

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES AND MEANINGS OF
AN ADULT MALE SURVIVOR OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

by

MALCOLM PAUL CAMERON

B.A., Grand Rapids Baptist College, 1981
M.R.E., Grand Rapids Baptist Theological Seminary, 1986
M.A.B.C., Grace Theological Seminary, 1987

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Department of Counseling Psychology (Faculty of Ed.)

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

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Abstract

This study explores the experiences and meanings of an adult male survivor of child sexual abuse. A case study approach in the form of an in-depth interview was utilized in an effort to examine one survivor's experiences and subjective interpretations in light of his childhood sexual victimization.

It was found that the survivor elevated his experience of child sexual abuse to the degree that it negatively permeated all aspects of his life. Child sexual abuse was cited by the survivor as the antecedent to the development of specific problematic life themes. These themes included sexual identity confusion, homophobia, ambivalence toward men, estrangement from his father, unsatisfying relationships with women, fear of intimacy, and movement toward recovery.

This study therefore examines the presenting data and includes a critical analysis.

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This study was made possible by the contribution of Willy, an adult male survivor of child sexual abuse who disclosed his story for two reasons.

First, motivated by his commitment to embrace personal wholeness, Willy chose to reflect over the course and content of his life in an effort to enhance his process of change. Consequently, Willy suggested that he gained insights, encouragement, and direction with respect to his personal development.

Secondly, Willy desired to make his story accessible for research purposes in a effort to promote increased awareness with respect to adult male survivors of child sexual abuse. In so doing, Willy felt that other men might be encouraged in their recovery as a result of his story.

Thank you, Willy, for your commitment to this study, and for remaining patient throughout its duration.

Chapter I. Introduction

General Topic

In the last decade child sexual abuse (CSA) has attracted national attention in the media as well as academic and professional circles. Society is reminded almost daily that many of its members are victims, perpetrators, and/or survivors of CSA, in some cases a combination of all three. Questions concerning the nature, extent, treatment, and prevention of CSA are being asked in an effort to address what appears to be an insurmountable problem (Cahill, Llewelyn and Pearson, 1991).

Research with respect to CSA has focused on various issues such as prevalence, characteristics, risk factors, coping mechanisms, and long-term effects associated with childhood sexual victimization (Beitchman, Zucker, Hood, DaCosta, Akman and Cassavia, 1992). Until recently, most CSA research has been concerned with the sexual victimization of females and, to a lesser degree, the perpetrators of female sexual abuse. Inherent to most research studies concerning CSA was the assumption that females were the primary victims and that the sexual victimization of males was rather uncommon (Watkims & Bentovim, 1992).

In recent years, however, there has been growing interest in the sexual victimization of males in an effort to examine a population that, for the most part, has been neglected by research. Peters, Wyatt and Finkelhor (1986), in their review of the literature addressing prevalence rates of male sexual victimization, suggest that considerable variations were derived from at least three American studies. They conclude that ranges exist from 3% to 31 % for males who have a history of CSA. They comment that even the lower rates indicate that CSA is far from an uncommon experience for males, and that the higher rates reported would point to a problem of epidemic proportions.

Watkins and Bentovim (1992), based on their review of current research with respect to CSA of male children, suggest that the study of male victims of sexual abuse is just beginning to develop. In addition, they suggest the main difficulties in assessing the available information have been the lack of gender analysis in most studies, the lack of control groups, and, in many instances, small sample sizes.

Despite apparent similarities between males and females with respect to long-term consequences of CSA, Watkins and Bentovim (1992) suggest gender analysis as

an appropriate research direction in an effort to examine possible variances that may exist between male and female victims. Specifically, the issues of under-reporting and the degree to which males are at greater risk of becoming perpetrators necessitate further investigation (Watkins & Bentovim, 1992).

The focus of this study, therefore, is that of male victims of CSA, specifically adult male survivors. The study is exploratory in nature and seeks to describe the experiences and meanings of one survivor's life as it was told during the course of an in-depth interview. The intent of this study, therefore, is to examine an adult male survivor's story in an effort to contribute to a growing body of literature addressing salient issues concerning men who were sexually abused as boys.

Previous Investigations

Hayes and Long (1992) suggest that in recent years there has been increased interest in the incidence and long-term effects of sexual abuse of males. The consequences of male sexual abuse are thought to include feelings of isolation, unworthiness, anger, masculine identity confusion, stress in coping with the male role, depression, and sexual dysfunction (Dimock, 1988; Nasjlete, 1980; Roger & Terry, 1984; Summit & Kryso,

1978). It is noted, however, that these descriptive statements are generally derived from clinical impressions (Hayes & Long, 1992).

Beitchman et al.(1992) in A review of the long-term effects of child sexual abuse found that sexual abuse is an important problem with serious long-term sequelae. The specific effects of sexual abuse, however, independent of force, threat of force, or such family variables as parental psychopathology are still to be clarified. Furthermore, Beitchman et al. suggest that clinical samples may include a constellation of variables commonly associated with psychopathology such as family disruption, parental illness and alcoholism and that their unique relation to CSA can not be easily determined unless control groups are included.

Beitchman et al. (1992) also suggest that various symptoms have been reported in the early aftermath of CSA, and that ambiguity exists as to which effects may be directly attributed to the abuse and which may be related to other antecedent or concomitant variables. Consequently, there may be "sleeper" effects of which a child may be unaware, emerging with dramatic impact in adulthood. While Beitchman et al. do not discredit or minimize the legitimacy of short-term effects

experienced by children , they do suggest that adults are able to assess childhood events from a different psychological perspective than that of a child and that understanding the adult perspective is necessary to unravel the full impact of CSA.

Watkins and Bentovim (1992) in The sexual abuse of male children and adolescents: A review of current research found that research with respect to sexually abused males has clearly lagged behind that of sexually abused females. They attribute the lag in research to the notion that sexual abuse of males was seen as an uncommon, if not rare, problem partly because it was doubted that sexual abuse had significant effects on males or their subsequent development

In addition, Watkins and Bentovim (1992) found that many studies with respect to sexually abused males and the consequent long-term effects suffer from one of the following limitations: being anecdotal; having biased samples; samples being too small in size; a lack of comparison groups; having no or insufficient objective measures; being retrospective; and, most relevantly, failing to undertake gender analysis. Despite methodological limitations, most studies have contributed varying degrees of helpful insights into

issues confronting male victims of CSA (Vander Mey, 1988).

In a recent study specific to men who were sexually abused as boys, Doll et al. (1992) in Self-reported childhood and adolescent abuse among adult homosexual and bisexual men found that out of 1,001 adult homosexual and bisexual male participants attending sexually transmitted disease clinics 37% reported they had been encouraged or forced to have sexual contact before age 19 with an older more powerful partner and that 97% of these incidents occurred with men. Doll et al. suggest the prevalence of sexual abuse with the study population was considerably higher than that reported from most studies of male sexual abuse. Although the focus of the study was that of adult males, the study did not comment on long-term effects, coping mechanisms, or variances that may have been present with respect to how the participants viewed their sexual victimization as compared to females.

In the first U.S. national study of male survivors of CSA, Mendel (1995) examined a clinical population of one hundred twenty-four men who identified themselves as having experienced sexual abuse in childhood. The central focus of the study was to further understand the

relationship between various abuse characteristics and adult psychosocial functioning. Independent variables included duration of abuse, severity of abuse, number of perpetrators, age of respondent at onset of abuse, presence of physical abuse, drug use by perpetrator, gender of the perpetrator, intra - versus extrafamilial abuse, and sexual interactions with mother, father, and siblings.

A multimethod approach was utilized, including both standardized and original measures in the form of a questionnaire. In addition semi-structured interviews with a sub-sample of nine men were included in an effort to extrapolate data from personal accounts. With respect to the questionnaire, three self-report checklists were utilized: The Trauma Symptom Checklist (TSC; Briere & Runtz, 1989); the World Assumptions Scale (WAS; Janoff-Bulman, 1989); and, the Brief Sexual Function Questionnaire for Men (BSFQ: Reynolds et al., 1988). The original measures made up the bulk of the study and included a number of questions related to the respondent's sexual abuse history as well as a number of demographic questions regarding the respondent's age, ethnic status, marital status, educational level attained.

Mendel (1995) cited the limitations of the study to include the fact that virtually all of the men had participated in extensive psychotherapy, that a high percentage of the respondents identified themselves as homosexual, that perpetrators may have been screened out of the study by referring therapists, and that the sample population was predominantly white with high levels of education inferring a higher level of socioeconomic status. Thus, the generalizability of a study of this nature is obviously limited.

Nonetheless, Mendel (1995) found that most of the participants in the study understood CSA as having damaging effects on all aspects of their lives. It was further found that the following issues specific to the male gender surfaced as a result of the study: 1) attempted efforts to incorporate victimization into previously held schemas concerning masculinity; 2) the fact of being acted-upon was perceived as a threat to the participant's view of themselves as men; 3) the common assumption that male victims are somehow responsible for the abuse; 4) the assumptions that victims inevitably become perpetrators due to society's belief that all men are oppressors; and, 5) common questions concerning sexual orientation.

In general, most studies with respect to adult survivors of CSA have as their focus characteristics, symptomatology, prevalence, long-term effects and, to a lesser degree, treatment considerations. From these studies questions have emerged with respect to gender analysis as an appropriate direction for further research. Recent research, therefore, appears to be motivated by the hypothesis that males experience CSA differently than females resulting in life events and associated meanings specific to the male gender.

Research Question

This study examines and describes the phenomenon of an adult male survivor of CSA. The investigation will focus on the experiences and meanings associated with one man's childhood sexual victimization. In essence, this study will probe into the life of an adult male survivor of sexual abuse, thereby investigating the fabric of his experiences, thoughts, emotions, and meanings. In so doing, an effort will be made to understand how his childhood sexual victimization radiated throughout the course of his life.

Rationale

Research with respect to adult male survivors of childhood sexual victimization is limited. Most studies

addressing the long-term effects of childhood sexual victimization are comparative in nature to women and are clinically based. Few studies even mention adult males survivors of sexual abuse. More often than not, adult male survivors are briefly mentioned in the context of treatment considerations toward the end of clinical studies.

The assumption inherent in studies of this nature is that an adult male survivor's long-term effects are remarkably similar to those of adult female survivors. Consequently, both theoretical and treatment considerations for men are based on generalizations derived from studies primarily concerned with women. (Andrews, 1994; Bagley and King, 1990; Vander Mey, 1990; Watkins and Bentovim, 1992; Andrews, 1994; Mendel, 1995).

The rationale for this study, therefore, is that the findings will contribute to a growing body of research literature addressing salient theoretical and practical issues concerning adult male survivors of CSA. It is anticipated that a clearer understanding of adult male survivors of CSA will be developed thereby contributing the development of effective treatment modalities.

Approach

The approach to this study was through field work research methodology. Specifically, a case study was utilized to explore the experiences and meanings of an adult male survivor of CSA (Yin, 1994). Of particular interest was the survivor's life experiences and their meanings, coping methods, and perceived long-term effects of his childhood sexual victimization.

This research is exploratory and descriptive in nature (Yin, 1994). Its aim is to capture the essence and complexity of the real-life experiences of an adult male survivor of CSA in his own context. A case study approach is appropriate as this methodology best captures the living elements of his experiences, associated meanings, relationships, coping mechanisms, perceived long-term effects, and psychological processes (Yin, 1994).

The primary source of information for this study was obtained through an in-depth interview with one participant totalling approximately five hours. The interview focused on the life experiences and their meanings of the adult male survivor of CSA before, during, and following the time period in which the abuse occurred. Included in the interview was an account of

current life experiences with the awareness that the participant remains in a process of continued self discovery. From this exploration life themes became apparent, ones that were understood by the subject to be an accurate reflection of his life. The self-others schema and life themes will be discussed at length in a later chapter of the study.

The participant was selected as a result of his voluntary response to an ad placed in the Vancouver Men's Evolvment Network Journal. An initial meeting transpired during which time it was determined that his story of abuse was credible. The participant presented as desiring to share his experience of childhood sexual victimization and was prepared to offer references from his therapists to validate the authenticity of his claims.

