness.

*"I couldn't cope with the fact that I was the manager, I couldn't cope with the fact that I was the boss. I was meant to be in charge, um, I felt that my, all my control systems were threatened, um, (mm), yah I became very, very unstuck by the whole experience, I really did (mm, mmm)." (Miles)*

(Also coded for Control, Esteem and Symptom)

*"S: I have a, I must make one admission to you (mm, mm), is that I haven't spoken a lot about this (mm) certainly to the one's I love, my children, that I haven't told them anything about it.*

*I: They don't know?*

*S: I, it's a thing of protectiveness (mm, mm). They've got to come up here and I don't want them to feel threatened (mm) you know by Johannesburg, so I haven't told them (mm) and really I'm a very private person in a lot of respects (mm)." (Justin)*

(Also coded for Express Emotion, and Intimacy)

#### 10.4.7.4 Hero

There were 67 thematic units coded under this heading occurring across 9 interviews with a range of 2 to 15 units per interview and a mean of 7.4.

Units were coded under the heading Hero when they reflected a preoccupation with taking on a heroic role involving triumph over adversity, often linked to taking risk. The term 'Hero' was used overtly in several interviews as a measure of ideal behaviour. Heroism appeared to be tied to action, combat and bravery and thus usually entailed demonstrating prowess and overcoming odds through such action. In many instances the notion of Hero in this context of criminal violence related to fighting one's attackers. Any such statements were coded under this heading.

*"The one very important thing...on an immediate psychological level, was I was distressed by the fact that the staff started throwing around words like 'hero', and that kind of perception of the role I'd played in this whole thing, (mmm). I was very upset by that, what I'm, I was very disturbed by this okay, that was the one thing." (Miles)*

(Also coded for Esteem, Image and Masculinity)

*"Yah, I, I unfortunately there's nothing one can do. It was...the guys were smaller than me, I thought at one stage maybe I should, I should have a bash at them. (Yah). But I said, 'Listen rather take what you want, I'm not gonna try and be a hero (mm, mm)." (Garth)*

(Also coded for Adversary and Discourse)

#### 10.4.8 Cluster 7: Miscellaneous

The final cluster consists of those three codes which did not clearly relate to any of the specific groupings outlined thus far. The cluster included two themes comprising over 50 items, i.e., **Victim and Support**; as well as the secondary code, Counselling.

##### 10.4.8.1 Victim

In total **249** statements were coded under this heading across all **10** interviews with a range of **15** to **54** units per interview and a mean of **24,9**.

This code was designed as something of a catch-all category to reflect those aspects of the interview data which captured the victimizing status and aspects in the experience. Since few of the men identified themselves overtly with the term "victim" or used this language explicitly, the category was largely conceptually derived by marrying the material stemming from the interviews with the theoretical construction of victimization outlined in chapters seven and eight. Material which reflected the subjugated status of the interviewee and the sense of having one's rights violated made up a considerable proportion of this code data. Thus there was some overlap with the codes Power/less, Independence, Contamination and Physical. In addition to this material, subject matter pertaining to the perception of the interviewee by others as a "victim", for example, as someone who had been violated or singled out in this particular way, was also included under this heading. The code was designed to provide a pool of material which might provide both a descriptive and discursive basis for interrogating these men's experiences of being criminally attacked. Some examples are provided:

*"Well, it did, I mean a lot of people pitied me, not in a way, in a sense, it became a baby situation, (mm, mm), I just, just felt, they said they, they just said at the time how could it happen, they never thought, I was the last one they think it would happen to, something like that."* (Paul)

(Also coded for Regression and Frame of Reference)

*"I felt embarrassed to the extent that I, I mean I always used to say, I, I, more than anyone else in my family would say, it's uh, not really that it wouldn't happen to you, but I would say it can happen any time, you know, or anyway*

*(mm, mm) and um..., so like I was expecting everyone to say: 'Yah, I told you so, I told you so (mm, mmm) kind of thing, but they didn't.' (Nigel)*

(Also coded for Control, Esteem, Intimacy, Loss, Self-doubt, Shame and Trust)

#### 10.4.8.2 Support

This code encompassed 90 items in total across all 10 interviews with a range of 2 to 18 and a mean of 9.

The theme pertained to the interpersonal support the interviewee had experienced post-trauma. As opposed to the responses of law enforcement agencies (Intervention) This code related to support systems such as counsellors, family, friends and work colleagues. It was largely comprised of positive reflections concerning the receipt of succorance, nurturance and affirmation, but also encompassed the interviewee's expectations of, and response to, such offered support; or upon occasion its lack. As would be expected there was some overlap between this category and those of Intimacy and Trust, however, the spontaneous reference to support and the fairly large body of material coded under this heading warranted its inclusion as an independent category.

*"Well look I'd suggest people go to a psychologist or something (mm, hm). I think it helps to go, you know, I think it's good to speak to a person who is not a friend or family or you know, ahh..." (James)*

(Also coded for Counselling and Express Emotion)

*"I: If, I mean if you were to think about someone in your situation?/*

*S: I would hate to be alone, that's what I, uh, think if..., no I think, I definitely think I want to have people around (mm, mm), because (pause), yah, it's like a support system (mm). It's like it always is, (mm), you know your family (mm). Yah, I think definitely. I mean if you're alone, I think you be, be, become more like paranoid (mm) and look over your shoulder a lot more (mm)." (Nigel)*

(Also coded for Fear, Intimacy, Safety and Trust)

#### 10.4.9 Discursive Categories

In addition to the categories outlined above, the analysis was also extended to highlight aspects

of the data which emerged as significant for consideration in the discourse analysis. Such codes were assigned in order to hone in on some of the core discursive aspects of the data, although the discourse analysis was based upon a reading of the interviews in their entirety. In this respect these codes cannot be viewed as representing a cluster, since their grouping was for the purpose of further analysis and their generation almost entirely theoretically driven. As indicated the material categorised under these codes was selected for its illustrative value in terms of highlighting, for example, expressions within popular culture, social stereotypes and the operation of power relations. This is the kind of textual material which tends to inform analyses at the level of discourse. Thus the extraction of this data was designed to assist the researcher in focussing upon such discursive employment within the interviews. The categories which were made use of in identifying potentially rich material for this aspect of the analysis were coded under the headings Masculinity, Gender, and Discourse. The categories Victim and Hero were also given particular consideration in this regard. These codes are not elaborated at this point since they are addressed within the discourse analytic section of the discussion chapter.

## **10.5 SECTION D: INTER-RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CATEGORIES**

This final section of the results chapter briefly examines the inter-relationship between some of the various codes utilized in the content analysis. Only those relationships that appeared particularly salient are discussed, since in the main there was sufficient discretion between categories to justify their inclusion as separate entities. Once again it must be emphasized that the quantification of material is a representational means of understanding the data rather than carrying any absolute weight. Working with data comprised of natural speech productions of necessity means working with data that reflects the kinds of tensions, contradictions and manoeuvres that are typical in the conversational use of language. Thus there are instances in which the multiple coding of a particular unit reflects the interweaving of a range of issues or concerns in a particular speech chunk. In some cases the associations are obvious and in others more tangential. This means that overlap in unit coding as computed by the ATLASTI program, whilst generally reflective of conceptual or theoretical inter-relationships, may also merely reflect the co-occurrence of two themes within a particular unit of speech. Having offered this proviso, there were aspects of the data which appeared useful to examine from this perspective, bearing

in mind that the computations cannot be viewed as representing absolute figures. Rather the figures and diagrams presented below can be understood as reflecting broad trends within the data and may allow for an enriched appreciation of aspects of the content analysis.

The material in this final section is presented under a range of headings reflecting different areas of important inter-relationships.

### 10.5.1 Masculinity

As the largest content category with 434 units it was interesting to examine the degree of overlap between this code and a number of others. Figures reflecting this overlap are listed below. The figure in brackets represents the number of units coded under the particular category of interest and the second figure the number of instances in which there was overlap in coding between this theme and that of masculinity.

| Theme                | No. Of Units in Common | % of Units<br>(Of subsidiary category) |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Powerless (294)      | 137                    | 47                                     |
| Independence (253)   | 139                    | 55                                     |
| Victim (249)         | 91                     | 37                                     |
| Anger (176)          | 70                     | 40                                     |
| Intimacy (161)       | 56                     | 35                                     |
| Responsibility (110) | 54                     | 49                                     |
| Work (46)            | 28                     | 61                                     |
| Adversary (46)       | 34                     | 74                                     |
| Humour (18)          | 9                      | 50                                     |
| Self-doubt (39)      | 13                     | 38                                     |

It must be borne in mind that the areas of overlap as illustrated here are representative of the researcher's coding decisions and thus in this area of conceptualization, i.e., of material pertaining to masculinity, will reflect this theoretical and subjective bias. This inter-play between conceptual and data derived analytic categories is part and parcel of such qualitative analysis and must be taken cognisance of in any interpretation of the data. It appears that several themes carry

substantial overlap with the category of masculinity and warrant discussion as dimensions of experience which may be of significance in understanding masculinity and exposure to trauma.

### 10.5.2 Control

As mentioned previously the theme of Control (374 units) appeared to carry considerable overlap with both the CSDT categories of Power/less and Independence. However, the category also encompassed a considerable volume of material that related to control but was not appropriate for categorisation under the other two headings, hence the inclusion of the separate category of Control. The table below illustrates the degree of overlap and singularity between the three code headings of Control, Independence and Power/less, as well as dimensions of overlap with other categories which required illustration:

| Theme                 | No. Of Units of Overlap | % of Theme |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Power/less (294)      | 131                     | 45         |
| Independence (253)    | 128                     | 51         |
| Express Emotion (130) | 65                      | 50         |
| Anger (176)           | 57                      | 32         |
| Hero (67)             | 30                      | 45         |
| Co-operation (44)     | 16                      | 36         |

From these illustrations of areas of overlap it seems that the issue of Control carried considerable importance in relation to the exercise of interpersonal power, autonomy, and in dealing with emotion. In addition it is worth noting that the degree of overlap between Power/less and Independence was 107 units, and between all three categories of Control, Power/less and Independence was 47 items. These issues will be elaborated within the discussion.

### 10.5.3 Frame of Reference

Cluster 4 was grouped around codes pertaining to meaning and beliefs implicated in the interviewees' adjustment to trauma. Such codes could be understood to coalesce around what has been termed one's World View or one's Frame of Reference. The key inter-relationships between Frame of Reference (330 units) and other codes encompassed within this frame are presented:

| Theme                 | No. Of Units of Overlap | % of Units |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Trust (205)           | 116                     | 57         |
| Victim (249)          | 111                     | 45         |
| Disillusionment (101) | 65                      | 64         |
| South Africa (87)     | 59                      | 68         |
| Safety (105)          | 35                      | 33         |
| Just World (34)       | 21                      | 62         |
| Growth (34)           | 15                      | 44         |

#### 10.5.4 Trust

Another theme which lent itself to consideration in terms of possible sub-components or areas of overlap within the data field was that of Trust (205 units). The inter-relationship between Trust and Frame of Reference has been illustrated above, however additional inter-relationships included the following category overlaps:

| Theme          | No. Of units of Overlap | % of Units |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Intimacy (161) | 52                      | 32         |
| Victim (249)   | 75                      | 30         |
| Race (57)      | 35                      | 61         |
| Support (90)   | 30                      | 33         |

It seems that statements reflecting a preoccupation with issues of trust have implications both for immediate relationships and for more generalized and abstract interpretations of relationships. Such issues will be explored within the discussion.

#### 10.6 CONCLUSION

Of the other major categories emergent from the data analysis there were no other particularly salient inter-relationships. To a large degree this can be understood as representing little significant correspondence of particular themes with other themes, but also reflects the limitations of the coder/s, the computer analysis and the categorisation system itself. As outlined in the method chapter, the text interpretation as facilitated by the ATLASTI program, cannot generate links beyond those possible within the constraints of the means by which the data is assigned to

categories in the first instance. It is intended that the more sophisticated conceptual analysis of the data will emerge through extended interrogation and discussion of the findings presented at some length in chapter eleven, the Discussion chapter, and in the supplementation of this discussion by a consideration of some of the discursive aspects of the data.

## CHAPTER 11

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

#### 11.1 INTRODUCTION TO DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEW DATA

Since the full transcripts of the interviews represent a vast body of data, and the findings are comprehensive, the discussion is divided into three sections for ease of reading, with the weight of emphasis on the first section and the second and third sections providing enhanced commentary on this data. The first section deals with material pertaining primarily to mainstream cognitive and social psychological perspectives drawing upon theory developed in this tradition, and centrally upon the notion of cognitive schemata. Given the integrated theoretical stance of the study, where relevant, a range of perspectives is brought to bear on such schemata. The second section of the discussion focuses on the notion of discourses specifically, as located within a critical, social constructionist tradition within psychology. The third broad aspect of the discussion is concerned more specifically with clinical findings and implications. Within each of these three broad categories of discussion, the central interest in masculinity and victimization will form a core aspect of the analysis.

Four points warrant mention in qualifying the ensuing discussion:

1. Firstly, it is important to note that the data presented was analysed within a qualitative paradigm. Thus while some mention will be made of quantification of aspects of the data as illustrated in the results chapter, the discussion will focus largely on thematic aspects.

2. Throughout the discussion on masculinity it was emphasized that masculinity is the manifestation of a gender rather than a sex based category. Thus it is possible for both women and men to possess masculine qualities in varying forms and varying intensities. From this perspective attributes understood as masculine may be associated with similar thematic issues pertaining to trauma irrespective of whether they are exhibited by men or women. For example, the focus on emotional control, as an aspect of masculinity, may be as problematic for masculine-typed women as it is for men. However, given that men served as the participants in the study and generally can

be expected to subscribe to masculine stereotypes more ubiquitously than women, the discussion will tend to refer to issues facing men and those associated with masculinity interchangeably. This qualifying comment serves to indicate that the author is cognisant of a degree of oversimplification in the application of the concept of masculinity.

3. The discussion follows a narrative structure which is informed by, but not limited to, the cluster categorisation of the results chapter. This is because whilst such clustering provided a useful conceptual framework within which to present the fairly comprehensive data set, it appeared somewhat constraining in structuring the discussion.

4. It should be noted that within qualitative research such as thematic content, narrative, or discourse analysis, it is accepted that arguments may be extrapolated on the basis of specific case examples or patterns of responses across a small number of subjects. In keeping with clinical case study research, individuals are understood to represent trends or tendencies which may be indicative of the experience of a broader population. Whilst it is accepted that the level of generalization from small samples is limited, such research aims to capture the variety of presentation rather than only that which is statistically significant. The validity of such extrapolation lies in its theoretical and conceptual coherence, the illustrative clarity of the supporting data and the degree to which such arguments are convincing to a critical reader. The ensuing discussion is based within such an understanding of qualitative research.

## **11.2 THEMES RELATING TO COGNITIVE SCHEMATA/SCHEMAS**

This section explores the personal constructions of the participants of their responses to the traumatic situations they faced. Such constructions have been primarily understood within the framework of cognitive schemata. It must be re-emphasized that the notion of schemas is understood as described within the CSDT framework of McCann and Pearlman and as such carries resonance for needs, emotional responses, defences and object relations. The first set of themes to be addressed are those relating to Control.

### 11.3 THE THEME OF CONTROL

(Cluster 1 (Core Cognitive Schemata Affected by Exposure to Trauma); Incorporating Dimensions of Clusters 2 (Reactions to Traumatization) and 3 (Psychological Defences and Coping Responses))

The most striking finding across the group was the focus on issues of control in relation to the traumatic experience and its aftermath. Whilst this concern contained several sub-themes which will be elaborated, it was apparent that all the interviewees had some preoccupation with the issue of controllability of the incident and their responses to it. In most cases this concern was conscious and reflected in overt comments about control, but the theme emerged at both explicit and more subtle levels. In total 361 statements were coded as relating to control, the single largest coding category other than that pertaining to masculinity. In addition, from observations and clinical impressions gained during the course of the interviews, it was clearly evident that this area of functioning was a central leitmotif in terms of understanding the men's responses to their trauma exposure. This finding was in accordance with Wortman's (1983) proposition that loss of control is the most salient feature of traumatization, although this study elaborates and differentiates this notion at a more complex level.

The word "control" carries a range of meaning within the psychological literature and defies easy definition. Within this study the concept of control was related to issues of intentionality and the capacity or opportunity to act or behave in accordance with such intention. The term "intentional" is defined as "pertaining to intention; purposeful; conscious or voluntary" (Chaplin, 1985, p.235). This definition captures the sense of this category and its contents well since the data reflected preoccupation not only with **doing or acting**, but also with **being**. For the men interviewed in the study the tensions and difficulties associated with operating in involuntary and unfamiliar ways without a sense of clear, mindful agency proved difficult to integrate. Such concerns pertained both to their behaviour during the incident and to consequent responses. The theme of control thus serves as a useful introduction to the discussion since it allows for an encompassing perspective on many of the other themes.

(Where other codes are introduced into the discussion they are indicated in bold type, although bold type face is also used to indicate emphasis or intensity of expression throughout the text).

In order to synthesize the analysis of the theme of control it is suggested that the preoccupation with control can effectively be understood as concerning two central aspects of psychological functioning, firstly **doing** and secondly **being**. The area of **doing** pertains largely to the exercise of control in relation to the external world whereas the area of **being** pertains largely to the exercise of control in relation to the self. To some extent these two domains of functioning can be understood to overlap with the central codes of **Power/less** and **Independence**, although they carry connotations beyond those suggested by McCann and Pearlman's theoretical formulation.

Thus in addition to taking into account features of control differing across context, i.e., during or post the incident, there is also a further distinction in the use of the term control which is useful to elucidate. This distinction emerges very clearly if one refers to synonyms for the term. Two key sets of parallels are offered which are of import for the study, although other uses are also possible. The two important sets of meaning are outlined as follows: firstly there is a set of synonyms encompassing words such as "call the tune, command, conduct, direct, dominate, govern, have charge of, ...lead, manage,...rule, steer" (Collins Pocket Reference Thesaurus, 1988, p.94) and secondly a set of terms such as "bridle, check, constrain, contain, curb, hold back, limit, master, rein in, repress, restrain subdue" (ibid, p.94). In a sense these two groups of parallel terms can be understood to refer once again to issues of control directed externally (**doing**) as opposed to control directed towards one's own functioning (**being**), reinforcing some distinction between issues of power and issues of autonomy or independence. Both these areas of functioning were implicated in interviewees' concerns about their role within the actual traumatic incident. Whilst there are self-evidently areas of overlap between these two areas, an attempt will made to do justice to both aspects of control throughout the discussion. Various dimensions of the theme of control will be discussed under the two broad themes of **Doing** and **Being** and a related range of sub-headings.

### 11.3.1 Control in Doing

#### 11.3.1.1 Involuntary Exposure and Agency

All the men interviewed evidenced distress, many of them intense, about the fact that they had been subjected to such an experience. The term *subjected* takes on a crucial meaning in this context carrying as it does connotations of lack of choice, objectification and domination. Whilst some men were pragmatic some of the time, (as evidenced, for example, in a view of themselves as random targets or as being in the wrong place at the wrong time), almost all the interviewees at some point volunteered statements of outrage or disillusionment about being exposed to such levels of threat.

