# UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

# RETHINKING MASCULINITY: A Critical Examination of the Dynamics of Masculinity in the Context of an English Prison

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This thesis is the result of work done wholly by me while I was registered in postgraduate candidature.

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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

**ABSTRACT**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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**Doctor of Philosophy**

# RETHINKING MASCULINITY: A Critical Examination of the Dynamics of Masculinity in the Context of an English Prison

**By Antony Whitehead**

This is a study of masculinity, constructed through relations between men, as men, within a prison for men in England. I base the study on a new, intersubjective method of observer/participant research that I devised and conducted while employed in the prison as a Probation Officer.

I incorporate myself, as a man, as a subject of my research on the basis that men construct masculinity intersubjectively, as men. I argue that men internalise masculinity to the extent that it is unquestionable within current frameworks of androcentric knowledge about men, as men. I take the view that this process of the *intersubjective construction* of masculinity between men can be brought to light only through a research process of *intersubjective deconstruction* between men.

Through my findings, I present a new paradigm of masculinity as manhood. I define masculinity as transcendental, heterosexual Heroism that is constructed in a clash between the Hero and the Villain, each of whom have equal status as men. I show that men internalise this mythology and construct each other and women within a Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity that overarches social divisions between men. If a man cannot be the Hero, it is better for him to be the Villain than the Non-Man, as the conventionality of offending by young men illustrates. The men's prison and the Criminal Justice System generate crime and masculinity in the same process, as a site where men enact masculinity through Hero/Villain/Non-Man dynamics.

I argue that the men's prison in England reflects the state of relations between men, as men, in England, because the prison contains a transient population of men who bring masculinity into it from wider society. It is therefore both a product and a producer of masculinity. The current men's prison and the Criminal Justice System are antithetical to regulating crime because their functions are to regulate masculinity within patriarchy and to institutionalise patriarchy within the state. The Villain and the Hero define each other as men, superior to the Non-Man and women, thus generating patriarchy. The Villain, through crime, legitimates the power of the Hero as the *man* in authority, thus institutionalising patriarchy within the state. I present a new model of masculinity and I raise new questions about the relationship between criminal and social justice and masculinity in England.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Masculinity is a contentious concept. It has been explored traditionally in terms of relations between men and women. This approach, however, leaves a vast area under-explored: how do men relate to each other, as men, and what role do these relations play in shaping the social construction of masculinity and its daily reproduction? This study aims to demonstrate that filling this gap in current knowledge is crucial to developing a fuller understanding of masculinity and using those insights to improve practice with men. It does so by examining masculinity as it is constructed on a daily basis, through relations between men, as men, in what has traditionally been described as a totally male institution: a men's prison.

I take the view that both masculinity and the men's prison are constructed socially, through relations between men, as men. From this perspective, a full understanding of the men's prison demands not only an examination of its function in regulating crime within the state, but also an examination of its function in regulating relations between *men as men* within the state. Arriving at such an understanding requires an analysis of the role that the men's prison plays within the state, through the Criminal Justice System, in relation to the commission and regulation of crime by men. It also requires an analysis of relations between men, *as men*, on both sides of the law, in the commission and regulation of crime.

I will demonstrate through such an analysis that masculinity as constructed between men in the men's prison, is rooted in and inseparable from the construction of masculinity through relations between men in the English Criminal Justice System and in wider, English society. I will also demonstrate that rather than being a peculiar, isolated institution (Goffman, 1991), the men's prison is a normative institution for men, with permeable walls, that reflects accurately the state of relations between men, as men, within wider society. I will further show that the commission and regulation of crime by men is central to the construction of masculinity within the state.

## Researching Masculinity:

As a current employee of the English Criminal Justice System, a Probation Officer, I am engaged in the process of regulating crime on behalf of the state and of constructing the 'crime' through my daily interactions with men on both sides of the law. I am also engaged,

as a man, in constructing masculinity through my daily interactions with men on both sides of the law. I am thus unable to stand outside the category 'man' or 'state employee'. I therefore research the social construction of masculinity from the perspective of a cog in the machinery through which masculinity and crime are constructed and regulated through relations between men within the men's prison, the Criminal Justice System and the state. My research approach relies on me being a participant/observer who is obliged to consider myself as a subject of my own research. I locate myself on the same critical plane as the men with whom I engage in the construction of masculinity and the commission/regulation of crime. I use my reflexive recording of my experience as a man employee in that machinery, relating to men on both sides of the law within it, in order to deconstruct my experience in that context and to expose it to critical scrutiny.

**Site of the Research:**

As an experienced Probation Officer, my employer seconded me to work in a Category 'C' training prison for men for a two-year period in the early 1990's. Category 'C' refers to a category of prisoner in the prison system in England and Wales. The Prison Service categorises prisoners according to their risk of attempting to escape and the risk to the public if they should do so, on a scale of 'A' to 'D'. 'A' is high risk. 'D' is low risk. Most prisoners in England and Wales fall into category 'C' and are therefore held in conditions of medium security. A 'Training Prison' is a prison to which prisoners are sent from local prisons after sentence. 'Training' is an anachronistic concept, which is based on the idea that prisoners can be rehabilitated through learning a trade. At the time of my secondment to the prison, the Prison Service had translated the concept of 'rehabilitation' as 'containment'.

At the time I conducted my research, Probation Officers were normally seconded from local Probation Services to all prisons at a ratio of one Probation Officer to one hundred prisoners to undertake 'welfare' work. The concept of 'welfare' appears to have had no specific definition at the time of my research. It was interpreted by the Prison and Probation Service in which I was employed as having Probation Officers work alongside uniformed Prison staff and staff such as drugs workers and teachers, seconded to the Prison from other agencies, to provide rehabilitative services to prisoners.

I volunteered to work in the Prison on the basis that working in such a way would broaden my career. I was not aware of masculinity as an academic subject at the time I entered the

prison. Some few months after I began the job, however, I became aware of the subject of masculinity and of literature that suggested possible links between masculinity and crime. It occurred to me that I was in a good position, as a man working in a prison for men, to conduct such a study of the construction of masculinity through relations between men within a criminal justice context, on an observer/participant basis.

My first step in obtaining permission to conduct the research was to approach my line manager in the probation team in the prison. He helped me to negotiate with the main prison governor, the local Probation Service and the local university. It was agreed that I would conduct my research on the basis of conducting my observations in the course of my day to day work within the prison. I was allowed one day per week out of the prison for study time, to be arranged around the normal duties of a seconded probation officer. A woman replaced my line manager shortly after I began my research. She proved to be highly supportive of my research and of me.

**The Researcher as the Research Subject:**

Taking this research approach as a Probation Officer employed in prison for men at the time of my fieldwork generated a number of problems for me on a personal level and an ethical level and in relation to my employers and colleagues. On a personal level, I experienced stress: I was obliged to conduct myself as a researcher while operating in a professional role in a prison. My job in the prison involved me carrying a normal Probation Officer's workload while taking on the extra pressure of simultaneously conducting research. I therefore experienced the stress of being very busy. This stress was augmented by the nature of my professional role and the fact that I was in a prison, a stressful environment. I dealt frequently with emotionally charged situations, in which I had professional responsibility. The stress of these emotional demands upon me was added to by the effect of a method of research that demanded changes in my consciousness: I experienced personal destabilisation as my sense of self as a man shifted through my reflexive recording of my experience. I deal with personal stress and my successes and failures in managing it in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Professional Problems:

I explained my research to my immediate Probation Office colleagues. They were not, however, offered a veto over whether I conducted the research or not. I experienced some occasional expressions of resentment from some of them, both men and women, over the fact that I was allowed to spend one day per week of my working time out of the prison, whereas they were not. I suspect that my immediate colleague's resentment was connected to my privilege, rather than my workload, since I was required to undertake the same amount of duties as them. None of my immediate colleagues directly expressed negative feelings about the subject of my study, although, as I explain in Chapter 6, however, I experienced indirect discouragement in the form of having newspaper cuttings that were hostile to the subject of masculinity posted over my desk. I also explain that I discovered that my immediate men, Probation Officer colleagues seemed prepared to tolerate my research, *so long as I did not cause them to be aware, on a day to day basis, that I was doing it.*

I freely explained my research to other staff colleagues outside my immediate team and to prisoners, wherever the opportunity arose. I encountered no resistance of any kind to my research within the prison, other than from my immediate men, Probation Officer colleagues. I did not seek permission to conduct my research from all the men I observed because my location in a large and busy prison made such a proposition impracticable.

Tensions between Ethics and Gathering the Data:

I found that there was tension between the ethics of my method of note taking and my vulnerability to interference from authority, even though I had negotiated my research openly with the Probation Service and Prison management. While I was unwilling to conduct my research covertly, because I did not want to behave in an underhand fashion towards staff or prisoners, I had to tread carefully in order to avoid attracting unwelcome attention to my role of researcher by the prison management. The tension between my role as researcher and my role as employee was particularly acute in situations where security was at issue: for example staff briefings about potential disturbances. By their nature, prisons are centrally concerned with security, order and discipline. My research was concerned, in part, about how these conditions are maintained within the prison. I feared

that it might occur to the prison management that my research might either upset the order of the prison or draw negative publicity to working practices within it. As a Main Grade Probation Officer, my ranking in the prison hierarchy and the Probation Service was low, and I was vulnerable to interference from authority within both the Prison Service and the Probation Service. In case of any concerns emerging about what I might upset or discover, it would have been very easy for the Prison Service or the Probation Service to stop my research or to end my secondment to the prison.

The tension between what I felt should be my ethic of openness in my research and my ability to conduct the research effectively also emerged in relation to the men immediately around me. I was concerned that if I drew constant attention to my role of researcher to the men around me, both prisoners and staff, they might adjust their behaviour to portray themselves in the best possible light, thus limiting the amount and quality of the data I might collect. I also felt that it was frequently inappropriate to draw attention to my role as researcher when I was engaged in attempting to resolve the concerns of staff or prisoners: such behaviour on my part would have been intrusive and incompatible with my professional role.

In summary, I found that my desire to conduct my research on an entirely open basis was in tension with a number of factors:

1) My ability to be effective in my professional role.

2) My desire to continue to have a career.

3) My desire not to be halted in my research.

4) My desire to obtain good quality data.

5) My need to get along with my immediate men, Probation Officer colleagues in order to survive the day to day stress of being in the prison.

I resolved this tension, with a degree of moral discomfort on my part, by choosing to conduct my research on a *semi-covert* basis.

I freely told prisoners and staff at all levels in the prison, including uniformed prison staff,

that I was conducting this study, before, during and after my period of observation. I explained the observer/participant basis on which I was conducting it. I made explicit the fact that my study incorporated *all* men within the prison, as men, including myself. Aside from some problems with my immediate men, Probation Officer colleagues, I encountered no resistance from prisoners or staff on any level to the subject of my research, or the method of note taking which I used to conduct it. Reactions, with the exception of those of my immediate men, Probation Officer colleagues, ranged from expressions of mild interest, to indifference. I feel that the explanation for this lack of concern on the part of nearly all of the many men around me was twofold:

1) I was an unimportant employee conducting a piece of research, which had no immediate implications for anyone in particular, which might or might not be published several years in the future.

2) The men I told of my research did not understand clearly my intentions.

I chose not to insist on explaining my intentions in any greater depth than the men around me expressed interest in, in order not to draw more attention to my role of researcher that was compatible with me functioning effectively within that role and as a professional worker.

On a daily basis, I drew little attention to the fact that during the period of observation I was continuously in the role of observer, constantly making notes about my own conduct and feelings and the conduct of the men around me. Sometimes I wrote-up events as soon as possible after they had occurred, away from the location they had occurred. Sometimes I wrote up events as they were actually happening. This was not difficult for me to achieve on a semi-covert basis because I was also continuously in the role of employee, using that experience as research material. As an employee, I was obliged to spend a large amount of my time making notes or writing reports. The lack of office space in the prison meant that I spent my working time in a variety of locations there, surrounded by a variety of men, both staff and prisoners, who were going about their daily business. My presence appeared to be of no particular significance to them. My observations included informal exchanges with staff when I was not strictly 'on duty'. In those situations, it was not practicable to write up notes contemporaneously, since I was mainly in the Gym, the changing room or the

communal shower, so I wrote them up immediately afterwards.

My period of observation and reflexive recording lasted for seven months, during which time I collected over 50,000 words in field notes. I ceased to record my experiences when it became clear that no new patterns were emerging from my notes. I explain my method of reflexive recording and my method of analysis of the field notes in Chapter 3.

**Limitations of the study:**

This is a small-scale study conducted over a short period of time by one individual. It is therefore limited by the constraints of what a researcher can achieve within those parameters. The pressure I was under at the time of the research to function fully as both an employee and a researcher also limits it: as the research progressed, I became progressively more fatigued. It is further limited by virtue of being a qualitative study in which the experiences of the researcher form the data, on the basis that it is unsafe to extrapolate from the particular to the general. The subjects of masculinity and crime each constitute vast areas that can be studied in their own right. The combining of these two subjects doubles the size of the field in which an individual researcher seeks to discover useful knowledge.

This study is further limited by the difficulties I experienced in feeling unable to question directly the perceptions of men I was observing, because I felt that such questioning would have been unethical and counterproductive in terms of the research. Before I began the research, I had hoped to be able to hold discussions with the men around me in order to be able to check my perceptions with them. In the early part of my research (see Chapter 5), however, I suffered significant personal de-stabilisation through my unexpected discovery, that my day to day *survival* in the stressful environment of the prison was inextricably bound-up with my construction of myself, as a man. I had *volunteered* for such destabilisation and I had support systems in place to deal with it whereas other men had not.

Once I had discovered how emotionally destabilising the deconstruction of masculinity was for me, I felt I had no right to jeopardise the survival strategies of other men, especially when, at the time, I had *nothing to offer in place of such strategies*. During most of the research process, I felt emotionally destabilised to the extent that I did not *trust* my perceptions. I was thus blocked, on an emotional level as well as a practical and ethical level, from checking the accuracy of my perceptions with the men I was observing. I chose, rather, to concentrate my energy on mapping masculinity within the prison as accurately as I

could, for as long as I could cope with the strain of doing so. I hoped that that this approach would eventually enable me to make a contribution to offer men alternative, less damaging means of living life on a day to day basis. I deal with the damage that men in the prison, as men, did to ourselves, each other and women in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. While my approach inevitably risks an element of me projecting my interpretation of events onto other men, that possibility could more ethically be tested with men volunteers who are far better informed that I was, when I embarked on this research. Such research could also have the advantage of being conducted by a man researcher in a far less practically and emotionally vulnerable and pressured position, who could use the rough chart into unexplored territory that this study represents.