The participant's rationale for volunteering for this study was rooted in his process of self-discovery. Consequently, he decided as a result of therapy to share his story of abuse with someone other than a therapist. In so doing, an effort was made by the participant to aid in the growing awareness and understanding of men who were sexually abused as boys.

Chapter II. Literature Review

Child Sexual Abuse

CSA can be defined as the involvement of dependent developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, and to which they are unable to give informed consent and that violate the taboos of family roles (Schechter & Roberge, 1976). Included in what could be understood as a traditional definition of child sexual abuse is an age differential between perpetrator and victim of at least five years (Watkins & Bentovim, 1991).

Recently, increased awareness of CSA incidents by younger perpetrators has resulted in the suggestion of a two year age differential, along with other criteria, to define inter-child sexual activities which are clearly abusive (Johnsons, 1988, 1989). Cantwell (1988) suggests a definition of sexual abuse between children that focuses entirely on behavior, thus dispensing with an age criterion altogether. Watkins and Bentovim (1992) indicate that descriptions of children as abusers complete the spectrum of sexually abusive behavior first described between adults and children, and adolescents and children.

CSA, for the purposes of this study, is defined as any sexual activity or experience imposed on a child which results in emotional, physical, or sexual trauma regardless of the perpetrator's age (Butler, 1985). This definition recognizes the wide range of abusive activities which follow a continuum rather than forming distinct categories that are often restricted by age differentials (Bagley and King, 1992).

However, in an effort to avoid the minimization of CSA by using a broad definition, Kempe and Kempe (1984), champions of the battered child syndrome, suggest the following delineation of those activities which are clearly abusive to children: (1) incest - sexual activity between family members; (2) pedophilia - the preference of an adult for the prepubertal children as sex objects; (3) exhibitionism - the exposure of genitals by an adult male; (4) molestation - behaviors such as touching, fondling, kissing, and masturbation; (5) sexual intercourse - including oral-genital, anal-genital, or penile-vaginal contact; (6) rape - sexual or attempted intercourse without consent of the victim; (7) sexual sadism - the infliction of bodily injury as a means of obtaining sexual excitement; (8) child pornography - the production and distribution of

material involving minors in sexual acts; and (9) child prostitution - the involvement of children in sex acts for profit.

These categories illustrate the various activities to which children may be subjected. Naturally, the resultant trauma may depend on the degree and duration of intrusion as well as the age and developmental level of the child to whom it occurs, not to mention the nature of the relationship between the child and the offender (Bagley and King, 1992).

Recent developments in defining CSA entertain distinctions between abusive and non-abusive sexual contact with children. Specifically, sexualized attention has been put forward as a term to describe the boundary between clearly abusive and clearly acceptable behavior (Haynes-Seman & Krugman, 1989). Obvious abusive behavior of a boy would be masturbating the boy, anal fingering or intercourse, whereas caressing and stroking a baby's buttocks persistently, or poking fingers in the mouth, which were arousing to the father, would be examples of what was considered sexualized attention. It is thought that sexualized attention, therefore, depends on the affective and sexually aroused state of caregiver and whether the child has a sexual

response to it. The distinction between sexual abuse and sexual attention further fades into the realm of cuddling, vigorous bouncing, and rough-housing which is stereotypically the normal approach, in particular, to boys by fathers (Watkin and Bentovim, 1992).

Sexualized attention is naturally linked to other important research questions such as what effects at different ages, if any, does modelling of sexual behavior have, and, what constitutes abusive modelling? Faller (1989a), Seghorn, Prentky and Boucher (1987), and Smith and Israel (1987) assert that the issue of sexualized attention is an important factor. However, the ethical, accessibility, multifactorial research design problems inherent in answering such questions are formidable and as yet have not been met (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992).

Besides as few pioneering studies on selected parent self-report groups (e.g. Rosenfeld, Bailey, Siegel & Bailey, 1986; Rosenfeld, Siegel & Bailey, 1987), there is little reliable information on community patterns of genital contact between parent and children, particularly in bathing or toileting situations (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992). Obviously infants and toddlers are subject to close physical contact during care-taking

functions. Rosenfeld et al.'s (1986) found that more than 50% of 8-10 year old daughters were reported as touching their mother's breasts and genitals, and more than 30% to be touching their father's genitals, while more than 40% of 8-10 year old sons were reported as touching their mother's genitals and about 20% their father's genitals.

Regardless as to whether the use of a boy for the sexual gratification of another individual is defined as sexually abusive or sexualized attention, it is clear from the available literature that the long-term effects of imposed sexual activity are present and, for the most part, damaging to the development of the male's sexuality in the broadest sense of the term. It is the position of this study that the concept of sexualized attention be further examined so as to maintain clarity with respect to defining sexually abusive behavior.

Prevalence

The definitions of sexual abuse used in research studies, sample selections, and methods of asking questions regarding sexual abuse strongly influence the prevalence rates (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992). It was commonly believed 15 years ago that girls were abused in excess of boys in a ratio of about 9 to 1 (Watkins and

Bentovim, 1992). However, contemporary studies now indicate that the ratio of girls to boys abused has narrowed remarkably.

The majority of community studies (e.g. Badgley et al, 1984; Burman, 1985; Finkelhor, 1984d; Kercher & McShane, 1984; Murphy, 1985) suggest a ratio of 2-4 girls to 1 boy. Clinical studies, conversely, are not so uniform. The highest reported ratio is 2.2 girls to 1 boy (Hobbs & Wynne, 1987) whereas other reports show 4 girls abused to 1 boy (Adams-Tucker, 1984; Bentovim et al., 1987; Gale, Thompson, Moran & Sack, 1988). The continuing discrepancy between community and clinical ratios are an ongoing concern for research and require further exploration and explanation.

Peters, Wyatt and Finkelhor (1986) carried out a wide ranging review of the prevalence of CSA comparing males to females. They examined volunteer samples, college student samples, and community samples. Their conclusions from these North American studies was that there is considerable variation in the prevalence rates for CSA derived from the studies that were examined. Reported ranges were from 6% to 62% for females and from 3% to 31% for males (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992).

Finkelhor (1984b) concluded in his Review Boys as Victims that estimates from surveys of men in the general population would indicate that perhaps 2.5-8.7% of men are sexually victimized as children. Further, Finkelhor suggests that abused boys have not been coming to public attention to the same extent as sexually abused girls and therefore raises the issue of possible under-reporting.

Under-Reporting Factors

The under-reporting of male CSA is understood as commonplace by most researchers (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992). In essence, possible factors leading to the under-reporting of sexual abuse in boys can be conceptualized as either coming from within the boy himself or due to a lack of response by those around him. Factors influencing under-reporting of sexual abuse in boys are thought to include fear of homosexuality, differential emotional response to being sexually victimized (externalizing as opposed to internalizing), lack of supervision whereby a boy's vulnerability to extrafamilial abuse is increased, blaming the boy as if the abuse was somehow the boys fault, the missing of alertors more pertinent to boys such as homophobic behavior, denial of abuse by females

in that women are often seen as being sexually harmless to children, denial of father-son abuse, and denial of child-child abuse (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992).

Long-Term Effects

Research with respect to the long-term effects associated with male CSA has tended to be comparative in nature, addressing parallels between males and females in relation to demographics, attributions, symptomatology, and long-term effects. In short, while demographics vary, attributions (internal and external), symptomatology, and long-term effects such as depression, anxiety, gender identity confusion, posttraumatic stress disorder, sexual dysfunction, and sexual identity confusion are found to be relatively consistent in the experiences of both males and females.

Beitchman (1992) in a review of the literature concerning the long-term effects of CSA suggests that the victims of CSA are predominantly female and that little attention has been focused on male victims. Bentovim and Watkin (1992) indicate that the question of whether there might be differential effects has yet to be seriously researched and we are left to rely on scattered impressions from clinical settings, usually involving small samples.

Beitchman (1992) concludes that there is evidence to support long-term sequelae of CSA among boys. He cites various outcome domains which include sexual dysfunction, gender identity conflict, homosexuality, and an increased risk of becoming sex abuse perpetrators. Beitchman warns that evidence in this regard is suggestive and certainly warrants further research. Whether or not, according to Beitchman, male victims of CSA are likely to show more severe or unique sequelae than female victims is a moot point.

Myers (1989) reported that men who were sexually assaulted as boys or young adults described problem areas in their lives such as repression, self-blame, posttraumatic stress disorder, male gender identity fragility, sexual orientation ambiguity, mistrustfulness of adult men, internalized homophobia, and disturbances of self-esteem and body image.

Vander Mey (1988) presents the hypothesis that distinct long-term effects can and do exist for adult male survivors. She does, however, acknowledge the importance of previous comparative research with respect to adult male and female survivors, and suggests that significant findings be taken into consideration when

focusing on research questions concerning the sexual victimization of males.

Cahill (1991) suggests that the long-term effects of CSA on males is that of depression, isolation, poor self-concept, difficulty in establishing and maintaining relationships, and sexual problems. In addition, Cahill indicates that male victims of CSA report a lack of identity with, or problems in coming to terms with, their own gender, sexual preference conflict, sexual dysfunction, sexual fantasies or attraction towards children, and sexual compulsion. Cahill expresses concern over the lack of research with respect to adult male survivors of sexual abuse and hypothesizes that some of the affect for adult males is different from that of adult females.

Finkelhor (1992), reporting on the first national survey of adults concerning prevalence, characteristics, and risk factors associated with CSA ($n = 1,145$ males; $n = 1,481$ females), concludes that findings were consistent with smaller scale surveys and suggests the need for continued research with respect to long-term effects. Finkelhor's concluding remarks indicate that a history of sexual abuse can be found in an important fraction of men and women in the general population, and

that many of these experiences are at the hands of a person known to the child. The report did not address the issues of potential variance with respect to long-term effects between male and female victims.

Literature concerning the treatment and recovery of long-term effects of sexual abuse of males is just now beginning to surface (Cahill, 1990; Dole, 1992; Hunter, 1990; Law, 1990; Vander Mey, 1988). Self-help literature has emerged in response to the growing awareness of the needs of women and men who are beginning, for a variety of reasons, to reveal their sexual victimization. Bass and Davis (1988) in The courage to heal: A guide for women survivors of child sex abuse present helpful information for women in the process of recovery. Bass and Davis acknowledge the book was written primarily for women and were not prepared to address the recovery process for men at the time of writing.

Recently, Davis (1990) in The courage to heal workbook: For women and men survivors of child sex abuse addresses the needs of adult male survivors of sexual abuse. While acknowledging the movement of men toward recovery, Davis presents written and oral exercises that may or may not be applicable for both genders. At first

glance, the exercises are seemingly helpful in identifying the fact of victimization, as well as significant outcome domains such as interpersonal relationships, anger, trust issues, self-esteem, intimacy, sex and parenting. The material does not, however, address how men might feel about themselves in the midst of prevailing norms, attitudes, and beliefs within society concerning masculinity.

Lew (1989) in Victims no longer: Men recovering from incest and other sexual child abuse writes out of his own experience as a psychotherapist having counselled numerous adult male survivors of sexual abuse. Most of the book reveals personal accounts of sexual abuse while providing literature and community resources for those in the process of recovery. Lew's work is helpful in identifying major characteristics and symptomatology of adult male survivors. Hunter (1990) in Abused boys addresses the recovery process for male survivors of sexual abuse, partners of those in recovery, clinicians, and others in the helping professions. Unfortunately, Hunter's list of resources, although helpful, is not specific to males. In addition, the recounting of the victim's stories is helpful in understanding issues related to sexual abuse

although drawing together common themes so as to better understand long-term effects is limited.

Research Directions

Vander Mey (1988) and Cahill (1990) question assumptions associated with the findings of comparative research in relation to the long-term effects experienced by male and female adult survivors of sexual abuse. They claim that adult male survivors of sexual abuse have seldom been researched apart from studies comparing both male and female survivors, and that most of the comparisons are symptomalogical in nature. In addition, Vander Mey and Cahill suggest that comparative research insufficiently addresses the long-term effects of sexual victimization on adult male survivors in the context of prevailing and possibly oppressive familial, societal, and cultural norms surrounding masculinity.

Geiser (1979) notes that the sexual misuse of male children is a poorly understood area of child abuse with much misinformation and many myths. He suggests that the dynamics of sexual abuse of males have little in common with those involving females. Vander Mey (1988) suggests that perhaps some of the misunderstanding is due to the silence surrounding the sexual victimization of males in society, and that masculinity involves a

denial of helplessness with passivity on the part of the male being equated with homosexuality.