*"S: I wouldn't, I definitely would have avoided it though, I would make sure that I did avoid it, because like (mm), 'cause I, I like, I hate to feel like, uh (pause), like uh, like you're forced into something kind of thing."*

*I: Did uh? I mean yah/*

*S: Not really forced but uh (pause)...*

*I: Where you don't have a choice?*

*S: Yah, like someone's taken away my choice, they should never get away with that."* (Nigel)

At the most primary level concerns in this regard appeared to relate to control over exposure to a stimulus, in this case to a highly aversive stimulus. For most of the sample this involuntary exposure represented an assault on a fundamental assumption about autonomy, the ability to regulate input in one's world. Interestingly contemporary developmental research into behaviour in early infancy has identified the regulation of stimulus input (e.g., in meeting or averting gaze) as one of the earliest respects in which infants become effective in engaging with the world (Stern, 1995). Thus the intrusion of traumatic events into individuals' lives appears to rob them of a sense of agency at a very basic level, the right to choose to participate in, or remove oneself from, a particular interaction. Before one even begins to consider responses to the aversive stimuli it is important to recognize the sense of outrage and fundamental doubt that this threat to regulation of input evokes. This is very clearly evidenced in the quotation cited above in which the preoccupation appears to be with the *"taking away of choice"*, a phrase that aptly captures the feeling of being coerced into participation in the event. Interviewees also used the words *"forced, inflicted, raped and unasked for"* in describing their experience of victimization. For men, this

stripping of autonomy may represent a severe threat to the foundations of masculinity, structured as they are upon constructs of independence and instrumentality. However, this will be explored further in examining the interface with masculinity more thoroughly.

Having highlighted the significance of the inability to regulate exposure to the event for these men, discussion now turns to focussing on those aspects of doing which represented difficulties in responding to the stimulus. These aspects could be viewed as reflecting concerns not only with agency but also with efficacy.

#### 11.3.1.2 Compliance or Co-operation

What was remarkable for its lack of exception was the evidence of compliance (**co-operation**) with the explicit and implicit directives of the attackers. All of the men interviewed described a lack of resistance to the power being wielded within the context of the event. Thus at a very fundamental level there seemed to be an acceptance of the need to relinquish control in the face of survival demands. When survival is dependant upon compliance, submission appears to outweigh any pull towards opposition as evidenced in the following quotations:

*"And I took them inside, I took them inside straight away, 'Come I'll take you, what do you want?' And it wasn't to be unfortunately." (Garth)*

*"The one with the firearm told me to lie down which I did. Then the bloke behind who I couldn't see...at all times he was out of vision.. He grabbed the back of my jacket and basically ripped it off with my hands you know being outstretched. Then he saw the watch and without you know sort of saying, grabbed the watch and tried to rip it off, which I still don't know how but calmly I said to him 'Just wait', and I loosened the strap and I actually put it in his hand." (Len)*

The quotations reflect an automatic deference to the authority of the attackers and the enactment of behaviour which appears designed to signal this very clearly. To this extent there were instances, such as in the second example cited, in which behaviour could be understood as not only compliant but even as co-operative.

As has often been pointed out in counselling, trauma survivors usually fail to see such co-operation as a form of activity, i.e., their lack of opposition may in fact be strategic in such an encounter. However, it commonly requires cognitive re-framing to assist clients to recognize such behaviour as a form of coping which is adaptive. Interestingly none of the men interviewed seemed to question their co-operative stance to their assailants' demands, suggesting that the focus of conflict around effectiveness lay elsewhere as will be explored further. This compliance with contextual demands confirms Janoff-Bulman's (1985) observation that this is commonly the case in criminal attack.

#### 11.3.1.3 Efficacy and Failed Enactment

In addition to the initial premise that victimization per se involves being robbed of autonomy and the observation that compliance appears to be the most common response to threat, the interviews elicited further intense absorption with issues of efficacy. For several subjects there was preoccupation with their actions during the traumatic incident. Much of this concern was focussed upon an evaluation of their efficacy in managing the event and in some cases with whether alternative adaptation or behaviour was possible. In this sense some of the preoccupation with control as **doing** could be viewed as confirming the pre-eminence of **failed enactment** as a dynamic in traumatic encounters.

For Lifton failed enactment describes "the idea of an image as a schema for enactment that is never completed" (in Wilson, Harel and Kahana, 1988, ps.9 and 10) and stems out of "a quick immediate sense that one should respond according to one's ordinary standards, in certain constructive ways, by halting the path of trauma or evil, or helping other people in a constructive way" (ibid, p.9). Such impulses towards averting or warding off damage to themselves and others were present in a number of instances in the interviews. Although the category of failed enactment was not large (25 units), where there was preoccupation with this aspect of functioning this seemed to be intense. It is also worth noting that for these men such preoccupations tended to be directed not only towards defence or prevention, but also towards attack, as illustrated in the following examples:

*"Still, often you know when I've been thinking about it I'd say 'Well why didn't I do something? (Yah), because I have... maybe I should have dealt with it outside? (Yah, yah). You know I might have been able to deal with it."*  
(Garth)

*"You know, the other question you ask yourself a million times: 'What if they weren't armed?', that they basically had these pistols and there was nothing in them. I think that's the biggest thing you fear. I've acted as if I'm totally helpless but meantime maybe if it was all a big bluff, I've given everything away for nothing, (uh huh). So I think that is one of the things that say sort of worry, that eats you up thinking: 'Could I, should I have taken the chance and hit the, sort of, used the aggression myself?'"* (Len)

It is suggested that the nature of unfulfilled schema for enactment may be gender coloured, in that men may feel a greater expectation to act in terms of counter-attack or resistance of domination. Such blueprints for enactment tended to be framed within the notion of the **hero**, a discursive construction of masculinity which manifested in the interviews and will be explored further. However, the presence of **failed enactment** concerns in the interview texts was noted in both obvious and more subtle forms. An example of this more subtle suggestion of preoccupation with possible alternatives for behaviour is also provided:

*"I: Did you think about it quite a lot, or?"*

*S: Mmm, I still do.*

*I: You do, yah?*

*S: I do, I did think about it, I don't like really feel scared about it (mm), I just, more than anything I try to work out where they were (mm), or like, uh ...yah, where they were, or like how they did it, (mm) because I don't even know that. I was like so tired (mm) and I was so asleep (mm) I didn't even see them coming (mm,mm), just, just that I'd be aware more than anything."* (Nigel)

Whilst the last quotes **implies** that greater awareness might have allowed for alternative enactment, the other two pieces of text make very explicit the interviewee's fantasy that better alternatives may have been possible in which they could have taken responsibility for behaving more effectively. Confirming the theoretical premise that such ruminations are repetitive and absorb a good deal of psychic energy, as in the Freudian notion of repetition compulsion, is the use of terms such as *"Still often...when I've been thinking about it; ask yourself a million times; that eats you up thinking; and; more than anything I try to work out"*. Since such concerns are

not always reflective of self-blame, they appear to reflect more significantly a need to exercise mastery in retrospect. This would tend to confirm Lifton's premise that rumination over failed enactment reflects the inability of the trauma survivor to make the image of potential action animate in the situation.

In the case of these men it appears that such action images may be generated both during the event and retrospectively. If it appeared that there were choice points of which the interviewee was cognisant at the time, these appeared to exercise a particularly strong pull. This suggests a stimulating point for further exploration in relation to Lifton's concept of failed enactment. There may be some distinction between schemata generated during, as opposed to after, the incident which has different implications for intensity of related emotion and fixation to the event. In addition, such preoccupation appeared to be more prevalent in interviewees who evidenced a strong need for control more generally in their lives, again confirming observations to this effect by Wortman (1983) and Bard and Sangrey (1979). Thus masculinized individuals may be more vulnerable to preoccupation with failed enactment.

#### 11.3.1.4 Efficacy and Reactivity

A further aspect of preoccupation with doing was noteworthy in the interviews. Not only did there appear to be a degree of contradiction between the generic impulse towards compliance and some evidence of preoccupation with failed enactment, there was also an intriguing dimension to interviewee's evaluations in that they wished to evaluate their exercise of effective behaviour in the situation as voluntary and under their control.

In the descriptions of the incidents it was evident that several men had behaved in a manner which could be construed as effective in contributing to their own or others' survival or diminishing the impact of the trauma. Such behaviour went beyond the demonstration of compliance and involved activity which had altered the possible course of events in a way which was constructive to those under threat, as illustrated in the following quotation. However as indicated it seemed very important to these men to evaluate their behaviours as volitional.

"I, I, I, think, I remember thinking that if I stayed in the car they, they might drive off with me (mm,mm), and I, I had to get out of the car (mm). I mean they said, 'Take the car out'. I don't know why I didn't take it out right onto the road (mm, mm). You know, instead I, I just put it on (mm), on a slight downhill (mm) with the handbrake on. I mean w-why didn't I drive right out onto the road (yah) with them (yah). I dunno (mm), because I, I think, I think um, I might have thought that they were going to drive off with me (mm,mm). And I've heard (mm) horrific stories about people locked in boots (yah), and then, the car set alight (yah) and things like that (Yeah, yah). So, perhaps subconsciously (yah) that was in my mind." (Roger)

This statement seems to suggest some concern with whether Roger felt he was effective through the exercise of conscious motivation, with the implication that such pre-meditation would have been more laudable, however, in the end he resorts to the notion of a *subconscious* motivation. Other interviewee's made use of the term "*instinctual*" in describing their responses, also suggesting action generated without conscious volition. It would seem that the exercise of adaptive behaviour is not sufficient to restore a sense of control but requires the further dimension of intentionality or planning. In some respects interviewees appeared to be making a distinction between what could be considered re-active behaviour as opposed to pro-active behaviour. It seemed that behaviour could only be internalized as effective if it was viewed as proactive, conscious and voluntary. In finding a developmental analogy, it would seem that there is little satisfaction in the exercise of control if this is perceived as involuntary or at the behest of an external agency. Full exercise of autonomy requires the opportunity to regulate behaviour agentically, i.e., with the self as the driving force behind operating.

A further factor emerged as important in determining whether effective behaviour was internalized as a source of satisfaction. Interviewees appeared to be assessing their actions in terms of some ideal, social blueprint for behaviour in such situations. Wood and Rennie's (1994) research into rape construal tends to support the notion that such sets of social expectations for victimizing situations appear to exist. Where their behaviour was discrepant with such implicit expectations, even if it could objectively be construed as effective, interviewees in the present study tended to discount the import of such behaviour.

In the context of male victimization by criminal attack, as suggested previously, the blueprint for activity tended to constellate around the archetype or discourse of the **hero**. Whilst this construct

will be elaborated in the section giving explicit attention to the masculine dimensions of the findings, at this point it is important to illustrate this feature of the data by means of an example. One subject, Miles, discussed his concern with this discrepancy between an idealized set of expectations and his enacted behaviour very clearly. In describing his response to the admiration of several work colleagues for his behaviour during the incident he used the words: "*I was, I didn't, it didn't go down well at all, I was very, as I say I was really disturbed by it*". He attributed his disturbance to the fact that in his own evaluation of his behaviour, he had not lived up to the stereotype of the hero and had in fact felt constrained to operate within the confines of the situation as controlled by the demands of the robbers. He made the following comment in explaining his discomfort with the perception of himself by others as heroic:

*"I hadn't done anything (mm, mm). I'd actually done everything that a hero shouldn't have done. I hadn't jumped over the counter (nm), I hadn't bopped him one, I hadn't kinda done all the things a hero's meant to do (mm,mm). I had actually completely and utterly succumbed, um just to make sure no one got hurt (mm), and so, ..... for me that's one of the biggest issues that just completely threw my reality, was gone."* (Miles)

In a sense Miles' adherence to an archetypal construction of heroism appeared to take precedence over the experience in reality. The tensions thrown up by the juxtaposition of social expectations and personal experience appeared to be particularly poignant in his case precisely because of the fact that the label of **hero** had been attached to him. Miles himself describes the confrontation with this discrepancy as "*completely throwing his reality*". What he appears to be demonstrating in effect is the extremely disquieting impact of being called upon to revise the influence of social constructions upon his schemata pertaining to efficacy and bravery.

Thus whilst several interviewees had exercised adaptive behaviours, their perception of their own actions was not uncomplicated and such tensions need to be explored in responding to the complex phenomenon of self-evaluation of enactment, or its lack. Both the issue of voluntarism and the weight of social blueprints for action appeared of significance in the self-evaluation of behaviour as effective.

Thus far the discussion of Control as Doing has emphasized the importance of experiencing oneself as having, or lacking, agency or efficacy in situations of extreme threat. It seems clear that

the opportunity and capacity to regulate input and to act upon the environment pro-actively are operations intrinsic to human functioning and are operations which are very much taken for granted once a person has acquired them developmentally. In this sense these aspects of personal control are in all likelihood the basis of core schemata, crystallised pre-verbally and consolidated particularly during the developmental stage of autonomy versus shame and doubt. The rupture of these schemata in exposure to trauma appears almost to defy description, but was generally encapsulated in the kinds of preoccupations illustrated thus far.

### 11.3.2 Control in Being

In existential terms, a further set of concerns relating to loss of control emerged in the form of preoccupations at the level of **being**. Interviewees evidenced difficulties not only at the interface between the self and the world and in operating effectively in the world, but also at the more internal level of being. The themes discussed in this respect tend to relate to the second set of synonyms for control focussing around notions of inhibition and restraint.

#### 11.3.2.1 Experiencing the Self as Powerless or Helpless

Almost without exception the men interviewed for the study reported that the traumatic encounter had produced the most marked sense of helplessness that they had ever experienced. The following quotation illustrates this recognition of intense helplessness:

*I: Have you ever had any other experience like that in your life?*

*S: No.*

*I: So it was a most..*

*S: Helpless*

*I: The most significant experience?*

*S: The most helpless I've ever been in my life, the most helpless situation I've ever been in, where I couldn't do anything about it." (Garth)*

In many respects a feeling of helplessness most clearly represents the experience of being out of control and has been described as a common core dimension of traumatic exposure. It is as if the

loss of autonomy and volition described previously, result in a concomitant alteration in the sense of self, epitomized in the sense of oneself as impotent. The term helpless can be unpacked as meaning something of the nature of *less* or *without help*. Rather than reflecting an inability to rely on external sources of assistance the implication is that the self is experienced as resourceless and in this respect as unable to help the self. Although they were willing to acknowledge having experienced such a state of being, many of the interviewees seemed shocked or put out at their incapacitation. Such experiences were perceived as context appropriate and yet as deeply alien.

It is clear that being in a state of helplessness has regressive connotations associated with a state of being prior to the acquisition of autonomy or initiative. Such feelings of helplessness are likely to evoke fears of passivity and dependency, fears which may be perceived as threatening to masculine identity. In addition to feeling impotent, resourceless or passive, helplessness was also connected to an awareness of being which was more clearly interpersonally defined.

#### 11.3.2.2 Feeling Dominated or Humiliated

Several men drew attention in the course of the interviews to the exercise of authority by the attackers and to the sense of being at the mercy of another person's actions. In some cases this was described at the level of awareness of loss of power in the face of the other's exercise of power:

*"I: Yah, so I mean, is, did you feel quite helpless in some ways?*

*S: Absolutely. You know, when we were that close I could actually look into the barrel of that gun. And where the other bullets should be, I was actually.. It was like black. I couldn't see if there were bullets. Now going through your mind or mine is the big thing is, he has the right to kill me or let me go. That I virtually accepted. I thought, 'This man can kill me.' and what I felt is I had no choice in the matter. It wasn't something that I could decide... he had the choice. So I think basically that's why I did as I was told because you know, besides begging for your life, the only way to sort of retain it is to do what you are told." (Len)*

There is an implicit reciprocity of relationship expressed in the phrases *he has the right to kill me or let me go* and *"he had the choice"* on the one hand; and on the other hand, *"I virtually accepted"* and *"It wasn't something I could decide"*. This kind of recognition of interpersonal

dominance was evidenced in other instances across the sample and generally provoked considerable dis-ease with location in the recipient position.

*"And I could feel he had his finger gripped in my belt at the back (mm), you know (mm,mm). Just gently you know, so that I couldn't run away (mm). And it was, oh, it was a terrible feeling too." (Roger)*

In some instances the experience of domination was exaggerated by displays of what were viewed to be gratuitous expressions of aggression and control on the part of the attackers:

*"S: Yah, um, then again, which is very impressionable, he said again to him: 'Shoot him.' You see.*

*I: Three times?*

*S: Yah, which he didn't do (mm)." (Justin)*

*"I was lying on the ground, they were carrying on, pulling drawers out and moving boxes and one just walked up to me and uh, you know as he bloody went past, kicked me in the groin, You know, 2 centimetres over and I would have been finished. Um, in the testes. As it was I was purple afterwards." (Matt)*

Stemming from interviews with criminals, Marsh and Campbell (1993) as earlier discussed, point out that robbery represents a transition from mugging and theft where incidents are either almost anonymous or without inter-personal exchange. In making the transition to robbery, the assailant is required to demonstrate interpersonal dominance. In such exchanges the victim is forced into a reciprocal relationship in which their role is to represent subjugation. Marsh and Campbell argue: "In declaring the crime, the robber declares himself to be in charge, and insubordination by the victim is a direct challenge to that control.... This pervasive sense of competition, of the immanent exploitation of vulnerability, of the danger's of ever letting down one's guard, has a uniquely masculine flavour." (1993, p.101). This taking charge of the situation and curbing of insubordination seem to manifest in the description of the robber's behaviour in the previous example. Whilst this serves to confirm characteristics of assailants rather than victims, the interviewee's appeared to experience their reciprocal interpolation into the position of captive. Even where threat of, rather than overt, violence pertained, this sense of subjugation was still generally in evidence.

In comparing the assumptive implications of criminal victimization as opposed to impersonal disasters Janoff-Bulman (1985) argues that the experience is **humiliating** rather than merely humbling since the "powerless and helplessness of the crime victim are perceived in relation to the acts of another human being" (p.507). This argument tends to have been borne out in the study as illustrated in the quotation cited below:

*I: Were they authoritative about taking you into the house?*

*S: Yeah, they also told me, you know: 'Do this' or 'Do that'.*

*I: So they instructed you (Yah) rather than asking you?*

*S: Yah, there was no option.*

*I: Was that unusual for you (Yah), being instructed? (Yah). Was that part of the frustration?*

*S: Mmm. Definitely.*

*I: Did you feel humiliated at all?*

*S: Definitely.*

*I: So it was as strong as that?*

*S: Yah, humiliation. I mean you're thrown on the floor and...*

*I: And they actually threw you physically on the floor? (Yah), so that you fell (yah) rather than um lay down.*

*S: They tied my hands and then threw, threw me down and then once I'm down they tied my legs." (Garth)*

Thus in the case of human inflicted trauma, such as violent crime, interpersonal subjugation is clearly experienced (Bard and Sangrey, 1979; Janoff-Bulman, 1985; Stanko, 1995). Janoff-Bulman uses the description of "having 'lost' to another human being" as in the sense of some contest (1985, p.507). Such encounters appear once again to lend themselves to particular gender interpretations. Masculinity is associated with the exercise of dominance and competitiveness as argued by Marsh and Campbell (1993) from an alternative perspective. The implications of being dominated or humiliated for men appear to carry particular meanings which will be explored further.