The limitations of this study, when considered in conjunction with each other, suggest that it would be unsafe to regard it as useful in any way beyond being an enquiry into what questions can be usefully asked about the social construction of masculinity and its links to the commission and regulation of crime by men. The strength of the study, however, is that it is conducted by an employee of the Criminal Justice System, who deconstructs his experience as a man within that system on a day to day basis. The research, therefore, has the value of reflecting the perspective of an insider looking outwards, as both a man and an employee, as opposed to a researcher attempting to discover the insider's perspective.

More significantly, however, the study has the value of being conducted on the basis that the researcher's masculinity is constructed *intersubjectively* with the masculinity of other men, to which he *contributes*. If this attempt to deconstruct masculinity through understanding the relationship between the man who researches and the man who is researched is successful, this study should indicate pointers to *new methods* of discovering the nature of masculinity and *new questions* about masculinity and it's links to crime by men. The deconstruction of the man researcher's experience as a man would seem to be a pre-condition to embarking on useful studies of masculinity. The main strength of this study is that it attempts to break this ground.

The principal advantage of researching masculinity, in relation to the commission and regulation of crime, by men, within a typical men's prison, is that the men's prison is occupied by men, defined by the state through its Criminal Justice System as both 'good' (staff) and 'bad' (prisoner). This juxtaposition enables comparisons in behaviour, attitude and belief, to see if any distinctions in our identity, *as men*, can be drawn between the two categories. In other words, are 'good' men and the 'bad' men significantly different, *as men*,

and if so, are 'bad' men defective, *as men*?

A secondary advantage of conducting this research in the men's prison is that by virtue of staff hierarchies, and the diversity of professional and social institutions employing men within a prison, the men's prison also offers the opportunity to make comparisons between men across a broad spectrum of social strata and differing personal and professional ideologies: do men belonging to differing social strata belong to different masculinities? Does the fact that men from lower social strata and black men are numerous among prisoners, and less well represented among staff, reflect such men belonging to problematic masculinities?

A further advantage of conducting such research in the men's prison is inclined to produce conflictual relations between men: men prisoners who are not in prison as a matter of choice are held there by men staff. The tension between men staff and men prisoners facilitated the observation of conflicted encounters between men, including myself, as both a man and as an employee of the Criminal Justice System. This observation of, and participation in conflict between men, as men, and on opposite sides of the Criminal Justice System, permits an examination of the extent to which those encounters are shaped by social conflict, and the extent to which they are shaped by the need of men in such encounters to maintain our identity *as men.*

**Aims of the Study:**

The aims of this study are as follows:

1. To explore the inter-subjective construction of masculinity through relations between men, as men, within the men's prison, between prisoner and staff, prisoner and prisoner and staff and staff.

2. To examine the way in which men construct women through our relations with each other as men.

3. To consider the implications of the construction of masculinity within the men's prison in relation to the Criminal Justice System, examining the role of masculinity in the commission and regulation of crime, by men, as men.

4. To discover what changes in approaches to the reduction of offending and protection of the public would be suggested by the role that masculinity plays in the commission and regulation of crime within patriarchy.

**Structure of the Thesis:**

This study falls into eight chapters, Chapter 1 being this introduction. The literature in relation to both masculinity and crime is explored in Chapter 2, which covers writing on masculinity by men from a wide range of ideological perspectives. This chapter analyses such literature in the light of feminist critiques of 'men' as a problematic gender category. It deals with differentials between men and women writers in their approach to masculinity and crime. It also considers the significance of literature on postmodernity in relation to masculinity.

The new research method I employed is set in context in Chapter 3. In this Chapter, I locate my reflexive method of data gathering through participant observation in relation to traditional ethnographic methods of research (Burgess, 1990; Freidrichs and Ludtke, 1975; Mann, 1976; McNeill, 1990; Morgan, 1992; Stacey, 1970). I also locate my research method in relation to feminist critiques of the limitations of traditional methods of social research (Eichler, 1991; Harding, 1987; Reinharz, 1992; Roberts, 1990; Stanley and Wise, 1993).

Chapter 4 contains a new theoretical framework of masculinity, including a paradigm of masculinity, which is necessary to the analysis of the data in chapters 5, 6 and 7. This Chapter starts from the point that a working definition of masculinity as a common denominator among men is a pre-condition to examining links between the construction of masculinity and the commission and regulation of crime by men, as men. I examine masculinity in terms of its function in institutionalising patriarchy within the state and as a faulty cognition within a cognitive/behavioural frame of reference (McGuire, 1995; Roberts 1995).

The analysis of the data, including its applicability to the behaviour of men, as men, outside the prison, is conducted in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Critical incidents from the data are presented in the form of vignettes that are labelled Examples 1 – 38 throughout these Chapters. Chapter 5 deals with the data and its analysis in terms of how men include ourselves and each other into the category 'man' within the prison, through co-operating

with each other, as men, despite divisions of power between us. This phenomenon of men's inclusion into the category 'man', across social and ideological divisions, is considered in the light of sociological literature on both prisons (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Scraton, Sim and Skidmore, 1991; Adams, 1994; Sim, 1994) and institutions (Goffman, 1991).

The data and analysis in respect of co-operation between men in excluding other men from the category 'man' is dealt with in Chapter 6. This process is considered in the light of the work of Priestley (1980) on segregated prisoners. It is also considered in terms of how the process of exclusion is carried on outside the prison setting, in the light of the work of Connell (1995).

The data and analysis in respect of men's construction of women in the prison is dealt with in Chapter 7. This chapter does not deal with relations between men and women, but rather with the way in which men, in interactions between men, construct women. The commodification of women, by men, in regulating relations between men, is discussed in the light of literature that deals with men's violence to women.

The concluding chapter, Chapter 8, examines the extent to which this study has met its aims. The conclusion also relates my theoretical framework of masculinity, contained in Chapter 4 to the problems that men generate for ourselves and others by conforming to internalised masculinity through cognitive distortion and ensuing anti-social behaviours. I also question whether such conformity serves the interests of the individual man or society in general. I present a new, cognitive approach to intervening in the lives of men who behave anti-socially and I discuss the implications of that approach for criminal justice in England.

## CHAPTER 2: THE SELF-INVISIBLE MAN IN LITERATURE

This Chapter sets the study in the context of literature by men writing about masculinity, feminists writing about masculinity, men writing about crime and feminists writing about crime. It examines the extent to which these bodies of literature are helpful in explaining the cohesiveness of men as a gender category, evident in the 'masculine phenomenon' of crime (Campbell, 1993, p. 211), as an example of the means by which men, as a gender category, maintain power within patriarchy. This Chapter draws distinctions between men and feminist writers, on the subjects of both masculinity and crime, because of fundamental differences in approach between the two. These differences are discussed in terms of their significance for the way in which masculinity is constructed and internalised by men writing about masculinity.

The first part of the chapter is concerned with an examination of literature on masculinity, to see what light it sheds on men's adherence to practices that support patriarchy in view of feminist analyses of the institutionalised power of men within patriarchy. It asks how helpful this literature is in arriving at a definition of masculinity as a social construction that drives those practices. This discussion incorporates a critique of literature on postmodernity, in relation to its limitations in arriving at a useful definition of masculinity. The second part of the Chapter examines current literature on crime, with a view to seeing how helpful it is in considering crime as an example of a practice by which men, as a gender category, maintain power within patriarchy. I discuss literature on the men's prison in Chapter 5.

In view of the large and expanding scale of the fields of literature named above, it has not been possible for me to read all literature relevant to this study. The consequent and inevitable element of randomness in my reading makes it impossible for me to offer a comprehensive overview of relevant literature. I therefore incorporate only a small sample of authors from the fields I name. I do so on the basis of the author's representation of what appear to me, from the perspective of a researcher looking for help in a new line of enquiry into masculinity, to be broad schools of thought within those fields of literature. This approach has the disadvantage of precluding me from picking through narrow strands of difference within those broad schools of thought by virtue of the limited space available to me. This disadvantage, however, is offset by the space that my 'broad brush' approach creates for locating the key points where my study departs from the many fields of literature that are relevant to it.

## LITERATURE ON MASCULINITY:

### Men Writing about Masculinity:

Current literature on masculinity, written by men, including literature that expresses sympathy with feminism, is subject to a degree of suspicion by feminist writers (Hanmer, 1990). The good faith and constructiveness of men's responses to feminist critiques of patriarchal power is made suspect by the consideration we benefit from that power (Dworkin, 1981; Greer, 1971; Eisenstein, 1979; Firestone, 1971). As a privileged gender category, men have an interest in keeping obscure the means by which we maintain that power on individual and collective levels. We men write as members of a privileged gender category, in response to critiques from members of a gender category that we disadvantage through our practices. Accordingly, our writing merits scepticism, particularly if it fails to locate the author, personally, as a beneficiary of patriarchy. I define patriarchy as a system that privileges men, as a gender category over women, as a gender category.

Hanmer (1990, p. 29) articulates this suspicion by feminist writers of men's interpretations of feminist analyses of patriarchy: 'Men are finding ways around women's analyses of how men personally hold and express power.' Hanmer's (1990) wariness of men's writing on masculinity, a topic that was problematised by women, exists in the context of a history of men's revisions of women's experience to fit it into ideologically mainstream, and therefore patriarchal, modes of knowledge. Freud's invention of the Electra complex (Masson, 1992), whereby women's experience of childhood sexual abuse is explained as fantasy, as a means of reconciling women's experience with patriarchal ideology, is an example of this phenomenon. Despite Hanmer's (1990) suspicion, however, the ability of women to theorise the experience of men, as men, is limited by the consideration that women live outside that experience. In this light, it would seem that an understanding of that which binds a man to practices which in their multiplication, result in the operation of patriarchy, can only be achieved fully from the inside, looking out, as well as from the outside, looking in.

This section of the chapter considers the extent to which literature on masculinity, written by men, justifies the suspicion articulated by Hanmer (1990, p. 29), that men are obscuring the means by which we hold power, in the face of feminist critiques of patriarchy. It examines the degree to which literature on masculinity, written by men, illuminates *from the*

*inside* the adherence of men, as a gender category, to practices which result in the maintenance of patriarchy. This body of men's literature, which reflects a range of different responses to feminist critiques of oppressive behaviour by men, can be divided into five schools: the first school is concerned with men in positions of institutional power, as academics, attempting to reconcile feminist analyses of the power of men as a gendered category to androcentric forms of knowledge within the academic body-politic. This school is composed of man academics writing about 'masculinities' in the plural (Brittan, 1989; Connell, 1991 and 1995; Hearn and Collison, 1994; Morgan, 1992; Seidler, 1994). The second school is characterised by man non-academic writing in uncritical sympathy with radical feminist thought (Stoltenberg, 1990). The third school is characterised by man non-academic writing which is openly hostile to feminist analyses of power, (Lyndon, 1992; Farrel, 1994; Thomas 1993). The fourth school is characterised by man non-academic writing, which ignores feminist analyses of power, (Bly, 1990). The fifth school is characterised by man non-academic work, which attempts to understand masculinity through a self-reflexive approach, (Jackson, 1990; Middleton 1992).

An examination of this body of men's literature on masculinity reveals three common features. The most obvious of these features is that all of this work post-dates the most recent renaissance of feminism, which began in the late 1960s (Dworkin, 1981; Greer, 1971; Eisenstein, 1979; Firestone, 1971). No significant work on masculinity within patriarchy appears to pre-date the late 1960s. This body of men's writing on masculinity, therefore, appears to owe its existence to the most recent renaissance of feminism, and to be written in reaction to it. Another less obvious but equally significant common feature is that this body of work, with the limited exception of Connell (1995) in Masculinities, makes no attempt to arrive at a definition of masculinity, or to explain its operation in and among men. The third common feature of this body of work is an unease with the experience of being a man, after the renaissance of feminism. I use the term 'man' when I refer to men writers to denote that men write as men, constructing ourselves self-invisibly (Haraway, 1997) as men in our writing, as will become apparent through the following analysis.

## The Man Academic School:

Writers in this area (Brittan, 1989; Connell, 1991 and 1995; Hearn and Collison 1994; Morgan, 1992; Seidler, 1994), take the path of conceptualising masculinity in the plural,

through the use of the term 'masculinities'. This approach, by concentrating on what separates men rather than what unites us, is antithetical to the possibility of examining what men, as a gender category, have in common. It appears to be based on an implicit assumption that masculine identity and social identity are conceptually inseparable. This approach, in the absence of a definition of these 'masculinities' and in the absence of a schema within which these 'masculinities' can be located, inevitably implies that there are as many masculinities as there are men. It thereby limits its usefulness to answering the question of how we men identify ourselves as men, and act as men, across the social and ideological divisions between us.

The approach of contemplating undefined 'masculinities' in the plural, as opposed to attempting to discover masculinity as a common denominator among men, sits uneasily with feminist analyses of patriarchy. Such analyses reveal that men's oppression of women over-arches social divisions between men, for example through the phenomenon of 'domestic' violence (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Scully, 1990; Kelly, 1996 and 1999; Russell, 1990), which men from all social groups perpetrate. Seidler (1994), for example, runs into a number of other difficulties in arguing that masculinity should be conceptualised as unproblematic:

> 'There is something misguided about a theoretical position which asserts that there is something 'wrong' or 'defective' or 'inadequate' in masculinity itself, thereby leaving no space for men to change their experience of themselves as men.' (Seidler, 1994, p. 114)

Seidler (1994) does not define masculinity, even though he uses the phrase 'masculinity itself'. In contradiction of himself, he also writes of different kinds of masculinity. The unitary conceptualisation of masculinity, implicit in the 'itself', is not compatible with a conceptualisation of masculinity in the plural. The confusion generated by these inter-contradictory and undefined terms in relation to masculinity is compounded by an absence of specification of that which is 'misguided' about conceptualising masculinity as problematic. Seidler (1994) asserts, in the absence of argument, that such a conceptualisation would allow men no room to change. While this may be true if masculinity is conceptualised as essential, it is not necessarily the case if masculinity is conceptualised as socially constructed.