Vander Mey (1988) draws attention to the fact that male sexual abuse victims frequently suffer in silence thus victimizing themselves. She asserts that the effects of sexual victimization on male children, placed in the context of stereotypical concepts of masculinity, include mental disorders, the probability of becoming rapists and incest offenders as adults, and the development of homosexual identification.

Research on male sexual victimization, according to Vander Mey (1988), suffers from samples severely limited in size, convenience samples, analyses dependent upon post factum victim reports, research primarily or exclusively focused on the victimization of females or female victims, a focus on only one type of sexual abuse (e.g., incest, pedophilia, rape), and lack of replication. She argues for continued and increased research focusing specifically on the issues surrounding adult male survivors of CSA.

As evidenced in the preceding paragraphs, there is growing concern surrounding the long-term effects of CSA in male victims. In addition, there is speculation that long-term effects of CSA for adult males may involve

unique variances when compared to the long-term effects of adult females. While research does not explicitly support this speculation, a number of points can be taken into account when considering the long-term impact of sexual victimization of males.

First, males can be and are sexually victimized and suffer negative long-term effects as a result of sexual victimization. Beitchman (1992) found that male victims of CSA show disturbed adult sexual functioning and that "sleeper" effects, of which the child and others are unaware, may emerge with dramatic impact in adulthood. Second, Pierce and Pierce (1985) found that force or threat of force were significantly more common among adult male survivors than that of adult female sexual abuse survivors. Third, Johnson and Shrier (1985) found that 25% of victimized males ($n = 40$) compared with 5% of controls ($n = 40$) reported sexual dysfunction, and 60% said that the sexual abuse had had a significant impact on their lives.

Fourth, Rogers and Terry (1984) reported that male sex abuse victims showed confusion of sexual identity, inappropriate attempts to reassert their masculinity, and recapitulation of the abuse experience. Finally, Longo (1982) found in a sample of male adolescent sex

offenders ($n = 17$) that 47% had been sexually abused as children, and Becker (1988) reported a 19% incidence of CSA among male sex offenders ($n = 139$).

Gilgun and Reiser (1990) recently studied the lives of three men who were sexually abused as boys to determine thoughts, feelings, and misgivings as they were coming to terms with their sexual identity. It was found that the sexual orientation of two of the subjects was not affected by being sexually victimized whereas the third subject felt that his sexual victimization interrupted heterosexual development. All subjects indicated that the process of coming to terms with their sexual identity involved years of silent suffering and internalized homophobia, not to mention having to deal with a homophobic culture.

Based on these findings it is reasonable to suggest that there is evidence to support long-term effects of at least certain forms of sexual abuse in adult male survivors. Vander Mey (1988) suggests that male children are indeed negatively affected by sexual victimization. The degree to which the long-term effects of sexual victimization for males varies from those of females is a current and much needed point of

discussion in the ongoing research concerning sexual victimization.

Qualitative Research

The phenomena studied in qualitative research are largely internal processes such as perceptions and feelings. The focus is on how events are perceived by the individual. The researcher is often in direct contact with those involved in the study (Borg & Gall, 1989). The purpose of this research is first to understand and then communicate the understanding of what it is like for an adult male to have been sexually abused as a boy. Qualitative methods assist in the understanding of what others, such as adult male survivors of CSA, are experiencing, and to see the individual in context rather than as an isolated variable (Fewell & Vadasy, 1986).

Case Study

"A case study is an empirical study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1989,p.23).

It is hoped that the information and knowledge gained through this study will be helpful in assisting

professionals and men in the process of recovery from CSA as they address salient issues with respect to theory and practice. It is further anticipated that this information will be useful by way of contributing to a growing body of literature with respect to adult male survivors.

Yin (1989) outlines and addresses three criticisms generally levied at case study methodology. The first is that case studies can lack rigor and are prone to bias. These tendencies are not however applicable only to case studies. They are also found in quantitative and experimental forms of research. The second criticism is that the case study offers little basis for generalization. Yin notes that the aim of the case study is theoretical propositions and not to populations. The third criticism is that case studies can lead to rather complex, tedious, reports. This later characteristic is dependent upon the abilities and talents of the researcher to glean out the essential patterns of findings.

Chapter III. Methodology

This chapter details the methodology and procedures employed in conducting this study. The first section details the writer's personal perspectives and their significance to the this study. The second section presents an outline of the study design. The third section addresses the issue of procedure, specifically detailing subject selection, the interview process, data analysis and presentation of findings. The fourth and final section addresses the issues of reliability and validity as they pertain to this qualitative study.

Personal Perspective

A basic tenant for qualitative research is that the researcher is the major research instrument (Spradley, 1979). Oakley (cited in Mishler, 1986) believes that the concept of "researcher and the researched as objective instruments of data production be replaced by the recognition that personal involvement is more than dangerous bias -- it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives." (pg. 31.) Therefore it is relevant to describe the personal context and perspective that I bring to this qualitative study.

During my first year of graduate studies at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver I worked as a Graduate Academic Assistant in the Student Counselling and Resources Centre. In this capacity my responsibilities included the maintenance of the Resources Centre's small library which included a few self-help books on adult male survivors of CSA.

Out of interest, I began to read a few of the books and became captivated by the intensity with which some of the personal accounts of sexual abuse were described. It was not the abuse itself that caught the my attention. Rather, it was the emotional and psychological affect men were describing that somehow evoked my continued interest.

My initial reading of self-help literature spawned a desire to continue pursuing the topic as I began to recognize its value with respect to research. Following subsequent attempts to locate research with respect to adult male survivors of sexual abuse I realized that literature in this regard was, and continues to be, limited.

It appeared that an area of research was presenting itself and I therefore chose to pursue an understanding of the issues confronting men who had been abused as

boys. Throughout the endeavor to investigate the phenomenon of adult male survivors, a conscious effort was made to avoid using this process for personal gain. While I was open to considering the impact of this topic in my own life, I purposed to retain objectivity while engaged in the research process.

Nonetheless, both the participant and the content of his story prompted a plurality of reactions for me. They included anger surrounding his victimization, sadness with respect to his sense of being damaged, an identification with his sense of shame, anxiety as I related to his obvious struggle to reveal intimate life events, identification with his struggle to feel confident within himself, and identification with his expressed self-doubt.

In short, I found myself relating to an individual living with varying degrees of uncertainty and confusion with respect to himself and others. The reasons surrounding his confusion differ from my own in that I do not recall memories of sexual abuse. What I do recall, however, are memories related to repeated efforts to develop self-confidence in the midst of peer criticism and verbal attacks during my elementary and high school years. In a sense, I felt victimized by the

indiscretions of others who I perceived as destructive and without regard for my life. Consequently, I developed a self-others schema in which I became the victim while others were either potential villains or persons who could possibly provide consolation. This victim self-others schema resulted in years of delayed personal growth with respect to self-confidence.

As a result of personal counselling and a significant degree of reflection concerning the impact of others in my life, I came to realize that fostering my victimization, as painful as it was at the time, was in essence continuing to inhibit growth beyond that of being a victim. Consequently, I did not take into account the fact people change and that I, too, was changing as a result of new relationships, personal maturity, education, and increased awareness. Moreover, I was not taking into account my personal responsibility for significant life change.

In recent years I have developed a healthier sense of myself with respect to my self-others schema, one that is characterized by personal responsibility for change concurrent with empathy for those afflicted by painful life events. More significant, however, is my perspective that individuals victimized as children can

either remain victims or they can choose to move beyond victimization. It is with this perspective that I approach this study. Consequently, as I was reading about the tragic life events sustained by many adult male survivors of child sexual abuse, I did so with great degree of empathy concurrent with my thoughts concerning the need to move beyond victimization.

In addition to the my personal reasons for moving in this particular research direction, I was also interested in the topic of sexual abuse due to the nature of my work. I presently work as a counsellor for a family services agency. In this capacity I provide individual and group treatment to men incarcerated in minimum and maximum correctional facilities. The focus of my work is specific to violent crimes including physical assault, sexual assault, attempted murder, and murder. It has been my experience to learn that most of the offenders with whom I work have been either physically or sexually assaulted as boys, thus making the nature of this study of great importance to me in the consideration of my professional development.

It is with a combination of personal identification with victimization and commitment to professional development that I approach this study. In short, this

study reflects my interest in heightening awareness with respect to issues surrounding adult male survivors of CSA. The purpose therefore is to investigate not only perceived long-term effects, but also life experiences and their meanings so as to possibly expose unique ways in which men have dealt with their childhood sexual victimization. In so doing, a significant contribution will be made toward the enhancement of our understanding with respect to theory and intervention.

Design

The design of this study used field research methodology, specifically the in-depth interview in an effort to gather information that described the range of experiences encountered by an adult male survivor of CSA. The information gathered in this study was derived from a participant who had experienced CSA for approximately two years between the ages of ten and twelve. In addition, the participant, now thirty-eight, has been in a self-prescribed process of recovery for a number of years. Consequently, the participant was relatively aware of his thoughts and feelings concerning his victimization and subsequent long-term effects. He was able to articulate his experiences and their

meanings within his range of ability to conceptualize in this regard.

Procedures

Selection of Participant

Locating participants for this study was difficult. Reasons for the difficulty in finding suitable participants are thought to include fear of disclosure, confidentiality considerations by therapists providing treatment to survivors, and a lack of trust by those who may, from a distance, be interested in a study of this nature.

At the outset of the study, three men volunteered as participants. One participant experienced the loss of two loved ones within the initial stages of the research and therefore withdrew his participation. Another participant chose to withdraw from the study for personal reasons related to his ambivalence surrounding self-disclosure for the purposes of this research. Thus, one participant continued to pursue the study while availing himself of the opportunity to share his story.

The remaining participant for this study voluntarily responded to an ad placed in the Vancouver Men's Evolvment Network Journal. The criteria for

selecting the participant included: 1) that the adult survivor be over 18 years of age; 2) that the adult survivor was a victim of CSA; 3) that he was able to recall both abusive and non-abusive memories; 4) that he was able to articulate experiences and meanings associated with having been sexually victimized as a child; and, 5) that he was in the process of recovery to the extent that participation in this study was not viewed as therapy.

In-depth Interview

Field research is a complex, non-programmed, interactive process that involves the researcher and the participant in the study with the research problem. Lofland (cited in Mishler, 1986) describes the unstructured interview as a "flexible strategy of discovery...Its object is to carry on a guided conversation to elicit rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis." (pg. 27) The in-depth interview, which forms the major tool of this research, is a dialogue between the researcher and the participant wherein the researcher may formulate and test hypotheses throughout the process.

Mischler (1986) conceptualizes interviews as "jointly produced discourses" (pg. 96). One of the

principles of this research design is reflexivity, a continual process of analysis and review throughout the research project. The flexibility of this research approach is especially appropriate because the stated research question is concerned with the discovery of the range and nature of the experience and meanings of an adult male survivor of CSA.

Acknowledging that the specific interview procedures, dialogue, and analysis relative to individual participant evolves according to the principles of reflexivity as the research progresses, the interview followed a broad general outline in order to maintain a continuity between the preliminary interview, the formal interview, and follow-up discussions (Spradley, 1979). A preliminary interview was held so as to determine the suitability of the proposed participant. The purpose of this interview was to outline the purpose, nature, limitations, and overall context of the study. Included in this preliminary interview was the intention of establishing rapport with the participant while commencing the initial development of trust both in myself as the researcher and in the process of discovery. The proposed participant was informed of his rights e.g., his right to withdraw from

the study at any time for any reason, his right to confidentiality, and his right to be assured that ethical considerations were inherent in a study of this nature.

Following the completion of the preliminary interview and a one week time frame for the proposed participant to decide if he would like to continue the process, a second interview occurred which was in actuality the first formal in-depth interview lasting approximately two and on half hours. This interview was audio-taped and ended at the request of the participant who felt that enough had been shared for one interview.

A second interview took place the following week so as to continue the development of the participant's story. This interview lasted two and one half hours during which time the participant completed his story in full up to the present time. Throughout the course of these two interviews the participant was invited to describe his experiences and their meanings associated with having been sexually abused as a child.