At the level of being out of control there is one further theme which emerged as particularly salient in interviewee's descriptions of their responses to these life-threatening incidents.

### 11.3.2.3 Unboundaried: Experience and Expression of Emotion

The preoccupation with emotion and its expression is verified by the fairly large number of units coded under the heading “Emotional Expression” (130) and its overlap with the category of control (50% of Emotional Expression Units). For almost all the men interviewed there appeared to be concerns about vulnerability to symptoms but more particularly to unregulated and unfamiliar displays of emotion. At the level of being, interviewees seemed to perceive themselves as unboundaried in the sense of being unable to regulate and control emotion. The bulk of interview data relevant to this theme related to the men’s concern with the manifestation of a loss of control in the expression of emotion in the period subsequent to the trauma. However, many of the interviewees acknowledged that they had experienced considerable fear during the incident:

*“On the day I was quite shaken (mm, mm) um... my boss is wonderful, she's great (mm)... 'cause she came to the shop and spoke to everybody and she saw me standing at the back. She said: 'Miles are you alright?' So I said: 'No I'm fine.', um... 'hen they noticed that actually I'm not fine...um..she said: 'What's wrong?' So I said: 'I was very scared, for the first time in my life I was scared. I've been in countless situations, um... and I've never been as scared as I was when they closed that door. I was terrified and I'm not coping with the fact that I was scared (mm). I really am not (mm). It's freaking me out completely.'” (Miles)*

*“I was freaked enough to be out of control, yah, I mean I'd gone beyond terror and panic, I mean I'd gone into...” (Miles)*

Other interviewees described feeling shaky, tearful and weak during and immediately after the incident. Thus there appeared to be clear evidence of emotional and related physiological decompensation. Whilst this is not surprising given the extremity of circumstance and is quite in keeping with descriptions of acute responses to trauma, such experiences are likely to be ego-dystonic for individuals who have previously demonstrated little emotion and prided themselves on control. These feelings of fear and vulnerability tended to continue in the wake of the experience and most of the interviewees described symptoms in keeping with increased anxiety, particularly in situations which evoked associations to the traumatic incident.

The concern with loss of control of emotion became more marked in discussions of responses subsequent to the trauma. Whilst the predominant emotion described during the incident was fear, aftermath responses tended to take the form of both pain and anger. Most of the men indicated that they had been tearful at some point after the experience and as already mentioned, several of the interviewees appeared to be on the point of crying at specific points during the interviews. It is unclear whether weeping was indicative of sadness, grief, tension or in some cases, of frustration, but it seems reasonable to assume that generally crying was associated with feelings of vulnerability. Few of the men were entirely comfortable with these demonstrations of vulnerability, even when they demonstrated a more gender sensitive awareness that it is acceptable for men to cry or to show feeling:

*"And you know the part if you look at work, say your concentration's on the job and everything is going well. Then you'll perhaps meet someone who's heard about it. Then they ask you and you've got to go through it again. And then um, (pause), somebody will perhaps ask about Karen (wife) and the kids, and that's the part that I find actually eats into me when basically now having, describing, your voice goes all squeaky. And I think I definitely can't become tearful (laughs) in front of this customer or whoever, (mm, mm, mm). And that is the hard part. That I find is the most difficult part in dealing with it. I think at home if perhaps I was to cry in front of a friend or somebody or a relation, I'd perhaps feel at ease with it. But now with a business associate you suddenly feel very uncomfortable, (mm, mm, mm). And you can't actually control it because before you've spoken a few words, I mean, and your voice has gone squeaky (laughs), you know basically you've got to that situation and like you know so your throat dries up, everything. So that to me is actually the worst part is where um, you're not pushed into a corner, but now, and also you've got one or two other work people who are perhaps also standing there and you feeling a total idiot." (Len)*

In this last statement Len twice refers to his considerable distress with what he experiences as a loss of control and by inference, potential loss of face, in displaying his distress, referring to this aspect of his behaviour as *"the most difficult part"* and *"the worst part"*. Giving way to emotion in a work context is posed as particularly distressing. The distress Len feels appears to be attached not only to the possibility of emotional display, but also to his sense of being out of control in that his voice pitch gives him away and he feels unable to control this physiological response and what is likely to follow. He appears to be voicing a difficulty with containment and repression of emotion and with the regulation of feeling one should expect of an adult, more particularly of a man in a business context. As in other instances, this example is a particularly clear indication of

apparent emotional unboundedness, but such distress at lack of emotional containment was evidenced in many other interviews. In its most extreme form, loss of emotional control appeared to conjure up notions of extreme decompensation:

*"People, some people you know they become nervous wrecks. They are people who aren't in a position to deal with that (Yah, yah) and if you openly discuss that, the person can fall apart. And then every time they go out in public they can become a natural wreck."* (Garth)

In this description the height of unboundariedness is expressed in the somewhat literal expression *"the person can fall apart"*. Thus the expression of emotional distress and pain appeared to be associated with embarrassment in its less severe forms, but extreme distress was associated with the spectre of a kind of total breakdown. These connotations to the expression of emotional pain arguably stem from an investment in a form of identity which values emotional suppression and restraint, a set of injunctions which are clearly more strongly masculine than feminine identified. The difficulty evidenced with emotional expression is also in accord with Stanko and Hobdell's (1993) observations of male victims' responses.

There was, however, a further dimension of emotional expression which requires more complex exploration in light of contradictory manifestations within the data. The theme of **anger** emerged as a very significant dimension (176 units) within the data analysis and so such warranted enriched discussion under a separate heading. According to Solomon (in Solomon and Levy, 1981) within the range of human emotions, anger is most acceptable in the repertoire of boys and men. Whilst emotional inhibition is desirable in the main, anger may be an acceptable expression of masculinity under certain circumstances. Interestingly, few of the men were aware of feeling anger during the course of the incident, many of them describing degrees of dissociation or feelings of fear. However, subsequent to the event anger appeared to be a prevalent and predominant emotion.

Contrary perhaps to popular theory, few of the interviewees felt entirely comfortable with this anger. It is suggested that in similar vein to other significant emotions (eg., pain and fear), the feeling of being unbounded or out of control in the face of angry emotions outweighed the possible legitimacy of this specific form of emotional expression for men. The complexity of the theme of anger will be explored in a further discussion section. Suffice to emphasize at this point

that at the level of being, emotional loss of control was experienced as particularly difficult for most of the men in the study.

In summary, concerns with loss of control at the level of being can be encapsulated as encompassing the experience of helplessness, the recognition of interpersonal subjugation and domination and the fear of emotional de-regulation. All of these aspects of being were poignantly described as having been imposed by exposure to traumatization leading to ruptures in core aspects of being or what could be described as self schemata.

The discussion now turns to an examination of those features of the experience which appeared to exacerbate these dimensions described as loss of control in **doing** and **being**. Thereafter, the interface of control themes with the construction of masculinity is explored in depth.

### 11.3.3 Exacerbating Factors

#### 11.3.3.1 The Welfare of Others

In relation to control as **doing** a factor that emerged as salient in constraining possibilities for action was the presence of others in the traumatic situation. In several instances employees or family members had also been party to the event. The presence of others, particularly what could be viewed as dependant others, appeared to compound interviewees' concerns about appropriate responses to the situation. The sense of pressure to assess the implications of any behaviour, not only for oneself but also for others, was particularly significant in relation to female partners and offspring. There appeared to be an assumption that such restraint upon action was non-negotiable.

*"Perhaps had it just been myself, and if say I had known they weren't armed, I would have perhaps given it a chance and also perhaps using their language to perhaps scare them into thinking the police or something is happening. You know, sort of just to, a decoy. But the fact that Timothy (son) was there, I felt my hands were tied."*

(Len)

This sense of responsibility seems to take pre-eminence over more risk taking behaviour while introducing a point of tension. It would seem that in these circumstances the role of **protector** and the role of **protector** may sometimes be at odds and lead to conflict. Interviewees

appeared to feel what approached resentment towards dependants for the constraints their presence placed on options for enactment:

*"S: For my family I know I made the right decision. But you know I wanna say to myself, well you should have given them a bloody hiding and finish.*

*I: And, so if you'd been there on your own, I know it's hypothetically... but...*

*S: I might have taken the chance, I would have taken the chance."*

Whether such potential activity is hypothetical or was indeed possible in reality appears irrelevant, since it is the perception of the restraint of responsibility that is important. It would seem that taking into account the welfare of others further complicates men's ability to be active or instrumental, particularly when this involves risk-taking. This is a possible source of tension which warrants exploration in addressing the impact of trauma upon men, or particularly, people in positions of responsibility.

#### 11.3.3.2 Public Scrutiny

A further factor which appeared to compound responses to the incident was what could be termed public scrutiny, largely identified in answers to interview questions about the responses of others to the individual in the aftermath of the experience. Both at the level of **doing** and at the level of **being** the impact of scrutiny was in the main negative.

For some of the sample the fact that exposure placed them in the public eye was uncomfortable irrespective of responses received. It was almost as if assuming the public identity of victim was outside of their control and placed them in a position of inferiority.

*"S: It was like you know people look at us in a different light, you know do they? But that's the way I felt. (Pause). I'm not the kind of person who wants people to feel sorry for me, but because of this event they would feel sorry for me (mm) and it's hard.*

*I: You didn't like that.*

*S: No, no... the last thing that I want is for people to feel sorry for me. And that's, that's like a ... people have never had pity for me, it's, it's, I can't stand that (mm)."* (Garth)

This quotation suggests that it is the scrutiny "*look at us in a different light*", surrounding being victimized which may elicit shame rather than the subjugation per se, or at least that any experienced humiliation is exaggerated by perceived observation. As a psychological phenomenon, shame is understood to be tied to the process of being observed and found lacking in some respect. Garth's reference to being pitied seems to indicate that he understood this response from others to reflect some sort of deficit in himself. It is evident that not all victims would necessarily perceive pity as disparaging as opposed to sympathetic. However, the substance of the dialogue confirms suggestions put forward in chapter seven that the status of victim is a fraught one, carrying both entitlement and loss of status.

It was of considerable interest that there was very little evidence of the kind of shame described above amongst the sample. The category only elicited 25 thematic units and was only explicitly mentioned in one instance.

*"S: ...but you know I wouldn't just openly come out and start chatting about it. It's something that I, it's like it was, it was, it was something that I wasn't, I was almost ashamed of it.*

*I: Yah, yah. What do you think that was to do with?*

*S: Yah, how can it happen to me?" (Garth)*

What this quotation reflects however, is that where shame was in evidence it tended to reinforce the idea that shame is more acutely experienced in interaction, i.e., in the light of scrutiny. Even to "*come out and start chatting about it*" seems too exposing, since it is anticipated that the response of others may produce feelings of derogation.

On the basis of those instances where shame (or embarrassment) was evident across interviews it is also tentatively speculated that men most at risk for shame are those who experience greatest difficulty with failed enactment. Where domination was accepted as inevitable and largely impersonal, shame appeared to be less likely.

It is also worth noting that the context of violence in South Africa may have played a role in diminishing propensity to shame. Janoff-Bulman (1995) cites work suggesting that part of the particular trauma of crime victims is that they feel in some way singled out for victimization.

Criminological studies of victimology have tended to reinforce notions that particular "vulnerable" individuals may somehow attract crime, by implication suggesting that some problematic quality in the individual may render them an easy target. The high incidence of crime in contemporary South Africa, in part attested to by media attention and middle class dinner conversations, has tended to produce some sense that criminal victimization is common, if not normative, amongst the white middle class. Almost all the interviewees made reference to family, friends or acquaintances who had also experienced criminal activity, if not violence. From this perspective interviewees were protected from the possible link between the perception of having been singled out for subjugation and shame. It also appeared that unlike rape victims, whose sexuality is personally implicated in such attacks, these male interviewees were able to some extent to divorce themselves from their possessions which were the target of the attack. These differences in response between male crime victims and rape survivors reinforces the assertion that social construction plays a central role in victim adjustment

Continuing with the theme of scrutiny two further points warrant discussion, the first in relation to failed enactment and the second in relation to emotional expression. In the case of failed enactment it was evident that responses from others either tended to reinforce existing preoccupations of interviewees or in some instances to provoke new areas of self-doubt about opportunities for enactment. The kinds of questions which produced such feelings of self-doubt both tended to come predominantly from other men, and to be entertained more strongly when they were volunteered by male observers. A typical description of such observer behaviour impact follows:

*"Yeh, that's the hard part (mm) you know, there's, I mean, people talk to you afterwards... 'You could have done this, you could have done that I'll say to them, 'You don't know how it feels.' (Mm, mm) 'Cause I've got... I mean they say, 'Paul why don't you carry a gun?'" (Paul)*

Thus in the main, becoming the subject of scrutiny involving evaluation of one's behaviour during the incident, tended to exacerbate self-doubt and discomfort. The impact of observation upon the expression of emotion was also negative in almost every instance. Even in the context of intimate relationships men felt compelled to maintain the image of "The Sturdy Oak". Public display of emotion, such as in the context of the interview or in work or social settings, was experienced as

considerably more discomfoting than private expression, although neither appeared to be entirely acceptable.

Whilst there was certainly some acknowledgement of the positive role of support amongst the sample, the sense of being scrutinized tended to elicit feelings of being found wanting in relation to being victimized, activity during the trauma and consequent emotional adjustment. This discomfort with being in the public gaze may contribute to men's under-reporting of victimization and difficulty with help-seeking.

In addition to the complicating factors of consideration of the welfare of others and the experience of being scrutinized, there was evidence that particular internal constructions of the event by the subjects themselves also contributed to the manner in which interviewees felt out of control. Both of these ways of framing the traumatic encounter centred around notions of contest.

#### 11.3.3.3 The Competitive/Adversarial Construction of the Traumatic Incident

It was apparent that several of the men had experienced the traumatic incident as an encounter with an adversary or adversaries in which the odds were stacked against them. In Stanko and Hobdell's (1993) study of male crime victims they observed that men tended to describe their experiences in this way, i.e., in terms of the metaphor of a fight or contest in which they weighed up the characteristics of the attacker almost as a co-contestant or competitor and placed emphasis on a "fair fight". In the present study it was clear from a range of statements largely encompassed under the heading **Adversary** (46 units) that interviewees had similarly assessed their assailants in terms of relative strength and aggressivity as illustrated in the following comment:

*"...so you know I understood the kind of person I was dealing with, obviously somebody who didn't have medical attention when he had his, when he got his facial wounds. (And?) And if he's got these wounds on his face, he's obviously been affected, he's done it before or been in a fight before, and not being somebody who gets in a fight every other night, I uh, wasn't prepared to take the chance, the risk." (Garth)*

In employing what appears to be a somewhat inappropriate metaphor, that of a contest, in the situation of a life threatening criminal event, these men were in turn compelled into a construction

of themselves as losers in the encounter. It seems that the generic situation of one man exercising power over another lends itself to construction as a contest, carrying particular connotations. This transposition of metaphor from condoned forms of competitive interaction to those outside social norms, leaves male victims vulnerable to the construction of themselves as having lost or failed in some way. In this study competitive encounter represented not only a contest of control against other men, but also an inversion of hegemonic power relations, in that white middle class men were being "defeated" by black, supposedly working class, men. Surprisingly however, there was little direct preoccupation with this kind of inversion of power.

It seems that in situations in which power is established predominantly through the use of violence there was little questioning of the control black criminals exercised over white business and professional men. This may reflect some awareness of different class attributes associated with masculinity as discussed earlier. Middle class men may see their power or potency as residing largely in economic intellectual and/or managerial skills, whereas working class men may place greater weight on physical attributes. Thus it is speculated that the apparent lack of indignation at the role inversion of power manifest in these incidents may be reflective of a reduction of competitiveness in situations in which middle class men feel their usual strengths are redundant and recognise the ascendancy of other criteria for domination.

The preoccupation with whether a gun or **weapon** may have been of use to the victim (present in both interviewee's and observer's reported responses), may be linked to this phenomenon. It could be argued that the possession of a weapon in any such interchange gives the bearer power over the other, almost as an extension of the propensity to be physically aggressive. Thus possession of a counter-weapon may be one way of levelling the playing field in a contest which is based on threat and enactment of aggression. The possession of a weapon also allows the contestation to move beyond physical strength, and rather to be placed upon access to such a resource and the ability or propensity to use it.

#### 11.3.3.4 The Fair Fight

Extending the contest metaphor, what was also notable in the data was some preoccupation with

the manner in which the contest was conducted. For several of the men there was considerable indignation about the use of excessive violence or responses of assailants which represented a lack of reciprocity in relation to the victim's behaviour. Whilst these sentiments are entirely understandable, they appear to reflect a further inappropriate extension of the contest/fight metaphor to the traumatic event which further compounded their sense of being out of control. The distress with victimization is exaggerated by the disruption of schema relating to fairness and playing by the rules. This kind of confusion is evident in the following quotation:

*"So you don't have the same anger (mm) as being beaten up for nothing (mm hm). You know if you wanna fight with someone, if you're big enough and strong enough to fight back and they injure you when you're fighting back, then you say: 'Right I gave you a re. on, I fought back or I resisted', then maybe you can understand his, his...(inaudible), but when he's doing the job, either for himself or someone, because it's a syndicate. But here you work, you made the decision to stay calm, no point in fighting because then you're the arm of violence and you're not going to do anything (Yah, yah), and you still get, land up with 3 cuts and a stab wound and you're basically bruised for 3 weeks. You know as you got bruised and having to have stitches and all that. And then my father, he's a small guy (mm mm), aged 69 (mm, mm). How much resistance can he put up? (Mmm) ...what for? (Yah). I mean you're lying on the ground... who're you going to call? No-one's gonna hear you. See... go inside, take what they want and then be over and get going, you're living. And then they can still walk up and they can kick you and stab you." (Matt)*

Implied in this fairly lengthy statement is the notion that certain rules apply in aggressive confrontation which justify particular sets of behaviours. By applying the rules of "fair fighting" to this context Matt seems to be suggesting that any act of resistance on the part of the one originally offended against, justifies retaliation or further violence. However, when as in this case, the attacked party puts up no resistance, it is incumbent upon the attacker to desist from attack, the game/battle has already been won by the surrender of the second party.

The evocation of the concept of "fair fighting" in this context appears to relate to broader perceptions of justice and predictability, including the notion of a **Just World**. In a Just World people play by the rules and harm is inflicted according to deservedness. By implication exposure to a situation in which it is apparent that the rules are not fair is likely to lead to questioning of Frame of Reference schemata which will be elaborated later.

Evidence of the use of this kind of contest metaphor carries further resonance with Janoff-Bulman's (1985) observation that criminal victimization can involve intense humiliation because of this parallel with the identity of loser. Stanko and Hobdell (1993) also observed that for some of the men who they interviewed preoccupation with the "unfairness" of the assault compounded their distress.