The gap in Seidler's (1994, p. 114) logic resides in the vague 'something' which, in its

unspecificity, obscures the question of why a conceptualisation of masculinity as problematic would leave men no room to change. The conclusion does not self-evidently follow the assertion. Seidler's (1994) self-contradiction over terms and the gap in his logic in justifying an avoidance of conceptualising masculinity as problematic disqualifies him from addressing the question of why men engage in patriarchal practices, despite social and ideological divisions. His ability to illuminate masculinity from the inside is limited by his reference to men as 'them', which inevitably suggests, in the absence of a justification of this term, that he is *outside* the genus about which he writes and thus self-invisible as a man (Haraway, 1997)

Like Seidler (1994), Morgan (1992) limits his ability to address the question of what social force lies behind men's engagement in patriarchal practices across social and ideological divisions by a reluctance to contemplate men as a problematic gender category. Morgan (1992) justifies this position by arguing that to do so risks essentialism:

> 'If we need to say that 'maleness' or 'masculinity' is something which links the professional footballer, the sociology student with the coal miner and the bread roundsman we need to be able to say this in a way that avoids the opposite danger of reification, essentialism and reductionism. It would appear to be a tricky juggling act.' (Morgan, 1992, p. 43)

This argument is very similar to that of Seidler (1994), except that Morgan (1992) gives a partial explanation of why it would be problematic to conceptualise masculinity as a common denominator among men. Morgan (1992), however, reveals a gap in his logic at the point where he fails to explain why the conceptualisation of masculinity as a common denominator among men should lead to 'reification, essentialism and reductionism', a phrase which replaces Seidler's (1994, p. 114) vague 'something'.

As with Seidler (1994), Morgan's (1992) conclusion does not self-evidently follow his assertion. If masculinity is conceptualised as a social construction, internalised by the individual man, it can be considered as a variable in his experience, which is capable of producing an infinite variety of responses in that man through its reaction with other variables. This conceptualisation of masculinity as a common denominator among men, as a source of the production of patterns of patriarchal practices by men, is not reificatory, nor essentialist, nor reductive, providing masculinity is also conceptualised as a variable. Such a conceptualisation allows for subjectivity, variability and change within the individual man. It allows him, as a subject, to externalise his internalisation of what it means to him be a

man; to question how that relates to signifiers of manhood in patriarchal society; and in that light, to question his conformity to and departure from patriarchal practices. Conceptualising masculinity as both a common denominator among men, and a dependant variable in men's experience of ourselves thus becomes a straightforward matter, rather than 'a tricky juggling act'.

Morgan's (1992) argument breaks down at the point which it fails to draw a conceptual distinction between masculine identity: a man's sense of identity *as a man*, and his identity along a multiplicity of other axes, such as race and social class. In this thesis, I argue that masculinity can be defined hegemonically, as a unifier of men, as men, across such divisions. Morgan (1992) apparently perceives masculinity in the individual man as being derived *from* social positioning, as opposed to *beyond* social positioning, as suggested by phenomena like 'domestic' violence. From this perspective, he perceives a necessity to make a simple choice between masculinity as an essential condition, or an unschematised plurality of undefined 'masculinities' as representative of the variability of men's experience. Thus he throws out the conceptual baby, feminist analyses of patriarchy, with the conceptual bath water, essentialism. In doing so, he follows the logic of his argument to the point where it folds in on itself: he questions the value of arriving at a definition of masculinity at all.

Like Seidler (1994), Morgan (1992) uses the term 'they' when speaking about men, implying that he is outside the category 'man' looking in, rather than on the inside looking out. Unlike Seidler (1994), however, he explains his use of the term 'they' by expressing his desire to avoid a 'pseudo community of interests' (Morgan, 1992, p. 41) with other men who belong to different social strata, suggesting that 'we' is a dangerous term in this respect. This position is consistent with a conceptualisation of masculinity in which masculine identity is inseparable from other axes of identity. If masculinity is conceptualised as an axis of identity in men which is distinct from other axes of identity, however, the use of the term 'they' becomes absurd in the sense that it cannot recognise that the man who writes it belongs to the category 'man' which he writes about and critiques. I would argue, in this light, that the use of the term 'we', when a man is speaking about men, as men, properly locates the researcher on the same critical plane as the researched. I explore the necessity for an intersubjective research approach to masculinity in Chapter 3 and I explain more fully my choice to use the term 'we' when discussing men, as men, in Chapter 4.

In this context 'we' can be understood as referring to men's membership of a privileged gender category within patriarchy, whether we like it or not. In this light, 'they', when used by men in relation to other men, *as men*, becomes an objectifying term. 'They' can be seen as a term which has the potential to allow its user to displace his implication in structural injustice within patriarchy, as a man, and as a holder of authority by virtue of being an author, onto men who have less authority than himself, on social and intellectual levels. This becomes a particular problem in studying masculinity in relation to the 'criminal' as object, because of the heavy policing of men according to race and class. I explore this problem in relation to race and class in Chapter 4 and in relation to men's construction of in-groups through objectifying other men in Chapter 6. I show that the construction of other men as 'them' is crucial to the maintenance of men's privilege through the problematisation of men other than ourselves.

Brittan (1989) falls into the same school as Seidler (1994) and Morgan (1992) in not distinguishing between masculine identity in men and other axes of social identity. This aligned position leads him, like Seidler (1994) and Morgan (1992), to perceive a straightforward choice between essentialism, in a concept of masculinity, and an implicitly infinite variability in the experience of being a man. Brittan (1989) justifies this position by referring to the fluidity of history and culture in shaping masculinity:

> 'Since gender does not exist outside history and culture, this means that both masculinity and femininity are continuously subject to a process of reinterpretation. The way men are regarded in late twentieth century England is obviously different to the way that they were regarded in the nineteenth century.' (Brittan, 1989, p. 1)

While it may be 'obvious' that men are regarded as different, over a hundred-year time-span in patriarchy, patriarchal institutions, like marriage, for example, still exist. The power of men, as a gender category, over women, as a gender category is a condition that has endured over the last century in England, and for many centuries previously. Seidler's (1994) argument cannot account for the continuity of patriarchy because it does not take into account the possibility that the continuity of patriarchal practices by men may reflect continuity in the social construction of masculinity.

Seidler (1994) does not make clear by whom this 'obvious' difference may be perceived, or what gender this notional person may be. The woman who is being battered today may be having a very similar experience to the woman who was being battered a century ago. The

writing of Frances Power Cobbe (1992), on Wife Torture in England, which was first published in 1878, when compared with the work of Dobash and Dobash (1979), on 'domestic' violence, published a century later, evidences a continuity of practices by men, as a gender category, within English society. Consideration of this evidence suggests that a conceptual effort is merited in attempting to distinguish masculinity as a factor in men's sense of identity, *as men*, within patriarchal society, from a plethora of other cultural and historical factors in men's identity.

Like Morgan (1992) and Seidler (1994), Brittan (1989) uses the term 'they' when writing about men, thus removing himself from the possibility of illuminating masculinity from the inside.

Hearn and Collison (1994) are equally bound by the assumption that masculinity cannot be defined. In order to avoid the trap of essentialism, they suggest that 'masculinities' elude definition, and, by implication, it is therefore impossible to define what a man is:

> 'Particular masculinities are not fixed formulas but rather they are actions and signs, part powerful, part arbitrary, performed in relation to complex material and emotional demands; these signify what it is to be a man.' (Hearn and Collison, 1994, p. 104)

Connell (1991 and 1995) is also vague on the definition of masculinity, particularly so in his early work Gender and Power (Connell, 1991). In this work he writes of two kinds of masculinity 'hegemonic' and 'subordinated', without defining either term. Like the rest of the men writers in this group, however, he is clear that masculinity is not an essential condition: 'Femininity and masculinity are not essences: they are ways of living certain relationships.' (Connell, 1991, p. 179) In his later work, Masculinities (Connell, 1995), however, he attempts, with reluctance, to define masculinity:

> ''Masculinity', to the extent the term can be briefly defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage in that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture.' (Connell, 1995, p. 71)

This amounts to a non-definition of masculinity. All we learn is that it amounts to unspecified 'practices'. Later in the same chapter Connell (1995) makes a similarly vague definition of 'hegemonic' masculinity:

> 'Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.' (Connell, 1995, p. 71)

This takes us no further than the first 'definition' of masculinity. Connell (1995) is still unspecific about what he means by 'practice'. Connell (1995) does not define the term 'subordinated' in relation to masculinity, except by giving homosexual men as an example, and citing feminising terms of abuse as a means by which heterosexual men and boys are expelled from the 'circle of legitimacy' (Connell, 1995, p. 79). This, crucially, fails to address the question of what constitutes the 'circle of legitimacy' (singular as opposed to plural); whether Connell (1995) considers himself to be in it; if the answer to this question affects the questions he considers valid to ask; how its boundaries are defined and how and why men stay within it. Thus Connell (1995) disqualifies himself from illuminating the experience of being a man, from the inside.

This school of men writing on masculinity has little to say about how being a man is experienced and actualised in the light of feminist analyses of men's institutionalised privilege, as a gender category within patriarchy, because it does not address this problem. It is rather concerned with another problem, which is that of marrying feminist analyses of men's privilege to existing and incompatible conceptual frameworks within the academic body politic, which justify men's privilege. The difficulty of this enterprise is reflected in the vagueness and opacity of the writing it produces. Feminist critiques of men's privilege generate not only moral discomfort among men, academic writers on 'masculinities', but also, and more crucially, they expose the conceptual bankruptcy of androcentric thought. I expand on this point in Chapter 3, in relation to methodology.

A pattern of discussing undefined 'masculinities', thereby failing to address the commonality of patriarchal practices among men, across social and ideological divisions, is reflected in the work of many other man authors (Brod, 1994; Kimmel, 1994; Kaufman, 1994; Horrocks, 1994) whose work sidesteps the crucial question, unwittingly raised by Connell (1995, p. 79, of their place in 'the circle of legitimacy'. The development of this orthodoxy points to the accuracy of Hanmer's (1990, p. 34) observation that 'The study of men conceptualised solely as the study of personal identity, of masculinities.' is too narrow to affect those practices, as well as her point that, 'Men are finding ways around women's analyses of how men personally hold and express power.' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 29). This

school of men's writing on masculinity obscures, rather than illuminates, the way in which men, as a gender category, maintain power within patriarchy. The logical culmination of this self-invisible (Haraway, 1997) approach is evident in the work of McInnes (1998), who argues that masculinity is a concept invented to explain how women and men have equal rights but lead different lives. On this basis, according to MacInnes (1998 p. 149) 'men simply do not possess such a thing as masculinity'.

The Polemic School:

This school is exemplified by Stoltenberg (1990), who takes a polemic approach to the challenge of feminist analyses of patriarchy to masculine identity. Unlike the proponents of the man academic school, Stoltenberg (1990) expresses no fear of being labeled 'essentialist', and does not conceptualise an obscure plurality of 'masculinities', be they 'hegemonic' or 'subordinated' (Connell, 1991 and 1995). Like the man academic school, however, his conceptualisation of masculinity appears to be disengaged from a recognition that he belongs to a gender category which is granted privilege whether individuals belonging to it want it or not. The conceit that he can stand outside men as a gender category, like the man academic school, is evident in the title of his book, Refusing to be a Man (Stolenberg, 1990). Like the authors of the man academic school, therefore, he does not concern himself with the way in which his own masculine identity may shape his perception of the questions that he considers to be valid. He describes masculinity as a 'sex-class construct of identity' (Stoltenberg, 1990, p. 190), without, like Connell (1995, p. 79 and his 'circle of legitimacy', defining it's meaning for himself, or addressing its operation in himself. He is thereby confined to reiterating the arguments of radical feminism (Dworkin, 1981; Greer 1971; Firestone, 1971; Eisenstein, 1979), without extending that analysis to men's experience of patriarchy. Stoltenberg (1990) does little to illuminate the means by which he maintains his power within patriarchy, because his approach to the issue denies that he has such power.

The 'Backlash' School:

This 'backlash' school of writing on masculinity, embodied in the work of populist authors (Lyndon, 1992; Farrel, 1994; Thomas, 1993) is concerned with attempting to deny the

validity of women's experience of men, captured by feminist writing, rather than dealing with problems in masculine identity and practice which feminist literature has exposed. In this sense, it follows the pattern of the man academic school. Whereas the authors of the man academic school seek to sidestep the feminist problematisation of themselves as belonging to a privileged gender category through obscured gaps in logic, however, the authors of the 'backlash' school adopt a bolder approach to the exposure of their privilege in the form of an explicit denial of that privilege. The negatory titles of these works, No More Sex War: The Failures of Feminism (Lyndon, 1992), The Myth of Male Power (Farrel, 1994) and Not Guilty: In Defence of the Modern Man (Thomas, 1993) are indicative of the authors' sense of feeling threatened by feminist critiques of patriarchy. Unlike the man academic school, whose authors seek exculpation on an individual level through a plurality of 'masculinities' which belong to 'them', however, this school seeks exculpation for men on a collective level, as a gender category. This exculpatory project is conducted, in Lyndon's (1992) case, through androcentric lines of argument, which evidence Scully's (1990, p. 2) view that 'women and men live in separate phenomenological, if not physical worlds'. On abortion, for example, Lyndon (1992) writes:

> 'When, therefore, a woman goes to request an abortion she should be asked if she knows the name of the father and if she is willing to give it. If she will name him, the man should be asked whether or not he agrees to the abortion or has required it. If that is his position, the fact should be recorded and the burden of responsibility for the abortion will be shared.' (Lyndon, 1992, p. 247)

In the margin to the library copy of the book, in capital letters in ink, an unknown hand, presumably female, had written, 'LIKE, HE'LL HAVE IT FOR HER, WILL HE?' Lyndon (1992) is apparently unable to understand that experiences of the world may vary considerably according to gender and that an androcentric interpretation by men, of women's experience, can lead to false logic in reading that experience as unshaped by gender. Lyndon (1992) makes no contribution to a useful definition of masculinity, since he does not see it as problematic, preferring instead to shoot the messenger: feminism.

Farrel (1994) is similarly lost in the face of feminist critiques of men's patriarchal practices. His text contains many illustrations of Scully's (1990, p. 2) point about phenomenological differences between the worlds of men and women, and an inability to grasp the most elementary arguments of feminism. On the subject of 'date rape', for

example, Farrel (1994) assumes an equal balance of power between the parties involved, a single possible interpretation of a woman's conduct and a man's prerogative in interpreting that conduct:

> 'If a man ignoring a woman's verbal 'no' is committing date rape, then a woman who says 'no' with her verbal language but 'yes' with her body language is committing date fraud. And a woman who continues to be sexual even after she says 'no' is committing date lying.' (Farrel, 1994, p. 228)

Like Lyndon (1992), Farrel (1994) is of no help towards arriving at a definition of masculinity that is useful to the scope of this study. He fails to grasp, rather than critique, feminist analyses of structural imbalances of power between men and women within patriarchy, on the most basic level.

