**Male Rape, Masculinities, and Sexualities: Understanding, Policing, and Overcoming Male Sexual Victimisation**

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# Abstract

This qualitative project critically explores state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape victims in England. It critically examines the ways in which police officers, male rape counsellors, therapists, and voluntary agency caseworkers ($N = 70$) think about and deal with male victims of rape. It pays close attention to how notions of gender, sexualities and masculinities affect and shape state and voluntary agencies' understanding of male rape and their views of men as victims of rape. Police cultures are also examined to understand how male rape is policed in England. The data are grounded in sociological, cultural, and post-structural theoretical frameworks, such as hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity. The data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and qualitative questionnaires. The qualitative data were analysed with the use of thematic analysis, drawing out important themes and concepts of the ways in which male rape is thought about, responded to, and dealt with by state and voluntary agencies. The research contributes to existing knowledge on male rape by contributing theoretically to discourse on unreported and unacknowledged sexual violence. Research on male rape is lacking in England. The scarce literature on male rape predominately examines male rape from either a clinical or psychological perspective, whereas this project approaches male rape from a sociological, cultural and post-structural perspective to fully understand this phenomenon. Providing state and voluntary agencies' discourses of male rape is important because they are the first port of call for male rape victims, yet the existing body of knowledge predominantly focuses on the victims' experiences of rape, although this is important. It is also vital, though, to make sense of the experiences and perspectives of state and voluntary agencies because they work very closely with male rape victims. I argue that cultures, social relations, power and discourses shape how state and voluntary agencies understand and respond to male rape. Through social structures, social practices, and social institutions, state and voluntary agencies consider and respond to male rape inconsistently, which can have serious implications for policy and practice as this project carefully details.

# Introduction[1]

According to recent figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales in 2013, approximately 75,000 men are victims of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault a year, while 9,000 men are victims of rape or attempted rape each year (Ministry of Justice, 2014a). Similarly, 72,000 males per year are estimated to become victims of sexual offences, whether reported or not (Ministry of Justice, 2014b). Therefore, there has been an increase in research surrounding male rape over recent years (see 1.1 for the definition of 'male rape'): rape in prisons (Lockwood, 1980, 1983); rape in the general population (Lees, 1997); rape in the army (Mulkey, 2004; Belkin, 2008; Turchik and Edwards, 2012; Zaleski, 2015); feminist responses to male rape (Javaid, 2014c); and also the dynamics, impact, and pattern of male rape (Walker et al., 2005; Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Javaid, 2014a, b, c). More recently, there has been research on how the media portray male rape (Cohen, 2014) and how male rape is dealt with in the courts (Javaid, 2014d). These research studies have challenged many male rape myths (see 1.2 for the definition of 'male rape myths'). These research studies have also highlighted the extent to which misunderstandings pertaining to male rape influence the attitudes of the wider community. Many research studies relating to male rape remain based on generalised victim demographics founded on statistical data collected from the sexual offenders. Although this generalised knowledge is important to understand patterns of male victim abuse in male rape cases, it does not provide specific details of men's experiences of rape; as a result, this may obscure how men experience rape. While different research studies on male rape do begin to provide a platform to understand male rape, most are based on US data that most likely will not resonate with a United Kingdom sample because, for example, English law is different to American law.

The broad literature on sexual violence also neglects research on state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male victims of rape and sexual violence in Britain. In other words, police responses to, and support services for, male rape victims. This research attempts to fill this gap in the literature on sexual violence, as it

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[1]Several publications have emerged from the thesis, whereby material in the thesis has been published into journal articles and a book (see Appendix 10, which details the publications that are derived from the thesis).

explores how such agencies respond to, and handle male rape victims. For example, this thesis will critically explore whether the police and voluntary services meet male rape victims' needs when these victims do build up the courage to report and seek support from such services. This is important to examine because research shows that the effects of rape on adult males are often severe (Coxell et al., 1999; Davies, 2002), in that the suicide rate is increasingly great amongst male rape victims (Walker et al., 2005). Research on male rape in the UK is lacking in contrast to female rape where it is more extensive (see chapter 2 for a critical overview of the main issues that keep male rape relegated, sidelined and marginalised). Therefore, I aim to critically explore the subject of male rape in this project not only to understand the phenomenon, but also to increase awareness of it since it "has remained largely hidden from public view and like female rape, continues to be shrouded in ignorance and misconception" (Rumney, 2008: 67). This is a particular problem, due to some research arguing that some police officers are homophobic and exercise homophobic attitudes toward male rape victims (e.g., Stermac et al., 1996; Lees, 1997; Gregory and Lees, 1999; Rumney, 2008, 2009; Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Although the public often has a positive perception of the police in contrast to other parts of the criminal justice system, such as the courts and probation (Rowe, 2009), the police are often highly controversial. For example, in connection with allegations that some police officers have perpetrated sexual assault and rape, the New Zealand Police Service has been susceptible to ongoing critical questions, scandals and controversy (Rowe, 2009).

Although the above recent research studies relating to male rape raise awareness of male rape in the 21st century, what is important to question is the combination of male rape and societal attitudes toward homosexuality to date, and whether homosexual male rape victims in particular are subjected to a form of double victimisation. This is important to consider because society labels gay men as 'abnormal', 'deviant' or 'effeminate' due to Western society's rules of masculinity that cannot account for same sex attraction; the concept of the masculine male is reserved for heterosexual men, leaving gay men marginalised and alienated in societies (Connell, 2005; Ferrales et al., 2016). Therefore, after gay male rape victims are raped, it is important to explore whether they in addition experience certain problems in securing appropriate treatment from the police because of their sexual orientation. Walker, Archer and Davies (2005) highlight that the issue of sexuality is fundamental to male rape

because homophobia negatively influences attitudes to male rape and the handling of male rape cases in the criminal justice system. More recently, Zaleski (2015: 65) supports this, arguing that, "For many male victims of rape, the issue of sexual identity comes into play. Male victims might fear that recounting the trauma will make people believe he is homosexual…Others might believe they are less of a man". Thus, critically examining the police attitudes toward, and responses to male rape victims enables one to identify and understand the issues that male rape victims experience, regardless of their sexual orientation (see section 2.4 and chapter 5 for a critical exploration of the police attitudes toward, and responses to male rape).

Furthermore, this thesis will critically examine the police occupational culture and whether homophobia is present in such a culture (see Reiner, 2010). It will also explore the different ways wherein police attitudes may inhibit the reporting of male rape to the police and the enforcement of the law when male rape is reported. There has been, however, a steady increase in reporting male rape over recent years; but the rate of men who feel comfortable to report their rape and sexual assault to the police and the voluntary sector is considerably low in comparison to women (Cohen, 2014). This low rate may reflect the negative police attitudes and responses directed at men as victims of sexual violence (Javaid, 2015c). Although support provisions are available for male rape victims in Britain, there are cultural, religious, social, and emotive issues that constrict men from reporting their rape to the police and from getting the support that they need, which means that they are frequently unreferred to appropriate agencies to serve their needs (Badenoch, 2015). This is problematic for a number of reasons; for one, these victims may be left isolated, alone and emotionally damaged. Another implication is that societies may continue to deny the existence of male rape, neglecting or overlooking it, which leaves the gender norms and values unchallenged. American researchers Stemple and Meyer (2014) recently found a salient issue that maintains misunderstandings regarding male rape: societies' dependence on conventional gender stereotypes. They argue that such traditional gender stereotypes leave societies from assuming that men are the main perpetrators of male rape when they actually found that men are more likely to be sexually victimised by women than other men. As a consequence,

The invisibility and minimization of male sexual victimization, the use of outdated definitions that fail to include female and same-sex perpetrators…and the lack of money available to study male sexual assault culminate in a paucity of research and public information (Hlavka, 2016: 2).

The critical discussion of evidence will be gleaned from a range of sources throughout this thesis. Through such an analysis, it will be possible to identify trends and issues in police responses to adult sexual assault and male rape. This is important to do because systematic reviews of the literature suggest that male rape myths may inform the delivery of criminal justice services to victims. For example, Abdullah-Khan (2008) argues that the police and some voluntary agencies are embedded with male rape myths; in other words, they maintain inaccurate views about male rape, such as male rape is non-existent or heterosexual men are unable to be raped. Lees (1997) argues, however, that all men have the potential to be raped and all types of men can be raped, regardless of their sexual orientation. Because male rape myths dominate state and voluntary agencies, male rape victims are left untreated, isolated, and sidelined (Donnelly and Kenyon, 1996; Hodge and Canter, 1998; Cohen, 2014). Therefore, it is important to critically discuss these agencies because, if the staff members in the agencies hold negative views about male rape, as they may do about female rape, it can be problematic in that they may inadequately respond to and handle male rape victims. American researchers Chapleau and colleagues (2008: 604) "speculate that the same attitudes that function to support rape myths about female victims may also function to support rape myths about male victims."

Recent research has found that secondary victimisation[2] is prevalent, which refers to attitudes and behaviors that are insensitive, hostile, homophobic and victim blaming by the police (Rumney, 2008, 2009). This supports earlier findings from Donnelly and Kenyon (1996), Hodge and Canter (1998), Gregory and Lees (1999), and Lees (1997). The police may cause secondary victimisation when serving male rape victims through homophobic, disbelieving, and hostile responses because they support the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue' (Walker, 2004;

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[2] Secondary victimisation is the re-traumatisation of the rape victim, abuse, or sexual assault. It is an indirect result of assault, which happens via the responses of institutions and individuals to the victim when dealing with the victim after the attack.

Sivakumaran, 2005). More recent research supports this (Jamel, 2010), in which it is argued that gay male rape victims are perceived as less legitimate or deserving, determined by police occupational culture. Similarly, according to Rumney (2009), gay male rape victims are less likely to report their rape to the police than heterosexual victims of male rape because of the officers' homophobic attitudes and behaviors emanating from the police occupational culture. Heterosexual, bisexual and homosexual male rape victims are discussed in respect of the specific needs of these victims. The needs of transgendered and child victims of rape are not discussed in this doctoral work due to the focus and capacity of it, but it is important that further research considers these types of victims.

There has been a lack of social research on whether state and voluntary agencies are appropriately trained to deal with male rape victims. Carpenter (2009) believes that state agencies always use a woman-focused model of victimisation when responding to male rape victims; in other words, state agencies deal with both female and male rape in the same way. He argues that some male rape victims experience rape differently in comparison to female rape victims. For example, male rape victims may question their masculinity or sexual orientation, as male rape essentially challenges or contradicts men's power, strength, self-reliance, and independence (Clark, 2014). There is no research available on whether voluntary agencies are similarly lacking in specific training to deal with male rape victims. Therefore, it is important to examine in this project whether state and voluntary agencies perpetuate or dispel male rape myths in contemporary society, and to explore whether this influences the treatment of male rape victims.

For female rape victims, we know that female rape myths influence the type of service being delivered to them. For example, if a female rape victim had been drinking, was previously in a sexual relationship with the defendant, willingly went home with the defendant, or somehow 'led him on', then the rape is less likely to be seen as 'real rape' and the female rape victim is disbelieved, making it more likely for the defendant to be acquitted (Temkin and Krahe, 2008). It appears that female rape myths negatively influence criminal justice practitioners. Temin and Krahe (2008) found this, arguing that bias, stereotypes and gender prejudice strongly influence perceptions of female rape, which in turn negatively influence the treatment provided

to female rape victims. As a result, they argue, female rape victims are reluctant to engage with the criminal justice system. It is argued, however, that male rape victims are less likely than female rape victims to report to state and voluntary agencies due to cultural and legal messages deep-rooted within societies, which specify who are considered to be legitimate rape victims (Cohen, 2014). Cohen goes on to argue that,

> Men are included [in service provisions] almost as an afterthought, and it is recognized that provision for men is not the norm. Surely this begs the question: if it is recognized that only some Rape Crisis Centres help male victims of rape, how can they be celebrated as acting for or serving all victims? Some is clearly not all. Exclusion by gender is a barrier to accessing justice and should be inexcusable (p. 87).

She also argues that male rape victims report at much lower rates in contrast to female rape victims (see section 2.4.1 for a critical discussion regarding the prevalence of male rape). Thus, it is important to examine state and voluntary agencies' thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, ideas, and views about male rape; if they believe that men can be rape victims; how male rape victims compare to female rape victims; and how they handle male rape victims. If male rape myths are present in state and voluntary agencies, it is important to highlight these and attempt to eradicate such myths because they can contribute to the under-reporting of male rape (Coxell et al., 1999; Gregory and Lees, 1999). It is, therefore, unclear from this and other existing work whether low reporting reflects state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward male rape or whether this is due to other factors, such as the responses to male rape by the wider society; in other words, victims' fears about friends and family finding out.

Feminist theoretical research on sexual violence is extensive: it highlights the hidden figure of unreported rapes in official police statistics (Lees, 1997, 2002); examines police responses to rape and attempts to eliminate rape myths (Gregory and Lees, 1999). Feminist research also plays a pivotal role in uncovering the extent of male violence against women and reveals the effect rape has on female rape victims. Radical feminists argue, for example, that the law imposed in societies is the main cause of patriarchy because it is fundamentally patriarchal, and so it oppresses, subordinates, and marginalises women (Mackinnon, 1989; see also Mac an Ghaill and

Haywood, 2007, for a fuller and robust discussion of patriarchy). Radical feminists generally believe that, once patriarchy collapses, only then can women be truly free from men or have equal power with men.

Comparatively, however, little research has provided for male rape victims. For instance, Carpenter (2009: no pagination) says that, "The study of male rape has been overshadowed by research into the effects of female rape and as a consequence has been ignored to a large extent." Stanko (1990), and more recently Apperley (2015), argue that men rape other men for exactly the same reasons that they rape women: to exercise power and control over the victim. Feminism conceptualises rape as a violent act that, along with a consideration of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987) (see section 1.7 for the definition and conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinity), may help us understand why male rape has been widely overlooked and discover whether social and gender expectations facilitate this neglect. How a man perceives himself as a man and in what ways masculinities are formed within a social and cultural setting are vital to understanding male rape. This is verified by Groth and Burgess (1980), Kelly (1988) and Lees (1997), who conclude that masculinity is a social concept. Feminists have done much to highlight the plight of female rape victims since the 1970s, and many voluntary services have evolved for these female victims, who are coming to terms with the effects of their rape. The rape of adult males, however, has gained very little attention by the public or in social science research literature. There is still no clear societal strategy to address male rape in Britain, even though it is estimated that help and support for male rape victims are more than twenty years behind that for female rape victims (Rogers, 1998). By adopting a more inclusive approach, this project will critically examine men being raped and sexually assaulted by other men and women. It is important to adopt this inclusive approach because:

> There are many forms of sexual violence and it is a tool with a multitude of uses. Whether it is repression of enemies, ethnic cleansing or punishment of prisoners, male victims are abundant and largely ignored…male victims are an often-unnoticed group that we neglect in terms of recognition, assistance and resources (Apperley, 2015: 92).

To shed light on the important issue of male rape in order to help address the lack of recognition, assistance and resources to which Apperley refers to, the thesis contributes to theory, method and practice in a number of ways:

1) It contributes to sociological, cultural, and post-structural understandings of knowledge about male rape by understanding the shifting nature of such knowledge, the ways in which discourses about male rape are constructed and re-constructed in state and voluntary agencies, and the implications of certain knowledges of male rape. Contributing to theoretical debates in this sense fills a lacuna since knowledge construction of male rape and the ways in which it manifests has largely been overlooked in sociological, cultural, and post-structural studies. Understanding the implications of discourses about male rape are important to make sense of how state and voluntary agencies position male rape victims at certain contexts, times and places. The thesis also contributes to current debates in gender and sexuality studies, adding to current understandings of social and cultural constructions of masculinities and sexualities. Identifying the links between gender, sexualities and male rape has largely been absent in gender and sexuality studies. The thesis makes these links to recognise and understand the different ways in which practitioners navigate through different masculinities and sexualities, how they perpetuate or dispel certain gendered and sexualized male rape myths that can inform their service delivery, and how the practitioners position male victims in certain categories.

2) The thesis also contributes to research methods and methodology. The thesis provides original, fresh, and nuanced qualitative data, gathered through qualitative semi-structured interviews and qualitative questionnaires. The empirical aspect of the thesis contributes to qualitative research methods and methodology, as the data offer nuanced, rich, and 'fine-grained' data to explore practitioners' unique understandings of male rape. As the prior research on male rape rests mainly on quantitative research to recognise the frequency and patterns of male rape, and on interviews directly with male rape victims—both approaches are important to build a better and holistic understanding of male rape—what is currently overlooked in the existing literature, however, is a qualitative empirical insight into practitioners' worldview and their attitudes and responses to male rape. Generating detailed and contextual understandings of practitioners' comprehensions of male rape, through qualitative research, add to the existing body of knowledge surrounding male sexual

victimisation by way of supplementing the current published quantitative studies on male rape and the studies based on qualitative interviews directly with male rape victims.

3) Finally, the thesis also contributes to policy and practice. The thesis contributes to the developments of policy and practice for it identifies 'tools' that shape discourses in state and voluntary agencies; for example, it identifies *training* as a 'tool' that shapes discourses. The thesis recognises that robust training in state and voluntary agencies is vital to help support male rape victims in practice. However, training can work to construct male rape either positively or negatively; the thesis highlights how training may actually reinforce male rape myths. I offer recommendations for policy and practice that can help shape better service delivery for male victims of rape. The thesis offers ways wherein to dispel potential male rape myths and problematic attitudes in state and voluntary agencies, so that policy and practice can better meet victims' needs.

The structure of this thesis aims to facilitate an understanding of state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape victims. The thesis intends to give a contemporary discussion of men's sexual victimisation. The following outlines how the thesis is structured—Chapter 1, 'Defining and Conceptualising Male Rape and the Current Research', looks at definitional issues associated with male sexual victimisation. It sets out the current research in terms of research questions, research project, rationales for conducting research on male rape, and theoretical, conceptual and methodological frameworks are also introduced. Chapter 2, 'Critical Literature Review', critically explores existing literature on male rape and highlights gaps in current knowledge relating to male sexual victimisation. Chapter 3, 'Research Methods and Methodology', considers the difficulties associated with researching male rape, and the empirical research methods and methodologies used to conduct the research are outlined. Chapter 4, 'Gender and Sexualities: Hegemonic Masculinity and its Relevance to Male Rape', applies the theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity to elucidate the research findings pertaining to gender and sexualities in understanding male rape, and it argues that hegemonic masculinity is particularly important to understanding male rape and the attitudes and responses to it. Chapter 5, 'Social Constructions of Male Rape in the Cultural World of Policing', considers the

different ways wherein the police serve male rape victims and examines police attitudes and responses in respect of male rape from a sociological framework and lens. Chapter 6, 'Social and Cultural Constructions of Male Rape in Voluntary Agencies', illustrates the findings relating to the voluntary services' attitudes and responses that are geared toward male rape victims grounded in sociological, cultural and post-structural studies. The conclusion highlights the implications of the research findings regarding the theoretical frameworks used in earlier chapters, and it outlines policy recommendations taking into consideration the research findings. Before raising awareness of the different research findings that will be brought together to give a holistic, critical discussion, it is important to conceptualise male rape and define it in the current research in order to critically examine such a phenomenon in Britain.

**Chapter 1: Defining and Conceptualising Male Rape and the Current Research**

**1.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to carefully define key terms, concepts and conceptions that will be drawn upon throughout this project. This chapter also outlines and discusses the research questions, rationales, aims of the project, and gap in the existing literature on male rape to demonstrate the contribution that this project makes while showing what will be critically explored in this project. In this chapter, it is also important to introduce and discuss in detail the theoretical, conceptual and methodological underpinnings in the current research to show what this project is based on. Before this, it is important to clarify what I mean by using the term 'male rape' to prevent it being confused with meaning men raping women or men raping children.

**1.1 What is Male Rape?**

This thesis focuses on adult male victims of rape and sexual violence in Britain. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 strengthened and modernised the law on sexual offences. This Act extends the definition of rape to include the penetration by a penis of the vagina, anus, or mouth of another person. Moreover, I argue that sexual violence is any unwanted sexual act or activity. For example, as my own cultural definition, male sexual assault is a form of sexual violence, in that male sexual assault is an act of psychological, physical, and emotional violation in the form of a sexual act, which is inflicted on a male without his consent by either a man or a woman. It can include manipulating or forcing a male to participate in any sexual act, such as the male or female offender intentionally touching the victim in a sexual way, apart from penetration of the mouth or anus (however slight) with the penis since this would be rape. These definitions of male rape and sexual assault form the conceptual basis for this thesis, while also including a broad spectrum of other unwilling sexual acts in the critical discussions within this thesis, such as non-consensual object penetration.

Therefore, only forced penile-anal or penile-oral penetrative sex acts are eligible for inclusion under the working definition of 'male rape' for this thesis. Definitions of

male sexual assault and male rape can be vague and are usually used interchangeably in everyday conversation and in research literature, which can obscure the specifics of the sex crime perpetrated. Stemple and Meyer (2014) argue that inconsistent and outdated definitions of male rape fuel incorrect or inaccurate perceptions about this phenomenon, which in turn influences the type of attitudes and responses that male rape victims receive. Sivakumaran (2007) suggests that, "It is important to differentiate between the various forms of sexual violence that are committed against men…rather than viewing them all under the rubric of 'sexual violence', for different dynamics may be present in the different types of abuse" (p. 262). However, there is no agreement in the social science literature regarding exclusion or inclusion criteria for male sexual assault and male rape, and some authors incorrectly interpret the legal definition of male rape (e.g., Graham, 2006). In addition, because of the dissimilar geographical jurisdictions covered by the research studies in this thesis, the definitions of male rape are varied. For example, in some studies (e.g., Allen, 2002; Davies, 2002; Graham, 2006; Clark, 2014), the male victim is described as being raped but the actual sex acts are not specified. I will make it clear whenever I am using 'male rape', 'male sexual assault', or 'sexual violence'. This research is concerned with male rape and non-penetrative male sexual assault. The way these terms are understood, defined and conceptualised in Western societies, UK policies and in the media may be misinterpreted or misunderstood because of male rape myths (see chapter 2).

For the purposes of this thesis, I will not be using the term 'survivor'. Although I support the notion of 'survivor', meaning that the victim is seen as having survived the rape, utilising it all through this thesis is impractical: first, research on state agencies uses the term 'victim' to recognise victimisation, and this is true all through the criminal justice system; second, a wealth of male rape research uses the term 'victim' instead of 'survivor'. Thus, it is inappropriate to alter the term used by other authors, so I will use the term 'victim' throughout this work to maintain consistency and accuracy.

**1.2 What are Male Rape Myths?**

In order to explore male rape in-depth in this thesis, and to examine whether there are male rape myths present in the primary data, I will highlight the different male rape myths throughout this work. For the purposes of this project, male rape myths are defined as inaccurate or incorrect conceptions relating to male rape, which provide a misrepresentation of the nature, extent and pattern of male sexual victimisation. Turchik and Edwards (2012) argue that, "male rape myths are endorsed by a substantial segment of the population and are related to social norms regarding masculinity and male sexuality" (p. 213). For Blackburn et al. (2008), accepting male rape myths reduces empathy for, and may even initiate the attribution of responsibility to male rape victims. From this, it appears that male rape myths can be harmful to victims of male rape, as they lead to blaming the victims and facilitate more favourable views of the sexual offenders. The foundational argument in this thesis concurs with and supports the following argument made by Turchik and Edwards:

> [M]ale rape emanates from the same patriarchal structure as female rape and is related to various systems of oppression, including sexism and heterosexism. Specifically, under a social system of patriarchy, masculine hegemony and heterosexism are valued ideals and these are incongruent with men's experiences of sexual victimization (2012: 213).

Their argument is plausible because it may be safe to argue that victims of male sexual victimisation are marginal to reinforce and perpetuate patriarchy, and the gender and social ideals of masculinity. Women are oppressed alongside men who do not achieve the gender and social ideals of masculinity, which are characterised by strength, power and control; arguably, men are unexpected to be victims, especially rape victims. Those men who do become rape victims, however, draw in stigma. For instance, Mezey and King (1987), McMullen (1990), and Isley and Gehrenbeck-Shim (1997) argue that the taboo and stigma of male rape keep it under-researched and hidden. From this, it seems that the taboo and stigma are consequential of stereotypes and male rape myths ingrained within societies pertaining to the causes, impact, and nature of male rape. In other words, the public invisibility of male rape victims is based on the circulation of sexualised and gendered expectations that could suggest

that 'men cannot be raped by other men' (Weiss, 2010; Hlavka, 2016). As Rowe (2009) eloquently and profoundly states, "The codified, structured nature of [police] institutions is often not able to respond effectively to changing social values and practices, which means that policing becomes misaligned with broader society, with negative consequences in terms of authority and legitimacy" (p. 127). Therefore, generally, police services often perpetuate societies' wider values and norms, including societies' perpetuation of gender and sexuality norms and values. The implication of this is that, as Apperley (2015: 93) argues, "The assumption that men are not vulnerable propagates stigmatization and undermines our understanding of [male rape]. Addressing sexual violence against men and women is a necessity".

It must, therefore, be recognised that research on male rape is needed. This thesis will draw attention to the many stereotypes and male rape myths, backed up by various research studies, with an intention to explore the prevalence of these within the analysis chapters (see chapters 4, 5 and 6). This thesis will empirically explore non-institutionalised male rape rather than institutionalised male rape, in that the predominant focus will be on male rape in the community setting rather than on restricted establishments, such as male rape in prison and in the military. This thesis will also empirically focus on adult male rape victims as opposed to male children who are victims of male rape. Setting this focus up will help meet the research aims more specifically. Although research on male rape in prison/military and on male children who are victims of rape are important, there is not enough space in this thesis to give full attention to these important issues. Therefore, this thesis highlights common male rape myths/cultural myths and stereotypes identified in various work that affect adult male rape victims in the community. Turchik and Edwards (2012) identified several male rape myths, and, in order to explore whether these male rape myths are present in state and voluntary agencies, I will examine such myths throughout this project:

> (a) [M]en cannot be raped; (b) "real" men can defend themselves against rape; (c) only gay men are victims and/or perpetrators of rape; (d) men are not affected by rape (or not as much as women); (e) a woman cannot sexually assault a man; (f) male rape only happens in prisons; (g) sexual assault by someone of the same sex causes homosexuality; (h) homosexual

and bisexual individuals deserve to be sexually assaulted because they are immoral and deviant; and (i) if a victim physically responds to an assault he must have wanted it (p. 211-212).

To get a better understanding of male rape and male rape myths, this thesis will critically review relevant literature associated with these phenomena by carefully selecting and synthesising all the relevant research evidence. This systematic review of the literature will not only give an understanding of male rape, but also elucidate my research data. I evaluate and synthesise evidence and literature relating to the state and third sector[3] and relating to gender, sexualities and masculinities concepts in a rigorous and transparent fashion to increase the validity and reliability of my argument and research findings.

## 1.3 Research Questions

The following overarching research question will form the basis for this doctoral work:

- How do conceptions of male rape shape state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male victims of rape and sexual violence in Britain?

The following are additional sub-questions to the overarching research question:

- How do notions of gender, sexualities and masculinities affect and shape state and voluntary agencies' understanding of male rape and their views of men as victims of rape?
- What roles do gender, sexualities and masculinities play in the discourse of male sexual victimisation?
- How does the police occupational culture influence the ways in which the police provide services for male rape victims?

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[3] The third sector is a non-profit-making or non-governmental sector, comprising of voluntary agencies providing support and services for male victims of rape. The third sector also includes charities.

**1.4 Rationales**

The research aims elucidate how conceptions of male rape shape criminal justice policy, practice, and service delivery in respect of male victims of rape and sexual violence. Through an investigation of the attitudes and understandings of practitioners within state and voluntary agencies, this research will present an important insight into how social and cultural perceptions shape the ways in which the police and voluntary agencies respond to, and deal with male rape. For the purposes of this doctoral work, this thesis will use 'state agencies' to refer to the police and 'voluntary agencies' to indicate that these are organisations that deal with male rape victims in Britain and that these are victim services in general. For example, 'Victim Support', 'SurvivorsUK', 'ManKind' and some rape crisis centres are voluntary organisations that male rape victims go to for help and assistance. The rationale for researching the police and voluntary agencies for male rape is because they are the first port of call for male rape victims when rape is reported (Jamel, 2010). They also have a core comprehension of the factors that discourage men from reporting rape and the impact of rape on men's lives.

Another rationale for formulating the above research questions is due to there being a lack of theory being employed to understand male rape; conversely, theoretical explanations of female rape are comprehensive. This is not implying that female rape ought to be displaced or relegated by male rape, but rather female and male rape should both be researched in social science research, especially when social science research have documented these two crime types. In this project, I demonstrate that there are some similarities and differences between female and male rape, showing the complexity of the concept of rape. Researching only female rape is problematic:

> Most research has focused on female victims…Although women are
> victimized far more often than men, the proportion of male victims compared
> to female victims may be skewed because of gender differences in reporting
> rates…male rape is problematic and currently understudied. Because male
> and female victims experience similar social sanctions and negative
> sequelae, it follows that similar social forces and ideologies work against
> rape victims of both genders…Rape myths about female victims have been

found to play a central role in the misperceptions and treatment of female rape victims…there are myths about male victims of rape that need to be explored and understood…[g]iven the limited research on male rape myths… (Chapleau et al., 2008: 600-601).

Based on these authors, it is apparent that research on male rape myths and on male victims of rape is required. To help understand male rape myths, social theory needs to be employed. By doing so, one can understand the different reasons why male victims of rape are actively 'forgotten' in research, practice and policy and why the state and third sector subscribe to male rape myths. Chapleau et al also point out that female rape myths facilitate the "misperceptions and treatment of female rape victims" (p. 601). It is vital to explore whether male rape myth acceptance can also facilitate inaccurate or incorrect understanding and poor handling of male rape victims to see whether female and male rape victims do "experience similar social sanctions and negative sequelae" (ibid.), as "it is clear that there has been a sustained public discourse suggesting that crime and disorder endlessly spiral and are (no longer) effectively met by a robust criminal justice system" (Rowe, 2009: 129). Women do indeed suffer various forms of violence, such as intimate partner violence wherein alcohol is involved (see Mullaney, 2007; Javaid, 2015a). Based on aggregated data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales in 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12, generally, 2.5 per cent of females said that they had been a victim of a sexual offence (including attempts) in the previous 12 months, which represents around 404,000 female adults being victims of sexual offences on average per year (Ministry of Justice, 2013). This indicates that rape and sexual assault are still serious issues for women.

A final rationale as to why this project is being conducted is to address and challenge the myth that rape is only a "women's issue". Weiss (2010: 276) explicates that, "for more than 30 years, rape and sexual assault have been largely framed by activists as a women's safety issue and by feminist scholars as a substantive area within a broader violence against women literature". The exclusion of male rape can be seen in the evolution of victimology, in which it leaves us with the view that victims are unlikely to be male since it respectively discusses female victims and male offenders, discussing them in gender-specific ways. This project, however, does not seek to deny

that many women have suffered, and continue to suffer, sexual violence. Instead, it aims to show that men can also become victims of sexual violence as a way in which to address gender inequality and injustice. Otherwise, the gender expectations of men and women and the patriarchal ideology may continue to be reinforced, placing women in their 'inferior' position and men at the top of the gender hierarchy. This polarisation, arguably, needs confronting because it may encourage hegemonic masculinities.

## 1.5 Aims of the Research

- To examine state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape;
- To consider the assumptions made by state and voluntary agencies regarding homosexual, bisexual, and heterosexual male rape victims;
- To examine how conceptions of male rape in state and voluntary agencies structure the response to it in England, UK;
- To explore the extent to which state and voluntary agencies meet the needs of male rape victims, seeking explanations for similarities and differences in the management of male rape cases in state and voluntary agencies;
- To investigate the role of the police and their experiences of dealing with male rape cases;
- To explore the relationship between gender, sexualities and male rape, examining how general notions of masculinities and sexualities shape, construct and form the ways in which state and voluntary agencies respond to, and deal with male rape victims.

## 1.6 Gap in the Literature

My research fills a gap in the literature on sexual violence, as it explores the experiences and perspectives of state and voluntary agencies that work very closely with male rape victims. Research on male rape in the UK is lacking. Research that is available on male rape rests either on analysed quantitative data sets on male rape victims' experiences or on case outcomes, or interviews directly with male rape

victims. Previous work also approached male rape from either a clinical or psychological perspective, which is important, but we also need to approach male rape from a sociological perspective, too. This current research takes a nuanced approach. Whilst male rape victims' experiences are certainly worthy of research, it is important to also explore the experiences and perspectives of state and voluntary agencies that process male rape cases, not merely because they are pivotal to the recovery of such victims and the outcome of such cases, but also because they interact with countless victims with varied experiences. By researching state and voluntary agencies, the researcher was able to discover their challenges and perspectives as they handle, and respond to male rape victims. The researcher was also able to explore state and voluntary agencies' thoughts, ideas, views and beliefs of male rape, and their experiences of working very closely with other state and voluntary agencies, all of which would not have been achievable through interviewing male rape victims. The researcher chose not to directly interview male rape victims because getting access to them was extremely difficult. Sleath and Bull (2012) argue that male rape victims rarely disclose their rape to researchers because the victims often hold feelings of self-blame, trepidation, and shame. Therefore, the empirical chapters only provide insight into the discourses of state and voluntary agencies in relation to this topic rather than the views of the victims and offenders themselves. Consequently, this thesis contributes theoretically to discourses on unacknowledged and unreported rape, and also to a broader literature on non-reported crime. By critically examining male rape, underpinned by sociological, cultural, post-structural, gender and sexualities theories and concepts, this project will develop some understanding of it.

**1.7 Theoretical, Conceptual and Methodological Underpinnings in the Current Research**

The focus of this research is on how the police and voluntary agencies respond to male rape, rather than the experiences of adult male victims of rape and the perpetrators of this crime. It is, nevertheless, important to present some understanding of male rape with the help of theory, advancing theoretical notions and conceptual understandings relating to male sexual victimisation. The thesis will provide some

understanding of police and voluntary agency practitioners'[4] responses to male rape and of the many issues associated with policing male sexual victimisation. Abdullah-Khan (2008) argues that the police and voluntary agencies deal inadequately with male rape victims, or male victims of rape are:

> [O]verlooked because of the strong gender stereotypes into which men and women are socialised. Men have traditionally been expected to be strong and dominant and this expectation disallows them to be victims of a sexual offence that fundamentally threatens and challenges their sexuality and manliness (Abdullah-Khan, 2002: 12).

Therefore, it is important to explore whether these issues pertaining to gender, sexuality and masculinity are present in my research findings within contemporary society or whether these issues are absent from my data. It is important to draw on the theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987) to help elucidate my research findings and these gendered expectations of men and masculinity that may be present in the findings. It is important to employ hegemonic masculinity in this thesis because it can help elucidate the conception of male rape and the responses and reactions to it by the police and voluntary services for male rape victims. Hegemonic masculinity refers to the dominant ideal or model of masculinity in societies; it essentially refers to the culturally idealised patterns (practices, norms, and forms) of masculinity that perpetuate patriarchy. Subordinated (e.g., homosexualities) and marginalised (e.g., racial and ethnic minorities) masculinities, configurations of practice, have less value and confer less symbolic and material advantage (Connell, 2005). Homosexual men can engage in hegemonic masculinity practices at times, in certain contexts, and benefit from what Connell (1995: 79) calls the 'patriarchal dividend', but many configurations of practice that are overtly and obviously homosexual are likely to be subordinated to hegemonic practices.

Connell (1987) developed hegemonic masculinity as a form of masculinity within a given society-wide and historical setting that legitimates and structures hierarchical gender and power relations between women and men; between femininity (although

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[4] When I use 'voluntary agency practitioners' or 'voluntary agency workers', I am referring to male rape counsellors, therapists and voluntary agency caseworkers.

femininities can be constructed in and through male bodies) and masculinity; and amongst masculinities, such as ethnic minority masculinities and gay masculinities. For Connell, enacting hegemonic masculinity is un-meaningful outside its relationship to nonhegemonic masculinities and femininities; in other words, the essence and meaning of hegemonic masculinity is unraveled through the legitimation of the relationship between femininity and between subordinate and subjugated forms of masculinities, such as ethnic minority masculinities and gay masculinities. Thus, hegemonic masculinity cannot stand-alone. It needs these other forms of subordinate masculinities to recognise and perpetuate the power of hegemonic masculinities. Shedding some light on the primary data and on literature surrounding male rape, sexual violence, masculinities and sexualities, this thesis will give an understanding of the issue of male rape in contemporary society and how hegemonic masculinity is appropriate to understand and explain male rape and the responses to it.

For this project, the working definition of hegemonic masculinity is the one employed by Connell: to embody and enact hegemonic masculinity, it depends on the situation, context and setting in which one situates and it is a set of practices. My working definition of hegemonic masculinity will also include patterns of 'masculine' behaviors, whereby men enact the gender expectations of men. They embody, for example, power, control, dominance, maleness, self-reliance, invulnerability, unemotionality, aggressiveness, sexual promiscuousness, violence, physical strength, as well as bodily traits and practices, such as muscularity and body/facial hair, when they draw on hegemonic masculinity.

With the support of the theoretical framework of hegemonic masculinity, this thesis will critically engage with the discourse and language associated with male rape. This language and discourse is gleaned from primary data, involving police officers, male rape therapists, counsellors, and voluntary agency caseworkers', unveiling their attitudes toward, and responses to male rape victims. Through social and power relations, Rumney (2009) and Ferrales et al. (2016) argue that male rape victims are marginal because of their identification, emasculation and stigmatisation. Consequently, these victims are seen as challenging and contradicting the status quo, and the gender expectations and social ideals of men (Javaid, 2015d). Men are not expected to be victims, vulnerable, hurt, damaged, emotional and sensitive; by

enacting these characteristics, however, they are not achieving hegemonic masculinity and are seen as not 'real' men (Connell, 2005; Seidler, 2007). Carpenter (2009: no pagination) agrees, arguing that, "In a male dominated culture, men do not want to accept their role as victims", revealing emotion, weakness and powerlessness. Therefore,

> Often men have learned to harden their hearts against feeling since emotions are deemed to be "feminine" and so a threat to male identities. Rather than acknowledge feelings of sadness or vulnerability that are experienced as signs of weakness, men split from their inner emotional lives or else unknowingly transform the sadness into anger or violence that still work to affirm otherwise threatened male identities….If men are constantly struggling against feelings of inadequacy, they cannot name and feel their traditional identities as providers and breadwinners (Seidler, 2007: 15-16).

To better understand and explain male rape, and the gender expectations of men that may be present in the primary data, the current literature concerning male rape, and research on gender, masculinity and sexuality more broadly, are critically reviewed. Combining these together, and linking them to the research findings gives a better understanding of male rape and enables a better understanding of the intersections between male rape, victimhood, gender, power, masculinity and sexuality. This will, in other words, help to understand why men may be reluctant to report their rape to these agencies. This will also elucidate the different ways in which police officers, male rape counsellors, male rape therapists and voluntary agency workers who work very closely with male rape victims perceive men as victims of rape.

For Rock (2002), a 'victim' is an identity, a social artefact dependent, at the outset, on an alleged transgressor and transgression and then, indirectly or directly, on a variety of witnesses, prosecutors, police, jurors, defence counsel, the mass media and others who may not always handle the individual case but who will, nonetheless, shape the larger interpretative environment wherein it is lodged. Rock further adds that the word 'victim' tends to convey stigmatised meanings of loss, weakness, and pain. These stigmatised meanings clearly challenge or threaten the overall norms of men's hegemonic masculinity (Kimmel, 2003; Seidler, 2007; Carlson, 2008; Hlavka, 2016),

which may make men reluctant to adopt the label 'victim', possibly causing isolation or an 'identity crisis' amongst men who have suffered violent victimisation, such as rape (Allen, 2002). It is important to explore whether state and voluntary agencies are aware of these issues when handling male rape victims, because being aware of these issues in practice may shape male rape victims' decision to pursue their case in the criminal justice system. Dunn (2007) argues that, for rape victims, the emotional impact is so severe that the fear rape causes keeps them in a long-lasting state of fear. These victims, he adds, are fearful of offender retaliation and/or fearful of death at the time of their rape. Many studies relating to male rape, however, are based on the offenders instead of the victims, which limits our understanding of men as rape victims and of the ways in which their victim identity may prevent them from getting access to support from state and voluntary agencies due to the gender expectations of men (Jamel, 2010). Therefore, it is important for this thesis to critically explore state and voluntary agencies' perceptions of men as rape victims, to give some understanding of this type of victim population from the perspectives of state and voluntary agencies. Do those who work in these agencies talk differently about male and female rape and, if so, what can we understand from these different discourses/narratives?

The denial of male rape by the police and the wider society is especially likely to be prevalent in Britain, where the silencing of taboos are prevalent features of daily life, because of the mistaken belief that 'men cannot be raped by other men' since men are expected to be strong, powerful, and macho (Abdullah-Khan, 2002, 2008). The discourse on gender suggests that masculinity is incompatible with a victim identity (Eagle, 2006). In Britain, this pattern is worsened by extreme gendered practices, whereby women are often conceptualised as rape or sexual assault victims, and men are frequently seen to be the offenders. This compartmentalisation is frequently reinforced by discursive practices that perpetuate gender inequalities, gender expectations, and hierarchy of masculinities, which, in consequence, serve as a means for the continued denial of male rape by the police and the wider society and of men as victims more generally (Graham, 2006). Considering these issues, it is crucial to formulate a platform to raise awareness of male rape for societies, the healthcare and legal domains, and for the victims and offenders themselves. This can be accomplished through the creation of male rape victim discourse that can serve as a

foundation for understanding sexuality, gender, masculinity and male rape. Therefore, this thesis will elucidate male rape victims' needs, as articulated by state and voluntary agencies that work closely with these victims, which can differ to female rape victims' needs since the latter group do not suffer confusion surrounding their masculinity and/or sexual orientation (Clark, 2014). For example:

> Accounts from [male] survivors indicate that normative expectations about masculinity act as additional barriers to disclosure for fear of being ridiculed as weak, inadequate, or labeled homosexual….Masculine socialization practices depict boys as invulnerable and powerful and male bodies as impenetrable. Dominant discourses position men as sexual aggressors and women as sexual victims; to envision men as victims or women as perpetrators challenges dominant paradigms of sexual harm and risk, particularly in a heteronormative culture….With few exceptions, boys' constructions of sexual violence have received little attention from victimization scholars and those interested in the gendered power dynamics of adolescent sexual development. The ways that young men process sexual assaults are unclear, but they are likely influenced by relationships among masculinities, sexualities, violence, and victimhood (Hlavka, 2016: 2).

It is clear, then, that research on masculinities and sexualities is needed for this research to present some understanding of the conception of male rape, and of the associated responses and attitudes to this crime. This will help one to understand the different ways in which state and voluntary agencies respond to, and deal with the subject of male rape. In this project, I contribute to the academic discussions of gender, sexualities and masculinities by carefully examining the appropriation of the conception of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987). Employing this theoretical framework will help us understand and elucidate male rape, and state and voluntary agencies' views and perspectives of men as victims of rape. However, there are some important limitations of hegemonic masculinity, which are vital to highlight to address the theoretical void that this thesis can help to fill. For example, Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 836) note themselves that, "The concept of multiple masculinities tends to produce a static typology." For Hearn (2004), hegemonic masculinity is blurred and not certain in its meaning while deemphasizing concepts of

domination and power. Collier (1998) states that hegemonic masculinity essentialises the character of men; but, as Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) specify, writers often use the concept of hegemonic masculinity in an essentialist and deterministic fashion without considering its fluid, non-static, and malleable nature. This thesis highlights the diverse nature of masculinities that male rape victims can embody depending on social structures, social institutions, and social contexts. Hegemonic masculinities are not fixed entities, as some writers mistakenly believe (e.g., Collier 1998; Hearn 2004); rather, they are "configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting" (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 836).

Hegemonic masculinity as embodied has further been critiqued by Beasley (2008). She encourages us to rethink the concept of hegemonic masculinity, but emphasises that her discussion should not divide perspectives. Beasley argues that there is, as she calls it, 'slippage' in the use of hegemonic masculinity. In other words, the application of hegemonic masculinity is not consistent, meaning that 'dominant' masculinities, which are the most common in certain settings and most culturally celebrated, does little to legitimate men's power over women and other men and such masculinities that do legitimate it might not invariably be common or socially celebrated so ought to not be called hegemonic masculinities (Beasley, 2008). As she critiques hegemonic masculinity to suggest that the concept 'slides' between differing meanings, interpretations, and understandings, she offers some contextual understandings for this "slippage":

> I suggest that these [several meanings of hegemonic masculinity] may be summarized as a slippage between its meaning as a *political mechanism* tied to the word *hegemony*—referring to cultural/moral leadership to ensure popular or mass consent to particular forms of rule—to its meaning as a descriptive word referring to *dominant* (most powerful and/or most widespread) versions of manhood, and finally to its meaning as an empirical reference specifically to *actual groups of men* (Beasley, 2008: 88; emphasis in original).

She goes further to argue that hegemonic masculinity is blurred in its meaning, is considered monolithic, and it is unclear how it recognises social practices as hegemonic ones, leaving authors to utilise the concept to typically mean dominance and power over others. For example, as she states, "because [Connell] is committed to the separate and determining authority of what [she] deems "material," [she] tends to slide away from the political legitimating meaning of hegemonic masculinity toward equating hegemony with "dominant" masculinity" (Beasley, 2008: 96). This is because, as Connell (2005) documents, hegemonic masculinity signifies institutional social power and 'material' authority. There also needs to be a clearer explanation, according to Beasley, of *how* hegemonic masculinity legitimates unequal relations. In general, Howson (2008) supports Beasley and her argument of 'slippage'. However, Howson also critiques Beasley on the grounds that she overlooks the fact that hegemonic masculinity differs across time and space, disregarding the importance of socio-historical contexts in which it manifests in dissimilar ways (locally, regionally, and nationally).

The thesis, nevertheless, attempts to overcome Beasley's criticisms by drawing on and distinguishing multiple masculinities in a hierarchical gender order that either legitimate or do not legitimate unequal relations, in order to make clear the salience and significance of hegemonic masculinity as a theoretical framework. Johansson and Ottemo (2015) establish that hegemonic masculinity does not always legitimate unequal relations and produce negative power effects because, "when the historical conditions and relational patterns in society change, the hegemonic position can also be challenged and questioned" (p. 193). The embodiment of hegemonic masculinity, as they argue, is that it never means complete power and control, but "instead points at a balance of forces and is expressed and constituted as a continuous and ongoing struggle for power" (p. 194). They suggest that, to enact hegemonic masculine practices, one is able to draw on different strategies, though the actual number of men embodying and practising hegemonic masculinity is rather low (Connell, 1987, 1995, 2005). The hegemonic position is invariably changeable and contestable (Johansson and Ottemo, 2015). Thus, while at times the power structure can be consistent and stable, it can at other times be dynamic and changeable, meaning that hegemonic masculinity is never fixed but rather negotiated so it does not always equate to negative power effects whereby power is negatively expressed against those in non-

hegemonic positions. The negotiation of hegemonic masculinity is inevitable. On balance, hegemonic subject positions producing negative power effects through, for example, control, discipline, violence and rejection, are not monolithic given that "[s]ubject positions can…never be totally fixed and stable. Instead they are moveable and transitional" (Johansson and Ottemo, 2015: 199).

Hegemonic masculinity as a theoretical foundation of this thesis will inform the empirical discussions. Therefore, the empirical chapters of this thesis (chapters 4, 5, and 6) will provide a sociological analysis of masculinities, gender expectations and male rape collectively. The thesis draws on hegemonic, subordinated, marginalised and complicit masculinities, developed by Connell (2005), to make sense of the primary data. However, as Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2003: 146) state, "no one theory can give the whole picture of an ever-increasingly complex global arena in which shifting gender meanings are experienced and negotiated in complex ways", which is why it is important to supplement hegemonic masculinity with other theoretical frameworks, such as queer theory and poststructuralism to give a more nuanced, original and comprehensive account of male sexual victimisation.

I will adopt an inductive method in the current research. Inductive work is theory generating, not theory driven, and so this work premised itself on theory being generated from the semi-structured interviews and from the qualitative questionnaires used in the current research. Bryman (2016) comments that it is important to utilise data collection methods that are sensitive to the social setting wherein data are generated and are flexible for the social researcher in order to inductively get a comprehension of the research topic one is researching. I felt it was appropriate and necessary to use an inductive approach because the current research is qualitative, and also because I interviewed police officers, male rape therapists, counsellors and case workers, recording what they said, who all provide services for male rape victims. Some respondents completed open-ended questions in the qualitative questionnaires; these questions gave the participants an opportunity to write their answers in detail. An inductive approach, therefore, enabled me to generate theory from my research data after I carried out primary research. With the use of both interviews and qualitative questionnaires, I was able to get a comprehension of how my participants

interact with male rape victims, how they understand the conception of male rape, and how their understandings were formed.

### 1.7.1 Foucault, Queer Theory, and Postructuralism as Theoretical Frameworks

In the current project, especially in chapters 5 and 6, I draw on concepts from Foucault, queer theories, and poststructural theories informed by cultural studies and sociology. Poststructural and Foucauldian understandings of the body inform the analysis since the bodies of male rape victims are carefully analysed through social and power relations and through social interactions between the police and the male victims. According the Foucault (1991), the body is an entity that is invested in meanings; the body is not neutral. The analysis, then, will focus on how the bodies of male rape victims challenge social and gender norms, and hegemonic masculinity. Foucault (1977) illustrates that "the soul is the prison of the body" to suggest that, while bodies are fluid, symbolic and material, they are under constant control and surveillance. Through social practices, social institutions, and social contexts, the body is vulnerable to power since power is omnipresent; however, despite power being everywhere, it can be contested and challenged (Foucault, 1980). As Mac an Ghaill and Haywood (2007) rightly argue:

> When we talk about the notion of power, we have to think about it relationally, thinking about powerful in relation to whom. In this way, we do not look at power as an either/or division but as being much more relational. We can say power is shaped relationally: one group is both powerful and powerless (p. 10).

This deeply persuasive account of power has some resonance with Foucault's understanding of power. Power, for Foucault (1982), is also relational in that it can control, shape, and reshape the body. The body, then, is always in a process of becoming, it is socially and culturally constructed, and the meanings 'marked' on the body can change through social interactions. As the body is a mere 'docile' subject, it is:

> …directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs. This political investment of the body is bound up, in accordance with complex reciprocal relations, with its economic use; it is largely as a force of production that the body is invested with relations of power and domination (Foucault, 1977: 55).

Interactions between state and voluntary agencies and male rape victims are shaped by power. Through culture and social relations, state and voluntary agencies construct male rape in certain ways. Discourse, a body of knowledge and ways of thinking about constructed knowledge, can also construct male rape in particular ways. For example, police discourse inscribes or marks the bodies of male rape victims in a corporeal fashion; male rape victims' bodies, then, become culturally "made" (Foucault, 1982) comprehensible as certain types of subjects. My data show that some police officers and voluntary agency practitioners construct male rape victims as "queer", so the bodies of male rape victims are 'marked' as unmasculine and as non-heterosexual. This, in turn, shapes and reshapes discourse relating to male rape, conceptualising it as non-heteronormative challenging heteronormativity (Jackson, 2005). Queer theories inform my analysis to better comprehend the ways in which gender and sexual norms shape state and voluntary agencies' interactions with male rape victims. I draw on heteronormativity, the normalisation of heterosexuality and the exclusion of other sexualities (Jackson, 2005, 2006, 2007), and on performativity of sexed/gendered subjectivities (Butler 1990, 1993, 1997). Stevi Jackson's work helped to make sense of the bodies of male rape victims as non-conforming and as non-heternormative, failing to embody heteronormative notions of gender and/or sexuality. As a result, some officers and voluntary agency practitioners construct male rape victims as 'deviant' and/or 'abnormal' since their sexual victimisation challenges expectations of heterosexual masculine practices and the institutionalisation of heterosexuality. To a lesser extent, Judith Butler's work on subjectivities and the performance of bodies is considered. Breaching social norms and values relating to gender and sexuality, male rape victims enact non-heteronormative gendered and sexual subjectivities. This, in turn, brings about disgust and disdain being directed towards these victims for their revelation of emasculation and subordination, and for their contestation of heteronormative expectations regarding gender and/or sexuality.

**1.8 Empirical Component of the Current Research**

The empirical chapters in this thesis will explore state and voluntary agencies' experiences of dealing with, and attitudes toward male rape victims. This thesis aims to draw together existing evidence that explores male rape along with the policing of this phenomenon, whilst also providing new and original primary data. Bringing together these studies from disparate disciplines, such as criminology, sociology, psychology, gender studies and law, and providing novel data to add to the current literature on sexual violence is not only original, but also enlightening, permitting deeper insights into the police responses to male rape victims and illuminating the assumptions that underpin the responses.

The way in which the police respond to male rape victims can determine what sort of outcome both the police and the victims get. It is argued that the police still hold a substantial amount of power and that includes the ability to be able to exercise some level of discretion in male rape cases. For example, the opinion of Brunger, Tong and Martin (2016: 1) is that, "While government reforms have changed policing and attempted to build structures of accountability and mechanisms for performance measurement, because of the nature of their work, supervision and control of the police still allows for substantial discretion." Similarly, Rowe (2013: 123) argues that:

> The sheer diversity and unpredictability of police work mean that individual officers will often be exercising their discretion in circumstances distanced from their supervisors. Although police officers might have targets set in terms of the number of sanctioned detections they are required to achieve, might be encouraged to participate in foot patrol, or to visit vulnerable premises or communities, they retain considerable autonomy over how they discharge their duties. Police work can be considered relatively invisible since it is carried out in places and at times removed from the supervision and scrutiny of more senior officers.

What these important illustrations suggest is that the police are able to exercise some form of discretion. It is important, therefore, to examine the level of discretion that the police use when handling male rape victims. The empirical part of the thesis will

provide fresh data to capture the extent of discretion that is applied in male rape cases and whether this is harmful to male rape victims, particularly in the form of secondary victimisation. Brunger et al. (2016) go on to argue that vulnerable people who engage with the police are unprotected. It could be argued that rape victims of both genders are vulnerable. Do the police increase male rape victims' vulnerability to further abuse? This project does not seek to blame the state and third sectors, but to recognise inadequacies (if there are any) in them, so that they can be better equipped to manage male rape victims in the short and long term. This is important to do, as well as exploring whether there are any inadequacies in the third sector, because recent research studies, such as Carpenter's (2009), have found inconsistencies in the way in which constabularies and voluntary services serve male rape victims. He says:

> At present the law enforcement agencies have a tarnished reputation for handling female rape and therefore sensitivity and professionalism in dealing with a male victim is seen as unlikely…and [male rape victims] can find themselves being ignored, questioned as criminals or at worst ridiculed… Many end up blaming themselves for what has happened. In the first instance the victims will be as desperate to keep it a secret as his attacker (no pagination).

The aim of this present study that gained ethical approval from a university research ethics committee was to explore police officers' experiences and views in respect of male rape from a nonjudgmental standpoint, so there was no need for deception, covert research or the elaboration of misleading cover stories. This study aimed to gain detailed, in-depth, and rich data from state and voluntary agencies in England. Therefore, the empirical chapters of this thesis critically examine the role of the police and voluntary agencies, and their experiences and views of handling male rape cases mostly from a gender and sexualities perspective. Chapter 4, for example, will provide a theoretical and empirical discussion of the relationships between social norms of masculinity and sexuality and the responses of police and voluntary services to male victims of rape and sexual assault. It examines in depth notions of gender, sexualities and masculinities and the ways in which they affect and shape state and voluntary agencies' understanding of male rape and their views of men as victims of rape. Essentially, it seeks to critically explore the different roles gender, masculinities,

and sexualities play in the discourse of male sexual victimisation in order to make sense of it.

The empirical chapters are based on interviews with the police, male rape counsellors, male rape therapists and voluntary agency workers (i.e., male rape caseworkers who provide advice, suggestions and guidance to male rape victims), who handle male victims of rape and sexual assault. In addition, these types of participants also filled out qualitative questionnaires, which were kept anonymous. I ensured that participants who were interviewed did not also fill out a questionnaire, as each method addresses issues in a different form. To inform the development of the semi-structured interview schedule and the qualitative questionnaires, I drew on Abdullah-Khan (2008) in order to shape the types of questions that I might ask. It was made clear to the participants that the study intended to enhance services for male rape victims, and to understand more about the conception of male rape from a gender and sexualities theoretical standpoint. The researcher offered all of the participants the opportunity to have an interview, but, if they declined, the researcher would then offer the qualitative questionnaires instead. Overall, this study gained a sample size of 70 participants, drawing on interviews with 25 participants and on qualitative questionnaires with 45 participants. The research methods and methodology aspects of the study are critically discussed in much more detail in chapter 3.

## Chapter 2: Critical Literature Review

## 2.0 Introduction

> While the penis may remain the rapist's favorite weapon, his prime
> instrument of vengeance, his triumphant display of power, it is not in fact his
> only tool. Sticks, bottles and even fingers are often substituted for the
> "natural" thing. And as men may invade women through their orifices, so,
> too, do they invade other men. Who is to say that the sexual humiliation
> suffered through forced oral sex or rectal penetration is a lesser violation of
> the personal, private inner space, a lesser injury to mind, spirit and sense of
> self? … All the acts of sex forced on unwilling victims deserve to be treated
> in concept as equally grave offenses in the eyes of the law, for the avenue of
> penetration is less significant than the intent to degrade. Similarly, the
> gravity of the offence ought not to be bound by the victim's gender. That the
> law must move in this direction seems clear (Brownmiller, 1975: 378).

The above passage highlights that men, as well as women, can be victims of sexual
violence. Brownmiller suggests that both female and male rape victims deserve to be
treated equally, which this project seeks to emphasise. Although the current rape law
in Britain may not recognise that rape can come in many different forms, such as
penetration with "sticks, bottles, and even fingers" as Brownmiller points out, the fact
that she was able to at least give recognition to the hidden nature and existence of
male rape at the time of writing is plausible. On balance, she encourages one to think
critically about the issue of male rape in academic discussions.

In doing so, this chapter is a critical engagement with the literature surrounding male
rape and explores the different male rape myths and stereotypes present in societies,
state and voluntary agencies, with a view to test such myths in the empirical part of
this research. The purpose and relevance of this chapter is to critically discuss the
literature on male rape and to highlight stereotypes and myths identified in various
research studies, so that the prevalence of these misconceptions can be explored
further in the empirical part of this thesis (the primary data are presented and analysed
in chapters 4, 5, and 6). It is also important to provide context and depth to the

empirical chapters that will soon follow, in which the findings of this research will be presented and analysed. The empirical findings and analysis will be, where appropriate, linked to this chapter and to the various sections within this chapter. Whilst there is a steady increase in academic interest of male rape in the USA, there is a lack of male rape research from the United Kingdom. Therefore, in this chapter, there will be an exploration of some research emanating from the USA. Research studies that have examined male rape within the United Kingdom have adopted small-scale samples due to the lack of reported cases and have mostly been clinically based. Nevertheless, this research attempts to contribute to existing knowledge surrounding male rape to give an understanding of such a phenomenon.

This chapter begins with providing a discussion of male rape in prisons and the army is raised, considering it was here where male rape first got attention by academic research and societies. This links into the next section that highlights predominant male rape myths occurring outside of such institutions. State and voluntary agencies operate outside of such institutions, so the male rape myths may influence their views; to explore this, the following sections give a discussion on whether such myths do have an influence on these agencies, with a view to test such myths within the empirical chapters. The penultimate section of this chapter gives a critical discussion on the law, as the law requires enforcement and compliance from both state and voluntary agencies. Finally, the last section of this chapter discusses how the courts handle male rape cases after the cases are brought to the attention of the police.

## 2.1 Male Rape in Institutions

Very little is known about the nature, incidence and prevalence of male rape in UK prisons due to lack of reporting, but also due to methodological sampling biases that often exclude inmates (Stemple and Meyer, 2014). Because of the lack of UK research studies on male rape in institutions, this section will include the majority of studies emanating from the USA. Using research that emanates from outside the UK is useful to give us some level of understanding of the nature and extent of prison rape in the UK (Abdullah-Khan, 2002). This section will also draw attention to the male rape myth that 'male rape only happens in prisons'. Throughout the world, though, the places with the largest number of male rape are prisons (Scarce, 1997).

The issue of male rape was much neglected in the United Kingdom until the 1980's [sic] when cases of male rape gained media attention…Prior to this point, male rape was being conceived as a phenomenon of prison life and it was within this institutional surrounding that its existence first gained recognition. Outside the prison environment, male rape was regarded as a violent outgrowth of the homosexual subculture. As such, in both instances it was regarded as a minority problem and one that did not require public or research interest. It was commonly assumed that male rape victims were children or young adolescents. The issue of male rape therefore remained concealed until relatively recently (Abdullah-Khan, 2002: 24-25).

The widely held misconception in UK society that male rape happens only in prisons flourishes, but this misconception is problematic because it ignores male rape occurring in the community; non-institutionalised rape has been traditionally seen as consensual homosexual activity (Sivakumaran, 2005). Therefore, state and voluntary agencies may neglect dealing with male rape happening outside of prisons. In prisons, the belief that a 'real' man cannot be forced into something so degrading against his will and, thus, the victim must have wanted the assault is widespread amongst male prisoners and prison staff (Young, 2007). Similarly, this concurs with older research as is suggested in the following quote:

[M]ale rape within prisons can be viewed as an extension of powers forcibly taken by the aggressors, to dominate the victims both physically and sexually. The rape of inmates is not regarded sympathetically, due to the common belief that a 'man' cannot be forced to engage in anything against his will (Abdullah-Khan, 2002: 25).

She argues that prison officials may overlook the issue of male rape in prisons because it is possible that they consider that 'men cannot be raped by other men'. Abdullah-Khan does not, however, consider alternative explanations. For instance, there could be a general indifference to the negative experiences of male prisoners who are there to be punished as criminals; e.g., 'they get what they deserve when raped in prisons' because of the crimes they committed to be incarcerated, although this remains speculative but warrants further research.

Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (2000) disseminated surveys to seven male prison institutions in midwestern states—1,788 inmates (25%) and 475 prison officials (25%) filled out, completed and returned the surveys. From this large response rate of completed surveys, which has a reasonable measure of generalisability, they found that 21% (375) of the prisoners suffered some form of sexual violence in prison, including rape. These figures may, however, largely be underestimates of the true reflection of prison rapes, given that many male inmates may be reluctant to come forward because of potential threats, repercussions, and reprisals. Although their surveys produced a high response rate, there was no way to clarify or confirm what their respondents had said or to ask follow-up questions to their responses in person, making it difficult to generate accurate and correct responses. My current project intends to avoid this restriction by using interviews to supplement the qualitative questionnaires. Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson's main conclusion is that prison rapes occur because of racial and ethnic conflict. For instance, they say that, "White inmates complained that Black sexual aggressors routinely preyed on young White inmates. Our data showed that the targets in 60% of the incidents were White, whereas the perpetrators in 74% of the incidents were Black" (p. 386). This points to an interesting finding, in that the race variable has a role to play in prison rapes; it is important to see whether Black men in the community are more likely to target White men. One could suggest that Black men rape White men as a way in which to exercise power and revenge for their subjugation and subordination in the slavery era. We know that the race and ethnicity variables contribute to sexual violence against men in conflict, as Apperley (2015: 94) comments that, "Although inflicted on an individual, castration, and sexual violence generally, can be used to emasculate an entire ethnic group whom the victim is representative of." Supporting Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson's finding that prison rape is on the rise, although their study was conducted over a decade ago, the increasing prevalence of male rape in prisons is further emphasised in more recent research:

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

*cutbacks* (resulting in staff shortages) and overcrowding within prisons, means that prisoners have more freedom of movement and, hence, are more able to engage in illegal activities (Abdullah-Khan, 2008: 17. Emphasis added).

There is, indeed, greater opportunity to carry out rape in prison, especially due to prisons with inadequate security, barracks housing, and overcrowding, which can put male prisoners at increased risk of rape (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2000). Given that the number of people sentenced and length of prison sentences have been increasing every single year since the 1980s, the issue of overcrowding in prisons persists (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Neal and Clements (2010) state that, though it is possible that the overcrowding of prisons may contribute to rape happening more frequently, it may not be causally linked. This is because, they argue, the overcrowding can indirectly contribute to rape through the reduced levels of security and supervision given to each male prisoner, increasing stress within the prisons owing to the overcrowding, and having many male prisoners share cells. Classification schemes may reduce opportunities of rape occurring in prisons. For example, certain male prisoners who are more vulnerable to rape should not be housed with a male inmate who is likely of becoming a rapist (Man and Cronan, 2001). In parallel, a survey asking prison staff and inmates to suggest ways to stop rape and sexual assault from happening in prison found that the most common suggestion was to separate the most vulnerable prisoners from convicted rapists (Struckman-Johnson et al., 1996). There are methodological limitations with this study, including (1) high rates of illiteracy amongst surveyed prisoners; (2) a small, non-representative sample; (3) participants' lack of reporting of victimisation, particularly within one-to-one interviews; and (4) different management practices.

The conception of financial cutbacks that Abdullah-Khan refers to in the above passage can also be applied when discussing state and voluntary agencies because, currently, there are financial cutbacks in such agencies, resulting in staff shortages and a lack of resources. Therefore, this may reflect the treatment and responses that male rape victims get in the community. It is important to explore the prevalence of these issues in the empirical research chapters. Such drawbacks have also resulted in research examining male rape in the UK to be based on small-scale samples due to the

limited number of known cases and have mainly been clinically based, which means that their results cannot be generalised to the wider population of male rape victims.