It is clear that several features exacerbated feelings of being out of control, both at the level of acting and at the level of experiencing. Compounding factors included not only situational factors but also more abstract influences such as the application of particular social constructions to the encounter. The ensuing discussion now focuses more explicitly on the interface between these observations about loss of control and how they may be informed by the social construction of masculinity.

#### 11.4 INTERFACE WITH MASCULINITY

Whilst the issues of concern raised above appear to have fairly universal applicability to human life, it is significant that such schemata are coloured by social, cultural and historical forces, one of which is gender expectations. The impact of masculine orientated expectations upon this area of functioning can only be inferred rather than irrefutably demonstrated, although arguments can be supported by the kind of illustrative examples presented thus far.

The discussion is broadly divided according to the two important dimensions of control, Control in Doing and Control in Being. To provide further structure to this exploration of the relationship between control issues and masculinity, the discussion is also constellated around the core constructions of masculinity proposed by Davis and Brannon (cited in Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982), those of "Give 'Em Hell, The Big Wheel, No Sissy Stuff and The Sturdy Oak". Whilst alternative frameworks may be equally applicable, these stereotypes appeared to carry particular resonance for the data and analysis discussed thus far. In addition they provide a useful framework for separating out collective sets of concerns.

### 11.4.1 Control in Doing

#### 11.4.1.1 Give 'Em Hell

Given some of the psychodynamic theory pertaining to early gender development, particularly that which is object relations orientated, it could be argued that masculinized individuals may struggle more deeply with issues of efficacy and agency. In sum, at the core of much of this theory is the argument that for boys dis-identification with the mother and identification with the father involves early and compelling negation of dependency needs and demonstration of self-sufficiency (Chodorow, 1994a). It may well be that such injunctions create an unbearable disjunction for masculine-identified trauma survivors who are confronted, even if temporarily, with their own loss of autonomy resonating with earlier developmental conflicts.

In addition to this more speculative premise, it has also been well documented that the construct of masculinity is centrally tied to instrumentality. Initiated with the early work of Parsons (1954) the distinction between masculinity and femininity in Western thought has been clearly linked to the poles of instrumentality versus expressiveness, as elaborated for example, in many aspects of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) and related scales (Bem, 1977). To be instrumental is to be active as opposed to passive and implies pro-activity rather than re-activity. To be masculine thus entails demonstrating this capacity for initiation and expenditure of energy, the exercise of agency. Thus once again, the idea of failed enactment appears to be more discrepant for masculinity than femininity, carrying greater disjuncture and by implication an increased sense of psychic disruption and anxiety. It is certainly not being suggested that feminine identified trauma survivors will not be pre-occupied with failed enactment. Rather what is being proposed is that men who have embraced instrumentality as part of their masculine identity may find their response to this aspect of their traumatization compounded by such expectations and may experience greater distress. This proposition was to some extent confirmed by the significant pre-occupation with control and the intensity of feeling evidenced in relation to the constraints placed upon acting instrumentally evidenced by many of the men interviewed.

*"I: I know, I know. But did it change your sense of yourself as a man at all do you think?"*

*S: No, the only thing is, that you know I couldn't really do anything. And that frustrated me (mm). (Pause)."*  
(Garth)

Expanding upon the construct of instrumentality, it is useful to focus explicitly on the stereotype of "Give 'Em Hell". Not only are men not expected to be passive, they are conjoined to actively demonstrate prowess. To repeat an earlier observation from the theoretical exploration of masculinity, "Daring violence, aggression and risk-taking are part of this dimension....Boys are taught that once confronted with a potentially violent situation, they are expected to use violence rather than other methods of potential problem solving in response... One is always expected to fight to protect an external part of one's masculinity, including one's money, business or wife" (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, ps. 66 and 67). This recognition of what is expected of a man in situations of threat is cogently captured in Miles' remark cited previously in which he refers to having done "*everything a hero shouldn't*" and describes "*leaping over the counter and bopping him one*" as representing the idealized response. Similar constructions were evident in numerous other cases, including for example, comparisons with other risk invoking situations (such as military incidents), suggesting that interviewees were aware of some injunction to behave in the same way within the traumatic incident context.

One interviewee, Nigel, placed considerable emphasis on the fact that his fatigue had prevented him from clearly gauging the degree of threat he was exposed to and had allowed him to respond fairly passively to the situation. Whilst he appeared quite content with the nature of his response, it is possible that the formulation of his response as one dominated by fatigue protected him from any expectations or doubts about whether he should have responded more aggressively. His preoccupation with assessing where the attackers came from (illustrated previously) suggests that he may have felt some need to be potentially pro-active in any future such encounter. Thus there is considerable evidence to suggest that some men in this study were aware of social injunctions upon men to perform in ways consistent with the stereotype of "Give 'Em Hell" and that this complicated the responses of several of the interviewees.

Lastly it is also worth noting once again that the responses of others reported to have most negative impact for the interviewees were generally those coming from other men rather than women. The social psychological research on attributions and victimization has identified a tendency for observers to attempt to dis-identify with victims, with complex factors coming into play the more closely the observer identifies with the victim (Wortman, 1983). Literature on

masculinity has also suggested that because of the hard-won attainment of masculine identity and the ascendance of hegemonic forms of masculinity, men tend to impose strict prohibitions upon other men in relation to non-conventional behaviour. Men in positions of domination also seek to entrench masculinist ideologies by co-opting other men into the maintenance of reinforcing stereotypes. Both attributional and masculinist factors may thus have been at play in the reported responses of other men to the interviewees. The suggestion that more pro-active, aggressive responses may have been available to the men in this study allows other men to maintain the "Give 'Em Hell" stereotype even in the face of conflicting evidence. Most of the subjects were aware of this contradiction at some level, sometimes eliciting anger about the impossibility of such expectations. For many of the others this perception was tolerated rather than challenged and in some cases they themselves engaged in compensatory fantasy scenarios. For example, James accepted that in the armed robbery in his shop he had no option but to comply, but believed that in a hijack situation he would take greater risks to escape, and Garth asserted that he would respond more aggressively in any future scenario.

*"I: Did you worry that it might happen again?"*

*S: No, no. I think I'm more fearless now. If it happens to me again I'd most probably react a lot more strongly, a lot more violently, (mm, hm), and whether that's good or not I don't know, but, but um... I think it would be pretty violent."*

It would seem then that masculine stereotypes and discourses in this area are deeply entrenched and that even in the face of conflicting evidence, such perceptions are protected.

#### **11.4.2 Control in Being**

##### **11.4.2.1 The Big Wheel**

In addition to preoccupations with doing in terms of efficacy and instrumentality it was also demonstrated that interviewees were concerned with issues of being. The dimension of control concerning being would seem to dovetail most clearly with the stereotype of "The Big Wheel" (Davis and Brannon 1976 cited in Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982). This stereotype encapsulates a pre-occupation with power largely tied to status in the world of work and achievement (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982), carrying with it the related right to make

demands on others (Eagley, 1983). Thus the construct implies success in competition represented in domination over others and the authority to direct and steer social processes.

As already indicated, contrary to expectation, the ten men interviewed evidenced little pre-occupation with their lack of dominance and their subjugation within the context of these violent attacks. There was certainly an awareness of helplessness in the face of the exercise of control by others, but in most cases this was not associated with evident humiliation or shame. Instead preoccupation with domination was expressed in relation to restrictions placed upon the capacity to act or escape the situation. There was little sense that these men sought to reverse the roles of persecutor and victim within the context of the trauma, but rather that their first instinct was to demonstrate compliance in order to survive and in this sense not to antagonise the attackers by questioning their authority. Posttraumatic revenge fantasies and demonstration of aggression may reflect a different dynamic which comes into play once the immediate threat is no longer present and the self has the luxury of attempting to evaluate and integrate the experience in hindsight. However, in the moment of the trauma early developmental needs for survival and autonomy appear predominant.

The lack of pre-occupation with the inversion of hegemonic masculine power has already been explored to some extent. The theory around hegemonic (white, middle class, heterosexual, non-feminist) masculinity would suggest that part of the demonstration of masculinity lies in the capacity to dominate other, particularly non-hegemonically masculine, men. In this respect to be dominated by black, apparently working class men represents an inversion of the proper order of things. It has been speculated that the lack of overt pre-occupation with this issue amongst interviewees may pertain to a recognition of the ascendance of different masculine class capabilities in different contexts, in this case the capacity for physical violence being privileged. However, it is interesting to observe that considerable anti-black racism and a disillusionment with the current dispensation emerged in the cluster relating to context specific codes. These more generalized perceptions may reflect a displaced awareness of these points of tension in the establishment of hegemonic masculinity. The particular race relations in post-election South Africa marked by a black president, a predominantly black government, Affirmative Action and a culture of Africanism also cannot be excluded from consideration. Although there was little overt mention

of these changes, it is impossible that these men were not aware of the rapid changes in racial hierarchy taking place in the country and this may have coloured their perceptions of race and masculinity. This issue will be pursued further later.

Continuing with this discussion of entitlement to dominance it was apparent that the use of weaponry was the predominant basis for the compliance the interviewees demonstrated. Linking this observation more speculatively to Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, it could be argued that the person in possession of the gun in this context is the person who holds the phallus or the primary signifier (Segal, 1990). Whilst this may seem a somewhat literal interpretation of theory, in the context of trauma the occupation of the seat of power tends to be tied to the physical and material rather than the verbal, as evidenced in the minimal verbal exchanges reported during the incidents. Under these circumstances the party without the weapon is the one who lacks power and is thus robbed of the capacity to act, however impermanent the other's embodiment of the phallus. By implication it is this lack that is associated with femininity. Interestingly, in the two instances where verbal communication was possible (compounded by language barriers), both Len and Matt felt they used their verbal skills with some effect, and appeared to experience some sense of potency, lending some credibility to this tentative theoretical link.

Finally some brief commentary on the "fair fight" notion as an aspect of masculinity is warranted. Whilst this notion may reflect a particular sociocultural view of masculinity, embracing as it does the notion of gentlemanly values, it appears to have gained wide popularity as a value to be inculcated into young men and boys particularly. It seems that the regulation of competition amongst men is more necessary than amongst women, perhaps because of the competitiveness inherent in the display of masculinity. So entrenched is the construct of the "fair fight" that it may be applied to any situation in which a man/men exercises aggression against another man/men, as was the case in Stanko and Hobdell's (1993) study and some of the interviews of this study. What is of interest in the application of the construct in this study is its manifestation in an awareness of the rules around concession rather than active combat. Where the metaphor of fair fighting appeared to be invoked interviewees indicated that their role had been to concede the fight, i.e., not to put up any opposition and to make this clear. Thus the winner was apparent from the outset and was expected to behave with magnanimity towards his non-contesting opponent. The non-

compliance with these implicit rules left the victim with an increased sense of indignation and disbelief. In this case it appears that the social construction of the rules for combat between men are invoked in a somewhat inappropriate context and fall short as a premise for understanding the inter-relationships in this kind of criminal exchange. A sense of disillusionment may ensue from an uneasy recognition that such rules of combat are not universal or sacrosanct.

#### 11.4.2.2 No Sissy Stuff

The association of restraint and regulation with masculinity is based to a large degree in the connection of such capacities to rationality. A further central pole in the artificial male/female dichotomy is the pairing of masculinity with rationality and femininity with irrationality, frequently conflated with emotionality. In Freud's early work on gender differences he asserts that the super-ego is less well-developed in the female as demonstrated in women's greater difficulty in exercising absolute moral judgements, apparently because they are too influenced by emotion and attachments. Whilst this negative evaluation of feminine moral comprehension has been more positively re-conceptualized by for example, Gilligan (1982), the stereotype of the detached, cool, rational man and the empathic, emotional, irrational woman has persisted, represented again for example in the categorisation of such attributes on the BSRI. In chapter five it was argued that men are not so much precluded from demonstrating emotion, but that the range of emotions acceptable in men is far more limited than that in women. Men are allowed to express frustration and anger, and perhaps some happiness, but are precluded from expressing anxiety, fear, sadness and vulnerability. The expression of such feeling in boys after a certain age is strongly prohibited as in the maxim, "Big boys don't cry" and the stereotype "No Sissy Stuff".

The "Sissy Stuff" which men are enjoined not too display includes very centrally the expression of emotion. According to Solomon, "Emotionality is the province of women. Expressiveness is evidence of vulnerability, weakness and femininity. It means that one can 'break down' under stress." (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.62). Men are expected to "hold it together" even in situations of stress. Thus the almost involuntary experience and manifestation of emotion in many men following traumatization is likely to produce some anxiety about masculinity. As illustrated in prior discussion, several of the men in the study confirmed a sense that the display

of emotion was evidence of weakness and loss of control, and in this respect appeared to be unmanly. Interestingly responses to interview questions exploring their perceptions of possible gender differences in adjustment to trauma tended to confirm the distinction between male and female as primarily tied to the expression of emotion and loss of control. This distinction will be elaborated in the later discourse section of the discussion.

It was apparent that the associations between masculinity, and control in the form of rationality; and femininity, and loss of control in the form of panic and emotionality; informed the consciousness of these men. Interviewees who were concerned to restrain such emotional expression used terminology (*become a wreck, get inside you, take you over*) which suggested that they subscribed to the notion that emotion could overwhelm and lead to 'break down'. Their constraint tended to be directed at keeping such a possibility at bay. Extending this theme was a suggestion that display of emotion in the presence of others was particularly difficult, carrying shameful connotations. Some contexts were worse in this respect than others. Whilst some broadly feminist postulate that men can retain their masculinity and cry had been absorbed by a few of the men, this permission appeared to be context specific. It may be permissible for men to cry in the context of intense relationship exchanges, but it is expected that people and men in particular, retain their composure in work and professional situations. Particular role stereotypes thus remain unchallenged. Rationality prevails as a valued attribute in the public domain, and emotion should be restricted to the private or personal domain. The world of work remains the province of the masculine, hopefully uncontaminated by the feminine.

#### 11.4.2.3 The Sturdy Oak

Not only is the curbing of emotional expression related to the preservation of rationality and impersonality in the world of work and public interchange, it appears to carry further weight in protecting men against dependence. If the display of a certain spectrum of emotion reveals vulnerability and is associated with the need for comfort, reassurance and nurturance, it places the feeler in a potentially dependant position. Solomon argues that this is a second key dimension of "No Sissy Stuff", the preclusion of dependency in the sense of leaning on, or needing another. "However, dependency is seen as distinct from masculinity by most men, and is avoided, leading

to solitary activity and problem-solving, especially under stress" (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.63). This censure of dependency is positively reinforced by the invocation of the image of "The Sturdy Oak", encapsulating stoicism and self-sufficiency.

The tendency towards withdrawal in situations of intense distress has been briefly mentioned, but has also been remarked upon more generally in the literature on war veterans. The pattern of withdrawal may be consistent with some of the avoidance triad symptoms described as typical in DSM-IV, but in this respect represents a response style on the pathological continuum. Drawing upon a different theoretical formulation, it would seem that Karen Horney's (1937) typification of interpersonal styles of dealing with anxiety: Moving towards, moving against and moving away from; might add a useful conceptual dimension. Although Horney views these characteristic styles of response as personality facets evolved through developmental patterns, it is possible that the development of gender identity may skew this propensity in specific ways. Thus it is suggested that masculine identified individuals may share a tendency towards the "moving away from" style of anxiety management. In some cases "moving against" may also come into play as a means of avoiding dependency, but for masculine men, 'moving towards' may be difficult and unfamiliar.

This hypothesis, that masculine identified people may tend to move away from, rather than towards others in times of stress, has implications not only for intimacy but also for receptivity to counselling. If such men are afraid of emotional display and dependence, and in addition characteristically withdraw when anxious, it may be anathema to them to seek help from a professional whose role it is to facilitate some of these aspects. In addition, even the act of seeking/accepting counselling may be viewed as a sign of weakness since it demonstrates to others that one is in need. Janoff-Bulman and Frieze's (in Barnett et al, 1987) study on gender differences in responding to victimization tends to support the notion that men may find it more difficult to seek help or publically acknowledge such violation, as indicated in under-reporting of crime and less use of public services. They also suggest that this may be indicative of some shame associated with victimization in the first place and with aspects of dependency and exposure in the second place.

Nevertheless, in the current study four of the sample had been for debriefing/counselling of 1 to 4 sessions, and most indicated that they had found this helpful and would recommend such a course of action to others in similar situations. This may be because in some respects it was easier to demonstrate emotion and express vulnerability with someone outside of their immediate social context. These ideas will be explored more fully in the clinical commentary.

In conclusion much of the discussion on **control in being** has centred around the implications of loss of regulatory capacities, not only for a personal sense of retaining a familiar identity, but also for the anxiety associated with public perceptions of such loss of control over inhibitory functions. The second major focus of the thematic content analysis centres more explicitly on reactions consequent upon traumatization, including loss of self-esteem and unravelling of identity.

## **11.5 REACTIONS TO TRAUMATIZATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR IDENTITY**

(Clusters 1 and 2)

### **11.5.1 Undermining of Self-Esteem**

Although *Esteem* was the least significant of the CSDT categories in terms of number of coded units, it still emerged as an important category in the whole data set (87 units) and in the analytic impressions of the interviews. The maintenance of a favourable level of self-esteem is viewed as a core personality function by Epstein (in Pervin, 1990) and is implicated in Janoff-Bulman's (1992) basic assumption that the "Self is Worthy".

In much of the discussion thus far on loss of control, it has been apparent that deviation from customary and/or normative ways of acting and being, has negative implications for self-esteem. This finding is also in keeping with Kernis' (in Kernis, 1995) observations about links between agency, efficacy and self-esteem. For example loss of emotional control was perceived in some instances as unmanly and socially undesirable. In addition to the distress stemming from engagement with the trauma itself, in many instances further negativity appeared to be attached to a loss of control and other aspects of response. Thus far the evidence of self-esteem difficulties has been largely implicit in the analysis. However, self-esteem issues warrant more central attention.

The area in which self-esteem difficulties were most clearly apparent in the data, was in relation to interviewees' concerns with self-presentation in the light of having been attacked. The need to retain self-esteem is illustrated in the following quotations:

*"I haven't changed much (mm). I'm still very much the ... very much the doer, very much a doer, very positive kind of person. I've always been a very, very positive person (mm) and ah, a kind of optimist, and that hasn't changed."* (Hilton)

*"Yah, I'm not a person that panics, I'm a pretty calm person in that sort of situation where...well things can go wrong. I tend to react reasonably well in that sort of state and I can think clearly, (mm). But uh...."* (Garth)

*"I'm realizing it now that I'm actually standing back and looking at it, but I really, I think I really came to believe (laughs), that I was this 6 foot tall, very brave, very confident individual who was, would kind of lead the world to victory."* (Miles)

These kinds of descriptions represent aspects of identity which appear to be central to each interviewee's self image (self schemata) and to the enhancement of self-esteem. Whilst these descriptions of self characteristics seemed to serve the purpose of reinforcing such knowledge of the self, it is important not to neglect their interpersonal function in telling the interviewer about aspects of the self which should be positively construed. Without examining other assertions of the individual, it seemed that these remarks had some validity but that there were also contradictions between these descriptions of the self and other competing descriptions. In this respect the interviews illustrated some of the post-modernist philosophy of personality, i.e., that personality is fluid, multiple and even contradictory. However, it seemed clear that the maintenance of perceptions of the self as brave and confident served an important function in creating a sense of continuity of self and in validating self-worth.