Thomas (1993), like Farrel (1994) and Lyndon (1992), as the title of his book Not Guilty suggests, is primarily concerned with resisting the conceptualisation of men as a problematic category. He does so by pointing to the diversity of men's experience within patriarchy and by pointing out that men are victimised as well as women. The flaw in Thomas's argument becomes apparent in the balance of his evidence being weighted towards men being the main perpetrators of abuse upon other men. This consideration adds to, rather than subtracts from, the argument that men are a problematic gender category by showing that we abuse each other as well as women. This consideration problematises men's relationships with other men, while doing nothing to dispel the argument that men, as a gender category, occupy a privileged position in relation to women in patriarchal society.

The 'backlash' school of men's writing on masculinity displays a sense of unease among its authors in relation to being a man within patriarchy post the second wave of feminism. It reveals that its authors are caught between unhappiness at being men, evident in a sense of being under collective attack by feminism, and a desire to evade responsibility for change by adopting the perspective of a falsely accused victim. This 'backlash' school is characterised by a cruder attempt than that of the man academic school to avoid facing difficult questions about the relationship between men's sense of identity, as men, and oppressive patriarchal practices by men, which over-arch social and ideological divisions. It does so by attacking feminists as false accusers, simplistically arguing that not all men are bad and some women are bad too. This line of argument correlates with the man academic school's preoccupation with the dangers of 'essentialism', versus the infinite variability of men's experience. The

former school is simply subtler than the latter. Once the rhetorical devices of both of these schools are exposed, however, it becomes clear that the direction of these critiques of new forms of knowledge which have been opened-up by feminism, though conducted from very different ideological perspectives, is towards re-asserting androcentric forms of knowledge.

The Pastoralist school:

This school of writing by men on masculinity is exemplified by the work of Bly (1990), Iron John . The popularity of Bly's work, evident in the large sales of his book, is testament to men's unhappiness within patriarchy, echoed by the 'backlash' and academic schools of men's writing on masculinity. Like the 'backlash' school, Bly (1990) portrays men as victims. Whereas the 'backlash' school portrays men as victims of feminists, however, Bly (1990) portrays men as victims of industrialism, failing as fathers through the alienation brought about by industrialism. Bly's (1990) work is pastoralist in nature. While neither professing hostility to feminism, nor acknowledging feminism as the prime mover of its existence, it seeks to find a way for men to ease our alienation and discomfort, as men, by promoting a pre-industrial vision of Heroic manhood, enacted through bucolic ceremony, as a valid source of masculine identity. Because of its removal from feminist exposures of patriarchy as pre-dating industrialism (Miles, 1993), however, and its implicit denial that masculinity was a problematic condition in the pre-industrial age, it contains no useful start-point for analysis of the masculine condition in the present age, and is therefore not helpful in arriving at a definition of masculinity which is useful to this work.

The Self-Reflexive School:

Of the five current, main schools of men writing about masculinity, this school (Jackson, 1990; Middleton, 1992), is the only one which addresses seriously the problem of how the man author's own sense of masculine identity and practice influences his study of masculinity. Jackson (1990) opens his work with an explicit acknowledgement of feminism as a prime mover in the study of masculinity:

> 'It's now fifteen years since Sheila Rowbotham threw out the challenge to conventional masculinity to start remaking itself by joining in the mutual investigation of gender identity: 'At the same time I sensed something very

> complicated going on in the heads of men who were about my age. It's for them to write about this. I wish they would very soon.' (Rowbotham, 1973, quoted in Jackson, 1990, p. 1)

Jackson (1990) explains men's resistance, pointed to by Hanmer (1990), to dealing with the 'something very complicated' as residing in the necessity which many men feel to maintain 'an illusion of mastery' over our lives (Jackson, 1990, p. 2). Middleton (1992) echoes this position by reference to his own relationship with Heroic, men figures in fiction. He also recognises that:

> 'Masculinity has a vested interest in blocking unheroic, masculine self-analysis.' (Middleton, 1992, p. 230)

In taking this position Jackson (1990) and Middleton (1992) achieve the two qualifications lacking in the men academic school, for addressing the question of what binds men together through our patriarchal practices. First, they are concerned with the study of men as a *gender category*, rather than the study of the 'narrow personal identities of men' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34), and second; they locate themselves explicitly *within* that gender category.

I would argue that the man researcher on masculinity disqualifies himself from the possibility of producing the *new concepts* that are required to masculinity unless he can meet these qualifications. By coming clean in this way, Jackson (1990) and Middleton (1992) locate themselves in Connell's (1995, p. 79) 'circle of legitimacy'. This approach opens-up the possibility of describing how that circle looks *from the inside*, which is precisely where the man author is in relation to masculinity. Other men authors, discussing nebulous 'masculinities', seem to be unaware that they *are in the circle, looking outwards*, living the 'phenomenological and physical lives of men' (Scully, 1990, p. 2). Unless the man researcher can find a means of describing what he experiences, personally, within that circle, in his construction of himself and other men, as men, he cannot produce the new concepts that are required to understand masculinity. Rather, he can only reproduce the discourses problematised by feminism, or echo feminist discourses.

The adoption or rejection by men of feminist concepts, such as 'patriarchy' or 'sexism' does nothing, in itself, to illuminate the experience of being a man. In itself, it simply generates intellectual and emotional indigestion as the body politic modifies its intellectual framework to accommodate such concepts within existing power structures, as the windy rhetoric of most men writing on masculinity demonstrates. As Hanmer (1990, p. 26) puts it,

'The inseparability of the political and the theoretical is understood in the gut, so to speak.'

The key to understanding the maintenance of patriarchal structures by men, therefore, would appear to lie not only in the application of feminist theory to patriarchal practices, but also by an exposure of the mechanisms in men by which those accommodations between intellectual integrity and the maintenance of power are made. A pre-condition to the latter is the invention of a method of enquiry into masculine consciousness which examines disparities in men between idealised and actual practice, regardless of the nature of a man's professed ideology, which appears to be of secondary importance to his engagement in those practices. I show how I devised such a method of enquiry in Chapter 3. In exploring his masculine consciousness and patriarchal practice in public, examining the disparities between his idealised masculine self and the actuality of his experience, Jackson (1990) takes a step in this direction. Middleton (1992) takes a similar step by turning his gaze inwards to look at his own relationship with his internalised visions of Heroic men.

Jackson's (1990) work, however, is limited in its ability to address the question of what binds men together in our patriarchal practices by the scope of his enquiry, which is confined to himself as a subject. In this arena, the dangers of extrapolating from the particular to the general are self-evident. His work is also constrained by the fact that the data upon which it is based, distant memory, is unreliable by its nature. Middleton's (1992) work is similarly constrained by the fact that it is not rooted in a deconstruction of his day to day experience as a man in relation to other men. Nonetheless, in their atypical willingness to explore uncharted and unsafe personal territory, Jackson (1990) and Middleton (1992) discover useful pointers to lines of enquiry that may be undertaken in answering that question. One of the most useful pointers to surface from this self-reflexive school is Jackson's (1990) lifelong fear of being found out by other men as fraudulent in his clam to masculinity, and subsequently ejected by those men from Connell's (1995, p. 79) 'circle of legitimacy'.

Jackson's (1990) whole experience of being a boy at boarding school, for example, is permeated by the fear that he will be discovered as deficient in his claim to masculine identity:

> 'The showers were the most terrifying places for 'unmanly' boys like me. I used to position myself in the most secret corners of the changing room, protecting myself from being ogled or ridiculed. And frequently I used to skip the shower, hiding my muddy knees and waiting till I got back to the boarding school when I could scrape the mud off my legs in the wash basin

without exposing the rest of my body to public gaze.' (Jackson, 1990, p. 180)

Here Jackson (1990) expresses both a recognition of his masculine inadequacy and a fear that it will be discovered by his man peers. This sense of inadequacy in relation to other men is a theme that recurs throughout his autobiography in a number of situations throughout his life, for example, in the pub as a young and older man, suggesting that he has internalised an unattainable ideal in relation to his masculine identity. In this light, it would seem that the most significant areas of experience to explore, in terms of discovering masculine identity, is that of the production of a masculine ideal in relations between men, and the need of men to maintain the illusion that we can attain that ideal. These issues are dealt with in Chapters 5 and 6.

Postmodernism:

The limitations of postmodernism in relation to feminist analyses of patriarchy are addressed by Fraser and Nicholson (1993), who critique postmodernism in relation to feminism through examining the work of Lyotard (1985). Fraser and Nicholson (1993) argue that postmodernism, while having the advantage of rejecting over-arching philosophies such as Marxism or Freudianism, which are androcentric, disqualifies itself from usefulness to the analysis of patriarchy by locating patriarchy theory itself as an over-arching philosophy. They challenge this contention by distinguishing between essentialist strands of feminism (Firestone, 1971; Chowdorow, 1978) and the possibility of creating non-essentialist, comparativist forms of feminist enquiry, which are capable of addressing societal macrostructures. Fraser and Nicholson (1993) argue that large-scale social enquiry, which is necessary to understanding patriarchy, need not necessarily be essentialist. Haraway (1997, p. 32) argues, men are 'self-invisible' within positivist discourses. I would argue that the abandonment of positivist discourses by men does nothing, in itself, to enable men to achieve the self-visibility necessary to break free from the gravitational pull of those discourses. Within these conditions, postmodernist discourses between men that appear to be new, can only, effectively be extensions of old discourses, in which we men are haunted by the invisible ghost of our denied masculinity.

I would go further than Fraser and Nicholson (1993), by arguing that postmodernism, as a concept, is not biased towards abandoning the tools required to analyse societal

macrostructures, but rather that postmodernism is understood by men writers like Lyotard (1985) to postulate a false pole between essentialism and infinite fragmentation in the study of identity, including, by implication, gendered identity. In this sense, postmodernism is open to misuse by men in negating the value of work on masculinity. The erosion of intellectual confidence in unfashionable, modernist, *androcentric* forms of knowledge, like Marxism, advanced through modernity, does not necessarily mean that no other forms of non-androcentric knowledge are possible in making enquiries into the wide-scale and continued privilege of men, as a gender category, in patriarchal societies. The collapse of intellectual confidence in modernist philosophies as being inadequate to encompass the variability of human experience may reflect flaws that reside precisely in their androcentricity.

The continuity of the advantage of men as a gender category, over women, suggests that men's practice is informed by forces that operate *independently* of philosophies or philosophical movements, like postmodernism, which, ironically, can be regarded as another meta-narrative that men can employ to dodge the issue of men's privilege over women. Such philosophies may justify patriarchy by denying or reinventing women's experience, but they do not *drive* it. Their function is rather to obscure that which drives it: men's fear of losing power, as power is understood in patriarchal terms. Thus androcentric, universalist philosophies inevitably collapse within patriarchy, because their androcentricity negates their universalism. They are replaceable within patriarchy by other philosophies, providing those philosophies obscure the experience of women, *as women*. Postmodernism can be regarded as just such another universalist, and mystificatory philosophical movement, adopted androcentrically by men academics because it serves the function of not only devaluing women's experience, *as women*, but also calling into question the legitimacy of enquiry into patterns of women's oppression at the hands of 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer 1990, p. 34) within patriarchy.

In this light, postmodernism as embraced by men merits treatment with the same suspicion as the men academic school of writers on 'masculinities', in its collective creation of a false pole between essentialism and infinite fragmentation in the construction of identity. Postmodernism can be used by men as a road-block to awkward questions, posed by feminists, about the unjust maintenance of patriarchal privilege by men, as a gender category.

**Feminists Writing About Masculinity *and* Crime:**

Unlike current writing on masculinity by men, with the exception of Lyndon (1992) and Farrel (1994) who seek to exculpate men as a gender category from offending against women, women writing on masculinity (Campbell, 1993; Miles, 1992; Segal, 1990) tend to deal with crime as an issue integral to masculinity. Miles (1992) puts it thus:

> 'What makes a man violent? That which makes him a man. What do the child abuser, sadist, sexual murder have in common? Masculinity.' (Miles, 1992, p. 267)

Campbell puts it thus:

> 'The great unspoken in the crime angst of the Eighties and Nineties was that it is a phenomenon of masculinity. Indeed crime is one of the cultures in which young men acquire the mantle of manhood.' (Campbell, 1993, p. 211)

Segal puts it thus:

> 'At a personal level, most of the crimes of men against women - and other men - are an aspect of men's deep fear of, and hence hostility towards, femininity, in societies which tolerate or excuse many forms of male violence.' (Segal, 1990, p. 317)

The linking of crime with masculinity, evident in the differential importance lent to it by men and women writers on the subject of masculinity, points again to the accuracy of Scully's (1990, p. 2) observation that 'women and men live in separate phenomenological if not physical worlds'. Whereas feminist writers generally have been centrally concerned with crime, in their experience of violence on economic, intellectual, physical and sexual levels, *as women*, men have no history of being victims *as men.*

This point is made by Hanmer (1990) as she writes about differentials in the way in which men and women experience oppression, using homosexuality as an example:

> 'Women are primarily oppressed as women, whether lesbian or heterosexual, but gay men are oppressed as sexual deviants.' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 30)

The same point can be made in relation to racism, or any other form of social oppression:

black men, gay men, disabled men, to name a few examples, are oppressed because of their skin colour, their sexuality or their disability, not because they are men. Women who are black, lesbian or disabled are oppressed because of these factors *and* the fact that they are women. Masculinity, therefore, can be seen as a variable which may be experienced differentially by men, which may be accepted, rejected or reinterpreted by men, but may never, by definition in patriarchy, allow men to be oppressed *as men*. If this were to occur on a large scale, then patriarchy would be at an end, because the category 'man' would have a different meaning to that of dominant gender category.

This dynamic extends to crime in the sense that women are frequently victims of crime *because they are women*, whereas men are rarely victims of crime *because they are men*. Sexualised violence against men, for example, violence against gay men, can be seen as a means of expelling men from the category 'man'. I argue in Chapter 6 that man to man violence can be considered as having two forms; one that incorporates men into the category man, and one that expels men from the category 'man'. Men, therefore, are less likely to have gender at the forefront of our consciousness because we do not generally experience 'men' as a problematic category, being removed from the experience of sexism, which we can understand only as a concept.

We are more likely to experience 'criminals' or 'yobs' as a problematic category, taking for granted that 'they' are men, but in a different category to us, perhaps belonging to a different 'masculinity'. This masculist mind-set is evident in the concept of a plurality of 'masculinities' itself. In relation to crime, however, it is particularly clear. Morgan's (1992) book on how to study masculinity contains a list of useful locations. 'Prison' forms part of that list, along with 'mining' and 'deep sea fishing' as 'cases where men and masculinity more or less come explicitly to the fore' (Morgan, 1992, p. 47)

According to Dobash and Dobash (1979), or Kelly (1996 and 1999), however, many women living with men from many different 'masculinities' need travel no further than their own homes for an experience of masculinity coming explicitly to the fore, and an experience of crime as well, in the form of violence at the hands of a man partner. It is perhaps for this reason that women writers on masculinity tend to incorporate crime as an integral part of their work, as opposed to something extraordinary and removed from their daily experience. The home is often the place of greatest danger for women (Dobash and Dobash, 1979, Kelly 1996 and 1999). The danger almost always comes from a man who is known to them, who may or may not belong to a criminal 'masculinity'. As Hanmer (1990, p. 34) puts it:

'Deviance theory does not really help us as we are talking about Mr. Anyman.'