Male prisoners who have been raped are reluctant to come forward to report sexual assault and rape, which means that the extent of these crimes are likely to be underestimated (Rideau and Sinclair, 1982; Robertson, 2003). Male inmates who have suffered rape do not report to prison officials because of stigma; compliance to an inmate code that labels such conduct as 'snitching'; fear of retaliation by their offenders; and concerns that prison workers will ridicule or disbelieve them and/or not do anything (Robertson, 2003). Secondary victimisation includes prison officials initiating male prisoners' alienation and low self-esteem (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2006).[5] Male prisoners who have experienced rape often subscribe to male rape myths as a result, in that they feel as if they have lost their manhood due to the rape and they blame themselves for not fighting their attacker(s) off, which in turn these victims suffer in silence (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2006).

Therefore, the lack of knowledge on the nature and extent of male rape in prison raises serious concerns since a ramification of male rape in prison includes a risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections; for instance, higher rates of HIV infection affect male prisoners than men in the general U.S. population (Robertson, 2003; DeBraux, 2006). Men who have suffered rape in prison, and who may have been nonviolent perpetrators when they were sentenced, may perhaps become vengeful and angry individuals capable of violence against societies that they hold culpable for their humiliation, emasculinisation, and, in particular cases, contraction of a sexually transmitted infection or HIV (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Many rapes in prison are bloody, violent, and physically traumatic to the victims; but gang rapes may be particularly traumatic because they are frequently characterised by extreme abuse (Human Rights Watch, 2006). Gang rapes in prison, in turn, can eradicate the victims' masculinity and lead to humiliation, while drawing in victim blaming attitudes in

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[5] The strength of Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson's (2006) study is the fact that they gained a large sample: their findings were based on a large number of male victims of prison rape (382), gathered from seven different prisons in five states. Therefore, the male victim data may be representative of prison populations in the Midwest.

prison, which increases the victims' risk of developing mental health issues (Neal and Clements, 2010). In prison, such victim blaming attitudes relate to the idea that 'a real man cannot be forced into a degrading situation', which could be compounded for victims who are also offenders due to a general lack of empathy amongst prison staff (Neal and Clements, 2010). Relatedly, societal attitudes of male inmates who have suffered rape are also reflected in the social acceptability of humour regarding rape in prison; jokes are frequently heard on late-night comedy and television shows, every so often in movies, and even on TV commercials (Young, 2007). This raises serious concerns, in that rape in prison may not be taken seriously, even though there is some suggestion that male prisoners who have suffered rape may be at more risk of committing suicide in comparison to other victim populations, such as female prisoners (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2006) and men who have suffered rape in the army (Neal and Clements, 2010).

There is evidence to suggest that male rape also happens in the army. Though military establishments are not as restricting as prisons, the state of being confined makes male rape less easy to evade (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Again, due to the difficulties of carrying out research in these settings, there is a lack of UK research available on the prevalence of male rape occurring within institutional establishments. Recent research has found that male veterans who were in the military and suffered sexual assault were met with poor treatment when they sought help from state and voluntary agencies (Mulkey, 2004). The participants in this study stated that they suffered what was defined as secondary victimisation. This exacerbates male soldiers', who have been raped or sexually assaulted, reluctance to come forward to report and to seek help. For instance, Hoyt, Rielage and Williams (2012) argued that male soldiers who were raped are reluctant to think or talk about their sexual victimisation, so they may withdraw from disclosing it to anyone especially when they are trained to control their emotions as accepting unemotionality and insensitivity are a part of combat training. Zaleski (2015: 24-25) supports this, arguing that:

> [T]he military often values "masculine" values such as strength, toughness, and restricted emotionality. Attributes contrary to this, such as empathy, emotionalism or weakness, are associated with femininity or homosexuality and are therefore mocked and denigrated…when a service member [solider]

insults another by stating they are "faggots" or "gay." This creates a world where to be tough is to be a man; if you are not a man, you are not part of the collective socius….Weakness…is when the recruit can no longer endure the pain. For some service members, this "suffering" includes reporting when sexual and physical boundaries are violated.

Therefore, male soldiers are reluctant to come forward to report their rape due to the potential of suffering stigma in the army (Mondragon et al., 2015), or due to the 'family', that is, the army unit, breaking up when there is pressure to keep it together and, being vulnerable, the victim could be seen as weak while branded as disloyal (Zaleski, 2015). Through reviewing the literature around this area, Hoyt et al. (2012) found that these victims fear ridicule in the military, disbelieving attitudes, and fear drawing in homophobic attitudes from other male soldiers. They comment that, "When sexual assault is reported, victims may feel ostracized or may be openly attacked in acts of retaliation by perpetrators, peers, and the chain of command" (p. 43).

One could infer, as a result, that male soldiers are kept silenced about their sexual victimisation or will suffer severe implications for disclosing it to their military establishment. Because of the very nature of sexual violence, it being a personal crime, male rape victims are often silenced (Apperley, 2015). Hoyt at al (2012) add, however, that enhanced procedures to report rape have improved the situation for male soldiers. They do not, though, make it clear how and in which ways reporting procedures have improved. Although there is no UK research on male rape in institutions, such as prison and the army, one ought to be cautious to compare and generalise USA conclusions to the UK context because of different cultures, forms of regimes, and structures. Nonetheless, they can provide some level of understanding.

In the military establishments, there is a particular form of masculine culture. Mondragon et al. (2015) and Turchik and Edwards (2012) suggest that this form of masculine culture is hegemonic masculinity, whereby men in the army are expected to perpetuate their gender role as a 'man' and what it means to be one. They argue that this form of masculine culture may prevent men in the army from disclosing their sexual violence or rape in order to exude strength, unemotionality, bravery, self-

reliance, power and control. It may be that, by soldiers not embodying stereotypical masculine traits and gender expectations in their military establishments, distress, backlash and homophobia may unfold. These barriers, including gender norms, may work to prevent male soldiers from disclosing their sexual abuse. Mondragon et al. (2015) add that, in addition, male soldiers who were raped or sexually assaulted feel isolated from other male soldiers while "loss of self-esteem, relationships, and decreases in job performance/role functioning" (p. 409) may also add to the aftermath of their sexual victimisation. Military leaders ignore or overlook these implications of sexual victimisation; they only respond to male soldiers' sexual abuse when the media sensationalises and highlights certain cases involving their abuse (Zaleski, 2015). This suggests that sexual violence in the military is only taken seriously if and when the media focus on certain cases that stand out, are unique, or are somehow 'different', leaving other incidents of sexual assault and rape in the military unacknowledged.

In the military, male soldiers rape other male soldiers as a way in which to objectify, dominate, and degrade them; this is referred to as a 'rape culture' or military culture, in which victim-blaming attitudes develop (Zaleski, 2015). As discussed previously that unemotionality is implemented in combat training, a rape subculture is also built into combat training that encourages sexual violence (ibid.). This is a plausible inference since combat training may emphasise power and control, and while sexual violence is essentially about exercising power and control over victims (see, for example, Stanko, 1990), one can appreciate such plausibility. Zaleski (2015: 21) adds that, in the military, a hierarchy emerges: 'As a result, new cadets will be trained on…how to demand power and obtain control over another person, and how to learn to view "the enemy" as an object to dominate'. What is significant here is the hierarchy in which new cadets situate. It is almost as if this hierarchy has a grasp of their everyday life. The new male cadets may give up control to military leaders.

Given the above-mentioned anecdotal work and research studies, it can be seen that male rape is apparent in prisons and military establishments. There is no research available on the prevalence and incidence of male rape in UK prisons and military establishments—this calls out for in-depth research to be conduced to explore male rape in such UK institutions. Of course, research can only take place in these institutions if/when the authorities in charge of these acknowledge that male rape

occurs in these settings and give permission for research to be carried out at their establishments. It is also important that the male rape myth that 'male rape happens only in prisons' is eradicated because male rape occurring in the community may be overlooked. It is important to critically examine other male rape myths occurring in the community because they will ultimately influence the way state and voluntary agencies, regardless of their own professionalism, respond to and handle male rape victims (Turchik and Edwards, 2012).

## 2.2 Predominant Male Rape Myths/Cultural Myths Concerning Male Rape in the Wider Community

Stereotypes of male rape and male rape myths proliferate in societies (Hodge and Canter, 1998), which are exacerbated by the visible tendency to hypothesise men's sexual 'experience' in comparison to women's, in that numerous male rape research compares male rape with female rape in terms of severity (Cohen, 2014). This can be seen in various male rape research (e.g., McMullen, 1990; Stermac et al., 1996; Scarce, 1997; Gregory and Lees, 1999). These research studies neither specifically develop nor apply theory while unchallenging the conventional frame of male rape— either within the sphere of feminism or sexual violence. It could be argued that this lack of theory in prior research leaves the stereotypes of male rape and male rape myths unchallenged. McMullen (1990) does begin to challenge male rape myths, but his work is not empirically supported. For example, McMullen (1990: 132) suggests that, "The sexual identity … of the vast majority of male rapists is heterosexual,"[6] therefore, challenging the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual problem' whereby the male rape offenders and victims are both homosexual. McMullen's argument is purely anecdotal, as he has no empirical data to support his theory; therefore, he can be accused of being biased when formulating his argument. McMullen draws his conclusions from clinical observations, not empirical work, and disregards case examples from his observations to support his arguments. Research by Hodge and Canter (1998: 231), which was empirically based, found the following in their research pertaining to male rape offenders:

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[6] McMullen uses the term 'male rapists' to refer to men who commit rape against other men.

[F]orty-five percent (30) of the offenders in the self-report sample were believed to be heterosexual, and most offenders in the police sample were thought to be either bisexual (43%, 10) or homosexual (33%, 8) with only 22% (5) labelled as heterosexual.

The dissimilar findings from these two data sources (i.e., the self-report sample and police sample), pertaining to the sexual orientation of offenders, demonstrate the difficulties in generalising since they show different results. The dissimilarities may be because of the police being reticent to categorise offenders as heterosexual or because of the lack of data required to develop such categorisations. The 'sexual orientation' variable is important to understanding male rape, as it helps to challenge the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual problem'; for example, only homosexual men rape other homosexual men or only homosexual men get raped. All men have the potential to rape or be raped, however, not just homosexual men (Lees, 1997). For example, Coxell et al. (1999: 849) found that, "Most men who reported non-consensual sexual experiences with other men defined themselves as primarily heterosexual". Similarly, Stermac et al. (1996) found that heterosexual male rape victims are more likely to experience 'stranger rape,'[7] while homosexual male rape victims are more likely to experience 'date rape.'[8] Arguably, focusing on heterosexual male rape victims relatively neglects gay male rape victims experiencing 'date rape' in the discourse of male rape, which reinforces a myopic conception of male rape analogous to female rape victims experiencing 'stranger rape'. More recent research supports that gay male rape victims are taken less seriously:

There is evidence to suggest that negative reactions may be a particular problem with respect to male rape victims who are gay or who are presumed to be gay. Such men appear to have their experience of rape taken less seriously…some police officers and other criminal justice professionals appear to attach to gay men or those they perceive as gay highly questionable assumptions regarding credibility, trauma and truthfulness (Rumney, 2008: 73-74).

[7] 'Stranger rape' typically refers to a stranger raping a victim, a victim who had no knowledge about the offender prior to the attack.
[8] 'Date rape' (also known as 'acquaintance rape') is a type of rape perpetrated by someone known to the victim.

This raises serious concerns. It appears that gay men or men who are perceived to be gay have their sexual victimisation questioned, disbelieved, and possibly unacknowledged as 'real' rape. Gay victims are often disbelieved, stigmatised, and demonised than heterosexual victims (Lyons, 2006). For the police and criminal justice professionals, then, there seems to be a level of discretion that is applied in male rape cases, which may be based on homophobia. Projecting homophobic attitudes onto these male rape victims may translate into a form of secondary victimisation. Another issue is that unleashing homophobia onto male rape victims suggests that male rape is solely a homosexual issue when this is not the case. Linked to the issue of sexuality, the earlier studies do not consider that sociologists claim that sexual orientation is fluid and open to change, so it is never fixed. This is a highly contentious area especially when studies on this issue are empirically flawed. The studies mentioned above (for example, Hodge and Canter, 1998) are inconsistent especially when the sexual orientation of offenders itself is guessed, as it is unknown within the studies or to the male rape victims. In addition, it is quite possible that an offender may identify himself as being a heterosexual man but will carry out the act of male rape in order to execute power and control, not for sexual purposes (Groth and Burgess, 1980). Lundrigan and Mueller-Johnson (2013) challenge this earlier study, arguing that their sample was based on convicted sex perpetrators undertaking examination at a clinic for sexually dangerous people, so they will show considerably dissimilar characteristics that are ungeneralisable to perpetrators recognised via other means and environments.

Likewise, the above-mentioned studies used different data sources and obtained different results, so it is problematic to generalise the sexual orientation of both the offenders and victims of male rape, especially when the data are reliant upon the participants who come forward to report, are prosecuted, or are seeking treatment. The studies are all based on certain sample groups, most of which are small scale. Nonetheless, the studies do give a valid understanding of male rape while eradicating the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual problem'.

Another male rape myth is that 'male rape victims will always fight back.' Some male rape victims, however, will submit or freeze in order to reduce physical damage (Carpenter, 2009). Stanko (1990) postulates that a 'real man' is someone who is a

physically powerful heterosexual male guardian, who is able to look after not just himself, but also violently protects his own safety and that of others. This definition is refuted within research; for example, Hodge and Canter (1998) found that, in 119 incidents of male rape, freezing was the victims' response in 60% of bisexuals, homosexuals, and heterosexuals. Carpenter (2009) adds that the intense fear of death forces male rape victims to remain cooperative when being raped, promoting their inability to fight back. Analogously, Gregory and Lees (1999) found that, in their sample, 60% of male rape victims gave no resistance to their attackers; and that the threat of violence was usually sufficient to gain compliance from the victims. In another study, it was found that most of the male rape victims in the sample responded to their rape with either submission, frozen fear, or helplessness, though 27% stated they resisted at some point during the attack (Walker et al., 2005). The issue of focusing on the physical violence aspect of a male rape incident is that it disregards those victims who have a lack of, or none physical damage. It is evident that the extent to which a male rape victim is seen to have attempted to physically resist a rape situation influences the opinions made towards him (Anderson, 1999). This leads one to argue that a scarcity of physical violence in male rape is explicitly or implicitly associated with consent (Graham, 2006), as the media tend to reinforce (Abdullah-Khan, 2008).

### 2.2.1 Representations of Male Rape in the Media

> Male rape [is] framed as a secretive topic that not even the media can contend
> with accurately … when male rape is referenced in the media, it is not
> representative of the experiences that survivors [male rape victims] are
> challenged with. This can further reinforce an idea that rape is about female
> victims … women are portrayed as sexual objects for men, whilst men are
> denied being sexual objects for other men (Pitfield, 2013: 81).

This subsection focuses on the depiction of male rape in the media. It is important to critically discuss because research, which will be examined in this subsection, has found male rape myths/cultural myths concerning male rape to be present in the media. In turn, this may influence policy makers, societies, state and voluntary agencies' responses and attitudes toward male rape victims. Cohen (2014) asserts that

the media has credence, credibility, and authority; so it has the power to legitimise knowledge of the social world while inventing or simplifying it. She goes on to argue that the media is the main source of learning, and, through the socialisation process, it consorts people to becoming accustomed to 'normal' rituals. Therefore, it may be safe to claim that the media has the power to influence state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape.

Although media depictions of male rape are important, there is a lack of social science research on this issue. General texts on media depictions of sexual violence have a dearth of information on male rape, but disregarding male rape may be deleterious because male rape myths may stay unchallenged in the media. Research that includes media representations of male rape often reinforces male rape myths, such as 'male rape is a homosexual issue.' For instance, Wlodarz (2001) argues that it is always homosexual men who are blamed in male rape movie story lines. He scrutinised movies in the 1990s that convey male rape and concluded that male rape is intrinsically 'deviant' and 'abnormal', arguing that the narratives in these story lines are desexualised and unerotic. It could be argued that, conveying the character's sexual orientation, however, sexualises the nature of male rape.

Again, the male rape myth that 'male rape is a homosexual issue' is highlighted in more recent research. Demirkan-Martin (2009) perpetuates male rape as solely a homosexual issue and believes that male rape is either incited by sexual deviance, sexualised aggression, or sexual lust/desire, instead of male rape being totally desexualised. This suggests that male rape does not affect heterosexual men and is essentially a sexual act, whereby the offender is unable to control his aggressive and sexual impulses. Lees (1997) argues that male rape is usually committed by heterosexual men against other men and is not motivated by sexual gratification, but, like female rape, by dominance, power and the enhancement of masculinity. It could be problematic if studies wrongly inform state and voluntary agencies because they could possibly perpetuate and, perhaps, reinforce male rape myths.

Male rape myths, suggested by some authors, are very much commonly widespread throughout the media and the media continue to express such myths. For instance, McMullen (1990) argues that the media undoubtedly reinforce these myths, especially

the press. He goes on to comment that there are many reports pertaining to male on male rape, in which the physicality of male rape victims is discussed in a way that suggests a shock that such a physical, masculine, capable individual ought to enable himself to be sexually abused and overpowered by another man. This may serve to reinforce gender expectations, and patriarchal and heterosexual norms, while emphasising the male rape myth that 'men cannot be raped by other men.' Jewkes (2015) argues that media texts can have double meanings, in that they are open to many interpretations. This is because, she argues, the audience has unique identities and characteristics that allow them to have different views on the subject matter at hand. This implies that not everyone will subscribe to male rape myths, but some will critically challenge them. The problem with Jewkes' argument, though, is that it is too simplified because the effects of media do not have to be inevitable and causal, as there may be other contributing factors involved.

Meanwhile, research evidence shows that the media socially construct knowledge, so it may possibly distort the knowledge in ways that are misleading (Kern et al., 2003). For instance, Abdullah-Khan (2008) criticised articles for their stereotypical viewpoints, having conducted content analysis of UK newspaper coverage of male rape between 1989 and 2002, because approximately 50% of the 413 articles examined depicted male rape victims as liars, male rape as consensual sex, and male rape as solely a homosexual issue. As a result, she argues, the newspaper reports on male rape convey heterosexuality as culturally 'normal' while presenting homosexuality as 'abnormal' through the use of stereotypes, inviting condemnation. In an earlier work, Abdullah-Khan (2002: 174) argues that, "Similar to female rape, research on male rape has demonstrated that the typical rapist is not the sex crazy stranger or serial rapist[9] who lurks in dark alleys but is more than likely a person known to the victim". Research evidence of male rape has shown that acquaintance rape and date rape, which are both types of rape that involve people who are familiar with or know each other, are more common than stranger rape (Stermac et al., 1996; Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim, 1997; Walker et al., 2005; Lundrigan and Mueller-Johnson, 2013). The media continue to, however, portray male stranger rape as 'real'

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[9]A serial rapist is a person who forces a series of victims into unwanted sexual activity. Similar to a serial killer, the rapist will have a 'cooling-off period' in-between crimes.

rape, suggesting that date or acquaintance rape is rare or of little importance (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). It could be argued that erroneous depictions in the media may keep society misinformed, conveying an extremely distorted picture of the incidence, prevalence, and nature of male rape. This could be deleterious for how state and voluntary agencies handle male rape victims because such agencies may uncritically and simplistically believe the media when it is portraying stereotypes and male rape myths.

> [I]t is often difficult to disentangle how news frames shape the social construction of reality from the "actual" reality of events. It is like being surrounded by an endless hall of mirrors (Kern et al., 2003: 282).

The conception of the media distorting knowledge pertaining to sexual violence is evidenced in Cohen (2014), in which she found articles on rape that are routinely and invariably gendered, and this is made both implicit and explicit. In Cohen's research, the gendering of rape was found in images, content, and context in the articles examined, whereby females were viewed as victims; males, as offenders. In doing so, the male rape victim is conveyed as aberrant, relegated, and marginalised within specialist archive of news; and even voluntary agencies' workers and the police cited in the media failed to provide due attention to male rape victims (ibid.). It can be argued that such portrayal supports the male rape myth that "male rape is not 'real' rape." If state and voluntary agencies consider such misrepresentations, it could ultimately have an impact on their duties when dealing with male rape victims. In criticism, the writers' media reports may be based on low statistical frequency of male rape in police statistics or on the lack of known cases of male rape, which in turn is gendering the media reports, in spite of neither justifying nor excusing the gendering of rape. To prevent the gendering of rape, the media should use gender-neutral terms without gendered pictures or pronouns (ibid.). Such neutrality, therefore, will include both male and female rape in the media discussions, giving a chance for all rape victims to seek validation for their experience.

From the evidence presented herein, it seems that the media does not consider male rape victims to be 'real' victims, promoting the male rape myth that 'male rape is not a serious issue', which may discourage reporting from male rape victims. Whilst

media coverage on male rape is increasing and is better than silencing the problem of male rape, it seems that such coverage is distorting this phenomenon. The media choosing not to dispel male rape myths is pernicious to the lives of male rape victims, and such myths may negatively influence policy makers, societies, state and voluntary agencies' responses and attitudes toward male rape victims. With this in mind, it is important to next examine whether the current literature has found any male rape myths present within state agencies.

## 2.3 State Agencies' Attitudes Toward, and Responses to Male Rape

This section critically examines the police attitudes toward, and responses to male rape. It sheds light on various studies of police attitudes and male rape victims experience with the police, which are important to examine since the empirical chapters will explore the police attitudes toward, and responses to male rape. More specifically, this section will particularly look at three barriers, it is argued, that prevent male rape from being adequately recognised: police statistics; under-reporting of male rape to the police; and police occupational culture.

### 2.3.1 Making Sense of Police Statistics

The police record crime to raise public awareness and societal recognition of crimes, although they focus more on crime types that are most frequently occurring in the statistics. In addition, analysis of police statistics helps one to comprehend how the police record reports of rape victims and discovers areas for further research. Walklate (2004) stresses that the police statistics highlight issues concerning the validity and reliability[10] for politicians, policy-makers, and criminologists alike. Similarly, other research works question the authenticity of police statistics: Lees (2002) specifies that the police statistics are the 'tip of the iceberg' of the true amount of rape; that is, the police statistics hide the actual number of rapes. Some have argued that this argument of police statistics giving an inaccurate figure of rape is also referred to as the 'dark figure' of crime, which denotes the amount of unreported,

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[10] 'Validity' denotes whether sources really measure what they state they are measuring. 'Reliability' indicates whether statistical sources measure what they state they are measuring and whether they do this accurately and consistently.

unrecorded, or undiscovered sexual crimes (Jones, 2003). This view is in agreement with both Reiner's (2002) and Walklate's (2004) research, which outline that the police statistics are frequently questioned because of a large number of crimes being unreported and unrecorded.

There also exists a large disparity between reported male rape and female rape in terms of frequency in the police statistics. For instance, Home Office data, which includes data about crime and policing in England and Wales, in 2008/2009 show that police-recorded figures for female rape rose by 5% (on the previous year) to 12,165 crimes, while sexual assaults on females dropped by 4% to 19,740 crimes; male rape reduced by 4% to 968 crimes, while sexual assaults on males reduced by 12% to 2,323 crimes[11] (Walker et al., 2009). These figures must be examined with prudence[12] because they do not differentiate between adult males who were raped as children, men who have been raped as adult men, and children being raped, so they are not giving an accurate reflection of, for example, men who have been raped as adult men. Children who were raped may not even realise that what had happened to them is defined in law as 'rape' and that they can seek legal protection. It could also be put forward that, due to the high profile coverage, male child sexual abuse is more 'socially acceptable' to report rather than adult males being raped. Therefore, indirect or direct negligence of adult male rape could possibly induce the shame and stigma that male rape victims may experience.

More recently, figures show there were 2,164 rape and sexual assaults against males aged 13 or over recorded by the police in the year ending September 2013 (Ministry of Justice, 2014b). It could be suggested that these figures are largely underestimates of the true reflection of male rape (taking into consideration the evidence demonstrated above), making it seem that male rape is 'less prevalent' than female rape—since many male rape victims are reluctant to report to the police as my earlier findings demonstrate (Javaid, 2014b; Abdullah-Khan, 2008). American researcher Stemple (2009) supports this, writing that the prevalence of male rape is much higher

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[11] The prevalence figures discussed in research studies and the accessible crime statistics give evidence of the growing social issues of sexual assault and male rape, highlighting an urgency to research and comprehend male rape at the micro and macro levels.
[12] Dissimilar prevalence figures are cited in the texts, with figures changing depending on the writers' definitions of 'sexual assault' and 'rape,' populations used, and place of sampling.

than the statistics state, but, because of the scarcity of social attention on male rape along side the under-reporting of this crime, a misleading and inaccurate figure is presented through the statistics. This is not suggesting that women are not reluctant to report rape. Cohen (2014) argues that, for some people, the police statistics on male rape are either construed as legitimising the popular misperceptions, forcing society to see rape as still a disproportionately gendered crime; for others, the misperceptions can be seen as formulating the statistics. Namely, societal gendered misperceptions inhibit recording and reporting practices, so rape appears to be disproportionately gendered (ibid.). It could be argued that both are collectively on a continuum. We need to critically examine the social construction of 'male rape' and investigate this construction in certain contexts, such as in state and voluntary agencies, to fully understand and explain such a phenomenon.

While it is important to carry out research on state and voluntary agencies, it is also important to examine other agencies that highlight male rape; for example, the media. Cohen (2014) collectively looked at media representations and police statistics on male rape. She found that the media embody gendered representations of rape and, therefore, this has an impact to inhibit reporting practices at the micro level. This, in turn, skews police statistics on male rape, which then has an incidental effect on institutional and legislative recognition of male rape (Cohen, 2014). Examining the police statistics on male rape in several research studies does raise some problems. This is because the different research using police statistics neither conceptualise nor define male rape in a precisely uniform manner. For example, some research articles utilise definitions that mirror legal definitions (e.g., Rumney and Morgan-Taylor, 1997a and 1997b), whereas other research works enable male rape victims to either define or conceptualise their own experiences (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). The former diminishes male rape victim experiences while the latter highlights their experiences. It could be argued that this paradox and disparity does not help in understanding an accurate picture of male rape so may leave state and voluntary agencies confused of the true nature and extent of male rape when male victims believe, in their eyes, that a crime has been committed. It could also be argued that, if male rape victims are reluctant to report to state and voluntary agencies, these agencies may not get an accurate understanding and reflection of the nature and extent of male rape.

### 2.3.2 Under-Reporting of Male Rape to the Police

For male rape to be recognised in societies, reporting them is important in order to have services available to help male rape victims, which in turn get social recognition of male rape. How the police respond to male rape victims can be critical for how the victims experience the reporting procedure; for instance, whether the victims are treated equitably and fairly. Research studies, though, have found that men are reluctant to report to the police for various reasons. These studies will be critically reviewed to give an understanding why men may be reluctant to report to the officials.

Coxell et al. (1999: 846) demonstrate that "[v]ery few sexual crimes…are reported to the police by men or women". Using a nationally representative sample of victim narratives from the National Crime Victimisation Survey to explore men's sexual victimisation experiences in the United States, Weiss (2010) found that, whilst 30% of female rape victims reported their rape to the police, only 15% of male rape victims reported their rape to the police. Weiss' study had a much broader definition of sexual assault (including non-penetrative contact offences and attempted sexual assault) and found that women were more likely to experience penetrative sexual assault than men. Hence women's increased reporting can be attributed to the fact that they are more likely to be sexually victimised, and men's decreased rates of reporting may be because they did not consider the incident serious enough. Furthermore, these low figures of reporting male rape to the police may be attributed to the fact that men may have a much harder time acknowledging or recognising that what has happened to them was actually rape and that it can be reported, especially when sexual assault and rape are generally thought to only happen to females (Temkin, 1987; Clark, 2014; Apperley, 2015).

Females are also usually reluctant to report their alleged rape to the police for a multitude of reasons, such as police distrust, embarrassment, and fear of retaliation (Lees, 2002). A female victim delaying reporting a rape is often interpreted as questionable by the police; the police assume that the first thing a female rape victim would do is to contact the police (Kelly, 2002). Female rape victims' trust and belief in men is seriously undermined due to them being raped by a man (Kelly, 1988), which may make them reluctant to report to male police officers. Female rape victims

usually describe themselves as 'feeling all over the place' as they struggle to comprehend and move on from the rape (ibid.). In addition, the drunkenness of the female rape victim was noted as a factor in nearly half of the cases (46%) and has been identified as contributing towards police scepticism (Kelly, 2002). It is also found that women are more likely to excuse their male partner's violent behaviour when their partner is intoxicated (Javaid, 2015a), which may make them reluctant to come forward to report or seek help.

Men hesitating to report may be feeling shame for not being able to preserve and fulfil stereotypical masculine traits (Lees, 1997; Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Weiss, 2010). From recent research evidence (Rumney, 2009), it is argued that homophobia determines the way in which others, including the police, respond to or serve male rape victims. For example, Rumney (2009: 244) sought to explain why homophobia occurs in male rape discourse. He says:

> A further issue is why homophobic attitudes arise in the context of male rape. One of the reasons may be the equation of men being anally penetrable with being gay and therefore less masculine…The association of anal intercourse with homosexuality can also be linked to attitudes that blame gay male rape victims for their own victimisation…This linkage also reinforces the assumption that, by being anally penetrable (and therefore less masculine), male rape victims must be gay.

One of the key recommendations highlighted by an Inspectorate Report is that the police need to focus on tangible evidence rather than the victims' credibility (HMCPSI and HMIC, 2007). Evidently, however, the above results demonstrate insensitive social and victim-blaming attitudes, homophobia, and ignorance concerning male victims of sexual assault and rape. Despite such negative social attitudes, male rape victims are more likely to search for medical assistance (and, as a result, be referred to the police) if their rape resulted in grave wounding (Kaufman et al., 1980). In this 25-year-old American study, it was also argued that male rape is more serious than female rape in terms of the effects of rape since it may involve greater threats of violence, with or without actual violence, the involvement of multiple offenders, and possible use of weapons. Elsewhere, it has been argued that

weapons are rarely used, due to the male victim being raped whilst already vulnerable; for example, he was asleep or incapacitated through drugs or alcohol (Jamel, 2008). Kaufman et al. (1980) argue that male rape victims are more likely to have been held captive for longer and to resort to denial than female rape victims. Such conclusions on male rape may segregate and relegate female rape and could result in female rape victims' voices being disregarded. It is important that both male rape and female rape are equally and sufficiently addressed (Cohen, 2014).

Kaufman et al. (1980) hypothesise that, if there is no grave wounding from the rape, the male victim is more likely to disbelieve that they were raped and, therefore, neither look for help nor report to the police. This evidence seems to indicate that male rape is seemingly, then, a crime of acute violence and such violence must be present. Put differently, it is necessary to show considerable injury otherwise victimhood may become dubious. It could be argued that this serves only to bolster male rape myths as opposed to eradicating them, reducing harm involved.

Kaufman et al.'s findings are premised on a low sample size of male rape victims (n=14), and, therefore, the results cannot be generalised to all male rape victims. Their findings also suggest that most male rape is stranger rape, a rape wherein the victim does not know the attacker. Other research has shown that acquaintance rape and date rape, which are both types of rape that involve people who are familiar with or know each other, are more common than stranger rape (Walker et al., 2005; Lundrigan and Mueller-Johnson, 2013). Jamel (2008) found that some male rape victims are raped indoors by strangers, which contradicts both these research studies that found that males raped indoors knew the offenders. It is clear that research in this area is inconsistent.

It could be argued that Kaufman et al.'s findings may keep society misinformed, conveying an extremely distorted view of the incidence, prevalence and nature of male rape. This could be deleterious for how the police deal with male rape victims since they may uncritically and simplistically believe such findings. The potential consequence of this type of study may inhibit female rape victims from coming forward. It could be suggested from this analysis that, although Kaufman et al. aim to raise awareness of male rape so service provisions can increase for male rape victims,

the result of their style of argument may further stigmatise female rape victims as 'less important'. Moreover, Kaufman's research contradicts the findings presented in Jamel's (2008) study, in which she argues that the public sees male rape as an anomaly, whereas female rape is seen as 'more important' than male rape and it has become normalised by comparison to male rape. Female rape is thus seen to be 'normal' and women expect it to happen, while men do not see the possibility that rape can happen to them; further research is needed in this area.

Another physiological reason for male rape victims not disclosing rape to the police is provided by Kassing, Beesley, and Frey (2005). These authors discuss that it is a common misconception that, if men ejaculate or have erections when being raped, they must have somehow consented. Getting an erection and ejaculating are involuntary physiological reactions to male rape (Sarrel and Masters, 1982). Additionally, as Mezey and King (1989) argue, extreme terror, anger, and anxiety can also stimulate an erection in a man. Groth and Burgess (1980) support this, arguing that male rape victims often have an erection while they are being raped, and their offenders may even get their victims to ejaculate because, for them, it personifies their power and control over their victim's body. The danger of being seen as a homosexual or public humiliation may force the victim to remain silent. It should be noted that Groth and Burgess's study was based on a small sample. The data were gained from 22 subjects (16 male rape offenders; 6 male rape victims), a small subset of a larger population of victims and offenders, which thus requires interpretation with caution since the results cannot be generalised. It could be suggested that this low sample size is expected, considering that male rape victims may be reluctant to report their crime. It is safe to argue that a man's physiological response to male rape is neither an indication of consent nor enjoyment. The physiological conception may draw in blaming attitudes from state and voluntary agencies, thus, increasing male rape victims' trauma, as evidenced in 80% of respondents (Walker et al., 2005).

Walker et al. (2005) also highlight the issue of victim blaming. Male rape victims are sometimes blamed for their rape (Sleath and Bull, 2012), as are female rape victims (Clark, 2014), which premises itself on scepticism because of male rape myths that endorse ideas that male rape victims deserved it, wanted it or precipitated their own rape, contributing to keeping male rape a taboo and hidden (Abdullah-Khan, 2008).

Rape can undermine a female rape victim's sense of female identity and womanhood and, similarly, frequently causes male rape victims to question their masculinity and sexuality (Clark, 2014). The offender's power and masculinity are enhanced when the offender forces the male rape victim to perform oral sex on the offender, in turn, arguably, subjugating, subordinating and emasculating the victim (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). These authors theorising male rape as a crime of power do not go far enough, as they focus more on the offender, leaving underexplored the question of how male rape affects victims and their identity. It is noted, however, that there are several common themes across these studies: changes to sex offences legislation; funding to voluntary agencies being reduced; lack of services for, and recognition of male rape victims; poor medical response to male rape victims; and underreporting of male rape.

The ideas that sexual assault and rape occur only to females or that 'real' men cannot be raped further induce men's risk of stigma, embarrassment, and shame; this may make male rape victims reluctant to report to the police (Davies, 2002). This stigma is partly the manifestation of societies' reluctance to come to terms with, to confront, and to comprehend the issue of male rape (Clark, 2014). This may be attributed to the fact that men, unlike women, are expected to be strong, powerful, invulnerable, macho, unemotional, violent, and capable of protecting themselves (Javaid, 2014c). Men may be too ashamed to confess that they have been emasculated or 'stripped' of their masculinity (Weiss, 2010; Clark, 2014), so they may not seek support. Lees, in her research of 85 victims and 81 police reports of male rape, further verifies this:

> The act of coercive buggery can be seen as a means of taking away manhood, of emasculating other men and thereby enhancing one's [the rapist's] own power (Lees, 1997: 106).

The presumption that male rape victims are homosexual can be argued to be a male rape myth that is inimical because it can make men reluctant to report to the police and add to men's shame of being raped (Rumney, 2008). Heterosexual male rape victims might fear being seen as homosexual if they report the crime, whereas homosexual male rape victims who are not 'out of the closet' might fear having their sexual orientation revealed or may not be taken seriously (Abdullah-Khan, 2008).

Similarly, male rape victims may experience homophobic attitudes or stereotypes from the police that imply that the victims got pleasure from the rape, 'wanted it,' or lied about their rape (Kassing et al., 2005). This suggests that male rape victims may not be taken seriously and their rape being made unimportant by the police.

### 2.3.3 Police Occupational Culture, Policing Homosexuality and Police Reform

This section will critically explore whether the police occupational culture influences how the police handle male rape victims, and whether there is a link between homosexuality, male rape and negative attributions. The police occupational culture is characterised as being masculine, referred to as a 'cult of masculinity', meaning that the police occupational culture is a form of hegemonic masculinity. For example, Smith and Gray (1985: 372) argue that the police occupational culture is comprised of:

> … masculine solidarity and … [it encourages] backing up other men in the group, especially when they are in the wrong … [and] drinking as a test of manliness and a basis for good fellowship, the importance given to physical courage and the glamour attached to violence. This set of attitudes and norms amounts to a 'cult of masculinity', which also has a strong influence on policemen's behaviour towards … victims of sexual offences and towards sexual offenders.

What this shows is that the police culture is masculine in nature, "a 'macho' police culture that foster[s] heavy alcohol consumption and sexual bravado" (Rowe, 2009: 129), so it is important to examine the extent to which this 'cult of masculinity' influences the type of service delivery given to men as victims of rape and sexual assault. Linked to this ideology, other commentators have distinguished certain key features to be embedded within the police occupational culture; for example, skepticism about rape cases (Sleath and Bull, 2012), solidarity and co-operation (Walklate, 2004). The police occupational culture is, it is argued, sometimes perceived as being the foundation of all policing-ills because the co-operation and solidarity components are recognised as giving 'cover' for illegitimate policing actions (ibid.). For this reason, it is important to understand the impact and nature of

the police occupational culture as to how policing activities are carried out to comprehend how male rape victims perceive the police, which will also give an understanding and indication of how the police see and handle male rape victims (this will further be elaborated on in the empirical chapters). What is important to think about at this stage is whether the police consider male rape victims as 'real' victims. Do the police regard male rape as serious as other crime types, such as female rape?

In many ways, the key characteristics established in the police occupational culture give a good framework wherein to comprehend how policing is carried out in terms of dealing with male rape victims. In reviewing more of the police literature surrounding the various components ingrained in the police culture, Reiner (2010) found suspicion, solidarity/isolation, machismo, conservatism and racial prejudice to be some of the key characteristics embedded in this culture, though the police culture is dynamic, fluid and vulnerable to change. In addition, police cultures are contextual and situational, "mediated by particular working environments" (Rowe, 2013: 138).

Police cultures, then, are neither static, monolithic nor stable, so they do not *cause* particular police practices. For example, Chan (1997: 232) states that, "it is possible to change police culture if traditional police cultural knowledge can be replaced with 'professional' cultural knowledge". Although Chan does not make clear what 'professional' cultural knowledge actually entails, her argument suggests that the altering nature of knowledge can shape and reform police cultures, shaped by contexts, interactions, and discourses, all of which produce knowledge that can help change (negative) police cultures. Relatedly, promoting cultural and social diversity is one way in which to culturally change police cultures (Chan, 1997). Other work supports Chan to suggest that police cultures are not fixed and uniform. For instance, Charman and Corcoran (2015: 484) argue that, "the outcomes embedded in a number of reforms might well have altered the 'expected' cultural expressions of the police, thereby, challenging the suitability of 'conventional' themes of police characteristics and practices". Both Waddington (1999) and Cockcroft (2013) establish that it is no longer possible to classify police cultures as homogenous and as representing solely white, working-class men because they now signify and symbolically represent a multitude of identities. The notion that police cultures represent different officers' identities is a reasonable conclusion given that officers' identities are always

negotiated. The diversity of police cultures is not only limited to the notion of identities, but also, as Westmarland (2008) argues, there are differing structures of police cultures, such as patrol culture, canteen culture, police subculture, occupational culture, and street culture, etc., with each one representing different meanings and cultures at different historical moments. The plurality of police cultures is evident, making it difficult to clearly define one set of police culture because the conception of police culture has evolved throughout time, altering to include novel ways of examining police cultures and the altering police worlds (Cockcroft, 2013). As the policing contexts shift, so do police cultures with many being mutated via historical periods, social structures, police functions, and police reforms. Evidently, police cultures are neither deterministic nor inflexible.

Moreover, male rape cases often rely on a range of factors including recent physical evidence, adequate victim contact that perpetuates support for a prosecution, and robust shared values between the Crown Prosecution Service and the police that maintain a culture of prosecution. Therefore, whether or not the above, arguably, over-simplified, key characteristics identified by Reiner (2010) are still widespread in all police cultures/forces is highly controversial. It could be argued that police cultures/forces across Britain no longer exist in exactly the same form since police officers' duties are multifarious and contextual, but Reiner's work has provided inspiration and insight to police culture researchers all over the world and his work is still widely cited for his valuable insights. His work encourages researchers to further examine if such key characteristics are still prevalent to date, perhaps these variables occur in certain policing actions in certain situations; their actual expression may vary depending on context.

Since the introduction of the Sexual Offences Act (2003), the reporting rate of male rape incidents has increased, which may be attributed to men's greater willingness to report because they now know that male rape is a crime in law. Moreover, changes within police practice means that the police now have targets to hit in terms of reaching a certain number of arrests, which may help increase prosecuting offenders of male rape. Further research would need to be carried out in order to explore whether the changes within police practice and the law have had an impact in the delivery of services and responses to male rape victims. An important detail that is

frequently omitted in research (due to the limited data available) is the number of male rape cases that reach the trial stage.

Further developments in the police include the emergence of Sexual Offences Investigation Trained (SOIT) officers, and Specially Trained Officers (STOs). These officers are solely dedicated to investigating cases of rape and sexual assault. They take initial and full statements, act as a liaison and support for victims throughout the remainder of the legal procedure, and arrange forensic examinations. The accessibility of STOs can be problematic regarding the most readily available officer being called upon since they have other duties and commitments, which may impact on their service provision to sexual assault and rape victims (Jamel, Bull, and Sheridan, 2008; Jamel, 2010). In addition, the majority of STOs are female, which can be problematic if some male rape victims want a male specially trained police officer (ibid.). Jamel (2008) found that it is the personality of the officer, not the gender, which is important for some male rape victims. Moreover, Sleath and Bull (2012) found victim-blaming attitudes toward rape victims amongst SOIT officers and STOs, which is problematic because one would expect that specialist training to handle sexual crimes would include training that would address misperceptions regarding rape victims.

Nevertheless, the establishment of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) provides services to victims of sexual assault or rape, regardless of gender and age, in case the victim does not want to report the offence to the police. SARCs aim to be one-stop service, providing forensic examination and medical care following rape/sexual assault and, in some locations, sexual health services. SARCs do not provide long-term specialised counselling and advocacy services. The HMCPSI and HMIC (2002) report highlighted that the location of the forensic examination and medical care is important because if such examination and care takes place within a busy police station, then it may well not be as conducive to a calming effect as a suite in a dedicated sexual assault clinic. Good practice is highlighted, nevertheless, at the Haven in London where the local health authority is actively involved in managing the SARC (HMCPSI & HMIC, 2007). Temkin (1999) argues that SOIT officers experience financial and logistical constraints, so they become 'secondary victims' because of the fact that, though they get specialist training, they might not often have the allocated resources or time to give an optimal level of service, apart from in a few

rape cases. This lack of resources can be seen in the employment of SOIT officers, in that Jamel, Bull, and Sheridan (2008) found there to be a lack of available male SOIT officers, preventing male and female rape victims being offered a gender-based choice of SOIT officer prior to appointment. Similarly, the same study (n=19) also found that 58% of SOIT officers stated that a choice of the sexual orientation of the SOIT officer was not given to victims, 16% stated the choice was given where possible, and a further 16% did not know that this was an option. It could be suggested that, giving the male rape victim the choice of SOIT officer according to gender and sexual orientation may enable the victim to connect with the officer, possibly making it easier for the victim to empathise with and relate to the officer.

Another example of the change in policing policy is the emergence of 'rape suites' that are specifically designed to accommodate all rape victims, including male rape victims. The 'rape suites' include additional sensitive and comfortable environments, often somewhere that is not near the police station, wherein to interview and medically examine sexual assault and rape victims. It is argued, however, that these changes have not noticeably reduced the level of under-reporting of male rape (Jamel, 2010). Further, it has been argued that there could be a dearth of consistency of police care; for instance, the changeover of SOIT officers and subsequent disruption (if not elimination) of the relationship created between the victim and SOIT officer (Jamel, 2008). Consequently, there may be attrition[13] of male rape cases because of the scarcity of confidence in the police response and treatment experienced by the male rape victims. It could also be suggested that previous experiences of the police responses and treatment, regardless of the crime type initially reported, could impact the victim's expectations of the subsequent police responses and attitudes toward their male rape case.

Nevertheless, Davies, Smith, and Rogers (2009) researched police workers' judgments toward adult victims of rape when victim sexuality and gender were mixed amongst subjects. They concluded that police workers' judgments toward the victim were on the whole positive, although significantly less positive toward male victims than female victims, so they argue that police workers are largely pro-victim, but they

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[13] The rate at which cases are dropped or lost.

are more negative towards male victims than female victims, regardless of victim sexuality. To what extent the changes in policing policy for male rape victims have had is an area under considerable critical discussion, as there is little research evidence accessible regarding whether the policing practice and policy have improved or exacerbated male rape victims' experiences of the police. Therefore, this present research will aim to fill this gap in the literature by exploring whether the ways in which the police handle male rape cases are improving in current society, and whether the police are knowledgeable of the many intricate issues associated with male rape.

Walklate (2004) argues that managing policing is not about developing police officers' skills and expertise in practice; instead, it is about making sure the officers adhere to the internal hierarchical authority. Therefore, this may leave the police occupational culture to evolve without any managerial supervision in practice. In other words, negative attitudes, beliefs, and values could go unseen when police officers are policing, which in turn might impact on the delivery of services to male rape victims. It may be that these negative attributes emanate from the police occupational culture, which can be dominated by a white, heterosexist, male culture (Loftus, 2008). If the police occupational culture holds misguided views, it can impact on how the police treat all types of male rape victims (Rumney, 2008; Javaid, 2015c), particularly gay male rape victims (Davies, 2002; Rumney, 2009). Rumney (2008) goes on to argue that the treatment of male rape victims is largely determined by the gender bias instilled in the police occupational culture. Similarly, Washington (1999: 727) found that, from the six male rape victims in the sample, five chose to not report to the police due to fear of 'being revictimized'; they feared that they would not be taken seriously because of their gender and were worried in case they would be blamed. Nonetheless, some improvements have been made in the police. For example:

> A number of constabularies produce information in the form of leaflets or on websites that explain how they respond to the needs of male victims….It discusses how men respond to rape and sexual assault and also covers some of the myths associated with male sexual victimisation. For example, it challenges the myths that 'male rape is a gay crime' and 'male rape doesn't happen' (Rumney, 2008: 69).

What this shows is that some, not all, constabularies are making a conscious effort to not only raise awareness of male sexual victimisation, but also to address it. Alerting us to the predominant male rape myths is useful because it may help to address rape myths, misconceptions, and deleterious views relating to male rape, which includes attempting to challenge gender expectations and social ideals. Walklate (2004) argues, however, that stereotypical assumptions linked with female and male behaviors ingrained in societies inevitably reflect in the police, even though the police present themselves as being neutral when dealing with victims. This is in agreement with other work (see Collier, 1998), in which it has been argued that the criminal justice system's views are sexualised, i.e., they render homosexual victims invisible and heterosexual victims visible. Similarly, there is recent documented evidence to suggest that homophobia is present within the police occupational culture (Rumney, 2008), and that male rape victims see the police as intrinsically homophobic (Walker et al., 2005). For instance, Rumney (2008: 78-79) argues that:

> The unearthing of homophobic attitudes in the context of male rape might be explained in various ways. One of the reasons may be the equation of men being anally penetrated with being less masculine and therefore gay…The association of anal intercourse with homosexuality can also be linked to attitudes that blame gay males for their own victimisation. But of course, it goes further. This linkage can also support an assumption that by being anally penetrated (and therefore less masculine), male victims must be gay.

This highlights that the police are likely to convey victim-blaming and homophobic attitudes to male rape victims, regardless of their sexual orientation. This is a process of secondary victimisation. The police are also likely to believe that male rape is a gay problem because of the sexual practice associated with male rape; that is, anal penetration being performed. It cannot be assumed, however, that male rape victims are solely homosexual because research evidence has shown that some male rape victims are heterosexual and bisexual (Groth and Burgess, 1980). Other work has found that 10 male rape victims were homosexual; 8 were heterosexual; and 4 were bisexual (Mezey and King, 1989).

It has been argued that gender expectations of men may also form negativity towards male victims who do not fulfill the gender expectations (Javaid, 2014c). It may be argued that state and voluntary agencies' attitudes and responses toward male victims of rape are premised on the ideology of hegemonic masculinity. Because other issues may have a role to play, it is not wise to exaggerate the influence of societies' views on state and voluntary agency provisions. Thus, it is important to not downplay the police responses to male rape victims, especially when they have made some effort to improve treatment and responses to male victims of sexual assault and rape, as previously discussed. It could also be suggested that homophobia is difficult to measure, as it comes in many different forms. Further, a report (O'Doherty, 2009) demonstrates that homophobia in the police is declining, and homosexual and bisexual men find the police to be less homophobic. This report is based on responses from more than 1,100 LGB (lesbian, gay & bisexual) people. The report indicates that LGB people's attitudes to the police are improving.

However, the evidence in this section indicates that the police culture can restrict a complete understanding of male rape. This section also demonstrates that male rape myths are common in the police culture. The evidence herein suggests that the source of the officers' hostility towards male rape victims lies in male rape myths, prejudicial attitudes, and stereotypes that have been found to be prevalent within the police culture. This is evident in research by Abdullah-Khan (2008), in which 71 male police officers in her sample said that they cannot be male rape victims, suggesting that they are physically large enough to defend themselves or that they do not make themselves susceptible to male rape. From this evidence, as well as others (e.g., Lees, 1997; Rumney, 2008; Jamel, 2010), it can be argued that the police demonstrate a scarcity of awareness of the realities of male rape. This may be because they have a lack of training or experience regarding the handling of male rape cases, as was evident in Jamel, Bull, and Sheridan's (2008) study in which some SOIT officers noted that they have a lack of experience and training regarding the handling of such cases. In addition, other research has found the police to be homophobic when dealing with male rape victims (Walker et al., 2005). Rumney (2008) argues that the police execute homophobic attitudes to male rape victims because of the homosexual activity that male rape is equated with, so officers support the male rape myth that 'male rape is a homosexual issue'. Research evidence has shown, however, that some male rape

victims are heterosexual (Mezey and King, 1989; Stermac et al., 1996; Isley and Gehrenbeck-Shim, 1997). The next section examines current literature of finding any male rape myths present in voluntary agencies to explore whether they dispel or, like state agencies, perpetuate male rape myths.

**2.4 Voluntary Agencies' Attitudes Toward, and Responses to Male Rape**

Voluntary agencies play an important role in producing, interpreting, and implementing policy, while having a vital duty to raise awareness, lobby for change, and deliver particular provisions. Voluntary agencies for male rape victims are, however, limited. The lack of empirical research and attention on male rape may make getting resources difficult. My research attempts to fill in these gaps by offering new empirical data on voluntary agencies that provide support for male rape victims. It is important to shed some light on the literature surrounding voluntary agencies for male rape victims, then, to give an understanding of voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape.

For many male rape victims, "its [sic] part of the male ethic emphasising self reliance that leads many victims to decide that they must deal with the encounter themselves…[although] [s]ome will finally find a time and place where they can share their ordeal" (Carpenter, 2009: no pagination). This highlights the importance of the need of voluntary agencies to be aware of the many issues associated with male rape, such as men's reluctance to engage with the third sector due to the pressure to embody and perpetuate hegemonic masculinity, which then can they adequately handle male rape victims.

There is an absence of a specific type of intervention specifically for male rape victims. For example, Vearnals and Campbell (2001) argue that voluntary agencies deliver intervention that is frequently based on either literature surrounding childhood sexual abuse or female rape, or clinical experience. Therefore, therapeutic intervention is not designed to address male rape victims' issues and concerns and is found to be insensitive to the victims' unique experiences (Washington, 1999). Older research stresses the risk of employing intervention that has either female or children victims in mind for male rape victims because such intervention tends to emphasise to

victims that they were powerless within the violent incident (Sepler, 1990). Connell (2005) discusses that males are socialised to be powerful and independent, arguing that both powerlessness and helplessness are not an option for males because they prevent men from embodying hegemonic masculinity. That is, the dominant form of masculinity in the gender hierarchy, which all men are expected to embody; but, men failing to achieve this social ideal of masculinity and the gender expectations of men means that they may get classified as not 'real men'. Voluntary agencies adopting such intervention that expresses powerlessness and helplessness may be harmful to male rape victims. In order to understand male rape victims' victimisation, Carpenter (2009) suggests that voluntary agencies should deal with them with a use of a masculinity framework.[14] This means that the agencies should be sensitive and understanding to men's masculinities through encouraging strength and independence when handling men as victims of rape. In the meantime,

> [M]en are victimised at multiple levels: first they are victimised by their attackers, they are then subjected to rejection and stigmatisation from friends and family and potentially humiliated at the hands of the law. These factors serve to reinforce the internalisation of self-blame and denial of the need for help that inhibits recovery from the assault…The psychological consequences of male rape impact in the immediate & long-term and can be emotional, behavioural and somatic. There have been few studies looking at the impact of male rape in comparison to female rape, but it is reasonable to assume that some features are common to both (Carpenter, 2009: no pagination).

From the evidence supplied here, it is clear that male rape causes immense short and long-term psychological pain. Therefore, voluntary agencies are pivotal in dealing with the after effects of male rape. For those victims who do try to get help, however, they may not be able to get it. For example:

> The support services for the male survivors of rape are very limited and have received little attention. There is a vicious circle whereby men do not report

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[14] This may help to understand how masculinity and men's health are interconnected.

because of the lack of facilities available to them and the stigmatisation of male rape. As a result of under-reporting the issue of male rape does not attract the level of attention that it deserves and this in turn makes it difficult to acquire resources. It is a shame that the centres provided to assist female victims of rape are often reluctant to offer advice or the basic courtesy of listening to male victims in crisis, primarily due to a lack of training and awareness (Carpenter, 2009: no pagination).

This passage suggests that, when male rape victims do eventually build up the courage to seek support, they are often unaware of what service provisions are available specifically for male rape victims, which in turn increases their reluctance to look for services for male victims of rape. Additionally, it suggests that there is a considerable lack of finance and resources put into providing services for men as victims of rape, while voluntary services specifically for female rape victims do not serve men. Neglecting men in this way implies that men do not want or need voluntary services to manage the after effects of their rape and implies that 'male rape is not a serious issue' in the third sector. King (1995) suggests that all types of voluntary agencies are needed in order to provide male rape victims with counselling support, as most will benefit from it.

Research has found that males who suffered penetration throughout their attack were more unlikely than other types of victims to look for assistance from voluntary agencies, suggesting that such males were potentially suffering from confusion and shame pertaining to their sexual identification (Monk-Turner and Light, 2010). When the victims seek help, as Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) argue, they are met with professionals, working in voluntary agencies, who possess male rape myths: if they were raped, it was because they 'wanted to be'; and 'men cannot be raped by other men', leaving the authors to conclude that many professionals in voluntary services do not consider male rape as a problem for men. More recent research supports this, in which Apperley (2015) argues that most health care service providers, who offer support, only believe that sexual abuse is only applicable to girls and women. In Donnelly and Kenyon's study, the authors explored mental health and medical professionals' responses and attitudes to male rape victims. They also found that gaps in service provision, dearth of responsiveness, and gender expectations of men

contribute to the scarcity of help for male rape victims. Although this research was conducted over a decade ago, a dearth of research has explored whether these findings are still relevant today. My research attempts to explore if such findings are still relevant in England.

In the meantime, voluntary agencies should attempt to address secondary victimisation because research claims that such agencies tend to perpetrate it. For example, Washington (1999) suggests that male rape victims experience secondary victimisation by informal and formal counselling services, and the medical profession. Washington's research, though, is based on interviews with six male victims of sexual assault from adulthood and childhood. Therefore, her results cannot be generalised to all male victims who undergo counselling services. Her results highlight that, because a small number of such victims were suffering from voluntary agencies' attitudes and responses, the fact that some victims were suffering warrants attention to see whether these issues are still present in England, which my research seeks to do. This is particularly the case especially when Walker et al. (2005) found a link between male rape victims' reluctance to seek psychological help from voluntary agencies and attempted suicide. Likewise, the victims show high levels of health issues and psychological disturbances, even years after the rape (ibid.). Further, the researchers found that the victims display anxiety, somatic symptoms, sleeplessness, depression, and social dysfunction, while lacking confidence pertaining to their social lives, appearance, and general competence; hence, the victims' reluctance to seek psychological help from voluntary agencies. The male rape victims who do seek help from such agencies will often present other reasons for attending, for example, medical advice, in order to conceal the rape itself (ibid.). Because of the hidden nature of male rape, studies such as Walker et al.'s have to use small sample groups, which means their results cannot be generalised.

In spite of criticisms, some attention is being directed towards male rape victims. The impact of the legislative construction on policy includes male rape whereby the Stern Review (2010)[15] incorporates male rape victims, stressing the need to incorporate the

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[15] The Stern Review (2010) is an independent review, directed by Baroness Stern, that investigates the treatment of rape complaints by local authorities, particularly looking at how such authorities deal with, and respond to victims of rape.

male in service provision, policy, and research. It is important to note that state and voluntary agencies did not consider the Stern Review findings. For example, in official government responses to Stern (2010) and the following voluntary sector reports, the initial commentary pertaining to male rape was excluded, so the voluntary sector in the provision of services (as the government directs and funds) for the male is small (Cohen, 2014). An important conclusion drawn from the Stern Review (2010: 8) is that "the policies are not the problem. The failures are in the implementation." The review goes on to say that, "Whilst treatment of victims has improved considerably, we heard of areas where victims' organizations struggle to have their concerns heard" (ibid.). This may suggest a number of viewpoints, such as voluntary agencies may be expressing genuine concerns, but policy or law makers is refusing to adequately and whole-heartedly acknowledge them. Meanwhile, Cohen (2014) carried out content analysis on the Stern Review (2010) and found that it implicitly perpetuates male rape myths, such as 'men cannot be raped by other men,' orienting rape as an issue of men against women, while conceptualising male rape as an anomaly. The relevance of this critical discussion is that, collectively, these problems ingrained in the review may impact the way voluntary agencies respond to, and deal with male rape victims, while influencing voluntary agency practitioners' attitudes toward male rape. Their views, beliefs, attitudes and opinions of male rape will be explored further in the empirical chapters (see, for instance, chapter 6).

Similarly, the *Interim Government Response to the Stern Review* (Home Office, 2010) largely neglects male rape, for example, in relation to risk management, protecting societies, and attrition. The focus is only on females as victims; males as offenders, which consequently ignores male rape victims by not considering them as a priority:

> Government priorities in this important area are to: provide end-to-end support for all victims through the criminal justice system, from report to court; bring more offenders to justice by improving reporting and conviction rates; and rehabilitate offenders and manage the risk they present to *women* and *girls* (p. 21. Emphasis added).

It appears that this passage completely neglects male rape victims. As a consequence, voluntary agencies that handle male rape victims may have a suspicion about male

rape victims being excluded in state funding or government agendas. The voluntary agencies, then, may well disregard such victims or see them as unimportant in comparison to female rape victims, considering there is funding in place for female rape whilst it is also prevalent in government agendas. If men are not seen as victims, arguably, they will not get the treatment needed and this may have an incidental affect on the victim and their family and society. Cohen (2014) argues that, by voluntary agencies, particularly rape crisis centres, neglecting male rape victims, limited data on male rape is being produced while inhibiting data collection. Consequently, this may possibly encourage state and voluntary agencies to see male rape as a low priority crime type and of little importance. The empirical part of my thesis will explore whether state and voluntary agencies both have a lack of understanding and awareness of male rape.

This section has critically discussed that voluntary agencies are possibly neglecting or excluding male rape victims, which may contribute to the 'invisibility' of the male victim (see Javaid, 2014a). In other words, male rape victims have a lack of recognition and service provisions that are available. There is also a lack of empirical literature to direct voluntary agencies on effective interventions for male rape victims. Although my research attempts to fill this gap, voluntary agencies may need training and support regarding male rape victims. There currently seems to be no change in voluntary agencies to improve their services for male rape victims (Cohen, 2014). Despite this, the Government has committed £500,000 in the year 2014 to provide services, such as counselling and advice, to help male rape victims who previously have not been able to receive such support and to encourage them to come forward (Ministry of Justice, 2014b). This fund will also support historic victims who were under 13 at the time of the attack. In addition, the victims have been given statutory protections and recognition, certain rights in policy, and male rape is now recognised in law.

**2.5 Law and Male Rape**

This section is relevant to discuss in order to examine in the empirical chapters whether issues of definition in the law may be of concern to state and voluntary agencies. For example, whether law enforcement and interpretation of the legislation

need to be addressed in the contexts of state and voluntary agencies. On the one hand, voluntary agencies having an understanding of the law is particularly important if male rape victims go seek advice and guidance to them about pursuing their case to the courts. On the other hand, the police having a correct and accurate understanding of the law on male rape is particularly important if a male rape victim decides to report their crime.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) made forced penile penetration of a woman or another man's anus an offence. Until 1994, in law forced penile penetration of another man's anus was not defined as rape, so a man could only commit rape against a woman. This Act is partially gender-neutral in that it substituted the words "it is felony for a man to rape a woman"[16] with "it is an offence for a man to rape a woman or another man."[17] The 1994 Act defined rape as non-consensual penile penetration of the anus or vagina. Consequently, the first case of male rape emerged before the courts.[18] Before the enactment of section 142 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994), forced penile-anal intercourse was classed as buggery, not rape. Buggery carried a lesser penalty than vaginal rape; buggery carried a maximum penalty of 10 years (where the male victim was over the age of 16), in comparison to the crime of rape for which the maximum punishment was life imprisonment. The Sexual Offences Act (1956), s.12 states that, "It is felony for a person to commit buggery with another person or with an animal", which remained the basis of legislation for prosecuting acts of anal sex between men until the Sexual Offences Act (1967) that decriminalised private homosexual acts between men aged over 21. It could be argued, thus, that prior to the 1967 Act, if male rape victims wanted to disclose their rape, there was the risk of consent being presumed if they were not able to provide evidence that they were raped. This might have induced a judgment of the victim consensually participating in homosexual activity, which could be a crime under the law of the pertinent state. The risk of this occurring could have deterred some male rape victims from reporting.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) emerged because of ideas

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[16] Section 1(1) Sexual Offences Act (1956).
[17] Section 142 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994).
[18] The first such case was *R. v. Richards* (1996) 2 Cr. App. R (S)16 7; for a detailed description of the case, see Abdullah-Khan (2008: 35).

surrounding gender equality, for prior to the 1994 Act, the coercive buggery of male victims was subject to a shorter sentence than the coercive buggery or the vaginal rape of female victims (Graham, 2006). The different penalties for forced buggery and rape prior to the 1994 Act came under the Sexual Offences Act (1956). For male victims, a sliding sentencing scale was utilised conditional on the ages of the victim and defendant: cases in which the offender was over 21 and the male victim was under 16, the maximum penalty was life, as it was when against a female of any age; cases in which the male victim and offender were respectively older than 16 and 21, however, the maximum penalty was 10 years[19] (Rumney and Morgan-Taylor, 1998). It was also evidenced in cases that forced buggery was less serious than the rape of a woman. For instance, the Court of Appeal in *Wall* (1989) 11 Cr App R (S) 111 argued the following:

> … rape was the most serious sexual offence, and if other sexual offences were equated with rape, there would be a risk that rape would be diminished as the most serious of sexual offences … by enacting the Sexual Offences Act 1967, s 3, Parliament had made clear its view that non-consensual buggery was a less serious crime than rape.[20]

Before the 1994 Act, there were no clear guidelines exclusively for forced adult male attacks. The comprehensive guidelines in *Willis* (1974) 60 Cr App R 146 merely covered cases regarding boys below the age of 16. Therefore, the guidelines set out in *Billam* (1986) 8 Cr App R (S) 48 for vaginal rape were applied to cases regarding buggery in a string of cases, such as *Stanford* (1990) Crim LR 526 and *Mendez* (1992) 13 Cr App R (S) 94, with a suitable sentence reduction to consider the apparent severity of the crime in comparison to vaginal rape. By examining the punishment under laws prior to the 1994 Act including examples of female and male victims of buggery, one can infer that within *some* cases there were penalties without considering the gender of the victim (e.g., *Wall* (1989) 11 Cr App R (S) 111; *Stanford* (1990) Crim LR 526; *Mendez* (1992) 13 Cr App R (S) 94). In some cases, it seems that sentences for forced buggery were not different depending on the victim's

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[19] Sexual Offences Act (1956), Sched 2; Sexual Offences Act (1967), s 20. The CLRC (1984: paragraphs 3.7-3.8) suggested a return to a maximum sentence of life imprisonment for the crime.
[20] This point was also well-established in the case of *Stanford* (1990) Crim LR 526.

gender. On balance, it could be argued that there was a lack of coherence and consistency in sentencing within law prior to the 1994 Act.