In essence, the participant served as a guide and teacher with respect to the historical and current developments of his life. Broad areas of interest focused on family life, the nature and experience of

abuse, relationship to the perpetrator before, during and after the abuse, social functioning, and intimate relationships. An effort was made therefore to encourage the participant in the sharing of his life experiences and their associated meanings with respect to having been sexually abused as a boy.

The objective of the interview process was to gather information about his experiences and meanings. Questions were therefore open-ended, although some questions were directed to probe for clarification or to obtain completeness of information. Example questions included:

- What was your family like growing up?
- Describe your relationship to family members.
- Describe your relationship to your father before, during and following the abuse.
- What effect did the abuse have on your thinking and your emotions?
- How has the abuse impacted your life?
- How has the abuse impacted your relationships?
- Describe your thoughts and feelings while being abused.
- Describe what you have learned as a result of having been abused.

- What does it mean for you to have survived childhood sexual victimization?
- How would life be different had you not been sexually abused as a boy?
- What impact has sexual victimization had on the development of your sexuality?
- What does it mean for you to be in recovery?

As previously mentioned, the duration of the combined interviews was approximately five hours in length. Following the interviews a transcript was developed and given to the participant to read. The intent in having the participant read the transcript was to seek clarification, additional responses, and written feedback so as to add to the sources of information. .

Analysis

A portrait description based on the interview process was developed as defined in the following chapter. This portrait reveals the perceptions of the adult male survivor of sexual abuse. According to the principles of reflexivity, the portrait was then validated with the participant in a follow-up interview with the objective of further clarifying and enriching the portrait.

The portrait and follow-up interview were both analyzed and studied in detail in order to establish a greater degree of clarity with respect to the experiences and meanings associated with child sexual victimization. The experiences and meanings of the participant are therefore discussed in the context of themes that arose during the interviews, the development of the portrait, and participant feedback.

Results

A description and critical analysis was developed in response to the self-others schema and life themes that emerged during the course of the interviews. The description and critical analysis are intended to provide information for the purpose of enhancing insight, knowledge, and the development of a theoretical construct for both professionals and survivors of CSA. It is further anticipated that this research will make a significant contribution to a growing body of literature specific to adult male survivors of CSA.

Reliability and Validity Issues

Of concern to qualitative research are the issues of reliability and validity. Yin (1989) explains that the case study tests appropriate for measuring the credibility of qualitative research are: construct

validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. Yin further details a number of tactics to be employed throughout the case study process so as to maintain research credibility.

Construct Validity

Construct validity deals with the soundness of the study through the establishment of correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. Yin (1984) has identified three tactics to manage this issue.

The first tactic is the use of multiple sources of evidence in a manner encouraging convergent line of inquiry. A criticism of this study could be found in relation to a lack of multiple sources encouraging a convergent line of inquiry. While this case study reflects the life of only one individual, it is nonetheless important for three reasons.

First, inherent in this research focus was the issue of lack of availability of participants. It was significant that as a result of enquiry concerning the availability of participants that only three men appeared to be willing to even consider their potential involvement in a study of this nature. Following the withdrawal of two participants, the study was left with one individual who committed himself for the duration of

the process. It is the position of this study that finding participants who were willing to disclose information concerning their childhood sexual victimization was challenging.

In addition, a consideration exceeding the importance of the first, is the fact of this study being ground breaking research with respect to describing the experiences and meanings of adult male survivors of CSA. Consequently, the research is understood as being revelatory in nature (Yin, 1994). The research is revelatory in the sense that it is concerned with how a CSA survivor viewed his life experiences and meanings as opposed to previous research primarily focusing on symptomatology, long-term effects, demographics, prevalence, and coping mechanisms.

It is therefore the position of this study that one case study was sufficient to develop an initial sense of the issues confronting an adult male survivor of CSA as he attempted to identify and extrapolate meanings associated with his experiences, and whether or not something of significance would result from the research process. The case study is therefore worth conducting because the descriptive information alone will be revelatory (Yin, 1994).

The second tactic involves establishing a chain of evidence that clearly links the individual case portrait and the general discussion to the specific experiences of the participant. This was managed through careful cross referencing of the individual interview data. In addition, the participant was included in ongoing discussions while the findings were being developed so as to continue in the maintenance of clarity and accuracy of information.

Finally, the third tactic is the reviewing of the narrative with the participant to further validate the results. This formed an integral part of the procedures of this study.

Internal Validity

Internal validity is only relevant to studies that attempt to establish casual relationships, ones that are explanatory in nature (Yin, 1994). Therefore, this test is not appropriate for this study since it is descriptive in nature and makes no attempt to explain or establish causal relationships.

External Validity

External validity deals with the generalizability of the study to the larger population. As this study examines the range of experiences and meanings of adult

male survivors of CSA, an analytic generalization was developed which describes the results of this study and provides a basis for comparison for other similar studies leading to a deeper understanding of the experiences and meanings. This study presents one account of a particular set of experiences and meaning. As Yin (1994) indicates, generalization is not automatic. Theories must be tested through replication of the findings in other similar studies.

Reliability

The objective of the reliability test is to establish that, if a later researcher followed exactly the same procedure and conducted exactly the same study, the later study would produce the same results and conclusions as the current study. As the personal experience of the researcher and the individual nature of the participant is such an important part of the research process, and because the interview process is so unstructured, the likelihood of ever exactly replicating this study is very low. Here the approach to dealing with the reliability issue has to be, as Yin (1989) states, to conduct the study "as if someone were always looking over your shoulder" (pg. 45). In the absence of another person observing the actual research

process, especially the interviews and follow-up discussions with the participant, this requires the researcher to explicitly acknowledge his assumptions, biases and perspectives. Only by complete disclosure of thoughts and process and systematic recording of the progress of the study in all detail can a measure of study reliability be achieved.

Chapter IV. Case Portrait

Portrait of Willy

Willy is a 38 year old single Caucasian male currently living in a small town in the interior of British Columbia. Born in Ottawa, Ontario, Willy spent most of his growing up years in and around Toronto until he was 18. He moved to British Columbia approximately twenty years ago in an effort to distance himself from "family expectations associated with being first born." Presently, Willy works in the hospitality industry and finds "pleasure in outdoor recreational activities" during his spare time.

When asked to comment on his childhood, Willy recalled his family as being "very poor and frequently in a state of transition due to my father's various employment opportunities." He recalled a few of their residences as being infested with mice, and that he and his two brothers and two sisters would occasionally capture the mice in an effort to be rewarded with sips of beer from their mother.

Willy recalled amicable relationships with his brothers and sisters in the midst of occasional sibling rivalries. He frequently played road hockey with other neighborhood boys during which time arguments emerged in

the event of allegations concerning unfair play. While he remembers arguing with his playmates, Willy also recalled himself as being a quiet boy who, for the most part, stuck to himself.

Willy was 10 when one of his younger brothers died from complications associated with a hole in his heart, one that had been present since the time of his birth. This unfortunate incident is understood by Willy as the first of many significant life events impacting long-term directions for both he and his family. It was just prior to and following the death of Willy's brother that his parent's relationship evidenced signs of deterioration. Willy's mother was drinking in excess while his father became immersed in the development of his career.

For approximately two years following the death of their brother, both Willy and his remaining brother were repeatedly sexually abused by their father. Willy stated that he could not "remember the first time his father abused both me and my brother. It happened for two years between ages ten and twelve." He recalled that what his father did was "sexual, oral at first" and that for the longest time he "just pretended to be asleep." He further stated that "I didn't feel very

good. I felt sad and bummed out because of the conflict of interest."

Willy remarked that "I didn't know what conflict of interest meant at the time. I felt disgusted with myself afterwards." Willy's initial ambivalence was related to the "release, the orgasm. The orgasm was very pleasurable. It was really strange." Willy further stated that "here is my father giving me - giving me - you know - he raised me, sort of guided me with rules and regulations, very strict. And yet at the same time he'd be coming in at night and doing these things. I mean he would just walk in."

Willy indicated that the sexual abuse would usually happen "late at night, around three in the morning." He would sometimes "wake up to find somebody jerking me off. At the same time I would be having this great pleasure feeling and then realize that - fuck - I didn't know what fuck was - and I'd just keep my eyes closed and try and pull away."

In some instances Willy recalled being abused while "laying on my back." He indicated that during these times "my father would grab me on my hips and would try and pull me over and I would resist because I didn't want to. When I couldn't resist any longer my father

would just pull me too hard and take advantage of his size."

Willy then recalled "just looking at the wall. I don't know if it was a creature or what it was but it was a great big circle. It was like an elephant. It was a huge happy shape and it was round like a character in a book. And there was this feeling. I can't really describe it. It was a very safe place and I'd let it grow bigger and I think I would let myself go into it and let myself disappear."

Willy stated that as time went on his father became more ambitious as reflected in his effort to take Willy to bed in their recreation room. It was during this period of time toward the end of the two year period of abuse that Willy became increasingly confused with respect to his role in relation to his father. He began to wonder if he should reciprocate his father's actions.

Willy stated that "one time I touched my father's penis and said to myself 'wow - this is really fucked'." Willy recalled being "really upset and really turned off." In the final incident of the abuse, Willy indicated that he "threw off the bed covers" while his father "took his foot and just kicked me off the bed. At the time it hurt but I thought what a relief."

Both during and following the sexual abuse, Willy noticed a number of changes in himself, his brother and his parents. Specifically, Willy recalled his relationship with his brother as becoming more verbally and physically aggressive. In addition, Willy suggested that "my mother knew what was going on in the sense that she drank a lot." Willy feels that his mother's drinking was in response to an "unhealthy marriage and the lack of power she felt concerning my father's actions with his sons." Willy stated that "I felt pissed off toward my mother because she could have done something - she could have phoned somebody."

Willy also recalled "something I held on to for a long time. I just buried it deep. I was babysitting when I was about twelve. And I touched the little girl, the baby who I was babysitting. They found out and I never babysat there again. Even to this day it bums me out. And that's what upsets me. I got really upset when we were talking about people taking advantage of other people." Willy identified this incident as "the only one time this happened. I grieve over my actions, especially knowing what my father did to me and my brother."

During the next few years Willy aligned himself with his father's demands and expectations with respect to taking care of his brother and sisters. His father became frequently absent from the home and consequently pressured Willy into assuming parental responsibilities such as taking his siblings to church on Sundays. Willy recalled feeling that he had no alternative but to yield to his father's will. Consequently, Willy felt a sense of entrapment. On the one hand, he had knowledge of his father's abusive actions, while on the other hand, he felt powerless in that "I had no where to go. I didn't know who to talk to. I didn't want to be labelled as being gay if anyone found out."

During the time of Willy's transition into high school Willy recalled "beginning to evolve in a sense. I noticed that I became insulting of other people and that I had the insight and ability to hurt people. I didn't have any boundaries with girls and I lost a lot of friendships because of a lack of boundaries. I didn't have any sense of commitment or faithfulness to friends. I never told anyone about the abuse. I just kept it to myself."

While in high school Willy recalled becoming homophobic. "I was questioning my sexuality and became

homophobic big time, really big time. I would crack homophobic jokes and insult someone if I knew they were gay. I never really understood my own sexuality. I never really had a sense of what that was. I knew that what was going on at home was wrong. I just didn't know how wrong it really was. My friends thought that being homosexual was weird. What my father was doing was considered homosexual. It didn't feel right. It never felt right. I didn't know. I was too young. It didn't make any sense. I didn't know what the physical feelings were, the emotional feelings, the spiritual feelings."

Willy's parents separated toward the end of his high school years. Consequently, Willy's younger sisters went to live with their mother. Willy was given the choice to live with his father or to move out on his own. Willy chose to live on his own and, at the request of his father, assumed responsibility for his brother. Willy stated that living on his own with his brother was a "better choice than to live with an alcoholic or an abuser."

Willy's living arrangement with his brother lasted for a brief period of time following which he decided to move to British Columbia. Following his arrival in

Vancouver Willy lived with his father for the first few months. Willy's father had relocated there only a short time earlier. "I view this as the beginning of the follow my father pattern. Its no coincidence to me that I moved to British Columbia to re-establish my relationship with my father."