The findings in this area tend to support Silver et al's (in Sarason et al, 1990) suggestion that victims face a self-presentational dilemma. If they appear undamaged they fail to gain sympathy, support and affirmation, and yet if they appear too severely decompensated they may evoke pity, distancing and censure from others. Given social stereotypes about masculinity, male victims may find it more difficult to balance on this tightrope of expectations.

### 11.5.2 Unravelling of Identity

Despite the kind of re-affirmation of personal identity illustrated above, it was apparent that several of the sample felt that aspects of their identity had been destabilized in the context of the trauma. Two instances of this unravelling of identity in relation to gender role were apparent in concerns with the roles of hero and head of household.

#### 11.5.2.1 The Hero Role

For several participants questioning of identity was focussed around their sense of themselves as heroic or lacking in bravery. In the one instance in which this personality constellation or identity had been central to the interviewee's prior self-image, the rupture in the solidity of this identity lead to a sense of wider disintegration. This is reflected in the following description of a reported conversation which took place between Miles and his parents subsequent to the traumatic incident:

*"That night I still said to them, 'This is me. I am not your hero anymore. I hate to tell you this, but you're the last people to know, but I'm not your hero anymore. I can't cope with anything anymore, I can't cope with life, I can't cope with work, I can't cope with my relationships, I can't cope with anything. I'm finished, there's nothing left. I'm stripped clean and I'm standing here theoretically naked in front of you and I'm sorry, this is not what you wanted me to be, for 20 years I've been a hero'."*

On the basis of clinical experience with male victims of trauma outside of the sample of the study, it is apparent that for those men who appear to have made attributes such as heroism core to their sense of identity, failure to demonstrate such capacities can be profoundly disruptive. The more discrepant their responses to these self expectations, the more serious the threat to the integrity of the personality. Although within the study none of the men demonstrated extreme decompensation in this respect, this has been observed in other clinical cases and generated some of the impetus for the study.

Miles also appeared to identify the origin of his self-expectations as in large part stemming from the internalization of such social expectations:

*"... you'll just blast them there, kind of (mm), um Braveheart style... sort of (mm, mm) and yah, it's, I suppose in a way ... the masculine image I've had is, has been quite fundamental to being a hero (mm, mm) or being the centre of everybody's kind of attention (mm)."*

Thus the locus of points of undermining of identity may be social rather than entirely personal in origin. It must be emphasized that although disturbing, the outcome of such disruptions in identity may not always be negative and in some cases may trigger a re-examination of aspects of identity which are experienced as beneficial over time.

#### 11.5.2.2 Head of the Household Role

A second focus of anxiety in the unravelling of identity emerged in relation to the sense of self as provider and protector. Although by no means all the men were heads of households per se, this heading serves to capture a dimension of identity relating to an understanding of oneself as a patriarch, the one who takes responsibility and makes decisions for an organisational structure, such as the family. Illustration of disruption of this role was most evident in Roger's discussion of the aftermath of the trauma.

*"But I think, looking back, almost the worst thing was, was the panic in, in the kitchen"(Roger)*

*"I was shouting at them to do this. And they were all shouting at me: 'Dad don't do that', you know (mm, mm, mm). I thought I could save the car you see (mm), by, by closing the gate (Yeah), so they couldn't get the car out (Yeah, yah). And they were saying: 'Don't do it because they'll come back and shoot us'."*

Faced with conflicting choices in terms of protecting property and family, Roger was called to question his judgement at this point by his children's alternative construction of the possible consequences of his action. He seemed to feel that he was unable to easily assume an authoritative role in his family in this instance.

*"No, I felt, kind of in, you know, as the head of the family and so on, that I should be telling people what to do. But also, Joy (Wife) also is (yah), is very much (yeah) the same."*

In this example conflict around decision-making power persisted after the traumatic incident in the form of preoccupation around closing his business and moving, and appeared to create a kind of skewing of authority within the marital dyad. Discrepancies in role expectancies, such as putting the safety of one's family (protector), before maximizing maintenance of earning potential (provider), appears to contribute to self-doubt, frustration and questioning of aspects of identity. In addition, such alterations in identity and role enactment have implications for established relationships and intimacy as further illustrated in a second example:

*"Okay the one thing, there is to say, I'm repeating myself. There are a number of issues where if I look at Karen (wife), I look at say a relationship, where because I'm now still alive, she feels say, too grateful. Where she's going: 'What if I had been dead? What would I have done now? What would I have done there?' So, perhaps if I was the type of man who wanted to abuse my wife, now would be an ideal opportunity. I could take, I would say: 'Listen you must just be grateful I'm here. Do as I say.' So I think her role is that she's become totally submissive where before she would say: 'Listen, I'm not accepting that'. Whereas now she's thinking twice: 'Well if he wasn't here.' So that is one thing that, so I'm not totally happy with that."*

In this case it seems that Len's wife's role has changed in relation to him, leading to a sense of discomfort with the degree of power he is able to wield in the relationship. Yet again, there are negative implications for intimacy in this reverse scenario. It would seem that not only diminishment of an accustomed role, but also its inflation, can lead to discomfort. In either case there is a feeling of being out of control in relation to one's external persona with concomitant alterations in identity, and anxiety to restore previously familiar self schemata.

## 11.6 INTERFACE WITH MASCULINITY

At the outset it must be acknowledged that a preoccupation with identity, self-image and self-esteem is not peculiar to sex or gender. However, some of the literature on masculinity suggests that the presentation of a public persona of a particular type may carry great import for the establishment of masculine identity. The psychodynamic proposal that men are enjoined to more actively demonstrate or assert their masculinity, supported in Gilmore's anthropological work (1990), as well as by observations in socialization literature that more rigid reinforcement schedules operate in relation to boys' behaviour (Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1982); lend

some credence to the possibility that image maintenance is of greater import in masculine identity. As alluded to already, the central stereotype of hegemonic, western masculinity of "The Sturdy Oak" conjures up notions of unyielding strength, of splendid self-sufficiency and of providing protective cover. Reinforcing the stereotype "No Sissy Stuff", the sturdy oak image provides the blueprint for acceptable behaviour rather than emphasizing what is prohibited. Solomon emphasizes the stoic qualities entertained within this portrayal of manhood, the "aura of invulnerability" (in Solomon and Levy, 1982, p.65), the self-reliance and the "omnicompetence". The kinds of self-descriptions interviewees evinced emphasized strength, calmness, optimism and a sense of not being easily rattled or shaken, tending to confirm that this stereotype had been incorporated into the identity of many of the men in the study. Deviation from this stereotype creates anxiety about the undermining of identity.

The idea of the "Head of Household" has its location firmly in a patriarchal social system, where 'the rule of the father' holds sway (Dobash and Dobash, 1979). This stereotype captures the principle that men are expected to direct women and children, particularly in the context of the family. The carrying of this responsibility entails providing for the material needs of the family unit and protecting them from external dangers. It has already been argued that this role image may be extended from the family to other social units in which men are expected to take charge. The roles of husband and father carry different connotations to those of wife and mother. The father/husband role depends on the maintenance of personal composure as embodied in the "The Sturdy Oak" and for this reason masculine identified men may be particularly at risk for self questioning in traumatic situations in which women and children or dependants are present.

The second self image area which arose as a focus of concern was that related to the display of what could broadly be termed, heroic qualities. This dimension is closely intertwined with both stoicism and protection of others and bears a strong relationship to the 'Give 'Em Hell' stereotype discussed previously. The discursive function of the notion of hero will be explored later. At this point suffice it to point out that where this construct had been internalized as a dimension of identity, or was evoked in the context of threat, the capacity to meet such heroic expectations, tended to affect self-esteem, even when the context was very clearly not conducive to displays of heroism.

In conclusion it is affirmed that in general the impact of trauma will be related to prior constructions of the self. The more aspects of identity that are experienced as core are challenged in the context of trauma, the greater the experience of distress will be. The more discrepant from the familiar experience of the self, the experience of the self in response to the trauma is, the greater the disruption to personality structure. Furthermore, the discrepancy between the social construction of masculinity and that of victim is likely to place men at greater risk in this respect, although it was also observed that radical questioning of self-image may in some instances take trauma survivors in positive as well as negative directions.

In concluding this section of the discussion on the impact of trauma on aspects of the experience of dimensions of control and identity, it is important to briefly reflect upon the defences and coping styles interviewees appeared to employ in dealing with such alterations to self.

## 11.7 COPING AND DEFENSIVE STYLES EMPLOYED

(Cluster 3)

Interviewees employed a range of strategies in dealing with the traumatic incident and its aftermath. Having experienced some of the alterations to self outlined in the previous sections of the discussion, it was to be anticipated that these men would engage in manoeuvres to minimize distress and cost to the self, some of which strategies were demonstrated in the course of the interviews. Several key coping and/or defensive styles stood out as most common across the sample. These included suppression/repression (indirectly coded under **emotional expression** in most instances), **minimization** and **displacement**. Each of these strategies will be briefly illustrated and elaborated.

### 11.7.1 Suppression and Repression

In the course of the interviews it became apparent that one method of dealing with the discomforting aspects of trauma, particularly the uncharacteristic expression of emotion, was to repress or suppress such associations. In some cases this defensive style was directly acknowledged. Given that repression is understood as an unconscious mechanism in classic

psychoanalytic usage, it would be correct to write of a mixture of suppression and repression taking place.

*"Um, I just became like that, hard (mm). Inside, inside it will probably eat you up because you've got no way to let it out (Yah, yah). And now you have this emotional wall around you and an incident like this (mm, mm, mm), you're fine. That is my defence and now you come near me, that's it. My defence now in a situation, as soon as you come near me, that's it (mm). I'm gonna wipe you out."* (Matt)

In this assertion Matt seems to be aware of the problems of repressing strong emotion and the fact that feelings of pain or terror may be displaced into aggression, a topic returned to later in this section. He also seems to be aware that repression of vulnerability involves distancing from others. Other men made more explicit reference to the constraints placed upon men in expressing vulnerability, or what they perceived as weakness, and their adherence to these expectations:

*"Um, you know to give you the, to say that one does not show emotion, you don't show that you've been affected, in a sense, I would say that is the only reason why I acted in the way that I did act (mm, mm). To give you an idea, it happened on the Wednesday evening (mm, mm). The Thursday was a public holiday and um... I organized beforehand that the guys in my studio would come in to come and work on Thursday and then they will take off a later date. (Right). And ahh, I got into the office, they got there around 7:30 in the morning, and ahh, after I'd been shot... this is the night before that I'd been shot(mm), I sat down and I worked since then to now...my butt off. I did not allow or would not allow any kind of um, what would you call it?... intimidation, psychological or emotional intimidation."* (Hilton)

In addition, Hilton went on to say: *"I'm not saying that I'm John Wayne in the process"*, but emphasized that he would not allow himself to ruminate to any great extent on the *"possible kind of repercussions"* of the event. The reference to the stoic, tough guy, cowboy figure of John Wayne, even as an idealized archetype, adds emphasis to the suggestion that emotional restraint is a particularly masculine injunction.

### 11.7.2 Minimization

In the case of minimization it was not unusual for interviewees to underplay their responses, to qualify acknowledgements of distress with statements to the effect that this wasn't so serious or

had been quickly alleviated, and to make downward comparisons with other trauma victims.

*"I think there's so much around and they've heard it from so, so many of our friends and near friends have, have had the incident (Yeah) now (Yah). I think, I think you get de-sensitized a little bit (Yeah, yeah, just...). Which in a way, its a good defence mechanism (mm) isn't it? (Mm). It enables you to carry on living a normal life."* (Roger)

This statement tends to confirm earlier suggestions that the likelihood that one is not a unique victim of crime dispels a degree of distress and also illustrates that some aspects of psychoanalytic thinking (*defence mechanism*) have become part of popular culture. However, in addition the quotation suggests that the downplaying of the enormity of such experiences allows one to retain a degree of control in "*living a normal life*".

*"It was a good hijacking, do you know what I mean (laughs), that's (Okay)like (Yah) you know like nothing happened, I mean like they didn't even take my computer, it was like sitting on the seat. And they, they took my wallet which had no money in it (mm mm). I never got hurt. All they took, and my keys, so, like from an emotional point of view, I think, I think I'm okay, but um (mm mm), (laughs), you never know, and um (mm mm) like I opened my eyes (mm mm) and that's what I think (mm mm). I feel like, if it didn't happen something worse could have happened (mm). It was like a, like a lesson to me sort of thing."* (Nigel)

These and other quotations appeared to reflect different means of diminishing the emotional impact of the event, often by the use of cognitive strategies such as pragmatism, intellectualizing, limiting thinking about it, making downward comparisons, or reframing the experience as a useful lesson learned. Such mechanisms bear some relationship to the kinds of cognitive manoeuvres Horowitz (1992) has outlined as salient in the processing of traumatic material, in this case perhaps related to "modes of thinking about" the material. They appear to bind anxiety and seem primarily directed towards containing what could be intense and overwhelming emotional and cognitive associations to the event.

### 11.7.3 Displacement

As was the case with the defences of repression and minimization, the use of the term displacement in the study referred to a broad range of related phenomena, perhaps not always

conforming to classic psychoanalytic uses of such terminology. The heading **Displacement** was used to code any material which appeared to illustrate a tendency to attribute feelings to others which may belong to the self, and also to the tendency to transfer/displace feelings from one context to another. It is interesting to note how frequently, in the course of discussing their emotional responses, interviewees resorted to more indirect forms of self-reference, using terms such as "*a person can...*"; and "*you*" or "*one*" rather than "*I*", indicating some tendency to distance from experience even grammatically. There was some indication of a propensity to displace feelings of vulnerability onto others, particularly female partners. It appeared that it was easier for interviewees to understand fearful and more emotionally expressive styles of reaction in their partners than in themselves. They were more comfortable with owning anger, but in this regard there was a displacement of a different kind in that the anger was displaced from the attackers to a range of other targets.

For example, Paul described episodes of intense rage when he would become like a "*raging bull*" and had threatened his girlfriend with shooting on occasion. He seemed to understand his aggression towards her as largely displaced in that he mentioned on several occasions that this kind of behaviour was "*not fair*" to her. For others this displacement was more general:

*"S: Oh, I can't tolerate that. But not even victims, it's just generally. People who can't stand up for themselves, whether it be in the workplace or the home, you know if somebody pushes them down all the time. It doesn't have to be, you don't have to be a victim of violence or anything, just the situation of somebody being overpowered and they're not prepared to stand up for themselves, I can't tolerate it.*

*I: So you probably would have been a bit like that before, but now..?*

*S: Yah, a little bit. Now it's stronger, it's much, much stronger. (Okay) And when it comes to that I get very angry and you know, if people aren't prepared to listen to what I'm telling them, I, I just say: 'Well listen do your own thing!'" (Garth)*

Part of Garth's frustration appears to lie in his inability to mobilize people, i.e., to demonstrate his effectiveness. However, it is also possible that his anger at perceived impotence in others is exacerbated by the displacement of feelings of judgement towards himself. Unlike Paul, the target of his aggression is not someone close to him, but rather towards the general "apathetic public". Within this general public, the South African government, key officials and black men in

particular, were the target of feelings of intense bitterness. Thus it is possible that such displacement of anger may lead not only to personal attack, but also to more generalized disillusionment, disengagement and racially prejudiced attitudes. For other interviewees such postulated displacement took the much milder form of impatience and irritability with intimates and others. However, it was apparent that displacement generally, but more particularly the displacement of anger, was a further area which contributed to problems with intimacy and the receipt of support.

#### 11.7.4 Engagement in Work or Occupational Role

Whilst not strictly speaking a defensive style, it is worth commenting on a fourth typical coping response represented in the rapid return to work, as illustrated in a prior example. For several of the interviewees immediate return to work and the taking on of an instrumental role in this context, represented the capacity to keep breakdown at bay. Not only did they appear to respond to some sense of obligation to their occupational role, but the ability to work seemed to provide reassurance that they were in control despite the pressures of the traumatic experience:

*"You know, I felt pretty strong in getting up and carrying on. The next day I was straight back to work and you know, I could stay home for 3 weeks and feel sorry for myself and that wouldn't benefit anybody."* (Garth)

It is debatable how successful or adaptive this method of coping is, and repercussions tended to vary across the sample. In some cases irritability and other forms of uncharacteristic behaviour emerged in the work context and in one instance was sufficiently concerning to the company to have led to a referral for debriefing. However, immersion in occupational role related tasks appeared to assist some interviewees to suppress and minimize the impact of the incident and to re-establish a sense of effectiveness in doing.

#### 11.7.5 Comparison of Styles of Coping

Whilst there are obviously inter-relationships between different styles of coping it is possible to make a tentative comment about the apparent adaptiveness of particular styles within the sample. It appeared that the men who made most apparent use of minimization presented with low levels

of symptomology on the IES-R. They also seemed to be relatively comfortable in discussing their experiences, but at certain points it felt as if it was difficult to elicit further associations to material. Although there did not seem to be any overt resistance to the interview process it was as if their style of adjustment precluded too much elaboration. In this regard some of the stress related research on coping with serious medical conditions suggests that contrary to expectation, minimization may be of benefit to the psychological condition of such patients (Janoff-Bulman and Wortman, 1977). The data from this study could very tentatively be viewed as confirming this suggestion. In addition, minimization can be viewed as a form of emotion- rather than problem-focussed coping, the former being recognized as more useful in situations where instrumental behaviour is precluded (Lazarus and Folkman, 1994). It may be that for men, a reasonably helpful, accessible style of emotion-focussed coping is minimization.

In contrast to minimization the data from the study suggests that displacement, suppression and repression may not be as adaptive. There were indications that such defensive styles could have later repercussions in acting out behaviour. The intensity of anger displayed by the men who apparently employed suppression suggested that there was a degree of displacement of emotion associated with vulnerability, into aggression and disparagement. It must be emphasized that these speculations about the value of alternative defensive styles are tentative and require further exploration, possibly through quantitative research in which one could control for severity of stressor. However, the apparent parallels between the stress and traumatic stress populations are engaging, as is the concordance of these findings with those of Stanko and Hobdell (1993) and Mendel (1995).

### 11.8 INTERFACE WITH MASCULINITY

It would seem that not only responses to traumatic threat, but also the defences employed to deal with such responses may be gender coloured. Whilst it is conceivable that the defensive styles described above may be demonstrated by both men and women, they tend to be styles of response which characterise masculine rather than feminine typified ways of dealing with pressure. Efforts appear to be directed at emotional containment and restraint, the avoidance of dependance, and the re-assertion of instrumentality. All these dimensions have been discussed previously as

characteristic of masculine enjoined behaviour. The nature of the typical defences utilized by the men in the study appears to further reinforce the image of "The Sturdy Oak". The employment of such defensive styles appears to carry mixed value, in some cases contributing to adjustment but in other instances producing further difficulties, for example a propensity for acting out aggression and diminished intimacy. The masculinized nature of defensive and coping styles also needs to be recognized in engaging with men in clinical settings as discussed later.