At the same time, the courts showed discomfort surrounding the term rape and the ensuing sentencing disparity in some cases concerning the buggery of female victims prior to the 1994 Act. For example, in the case of *Ball* (1982) 4 Cr App R (S) 351, 352, initially the judge thought that, if the victim did not have consensual buggery, then it is an issue of 'anal rape'. Similarly, Glidewell LJ in the case of *Jenkins* (1991) Crim LR 460 (abridged report) specified that, "Non-consensual buggery is in many ways a particularly unpleasant form of rape, and is treated as such …". Glidewell LJ expanded on this point in the case of *Mendez* (1992) 13 Cr App R (S) 94: "In our view, forcible buggery of a *woman* is equatable to rape, but worse than *normal* vaginal rape" (italics mine). This leads Rumney and Morgan-Taylor (1998) to argue that it is unknown whether the courts implied that there ought to be an extra element aggravating forced buggery perpetrated against a woman, or whether the courts questioned the unique status of rape. It is important to note that one judge, at least, mentioned the act of buggery as a form of rape against a male in the case of *Payne* (1994) 15 Cr App R (S) 395, 396: "Here was this unfortunate creature … for whom the only human emotion should have been the deepest pity and desire to help, instead of which, *he is raped* by you" (emphasis added).

The quotes above conflict with the inferences made by the Criminal Law Revision Committee (CLRC) report because it states that rape is a "unique and grave" crime (1984: paragraph 2.3), and other penetrative acts are "distinct from rape" (ibid.: 2.47). The CLRC (1984) supports the view that rape is a highly gendered crime whereby rapists are men and women are victims, so the report outlined that forced buggery should be excluded as a crime. This view suggests that the criminal sentencing of coercive rape of a man was regarded as less important than coercive rape of a woman. It is not clear, then, whether the approach in the cases of *Mendez* (1992) 13 Cr App R (S) 94 and *Jenkins* (1991) Crim LR 460 (abridged report) would have been applicable to male victims of forced buggery. Similarly, in parliamentary debates about the 1994 Act to criminalise male rape, there were continual discussions on the anal rape of females, and there were many suggestions that coercive anal rape might be less upsetting for a man than for a woman (*Hansard*, House of Lords, 1994, 20 June.

London.). The report did highlight the need to consider male rape in law, so it is plausible that at the time of the report, it was able to at least give recognition to the hidden nature and existence of male rape, where much legal literature and research failed to do so:

> It is clear that the distinction between buggery that is really consensual anal sex and buggery that is really rape must be clarified in law. That legal distinction is long overdue, both for women and for men. Consensual sex of whatever nature is not the business of the law, but it is the law's job to protect women, men and children from anal rape (*Hansard*, House of Lords, 1994: 20 June, column 179).

For the first time ever, the parliamentary debates associated with the amendment paid significant attention to the concept of male rape (Rumney, 2008). "The amendment was seen as a means of securing equality of treatment with female victims, as well as ensuring appropriate labelling and sentencing for male *and* female victims of anal rape" (ibid.: 82) (italics in original). These points were continually raised in the debates found in the *Hansard* House of Lords (1994), 20 June, London report, yet Graham (2006) does not acknowledge them, but still she argues that this amendment is 'privileging' male rape victims. She also does not consider that the Government initially refused to include non-consensual anal rape of both men and women in the amendment.[21] Rumney (2008) also challenges Graham, arguing that she does not discuss how such privileging can occur along with the appalling handling of male victims of sexual assault and rape in prisons. Similarly, Abdullah-Khan (2008) believes that the criminal justice system provides poor treatment for male rape victims, suggesting that male rape victims are not being privileged over female rape victims. Graham's sources in her work on male rape are incredibly restricted, as she neglects a large amount of research in the areas of medicine, human geography, forensic psychology, psychology, criminology, crime science, history, and law. As a result, the conclusions and arguments that she draws rely heavily on a flawed comprehension on the literature surrounding male rape.

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[21] An amendment introduced within the House of Commons was initially rejected by the Government, but later accepted within the House of Lords, resulting in inclusion within the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994), ss.142 and 143, altering the Sexual Offences Act (1956), s.1.

In balancing the argument, within the initial parliamentary debates, in which there was a brief debate about the amendment, there was more discussion about the non-consensual penile-anal intercourse of men instead of women (*Hansard* House of Lords (1994), 20 June, London). Therefore, it is clear from the *Hansard* House of Lords (1994), 20 June, London report that MPs were aware of the existence of male rape, considering at the time, male rape had a lack of recognition, so they felt it was important to highlight male rape in order to give it societal recognition. For example:

> Men and boys, like women and girls, are raped by strangers, by members of their families, by their partners in gay relationships, by casual acquaintances or dates, and, especially when they are young, by men in positions of power and authority over them. Male rape is especially common in prison. It is time that the law addressed that problem, which could easily be done by changing the word in the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act from "she" to "person" (*Hansard*, House of Lords, 1994: 20 June, column 179).

Thus, male rape victims are not being privileged in any sort of way over female rape victims (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). In fact, this privileging argument may be harmful since it could be argued that we must not compare and contrast who is being privileged, as this is not providing any context in which to support all victims of rape, regardless of gender. Other writers, however, believe that females should get privileged treatment in law and so the law ought to be, above all, concerned of the safeguard regarding female autonomy:

> Given man's greater physical strength and woman's consequent vulnerability, the overriding objective which, it is submitted, the law of rape should seek to pursue is the protection of sexual choice - that is to say, the protection of a *woman's* right to choose, whether, when and with whom to have sexual intercourse (Temkin, 1982: 400-01. Italics added).

This myopic argument expects men to be strong, dominant, powerful, and invulnerable, ignoring the possibility that many men may not subscribe to or fulfill these expectations. Whilst her argument is supporting women's rights, her formulation ignores men's rights in respect of getting equivalent rights to women in

law. Her argument also ignores the many different ways wherein an individual can be controlled to having sexual intercourse that is unwanted, such as bribes, blackmail, manipulation, threats, alcohol, and drugs (see Mezey and King, 1989). Further, she ignores the extent of physical strength in that it differs amongst men and disregards that women or men may become victims of rape by offenders of identical gender. Moreover, her gender-specific approach overlooks that many male rape victims are so fearful throughout the attack, which means they are not able to fight back (Carpenter, 2009), so there are dangers in generalising.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) came with many inadequacies. For example, the Act is usually seen as producing a criminal classification for 'male rape',[22] though this is deceptive, as it only incorporated penile-anal intercourse as a form of rape. This deception being about 'male rape' instead of anal rape is at least, in part, because of the structure of reference wherein the reform in legislation occurred, as the Act developed from worries over dissimilar criminal sentencing for coercive buggery of a male and female victim (Graham, 2006). Before this Act, the propensity to perceive penile-anal intercourse of women and of men as inherently dissimilar was reflected in the difference between the criminal sentencing for the coercive buggery of a woman and of a man (ibid.). The difference in criminal sentencing of coercive buggery facilitated a movement to reform the legislation (hence, the introduction of the 1994 Act), rooted in expanding criminal sentencing for the crime of male rape (ibid.).

Another issue of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) is that rape was not made completely gender-neutral,[23] only made partially, as the offender must penetrate using his penis. Naffine (1992) demonstrates that rape is only applicable to women, so men should not be thought of as potential rape victims. Therefore, it could be argued that she overlooks the possibility that men can be raped because she argues that rape is a crime of men against women. She does not provide any research evidence, ignoring the available research evidence on female offenders of male rape and of the subject of male rape itself, to support her argument that rape is a gender-specific

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[22] For instance, Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede refers to his revision in legislation, which the House of Lords brought in, as associated to male rape (*Hansard*, House of Lords, 1994. 20 June).

[23] In rape, 'gender-neutral' is the idea that the law can apply to both women and men as victims or assailants.

crime other than police statistics. There are many issues with relying solely on police statistics; for a critical overview, see subsection 2.3.1. In addition, it could be argued that Naffine's approach downgrades men's autonomy by replacing it with women's. Moreover, whilst she criticises gender-neutral laws, she does not critically examine gender-specific laws.[24] Naffine's approach is that, it could be argued, when victims are male, their victimisation is unworthy of attention; occasionally, some other legal scholars share this view (e.g., Mackinnon, 1989; Temkin, 1982, 1987). It has been argued that these legal writers place one category of victims against another whilst situating them within a hierarchy of significance, relegating male rape in the process:

> It is somewhat ironic that feminist critics of gender neutrality (rightly) criticize the legal process for failing to properly address and understand the experiences of female victims, yet they make the same mistake in their analysis of legal responses to male victimization (Rumney, 2007: 497).

Moreover, the 1994 Act did not criminalise oral and object penetration. This was problematic because research has found that some male rape offenders commit both oral and object penetration without the male rape victims' consent, and the victims saw these as forms of rape (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Feminists also saw the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) problematic, as it predominately concentrated on one specific sexual act: a man's penis sexually penetrating a woman's vagina. This led feminists to argue that this criminalisation mirrors a male heterosexual obsession with one opening and one object. Feminists argue that this type of conceptualisation (or definition) does not reflect female rape victims' victimisation. This can also be said for male rape victims' experiences, in that they do not just see forced penile-anal intercourse as rape (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Additionally, Walklate (2004) comments that the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) centers on the notion of consent (or being irresponsible as to that consent), which situates the responsibility of providing evidence on the alleged victim.

Temkin (1987) and the Sexual Offences Amendment Act (1976) stipulate that rape is

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[24] Gender-specific rape laws only identify penile-vaginal intercourse, so they do not identify other forms of violators or violation; they disregard male rape, women being raped by other women, and oral/object/anal rape.

'gender specific'; that is, only a man can perpetrate rape, and only a woman can be a victim of rape. Temkin (1987) further adds that including male rape in rape law is counter-productive, as male victims at trial will suffer the same poor treatment that females suffer, with defence counsel implying that 'he consented at the time', 'he asked for it', or 'led him on'. Lees (1997) challenges Temkin's argument, arguing that all men have the potential to be raped, not just women, and that the legal recognition of male rape will encourage male victims to report rape. Thus, the emergence of the Sexual Offences Act (2003) helps to strengthen the position of male rape victims in court and to raise greater awareness of the crime while highlighting its seriousness. The Act also helps to eradicate the inadequacies that the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) caused; this included criminalising non-consensual oral penetration[25] while keeping non-consensual anus-penile penetration a crime. Despite the improved legal changes in law, rape is still assumed to be non-consensual vaginal-penile penetration (Weiss, 2010). Nevertheless, section 1 of the Sexual Offences Act (2003: chapter 42, part 1) states the following:

(1) A person (A) commits an offence if—

(a) he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis,
(b) B does not consent to that penetration, and
(c) A does not reasonably believe that B consents.

(2) Whether a belief is reasonable is to be determined having regard to all the circumstances, including any steps A has taken to ascertain whether B consents.

This brings in the inception of oral penetration and introduces the conceptions of recklessness and consent by re-expressing a consideration of consent and of 'reasonable.' The term 'reasonable' is not clearly defined and leaves it open to subjective interpretation as to what counts as 'reasonable.' The Sexual Offences Act (2003: section 79) also incorporated surgically reconstructed genitalia (e.g., gender-

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[25] Sexual Offences Act (2003), s. 1. For the first time, this legislation incorporated penile penetration of the mouth in the *actus reus* of rape. Before this, such sexual assaults were conceptualised as indecent assault, which carried a lesser punishment for offenders.

reassignment surgery) to the current offence of rape. Moreover, women cannot be convicted for rape, which is problematic because some research has shown that male victims classify being forced to perform oral and anal sex on women as rape (e.g., Weiss, 2010). Although a few cases occur, the fact that some cases of women forcing men to perform such acts are evidenced clearly warrant legal protection for all male victims. Further research evidence (e.g., Abdullah-Khan, 2008) shows that women do also force other women to perform these sexual acts; for example, an 18-year-old woman involved in the rape of a 37-year-old woman. In this case, the female offender,

> Struck her victim to the ground and held down her arms before another gang member kicked the woman in the head … the victim described how a girl, (believed to be the perpetrator Claire Marsh) laughed throughout the ordeal and rallied the rapists … with the cry 'go on, give her some' (case cited in Abdullah-Khan, 2008: 31).

The prosecuting counsel advised the jury of the following:

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

Abdullah-Khan (2008: 32) argues the following regarding this particular case:

> The female assailant, who denied the attack, was sentenced to seven years in a young offenders' institution….Critics of the suggestion that females commit rape would no doubt argue that gang rape, as in the above case, involves a particular psychology of manic group behaviour and as such, cannot be evidenced to support the need for gender-neutrality in rape law.

Whilst women offenders of rape seem to be uncommon, the fact that some studies have documented their existence (e.g., Sarrel and Masters, 1982; Johnson and Shrier,

1987; Anderson and Struckman-Johnson, 1998; Fiebert and Tucci, 1998; Oliver, 2007; Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Duncan, 2010; Weiss, 2010; Stemple and Meyer, 2014) shows that they do occur. It is important, therefore, to recognise that women raping men is an issue that needs addressing.

Furthermore, the Sexual Offences Act (2003: section 2) considers non-consensual penetration of the vagina or anus by a part of the body (e.g., a finger) or anything else (e.g., a bottle) that excludes the penis as assault by penetration.[26] Legal acknowledgement of such forced sexual acts as rape will assist in tackling societal ideas of denial and help female and male victims to seek legal redress and support, while validating male victims' experiences of rape (Rumney, 2007). If this notion of naming or labeling such forced sexual acts as rape is ignored in law, it will exacerbate the institutional neglect of male rape and the lack of societal recognition of this social issue (ibid.). In addition, this lack of legal acknowledgement would strengthen the idea that 'male rape is not really a social problem', while causing isolation amongst male rape victims (ibid.). After all,

> [Rape] is not a gender [specific] issue. Many victims are men and boys.
> Indeed, one concern is that boys who were abused as children find it
> particularly difficult to come forward and say they have been abused,
> because there is still the stigma that means they might be called *gay*
> (*Hansard*, House of Lords, 8 July, 2010: column 590. Emphasis added).

There is an issue that arises from this passage: although this recent Hansard debate regarding male rape highlights that rape is not a gender-specific issue, it perpetuates the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue.' The debate implicitly suggests that male rape does not affect heterosexual men since it equates the phenomenon with the word 'gay'. Research evidence has shown that some male rape victims are heterosexual or bisexual (Groth and Burgess, 1980; Mezey and King, 1989; Stermac et al., 1996; Isley and Gehrenbeck-Shim, 1997; Lees, 1997). Therefore, it could be argued that the members of the House of Lords are unaware of

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[26] No other object or appendage meets the requirements to be eligible as 'rape' because these simply become assault by penetration; however, many male rape victims may see these as forms of rape. Demeaning these acts in law could provide a disservice to all rape victims—perhaps this is more to do with refusing to acknowledge women as rapists.

the growing amount of research evidence that contradicts the male rape myth, in this instance. They may have overlooked disciplines such as criminology, sociology, or the social sciences to better understand male rape and this particular male rape myth. Consequently, it could be argued that the above passage ignores the violence, suffering, and pain experienced by heterosexual and bisexual male rape victims. Such mistaken beliefs about male rape may influence the way state and voluntary agencies enforce the law or subsequently deal with heterosexual and bisexual male rape victims, in particular. The mistaken beliefs may also lead to inappropriate policy decisions or provide scholars, societies, and practitioners with a misleading impression of male rape. Basing policy decisions on inaccurate information could pose a risk since such information possibly will result in misguided or unnecessary reforms to the criminal justice procedure.

In summary, I critically examined the legal definitions of male rape and argued that contemporary legislation within Britain is too inhibiting for male rape victims. This can partly explain the under-reporting of male rape. This section was important to critically discuss to examine in the empirical chapters whether issues of definition in the law may be of concern to state and voluntary agencies. For example, whether law enforcement and interpretation of the legislation need to be addressed. The Sexual Offences Act (2003) is not gender-neutral, in that women cannot be convicted for male rape, which is problematic when this section has provided research evidence demonstrating that women can and do rape men (e.g., Sarrel and Masters, 1982; Johnson and Shrier, 1987; Anderson and Struckman-Johnson, 1998; Fiebert and Tucci, 1998; Coxell et al., 1999; Oliver, 2007; Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Duncan, 2010; Weiss, 2010). It could be argued that, in the legal literature, some of the attitudes around male rape may trivialise this phenomenon, while possibly preventing men from coming forward and seeking the support and help they need. The legislation pertaining to male rape has improved, however, giving male rape victims a stronger position in law and society than was the case previously (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). It is important to examine this further in the empirical chapters. It is also important to examine how the legislation has improved in practice, particularly in the courts since it is here where male rape victims can get justice.

### 2.5.1 Courts and Male Rape

It has been suggested that male rape victims' experiences of the court process can provide them with the opportunity of reclaiming the power they lost to the offenders, for example, by getting justice for what has happened to them (Lees, 1997). In 2011, there were 1,058 offenders found guilty of rape of a female, and 95 offenders found guilty of rape of a male (Ministry of Justice, 2013). This shows that the conviction rate for female rape is higher than male rape; the report offers no explanations for this disparity in figures. The figures could largely be overestimates depending on what the report is basing the figures on. The Stern Review (2010) reports that a very small number of men accused of male rape go through the court system, and the statistics imply that getting a conviction in either a sexual assault of a male case or a male rape case is very difficult. The Stern Review is possibly basing its inference on a very small number of cases.

Gregory and Lees (1999) premise their conclusions from a small number of male rape cases that reached the courts and argue that the conviction rate for male rape is high. They examined sixty sexual assault and male rape incidents and concluded that only eleven male rape cases went to court, but there was a high conviction rate of 75%–100%; they conclude that these figures imply that juries may be more willing to convict in male rape cases. Gregory and Lees' study, arguably, shows bias in their findings since the number of cases that they draw conclusions from is very small.

Conviction rates in male rape cases are determined from an intricate combination of the male rape complainant's decision to report to the police; the police deciding to investigate the case further; the police able to find evidence and suspects; and the prosecution services deciding to take the case to court (Lees, 1997). In this study, Lees also identifies how the jury is usually dubious of a scarcity of a rape victim's physical resistance and injury during an episode of alleged rape, and the defence will frequently argue that such scarcity is inconsistent with a claim of rape. This stereotype, she argues, can be even more influential in a male rape case than a female rape case. As a result of this stereotype held by the jury, male rape victims may be reluctant to report their rape or are more likely to withdraw from proceedings (ibid.). It may also influence societies, voluntary and state agencies' attitudes toward, and

responses to male rape victims. This theoretical assumption of mine will be either supported or unsupported in the empirical chapters.

Evidence is sometimes heard in court that men who obtain an erection or ejaculate during their attack somehow consented to the rape, and so the defence counsel may use this against the victim in court to suggest that consent was given (Rumney and Morgan-Taylor, 1998). Research has suggested that an erection and ejaculating are involuntary physiological reactions to male rape (Groth and Burgess, 1980; Sarrel and Masters, 1982). Nonetheless, this reaction may be utilised within courts to establish consent and undermine the male rape victims' credibility (Groth and Burgess, 1980). It is possible that this reaction to rape can also be used to establish a mitigating factor in sentencing within female rape cases. In one case, it was concluded that there ought to be some mitigation of sentence where "the victim has behaved in a manner calculated to lead the defendant to believe that she would consent to sexual intercourse" (*Billam* (1986: 51) 8 Cr App R (S) 48). It could be argued that it is unreasonable for a judge, who does not consider the reality of rape, to use a rape victim's involuntary physiological reaction to their rape as a ground for mitigation.

It has been suggested that it is unreasonable for the courts to perpetuate the idea that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue', in that the courts assume that all victims and offenders of male rape are homosexual (Rumney and Morgan-Taylor, 1998). In one male rape case, the heterosexuality of the offender was considered a mitigating factor in sentencing and the offender had his sentence reduced because:

> [T]his was an isolated incident … in the experience of this court those who commit this kind of offence usually have fairly marked *homosexual tendencies*. There is nothing about this case to indicate that this man has got those tendencies (*Harvey* (1984: 186) 6 Cr App R (S) 184) emphasis added).

From this, it appears that the courts maintain the male rape myth that 'male rape is a homosexual issue', while equating homosexuality with a tendency to perpetrate offences relating to sexual violence. Research demonstrates that many offenders and victims of male sexual assault and rape are not solely homosexual (Groth and Burgess, 1980; Mezey and King, 1989). These misconceptions in court may not only

be detrimental to the lives of male rape victims, but also may influence the way other state and voluntary agencies deal with male rape victims in practice.

Other research has found that many male rape victims report that the treatment they get from the courts and state agencies is worse than the rape itself (see e.g. Abdullah-Khan (2008), Jamel (2010), Sleath and Bull (2010)). Rumney (2009) argues that male rape victims who are believed to be homosexual or are actually homosexual may experience homophobic attitudes by the courts and so will be perceived as more to blame for, and less traumatised by their rape, than heterosexual male rape victims and female rape victims. During the parliamentary debates over the legal recognition of male rape in England and Wales, Lord Swinfen stated:

> Non-consensual buggery for a homosexual man would be an extremely traumatic experience. For a heterosexual man it would be an even greater trauma (*Hansard*, House of Lords, 20 June, 1994: column 66).

Some male rape victims do make false allegations, but this can also be a tactic used by lawyers to discredit complainant's credibility (Rumney, 2001). Defence counsel will suggest a possible motive for the alleged victim making a false allegation of rape during cross-examination (ibid.). In one case it was argued, for example, that a false allegation was made out of regret at having sex for money (*R. v. Richards* (1996) 2 Cr. App. R (S) 16 7). The Director of Public Prosecutions has made a study on false allegations in rape finding that, in a given time period, there were a large number (5,651) of prosecutions for rape, but only a very small number (35) of individuals prosecuted for having made a false complaint (DPP, 2013).

**2.6 Summary**

This chapter critically examined the literature surrounding male rape and stresses that there is a lack of academic research regarding male rape in the UK. The vast array of male rape research that is available rests upon clinical observations and adopts small-scale samples because of the lack of reported male rape cases, limiting the exploration to the true impact and nature of male rape. Whilst some studies exist to explain the treatment male rape victims receive from state and voluntary agencies, a lot of this is

anecdotal and needs empirical data. There is a lack of empirical research on state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape. My research attempts to fill this gap. Although the limited research findings on male rape critically discussed here are inconsistent, indicating that it is a complex phenomenon, this chapter has identified several common themes, which will run throughout this thesis and will be explored within the empirical part of this research. For example, the issue of sexual orientation and male rape indicates that there is a link. Another theme that emerged in the literature review was gender role socialisation, which produces firm roles for both women and men, possibly influencing how state and voluntary agencies deal with male rape victims in that they may consider that 'men cannot be raped by other men'. Such stereotypical views may preclude the victims from seeking support. The gender role socialisation notion will be explored further in the empirical chapters. A further recurring theme was the suggestion that 'male rape is not as serious as female rape', which was particularly highlighted in the law section whereby gender-neutrality was heavily criticised by some feminists; this will be further explored in the analysis chapters. These themes will formulate the grounding of the empirical work and findings from this will, where appropriate, be linked to existing research.

**Chapter 3: Research Methods and Methodology**

**3.0 Researching Male Sexual Victimisation: Introduction to Empirical Work**

This chapter critically discusses the research methods used in this thesis. The empirical research took on a qualitative approach, rather than a quantitative approach. Choosing this approach will be explained and justified, and the value of using qualitative research methods is discussed, along with the methods of data collection and analysis. Because male rape is a sensitive issue, it is important and essential to give some consideration to the literature on researching sensitive topics. This will also be supplemented with a discussion of the importance of reflexivity; that is, locating oneself in the research process. It is important to pay much closer attention to aspects of power relations, positionality and reflexivity when doing research on male sexual victimisation, because they can enlighten the qualitative researcher of the ways wherein denial of male rape and resistance to understand it can take shape in everyday life. Reflecting on how people see this issue and how participants perceive it serve as a useful resource for linking our experiences and for identifying resistance to the subject that is being neglected in academia and everyday life. The many different shades and forms of challenges that arose for me during my doctoral research will be critically explored in this chapter. There is a lack of research on reflexivity pertaining to male rape. This scarcity raises concerns, since authors have argued that positioning oneself in research and reflecting on how their role in the research process affects their research is something that needs to be considered and critically discussed (Lumsden and Winter 2014).

In this chapter, drawing from my research experience of conducting doctoral research on police and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male sexual victimisation, and insights from literature on reflexivity, positionality and stigma, I demonstrate the various ethical dilemmas and issues that arise when researching the topic of male sexual victimisation. This is demonstrated through providing a primary account of my own experience of conducting research on male rape, with support of my own fieldwork notes and sociological research surrounding reflexivity. I critically engage with, by highlighting the strengths and weaknesses, the method and approach of reflexivity. Drawing out the strengths and weaknesses of the methodological

approach of reflexivity will help raise better awareness and understanding of the problems associated with researching male rape for other similar researchers. This chapter starts to introduce the dissimilar parts of the empirical research, which are then elaborated upon. Two chief research methods were used in this qualitative doctoral research to explore the discourses of state and voluntary agencies in relation to male sexual victimisation, rather than the views of the victims and offenders themselves. I asked each of the voluntary and state agencies whether they would like to have an interview with me; if they were unable to do so, I asked if it would be acceptable to send them a questionnaire. The qualitative questionnaires that were filled out add to, and supplement the semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews[27] with male rape counsellors/therapists/voluntary agency workers who have had experience of dealing with the issue of male rape were carried out. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with police officers because they are often the first port of call for male rape victims when/if they report to the police (Jamel, 2010; see also section 1.6 for a discussion on the significance of researching the police, voluntary sector and male rape collectively). These interviews helped to ascertain the impact and nature of rape on men's lives, whilst exploring the nature and quality of service provisions for male rape victims. The interviews were conducted during 2015. The purpose of this research method was to generate fine-grained, meaningful, in-depth, rich data. This part of the primary research critically explored the experiences of state and voluntary agencies and compared their thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, observations, and views to existing research that reveals particular state and voluntary agencies' attitudes. The predominate UK and USA literature found many male rape myths present in state and voluntary agencies (e.g., Donnelly and Kenyon, 1996; Hodge and Canter, 1998; Rumney, 2008, 2009; Cohen, 2014). Through the interviews, I was able to pick up on particular male rape myths held by my participants. Therefore, the reality for the participants in my research was compared to findings relating to male rape within the existing body of literature (see chapter 2).

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[27] A copy of the semi-structured interview schedule is included in Appendix 5.

Qualitative questionnaires[28] to explore male rape counsellors/therapists/voluntary agency workers and police officers' attitudes and views were disseminated, which helped to explore their perspectives about male sexual victimisation. At the same time, I experienced stigma while I disseminated the questionnaires and conducted the interviews. I faced and observed stigma in the research context and also suffered it in my personal life. This is important because it indicates something significant and unique about male sexual victimisation (and perhaps about other research on sexuality), that those who research this issue may suffer similar abuse and prejudice as male rape victims. My experience of having the worthiness and credibility of my research on male sexual victimisation frowned upon led me to generate richer and more transparent data, because I understood the reasons why this issue was being neglected in academia and in the wider community. This chapter will shed light on these reasons. The questionnaires were important to disseminate to the police because they are often the first point of contact for male rape victims (Javaid, 2015c). The questionnaires also explored police experiences and their views of handling male rape victims and male rape cases in general. They, in addition, identified gaps in existing services for male rape victims. Essentially, the questionnaires gave some understanding of police attitudes toward, and responses to male rape in England.

**3.1 Defining and Conceptualising Researcher Reflexivity**

In qualitative research, reflexivity is often utilised and is seen as a tool where qualitative researchers can validate their research practices (Gerrish and Lacey, 2006). For Messerschmidt (2016: 46), "reflexivity refers to the capacity to engage in internal conversations with oneself about particular social experiences and then decide how to respond appropriately". Gerrish and Lacey (2006) demonstrate that reflexivity is seen as an essential method within qualitative research in the sense that the researcher continually reflects on the ways in which his perceptions, actions and values influence his research process, data and analysis. My identity ultimately influenced my perceptions, conducts and values, as this chapter will highlight. Reflexivity is important because it helped me to understand my stigma, data and the concept of male rape. In support of this, Morrow (2006) indicates that, as a strategy that qualitative

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[28] Copies of the questionnaires are included in Appendix 3 and 4.

researchers can adopt to understand the issue that their research is concerned with, reflexivity can help one to understand their participants' meanings in an accurate way. This suggests that reflexivity, as a process, can help understand human relationships and social and power relations.

In order to elucidate the different ways in which I used reflexivity in my research, I provide fieldwork notes to demonstrate how I continually reflected on my own perceptions, values, and actions in the course of my research. I also draw out the strengths and weaknesses of this method throughout this chapter, because it triggered some of my oppressed feelings, forcing me to relive some of my darkest moments. Both Parker (1999) and Davies (2012) point out that, to perform reflexivity, the researcher must reflect on his own biography, history and past experiences, thinking through how these may impact the research process and social/political identities the researcher might have. Reflexivity, therefore, allowed me to reflect on the findings and assumptions made during my research. These principles demonstrate the underpinning premise of the theory of reflexivity for this chapter.

**3.2 Researcher's Subjectivity: My Story, Identities and Darkness**

This brief section will detail my own subjectivity, in which I indicate all the details I deem important for the reader to know about myself to set the context for the ensuing discussions in this chapter regarding reflexivity. To begin with, I am male and of British Asian/Pakistani descent and most of my family is based in the city. It is the city where I feel most familiar with, having had a northern upbringing, as opposed to rural areas. I have had to work and study extremely hard to achieve my several qualifications and to maintain my current status as a doctoral student without much financial, emotional and social support. Because of my homosexuality, ethnic and racial identity as a Muslim gay male, I always feel marginal, alien, inferior, subjugate, and subordinate to others but most notably to other men. This conflicting identity of being both gay and supposedly subscribing to Islam continually forces me to struggle negotiating my relationships with condescending family members, the Asian community, and the wider community, being vulnerable to racism, sexism and homophobia. Becoming accepted, therefore, was and is very difficult, but I also have another part of my identity that adds to this list of 'shame': my identity as a rape

victim. Having different strands of stigma already attached to me, a gay Muslim rape victim, concerns me the most in terms of my position in life. Coming from a powerless minority group coupled with my subordinate forms of identity, I therefore had access to a lack of resources that I could draw on to address the ramifications of stigma. My minority status and stigmatised identities correlated very well with profound levels of interpersonal and institutional discrimination. Having a scarcity of cultural and material resources with which to challenge this discrimination was incredibly difficult if not impossible.

My experience of rape occurred while I was doing my undergraduate degree, not really knowing much about the concept of male rape then. My victimisation made me even more conscious of men, developing into a form of reluctance to engage with men in my everyday life. At age 27, I reflect on my experience of rape through my doctoral research. Not expressing religious ideology or not achieving the expectations that are required to be fulfilled in my culture, that is, homophobia, sexism and conservatism, and not appearing 'masculine', apparently makes me 'feminine', alien, and less cultural and religious. Being vulnerable and somewhat naïve placed me in a position where stigma, again, was easy to come by in my doctoral research.

### 3.3 Ethical Dilemmas, Reflexivity, and Doing Sensitive Research

Researching conceptions of male rape required consideration of a range of ethical issues and dilemmas. In the context of this research, a key issue was the sensitive nature of the subject matter. The research involved data collection on the sensitive issue of male rape. A primary concern was to ensure that research participants were comfortable in discussing a range of issues relating to male rape. Although research participants were professionals working within the area of male rape or had some knowledge of it, it was nevertheless important to ensure that all research was conducted with sensitivity. To this end, I deal in this section with issues relating to conducting research in such a way as to minimise discomfort or distress among research participants. It was important to ensure that the research did not cause an inconvenience to the professionals in their everyday working practices. In order to ensure this, fieldwork was conducted when the participants were not occupied, so research was carried out with the participants around their work commitments. At the

same time, I had to reflect on my own role as a researcher in this study. Researchers, such as Blaikie (2000), stress the significance of social researchers situating themselves in the research process, thinking about their own intricate identity and how this influences their choice of research methods, methodology and even the topic of study.

I realised that many voluntary agencies had a lack of publications on male rape to refer to. Because my desire to provide help wherever possible in an ethical capacity increasingly developed, I directed some of my research participants to my own publications and to the wider literature on male rape to fulfill my desire of wanting to help wherever possible. Therefore, the need to 'give something back' to the voluntary organisations and to the individuals who participated in my research was important to me. I was able to offer my skills and empathy to the work of the organisations and help raise awareness of the issues of male rape, which was done by voluntarily providing my participants with research evidence surrounding male rape.

At the same time, I needed to ensure that the participants were not exploited or regarded as sources of data only. In attempting to do this, it was necessary to consider the welfare of the participants as paramount to the research, and this was always my first priority. The participants were required to talk about the topic of male rape, which is a sensitive topic; so the participants could have got emotional or upset when talking about such a topic. Although they did not get upset, I nonetheless had mechanisms in place if this had occurred; I would offer the participants the opportunity to take a break or, if needed, to terminate the interview. Therefore, building a rapport with the research participants was necessary, so they felt at ease when fieldwork was being carried out; this also helped to prevent discomfort and distress. In doing so, mutual confidence and trust were required. Thus, I would carefully listen or respond at all times in a non-judgemental manner. In addition, I attempted to be friendly and easy to talk to, which could dispel any discomfort or distress that the participants felt. I would always make it clear to the participants in advance if they felt that the research was causing any distress, so that they can withdraw at any time. In addition, I ensured that the interview questions were worded sensitively (see interview schedule in Appendix 5).

Moreover, I remained neutral when conducting the interviews, in order to not challenge the interviewees' answers; otherwise, this could have made the participants feel uncomfortable or discomfort. I gave my participants the opportunity to have the recorder inactive if they felt uncomfortable or wanted to take a break. I also gave them information about where they could seek counselling or support groups, as it can be emotionally difficult to talk about the topic of male rape. The information sheet (see information sheet in Appendix 2), therefore, provides the research participants with details of counselling or support organisations. There was the possibility that my research could have included victims because victims of rape and sexual violence may work for the organisations being researched. Nonetheless, I gave all my participants the opportunity to withdraw their participation in the research if it became discomforting or distressing (none of my participants withdrew from the study). This was to ensure that participants were not harmed in any way as a result of the research. My aim was not only to understand more about male rape through my participants' stories and to help raise awareness of this crime type, but also to help address male oppression since the very act of male rape oppresses, subordinates and subjugates its victims (Lees, 1997). Abdullah-Khan (2002) concurs with Lees, while alerting one to be more cautious of the researcher's personal role when doing research on male sexual victimisation. For instance, she argues:

> It may be argued that by considering their [researchers'] personal roles and how they could be affected by the topic they are studying; [sic] researchers empathise with the research subjects, thus breaking down barriers between themselves and the subject. The hierarchical relationship between the researcher and the subject is broken down, allowing the researcher to become closer to the subject. Hence, in the case of interviews, rather than minimising the personal involvement of the interviewer as in traditional interview techniques, the method relies on forming a relationship between interviewer and interviewee. This becomes an interactive process (p. 130).

I agree with Abdullah-Khan. For my own research on male sexual victimisation, to help elicit valid responses in a comfortable setting, it was felt that such an interactive methodology was appropriate to researching male rape since it is a sensitive topic. This interactive methodology helped me to reflect on my own role in the research

process, while it allowed me to get closer to my research participants, which in turn helped to generate valid and reliable data. By and large, though, traditional criminological research neglects the significance of reflexivity, identity and personal details pertaining to the researcher, such as sex, gender, age or experience, when considering the role he/she plays in the research (Davies, 2012). These important variables, however, prove to be core elements within the research process (Lumsden and Winter, 2014). Although the presence of a male researcher in this field can appear understandable since male rape affects men, I still encountered interrogative questions, such as:

> Why I was interested in such a taboo subject area, what are my true intentions, what do I plan on doing with the data, and why do I have a notepad and a pen out?! While sometimes I experienced such interrogative and aggressive questions, particularly from men in my sample, I was kept in a state of fear, intimidation and apprehension (Fieldwork Notes).

Although I advocated for the need of neutrality when conducting the interviews, in some interviews, it was emotional to hear an interviewee talk about how male rape does not affect heterosexual men, although most research argues that all men, regardless of their sexual orientation, have the potential to be raped (e.g., Stermac et al., 1996). It was important that I stripped away any biases, prejudices, or theories held, even though I found it difficult to be neutral, especially when from an academic point of view, I learned that all types of men can be raped. Burawoy (2003: 646-647) says that "there is no way of seeing clearly without a theoretical lens, just as there is no passive, neutral position." Despite this, I remained professional by not challenging any of my participants' views and beliefs because challenging the beliefs of interviewees could cause upset and ruin the relationship of trust. Keeping quiet does facilitate the interview procedure, yet remaining uncomfortably silent may serve as a form of affirmation and reinforcement. I did not challenge such remarks during my research, which is inconsistent with my identity as someone who challenges injustice and inequality. I was able to use my silence to take back some of the power, however, as I attained the 'required data'. Similarly, Gailey and Prohaska (2011) state that they had to ignore comments and statements that made them feel very uncomfortable and

to perpetuate poise in the interview process to get the necessary information from the participants.

Other research shows that, because the social researcher plays an important part within the research process, the researcher's characteristics—including (though not restricted to) previous experiences and exposures, education background, race, gender, age, and socioeconomic status—are independent variables that affect outcomes and interaction (Pattillo-McCoy and Buford, 2000; Gailey and Prohaska, 2011). Therefore, my academic background and individual characteristics had an influence on how I understood my interviews; nevertheless, in some discomforting interviews, I remained professional, despite feeling like a partial outsider. A researcher can have many strands of identification, strands that might be tugged into the open or stuffed out of sight (Narayan, 1993). I was, to a degree, able to understand or empathise with my participants because of my northern upbringing, in which I learned how to empathise with, understand and respect those around me. Given the complex nature of identity, there will ineluctably be particular aspects of self that connect with the people we study and other aspects that highlight our differences (Narayan, 1993; Gailey and Prohaska, 2011).

The stark differences that occurred, on some occasions, were in relation to the concept of power. I felt that there was a power imbalance in some of the interviews and when I was disseminating the qualitative questionnaires. In some interviews, for example, I encountered aggressive and dominant men who wanted to take control of the interviews, whilst placing me in a subordinated position. Some of the participants' tone of voice aggressively emphasised the power imbalance clearly, and, as a result, I maintained silence at times due to feeling intimidated and frightened. Bloor, Fincham and Sampson (2010) argue that emotional upset can occur for the qualitative researcher because of some participants directing antagonism and hostility towards him. Similarly, when I met up with the participants individually on an agreed time and date, I was aggressively and abusively told to 'come back at another time' on several occasions. As a result, I became confused, anxious, apprehensive and uncertain about where the research was going because I was being 'messed around' so often. For me, this created confusion, anxiety, apprehension and uncertainty about where the research was going. Gailey and Prohaska (2011) experienced similar issues

in their research. They had to also give up control to ensure that their participants would converse with them (i.e. allowing the participants to order the researchers around, silencing the researchers, freely interrupting and directly questioning the researchers, etc.). Gailey and Prohaska found that this process made them feel threatened on occasions and extremely vulnerable, arguing that the interview structure can make the researcher feel powerless, as he/she is reliant upon their interviewees' assistance to provide them with information. Another example where the power imbalance was clearly emphasised: while attending a meeting with a voluntary agency to negotiate access for my doctorate research, my fieldwork notes demonstrate some of these concerns,

> I felt very intimated, frightened and fragile because, late at night, I was in a room full of unknown and aggressive men, who aggressively questioned my true intentions of my doctorate research. They shouted, 'why on earth do you have a pen and paper out?!' And yelling, 'what are you doing here exactly, why have you come and why are you researching male rape!?' After trembling with fear and emotion, I walked out of the agency and cried, only to miss my train to go back home, waiting for my next train at the train station all-alone at night, uncontrollably sobbing and crying.

Conducting research in this way can cause different dynamics in regards to concerns of insider-outsider and politics of representation (Sultana, 2007). Thus, I believe, at times, some participants were vigilant of what I was going to do with my data, such as how was I going to represent their organisation. Different aspects of identity can become emphasised at different times (Narayan, 1993). For example, I felt as if my identity of British Asian and Pakistani helped to voice out my ideas appropriately at appropriate times, especially coming from a family who always fought for justice. Accordingly, with crosscutting identifications, which aspect of my subjectivity I select as a defining identity can alter, depending on the prevailing vectors of power and on the social context (Narayan, 1993). I never had one fixed identity in this research process; instead, my various identities fluctuated along with my emotions. Therefore, I believe, in life as well as in research, identity can change, depending on the prevailing vectors of power and on the social context. Lumsden and Winter (2014) support this, arguing that power dynamics and relations between researcher and the

researched (whether powerful or powerless) are contextual, changeable, often unpredictable and fluid, which challenge and shape our identities but also result in the co-production of findings and knowledge.

In addition, my label as a student induced some interviewees to see my positionality in the interviews, which was seemingly being classed as inferior to that of the interviewees' positions due to their senior positions and 'expertise'. Thus, whereas this was infrequent, I found that any differences coming to light could potentially be deleterious. As Sultana (2007) also experienced in her fieldwork and in her research process, I found very similar experiences in my own fieldwork and throughout my research process. For example, she says that:

> [S]ome male elders talked down to me and were condescending…[w]hile this did make me uncomfortable, I have faced similar diatribe and exercise of authority from…men in the city, and sometimes from elders in my own family, and have learnt to either respond in a diplomatic manner or handle it with humor (depending on the situation and the person)…It [fieldwork] felt like being part of a larger family where people felt free to prod, pry, and pontificate (p. 380).

I encountered and suffered all of this, too, not just in the research context, but also in my personal life. After my fieldwork, in which people "felt free to prod, pry, and pontificate", as Sultana says, I would go home to encounter all of this again. It was almost like a never-ending cycle of torment, living in a constant state of fear, loneliness, sorrow, confusion, and pain. Despite some discomforting and emotional experiences within my research process, I exercised professionalism and hard work by taking on multiple roles. These multiple roles included, for example, the following: attending many meetings and contacting participants/potential participants on a continual basis regarding the project. Through commonalities and differences between the researcher and participants, there were also different views that were embedded in all the participants, in that sometimes they clashed, or sometimes they coincided. Therefore, the participants' stories were different, inspiring, yet interpreted and formed differently. My experience of rape helped me to not only understand my

participants' views or stories, but also helped me to learn more about and to understand my own experience of rape.

### 3.3.1 Sociology of Male Rape Victim Reflexivity

Undertaking this research on male rape has affected me in a number of different ways, as partly discussed above, but most notably it has allowed me to reflect on my own experience of rape. As Davies (2012: 747) also experiences, I too experience this: "Writing academically and emotionally about my own emotional sensibilities and feelings [is] challenging", but we can "offer some academic analysis arising out of it". My sense of self is ultimately embedded in this research project because of my biography, history, experiences and victimisations. According to Foucault (1976), the products of social research reflect its social researcher, instead of representing some world that is independent of it. In parallel, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 14-16) argue that:

> [S]ocial researchers are part of the social world they study….The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them. What this represents is a rejection of the idea that social research is, or can be, carried out in some autonomous realm that is insulated from the wider society and from the biography of the researcher, in such a way that its findings can be unaffected by social processes and personal characteristics…there is no way in which we can escape the social world in order to study it.

I agree with this argument. This is because I chose my research project due to my sexual victimisation and my identification as a homosexual, which often positioned me as subordinate, so I wanted to learn more about the different forms of my suffering. Through the research project, I became equipped with the tools to make sense of my history, biography and sexual victimisation. At the same time, I also became able to understand and explain the ways in which my marginalisation, subordination, subjugation and alienation come about. Becoming reflexive, however, led me to question my objectivity and neutrality in this qualitative research. I

wondered whether qualitative researchers could ever completely, objectively, or neutrally divorce themselves from the subject matter that they are researching. Edwards and Holland (2013: 84) similarly review that, "By virtue of being human, researchers are not neutral and objective enquirers in qualitative interviews but are emotionally engaged participants who are sharing an experience with the interviewee". Burawoy (2003) supports this, arguing that we cannot understand or study the external world without having a relationship with it.

As some of the participants asked me why I had chosen to study this area of topic, I had to be honest not only to them, but also to myself about why I had chosen this study of area, despite not wanting to talk about me as it created some angst. My participants appreciated my honesty, though, about choosing this research area because of my own sexual victimisation. I had to then make a decision on the spur of the moment about how much to disclose, even though researchers disclosing personal details to their participants is frequently seen as good research practice with some feminist writers supporting researchers' self-disclosure (e.g., Oakley, 1981; Stanley and Wise, 1983; Reinharz, 1992). Disclosing my sexual abuse in this way lessened the hierarchical nature of the research process, in that it helped to break any barriers there may have been between the participants and I in the interviews since the participants were more revealing after I disclosed my sexual victimisation. This, as a result, helped to encourage valid, detailed and in-depth responses from the participants, whilst helping to rapidly develop rapport between the participants and I, in order to build a research relationship that would easily allow me to access my participants' stories. The participants disclosing such detailed responses, however, triggered some flashbacks of my own suffering.

Although I did not get any social support for my sexual victimisation during the duration of the research process or throughout the time of studying for this thesis, emotional changes, sleeping disturbances and feelings of sadness, helplessness and frustration fluctuated within that time frame. As a result, so many times I wanted to abandon writing this thesis, especially when it was becoming an emotionally difficult process, delving into the past and reliving some of my darkest moments. In a similar vein, Gailey and Prohaska (2011) found it emotionally challenging to interview men about sexually degrading behaviors, whereby men sexually objectify and degrade

women through misogynistic sexual practices. After some of their interviews with the men, these women researchers became tearful, emotional and distressed.

It is the qualitative researcher's job to delve into other people's lives, sometimes at a time of hardship, stress and crises, and to ask them to talk in depth and detail about their views and experiences (Morse and Field, 1995). Entering into the lives of my participants to understand male rape from their point of view was, to some extent, a process of secondary victimisation, in that I was made to relive some of my past experiences of abuse. This process was also a way of getting fine-grained, detailed, rich answers, which I needed to not only validate my own experience of sexual violence, but also to explore common themes that I could relate back to the literature on male rape to help understand this phenomenon. Therefore, to do this, understanding my participants' views was crucial for the empirical part of this thesis. An interactionist approach is important, thereby, to help capture my participants' stories. Employing a qualitative approach was appropriate for achieving my research aims (see section 1.5). As I revealed my sexual victimisation to some of the participants due to being asked why I chose to study male rape, I was quite surprised at the depth of information offered to me by them. I felt a little uneasy about the level of disclosure that occurred in some research interviews since it was like they were centring their discussion on my experience or somehow relating it back to my personal experience. This felt like secondary victimisation.

In fact, the whole research process, from the inception of laying out ideas for the research to the writing up of the thesis, was a form of secondary victimisation because I was continually reminded, re-living, and reflecting on my historical memories of abuse. Despite this form of insidious secondary victimisation, I was expected by some to "man up". Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 82) establish that the researcher is "faced with the difficult task of rapidly acquiring the ability to act competently, which is not always easy even within familiar settings". Although I was situated in "familiar settings", such as fieldwork, supervision environments, workplace, sitting behind a laptop in my bedroom, I was struggling to embody hegemonic masculinity that was expected by others—strength, independence, unemotional, insensitive and control— which was difficult to do because of my feeling hierarchically marginalised and subordinate to other men who embody hegemonic masculinity. Given my compliance

to homosexuality, being an ethnic minority, and my identity as a victim of rape, robust barriers were inevitably raised that were difficult, if not impossible, to tackle. Ultimately, these barriers prevented me from embodying hegemonic masculinity.

Suffering depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, as a result, made it emotionally challenging and difficult to carry out the fieldwork. This emotional upset was exacerbated when witnessing different sides and shades to my participants. For instance, when voluntarily helping out with activities relating to my participants organisations, such as making coffee, giving feedback on relevant books they are using for their clients, despite this process becoming very time consuming, I encountered sides of my participants that did not surface at the interviews. The ethical dilemma was whether to include this type of information into the thesis, but I chose not to do so in order to *ethically* carry out this research. The 'off the record' type of information that I encountered were negative regarding the concept of male rape, but I only recorded what my participants wanted me to record and to use for my research.

Throughout the research process, it was sometimes cathartic and I was finding solace in my writing. For the most part, however, I felt that it was overshadowing my happiness and joy because I was made to relive the darkest moments in my life. Becoming insular, closed-off and insecure, even becoming emotionally upset and crying after some difficult interviews, my experience of studying male sexual victimisation shows the nature and extent to which other researchers studying sensitive topics are vulnerable and susceptible to further abuse. This feeling of embodying an 'outsider' is shared with many other scholars (e.g., Abdullah-Khan, 2002, 2008; Davies, 2012; Gailey and Prohaska, 2006, 2011). I attempted to manage my own emotions, however, while I was at the 'front stage' in front of people who cultivated or directed my doctoral research, such as my supervisors and research participants, compared to when I was 'back stage' at home alone in my bedroom where I would emotionally 'fall apart' and critically reflect (see Goffman, 1959).

### 3.3.2 Researching a Sensitive Topic and Risk Analysis

Before I critically explore the research methods used in this research and the methodological aspects of this research, it is essential to examine the nature of

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sensitive topics, such as male rape, that make it significant for researchers to carefully formulate a viable research strategy. It is significant to understand that the topic of male rape is an emotionally charged and sensitive area of research (Scarce, 1997). Therefore, it was difficult, at times, to recruit participants who were willing to talk about the issue of male rape, considering that feelings of awkwardness, embarrassment, and discomfort that many people may feel when disclosing information on male rape. Many of the participants in this present study could have felt distressed, due to remembering and recalling male rape cases that they had worked on and found particularly harrowing. The idea of being 'studied', also, could have resulted in the participants feeling that they are just 'being used' for information. Thus, the psychological and emotional state of the participants remained paramount to the research project, and always ensuring that they were first priority in the research. To achieve this, an informed consent form and an information sheet[29] detailing my doctoral research were provided to all participants, in order to ensure that they were sufficiently aware of potential distress and were able to accurately predict their level of anticipated distress to make an informed decision to partake. In order to get informed consent from the participants, I ensured that the following bullet points were highlighted to my participants, and it was hoped that, by following this procedure, the participants would be more likely to give their informed consent voluntarily to participate in the research:

- The purpose of my research (e.g., to understand more about male rape) was clearly and succinctly outlined;

- How long my participants' participation would last in the research (after ethical approval, fieldwork ended on December 26th, 2015);

- The procedures and practicalities of the research were made clear, highlighting that they can drop out of the research anytime they like;

- I had asked my research participants for their consent to audio-record the interviews and to allow me to use the recordings once installed on to

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[29] A copy of the informed consent form and the information sheet about my PhD research are included in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.

> my laptop, and refer it over to the participants if they would like a copy of their recording;

- The benefits and risks of participating in this research were stressed;

- How the data will be used and managed, and how long it will be kept (I asked my participants if it would be acceptable to keep the data indefinitely, so that I can, for example, publish the findings in journal articles and a book) were notified to the participants;

- I ensured to the participants that the information they choose to impart would be completely anonymous in the written thesis and their information would be kept confidential. In the empirical chapters, I utilise the gender of the participant (male or female), their occupation, and a specific number. This approach perpetuates confidentiality and enables readers to track certain respondents all through the empirical chapters in addition to attribute several quotes to the same respondent.

Indeed, I ensured that confidentiality and anonymity were given to the research participants, which hopefully encouraged them to trust me with the knowledge they gave, possibly increasing the validity of the answers. Therefore, any information that could have possibly identified the participants was removed or reduced, so the participants were not identifiable. Because the data is kept anonymous in this research, it was hoped that this helped to alleviate any worries that the participants may have had. In the interviews, I used a voice recorder; and the data from the voice recorder was transferred on to my laptop that had a password, so nobody else could get access to it. The participants' professional contact details were kept and stored in my laptop but were not kept in the same file as the transcripts, in order to preserve complete anonymity. This was important to do in case my laptop got hacked into or stolen. Moreover, any written (hard copies) documents regarding the participants' views were kept locked in a storage at my home, which was accessible with a key that only I had.

Despite comprehensively and carefully considering the various forms of risk that my participants could have encountered, my safety and psychological and emotional state were also important and needed to be carefully considered, too. Therefore, I ensured

to carry out the interviews in a place where other people were present, such as the participants' workplace. This was their organisation, such as a state or voluntary agency, where there were other people experienced in dealing with crime who could be called on for help if necessary. It was, in addition, important to inform a family member of my whereabouts whenever I was conducting fieldwork. By doing so, it made sure that my immediate family member could 'check up on me' in case I did not arrive home at a certain time after doing fieldwork, seeking help if necessary.

Moreover, there was the notion of 'going native', which means identifying too closely with the group one is researching. For example, I could have become too immersed into the occupational culture that I was researching when conducting the fieldwork. I was aware that my access to the participants was in flux, and at the mercy of forces that was often beyond my control, considering that some participants were conveying 'mixed signals' in respect of participating. Thus, I needed to ensure that I executed a detached and objective view to prevent unleashing my personal opinions, not only to prevent immersion, but also to become aware of my status as a professional researcher. A sense of alienation occurred when switching in and out of the field, which caused me some discomfort and distress. Nevertheless, before I carried out the fieldwork, I did literature searches that helped me to identity any potential threats and conundrums that I could have experienced in a particular field. Lee (1993) argues that sensitive research inevitably includes some cost, either in terms of inconvenience, time, or finance. Throughout the research process, I was financially constricted, which made it difficult at times to get to the places in which fieldwork was conducted. Holding down a part-time job, therefore, was necessary for me to financially support myself throughout the research project. Finding the balance of conducting research and part-time teaching to financially support the research project proved very difficult at times, in that the social aspect of my life drastically deteriorated.

A further issue to consider is the effect that the publishing of my research may have on my participants' credibility. This is especially important in relation to my participants who may hold ideas about other people in society that are inflammatory or potentially dangerous. In these cases, I need to be prepared to justify my position and to explain the utility of my work to the development of knowledge on such groups, but, at the same time, this may put me in risk of being accused of

misrepresenting the people who I was researching. To prevent this from happening, I ensured that I provided the finished transcripts for those participants who asked to see them, and, where possible, gave them an opportunity to amend the transcripts. The participants did not request their transcripts to be amended. The participants were also offered the opportunity, where appropriate, to see the results of the doctoral research. My participants generally believed that male rape victims face strong prejudice and were, therefore, more inclined to participate to help raise awareness of male rape and to help tackle the myths, shame and stigma attached to the issue of male rape. Rumney (2009) argues that male rape myths, such as male rape is solely a homosexual issue, and victims of male rape 'asked for it' by frequenting gay venues or by not showing physical resistance are, thus, blame-worthy, are all-important considerations when doing sensitive research. I felt, though, that male rape myths and the very nature of male rape being a taboo (Clark, 2014) could potentially contribute to the reluctance of people to take part in my research. Therefore, I made it essential to make sure that the research was carefully worded in a sensitive fashion when I sent the letter of introduction to potential participants and the letter of request to organisations that could facilitate my research[30].

### 3.3.3 Researching Taboo and Stigmatised Topics, and Experiencing Stigma as a Researcher Studying Male Rape

Throughout the research process, I encountered other people's disapproval, contempt, and disgust directed towards my research topic and to me as a result. This was because, I believe, that the subject matter of male rape is embedded in stigma and taboo, as both Scarce (1997) and Clark (2014) also believe. Abdullah-Khan (2002: 135) argues that, "Taboo topics are those which are stigmatised, socially disapproved and indeed; unpopular. Research into a taboo area often involves dealing with fundamental social problems that people may choose either not to recognise or to avoid". For the purposes of this thesis, I use Abdullah-Khan's definition and conceptualisation of taboo and the following as a basis for defining 'taboo'.

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[30] A copy of the letter of request and the letter of introduction are included in Appendix 7 and Appendix 6 respectively.

In everyday usage, the word 'taboo' refers to something prohibited, forbidden, by custom rather than by law. It may be something too terrible even to think of, its reality denied. Or, more weakly, it may simply not be mentioned in conversation (Walter, 1991: 295).

Walter rightly argues that something classified as 'taboo' is not talked about in conversations, or even thought about internally. Consequently, the thing that becomes a taboo is pushed out to the periphery of human thought. From my experience of conducting research on a taboo topic, male rape, I felt it was frowned upon and people who talk about it also become marginal in different ways. For instance, I also experienced what Abdullah-Khan (2002) suffered when she also researched male rape, in that her participants and the wider society thought, 'why is a nice girl studying such a disgusting topic'. I encountered similar reactions not only from some of my participants, where some would raise eyebrows, looking at me cautiously and questioning my credibility as a researcher, making it difficult to connect with and feel relaxed around my participants, but also from the wider society and from my immediate and extended family where I experienced direct and indirect disdain, laughter and mockery. This process made it easier for me to suffer stigma both in my professional and personal life.

For Abdullah-Khan (2008), researching taboo topics puts the researcher in danger of imposing particular feelings on to the participants, such as guilt, stigma, and embarrassment. I was aware that these feelings could surface, but I also had to be prepared to accurately represent the facts that my data generated, even if those facts were unpleasant. I also needed to be prepared that many of the men in my sample, in particular, may find it difficult to talk about the subject. In particular, male rape victims invoke an identity that lies outside the boundaries of prescribed gender conduct, which results in an associated 'stigma' of disapproval, rejection, fear, and shame, if revealed to societies embedded with traditional gender stereotypes, norms and expectations (Javaid, 2015b). Therefore, due to the stigma associated with male rape (Scarce, 1997; Ferrales et al., 2016), and due to the possibility of men in particular feeling reluctant to talk about a crime that challenges men's masculinity, potentially causing discomfort amongst men in my sample, it quickly became apparent that researching the subject of male rape was extremely difficult and

problematic. I found that such a stigma was also reflected on myself, researching this stigmatised subject area. In parallel, Hammond and Kingston (2014: 340-1) also experienced stigma for researching a taboo subject area:

> [D]ebates would involve people labelling prostitution or those involved as 'dirty', 'diseased', 'shameful' or 'dangerous'. In this sense, some believed our research to be unworthy because prostitution should not exist to be researched….We found that when we 'went home'…we still experienced stigma because of our associations with prostitution.

I encountered similar experiences to these women authors. As they were associated with a stigmatised and taboo topic, which meant their research was seen as 'unworthy' so they, as researchers, were not taken seriously, I too was associated with a stigmatised and taboo topic, which meant that I was also seen as an 'unworthy' researcher who studies 'unworthy' research. Applying Goffman's (1963) theoretical perspective of 'stigma by association', it becomes clear that, because indeed stigma is associated with male rape, stigma also becomes transposed onto me, the researcher. "The idea that 'proper' people would not wish to become involved in researching topics that are stigmatised can often lead to suspicious questioning of the researcher's motives for conducting the work" (Abdullah-Khan, 2002: 135). I encountered similar experiences to Abdullah-Khan, in that people in my professional and personal capacity, acquaintances, and some of my participants suspiciously, cautiously, and, sometimes, aggressively questioned my true motives as a researcher. I was not taken seriously because I was associated with a stigmatised topic. Therefore, this stigma metaphorically and symbolically transposed itself onto me. According to Goffman (1963), people who are closely connected with a stigmatised topic often suffer the same social stigma. I felt that these types of people purposely divorced themselves from my topic of inquiry and thus me as a human being, because the subject matter essentially confronts the status quo, the gender expectations of men, hegemonic masculinity, and heternomativiety. This distancing helped to induce my depression, my high levels of fear, and my distrust of men.

As Scarce (1997) suggests, men as victims of rape are not seen as 'real' victims, and so they draw in negative responses and treatment. To a degree, I was able to

empathise with their status as not 'real' victims because, at times, I was not seen as a 'real', authentic and a 'proper' researcher due to my association with the topic of male rape. Similarly, Hammond and Kingston (2014) also experienced this, in that they were seen as improper, unauthentic, and not 'real' researchers because they were associated with an 'undeserving topic'; that is, prostitution. For example, they argue that the notion "sex workers are considered 'undeserving victims' became fused with us as sex worker researchers that led to colleagues and those in our personal spheres to question the validity of someone studying an 'undeserving topic'" (p. 330). My involvement with male rape research, similarly, led to the same outcome as Hammond and Kingston's.

Furthermore, because of the negative, hostile, and homophobic responses and attitudes that male rape victims often suffer (Rumney, 2008, 2009), people saw my work as shameful or disgraceful, confronting heteronormativity, hegemonic masculinity, and gender norms. This, in turn, brought about methodological difficulties. For instance, it was extremely difficult to obtain a sample or to gain access to data. There was also the issue of reliability of data, in that the participants may have found it difficult to be truthful when talking about the topic of male rape due to fear of repercussions or due to the uncertainty of how their organisation may be depicted. For Goffman (1963), stigma is so powerful that it can bring about substantial, emotive and cultural implications for the person who has a particular feature or does not have a specific trait. This feature, I felt, was myself being male and researching a non-masculine subject, studying male rape, so challenging masculinity in this way led to my conceptualisation as an undervalued male person who has a 'spoiled identity' (Goffman, 1963). At times, I was questioned not only in a personal capacity, but also in my professional sphere as to why I did not study 'proper' topics instead. Hammond and Kingston (2014: 339-340) encountered similar experiences:

> The feeling that some people who were not directly involved in our research field, either as a participant, peer or colleague, viewed our topic and our jobs as researchers as a 'joke' and 'unworthy' of academic research was an experience we both had outside of the data collection context. Some people disbelieved that we studied prostitution, and were so shocked by our

declaration that they initially seemed stunned, asking us to repeat the statement or questioning whether we were telling the truth. We witnessed and became the focus of laughter, jokes and ridicule, with many people finding it 'funny' that we…were studying prostitution….Hammond recalls [an] uncomfortable event at which several people who knew about her work informed others that she was 'doing a PhD on prostitution' with the 'humorous' undertone that she herself was a sex worker and would be involved in selling sex…Kingston also…found her friends would inform people they met that she was undertaking a PhD into prostitution because they enjoyed observing their shocked and sometimes horrified reactions.

Researching my controversial research area was further problematic because, within the subject of male rape, the conception of homosexuality was ingrained under the umbrella of male rape. The link between male rape and homosexuality adds further stigma and taboo to the subject of male rape (Rumney, 2009). This, as a result, created further barriers in this research, in that it was difficult to get gay men to participate in the research, for example (but I did not particularly need gay men in the sample). This was, perhaps, because they were worried that the research could 'out' them or they may have feared homophobia from the wider society. Rumney (2009) argues that powerful social and legal prohibitions contribute to homosexuality being a taboo and a stigmatised subject of inquiry given that societies deem homosexuality as 'deviant' and 'abnormal'. This could have, therefore, added to gay men's reluctance to partake in this research, although my identity as a gay individual helped me to connect with, and to understand the small minority of gay men who did partake in this research. Because of my homosexuality and the topic of study that I am interested in researching, my vulnerability increased, which left me susceptible to threats, abuse, and derogatory and degrading language. Hammond and Kingston (2014) argue that:

The reflexive insights of other sexuality researchers reveal the professional difficulties facing those whose work explores issues surrounding sex and sexuality including being viewed as an illegitimate, thrilling or taboo topic, as a joke, or as unworthy study, all of which can result in loss of professional status, present barriers to career progression and leave researchers vulnerable to inappropriate remarks…[and] personal abuse (p. 332).

Despite receiving unpleasant, unwanted and unsolicited hostile comments, some of which came from the wider society asking, for example, 'whether I have fantasies about being raped' after I had stipulated that 'I am a PhD student researching male rape' on social media, I carried on researching this taboo topic of male rape. Abdullah-Khan (2008) comments that researchers studying male rape are vulnerable to offensive remarks and hostile attitudes by the wider society. Similarly, Hammond and Kingston (2014) highlight that sex and sexuality research are likely to draw in unsolicited sexual attention and flirtation from the wider society and from the researcher's participants, particularly from men. This is also supported by other research (Gailey and Prohaska, 2011), in which two female researchers who interviewed men about sex faced challenges, such as the men thought that these female researchers were flirting because they were interested in and talking about sexual behaviors. A number of their participants made inappropriate sexual remarks to them in the interviews, and the researchers experienced sexual hustling many times throughout the interview process while enduring many sexist and offensive comments about women. Gailey and Prohaska (2006) state that one participant actually reached out to the first author after an interview to ask her on a date. He became antagonistic and said that she and Prohaska were lucky they were in good shape or men would not be talking to them about sexual practices when she refused to go out on a date with him (p. 47). As a male researcher researching the topic of male rape, I was sometimes seen as 'kinky' or 'up for it' because I was associated with a topic that relates to sex and penetration. Getting sexual attention was a key concern for me, and, although I received offers to go out on dates with some of my participants, I declined. Similarly, in Hammond and Kingston's (2014: 335) research, the second author also received an offer for casual sex during her own research. They recall:

> … a male senior police officer sent her a sexually explicit message offering her casual sex following an interview: "Yeah was cool to meet one so chilled and open minded – don't let the gay thing put u off if you fancy a bit of casual sex (just don't tell the bf! [boyfriend]) Defo [definitely] give me a shout though I'll settle for coffee x".

Putting forward some observations regarding critical and contemporary criminology, Daly (2011: 11) writes that, "Originality and quality are elusive terms, but they collect

around the notion of a researcher's 'intellectual authenticity,' which is associated with taking chances, *challenging the status quo*, but not conforming to fashionable trends" (emphasis added). In parallel, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 17) point out that "researchers must try to make their research serve a…function, such as challenging the status quo, in some respect." Some of my participants believed that, regardless of the stigma associated with male rape, research on male rape is needed due to the lack of it and is considered worthy of research because male rape does happen. I felt, therefore, that it was important to research this neglecting phenomenon of male rape and to challenge the status quo. On balance, from Goffman's theoretical standpoint, it appears that my research experience supports this analysis of stigma since I experienced feelings of stigma for studying a contentious research area.