While living with his father Willy noticed himself becoming "increasingly hostile toward my father. It was a mistake to always be around an abuser, and I was always reminded of the abuse every time I saw him. I started to break away from my father and I began to think that I wanted to change what happened to me and to change who I became."

Now in his early twenties, Willy decided to distance himself from his father and consequently moved to Whistler. For the next four or five years Willy immersed himself in "seasonal jobs, lots of sex, lots of parties, cocaine and acid. I started to hang out with people who were like substitute parents, people who were older than me. I wrote a lot in my journals and began writing poetry."

It was during Willy's Whistler years that his mother died due to complications associated with her alcoholism. Willy chose not to return to Ontario for

her funeral because he did not want to face or interact with his relatives. He recalled feeling sad as a result of never talking to her about his abuse. He continued to question whether or not she was aware of his father's actions while wondering why she did nothing to intervene.

Following his time in Whistler, Willy moved back to Vancouver for a job opportunity. During this period of time Willy recalled "getting into a lot of drinking, unhealthy drinking. I didn't have a big social circle, only a few friends. My work life increased. I reached a management position at MacDonalds followed by a management position at Chuck-E-Cheeze."

As a supervisor at Chuck-E-Cheeze, Willy occasionally dated a few of his female staff members. Ultimately, due to indiscriminate relationships with his female subordinates concurrent with what he defines as "emotional and physical burnout", Willy was fired from his managerial responsibilities.

Willy understood this period of his life as the culmination of having lived many years in denial. Characterized by what he defined as "obsessive and erratic relationships with women" along with "excessive drinking and marijuana", Willy came to conclude that "I

needed someone to talk to. I was physically tired, emotionally exposed and my income dropped to unemployment." In short, Willy claimed that it was during this period of time that he decided to address his sexual abuse.

Prior to engaging in an effort to address his sexual victimization, Willy acknowledged that although he appeared to be self-directed and self-sufficient, he was aware of a "profound sense of emptiness, a lack of knowing and appreciating who I was, and an inability to feel grounded within myself. I started to realize that in certain areas of my life I was still ten years old, eleven years old, twelve years old, you know, fourteen."

In 1988 Willy lived with a woman for a year who "accepted me right off the bat. She grounded me - yoga, vegetarian, not a smoker. She accepted me how I was. A lot of people don't accept me. I was really sensitive then. I took a lot of things defensively, personally. But this woman just amazed me. She turned me onto journals and different books and different ideas. And I started cleansing my body. I quit smoking cigarettes."

Willy identified this relationship as being pivotal with respect to his developing sense of himself as well as his growing belief in the legitimacy of his

perspectives in relation to his abuse, the fact that he was abused. In essence, Willy recalled this woman as validating his story as well as his life in general. Apparently, this woman's sister worked in a helping profession and suggested that Willy seek counselling through a local social services agency for abuse issues as well as that of being a child of an alcoholic.

Consequently, Willy made contact with North Shore Social Services in an effort to talk with a counsellor about his sexual victimization. He was aware that his father had remarried and had another son. Out of his concern for the well-being for himself, as well as that of the child, Willy reported his sexual abuse to a counsellor. The counsellor apparently indicated that there was no evidence to take action with respect to Willy's father.

Following Willy's limited interactions with North Shore Social Services, he decided to visit his father and his new wife for the purpose of confronting his sexual victimization. "I wanted to talk about why he abused me. It wasn't happening and he didn't want to talk about it. I was pussy footing around and I wasn't being very direct. Like, he's my father. He's the guy who brought me up and he's the guy who abused me.

That's the dynamic. I'm the son and he's the father and until he dies I think that's when it will really be over for me."

"So I went over there and he and his wife didn't know what was happening. I wasn't angry at my father during this period of time. So we sat downstairs and I talked to them for about an hour and they were both like, my father couldn't believe that here I was confronting him and at the same time telling his new wife. Finally I got up and had to leave."

"And I got on my bike and, uh, I have moments in my life where I can recollect where my heart or my spirit is just soaring so high and that was just one of those moments when I got on my bike. I don't know how fast I drove and I wasn't out of control and I wasn't out of touch. I felt like I was on another plain and a big burden was really lifted off me. And it was like I went parachuting for the first time and jumped out. It was like - wow - I started singing. I was just so happy."

Willy suggested that nothing really came of this confrontation insofar as the development of his relationship with his father was concerned, and that his father remained aloof. However, he understood the confrontation as being pivotal with respect to his own

sense of direction. Following this incident, and upon entering his mid thirties, Willy saw himself as "coming to terms with life around me. I was beginning to accept responsibility for my actions and beginning to see myself as a good person, whereas before I always felt like I didn't have any boundaries and that I was dirty somehow, or that I had to hide."

In an effort to address his sexual victimization, Willy began to write in journals to keep a record of occurrences both historical and present. "I began to write because I was interested in self-discovery." During this period of time, Willy accessed sexual abuse counselling at an alcohol and drug rehabilitation centre in Vancouver. As a result of counselling which lasted for approximately ten sessions, Willy learned about unresolved anger, grief, and loss in relation to his father and mother.

In addition to individual therapy, Willy was encouraged to participate in a men's group. "My therapists have all been female. I was tentative because there were men there. But I went and it was pretty cool. It was really uplifting but I knew I wanted to be back with my female therapist."

Consequently, Willy returned to his therapist who in turn directed him toward self-help literature.

"My therapist gave me a beginning and a really good background of reading material. The Courage To Heal Workbook and some other reading material. So I was able to help myself and that's an aspect that I always felt, as soon as I said no to my father that was the point that I could help myself. It just takes a long time."

In addition to Willy's therapist contributing to his self-discovery, "changing friends" also "guided" Willy toward a greater depth of personal awareness and direction. He defined this transition as "looking at the world differently and looking at myself differently." My friends were into alternative thinking in the sense that they weren't mainstream. Mainstream meaning to me that they weren't conservative and happy with how the world is today. And I started talking to people that would like to change within themselves. If you can't change the world, then you can make change within yourself. I was becoming a hell of a lot more tolerant."

In one of Willy's recent endeavors with respect to fostering self-discovery, Willy had the opportunity to participate in an adult male survivors men's group in

Vancouver. Following an unsuccessful attempt to participate in the group, Willy found an edition of the Men's Evolvment Network journal entitled "Thunderstick" in which an ad sought participants for the purpose of researching adult male survivors of sexual abuse.

Consequently, Willy met with the researcher of the proposed study so as to determine whether or not he wanted to participate in a study addressing issues with respect to adult male survivors. Following the completion of the information meeting with the researcher followed by a phone call to the University of British Columbia's Counselling Psychology Department to confirm the study, Willy chose to participate. He did so out of his desire to make his story accessible for the purpose of research and practice. "I came to the last page and your ad was there and I thought, hey, this is an avenue that I've always been interested in and its more mono/mono which is something that I can handle."

Presently, Willy feels that there is a need in his life to forgive his father for the sexual abuse. "I have to forgive my father because its a part of dealing with my anger. I'm starting to recognize I have to see he is also a person, and that he has had something going on in his life as well." In addition, Willy understands

that certain areas of his life must be acknowledged in order to continue his personal growth.

"I feel like I've been screwed up for a long time. I still struggle with what the abuse means to me. I'm trying to learn from it. Its the fibre of my life. It influences where I'm at as far as when I converse with others, and where I'm at with my struggles. This is my struggle, and now I'm trying to turn it into an opportunity."

"I'm learning to make healthy choices - to admit homophobia, to admit questions about my sexuality, to admit that I didn't like what happened to me, and to find people who will listen to me. Sometimes I feel like a puppy chasing its tail all the time. Sometimes I feel like my world is falling apart although I know its not, but that's how it feels. Maybe not so much now. It was like, someone would say 'sit' and I'd sit, I'd look up, and I'd stay. The greater spirit helps me to slow down, its like an invisible means, a force higher than myself, possibly from other people."

With respect to homophobia and questions concerning his sexuality, Willy was quick to point out that "I don't feel homosexual. I am not homosexual, not gay. I understand the feminine side and feel more trust with

women than with men. I feel comfortable with my sexuality. Men are too narrow for me, especially when we talk about feelings and emotions and creative outlets and stuff like that."

Recently, Willy experienced a sexual encounter with two other individuals, one male and one female. He identifies this experience as being "pretty cool" as a result of being in bed with both a man and a woman. He recalls the woman getting up to use the washroom and that he and the man were "just being in each others arms. I was in his arms and it was okay. It felt, it sounds disjointed, but I remember laying there and she went to the washroom and we just held each other and that was kind of nice, laying side by side, we weren't chest to chest. I don't think I would be comfortable chest to chest".

Willy suggested that "in the last couple of years I've been feeling comfortable touching males, like 'hi, how are you' sort of thing. Or when a male would touch me I just go 'hold it, stop it', but now I'm okay with that. Like I'm clear now that men could like me. Like now I understand how men could like other men, like not from sleeping together but just in the last few years

now I understand that. So this whole experience was important to me."

When asked to clarify the impact of child sexual abuse on his life, Willy clarified that "it was affecting me in different ways, my relationships with people. My innocence, my virtue, my dignity, my virginity both physically and emotionally were stripped away at a vulnerable and tender time of my life. It eroded a sense of wholeness. It took away any sense of congruence I might have had between spirit, mind, soul, emotions, and body."

Upon reflecting over his relationship with his father, Willy claimed that "I've never felt a fundamental sense of affirmation from my father. Someone was taking advantage of their power and I'll tell you its really scary because it didn't make any sense to me. I'm 38 years old and this person has this power. He fucked me up totally. The abuse will never really be over until the day I die and then its over. The abuse stops with me. Trying to figure it out takes up a fucking big chunk of my time and emotions."

This past year Willy received a letter from his father indicating his father's desire to communicate. At present, and with reluctance, Willy has yet to decide

if he will re-establish some form of communication. The issue at stake for Willy is his commitment to personal boundaries characterized by his uncertainty with respect to his father's intent.

When asked to comment on his relationships with women following his sexual victimization, Willy stated that "when I went to kiss a girl I didn't have a clean slate to go with. When I talked to my friends about women I didn't have a clean slate again, I didn't feel fresh and I sensed that from them. Not from every single person but I felt I was at a disadvantage in that. I had lots of negatives inside and I didn't know what to do with them. I felt that my whole sexuality went crazy. I ended up having no boundaries".

Willy understands himself as having been through a series of relationships with women characterized by a lack of personal boundaries. "They would come on to me and I would let them do what ever they wanted. I had no sense of just how to be a guy and just try and talk to women and just go out with them. It just seemed that I didn't understand that it takes a period of time - that essence of just go with it. When my father abused me he just came in and did his thing and then he left. So I think that's how I learned how to be. You go with

someone and do your thing and they do their thing and then you leave. That's just how things went."

Willy stated that he only has had one relationship with a woman that has lasted a year. "It really makes me mental. This relationship just ended again the same type of way. I'm not sure its a normal thing that's happening to me. Women put the moves on me and it would go both ways and that's the pattern - there's no fence there".

Consequently, Willy understands himself to be missing something in the midst of frequent attempts to establish lasting relationships with women. "I've had a lot of fun and intrigue and a lot of very interesting events and adventures. But there is still something missing. I'm missing involvement. I think it was appealing when a woman thought I was attractive, good for my ego. But I never had the experience of learning how to deal with my fears, who to go and talk to. I've wanted someone to really care for me and that I could share with. A relationship is something that I want but I keep putting it off".

Chapter V. Reflections On Case Study

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold. First, emergent themes in the context of stated life events and meanings are identified and summarized. Secondly, personal reactions to the participant and the content of his disclosures are presented. Thirdly, a suggested conclusion in the context of a theoretical construct is identified in an effort to conceptualize the data.

Themes

Central to the nature and purpose of this study was the revelation of Willy's significant life events and their perceived meanings. Emerging from Willy's disclosures were themes characterized by problematic personal and interpersonal issues. A common denominator for each emergent theme appeared to be that of CSA. In short, Willy identified CSA as the antecedent to most, if not all, of his presenting concerns with respect to himself and others. Consequently, Willy understood the following areas of his life as having been a direct consequence of CSA: sexual identity confusion; homophobia; ambivalence toward men; estrangement from father; unsatisfying relationships with women; fear of intimacy; and, movement toward recovery.