Having investigated the more behavioural and emotional aspects of interviewees' responses to dealing with life-threatening trauma, including adjustments at the level of being and doing and implications for self-image, the next major section of the discussion summarizes some of the key aspects of the study pertaining to the realm of cognition, belief and meaning.

## 11.9 FRAME OF REFERENCE

(Clusters 4 (Meaning Related Themes) and 5 (Context Specific Issues))

Drawn from McCann and Pearlman's CSTD theory, the heading of "Frame of Reference" is used to broadly encompass a further set of related themes which emerged from the data, those pertaining to how the interviewees **thought** about the trauma. The material discussed within this sub-section relates to concerns with meaning, belief and existential and world view schemata. In interpreting the data it also became apparent that it was virtually impossible to separate out such frame of reference concerns from contextual references. For example, future orientation reflected perceptions about the future of South Africa and racial attitudes were implicated in issues of trust. Thus this section of the analysis combines elements from both clusters 4 and 5. In addition, the discussion is reflective of two related dimensions which emerged from the data; firstly the nature of cognitions apparently arising out of the traumatic incident exposure, and secondly, the reactions which occurred in responses to the development of these schemata.

The most striking finding in the area of meaning was the powerful sense of **disillusionment** evidenced by the men. The pervasiveness of bitter, resigned and negatively toned schemata which emerged in the interview texts required the establishment of a specific code heading reflecting this preoccupation and in total 101 thematic units were coded under **disillusionment**. In order to

more clearly comprehend the substance of this category the discussion focuses on the notion of loss and upon the development of schemata which carry strong parallels with Janoff-Bulman's conceptualisation of the breakdown of core assumptions.

### 11.9.1 Loss

Inherent in many of the statements concerning attempts to understand or come to terms with the trauma was evidence of a sense of loss across a wide range of dimensions. Reflections of preoccupation with loss emerged in the following areas:

#### 11.9.1.1 Trust in the Future of the Self

*"I no longer think to myself that will only happen to other people (mm) in all situations (mm), whether it's uh ... from a physiological point of view or a motor accident or sickness or whatever, that I think that I am vulnerable. It's, it's come to a point now that I realize I am vulnerable (mm). I mean stupidly or naively, one sort of has a sense of immortality (mm). Uh.. you know and ... what happened to me is when I see a television programme and I see a skull there (mm), you know I can feel the skull... you know, my own skull. The vulnerability is now absolutely plain and simple to me (mm, mm), that we are as vulnerable as anything else and people are dying all the time and nobody cares a damn (mm)." (Justin)*

This powerfully expressive quotation reflects a profound confrontation with the significance of human existence and a central preoccupation with mortality and risk. For several of the interviewees the experience had produced this kind of existential concern with the integrity of being and an awareness of their fragility. Expressions such as *"snapped out of it like someone treads on an ant,"* and *"people are dying all the time and nobody cares a damn"*, capture a sense of human life, and more particularly their own, as expendable. It is evident that traumatization of this nature can have a profound impact on belief systems which may not always be overtly expressed, except when elicited in this kind of interview or counselling context. Such material also confirms Bard and Sangrey's (1979) observations that criminal victimization can confront victims with existential issues and impel them to question core life values. In addition, concerns in relation to the continuity of the self could also be viewed as resonating with the symptom described as a

“sense of fore-shortened future” (in DSM-IV and earlier classification systems), but these concerns appeared to carry a weight beyond this somewhat circumscribed DSM-IV definition.

#### 11.9.1.2 Trust in the Future of the Country

Perhaps more closely linked to the DSM-IV notion of a foreshortened future were opinions which emerged in relation to the future of South Africa. Although discussion about the future did not necessarily take on this symptomatic form amongst the interviewees, those who did voice such concerns presented pessimistic views of potential scenarios for criminal violence and South Africa. The present was generally unfavourably compared to the past and there was anxiety over the environment in which these men’s children would grow up. While some men were able to entertain a sense of continuity about their own lives it seemed that their anxieties were transmitted more strongly into their children.

*“S: But it’s a, it’s still left me with a terrible feeling of the country going one way (mm), which I (mm), which I hate (mm). You know, one’s kind of trapped (mm, mm), and I don’t, I often wonder how, how this ongoing situation in South Africa is going to affect (mm) our children (mm, mm). And I’m, I’m going to encourage them to leave.*

*I: Do you feel sad about that at all?*

*S: Yes, very sad, because you know (yah) why can’t I have a wonderful life with my children and ultimately their children (mm, mm). Although I don’t think of their children at this stage in my life. But why have they got to be, um, why can’t they ride their bicycles around the suburb (mm) like I did when I was young (mm, mm).” (Roger)*

There was little or no evidence of optimism about South Africa or in the capacity of the state to reduce crime. Despite some awareness that the present situation was the product of historical forces, there was no understanding of their current perspective as located within a period of transition which might produce change over a longer period of time. In this regard interviewees’ construction of the future seemed to be locked in the experience of the present.

#### 11.9.1.3 Trust in Others as Benign

Schemata relating to **trust** are centrally implicated in trauma adjustment in CSDT and as a coding

category **trust** encompassed 205 items. From the volume of responses assumed under the category it is clear that loss of trust in others was a primary preoccupation for all the subjects. In general terms this took the form of deep disturbance at the perceived callousness of the assailants and their apparent lack of respect for human life.

*"Well my, that hurt, I realized I was living afterwards about my life was at stake (mm, mm). The people who were doing it just had no value for life (mm), that's what hurt me." (Paul)*

*"...because I experienced the fact that 3 people treated 5 other people in a way that none of those people deserved it. Those peoples' lives were potentially a few millimetres away from death through the whole experience and you only had to pull the trigger that far (mm) and it had only to go once, and it would have been a bloodbath because the whole adrenalin hype would've just sent everybody over the top and that whole... everything hung ... on whether that guy fired that first shot or not, um... and we don't have the right to do that to each other (mm, mm)." (Miles)*

In these quotations it is the misuse of human agency and sense of interpersonal betrayal that appear to produce intense distress. There is evidence of a harsh confrontation with the fact that people may inflict harm upon others, in some cases without reason or provocation. This preoccupation with the betrayal of trust, whilst perhaps most extreme in the awareness of murderous capabilities in others, was pervasive in all the interviews. Janoff-Bulman (1985) argues that the experience of criminal victimization is particularly implicated in ruptures of interpersonal trust as it confronts the victims with the human capacity for evil. The term "evil" carries a particular resonance which seems justified in the context of the quotations cited, in which the sense of disbelief and outrage at the exercise of brutality is exemplified.

This loss of trust tended to persist after the incident and was clearly apparent in most men's responses at the time of interviewing. In addition, loss of trust was related not only to the behaviour of the assailants but also to acquaintances and particularly law enforcement agencies such as the South African Police Services (SAPS). In this respect much of the material relating to a perception of the world as unsafe and other people as untrustworthy was context dependant. There appeared to be a pervasive sense of disillusionment about the capacity of the South African government and law implementation forces to deal adequately with violation of these citizens. At

the level of direct interface with the police numerous comments were made about perceived incompetence.

*"I, I think the police is just incompetent in general.... they were just unbelievably incompetent." (Hilton)*

*"Frankly I think a lot of that disappointment was in the way the cops handled it. They never came, the fingerprints they took a few days later and they never came to take, they never came to, until we phoned them about 3 or 4 times to come and get our evidence." (Garth)*

*"... 'cause I think that the big, the frustrating part is that the police are doing nothing." (Len)*

Mistrust also appeared to have generalized to the public and to specific race groups as will be elaborated later. Thus alterations in trust schemata in the direction of loss of trust seemed to be enduring and fairly pervasive. In this respect interviewees' responses confirmed Janoff-Bulman's (1985) assertion that traumatic exposure to interpersonal violence particularly, produces ruptures in basic assumptions about the world and other people as generally benign. The small number of exceptions to the development of increased mistrust were reflected in comments manifesting appreciation of support from significant others, but this did not appear to counteract more powerful feelings of distrust of human agency more generally. It was apparent that a loss of trust contributed considerably to the palpable sense of disillusionment evident in the interviews.

#### 11.9.1.4 Trust in the Justice and Predictability of the World

Whilst the greatest area of preoccupation in relation to meaning covered themes relating to trust, there were also indications of concern with issues relating to order and justice. The sense of the intrusion of some form of chaos into life has already been encapsulated in previous quotations, the most central focus in this respect being the apparent disregard for human life:

*"The worst, the worst about it I would say is just there's no value for human life, hey (mm, mm). I mean for a person to do that to myself... or to anybody, just come in and blow your head off for your car, or your money, or something like that, to me... that's just uh, people are at the moment running around the country with guns of whatever they've got, to do what they want (mm, mm) and it's just not right. It's just not right." (Paul)*

In this quite complex statement Paul verbalizes concern about the abuse of power, about the value of life in relation to material possessions and about the rupture of social convention. His repeat of the words "*it's just not right*" suggests that there is a commonly understood 'right' form of human interchange which has been violated and a sense that such behaviour goes against the natural order. This feeling that order has become undermined was located within the context of post-election South Africa but reflected a more generalized sense of living in a world which was out of control. As in Paul's use of the phrase "*running around the country*", several other interviewees reflected a perception that South Africa was a country in which social regulation was under threat. There was an impression that crime had become so commonplace that it no longer evoked outrage on behalf of the victims.

*"No, no basically you know the whole problem is the problem with this, with this country (Yah). I mean a thing like that, it blows over after 2 days (Happens to a lot) yah, it happens to a lot of people. You know a few years ago, more people might have heard about it (Yah)."* (James)

*"The violent crime that takes place, like break-in, rape... just (mm) makes your other crime. look so much pettier (mm). White collar crime (mm), fraud (uh hm). Uh, 'cause a guy's stealing five hundred thousand rand, he's not hurting anyone (mm, mm). You know a guy takes a car, he's gonna get five thousand rand for it, or ten thousand rand for a hundred thousand rand vehicle (mm, mm). He's gonna kill me (mm mm). So which is the worst?"* (Matt)

In such notions of anarchy and loss of standards for judging right and wrong there is an implicit questioning of notions of justice and predictability. Exposure to criminal victimization of this nature appeared to elicit profound doubts about morality and coherence in many of the men. The perception of a world in which order was under threat stemmed not only from the perceived inability of the state or individuals to regulate the situation, but also from some contestation of Just World Theory and negative perceptions about the future.

Whilst material reflecting a preoccupation with Just World principles was limited (34 items), such concerns were present. Just World theory holds that in the main social attributions tend to be based on an assumption that loss and benefit are directly related to deservingness. For some of the interviewees an area of preoccupation in relation to meaning lay in the accumulation and loss

of wealth and assets, and this was the area in which Just World premises tended to be most clearly illustrated:

*"And I think the big thing is where you sit down and you say: 'Okay fine, you can't blame all the blacks for...it's the minority that are the criminal element.' But you still feel angry in the sense that now what you've worked for, like I'm saying in my case where there was no inheritance, nothing like that. What I've got is what we've worked for. And so it wasn't just given out by the government or it wasn't free. And I think that's the part that also makes me angry is that all of a sudden, you basically ask yourself: 'Why should I go and replace the car? Why should I do that because they can just take it away again?' And I think that's a question you ask yourself and it comes back to society, why are we not living in a society where you have rights?" (Len)*

*"And why work? Why work? A man is hungry and he steals a loaf of bread you know, he's hungry. A man walks in, uh, guns and knives and takes uh, what... the equivalent of twelve or thirteen thousand rand from a small business, in 12 minutes." (Matt)*

For some interviewees their sense of economic struggle and their subscription to a strong work ethic were viewed as factors which entitled them to reward rather than victimization. They seemed to be particularly disillusioned about the fact that they were undeserving victims, as if a Just World should act to protect them from this fate. It would seem that whilst there was a fairly pervasive sense of the prevalence of anarchy, the assumption of a just order was not necessarily uppermost in interviewees' concerns. However, where financial losses had been significant Just World beliefs tended to surface more clearly.

It was clear that direct exposure to life threat and crime had provoked doubts about pre-existing assumptions of meaningfulness and justice, and in this sense represented a loss of taken for granted beliefs which appeared to have provided a protective skin up until this point.

#### 11.9.1.5 Commentary on Loss of Beliefs

In general alterations in significant beliefs were in a direction consistent with those observed by both Janoff-Bulman (1985; 1992) and McCann and Pearlman (1990). There was evidence of rupture in the assumptions relating to the benevolence and meaningfulness of the world. In addition, the data was also clearly illustrative of loss of trust and faith in others and in alterations

to Frame of Reference, reflecting disruptions in schemata pertaining to hope, coherence and locus of control. However, what was particularly striking amongst the present sample was the degree of disillusionment evidenced. There was a bitter tone to many of the interviews which reflected a disenchantment or resignation largely unmitigated by any optimism or weighing of good and bad. It is suggested that this deeply negative outlook was shaped in part by the historical and political context in which the trauma occurred.

More global disruptions in South African society related to the dismantling of Apartheid appeared to have created a pre-disposition in Whites to perceiving the world as unpredictable and potentially out of control. There was a sense of disjuncture and inability to trust the unfamiliar in the form of a new government and a new future. It is possible that many white South Africans exposed to Apartheid ideology and the notion of "Die Swart Gevaar" ("The Black Threat/Danger") may have carried latent fantasies of the unleashing of chaos with the assumption of black power over whites following democratic elections. Certainly, media build-up to the 1994 elections reflected alarm about potential anarchy and bloodshed. It is possible that such latent fantasies may have been represented more concretely for these interviewees in exposure to victimization and the perception of crime as rampant and unchecked. Thus it is proposed that whilst the universal assumptions documented by Janoff-Bulman (1992) appeared to apply in this sample, context specific factors may shape the manner in which such assumptions are challenged or become emergent. In this respect a further plea is being made for the recognition of the importance of the social location of victims. In this case it is suggested that personal belief responses and global assumptions were strongly influenced by the particular socio-historical location of these men. This observation may also explain in part the minimal number of responses directly reflective of a Just World outlook, since it may be that for these citizens the 'New South Africa' is not strongly imbued with expectations of operating according to Just World principles. Although, these comments remain speculative, there was considerable evidence that attributions of callousness and anarchy on the part of the attackers were generalized to law enforcement agencies and the government as a whole. Such associations are most clearly illustrated in the following quotation:

*"Three years ago, four years ago, that would've been a very serious offense (mm, mm). And it's almost as though, now I'm going to become a bit of a racist, but it's almost as though one gets to the kind of point where you think..."*

*I have come to the conclusion that the present government's attitude is: 'Oh, you know, if this is the way we get rid of the people then that's the way we get, if this is the way we equalize then this is the way we equalize.' Um, this, this, 'The fact that he's white, the fact that he's a man means that automatically he's implicated in the racist regime from the past.' (Mmm, mm) And um, I'm upset about it." (Hilton)*

Having explored the nature of alterations to beliefs it is important to comment upon how interviewees responded to such challenges to their meaning systems.

### 11.9.2 Reactions to Alterations in Beliefs

It was clear that as in the case of difficulties with **being** and **doing** and **control**, interviewees employed a range of strategies to deal with transitions in their cognitions. The widespread presentation of disillusionment and rupture in beliefs evident in the range of losses outlined, produced several different, largely defensive reactions. These could be identified as Fight (or outrage), Flight, Resignation, Revision of Personal Morality, Externalization of Blame and Generalization of Blame. Each of these attempts to come to terms with core schematic alterations will be briefly elaborated.

#### 11.9.2.1 Fight

As is the case in response to threat in reality, the sense of threat stemming from confrontation with what appeared to be harsh and terrifying cognitive actualities also appeared to provoke the instinctual responses of fight and flight, albeit perhaps in more metaphoric terms. Whilst not as common as might have been anticipated, given the degree to which these men felt antagonised by their experiences, there was some evidence of protest against such premises as appeared to be derived out of the traumatic encounter. This 'fighting' of negative constructions of reality has already been to some extent illustrated in quotations in which interviewees indicated that such a state of affairs was not right, but also took the form of more ardent protest or outrage.

#### 11.9.2.2 Flight

In contrast to fight responses there was also evidence of an approach to the traumatic material

which represented flight from its implications. This was particularly clear in evidence of thoughts about emigration. Without exception all of the interviewees mentioned that they had considered emigration from South Africa at some point following the traumatic incident. Both James and Nigel had concrete plans to leave the country at the time of the interviews, although Nigel indicated that the hijacking had merely solidified an earlier decision to leave. The response to perceptions of the loss of social order and increased vulnerability were represented in a tendency to dis-invest or flee from the context.

### 11.9.2.3 Resignation

In addition to coping with the implications of trauma for existence through fight or flight related responses, several men evidenced a kind of resigned, almost detached response to the situation. In this respect they appeared to subscribe to an external locus of control in which they saw themselves as unable to address or contain the destructive forces around them and moved towards disengagement or apathy. In some cases this took the form of disinvestment of emotional energy from fighting and the extension of this into withdrawal of human feeling from horrific events and the infusion of their responses with a kind of impotent rage which manifested in deep cynicism.

*"Well the taxi drivers are killing each other so, (uh) I don't really have any sympathy for them (uh huh). Um, whereas before also I, I had more sympathy for violence in townships against people and that type of thing, but now if you want to kill each other, go for it. I couldn't give a damn (mm, mm). That's the major feeling I have now (mm, mm). I don't, I've lost my sympathy." (Matt)*

*"You know... it's... the little chap there with his overall and he's trying to grow a moustache and it was sort of bum fluff (mm), you know, it's pathetic, the whole thing was pathetic (mm, mm). I just thought to myself, well (pause) uh... people really live sort of pathetic lives and it, and at their vulnerable, at that point they were so vulnerable that it all came out that it was just there (mm, mm). It became obvious." (Justin)*

Such comments reflect a deeply alienated view of human nature and its significance. From a clinical perspective such attitudes would be commonly associated with depressive mood disorder and associated distortion in cognition.

#### 11.9.2.4 Revision of Moral/Ethical Code

A further means of coping with apparent loss of faith in prior assumptions involved the re-evaluation of pre-existing moral codes. The renunciation of previous morality in the face of apparent injustice lead to a kind of situationally based assessment of values, often motivated by personal rather than common justice. Whilst these shifts were generally subtle, they tended to reflect movement in this direction of strategically defined ethics rather than subscription to a more universal morality.

*"And I think that's the big thing, thinking well, if it came to a point let's say someone was to come onto the property at night, I wouldn't ask questions... I would shoot first (Uh huh). You know where in the past you'd perhaps think okay, you must shoot the person in the leg or something... at least give them a chance. But now the question is: 'Well it's you or me.'"* (Len)

Thus the development of an appreciation of the arbitrariness of existence, lack of fairness and unpredictability, in the place of assumptions of coherence, tended to be associated with feelings of disengagement and an altered morality.