### 3.3.4 Reflecting on the Challenges of Researching the Police

This section outlines some personal reflections on the challenges associated with researching the police, particularly the issue around how officers symbolically and culturally represent power in terms of having dominant discourses in the criminal justice system. In some interviews with the police, there were clear strands of homophobia, sexism, gender bias, and so on. I felt that, by challenging the officers and their perpetuation of discriminatory attitudes and views, however, it would ruin the relationship of trust and so that rapport that I tried so hard to build would have broken down. Therefore, they possibly would not have provided any data or information in the interviews had that trust been undermined. Thus, I remained voiceless and silent during the interviews. As a result, some officers were very 'revealing' in their answers and provided a comprehensive account on some occasions. However, on other occasions, some officers would aggressively refuse to answer some interview questions, with one officer bluntly stating that, "That is a ridiculous question. If my senior was here, she would not put up with you…I'm just not going to answer that question [laughs]" (Fieldwork Notes). Even though I provided officers with the interview questions before the actual interviews, I was still met with scorn. Reiner and Newburn (2008) argue that, when a researcher interviews a sample of officers of dissimilar ranks, particular information cannot be collected from the police since some interviewers are sometimes prevented or silenced from asking questions relating to political opinions. This silencing works to reinforce the

officers' hierarchical positions, that of cultural and symbolical power. Officers are the 'arm of the state'; they represent the state (Reiner and Newburn, 2008). Therefore, some officers were cautious and suspicious of my presence and were wary of what I was going to do with the data collected from the interviews. How was I going to represent their police force, for example? Although the aims of the research were provided to officers, where I outlined that I am interested to learn more about the subject of male rape, the officers' level of suspicion was present all through my time within the field and, according to Reiner and Newburn (2008), researchers experiencing police suspicion is not an uncommon experience.

Consequently, on some occasions, officers would 'stand me up'. That is, after they agreed to do an interview, they would not carry out the interview without informing me of their reasons. I was, therefore, left 'hanging around', waiting for them. Westmarland (2011) establishes that researchers are often made to spend considerable time 'hanging around', waiting to sort out, arrange, and carry out interviews. The feeling of being 'messed around' by the police was something that was frequent during the fieldwork, which suggests that some officers were not 'bothered' about the importance of the research. This feeling of being 'messed around' resulted in the exacerbation of my unhappiness, anxiety, and depression during the research; aspects that Abdullah-Khan (2008) also experienced when researching the policing of male rape. Westmarland (2011) documents that, because researchers are human beings, and the participants they research are human beings, too, researchers inevitably run into ethics and emotions. The police were in a position not only to control the type of information they provided during the interviews had they engaged with the questions, but also controlled my emotions and shaped the ethics of the research.

### 3.4 Sampling, Access and Recruitment

The recruitment strategies used for selecting my research participants were purposive and snowball sampling methods. Purposive sampling enables the researcher to select a case since it exemplifies some process or feature wherein one is interested, and it requires the researcher to critically consider the parameters of the population he is researching (Silverman and Marvasti, 2008). Snowball sampling develops when the researcher asks a contact/participant to introduce him to a potential participant, which

is based on chance meetings (Silverman and Marvasti, 2008). Mason (2002) observes that, in qualitative research, purposive and snowball sampling methods offer flexibility that may be important for sensitive research. On this basis, it can be inferred that flexibility in this doctoral work supports the qualitative research paradigm that forms the conceptual basis on which the research is based.

I employed purposive and snowball sampling methods because they were the most appropriate sampling methods to select state and voluntary agencies that deal with male rape cases, and that then accordingly gave information required to locate other state and voluntary agencies who have had experience of dealing with male rape cases or are dealing with such cases. This means that I selected specific people working in particular state and voluntary agencies because I believed they would provide me with the most appropriate information, since they work very closely with male rape victims on a one-to-one basis. These participants are dedicated to investigating cases of male rape and adult male sexual assault. They take initial and full statements, act as a liaison and support for male rape victims throughout the remainder of the legal procedure, and arrange forensic examinations for the victims. A random selection, therefore, would be inappropriate. It is also impossible to formulate a random sample of state and voluntary agencies that deal with male rape because the population is not only difficult to reach, but also there are not many agencies that deal with male rape in Britain. Therefore, the sample size for this doctoral research is $N = 70$, as this study draws on 25 interviews and 45 qualitative questionnaires, but it should be noted that the aim of this research is to explore the specific, nuanced and detailed experiences of the participants who handle male rape victims, to formulate a thorough understanding of their attitudes toward, and responses to such victims. Deciding on a sample size in qualitative research is reliant upon the aims and research questions, nature and design of the research, and the fundamental philosophical approach taken; and the selection of participants is made on the basis of relevance for the researcher's theory (Edwards and Holland, 2013).

The sample, as such, gives a useful indication of how male rape cases are handled, and it sheds light on the nature and impact of male rape. Given that there are not many voluntary agencies available that provide specific support for male rape victims, it is necessary to conceal the actual names of the voluntary services that were

researched in this study. It was also considered appropriate to mask the names of the police forces because the rape departments in each police force are small and most of the police forces that were researched preferred to have the name of their police force concealed. This was also true for the voluntary agencies that were researched.

Prior to commencing the doctoral research, I already had access to a particular state agency in the North East, having already worked with them and published research on their organisation. As a result, this police force acted as a 'gatekeeper' for this research and introduced me to other police services and voluntary agencies that were interested in participating in my doctoral research. This process allowed for less skepticism and more enthusiasm to partake in the research. The initial point of contact, therefore, was with this particular police force in the North East. After having researched this police force, it was hoped that they would get me access to other police forces and voluntary agencies in Britain. This developed into a snowball sampling strategy, whereby they would pass on my details on to other state and voluntary agencies that they have connections with. I also had connections with several academics specialising in police studies, so they also acted as 'gatekeepers', facilitating access to several police forces in Britain. Moreover, a voluntary agency that was researched first was one based in the North East and acted as a 'gatekeeper' to facilitate access to other voluntary agencies that they have connections with. In addition, before commencing fieldwork, I had connections with academics specialising in voluntary agencies, so such academics also acted as 'gatekeepers' to facilitate access to other voluntary agencies. Despite this recruitment strategy, I also approached the state and voluntary agencies myself through email, describing my doctoral research and the benefits of participating to help increase my sample size. In practice, access is not just established at the outset but is instead a process of continuing explanation and negotiation, i.e., access is an on-going activity (Rowe, 2007).

There are some differences between the voluntary and state agencies. The former tend to have fewer resources available to give a robust service to male rape victims, while the latter have more resources available, although there is a current decline in this due to budgets cuts in the state sector. Voluntary organisations tend to be more relaxed and informal, in which staff members are dressed casually, as opposed to state

organisations where it is more formal, rigid, and the police are noticeable through their police uniform. Generally, I also found that the third sector serve more male rape victims than the state sector. Furthermore, the philosophy of the third and state sector's were different; for instance, the police were more focused on getting a prosecution, whereas the third sector was more concerned with providing a safe space for male rape victims to share their story, providing support and care for them.

I approached 13 police forces and 10 voluntary agencies in Britain, which do not make up the entirety of the British police force and third sector. Ultimately, 5 police forces and 4 voluntary agencies participated in the research. In respect of how many police forces and voluntary agencies declined to take part in this study, 8 police forces and 6 voluntary agencies refused. For the interviews, 15 police officers and 10 practitioners from voluntary agencies took part. For the questionnaires, 38 police officers and 7 practitioners from voluntary agencies filled out, completed and returned them. I ensured that the participants who were interviewed did not also fill out a questionnaire and participants who completed the questionnaire did not also do an interview.

The research participants are diverse in regards to amount of experience handling male rape cases, educational level, ethnic background and training of rape cases. The type of participants include the following: specialist police officers (4); police detectives (4); police constables (34); police sergeants (9); police response officers who are trained to be the first line of response in crime situations (2); male rape counsellors (7); male rape therapists (3); and voluntary agency caseworkers (7). Due to the lack of male rape counsellors, therapists, and caseworkers who deal with male rape victims in Britain, this made it difficult to get an equal representation across various stakeholder groups. The gender of the participants comprises of 33 males and 37 females. The sample is predominately white. Most of the participants are under 40 years of age and are mostly from highly educated and middle-class backgrounds; for example, some had a bachelor's degree.

The respondents provide services for many male rape victims, although they often serve more female rape victims due to the higher number of female rape victims who come forward. On average, the respondents have had around 7 years of experience of

working with male rape victims and male victims of sexual assault. Most of their clients are middle-class men, as the participants stated. Some of my participants had no specialist training on male rape and sexual assault against men, but most had training on female rape and sexual assault against women. The findings from the interviews and questionnaires cannot be generalised to the wider population, so the sample may not necessarily represent the population of state and voluntary agencies that deal with male rape and sexual assault against men. Although all of my participants were English-speaking-people, there was a chance that non-English-speaking-people may have been encountered as eligible participants for my doctoral research. If I had participants in my sample who neither understood nor spoke English very well, I would have ensured that sufficient time was given for explaining each section of the consent form and for the participants to ask questions. I would have also worked with an interpreter to explain intricate topics, and the consent form would have been translated for such participants.

## 3.5 Research Methods and Methodological Paradigms Adopted

### 3.5.1 Adopting a Qualitative Approach

The empirical research adopted a qualitative approach. There was a commitment to seek to comprehend the views of those being researched, and there were also only small numbers of state and voluntary agency workers who have dealt with or deal with male rape victims, so there were not many of these workers available to take part in the research. Therefore, this made the collection of quantitative data problematic. A qualitative approach, consequently, was seen to be appropriate for this research. For Tracy (2013),

> Qualitative research is about immersing oneself in a scene and trying to make sense of it…[for example] during an interview. Qualitative researchers purposefully examine and make note of small cues in order to decide how to behave, as well as to make sense of the context and build larger knowledge claims about the culture…researchers immerse themselves in a culture, investigate the particular circumstances present in that scene, and only then

move toward grander statements and theories. Meaning cannot be divorced from this thick contextual description (p. 3).

Tracey goes further to argue that qualitative research places emphasis on social constructionism, meaning that qualitative researchers attempt to understand their participants' lived reality, which is socially, historically and culturally constructed. Thus, an inductive approach is taken for this doctoral work, in which theories emerge from the data, rather than taking a deductive approach, wherein a hypothesis is developed founded on current theories and then aiming to test such a hypothesis through a research strategy. Adopting an inductive approach was appropriate because the researcher was dedicated to critically exploring the data without the limitations imposed by needing to test theory. This meant that data were examined before thinking about its connection to current knowledge in the subject matter of male sexual victimisation. The researcher's experience of researching male rape and publishing in the subject area, and his awareness of very recent current debates in this area (see, for instance, Javaid, 2016a, b), reflect in the research aims that are set out in section 1.5 of the thesis. There are many benefits of using a qualitative approach, which commonly get used alongside an inductive approach, for this project. Tracy (2013: 5) outlines some of the salient benefits of qualitative research. For example, qualitative research:

- is rich and holistic;
- offers more than a snapshot – provides understanding of a sustained process;
- focuses on lived experience, placed in its context;
- honors participants' local meanings;
- can help explain, illuminate, or reinterpret quantitative data;
- interprets participant viewpoints and stories;
- preserves the chronological flow, documenting what events lead to what consequences, and explaining *why* this chronology may have occurred;
- celebrates how research representations (reports, articles, performances) constitute reality and affect the questions we can ask

and what we can know;

- illustrates how a multitude of interpretations are possible, but how some are more theoretically compelling, morally significant, or practically important than others.

(Emphasis in original).

Tracy rightly argues that qualitative research aims to explore the 'why' in research usually through asking questions, generating rich, detailed and contextual answers that provide meaning to help examine the 'why'. For my project, I attempted to understand my participants' stories, views and attitudes regarding the conception of male sexual victimisation, so that I can make sense of the phenomenon of male rape from the state and third sectors' perspectives. The qualitative approach also helped me to comprehend the roots of my participants' answers, so where do their views and attitudes stem from? Therefore, using a qualitative approach to study the topic of male rape helped to reveal the nuanced, detailed, specific and in-depth information regarding male rape from the discourse of professionals handling male rape cases. These professionals, thereby, can provide such information in a rich and detailed way in which a quantitative approach cannot. It was felt that a qualitative approach would be better suited to explore state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape in a detailed, rich, sensitive, and meticulous way when researching the sensitive nature of male rape. A quantitative approach, although it could have provided information about the extent and prevalence of male rape, would not have provided the knowledge regarding the nature, effects, interpretations and understandings of male rape that were more closely aligned with my research aims.

Using various and multiple questions within the two research methods increased the theoretical value of this research, revealing issues and conceptions relating to male rape that the use of one research method alone may have overlooked. Arguably, the quality of such meaning cannot be gained with a quantitative approach. Each set of data could be examined and used to interpret the other by getting data from the two different research methods. This is important to do when there may be some incomplete answers or unanswered questions (Jupp, 1989). Indeed, in some of the questionnaires, some questions were partially filled out or completely ignored, so the semi-structured interviews helped to supplement such questions. This was also true

for when some interview questions were partially answered; the questionnaires helped to supplement, or add to the interview questions that the participants partly answered.

A comparative research design is the foundation for this qualitative research because I intended to study two contrasting cases: state and voluntary agencies. The decision to use this research design was made, in part, on pragmatic grounds of the lack of resources to collect data across a wide range of agencies and institutions. The aim of the comparative research design was to seek explanations for similarities and differences in the management of male rape cases within state and voluntary agencies; similarly, to gain a greater awareness and a deeper understanding of how state and voluntary agencies respectively deal with male rape cases, so comparisons can be made between these two cases. Therefore, the findings are intended to make a small contribution to theory, rather than to be generalised to other state and voluntary agencies that may be operating in very different circumstances.

### 3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

In qualitative research, semi-structured interviews are the most common method of data collection (Jamshed, 2014). This form of interview in qualitative research is in-depth, in that the respondents are requested to respond to prearranged, open-ended questions (ibid.). Through the use of semi-structured interviews, which were audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher, the research attempted to unravel the adequacy of the participants in meeting male rape victims' needs and to explore any male rape myths that might have been present in such participants' attitudes and views. Semi-structured interviews with male rape counsellors/therapists; voluntary agency workers; Sexual Offences Investigation Trained (SOIT) officers; Specially Trained Officers (STOs); rank and file officers, who were situated in Britain, were conducted at either the participants' workplace or mine to further ascertain male rape victims' needs as well as the impact that rape has on male victims. A total of 25 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Each semi-structured interview approximately lasted around 1 hour, giving enough time for me to form trust and rapport with my participants. This interview technique frequently led to fruitful discussions regarding male rape and gave insight into the participants' attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, views, and responses to it that could not have been anticipated with closed-ended questions

in surveys. I ensured that everyone in the agencies that I researched was aware that I was a researcher, who was conducting research. This was done by putting up the information sheet around the organisations, such as on notice boards, in the communal area, and so on; thereby, people who came in and out of the organisations were made clearly aware of the research and my role as a researcher. This ensured that this research was fully overt.

The semi-structured interviews were appropriate to use because they easily captured the officers and male rape counsellors/therapists' beliefs, thoughts, views, and attitudes of male rape. This interview technique gave knowledge regarding the workings and experiences of the research participants who deal with male rape cases, so I could examine the competence of the participants. The interviews were an appropriate method of data collection also because some of the research aims needed the critical exploration of personal narratives of the processes by which participants handle male rape cases and victims, and the changes that they had observed whilst employed within the sectors. The interviews helped to ascertain the nature and impact of rape on men's lives and the adequacy of service provisions. The interviews were semi-structured to ensure that similar areas were covered in every interview. For example, in the interviews, certain questions about male rape myths were asked, and topics of discussion included issues pertaining to the participants' perceptions of male rape and responses to male rape victims. The interview questions/topics allowed me to consider the ways in which male rape is conceptualised and understood in state and voluntary agencies. The detailed and textual types of information that can be generated from semi-structured interviews make it a viable tool for the qualitative researcher (Jamshed, 2014). From a qualitative conceptual framework, semi-structured interviews enabled me to collect in-depth information that could be analysed to help explain and understand the grassroots of my participants' views and perspectives. For the qualitative researcher, semi-structured interviews are flexible and have a lack of strict structure (Edwards and Holland, 2013), which helped to create a more informal, conversational, fluid and comfortable interactive process for my participants and me. This interactive approach supports the qualitative conceptual framework, in that understandings and meanings are produced in interactions, which includes the production and reproduction of knowledge (Mason, 2002). In effect, coproducing knowledge in this way results in equality in the research relationship

between the respondent and researcher (Edwards and Holland, 2013).

The semi-structured interview method is, however, inherently limited in the type of information that can be generated; for instance, it only gathers data in respect of what the interviewee tells the researcher about their social world (Bryman, 2016). Thus, the interview data that were collected only contain information that the agency workers chose to impart. Moreover, the semi-structured interview method relied on respondents' memories to accurately and precisely recall past experiences of handling male rape cases. Human memory, though, can be distorted and is open to change and, due to its malleability, it can be unreliable (Loftus, 2003), so my participants' actual experiences of dealing with male rape cases may have been difficult to accurately and precisely recall. To help the participants share their story with me without feeling discomfort, I stated that my interest in their experiences of handling male rape cases was from a non-judgmental standpoint, and the importance of the research on such a neglecting phenomenon was highlighted. The interview questions and topics helped the researcher to identify any misguided beliefs, male rape myths, and homophobia held by the research participants; they also helped the researcher to recognise if the participants were entirely informed of the problems of, and connected to male rape.

### 3.5.3 Qualitative Questionnaires

Qualitative questionnaires were disseminated to the police and voluntary agencies that were situated in Britain to assess understanding of male rape. The prevalence of male rape myths in 5 police forces was explored using the questionnaire of police attitudes and experiences of male rape cases. The qualitative questionnaires were also disseminated to 4 voluntary agencies that deal with male rape. I created two different types of qualitative questionnaires to consider the voluntary and police organisations' different and respective roles; one questionnaire was specifically designed for the voluntary organisations and one for the police forces. The questionnaires were disseminated to explore the prevalence of myths and misconceptions about male rape among police officers, male rape counsellors, male rape therapists, and voluntary agency caseworkers. In total, 45 qualitative questionnaires out of 80 were filled out, completed and returned.

The qualitative questionnaires disseminated to several police forces that cover urban areas and to voluntary agencies helped to ascertain the ways in which misconceptions and discriminatory views and perspectives feed into their practice, influencing the type of service delivery given to male rape victims. The questionnaires were important to disseminate because, "regardless of their own professionalism, [male rape myths] will inevitably have an impact on the way they perceive and subsequently deal with male victims" (Abdullah-Khan, 2002: 20). The qualitative questionnaires, in short, aimed to understand and examine state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape.

The questionnaires began with demographic questions. Then, they benefited from combining a series of open and closed questions, but predominately included open-ended questions. The closed questions would identify if the respondents had thought about, or were aware of the issues pertinent to male rape and would serve to identify specific aspects of these issues, while open questions would give an indication of general feelings about male rape. Therefore, the participants' reasons for their views and opinions about male rape could be examined by including both closed and open questions, which in turn helped to keep the responses in context while potentially increasing the accuracy of the responses. Including both closed and open questions gave a degree of flexibility to the qualitative questionnaires. According to Edwards and Holland (2013), flexibility is key to, and the basis of qualitative research. Within qualitative research, qualitative questionnaires can provide rich qualitative data because open-ended questions encourage responses that include stories from people's own experiences, history and biography (Adamson et al., 2004). As a result, I felt that the qualitative questionnaires were in sync with the qualitative conceptual framework, in that they provided a fruitful way in which to investigate male rape and provided triggers to contested or difficult issues embedded in the topic of male rape. They were also adaptable in the sense that the participants could fill them out in their own time, with the participants in control of the flow in responses, giving them greater scope to think through the questions asked. In turn, time for reflection and consideration encourage more well thought out and descriptive answers (Adamson et al., 2004). The response rate of questionnaires can be low (Edwards et al., 2002), which is why I disseminated the questionnaires to many police forces and voluntary agencies in order to increase the sample size and subsequently the chances of getting a high response

rate. The participants could have misled the researcher or withheld knowledge in the questionnaires. Questionnaires are associated with higher levels of incomplete or missing responses (Smeeth et al., 2001). This sometimes occurred; for instance, in some of the qualitative questionnaires, some questions were either ignored or partially filled out. I sent the questionnaires to the agencies myself as soon as ethical approval was granted to ensure that they were safely passed on to the agencies, and it was hoped that the participants would fill out the questionnaires at their work place. Once completed, I then asked if the participants would prefer to post them to me or to email me back the questionnaires. I asked each organisation to complete the questionnaires as soon as possible. Occasional reminders were sent through email.

## 3.6 Data Analysis

The qualitative findings were transcribed and reviewed by the researcher. Several supervision meetings were held to discuss initial impressions of the data. Analysis of the present data was guided by the main research question and sub-questions (see section 1.3). To answer these research questions, I drew on thematic analysis. Thematic analysis requires the researcher to recognise themes or patterns appearing out of qualitative data (Braun and Clark, 2006). There was a concern to recognise differences and commonalities in the views and experiences of the participants. The researcher followed thematic analysis with thematic coding where codes/labels were placed onto segments of the data that looked important. Each transcript was read and reread by the researcher while noting down some initial codes and labels on the transcripts before transcripts were imported into the data analysis software NVIVO 10 for final coding. A stage of coding involved the analysis of sentences and words for common themes, concepts, and patterns across the data set (see coding framework and thematic maps in Appendix 8 and Appendix 9 respectively). Analysing the data focused around organising the dissimilar concepts, conceptions and themes that developed from the data, not just on putting masses of data into order.

Thematic analysis was adopted because it helped to understand the participants' lived experiences of handling male rape cases in a detailed way, which this type of qualitative analytical approach accommodates. Therefore, verbatim transcripts were read, usually line by line, and key phrases and words were highlighted within the

procedure of 'open coding', whereby the researcher drew out key concepts, conceptions and themes using real examples from the text. Verbatim quotes are used in the empirical chapters to illustrate the points made. Braun and Clark (2006) express that thematic analysis provides a flexible, useful, and an accessible way in which to analyse qualitative data, so it can possibly give a detailed and rich account of data.

Thematic analysis provided a detailed understanding of male rape, its nature and impact, and state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to it. In the analysis chapters, I aim to convey the data in a coherent and easy-to-read way, with complete accuracy without losing the richness, breadth and quality of the data. To help me do this, the type of analysis that was carried out included both semantic and latent analyses, which were useful methods to use in order to research an under-researched area, that is, male sexual victimisation.

> With a semantic approach, the themes are identified within the explicit or surface meanings of the data and the analyst is not looking for anything *beyond* what a participant has said or what has been written … the analytic process involves a progression from *description*, where the data have … been organised to show patterns in semantic content, and summarised, to *interpretation*, where there is an attempt to theorise the significance of the patterns and their broader meanings and implications … often in relation to previous literature … a thematic analysis at the latent level goes beyond the semantic content of the data, and starts to identify or examine the *underlying* ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations—and ideologies— that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data (Braun and Clark, 2006: 13. Italics in original).

My reasons for using both semantic and latent types of analysis on a continuum are because this project sought to describe, explain and critically evaluate the surface of my data, so that the reader becomes aware of important and predominant themes pertaining to male sexual victimisation that emerged from my data, such as the issue of under-reporting of male rape. The themes that I recognise, code and critically examine are an accurate representation of the context of my data. This developed into a semantic type of analysis. I also adopted a latent type of analysis because I wanted

to distinguish the complexity and depth of my data, as well as providing a rich description of the data, such as explaining how police and voluntary agencies' attitudes are formed, seeking to recognise the factors that shape their attitudes and responses toward male sexual victimisation. What factors influence their attitudes and responses? Exploring hegemonic masculinity and the gender expectations of men were important to give a more nuanced and detailed account of certain themes in the data, which helped to make sense of how their attitudes and responses get shaped. Understanding their attitudes, assumptions, ideas and meanings that underpinned their responses to male rape was key. For example, I understand and explain my participants' stories in relation to gender stereotypes and norms, connecting their descriptions to sociological, cultural and poststructural studies.

While I drew on thematic analysis as my preferred analytical approach, there were other analytical approaches, such as narrative analysis and grounded research, with which to analyze the qualitative data. Grounded theory is very similar to thematic analysis particularly regarding its procedures for coding from data or for coding themes (Braun and Clark, 2006), in that it requires one to produce categories and codes, gathering themes from these, and then producing theory in relation to the participants' experiences and understandings (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). For Strauss and Corbin (1998), however, grounded theory should only be used in very specific circumstances in which to create 'new' theoretical frameworks or theory, and, using grounder theory requires one to use "a *systematic set of procedures* to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: 24; emphasis added). To do grounded theory, one has to follow a strict and rigid set of procedures and rules to analyze qualitative data, but it was felt that this limited the scope, freedom and flexibility to analyze my qualitative data, and the aims of the project were not to systematically build an extensive and over-arching brand 'new' model or theory as such, but rather to draw on current theoretical frameworks, such as post-structuralism, hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity, to elucidate and make sense of the collected qualitative data. Thematic analysis, thus, was more appropriate and offered greater flexibility and movement to analyze the data.

Relatedly, before starting the study, using grounded theory to analyze data typically means that the sample is unknown, unrecognised or non-defined (Bryman, 2016) until

the data collection process/fieldwork (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). If, however, the sample was defined and determined at the start of the project, thematic analysis is more appropriate and ideal (Bryman, 2016), which was fitting with my approach given that, at the start of the project, I knew that I wanted to research the sample of police officers and voluntary agency practitioners considering that the aims of the project and the research questions hint that this is the sample that I will be focusing on and researching in depth from the inception of the research project as opposed to the data collection stage.

Another analytical approach that could have been adopted to analyze the qualitative data was narrative analysis. It requires the researcher to regard stories as knowledge that forms, as Etherington (2000) argues, the social reality of the narrator. These stories are gained from participants through qualitative research methods, such as interviews, ethnography, and so on, given that human beings are storytellers (Plummer, 1995). They tell stories of the different worlds in which others position them in or they position themselves in. Such stories are messy, different, conflicting, and are socially and culturally situated knowledge (Plummer, 1995). The use of narrative analyses offers a way in which to focus on the 'content' of stories and/or the 'meaning', depending on the aims of one's project. Whilst there are many important similarities between thematic and narrative analysis, it was felt that thematic analysis was appropriate to use to closely fulfil the aims of the research given that themes and concepts were salient features throughout this project. The researcher also found narrative analysis a bit more complex than thematic analysis, which was much easier to use in order to recognise similarities and differences across participants' views; identifying (in)consistencies in the data sets were important to achieve the research aims more specifically. On balance, thematic analysis offered diversity, flexibility, and it was easier to employ than both grounded theory and narrative analysis.

However, there are some important limitations to thematic analysis, but I attempted to overcome these challenges. For example, thematic analysis was very time consuming, which took some focus away from writing and reading for the project. The skill of multi-tasking, then, was useful to overcome this weakness. The themes also needed to be checked over and evaluated to make sure they represent the whole of the text, so it was important that my supervisors had checked over the themes to ensure that they

were validated in the early and late stages of data analysis. Their feedback in relation to the themes were useful to help build reliability and validity in themes analysis coding. Consequently, I was better informed of any potential conflicting results regarding any themes. Bryman (2016) argues that validation and quality enhancements should be done in the early stages of the research, so the themes were consistently checked as soon as it was feasible to do so in the early stages. There was also an issue that thematic analysis could have overlooked context when analysing the data. To overcome this challenge, I ensured that I transcribed accurately and precisely, despite it being time consuming; I also ensured that when analysing the data, I had carefully organised the different themes and kept them in their contexts.

From the data, I was in a position to examine the participants' accounts and to explore several accounts that were based on discrimination, homophobia, sexism, and so on. Therefore, on the one hand, some accounts were seen as unreliable or invalid simply because they were discriminatory and perpetuated pernicious myths and inequalities. I disagreed with these accounts given my educational background as a trained sociologist, who supports and maintains diversity, equality, and acceptance and who draws on research evidence that had clearly contradicted some participants' accounts, which made me suspicious of their accounts. As Song (1998) states,

> Although I would argue that the researcher's access to certain lines of inquiry and knowledge may be limited in many interview situations, this does not mean that researchers cannot 'go with' their sense of scepticism, or query arguments and lines of thought which do not seem convincing or are blatantly contradictory (p. 112).

On the other hand, other accounts were more valid because they were non-discriminatory and challenged male rape myths. The research evidence also supported these types of positive accounts, which arguably enhanced the validity and reliability of these accounts. Thus, I tended to agree with these accounts more so than the negative accounts about male rape that were unsupported by the research evidence and were grounded in clear discrimination and prejudice.

## 3.7 Structure of Empirical Findings

The empirical findings from this research are critically explored in light of the critical literature review (chapter 2). The following empirical chapters will test the dissimilar male rape myths that have been found in previous literature that have been drawn on in chapter 2. The empirical findings will either support or contradict previous theory and literature on male rape. The following empirical findings will be separated in to three thematic chapters: chapter 4 presents "Gender and Sexualities: Hegemonic Masculinity and its Relevance to Male Rape", using theoretical frameworks, such as hegemonic masculinity, to discuss particular themes that have emerged from the data relating to gender and sexualities; chapter 5 presents concepts and themes pertaining to "Social Constructions of Male Rape in the Cultural World of Policing", to consider the different ways in which the police deal with male rape victims and to examine police attitudes and opinions regarding male rape from a sociological and poststructural perspective; finally, chapter 6 presents themes in respect of "Social and Cultural Constructions of Male Rape in Voluntary Agencies", in order to examine the voluntary services and their attitudes and responses that are directed toward male rape victims, and to consider the constructions of male rape in voluntary services. The following empirical chapters will be based on the research questions presented in section 1.3 and research aims outlined in 1.5. The quotes used in the following empirical chapters come from the semi-structured interviews and qualitative questionnaires.

**Chapter 4: Gender and Sexualities: Hegemonic Masculinity and its Relevance to Male Rape—Findings and Discussion (Part 1)**

**4.0 Introduction**

In almost every single data set, there appeared a theme, concept or conception associated with gender and sexualities. Therefore, this chapter will draw on recurring themes founded on gender and sexualities, using hegemonic, subordinated, marginalised and complicit masculinities as sociological theoretical frameworks to elucidate such themes and to throw light on the ways in which gender and sexualities norms and beliefs shape understandings and views of adult male rape. Linked to this aim, this chapter will engage with these masculinities that are configurations of practice. It is significant to engage with these masculinities because, by doing so, one can understand how male rape victims can (and do) engage in different configurations in dissimilar settings, contexts and situations. Engaging with different forms of masculinities and comparing them with hegemonic masculinity is important because my data and other research evidence suggest that male rape victims embody a subordinate form of masculinity, challenging and contradicting hegemonic masculinity and the social ideal of gender. This chapter will also engage with notions of sexualities in terms of examining the ways in which hegemonic configurations of masculinity exclude practices associated with femininity. The expectation of hegemonic masculinity shapes state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape victims. Understanding these attitudes and responses through a gender lens will unveil how and in which ways male victims of rape are perceived, treated, responded to and talked about. To this end, I provide primary data involving the discourse of state and voluntary agencies on the subject matter of male sexual victimisation. This chapter has five main sections:

- Section one provides an analysis of masculinities, gender expectations and male rape collectively. It draws on hegemonic, subordinated, marginalised and complicit masculinities, developed by Connell (2005), to make sense of the primary data;

- Section two critically engages with notions of sexualities and male rape, using the concepts of heteronormativity (Jackson, 2005) and the social construction of sexualities to make sense of male sexual victimisation;

- Section three presents the complexities and difficulties of reporting male rape, with the assistance of gender and sexualities theories and concepts to help understand such difficulties;

- Section four critically discusses ideas of vulnerability and how these link in with male rape discourse, gender and sexualities; and

- Section five provides possible explanations for male rape, placing it in certain contexts, such as in patriarchal and hate crime/homophobic violence frameworks.

## 4.1 Masculinities, Gender Expectations, and Male Rape

### 4.1.1 'Men Cannot be Raped': Male Rape Challenging Men's Masculinity

Masculinities are not a biological fixed category (see Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007), but rather represent different ways that men 'do' gender. Therefore, masculinities are best thought of as plural, changing, and not static (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005), or as a sociological theory that understands gender as a relational model (Connell, 1987; Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2003). West and Zimmerman (1987) and Connell (2005) argue that, through gender and power relations, masculinities are formed, relational and so we 'do' gender in culturally specific manners that are normatively appropriate in a given context and setting, but this 'local' setting culture is also influenced by wider national and global cultures. 'Doing' gender, then, indicates that gender is a display, meaning that masculinity is enacted differently depending on the context, setting, environment, and situation in which one situates. Gender is always ongoing, accomplishing, and configuring; it is a social practice, indeed, a "*process* of configuring practice" (Connell, 2005: 72. Emphasis in original). This ideology leads Connell to develop a theory of masculinities that comprises of four different masculinities that are hierarchical. These are practices that men move within and without or are positioned in by others,

that work together to reinforce and differentiate each other: hegemonic masculinity; subordinate masculinity; complicit masculinity; and marginalised masculinity. She stresses that we need to examine the relationship between these masculinities.

Hegemonic masculinity practices allow people who embody them to maintain advantageous positions in many aspects of everyday life. In doing so, such practices create and legitimate unequal relationships between men and women, and between men with power and with those men without power (or lack of), giving certain men a dominant place in the gender hierarchy in contrast to women and 'other(ed)' men (see Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Such hegemonic configurations can be enacted collectively or individually; they are often not consciously enacted and are embedded in social structures in ways that then facilitate and constrain particular configurations of practice. Subordinate masculinity, which is particularly important to consider in the context of male rape, relates to the subordination of gay men though it does not just relate to gay men because other men can be subordinated by hegemonic configurations in certain contexts; but it is through a display of material practices where gay men are subordinated to heterosexual men, resulting in cultural ramifications, such as abuse, violence and rejection. Homosexual men can (and do), however, enact hegemonic configurations of practice at times. Complicit masculinity refers to men who do not enact hegemonic masculinity practices. As many men are not able to achieve hegemonic masculinity, most men will however benefit from the inherent power associated with the way that hegemonic configurations of practice become embedded within social structures. Connell calls this the patriarchal dividend, meaning "the advantage men in general gain from the overall subordination of women" and these men are also referred to as embodying a "slacker [version] of hegemonic masculinity" (2005: 79). Thus, "[m]en who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity" (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 832). The final social construction of masculinities is referred to as marginalised masculinity, which explains men who are possibly situated authoritatively regarding gender though are relegated in respect of physical stature, class, or race. For example, ethnic minority and black masculinities are often marginalised to the leading 'superior' white race. These four masculinities are configurations of practices, shaped by social and cultural contexts.

With Connell's theoretical framework in mind, male rape victims are often placed at the bottom of the gender hierarchy (Lees, 1997; Weiss, 2010; Turchik and Edwards, 2012; Javaid, 2014c, 2015b; Ferrales et al., 2016). Male rape victims embody a subordinate form of masculinity; they are oppressed, relegated and made subordinate for not achieving hegemonic masculinity. In other words, men are not expected to be a victim or a rape victim. Men, in particular, have been shown to be more likely to perpetuate this expectation and myth compared to women (Chapleau et al., 2008). This idea that male rape inverts, negates and undermines men's masculinity is reaffirmed here within the views of both statutory and third sector respondents as seen in the following quotes:

> [I]t's still the issues I think about…how males perceive their masculinity as being affected by male rape. That's not something to actually happen to men…they may question themselves about their masculinity…as a man, you don't expect to be attacked like that (Specialist Police Officer 3, Female).

> I think it [male rape] links to hegemonic masculinity. This idea that they [male rape victims] might be seen as less of a man (Police Detective 1, Female).

> Victims will be reluctant to undergo the full legal process born from fear [of] people perceiving them as weak or less of a man (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 2, Male).

> I feel [it has] got to do with that particular offense regarding men [male rape], and…the masculinity is undermined, if you like (Police Sergeant 1, Male).

> [T]here is an expectation in our society for men to be masculine and have more aggression than women so to speak. This could be where they might struggle, coming to terms with the expectations of their friends and family and of society with what they should do in that situation [male rape], in comparison to what is expected of women (Police Constable 11, Female).

This [male rape] appears to still be a taboo subject. And also males have more 'pride' and always wish to appear strong and masculine. This crime could leave them feeling weak and unmasculine (Police Response Officer 2, Female).

Because you're a man, you are expected to 'man up'….The police would expect a man to be a 'man' and to be masculine and dominant (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

I feel there is...judgment on their...masculinity (Police Sergeant 2, Female).

It's to do with their masculinity….A lot of men will see it [male rape] as a slur on their…masculinity (Police Sergeant 3, Female).

Some men may feel that it's [male rape] an attack on their masculinity…it may hurt their pride and masculinity (Police Constable 23, Male).

They [men] are threatened by another type of masculinity or a masculinity that they don't understand, and I think it's linked to penetration as well…in general in culture and sex, women are seen to be penetrated. So if a man is penetrated, whether that is consensual or not, it makes him almost seem like a woman. It's difficult for men to understand, it's almost an inbuilt misogyny (Male Rape Therapist 2, Male).

These excerpts raise the issue of gender expectations of men and the configurations or representations of masculinity that men are expected to embody, including male rape victims. They are represented and expected to act as strong, powerful, tough, dominant, and in control. These quotes strongly suggest that male rape questions the ability of these men to practice hegemonic configurations of masculinity and thereby challenges their sense of self as what it means to be a 'man'. The quotes suggest that society does not expect men to be rape victims (it is important to bear in mind that police officers and voluntary agency practitioners are a part of society), and that the act of male rape challenges male rape victims' views of what it is to be a man (that is, their masculinity) and causes problems in how they manage their masculinity. Male

rape challenging male rape victims' masculinity has several implications. For example, they may withdraw from society, they may be reluctant to engage with the criminal justice system, or they may struggle to come to terms with their subordinate masculinity, as hegemonic masculinity is difficult for them to embody having been a victim of a crime that is still often seen as affecting the female population.

Male rape victims can, however, "adopt hegemonic masculinity when it is desirable; but the same men can distance themselves strategically from hegemonic masculinity at other moments" (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 841). This suggests that male rape victims may be able to draw on hegemonic configurations of practice as well as being positioned at other times in subordinated configurations, depending on social structures, social context and social practices. In the context of male rape, it could be argued that male rape victims suffer a 'crisis of masculinity' for not being powerful, strong, and invulnerable, and, therefore, being positioned as unmasculine after their masculinity is 'stripped' away. When I say 'crisis', I mean that male rape victims' masculinity becomes questionable and contested. There is a form of 'existential angst' experienced when what they thought was a certain or secure identity becomes unstable, which may induce experiences and practices of subordinate masculinity, feminisation, and lack of power.

My data suggest that men are expected to be unemotional, masculine, stoic, powerful, strong, aggressive and invulnerable, and certainly not expected to be a victim of rape. Male rape, however, clearly threatens the social norm of masculinity, as my own findings suggest. As a result, the police may perpetuate negative judgments against those men who have 'failed' as men. As Police Response Officer 1 (Male) describes, "The police see male rape victims as failed men, not 'real' men". By men not enacting hegemonic masculinity configurations and becoming rape victims, they are feminised, as Male Rape Therapist 2 (Male) commented: "if a man is penetrated…it makes him almost seem like a woman." It could be argued that male rape victims who are emasculated and feminised may draw in negative views, attitudes and responses, may be negatively sanctioned, and made 'abnormal' by other men, including men working in state and voluntary agencies.

It could be problematic if men (also women since, relationally, women can also enact hegemonic social practices and patterns of behavior (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005)) working in state and voluntary agencies position male rape victims in subordinate masculinities because service delivery may then be denied or inadequate. Consequently, this could make male rape even more of a 'hidden' phenomenon and foster classifying male rape victims as 'undeserving' victims because of their being positioned (much of the time) in configurations of practice other than hegemonic ones, which are divergent to the dominant and leading hegemonic masculinity in the hierarchy of masculinities. It is apparent that hegemonic masculinity is embedded in state and voluntary organisations as, "At the local level, hegemonic patterns of masculinity are embedded in specific social environments, such as formal organizations" (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 839). This suggests that power flows through state and voluntary organisations, meaning that they may *unconsciously* label male rape victims as 'undeserving' or as not 'real' victims, not worthy of protection and adequate treatment. The notion of 'undeserving' or not 'real' rape victims prevails because male rape victims (unconsciously) undermine and disrupt the power and authority of the gender order. This notion of 'undeserving' or not 'real' rape victims is echoed in the following quotes:

> If you think about the idea of the deserving and undeserving victims, I think that [male rape victims] are almost attributed by the state as this undeserving victim label, so it is much harder for those victims to be heard and to have their complaint be deemed as a credible complaint....Why do we always begin with a stamp like that with these victims who shouldn't be believed, because it turns the whole criminal justice system on its head....But this idea that, if you're an undeserving victim, then it takes so much more for the police to believe you. I think that male rape is one of those areas that is really hard for people to understand...so the police might be more inclined to think it's made up (Police Detective 1, Female).

> I think it's the fear and the machismo..."that would never happen to me" kind of thing in our culture, you don't really discuss it [male rape] in a real way in the police and the voluntary sector (Male Rape Therapist 3, Male).

These passages suggest that male rape victims are compartmentalised as 'undeserving' of victim status by many in statutory ('the state') services or, similarly, are conceptualised as not 'real' rape victims because they are men. Richardson and May (1999) demonstrate that violence, such as sexual violence, is socially constructed and defined differently across people. How people come to define and construct sexual violence, then, is largely shaped by interactional and social contexts wherein it is framed and by social traits of the victim. Unconsciously classifying male rape victims as 'undeserving' of victim status and as not 'real' victims, based on how rape is socially and culturally constructed at certain historical moments, is problematic. This is because these victims may be disbelieved and may be seen as not credible complainants, while the male rape myths that "male rape does not exist" or "men cannot be raped" may be perpetuated in state and voluntary agencies.

### 4.1.2 "'Real' Men can Defend Themselves"

It is fair to say that men are expected, as my data suggest, to deal with potential threats or actual occurrences of rape. To avoid rape, then, they are expected to fight off their attacker(s) to demonstrate hegemonic masculinity not only to themselves, but also to other men, including their attacker(s). Warding off rape in this way, arguably, enables these men to enhance their masculinity and to prevent disbelieving, hostile and homophobic attitudes and responses from societies and from state and voluntary agencies. This notion of 'fighting back' was strongly present in the data:

> [B]y not viciously fighting off their attacker, they [male rape victims] might be seen as engaging in a consensual act (Police Detective 1, Female).

> It's all that sort of laddism, isn't it? The way they'll be viewed by their friends and all the questions about "why didn't you fight back" (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

> [O]ne of [the] responses are "why you don't fight back" [sic]. There is an automatic narrative, and being empathic and all, but…still way imperfect (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

[T]he guy [rape victim] is weak or submissive…[male rape victims] are likely to be physically or mentally weaker than the perpetrator of the act (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 2, Male).

I think the male victim's struggle in their minds that they were not able to fight off their attacker….Depending on the circumstances of the rape may well cast aspersions as to the stereotypical ideas that male rape covers i.e., "Why didn't they fight them off?" (Police Constable 4, Female).

Some men have a difficulty getting beyond the Macho [sic] attitude that they should have prevented this happening or even put up a fight (Police Constable 8, Male).

A lot of the males I have worked with have…been asked why they didn't fight back (expectation that men are strong) and categorically been told "you must have got it wrong, men can't get raped". Male victims can (not always) struggle with the emotional fallout from sexual assault. There is a pressure that many report feeling from those around them that they should be strong (not show emotion) and not talk about it because the assault makes them look weak (Male Rape Counsellor 7, Female).

[V]ictims of rape should fight back (Police Constable 7, Female).

[I]f [rapists] find someone…[victims] have a way of fighting back (Police Constable 11, Female).

[Male rape victims] should have fought back (Police Sergeant 2, Female).

He didn't fight back, he must have wanted it (Police Sergeant 3, Female).

[Men are] more likely to fight back than a female (Police Constable 20, Female).

[A] male/male may be physically similar (Police Constable 23, Male).

[Male rape victims] think that they will be looked upon as being weak by the police, but why didn't they fight their attacker? (Police Constable 25, Female).

I say to the male rape victims, "Why didn't you stop them from raping you?" I would have [fought back] (Male Rape Therapist 3, Male).

These excerpts suggest that the male rape myths that '"real" men can defend themselves against rape' or 'men are expected to always fight back' are present not only in societies, but also in state and third sectors that serve male rape victims. Groth and Burgess (1980) and Chapleau et al. (2008) support this, arguing that men are always expected to protect themselves if/when threatened with rape. Chapleau et al. go on to argue that '[people] will judge male rape victims harshly for not being "man enough" to escape a sexual assault and, if assaulted, expect male victims to quickly reclaim their manhood and deny that the assault was traumatic' (p. 604-605). Turchik and Edwards (2012) argue that these male rape myths render, in part, male rape to be unchallenged, untackled and render male rape victims to be uncared for. Toxic and harmful gender expectations of men and preconceptions, such as "victims of rape should fight back" and "[male rape victims] are likely to be physically or mentally weaker than the perpetrator of the act" (see findings above), can provide a disservice to male rape victims, perpetuating patriarchy and reinforcing gender norms and ideals. As male rape myths such as these appear to dominate the state and third sectors, male rape victims are likely to be actively unacknowledged and are likely to remain 'invisible', alienated and marginalised (Turchik and Edwards, 2012). Perpetuating these male rape myths, which may induce victim-blaming attitudes (Walker et al., 2005; Chapleau et al., 2008; Rumney, 2009) or homophobia (Kassing et al, 2005), ignores that many male rape victims are unable to fight off their offender(s) at the time of their rape because of fear, intimidation, and control. For instance, in Gregory and Lees' (1999: 116) research, while finding that "male complainants were particularly anxious if they had not resisted, which they feared would lead people to assume they had colluded", they also found that many male rape victims cannot fight off their attacker(s) because "[t]he threat of violence [is] usually sufficient to gain compliance" (ibid.: 121). (This also applies to female rape victims.)

If male rape victims do not fight back, there is a risk that they may be seen as partaking in consensual sex, having "wanted it", and/or having failed in their duty as 'men'. In other words, they may be seen as weak, powerless, pathological, and not 'real' men, as my findings suggest. In addition, some authors add that a feminine identity is enforced onto male rape victims (e.g., Turchik and Edwards, 2012; Ferrales et al., 2016) for not demonstrating hegemonic masculinity during their rape. In this context, there is an expectation, recognised by statutory and voluntary agencies, for male rape victims to embody hegemonic masculinity, enacting physical resistance, aggression, strength, courage, bravery, power and dominance, by fighting off (or at least attempting to) their sexual offender(s). Submitting to their rape and complying with their attacker(s), however, are inconsistent to the hegemonic and heterosexual masculine ideal, as they are more aligned with female gendered norms of submissiveness and being a passive (sexual) recipient. Despite this, men can reclaim back their hegemonic masculinity by fighting back if successful (Messerschmidt, 2000), such as against their sexual offender(s), which may prevent subsequent negative attitudes, responses and sanctions directed toward male rape victims. By doing so, these victims can show not only to themselves, but also to other people and to other men that they are 'man enough' to deal with situations by themselves without any help or support since a 'real' man is obligated to respond in this way (ibid.). Carrying out self-reliance, independence, strength, power, violence, and aggression may, therefore, allow male rape victims to reclaim back their hegemonic masculinity while potentially preventing stigma and derogatory labels, such as "queers", "wimps" or "pussies".

From my data, there was also a belief that all men "may be physically similar". This view could be problematic because males come in many different sizes, shapes, and weights, whereas this view generalises all males/men as being similar and as a fixed inherent category. It is safe to argue that the male rape myth "men are expected to fight off their rapist" may be prevalent in state and voluntary agencies, despite it being pernicious to male rape victims' lives. Thus, because "male rape myths are embedded within our language, across all institutions, the words chosen to describe rape victims…such as [using] feminine pronouns, can have a negative impact on male victims and contribute to the promotion of rape myths" (Turchik and Edwards, 2012: 221). While sexism and male rape myth acceptance may be high in state and

voluntary agencies and in societies, men rather than women are more likely to be sexist and to subscribe to male rape myths (Chapleau et al., 2008), including male police officers and male practitioners working in the third sector. Thus, it appears that men may convey sexist attitudes toward other men, notably male rape victims, who are deemed an anomaly for deviating from gender norms and ideals.

### 4.1.3 'Women Cannot Rape or Sexually Assault Men'

Another finding that emerged from the data is the issue of women raping men. Although women cannot be prosecuted for rape in English law, my data suggest that such rape is a recurring phenomenon. Some of my participants, however, held the view that "women cannot rape men". This male rape myth, arguably, is deleterious because it may render men who have been sexually assaulted or raped by women seem unworthy of a victim status, which in turn may shape the type of service and response they receive. The following quotes shed light on this particular male rape myth, and the issue of women raping men is also highlighted in the below quotes:

> [W]e really need to look at those victims as…some were raped by females (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

> I…know a lot more about women as abusers and how frequent that is, so women do rape men. That's another side of it [male rape] that I have seen. It definitely has opened my eyes since working here…We see it [women raping men] a lot in childhood sexual abuse. The figures are older women who are of an authority, abusing young men. We also see it in young relationships…we see attacks on young men [by women]. The only difference is [that] it's not classed as 'rape'. We class it as rape, but, in the law, it's not classed as rape…we see that [women raping men cases] quite a lot I'd say. 20% of our survivors are men, and I'd say 10-15% of them have been attacked by women, which is quite high. That's probably the main thing that I've learned since being here, that women are abusers and it is a lot more prevalent than you would imagine (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

That [women cannot be prosecuted for rape] needs to be changed because there is plenty of domineering women. God, you just have to look at the lesbians on the scene [laughs]. There are lots of guys who are terrified of their wives….Whereas a woman forces herself onto a man, he'll struggle to have that taken seriously…a police officer going behind the scenes and going, "oh, we've got a right one here. He reckons his wife's raped him". That kind of attitude, and I think it will take some convincing from his point of view. In society, men are expected to have sex with women. They are supposed to have sex with their wives, so when he goes to the police and reports, and to say that well, "she's raped me", implying that he didn't want to have sex with her, then that challenges masculinity…when the wife has raped the guy or abusing the guy…he's expected to be the dominator…I think the straight male, the ordinary joe in the pub sort of thing, reading about a situation where a wife has raped her husband, he would be the focus of a huge joke…they would go, 'arghhh you wanted it anyway man' (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

There are enough measures in place for women who do sexually abuse; there are other offences to fall back on (Police Constable 12, Female).

I'm probably more aware of it [women raping men]. I'm more aware of sexual violence in culture and how it's portrayed in the media like how it can be with an older woman and a younger man, how many think "oh well she was just initiating it" but actually it was rape. And that's one area that's not really discussed, in that misogynistic framework of how women are considered capable of rape. I remember seeing a film "40 days and 40 nights", a rom-com, and a scene where a woman has handcuffed a man to a bed and is basically forcing him to have sex with her. It was done in a funny way, but I thought, "flippin' heck! That's rape" (Male Rape Therapist 3, Male).

There is still very much a culture of "man up" surrounding male victims…I find it odd that rape can only be committed by a man. Particularly when we are about to embrace a new raft of legislation about controlling behavior

being considered an offence. It is quite feasible there could be [male] victims in abusive relationships with women, who are not allowed to be victims currently (Police Sergeant 7, Male).

[A] woman can't rape a man (Police Constable 3, Male).

[O]bviously a woman can't rape a person (Police Constable 11, Female).[31]

These quotes demonstrate that the frequency of women raping men might be higher than commonly thought. Based on these narratives, there seems to be an implication that the social norm is that it is men who are the ones wanting and initiating sexual activity with women, suggesting that women are responsible for fulfilling their needs. Defining rape, therefore, becomes problematic. When women do rape men, men are expected to 'man up', to deal with it, or otherwise may be seen as having secretly enjoyed their rape. It appears that rape is still thought of as non-consensual vaginal–penile penetration. By implication, then, women not having a penis are seemingly unable to rape. Despite the belief that men have a biological urge or need for sex, and that they are supposed to initiate sex with women and enjoy it, pornography particularly conveys this notion, many men simply do not enjoy forced sex by women. This biological positivistic ideology is empirically flawed.

The above quotes do link to the concepts of hegemonic masculinity and of social construction of masculinities. For example, both Connell (2005) and Weiss (2010) argue that 'real' men are expected to be promiscuous and to have sex with women, and lots of women, in order to embody hegemonic masculinity and heterosexuality, demonstrating to themselves and to other men that they are 'real' men (in other words, they are not attracted to other men). Therefore, the gender expectations of men shape the view that men, including male rape victims, are supposed to dominate and initiate sexual intercourse with women, not be sexually victimised by them. The idea that women rape men goes against this gender ideal, which in turn may bring about a dismissal of, or even backlash against, male rape victims. As a result, men who have been raped or sexually abused by women may not be taken seriously and may have

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[31] It is worthwhile to note that the police officers who had expressed beliefs that women cannot rape men were actually not aware that, under UK law, a woman cannot commit rape against a man.

their sexual victimisation trivialised; they may be overlooked, secondary victimised, laughed at, or made a mockery of. These implications may not only occur in the state and third sector settings, but also in the wider societies for "men who admit that they do not want sex or, worse, were forced to have sex violate codes of male (hetero)sexuality" (Weiss, 2010: 277). Weiss adds that, "The fact that men are victimized so often by women certainly contradicts cultural stereotypes about women as passive, both physically and sexually, as well as the assumption that men are exclusively the aggressors of sexual violence" (p. 284). In support of this, taken together, my findings definitely challenge the male rape myth that 'only men rape men'.

Relatedly, the findings also suggest that women can also embody aspects of hegemonic masculinity practices in given settings, contexts, and situations, which concurs with Connell (2005) and Connell and Messerschmidts' (2005) sociological framework, that hegemonic masculinity is relational, interactional, socially constructed, and an enactment of violence, power and dominance. I would argue, however, that although both women and men can embody hegemonic masculinity, men remain more likely to engage in these configurations of practice. Weiss (2010) and Ferrales et al. (2016) support my findings regarding women sexually victimising men. Weiss found that the gender expectations of men and gender ideals harmfully conceal the possibility that women can be sexual aggressors in societies because "social constructs of femininity…as physically weak and sexually vulnerable…fit overall perceptions of sexual victims" (p. 277). As my findings suggest, however, men are not socially constructed as weak and vulnerable, which means that they may be ineligible as rape victims. If state and voluntary agencies perpetuate the view that women cannot rape or sexually assault men, they may disbelieve, neglect or inadequately deal with men who have been raped or sexually abused by women. Expressing victim-blaming attitudes, in turn, to these victims is problematic because it can serve to invalidate their experience of rape.

From my data, it appears that derogatory language may be perpetuated in police forces. For instance, Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3 (Male) above suggests that derogatory language may be expressed in police forces, mainly by male police officers, although it may not directly and explicitly be expressed to male rape victims.

Therefore, this 'behind the scenes' language may take place 'backstage'. Goffman (1959) developed a dramaturgical model, in which he demonstrated that, utilising particular methods, individuals (actors) showcase themselves to display a social performance that is appropriate in a given context. He calls this impression management. In this model, he developed 'front stage and back stage'. Within the former, groups of people or individuals (such as police officers) socially perform in front of an audience (such as complainants). It is here where, as Goffman says, performers can hide their true beliefs, thoughts and views until they can uncover them in the backstage. In the backstage, then, the performers can break rules and regulations and reveal negative thoughts, beliefs and views should they choose to do so. Goffman's theoretical perspective is important because it suggests that police officers may not directly express derogatory language to male rape victims, face-to-face, but may nonetheless unleash such language in the informal backstage to their colleagues, making a joke and mockery about male rape, laughing about it, demeaning and degrading the victims 'behind their back' or 'behind closed doors'.

More recent research concurs with Goffman. For example, Pascoe and Hollander (2016: 69) argue that men can, in order to 'do' gender, engage in "nonconsensual sexual interaction, talking about rape and sexual assault, making jokes about it, laughing at imagery about it, labeling oneself or others as rapists, blaming sexual assault survivors for their own victimization, or…symbolically deploying the idea of rape". As an interactional accomplishment, they suggest, male police officers are 'doing' gender by collectively shaming, downgrading, and emasculating male rape victims to enhance their own gendered status as masculine and to celebrate their own dominance over 'inferior' men who are victims of rape. Thus, "practices, discourses, and symbols associated with sexual violence and assault may be deployed in the service of masculine dominance at interactional, discursive, structural, symbolic, and global levels" (ibid.). From my data, some police officers will trivialise male sexual victimisation (for example, symbolically and discursively), and in not taking it seriously may deem it as unimportant and laughable. Consequently, because some police officers may position men who have been raped by women as 'failed' men "by drawing on cultural resources that affirm expectations of normative masculinity" (ibid.: 68), they may be disinclined to engage with the police and the criminal justice system, preventing justice/prosecution.

### 4.1.4 Hypermasculinity and the Police

At the same time, police officers can also strengthen, perpetuate and enhance their hegemonic masculinity, manhood, and solidarity since police forces are, arguably, hypermasculine environments. Similar to hegemonic constructs of masculinity, hypermasculinity typically refers to an *exaggeration* of male stereotypical conduct; for example, there is typically a focus on aggression, violence, and physical strength as being 'over-the-top' and excessive in hypermasculine contexts, such as police institutions. For Schroeder (2004: 418), "Hypermasculinity refers to sets of behaviors and beliefs characterized by *unusually highly developed* masculine forms as defined by existing cultural values" (emphasis added). In comparison to hypermasculinity, although both serve to reinforce power, hegemonic masculine practices may not always be *exaggerative* to embody power and dominance whilst reproducing and legitimising the social structures and relations that strengthen their dominant and hierarchical positions. Because the police display hypermasculinity, power and hegemonic masculinity, Messerschmidt (1993) argues that police forces are inherently and exaggeratedly hierarchical and violent institutions that glorify aggression, dominance and power. He goes on to argue that hegemonic masculinity practices are institutionalised in police agencies, which suggests that other forms of masculinities, such as subordinate and gay masculinities, may be measured alongside hegemonic masculinity in police forces. In other words, male rape victims displaying subordinate masculinities may be judged harshly in police agencies. In police agencies, he adds, patriarchy is prevalent along with the police deploying masculine characteristics, such as being tough, unemotional, insensitive, and detached whilst keeping away from social action or characteristics associated with womanliness or femininities. Similarly, Acker (2006) suggests that organisations, such as police forces, produce and reproduce gender inequality founded on power relations and "shaped by gendered and sexualized attitudes and assumptions" (p. 444). Furthermore, Acker stipulates that:

> All organizations have inequality regimes, defined as loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organizations. The ubiquity of inequality is obvious…I define inequality in organizations as systematic disparities between participants in power and control (p. 443).

Therefore, it may be safe to put forward that, if male rape victims, and the subject of male rape, symbolise and personify subordination, weakness and feminisation, then male rape victims may be downgraded, relegated and made 'abnormal' in the gender hierarchy within police agencies since "[in] police agencies, men's power is deemed an authentic and acceptable part of social relations. This legitimacy of the power by men in police work adorns them with greater authority" (Messerschmidt, 1993: 175). This suggests that the police are able to exercise power against male victims of rape, meaning that they can accept these victims as 'real' rape victims or, alternatively, deny them a victim label, which in turn may formulate negative, poor, and deleterious police attitudes and responses. Challenging police officers' hegemonic masculinity may bring about severe reactions, antagonism, and repudiation of male rape victims. My findings support Messerschmidt's theoretical perspective in that police forces remain hyper-masculine environments and some police officers exude hegemonic masculinity, which can be problematic. For example:

> [P]eople historically haven't reported because of the…macho police…anyone coming to the police counter and they get a negative response, they'll think, "I'm not going back there" (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

> [F]or men, I think [it] must be harder to come forward to report [male rape] to the police…looking at it from a male perspective, if you were to look at the police and "right, I'm going to report" and you look at the majority of officers are probably male, to then think about going and reporting that in a predominately male environment, must be quite a hurdle to get over initially…even if knowing that there's women who are gonna speak to you (Specialist Police Officer 3, Female).

> I've worked with the police and they are very male men's men and a lot of them are very arrogant…I think a lot of them will be dismissive and a lot of them will think, 'oh, just man up'…voluntary agencies try to take [male rape victims] more seriously than the police initially do. Thinking about those kinds of [officers], they'll think that [male rape victims] are 'always up to it'. [The police will] be skeptical let's just say that; they will need some initial

convincing and sometimes the victim will not be able to do the convincing. There will be a lot of judgment…[the police will] dismiss [male rape] as a lifestyle choice (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

Majority of the police are male…and you have to understand the police culture, it is a powerful culture, and police officers are not likely [to] understand the acceptance of being a [male rape] victim…police officers recruit people that are like themselves. They tend to recruit their own "clones". They are indoctrinated into [a] system that reinforce[s] the prejudices and conscious bias (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

[T]he police service [is] like full of testosterone (Police Sergeant 1, Male).

I suppose that police force is seen as being maybe not as diverse as it should be, and probably isn't…and I suppose that the police force is viewed as quite sort of White, male, probably straight, and that's probably intimidating and puts people off to come forward (Police Constable 3, Male).

[T]here are voluntary agencies that are much more user friendly for victims – they don't appear to be as confrontational as the police (Police Constable 22, Male).

I think males would…'get over it [rape]' (Police Constable 34, Male).

These narratives suggest that hegemonic masculinity remains present in police forces. The police are seen, and to some extent recognise themselves, as very macho, confrontational, arrogant, and in complete control, holding onto gender norms that encourage and support hegemonic masculinity. Despite there being women police officers, male rape victims and societies still view the police as patriarchal (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). As a result, these victims are less likely to engage with police agencies for fear of being ridiculed, disbelieved and humiliated because they cannot measure up against police officers' hegemonic masculinity and expected gender norms. As my findings point out, because of the masculine and patriarchal culture that underpin the police force, some police officers are likely to think that male rape victims need to

"man up" or they are "always up to it", meaning that they are sexually promiscuous and so male rape is not real 'rape'; it is just another form of casual sex. In addition, because of the hegemonic masculine police culture, male rape victims may often be expected to "get over it" rather than to expect legislative action. On balance, police skepticism, which is a core part of police occupational culture (Reiner, 2010), is often outwardly projected onto male victims of rape and male sexual assault victims. As a result, male rape "is not taken as seriously as rape suffered by women" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 7, Male).

## 4.2 Sexualities and Male Rape

### 4.2.1 'Male Rape is Solely a Homosexual Issue'

This section links with the preceding section because my findings recurrently point out that male rape not only affects and challenges men's hegemonic masculinity, but also affects men's, and makes men question their own, sexuality. As a result, making it much more difficult for male rape victims to embody hegemonic masculinity that is characterised by heterosexual practices and heterosexual patterns of behaviour (Connell, 2005). Therefore, male rape victims may be seen as homosexuals, as the act of male rape equates to anal penetration, even though some of them may identify as heterosexual, fostered by compulsory heterosexuality (Connell, 1987) and heteronormativity (Jackson, 2005). These are some of the fears that male rape victims often have in the eyes of police officers and practitioners working in the third sector, invoking implications in terms of policy and practice:

He's a young lad [male rape victim], who's a little bit unsure about his sexuality (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

They [victims] will have an issue if they are a straight male and they've been raped that they may have a dilemma with themselves, a lot of them think "what does this mean?" (Police Constable 11, Female).

[If] it's their first experience of a sexual act then it taints their notions of their own sexuality. I think it kind of contaminates their own sexuality, and so

they, as victims may be confused about what has happened and if they were to divulge what has happened, they may be seen as homosexual when really they don't think they are (Police Detective 1, Female).

[A] lot of men especially who have been raped…do question their sexuality. [T]here's a question around that…there is a lot of experimentation that goes on generally for survivors (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

[A] young man…maybe he is just not aware of his sexuality, was associating with people who were homosexual, they could possibly take advantage of him (Police Sergeant 1, Male).

[Male rape victims] will feel their sexuality has been questioned (Police Constable 7, Female).

I think some men will questions [sic] themselves and their sexuality (Police Constable 11, Female).

I feel it [male rape] is still looked upon as a slur on their sexuality if they have been subjected to a rape and therefore their humiliation and shame is exaggerated…I feel there is extra stigma with male rape around a judgment on their sexuality…some males may wish to hide their sexuality (Police Sergeant 2, Female).

A lot of the males I have worked with have had their sexuality questioned… I have noticed that often after a sexual assault a male will question his sexuality on some level, from 'I must be gay' to…'Maybe I wanted it' (Male Rape Counsellor 7, Female).

[T]here are many similarities [between female and male rape cases]. The main difference I noted was an issue raised by male victims about perceptions of others as to their vulnerability and sexuality (Police Detective 2, Female).

[H]e was heterosexual…he was a bit worried about it, that people are going to think that he was a gay man and things like that (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female).