**Men Writing About Masculinity and Crime:**

The recognition of the widespread abuse of women, and children, by men in patriarchal societies, which has developed in response to the recent renaissance of feminism, points to a credibility gap between the ideology of patriarchy and the actuality of its practice by men, thus calling into question a cornerstone of the patriarchal state: the man as protector and provider. That which has the power to rock this cornerstone on its foundations, however, is the location of these practices as *criminal and conformist* at the same time. If 'Mr. Anyman' can rape and batter, and is publicly exposed as a 'common' rather than 'domestic' criminal, the category 'criminal', meaning, by definition 'deviant', begins to lose that meaning. If 'Mr. Anyman' can be a 'criminal' as the evidence of Dobash and Dobash (1979) suggests, then who is 'deviant' and who is 'normal'?

When this question is posed in the light of a gendered analysis of criminal statistics (Graaf, 1992), and 'Mr. Anyman' appears to be likely to have engaged in some criminal activity at sometime in his youth, the conceptualisation of the criminal as 'deviant' appears to relate more closely to the ideology of patriarchy than its actual practice by men. This consideration inevitably suggests that if we wish to learn about the actuality of crime, as opposed to the patriarchal ideology of crime we should look to 'Mr. Anyman', and ask what 'phenomenological if not physical world' (Scully, 1990, p. 2) he lives in, rather than the 'Mr. Deviant', the subject of criminological enquiry, he has created to deal with the credibility gap between his ideology and his practice. And we should look at the relationship between 'Mr. Anyman' and 'Mr. Deviant' to see how one maintains the other: how patriarchal ideology is maintained by men, despite conflicting practice by men.

Literature in this regard, with the limited exceptions of Jackson (1990) and Middleton (1992), has yet to be written by men. No attempt, that I am aware of, has been made by any man author, defined by the criminal law as 'normal' or 'deviant', to locate and chart his masculine identity and practice in his relationships with other men, on a day to day basis. Recent literature on 'masculinities' and crime, Messerschmidt (1993) and Jefferson (1994) for example, written mainly by men within the criminological establishment, tends to reflect the orthodoxy of the man academic school of writing, in that it avoids addressing itself to exploring the links between legal and illegal practices by men, as men.

This tendency is evident in the work of Jefferson (1994), who cites bell hooks' fondness for her 'easygoing' brother over her 'fearsome' father as evidence that 'the notion of a single masculinity that all men aspire to must be given up.' (Jefferson, 1994, p. 12) On this basis he goes on to argue that:

> 'Rather we need to be thinking about a range of masculinities, though undoubtedly some, like the patriarchal ideal embodied by bell hooks' father, are more dominant than others. Connell's notion of a 'hegemonic masculinity' (which) is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women' (Connell, 1987, p. 87) best captures both notions: the variety of masculinities and their hierarchical ordering.' (Jefferson, 1994, p. 12)

Jefferson's argument is syllogistic, in the sense that it offers bell hooks' liking for men who were 'not obsessed with being Patriarchs' (Jefferson, 1994, p. 11) as evidence that it is not possible to find a common denominator between men who fit ideal models of patriarchal practice and those who do not, in the form of a social construction of masculinity. Thus he side-steps the question of what links 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) with Mr. Deviant and thereby the necessity of locating himself as, a man, in relation to both. Following Connell's (1991 and 1995) model of 'masculinities', Jefferson (1994) arrives at a conclusion, in which he very briefly discusses crime in relation to masculinity. This conclusion is quoted in its entirety:

> 'With that in mind, think, finally of the question of masculine subjectivity and crime, especially where issues of gender are obviously central, such as wife-battering, child sexual abuse and rape. The worst motivational accounts in this area are tawdry variations on the theme of 'Bad, mad or sad' while even the best tend to get stuck on one side or the other of the individualistic / socially deterministic divide. Finding a way of transcending that dichotomy, or producing accounts which are intellectually coherent and experientially recognisable, is one important way in we can begin to take 'men and crime' more seriously.' (Jefferson, 1994, p. 30)

Jefferson (1994) does not concern himself with masculine identity, but rather with masculine subjectivity. Although he nods in the direction of a link between masculinity and crime with the phrase 'obviously central', he does not explain what he means by it. All that Jefferson (1994) has to say is that 'men and crime' should be taken more seriously.

Messerschmidt (1993), whose book Masculinities and Crime is forwarded by Connell

(1990 and 1995) as 'This is a vivid and original book.' (Messerschmidt, 1993 p. vii), uses Connell's (1995) vague conceptualisation of 'masculinities' as a model for his own vision. In order to do so he redefines Connell's (1995) non-definition of 'hegemonic' masculinity into something more workable:

> 'Simply defined, in any culture, hegemonic masculinity is the idealised form of masculinity in a given historical setting.' (Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 82)

Messerschmidt (1993) does not give an example of what an idealised form of hegemonic masculinity might be, or how it might have developed. He argues that different 'masculinities', which he does not define, produce different forms of crime. This line of argument generates difficulties in explaining areas of crime which are demonstrably committed by men across all social classes, for example 'domestic' violence (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Kelly 1996 and 1999). In order to deal with this problem, he cites studies which link low social status and unemployment, to the reported incidence of such violence, in a section strategically titled 'Wife Beating and Battering Rape' (Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 143).

> 'Finally, Michael Smith's (1990a: 49) study of risk factors in wife beating found that 'the lower the income, the higher the probability of abuse. 'This same study went on to report that the chances of a low-income woman being severely battered during marriage exceed those of a middle-class woman by a factor of ten. Smith's (1990: 267) data reveals that 'men with relatively low incomes, less educated men in low status jobs were significantly more likely than their more privileged counterparts to subscribe to an ideology of familial patriarchy. These men are also more likely to have beaten their wives.'' (Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 148)

Messerschmidt (1993) does not address himself to the question of whether these studies are deficient in their methodology because of their narrow, positivist definition of violence as simply physical. When men's violence to women is considered in the light of its function in maintaining patriarchy (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; Kelly, 1996 and 1999) it can be seen to operate on economic, sexual, emotional and intellectual as well as physical levels. Nor does Messerschmidt (1993) take into account the extra policing to which lower working class men are subject, which Box (1991) argues to be productive of disproportionate convictions for crime generally among men in that class. When he addresses himself to the subject of 'Force-only Rape', we discover why he has categorised 'Battering Rape' in with

'Wife Beating'. Apparently, middle-class husbands are likely to use 'only the force necessary to coerce their wives into submission' (Messerschmidt, 1993, p. 150). This consideration could be interpreted as indicative of a reflection of more effective intimidation of women by middle class men because of the greater resources available to us than working class men.

The same consideration can be applied to 'domestic' violence: men with high social status may batter less, although we cannot judge until we have methodologically sound studies of Mr. 'Anyman' to interrogate, because *we do not need to*, having more effective means of doing the violence of inflicting our will on women. The violence done is not the method, nor the intent, but the consequence for the victim, as experienced by the victim, a point apparently lost on Messerschmidt (1993) as he extends the man academic school of argument to its logical point of absurdity, where it folds in on itself as different 'masculinities' begin to look alike.

Collier (1998) recognises the difficulty of applying Connell's (1995) notion of hegemonic and subordinated masculinities to crime by men because of what Collier (1998, p. 178) describes as the 'inherent vagueness and instability of the concept of 'maleness/masculinity' *itself*'. On this basis, he argues that the concept of masculinity is not helpful to understanding men committing crime, as men. Yet his use of the term 'inherent' in relation to masculinity '*itself*' negates the fact that masculinity is a concept, as opposed to an object. The problem thus seems to be that masculinity has been vaguely conceptualised by Connell (1995) as opposed to being inherently vague.

The difficulty of applying the vague concept of 'masculinities' to Criminal Justice practice is evident in the work of Scourfield (1998). Scourfield (1998) notes that Probation Officers fail to challenge the masculinity of men defendants, as does Dominelli (1991). In view of the lack of a useful theoretical framework of masculinity, that hardly seems surprising. Scourfield's (1998) observes that Probation Officers need to spend more time discussing the literature's implications for practice. This observation suggests to me that the lack of such discussion reflects a lack of a useful body of grounded, self-reflexive, intersubjective literature on masculinity, based on day to day research on men's practice, as men. Hornby (1997), using the same vague concept of 'masculinities' runs into similar problems. Hornby (1997, p. 26) speaks of male defendants belonging to 'problem masculinities' and concludes that the male Probation Officer is 'suffocated' by the 'stranglehold of radical feminism'.

Literature written by men on masculinity and crime does not attempt to understand 'crime'

as a masculine phenomenon. Its failure to so appears to be rooted in both a lack of distinction between the actuality of offending, and the myth of 'crime' (see Chapter 4), and the adoption of the man academic school's paradigm of an unschematised plurality of undefined masculinities. Criminology, as an academic discipline, is barren of texts that illuminate offending as a product of masculine identity. This is not just because other academic disciplines, despite pressure by feminism, have failed to produce a new form of knowledge in relation to men, but also because criminology's conception of 'crime' is antithetical to a conception of offending as a masculine phenomenon. If Criminology were to deal with offending instead of 'crime', its focus would shift onto the study of men, rather than the 'criminal'. If it were to focus on Mr. 'Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34), rather than Mr. Deviant, it would lose its claim to discreet status in relation to other social science disciplines. An understanding of offending as a 'phenomenon of masculinity' (Campbell, 1993, p. 211) would therefore put criminology itself on trial, in line with the indictment made by Smart (1995) in respect of the marginalisation of feminist theory in relation to both orthodox and radical schools of criminology:

> 'It is clear that if mainstream criminology remains unchanged it will follow the path that Young has outlined into greater and greater complicity with the mechanisms of discipline. However, the path of radical criminology seems wedded to the modernist enterprise and is, as yet, unaffected by epistemological sea changes which have touched feminism and other discourses. Under such circumstances it is very hard to see what criminology has to offer to feminism.' (Smart, 1995, p. 47)

In this light, it is not surprising to discover that, post the recent renaissance of feminism, mainstream criminology, an academic discipline founded and policed by 'normal' men, studying 'deviant' men as objects, has little to offer in answer to the question of why most crime is committed by men. The nature of the discipline does not permit it to conceptualise crime as a 'phenomenon of masculinity' (Campbell, 1993, p. 211) because to do so would invite its own demise.

**Conclusion:**

Sharp differences in gendered consciousness emerge through examining literature on masculinity and crime differentially, according to the sex of the author. Feminists

(Campbell, 1993; Miles, 1992; Hanmer, 1990; Segal, 1990; Scully, 1990) living in the phenomenological world of women, are preoccupied with accounting for the propensity of 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) to engage in practices which are harmful to himself and others. Men, living in the phenomenological world of men, are preoccupied with personally absenting ourselves as subjects of this enquiry, whether our professed ideology supports it or not, by directing attention anywhere but towards ourselves. Men sociologists (Brittan, 1989; Connell, 1991 and 1995; Hearn and Collinson, 1994; Morgan, 1992; Seidler, 1994) and polemicists (Stoltenberg, 1990) point to 'them', as other men. Men criminologists (Jefferson, 1994; Messerschmidt, 1993) point to 'criminals' and working class men. Men pastoralists (Bly, 1990) point to industrialism. Men reactionaries (Farrel, 1994; Lyndon, 1992; Thomas, 1993) point back at feminists. Men postmodernists (Lyotard, 1985) point to universal chaos. With the limited exceptions (Jackson, 1990; Middleton, 1992) these men authors exhibit *uniform* and *personal* resistance, to questions, raised by feminism, about masculine consciousness. The result of this personal resistance is that they disqualify themselves from illuminating patriarchal practices, by men, from the inside, as men. The question raised by this scale and scope of personal resistance by men to questions raised by feminism is what are we so determined to conceal from ourselves? Men's literature on masculinity and crime reveals consistent personal resistance on the part men to feminism, combined with a recurrent theme of unhappiness at being a man within patriarchy. This ambivalence suggests that men are *personally* alienated within patriarchy, but lack the conceptual means to theorise that alienation. As Hanmer (1990) puts it:

> 'The most oppressed of all conditions is to have no words to explain the feelings and predicaments one is experiencing, while the belief systems of dominant culture and intellectual life deny its reality.' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 21)

The crucial difference between men and women as gender categories, however, is that while men and women may both experience alienation within patriarchy, men have the physical, emotional, intellectual, sexual and economic power to act out that alienation on a large scale. I will show that offending by men can be seen as an example of the enactment of that alienation, as well as being functional in legitimating patriarchal authority. Men in the Criminal Justice System act in collusion with men inside and outside academia, to direct enquiry away from ourselves, as men, by problematising other men and women. Available literature on masculinity and crime reveals that we men are trapped in a phenomenological

bunker of masculinity, evading the light of feminist enquiry into the link between masculinity and crime and displacing our alienation, generated by our practices, as men, onto women and other men.

# CHAPTER 3: BECOMING SELF-VISIBLE: A REFLEXIVE METHODOLOGY FOR MEN

## Introduction:

In Chapter 1 I have explained the difficulties I experienced in conducting my research on an overt basis and how, as a result, I was obliged to conduct it on a semi-covert basis. I have also discussed the limitations of this approach in respect of both the ethics of permission from research subjects and in terms of being unable to check my data with research subjects other than myself. In this Chapter I explain why and how I chose observer participation as my method of research, how I devised my particular method and how I recorded and analysed the resultant data.

I set my explanation of these points in the context of literature on observer participation. I trace the historical development of observer/participant methodology within a positivist framework. I show how such positivist methodology is unreliable in the study of masculinity, because of the internalisation of masculinity in the man researcher. I also show that positivist methodology is unreliable in *any* context because of its failure to incorporate the researcher as a 'crucial variable' (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p. 157) in her/his own research. I discuss the limitations of adapting negotiated, intersubjective, feminist research approaches to the study of masculinity. I do so with particular reference to the problems of the vulnerability of the man researcher to being perceived as a threat by men more powerful than himself, since formal and informal hierarchies of power among men are linked inextricably to the construction of masculinity through relations between men. I expand more fully on this point in Chapter 4, where I show that the primary function of masculinity is the control of men by more powerful men within the state. In this light, research into masculinity, which is based on appropriate, intersubjective methodology exposes the mechanisms behind such power.