#### 11.9.2.5 Externalization of Blame

As has already been mentioned loss of trust was not limited to the attackers, but extended to the police, law-keeping forces and the government. Whilst some of this perception appeared to be realistically based there was also a sense in which rage at an unjust environment which had failed to provide protection seemed to represent an externalization of blame and an avoidance of recognition of one's own vulnerability.

The inability of the state to deliver on what are commonly understood to be the rights of victims, for example redress and compensation, appeared to exacerbate the sense of injury and perceptions that society is out of control. In some respects this perceived lack of redress could be understood as a form of secondary victimization since it exaggerated feelings of helplessness, frustration and hopelessness and may have impeded recovery from the process of traumatization.

From a more clinical or psychodynamic perspective, anger and disillusionment at the government and police could be understood to reflect the anxiety associated with an impotent parent and/or the absence of a protective, authoritative father figure. Some of the interviewees' expressed concerns lent themselves to this kind of more speculative interpretation:

*"But it's not enough to be afraid, it's not enough to be afraid. (Pause). You know to be afraid and not to do something about it is useless (mm). I mean to be afraid and not do something about it is like the Minister of Security who leaves his home because he's afraid. You know, that's pathetic. That is, that is the height of apathy (mm)... and I don't know how a man can live with himself."* (Garth)

*"I really am upset about the... and it's not just through incompetence, it's ah, if they really were concerned they would have done something about it."* (Hilton)

There seemed to be a sense of a lack of protection from any source of authority either through ineptitude or lack of care. Whilst there was no overt recognition of this more childlike need for a source of containment beyond themselves, the kind of sentiments expressed in the above two statements imply loss of faith in authority figures.

#### 11.9.2.6 Generalization of Blame

In addition to employing the defensive manoeuvre of externalizing blame there was also evidence of a generalization of blame within the interviews. Whilst this was apparent to some extent in comments about law-enforcement personnel, the most obvious manifestation of this generalization took the form of anti-black racism.

Loss of trust in specific individuals became generalized within the sample, reflected in the acknowledgement of elevated hostility to African or black people almost across the board. Whilst this kind of phenomenon is not peculiar to South Africa, stereotyping and racism following victimization has a greater chance of flourishing in an environment in which there is a prior history of prejudice and division. As described in Lebowitz and Roth's (1994) study on rape attributions, it is almost as if trauma re-evokes what they term latent schemas, even in the face of a more mature comprehension of the complexity of human relations. Interviewees demonstrated the need

to juggle different frameworks for understanding racial attitudes, but overwhelmingly found themselves holding mistrustful and hostile schemata about blacks. A comment by Garth appeared to reflect his recognition that his demonstration of racial hostility represented a capitulation to a dominant white ideology which he had previously sought to question. In discussing his wife's "absolute hatred for the black people" he said:

*"I understand it. You know I've got friends who've always been like that (Laughs loudly). The guys who're running manufacturing plants, they've got this hatred anyway and they said suddenly you've come round to the right way of thinking. It's sad. I mean you can laugh about it but it's a sad thing."*

In keeping with most of the literature on racial prejudice the attitudes of these men towards black people tended to be characterised by mistrust based upon the three contributory factors of fear, anger and stereotyping. Experiences of victimization tended to exacerbate negative out-group evaluations and to promote stereotyping (Tajfel cited in de la Rey in Foster and Louw-Potgieter, 1991). The generalization of negative attitudes to blacks as a group is evidenced in the following typical quotations:

*"I: Do you trust people more or less do you think? Or is that too general a question?"*

*S: Black people (Laughs), I don't trust that many (Okay), just the odd occasional one who I know well (Mmm). Generally I won't trust them. I won't trust anything that comes out of their mouths." (Garth)*

*"Yah, it became a hatred, you know, and I'm not, I'm not a racist hey (mm). I just hated the okes, hated the ..., that I mean it went you know, a black person did it to me..." (Paul)*

*"You know that um... (Yah), that I, that I haven't got time for them anymore (mm, mm). Some of them I know, guys, I mean they all, ninety-nine percent of the guys that dealt with us are black. And um, you'd help them out and you're friendly with them. You see now I don't have time for them. Now you're starving in the street, don't even talk to me, I'm not interested." (Matt)*

*"Well, you, you just get cross that, you, someone has invaded your privacy (mm) like that (mm) and, and um, I guess it's a racist thing too you know, you just say: 'I hate blacks', you know (mm, mm). And, and there's no hope for the country (mm) and it's this and that." (Roger)*

These comments appear to encapsulate a generalization of lack of trust and antagonism directed towards black people as a whole but also some awareness on the part of the subjects that their attitudes could be construed as racist or racially biased. However this awareness did not preclude the holding of such attitudes. The generalization of such racial schemata is epitomized in the use of collective pronouns such as *"they, them and their"*, a usage commonly highlighted in discourse analytic analyses of texts about prejudice such as Potter and Wetherell's (1992) writing on attitudes to Maoris. Connected to this antagonism and collectivisation was some evidence of reinforcing stereotypes pertaining to problematic characteristics of black people.

*"It's my perception of, of black men. You know they'll do anything for a buck."* (Garth)

*"Whereas the black people just pull the trigger (mm), because they, they have no feelings left because they're so (inaudible) (mm). But I don't think a white guy would be quite like that."* (Roger)

These stereotypes suggest a perception of black men as more ruthless in their exercise of aggression than white men. In some cases such sentiments were qualified by an awareness of the history of Apartheid and associated black impoverishment, however reduction of black men into a group and a generalized suspicion tended to be the predominant response, evidenced in 9 out of the 10 interviews.

However, in keeping with more post-modernist understandings of social behaviour and also with ideological interpretations of social identity theory (Foster in Foster and Louw-Potgeiter, 1991), many of the men were aware of contradictions in their attitudes and sought to qualify their statements. In many cases this took the form of contextualizing these attitudes or limiting generalizations. The interpersonal nature of such aspects of discussion cannot be ignored. While none of the interviewees asked the interviewer directly about her racial attitudes, it is conceivable that her association with a liberal university and other aspects of her manner may have lead participants to proffer their opinions in such a way as not to offend someone with liberal sentiments. It is also likely that the middle class status of these men would have exposed them to debates about race which precluded the assumption of simple racial prejudices. It is then highly significant that despite such possible tempering influences, the negativity towards black people was as striking as has been argued. The kinds of opinions illustrated in this section tend to confirm

McCann and Pearlman's (1990) concern that traumatic exposure can damage trust schemata in both particular and general ways, potentially contributing to group prejudices.

### 11.9.3 Growth

Counter-balancing the overwhelmingly jaundiced views of the men interviewed was some evidence of renewed investment in life and greater acknowledgement of close relationships. In the main thematic units coded under **growth** (34) reflected an appreciation of reprieve from death and cherishing being alive:

*"I think it one's, I think it made me more conscious of enjoying life (mm hm, mm hm), not making the most of life, but experiencing life." (James)*

*"I think in the end um... you know, other than the fact that I'm very, very pleased to be around and celebrate that continuously... small little things (mm). Spring had a major effect on me, the fact that I'm still alive." (Hilton)*

*"...it's no longer just making a living now, it's a question of getting out of life what I can in the short time that I'm able to, there's this feeling that you only have one chance in life (mm), it's not as if you can come back and try again (mm, mm). You know, this is your best shot (yah), where you've landed now, is that what you, is that really your best shot?" (Len)*

In addition, the experience of the trauma was often perceived as a catalyst for change:

*"I made a conscious effort not to leave things unfinished, um... when I'm upset with someone I tell them I'm upset with them, um... if I'm pleased with someone I tell them I'm pleased with them." (Miles)*

*"Well I would say there are a lot of positive things that come out of it, uh, you know if your life was in a sort of a doldrums um, it sure... something's gonna happen, something's gonna change, there's a sense of change." (Justin)*

*"I would say what I'm looking at is let's say the positive changes like reducing alcohol, getting fit and things like that. I definitely hope that they do stay and I would say the things from like say dwelling on the past and that, that I actually say, resolve the unresolved issues." (Len)*

These kinds of growth acknowledging responses tended to emerge in relation to questions that promoted a more reflective stance on the part of the participants, such as how the event might impact upon them in the future. Thus the recognition of more positive outcome dimensions appeared to be dependant on a degree of distantiation from their experience. This may explain the apparent discrepancies in attitudes across interviews highlighted in comparison of individual subject's remarks cited both in relation to disillusionment and growth. It is also possible that the inviting of a more reflective perspective evokes a different type of response from that generated from more spontaneous immersion in the implications and experience of the event. This possible basis for differentiations in response has useful implications for clinical intervention as does the understanding that such experiences may be perceived as catalytic points for positive change. Finally, in describing the primary features of more constructive outcomes of trauma, it is also important to note that feelings of greater intimacy and self-worth could also be promoted as encapsulated in this poignant statement Miles made about his altered relationship with his parents:

*"... they'd have never had the opportunity to realise that this, this thing they love actually is worth loving (mm, mm) uh, so those kinds of things, yah."* (Miles)

In concluding the discussion of clusters 4 and 5 it is important to note that there is indeed evidence that trauma of this nature: life-threatening, criminally motivated violence; produces questioning of the kinds of existential schemata referred to as world view or **frame of reference**. Much of this existential questioning was informed by perceptions of the overarching context within which the traumatic incidents had taken place, i.e., by a perception of a crime ridden, South African society at a point of political transition, largely reflective of a racially divided past. Whilst there was some evidence of unequivocally expressed positive outcomes, the dominant tone of the interviews reflected common and intense feelings of disillusionment, injustice, hopelessness and helplessness. Associated with these feelings was a degree of antipathy towards black men and a sense of alienation from the country.

However, it is important to sound a word of caution in reading interviewee responses as too specifically tied to contemporary South Africa. Although many of the comments appeared to reflect this particularity, some of the sentiments expressed are resonant of Vietnam War veterans' responses to an America they believed had betrayed them. Thus more generally it could be

asserted that dealing with trauma in the context of lack of community support or apathy is likely to produce these more negatively tinged, bitter alterations to core schemata, since the alienation of trauma is unmitigated by reparative interventions.

#### 11.10 INTERFACE WITH MASCULINITY

It is more difficult to identify gender specific dimensions to the cognitions associated with this discussion of meaning. Many of the themes raised would appear to have similar relevance for men and women and to this extent the discussion is somewhat brief. However, there were some aspects of attributions relating to frame of reference which appeared to be coloured by masculine identifications.

At a speculative level it could be argued that the more general association of masculinity with detachment and interpersonal distance creates a greater propensity for mistrust and alienation. Thus while it is not uncommon for trauma survivors to experience ruptures in trust schemata, masculine identified individuals may view such experiences as confirmatory of pre-existing schemata or as exaggerating an assumed basis for distrust. In addition, some of the difficulties men may have with intimacy referred to previously, may preclude the counter-balancing of being let down with the experience of being supported. Thus it is conceivable that masculinity places individuals at greater risk for developing distrustful schemata as illustrated in the kinds of responses evoked in many of the men in the study.

The intensity of antipathy towards the South African police and government may also be understood as gender faceted. In a comment about the cowardice of the Minister of Safety and Security for example, Glen made explicit reference to not understanding how such a "*man can live with himself*". It is likely that men are more prone to identify with figures in authority and those whose task it is to maintain law and order. The impatience with incompetence may thus reflect a need to dis-identify from men who are unable to fulfill their functions as protectors. However, their disillusionment and resignation may also signal some identification with impotence. In symbolic terms, if father figures or men with superior authority are unable to regulate society, then there is little chance that sons or subjects can exercise any greater potency.

One way of dealing with such perceptions of loss of patriarchal power is to couch this phenomenon in racial terms. Thus it is easier to conceive of black men, who are unlike oneself, as being impotent to regulate society, than it is to accept that such authority may be difficult for any men to impose at this transitional point in South African history. The extremes of alternation between bitterness and resignation, as well as the indications of vacillations in relation to racial attitudes and views about how to understand and address violence seem to reflect struggles with the assumption of authority and related identification and dis-identification.

The researcher was also of the opinion that the intensity and surety with which assertions about such topics were made was more characteristic of a masculine style of thinking than a feminine style. Thus whilst there were manifestations of contradictory beliefs across interviews, such discrepancies were often highlighted by the degree of conviction which characterised statements. Masculine speech tends to be marked by the use of categorical statements unlike feminine styles of conversation which reflect greater qualification of comments (Spender, 1981). This may explain the generally assertive tone of much of the material relating to global beliefs. Such a style of conversation may also have contributed to the pessimistic tone of frame of reference material since to make assertions with such conviction disallows the entertainment of possible moderators. Reflecting further upon this point, it is also of significance that these views were being communicated by a man to a woman. Whilst it is beyond the scope of the study to explore the implications of the research findings on gender and language exchange, it is probable that such opinions may have been more firmly conveyed to a woman researcher, who in addition, was playing a receptive rather than a more interactive debating role.

Apart from masculine dimensions which may have contributed to more subtle process dimensions of exchange, there were some areas of analysis of content which had more direct bearing on the interface between masculinity and meaning in situations of trauma. The two most obvious areas of preoccupation in this regard were those relating to work and reward and those relating to future orientation. From the brief discussion of Just World related material, it is clear that some of the men held a protestant work ethic which views participation in the world of work as morally right and laudable. There was thus an implicit sense of indignation that as upright, valued members of the workforce they should be subjected to victimization, particularly the loss of

property. It is generally accepted, that despite changes in the gender division of labour, men's identity is more strongly tied to occupational role than is women's. In addition, as discussed previously it is a man's role to provide for the financial well-being of his family. The preoccupation with financial loss and the sense of unfairness concerning their injury in relation to their productivity, is an aspect of meaning that is therefore likely to have greater salience for men.

The fulfilment of gender role obligations also appeared important for a further dimension in the establishment of meaning, i.e., orientation towards the future. The negative tone of future scenarios evidenced in several interviews has already been discussed. Whilst there was preoccupation with future safety and career prospects in relation to the self, the strongest motivation for making changes in relation to the future stemmed from a concern about offspring. Fathers seemed to feel a sense of responsibility for their children's future well-being, most particularly in terms of safety. In accordance with aspects of failed enactment and responsibility discussed earlier, it appeared that the identification with their children produced more intense worries about the future than concerns about risk to themselves. Whilst mothers are also likely to feel such intense protectiveness towards children, for men there appeared to be an added dimension to their considerations which involved responsibility for securing their children's future or providing them with a stable base from which to develop into adulthood. Fathers thus appeared to be more comfortable with a mercenary attitude in relation to securing the future of their offspring. They were also more committed to removing their children from South Africa as a potential source of risk, than to leaving themselves. In these respects anxiety and negativity about the future tended to be weighted by gender role considerations in relation to playing the role of protector and provider.

### **11.11 MASCULINITY AND ANGER**

(Cluster 6 (Masculinity))

The major focus in this section of the discussion constellates around the theme of anger since the other categories associated with masculinity have already been addressed and **anger** produced the highest frequency of responses (176) in this cluster. In addition anger was an area which emerged

as centrally important in the overall findings of the study and had particular relevance to gendered constructions of response.

From an impressionistic overview of the interviews and subsequent analysis, the three issues which emerged as most striking were those relating to the theme of control, the very evident pessimism and disillusionment with regard to South Africa and interpersonal trust, and thirdly, the intense and overt manifestations of anger and aggression. The implications of the intensity and expressive potential of the anger reported by interviewees was disturbing. In accordance with the observations on gender differences in trauma responses outlined by Janoff-Bulman and Frieze (in Barnett et al, 1987) the experience of anger and rage appeared to be particularly characteristic of these male victims. Furthermore the descriptions of anger tended to go beyond the bounds of what appears to be encompassed under descriptions of hyper-vigilant symptomatic responses within DSM-IV and to be more in accordance with the kind of rage identified by Krupnik (1980) as characteristic of victims of violent crime.

#### 11.11.1 Ubiquitous

Without fail all of the men interviewed mentioned angry feelings as one of the common features of their response to the traumatic event. For several of the men this was the foremost dimension in describing the impact of their victimization. The ubiquitous nature of such responses is illustrated in the following set of quotations:

*"I: Do you think it changed you in....?"*

*S: I'm not, I'm much more angry, much more angry." (Garth)*

*"Yah, you know, just um, I still get um, you know if I really talk about it in detail to someone I still get upset about it (mm, mmm). Maybe it comes deeper down (mm, mm), the temper and really came, the anger..." (Paul)*

*"No, no, what I'm saying is I think it builds up along the way (mm), you know what I mean, that's why there's definitely... I think definitely the anger gets in there." (James)*

*"I: What happened after the hold up? Did you have the same... kind of feeling or was it different?"*

*S: Uh, very different. I was more agg..., no, this was more on the anger side given everything else." (Matt)*

*"I have lost my temper yes, a couple of times which is not like me." (Justin)*

*"So I think slowly you go through a time where you are very angry." (Len)*

*"But certainly I have, I have felt furious (mm) about the situation." (Roger)*

*"I wouldn't know how a victim feels other than just irritation or discomfort at what happened and why the hell did he do this and stuff like that..." (Hilton)*

Given the volume and commonality of these kinds of responses it seems warranted to propose that anger characterises a central component of the male response to victimization of this kind. This finding is also in keeping with Maguire's (1980) study of victims of housebreaking in which he found that women's responses tended to be dominated by fear whereas anger was more prevalent in men's responses.

#### **11.11.2 Spectrum of Responses**

Although all the interviewees indicated that anger was one of their most apparent responses to the incident there was considerable variation in the intensity and expression of anger within the sample. For some men their anger emerged in the form of impatience and irritability with others, whereas at the other end of the spectrum men described the need to find an outlet for feelings of rage, sometimes implicating weapons. The responses characteristic of the more extreme end of the spectrum were perturbing in their implications for the possibility of the enactment of violence.

The DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) describes two of the common symptoms of posttraumatic stress as : 1) irritability and 2) outbursts of anger. Irritability is evidenced in the following quotes.

*"I'll tell you what's very interesting... in the last week my staff have said to me: 'You need a holiday, you're very irritable, you're frustrated, you're impatient with people, you've been quite rude to the staff at different times', um... but only in the last week to 10 days." (Miles)*

*"I think a lot of that, the anger and that short temperedness and you know in general has gone, (mm)." (Garth)*

*"And I have become incredibly impatient, um, um, just with things in general (mm). I don't want to say 'incompetent', that's not the right word, but... um... people not making their decisions, wasting my time and things like that, I've become incredibly, almost ah, I will say 'obnoxious', I, I have to control myself (mm), it's ah, not get overboard and things like that." (Hilton)*

However, beyond these descriptions of impatience and short-temperedness which were conceivably connected to hyper-arousal, many of the interviewees described much more powerful feelings of anger and impulses to act out intense feelings of aggression.