These quotes raise some issues. The respondents strongly suggest that many male rape victims often question their sexuality after their rape. Gregory and Lees (1999: 119) support this finding, commenting: "Forcing men to take part in what is regarded as homosexual acts, often leads victims to be confused about their own sexual orientation". The quotes above also highlight that these victims fear that societies, state and voluntary agencies may think that they are homosexual, particularly if they are heterosexual, as heterosexuality is the privileged norm that all men are expected to sustain (Messerschmidt, 2000; Acker, 2006; Jackson, 2007; Ferrales et al., 2016). Jackson (2007) maintains that, to validate men's masculinity, they are supposed to engage in heterosexual practices and heterosexual patterns of behaviors, although they can also engage in other means to confirm their masculinity, as discussed in the previous section of this chapter, such as being tough, courageous, powerful, and having casual sex with many different sexual partners. My empirical findings above are important because they make one question why male rape victims are so fearful of being perceived as gay. Richardson and May (1999: 317) helpfully shed light on this conundrum, arguing that, "A person who is identified as 'homosexual' is…at risk of no longer being seen as a whole person, but in terms of a sexualised and stigmatised category". In a similar vein, Acker (2006: 445) argues that, "Heterosexuality is assumed in many organizing processes and in the interactions necessary to these processes….Homosexuality is disruptive of organizing processes because it flouts the assumptions of heterosexuality. It still carries a stigma that produces disadvantages for…gays." Thus, male rape victims may fear that societies, state and voluntary agencies may stigmatise, alienate, or marginalise them because of their homosexuality or presumed homosexuality as some victims may not identify as gay. If state and voluntary agencies believe that these victims are homosexuals, they may be blamed for their sexual victimisation. For example:

[T]he demarcation of the public as heterosexual territory means that…gay men who 'trespass' may be blamed for making themselves vulnerable to violence by being in the 'wrong' spatial location…it is argued that the

public/private divide serves to construct…gay men as 'deserving' or 'guilty' victims of public violence towards them…this could be seen to mitigate offenders' culpability and, in some contexts, may even allow acts of public violence to be construed as legitimate (Richardson and May, 1999: 322).

This suggests that male rape victims, who are gay or are presumed to be gay, may be blamed for putting themselves into a rape situation by 'trespassing' on heterosexual territory. There is robust evidence to show that male rape victims are more negatively evaluated when they are perceived as gay than when they are heterosexual (e.g., Kassing and Prieto, 2003; Walker et al., 2005; Davies and Rogers, 2006). It seems that state and voluntary agencies could well be likely to exonerate blame from male rape victims' offenders. For example, "The [gay] victim can be construed as more 'deserving' of violence than others – a 'legitimate target' of violence – which in turn can significantly influence assessments of the degree of culpability attributed to perpetrators" (Richardson and May, 1999: 318). Similarity, for Lyons (2006), "attributions of blame generally are conceptualized as a function of stereotypical beliefs about the victim's…marginal social status…we have reason to believe that a victim's sexual orientation also will influence third-person evaluations of victimization" (p. 41).

This blaming concept is a form of secondary victimisation. This blame may be justified on the basis that male rape victims who are gay or are seen to be gay challenge the heterosexual and homosexual binary, hegemonic and heterosexual configurations of practices, and heteronormativity. Thus, victim-blaming attitudes and perspectives may be brought about against male victims of rape and sexual assault. These victim-blaming attitudes can be harmful for male rape victims, in that they are denied help, support or treatment (Rumney, 2009). Similarly, other research supports my data regarding heterosexual male rape victims fearing to be seen as gay to the public and the criminal justice system, having their sexuality dubiously questioned and challenged. For example, Weiss (2010: 292) argues that "straight men may fear being labeled as gay" but takes it a step further by arguing that "gay men who are not "out" may fear having their sexual orientation exposed". From this and from my findings, it could be argued that male rape victims who are gay but are not "out" as such may fear that societies, state and voluntary agencies will unveil their sexual

orientation to their close family and friends or to communities to which they belong. Therefore, in order to prevent stigma, subordination and humiliation, male rape victims will conceal their sexuality to societies, state and voluntary agencies, and even to themselves, denying their identity not only as a 'rape victim', but also as a 'gay rape victim' if they are truly gay. Fearing to be seen as gay and to be excluded throws light on the ways in which men are ashamed to acknowledge their experience of rape and sexuality and on the ways in which they may be dealt with and handled.

Furthermore, my finding that heterosexual male rape victims, in particular, often question their sexuality after their attack is made clear with the help of Allen's (2002) theory. She argues that sexuality is vulnerable and open to change; it is dynamic, changeable, fluid and never fixed, influenced and formed by past experiences, ideologies, biography, and memories. From this, one could argue that sexualities are situational, contextual and an enactment in a given and appropriate setting. For instance:

> [Sexuality is] situational…you need to understand each individual. You have to understand their particular story and then you have to situate yourself in the environment they find themselves (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

Male rape victims' sexuality is situational, relational and locational, meaning that it is neither fixed nor determined, hence their confusion around their sexuality after their sexual victimisation. I argue, therefore, that male rape victims' gendered and sexual self is created and re-created through social and power relations, shaped by social structures, social practices, and social institutions. Drawing on a social constructionist approach to sexuality, Jackson (2007) argues that sexuality is socially constructed in that it is demonstrated, implicitly or explicitly, through our everyday lives, always being altered all through life. Thus, the sexual self is 'in process' constantly. In interaction with others, including their offenders, male rape victims' sexuality is constantly constructed, reconstructed, shaped, and reshaped. Jackson goes further to say that the 'sexual self is viewed as actively "doing sex," not only in terms of sexual acts, but as making and modifying sexual meaning, since intrapsychic scripting is inevitably interdependent with both the interactional and wider sociocultural scripting of the sexual' (p. 4). On this basis, it can be inferred that male rape victims are forced

to 'do' or enact homosexuality during their rape, which can make them question their sexuality after their rape and propel others to think that 'male rape is a homosexual issue'. I found that, through my data, offenders of male rape are not exclusively gay and that male rape does also affect the heterosexual population. For example:

> I think anyone can become a rape victim. We have had heterosexual men become victims of male rape (Specialist Police Officer 2, Female).

> Straight and bi guys taking advantage of homosexual guys…Heterosexual males taking advantage of homosexual males believing them to be up for it whether or not they are consenting (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 2, Male).

> Anyone can become a rape victim…there is no link between male/female rape and heterosexuality, so why would there be a link with male rape and homosexuality (Male Rape Counsellor 4, Female).

Some participants, however, believe that offenders of male rape are only gay, perpetuating the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue'. For instance:

> [A male rape victim] who's went with an older male who is *obviously* gay, and they've had some relations, and he's reported, so we are going through a process. It's a genuine report at this point (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male. Emphasis added).

And when I asked, "Do you think there is a strong link between male rape and homosexuality?"

> Police Constable 10 (Female) answered, "Only with regards to the offender".

I would think that the offenders would be homosexual (Specialist Police Officer  4, Male)[32].

On speaking to some officers, some have thought that gay rape was a homosexual issue (Police Constable 23, Male).

[Male rape] happens in the homosexual world (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

When I asked, "Whom do you think are most likely to become male rape victims?"

Police Sergeant 6 (Female) replied: "Homosexual males because of the physical relationship between men".

Some of the excerpts above suggest that male rape offenders are not only homosexual, but also heterosexual, challenging the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue' and supporting the research literature that male rape offenders are primarily heterosexual men (e.g., McMullen, 1990). They also suggest that heterosexual men can also enact, or, in the context of male rape, be forced to enact homosexual practices. This suggests that sexuality is fluid and, sometimes, uncontrollable. The data suggest that all men, regardless of sexuality, are vulnerable to rape, including heterosexual men.

Some participants, however, suggest views of normative heterosexuality, which impinge on their perceptions of male rape, 'othering' male rape in turn because it does not fit in the bounds of normative heterosexuality. This is, in part, because of the sexual practice that male rape is equated with; i.e., it involves penile-anal penetration. However, some heterosexual couples may enjoy anal intercourse and female rape victims can also suffer forced anal penetration. Some participants believed, however, that 'male rape is only a gay problem'. This belief can shape the ways wherein heterosexual male rape victims are responded to and dealt with. For example, when

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[32] Arguably, a specialist police officer holding such a view may be concerning, because one would think that specialist training would help to eradicate such a harmful view. Perpetuating the myth that male rape is a homosexual issue ignores the possibility that offenders can be heterosexual and that male rape can also affect the heterosexual population.

state and voluntary agencies provide services for 'straight' male rape victims, the response may be disbelieving and the services may be hostile, poor or inadequate, enforcing secondary victimisation. This secondary victimisation can also apply to male rape victims who are presumed to be 'straight', though this is highly unlikely since research has found that male rape is commonly perceived to be associated with homosexuality (Rumney, 2009). Other research supports Rumney. For example, Gregory and Lees (1999: 122) argue that, "There appears to be a strong tendency for the police to see male rape as a predominantly homosexual crime". The police perpetuating the male rape myth that 'male rape is a homosexual issue' is problematic because services for heterosexual male rape victims may be denied, trivialised, or deemed unnecessary, while their offenders, particularly if they are 'straight' offenders, may be exonerated. It cannot, however, be assumed that male rape offenders are solely gay because "most suspects are either heterosexual or pursue heterosexual lifestyles. The data also suggest that heterosexual or bisexual suspects are more likely to attack men who are heterosexual than homosexual" (Gregory and Lees, 1999: 123). It is unclear why they are more likely to target heterosexual men, though it could be suggested that 'straight' men are less aware of the possibility of being raped because of notions of masculinity that emphasise men's invulnerability.

### 4.2.2 Homophobia and Male Rape

Because of the myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue', male rape victims, regardless of their sexual orientation, may be seen as engaging in a consensual act (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). The state and third sectors presuming that the act of male rape is actually a consensual act may be founded on, either *implicit or explicit*, homophobia, as my data suggest:

> [H]eterosexual man, who goes to club and meets young girls, and the young girls sexually dressed, they have a few drinks, exchange phone numbers, they have a bit of a kiss, *but then a gay reads that like to come on to have full on sex* (Police Sergeant 1, Male. Emphasis added).

When you get teenagers who are discovering their sexuality, sometimes they're not sure and they *go the wrong way*. If they're still discovering, sometimes they try the wrong way, and it becomes rape (Police Sergeant 3, Female. Emphasis added).

I really think it depends on the sexuality of the male victim...I would say that with heterosexual males who have reported rape suffer issues with regards to their masculinity along with other issues such as shame and embarrassment, which is not always the issue for homosexual victims of rape (Police Constable 13, Female).

[T]here is a lot of homophobia, not just in the police, but in people general, there is a lot of homophobia even though it may be hidden in the same way as racism, even though it is hidden what people say to people's faces and what they say behind their backs…in a homosexual situation, [the police] will be, "Oh well, you were asking for it. That's what they [gay men] do. That's what they're like. It's no good letting it happen, and then coming to us saying that you didn't want it" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

[D]oes homophobia play a part in relation to the rape victims, I would say yes…that's the kind of way they [state and voluntary agencies] would frame you, if you are not [a] heterosexual male and you were raped as a child, you are usually turned into [a] perpetrator…that's what is going to happen or in the mind of some people, because you are gay, that's why they have chosen you, but that's a major prejudice…racism, homophobia, sexism…are reflection[s] of society (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

I think that there will be a lack of empathy and compassion with victims… especially where the male rape victims are homosexual…I also believe that some will impose inaccurate judgments on certain minority groups such as male homosexuals (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 2, Male).

Instances of homophobia or even just discomfort in discussing male rape may result in issues policing male rape (Police Response Officer 1, Male).

[I]ssues around homosexuality will affect police staff's responses (Male Rape Counsellor 6, Male).

Years gone by where there may well have been homophobic attitudes (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

From such data, either implicitly or explicitly, homosexual male rape victims may receive poorer treatment and disbelieving attitudes, based on homophobia, than heterosexual male rape victims. It is incorrect to assume, as Police Constable 13 do, that male rape victims do not suffer contradictions regarding their masculinity, stigma and embarrassment because research has found that gay male rape victims do suffer these issues (Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Rumney, 2009). Homophobia, bearing in mind that it comes in many different forms, seems to be present in the data. It is argued that gay men (or those who are presumed to be gay, such as male rape victims) are severely bullied and homophobia is often unleashed onto them in their everyday life (Jackson, 2007). Kimmel (2005) theorises that hegemonic masculinity, which other forms of masculinities are measured against, such as gay masculinity, sets the standards for all men to achieve. Although heterosexual men have an advantage to achieve this dominant and leading form of masculinity because of their privileged position in societies, gay men struggle to achieve it as heterosexual men dominate and exude power over gay men through homophobia to affirm gay men as subordinate, inferior and worthless (Messerschmidt, 2000; Kimmel, 2005; Javaid, 2015b). Kimmel adds that, heterosexual men using homophobia as a tool to unmask and emasculate gay men as incomplete allow 'straight' men to boost their hegemonic masculinity. Thus, it could be concluded that men in state and voluntary agencies unleashing implicit or explicit homophobic attitudes, responses, and appraisals toward male rape victims allows them to enhance their hegemonic masculinity, confirming to themselves and to other men that they are both heterosexual and 'real' men, not effeminate sissies, unmanly or feminine.

Male rape victims' sense of self, therefore, may be surveillanced not only by other people, other men, but also by the victims themselves to ensure that they are behaving in a heterosexual fashion to prevent or avoid homophobic reactions, responses, or appraisals from others. Connell (2005) argues that, "Terror is used as a means of drawing boundaries and making exclusions, for example, in heterosexual violence against gay men" (p. 83), which means that male rape victims could be living in a constant state of fear, dread, and are afraid particularly of heterosexual men, such as those working in state and voluntary agencies, fearing homophobia and homophobic violence that could expose themselves as not 'real' men and as not measuring up against other men who embody power. For gay male rape victims, "as a marginalised and stigmatised group within society…gay men are unlikely to be construed as 'innocent' victims…As a consequence of this stereotyping of…gay men as a potential threat, their status of victim is problematic" (Richardson and May, 1999: 310). Because homophobia is so powerful and influential in that it can humiliate male rape victims, silencing them, and shape police officers' and practitioners' in voluntary agencies attitudes and views against gay men, male rape victims who are gay or who are presumed to be gay may be denied of a victim status, which in turn may invoke disbelieving attitudes, insensitive and unsympathetic responses. Gregory and Lees (1999: 118) support this, finding that:

> Analysis of both police and victim questionnaires shows that police officers are more likely to regard the testimony of homosexual victims as 'unreliable' —i.e. either to assume that the sex was consensual or that the complainant was malicious. Feedback from gay victims suggests that this scepticism is unfounded….Victim feedback also indicated that gay men are treated less sensitively and sympathetically by the police than heterosexual men. Some police officers seem to believe that rape is less traumatic for gay men.

It is arguable, from my data and from other research evidence, that homophobia shapes the way in which male rape victims are perceived, served and dealt with. These victims are often 'othered' during the process of which they are handled. I argue that the subject matter of male rape may trigger social conflict because it challenges normative heterosexuality, potentially resulting in social conflict that includes homophobic reactions, responses, or appraisals from others including state

and voluntary agencies. What arises from this social conflict, then, is homophobia. This argument is one way to explain the resistance to male sexual victimisation by whomever male rape victims communicate with. Therefore, male victims of rape may be seen as challenging social order and social cohesion, which in turn inducing backlash and homophobia. Homophobia in this way may be grounded in the next finding that emerged in the data. That is, "gay men are sexually promiscuous".

### 4.2.3 Male Rape Victims and Sexual Promiscuousness

Some of my participants held the view that male rape victims are sexually promiscuous, which is the same for female rape victims. Therefore, like female rape victims, male rape victims are often blamed for their own sexual victimisation for putting themselves in 'risky' situations; in other words, suggesting that the victims 'asked for it'. For instance:

> Homosexual males put themselves into situations where they are vulnerable i.e. "cruising areas" and picking up on blind dates (Police Constable 4, Female).

> [H]omosexual males [are] promiscuous owing to their social lives and [are] adventurous sexually…being part of their social scene. This can…result in them putting themselves in vulnerable situations whereby offenders are able to go on to commit offences against them…homosexual males making themselves vulnerable (Police Constable 13, Female).

> [Gay men] live a more promiscuous lifestyle so can be a victim...a male who was raped by a canal in Manchester, which is a known area for homosexual men to go and have sex…not a very nice area, so I can see they will have been putting themselves at risk (Police Constable 12, Female).

> [H]omosexual males…are more likely to be involved in situations where anal sex is to take place (Police Constable 16, Male).

[A]nal penetration is considered to be an activity for homosexual males (Police Constable 15, Female).

Homosexual males…indulge in liaisons that turn bad with other homosexual males (Police Constable 17, Male).

The heterosexual male is the least likely to flirt with another male or go back to a male's accommodation or be in a relationship with another male (Police Sergeant 2, Female).

[I]t's because of the lifestyle….The circles they mix in and homosexual males will go looking for other males for sexual males, whereas heterosexual males don't go looking for sexual relations. When people drink, promiscuity becomes higher. It's about that interaction between males. It's *different* for bi-sexual or homosexual males rather than heterosexual males (Police Sergeant 3, Female. Emphasis added).

[H]omosexual males would…be the victims of a rape due to [them having] intercourse with the same sex (Police Constable 31, Male).

These quotes, or generalisations, suggest that the respondents perpetuate the male rape myths that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue' and 'gay men must have wanted it', ignoring the possibility that male rape can occur at any time and anywhere. This finding of mine is in line with other work that also found that gay male rape victims are often seen as having 'asked for it' and are, therefore, blamed for their rape (Lees, 1997; Rumney, 2008). As my findings suggest that gay men do casual sex and so they are susceptible to rape, which implicitly suggests that being raped is their 'own fault' so to speak, "it can be argued that through its laws and social policies the state encourages a cultural context which both reinforces and reproduces the public construction of…gay men as…'deserving' victims of violence" (Richardson and May, 1999: 327). The perception that gay men, gay male rape victims, or male rape victims who are presumed to be gay 'deserve' to be raped or are blamed for their rape because they put themselves in 'risky' situations for 'sleeping around' may rest on notions of heteronormativity that are embedded in our culture.

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Jackson (2006) theorises that, for the culturally normal heterosexuality to prevail, it is reliant upon its subordinate 'other', homosexuality, to maintain its privileged and institutionalised position. Thus while, as Jackson maintains, heteronormativity conceptualises heterosexuality as culturally 'normal' and as the hegemonic form of sexualities in everyday life, from social institutions to social relations, it functions to exclude and compartmentalise homosexuality as deviant and abnormal. As heterosexuality becomes institutionalised, then, a homo-hetero binary may formulate creating a division between heterosexuals and homosexuals, an 'us' and 'them' divide. The implications that heteronormativity creates for men, as victims of rape, either gay or presumed to be gay, are that they are marginalised, subordinated, un-natural and inferior while potentially drawing in homophobia and secondary victimisation. Their homosexuality, or presumed homosexuality, becomes pathologized, abnormal and deviant; in turn, male rape victims are 'othered'.

### 4.2.4 Effeminacy and ('Camp') Male Rape Victims: Challenging Compulsory Heterosexuality

This 'othering' mechanism can be used in other means. For example, from the data, I found that 'camp'[33] gay men are more likely to be 'othered' than any other type of victim because they often express dramatism, which in turn makes it difficult for them to be believed regarding their sexual victimisation. Effeminacy in men challenges hegemonic masculinity, bringing about disgust, distaste and hostility (Connell, 1995, 2005). Male rape victims who are effeminate, therefore, diverge from hegemonic norms regarding sexuality. Embodying femininity in this way could mean that these victims are culturally, politically and socially excluded while drawing in violence. The stigma ingrained in 'camp' men can personify the subordination of femininity. My data exemplify the consequences for 'camp' male victims of rape:

> [F]eminine, 'screamy queeny' gay [male rape victims] might be really dramatic and make themselves hard to be believed. There is always an element of doubt (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

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[33] 'Camp' refers to a specific practice of homosexuality. It is characterised as being effeminate, 'over-the-top', and feminine.

Arguably, in the dominant heterosexual culture, men are expected to be 'straight acting', not showing any signs of femininity or effeminacy because to do so risks losing their hegemonic status. Like women, it could be argued that 'camp' male rape victims symbolise characteristics associated with femininity and so they may be seen as embodying 'inferiority', for instance, through the use of language, mannerisms and gestures. Directed towards effeminate gay men, including male rape victims who exude campiness, people use slang to refer them as 'like women', expressing contempt or disapproval, and so they are unworthy of receiving positive attitudes and responses (Blachford, 2002). Further, this "slang used is the same as that used by heterosexuals against *all* homosexuals, that is, 'queer', 'bent', 'poof' and 'fairy'" (ibid.: 299).

It can be concluded from what Blachford has suggested that male rape victims who express campiness are likely to be seen as 'truly perverted' by societies, state and voluntary agencies, resisting acknowledgement of their sexual victimisation because they may feel threatened by their overt effeminacy that contests the social configurations of normative and compulsory heterosexuality. Because male rape and homosexuality become a taboo, then, "gay men may want to distance themselves as far as possible from the stereotyped role of the homosexual which they have internalized as negative and undesirable. So effeminate homosexuals are going to be stigmatized by the more 'normal' homosexuals" (ibid.). This suggests that even 'normal' homosexuals, that is, 'straight acting' or non-camp homosexuals, may reject effeminate gay men as they associate with the dominant heterosexual male culture that is so often pervasive and prevailing. This raises some concerns in terms of the way in which *all* types of men respond to, and deal with effeminate male rape victims in societies and in the state and third sectors. By expressing indirect or direct ridicule against effeminate 'screaming queens', 'normal' and 'straight acting' men resist and distance themselves from 'camp' male rape victims who are seen to deserve disdain and mockery because they represent a challenge to dominant ideas of heterosexuality.

Male rape victims can, however, avoid such disdain, mockery and ridicule by 'passing for straight' (Blachford, 2002) or acting like a very 'straight' gay (Connell, 2005). By doing so, male rape victims can reduce stigma and the associated negative attitudes and responses, meaning that support services, policy and practice can potentially be

more favorable and sympathetic toward male rape victims. This means, however, that these victims have to employ a façade, pretending to be something that they are not.

Outside of the criminal justice context, and more specifically in the context of male rape, my data suggest that strong, dominant, masculine gay men will take advantage of small, effeminate gay men through sexual violence, which implies that gay men can move from embodying a subordinate masculinity to enacting hegemonic masculinity practices at times. This supports Connell's (2005) theoretical framework. For example:

> [H]omosexual people will…become rape victims, and the reason why I think that is because a lot of guys will think, 'because they are gay, they are up for it', regardless of whether they say yes or no. In the heat of the moment, they'll not consider they are raping that person, overwhelming that person. You know how you get your sort of small, effeminate kind of gays, and then you got your more strong, dominant, more masculine gays. I think a lot of them more masculine gays will take advantage of the more effeminate gays (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

Supporting Connell's theory, homosexual men may be able to draw on hegemonic configurations of practice as well as being positioned at other times in subordinated configurations depending on the context, situation and cultural forces. As Plummer (2007: 16) concurs, "Sexuality, for humans…is always grounded in wider material and cultural forces….From the social acts of rape…sexuality for humans has no reality *sui generis*." One could infer, therefore, that the 'more strong, dominant, more masculine gays', as male perpetrators of rape, may feminise the 'small, effeminate kind of gays' and so seeing them as appropriate objects to dominate and penetrate because they personify weakness and submissiveness. Through cultural and material forces and practices, these offenders can embody hegemonic masculinity or enact hegemonic sexual practices when it is desirable given the appropriate social context. In a similar vein, I found that heterosexual men can also take advantage of gay men who are likely to be seen, it could be argued, as weak, effeminate and who diverge from hegemonic social practices or hegemonic social configurations. For instance:

[A] gay guy being at a straight party and then people start drifting off to bed and one of the straight guys thinks he can just take advantage because the guy's gay…[similarly] a straight bar, last Thursday night where a guy dropped his trousers at the bar…and was reacting in such a way that he was imitating the guy who worked behind the bar because he was gay, "you want this, you want me" and all this kind of thing because he had a few drinks. You think because he's gay, he's interested in you, "you must want me" sort of thing. That's pretty much a male thing, isn't it? Because you're gay, you want any man in the world. A lot of homophobia is born from that, because they think that, if you introduce a gay guy, "you'll be asking me out". If you ask a straight guy to go to a gay club, he'll be like, "oh, they'll all be asking us out"….It's that kind of mentality that you think a straight guy going to gay pride and every guy in the field will be coming up to him and they all want him. They'll not keep their hands off him and that's an arrogance amongst masculine males (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

This passage suggests that heterosexual men are desirable, the leading form of sexuality, the normative concept of sexuality that is so prevailing, and the standard of which all men are expected to achieve in order to consolidate heterosexual identities. The reality is, of course, some men do not enact heterosexual practices. Consequently, those men (e.g., gay men and male rape victims who are feminised) who deviate from heterosexual practices could be socially constructed as abject objects. This objectification may particularly be the case when male rape victims are initially used as 'subs' or 'slaves', which means that they may not have the language or discourse to make sense of their sexual victimisation or to define it as rape as such. For example:

[T]hey allow themselves to be abused…if you look at social media sites and things like that, they see themselves as being subs or slaves, 'use me' sort of things and all sorts of things. Horrible ways and it makes you wonder what goes through their minds if they think that's all they are worth, so when they are being raped, they might not even realize it (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

While the concept of victim blaming may be present here whereby victims "allow themselves to be abused", the respondent raises an important issue regarding discourse and victims being unable to define their sexual victimisation as 'rape'. Both Abdullah-Khan (2008) and Rumney (2007) argue that the law and the criminal justice system do not consider that male victims will define their unique experience as 'rape' that does not necessarily reflect the legal definition of male rape. This flaw in law and the criminal justice system is problematic because many victims who believe that they have been raped, whether their victimisation included forced penetration or not, may be unacknowledged, unconsidered as rape victims, unserviced and uncared for, as their sexual victimisation does not mirror legal definitions of rape or sexual assault.

## 4.3 Gender, Sexualities and Reporting Male Rape

### 4.3.1 Heteronormativity and Reporting Male Rape

This section critically details the issue of underreporting of male rape. From the findings, it was found that state and voluntary agencies believe that many male victims of rape are reluctant to report and to engage with the criminal justice system and the third sector. Reasons for this reluctance are to do with issues around gender and sexualities, which affect and shape the ways in which state and voluntary agencies perceive, respond to, and deal with male rape victims. For instance:

> [W]e've had experience of men, who on the face of it, being married, have children, the stereotypical two plus two family, but actually, frequent the gay scene, and can become victims, so they won't report because the effect it will have on their life basically. They could get caught or whatever you wanna call it, so there's definitely an element of that, which is difficult to over come really from a police's point of view….They think they are going to get a poor response from the police. Historically, if you think back over years and years, the police, historically didn't really deal with that type of offence very well….They have to go through the whole scenario again in court and that can be traumatic in itself…so it's a difficult one really for a lot of people if they are not strong to go through that process. *I can understand why they*

*don't report*....I'm not sure how we are gonna overcome the reporting issue (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male. Emphasis added).

[I]f we are talking about certain people who are maybe sexually haven't 'come out', and maybe then put themselves in the situation where male rape occurs. And that's maybe why there is underreporting as well (Police Constable 3, Male).

These passages suggest that some male rape victims will not report to the local authorities because they could 'out' them. The first respondent's understanding and view of male rape through a gender and sexualities lens is that, to conceal their clandestine sexual activity with homosexual men, 'straight' men will not disclose their sexual abuse to keep their heterosexual relationship intact, preventing their heterosexuality from being questioned, as they "think they are going to get a poor response from the police". This respondent has pointed out that the police have not taken the issue of male rape seriously, though he makes it unclear as to what changes have been made in the police to date to reduce male rape victims' trauma and to encourage male rape victims to come forward to report. This type of victim population, whereby 'straight' men sexually engage with other men and becoming 'hard-to-reach' victims is arguably due to heteronormativity. It hinders their engagement with the police, third sector, and societies because of 'the idea that women and men are "made for each other"' (Jackson, 2005: 29), so making it difficult and problematic to disclose their male on male rape; in other words, their penile-anal penetration with other men. Plummer's concept of 'telling sexual stories' is useful to understand 'straight' men's reluctance to admit being raped. He says the following:

The story telling process flows through social acts of domination, hierarchy, marginalisation and inequality. Some voices—who claim to dominate, who top the hierarchy, who claim the centre, who possess resources—are not only heard much more readily than others, but also are capable of framing the questions, setting the agendas, establishing the rhetorics much more readily than the *others* (1995: 30. Emphasis mine).

It can be argued that 'straight' men, who have been raped and are in a heterosexual relationship, may find it difficult to report their sexual victimisation for fear of losing control and of losing their place in the gender hierarchy. Because they may fear their heterosexual identity will be tarnished and their heterosexual relationship will 'fall apart' if they report their rape to the police, which adds to their shame, they may at the same time draw in sexist reactions, responses, or appraisals from others including the police. Plummer (1995) demonstrates that issues around gender and sexuality shape how particular 'sexual stories' are told or, in some cases, prevent certain stories from being told. Remaining silent enables them to maintain their heterosexual identity and relationship, while exercising their desire and homosexual practices at other times in a clandestine fashion. A heterosexual affiliation and identity are important for these men because, as Jackson (2005) maintains, heterosexuality is defined as 'natural' and 'normal', the 'only "normal" and legitimate form of sexuality' (p. 17). This suggests that other sexualities, such as bisexuality and homosexuality, are 'abnormal'. As she further argues, 'While heterosexual desires, practices, and relations are socially defined as "normal" and normative, serving to marginalize other sexualities as abnormal and deviant, the coercive power of compulsory heterosexuality derives from its institutionalisation as more than merely a sexual relation' (ibid.). Male rape victims dissociating from a homosexual identity, affiliation, or relationship by concealing their rape allows them to avoid or prevent homophobic or sexist reactions, responses, or appraisals from others, including the state and third sectors. It also allows them to avoid getting "a poor response from the police" (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male). As heterosexuality is institutionalised across all institutions (Jackson, 2005; Acker, 2006; Pascoe, 2011), from police forces, the state, and the law to voluntary agencies, it can be argued that male rape victims deviating from heterosexual normalcy are unlikely to engage with state and third sectors and vice versa. Heteronormativity, then, serves to worsen this underreporting of male rape to the police and to the third sector.

### 4.3.2 Stigma and Reporting Male Rape

Another related finding emerged in relation to the notion of stigma and reporting male rape. For example:

The issue is is the barriers for the victim of coming forward and reporting [male rape]…there isn't the confidence in victims to come forward and report…because of the stereotypes and the stigmas that they perceive…that are there from the police (Specialist Police Officer 3, Female).

[T]here are many male rape victims who are reluctant to report for many reasons, mainly because of the stigma attached to male rape [and] that they will not be believed (Specialist Police Officer 2, Female).

There [are] issues of shame, so young lad[s] might be unlikely to report much less so than a female who is raped. There doesn't seem to be the same stigma attached to a woman…I think there is definitely a lot of taboo and stigma around, and a lack of understanding on the issue of male rape…If a woman reported rape, 'you sure you didn't say yes?', 'You sure you didn't consent?' So, I think there are still kind of reminiscence of that within this idea of male rape…law enforcement almost use that as a 'stick to beat the victim with'…so that their whole credibility is undermined, and so they are made to *feel more of an offender than a victim*. But unfortunately, I think that that sometimes does happen (Police Detective 1, Female. Emphasis added).

I think it would be helpful if the victims didn't seek any help at all (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

[T]he fact that people don't go to report [male rape]…I think that is instinctive in men anyway. It's a bit like men not bothering to go to the doctors in the same way. Men don't like to make a fuss and that. They think that they are strong enough to be able to just cope with it and get on with it and not report it and/or, if they start to report it, and they feel they are not getting a positive reaction or they are not being believed, they'll shut down (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

Macho males are less likely maybe to come forward, as they'll see it as a sign of weakness. Maybe they'll think the person who reports it will be

humiliated….People who can't look after themselves at night time
(Specialist Police Officer 4, Male).

There is a pressure that many report feeling…that they should be strong (not show emotion) and not talk about it because the assault makes them look weak (Male Rape Counsellor 7, Female).

These excerpts highlight the issue of stigma, whereby the topic of male rape is embedded in stigma and seen as a taboo, and so the victims often face stigma in a social sphere. Specialist Police Officer 3 (Female) raised the issue that the police stigmatise male rape victims, arguably based on stereotypes embedded in police agencies. Stereotypes of men may, indeed, generate such stigma for these victims. As a result of their stigma, the victims are reluctant to report and to engage with the police. This reluctance is not only due to the potential stigma that the victims may suffer from the police and potentially the third sector, but also due to beliefs that the police will undermine their credibility, making them "feel more of an offender than a victim" (Police Detective 1, Female) due to stigma undermining their credibility as victims, which in turn may bring about disbelieving attitudes. Male Rape Counsellor 3 (Female) says that, "it would be helpful if the victims didn't seek any help at all", perhaps to prevent or avoid the stigma that state and voluntary agencies may generate for the victims as gender and other inequalities are highly legitimated and perpetuated in these agencies where discrimination is pervasive (Acker, 2006). Simultaneously, stigma may affect or challenge men's masculinity, highlighting their weakness. Goffman (1963) argues that a stigmatised person is a "blemished person, ritually polluted, to be avoided, especially in public places" (p. 1), and he goes on to say that:

While the stranger is present before us, evidence can arise of his possessing an attribute that makes him different from others in the category of persons available for him to be, and of a less desirable kind – in the extreme, a person who is quite thoroughly bad, or dangerous, *or weak*. He is thus reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a *tainted*, discounted one. Such an attribute is a stigma, especially when its discrediting effect is very extensive; some-times it is also called a failing, a shortcoming, a handicap (p. 11. Emphasis added).

This suggests that, by male victims reporting their rape, they are revealing their vulnerability and powerlessness that could in turn induce stigma, generated by those who are not weak and have power, authority and control: police officers. Goffman (1963) demonstrates that men, who do not embody hegemonic masculinity, showing signs of weakness, are stigmatised as 'inferior' and are deeply discredited. This inferiority may propel many victims to remain silent. Because stigma is so powerful, the stigmatised individual can metaphorically and symbolically transpose his stigma onto anyone who associates with him (Goffman, 1963). This suggests that, when stigmatised male rape victims report to the police or seek help, their stigma may metaphorically and symbolically transpose onto police officers and onto practitioners working in the third sector, which in turn may bring about reluctance amongst the 'professionals' to engage with the victims, attempting to prevent or avoid the stigma being transposed and metaphorically 'infecting' them. It appears that the police are unlikely to take the issue of male rape seriously by stigmatising the victims. It also seems that the police can generate the victims' shame, humiliation, embarrassment and guilt, which may discourage these victims to report or to seek help, or may propel them to drop out of the criminal justice process. As Gregory and Lees (1999: 113) note, stigma "appeared to be one reason few of the victims considered reporting to the police to be a serious option". Similarly, Weiss (2010) argues that:

> For men, the potential of skepticism may be even greater because of social definitions of sexual violence and ideals of masculinity that deny that real men can be raped. After all, when men report sexual victimization, they are publicly admitting that they were not interested in sex, were unable to control situations, and were not able to take care of matters themselves—all statements that run counter to hegemonic constructs of masculinity. It is not surprising that few men appear to be willing to risk negative scrutiny and potential ridicule (p. 293).

### 4.3.3 Homosexuality and Reporting Male Rape

Another issue that emerged in the data involves homosexuality and reporting male rape. The finding suggests that, when male rape victims report their crime, they may be seen solely as homosexuals and this has severe implications. For example:

The idea that they might be seen by the people who they reporting to as a homosexual (Police Detective 1, Female).

I would imagine that gay people have quite a rough time, and I think that will breed a reluctance to go forward and report it in the first instance and/or to go forward to try and secure any prosecution (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

I'm aware of friends of mine, who were men, who have reported being raped and one of them was a gay man. I know he is gay, but he made the allegation, but he fell that he was not taken seriously, and when he went to speak with his doctor, his doctor asked him, "Have you really been raped?", almost like declining it (Police Sergeant 1, Male).

These quotes support Gregory and Lees' (1999) findings. They found that male rape victims are reluctant to report because of "[f]ear that they will be considered to be homosexual…leads many to have qualms about reporting to the police….For men who are gay, the barriers to reporting may be even greater as they may assume that the police are homophobic" (p. 119). Their findings, as well as mine, draw on the issue of the police and other agencies subscribing to male rape myths, such as 'men cannot be raped', 'male rape is a homosexual issue' and 'homosexual and bisexual individuals deserve to be sexually assaulted because they are immoral and deviant'. These myths, as my findings suggest, may be borne out of (implicit or explicit) homophobia that discourages men from reporting to the local authorities or from seeking help from the third sector. Sivakumaran (2005) develops the notion of the "taint" of homosexuality that doubly stigmatizes male rape victims since they engage with anal penetration with other men, regardless whether it was consensual, so they are forced to hide behind a "veil separating the public from the private" (p. 1276). What this suggests is that male rape is conceptualised as a 'private' issue rather than a public one, or that the "matter is considered best resolved within the community itself" (Sivakumaran, 2005: 1284), even though it affects men in the community and in intimate relationships.

For men in state and voluntary agencies, homophobic discourse is, arguably, important to express because it is essential to the embodiment of heterosexual masculinity and of hegemonic masculinity. Drawing on Pascoe (2011), it becomes clearer why gay men are not taken seriously when they report their rape to the police or to seek support from the third sector. She illustrates that, for men who diverge from obeying normative practices of sexuality, they may well consequently suffer degrading treatment through discourse of language or through homophobic reactions, such as being called "queer" or "faggot", as a way in which to police gendered identities and practices. From this, it seems that police officers may not take the issue of male rape seriously when a report is made as a way of policing their own masculinity and heterosexuality, whereby they try to confirm to themselves and to other policemen of their own conformity to normative practices of sexuality; that is, heterosexual sexual practices. This policing phenomenon can also take shape through discourse. For example, Pascoe (2005, 2007) explains that men can draw on the 'fag discourse' to police the boundaries between the 'normal' (heterosexuality) and the 'abnormal' (homosexuality), which includes enacting homophobic attitudes and practices to reject gay men, the unmasculine, and to perpetuate compulsive heterosexuality. Male police officers and male voluntary agency practitioners can draw on this 'fag discourse' if their hegemonic masculinity is threatened, fearing "*men's* same sex desire" as Pascoe (2011: 177. Italics in original) puts it, when male rape victims report since the act of male rape is a non-masculine practice equated with anal penetration. Producing gender inequality, sexism and homophobia through the 'fag discourse' intensifies the underreporting of male rape, reinforcing secondary victimisation.

**4.3.4 Getting an Erection During Rape and Reporting Male Rape**

In respect of the underreporting of male rape, a finding emerged in relation to the male rape myth 'if a victim physically responds to an assault, he must have wanted it'. For example:

> I believe that heterosexual males, regardless of race or culture, are reluctant
> to report due to the masculine society we live in….Males do not have the
> confidence to report for fear of their sexuality or masculinity being put into

question, *especially if the male achieves an erection during the attack*, which I believe is a regular occurrence and, therefore, less chance that they will be believed or it will be thought that they enjoyed it because of this and, therefore, not a 'real' victim! (Police Sergeant 2, Female. Emphasis added).

Due to some men getting an erection during their rape, they are often silenced by shame and embarrassment. What this means is that, for having an erection during their attack, men are unlikely to disclose their abuse to state and voluntary agencies because of the possibility of being disbelieved regarding their rape. Although getting an erection during an episode of rape is an involuntary physiological reaction (Groth and Burgess, 1980; Tewksbury, 2007), they are still likely to be seen as having engaged in 'consensual sex', as having enjoyed it, and, therefore, classified as not 'real' victims. Two important issues emerge from this analysis: first, this notion of consensual sex; and second, this idea of not a 'real' victim. To make sense of the former, Plummer (2005) points out that societies put pressure on men to have sex, lots of sex, so they are believed to have the power to be able to have sex with whomever they want and whenever. For a man to admit that he did not want sex, however, directly challenges this pressure and societal ideal. In itself, the erect penis is a personification of male power and dominance (Plummer, 2005), so male rape victims who are erect during their attack may be seen as having initiated the sex in the first place or that it was consensual since the erection 'says it all', that he 'enjoyed it', and his masculinity remains intact for the erection is a symbol of an embodied hegemonic masculinity. Societies, state and voluntary agencies' thinking in this way may perceive male rape as a consensual phenomenon when a report is made. This links into the latter part of the analysis—not 'real' victims—whereby these agencies may find it problematic to classify a male rape victim who had an erection as a 'real' victim, considering the power and dominance that an erection symbolises. Admitting rape challenges this representation of power, making it difficult to take these victims seriously when they report their allegation.

## 4.4 Vulnerability and Male Rape

### 4.4.1 Alcohol, Drugs and Vulnerability

An additional finding emerged in relation to vulnerability and male sexual victimisation. On the whole, respondents believed that men's lifestyle made them more vulnerable to sexual violence, such as placing themselves in vulnerable situations with the use of alcohol or drugs. For example:

> I think a lot of things contribute to vulnerability generally, like alcohol abuse, drug taking, which can leave victims vulnerable to attack, if you know what I mean. I've seen city centre videos of people who are on a night out in the town and they've been that drunk, they are staggering around the streets uncontrollably drunk. For that reason, they are vulnerably open to attack for various crimes, but equally leave them open and vulnerable. We have had cases where young people who have been drunk by drink have been attacked, so it does happen (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

> The [male rape case] I dealt with, more recently, was a male rape [victim] who was befriended. He was significantly under the influence of alcohol. The victim sort of wasn't aware of his surroundings, what was going on, and he became split up from his friends, and basically he was targeted by someone who befriended him, took him off to an address, and the next thing he comes around and he's been raped by this guy (Specialist Police Officer 3, Female).

> [A]lcohol and drugs [are] involved…I mean, we can't assume that every man is big, tough, strong and powerful….Their [victims'] memory might not be the best ever because of the trauma, but it can be misconstrued…as, "Oh, well you have had too much alcohol or you have been under the influence of drugs so therefore you may have said yes" (Police Detective 1, Female).

These excerpts suggest that alcohol and drugs may play a part in male rape occurring, whereby victims of this crime are susceptible to being raped whilst intoxicated or on

drugs. Police Detective 1 (Female) suggests that, because the victims may have been intoxicated or on drugs, they may encounter disbelieving accusations from the wider society, state and voluntary agencies; for instance, "oh, well you have had too much alcohol or you have been under the influence of drugs so therefore you may have said yes [to sex]". Hlavka (2014) argues that victims of sexual violence may be seen as blameworthy for putting themselves in a vulnerable position where they can be raped or sexually assaulted. Police Detective 1 (Female) also points out another issue in her quote: "we can't assume that every man is big, tough, strong and powerful". This suggests that alcohol and drugs may make it difficult for male rape victims to enact hegemonic masculine practices because they may impede their sense of power, control and domination, bringing about, therefore, a lack of control of their own body and mind. Consequently, this lack of power and control may facilitate disbelieving attitudes and biased assumptions and responses regarding gender roles and stereotypes, since men are supposed to embody hegemonic masculinity at all times (Kimmel, 2005). Alcohol and drugs, however, make hegemonic masculinity difficult to embody. At the same time, men can reclaim back their, or embody hegemonic masculinity after having been raped. For example, as Weiss (2010) maintains:

> One of the ways in which men can reassert masculinity is to blame their vulnerability for victimization on the consumption of alcohol, essentially providing an explanation for how people who are supposed to be in control at all times could have been (sexually) victimized in the first place. Since alcohol impairs a victim's ability to resist attacks, being drunk provides a plausible explanation for how it was possible for men to be overpowered and unable to defend themselves (p. 289).

This suggests that, while male rape victims are unable to enact hegemonic masculinity practices at times, they can also embody hegemonic masculinity when it is doable given the context, situation and social structures; or they can draw on the "patriarchal dividend" when/if their power is threatened (Connell, 1995). By men adopting hegemonic masculinity practices after their rape, such as admitting that they were drinking before they were raped so they took part in hegemonic masculine practices, they may be able to demonstrate a masculine project revealing to the police and to the third sector that they engaged in a masculine activity prior to their rape, which may

help to offset the feminine connotations linked to male rape. Drinking alcohol is important for men since "[n]ot drinking or being a light drinker is associated with femininity and therefore considered weak" (Carlson, 2008: 9). I argue, therefore, that male rape victims selectively providing snapshots of masculine conducts (e.g., drinking alcohol) that these victim engaged in prior to, during, or after their rape may induce more sympathetic and sensitive police and voluntary sector attitudes and responses. By not revealing a masculine project in this way, however, male victims of rape may encounter unsympathetic and insensitive police and voluntary sector attitudes and responses.

### 4.4.2 'Real' Men and Vulnerability

There was a belief amongst the respondents that, for most 'real' men, the risk and vulnerability of being raped by other men is low:

> I think for most *real* men, the risk of being raped by other men is probably quite low (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male. Emphasis added).

This suggests that a particular male rape myth is present in this belief. That is, "'real' men cannot get raped or are not vulnerable to rape". Arguably, this is problematic because it is unclear as to which types of men are conceptualised as 'real' men. Does it include gay, bisexual or heterosexual male rape victims? Connell (2005: 45) argues that the belief of there being 'real' men is omnipresent, defined as natural and 'deep masculine'. Goffman (1963: 128) similarly defines 'real' men as the following:

> [Y]oung, married, white, urban, northern, *heterosexual*, Protestant, father, of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight, and height, and a recent record in sports. Any male who fails to qualify in any one of these ways is…*unworthy, incomplete, and inferior* (Emphasis added).

From the respondent's suggestion of there being 'real' men, homosexual and bisexual male rape victims are unclassified as 'real' men, only heterosexual men are. This suggests, then, that gay and bisexual male rape victims are only thought of as being vulnerable to rape and that male rape is only applicable to them. What this indicates,

furthermore, is that state and voluntary agencies may position gay and bisexual men at the bottom of the gender hierarchy, who are compelled to embody subordinate masculinities (Messerschmidt, 2000). The respondent's quote above, using Goffman and Connell as frameworks to understand it, indicates thus that gay and bisexual male rape victims are deemed abnormal and "unworthy, incomplete, and inferior" or as not 'real' men, so they are solely vulnerable to, and at risk of, rape. The respondent's quote, however, contradicts Lees' (1997) research, in which she argues that all men are vulnerable to, and at risk of, rape. Arguably, moreover, it can also be put forward that gay and bisexual male rape victims are more likely to be disbelieved regarding their rape, as they may be seen to be putting themselves in vulnerable and risky situations than female victims. To suggest that these victims are not 'real' men and so are 'more vulnerable' to rape ignores the possibility that "anyone is at risk of rape" (Police Detective 3, Female). Although men are less likely than women to admit their risk and vulnerability since they are able to either control or conceal their emotions (Seidler, 2007; Carlson, 2008), they are simultaneously demonstrating hegemonic masculinity practices by concealing their vulnerabilities, anxieties and weaknesses, instead revealing strength, self-reliance, autonomy and invulnerability (Williams, 2009). In other words, "[m]en's vulnerability [is] dealt with through intended solitary discourses and practices…[such as] containment of difficult feelings, rational thinking alone, activities to deal with vulnerability without disclosure, and not accessing others' help" (ibid.: 448). Similarly, Seidler (2007) explains:

> Men often feel that it is harder to lift the phone to reach out when they are down than when they are feeling good about themselves….Masculinities become performative often as a way of concealing inner emotional turmoil from others. If there is a fear about how young men are to cope, often this is a fear they hide from themselves. They can take refuge in the notion that as long as they remain unspoken and others do not know, these emotions are not real and might disappear just as they arrived. Vulnerabilities are often hidden as men can feel they should somehow be able to handle their own emotions so as not to be more shamed, especially in conditions where they can feel without employment of relationships that their masculinities are all they have left as sources of self-esteem (p. 13).

### 4.4.3 Gay Communities as Vulnerable

Another finding that emerged in relation to vulnerability and male rape is the issue of the gay community being vulnerable to male sexual victimisation. For example:

> [T]he gay community are the only people who are gonna be victims of male rape, but they are a vulnerable group. But it is a very difficult area of business…there's a lot of people who still think that the police are going to have a negative attitude towards them….If you wanted to be a predatory rapist who wanted to target men, that's the place to go to (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

> [I]n the gay community, [male rape] is something that happens quite a lot, or sexual assault does…[gay community] is a very vulnerable group (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male).

> [W]ith gay men in the gay community, because they are looking for relationships, they're out socializing, there's lots of alcohol, they're more vulnerable in that respect. Yeah. You wouldn't get a heterosexual male flirting with a homosexual male. Even if they had no intention of a sexual relationship, you don't get that flirtatious, it's not the same (Police Sergeant 3, Female).

These extracts suggest that the gay community (or gay scene) is most vulnerable to male rape or male sexual assault. The quotes, however, challenge the male rape literature. For example, Scarce (1997) demonstrates that the gay community is vulnerable to or at risk of rape and sexual assault equally as the heterosexual community is (also known as the 'straight' scene). There is very limited research on whether the gay community is more or less at risk of rape. Arguably, though, it may be problematic to make 'more than or less than' statements or generalisations because it neither gives us any context and understanding with which to tackle male sexual victimisation nor provide us with any comprehension of the nature and pattern of male sexual victimisation. In fact, it may impede one from exploring or considering male rape in the heterosexual community if state and voluntary agencies believe that

the gay community is the only vulnerable place in which male rape occurs. Scarce (1997) goes further to argue that 'professionals' believing that male rape only occurs in the gay community provides a huge disservice to heterosexual male rape victims or may even neglect reaching out to them.

Following Scarce, it could also be argued that particular male rape myths may be perpetuated if these 'professionals' maintain that the gay community is the only place where male rape occurs or can occur. For instance, 'sexual assault by someone of the same sex causes homosexuality', suggesting that gay men frequent the gay scene, not the 'straight' scene or either; 'homosexual and bisexual individuals deserve to be sexually assaulted because they are immoral and deviant', potentially inducing victim-blaming views, attitudes and responses; and 'male rape is a homosexual issue', which arguably may overlook heterosexual, bisexual or transgendered (from female to male) male rape victims. Specialist Police Officer 1 (Male) suggests that gay men in the gay community or gay scene are going to "think that the police are going to have a negative attitude towards them". Weeks et al. (2001) argue that, as the gay scene is seen as a place where gay or bisexual men go to in order to seek casual, 'no strings attached' sex, "[t]his is an aspect of gay culture that has received criticism from both outside and within the gay community [and] has often caused moral outrage from some heterosexuals" (p. 143). In the gay community, gay and bisexual men creating a moral outrage, challenging moral norms and values in this way, may facilitate active repugnance against not only them, but also against the gay community, which in turn may propel state and voluntary agencies to conceptualise the gay community as being 'more vulnerable' to male sexual victimisation. Moreover, when sexual violence does occur in the gay community, the victims may be met with scorn, hostility, and disgust for challenging morality in the way of engaging in public or casual sex, resulting in social conflict.

**4.5 Explaining Male Rape: Patriarchy and Hate Crime/Homophobic Violence**

### 4.5.1 Patriarchy and Male Rape

From the data, there was a recurring theme relating to the ways in which the offender gains power and control over their victim. For instance:

[T]he perpetrators use particular tactics to make sure that [male rape victims] don't report…like 'if you say anything about our secret mission, your parents will be killed'…it's the threat that, if he says anything, then his parents are in danger (Police Detective 1, Female).

[Offenders] know how to emotionally black mail the victim making them believe the police won't believe them (Police Sergeant 9, Female).

[Male rape] is about power and control. It's a violent crime (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

It's all to do with power. It's to do with dominating someone, and forcing your beliefs on them (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

[Male rape] comes out of power and control, and destruction of someone's sense of masculinity, there is some enjoyment in it, perpetrators enjoy destroying your sense of safety that gives them the sense of power…[the] penis is a weapon of power (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

The quotes suggest that offenders carry out male rape, like female rape, as a way in which to maintain power and control over their victim(s). In support of this suggestion, other research has found that male and female rape are exercised as a way in which to boost, maintain and strengthen the male offender's hegemonic masculinity by exercising power, control and domination over the victim(s), as these facets are often unachievable through other avenues in the offender's everyday life (Gregory and Lees, 1999; Messerschmidt, 2000). Male rape as an exercise of manliness and strength is documented in more recent research (Weiss, 2010). Male rape can be exercised as a form of homosexualising, in that the offender(s) emasculates their victim (Ferrales et al., 2016). If male rape victims are emasculated and feminised, almost turned into women metaphorically, "heteronormative discourses have allowed for men's limited accountability for aggressive, harassing, and criminal sexual conduct" (Hlavka, 2014: 339-40). This is particularly the case when rape is a male prerogative and a male sexual entitlement (Brownmiller, 1975), meaning that state and voluntary agencies may perpetuate this thinking and belief.

Although my findings indicate that male rape is about power and control, which support the prior research evidence (e.g., McMullen, 1990; Abdullah-Khan, 2008), heteronormative notions may affect and shape societies, police officers, and voluntary agency practitoners' views and understandings of male rape, such as perpetuating the belief that male rape is normalised, pathologised, non-existent or conceptualised as not 'real rape' (Hlavka, 2014, 2016). Thus, male rape offenders are rarely prosecuted and convicted, reinforcing the male rape myth that 'male rape is not a serious issue'. For example, because of myths and misconceptions, such as men are "unable to control their sexual desires" (Hlavka, 2014: 344), and because casual sex with many different partners is a requirement and an entitlement for men to embody hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005), many male rape offenders go unpunished:

> There are issues in relation to myths and stereotypes within the criminal justice processes that make it difficult for jury's to be able to understand the crime and to therefore convict offenders. This is also true in female rape cases (Police Detective 2, Female).
> Offenders are less likely to be prosecuted so continue to offend without being challenged (Police Sergeant 9, Female).

**4.5.2 Gang Rape of Men/Male Rape as a Form of Hate Crime**

Another way in which male rape offenders can execute power and control over male rape victims, emasculating them of their power and control, is within a gang rape context. For instance:

> The one I dealt with was a stranger attack, which was in a park in Newcastle many years ago, and it was a male who was attacked by 3 males…who obviously pinned him to the ground and raped him ok (Specialist Police Officer 3, Female).

> People often think that male rape does not exist or that it only happens in gang violence or in prisons and believe that the victim's behavior is responsible for the attack (Male Rape Counsellor 4, Female).

Male rape is gang related and a lot of degrading treatment happens as part of the assault….In prison men are vulnerable due to gang related control (Male Rape Therapist 1, Female).

Some respondents believed that male rape occurs in a gang rape context; there was a suggestion that people in societies, state and voluntary agencies perpetuate the view that male rape only occurs within a gang violence context, possibly perpetuating the male rape myth thus that 'male rape only happens in prisons'. There is research evidence, however, that suggests that male rape occurs both in a gang rape context and in a one-to-one context within the wider community (Abdullah-Khan, 2008), which contradicts the respondents' views and beliefs. Nonetheless, there is research evidence that also supports the respondents' views when they suggest that the group members exercise male rape collectively to degrade and stigmatise their victim(s); stigma may be induced against the victim(s) for being emasculated and having their masculinity tarnished and defeated. For example, Messerschmidt (1993) and Carlson (2008) argue that, in a gang rape situation, rape helps to enhance and strengthen the group members' solidarity, brotherhood, and hegemonic masculinity through degrading and subordinating their victims, taking away their victims' manhood and masculinity in the process. One could speculate, therefore, that strengthening bonds between groups of perpetrators may enhance feelings of masculinity. As Pascoe and Hollander (2016) demonstrate, "[b]eing penetrated feminizes men, rendering them as less than masculine, perhaps as symbolic women, and rendering the perpetrator as dominant, that is, masculine" (p. 75). This degradation and subordination may occur, as my participants suggest, in a hate crime context that can also involve gang rape violence. For instance:

I imagine that a lot of homophobes and people who hate gay people would do [male rape], kind of their way of teaching them a lesson. If you think of the National Front its proving their masculinity, 'you want it, you get it' sort of thing…a lot of sexual acts are about domination, power and control (Voluntary Agency Worker 3, Male).

[A] brother and sister who met a group of people at a party and gone back to the house with them and the sister was being raped by two men and he was

being raped by three men. And this was happening all in the same room. So he was basically being raped orally and anally at the same time….They were saying things to him like: "you never had such a big one like this", "you love it, you love it, you know you do", and they told him to turn around and watch his sister be raped as well (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female).

These passages support the notion that male rape can be carried out as a form of hate crime against gay men or men who are presumed to be gay. Herek et al. (1999) found that gay victims of hate crime feel a sense of powerlessness during and after their assault, leaving them open to degradation and homophobia not only during their rape, but also from the wider society and from the police post-rape. These quotes support Herek, suggesting that degrading treatment can occur during the rape of men, as a way in which to enhance the offenders' power and control over their victims and to arguably enhance group members' solidarity and relationship. This finding supports earlier research findings. For example, Gregory and Lees (1999: 132) stipulate:

> Raping gays or men who are perceived as 'weaker' can paradoxically be seen as a way of defending oneself against homosexual feelings. When carried out with a friend or gang, rape can be seen as both a way of enhancing relationships with them (victims often report that the assailants laughed and joked with each other) and, by humiliating the victim, of showing oneself to be a 'real man'. Humiliation was reported by many assailants, some [victims] had been left lying naked and wounded in the street or urinated on.

**4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter uncovered the social construction of male rape through a gender and sexualities lens. This was important to do because themes, concepts and conceptions relating to gender, sexualities and masculinities frequently occurred in almost every data set. This chapter, overall, suggests that male rape victims may struggle to come to terms with their masculinity and sexuality post-rape and even during their rape. The act of male rape challenges and confronts men's masculinity and sexuality, which shapes the way in which societies, state and voluntary agencies perceive, respond to,

and serve male victims of rape. The findings suggest that male rape victims are unable to embody hegemonic masculinity, so they are often forced to embody subordinate or marginalised masculinities. As a result, homophobic reactions, responses, or appraisals from others, including police officers and voluntary agency practitioners, are often induced to regulate masculinities and sexualities, ensuring that male rape victims are placed at the bottom of the gender hierarchy. Furthermore, some male rape myths emerged in the findings. For example, "men cannot be raped", which is underpinned by different cultural stereotypes and gender and sexuality norms. This myth, amongst others that emerged in the findings, such as "male rape is a homosexual issue" and "'real' men can defend themselves against rape", exists because of stereotypes about masculinity, strength, power, and dominance, and because of hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity. The findings indicate, moreover, that gay and bisexual men are seen not to constitute 'real' men; they are often excluded from being considered as 'real' rape victims. These male rape myths, underpinned by gender norms and values, are deleterious because they make it difficult for victims to report and to receive adequate services and responses from the state and third sectors. In the next chapter, I aim to examine in depth the policing of male rape from a sociological, cultural and poststructural framework.

# Chapter 5: Social Constructions of Male Rape in the Cultural World of Policing—Findings and Discussion (Part 2)

## 5.0 Introduction

In the last chapter, I showed that notions of gender and sexualities affect and shape state and voluntary agencies' understanding of male rape and their views of men as victims of rape. As a result, it is possible to delineate the different roles that gender, sexualities and masculinities play in the discourse of male sexual victimisation. In this chapter, I focus on social and cultural constructions of male rape in police forces and the policing of male rape. Drawing on a sociological and post-structural perspective, I closely examine the ways in which police officers construct and respond to male rape. This is important to examine in order to fully answer the research questions: How do conceptions of male rape shape state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male victims of rape and sexual violence in Britain?; and how does the police occupational culture influence the ways in which the police provide services for male rape victims? Drawing on a theoretical framework informed by sociological, post-structural and queer theories, I focus here on police officers' interactions with, and cultural constructions of, male rape victims, to theorise power and social relations between officers and male victims of rape. From the qualitative data presented and analysed, themes of power, discourse, culture, values, norms and beliefs emerge. I primarily draw on Foucauldian understandings of the social world. For instance, the main conceptions informing the analysis are elaborated in post-structural comprehensions of *discourse* (Foucault, 1972), the *body* (Foucault, 1982), *power* and *discipline* (Foucault, 1977). I suggest that we suspend judgements from rightness or wrongness in the ways in which male rape is policed; instead, we consider the minutiae of officers' interactions with male rape victims to gain some understanding of the social and power relations inherent in that to better understand how police officers engage with male rape victims. It is significant to understand how police officers respond to and serve male rape victims since they are legally obliged to investigate male rape allegations to collate evidence to present it to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), so that the CPS can decide whether there is sufficient evidence to prosecute the offender(s) and whether it is in the public interest to do so.

In terms of structure, firstly, police cultures and discourses are closely examined to understand how police officers socially and culturally construct male rape. In section 5.1, I argue that some officers will construct the bodies of male rape victims as insignificant, 'othering' them, because of male rape myths being circulated through police cultures and discourses, while for other officers, male rape is an important issue. Secondly, I critically explore social constructions of 'deviancies', queerness, and mental health in the policing of male rape, where I argue that some officers construct male rape victims as 'deviant', queer and intertwine male rape with mental health. Thirdly, the chapter goes on to unravel how cultural myths/scripts shape police interactions with male rape victims, where I conclude that constructions of male rape myths can propel some officers to exercise secondary victimisation. Fourthly, I examine police subcultures in depth to understand how male rape victims are labeled, and I discuss that some officers label the victims as the 'non-victimised'. Finally, the chapter examines cultural constructions of police (dis)belief and (in)sensitivity regarding male rape; and I argue that a 'culture of disbelief'[34] is prevalent in some police forces but not all police officers will subscribe to it, though some do.

## 5.1 Cultures and Police Discourses in the Policing of Male Rape

Police officers' cultures and discourses form and shape the ways in which they perceive, respond to, and deal with male rape cases. As a result, police officers construct and conceptualise male rape in certain ways. Consider the following excerpt as an example:

> We are pretty cold when it comes to [dealing with male rape]…we are not qualified to sort of try and give like counseling. That's why [male rape victims] interpret the questions [and police investigations] as being quite cold and calculated…someone else will sort out the 'emotional stuff', if I say touchy and feely stuff, afterwards who are better trained to deal with [male rape]. That's probably the best way, because if we try to do it, we'll probably make a right mess of it….From a victim's point of view, it's better that they

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[34] A culture in which police officers are skeptical about male rape cases, disbelieving male victims of rape through victim-blaming attitudes and responses.

see services who are qualified and trained to sort of deal with [their rape] (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

While I wish not to classify the police as a homogenous group (Chan, 1996), I aim to gain an insight into the police officers' discourses and cultures to make sense of their cultural world, which male rape is a part of. For Foucault (1972: 80), discourse is "an individualisable group of statements". It is a body of knowledge that is shaped by social structures, social practices, and social institutions. I am defining 'culture' as a set of norms and values that are not fixed but are always relational, contextual, and situational (Holdaway, 1983; Reiner, 2010). Focusing on discourse and culture in the police, Specialist Police Officer 1 (Male) hints that some police officers express discourse to male rape victims in a 'cold' fashion. My interpretation of this is that some officers' cultural discourse may not be underpinned by robust training, excluding any training surrounding counseling for male rape victims, and are potentially unable to provide an empathetic and sympathetic approach to male victims of rape. Through social relations between the police and male rape victims, their interactions can be seen as a product of discourse; for example, the interactions are shaping and re-shaping discourses of male rape, meaning that officers come to learn about male rape in different ways depending on their interactions with male victims of rape. Discourse is central to understanding the ways in which the police respond to and deal with male rape victims. As the Specialist Police Officer 1 (Male) highlights, this 'cold', unemotional and insensitive approach that some police officers may demonstrate through discourse can metaphorically and symbolically inscribe or mark the bodies[35] of male rape victims, whereby these victims are "made" (Foucault, 1982: 208) or transformed into certain subjects that some officers may see in a certain way depending on their own cultures. My interpretation of the above quote is not only representative of male rape, but also apparent in interactions of the police with female victims (see Maier, 2008).

Some officers conceptualise male rape victims as 'emotional' or symbolically representing emotion, sensitivity, and fragility. This discursive idea or perception of

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[35] The way in which I am using "bodies" in this chapter is through the lens of the "body" as a cultural and social construct and as a significant entity in a symbolic and material process of power, shaping it in ways that become fundamental to social and power relations.

male rape may not only legitimate the 'cold' and unsympathetic discourse circulated against male rape victims, but also may conceptualise male rape as signifying femininity as it is often intertwined with emotion. The discursive idea of male rape symbolising emotion and so femininity in some police officers, then, circulate a discursive body of knowledge metaphorically, culturally and symbolically 'marking' the bodies of male rape victims as emotional and feminine. The 'cold' discourse symbolically and metaphorically mark male rape victims' bodies as emotional and feminine, which can be enacted as a bodily discipline (Foucault, 1977) through discourse that is founded on a 'cold' approach comprising of unemotionality and coldness by some officers. The victims' bodies, then, metaphorically and symbolically transform into 'women' since emotion marks the body as feminine and non-heterosexual (Foucault, 1977) for some officers who circulate discourse reflecting such discursive ideas.

By exploring the ways in which police officers respond to male rape victims and how discursive ideas and knowledges of male rape are corporeally marked on male rape victims' bodies, one is able to consider the different ways in which social interactions between the police and male rape victims are regulated and managed in particular ways regarding discipline and the shaping of behaviors. It could be argued that, in the police, certain discourses relating to male rape can "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1972: 49). Thus, as the material effects of discourse, the bodies of male rape victims may be configured, reconfigured, and shaped and reshaped in their social interactions with the police. For example, if police discourse is hostile, some victims are likely to withdraw their engagement from the police and from criminal proceedings. The following quote by a female Police Constable reflects this: "A lot of [male rape] victims deal with character assassination by the police rather than looking at the bare facts…it's very difficult to get a conviction for rape, then" (Police Constable 12, Female).