Sexual Identity Confusion

Although Willy identified himself as being heterosexual, he claims to have experienced a significant degree of sexual identity confusion resulting from CSA. Willy suggested that his initial confusion was rooted in conflicting physical and emotional reactions toward his father during and following the abuse. Concurrent with the initial tension he experienced surrounding his father's behaviour was the influence of Willy's emerging homophobia spawned primarily by the influence of his childhood peer group.

Consequently, Willy distanced himself from the idea that he, too, might be homosexual as a result of being sexually victimized by another male. However, confusion remained concerning the degree to which Willy felt normal with respect to his emotional and physical reactions toward men and women. Presently, Willy suggests that "I am not gay...". The issue of sexual identity confusion appears to remain, however, in terms of seeking to understand normal and/or healthy interpersonal "boundaries" between himself and persons of either gender.

Homophobia

Willy identified his homophobia as being generated by his sexual abuse transpiring in concert with peer group pressure, thus fostering criticism toward homosexuals, homosexual behaviour, and anyone who appeared to be what one might think as stereotypically gay. As a result of labelling his sexual abuse as homosexual, Willy reacted to his abuse by developing and maintaining an overt disregard for anything related to homosexuality. Willy suggested that his homophobia has evolved in the sense that he is able to tolerate and possibly even understand how men could be attracted to other men.

Estrangement From Father

Throughout Willy's story was the ongoing theme of his strained relationship with his father. From the time of the abuse Willy felt a departure from any closeness that may have existed in his relationship with his father prior to the period of time during which the abuse took place. The apparent struggle emerged in the form of confusion surrounding his father's actions that impressed him as being discontinuous with previous interactions. Even more confusing and disempowering was

the imposition of parental responsibilities on Willy's life in the absence of both parents for various reasons.

Willy understands his move to the west coast as being an attempt to re-establish some form of relationship with his father who had previously moved to B.C. Willy identifies this as "the follow my father pattern" in which he has attempted on at least two or three occasions to engage his father in dialogue concerning the abuse. His father allegedly remains distant and aloof except for this past year when Willy received a letter from his Dad indicating his interest in discussing the past. Presently, Willy is in the process of reluctantly considering his request, somewhat fearful of making himself vulnerable to an oral exchange of thoughts and feelings.

Ambivalence Toward Men

Since the time of his abuse Willy claimed to have remained distant from men. He suggested that his capacity to trust men is very low. Willy further indicated that his abuse somehow spawned an understanding of what he identified as the "feminine side to himself". When asked to clarify his comments with respect to his feminine side, Willy felt that he

was able to relate more easily to the emotions of women than he could to the emotions of men.

Willy suggested that men have difficulty in sharing their emotions and that most men are unable to relate to his experience of abuse. Willy, therefore, limits his involvement with men while focusing his attention on women who demonstrate the capacity to relate to his abuse, not to mention the impact the abuse has had on his life. Consequently, most of Willy's friends are women.

Unsatisfying Relationships with Women

Willy suggested that he has not had a relationship with a woman lasting more than one year. Most of his relationships with women have been brief and characterized by what he identified as a lack of "boundaries". When asked to comment on what he meant with respect to a lack of boundaries, Willy indicated that he would either just let women "come on to me", or, that "I would just come on to a woman" without regard for her possible involvement with anyone else. Willy suggested it was unimportant to him whether or not the relationship developed into anything other than being sexual.

Willy understood his lack of a personal boundaries with women to be related to his sexual abuse in that his father demonstrated a disregard for Willy's freedom of choice and preference concerning sexual activity. Consequently, Willy claims to have developed a similar pattern of relating to women although he does not understand his relational style in this regard to be abusive.

Fear of Intimacy

Central to Willy's account of life events and their meanings was the recurrence of his fear of intimacy with both men and women. Willy suggested that he never had the experience of learning how to deal with his fear of intimacy. Consequently, he frequently wondered who he could talk to about the content and process of his life. Willy claimed to have wanted someone to care for him, someone with whom he could confide in the context of an intimate relationship. Interestingly enough, Willy has remained distant with respect to ongoing intimate relationships with men and women.

Movement Toward Recovery

Willy suggested that he made efforts toward recovery. It would appear that these efforts have been both formal and informal depending on Willy's personal

and interpersonal circumstances at various life junctures. Informal efforts toward recovery were understood by Willy as having contact with people who held alternative world views and lifestyle choices. Many of these individuals were said to have provided acceptance and affirmation, both of which were lacking in Willy's formative years. Formal efforts toward recovery were said to be individual therapy, contact with the North Shore Social Services, and involvement with a Vancouver Alcohol and Drug rehabilitation centre.

When asked to comment on the meaning of recovery, Willy indicated that recovery was gaining a sense of being grounded within himself, to develop an understanding of the degree to which sexual abuse affected his life, to abandon his fear of intimacy, to work through the anger he feels toward his father, to learn more about healthy relationships with men and women, and to be at peace with himself.

Personal Reactions

Introduction

This section addresses my personal reactions to Willy and his story. It is anticipated that an understanding of an adult male survivor of CSA will be further developed and clarified. The following

comments, therefore, are specific to one individual and are not intended as generalizations.

That Willy was sexually abused as a boy for a period of approximately two years is abhorrent. That both he and his brother were concurrently abused by their father is, for most, unimaginable. Willy viewed his disclosure of abuse for research purposes to be a significant part of his recovery. Consequently, the intensity with which he spoke during the interviews and follow-up discussions was readily apparent, as was the degree to which Willy protected his emotions.

This critical analysis acknowledges individuals such as Willy who are recipients of unfortunate life events. Making sense of life events while attempting to determine their meaning is, for many, extremely challenging. The degree to which CSA affected Willy's life, for instance, may never be understood in full. The need to maintain empathy toward those afflicted by the indiscretions of others cannot be overstated. The need to examine barriers to overcoming affliction, however, is of great necessity in the consideration of efficacious intervention.

Subject's Research Commitment

Willy impressed me as being genuinely committed to the research purpose and process with respect to examining an adult male survivor of child sexual abuse. This was demonstrated by his initial positive enquiry concerning the nature of purpose of the study, followed by his commitment to the study throughout its duration. Willy understood and respected the limitations of the study in that it was not intended for therapeutic purposes.

Subject's Story of Abuse

The trustworthiness of Willy's story was not questionable. If requested, Willy was willing to provide names of therapists, agencies, friends, and family members in an effort to confirm the authenticity his disclosures. It was found that Willy's story of sexual abuse and its effects, not to mention the manner in which it was communicated, remained constant throughout the study. In short, both Willy and his story impressed me as being credible.

Subject's Oral Presentation

As is reflected in the transcript derived from the in-depth interviews, Willy presented as one who struggled to bring his thought processes to identifiable

conclusions. Consequently, the fragmented and scattered nature of Willy's oral presentation during the interview necessitated numerous follow-up discussions either in person or over the phone.

Willy acknowledged his tendency to tell stories within stories. Some stories failed to provide conclusions, whereas other stories reflected a greater degree of clarity and closure. More often than not, the stories most directly related to his experience of sexual abuse failed to present substantial conclusions insofar as their meanings were concerned. Willy once suggested that his fragmentation might also reflect my inability or lack of experience with respect to orchestrating productive interviews.

Subject's Lifestyle

Willy's frequent residential moves concurrent with numerous and diverse relationships reflected a significant degree of transience. Willy impressed me as having initiated and/or participated in living environments and relationships in which the longevity of his commitment to people and places was limited. While apparently at ease with his lifestyle characterized by frequent transitions, Willy suggested this particular pattern developed in his effort to search out resolution

with respect to his abuse, specifically in relation to his father.

Subject's Relational Style

In addition to frequent geographical and interpersonal transitions, Willy impressed me as selectively seeking persons who would understand his experience of abuse while validating its ramifications in his life. Conversely, in the event that persons were unwilling or incapable of affirming both he and his sexual victimization, Willy impressed me as one who would abandon dialogue and/or relationship with such individuals. I heard him strongly evaluate those who were unable to meet his expectations with respect to appreciating and affirming his victimization and resulting lifestyle choices and patterns.

By way of illustration, points were raised during the course of the in-depth interviews for which clarification was requested. On a few occasions Willy remarked that I could not really understand and that it didn't really matter as it was only he who needed to understand. Consequently, the ethos of Willy's presentation during these interactions could be described as detached and resistant. In short, I felt

cut off as a result of not having experienced sexual abuse.

Subject's Limited Sense of Meaning

It was difficult to extrapolate the meanings associated with Willy's CSA and subsequent experiences. Willy's aforementioned detachment and resistance may have been related to a lack of personal in-depth awareness. Willy suggested that it was challenging for him to tell his story due to my gender, and that I was one of the few males with whom he has confided with respect to his abuse. The degree to which my gender impacted Willy's disclosures or lack thereof is unknown.

Willy's sense of meaning associated with life events was therefore observed as being withheld, possibly due to my gender, or, delayed with respect to his emotional awareness coupled with limited cognitive formation resulting in a lack of clarity and insight. The most prominent sense of meaning Willy associated with CSA emerged in the form of cause and effect. In short, Willy claimed that his personal and interpersonal confusion developed as a result of CSA.

Interestingly enough, Willy articulated certain meanings specific to his abuse that emerged in the form of long-term effects, ones that were consistent with

those appearing in both research and self-help literature. Willy's sense of meaning, however, was limited to the identification of these effects. He impressed me as being frustrated in his effort to elaborate beyond their identification and the belief that these effects were directly related to his sexual victimization.

Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore and examine an adult male survivor of CSA in an effort to shed light on a phenomenon that has experienced limited research. Current theory suggests that men who were sexually abused as boys may experience long-term effects such as depression, increased levels of anxiety, homophobia, sexual identity confusion, alcohol and drug abuse, fear of intimacy, and an underlying lack of trust in authority figures. Until recently, most of these long-term effects have been derived from studies primarily concerning women. Most studies cite the need for increased research with respect to adult male survivors of sexual abuse.

This study found that the research participant identified long-term effects of CSA consistent with

those cited in current research literature. However, the focus of the study was that of examining the life of an adult male survivor of CSA in an effort to explore his sense of meaning associated with child sexual victimization and subsequent life events. It is within this context, therefore, that the following remarks are presented.

It was observed that Willy's sense of meaning with respect to CSA and life experiences was limited to cause and effect. Ultimately, his sexual victimization resulted in a life characterized by turmoil and confusion. This observation is rooted in one of Willy's most poignant statements. "I feel like I've been screwed up for a long time. I still struggle with what the abuse means to me. I'm trying to learn from it. Its the fibre of my life. It influences where I'm at as far as when I converse with others, and where I'm at with my struggles. This is my struggle, and now I'm trying to turn it into an opportunity."

It would appear that Willy elevated his CSA to the degree that it became the "fibre of my life", resulting in the maintenance of a pattern of thinking and behaving characterized by his sense of victimization wherein the more obvious problematic long-term effects were easily

identified. It would also appear that Willy's pattern of thinking and behaviour has been resistant to significant change, thereby eliminating the possibility of becoming something other than a victim. Finally, Willy's victimization appears to function as a way of life rather than an obstacle to overcome.

A Theoretical Construct

A recent theoretical construct is suggested in an effort to provide a lens through which to make sense of the presenting data. Specifically, Leahy (1991) in Scripts in Cognitive Therapy hypothesizes *life scripts* in which people live out a particular drama in the context of his or her interpersonal world. Life scripts suggest that some individuals maintain a negative cognitive set and a dysfunctional pattern of behaviour, both of which are resistant to change. Life scripts, therefore, are defined as a set of expectations and predictions contained in the roles of a drama. Consequently, life scripts seek to maintain a well developed system wherein the protagonist experiences significant validation from other players. Central to life scripts is the consistency of each player's character in justifying resistance to change due to the negative impact of the protagonist's unfortunate past.

Leahy (1991) suggests that a life script is an intuitive, inductive, and self-preserving theory, one that is resistant to disconfirmation. Scripts are therefore unlike scientific propositions which lend themselves to clear hypothetical constructs and operational definitions. A script is thought to be self-preserving for a number of reasons.

First, scripts are intuitive and vague. For instance, the hypothetical construct, "victim", is subjective in that it is a matter of moral or ethical judgment as to whether or not one is treated unfairly. Secondly, the test of "victim" is difficult to disconfirm. "Victim" is viewed as a disposition and it is therefore not essential to be a victim to qualify as a victim.