*"Uh, now I, look I mean I drive with a firearm on my lap with the trigger, with my finger on the trigger at the robot (traffic light) and if anyone walks up to the robot I will shoot them first. I won't ask. Before I may have been wary and not done anything you know, given a person the benefit of the doubt. Now if someone's gonna walk up to my car, I'm gonna slug them. Whether he's collecting or whatever, (mm, mm). It's tough luck." (Matt)*

*"I have... I've felt sort of, you know sometimes when you pick up a knife and you're cutting a piece of bread you just feel like lashing out at something (mm, mm) or someone, you know. I dunno it's sort of an impulsive, it creates experience (mm, mm) you know, that rage. I don't deal with problems now, uh in the way I used to, now it's sort of, it becomes, it creates anger, (mm, mm)." (Justin)*

*"S: Maybe it comes deeper down (mm, mm), the temper and really came, the anger...*

*I: Okay, tell me about that.*

*S: No, I just, just got the anger.*

*I: Was it like a rage in you?*

*S: It was worse than a rage, I tell you I just went, Carol said I just used to go blank for 10 minutes, screamed and shouting and all that and then I would sit down and say: 'No, I don't know why and this?'. So you get those spells." (Paul)*

The verity of these statements was borne out by other observations. On accompanying Matt to his car the researcher was in fact shown the gun that he carried on his lap while driving. Paul indicated that on one occasion in arguing with his girlfriend he had threatened to shoot her and that she had been, and still was to some extent afraid of what he might do. In contrast to the other two, Justin's propensity for inflicting damage appeared to be more self-directed and he indicated that suicide was now an option which he could entertain. It must be acknowledged that each of these responses was coloured by the individual's personal history and circumstances (for example Justin's social isolation), however it could be argued that exposure to victimization may unleash or exacerbate destructive impulses in men, even though these may at times be experienced to be ego-dystonic.

### 11.11.3 Ego-dystonic

In the course of describing their aggressive response to what had happened it was not uncommon for these men to remark that such feelings and behaviour were "unlike me". It is also interesting to note that both Justin and Paul use the distancing pronoun "you" in describing their rage, as if needing to dissociate from such feelings, characterising them as outside of their personal volition and as generic rather than individually located. Further examples of the recognition of aggression as ego-dystonic are the following:

*"S: No, no I think I'm more fearless now. If it happens to me again I'd most probably react a lot more strongly, a lot more violently, (mm hm), and whether that's going to be good or not I don't know, but, but um... I think it would be pretty violent.*

*I: So in a way it's almost sensitized you (Yah) to acting in a way that, uhut...*

*S: That's not me.*

*I: Yah, yah. I mean does that worry you?*

*S: Yah, I'm not a violent person, um, the last thing I want to do is become a violent person." (Garth)*

*"I think it's made me generally harder, I just say something straight out if that's the way I feel. Well I was never really like that (mm, mm), but, um, it's slowly coming back to normal" (Paul)*

*"Let's say it's one of those things but I know it's not in myself to have that nature and I think that's actually what I'm fighting with, where afterwards you do something and then you analyse it and say: 'Well now that's not the person I should be taking it out on.'"* (Len)

Similarly Miles described some shock at his own callousness in response to a robber who had been shot in the street and other men noted their anger and its manifestations as unfamiliar. In the quotations above there is a common tendency to disavow an identification with this kind of behaviour: *"that's not me; I was never really like that; it's not the true part of me and it's not in myself to have that nature"*. The implication is that such feelings have arisen outside conscious volition and are at odds with the person's self-image. There is thus a sense of discontinuity with the prior sense of self. In addition to the discomfort with such experienced alteration per se, there also appears to be some discomfort with the carrying of these feelings as reflected in Len's attempts to temper his response through understanding and Garth's assertion that this is the *last thing* that he would want. Such concerns with the degree to which anger/aggression is perceived to be outside of the sphere of the conscious, familiar, rational and reasonable, carry considerable overlap with the discussion of difficulties with control as characterised by self-regulation. It is interesting that despite stereotypes which would suggest that men should be comfortable with the exercise of aggression, encompassed under such typical injunctions such as "Give 'Em Hell", there appeared to be considerable discomfort with manifestations of aggression in the context of the study. Such discomfort did not appear to be related to the dynamic between the interviewer and interviewees, since these assertions of dis-identification seemed clearly to be generated out of self questioning as illustrated above. Where there was evidence of self consciousness in relation to being perceived negatively by the researcher, this seemed to manifest in more defiant assertions of the need to exercise aggression and justification of this. The experience of angry feelings and aggressive impulses thus appeared to be complex and to produce contradictory responses amongst the participants. The mechanisms underlying such responses call for further exploration.

#### **11.11.4 Psychological Mechanisms Implicated**

Having described the frequent presence of angry responses and their potentially destructive nature, it seems useful to explore the possible basis of such anger rather than considering it self-evident. In the past in relation to war veterans, understandings have been employed which

suggests that aggression is disinhibited in situations of combat and remains inappropriately disinhibited in civilian contexts thereafter. It is almost as if there is an acceptance that demobilization from war situations involves a re-socialization into civilized society, part of which requires re-learning how to contain aggression. However, such premises cannot be easily applied to men caught up in traumatic violence in a civilian environment. The widespread sense that aggression was ego-dystonic within the sample suggest that such aggression cannot easily be understood as a kind of disinhibition of natural impulses which are intrinsic to masculinity.

The dis-ease with manifestations of anger for these men appeared to be rooted in a sense of alienation from themselves, rather than concerns about demonstrating social inhibition of primitive drives. This would suggest that men's relationship to their own aggression carries anxiety and discomfort. Thus social stereotypes proclaiming aggression to be an inherent dimension of masculinity may confuse social injunctions with instinct, and responses to stress/threat with spontaneous drive. If aggression were indeed so natural a dimension of masculinity why would these men experience their own displays of such as un-natural?

The most obvious basis for understanding aggression in the context of victimization is in relation to **revenge**. The retaliatory impulse in situations in which one has been wronged is commonly understood in Western society. Much of the operation of the criminal justice system in relation to victims is to provide a socially sanctioned procedure for redress as outlined in the theoretical discussion of victimology. The institution of such a system however, precludes the exercise of personal punishment or revenge. It is recognised that for many trauma survivors fantasies of revenge may be very powerful and may represent the need to satisfy more primitive needs for retribution than those served by the formal system. Such impulses were certainly evident within the interviewees as illustrated in the following cases:

*I: I mean did you feel damaged in some way by what had happened?*

*S: Yah, if I caught those guys I'd shoot them myself now, I'd cut them up in pieces if I find them.*

*I: And is that different for you?*

*S: And I'd love the revenge.*

*I: And is that different? I mean have you felt like that before in your life?*

*S: No. Revenge is a lot sweeter than I'd ever thought. (Mm)" (Garth)*

*"I would like them to be sent to a colony in Mars with a one way ticket (mm, mm) uh, near sort of going to jail, and not having a private TV and you know as long as you have a bit of money (inaudible). I'd like them to be sent to some sort of underground mine in Mars to work there for the rest of eternity."* (Justin)

*"I found sort of slowly it was building up where I got to the point of saying: 'Right, how do I get revenge?', where you sort of start thinking that you're even prepared to kill. I got to that point where I thought: 'Well okay, the next time there'll be a bottle of say brandy with half weedkiller in it.' You know, all that sort of thing where (uh huh) I thought okay... A friend around the corner had taken the battery out of his car and left it in the yard sort of to take the next morning. When he got up the battery had disappeared. And I thought well, that's the sort of thing where you could virtually set a booby trap where you put something for them to steal and then when people come to use it, it actually blows up or something."* (Len)

It is interesting to note the personalized nature of these various fantasies of revenge. However, although such revengeful motives for aggression were certainly present within the sample they did not form more than a small number of the thematic units coded under anger and cannot be understood as the primary motivating force for its display. Indeed revenge motifs tended to remain at the level of fantasy and were sometimes tempered by reason. Following his outline of fantasied strategies for retaliation, Len immediately went on to qualify his comments as follows:

*"Then I thought, in one way who will I really be hurting? I'm maybe hurting perhaps innocent people who are basically just poor or are in need of something and are going to steal it and use the money for food. Whereas the actual people that they need to get at are the criminal element (uh huh), so I think slowly you go through a time where you are very angry."*

Such reflection was fairly rare amongst the sample although there were other men who were pragmatic about wanting their attackers apprehended and charged, rather than needing to inflict damage upon them more personally. The essential point here however, is that the need for revenge cannot be understood as a primary or comprehensive explanation for the enormity of anger generated within the sample.

Related to the construct of revenge was the observation that several of the items coded under anger reflected the **displacement** of aggression from one context to another. This displaced aggression appeared to stem more clearly from a kind of global frustration related to the traumatic

incident, than from anger directed at the figures of the assailants per se. Generalized feelings of frustration, impotence and anger, tended to take the form of inchoate manifestations of irritation and rage against others. Some examples of this kind of displacement of anger have already been proffered in prior discussion. However, it seems useful to illustrate the phenomenon of displaced anger more fully in order to continue the exploration of the origins of anger in this kind of context. Miles reported attacking his father "very viciously" for being unable to control his alcoholism in his childhood and understood this attack explicitly as "*taking it out*" on his parents. Garth was virulent in his contempt for public apathy as indicated in a further example:

*"Yah, for sure, um the last thing... and I tell you people who don't take care, I don't feel sorry for (mm, hm). If it happens to somebody because they're negligent it's their problem. If they're not prepared to stand up for themselves. I get irritated by people who, you know, if you arrange a, an anti-crime drive or something like that, the apathy (mm, mm) I just can't stand it. "*

*"Well, this is what happened, I was suffering from anger, and I was cross and I was upset about it, ... I think the anger, I took it out on all the close people, that went through, and especially Carol, I put all my anger out on her (mm, mm). She just couldn't cope anymore." (Paul)*

Some of Paul's anger at his girlfriend appeared to stem from incidents in which she questioned his decisions and also from a perception that she didn't fully understand the enormity of the impact of the trauma upon him. Other examples of what could be viewed as a displacement of anger, were Roger's anger at his wife for forcing the issue of leaving the city and Hilton's anger towards people he perceived as slow in decision making or execution of tasks.

Almost all these examples have in common an annoyance at inadequacy or impotence in oneself or the other. In some cases the anger seems to stem from the inability to assert oneself over others who may in some way be impeding access to goals, and in other cases the impatience appears to be directed at a loss of control or inability to exercise mastery on the part of others. Thus it is being suggested that a core source of anger and aggression is perceived impotence or absence of mastery. It is proposed that this is the essential dimension around which anger constellates and is in some cases displaced.

Following on from this observation, the research suggests that the primary motivation for aggression in criminal victimization may be compensatory rather than disinhibitory, although both factors may come into play. The propensity for aggression (perhaps not entirely encompassed within the increased arousal frame of DSM-IV symptomology), which characterised this sample, seemed to be driven by a need to exercise power and control in an unequivocal and conspicuous manner. The most obvious means to demonstrate the exercise of power for men appeared to be in the expression of aggression. This hypothesis is further borne out by the observation of two men that they were almost searching for opportunities to legitimately demonstrate aggression even if this involved risk:

*"You know a bit of difficulty distinguishing between good and bad (mm) I think, but I definitely have a strong feeling and the more I talk about it, and the more I recognise the fact that I just wanna go out there and if someone does something I'm going to blow them away whether the guy next to me is getting hijacked or killed. That I might feel better if I can go out and (mm, mm) just let rip." (Matt)*

*"I: It's kind of almost, almost like trying to find a reason to be able to be aggressive?"*

*S: Yes. Yah, you could say it's not like a death wish, but give me a cha, an excuse, (Yah), let's say it's one of those things..." (Len)*

The observation of aggression seeking behaviour is not new in the trauma field and has tended to be understood in terms of sensation seeking and repetition compulsion. However, it has generally been seen as an extraordinary response to traumatization.

In more general terms what this study suggests is that the seeking of mastery through the demonstration of overt aggression (across a spectrum of responses) may be much more common in male victims than has generally been comprehended. Such a conceptualization would tend to support Krupnik's (1980) observation that people who typically direct anger outwards (as opposed to introjectively) are more likely to evidence rage in the aftermath of victimization (p. 349). Despite somewhat obvious links, she fails to relate such patterns of behaviour to gender. The particular significance of such behaviour for male victims may be understood in the light of some of the object relations and anthropological literature on masculinity. The research of Gilmore for example, argues that in order for males to attain a masculine identity they have to

demonstrate their prowess and actively distinguish themselves from feminine qualities of passivity and dependence. It may well be that having been robbed of the opportunity to embody such active masculinity in a situation of victimization, a situation which even more significantly represents a test of masculinity in adversity, men feel compelled to restore a sense of masculine identity through the demonstration of enhanced aggression. Such a propensity also tends to be confirmed in studies such as Mendel's (1995) in which it is noted that boys who have been sexually abused may well adopt the defensive stance of identification with the aggressor and become later abusers themselves. However, since such aggression is compensatory, and often recognized as directed at inappropriate targets, it may well be experienced as ego-dystonic rather than reparative.

The implications for counselling in this respect are significant, since it may be useful for one of the goals of counselling with masculine identified individuals to look for alternative and more constructive means of re-establishing masculine identity which go beyond reassurance. Such premises may account for the success of more ritualistic healing programmes such as psychologically guided wilderness trails, which involve the demonstration of ingenuity, physical strength and courage; and of the replication of American Indian sweat lodges which carry similar connotations (Silver and Wilson, in Wilson, Harel and Kahana, 1988). It must be acknowledged however, that such approaches represent a subscription to gender role stereotypes rather than a more critical deconstruction of the constraints of masculine injunctions. Nevertheless they may represent more constructive alternatives to the expression of masculinity in more destructive aggressive forms, although they should not be at the expense of exploring more feminine responses to trauma such as assisting men to acknowledge feelings of terror and helplessness and allowing for cathartic expression of emotion.

In summary, it seems that the tendency towards anger as a response to trauma is predominant in men. The theme of anger emerged as highly significant in the context of the study comprising one of the ten highest categories of response across the data set. The range of such response was considerable with some men reporting potentially dangerous impulses. The mechanisms underlying such manifestations of aggression appear to be complex and encompass symptomatic responses, revenge fantasies and displacement. A considerable volume of such responses were experienced as ego-dystonic by interviewees. It is argued that the primary motivation for the

expression of aggression is compensatory, a response to a feeling of impotence and lack of mastery, representing a need to assert masculinity through the overt demonstration of fairly crude forms of power. With one exception, aggression was directed interpersonally and appeared to have largely negative consequences. It is suggested that counselling of male victims may need to focus more clearly on facilitating the restoration of masculine identity in alternate ways.

Having finally concluded the discussion on the central themes which emerged from the content analysis of the data, it remains to provide some overview and integrating commentary from the perspective of discourse analysis and the clinical implications of the study. Before proceeding to this final section however, it may be useful to provide a summary of the key aspects of the discussion thus far, since it has encompassed a considerable volume of material.

## **11.12 SUMMARY OF THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS**

The three major areas which emerged as highly significant themes within the data were those relating to Control, Frame of Reference (with a particular focus on South African issues) and Anger.

### **11.12.1 The Theme of Control**

It was clearly apparent that issues relating to control and loss of control were uppermost for most of the interviewees in relating their experiences of trauma. This preoccupation with control focussed around reflections both upon responses during the actual incident and functioning thereafter, and encompassed difficulties with mastery and regulation. Problems in relation to control could be described as occurring at the level of **being** and **doing**.

The data highlighted problems of **control as doing** in the areas of the inability to escape participation in the incident, the impulse to behave in a compliant or co-operative manner, questioning of behaviour during the encounter related to failed enactment, and difficulties in the sense of having behaved reactively rather than proactively.

In the area of **control as being**, issues were more clearly focussed on the sense of self and identity in relation to the incident. Thus there was evidence of concern with the experience of the self as helpless and disempowered in response to the exercise of control by another. Surprisingly, despite this sense of being overcome and subjugated there was little evidence of shame amongst the interviewees. A further concern with **being** out of control related to emotional containment and expression, most particularly in the direction of increased demonstration of vulnerability. However, the expression of anger also posed difficulties.

These concerns about loss of control in relation to **doing** and **being** were exacerbated by the presence of several related features. The sense of responsibility for dependant others when they were present during the incident appeared to exacerbate difficulties in negotiating appropriate activity. Reflections upon difficulties in acting tended to be influenced or coloured by the responses of observers to descriptions of the event, usually in the direction of increased self-consciousness and greater questioning of behaviour. Responses to the incident also appeared to be weighed in accordance with prevailing constructs about interpersonal conflict between men, which appeared to have been inappropriately applied to this context and complicated processing. It seemed that to some extent the attacks were implicitly compared to competitive encounters between men with the assailants being weighed as adversaries. Notions of fair fighting were applied and implications were drawn that one was a loser in such a contact.

The data also revealed further difficulties in self-image negotiation prompted by a sense of loss of control over identity and self-representation. There was some difficulty with self-esteem linked to the areas of tension outlined previously and also to some unravelling of identity. For several of the men their comfort with particular personality styles and role behaviours (e.g., head of household) was undermined by the unfamiliarity of their responses. There seemed to be a need to re-assert temperamental styles that reflected composure, rationality and a phlegmatic outlook.

A range of coping and defensive styles were identified including suppression, repression, displacement, minimization and engagement in work. These defences appeared to be utilized with varying degrees of adaptiveness, but in some instances they appeared quite clearly to be counter

productive for intimacy and support seeking. There was some suggestion that suppression and displacement were less successful means of dealing with discomfort than was minimization.

All of these features of the data were described and discussed and then further debated in terms of their specific interface with masculinity. It is of significant import that much of the construction of masculinity is predicated upon the exercise and demonstration of control. Thus masculinity is associated with instrumentality, dominance, competitiveness, activity, initiative, rationality, emotional restraint, independence, responsibility for women and children, risk-taking and stoicism, amongst other central attributes. Most of these characteristics of masculinity are aptly summed up in the four stereotypes of "Give 'Em Hell, The Big Wheel, The Sturdy Oak and No Sissy Stuff" (Davis and Brannon cited in Solomon in Solomon and Levy, 1981). It was evident that all these dimensions of masculinity were to some degree compromised in these men's described responses to traumatization and it was apparent that an awareness of the construction of conventional masculinity tended to compound difficulties in adjustment and negotiating identity post the trauma.

#### **11.12.2 Frame of Reference**

The second major set of themes addressed concerned more explicitly cognitive responses to the trauma, including meaning-making and apparent alterations to belief systems. Interviewees evidenced a pervasive and dominant sense of disillusionment in the aftermath of the trauma. This seemed to stem most generally from the loss of several core assumptions including: trust in others; a sense of personal invulnerability or integrity; and hope about the future. Such beliefs appeared to be particularly contextually coloured, centring around the perceived failure of the new government or the South African Police Services to take charge, protect citizens from crime and effect punishment. Whilst these alterations in belief clearly resonate with Janoff-Bulman's description of ruptures to basic assumptions and McCann and Pearlman's alterations to Frame of Reference Schemata, it was suggested that such alterations to belief also need to be contextualized within the locus of historical and political circumstances within which traumatic material is being processed.

**Author** Eagle G

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