## Research Approach:

My field research was similar to that of Holdaway (1983), in that I conducted research in respect of my own workplace. The crucial difference in approach between Holdaway's (1983) work and mine, however, was that my intention was not to 'probe the occupational

culture' (Holdaway, 1983, p. 4) in the same way that Goffman (1991) explored the occupational culture of a psychiatric hospital. My intention was rather to discover the mechanisms by which masculine identity is constructed in the individual man in my own society, using an institution, the men's prison, to study dynamics among men, incorporating myself as a subject of my own research.

I chose to conduct my research in a men's prison because I was employed there at the time I became interested in the subject of masculinity. The men's prison is a key site for the conduct of enquiry into the production of masculine identity, since it contains men defined by the Criminal Justice System as both legitimated, as men staff, and non-legitimated, as men prisoners: in Hanmer's (1990, p. 34) terms, 'Mr. Anyman' and 'Mr. Deviant' respectively. I explain how I arrived at this view in Chapter 4. Being a man employee in an institution where men's conformity to patriarchal norms is enforced by the state, through men employees such as myself, represented an unparalleled opportunity to begin unravelling the question of why and how 'Mr. Anyman' rather than 'Mr. Deviant' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) engages in oppressive practices *as a man*. Were the 'criminals' qualitatively different from my men colleagues and I, as the Criminal Justice System implies? Or could both prisoners and man staff, *as men* playing different and temporary *social* roles, be located as inter-meshed cogs in a machine, the prison, as a component of a larger machine, the Criminal Justice System, whose primary function is to legitimate state authority as patriarchal?

I chose observer/participation as a research method because I was ideally placed to do so. As an integral part of the prison I was studying, by virtue of being an employee; a functional cog in the machine, rather than a researcher adopting the role of cog, it would have been perverse of me to adopt any other method. By undertaking the research I simply extended my role as participant to incorporate that of observer. Accordingly, I examined literature on participant observation, in particular, and more general literature on ethnography. I needed to resolve the problem of how I should incorporate myself as a variable in my research, both on the level of being a cog in the machine I was studying, and on the level of my socialisation as a man.

I found that literature on ethnography and observer participation, tends to fall into two distinct categories: that which is written from a positivist perspective, and that which is written from a feminist perspective. Each perspective represents a broad but distinct and incompatible ontological standpoint. In terms of ontology, the positivist methodological

literature which I examined falls into three schools: the traditional school, which is uninformed by epistemological concerns about the construction of data according to the socialisation of the researcher (Freidrichs and Ludtke, 1975; Mann, 1976; McNeill, 1990; Stacey, 1970); the liberal school (Burgess, 1990), which builds on the traditional school by considering the socialisation of the researcher in terms of its *influence* on the researcher; and the 'masculinities' school (Morgan, 1992), which builds on the liberal school in an unsuccessful attempt to incorporate feminist, ontological critiques of positivist methods into a positivist perspective. I found that feminist methodologists (Stanley and Wise, 1993; Reinharz, 1992; Roberts, 1990; Harding, 1987) are in broad consensus on the concept of incorporating the researcher and the researcher's socialisation into the research process, as a matter of methodological necessity.

**Positivist Participant Observation Literature:**

The Traditional School:

I did not find traditional literature on participant observation to be of much help in formulating a methodology, because of its positivist nature. This body of literature centred on a conceptualisation of the researcher as an outsider entering the research situation. For this reason, perhaps, it does not concern itself with the problem of how the researcher, as an integral element of the research situation, researches him/herself. Within its own, positivist framework, therefore, this body of work is methodologically flawed. This body of literature is also methodologically flawed on a more profound level. It assumes that the researcher is capable of finding a universal 'truth', if only a sufficiently rigorous, empirical framework of analysis can be created in order to convert the kind of 'soft' data which can be obtained from participant observation into 'hard' data which would represent 'facts'. This is a separate issue from the existential question of whether or not a universal truth exists. It is an issue about the limitations of the researcher in relation to omniscience, which is problematic, whether truth is conceptualised in relative or absolute terms. This universalist approach is typified by Freidrichs and Ludtke (1975):

> 'findings must be abstractable from the author's cognition.' (Freidrichs and Ludtke, 1975, p. 1)

This assertion assumes that the researcher is capable of transcending her/his individual cognition. This causes a problem in terms of observer participation, since observable phenomena inevitably take their form in the cognition of the researcher. Unless the researcher is omniscient, therefore, she/he will necessarily be unable to locate the boundaries between the phenomena and the cognitive framework within which they are experienced. The problem of the observer's lack of omniscience is exacerbated by the caveat, raised by the work of Berger and Luckmann (1991, first published 1966), writing nine years earlier than Freidrichs and Ludtke (1975), that reality is socially constructed. Since cognition is formed in the medium of socialisation, as Berger and Luckmann (1991) point out, this adds a social dimension to the methodological problem of abstracting the findings from the author's cognition. Freidrichs and Ludtke (1975) recognise the former element of this problem, the consideration that phenomena take form in the cognition of the observer, quoting Whorf (1963):

> 'The categories and types being abstracted from the world of phenomena cannot simply be found by us in itself, e.g. because of their catching the observer's eye. Contrary to this, the world presents itself in a kaleidoscopelike stream of impressions which must be organised by our minds, i.e. largely by the linguistic system of our minds.' (Freidrichs and Ludtke, 1975, p.2, quoting Whorf, 1963)

In brief, cognitions are selective. Freidrichs and Ludtke, ignoring the problems of socialisation pointed to by Berger and Luckmann (1991), deal with this problem in the following manner:

> 'The aim of observation is to describe a behaviour sequence in such a way that a maximum of convergence of reiterated observations of one observer as well as an agreement between different observers observing the same sequence is reached.' (Freidrichs and Ludtke, 1975, p. 2)

This consensual model of 'reality' is reminiscent of a definition of common-sense as 'organised mass ignorance', an epigram I have heard attributed to Oscar Wilde, although I have been unable to source it. As a methodological approach, this model is flawed on four levels: first, it disregards the problem of the individual's subjectivity of cognition, in which phenomena are selected and shaped by him/her into observations within her/his cognition, from a mass of phenomena which exist independently of her/his cognition: the world does

not 'present itself' to us, but rather it is constructed by us; second, it disregards the problem of the observer's socialisation in the construction of those data: variations in socialisation are infinite, therefore variations in the construction of data have the potential to be infinite; third, it disregards the problem of the relationship between the observer and observer's socialisation: this is likely to be a dynamic relationship, since socialisation is not a static process; and fourth, it disregards the problem of the observer's construction of self, in relation to socialisation, through the construction of the data: that which the observer perceives is inevitably in a dynamic relationship with her/his sense of self.

None of these problems can be resolved through seeking convergence in *interpreting* the data, since these problems, a priori, relate to the *construction* of the data. The data are constructed through a complex set of dynamics in which the observer also constructs him/herself along a multiplicity of dimensions of socialisation. These elements of socialisation may be in a dynamic relationship with each other as well as the data. These elements are inevitably present in the researcher's engagement with research material.

The complex nature of the dynamics by which the observer constructs both self and data in the same process is similarly absent in Mann's (1976), conceptualisation of the observer's role. Mann (1976) makes the positivist assumption that *sharing* the experiences of the researched equates to *having* the same experiences as the researched:

> 'Participant observation, then, is an attempt to put both the observer and the observed 'on the same side' by making the observer a member of the group so that he can experience what they experience and work within their frame of reference.' (Mann, 1976, p. 88)

Mann (1976), therefore, does not address himself to the problem of how the researcher's socialisation may influence her/his construction of the phenomena s/he may observe.

McNeill (1990) is similarly naive in relation to the problem of the observer's socialisation in constructing observable phenomena:

> 'The trick is to see the social context as the regular participants do, while at the same time remaining a detached observer of events.' (McNeill, 1990, p. 77)

Apparently, this entails being 'open minded':

> 'It has been suggested that, if a researcher is not sometimes surprised at what

> they observe, then they are failing to be as open minded as they should.' (McNeill, 1990, p. 77)

It is difficult to see how it is possible for the researcher to be 'open minded', if her/his consciousness is not taken into account as within the research process. The researcher's consciousness is not a blank sheet upon which impressions can be written, nor does that sheet stay still. The complex matrix of dynamics between socialisation, the construction of data and the construction of self, which produce a fluid consciousness, cannot be suspended in order to write upon consciousness, because that which is experienced is formed within that matrix. The erroneous assumption, however, implicit in positivist methods, that it is possible to suspend one's socialisation in the construction of data, appears to be an integral part of ethnographic tradition in the Social Sciences. Stacey (1970), for example, quotes uncritically Malinowski (1964), who implicitly makes this assumption:

> 'Finally, Malinowski stressed how important it was to 'grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise *his* vision of *his* world'.'. (Stacey 1970, p. 52, quoting Malinowski, 1964, original italics)

Stacey (1970) considers the sex and class of the researcher to be important, but only in the sense that, in the study of Banbury, differential sex and class origins gave researchers a wider access to different elements of the town's life:

> 'In the team of three people studying Banbury there were research workers from both sexes and who, in their social origins had come from the titled upper, the middle and the working classes. They were able to exploit these characteristics in the interests of the research, each participating in a different sector of the town's life.' (Stacey, 1970, p. 60)

Stacey (1970) goes on to say:

> 'In some sectors they moved about where their own origins made them acceptable, where their knowledge of the mores was a useful entree. In other sectors they deliberately moved in areas of society which by reason of their upbringing were quite unfamiliar to them.' (Stacey, 1970, p. 60)

Significantly, however, Stacey (1970) does not explain why this was done. Presumably, it was thought that researcher with different socialisation, implicitly assumed to be static, might have a different perspective on experiences which fell outside the range of their

socialisation from those whose range it fell within. The positivist assumption of a unitary reality, however, implied in the lack of discussion of the significance of differential experiences, and the lack of any apparent systematic means of cross-referencing observations of similar situations by observers with different origins, presumably resulted in the kinds of meetings of researchers prescribed by Freidrichs and Ludtke (1976), where the differential experiences of researchers would be shoe-horned into prevailing androcentric (see Eichler, 1991) and racist discourses, leaving many interesting questions unasked. For example: Were the observers white? If so, how did their whiteness affect their construction and interpretation of the data? What might a team of black, women researchers have made of Banbury? Would race and gender, powerful elements in socialisation, have affected the construction of the data and, if so, how would those differences have been interpreted by white, men colleagues in research meetings?

Stacey (1970) addresses the issue of race in discussing a study by Davies and Gardner (1941), 'Deep South':

> 'America could not at that time (1936) by definition be crossed. In order to see Deep South 'whole' the only way in which it could be studied was for white and coloured workers both to be employed, each working on one side of the colour-caste line.' (Stacey, 1970, p. 61)

Stacey (1970) sees the issue of 'colour' as being related simply to the question of access, rather than of significance in how researchers may frame their perceptions.

The Liberal school:

Burgess (1990) is, on a surface reading, apparently more sensitive to the problematic nature of the researcher's socialisation in formulating the phenomena s/he observes:

> 'we need to consider the extent to which experience, age, sex and ethnicity will *influence* the field researcher's role.' (Burgess, 1990, p. 88, my italics)

'Influence', however, is a highly significant term in this context. The use of the term 'influence', rather than, for example, 'shape', 'frame' or 'formulate', implies that there is a universal, absolute standard from which the researcher departs, according to these factors, raising the question of what that standard might be. This grafting-on of 'issues' to a

positivist approach demonstrates its methodological limitations when Burgess (1990) discusses each of these factors in relation to the statically and uni-dimensionally conceptualised socialisation of researchers in terms of their possible *influence* on the researcher. When he discusses age, for example, the illustrations he makes are confined to the effect of age gap on formation of the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Like Stacey (1970), he is oblivious to the possibility that the researcher's socialisation, implicitly unidimensional and static, in this instance in respect of age, may be a critical factor in her/his formulation, interpretation and prioritisation of observable phenomena.

When discussing methodological considerations in respect of a young woman observer conducting research among the elderly, his concerns centre around her inability to 'do' being an old person. (Burgess, 1990, p. 90) He does not consider age in terms of the researcher's socialised view of age. Thus he overlooks possibilities like a differential between an observer who comes from a culture in which old people are venerated and observer who comes from a culture in which old people are regarded as useless. Would each observe the same phenomena? What influence may other factors, like race, play in this process? Was the researcher having a good or a bad day?

Burgess (1990) is similarly limited by his positivist approach in relation to the question of the researcher's sex in *influencing* the research process:

> 'A further characteristic of the researcher that needs to be considered is the influence of sex and gender on field research. Much of the literature considers how gender influences the questions that can be posed and the data that are collected in field projects (cf. Golde, 1970; Warren and Ramussen, 1977; Wax, 1979; Roberts, 1981). Indeed, much of the discussion focuses upon how being female influences the role which the researcher is allocated and how this may limit or impede the progress and process of the research (cf. Easterday et al.).' (Burgess, 1990, p. 90)

As in Burgess's (1990) discussion of age, the positivist concept of *influence* comes into play, again. The underlying, positivist assumption that a 'neutral' and static role is possible for the researcher inexorably leads Burgess (1990) away from a conclusion that the socialisation of the researcher must be treated as central to the process of observation. This positivist perspective leads Burgess (1990) to mention rather than discuss Morgan's (1992) response to feminist critiques of masculine forms of knowledge, in a single sentence:

> 'He indicates that gender differences do not merely exclude researchers from certain areas but are a source of knowledge about a particular field.' (Burgess, 1990, p.91)

Burgess's (1990) dismissiveness of feminist critique is reinforced by his choice to refer to a man author responding to it, rather than by reference to the feminist authors he cites, who originally made the critique. Burgess (1990) obscures a central plank of feminist scholarship, the argument that new forms of knowledge are required to encompass the experience of women within patriarchy, by covering it over with an allied feminist argument that woman researchers are disadvantaged by virtue of their gender. He then re-frames the latter argument, which is based on the experience of women researchers being marginalised through routinised subordination within patriarchal institutions, like universities, for example, into an implicitly *localised*, rather than structural, problem, where women *may* be handicapped by their gender. He does so with a single, well-placed, 'if': *'if'* they are allocated roles where they are subordinate to men' (Burgess, 1990, p. 90, my italics). Women are not always allocated roles that are subordinate to men. The salient point is that women are disadvantaged within research roles, because the roles themselves are conceptualised as masculine. The concept of 'influence' suggests, in the absence of an explanation of the 'neutral' and static position which it implies, that the notional researcher, in line with tradition, is both white and man.