Third, individual motives of the participants may be questioned and therefore potentially disconfirming evidence is discounted as a cover or an exception. Fourth, the script holder attends to and selectively recalls information consistent with the script, thus the script is self-preserving. Finally, scriptholders construct the interactive reality that confirms their script by enlisting others to play a script-game with

them which in essence in the self-fulfilling prophecy of the scriptholder (Leahy, 1991).

Leahy (1991) proposes the following developmental schema in an effort to identify the etiology of a life script: 1) that the individual's conception of self and others is determined by the early development of schemas; 2) that these schemas lead to a theory-driven search for information consistent with the schema; 3) that these schemas are formed at the preoperational level of intelligence and are therefore dichotomous, intuitive, morally absolutistic, and egocentric; 4) that these schemas focus on vulnerability, especially attachment issues; and, 5) that the individual compensates for this vulnerability by attempting to turn himself into the opposite of the schema.

Other characteristics of life scripts and scriptholders include: 1) the selection of historical information consistent with the script; 2) the sabotaging of interventions by the scriptholder; 3) the scriptholder's selection of a therapist resulting in the validation of the script; and, 4) the scriptholder's lack of awareness with respect to significant life events that could have resulted in another narrative which, if brought to the awareness of the scriptholder,

would confront the individual with the possibility of change (Leahy, 1991).

The analytical task, therefore, becomes the examination of an individual's construction of reality resulting in an interpersonal world that in essence proves the script to be correct. One must therefore step outside the egocentric perspective of the schema into the interpersonal narrative of the script. In other words, the scriptholder decenters from the script to understand how his or her schema influences the thinking and behaviour of self and others (Leahy, 1991).

Suggested Application

Leahy (1991) identifies the victim script as being one of two scripts (acquisitor narcissist being the other) that presents resistance to change. Characteristic of a victim script is the calling on of others to validate the scriptholder's suffering, thus reducing the possibility of change.

Leahy suggests that the victim's assumptions pertain to low frustration tolerance and awfulizing ("it's awful that I feel bad", "I should never feel bad"), entitlement ("Since I had a bad childhood, I deserve better treatment now"), demands for sympathy,

and blame ("I shouldn't have to work at my problems, because others are the cause of them", "Someone should be blamed if there are problems", "You should listen to my complaints and take them seriously"). The victim, therefore, assumes little responsibility for the problem and consequently believes there is nothing he or she can do to solve it. Suggestions to the contrary are viewed as signs of insensitivity and rejection.

Leahy (1991) also suggests that there are important advantages to the victim in the previously mentioned assumptions. The victim can obtain sympathy and attention, relief of responsibility, be allowed to blame and punish others, become morally superior to the people who treat him or her unfairly, engage in self-pity, and avoid regrets over attempted behaviours resulting in failure. Leahy further suggests that the scriptholder's apparent passivity is an effective mask for competitiveness being reflected in his or her resistance to change.

In the context of Leahy's (1991) theory with respect to life scripts, it is hypothesized that Willy, as a victim and survivor of CSA, developed and maintained a life script characterized by victimization wherein his interactions with others functioned toward

the validation of his life in all that it meant for him to be a victim. In so doing, his victim life script, rooted in assumptions spawned by sexual abuse (entitlement, blaming, demands for sympathy, etc), enabled him to maintain a victim narrative. This in turn resulted in resistance to change.

With respect to the development of Willy's victim cognitive set, it would appear that Willy came to view his world as being unsafe following the unfortunate event of his sexual victimization. Concurrent with his developing view of the world and others, Willy is thought to have elevated his sexual abuse to the degree that it became an all consuming life event, one that would influence the present outcome of his life. Life, therefore, became an event to survive based in a victim schema, resulting in his effort to find others who would listen, affirm, and validate his experience.

With respect to his interpersonal relationships, Willy presented as gravitating toward those who were sympathetic and affirming of his experience of child sexual abuse, primarily women. It is thought therefore that Willy was threatened by those seeking to present alternative ways in which to view his victimization, not to mention his life in general. In short, Willy

presented as being skeptical and resistant toward individuals and circumstances inconsistent with his drama of victimization.

His movement toward recovery is thought to be scattered and unintentional; scattered in the sense that therapy transpired in a transient manner, unintentional in that his movement toward recovery appeared to lack direction rooted in identified goals. Willy spoke of wanting to be grounded, to be at peace with himself, to forgive his father, and to make himself available to others working through similar circumstances. His effort in this regard, however, appeared to be without constructive plans toward this end. It is further hypothesized, therefore, that Willy sabotaged his movements toward recovery by engaging in short term and ineffective treatment modalities.

In summary, it is proposed that the meaning Willy attached to his CSA and subsequent life experiences surfaced in the form of victimization. In essence, his CSA became paramount to the degree that it adversely influenced his belief system, his behaviour toward others, and his ineffective movements toward recovery. That Willy attributed his CSA to all problematic areas in his life reflects a limited scope of understanding

with respect to the etiology of personal and interpersonal confusion.

Chapter VI. Discussion

Introduction

This chapter addresses the findings of this study. The first section summarizes the findings of the study in the context of the emergent issues of the research participant. The following sections outline some of the limitations as well as theoretical and practical implications of the study. Finally, suggestions are proposed for future research.

Findings

This study explored the experiences and meanings of an adult male survivor of CSA. A case study approach in the form of an in-depth interview focused on one survivor's experiences and subjective interpretations with respect to his childhood sexual victimization. It was found that the survivor, Willy, elevated his sexual victimization to the degree that it adversely permeated all aspects of his life.

Willy therefore cited CSA as being the primary cause for the development of specific problematic life themes. These themes included sexual identity confusion, homophobia, ambivalence toward men, estrangement from his father, unsatisfying relationships

with women, fear of intimacy, and movements toward recovery.

It was then proposed that Willy, since the time of his abuse, developed and maintained a life script or drama wherein he, as the protagonist, remained victimized. It was further suggested that Willy's victim role spawned his search for persons, primarily women, to affirm his self-others schema, one that was characterized by the nurturing of his victimization resulting in the delay of significant life change. The question therefore remains concerning Willy's selection of this particular life script as opposed to alternative schemas such as that of rising above his victimization.

Limitations Of The Study

This study was confronted by various limitations. The most obvious limitation is that it was a single case study. The potential richness of data cross referencing was therefore eliminated. Consequently, the examination of one research participant forfeited the possibility of generalizations.

Establishing a research hypothesis for this study is understood as being both a limitation and an asset. Previous research with respect to adult male survivors of CSA was extremely limited. This reflects either a

lack of awareness concerning the phenomenon, or, the continued assumption that the long-term effects of child sexual abuse for men are not dissimilar to those experienced by women. Furthermore, theoretical constructs specific to adult male survivors were also absent from most research studies of this nature. As a result of these obvious limitations suggested research directions were sparse.

This study, therefore, took advantage of the opportunity to simply examine the life of a survivor in an effort to shed light on a phenomenon that appears to have been neglected by research. The broad nature of this study, therefore, could be understood as limitation. Conversely, the investigative nature of this study could be viewed as an asset in that the genesis of theoretical constructs unique to adult male survivors might be developed.

Another limitation of the study was Willy's oral presentation of life experiences. As previously mentioned, Willy's pattern of communication could be described as fragmented and somewhat inarticulate. It was therefore very challenging to ascertain and extrapolate meaning within the confines of his communication pattern. When asked to further clarify

life experiences and their meanings subsequent to the in-depth interview, Willy presented limited information and insight in a manner consistent with his original disclosures, thus confirming my initial impressions.

Conversely, I was limited in the sense that my personal values, world schemas, and biases inhibited to the degree to which Willy's meanings were recognized and understood. It is probable that Willy, to a degree that I was unaware, suggested meanings in language and phrases unique to his own style of communication and understanding. As previously mentioned in an earlier chapter, I approached this study with my own issues with respect to significant life change subsequent to unfortunate life events.

It is possible, therefore, that the lenses through which I experienced Willy were further tainted by my belief that victims often capitalize on their victimization which in turn results in limited growth. In an effort to compensate for these probabilities, my advisor monitored the degree to which I was limited and assumed responsibility to aid in my objectivity with respect to the research process and findings. Consequently my advisor was called on to fulfill his role on several occasions.

Theoretical Implications

This study has several theoretical implications with respect to adult male survivors of CSA. Presently, there appears to be no adequate theoretical models addressing the experiences and meanings of adult male survivors of CSA. In the absence of a solid research tradition specific to this study I chose to search for CSA theories that might be applicable in a broader sense insofar as they relate to the phenomenon of adult male survivors. Consequently, my evaluative remarks with respect to existing CSA theories and the sense I make of these theories in light of my findings are speculative in nature.

Existing theoretical models with respect to CSA are primarily concerned with demographics, types and duration of abuse, relationship of the victim to the perpetrator, characteristics and symptomatology, and long-term effects. Once again, most of the available theoretical models are specific to women. It would appear that most CSA theories advocate, if not presuppose, a causal relationship between CSA and subsequent problematic long-term effects. Consequently, the existing CSA research/theoretical tradition implies that those sexually abused as children will develop one

or more of the long-term effects repeatedly identified in CSA research studies.

Furthermore, it is commonly thought that many of the theoretical models specific to women are transferable to males with respect to the long-term impact of CSA. Whether or not these theoretical constructs are in any way applicable to adult males has yet to be investigated to any degree of significance. This study, therefore, argues for the need to evaluate existing theoretical CSA constructs and the implications these constructs pose for future research with respect to adult males. A summary of current theories concerning the impact of CSA is presented. Brief remarks are made with respect to each theory and their applicability to adult male survivors.

Finkelhor and Browne (1985) suggest that the various effects of CSA can be categorized into four traumagenic (trauma-causing) dynamics: traumatic sexualization (inappropriate developmental shaping); betrayal (child discovers someone who they were dependent on has caused them harm); powerlessness (the process whereby the child's will, desires, and sense of self-efficacy are continually contravened); and, stigmatization (negative connotations associated with

sexual abuse). The problem with this model is that it is not gender specific and consequently overlooks potential variances found within each dynamic for both males and females. In short, this model does not provide room for differentiation of effects between men and women insofar as their experience of abuse is concerned.

A second theoretical model has been utilized to characterize the effects of sexual abuse. Writers such as Lindberg and Distad (1985), Donaldson and Gardner (1985), and Eth and Pynoos (1985) came to apply the concept of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to childhood abuse experiences including sexual abuse. These writers noted considerable similarity between the presentation of adult survivors of sexual abuse and that of battle veterans. However, PTSD appears to have limited utility in explaining specific characteristics of child sexual abuse and fails to explain, for instance, the impact of violated trust from a primary caregiver, that being distinct from the impact of battle or natural disaster (Mendel, 1995).

Janoff-Bulman's Assumptive Worlds (1985, 1989) model focused on the cognitive aspect of the impact of sexual abuse. She suggested that all individuals have

certain assumptions or schemas about the world. When experienced, trauma forces its victims to reappraise their view of the world. Janoff-Bulman further hypothesized that the consequence of trauma is the assimilation of the trauma into an existing schema, or, the revision of the schema so as to accommodate for the trauma. Three categories of assumptions challenged by trauma such as sexual abuse are 1) the perceived benevolence of the world, 2) the meaningfulness of the world, and 3) the worthiness of the self. The problem with this model is that it addresses only the cognitive impact of victimization and does not convey particular affective aspects of the impact of sexual abuse.

Mendel (1995) suggests feminism as one of the most influential frameworks for understanding the impact of incest in the life of the victim. According to feminist theory male supremacy and female oppression is used as a basis for explaining why the vast majority of incest perpetrators are male. Mendel suggests that feminist theory views sexual abuse simply as an abuse of power and appears to work best when applied to father-daughter incest.

While sexual abuse is understood in this study as an abuse of power, the feminist perspective may have

decreased applicability to other forms of sexual abuse such as mother-son or peer abuse and their impact on adult males (Mendel, 1995). Feminist theory, rooted in the assumption that women have been oppressed by men since the beginning of time, falls short in identifying the need for gender analysis when considering the impact of CSA on males abused by women. In addition, feminist theory would not tolerate assumptions derived from studies specific to men being imposed on research specific to women.