This excerpt suggests that the effects of police cultures and discourses can be harmful on some occasions because some officers may conduct 'character assassination' against male rape victims, controlling and regulating their bodies that are metaphorically and symbolically 'marked' as 'suspicious'. When some officers do 'character assassination', they are questioning and unraveling the validity of the male

victims as authentic rape victims. According to some officers, therefore, the victims may no longer embody a rape victim identity in a legal context and framework if they withdraw from their allegation and if their rape victim identity is undermined and tarnished through 'character assassination' by some police officers. As the findings suggest in this chapter, male rape cases do not often come to the police's attention due to a lack of reporting, this is likely to shape some officers' discourse pertaining to the frequency and significance of male rape in that it is an unimportant issue. For instance, "None of the police believe [male rape] is important because they'll say rape generally, not just male rape, but rape generally, is underreported" (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male). Christiansen and Fischer (2016) argue that, in order to construct discourse, knowledge claims ought to be founded on systematic observations of measurable phenomena. This suggests that some police officers may rely on police statistics to construct and develop their discourses and cultures relating to the issue of male rape and its prevalence. As one officer stated, "You can only base your statistics on the crimes reported. For that reason, then, the rape of men does not occur per se, in as much as the rape of women" (Police Constable 27, Female). For other officers, however, police statistics are unreliable and inaccurate to develop a true 'picture' or representation of male rape, so there is a 'dark' figure of male rape that does not consider the amount of unreported and unrecorded crime. For example:

> The issue is you've got underreporting, which means you got that black 'dark figure' of crime…there has been a lot of criticism of police officers' recording of crime…I do personally know of instances where lads have said that they had been raped and they have told me that they have not been taken seriously, so you can't completely discount this idea of the 'grey figure' of crime…they have told the authorities and the authorities have shoved it 'under the carpet' basically or didn't accept that it might be happening…you are almost given less credibility (Police Detective 1, Female).

For Foucault (1976), these discursive ideas and beliefs systematically construct the subject matter of which they speak. In the cultural world of policing, then, male rape is insignificant or implausible for some individual police officers, while for others, it is equally important as female rape in terms of care and attention: "We always provide adequate training to officers and adequate care for male rape victims"

(Specialist Police Officer 2, Female). As such, this discrepancy in discourse suggests that discourse may be fluid, vulnerable, and open to change, depending on officers' different contexts and situations in their own cultural world of policing. Arguably, this occurs because culture is never fixed; it is invariably changing, influenced by social divisions, social structures and institutions (Jackson, 2007). For example, some police officers' discourse may conceptualise male rape victims as powerless and voiceless:

> [Male rape victims] may feel the police will treat them as a statistic rather than a survivor. Also they may feel they will have more control of things with an external agency rather than with the police who may take over with their investigation goals (Police Response Officer 2, Female).

However, because of notions around hegemonic masculinity, male rape victims often feel discouraged to embody emasculation and powerlessness since some do not want to project a 'failed' man image to the social world for fear of backlash, disgust and disdain being directed towards them by other men with power (Javaid, 2015b). Some officers may, indeed, express discourse that metaphorically and symbolically conceptualises male victims of rape as 'numbers'. For Foucault (1991), power is omnipresent; it is embodied and diffused in discourse. While Foucault (1991) suggests that power is not an inherited entity, power then becomes a relational concept that can be negotiated, meaning that police officers' discourses can be challenged. The police are able to express power supremacy "with their investigation goals" (Police Response Officer 2, Female), which may not prioritise male rape victims' needs. Power can flow through police institutions that allow some officers to express power and social supremacy through discourse by way of placing male rape victims in less than desirable subordinate positions, notably categorising them as a 'statistic'. By doing so, officers construct male rape victimology that allows for power to be uncontested. However, power is relational, contextual and situational (Connell, 2005; Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007), so male rape victims can challenge these perceived superior police powers at the same time, meaning that police discourse can be confronted, shaped and reshaped. Therefore, power is not necessarily a 'bad thing', for example:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production (Foucault, 1991: 194).

Police officers often have managerial supervision to ensure that targets are met and that male rape cases are properly investigated according to the rules and regulations that each police force work by. Foucault (1991) notes that people behave in expected ways and learn to discipline themselves. Police officers may, then, conform to the rules and regulations set out by each police force when investigating male rape allegations. Police training is one example of the developments in policing, whereby officers can be better trained to respond to male rape victims' needs. Police training can provide officers with a lens or discourse that is reshaped with which to serve male rape victims. My findings suggest that the police have a lack of training regarding male rape; as my research found, a majority of officers have a lack of training regarding male rape. However, it is important to note that most police forces that I researched expressed a need to have training that focused on male rape, as well as female rape, but failed to implement male rape training. Instead, many police forces would draw on their training of female rape when dealing with male rape victims. Some police officers' discourse, then, is likely to circulate knowledge based on female rape. However, we know that there are unique differences (and some similarities) between male and female rape. For instance, men often question their sexuality and masculinity after their rape in contrast to female rape victims (Javaid, 2015b). My findings are in agreement with Jamel et al. (2008: 491) who argue that, "The standard of available training in sexual offences investigation was found to be variable across police forces". As an example, the lack of police training dedicated specifically for male rape can be seen in the following exchange of communication:

Interviewer: So what kind of training did you have to undergo in order to work in this department that is dealing with male rape victims?

Specialist Police Officer 1 (Male): Erm, well, not so much me myself. The front line officers obviously a lot of them have SOLO training (sexual

offences training). It's not specifically generically towards men, it is towards victims of sexual violence, so it is a bit generic. It doesn't sort of specify, 'Oh, this is a male victims course'.

This is just one example of where police training is *generic* and does not include any form of training relating to male rape. I found this lack of police training on male rape in almost every single police force in England that I researched. Another officer, like many others in my sample, stated that she does not have police training to be able to handle male rape victims, as exemplified in the following quote:

> I think the police recognize we're investigators you know. *We haven't got the best knowledge of training* to be able to support a [male rape] victim (Specialist Police Officer 3, Female. Emphasis added).

Although similar quotes like these came from different types of police officers, it was striking to me that specialist police officers would also state that they have no specific training on male rape. One would think that their specialist training would include some basic training on male sexual victimisation, as it is presumed that specialist training would thoroughly cover all facets of sexual violence. This could mean that specialist police officers' discourse may circulate male rape myths, as there is no training to eradicate such myths. Because there may be no form of training regarding male rape, then, male rape myths are likely to circulate via discourse, even amongst specialist police officers; male rape myths, such as 'men cannot be raped' or 'rape only happens to women'. For example:

> There is too much focus on female rape in training and…because nobody discusses male rape, it can't possibly happen. It's almost like well, "It [male rape] mustn't have happened because I never had any of this on my training". Again, that contributes to the cynicism of officers…I used to run training in my police force for CID officers and for various different departments, mainly investigative interviewing, but I am not aware of any particular course that just deals in isolation with male rape. As far as I'm concerned, there isn't one. There is no specific course on male rape (Police Detective 1, Female).

This excerpt suggests that male rape myths can circulate through police discourse because officers may not receive any specific training on male rape to tackle and eradicate such myths. Venema (2016) argues that training in police forces is needed and should be compulsory, stating, "Training on sexual assault was described as a need within police departments. Officers indicated the need for training among all patrol officers, while acknowledging limited resources to do so" (p. 889). While this suggests that knowledge on male rape is important, police forces may not have sufficient resources to be able to provide specialist training on male rape.

As highlighted above, if no training on male rape develops, police discourse is likely to perpetuate the discursive idea that male rape does not occur or that rape only happens to women. Although training may prevent male rape myths from circulating through police discourse, it can also work against male rape victims. For example, Venema (2016) argues that "a poor fit exists between police training and what is helpful to victim-survivors of sexual assault [since] [p]olice officer training emphasizes skills to identify indicators of doubtful credibility when interacting with crime victims" (p. 893). As Police Detective 1 (Female) stated: "Male rape is not within my sphere of understanding, I've never had any training on it, and therefore, it doesn't ring right". Similarly, I found that an absence of police training on male rape can circulate doubtfulness of male rape in police discourse; that is, the discursive idea that male rape does not occur. Logan (2016) suggests that police training to train officers to be 'professional' may be ineffective. Concurrently, Dwyer (2015) found that police training can shape police discourse, teaching officers, either explicitly or implicitly, masculine qualities that function to deleteriously serve victims who are unmasculine. Male rape victims may be seen as unmasculine as their victimisation contradicts notions of masculinity (see chapter 4).

It is clear that police training can shape police discourse relating to male rape, configuring it to fit the needs of *female* rape victims. As male rape is absent in police training, some officers' discourse may function to exercise power with precise and diverse techniques. For instance, some officers are likely to circulate discourse to suggest that male rape is non-existent due to a training neglect incorporating male victimology or a social neglect of police acceptance of male victimology. Male rape victims, then, may be deemed as 'abnormal' or 'deviant' for discourse on male rape

victimology when it is actively forgotten in police training. Alleged male rape victims may, then, be controlled under 'biopower' (Foucault, 1978) that they may have to negotiate with some police officers, who are untrained in respect of male rape. Controlling the actions and bodies of male rape victims that may become 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1991), police training can normalise what has been 'made' as abnormal. By the rapist controlling the actions of a male body and placing them in a subjected subordinate gendered position, their bodies are perceived as "docile bodies". Therefore, police training should normalise perceptions of male docile bodies to remove the social perception of gender deviancy when rape occurs. Otherwise, female rape may be constructed as a 'normal' discursive idea in contrast to male rape for some officers. Police training can work to configure and reconfigure police discourse to dominate and control victims' bodies that challenge police discourses and cultures. For Foucault,

> These methods [such as police training], which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called 'disciplines'….The historical moment of the disciplines was the moment when an art of the human body was born, which was directed not only at the growth of its skills, nor at the intensification of its subjection, but at the formation of a relation that in the mechanism itself makes it more obedient (1977: 137).

Through police training in which constructions of rape are made 'normal' or 'abnormal', police officers' bodies are disciplined into docility. Police training can function to control officers; it is a form of oppression and domination that is useful for the oppressors, such as those whom are higher up in the managerial levels. However, research also shows how formal training can be resisted/undermined by informal on-the-job training, too (Fielding, 1988). When police training circulates, it can work to express power and control over officers who are 'trained' and are mere 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1991) that are disciplined, subjected and controlled through which officers become obedient. Police training, then, becomes "an apparatus that makes it possible to supervise" (Foucault, 1977: 281). I argue that the aspect of police training seems to be a characteristic and fundamental dimension of the social and power

relations that exist between the police and male rape victims. Discourse and control are key aspects that are in constant flux within police institutions. As the police themselves are under supervision and control through the apparatus of police training, so too are male rape victims through the apparatus of police discourse.

This section has shown that police cultures and discourses are fluid, dynamic and vulnerable to change. They are contextual and shaped by social and power relations and social interactions between officers and male rape victims. Some officers will circulate male rape myths through discourse, such as 'men cannot be raped', while other officers will not, depending on the setting in which officers situate. Police training is a tool that helps construct police cultures and discourses, shaping whether male rape is seen as 'normal' or 'abnormal', 'non-deviant' or 'deviant'. Next, I critically interrogate the ways in which male rape may be constructed as 'deviant', queer, and how some officers may associate male rape with mental illness.

## 5.2 Social Constructions of 'Deviancies', Queerness, and Mental Health in the Policing of Male Rape

Officers' ideas and views of male rape differ on a social continuum. For each officer, his or her ideas and views are constantly in flux. This brings us to the point that 'deviancies' in the policing of male rape are also socially and culturally constructed. I focus here on particular 'deviancies' in the policing of male rape, such as mental health and homosexuality, because they are culturally "made" 'deviant' through social and power relations between some police officers and some social bodies that may or may not include male rape victims. As Christiansen and Fischer (2016: 9) demonstrate, "Things (objects and events) and quasi-things (concepts) are real because they are made" in a dialectical and reciprocal relationship between officers and with social agencies. In the findings, the social constructions of mental health and homosexuality emerged. For example:

> We've had incidents where young men have obviously end up going out, getting involved in a situation, end up having sex or whatever, and the next day they regret it and think 'I'm gonna falsely report'….People who get prosecuted are the ones who tell lies, falsely report, get people arrested,

maybe go through the court process, and perverting the course of justice…we've done people for wasting police time for falsely reporting….We do get a lot of allegations with people with mental health issues, falsely report, ends up being false (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

Some police officers in my sample often believed that they are better able to recall incidents where male rape victims have lied to them; they remember false reports rather often and easily, than male rape cases that were seen to be fairly genuine. I found that the common explanation used to regard a male rape case as 'false' was that the participants believed male victims to conceal sexual acts that they either regretted or wanted to hide from societies; for instance, experimenting with homosexuality. In the policing of male rape, homosexuality is often constructed as 'deviant' (Rumney, 2009; see also Burke, 1994). This may make it difficult for some officers to regard rape allegations from gay male rape victims or victims presumed to be gay as legitimate allegations, and so their complaints may be constructed as 'false' due to the construction of homosexuality as 'deviant' and 'abnormal'. Foucault (1978) expresses that the construction of homosexuality induces some level of fear and backlash against it because it poses a threat; it, therefore, becomes repressed. Could it be safe to argue that, due to the close intertwinement of homosexuality with male rape, rape allegations from gay men (or presumed as such) may be constructed as 'invalid' or 'illegitimate' because, in some police officers' construction of 'normal' heterosexuality, homosexuality is excluded, marginal, and placed at the periphery of what is socially constructed as 'normal'. In agreement with Foucault, Jeffrey Weeks (1977) argued that it is necessary to see the social construction of non-heterosexuality in institutions, such as police institutions, as a perversion and an abnormal deviation from normalised heterosexuality, leading to social control. It could be argued that social control can manifest itself in several ways, one of which is to deem male rape reports from gay men as 'false', so as to perpetuate normative heterosexuality in some police institutions, in which heteronormativity stubbornly persists (Jackson, 2005; see also section 4.3.1).

Some police officers who suggest that the victim has lied or made a false allegation may then "no crime" their allegation, which means that such male rape allegations do not become a 'crime figure' as such, but rather form part of the 'dark' figure of crime.

That is, the amount of crimes that goes unrecorded by the police, which in turn may give an inaccurate or misleading 'picture' of male rape. In other words, male rape may actually be on the rise, but, given the under-recording of male rape based on male rape victims supposedly lying to the police, one is left with a distorted view of male rape.

Some officers may construct reports from gay male rape victims (or victims presumed as such) as 'false'; this is even more likely to be the case in gay relationships. For example, an issue emerged regarding acquaintance rape in that some officers expect sex in this context. Therefore, the victims are less likely to be believed by some officers if they were raped in the context of acquaintance rape because, as the findings suggest, sex is always expected in homosexual relationships. For instance:

> There is fear that [male rape victims] are not going to be believed [by the police]. Sometimes they put themselves in the position where they are feeling that it was deserved. It depends on the context in which they've been raped. If it was with a partner, who's forced sex on them or somebody who they have had a one nighter with, or whatever, it kind of means…no means yes sort of arrangement. [The police] might think that they deserved that; they should do sex with their partner…they've said 'no', but then the partner said 'you wanted it anyway' (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

This perception that sex is an expectation in gay male relationships may promote the male rape myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue' and credibility for male victims of acquaintance rape may be undermined or weakened, which in turn may bring about disbelieving attitudes and responses against these types of victims by some police officers. Comparatively, in cases of female rape in heterosexual relationships/marriages, some criminal justice practitioners do not construct the female victims as 'real' rape victims (Temkin and Krahe, 2008). In line with other recent work, "Typical sexual assault scenarios considered ambiguous include those involving…acquaintances, or those with a current or prior intimate relationship" (Venema, 2016: 883). What this means is that, like female rape by male acquaintances, male victims of acquaintance rape are unlikely to be constructed as valid or credible victims by some police officers, so they may be disbelieved, while

some police officers may be suspicious or dubious against acquaintance male rape victims. Notably, not all gay relationships may be characterised as sexual, some of which may be asexual or not sexual in nature, and so they may be based on romantic love, intimacy and friendship. Furthermore, the dynamics in gay relationships may be unique, involving two men, so which man in the relationship enacts the active role and the passive role. Do both men enact both roles? It is unclear which one would be seen as the penetrator and, therefore, offender. For Foucault (1978), these roles can be negotiated through social interactions with the sexual 'participants', whereby the 'self' is in constant flux with the 'other'.

Although previous research has found that stranger rape is less likely to occur against men than acquaintance rape (Lundrigan and Mueller-Johnson, 2013), my respondents sometimes suggested that male rape reports are more serious, more believable, or more legitimate if the alleged offender was a complete stranger. A stranger male rape case is seen as more serious since 'stranger rape' may occur when a man is less likely to expect it to happen to him and it frequently includes more than one assailant, a high level of violence, and a weapon (Kaufman et al., 1980). As the following respondents indicated:

> You'll have your stereotypical stranger rapist, which is like hiding in the bushes, dark, and grabbing a total stranger and raping them in the bushes. That's the main type of rapist (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

> From a total stranger rape of a man…if you are sort of young and you're gay then you are probably more vulnerable to it (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male).

> If it was a stranger attack of either men or women, there is more of a likelihood for that issue of being believed…the police are more inclined to trivialise acquaintance male rape instances than say a stranger dragging a person down the back alley and raping them, which is wrong, but it says something not just about policing, but also about the wider society that we live in. It's almost like back in the days of, 'well you can rape your wife'. R vs. R pre-1991, it was acceptable to rape your wife, and obviously in some of the countries like Pakistan, it is still acceptable to rape your wife. I think we

still got reminiscence about dated attitudes that question the consent issue whether it's a male or female victim of rape, where it involved the partner that they are seeing (Police Detective 1, Female).

These excerpts challenge a few respondents' views that suggest that stranger rape is rare and that acquaintance rape against men is more common. The view that stranger rape is rare in contrast to acquaintance rape supports the research literature (Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Lundrigan and Mueller-Johnson, 2013). As examples of this view, consider the following excerpts:

> If you look at a stranger male rape, how likely is that to happen, I would say probably it will happen because I know it's been reported previously before, but it's unlikely and it's probably not as common as male rape where you're in a male-male relationship (Specialist Police Officer 3, Female).

> [I]t's usually someone that they know. It's unusual that it's a stranger rape. Most victims are raped by their partners or family members or someone that they're associated with (Police Constable 12, Female).

> [S]tranger rapes with male victims are rarer than the grooming of young males so…males who already have a sexual preference towards other males would be more likely victims than heterosexual males (Police Constable 18, Male).

From the excerpts, it is clear that some inconsistences arise. A few officers believed that acquaintance male rape cases are more common than stranger male rape cases, and supporting the research literature (e.g., Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Stuart et al. 2016). Although the few officers suggested that stranger rape is rare, they seem to suggest that male rape only affects gay men in a homosexual relationship, overlooking the issue that male rape can also affect heterosexual, bisexual and other types of men. For example, the research literature suggests that heterosexual men are largely victims of male rape (Isely and Gehrenbeck-Shim, 1997; Hodge and Canter, 1998). From the findings, it appears that male rape can occur in both a stranger and acquaintance rape context, but, because of the inconsistent views regarding which one is more prevalent,

male rape victims are likely to receive inconsistent treatment by some officers. If male rape victims reveal no physical injuries from their rape that was experienced in doors or by someone whom the victims know and some officers believe that stranger rape is 'real' rape, then not only may the victims be disbelieved, but also may have their attack trivialised. It may be that some officers construct victims with physical bruising as 'real' rape victims. Through social practices with the police, the victims' self and identity are constructed in certain ways at any given time; officers can draw on their cultural power to construct 'real' rape victims. For instance, if "the subject is formed by a will that turns back upon itself, assuming a reflexive form, then the subject is the modality of power that turns on itself; the subject is the effect of power in recoil" (Butler, 1997: 6). The effects of power appear to construct 'real' rape victims. As such, officers' subjectivity is historically rooted and constantly being reconstructed in interaction with male rape victims, shaping their views of male rape.

Some officers believed that gay sex in a homosexual relationship is expected so may not necessarily be classified as 'rape'. While this finding was inconsistent amongst the officers, those who subscribed to this view are likely to believe only male victims of stranger rape. Consequently, some police officers may neglect or overlook male victims of acquaintance rape, invalidating their sexual victimisation in turn. Since most officers symbolise heternormative and masculine bodies, they are able to regulate the conduct of bodies that do not conform to this symbolisation (Foucault, 1977). Foucault (1980) argues that bodies are textual in origin since, through discourses, they are constructed; and these discourses are founded on regulatory norms and shared symbols. Gay male rape victims' bodies may not signify heternormative and masculine bodies because they may echo a powerful discursive idea of 'looking queer'. That is, queerness may be considered as a discursive body of knowledge, marking the bodies of gay male rape victims (or presumed as such) that can be enacted as a body discipline with regards to what it means to be a homosexual (Foucault, 1977). In her theorisation of performativity of sexed/gendered subjectivities, Butler (1990) demonstrates that queer bodies enact and perform non-heteronormative gendered and sexual subjectivities via "the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self" (p. 140). Therefore, as a display of what it means to do queerness as a "citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it

names" (Butler, 1993: 2), queer bodies perform discursive knowledge. In the case of gay male rape victims in homosexual relationships, for some officers, these victims are transformed into certain subjects with connection to certain discursive knowledges regarding whom is a 'real' rape victim based on police subjectivity. The victims' bodies can present manners in which their bodies are different from other bodies in ways that violate constructions of hegemonic sexuality. These concepts frame the ways in which some officers' interactions with gay male victims of acquaintance rape are constructed and conceptualised.

### 5.2.1 The Interconnection Between Mental Health and Male Rape

Specialist Police Officer 1 (Male) suggests that the police get many allegations from men with mental health issues who 'falsely report' rape: "We do get a lot of allegations with people with mental health issues, falsely report, ends up being false" (SPO1, Male). It is unclear on what grounds they are assessed as having mental health issues. It is also unclear why the police mainly classify allegations coming from men with mental health issues as false. As Rumney and Hanley illustrate (2011: 142), "While it is known that men and women make false allegations of rape, we know little of how people decide when an allegation of male rape is false and on what evidential grounds". Perhaps officers are likely to "overestimate the percentage of false reporting" (Venema, 2016: 876) amongst male rape victims with mental health issues (or presuming they have mental health issues), or the police may be more likely to be discriminatory against male rape victims who have a mental health disorder, such as depression, which often occurs after an incident of male rape (Walker et al., 2005). Thomas Szasz (1972) highlights the ways in which societies construct knowledge of mental health and so knowledge of the body, so speaking about male rape victims who may be experiencing mental health issues can construct knowledge about their body and about their credibility. For Szasz, mental health issues are neither illnesses, diseases nor pathological, but rather best conceptualised as 'moral' issues. Mental illnesses become a social construction or myth that do not exist; they are, instead, 'problems in living' (Szasz, 1972). This leads one to argue, then, that some officers are likely to classify reports coming from male rape victims suffering from mental health issues as 'false'. Szasz argues that mental health issues are socially constructed to the extent that societies label them as 'deviant'. Some officers

may, therefore, classify some male rape victims with mental health issues as 'deviant' or 'abnormal', which could increase the likelihood of some officers conceptualising their allegations as 'false'.

In the view of Erving Goffman (1963), mental health disorders are deeply discrediting. He demonstrates the ways in which stigma, which can emerge from the social construction of mental health disorders, produces deleterious effects for those who are stigmatised with a mental health disorder. For example, one effect, as he suggests, is that mental health issues reduce the bearer from a whole person to one that is incurably 'tainted'. This construction of mental health as a person being 'tainted' is socially damaging and can bring about repulsion against him or her. Therefore, through social relations and interactions with the police, male rape victims presenting a mental health issue may be deeply discredited by some police officers, and so their allegations are likely to be constructed as 'false'. Men and women with mental health issues are more likely to be victims of sexual violence than the general population (Khalifeh et al., 2015), which is problematic as devaluing these victims' complaint in the criminal justice process may mean that some victims disengage with the police, since a stigmatised individual may be conceptualised as not quite human (Goffman, 1963). Some officers, then, may either consciously or subconsciously exclude male rape victims who present a mental health disorder to them through social interactions. Drawing on Goffman's theoretical standpoint, they may become 'blemished' victims who may be socially and culturally constructed as 'deviant' or 'abnormal'. Their stigma is so powerful that it can present barriers to getting equality and justice.

These victims' identity, therefore, transform into a 'spoiled identity' (Goffman, 1963). Resisting stigma can prove difficult (but not impossible) for these victims, involving the negotiation of discursive/structural contexts with which to negotiate an unspoiled social identity and to circulate unspoiled subject positions through social interactions with the police. Drawing on Foucault (1977), power operates to construct embodied subjectivities. While power is in flux, governed by knowledge regarding victims with mental health disorders, some officers are able to express social control against these victims. Constructing these victims as stigmatised (the subjects as 'knowable') produces the conditions for subjectivity (Foucault, 1978), and so some

officers through face-to-face interactions with the male rape victims perform subjectivity. Butler (1993) demonstrates that subjectivity is 'citational' and temporal, so it is susceptible to ongoing change; it is a perfomative and iterative concept. Through mental health discourse, constructing the 'abnormal' is creating the 'norm'; therefore, the 'spoiled' identity can be negotiated through social interactions with the police. Social interactions between the police and male rape victims presenting mental health issues can be conceptualised as a discursive "practice through which we see and thereby come to know things" (Mason, 2002: 4) about the construction of mental health and male rape in police forces. However, Foucault (1977: 178) states that "the slightest departures from correct behaviour [are made] subject to punishment" by some police officers, meaning that male rape complainants who present mental health issues to certain officers may induce dubiousness and skepticism in police discourse against these victims due to the stigma embedded in mental health. Police officers learn to recognise what it means to embody discourses of mental health, shaping police interactions with male victims of rape and constructing their allegations as 'false'.

This section has revealed that, as some officers construct male rape as 'deviant', queer and closely align male rape with mental health, the reports of male rape allegations are likely to be constructed as 'false' especially in gay relationships. As a result, disbelieving attitudes and responses are likely to manifest in police practice. Through social and power relations, police officers can draw on their cultural power to construct 'real' rape victims; gay male rape victims, in particular, are less likely to be constructed as 'real' rape victims due to homosexuality being constructed as a perversion, a manifestation of 'abnormality'. Next, I examine the ways in which male rape myths, such as 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue', influence and shape how the police think about and respond to male victims of rape.

**5.3 Policing and Cultural Myths/Scripts of Male Rape: How Cultural Myths/Scripts Shape Police Interactions with Male Rape Victims**

The social and cultural constructions of rape myths can shape the ways in which police officers respond to and deal with male rape cases, so how the way officers talk about sexual violence and male rape influences their behavior in practice. These

constructions can shape police interactions with male rape victims. For some officers, constructions of rape myths in their inner world of policing can manifest into secondary victimisation, which occurs when the police poorly serve male victims of rape. Lees (1997), and more recently Javaid (2016c), found that some police officers often mistakenly believe that there are falsehoods in male rape victims' testimonies, which influences whether they provide empathy and sympathy to these victims. In many cases, Lees found that most police officers were not sympathetic to male rape victims. More recent work concurs with this, finding that most police officers want to pursue cases that have thrilling, exciting and dangerous elements to them, such as violent and dangerous petitions; but when they deal with cases that exclude these elements, they manage them lethargically, insensitively and unprofessionally (Loftus, 2010). My findings support these previous studies. It may be that, in some male rape cases, some officers do not see men as 'real' rape victims, which in turn will bring about secondary victimisation against the victims. Some police officers, not all, are often reliant upon the way male complainants behave to make a decision as to whether or not the complainant is a 'real' rape victim. For example:

> It depends on the person who is making allegations, how do they come
> across (Police Sergeant 1, Male).

> How they were, were they upset, distraught?...rape victims should be
> distraught, and crying…you get cops seeing a rape victim, and some of them
> will have a perception in their head what a rape victim should be like, and
> they get there and think, "Well, they don't seem upset to me" (Specialist
> Police Officer 1, Male).

As indicated above, some police officers may be insensitive to male rape complainants at the first point of contact and at the following series of contacts with the victims. Police officers' culturally construct credibility, focusing on victims' character and behavior to construct their credibility. They may be influenced by male rape complainants' conduct during the reporting stage and during the rape investigation, as to whether they are seen as 'real' rape victims. One way in which some officers may be convinced is if the male rape complainant was crying; however, many male (and female) rape complainants may not reveal emotion. For rape victims,

they "find recounting their rape or sexual victimisation very difficult and require sympathetic listeners to hear their story" (McMillan, 2015: 623). Providing a sensitive approach to male rape victims, then, is important to not only validate their experience of rape and honoring their victimisation, but also to help generate information, which can be used as evidence, that is of high quality. By doing so, the quality of the male rape investigation may be enhanced. However, failing to provide a sensitive approach to prevent secondary victimisation may hinder charging decisions. If male rape victims do not come across as upset, some police officers may dismiss their allegation. Waterhouse et al. (2016) found that the police are likely to think that rape cases are fabricated because some officers perpetuate rape myths. Rape myths do not represent male rape cases in an accurate way. In fact, the myths distort and misrepresent the realities associated with male sexual victimisation, providing an inaccurate and incorrect portrayal of male rape. It seems that the onus is on male (and female) rape complainants to convince the police that they are victims of rape; otherwise, some officers are likely to dismiss it, as suggested by an officer:

> [A] friend of mine, who was also gay, reported that he have [sic] been raped, but the police didn't do anything basically, they kind of just dismissed it, like nothing happened (Police Sergeant 1, Male).

Dismissing male rape allegations may suggest that some police officers are insensitive and 'cold' toward male rape complainants. Comparatively, in female rape allegations, Gregory and Lees (1999) found that some female rape victims in their sample were dissatisfied with the police responses, particularly from male police officers, because they were seen as unfeeling and unsympathetic through their attitudes and demeanours. Gregory and Lees (1999) stated, "When interviewed by researchers, police officers expressed feelings of inadequacy in dealing with these [male and female rape] offences and many felt ill-equipped to deal sensitively with the victims" (p. 118). Arguably, this implies that some officers are likely to dismiss male (and female) rape allegations because of their own constructions of male (and female) rape. Dismissing male (and female) rape allegations because the complainants do not 'look' or 'behave' like a rape victim may be ineffective and counterproductive for the police because, as McMillan (2015: 626) says, it is:

> …likely that victims will be more cooperative with the police if they feel they are treated fairly, an issue of relevance in rape cases given the high rates of victim withdrawal. People are likely to feel more valued if in their interactions with legal institutions like the police they are allowed to have their say (or tell their story) believe they are taken seriously, and that they or their complaint is not prejudged.

Cultural myths pertaining to male rape and constructions of male rape can influence police responses to male rape. Such constructions and cultural myths can construct police officers' cultural norms, values, and practices regarding what male rape entails and how a male rape victim ought to behave and conduct himself; so police cultures perpetuate attitudes toward rape and victimology. However, as Rowe (2009: 135) rightly argues, "officers are not just passively influenced by prevailing cultural norms or the procedural requirements of policy", so some officers can and do challenge such norms and provide an effective service to victims of sexual violence. If the victim deviates from police officers' constructions and cultural myths of rape, though, then victimhood is unlikely to be granted, potentially fuelling secondary victimisation. Because police officers are in a position of power, they can disempower victims through revictimisation. For each police officer, he or she ascribes meaning to his or her own distinct constructions of male rape. To make sense of the ways in which cultural myths of male rape and constructions of male rape shape police interactions with male rape victims, I draw on cultural script theory.

Cultural script theory can help explain how police officers' social life impacts perceptions toward male rape. In a policing context, I define a script as a set of cultural expressions, stories, or an expected revelation of events that is expected or appropriate in a given social context, so providing a justification or rationale for a certain course of action or police response. Cultural script theory is a part of symbolic interactionism within sociology. Drawing on Goffman's (1959) dramaturgy sociological framework, I argue that the police express social symbolism regarding the ways in which officers construct ideas of a 'real' rape victim. The role of scripts is an everyday part of policing male rape for it helps to conceptualise and make sense of male rape for officers. These scripts are shaped, reshaped and negotiated through officer's thoughts and views of male rape and through their everyday social practices.

These scripts can evolve in policing contexts. According to Goffman (1959), many elements are scripted in everyday life. What this suggests is that officers learn how to talk, respond, and behave in certain contexts due to their own socialisation processes. The officers' own unique responses to male rape are referred to as 'scripts'; for Goffman (1959), these scripts are a segment of the stage/theatre metaphor that is the foundation of his dramaturgical perspective.

In other words, not all officers will respond to male rape in the same way; therefore, demonstrating a multitude of cultural outlooks and practices. The script may often be a taken-for-granted concept for officers, who may be unaware of its constant reconfiguration. The scripts assist officers to negotiate male rape cases, determining which one fits their 'rape script'. These scripts are socially constructed, shaped by external and social forces. For some officers, 'real' rape tends to follow a typical sequence, such as rape victims revealing emotion (i.e. crying), bruising, and/or weakness. However, many male rape victims may not present themselves in these expected ways. In the interviews with the officers, it appears that some officers' scripts are based on essentialism and social determinism. Some officers suggest that rape victims should behave in a certain way, and they have expectations about how the victims ought to conduct themselves when reporting their rape and during the rape investigation. What this means is that, at any point in time, officers' options may be influenced and shaped by their cultural scripts. Although the police may claim to be autonomous and impartial, some officers' conduct is shaped by predefined patterns of conduct that male rape complainants must convey to be credible and legitimate rape victims. The scripts provide meaning about rape for officers, giving some level of direction for dealing with male rape cases. While scripts can provide officers with vocabulary, a set of phrases and words to construct male rape, this may incorporate denying language and discourse. For example:

> [A]re they willing to give a statement, are they willing to provide evidence on [a] later day, how cooperative would they be on the process based on the concerns they have…the case is based on the evidence…I have to say that [there] is maybe more reluctance on the side of male victims to come forward and see the process through; male rape cases present more

challenges and makes you think, "Have they really been raped?" (Police Constable 3, Male).

Some police officers suggest that, because of the lack of cooperation from male rape victims and lack of evidence in male rape cases, they are likely to act dubiously toward alleged male rape victims. This is a process in which police officers' construct credibility. By male rape victims disengaging in their rape investigation, credibility is likely to be reduced and so some police officers are more likely to disbelieve their allegation. As Venema (2016) argues, "Because officers perceive physical evidence as crucial in determining the legitimacy of a sexual assault, many are suspicious of cases that lack physical evidence…if there is no physical evidence…then it's unlikely to be a sexual assault" (p. 881). It appears that, as male (and female) rape cases are unlikely to generate any or much physical evidence, some officers may construct the victims' allegation as something other than rape or sexual assault, shaped by officers' scripts. However, because these scripts are learned social processes that signify a set of norms, values, and beliefs, these can alter depending on the social context in which officers situate. What is likely to be present within police cultures, though, is the cultural myth that men cannot be 'real' rape victims (see: previous section). The social construction of this myth may structure some officers' conduct against male rape complainants and may impact on charging decisions. The constructed scripts are highly influential to the extent that some officers will misclassify male rape as something other than rape, such as sexual assault. As McMillan (2015: 623) asserts, "[T]he police not only make an initial decision about whether a crime has taken place but also subsequently how to classify it". In my findings, there was a suggestion that, when male rape allegations are brought to the police's attention, they are likely to classify these allegations as something other than 'male rape', such as 'sexual assault' or 'assault'. This is due to a number of reasons; for example, some officers are likely to construct male rape as a "taboo subject that is not challenged…officers and victims are embarrassed by it" (Police Constable 22, Male), so some officers may construct a 'male rape' allegation as a case of 'sexual assault' in their own cultural script. Another reason may be because some officers may not know what male rape entails, so, again, may conceptualise a 'male rape' allegation as something else that is not male rape in their own cultural script. For example:

> The majority of male rape goes unrecorded and/or doesn't get taken seriously at the first conversation. It just gets dismissed as something else and not particularly logged (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

> Where allegations are brought, [male rape] is more likely to be classified as something other than rape i.e. assault (Male Rape Counsellor 4, Female).

Male rape may get classified not as 'male rape' but as something else that does not reflect male rape victims' experiences, such as assault or sexual assault. In support of my findings, Stemple (2009) argues that the police are likely to record male rape incidents as 'sexual assault' or as something else that does not reflect the complainants' experience. Similarly, Waterhouse et al. (2016: 2) argue that:

> The police officers' levels of sexism, empathy, their perceptions of their own personal responsibility, and of the seriousness of the crime…seem to have an effect on whether officers felt they should file a crime report, lay charges, and make an arrest.

The implications of constructing male rape allegations, either consciously or subconsciously, as something else could be problematic. For example, the cultural myths that 'male rape does not exist' or that 'male rape is not a serious issue' may be perpetuated, strengthened and reinforced, in turn, producing an incorrect or inaccurate portrayal of the frequency of male rape and male sexual assault in England. It can be argued that, for some officers, their scripts can be very similar, although for other officers, there can be different types of scripts to classify male rape allegations appropriately. In a policing context, for some officers to construct male rape as sexual assault suggests that there is some level of agreement across some police officers' scripts. Having some level of agreement in scripts for officers may be important because it can be an indication that 'one is part of the club'. For officers who are 'outsiders'[36] (Becker, 1963), who are not 'part of the club', having an awareness and understanding of suitable cultural scripts in the police are vital to gain acceptance and recognition from their peers. Collectively categorising some male rape allegations as

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[36] For Becker, 'outsiders' are people who break social rules, norms, and values created by a group.

sexual assault by some officers, therefore, may provide such acceptance and recognition by peers. In this way, on the one hand, scripts can become in agreement, providing harmony, structure and social acceptance in police forces. On the other hand, some officers' scripts that are not in harmony may be frowned upon, increasing exclusion for some officers. Scripts are a part of police cultures, which officers are strongly encouraged to learn, follow, and reinforce (Reiner, 2010). Scripts can be demanding and, if they do not agree, group membership is likely to be threatened or challenged. Scripts are significant for officers, as they can facilitate the construction of their inner world of policing; however, they may limit a variety of options for officers. Constructions of male rape are made and remade in the policing of male rape, which may be relationally shaped by police subcultures through social practices.

In this section, I demonstrated that some officers rely on male rape complaints' demeanors and conducts to construct whether or not they are 'real' rape victims. Cultural myths shape the ways in which the police think about and respond to male rape. According to some officers' cultural scripts, a 'real' rape victim would reveal emotion, cry, or present the police with bruising that developed from their attack. Otherwise, their allegation may lack substance, validity, or credibility. In the next section, police subcultures are explored to understand how some male rape victims' allegations are labeled as invalid or non-credible.

### 5.4 Social Constructions of Police Subcultures and Labeling Male Rape

Police officers' (and everybody else's) realities appear to be socially constructed, meaning that police subcultures are also socially constructed. Loftus (2010) suggests that the police categorise themselves as a 'we' and the public as 'they' to socially construct the 'other'. The 'other' can refer to male rape victims, as they are a part of the community to which the police serve. My findings suggest that police subcultures construct certain norms and values, shaping police attitudes and practices that can influence the ways in which some police officers respond to and deal with male rape victims, who are often constructed as the 'other'. For example:

> There's like macho police culture[s]…there may well have been *homophobic attitudes* (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male. Emphasis mine).

Looking at police culture[s] more generally of old, out-dated attitudes that need changing, and the only way to change those attitudes is by raising awareness (Police Detective 1, Female).

The police culture sees men as powerful, dominant and non-victimized, to become victims regarding [male rape] when you are [an] adult, you may find that it changes how the police actually see you (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

With the police culture, it's like almost like it's accepting that, if a woman is raped, it's unacceptable, and it should not be happening and it gets the headlines, but if male[s] make allegations of rape, it's kind of almost like we don't know what to do with it. What kind of headline do we put here, has it really happened? (Police Sergeant 1, Male).

The police culture, probably within the UK, where beliefs about male rape is not a prevalent problem so there won't be the same appetite [as female rape] to tackle it…that seems to be the mindset, certainly at top of the government level. [Male rape] is not [an] obvious problem that people are talking about, [so] they [the police] won't push themselves to do anything about it (Police Constable 3, Male).

You might also have police cultures represented in Britain, where if a man is raped he almost becomes the perpetrator…he gets the status of someone who has done something wrong. He might be seen as, "He was asking for it" (Male Rape Therapist 2, Male).

Police subcultures seem to shape police officers' everyday practices and decisions in respect of male rape cases. They clearly impact on how male rape victims are treated. According to Reiner (2010) and Loftus (2010), police skepticism, cynicism, and conservatism are core characteristics of police subcultures, so some police officers are likely to be "intolerant towards those who challenge the status quo" (Loftus, 2010: 2). It could be argued that male rape victims challenge the status quo of a heteronormative masculinity, and so they may be socially constructed as the 'other'

by some officers, as their sexual victimisation may be seen as something that only happens to women, meaning that the view that 'men cannot be raped' may be perpetuated across some police officers. My findings support police researchers', Reiner's and Loftus's, argument, that police subcultures may perpetuate certain core characteristics, such as subscribing to conservative politics whereby police subcultures may support homophobic attitudes and views, either implicitly or explicitly. It appears that "old, out-dated attitudes that need changing" (Police Detective 1, Female) and "homophobic attitudes" (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male) are still embedded in police subcultures, which may mean that some officers may circulate discretion and discrimination toward male rape victims since they are core characteristics of police subcultures (Reiner, 2010; Loftus, 2010). Sivakumaran (2005: 1292) argues that "there is state support for discrimination against sexual minorities". Male rape is an issue that some officers may see solely as a homosexual issue, so police subcultures may encourage discretion and discrimination against male rape victims because they may be seen as homosexuals or as sexual minorities. Some officers constructing male rape as solely a homosexual issue may do so as a form of defensive mechanism, in that male (heterosexual) police officers encountering male victims may attribute in this way to avoid the fear that they also may be victimised.

However, there have been some notable developments in policing overall (see section 2.3.3 for an overview of these developments in policing), which may help to challenge and weaken the harmful core characteristics of police subcultures to which Reiner and Loftus refer to. For example, the development of rape suites is a commendable change in police practice, as they can help provide a 'safe haven' for male rape victims in which to share their story. There is also a notable introduction of specially trained police officers, who are dedicated specifically to dealing with rape cases, but due to austerity and the decline in funding and resources for the policing of male rape, these officers are not easily available (Jamel et al., 2008). It is not clear whether these developments are consistent across every police force in England. In addition, Loftus (2010) argues that the changes and developments in the policing landscape are incomplete. It appears that police subcultures can be problematic if they strengthen the view that men cannot be victimised, as the findings suggest, which may hamper effective police interpersonal and communication skills used to deal with

male rape victims; at the same time, these may be skills that may go against masculine police subcultures.

My findings also suggest that police subcultures may be more accepting of female rape than male rape, because the latter may corrupt the ways in which some police officers conceptualise sexual violence (see Police Sergeant 1, Male, above). For some police officers, rape is constructed as something that only happens to women; so, when a man alleges rape, some police officers may be unsure about how to respond to his allegation and so may dismiss it as 'unbelievable'. By not believing that men can be raped, police subcultures can continue to operate with the conceptualisation that sexual violence is gendered; that is, only women can be raped. However, the recent gradual increase in the employment of gay and bisexual police officers may challenge police subcultures and may, instead, encourage new positive styles and forms of policing that could work to take male rape seriously at the local, regional and national levels. The expansion of women police officers, though, has not diluted police subcultures in respect of rape since some of the toxic characteristics (e.g., skepticism of rape cases) associated with police subcultures still remain regarding treatment of female rape cases (Temkin and Krahe, 2008). Representing diversity, however, may be useful to dilute the negative characteristics associated with police subcultures; but, as Loftus (2010: 3) argues, "Notwithstanding the reordering of the policing landscape, I argue that there still is a police culture whose defining elements are alive and well".

Police subcultures are contextual, situational, and relational. In these police subcultures, it is likely that they socially construct male rape victims as the 'other', the 'abnormal' and the 'deviant'. When officers internalise police subcultures, he or she is likely to be cynical of male rape victims and distrusting of the victims. The implication of police subcultures can be detrimental in the sense that some officers devalue male rape for it may be culturally constructed as deviating from gender norms and values and for it deviating from the 'real' police work norm (Reiner, 2010). That is to say that some officers do not culturally construct the policing of male rape as 'real' police work. If some officers see it as 'real' police work, it will be seen as something that women officers ought to deal with since they are often constructed as representing social workers, employed to specifically work with cases involving sensitive and emotional issues (Miller, 1999). For some officers who construct male

rape as a stigmatised crime and male rape victims as the 'other' with a 'spoiled identity' (Goffman, 1963), police subcultures may encourage these officers to label these victims as 'outsiders' (the 'other') (Becker, 1963). To make sense of the ways in which some officers label male rape victims due to police subcultures and to understand the 'othering' process in which male rape victims are labeled as "deviant" and "non-victimized" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male) by some officers, I draw on the sociological perspective of labeling theory.

If some officers label male rape victims solely as "non-victimized" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male) or as a "perpetrator" (Male Rape Therapist 2, Male), social rejection and exclusion are likely to manifest through their attitudes and responses toward male victims of rape. From the interactionist sociological perspective, the concepts of labeling (and stigma) developed. These concepts are concerned with the significance of symbolic meanings that labels can have and the social impact of such labels. Some labels, mainly negative ones, are so powerful that they can have social, personal and material implications, creating barriers for the stigmatised individual(s) (Goffman, 1963). It can be argued that, as a social construction, the police labeling male rape victims in certain ways can inform police practice, drawing attention to the ways in which the police perceive these victims. On the social construction of deviance, Becker (1963) stated that "social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labelling them outsiders" (p. 9). I infer that, as power flows through police institutions, some officers are able to label male rape victims in certain ways, such as the "non-victimized" or the "perpetrator". These negative labels, arguably, construct and conceptualise male rape victims' bodies as 'deviant', othering them. Becker (1963) argues that social control institutions, such as the police, disproportionally label the powerless as 'deviant'. Arguably, some officers construct perceptions that male rape victims are powerless because they have been subordinated and emasculated. The construction of these labels in some police forces suggest that male rape victims are 'outsiders' for deviating from cultural norms and values. These labels that some officers may enforce are done so through interactions with male rape victims. For example, as Becker (1963: 14) states:

[W]e cannot know whether a given act will be categorized as deviant until the response of others has occurred. Deviance is not a quality that lies in behavior itself, but in the interaction between the person who commits an act and those who respond to it.

Therefore, male rape victims may receive the label 'deviant' or other labels filled with negative/positive connotations in an interactional process with some officers, who may label these victims in a negative way for challenging norms and expectations of sexual violence, as men are unexpected to be rape victims or to engage in an act that is characterised as homosexual: anal-penile penetration against men. Rather, rape is expected to happen against women (Stanko, 1990). For men, they are not socialised to fear rape or expect it to happen to them, so there is no 'safety manual' to prepare men for rape or to avoid it from happening (Stanko, 1990). Some officers may socially construct male rape in this way since Becker (1963) argues that values and beliefs shape our comprehension of the social world. As he suggests that societies are based on inequality and injustices, some officers are likely to 'take sides' and culturally construct a specific conceptualisation of sexual violence.

To label male victims of rape as 'deviant' in such a way as to 'other' them and construct them as illegitimate rape victims involves a level of subjectivity. Some officers may draw on subjective judgments to enforce such labels against some male rape victims since "deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label" (Becker, 1963: 9). The construction of deviance and abnormality of male rape victims starts when moral crusaders and social groups first produce rules, not at the point when an individual is labeled as 'abnormal' or 'deviant' (see Becker, 1963). Thus, before even labelling male rape victims in a certain way when interacting with them, some officers may develop a 'picture' of the concept of male rape, such as "male rape does not really happen very much" (Police Constable 32, Female) or that "male rape is not an issue in my opinion" (Police Detective 3, Female). These subjective judgments and views inform the types of labels that officers enforce onto male rape victims, some of which may have negative or positive connotations attached. For Becker (1963), labels and rules are not uniformly enforced; instead, they are selectively enforced. This suggests that, when officers apply labels to male rape victims, such labels will vary.

As labels are applied variably, then, arguably the police may treat male rape victims inconsistently and unpredictably. However, male rape victims can contest such labels, but it takes a very strong personality to overcome and challenge these perceptions, as Becker (1963) suggests. If male rape is not labeled as 'deviant', it is likely to be constructed as a manifestation of social disorganisation and social dysfunctionality (Becker, 1963). This suggests that male rape victims may be 'out of place' (dysfunctional) for their identity creates some level of instability not only for societies, but also for social control institutions, such as the police (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). However, it may be difficult to identify what is functional and dysfunctional for the police and for societies. Within police cultures, officers enforce labels to help them make sense of crime types and crime victims, including male rape and its victims; some labels may be constructed as 'bad' while some may be 'good' to put it simply.

For example, some officers enforce 'positive' labels to male rape victims, constructing them as credible and worthy victims of rape. Therefore, this can encourage such officers to "provide the very best service to the victim" (Police Detective 4, Female). Some officers serve male rape victims in the same way as female rape victims, constructing both male and female rape as equally important; for example, Police Constable 2 (Female) states that, "we definitely treat them [male rape victims] the same…I wouldn't say that we treat them any differently. They [rape victims] get the same support regardless if they are male, female or children". This idea of male rape being constructed as grave and vital, as similar to female rape, undermines hegemonic constructs of masculinity amongst some officers at certain historical moments. Instead, as developed by Messerschmidt (2016), these officers occupy more "positive" forms of masculinities when serving male rape victims. "Positive" masculinities challenge hegemonic masculinities since they do *not* legitimate unequal relations, but rather "[p]ositive masculinities are those masculinities (locally, regionally, and globally) that contribute to legitimating egalitarian relations between men and women, masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities" (Messerschmidt, 2017: 75). Some officers, thus, embody positive masculinities as a way in which to dismantle unequal power relations, providing more sympathetic and equal responses to male victims of rape as similar to female victims. Some officers' embodiment of non-hegemonic masculinities challenges police misuse

of power, whereby power becomes contested, and more fluid and negotiable. Therefore, some officers do not occupy advantageous, unequal and dominant positions over male rape victims at certain historical moments and at particular social contexts.

However, in other types of police cultures, some officers apply 'negative' labels to male rape victims, leading some officers to suggest that male rape is not a serious issue and so informing their responses to some male rape victims, as one officers states: "We have little contact with [male rape victims]" (Police Constable 23, Male). From this, the labeling process in police subcultures is intricate and highly inconsistent. To make further sense of this complexity, I draw on Lemert (1951) who distinguished between primary and secondary deviance. *Primary deviance* is frequently conceptualised as people not having any perception of himself or herself as 'deviant'. Initially, through the reaction of others to the 'deviant' person who is associated with a 'deviant' act, such as male rape that is socially and culturally constructed, *secondary deviance* is formulated. As some officers may enforce stereotypes and 'negative' labels with regards to male rape, labeling it as 'deviant' and labeling male rape victims as "the perpetrator[s]" (Male Rape Therapist 2, Male) or as "non-victimized" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male), not "accept[ing] that it might be happening [so the victims] are almost given less credibility" (Police Detective 1, Female), a 'deviant' identity within the victims may be constructed and shaped by some officers. The concept of secondary deviance is important here because it highlights the ways in which some officers may react to male rape and lead the victims to see themselves as 'deviant' through stereotyping and labeling, often filled with negative connotations. Lemert's sociological perspective has some resonance with Becker's since, instead of exploring individual actors' conduct to understand the origins of deviance, the key to comprehending such origins of deviance is through the reactions of a social audience.

In his later sociological project, Lemert (1967) theorised, as did Becker (1963), that social control causes deviancy. This suggests that social control institutions, such as the police, are able to express power through socially constructing male rape as 'deviant' in some police officers' conceptualisation of sexual violence. By drawing attention to the role of social reaction, especially by the police, one is able to

understand constructions of police disbelief over male rape to which I turn to in the next section. Meanwhile, this section has shown that some officers will enforce negative labels against male rape victims, while other officers will apply more positive ones through social interactions with the victims. A social audience, notably the police, can only label the act of male rape as 'deviant' through their responses to it. The negative labels can be detrimental in the sense that they can induce police disbelief and insensitivity.

## 5.5 Cultural Constructions of Police (Dis)Belief and (In)Sensitivity Regarding Male Rape

In police forces, there appears to be a cultural construction of police disbelief over male (and female) rape claims, which I refer to as a 'culture of disbelief', which is problematic since police officers are gatekeepers to the criminal justice system (Jamel, 2010) and are often the first responses that rape victims will receive (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). However, not all police officers will subscribe to this way of viewing male victims of rape. When some police officers do interview alleged male (and female) rape victims, they feel that the victims' testimonies 'have holes in'. Some officers, then, culturally construct the concept of male (and female) rape as 'not believable', circulating disbelieving attitudes and responses to the victims either explicitly or implicitly. In other words, some victims are often met with a 'culture of disbelief' regarding their male rape allegations. Some officers explained to me that, in alleged male rape cases, there are significant components absent that are presumably required in a 'real' male rape case, such as the victims revealing some level of emotion, corroborating evidence, and/or forensic evidence. Police disbelief is likely to circulate through discourse if the victims' testimonies do not 'make sense' to the police; their disbelief is arguably based on, and shaped by, stereotypes and subjective judgments regarding male rape. Some participants suggested that some officers might disbelieve male rape complainants. For example:

> [I]n the police where male rape victims just haven't been believed…because the police aren't aware of the crime, so they think it's a bit too far fetched… it's because there is a lack of understanding and awareness of this type of crime (Police Detective 1, Female).

We kind of encourage male rape victims to take it to the police and their experience is that they aren't believed and the legal system really let them down…gay male rape victims will find it more difficult than heterosexual male rape victims…it will be more difficult for them to be believed because the police will believe that, "It is your gay lifestyle choice, now you are complaining about it" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

Some of the participants made comments similar to these excerpts, suggesting that some officers are unlikely to believe male rape victims for many reasons. For instance, one reason is that, as some officers culturally construct male rape as a gay problem since the act of male rape involves penile-anal penetration (Rumney, 2008), male rape victims may be constructed as gay and culturally learn from "police encounters about the need to avoid 'looking queer' to minimise police harm" and to reduce victim blaming and negative attitudes (Dwyer, 2015: 493). This suggests, then, that the police interacting with the LGBT community may be problematic for LGBT people are 'out of place' (Dwyer, 2015: 494). As a result, some officers are likely to express victim-blaming views, attitudes, and responses to LGBT victims, as they may construct and circulate suggestions that they were 'asking for it'. The social relationship is often "adversarial, harassing, discriminatory, characterised by mutual mistrust" (ibid.). From Dwyer's findings and mine, it appears that some officers may circulate discrimination, underpinned by victim-blaming views, to male rape victims who are part of the LGBT community or who are presumed to be so. It could be argued that managing police relations in spaces that the police can control and regulate, then, may be difficult if some officers circulate hostility and victim-blaming attitudes to male rape victims. Through the cultural construction of victim blaming, some officers socially exclude victims. Police disbelief is often the main fear that male rape victims have (Jamel et al., 2008). Although my findings suggest that police disbelief over male rape claims stems partly from a lack of awareness and understanding of male rape, there still may be conflict "between believing the victim and providing a sensitive response to reported rape and their initial training to disbelieve and be suspicious" (McMillan, 2015: 635). Through victim-blaming comments, responses and suggestions, some officers can carry out secondary victimisation against rape victims that acts as a barrier to their professional police work (Venema, 2016), exonerating the male rapists (Temken and Krahé, 2008).

Goffman (1959) elucidates that not many people can at all times and comfortably have the recognition of 'normal'. If male rape victims do not display 'normality' through social interactions and relations with the police, some officers may construct the victims not only as 'abnormal', but also as victims who are "far fetched" (Police Detective 1, Female). For those who are dispossessed of a 'normal' category and so are not taken seriously, as Zygmunt Bauman (2004: 39) writes, they are denied "the right to *claim* an identity as distinct from an ascribed and enforced classification" (Italics in original). That is to say that male rape victims' identity and sense of self are undermined and tarnished by some officers; they are socially excluded and placed at the periphery of normalcy, while some officers may enforce and ascribe a tainted label and classification onto male victims of rape. As the police can circulate power (Becker, 1963), they have the power to name male rape victims as illegitimate or as unworthy of a rape victim status; perceptions of emasculation impact how the police treat male victims. This, in turn, can bring about disbelieving attitudes and responses against male rape victims, creating a divide between the police ('normal') and the victims ('other'). It seems that some male rape victims may be positioned as without value and as without a meaningful identity that some officers welcome and are sensitive to. Through social control, the police's power can draw lines between credible and non-credible male rape victims.

For instance, "gay male rape victims will find it more difficult than heterosexual male rape victims" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male) to be constructed as credible and believable male rape complainants by some officers because they circulate humorous discourse, such as "It is your gay lifestyle choice, now you are complaining about it…the police will laugh it [their rape] off as a joke, humoring it" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male). I argue that this humorous discourse and specific language in some police cultures are socially and culturally constructed. They emerge through social relations in which that discourse and language is learned; therefore, they are social, not 'natural'. As this form of discourse and specific language can construct gay male rape victims (or victims presumed to be gay) as non-credible and as non-believable rape victims, power operates to construct these victims in this way, creating 'truths' about the world in which male rape discourse circulates. I am drawing on Foucault (1980) here to argue that, for some officers who construct humorous discourse and this specific language to which Voluntary Agency

Caseworker 3 (Male) refers to, 'truth' claims about gay male rape victims appear to be necessary, self-evident, discernible and taken-for-granted. 'Truth' claims are constructing officers' world-view of male rape to make coherent sense of male rape victims' place in their world-view of male rape. The officers' perspective of male rape, then, becomes conceptualised and normalised since "[power] traverses and produces things…[it] forms knowledge, produces discourses…[it] runs through the whole social body" (Foucault, 1980: 119).

My argument here is that exercising power to construct gay male rape victims in this way may circulate unequally across police officers since Foucault (1980) suggests that not everybody is able to distribute power equally. For these officers, according to Foucault (1976), power is constructing knowledge to comprehend and make known certain subjects in certain ways. In this case, through the workings of power, officers are constructing gay male rape victims (or victims presumed to be gay) in certain ways. One way, as the findings suggest, is that the gay lifestyle and culture allows some officers to construct gay victims as men who 'sleep around' and are sexually promiscuous, so barring them from becoming constructed as valid, credible and believable rape victims for consent is presumed to be given in each sexual encounter that these men engage in. Thus, power constructs 'truths' through social relations between officers and victims.

Some officers, then, construct certain types of male rape victims as authentic and as 'true' victims, notably, heterosexual male rape victims. This is because these victims are created from officers in powerful, authoritative positions and these victims agree with 'truth claims' produced by some officers. Their power shapes and constructs the 'other', notably gay male rape victims (or presumed to be gay), as questionable and they are at the periphery of 'sense', leaving heterosexual male victims of rape to be unquestionable, obvious and 'true' rape victims. The argument being made here is that, from a Foucauldian perspective, 'true' (heterosexual) male rape victims are an effect of social relations between the police and rape victims that creates them as 'true'. Some officers are, therefore, governed by truths that are socially produced as true. Change is possible, though, as forms of discourse are never fixed but are invariably vulnerable to change across place and time. However, they are not always easy to disregard or divorce from. They shape, essentially, 'who we are'. Through

subjectivation (Foucault, 1982), gay male rape victims are transformed into subjects filled with certain meanings produced by officers' discourses. In a relational process, the victims become subjects to the officers' norms and rules created by knowledges about homosexuality. Gay male rape victims are, then, subjected to a variety of discourses (e.g., humorous discourse) that stipulate what the 'true' rape victim is. Through 'governmentality' (Foucault, 1982), a certain form and usage of power wherein people are managed via categorisation and classification, 'normality' is highlighted and demanded across some police officers, differentiating between gay male rape victims ('abnormal') and heterosexual male rape victims ('normal'). This is because heterosexuality is institutionalised in all segments of everyday life, including social control institutions (Jackson, 2005), such as the police.

A number of participants suggested that some police officers are misinformed about male rape and so ineffectively deal with male rape victims. This suggestion was often directed towards 24-seven uniform police response officers, who are often the first point of contact for male victims of rape when a call is made. As an example, one officer expressed a shop analogy to position 24-seven uniform officers as shopkeepers and the general public as customers; he suggests that 24-seven uniform response officers ought to be courteous, caring, and give a service to their customers:

> It's the wider cops, like 24-seven uniform cops. It's educating them around the issues around sensitivities around [male rape victims] coming forward. Just one minor negative response to a victim could just turn them off straight away. If you think yourself, if you go to a shop to buy something, and the sales person, you get negative vibes, you're not gonna buy anything are you? (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

This analogy of the police serving the general public as if they are customers is culturally constructed to compartmentalise how 24-seven uniform officers ought to serve male rape victims. Officers who do not fit this constructed analogy may be resisting some forms of power, such as power that is enforced or exercised by senior staff members. Foucault (1982) notes that power invariably operates along side resistance. Therefore, officers who are untrained or uneducated with regards to male rape, despite the fact that policy suggests that officers are required to take training to

be informed about sexual violence (HMCPSI & HMIC, 2007), are resisting power by not regularly committing to training on male rape. Consequently, as response officers have no training on male sexual victimisation, even at the basic level, they are constructed as the ones that are most in need of education on male rape; this is one implication of the effects of power. Logan (2016) argues that, for police response officers, it is extremely difficult for them to be sensitive, sympathetic and empathetic when reaching out to victims of violence, supporting Specialist Police Officer's (1, Male) comment: "We are pretty cold when it comes to [dealing with male rape]….That's why [male rape victims] interpret the questions [and police investigations] as being quite cold and calculated". Logan writes that "there are times in policing where empathy and sensitivity can get [the police] hurt….There must be an acknowledgment that lack of empathy, antisocial tendencies, narcissism, impulsivity, and low frustration tolerance are elements associated…within the [police] ranks" (p. 4). The traits to which Logan (2016) refers to can be embedded in all police ranks, which arguably shape or construct how male rape victims are responded to and dealt with. My findings support previous research, which concludes that police officers have a lack of experience and understanding of handling male rape cases; the authors write, "when officers attempted to balance their investigative role with their victim liaison role the result was a hollow form of empathy" (Jamel et al., 2008: 501).

For Foucault (1977), the 'soul is the prison of the body', meaning that bodies are controlled, governed, and exposed to social control but some can resist such power and control. Some officers may do so, but this has ramifications for male rape victims, as argued. To use Foucault's (1977) concept, officers may be mere 'docile bodies', who are expected to conform to social norms and patterns of police work in police forces. Some officers conform; others do not. Those officers (particularly 24-seven uniform police response officers) who may be unaware may, thus, lack education, training and sensitivity when serving male rape victims as a result of resisting power, conformity, and 'police rituals' that includes awareness-training initiatives involving sexual violence. While some officers resist power and authority that circulate to manage male rape cases, producing police corruption that is consequential of resisting power (Foucault, 1991), some police officers themselves believe that male rape

victims think that they are going to get a poor response from the police, as exemplified in the following quote:

> This is feedback we've had from agencies who deal with victims…some of the reasons they say why they don't report is fear of the criminal justice system, or stigma. They think they're gonna [sic] get a poor response from the police…if you think back over years and years, the police, historically didn't really deal with that type of offence [male rape] very well.…We're still feeling the fallout from the old days...because the criminal justice system, the way it's made up…it's difficult for victims to be put through the mill. [Male rape victims] have to go through the whole scenario again in court and that can be traumatic in itself…so it's a difficult one really for a lot of people if they are not strong to go through that process (Specialist Police Officer 1, Male).

The feedback that he refers to is gleaned from victim support services that deal with male rape victims. These services have collated victims' accounts and experiences with the police, so the feedback gets fed back to the police force. As the above quote highlights, the feedback from the voluntary services suggests that some male (and female) rape victims are fearful of the criminal justice system and the police; they think that they are going to get a poor response and insensitivity from the police. Specialist Police Officer 1 (Male) suggests that the police, historically, have not dealt with the issue of male rape very well. To date, the police are still experiencing "the fallout from the old days" (SPO1, Male), meaning that the police are still suffering from the effects from previously having dealt with male rape in a poor fashion. What this could suggest, then, is that some police officers may treat male rape victims insensitively in current society because of resisting power and authority, such as being unaware of certain policies so may have an incidental effect on male rape victims. As a result, a certain police environment may develop in which some police officers may distrust male rape victims and so this could possibly encourage them to provide a poor response to male rape victims. Logan (2016: 5) agrees, arguing that, '[A]s the distrust of police increases, the reporting of crime decreases. This phenomenon follows the attitude of "why report it to the police; they're not going to do anything anyway"'. Further, Specialist Police Officer 1 (Male) says that it is "difficult for

victims to be put through the mill", which could suggest that some police officers may force male rape victims to have an unpleasant and difficult experience with the police and the criminal justice system, perhaps by aggressively asking them many questions and by disbelieving the victims' answers. This links back to the concept of resisting power, as some officers may not take consistent training, education and may not regularly attend courses on how to interview rape victims, so this could reflect in the ways in which they deal with male rape victims in practice. In the excerpt, there also seems to be an implicit suggestion that male rape victims are 'weak' "if they are not strong to go through that process", which could minimise their sexual violence.

It is important to note that the officer himself believes that male rape victims think that they are going to get a poor response from the police. Therefore, some police officers may form a self-fulfilling prophecy (Becker, 1963) if they think that male rape victims expect a poor response. For example, some police officers may circulate poor attitudes and practices influenced by the male rape victims' expectations, allowing such negative attitudes and practices to come true. My findings are in accordance with recent empirical evidence that found that rape victims feared that some officers would not take them seriously through negative attitudes and poor practices (see Ceelen et al., 2016). Therefore, some officers exercising their own power and authority may make it easier for poor police attitudes and practices against male rape victims to circulate, as "[w]here there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1978: 95). While "[p]ower is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (ibid.: 93), officers who circulate it are still exercising their own power through managing rape cases in their own way involving insensitivity and disbelief, but the victims can challenge their power and authority; for example, through disengagement, dropping out of the criminal justice system, or withdrawing their complaint.