The 'Masculinities' School:

Morgan (1992), one of the proponents of the man academic school of writers on 'masculinities' (see Chapter 2) writing eleven years later, quotes Bordo (1986), in recognition of the problem of masculinity in the general conduct of sociological enquiry:

> 'Here, 'masculine' describes not a biological category but a cognitive style, an epistemological stance. Its key term is *detachment*: from the emotional life, from the particularities of time and place, from personal quirks, prejudices, and interests and most centrally from the object itself.' (Bordo, 1986: italics in original, quoted by Morgan, 1992, p. 168)

Thus Morgan (1992), unlike Burgess (1990) recognises the untenabilty of positivist claims to the possibility of 'objectivity' in sociological enquiry:

> 'If detachment is identified with masculinity, it again loses its claim to universality. The desire to eliminate sources of bias may simply be another form of, gender-based, bias.' (Morgan, 1992, p. 168)

The logical development of this view, if applied to a man participant/observer, is that the phenomena he observes are constructed in congruence with his masculine bias, or in Eichler's (1991) terms, within his androcentric frame of reference. The method he applies, therefore, is flawed, unless it incorporates a means of discovering that bias and factoring it into the research process. Morgan's (1992) concept of 'bias', however, is effectively the same as Burgess's (1990) concept of 'influence', in that the concept of bias implies a departure from a 'neutral' norm.

While Morgan (1992), unlike Burgess (1990), recognises that the norm is not neutral, the juxtaposition of an implied neutral norm against a recognition that the norm itself is biased generates a paradox in that the former position contradicts the latter. A closer reading of Bordo's (1986, quoted by Morgan, 1992, p.168) quotation, however, reveals that she is arguing that a masculine style is based on an untenable *conceit* of detachment, rather than arguing, as Morgan (1992) infers, that the *elimination* of bias is possible. Bordo (1986, quoted by Morgan, 1992, p. 168) is arguing for the *location* of the researcher in the research, rather than a style of research that pretends to be able to *eliminate* the researcher. The paradox which Morgan (1992) generates for himself stems from his positivist reading of Bordo (1986, quoted by Morgan, 1992, p. 168), which cannot encompass the necessity of locating, rather than pretending to be able to eliminate the researcher from the research process.

Morgan's (1992) failure to grasp the fundamental point about the necessity of locating the researcher in the research, made by Bordo (1986, quoted by Morgan, 1992, p. 168), and by many other feminist methodologists who are discussed later in this Chapter, may go some way towards explaining Morgan's (1992) negation, and his blaming of women for that negation, of the value of men attempting to develop a useful methodology for studying masculinity:

> 'Even if men were capable of developing a critical study of their own practices it is doubtful whether they would be producing anything that women would want to, or be interested in hearing.' (Morgan, 1992, p. 192)

Although Morgan (1992) mitigates his responsibility for this statement by characterising it

as a parody of a feminist position, rather than simply saying what he thinks, what he says nonetheless represents a logical culmination of his failure to recognise and address the necessity for creating research methods which incorporate a means of discovering the man researcher's androcentricity in their processes. In the absence of such methods, the man researcher could discover nothing useful to feminist knowledge. All that could be achieved, in the absence of such methodology would be the reproduction of androcentric knowledge.

Operating from a positivistic perspective, constantly reasserting the necessity of considering 'masculinities' in the plural, despite the evidence that problematic behaviours in men cut across social divisions between men, the best suggestion that Morgan (1992) can offer is that men study men in settings that are inaccessible to women, then discuss our findings with women. He says nothing useful in respect of methods that may discover the man researcher's androcentricity in the research process. May (1993), recognises the problems generated by this positivist approach, but he is unable to suggest a means of discovering the man researcher's androcentricity through the research process.

**Feminist Methodology:**

Feminist methodology, despite the variety of perspectives it contains, is by definition centrally concerned with the advancement of knowledge by women, about women, for women. While feminist methodologists like Stanley and Wise (1993) address the necessity for studying men,

> 'Feminist research must be concerned with all aspects of social reality and all participants in it. It seems obvious that any analysis of women's oppression *must* involve research on the part played by men in this.' (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p. 31, original italics)

they are equally clear that men cannot conduct feminist research, because men cannot be feminists:

> 'We reject the idea that men can be feminists because we argue that what is essential to 'being a feminist' is the possession of 'feminist consciousness'. And we see a feminist consciousness as rooted in the concrete, practical and everyday experience of being, and being treated as, *a woman.*' (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p. 31, original italics)

Reinharz (1992), on the other hand, seems unclear about whether men are capable of conducting 'feminist research'. She expresses this unclarity, in her brief section, 'A Note about Men' (Reinharz, 1992, p. 14), by offering something less than an admission to men who define themselves as feminist into the category of feminist researchers:

> 'My use of the criterion of self-definition provided me with a straightforward approach to these conundra. I include the work of men who call themselves feminist in a research publication. Since I have found so few instances, I suspect the closer men come to understanding feminism, the more reluctant they are to take the label. Nevertheless, it seems important to examine the specific instances where it occurs.' (Reinharz, 1992, p. 18)

Stanley and Wise (1993) have no suggestions to make in respect of men studying men, as men, since their concern is that of women conducting research 'on, by and for women.' (Stanley and Wise, 1993 p. 30). Reinharz (1992) has little to say on the subject, except to observe that men studying men are frequently assumed by the wider public to be homosexual (Reinharz, 1992, p.15). Roberts (1990), like Stanley and Wise (1993) and Reinharz (1992), is similarly, centrally concerned with the creation of a methodology which makes women visible. Feminist methodology has little to say *directly* about how men might study men, as men, because that is simply not a central concern of this body of work. If, however, as Stanley and Wise (1993) point out, 'any analysis of women's oppression *must* involve research on the part played by men in this.' (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p. 31), it is difficult to see how this could be achieved without the co-operation of men.

Harding (1987) takes a different perspective to Stanley and Wise (1993), in that while agreeing with the point that traditional epistemologies exclude women as 'agents of knowledge' (Harding, 1987, p. 3), she argues that the exclusion of women from areas to which women do not have access generates a necessity for the co-operation of men in contributing to feminist knowledge. Harding (1987) contends that the invisibility of women in sociological theory is a reflection of the invisibility of women in wider society, despite women's continuous, active resistance. Women are invisible in wider society because they are excluded from it, ontologically, if not physically, by men. I would go further than Harding (1987), by arguing, from my experience as a man, that men's exclusion of women from *Masculine Space*, which I discuss in Chapter 4, is a key factor in both the production of masculine knowledge and the suppression of women's agency in all areas, including the production of knowledge.

Masculine Space can be defined as space where men are present and women and children are absent. I show in Chapter 4 that as soon as a woman or a child enters such a space, it changes character. Even if a woman were to enter such Masculine Space in disguise, she would not be ontologically able to 'know' what was happening in the same way that a man would, because she would no more be able to enter masculine consciousness than a man would be able to enter feminine consciousness. In this sense, the concept of men calling ourselves feminist becomes absurd.

By the same token, however, if masculine consciousness, which can only be deconstructed by men, since it is exclusive to us, is not deconstructed, then feminist scholarship is consigned to studying the effects of patriarchy, rather than its causes. Masculine consciousness, our sense of ourselves as men, the key instrument in the maintenance of patriarchy, is produced by men primarily in the *absence* of women, be it a physical or ontological absence, or a combination of the two. Masculine consciousness is the patriarchal machine-tool which is used to manufacture weapons such as rape and violence, which are used to enforce patriarchal norms on women and, just as critically, on other men. It is codified in men's knowledge and concealed from feminist knowledge unless or until men are prepared to reveal and decode it. If that does not happen, feminist scholarship is consigned to a victim perspective. It can study only the effects of patriarchy, the weapons such as rape, rather than its cause, the machine-tool which manufactures the rapist as 'Mr Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34).

Feminist critiques of positivist methodology, however, are of indirect help in filling the methodological vacuum in relation to the study of men, as men. Stanley and Wise (1993) are particularly helpful in this respect, not least by pointing with particular clarity, along with Reinharz (1992), Roberts (1990) and Harding (1987) to the key importance to the research process of the researcher incorporating her consciousness into the research process:

> 'Our consciousness is *always* the medium through which research occurs; there is no method or technique of doing research other than through the medium of the researcher.' (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p. 157)

This is not simply a matter of ideology:

> 'the personal is not only the political, it is also the *crucial variable* which is absolutely present in each and every attempt to 'do research', although it is frequently invisible in terms of the research.' (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p.

157, my italics)

**A New, Intersubjective Methodology for Men Studying Masculinity:**

Although Stanley and Wise (1993), along with other feminist methodologists, write for the woman researcher, the consideration of the researcher as a 'crucial variable' in the research process seems no less valid for the man researcher. This consideration becomes particularly apposite in respect of a man researcher studying men, as men. The man researcher inevitably operates within the parameters of his masculine consciousness. In studying men, as men, he is inevitably studying himself, because he experiences himself as a man. Within a positivist framework, he can only study other men, as men, if he regards *them* as belonging to a different masculinity. This consideration may go some way towards explaining why the man academic school of writers, referred to in Chapter 2, insist in conceptualising masculinity in the plural.

If the man researcher operates outside a positivist framework, however, and he does not assume that he belongs to a different masculinity than the rapist, he is obliged to find a method of becoming aware of how his consciousness is operating. He needs to externalise the matrix of dynamics, internalised in himself, by which he is constructing the data and himself in the light of his socialisation. Unless this process is, or becomes, an element of the research method, he will be unable to move beyond constructing the data within his pre-existing conceptual framework. In the case of a man studying masculinity, this would necessarily prevent him from creating a new form of knowledge that is required to conceptualise that which he is studying.

Reading feminist texts, however, as Morgan's (1992) work illustrates, is not enough to provide sufficient distance from masculine consciousness for the man researcher to begin making useful observations on men, for two reasons: the first is that the man reader engages with those texts from an androcentric perspective, and the second is that those texts are written by women who are excluded from Masculine Space, and are therefore incapacitated from illuminating such space.

Before embarking on my fieldwork, I came to the view that, if it is to add to the sum of feminist knowledge, therefore, any ethnographic research study of men, by men, should satisfy the following three methodological qualifications, which I explore in Chapter 8:

1: *It should be concentrated on Masculine Space:* This seems to me to be a question of priority. Man researchers may well be able to make useful observations on mixed gender situations, but women researchers also have access to such situations, whereas man researchers have unique access to Masculine Space.

2: *It should cause the researcher to change his consciousness:* unless the man researcher changes his consciousness, by externalising the internalised matrix of dynamics between data, self and socialisation, he will not be able to make any observations that are useful to feminist knowledge, because he will construct data according to pre-existing socialisation. This is not a matter of adopting an ideology, but rather of becoming aware of how he constructs himself, as a man, through constructing the data *and* himself, as a man, in the same process. Such awareness will inevitably cause a change in his consciousness.

3: *It should incorporate a means for the researcher to chart his change of consciousness against his observations:* I conceptualised my fieldwork as a journey in which I hoped to chart a rough map, by marking changes of consciousness in a journal. I found that I did not simply construct data, but I also rapidly and continuously reconstructed them, to accord with my pre-existing frame of masculine identity: my masculine self. The unreliability of memory is discussed in relation to methodological literature later in this chapter. The function of that unreliability in relation to the maintenance of masculine identity is discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

In contrast to Morgan's (1992) androcentric, positivistically-rooted perspective, this start-point offers some hope of making discoveries which may be useful to feminist knowledge. I reasoned, before conducting my fieldwork, that if I had internalised masculinity; a sense of what it means to be a man, I ought to be able to externalise it by looking at myself in relation to other men, using them as a mirror of myself. My intuition was that if I could find a systematic means of checking my expectations of other men against my experience of them, I should be able to begin a process by which I could understand what I was projecting onto them. This, in turn, should enable me to understand what expectations I had of myself, as a man. I started from the assumption that my androcentricity caused me to live in a state of unquestionable consciousness, and I should therefore expect to find a gap between my expectations and my experience in my conduct as a man, in relation to other men. The

validation of this intuition through the data, is discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

The observation element of my research was a dynamic process observation and self-reflection in which I examined myself, as a man in relation to the men around me, constantly considering the significance of disjunctures between my expectations and my experience of both myself and other men. I recorded interactions I observed and was involved in as contemporaneously as possible: sometimes on the spot, if I could do so unobtrusively, sometimes immediately afterwards, but always before I left the prison at the end of the day. I kept my log initially in the form of whatever paper I had in my hand, which was usually a note-pad. I recorded my thoughts and my feelings as fully as possible, within the constraints of being obliged to function simultaneously in my professional role and not drawing attention to my role as observer.

My note-taking was also a dynamic process in that I used my notes both to record my *experience* and to reflect on it, noting changes in my construction and interpretation of previously recorded events as my frame of perception began to shift. My notes thus reflect the dynamic nature of my changing perceptions, which shifted radically during the course of the research as I show in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. I ceased to take notes only when my perceptions began to stabilise. The re-stabilisation of my perceptions became evident to me through my inability to record new patterns in my notes. I then ceased my fieldwork and began to transcribe my notes, word for word, onto my computer. I show examples of my contemporaneous notes in Appendix 1. I show an example of a key moment in a shift in my consciousness as a man in Chapter 5, where I incorporate an extract direct from my fieldnotes.

The Dynamic Construction of Self and Data:

In contrast to Gans (1967) and Pryce (1979), cited by McNeill (1990, p. 78) as being satisfied of their ability to accurately memorise and record events, albeit with a caveat about the selectivity of the researcher, I found that my memory was highly unreliable. Even when I had made contemporaneous notes, and I believed I had memorised fragments of conversation verbatim, I found through referring back to my notes that I had reconstructed the conversation, usually in a way which suggested that I had acted with greater competence, *as a man*, than I had recorded at the time. '... it is surprising how efficient one's memory can become with practice.' (Pryce, 1979, quoted by McNeill, 1990, p. 78)

I will explore the significance of this constant reconstruction of my memory, and my observation of the same phenomenon in other men, in relation to the construction of masculinity, in chapters 5 and 6. In methodological terms, however, the possibility that memory may constantly be reconstructed raise serious questions about its shaping, rather than influencing the research process, and points to the importance of recording *experiences*, rather than events, in their emotional complexity. Gan's (1967) position illustrates the point:

> '(I) rarely took notes during the thousands of informal conversational interviews. Instead I memorised the answers, made field notes as soon as I could, and later wrote the whole interview in my field diary. (Although a famous novelist has recently garnered publicity for memorising his interviews, *this has long been standard practice for many sociologists.)'*
> (Gans, 1967, quoted by McNeill, 1990, p. 78, my italics)

In view of Gans' use of 'informal conversational interviews', in which he was implicitly engaged in loose, rather than formal, structured, standardised interviews, it is significant that he memorises 'the answers', rather than the interchange, which must have had some bearing on 'the answers'. Nor does he mention whether questions were asked of him; a reasonable likelihood in a conversation, or whether he gave answers himself. Thus he fails crucially to incorporate himself as a key variable (Stanley and Wise, 1993) in the research process, in a way which suggests that he reconstructs the exchange sometime between the unspecified time that he records his field notes, and the further unspecified time he writes up 'the *whole* interview' in his field diary, unwittingly calling his memory into question. He, and McNeill (1990) in quoting him, fail to see the disjuncture between 'I memorised the answers' and 'later wrote the whole interview', and its implications in respect of, ironically, the boast of superiority of sociologists over writers of fiction, 'this has long been standard practice for sociologists.'