Finally, Sepler (1990) reviews the evolution of treatment of sexual abuse victims from its source in victim advocacy for female rape victims. In short, she argues that principles appropriate to female victimization are inappropriately transferred to work with males. Sepler identifies the feminization of victimization which inadvertently developed the masculinization of oppression. Consequently, Sepler suggests that males experience their sexual victimization in the context of society's effort to feminize the victim while at the same time the male victim is understood as being weak or without power. The result, according to Sepler, is that male victims

have gone undetected and/or under reported due to society's belief that only females are victims.

With respect to the applicability of these theories to the findings of this case study, it would appear that strains of each theory can be found in the experiences and meanings of Willy as an adult male survivor of CSA. The problem with these theories, however, is that each one has been derived from studies specific to women and are understood by this study as implying a causal relationship between CSA and specific long-term effects. In short, these theories suggest that sexually abused children will grow up to experience any one of a number of the previously identified long-term effects. Consequently, these theories appear to foster the notion of victimization, thereby offering limited insight with respect to the development of efficacious interventions, ones that would result in significant life change.

In addition, none of the suggested theories, other than Janoff-Bulman's Assumptive Worlds (1985, 1989), address the development and maintenance of a victim's assumptions and schemas before, during, and following an abusive experience. In other words, it would appear that no effort has been made to consider how a victim might make sense of their victimization or the

development of one's self-others schema that has either worked for or against the victim. In short, the primary focus of the aforementioned theories would appear to be that of victimization and all that it means to be a victim.

Janoff-Bulman's Assumptive Worlds (1985, 1989) model is compatible with the findings of this study insofar as the development of one's assumptions and schemas are concerned. It was found that Willy elevated or incorporated his experience of sexual abuse to the degree that it altered, modified, and/or changed his assumptions and schemas of self and others, resulting in the continued manifestation of victimization. In essence, Willy's world became a less benevolent place in which to live following his abuse, one that unfortunately came up short on meaning.

Janoff-Bulman's Assumptive Worlds (1985, 1989) model is also consistent with Leahy's (1991) theory suggesting that dysfunctional life scripts grow out of negative cognitive sets resulting in a dysfunctional pattern of behaviour. With respect to Willy, it is suggested that his dysfunctional pattern of behaviour, rooted in a negative cognitive script, was characterized by the overflowing of his victimization into all aspects

of his life. The overflow of one unfortunate life event, therefore, permeated Willy's life to the extent that it negatively influenced his beliefs, thoughts, emotions, interpersonal relationships, and most profoundly, his view of himself.

The fact that Willy viewed himself as a victim throughout the better part of his life while appearing to struggle in his effort to move beyond victimization is, in the opinion of this study, possibly related to the plethora of CSA theory, research studies, and self-help literature that appears, for the most part, to be fixated on victimization and its long-term effects. Most of Willy's comprehension and oral account of his victimization was reminiscent of what appeared in both academic and self-help literature. While his reading in this regard may have been of value insofar as increased self-awareness was concerned, it appeared to have been of little help with respect to moving him beyond victimization. It could also be speculated that his therapy, possibly influenced by much of the same literature, was influenced by the therapist's theoretical orientation, one that was causal in nature, thus reflecting commonly accepted explanations for identified long-term effects of CSA.

In summary, a parallel is drawn between Janoff-Bulman's Assumptive Worlds (1985, 1989) model and Leahy's (1991) life scripts in that Willy, in response to the trauma of sexual abuse, assumed the world to be less than safe wherein the developed meaning of his life surfaced in the form of victimization. Concurrent with the development of his victimization Willy is further understood as having influenced others to participate in his schema in an effort to validate his life script, thereby influencing the limited degree to which significant life change transpired.

Absent from CSA theories, therefore, is the probability of other influencing environmental and physiological variables in a victims life, ones that may have contributed to the development of long-term effects presently associated with CSA. Specifically, most theories do not take into consideration parental/familial psychopathology, family disruptions/disturbances, alcohol and drug misuse/abuse, peer physical and/or sexual abuse, and physiological considerations coming to bear on a victims life before, during, and following CSA. In other words, many factors other than CSA influencing a victim's self-others schema

have not, for the most part, been addressed in research literature.

Consequently, this study argues for research that de-elevates CSA as the primary cause of previously identified negative long-term effects. It suggests that research specific to survivors of CSA might take into consideration additional influencing factors coming to bear on a victim's life. Depression, for instance, frequently associated with CSA, may in fact be physiologically based and simply exacerbated by CSA. CSA in this instance would therefore be de-elevated as the primary reason for depression. At the same time CSA could be understood as one of many contributing factors influencing one's development.

It is therefore thought that a pro-active research direction might have as its focus the sense one makes of their abuse concurrent with the consideration of other influencing variables. In so doing there would be a decreased emphasis on one's victimization in an effort to foster the prospect of significant life change. In addition, this direction might lessen the impact of one's victimization if a CSA victim, for instance, realized that their homophobia developed not as a result of sexual abuse, rather as a result of environmental

factors such as societal norms and mores coming to bear on the individual's life either before or following the time of abuse. This suggested research direction represents a refreshing change from what is already known concerning the identified effects of sexual abuse.

Practical Implications

With respect to practice, the presenting issue for a therapist is the significance a client attaches to historical and current life events. It would appear in the case of Willy that the significance he attached to his victimization was the fact that he was victimized resulting in a life characterized by personal and interpersonal confusion. Because therapists work within theoretical constructs consistent with their professional training and experience, the degree to which the therapist is influenced by theory is therefore significant.

If a therapist's theory is bound by victimization and identified long-term effects, than the likelihood of Willy, for instance, moving beyond victimization may be in question. If, however, the therapist can intervene in the early stages of recovery with a broader theoretical base, he/she might possibly aid in the containment of the client's victimization, thereby

limiting the degree to which the client assumes his/her victimization to be detrimental long-term.

Consistent with the aforementioned implication of this study is not only the significance Willy attaches to his victimization, but also the therapist's theoretical understanding specific to male sexual victimization and the resulting treatment modality. It is possible that therapists providing treatment to men sexually abused as boys are utilizing theory specific to women at the expense of understanding unique ways in which men experience their abuse while making sense of life events. Consequently, therapists working from theory specific to women could inhibit the degree to which men might experience significant change.

Another implication of this study is that it supports previous findings suggesting men who were sexually abused as boys may exhibit long-term effects consistent with those experienced by women. It would appear that Willy's identified problematic personal and interpersonal issues were described in a manner consistent with those cited in literature addressing long term effects of childhood sexual victimization. The degree to which the oral account of his life was

influenced by literature addressing long term effects of sexual abuse is unknown.

Furthermore, this study challenges historical and current research and self-help literature concerning the ramifications of CSA in its departure from long-term effects. It presents the theory that Willy, as an adult male survivor of CSA, developed and lived out a victim schema in relation to self and others. It is thought that Willy drew others into his schema in an effort to validate his victimization. Consequently, his schema or life script functioned in an effort to avoid personal responsibility with respect to significant change.

Finally, it would appear that this study extends what is currently hypothesized with respect to adult survivors of CSA. Rather than discarding other theories relative to the impact of CSA in adulthood, it acknowledges the contributions of these theories while seeking to expand the parameters of understanding. In short, the findings of this study acknowledges victimization, identified long-term effects, abuse of power, and self-other schemas.

At the same time, however, this study fosters the idea that the issue of resistance to change is rooted in life scripts designed to retain one's victim identity.

Furthermore, it promotes the thought that previous research studies have developed a theoretical construct that allows for the elevation of the CSA experience to the degree that other influencing variables or life events are not addressed as potential explanations for identified long-term effects. In short, this study argues for a theoretical construct that de-elevates the experience of CSA as being the primary reason for the development of various problematic personal and interpersonal issues.

Future Research Implications

Based on the theoretical and practical implications previously mentioned, implications for future research are apparent. Most obvious is the need for a plurality of case studies so as to compare life experiences and meanings. A broader range of research participants would ideally be examined. This would include men who are married, men who are married with children, men of homosexual orientation, men abused by women, men representing varying degrees and duration of abuse, and men who were in various stages of recovery.

This suggested research direction would be done in an effort to support or invalidate the theory of victim life scripts and schemas based in negative cognitive

sets and dysfunctional behaviour. In addition, this research direction is encouraged in an effort to move away from advocacy research characterized by the validation of the survivor's victimization. In essence, this research direction would attempt to consider other influencing variables coming to bear on an individuals life both before, during, and following the time of abuse. These variables might include issues related to familial psychopathology, family disturbances, external influences, and so on as contributing factors coming to bear on the development of many of the previously cited long term effects currently associated with CSA. In other words, this research direction may in fact challenge previously accepted self-other schemas that have permeated research findings. Previous research has supported the concept of victimization at the expense of sifting out theoretical explanations for inertia with respect to changing one's victim identity.

Summary

This study explored the experiences and meaning of an adult male survivor of CSA. A case study approach in the form of an in-depth interview was utilized in an effort to examine one survivor's experiences and

subjective interpretations with respect to his childhood sexual victimization.

It was found that the survivor elevated his experience of CSA to the degree that it negatively permeated all aspects of his life. CSA was cited by the survivor as the antecedent to the development of specific problematic life themes. These themes included sexual identity confusion, homophobia, ambivalence toward men, estrangement from his father, unsatisfying relationships with women, fear of intimacy, and movements toward recovery.

This study examined the presenting data and included a critical analysis. It was hypothesized that the research participant, in response to his childhood sexual victimization, developed and maintained a self-others schema. Within this framework the adult male survivor lived the life of a victim and consequently interacted with others in an effort to have his victimization validated. It would appear that his personal growth has been limited as a result of his self-others schema characterized by victimization.

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**Appendix A - Letter of Introduction and Statement
of Research Purpose**

Department of Counselling Psychology
Faculty of Education
5780 Toronto Road
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1L2

Tel: (604) 822-5259 Fax: (604) 822-2328

Re: research being conducted by graduate student,
Malcolm Cameron in the Department of Counselling
Psychology for the purpose of a graduate thesis under
the direction of Faculty Advisor, Dr. Larry Cochran
(822-5259) entitled:

**A Descriptive study Of The Experiences And
Meanings Of Childhood Sexual Abuse For Adult Male
Survivors**

Dear Participant/Agency:

Thank you for your willingness to engage in the
abovementioned research project. Your cooperation is
appreciated.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the
phenomenon of adult male survivors of sexual abuse. The
objective of this study is to search out the experiences
and meanings of childhood sexual abuse in the lives of
adult male survivors throughout the course of their
lives since the time of abuse. As a result of this
study it is anticipated that a significant contribution
will be made to the growing body of literature
addressing personal, theoretical, and practical concerns
so as to further enhance the lives of thos involved in
the process of recovery.

The research will take the form of indepthinterviews
which will require an initial audiotaped 1-2 hour
interview during which time the story of abuse and the
subsequent meanings and experiences associated with
various stages of the participant's life will be
investigated. Open ended questions will be used and
will not reflect any attempt to engage the participant
in therapy.

A transcript will be made for the initial interview following which another meeting will be requested for the purpose of establishing accuracy and clarification. Following the second meeting the transcripts will then be analyzed for the purpose of drawing out meanings and experiences. A third meeting will be requested so as to obtain feedback from each participant concerning their impressions, thoughts, and feelings about the defined meanings and experiences. Finally, each participant will be contacted for a follow-up meeting during which time a copy of the thesis will be presented in appreciation for their participation.

It is anticipated that each participant may spend between 8-10 hours for the purpose of the study. Monetary compensation is not included in this particular consent/agreement. A copy of the thesis will also be presented to participating organizations/agencies in appreciation for their participation.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained through accountability to the research advisor, the participants, and the granting agencies. All documentation will be destroyed via the shredding of transcripts and the erasing of tapes.

_____ (name of participant and/or agency) hereby consent(s) to participate in the aforementioned research project with the understanding that at anytime and for any reason I am (we are) free to withdraw from participation, and that all interviews and accumulated data in the form of audiotapes and transcripts will be destroyed following the completion of the research, and that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained both during and following the research, and that I have a copy of this agreement for my (our) records.

Participant(s)

Witness