**5.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have argued that police interactions with male rape victims allow police officers to circulate discursive knowledge via police power and authority. The social and cultural constructions of male rape in a policing context often conceptualise male rape as the 'other'; for some officers, male rape is 'out of place' in

their discursive practice through which they construct and, therefore, make sense of male sexual victimisation. Through social and power relations between officers and male victims of rape, some officers construct sexual violence in certain ways and come to learn what it means to embody queerness. Consequently, some officers position male rape along side discourses of queerness, subsequently shaping their interactions with male rape victims. The element of power flows through interactions between officers and the victims, whereby some bodies of male rape victims are regulated, disciplined and controlled by some police officers who construct male rape victims' bodies as non-heteronormative and unmasculinised bodies. The sociological and post-structural theoretical frameworks used in the analysis conceptualise officers' interactions with male rape victims in a way that has been overlooked in the available literature, because they highlight how the bodies of male rape victims are controlled through power and how resisting power can shape social interactions between officers and the victims. The data suggest that officers learn from interactions with male rape victims (and possibly with female rape victims, too) to construct sexual violence, the meaning of it, and what it entails. Some themes emerge from such social interactions. For example, some officers are policing male rape in a discriminatory fashion, while other officers are policing male rape professionally without discrimination. Police officers' understandings, constructions, and knowledges of male rape are clearly diversified, based on different ways in which their discourse is made and re-made relating to sexual violence. Whilst negative police interactions may occur in certain contexts, positive police interactions with male rape victims may occur at other contexts. In the next chapter, I continue to employ the social constructionist ideological framework to explore the social construction of male rape in the third sector to examine any similarities or differences in terms of state and voluntary agencies' responses and practices.

# Chapter 6: Social and Cultural Constructions of Male Rape in Voluntary Agencies—Findings and Discussion (Part 3)

## 6.0 Introduction

Having argued in the previous chapter that police officers socially and culturally construct male rape dissimilarly depending on social and cultural forces, contexts, and cultural myths, it is important to examine in this chapter whether this is also true for voluntary agency practitioners. It is significant to critically examine the ways in which the practitioners in voluntary agencies construct male rape because they are the first port of call for when male rape victims seek support, counselling, and treatment. By researching voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male victims of rape, the aims of this project and the research questions can be fulfilled and answered. For example, how do conceptions of male rape shape state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male victims of rape and sexual violence in Britain? It is important to consider whether cultural myths relating to male rape, which I argue emerge from social relations and social structures, arrange the type of service delivery they provide to male rape victims. To elucidate and make sense of the data presented herein, I continue to draw on sociological, cultural and post-structural theoretical frameworks. Sociological and cultural studies are the most suitable areas of study to provide knowledge and understanding of how male rape is culturally and socially constructed in voluntary agencies within England. I do not claim to represent the culturally constructed realties of all voluntary agency practitioners in England, but rather provide a snapshot of some practitioners' attitudes toward and responses to male rape that are shaped and reshaped by cultures, discourses, and social and power relations. Therefore, this chapter provides some knowledge and understanding of how male rape myths, which are culturally and socially constructed, inform the practitioners' attitudes toward and responses to male rape victims in a local and regional context.

In terms of structure, this chapter will first critically analyse whether voluntary agency practitioners construct male rape as a social problem in voluntary agencies; close attention is paid to the practitioners' cultures. I argue that, shaped by their cultural ideologies and social structures, some voluntary agency practitioners

conceptualise male rape as less important, insignificant and unproblematic. Second, this chapter examines the link between voluntary agencies and cultural constructions of male rape myths; here I argue that some practitioners subscribe to such myths that shape the ways in which they serve male rape victims in practice. Third, I consider the ways in which the practitioners understand male rape through discourse, surveillance, and subjectivity. I come to argue that some practitioners construct male victims' experience of rape as 'abnormal', 'unnatural', and 'deviant', while others attempt to normalise their experience of rape in order to provide empathy. Fourth, I critically examine the interconnection between male rape discourse and stigma, arguing that some practitioners find it difficult to take male rape seriously because of the stigma associated with it. Finally, constructions of victim blame and (dis)belief in voluntary agencies are critically examined, where I argue that some practitioners circulate victim blaming attitudes and responses against male rape victims.

## 6.1 Cultures and the Construction of Male Rape as a Social Problem in Voluntary Agencies

Some of the voluntary agency practitioners[37] constructed male rape as a problem but as an *insignificant* social problem. For example:

> I'm slightly stuck with why would I feel [male rape] is significant…it is an issue but it is not significant (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male).

> [D]epending on the circumstances, male rape might not be taken seriously by some voluntary agency workers. It might [be] an inexperienced worker that is dealing with it and dismisses it (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

> [I]t depends how we situate the crime: for adolescence, young people, children, it is a major issue; for adult male rape victims, I'm not so sure male rape would be defined as a problem….It comes down to the numbers, basically…I have not seen any evidence that suggest to me that males are the dominant victims of sexual crimes (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

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[37] As noted in chapter 1, the voluntary agency practitioners consist of male rape counsellors, therapists, and voluntary agency caseworkers.

From the data, some voluntary agency practitioners constructed male rape as less important, insignificant and unproblematic. Some of the practitioners may be inexperienced, having a lack of training and experience with handling male rape victims, so they are likely to dismiss it or construct it as unserious. It could be argued that some are silencing it: by saying that it is insignificant, one could argue that they are discursively silencing it and, perhaps, even speaking/thinking it out of existence in a discursive way; it is not considered important in the discursive frame of awareness of some of these workers. This further perpetuates the discursive silences around male rape generally, and it continues to perpetuate underreporting. If it is not in the workers' frame of awareness, it is further silenced in how they look at and assess male rape victims who come for support. While some of them culturally construct male rape as a problem, it is often regarded as unimportant partly because of the lack of male rape victims engaging with the voluntary sector and the lack of "evidence that suggest…that males are the dominant victims of sexual crimes" (VAC4, Male) in contrast to female rape victims. For some practitioners, there is a lack of evidence in male rape cases, which determines how they construct this phenomenon whereby some, for example, deem male rape victims as non-dominant victims of sexual violence in contrast to "adolescence, young people, [and] children" (VAC4, Male) victims of sexual violence. Therefore, I argue that the lack of evidence in male rape cases shapes the practitioners' subjectivities with regards to male rape.

Michel Foucault (1978) saw sexuality discourse as a historical, cultural and social process, implying that therapists, counsellors, and psychologists were not objective but rather subjective agents who would construct and apply social labels to their clients. They were, according to Foucault (1978), heavily influential in the construction of discourses relating to sexuality that produced, through social and power relations, new subjectivities and subjects; for example, the homosexual or the invert. Through power-knowledge, new strands of governmentality and biopower emerge, controlling populations and people (Foucault, 1978). Sexuality became susceptible to subjection, power and discipline (Ibid.). Therefore, because of sexuality becoming intertwined with male rape discourse, male rape is subsequently becoming disciplined, regulated and controlled by some male rape therapists and counsellors. They are creating, producing and applying social labels against male rape victims since they are constructing new subjects and subjectivities (see Cohen, 2014). As

male rape victims are sometimes erroneously seen to be as solely homosexuals (Rumney, 2009), some male rape therapists and counsellors are controlling, governing and disciplining male rape as insignificant, unimportant and with less value (Lowe and Balfour, 2015). However, Foucault (1978) discusses that agents can contest certain social categorisations, whereby power and discipline are challenged, notably "[w]here there is power, there is resistance" (p. 95). This makes one argue that, although some therapists and counsellors construct male rape as having less symbolic and cultural value, worth and importance, others, on the contrary, construct male rape as significantly important with high value.

Indeed, in a fluid manner, voluntary agency practitioners construct male rape as a social issue. For example, Male Rape Counsellor 1 (Male) suggests that male rape is a social issue and so "we offer a long-term support and we offer quite varied options of support...from counselling to one-on-one support, going to Dr appointments to supporting reporting. That kind of stuff, and signposting". Whilst power and discipline through certain social categorisations can be contested and challenged, other forms of sexual subjectivities and identities with regards to male rape become high in symbolic and cultural value. This suggests, therefore, that cultures in voluntary agencies are manifold, dissimilar, and fluid. Zygmunt Bauman (2000) demonstrates that, with his concept of 'liquid modernity', social agents can move from one social position to a different one in a fluid fashion, suggesting that cultures are neither determined nor fixed. The 'liquid modern' individual flows through social life with differing opinions and views that get configured and reconfigured through social relations and interactions. Therefore, while some voluntary agency practitioners may construct male rape as important and significant in voluntary agencies, they may, in a fluid manner, change their perspective and conceptualisation of male rape as insignificant depending on the context, environment, setting, space and place in which they situate at a given time. When interacting with male rape victims, they express their culture through language, discourse, and words. For Jeffrey Weeks,

> Words can excite us, direct us, pain and punish us, give us hope and fill us with fear. They can place us, and shape who and what we are and want to be. And they provide critical markers of historical shifts in ideas and values (2016: 23).

It is through words, then, that male rape therapists, counsellors, and voluntary agency caseworkers come to see, hear, and make sense of male rape. Their interpretation of male rape is guided and shaped by words. Their words are socially and culturally constructed, shaping whether or not male rape is constructed as a (in)significant social problem in voluntary agencies. According to Foucault (1978), counsellors, therapists and psychologists are producers of words and, with that, new meanings. It is my argument, thus, that current male rape counsellors and therapists working with male (and female) rape victims create words and new meanings that help them to understand whether male rape is a social problem in voluntary agencies. Accordingly, their attitudes and responses toward male victims of rape are dialectically shaped in interaction with other voluntary agency practitioners and male (and female) rape victims. Both Weeks and Foucault are in agreement with each other that words are historically constructed and specific, temporal, and operate to position us in certain social categorisations. For example, the categorisation of male rape as unimportant is "made" at certain times and spaces, which can, at the same time, be "unmade".

For Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4 (Male) (see above), rape against children and young people is constructed as a major social issue in voluntary agencies; but he does not construct rape against adult male rape victims as a significant social problem. His culture and beliefs are shaped by the frequency of the reporting of adult male rape, which, according to him, is considerably low. As we have discussed in an earlier chapter, adult male rape victims are reluctant to report for various reasons (see subsection: 2.3.2). To theorise this segment of the data, I argue that some voluntary agency practitioners construct rape against adult male rape victims, as opposed to rape against children and youths, as under-valued, insignificant and unimportant because of constructions of 'roles' that authentic rape victims are expected to perform or fit. Weeks (2016) states that, "'Roles', neat slots into which people could be expected to fit as a response to the bidding of the agents of social control, have become 'performances' or 'necessary fictions', whose contingencies demand exploration" (p. 37). Not all rape victims are children or youths, so, to some voluntary agency practitioners, adult rape victims perform a role that is illegitimate of a rape victim identity that performs a different meaning to such practitioners, one of lacking authenticity and so one of insignificance. Weeks (2016) demonstrates that identities are neither determined nor fixed, but instead are dynamic, relational, hybrid and fluid,

meaning that all rape victims are dissimilar and will present their identities in different ways that will subsequently be read and interpreted by voluntary agency practitioners in different manners. For example, "anyone can become a victim. Anyone at all. So, I think that there's more social groups [sic] who are not as likely to come forward" (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female). This respondent suggests that all types of rape against males are regarded as a significant social problem in voluntary agencies, not necessarily just those of which are against male children and youths.

Because of a lack of specific training on male rape, and because of a lack of experience of dealing with male rape victims, some voluntary agency practitioners are likely to construct male rape as insignificant and, therefore, are unlikely to take it seriously. I argue, therefore, that male rape becomes more unrecognisable as a problem. Again, this contributes to the silencing and, perhaps, the erasure of male rape victims overall. For example, see the quote by Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3 (Male) above, and see also the following excerpt:

> [T]here has been a lack of awareness and therefore a lack of support for men who experience rape and sexual assault. However, the voluntary agencies in this area and some of the funders are talking to each other and working hard to address this silence and the consequent insufficient support (Male Rape Counsellor 8, Female).

As there are multiple social worlds, some of which overlap yet some are segregated and distinct from other social worlds (Weeks, 2016), the social world of trained/experienced voluntary agency practitioners in contrast to untrained/inexperienced voluntary agency practitioners is likely to differ and culturally construct male rape as a 'real' and pressing social issue in voluntary agencies. Some respondents "haven't done specific training with male rape, but…have done training of working with survivors more generally of sexual assault, including rape, and child sexual abuse" (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male). What this means is that male rape will be given meaning as socially significant, which will be shaped and reshaped, through voluntary agency institutions at certain times depending on certain configurations of power. For example, some practitioners can constitute power through accepted forms of knowledge about male rape gained from specific

training on male rape, allowing them to understand male victims of rape while constructing the validity of this crime. For them, through knowledge gained in training, male rape is actively 'made' 'real'; for them, male rape is a 'truth', their truth becomes an effect of power. For Foucault (1991), rather than being an element that can be imposed, seized, or held, power is a process. Power takes shape within institutional forms in particular historical conditions through discourse and words that will construct the (in)significance of male rape at certain cultural and historical contexts. The intricate interactions of social and cultural forces that shape the ways in which male rape is deemed as important or unimportant at certain times is constantly being negotiated and renegotiated. For example, one respondent suggests that currently, as a voluntary organisation, they are not adequately accommodating the needs of male rape victims because of a lack of funding and resources. However, if their organisation was 'pumped up' with funding and resources, the voluntary agency practitioners could adequately accommodate male rape victims' needs.

> Interviewer: Would you say that you adequately accommodate the needs of male rape victims?

> Male Rape Counsellor 3 (Female): I'd say we could do more as an organization, so at the moment, no, and that's due to funding not being around and not being given, so yeah. We don't do as much as we'd like to, but we are working on that. So, no.

It could be argued that this is one of the implications of some voluntary agency practitioners constructing male rape as unimportant compared to female rape, in that treatment to male victims of rape is likely to not meet their needs. Even so, "the voluntary agencies try to take [male rape victims] more seriously than the police initially do" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male), but one is left questioning on what grounds is male rape constructed as serious and as a social issue? Ken Plummer (2015) developed the notion of 'critical humanism' to identify different human goals and the different ways in which to be human. Although some voluntary agency practitioners have the intention of doing 'good', to provide ongoing support for male rape victims and to meet their needs, they are limited and restrained by bureaucracy to provide a 'better world' for male rape victims. For Max Weber, bureaucracy leads to

depersonalisation. Given that voluntary agencies are bureaucratic in structure, they are sometimes not always able to adequately deal with male rape victims' needs, regardless whether they construct male rape as a social problem or not. Weber famously stated that:

> [The calculability of decision-making] and with it its appropriateness for capitalism…[is] the more fully realized the more bureaucracy "depersonalizes" itself, i.e., the more completely it succeeds in achieving the exclusion of love, hatred, and every purely personal, especially irrational and incalculable, feeling from the execution of official tasks. In the place of the old-type ruler who is moved by sympathy, favor, grace, and gratitude, modern culture requires for its sustaining external apparatus the emotionally detached, and hence rigorously "professional" expert (Quoted in Bendix, 1960: 421-22).

Weber suggests that bureaucracy is inescapable, an inevitable part of social life. With its 'cold' and mechanical structure—voluntary agency workers almost like unemotional 'machines'—male rape victims are sometimes dealt with in a prescriptive, structured and determined manner. Though voluntary agency workers may want to provide emotional care, support, and informal friendship, they are governed by bureaucratic rules and regulations; they are depersonalised and dehumanised. Some workers, therefore, may construct male rape as not only unimportant, but also as something that is needed to just be dealt with because of funding that directs voluntary agencies to deal with both male and female rape victims. The workers are controlled to carry out specific tasks and to follow procedures. Arguably, however, glitches can occur in bureaucracy, whereby voluntary agency workers may consciously or subconsciously make 'mistakes' that could incidentally reflect in the way in which they handle male rape victims. As Weber (1949) discussed, no individual can understand the whole of the reality that confronts him/her; he or she can only understand one part of reality. Being human requires one to be selective and to see the world from a particular point of view (Weber, 1949), which may include some voluntary agency workers constructing male rape as insignificant so contributing to the glitches that can occur in bureaucracy, which can then have an incidental effect on the way in which male rape victims are treated.

This section has shown that some voluntary agency practitioners construct male rape as an important social issue, deserving of care and attention, whereas others deem it as unimportant, disrupting their construction of sexual violence whereby rape against children is demined as 'real' rape. It is through discourses, words, and cultures where male rape is configured in certain ways. Male rape myths, arguably, shape the ways in which the practitioners consider and handle male rape victims to which we turn next.

## 6.2 The Relationship Between Voluntary Agencies and Cultural Constructions of Male Rape Myths

The findings indicate that there are cultural constructions of male rape myths present in some voluntary agencies, meaning that some voluntary agency workers perpetuate male rape myths. Some voluntary agency practitioners suggested that, "The sort of prejudices [and rape myths] in the third sector may well impact on male rape victims" (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male), while others hinted that, "Many myths and taboos surround male rape [prevent] men from feeling they can come forward to voluntary agencies" (Male Rape Therapist 1, Female). My argument will be that male rape myths are socially and culturally constructed, shaped by social and power relations. Thus, some voluntary agency practitioners will, either consciously or subconsciously, circulate male rape myths in social practices and interactions with (or without) male rape victims. When dealing with male rape victims in practice, I argue that some voluntary agency practitioners are able to circulate male rape myths because of power and dominancy. By drawing on Max Weber (1968), it becomes clear that:

> Domination in the most general sense is one of the most important elements of social action…in most of the varieties of social action domination plays a considerable role, even where it is not obvious at first sight….Without exception every sphere of social action is profoundly influenced by structures of dominancy (p. 141).

Because voluntary agency practitioners are able to circulate some level of power and dominancy through social relations with male rape victims in certain contexts, since the victims are required to follow their directions, advice, and orders when the victims seek help and treatment, some voluntary agency practitioners construct and subscribe

to male rape myths that shape the way in which they respond to and deal with male victims of rape. In practice, male rape myths inform their work and responses. The victims are required to momentarily 'give up' their power over their body to practitioners at certain places and times, in which treatment is being sought from voluntary agency practitioners. The practitioners can express dominancy through discourse, whereby the bodies of male rape victims are controlled and certain rape myths come to dominate in voluntary agencies, shaping how the victims are handled. For example, Male Rape Counsellor 1 (Male) culturally constructs the male rape myth that "rape only happens in prison", which may shape the way in which he deals with male victims who have suffered their rape in the community setting:

> A lot of male rape happens in prison. That is where male rape happens, not really in the community setting, because they are all men together. There might be some sexual thing in that as well…in a way that it goes back to a more animalistic nature of humans.

This respondent strongly suggests that male rape does not happen 'in the community setting'. Arguably, this is a form of discursive silencing, where the practitioner does not recognise male rape occurring in the community setting in their frame of awareness. Instead, MRC1 (Male) culturally constructs male rape as being a 'prison problem', in that it only really occurs in prison establishments. His reason is because "they are all men [locked up] together", so, due to the unavailability of male prisoners to engage in sexual practices with women who they may normally sexually engage with outside of prison, they are confined within the prison institution that prevents heterosexuality from being performed. MRC1 (Male), therefore, suggests that men have no option other than to engage in rape in prison because sex is 'uncontrollable' for men. However, Stanko (1990), and Groth and Burgess (1980) argue that rape is essentially a violent and political act that men do in order to exercise power and control against their unwilling victim, rather than a biological need that men have but cannot consciously control. There are clear discrepancies between the research literature and the respondent's interpretations regarding the explanations of male rape. To help understand why some practitioners circulate male rape myths, such as 'male rape only happens in prison', I draw on phenomenology developed by the sociologist Alfred Schutz. It is an epistemological approach that stresses that events and things, in

themselves, have no meaning. Events and things gain meaning only when individuals ascribe meaning to them (Schutz, 1962). It is often through, for example, 'common-sense knowledge' and social interactions with others that people come to ascribe such meaning (Ibid.).

From this sociological approach, some voluntary agency practitioners, such as MRC1 (Male), interpret and understand male rape as a prison problem whereby male rape only happens in prison, shaped by common-sense knowledge and the way in which they believe the world is structured. The approach of phenomenology emphasises that the language and beliefs that individuals circulate, which then shape the way in which they behave, are indexical, meaning that people understand their words and responses in certain contexts wherein such words and responses are exercised (Schutz, 1962). Some practitioners, then, draw on common sense thinking to help conceptualise male rape in a way that allows them to easily comprehend male rape. Abdullah-Khan (2008) argues that the myth that male rape only happens in prison is embedded in common-sense thinking because it is here where male rape first gained recognition in societies. Through the process of constructing meaning and ascribing it to male rape, practitioners may be reminded of past particular events or occasions that included male rape in prison. Therefore, some practitioners infer that this scenario is typical of *all* male rape incidents.

Furthermore, most voluntary agency practitioners strongly debunk the male rape myth that 'women cannot rape men'. Instead of constructing and circulating the male rape myth that 'women cannot sexually assault or rape men', they believed that women raping men is an issue that they see very often in their voluntary agencies. For example:

> I also know a lot more about women as abusers and how frequent that is, so women do rape men. That's another side of [male rape] that I have seen. It definitely has opened my eyes since working here….The figures are older women who are of an authority, abusing young men. We also see it in young relationships; again, as you say with drinks and drugs, we see attacks on young men [by women]. The only difference is…it's not classed as 'rape'. We class it as rape, but, in the law, it's not classed as rape. There's a term for

it…20% of our survivors are men, and I'd say 10-15% of them have been attacked by women, which is quite high. That's probably the main thing that I've learned since being here, that women are abusers and it is a lot more prevalent than you would imagine (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

In order to unravel how ideas of truth come about, especially in this case where it is strongly believed that women can and do rape men, despite it not being recognised in law, I shed light on Foucault's post-structural work. By doing so, one is able to understand how the practitioners who believe that women can rape men take control of systems of knowledge that help them construct this issue and making it a 'real' issue. Since working in her particular voluntary organisation, MRC3 (Female) was able to construct women raping men as a 'true' issue, as morally wrong, which "has opened [her] eyes" (MRC3, Female). According to Foucault (1972), 'truth' is relative, contextual and situational, meaning that 'truth' is constructed at certain times and in places; it alters depending on whomever is powerful enough to conceptualise it. Prior to working for her current voluntary organisation, MRC3 (Female) did not define women raping men as a 'true' issue, so it was untrue to her, but it was "made" true as soon as she started to work for her voluntary organisation. She now defines this issue as the 'truth', shaped by statistics in her organisation that outline, "20% of our survivors are men, and…10-15% of them have been attacked by women, which is quite high", she stated. For Foucault (1972), discourse and language produce 'truth', giving the practitioners meaning with regards to male rape. Discourse and language construct and re-construct the practitioner's interpretations and understandings of male rape, depending on place and time. MRC3's (Female) understanding of male rape differed depending on her cultural setting since, before working in her organisation, she suggests that women could not rape men, but after working there, she is made aware of the realities associated with women raping men. This reality for her is 'made' culturally 'normal', whereas prior to her employment, it was 'made' 'abnormal'. For Jeffrey Weeks (1999),

> These new subjectivities…are cultural creations. They are…fictions, individual and collective narratives which we invent to make sense of new circumstances and new possibilities. They may be fictions, but they are

necessary fictions: they provide the means through which we negotiate the hazards of everyday life in a world in a process of constant change (p. 46).

Voluntary agency practitioners' subjectivities, then, are cultural creations. They are made, remade, configured, and reconfigured as narratives or stories that help them to produce and understand male rape myths. The male rape myths that are produced help develop stories about male rape, which shape and maintain the practitioners' subjectivities. These stories may be fictitious, but, to the practitioners, they are 'real' in their consequence since "[i]f men [sic] define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas and Thomas, 1928: 572). I am not claiming, therefore, that subjectivities and narratives are essentialist and deterministic, but rather fluid, dynamic, and negotiated through social and power relations and social structures. In accord with my argument, Ken Plummer (1995) discusses humans as storytellers, and, through narratives and stories, our subjectivities become shaped and reshaped. People's stories reflect their culture and wider social changes, "providing the language which makes change possible" (Weeks, 1999: 47). Therefore, MRC3 (Female) is equipped with a language that allows her to acknowledge and accept the discursive idea that woman can rape and sexually assault men. However, as Weeks (1999) argues, stories can be deleted, rewritten, or changed, so her view that women can rape men can be changed or reconfigured through time and place. Weeks goes on to argue that the "most common narratives are stories which tell of discrimination [and] prejudice" (p. 47). Some voluntary agency practitioners constructed gendered norms and values, circulating either implicit or explicit discrimination, influencing the way in which they pragmatically serve male rape victims. For example:

> [W]e would more likely offer a male survivor a male worker…we are less likely to offer a female worker….We have different supportive groups for men than we do for women because of the way that men process things, so for women, we'll have an informal coffee mornings where people get together to have a chat and a coffee, whereas for men, we have much more structured groups because that sort of format does not work for men because men are not socialised to do that. Men are not socialised to sit and chat over coffee; they are very goal-driven. They want something at the end of it, so that's the way we work with men. We intend to work in goals. What they

want to achieve and how we help them to achieve it. Men are just fundamentally different to women; they are socialised differently to women…there are some characteristics with men that are different to women, so anger and revenge are more of a male trait (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

Men traditionally and culturally find it harder to seek help from others. Roles often define men as being strong, supporters of others, tough, able to sort things out for themselves. Men fear that they will be viewed as potential perpetrators if they have been a victim of sexual assault (Male Rape Counsellor 4, Female).

These excerpts circulate the discursive idea that men are not supposed to be a victim of rape. These cultural stories tell of exclusion, alienation and marginalisation in the sense that male rape victims are treated and thought about differently in comparison to female rape victims. The passages of text pose questions about how the bodies of male rape victims ought to be handled since they reveal that the victims challenge the hegemony of patterns and procedures of rape service delivery. Although some practitioners deal with male rape victims, they do so in a way that reinforces gender norms and expectations of how a man should behave in the context of post-rape. This approach can manifest itself in a way that compartmentalises them as the 'other'. When a man confesses that he was raped, he is subjected to power[38]. As Foucault (1978) argues, by confessing about one's sexuality and thus 'who you are', people make themselves governable, subjectifying and subjecting themselves through power relations. Confession is a form of technique that produces 'truth'. Foucault (1978: 58) writes that, "Western societies have established the confession as one of the main rituals we rely on for the production of truth". Though my focus here is not on the truth of the victims' confession, but rather on the way in which confession positions these victims and produces 'truth'. The confession of rape induces some voluntary agency practitioners to draw on language and discourse of domination, power and authority. Some practitioners create 'truths' of men as victims of rape that determine the type of treatment they get in contrast to women as victims of rape (see MRC3,

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[38] The same can also apply to female rape victims (see Temkin and Krahe, 2008).

Female above). The invention of this form of treatment that MRC3 (Female) refers to and applies to all male rape victims circulates a discursive idea of how men ought to be treated. Power, then, becomes justified and secured (Foucault, 1978), allowing some practitioners to exercise treatment that is shaped by gendered norms and expectations. Similarly, some voluntary agency practitioners give the implicit suggestion that male rape is solely a homosexual issue, reinforcing sexuality norms and expectations. For instance:

> Half of the world are practicing homosexuality and the other half of the world are pretending that it doesn't exist, so that's why there probably isn't any huge focus on male rape in the third sector as such (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

> Many initial reports may not be taken seriously…there will be many cases where voluntary agency practitioners believe [male rape] is the product of a lifestyle choice or partner expectation (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 2, Male).

With regards to the first extract, he is equating male rape to homosexuality. He acknowledges that, while some people are enacting homosexual practices, others are 'blind' to homosexuality and homosexual men. Therefore, some practitioners in voluntary agencies are less inclined to acknowledge homosexual men, including gay male rape victims; or they may not be taken seriously when seeking help from a voluntary agency. This is partly because male rape "is the product of a lifestyle choice or partner expectation" (VAC2, Male), suggesting that male rape may not actually be rape as such but rather a form of homosexual consensual sex. Similarly, he suggests that, in a homosexual relationship, sex may be expected so may not necessarily be seen as rape in this context by some practitioners. The research literature, however, suggests that acquaintance rape and rape in gay relationships are common forms of rape (Lundrigan and Mueller-Johnson, 2013), and that heterosexual and bisexual men are equally as vulnerable to rape as homosexual men (Cohen, 2014). One could argue that some voluntary agency practitioners may label male rape as a 'gay crime', a homosexual issue, and that some practitioners label male victims of acquaintance rape as 'illegitimate' or 'invalid' rape victims.

Ultimately, the circulation of these labels is about the implementation of power (Becker, 1963). In a web of power relations, some voluntary agency practitioners may apply such labels to the least powerful people of societies, to the most helpless, and to those whom are incapable of challenging such labels (Becker, 1963). Because gay male rape victims in particular are the most powerless, emasculated, and subordinated in contrast to heterosexual and bisexual male rape victims (Rumney, 2008, 2009), some practitioners are likely to label gay male rape victims as 'abnormal' or 'deviant' bringing about disbelieving attitudes and responses. Becker (1963) acknowledges that victims are generally labeled as deviants in a hierarchy of credibility. I am arguing, then, that gay male rape victims in general, and gay victims of acquaintance rape in particular, are less likely to be labeled as 'credible' rape victims, but instead are likely to be labeled as 'non-credible' rape victims by some practitioners in the voluntary sector. Once a label is applied, as Becker argues, the self-fulfilling prophecy can come about. Therefore, these male rape victims may be forced to accept their label as 'non-credible' victims or it may become their 'master status' that determines their identity as a 'non-real' rape victim because a master status is one that "tend[s] to overpower, in most crucial situations, any other characteristics which might run counter to it" (Hughes, 1945: 357). These labels are founded on stereotypes relating to male rape. While such labels can have negative connotations attached to them, they can also have positive ones. For example, some practitioners label male rape as a serious issue, as exemplified:

> Rape is a serious issue in our society regardless of gender. Male rape is a significant issue specifically because there is a lack of societal awareness. Many support organisations are also aimed at women or women and children. This in itself not only excludes males from accessing support from that service, but also reinforces the message; 'men don't get raped' or 'men don't need support' both of which can cause more trauma for male victims (Male Rape Counsellor 7, Female).

Because of the lack of services for male rape victims, they are often labeled as 'undeserving' of services, perpetuating the discursive idea that 'men cannot be raped' or that 'men don't need support'. A third of practitioners in my sample labeled male rape as unimportant, insignificant, and far-fetched with one commenting that,

"Voluntary agency practitioners do not want to hear about [male rape]" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 6, Male). These negative labels can exclude male rape victims and place them at the periphery of normalcy. They are likely to be treated with suspicion. By the reactions of practitioners to male rape victims, with the application of negative labels, the victims are likely to be negatively treated. Male Rape Counsellor 7 (Female) suggests that other practitioners are likely to construct labels that have negative connotations attached to them in reference to male rape, such as 'men cannot get raped':

> A lot of the males I have worked with in the voluntary sector have had their sexuality questioned, been asked why they didn't fight back (expectation that men are strong) and categorically been told, "You must have got it wrong, men can't get raped". While female victims also come up against societal view, the impact seems to be greater for men….Because of the lack of support available to male victims, they are automatically treated worse than female victims. If you Google things like 'rape support' both generally or for a specific area, a lot of what comes up says things like "have you been affected by rape? We help lots of women like you" which just reinforces the belief 'real men don't get assaulted' which is pushing male victims away and stopping them finding the support that is available (Male Rape Counsellor 7, Female).

In sum, this section explored how male rape myths inform some voluntary agency practitioners' attitudes and responses toward male rape victims. Either consciously or subconsciously, some of the practitioners circulate male rape myths in social practices and interactions with (or without) male victims of rape. Through power and discourse, the practitioners are able to control the bodies of male rape victims; and through common sense thinking and rape myths, some practitioners come to learn about and understand male rape, which we turn to next.

**6.3 (Mis)Understanding Male Rape Victims in the Voluntary Sector**

Over half of the voluntary agency practitioners in my sample suggested that either themselves or other practitioners lack understanding with regards to male rape. As examples, consider the following passages of text:

> [W]e don't really know the facts about male rape, so we would be a bit naïve…I do know that [male rape victims] who have had sort of counselling with people who haven't had any training working with trauma and things, the survivor often feels that the counsellor didn't really 'get them' (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male).

> Voluntary agency practitioners don't want to understand anything, do they? With anything that they feel uncomfortable with, they don't want to talk about rape; anything that is sort of out of the public's main focus. When you have got things on male rape, they don't want to hear that, but they will because it is part of the job….It is just one of those issues that [they] overlook. To them, [male rape] just doesn't exist. They don't want to talk about it (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

> [T]he way voluntary agency practitioners respond in the UK to the possibility of men being raped is different to other places. For many of them, it's difficult to understand that a man can be raped…it's a lot to do with ignorance. Also, for men, there is an underlying fear of rape. So it's almost like, "That couldn't happen to me, I'm so macho", but also the mechanics of rape…the stuff around penetration is quite hard for men. It's quite hard for a lot of men to understand how a man is raped, a lot of men are very threatened (Male Rape Therapist 2, Male).

These passages of text suggest that most practitioners lack understanding of the 'facts' associated with male rape. For instance, some counsellors do not connect with the victims; without empathy, then, the practitioners can circulate the discursive idea that 'male rape does not really exist'. By not constructing discourse of male rape, as some practitioners "don't want to talk about it" (MRC3, Female), they can regulate

and control the bodies of male rape victims (e.g., by silencing them, by overlooking them, and by 'invisibilizing' them) through the rules governing sexuality which Foucault (1978: 139) calls 'anatomo-politics'. Disciplining bodies of male rape victims in this way can also be seen as controlling the lives of male rape victims. Anatomo-politics of the bodies of male rape victims operate to silence and subjugate their bodies because "[w]ith anything that [voluntary agency practitioners] feel uncomfortable with, they don't want to talk about rape" (MRC3, Female) and because "[f]or many of them, it's difficult to understand that a man can be raped" (MRT2, Male). Foucault (1978) writes that:

> [P]ower over life evolved in two basic forms….One of these poles-the first to be formed, it seems--centered on the body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls, all this was ensured by the procedures of power that characterized the *disciplines*: *an anatomo-politics of the human body* (p. 139. Italics in original).

As some practitioners, mainly male practitioners, find it difficult to understand that a man's body can be raped since mechanically men's body is seen as impenetrable, a form of knowledge is likely to be circulated. This form of knowledge, or version of reality of what is false or true about sexual violence, relates to the idea that men cannot be raped and so creates and shapes some practitioners' cultures and responses toward male rape victims. Such responses are likely to be based on new forms of knowledge that help construct realities pertaining to male rape. Foucault (1978) had recognised that in "*institutions* of power…*techniques* of power present at every level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions….They also [act] as factors of segregation and social hierarchization…guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony" (p. 141. Emphasis in original). Male rape victims who seek help and support from voluntary agencies are susceptible to power and techniques of surveillance. This is because male rape victims are under constant surveillance not only by themselves, but also by other men to ensure that they are constantly conducting themselves in a heterosexual and masculine fashion—otherwise they are deemed as deviant and an anomaly (Javaid, 2015b). For Foucault, the interrelation of

internal self-surveillance and self-policing with external enforcing of surveillance and policing provides discourses with power (Foucault, 1977, 1991). In relation to their cultural and discursive knowledge and understanding regarding sexual violence, some practitioners' discourses apply normalcy while controlling and disciplining deviancy. To reassert the dominant ideal of sexual violence victims, that is, female rape victims, some practitioners construct male rape victims' bodies as dysfunctional, contaminated, abnormal or unnatural. I argue, therefore, that some practitioners construct male rape victims as embodying a deviant sexuality, and, by asking for help, they are seen as 'not being able to cope' shaped by the practitioners' discourses such as "'That couldn't happen to me, I'm so macho'" (MRT2, Male).

Some practitioners can, therefore, either implicitly or explicitly, circulate discursive knowledge to male rape victims pertaining to worthlessness and failure; at the same time, disbelieving attitudes and responses can circulate against the victims. Their bodies become subjected to the practitioners' examination, surveillance and control; and to the regime in voluntary agencies, such as making an appointment, attending the agency, and undergoing treatment/counselling/therapy. During this procedure, the bodies of male rape victims are under the strict control of the voluntary agency practitioners. It could be argued that voluntary agencies' needs take precedence over male rape victims' needs, with some practitioners circulating a depersonalised and rational approach since "[w]hen you have got things on male rape, they don't want to hear that, but they will because it is part of the job" (MRC3, Female). It is fundamentally my argument that the practitioners' versions of reality and discourses are *relative*. Although most practitioners expressed male rape in ways that could be interpreted as 'negative', there were other practitioners who constructed male rape in a more 'positive' light, which means that practitioners construct and conceptualise male rape differently. Therefore, we can only understand male rape in the context of practitioners' culture for their unique and individualised culture contains its own discourses, languages, and peculiarities that guide their attitudes and responses toward male rape victims. For example:

> You have to understand [male rape victims'] particular story and then you have to situate yourself in the environment they find themselves (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 4, Male).

> We are trained counselors and offer unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence to our clients. From the outset we explain what we can offer and listen to what our clients need. Normalising the client's thoughts and feelings often helps to challenge stigma (Male Rape Counsellor 4, Female).

> [V]oluntary agencies might hold similar views as the police, but they might try not to. They might be a bit more empathetic, but society lacks the awareness and the depth of knowledge to be able to manage male rape situations effectively and this can reflect in the voluntary agencies (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

From these passages of text, we can see the disparities between practitioners in terms of constructing male rape as either 'positively' or 'negatively', some of who circulate discursive knowledge of male rape victims as either impenetrable or penetrable. In other words, some practitioners believe that men can be raped, while some believe that they cannot as such. For some, the impenetrable becomes constructed as deviant, while for others, the penetrable becomes constructed as normalised equating male rape victims to female victims. Weeks (2016) suggests that we cannot divorce ourselves from our own cultures, meaning that we can never really understand anything with any great certainty, but, through discourse and language, we construct, add meaning to, and try to make sense of 'things'. The three respondents strongly suggest that they attempt to offer empathy to male rape victims because, for them, male rape is constructed as a salient issue that warrants attention and understanding. In line with Foucault's (1972) work on the archeology of knowledge, these respondents' forms of knowledge relating to male rape construct different responses to male rape victims, mainly of empathy and understanding. New forms of knowledge and discourse about male rape, that is, it is normalised, non-deviant, and non-abnormal, define modern life for some practitioners. Foucault (1972) articulates that, in order for people to know and understand a version of reality, acquiring a discourse is a necessity. While discourses are omnipresent, practitioners are constantly drawing on different discourses to make sense of male rape in voluntary agencies. The issue with this is that practitioners are likely to respond to male rape victims in an unpredictable, haphazard, and inconsistent fashion. The many discourses that practitioners draw upon maintain power over them, shaping what practitioners know

and understand, what practitioners contemplate, and what practitioners discuss as 'truths' (Foucault, 1972). Discourses, therefore, create practitioners' identity and subjectivity through a relational and dynamic process, influencing the ways in which they respond to male (and female) victims of rape.

It is clear that voluntary agency practitioners view and understand male rape through multiple lenses, which change over time and in contexts, and change according to social and cultural developments. It could be argued that the practitioners' discourse with regards to male rape is also shaped by legal, religious, political, and social knowledges that construct comprehensions of male rape while cultivating actions and thoughts regarding male rape. The concept of the 'gaze', developed by Foucault (1977), refers to the ways in which individuals are objectified and constituted. Founded on certain powerful disciplinary discourses, the 'gaze' demonstrates the act of examining and exercising surveillance (Foucault, 1977). Foucault explained that surveillance worked to (ab)normalise certain practices according to a particular societal ideal. For some voluntary agency practitioners, then, through their 'gaze' of male rape victims, they come to construct male rape as 'normal'. This 'gaze' concept and the conception of discourse run alongside each other to construct male rape in particular ways. Thus, some practitioners come to normalise male rape by offering "unconditional positive regard, empathy and congruence to [their] clients…[and they] listen to what [their] clients need. Normalising the client's thoughts and feelings" (M RC4, Female). Then, through discursive practices (Foucault, 1972), voluntary agency practitioners respond to and deal with male rape victims in a way that is accepting of them as victims. The discursive knowledge of male rape as 'normal' by some practitioners can alter through space and time for discourses are neither fixed nor stable. While discourses can 'restrain' us, they can also 'free' us (Foucault, 1972).

Although some practitioners are more accepting of male rape than others, some work has shown that voluntary agency practitioners generally support and perpetuate male rape myths (Donnelly and Kenyon, 1996; Kassing and Prieto, 2003; Cohen, 2014; Lowe and Balfour, 2015). These studies found that voluntary agency practitioners, on the whole, maintain stereotypes that shape and construct the ways in which they think about, discuss, and respond to male rape; as such, they are less accepting of male rape victims in voluntary agencies. While I also found that some voluntary agency

practitioners can be hostile towards male rape victims, constructing male rape as 'abnormal' and 'deviant', it is unwise to generalise this to all practitioners which these studies implicitly seem to do. Furthermore, the studies do not engage with social constructionism and sociological theoretical frameworks, meaning that their arguments have an element of essentialism and determinism in without considering the social, cultural and historical contexts in which voluntary agency practitioners respond to male rape victims. However, in their analysis, they are aware of the stigma that is embedded in the subject matter of male rape (Scarce, 1997; Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Apperley, 2015) to which we turn next.

## 6.4 Responding to Shame: Cultural Ideologies of Honour, Stigma and Respect

In this study, at least a third of voluntary agency practitioners stipulate that male rape victims are reluctant to engage with them to seek help because of stigma, which means that they are unable to offer their support and services to the victims. For instance:

> [B]ecause of the underreporting, and because of males not seeking help, it means that we cannot adequately provide services for them (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

> Men can be difficult to engage with anything to do with their health; we tried a 'Male Drop In for Men' and found it was difficult to get them to attend. Men at times do not make their health a priority and are not sure what therapy is. They find it difficult to know how counselling will help; it feels a bit wooly to them. They prefer to have a 'Haynes Manual' guide of what it will be like (Male Rape Therapist 1, Female).

While the respondents in the sample declared that many male rape victims do not come forward for help and support, it is unclear what the practitioners are doing to tackle the under-reporting and to draw in the victims. By not creating and constructing discourse relating to male rape, the victims of this crime are likely to be silenced. These victims become the 'unspoken', the 'unknown', transforming them into objects of taboo, since, to repeat Foucault, truth claims about male rape as the

'invisible' can be seen as discourses and taken-for-granted truth claims that "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault 1972: 49). These discourses that some practitioners circulate "means that [they] cannot adequately provide services for them" (MRC3, Female). Another explanation why some practitioners are reluctant to create discourses about male rape, to speak about the unspoken, pertains to stigma. Most practitioners in my sample stated that stigma is heavily embedded in male rape discourse, making it difficult to construct it as a problem and to take it seriously. Consider the following passages of text, as examples:

> There are both similarities and differences between male/female rape. Both genders experience powerlessness and feelings of shame, believe it is in some way their own fault and self blame. Added dynamics for males are usually greater taboo/stigma (although stigma affects both genders) and public [and some practitioners'] attitudes/perceptions that 'men cannot be raped' or 'why is it a problem, just enjoy it' (Male Rape Counsellor 4, Female).

> [S]ome people actually don't want to say the word[s]; don't want to be as graphic…because they find it embarrassing [and] because that is something that is not spoken about…more that we speak about [it], more open and more graphic we can be…we should be saying as it is, "Hey look, this can happen to you" (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female).

Male rape seems to contain a higher level of stigma than female rape, serving to normalise the acceptance of female rape while abnormalising male rape. Drawing on the sociological perspective of labeling theory (Becker, 1963), it becomes clear that male rape becomes stigmatised through the labels and discourses of male rape as deviant, taboo and fuelled by male rape myths, such as "'men cannot be raped' or 'why is it a problem, just enjoy it'" (MRC4, Female). As a result, some male rape victims are blamed for their assault (Rumney, 2008, 2009; Cohen, 2014). The stigma embedded in male rape, arguably, arises from social control since the act of male rape challenges gender, social, moral, and sexual norms. To reaffirm and reinforce such norms, male rape is stigmatised, ignored, relegated, and it "is something that is not spoken about" (VAC5, Female) so as to maintain the status quo of heterosexuality

and hegemonic masculinity. VAC5 (Female) suggests that, when we construct discourses about male rape—the more we speak about it—societies will have less grounds to deny its existence, potentially encouraging male rape victims to engage with the voluntary sector. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, Ken Plummer (1975) argued that identity becomes stigmatised according to the interactional and social responses to it. Cultural codes or 'scripts' constructs people's responses to the stigmatised entity, and regulation manifests itself through the stigma (Plummer, 1975). Therefore, through social relations and social interactions with male rape victims, practitioners attach different meanings to male rape, some of which induce them to stigmatise male rape, while others are less likely to stigmatise it. Those whom stigmatise male rape are likely to regulate it by not speaking about it, discouraging a discourse that raises awareness of it, so it cannot come to the attention of voluntary agency practitioners. Other practitioners were keen to develop discourse relating to male rape in order to challenge the stigma attached to male rape. For example:

> [M]ale rape is such a difficult thing for a man to get to the phone and talk about…I had [a] case where the guy's sister rang in, he was a victim of rape, but it took him two or three weeks later to actually pick up the phone to someone and to talk to someone and, then, when he was on the phone, it was probably 45 minutes before he actually got the words out. This particular incident was a gang rape, and he actually rang up saying that he felt like he had something physically wrong with him…shame, fear, anxiety, he had all of those things, he couldn't even get [the] words out to me. Took him so long, he [kept] saying 'oh my god', 'and I don't know how to say this', and this went on for a good forty minutes, and that's all he kept saying was 'oh my god'…he just didn't want to use the words, he didn't want to say those words, he felt so shameful, so fearful, and it took a lot of, you know, time really. I just kept saying to him, 'It's OK, I'm not going anywhere'…It's hard, but is not about me. It's about them and when you are on that phone, you're just focusing on them, and you can't, you want to say "bastards", you know basically, but you can't, you just have to concentrate on that person that they are getting support and making sure that they are supported emotionally and practically (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female).

In interaction between the victim and this particular practitioner, the latter is constructing and making sense of the victim's stigma through a social and interactional process. By attempting to challenge the discourse of stigma, she reassures the victim that she is "not going anywhere" and puts the victim before herself since it "is not about me. It's about them and when you are on that phone, you're just focusing on them". This interactional process normalises the male victim's experience of rape through the acceptance of the victim's victimisation and story, which suggests that, while stigma can be present at certain times, it can also be non-present at other times. This is because, as Plummer (1975) notes, stigma is fluid, fragile and always negotiated through social and interactional relations. One is not born stigmatised, then, but rather becomes it dependent upon social structures, social practices, and social and power relations. Male rape victims are likely to be heavily stigmatised for undermining notions of compulsive heterosexuality, hetero(masculinity) and heteronormativity (Hlavka, 2016). Not only are male rape victims often stigmatised through a dialectical relationship with other people, but also homosexuality, which is often attached to male rape (Turchik, 2012), is also deeply stigmatised. For example:

> I supported a gay man who was raped and that was [a] difficult story, because he wasn't an open gay person, he did used to go to gay clubs, and had come back with somebody and he got basically raped. But you know, that was one of the reasons why he didn't want to go to court because his family finding out. He was of Asian [Islamic] culture, so obviously that makes the difference as well, what kind of culture and beliefs people have….He basically said, "You know, I don't want to bring shame on my family, I never wanted my family to know that I was gay", but I obviously couldn't guarantee him that that wasn't coming out in court (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female).

VAC5 (Female) suggests that particular forms of culture and religious ideology, such as Asian and Islamic cultures, make it difficult for male rape victims to engage with the voluntary sector and the criminal justice system. She suggests that male victims of rape, who come from particular religious or cultural backgrounds, remain silent in order to prevent their stigma or expected stigma from metaphorically and

symbolically transposing itself onto their family members. This makes it difficult for some practitioners to support these types of victims, who are constructed as the 'other' since, as Jeffrey Weeks (2016: 107) notes, "[Islam] firmly emphasizes the ideal of monogamous, heterosexual relationships ordained by the Koran". Ken Plummer (2015: 114) states that, "For Muslim cultures, religion defines gender and sexuality"[39]. Any person who divorces from engaging with religious ideology and cultural expectations may be deemed as not quite human and are potentially treated as perverse by the wider society so potentially making it difficult for some practitioners to deal with such victims. As such male rape victims challenge the ideal of heterosexual monogamy and the expectation of the heterosexual nuclear family, they may be stigmatised not only by the same members of their culture and religion in which they belong, but also potentially by their family members since homosexual practices are frequently forbidden in such cultures and religions. For these types of victims, as with any other victim, they each embody many strands of identities at the same time: racial, ethnic, sexual, gendered, and other, each of which is in constant flux (Butler, 1990). The stigma of homosexuality in religious and cultural families is so powerful that it serves to exclude the homosexual in order to preserve heterosexuality (Jackson, 2005). In agreement, Plummer (2015: 114) writes that, "Today, Muslim cultures in general treat homosexuality with little tolerance", which creates a stubborn barrier for such male rape victims to seek out help, support and treatment from the voluntary sector, potentially making it difficult for some practitioners to reach out to such victims.

In sum, this section focused on stigma and how it makes it difficult for some practitioners to serve male rape victims. While male rape may be culturally 'made' as 'deviant', a taboo, and as stigmatised in some voluntary agencies, some practitioners strongly challenge the discourse of stigma when dealing with male rape victims in order to put the victims' needs first. However, in particular religions and cultures, homosexuality and male rape are deeply stigmatised to the extent that the victims of male rape become stigmatised, making it difficult for the practitioners to engage with them. As a result, due to the stigma embedded in male rape discourse, some practitioners are likely to circulate victim blaming attitudes and responses.

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[39] This also applies to other religions, such as Christianity.

**6.5 Constructions of Victim Blame and (Dis)Belief in Voluntary Agencies**

Over half of the voluntary agency practitioners in the sample reflected on the issue of some practitioners disbelieving male rape victims, either implicitly or explicitly, in voluntary agencies. Some practitioners in the following quotes also expressed victim-blaming attitudes themselves, though this was infrequent in contrast to the police officers in the sample:

> [W]e know that [male rape victims] don't report or talk about it. They are too ashamed to come forward or they don't think they'll be believed…a lot of people won't come forward because they feel that they have had consensual sex or that is how it will be viewed, and their word against their offender's. And actually, if there's just two of you, then how do you prove that? (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male).

> [A] guy that I worked with, his dad and his dad's friends had raped him…that's what he had claimed and he had gone right through the legal system at the time, and nobody would believe him because of who his dad was…because of his experiences, I didn't know whether I should believe him or not…and I was like, well, "I don't know what to believe about you and whatnot"…a lot of people come from more deprived backgrounds, not as intelligent or whatever, [and] will be sexually abused…they allow themselves to be abused…in the first male rape case that I dealt with, I used to question, "Is he telling the truth, is he not, is he making it up, is he exaggerating", but that was part of his persona….There is always an element of doubt (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 3, Male).

> [V]ictims think they won't be taken seriously….There is strong evidence of re-victimization (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 7, Male).

The reason as to why some male victims of rape are reluctant to engage with voluntary agency practitioners, according to the practitioners, is that they think that the practitioners will disbelieve and re-victimise them. They suggest that victims will see their claim of rape as something that will be constructed and viewed as consensual

sex, hence disbelieving the victims' claim of rape. Against some male rape victims, VAC3 (Male) suggests that he is unlikely to believe them because of their family background and circumstances that shape his construction of a valid and legitimate rape victim. When dealing with male rape victims in voluntary agencies, some practitioners may maintain views such as "they allow themselves to be abused" and "[t]here is always an element of doubt" (VAC3, Male). It is appropriate, therefore, to argue that some victims may very well think that they "won't be taken seriously" (VAC7, Male) since some practitioners may very well disbelieve male rape victims through secondary victimisation, where the victims are made to feel more of an offender rather than a victim. Voluntary agency practitioners will be drawing on their cultures, discourses, and historical and social constructions of rape to make sense of the narratives of male rape victims, which will help them determine whether a male rape victim is 'telling the truth'. Male rape victims' narratives or 'story telling' of their sexual experience (Plummer, 1995) will also help the practitioners to construct the victims' credibility, validity, and 'ideal' or 'non-ideal' victim status.

The sociologist Nils Christie (1986) developed the notion of the 'ideal victim'. His original formulation of the concept was based around the 'little old lady', who was referred to as, while out committing acceptable deeds, an innocent and youthful female attacked by a stranger who was unknown. He devised this notion to suggest that this typology is what society classifies as an 'ideal' victim given the circumstance and context. In reference to sexual violence, Turchik and Edwards (2012) suggest that societies often classify a 'real' (or 'ideal') rape victim as being a female rape victim who is attacked by an unknown stranger ('stranger rape'). This common-sense thinking and persistent stereotype in societies ignore the fact that men can also be 'legitimate' victims of rape, but my data, as well as other work (Graham, 2006; Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Cohen, 2014; Clark, 2014), suggest that they are unlikely to be constructed as the 'ideal' victim. Drawing on Christie's work, it can be argued that male rape victims are not easily and readily given the victim label and status; some may never achieve such a label and status because they do not fit within Christie's typology. Therefore, some members of society, such as voluntary agency practitioners, will not construct male rape victims as 'ideal' and 'legitimate' rape victims; in turn, disbelieving attitudes and responses are likely to unfold and reflect in the type of treatment that male victims of rape receive. Disbelieving attitudes and

responses can manifest into secondary victimisation, where the victims are made to relive their rape experience, to be 'put on trial', and suffer the feelings and pains they endured during their rape; they experience what I call 'secondary rape' by the responses of some voluntary agency practitioners. Male rape victims' experience of rape needs to be readily and easily acknowledged by practitioners in order to be constructed as 'ideal' victims and to acquire the victim label and status. This is negotiated through social and power relations between the practitioners and the victims. This social process, then, is not fixed, determined, nor static, but rather dynamic, fluid and changeable. Social factors will help construct practitioners' acknowledgement of male rape victims as 'ideal' and 'legitimate' rape victims.

For example, the media and the different forms of technology that portray images of sexual violence and victims of rape are likely to shape how practitioners think about and respond to male rape victims (Cohen, 2014). They can help shape whether or not practitioners provide male rape victims with a victim status (Pitfield, 2013) or with a victim identity (Rock, 2002). One could argue that a 'culture of victimhood' or a 'hierarchy of victimisation' regarding rape victims emerges that positions male rape victims, most commonly, at the bottom tier. Christie's work is useful to understand the ways in which constructions of 'victimhood', 'illegitimacy', 'undeserving', and 'non-innocence' manifest in service delivery in respect of male rape victims. His work, in turn, helps to make sense of the disbelieving attitudes and responses that can unfold in practice. However, his typology gives no room for social change, so it could be argued that his theoretical argument is socially deterministic on some level. Moreover, his original formulation did not have an empirical foundation. Nonetheless, his work has allowed one to argue that some practitioners will deem male rape victims' status and label as a 'real' and 'ideal' victim as, in fact, 'illegitimate'; it is difficult, then, for these victims to be taken seriously by some practitioners at the local, regional and national levels. Through social interactions, some practitioners will construct these victims as illegitimate, undeserving and as the non-innocent, hence the development of disbelieving attitudes and responses. However, for a third of practitioners in my sample, male rape victims are positioned at the top of the tier on the 'hierarchy of victimisation' by the acknowledgment of male rape victims and by believing them. For example:

> [R]ape victims can claim for criminal injuries compensation, but if they
> don't report [their rape] to the police, they miss out on that. I know that
> financial benefit[s] are nowhere [near in terms of] compensating for what
> happened to them, but sometime[s] it is *acknowledgment*. They acknowledge
> them [the victims] and, of course, *we believe you that this happened to you*
> (Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female. Emphasis mine).

It is important to stipulate that the 'hierarchy of victimisation' to which I refer is not a
static hierarchy but, instead, open to continual change. It is historically, culturally and
socially constructed, changing over time. To put it simply, it means different 'things'
for different voluntary agency practitioners at different times. Therefore, male rape
victims can lose their victim status and label. Recognising and accepting male rape
victims as 'real' and 'ideal' victims is an intricate process that is always negotiated,
shaped and reshaped through social and power relations, and through a variety of
processes and interactions. On balance, for some practitioners, it is readily easy to
grant male rape victims with a victim status and label; for others, it more difficult and,
sometimes, they may never grant victim status to the victims, fuelling victim-blaming
attitudes and responses. This is because, I argue, some practitioners will construct
male rape victims as the 'other', the stigmatised, and the abhorrent. For some
practitioners, the victims embody characteristics associated with 'folk devils' (Cohen,
2002) for they are constructed as 'deviant' and as 'outsiders' who are blamed for their
rape. They are symbolised as the 'other' who threaten the status quo, bringing about a
'moral panic' (Ibid.). This moral panic is likely to provoke some practitioners to react
distastefully to male rape victims through the rejection, condemnation, and
disapproval of their rape. Social disapproval and condemnation are aspects of this
'moral panic' that work to conceal the act of male rape by either providing poor
treatment or disbelieving the victims. While some of my findings agree with Stan
Cohen's work, especially with some practitioners suggesting that male rape victims
embody 'folk devils' producing a 'moral panic', not all of the practitioners
constructed male rape victims in this way. Thus, the responses and reactions to male
rape will be inconsistent and dissimilar, which suggest that the victims could receive
unpredictable and variable treatment in voluntary agencies. However, because some
practitioners will construct the victims as personifying 'folk devils' hence 'moral

panic', "some very serious, significant and horrible events [such as, male rape]…can be denied, ignored or played down" (Cohen, 2002: 26).

It could be argued that the embodiment of 'folk devils' can be contested since it is based on power, as power can be challenged (Foucault, 1978). Therefore, male rape victims can contest the characteristics associated with 'folk devils' and 'moral panic' by claiming for criminal injuries compensation and reporting to the police (see Voluntary Agency Caseworker 5, Female, above). By doing so, the victims are acknowledging their sexual victimisation while others are also acknowledging it with them. Arguably, this could prevent the embodiment of 'folk devils' and, thus, making it difficult for the moral panic to take place or lessening its severity.

Given that some voluntary agency practitioners clearly *believe* male rape victims, for example, "if anyone comes to us, our first rule is that we believe them, regardless… it is very important that you feel you are being believed" (Male Rape Counsellor 1, Male), I argue that some third sector and voluntary workers embody 'positive' forms of masculinities at certain historical locations and social contexts. At particular times, there are gendered practices in voluntary agencies that do *not* legitimate patriarchal relations, which is valuable because power and hegemonic constructs of masculinity in voluntary agencies are being contested and more fluid. Some of the practitioners' embodiment of positive masculinities operates to contest and challenge hegemonic masculinity by way of believing male rape victims and providing a more 'softer' and caring masculinity, or as Messerschmidt (2016, 2017) calls *positive masculinities* that contest gender hegemony. Some practitioners, then, enact non-hegemonic configurations of practices at certain moments given that positive masculinities are "constructed exterior to gender hegemonic relational and discursive structures" (Messerschmidt, 2016: 56). Through empathy, sympathy, and believing attitudes and responses, some voluntary agency practitioners enact gender egalitarian relational and discursive social structures in voluntary agencies when embodying *positive masculinities*. Through *positive masculinities*, the practitioners contest gender inequality, over-use/misuse of power, and hegemonic masculinities in their voluntary agencies, meaning that power becomes much more fluid.

**6.6 Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter was to critically examine the ways in which male rape is culturally and socially constructed in voluntary agencies within England, in order to make sense of voluntary agency practitioners' attitudes toward and responses to male rape victims. Understanding their cultures, discourses, and constructions relating to male rape is key to make sense of how they consider and treat male rape. Through social and power relations, these cultures, discourses, and constructions are negotiated, shaped, and reshaped, meaning that some practitioners will hold similar views about male rape while others may not. For example, some practitioners construct male rape as an insignificant issue whilst others construct it as a significant social issue, shaping the ways in which they serve male victims of rape. Similarly, certain practitioners draw on cultural myths pertaining to male rape to help them understand male rape, but others attempt to eradicate such myths in practice because they contribute to the misunderstanding of male rape. Different practitioners subscribe to differing views because of 'power/knowledge', social relations, cultures, and discourses, shaping the ways in which they construct and understand male rape, which in turn guide their responses to male victims of rape in practice. Sociological, cultural, and post-structural theoretical frameworks have been useful to elucidate that the practitioners' knowledge and understanding of male rape are dynamic and in constant flux and fluidity. With the handling of male and female rape victims, practitioners produce and reproduce discourses of sexual violence that allow them to conceptualise and construct male rape. Some practitioners' discourses relating to male rape can fuel victim-blaming attitudes and responses, further stigmatising the victims; but other practitioners' discourses work to challenge such stigma by believing the victims and normalising their experience of rape. Thus, the victims are likely to receive an inconsistent, variable and unpredictable response, care and treatment. As Foucault (1978) argued, power is omnipresent, so that includes in voluntary agencies. There is a 'regime of truth' (Foucault, 1978) in voluntary agencies, consisting of the view that only females are 'real' or 'ideal' victims of rape, so male rape victims are likely to be deemed as the 'other', the 'abnormal', and the 'deviant'. However, this 'regime of truth' can be contested since it is in constant negotiation and flux, but, given the lack of male rape victims coming forward to voluntary agencies, such contestation is likely to be difficult in policy and practice.

## Chapter 7: Conclusions

### 7.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed summary of each chapter of the thesis. It also re-visits the research questions in light of the findings from the fieldwork. In addition, the chapter outlines the theoretical and conceptual contributions that this project makes; the theoretical frameworks used in this thesis, which inform and elucidate the data, are re-visited to outline my theoretical and conceptual contributions. The chapter also re-examines research methods and methodology, where it discusses the contributions that this project makes to qualitative research methods and methodology. Furthermore, this project contributes to policy developments in order to help shape better responses to, and services for male rape victims; therefore, some discussions regarding the contributions to policy and practice are made. The chapter ends with offering some future research directions that other writers can take in order to gain a better understanding of male rape in the different contexts in which it occurs.

### 7.1 Summary of Chapters

The aims of this research have been to critically examine state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape victims in England. Moreover, how constructions of gender and sexuality notions shape the ways in which state and voluntary agencies think about and respond to male rape victims were also important to consider in this project. It was, furthermore, significant to critically explore the social and cultural constructions of male rape myths since they can influence and shape how police officers, male rape therapists, counsellors, and voluntary agency caseworkers deal with male rape victims in practice. Police cultures were critically examined to understand the dynamics and variability of such cultures and the impact of police cultures on male rape victims.

Chapter 1 provided an outline of the current research. In this chapter, I argued that definitions of male rape are unclear; the way in which I defined and conceptualised male rape in the current research was men raped by other men and women. This involves men being raped both orally and anally, and women forcing men to penetrate

them. Incorrect and inaccurate definitions of male rape in state and voluntary agencies are problematic, in that some male rape victims' experiences of rape may run counter to some state and voluntary agency practitioners' definitions of male rape. This means, therefore, that treatment, help and support may be denied or their experience made trivialised. The chapter contributes to an improved understanding of naming and defining male rape. It was also important to define and conceptualise male rape myths, as previous work has found that such myths inform service delivery and responses toward male rape victims in practice (see Donnelly and Kenyon, 1996; McMullen, 1990; Scarce; 1997; Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Chapleau et al., 2008; Cohen, 2014). I argued that male rape myths do, indeed, shape the ways in which state and voluntary agencies respond to male rape victims. However, not all practitioners will subscribe to these myths, but some will do so at different times and places.

The research questions and rationales were also outlined in chapter 1 to highlight the need to research state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward and responses to male rape victims, and how notions of gender and sexuality inform their attitudes and responses. This focus is largely absent in the existing body of knowledge relating to male rape since most work is concerned with quantifying male victims' experiences of rape. To increase the originality and nuances of this project, it was important to discuss the theoretical, conceptual and methodological underpinnings of the current research, where I introduced Foucault, queer theory, and poststructuralism as theoretical frameworks to elucidate and make sense of the rich, qualitative data. There is a currently no literature on male rape that draws on these specific theoretical frameworks to understand male rape since most work approaches male rape from a clinical and psychological perspective. This is important, but so is adopting a sociological perspective to understand to fluid constructions of male rape in institutions. The methodology was also introduced to increase the original value of this project, in that I collected and draw on 25 in-depth qualitative semi-structured interviews and 45 qualitative questionnaires, contributing to existing knowledge of male rape with original and primary data.

Chapter 2 gave an overview of the existing body of literature pertaining to male rape, law, police and policing, and voluntary agencies in order to set the context for the ensuing discussions in the thesis. The chapter began to examine rape in prison since it

was here where male rape first gained recognition in the academic arena and in a policy and practice context. The widespread male rape myth that 'rape only occurs in prison establishments' was closely examined in order to consider whether state and voluntary agency practitioners hold such a myth. As my findings reveal, some of these practitioners do perpetuate such a problematic myth. To provide some further context to other male rape myths, notably in the wider community, I evaluated other male rape myths such as "male rape is solely a homosexual issue" and "male rape victims will always fight back". These myths were important to discuss in order to, again, examine whether the practitioners are likely to maintain such myths. I argue that, while some practitioners maintain such myths, others will challenge it depending on the setting, context and environment in which they situate. Whether they challenge or hold such myths will depend upon a range of social factors, such as the representation of male rape myths in the media. As Jewkes (2015) argues, some people will take in media messages and representations without challenging them, while others will confront and challenge them.

Furthermore, it was important to consider previous academic literature concerning state agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape. I argued that, generally, three main barriers remain in tact that contribute to the discursive silences around male rape generally. They include police statistics, giving an inaccurate and incorrect prevalent rate of male rape; underreporting of male rape to the police, in that many victims are reluctant to engage with the police for reasons, such as police distrust, homophobia, and police skepticism; and police cultures, in which certain components stubbornly persist, such as skepticism about rape cases, conservativism, and gender bias. It is, however, important to not downplay some improvements that have been made in the police, such as the rise of specialist police officers and rape suites designed specifically for male rape victims. Further, it was also important to review the literature concerning voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape, whereby it was demonstrated that some practitioners are likely to circulate the discursive idea that rape is only applicable to women, not men. Finally, it was vital to give some understanding of law and male rape, and how male rape victims can get justice for their attack(s) in court. The Sexual Offences Act (2003) has strengthened the position for many male rape victims, in that both forced oral and anal penetration is made illegal. However, some limitations remain with this Act, in that women

cannot be prosecuted nor convicted for raping men when my findings reveal that women raping men is a serious and prevalent issue. To repeat one participant,

> 20% of our survivors are men, and I'd say 10-15% of them have been attacked by women, which is quite high. That's probably the main thing that I've learned since being here, that women are abusers and it is a lot more prevalent than you would imagine (Male Rape Counsellor 3, Female).

Chapter 3 provided some knowledge regarding how this empirical project was carried out, in which the research methods and methodologies were critically discussed. I introduced the empirical work that was undertaken. This qualitative project gained a sample size of 70 participants overall. Two qualitative research methods, semi-structured interviews and qualitative questionnaires, were used to collate the rich, detailed and contextual data. The data were then analysed with the use of thematic analysis, drawing out key themes and concepts. In chapter 3, it was also significant to detail ethical dilemmas linked to researching male rape for male rape is such a sensitive topic (Abdullah-Khan, 2002). It was important to ensure that the research participants were not harmed in any way when empirically conducting this research. To ensure this, several methods were adopted, such as the offer of terminating the interview if any participant got upset or emotional.

To enhance the quality of the data, it was vital to discuss reflexivity to question and reflect on my interpretations of the data and the arguments that I am making. It was vital, thus, to detail my own personal and historical experiences of abuse, pain and trauma to reflect on how they have shaped the research process. For instance, drawing on Goffman's (1963) theoretical framework of stigma by association, I argued that, as stigma is deeply embedded in the subject matter of male rape, that stigma ended up metaphorically and symbolically transposing itself onto me, the researcher, the writer, as I was closely associated with the stigmatised topic. The stigma was not only limited to the fieldwork, but also extended to my personal life. For example, family members, acquaintances, and people in the wider community expressed disgust, distain and antagonism toward me, as I was associated with male rape research. This brought about individual, personal, and social implications, in that I was constructed as the 'undateable', the 'unmasculine', and the 'other'. The implications tell us

something unique about male rape, in that this stigmatised topic is likely to prove difficult to research, theoretically, conceptually and methodologically, for other researchers. Although reflexivity helped me to understand my relationship to my participants and how the researcher-participant relationship dynamics influenced and shaped the data collected, drawing on reflexivity was emotionally, personally, and individually difficult because I was continually reminded about my own experience of rape. In some interviews, for instance, some interviewees wanted to know why I chose to research this topic, so I felt forced and obliged to think about and discuss the real reason; that is, I chose to write about male rape due to my own sexual victimisation. This, consequently, reminded me of my own history, past experiences, and abuse, which in turn made me feel sad, depressed, and emotional. However, I felt that such honesty brought me closer to my participants in a way that brought about in-depth, detailed, honest and valid responses to my questions. I noticed that it broke down any barriers there may have been in terms of building rapport.

Chapter 4 demonstrated the first part of the findings and discussion, which explored how ideas of gender and sexualities shape, construct and form the ways in which state and voluntary agencies respond to, and deal with male rape victims. For example, notions around masculinities, such as 'men cannot be raped' because they are expected to embody aspects of hegemonic masculinity, such as power, strength, and control, shape how some state and voluntary agency practitioners consider and respond to male rape victims. Male rape is seen by many of the participants as challenging men's masculinity, which can bring about skeptic and dubious responses against male rape victims. One of the ways in which such responses manifest is through disbelieving attitudes and responses, since 'real' men are expected to embody aspects of self-reliance and self-control by defending themselves and to have power and control over their own bodies (Connell, 2005). Confessing to state and voluntary agencies that they 'failed' as men by being vulnerable to rape positions them in less-than-desirable positions in the gender hierarchy, notably at the bottom tier whereby they are often constructed as 'inferior'. However, male rape victims can move through different masculinities, so they can move up and down this gender hierarchy, at different times, places and contexts. This is dependent on a range of social factors, such as proving to state and voluntary agency practitioners, particularly men, that they can reclaim back their masculinity by drinking heavily, by dealing with the post-rape

effects themselves, or by not seeking help and support. This, thus, allows the victims to embody hegemonic masculinity practices; i.e., self-reliance, control and strength.

Moreover, chapter 4 detailed that gay male rape victims are more likely to be handled negatively than their heterosexual counterparts. Some male practitioners will construct gay (or presumed as gay) male rape victims as embodying subordinate masculinities, and so will deem them as the 'other', the unmasculine, and the homosexual. This is because some practitioners erroneously construct male rape as solely a homosexual issue, whereby male rape only affects gay men. Although gay men can embody notions of hegemonic masculinity at certain times and places (Connell, 2005), this is likely to be difficult for gay male rape victims due to their emasculation of being controlled, penetrated and subordinated through the act of rape. The forced enactment of these 'inferior' roles are antithetical to hegemonic and heteronormative practices and patterns of behavior, which in turn can induce homophobic attitudes and responses by some state and voluntary agency practitioners at different times and places to maintain compulsory heterosexuality and hegemonic masculinity. As antagonism and homophobia against homosexual men are standard features of hegemonic masculinity, positioning gay men "at the bottom of a gender hierarchy among men" (Connell, 1995: 78), some men in state and voluntary agencies will circulate such features to allow themselves to embody hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity. Therefore, some of these practitioners do embody hegemonic masculinity at particular times when it is desirable. Not only do these male practitioners often enact hegemonic masculine practices, but also draw on the 'patriarchal dividend' (Connell, 1995). From perpetuating an unequal gender hierarchy, some men benefit more than other types of men from this patriarchal dividend to which Connell refers. Gay male rape victims are excluded from the patriarchal dividend in contrast to the heterosexual men in state and voluntary agencies who embody hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, the victims are excluded from the power, respect and authority that the male practitioners get from this patriarchal dividend.

Chapter 5 examined constructions of male rape and the policing of it. This chapter began to critically consider police cultures and discourse to make sense of the ways in which male rape is constructed and responded to. Police cultures and discourses

inform how the police handle male rape cases. Through social relations and social interactions with male rape victims, police cultures and discourses are always shaping and reshaping, which means officers' views and constructions of male rape are never fixed or determined. In the policing of male rape, notions of deviancies, queerness and mental health shape how the police come to understand male rape. For example, some police officers construct rape claims from men who suffer mental health issues as 'false', 'unreliable', and 'invalid', which is problematic when recent research evidence shows that men and women with mental health issues are more likely to be victims of sexual violence than the general population (Khalifeh et al., 2015). This chapter also discussed the issue of cultural myths/scripts shaping police interactions with male rape victims. I argued that the police express social symbolism regarding the ways wherein officers construct ideas of a 'real' rape victim, drawing on Goffman's (1959) dramaturgy sociological framework. Officers are always drawing on scripts to construct and understand male rape, which shapes their responses to male rape victims in practice. Through police officers' perspectives and views of male rape and through their everyday social practices, such scripts are always being configured, reconfigured and negotiated. The penultimate section of this chapter was concerned with examining social constructions of police subcultures and labeling male rape. This section paid close attention to the ways in which labels are created and applied when handling male rape cases. While some officers enforce 'positive' labels against male rape victims, constructing them as credible and worthy victims of rape, other officers label male rape victims in negative ways, such as the "non-victimized" or the "perpetrator". Enforcing negative labels can induce secondary victimisation against male rape victims in police forces, but not all officers construct male rape negatively.

Chapter 6 explored how social and cultural constructions of male rape in the voluntary sector were understood and examined. In particular, the chapter critically examined whether male rape was constructed as a social problem in voluntary agencies. From the findings, some voluntary agency practitioners constructed male rape as less important, insignificant and unproblematic, shaped by discourses, cultures and social structures. In contrast, other practitioners constructed male rape as important and a 'real' social issue through social relations/interactions with male rape victims. The chapter went on to explore the different ways in which male rape myths

inform some voluntary agency practitioners' attitudes and responses regarding male rape. I argued that male rape myths can and do shape how the practitioners think about and respond to male rape. For example, some voluntary agency practitioners interpret and understand male rape as a prison problem, whereby male rape only happens in prison. This belief is shaped by common-sense knowledge. As a consequence, male rape victims in the wider community setting are likely to be constructed as invalid, unbelievable and regarded as 'suspicious'. However, some practitioners do attempt to provide adequate support and understanding for male rape victims. For example, some practitioners construct male rape 'positively', circulating discursive knowledge of male rape victims as penetrable. In other words, they believe that men can be raped since the penetrable becomes constructed as normalised, equating male rape victims to female victims in terms of severity and seriousness. Some practitioners also attempt to challenge the stigma associated with male rape by putting the victims before themselves. In doing so, they provide empathy to the victims, normalisating their experiences of rape. However, at certain times and places, constructions of victim blame and disbelief do emerge in voluntary agencies, whereby some practitioners circulate disbelieving attitudes and responses against some male rape victims because they are not seen as 'ideal' victims (see Christie, 1986).

## 7.2 Answering the Research Questions

Abdullah-Khan (2008: 221) argues that, "Stereotypes about real men being physically tough and able to protect themselves along with myths about male rape rooted within such stereotypes prevent victims from disclosing and reporting rape". I found similar findings as this in my own work. Some state and voluntary agency practitioners perpetuate male rape myths and stereotypes such as these. I argue slightly differently to her, though, in that these myths and stereotypes are perpetuated at particular times and places, so they are contextual and situational, neither fixed nor determined as she implicitly suggests. She takes a more fixed approach, rather than more of a sociological and cultural approach. Nonetheless, her work provides a comprehensive and useful understanding of male rape in British society. My research findings also support older research (Scarce, 1997; Kassing et al., 2005), whereby there is an incompatibility between the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity and the act of male rape since male victims of rape struggle to embody this form of masculinity. As

a result, in state and voluntary agencies, some male workers' attitudes and responses are likely to express notions that suggest to the male rape victims that they are 'failed men', not man enough to cope with their rape nor to handle the after effects of their rape by themselves. Thus, revealing emotion, weakness and subordination to such agencies may bring about disgust, disdain and antagonism while the victims are treated as 'deviant', 'abnormal' and the 'other'.

Sleath and Bull (2012: 982) argue that "male rape myth acceptance has a strong relationship with male rape victim blaming." I found that some officers who maintain male rape myths, accepting stereotypical notions of male rape, are likely to circulate victim blaming attitudes and responses to male victims of rape in practice. Kassing et al. (2005) also support this argument. Again, I argue that victim blaming against such victims is contextual and situational, shaped by social structures, and social and power relations. It is important to note, however, that not all police officers, male rape counsellors, therapists, and voluntary agency caseworkers will circulate victim blaming attitudes and responses, but some will do so either explicitly or implicitly at certain times and places. This is dependent upon a range of factors, such as social factors and social representations of sexual violence through the media, through social relations/interactions, and through discourses. Discourses are omnipresent, with each discourse involving knowledge about sexual violence. For example, there are some discourses that suggest that only women can be victims of sexual violence, not men, shaping how some state and voluntary agency practitioners think about and respond to male rape victims in practice.

There is a link between female rape myths and male rape myths. I found that some state and voluntary agency practitioners are likely to construct a rape as 'real' only if the victims fought back, showed some resistance, or are able to present some bruising that occurred from their rape. This has some resonance with literature on female rape, in that such practitioners will construct an allegation of female rape as authentic, genuine and legitimate only if the female victims retaliated, attempted to fight off their attacker(s), can show physical bruising that emanated from their attack, or can convey emotion, such as crying (see Temkin and Krahe, 2008; Sleath and Bull, 2012). However, sometimes, female and male rape victims will not reveal any sort of emotion or any of these aspects to state and voluntary agency practitioners, which

means that some of the practitioners are likely to circulate hostile and victim-blaming attitudes and responses. Therefore, some stereotypes and male rape myths are present in state and voluntary agencies, but not all practitioners will maintain such stereotypes and myths. In fact, some will and do challenge them. For example, some participants strongly challenged the myth that women cannot rape men, constructing a discourse in these agencies about women raping men as a salient and frequent issue that they encounter in their agencies. The creation of this discourse reflects and shapes the way in which they respond to male rape victims by believing the victims and by providing ongoing support and care for such victims, regardless of the fact that in law women cannot currently be prosecuted nor convicted for raping men. It is plausible, then, that some state and voluntary agency practitioners are dispelling some male rape myths and stereotypes, recognising all types of male rape victims.

However, other myths and stereotypes can and do shape some of the practitioners' knowledge and understanding about male rape. For example, contributing to keeping male rape a taboo and an 'invisible' topic, some of the practitioners perpetuated the myths that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue' and 'rape cannot occur in gay relationships'. Regarding the former, some practitioners construct male rape as a gay problem but, ironically, construct rape in gay relationships as invalid because sex is expected in such contexts; therefore, only 'stranger rape' is 'real' rape. Academic literature challenges some of my participants' discourses, as Abdullah-Khan (2008: 223) found that "men are more likely to be raped by someone they know". This is also true for female rape victims (see Lees, 1997). As a consequence of my findings, some practitioners are likely to disbelieve female and male rape victims who have been raped within an acquaintance/date rape context, which could construct some male rape victims as 'liars'. Arguably, this could reflect in the ways in which some officers record male rape allegations.

Police cultures are deeply influential in creating discourses about male rape, how the police think about male rape, and how they respond to male victims of rape in practice. My findings suggest that skepticism about rape cases is a clear component of police cultures, but "police culture does not provide any absolute guide to officer behaviour" (Rowe, 2013: 138). My argument is that police cultures are dynamic and fluid, shaped by social relations, social structures and social practices. In other words,

not all officers will embody the negative/positive characteristics associated with the police culture. Some officers will resist the police culture at particular times, places and contexts; however, at other times, my findings suggest that the majority of police officers are dubious of male rape cases because men are *not* expected to be vulnerable to rape. This vulnerability shapes discourses about male rape, which shapes how *some* officers think about male rape. Some officers will question men's masculinity if they were vulnerable at the time of their rape. Arguably, this ignores the fact that some male rape offenders gain control over their victims through the use of drugs/alcohol or coercion (see Mezey and King, 1989). Therefore, male rape victims are uncontrollably vulnerable at certain contexts and times.

## 7.3 Theoretical and Conceptual Contributions

In this research, I have argued that cultures, discursive ideas and knowledges create and shape how state and voluntary agencies understand male rape and deal with male rape victims. Their discourses, constructions and cultures are negotiated through social relations and interactions with male rape victims. This means that their perceptions and views of male rape are never fixed, but always in constant negotiation with, for instance, other workers and with interactions with male (and female) rape victims to make sense of male rape. It is through discourse about sexual violence, gender and sexuality that state and voluntary agencies come to learn about and understand male rape, which in turn influences and shapes the ways in which they think about and respond to male rape victims in practice. To give some level of understanding of male sexual victimisation, the policing of it and the discourses that surround male rape, the project drew on sociological, cultural and post-structural theories and conceptions using them to draw out the finer details of my analysis.

For example, Foucault's work on power and knowledge (1977), the conception of discourse (1972), and the 'subject' and the body (1982) were heavily drawn upon particularly in chapters 5 and 6 to shed some light on the ways in which male rape is understood and responded to in state and voluntary agencies. Both state and voluntary agencies, in a certain historical moment, draw on discourses to create knowledge about male rape. This leads them to carry out social practices (i.e., responses to male rape victims) that entail meaning with regards to male rape and sexual violence more

broadly. Discourses influence and shape how they deal with male (and female) victims of rape since all social practices have a discursive element attached to them (Foucault, 1972).

What is similar in both state and voluntary agencies, then, is the existence of discourse/language about male rape that guides their conducts/practices when handling male rape victims. Through discourse, therefore, state and voluntary agencies construct and reconstruct the topic of male rape because it creates and conceptualises knowledge of male rape, which in turn shapes and reshapes police officers, male rape counsellors, therapists and voluntary agency caseworkers' practices and responses toward male victims of rape. Their discourse produces the different ways in which male rape is thought about, discussed, and responded to, influencing how their notions of male rape are pragmatically carried out in practice to circulate power and control over others' conduct, notably the conduct of male (and female) rape victims.

State and voluntary agencies' discourses about male rape are culturally and historically specific, meaning that their discourses are neither determined nor fixed, but fluid, dynamic and changeable given the historical, cultural and social contexts in which the workers in these agencies situate. Thus, knowledges about male rape and the responses toward the victims of this crime are likely to alter through time and space. As power is relational, negotiated and fluid (Mac an Ghaill and Haywood, 2007), I argue that power flows through both state and voluntary agencies, and knowledge about male rape is linked to power relations; such agencies circulate and exercise power through discourse, as they are able to regulate male (and female) rape victims' conduct in practice. For instance, when the victims report their crime, officers will rely on their discourse to respond to the victims in certain ways; some officers will construct the allegation of male rape as not 'real' rape, whereas other officers will respond in a way that constructs the allegations as 'real', legitimate and authentic. Consequently, some male rape victims are likely to disengage with the criminal justice system, making it difficult for the police to gather robust and reliable evidence, inducing secondary victimisation, and increasing the 'no-crime' rate, which could reflect badly on police practice. As Foucault (1977) argues, once circulated in the world, all knowledge has implications and effects. Knowledge, then, can restrain,

control and discipline male rape victims' conduct, shaping their (dis)engagement with the police (and voluntary agencies). I am arguing that there is a regime of truth in both state and voluntary agencies regarding male rape. That is, male rape is not a serious or 'real' problematic issue or that 'men cannot be raped' (amongst other male rape myths), so some officers and practitioners perpetuate this regime of truth (i.e., perpetuating male rape myths) while others challenge it, depending on social, cultural and ideological factors. Male rape victims continue to be subjected to state and voluntary agencies' power, dependence, and control; they become subjugated.

"Whereas criminologists had concentrated largely on the offenders of crime and their motives and backgrounds to explaining the causes of crime" (Abdullah-Khan, 2008: 219), sociologists and criminologists often neglected researching victims and their experiences of state and voluntary agencies. Although work pertaining to male rape is slowly occurring, which importantly focuses on interviews with victims detailing their experience of rape, most of the work however overlooks how state and voluntary agencies serve male rape victims in practice. This is deeply concerning when state and voluntary agencies are the first point of contact for male victims post-rape and are essential to the recovery of the victims; they are also important agencies to help the victims get justice for their attack(s). Thus, it is vital to understand the ways in which the victims are treated by such agencies in current British society. Understanding how state and voluntary agencies think about and respond to male (and female) rape victims is important to make sense of how positive and negative attitudes can manifest through services and practices. It was vital to research how male rape victims are treated in England also because rape is a constant threat for human beings; it can happen anytime, anywhere, and against anyone (Stanko, 1990; Scarce, 1997). Male rape, then, is a pressing social issue in contemporary British society as some of the respondents in the current study stated.

This work contributes theoretically and conceptually to discourses on gender and sexuality and supports the theoretical paradigms of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987, 1995, 2005) and heteronormativity (Jackson, 2005, 2006, 2007). It furthers our understanding of gender and sexuality conceptions and theories. This is because, prior to this research, there has been a lack of work drawing on gender and sexuality concepts and theoretical frameworks, such as hegemonic masculinity and

heternormativity, to make sense of male rape and of state and voluntary agencies' attitudes and responses toward male rape victims. By using these concepts in this project, I have recognised the intricate and significant social constructions of masculinities and sexualities in state and voluntary agencies. Notions of gender and sexuality influence and shape how state and voluntary agencies consider and respond to male victims of rape in practice, such as the idea that 'men cannot be raped' because they are expected to be powerful and strong is present across some officers' and some practitioners' perceptions.

Another idea relating to sexuality that is present across some of these respondents is the myth that 'male rape is solely a homosexual problem', potentially excluding heterosexual and bisexual male rape victims. Treating male rape solely as a gay problem is problematic because a segment of the population that has suffered rape may be ignored, overlooked, disbelieved, or refused help. Drawing on gender and sexuality concepts, some officers and practitioners frown upon and question male vulnerability, as they expect men to be able to ward off potential threats of rape or, if threatened, should be able to physically and violently protect their bodies. This view, as a consequence, could increase male rape victims' trauma that results in a 'crisis of masculinity' whilst drawing in victim-blaming attitudes and responses. My data support such arguments, contributing to knowledge and attempting to fill a gap in the literature on victimology, sociology, social policy, and unacknowledged rape by providing an improved understanding of the intricate issues of male rape with the help of research from gender and sexuality, and of sociological, cultural and poststructural studies.

**7.4 Contributions to Research Methods and Methodology**

The focus of this study was aiming to provide some level of understanding of the ways in which a cohort of police officers, male rape therapists, counsellors, and voluntary agency caseworkers think about and respond to male rape through empirical data. In other words, how meanings about male rape are constructed and reconstructed in state and voluntary agencies was the main focus of this project. This micro approach allowed me to focus on collecting, interpreting and understanding rich, detailed, and contextual data, focusing on the respondents' attitudes and

responses to male rape within England. The data were theorised using sociological, cultural and post-structural theoretical frameworks. The argument in this project is that, taking a Foucauldian approach, there is no universal truth about male rape, but rather different contextual constructions, understandings and interpretations of male rape in state and voluntary agencies. It is hoped that the themes, concepts and arguments developed in this project will raise empirical questions about how state and voluntary agencies deal with male rape victims, encouraging other researchers to pursue empirical research projects on this important area through the adoption of a qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods approach. The fresh data are worth considering regarding the broader picture, encouraging other researchers to take a more macro (and micro) approach to comprehend this phenomenon further through empirical data.

Furthermore, most work on male rape adopts either interviews directly with male rape victims or quantitative methods to understand the pattern and extent of male rape. While both are certainly important to get some level of understanding of male sexual victimisation, the existing body of work has overlooked the necessity to speak directly with state and voluntary agency practitioners who have direct contact with the victims themselves. Thus, this work used both qualitative semi-structured interviews and qualitative questionnaires, seeing as most work on male rape tends to be quantitative based in essence, to examine state and voluntary agencies' thoughts, beliefs, views, and attitudes about male rape. This qualitative approach made it easier to collect rich, in-depth data, which was lacking in the existing body of work pertaining to male rape. Contributing to qualitative methods and methodologies in this way not only provides a fuller understanding of male sexual victimisation, but also represents a way in which a qualitative study on male rape, rather than a quantitative study on male rape, can move into formal publication making a contribution to knowledge. In fact, due to this qualitative project, several publications on qualitative research on male rape are now frequently appearing (e.g., Javaid, 2016c, d, 2017a, b), supplementing the published quantitative studies on male rape.

## 7.5 Contributions to Policy and Practice

This project contributes to policy and practice developments to help and support male victims of rape. In the findings, there was a recurrent theme relating to discourse around training in state and voluntary agencies. I suggest that policy and practice consider training as an important endeavor to help support male rape victims in practice. It can also work to construct and shape discourse around male rape in a more positive light, but this will only work if the training tackles the male rape myths outlined in this research. Consequently, we should see appropriate and professional attitudes and responses toward male (and female) rape victims. In both state and voluntary agencies, there should be more raising-awareness campaigns to produce and shape discourse on male rape, so that the cultural myths that 'men cannot be raped' or that 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue' can be dispelled. By doing so, this will help produce forthcoming discourses about male rape that stress to state and voluntary agencies that all types of men can be raped, not just homosexual men. In addition, these agencies should highlight their support and services on a bigger scale; for example, through leaflets and media campaigns/adverts, so that male rape victims can become aware of how to access these agencies to report and/or to seek help and treatment. My findings support Turchik's argument:

> In particular, issues around sexual functioning, sexual identity, sexual orientation, and male rape myths may be important in the context of treatment, as counselors and other health care professionals need to be aware of and educated about these issues as they may be particularly prevalent among male victims (2012: 253).

For state and certainly voluntary agencies, it is important that they are aware of these important issues since my findings show that these issues are relevant in the context of male sexual victimisation. Therefore, they need to be educated and aware of these issues, as Turchik rightly argues, as this will help dispel gender and sexuality norms and values that may negatively shape the ways in which these agencies serve male rape victims. Achieving gender equality is paramount when dealing with both female and male rape victims because male rape myths such as 'men cannot be raped' can be eradicated once and for all.

My findings suggest that it is important to adopt a multi-agency approach when handling male rape victims. This means that both state and voluntary agencies ought to work more closely together when supporting male rape victims. Some participants reported that, generally, the police see themselves as an agency that is there for victims to help them get a prosecution, rather than as a support agency to meet the personal needs of these victims. Although this can be problematic, in that some police officers may perpetuate such thinking that they end up unsupporting male rape victims from when they report to when they give a victim statement, it may be useful for voluntary agencies to supplement state agencies in terms of providing support and care for the victims. If some officers do not provide support and a caring attitude toward the victims, it is vital that they refer them onto voluntary services that may be better equipped to manage the needs of the victims. A multi-agency approach to dealing with male rape victims can also increase consistency in terms of care and treatment, since an argument in this thesis is that state and voluntary agency practitioners' discourses are inconsistent, which means that the victims are receiving haphazard, unpredictable and inconsistent responses and treatment. Finding some level of consistency in these agencies is important so that the victims can expect what type of response and treatment that they will receive and how they will receive them, which will help inform their decision as to whether or not they want to proceed with their rape allegation.

**7.6 Future Research Directions**

As Abdullah-Khan (2008: 235) rightly comments, "there is a need for male rape research in all environments where it occurs such as the general community, prisons, military organisations and warfare situations, psychiatric units and other institutional settings, to develop a greater understanding of it". One may want to consider the frequency of particular gendered and sexualised beliefs and norms, such as 'men cannot be raped' or 'male rape is solely a homosexual issue', across state and voluntary agencies within England or in other parts of the world. This would allow one to develop some understanding of how prevalent male rape myths are in these agencies. Meanwhile, as qualitative research can give us insights into these male rape myths in terms of the causes of such myths, other researchers may want to consider using qualitative research to understand them in other agencies located outside of

England to draw out the similarities and differences between my own work with that of others. This is important to do because not all state and voluntary agencies operate in the same way, so there is likely to be some important differences.

Although the race and ethnicity variables were not salient concepts in my findings, it would be interesting to see whether such variables emerge in other researchers' works. Focusing on these certain variables in other works would help us to understand whether racism is an important factor when writing about male rape (Scarce, 1997). Are black or ethnic minority male rape victims vulnerable to racism by societies, state and voluntary agencies? I urge other writers to contemplate such a question in their future works relating to male rape. While this question has somewhat already been considered within the prison context (see Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2000), it has been ignored within the wider community context where male rape frequently occurs (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Similarly, I urge other writers to also think about the ways in which sexuality plays in the discourse of male rape. Sexuality was a strong theme in my own findings, and it is likely to be so in other writers' works. It would be useful explore sexuality further by researching how gay, bisexual and/or heterosexual male rape victims experience rape, in what contexts, and recognising the attitudes and responses that they draw in not only by state and voluntary agencies in other parts of the world, but also by their loved ones and their friends and family. Empirical research in this sense would be welcomed; speaking with male rape victims themselves would, indeed, generate rich, contextual and interesting data. It is important to also reach out to other types of male rape victims, such as transsexual and gender-fluid victims. As implicit and explicit homophobia emerged in my own findings, I suspect that it would also emerge in other researchers' findings, so other researchers might want to consider whether it does actually emerge in their own findings and what are the implications of this in certain contexts.

Furthermore, I would also suggest to other researchers to be imaginative with their data. For example, the use of content/discourse analysis would help one to understand how discourse about male rape emerges in certain contexts. The media (such as, Newspaper coverage of male rape/sexual violence, online media articles, or online adverts, etc.) would be a useful context in which to carry out discourse analysis to examine how the media express male rape and/or sexual violence discourse. Recent

work has started to examine this area, though has limited itself to the UK context (see Jamel, 2008; Cohen, 2014). Therefore, in other parts of the world, international scholars may want to conduct discourse/content analysis on the different ways in which the media express male sexual victimisation. This would allow one, then, to employ a comparative research design, whereby media discourses in the UK context can be compared and contrasted with media discourses outside of the UK. Can any commonalities and dissimilarities be identified? How 'unique' is the male rape discourse in the UK? Taking this approach would also enable one to understand whether the media maintain or challenge male rape myths, and gender and sexuality norms.

Other works can also contribute to theoretical and conceptual debates surrounding male rape. For example, while this project heavily drew on sociological, cultural and poststructural theoretical frameworks to inform and elucidate the data, other works should also consider adopting other frameworks, such as the concept of intersectionality. For instance, how does male rape intersect with social identity markers beyond gender and sexuality (e.g. ethnicity, class, religion, age, ability/disability)? Adopting a multi-disciplinary approach to understanding male rape would be recommended for other scholars working in this field. This would add to the theoretical and conceptual debates surrounding male sexual victimisation. On balance, my suggestions for further research will surely help to shed light on this particularly under-addressed topic, stopping male rape being a taboo.

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# List of Appendices

**PhD Research: Consent Form** <span style="float:right">**Appendix 1**</span>

**Title of Project:** State and Voluntary Agencies' Responses to, and Attitudes Toward Male Rape.

**Name of Researcher:** Aliraza Javaid.

This form is for you to state whether or not you agree to take part in the study. Please read and answer every question. If there is anything you do not understand, or if you want more information, please ask the researcher.

Having read the information sheet about the PhD research, outlining the aims and outcomes of the study, do you feel that you have adequate information to enable you to make an informed decision to participate in this study?    Yes ❐ No ❐

Do you understand what the project is about and what taking part involves?    Yes ❐ No ❐

Do you understand that anything you say during the research is kept strictly private?    Yes ❐ No ❐

Do you give consent for the researcher to keep your data indefinitely so that he can publish the findings in the future?    Yes ❐ No ❐

Are you also aware that you retain the right to withdraw your information at any time and that it will subsequently be destroyed?

   Yes ❐ No ❐

Do you consent to take part in the PhD study?    Yes ❐ No ❐

If yes, is it acceptable to tape-record your interviews?    Yes ❐ No ❐

Please write your name here (in BLOCK letters): _____

Please sign your name here: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name: _____

Date: _____

**Information Sheet about my PhD Research**                     **Appendix 2**

## Introduction

I am conducting research for my PhD in Sociology entitled, "State and voluntary agencies' responses to, and attitudes toward male rape" at Newcastle University. One of the aims of this PhD research is to consider the service being provided to male rape victims by state and voluntary agencies in British society. The purpose of my PhD research is to understand more about male rape and to improve understanding of how state and voluntary agencies respond to male victims of rape. I will feed back the findings from this study to the relevant service providers. It must be stressed that all information given is entirely **confidential** and **anonymous** and will not be shared in a format that identifies individual participants. Therefore, there are no ways in which your views and beliefs may be linked to your identity. Thank you for your time and co-operation. This is very much appreciated.

**The Aims of the Research**

- To examine state and voluntary agencies' attitudes toward, and responses to male rape;
- To consider the assumptions made by state and voluntary agencies regarding homosexual, bisexual, and heterosexual male rape victims;
- To examine how conceptions of male rape in state and voluntary agencies structure the response to it in England, UK;
- To explore the extent to which state and voluntary agencies meet the needs of male rape victims, seeking explanations for similarities and differences in the management of male rape cases in state and voluntary agencies;
- To investigate the role of the police and their experiences of dealing with male rape cases;
- To explore the relationship between gender, sexualities and male rape, examining how general notions of masculinities and sexualities shape, construct and form the ways in which state and voluntary agencies respond to, and deal with male rape victims.

### What if I change my mind after the participation?

If you change your mind about being part of the study, even after the interview that should last around 1 hour, your data will be left out of the study. A decision to withdraw at this, or any time, will not affect you in any way.

### What will happen to the results of the PhD study?

A PhD thesis will be written, which may include the data that you provide. The results may also be published in a book and journal articles. Participants who take part in the study will be offered a summary of the PhD thesis and findings and will be provided with the finished transcripts, and, where possible, I will give you an opportunity to amend the transcripts to ensure that what I have transcribed is accurate. No names or other identifying information will be published in the PhD thesis and in any publication.

**Will the information the researcher collect be kept confidential/anonymous?**

All information collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. Data, transcripts and recordings will be kept in locked cabinets and password protected computer storage spaces. Anonymous audio recordings and transcripts will be kept as secure computer files indefinitely. While written extracts (verbatim quotations) may be used within the PhD thesis and publications relating to the study, individuals will not be identified from the details presented. All data will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Contact details**

If you have any queries regarding my PhD research or its findings, my contact details are as follows:

Aliraza Javaid, BSc (Hons), MSc, MRes, PhD (in progress)
PhD Student and Part-Time Lecturer in Sociology, Criminology and Psychology
Newcastle University
Email: A.R.Javaid2@newcastle.ac.uk

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If you find participating in my PhD research in any way distressing or upsetting, you may wish to seek help from one of the following organisations:

Samaritans (available 24 hours a day): 08457 909090 (call charges apply).
Website: http://www.samaritans.org
Or
Mind: 0300 123 3393 (available: 9am-6pm, Mon-Fri; call charges may apply).
Website: http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/

**Questionnaire on Male Rape for the Police** **Appendix 3**

This questionnaire is about your opinions and views regarding male rape and sexual violence against men. Please take a few moments to answer the questions provided. Please answer **all** questions. Additional sheets are provided should you need further space for your answers. The questionnaire remains strictly **confidential** and all information given is entirely **anonymous**. Thank you for your participation in my PhD research.

Q1. a) Gender: _____

    b) What is your rank in the police force: _____

    c) How long have you worked in this police force: _____

Q2. a) Did you have to take particular police training to work with male rape victims? If so, describe the training that you had to take.

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b) How many rape cases have you worked on? If you have worked on both female and male rape cases, are there any similarities and differences?

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Q3. Do you think male rape is an issue in our society?

Yes ☐            No ☐            Don't know ☐

Please provide reasons why you think this:

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Q4. Whom do you think should handle male rape victims and sexual violence against men?

Voluntary agencies ☐

The police ☐

Both ☐

Other ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q5. Do you work alongside any other agencies as part of a multi-agency response? If so, how often and in what way?

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Q6. Do you think voluntary agencies adequately accommodate male rape victims' needs?

Yes ☐                    No ☐                    Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q7. Do you think the police adequately accommodate male rape victims' needs?

Yes ☐                    No ☐                    Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q8. Do you think male rape is regarded as a serious issue in your police force?

Yes ☐                    No ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q9. Once a male rape victim reports or seeks help, how soon after that are they appointed someone who deals with their case in your police force?

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Q10. Are male rape victims offered a choice of the gender of the police officer who deals with their case?

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Q11. Do you think male rape is:

Under-represented in police statistics      □

Over-represented in police statistics      □

Represented fairly accurately in police statistics □

Other      □

Please give reasons for your answer:

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Q12. In your experience, how long does the forensic examination take place and does the male rape victim get to choose the gender of the forensic examiner?

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Q13. How do you put the male rape victim at ease when they report to you?

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Q14. Do you think male rape victims are treated:

Better than female rape victims ☐

Worse than female rape victims ☐

About the same as female rape victims ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q15. Do you think the legal recognition of male rape has significantly improved the situation for male rape victims?

Yes ☐                        No ☐                        Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this is:

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Q16. Do you think it is difficult to secure convictions in male rape cases?

Yes ☐                        No ☐                        Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this is:

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Q17. Do the police maintain contact with the male rape victims up until the trial and are they given updates regarding their cases?

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Q18. Are there any strengths and weaknesses of the service given to male rape victims?

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Q19. Do you suggest any changes to be made to the services provided to male rape victims?

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Q20. Do you think there is a need for more social awareness of male rape?

Yes □                    No □                    Don't know □

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q21. Do you think male rape victims suffer:

Less emotional trauma than female rape victims □

More emotional trauma than female rape victims □

The same level of emotional trauma as female rape victims □

Other □

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q22. Do you think male rape victims are:

More likely to report rape to the police than female rape victims □

Less likely to report rape to the police than female rape victims □

As likely as female rape victims to report rape to the police □

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q23. Do you think male rape victims are:

More likely to seek help from voluntary agencies than female rape victims □

Less likely to seek help from voluntary agencies than female rape victims □

As likely as female rape victims to seek help from voluntary agencies □

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q24. Whom do you think are most likely to become male rape victims?

Homosexual males    □

Heterosexual males    □

Bisexual males      □

Please give reasons why you think this, and, if you have any other comments on this, please include them:

_____

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Q25. Do you think there is a strong link between male rape and homosexuality?

Yes   □           No   □          Don't know   □

Please give reasons for your answer:

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Q26. In your view, what circumstances may contribute to the rape of a man?

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Q27. Do you think the number of false allegations of male rape is:

Very high     □

High        □

Low        □

Very low     □

Please give your reasons why you think this:

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Q28. Do you think male rape victims would:

Always fight back       □

Sometimes fight back   □

Never fight back        □

Please give your reasons why you think this:

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Q29. Do you have any other comments regarding male rape that you would like to add?

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Many thanks for participating in my PhD research. It is very much appreciated.

## Additional Space

Please use this space below to continue answering any of the questions provided. Please clearly label which question you are continuing with:

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**Questionnaire on Male Rape for Voluntary Agencies**        **Appendix 4**

This questionnaire is about your opinions and views regarding male rape and sexual violence against men. Please take a few moments to answer the questions provided. Please answer **all** questions. Additional sheets are provided should you need further space for your answers. The questionnaire remains strictly **confidential** and all information given is entirely **anonymous**. Thank you for your participation in my PhD research.

Q1. a) Gender: _____

    b) Please select the role that best describes you: male rape counsellor; male rape therapist; voluntary agency worker; or other: _____

    c) How long have you worked in this voluntary agency: _____

Q2. a) Did you have to take particular training to work closely with male rape victims? If so, describe the training that you had to take at this voluntary agency.

_____

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b) How many male rape victims have you worked with? If you have worked with both female and male rape victims, are there any similarities and differences?

_____

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Q3. Do you think male rape is a significant issue in our society?

Yes ☐                No ☐               Don't know ☐

Please provide reasons why you think this:

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Q4. Whom do you think should deal with male rape victims and sexual violence against men?

Voluntary agencies     ☐

The police     ☐

Both     ☐

Other     ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q5. Do you work alongside any other agencies as part of a multi-agency response? If so, how often?

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Q6. Do you think voluntary agencies adequately accommodate male rape victims'
needs?

Yes ☐                           No ☐                           Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q7. Do you think the police adequately accommodate male rape victims' needs?

Yes ☐                           No ☐                           Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q8. Do you think male rape is regarded as a serious issue in your voluntary agency?

Yes ☐                           No ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q9. Once a male rape victim seeks help from your voluntary agency, how soon after
that are they appointed someone who deals with their needs?

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Q10. Are male rape victims offered a choice of the gender of the male rape counsellor or therapist who deals with their needs? If no, why not?

_____

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Q11. Do you think male rape is:

Under-represented in police statistics ☐

Over-represented in police statistics ☐

Represented fairly accurately in police statistics ☐

Other ☐

Please give reasons for your answer:

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Q12. How do you put the male rape victim at ease?

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Q13. Do you think male rape victims are treated:

Better than female rape victims ☐

Worse than female rape victims ☐

About the same as female rape victims ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q14. Do you think the legal recognition of male rape has significantly improved the situation for male rape victims?

Yes ☐               No ☐               Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this is:

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Q15. Do you think it is difficult to secure convictions in male rape cases?

Yes ☐               No ☐               Don't know ☐

Please give reasons why you think this is:

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Q16. Do you maintain contact with the male rape victims up until the trial and are they given updates regarding their cases?

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Q17. Are there any strengths and weaknesses of the voluntary service given to male rape victims?

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Q18. Do you suggest any changes to be made to the voluntary services provided to male rape victims?

_____

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Q19. Do you think there is a need for more social awareness of male rape?

Yes □                          No □                          Don't know □

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q20. Do you think male rape victims suffer:

Less emotional trauma than female rape victims ☐

More emotional trauma than female rape victims ☐

The same level of emotional trauma as female rape victims ☐

Other ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q21. Do you think male rape victims are:

More likely to report rape to the police than female rape victims ☐

Less likely to report rape to the police than female rape victims ☐

As likely as female rape victims to report rape to the police ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q22. Do you think male rape victims are:

More likely to seek help from voluntary agencies than female rape victims ☐

Less likely to seek help from voluntary agencies than female rape victims ☐

As likely as female rape victims to seek help from voluntary agencies ☐

Please give reasons why you think this:

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Q23. Whom do you think are most likely to become male rape victims?

Homosexual males ☐

Heterosexual males ☐

Bisexual males ☐

Please give reasons why you think this, and, if you have any other comments on this, please include them:

_____

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Q24. Do you think there is a strong link between male rape and homosexuality?

Yes ☐                    No ☐                    Don't know ☐

Please give reasons for your answer:

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Q25. In your view, what circumstances may contribute to the rape of a man?

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Q26. Do you think the number of false allegations of male rape is:

Very high    □

High         □

Low          □

Very low     □

Please give your reasons why you think this:

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Q27. Do you think male rape victims would:

Always fight back      □

Sometimes fight back   □

Never fight back       □

Please give your reasons why you think this:

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Q28. Do you have any other comments regarding male rape that you would like to add?

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Many thanks for participating in my PhD research. It is very much appreciated.

## Additional Space

Please use this space below to continue answering any of the questions provided.
Please clearly label which question you are continuing with:

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**Semi-Structured Interview Schedule**                                      **Appendix 5**

Thank you for agreeing to do this interview. Your participation is much appreciated. I am hoping that the information and knowledge that you are able to provide will help in improving understanding of the issue of male rape and the needs of the victims.

If you consent, the interview will be recorded and transcribed. The recording and transcript will be confidential and all of the information you choose to give will be anonymous in the written document of the PhD. If you would like a copy of the recording or transcript, I can provide this.

The interview should not take more than 1 hour.

We will explore the following questions:

1. First of all, do you think that male rape is a problem in the UK? If so, why is this the case?

2. In your opinion, do you think official crime statistics reflect the prevalence of male rape?

3. In your own opinion, do you think most male victims of rape report the offence? If no, why?

4. Do you think particular social groups are more likely to become victims of male rape?

5. Do you think the likelihood of man being a victim of rape is associated with his sexual orientation?

6. Do you think that there is a link between male rape and HIV?

7. Do you think that the media give enough attention to male rape?

8. Do you think male rape can be carried out as a form of hate crime?

9. What circumstances do you believe contribute to the rape of a man?

10. Have your views about male rape changed since working here?

11. Whom are the best people to deal with sexual assaults against men? Why?

12. Whom do you think should deal with sexual assaults against males? Why?

13. Do you think that the legal recognition of male rape has significantly improved the situation for male rape victims? If so, how?

14. Is there any reason why OR are there any situations under which you would treat a male rape victim differently compared with a female rape victim?

15. Would you say you adequately accommodate the needs of male rape victims? If so, how?

16. Would you say that there are issues that can occur in the nature of policing male rape?

17. Did you have to undergo some training regarding dealing with male rape? If so, what kind of training did you have to undergo?

18. Is there an issue of false allegations of male rape? In your experience in this department, is this a problem that you have encountered? If so, how often?

19. Do you think male rape victims make false allegations? If so, why is this the case?

20. In your view, how difficult is it to secure convictions in male rape cases? Why?

21. Do you believe that there is an urgent need for more awareness of male rape within the criminal justice system?

22. Do you have any suggestions as to how services can improve in terms of dealing with male rape victims? Why?

Is there anything else you think I should know to help me in my PhD research?

Thank you very much for your help.

**Letter of Introduction** <span style="float:right">**Appendix 6**</span>

To whom it may concern,

I am conducting research for my PhD in sociology, entitled "State and Voluntary Agencies' Responses to, and Attitudes Toward Male Rape" at Newcastle University. One of the aims of this PhD research is to learn more about the services being provided to male rape victims by the police and voluntary agencies. The purpose of my PhD research is to raise awareness of male rape, in order to encourage male rape victims to come forward to report and to seek help. Should you choose to participate in this PhD research through either filling out a questionnaire or having a short, informal interview with me then I will only aim to learn more about your experiences of dealing with male rape victims. It must be stressed that all information given is entirely **anonymous** and **confidential**. Therefore, there are no ways in which your participation may be linked to your identity. Thank you for your time and co-operation.

Please may I direct you the information sheet about my PhD research, which discusses more about the PhD study and outlines the potential benefits of participating in my PhD research.

Should you have any queries regarding the PhD research or its findings, my contact details are as follows:

Mr Aliraza Javaid,
BSc (Hons), MSc, MRes, PhD (in progress)
Lecturer in criminology and PhD Student
Email: A.R.Javaid2@newcastle.ac.uk

**Letter of Request** **Appendix 7**


Dear _____

**State and Voluntary Agencies' Responses to, and Attitudes Toward Male Rape.**

I am writing to ask if it would be possible to interview some of your _____ as part of the above named research based here at _____. Their responses would be strictly anonymous and non-attributable.

The aim would be to interview _____ who have dealt with sexual offending and in particular cases where the victims have been men. Interviews would last about an hour. The completion of a questionnaire would also be of value if interviews were not possible.

My University have granted ethical approval for the research, which forms part of my PhD. I have previously worked with Northumbria Police for an earlier piece of research on the same subject and have published a number of journal articles in this area.

Any findings arising from this work would be available to yourselves and I would also be happy to present the findings at any form of event deemed suitable by you.

May I thank you in advance for considering this request. At this stage, this is a preliminary letter and I have provided more details of the aims and objectives of the research (please see the attached information sheet). I would be happy to meet with a view to further discussions.


Yours sincerely


Aliraza Javaid

**Coding Framework**

**Police Role**

- Police are not the best people to deal with the aftermath and emotional effects of male rape.
- Police take a multi-agency approach, liaising with ISVA, SARCs, MESMAC, and counseling services; male rape victims can report anonymously.
- Counseling and long-term support are not the police's role.
- Police officers not the best people to support male rape victims.
- In male rape cases, the police need to be involved to secure a prosecution; voluntary agency to support the victim throughout the legal process and beyond.

**Gender, Sexualities and Masculinities/Hegemonic Masculinity**

- Men's 'lifestyle' and vulnerability facilitate rape; e.g., "cruising", or drugs and alcohol.
- Gay scenes are at risk regarding male rape.
- Gay men are more vulnerable to rape.
- Male rape is about power and control.
- Male rape is not about power and control; it is about sexual attraction.
- Male rape is a taboo.
- Offenders of male rape aren't necessarily gay.
- Stigma attached to male rape.
- Men are silenced more by shame and embarrassment due to ejaculation during the rape.
- Society conceals a lot of male issues.
- Male rape affects and challenges men's masculinity.
- Male rape victims fear they will be disbelieved if they report.
- Male rape victims feel embarrassed and guilty.
- Male rape victims fear that police will not take them seriously.
- For most 'real' men, the risk of being raped by other men is low.
- Heterosexual men can be victims of rape.
- Any man can become a victim of rape.
- Male rape can be carried out as a form of hate crime.
- Male rape cannot be carried out as a form of hate crime.
- Gang rapes.
- High drop out rate for male rape cases because victims don't want their sexuality and gay lifestyle questioned in court.
- Men are expected to be strong and powerful, not expected to be rape victims—gender expectations—so they fear to be seen as 'weak'.
- Male rape victims do not seek help—gender and socialisation—because you're a man, you are expected to 'man up'.
- Heterosexual working class men, who have suffered rape, are least likely to come forward to a voluntary organisation to seek help.

- Police forces are hyper masculine environments.
- Notion of deserving and undeserving victims; male rape victims are labeled as 'undeserving' of victim status.
- Male rape links to hegemonic masculinity, as male rape victims may be seen as less of a man or as homosexuals.
- By not fighting off their attacker, male rape victims may be seen as engaging in a consensual act.
- Society expects men to have fought their rapist off; male rape victims are unlikely to fight off their offender because of fear, intimidation, and control.
- Male rape affects men's, and makes men question their own, sexuality.
- Homosexual male rape victims are more likely to come forward to a voluntary organization to seek help.
- A lot more societal pressure on men to be manly.
- 'Male rape is a homosexual issue'; rape between gay men is 'consensual'.
- More strong, dominant, masculine gay men will take advantage of small, effeminate gay men.
- When men are being raped, they might not even realize it; subs or slaves, 'use me' sort of things.
- Male rape offenders purposely intend to infect male rape victims with HIV (giving offenders power?).
- Gay men are sexually promiscuous.
- Police are more likely to overlook or disbelieve a case in which a woman has raped a man; men are expected to have sex with women (heteronormativity).
- The police would expect a man to be a 'man' and to be masculine and dominant.
- From the police, homosexual male rape victims receive poorer treatment and disbelieving attitudes than heterosexual male rape victims.
- 'Feminine, screamy queeny' gay men might be really dramatic and make themselves hard to be believed regarding their sexual victimisation.
- Sexuality is situational.
- Dominant homosexual males take advantage of more submissive or perceived weaker homosexual males.
- Heterosexual and bisexual men take advantage of homosexual men.
- Male rape victims feel powerlessness, a feeling of loss of power and control.
- Public attitudes and perceptions are that 'men cannot be raped'.
- Most male rape is gang related and degrading treatment happens as part of the assault.
- Men can be difficult to engage with anything to do with their health.
- Police forces lack diversity; they predominately comprise of white heterosexual men—intimidates victims and puts them off to come forward.
- Heterosexual male rape victims fear they will be seen as homosexual.

- Men are expected to be unemotional, masculine and aggressive.
- Anal penetration is considered to be an activity for homosexual males.

## Volume of Male Rape

- Male rape is an unknown quantity; male rape is underreported.
- A Muslim or Hindu community in the UK or any sort of minority is less likely to come forward to disclose male rape because of culture and honor.
- Heterosexual and homosexual men are reluctant to report to the police.
- Police statistics unreliable and inaccurate.
- Sexual violence against men is increasing.
- The dark figure of crime; under-recording and 'no-criming'.
- Where convictions are brought, they are more likely to be classified as something other than male rape (i.e., sexual assault) in police statistics.

## Meeting Male Rape Victims' Needs

- Male rape victims offered a choice of a female or male medical examiner; specially trained officers.
- Male rape victims are not offered a choice of a female or male medical examiner.
- Male rape victims are not offered a choice of a female or male police officer or practitioner in a voluntary agency.
- Sexual offences training is not specifically towards men, it is towards victims of sexual violence, so it is generic.
- Lack of finance and resources (budgets cuts) put into the police and voluntary sector for male rape.
- Police officers have a lack of time to invest in male rape victims.
- Some rape services don't deal with men; they'll only deal with women because they're feminist organisations.
- Male rape victims' needs get met.
- Police do not meet male rape victims' needs.
- Male rape victims say to police officers that police have not taken them seriously; police 'culture of disbelief' over male rape allegations.
- The importance of Survivors and specialist voluntary services for male rape victims' needs.
- In rural communities, male rape victims' needs are not met—gaps in service provision—more service provision in urban areas.
- No specific training course on male rape for the police.
- No specific training course on male rape for voluntary agencies.
- Voluntary services don't meet male rape victims' needs due to lack of funding.
- Police believe no training is needed on male rape, only compassion.
- For voluntary agencies to meet male rape victims' needs, it depends on the victims' age and the waiting list.
- Police are becoming more diverse.

**Criminal Justice Systems and Voluntary Sectors' Treatment of Male Rape Victims**

- Male rape victims think they're going to get a poor response from the police.
- Police occupational culture, in which machismo, sexism, racism and homophobia exist.
- Police occupational culture; police cynicism and skepticism.
- Police have prosecuted people for wasting police time for falsely reporting male rape.
- False allegations of male rape.
- When male rape victims come forward, they are all believed.
- Juries perpetuate male rape myths and stereotypes associated with male rape.
- Police insensitivity; e.g., 'they [male rape victims] don't seem upset to me'; secondary victimisation.
- Lack of accurate understanding of male rape; 24-seven uniform cops need educating on male rape.
- Lack of police training and understanding regarding male rape.
- No stereotypes in courts relating to male rape.
- SARCs and ISVAs are best to deal with male rape victims due to their specialist knowledge and understanding of male rape.
- Male rape victims do not get treated differently to female rape victims.
- Police treat male and female rape victims differently.
- Police take male rape seriously.
- Police do not take male rape seriously.
- Police officers unlikely to use discretion.
- Police likely to use discretion.
- Male rape myths and disbelieving attitudes; e.g., "oh, well you have had too much alcohol or you have been under the influence of drugs so therefore you may have said yes"; "you sure you didn't say yes?"; and "you sure you didn't consent?"
- Judges perpetuate male rape myths and negative attitudes regarding male rape.
- Voluntary organisations treat male and female rape victims differently; different supportive groups for men and women. Women = informal coffee mornings; men = much more structured groups (goal driven).
- According to voluntary sector, male rape victims' say that they aren't believed and the legal system lets them down.
- Voluntary agencies take male rape victims more seriously than the police initially do.
- Victim blaming; 'you were asking for it'.
- Gay sex in a homosexual relationship is expected, so not 'rape'.
- Voluntary agencies do not have sufficient knowledge, empathy, understanding and specialised training regarding male rape.
- Voluntary agencies use discretion against gay men.
- Male rape victims get treated worse than female rape victims.

- Voluntary agencies do not maintain contact with male rape victims up until the trial and are not given updates regarding their cases.
- Police believe that women cannot rape men.
- Police do not respond sensitively to male rape victims.
- Voluntary agencies have far more expertise regarding male rape than the police.
- Police don't keep in regular contact with male rape victims due to workload.
- Victim blaming attitudes in police.
- Male rape is not regarded as a serious issue in voluntary agencies because it is under-represented.
- Criminal injuries compensation scheme for male rape victims.
- Police treat male rape victims better than female rape victims.

## Male Rape Conviction Rates

- Lack of evidence in male rape cases.
- It is difficult to get a conviction in male rape cases.
- Male rape cases can take up to 2-3 years to reach the courts.
- Male rape victims lying, which undermines their case.
- High attrition rate in male rape cases.

## Acquaintance Rape and Stranger Rape

- Different types of male rape; acquaintance rape and stranger rape.
- Stranger rape less common than acquaintance rape.
- Police and wider society are more likely to believe stranger male rape cases than acquaintance male rape cases.

## Consent
- Drugs and alcohol blur consent.
- Consent is difficult to prove in court.
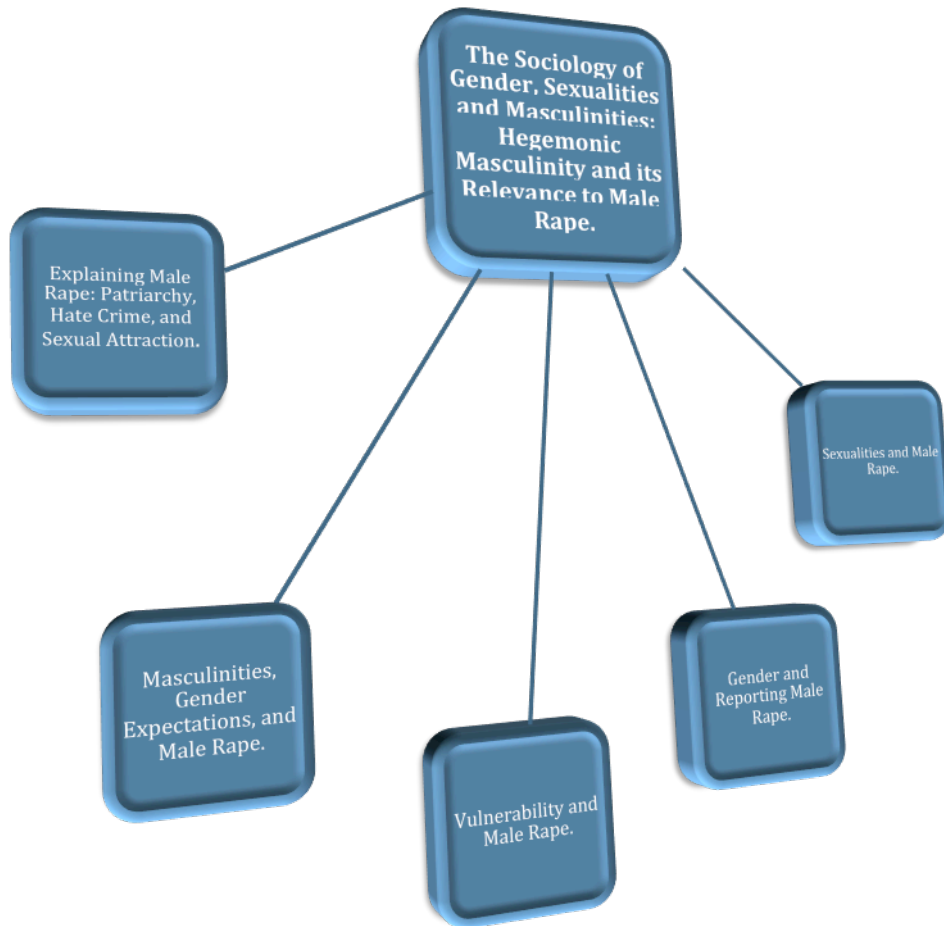
## Legal Recognition of Male Rape

- Law on male rape is intricate; practitioners misunderstand the legal side of male rape.
- Very clear definitive legal framework to which police work around.
- Many cases of women forcing men to penetrate them; women raping men—not classed as 'rape' in law, however.
- SOA 2003 has improved the situation for male rape victims in terms of forced oral and anal sexual acts being classed as crimes.
- Male rape victims don't understand the legal definitions of male rape or the legal aspects of it.
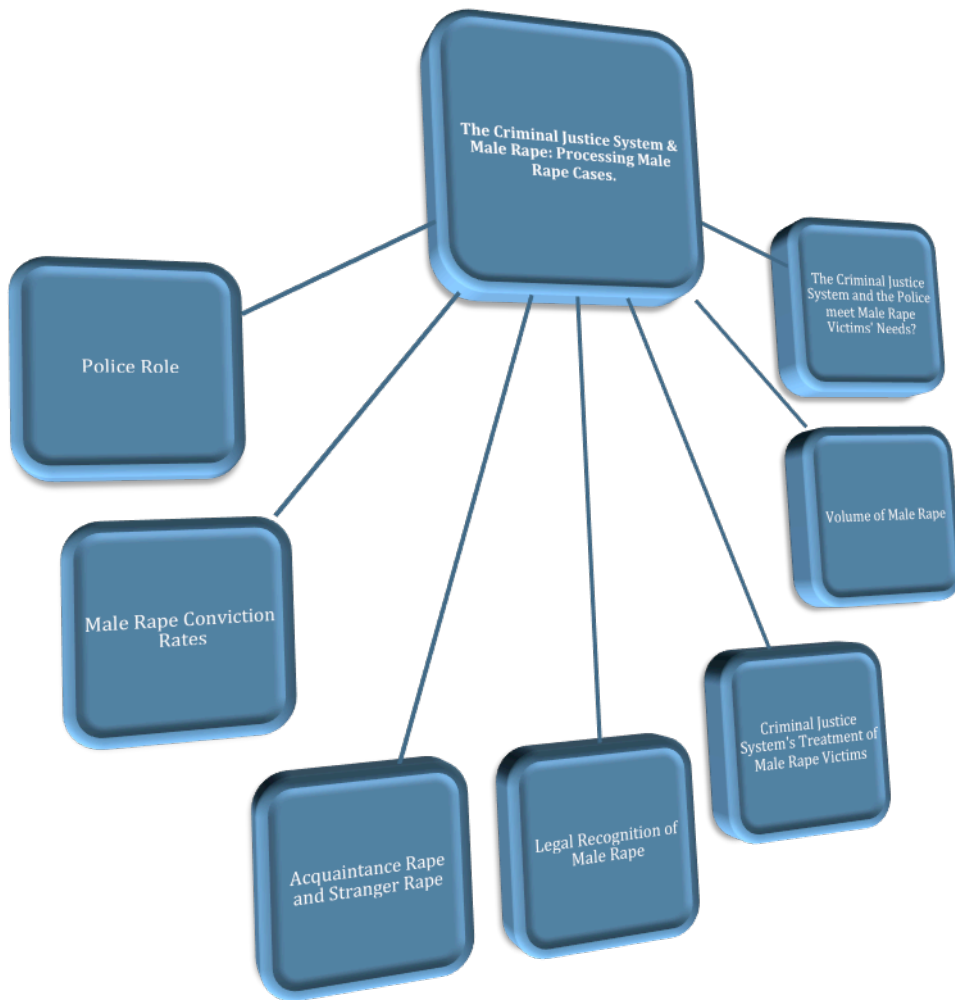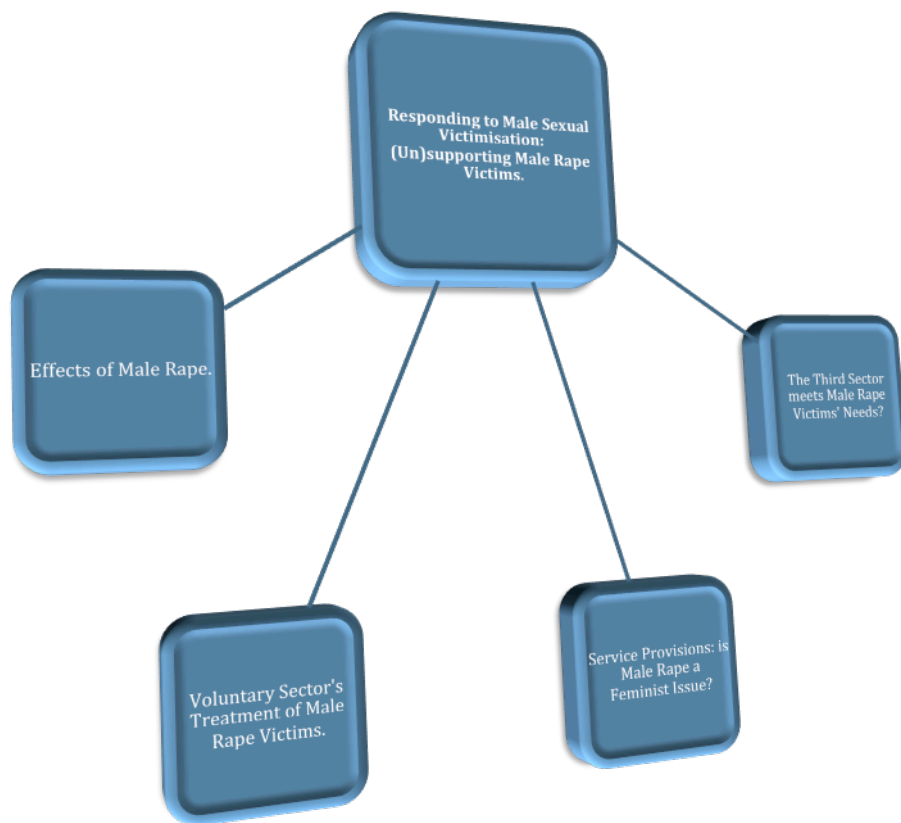
**Effects of Male Rape**

- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- Rape Trauma Syndrome.
- Suicide.
- Coping mechanisms; male rape victims turning to drugs and alcohol.
- HIV contraction; no link between HIV and male rape ("gay disease").
- Trauma can impair male rape victims' memory, making recall difficult.
- If alcohol or drugs is involved, male rape victims' recollection of events may become impaired.

**No Category**

- Male rape can be opportunistic.
- Police are not male rape victims' first port of call.
- Lack of social awareness of male rape.
- Male rape victims do not know that they have suffered rape due to their lack of awareness and understanding of what rape is.
- A lack of voluntary services that deal specifically with male victims of sexual assault and rape.
- Credibility of the victim determines whether the police take their case seriously.
- People think that 'male rape does not exist' or that 'male rape only happens in gang violence or in prisons' and believe that the 'victim's behavior is responsible for the attack.'
- Male rape myths influence the ways in which male rape victims are perceived, dealt with, and treated.

The Sociology of Gender, Sexualities and Masculinities: Hegemonic Masculinity and its Relevance to Male Rape.

Explaining Male Rape: Patriarchy, Hate Crime, and Sexual Attraction.

Sexualities and Male Rape.

Masculinities, Gender Expectations, and Male Rape.

Vulnerability and Male Rape.

Gender and Reporting Male Rape.

The Criminal Justice System &
Male Rape: Processing Male
Rape Cases.

Police Role

The Criminal Justice
System and the Police
meet Male Rape
Victims' Needs?

Volume of Male Rape

Male Rape Conviction
Rates

Acquaintance Rape
and Stranger Rape

Legal Recognition of
Male Rape

Criminal Justice
System's Treatment of
Male Rape Victims

Responding to Male Sexual Victimisation: (Un)supporting Male Rape Victims.

Effects of Male Rape.

The Third Sector meets Male Rape Victims' Needs?

Voluntary Sector's Treatment of Male Rape Victims.

Service Provisions: is Male Rape a Feminist Issue?

## Books

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