In an attempt to understand the mechanisms by which I constructed myself as a man, I charted my emotional state, noting dissonance between what I felt and what I felt I ought to feel. I related events in my life beyond my job to my experiences in the prison. In summary, I employed every stratagem I could examine and widen the distance between myself as subject, and myself as object, unlike Holdaway (1983), who takes for granted his ability to see himself as an object without questioning his consciousness or mechanisms by which it and the data are produced.

I believed that this was a strategy that would be likely to upset my emotional equilibrium,

because of my professional experience of the destabilising effects of knowing, rather than knowing about fragmentary identity, usually among people considered to be 'mad'. Yet such a move beyond my perceptual framework was what I needed to achieve. The discovery of my alienation was the only way I could see of experiencing the dissonance between expectation and experience in myself. I felt that if I could arrive at an understanding of how I survived in the alienating environment of the prison, without going 'mad', I should be able to begin to discover the mechanisms by which I and the men around me constructed our androcentric consciousness.

I recorded my *experiences*, rather than my observations, bearing in mind Stanley and Wise's (1993) view that the researcher is a crucial variable in the research process. I employed the wide range of experiences available to me, in both a personal and professional sense, in relation to the men around me, in an emotionally pressured environment, to examine the intersubjective process of my construction of myself, as a man, in relation to the men around men. I recorded my experiences in relation to other men with a degree emotional honesty that I had never hitherto attempted. I obliged myself to fully feel and record the extreme emotional pressures to which I was frequently subject.

These experiences resulted not just from being present in the alienating environment of the prison, but also in having professional responsibility for supervising, assessing and working with men within that hostile environment, frequently sharing their experience of the emotional consequences of having committed acts of extreme violence. I deliberately suspended my maintenance of an emotional distance from men in situations where I would normally have considered emotional distance to be advisable, for example, when discussing a man's feelings about having killed his wife or raped his daughter. Rather than treat a man in such a situation as simply the object of assessment or intervention, as I was professionally obliged to do, I sought to fully experience the emotional consequences of such encounters for myself, recording the complex and contradictory feelings they generated, looking for differences between what I felt and what I felt I ought to feel. Unsurprisingly, this approach exacted an emotional toll on me, on those to whom I was close, to my certain knowledge, and most probably on many people with whom I came in contact during the period of my fieldwork and for some months afterwards.

**Stress and Support**:

The fact that I and those closest to me survived the fieldwork, despite the considerable stress it generated for both me and them, is testament both to the possibility that men can survive attempts at the degree of emotional effort which is required for us to gain new knowledge, and the willingness of women, in my case, to support me in those attempts.

The stress:

I conducted my fieldwork over a period of seven months. During that period it was unusual for me, during the working week, to sleep for more than five hours, in contrast to my usual eight hours. I suffered from anxiety dreams. I was frequently so anxious on my way to work that I would have to stop to be sick. I smoked and drank more than usual. I suffered mood swings, oscillating rapidly between elation and despair. I talked obsessively about my work whenever I had the opportunity to do so, to anybody who expressed the mildest interest. I am reliably informed that I was difficult to live with. It took me several months after completing the fieldwork to return to my normal patterns of sleep.

The support:

Almost all of the emotional support during the course of my fieldwork came from women: my partner, my friends and my colleagues. My woman manager provided me with a great deal of support on a day to day basis, on a professional, intellectual and emotional level. I had a great deal of difficulty, during the research process, in explaining what I was experiencing to other men. I believe, with hindsight, that this signified a degree of success in moving outside my internalised frame of reference. As Chapter 5 will illustrate, I received a great deal of support from other men, particularly at work, but that support was inevitably framed within the masculine consciousness I was attempting to deconstruct. Outside that framework, the only support I *could* receive was from women.

**Ethical considerations:**

> ''Getting the seat of your pants dirty in real research' (Manning 1972, p. 213) is a hazardous business.' (Holdaway, 1983, p. 3)

Unlike Holdaway (1983), I did not conduct my research covertly. As I have explained in Chapter 1, I negotiated with prison and probation service management, obtaining agreement for me to conduct observer participant research within the prison, concentrating on interactions between men, as men, of all statuses within the prison. I told my immediate colleagues the same, and I freely mentioned it to both prisoners and staff in the course of daily conversations, encouraging their comments and observations wherever it seemed congruent with the conduct of my job. Other than some problems with my immediate, men, Probation officer colleagues, as I have explained in Chapter 1, I encountered no objections to my role as researcher. Reactions varied from mild interest to lack of interest, other more immediate issues taking priority. The insignificance of my role as researcher to the harsh, immediate issues of life in a prison for most of the men around me made the question of covertness or overtness an issue that related more to my academic concerns and moral comfort than the realities of others.

Despite making no secret of my role as researcher, however, I chose not to draw attention to it on every occasion I was observing myself and others in interactions, nor did I always share my observations with others, for practical, professional and methodological reasons:

Practical reasons:

At the time of conducting the research, I was a relatively unimportant and dispensable employee working for a powerful organisation upon which I depended for a living. Given the imbalance of power between the organisation and me, I would have risked my job by drawing attention to my critical appraisal of those employees who had power over me. The role of critical observer sits uneasily with that of subordinate employee, particularly at times when one is being held to task in one's employment. I show in Chapter 6 that this clash became particularly clear when I rendered myself liable to disciplinary action by mislaying my prison keys and I was summoned before one of the governors to account for myself. I did not feel that it would have been conducive to my continuing employment, which he told me was in question, to draw attention to the fact that the researcher in me was delighted by this opportunity to experience and observe the way in which he would exert his authority and I would react.

Ethical reasons:

Just as some men held institutional and social power over me, I held such power over others. Apart from the power conferred on me by being a white, man professional, the fact that I was conducting research gave me power. Stressful and immediately unrewarding though the experience of fieldwork was, I knew that I was gathering research material from a unique and privileged position and that someday my career would probably be advanced through my observations of men struggling and, like myself, often failing in the face of demands we could not meet.

We all fear being judged. My role as researcher cast me in the role of judge, attaching me to the narrow sector of society, of which academia is a part, where those who are at a safe distance from getting their 'pants dirty' make critical appraisals of those who earn a living by doing so. I was aware that an obtrusive insistence of my role of observer could be used as a means of pushing my own, non-academic agendas forwards, by intimidating others who knew that I would be able to write my own account of events, casting myself as I wished, whereas they would probably not.

Methodological reasons:

The idea that a participant observer moves along a continuum from observation to participation is simplistic. My experience was that I had no effective choice about whether I observed or not, other than by physically withdrawing myself from the situation. I saw what I saw and I felt what I felt. On occasions, I was conscious of my role as observer and I chose not to draw attention to it because I wanted to see how events would unfold. On other occasions I was too absorbed in events to be aware of my role of observer until I had an opportunity to record events some time afterwards. At no time, however, did I stop observing, whether I wanted to or not. This, perhaps, represents the difference in perspective between a researcher who obtains a job in order to conduct research (Morgan, 1992) and an employee who decides to conduct research. The risk of 'going native', to use an apposite, white supremacist phrase, is obviated by the fact of being native.

Professional Reasons:

The demands of my professional role meant that it was frequently inappropriate to introduce my role of observer into the conversation, for example, if I was counselling a suicidal prisoner, assessing risk in respect of a life sentence prisoner, or engaging in many elements of my work where I was under a professional obligation to set aside my research concerns in favour of greater concerns, such as the immediate and urgent needs of an individual in distress, or the protection of the public.

**Analysis of the Data:**

The data I gathered is based on my experience of running groups and courses, with uniformed and non-uniformed man prison staff, for man prisoners, casework with prisoners, acting in consultancy and training roles for uniformed prison staff, attending various boards and meetings with prison managers in order to make decisions regarding prisoners and attending staff meetings. It is also based on informal encounters I had with other men, and informal situations that I witnessed or became involved in. I present the data in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 in a series of vignettes, presented as Examples 1 – 38. These Examples mark critical moments in the process of my discovery of the processes by which I and other men in the prison constructed ourselves, as men, through our relations with each other, as men.

At the end of my 7-month period of fieldwork, I transcribed my field notes and read through them over and over, chronologically, looking for repetitions of scenarios that indicated patterns in conduct between men. As a result of having lived through the experience of recording the data on a reflexive basis, I had a broad idea of what patterns I might find. The way in which I set out my findings in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 reflects my experience of my fieldwork as a journey. For example, I had formed the concepts of Masculine Anxiety and Masculine Space, which I describe in Chapter 4. The data, however, contained some patterns that surprised me, indicating that I did not have the degree of awareness that I felt I had during the fieldwork process. I was taken aback, for example, by the scale and scope of evidence of men's misogyny and of men's masochistic fantasies in relation to women.

Having established distinct patterns of scenarios in the field-notes, I transcribed those scenarios from note-form to prose to form a series of vignettes, around which I structure the

findings in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. I have used almost all the vignettes that I transcribed. The vignettes I have not included simply repeat the patterns I found. I found that the patterns fell clearly and distinctly into vignettes that demonstrated men finding ways of including each other into the category 'man', excluding each other from the category 'man' and constructing women through our relations with each other as men. The 3 findings Chapters, 5, 6 and 7 reflect these patterns.

**Conclusion:**

Traditional, positivist ethnographic methodologies are antithetical to the externalisation of masculinity, or indeed *any* element of acculturation that the researcher and the researched hold in common. Such methodologies are incapable of achieving the pre-condition for studying masculinity, of incorporating the researcher as a subject of his research. Framing this problem in positivist and ethnocentric terms as 'bias' compounds it through assuming a masculist standard. Research rooted in masculist standards is incapable of interrogating those standards, as I have shown in Chapter 2.

Feminist, methodological approaches lend themselves to the production of the new knowledge that is required to deconstruct masculinity through commonly illustrating the necessity of an intersubjective approach. Feminist research approaches, however, are not directly translatable into a masculine context because of the dependence of formal and informal hierarchies of power within institutions of state on the construction of masculinity through relations between men, as men. This dependence places the researcher in direct conflict with the interests of men who have power on institutional and intellectual levels, as individuals and *as men*. Such men hold such power through their willingness to defend it from challenges, including challenges on an intellectual level. This consideration suggests that a degree of covertness on the part of man researchers on masculinity may be a necessity.

Covertness in research is fraught with ethical problems in the sense that it places the researcher in the same God-like position over research subjects that positivist ethnographers assume. Covertness also dilutes the credibility of the findings in the sense that the researcher in unable to check her/his perceptions with those of the research subjects and is thus at risk of projecting her/his perceptions onto them. If we are to begin to fill the current vacuum of knowledge in relation to men, as men, however, we have to start somewhere with research that is intersubjective and grounded in the day to day practice of men, as men. The

methodological limitations of this study devolve from the limitations of the researcher as a unique individual and through the semi-covert nature of the research. These limitations, however, can be offset by future research that uses the new concepts that arise from this study as a new point of departure in questioning relations between men, as men.

# CHAPTER 4: A NEW PARADIGM OF MASCULINITY, CRIME AND PATRIARCHY

## Introduction:

This Chapter contains the theoretical framework that underpins this study. I offer a new means of conceptualising the men's prison as a key component of the Criminal Justice System in which men, as men, construct masculinity within patriarchy and institutionalise masculinity within the state. I also present a new paradigm of masculinity within patriarchy in England as an unspoken, hegemonic understanding of *manhood*, which is internalised by the individual man, shaping his conduct on a day to day basis. I argue that masculinity is constructed through relations between men, *as men*, on an *intersubjective* basis, *across* social divides, in whatever location we find ourselves, including the men's prison and the Criminal Justice System, on *both* sides of the law. I locate that argument in relation to literature on crime and the men's prison. I consider the role that the commission and regulation of crime by men through the Criminal Justice System and the men's prison plays in institutionalising masculinity, as a key component of patriarchy, within the state.

I use the term 'we' rather than 'they' in relation to men within the men's prison, the Criminal Justice System and wider society, because I include myself, as a man operating in all those circles, as a subject of my research, as I explained in Chapter 3. I take the view that during my research, I constructed my own identity as a man through intersubjective relations with other men inside and outside the prison, as men. In this light, the use of the term 'they' would seem to be inappropriate. I use the alternative term 'we' in recognition of my inter-subjective position as a man among men, constructing myself, other men and women and the data in the same process, rather than as a claim to represent with authority experiences other than my own. I thus incorporate myself as a key variable (Stanley and Wise, 1993) in the research process. This consideration is explored in Chapter 3.

## Re-Conceptualising the Men's Prison:

Most offenders who are processed by the Criminal Justice System in England are men (Graef, 1993; Home Office, 1995). The smaller proportion of convicted women offenders are treated as deviant as citizens and as *women* (Smart, 1989 and 1995; Heidensohn, 1989).

The larger proportion of convicted men offenders are treated as *deviant* as *citizens*, but unless they committed sex offences or offences against the elderly or children (Preistley, 1980) they are treated as *normal men*. Smart (1989 and 1995) explores the differential policing, prosecution and punishment through imprisonment of women as a function of maintaining a *normative construction of femininity* within patriarchy and the state: women are subject to greater moral indignation than men for committing offences of any kind. The differential policing, prosecution and punishment of men, however, is yet to be explored in terms of its function of maintaining a *normative construction of masculinity* within patriarchy and the state. Such exploration requires an analysis of the treatment of *men as men*, within the men's prison, the Criminal Justice System and the state.

Criminological literature, including literature on masculinity and crime (Messerschmidt, 1993; Jefferson, 1994) treats men criminals as *objects* of study, rather than as men involved in the *inter-subjective* construction of ourselves, as men, in everyday behaviour, including the commission and regulation of crime and the experience of the men's prison. Literature on the men's prison (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Priestley, 1980; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Adams, 1994) follows the same tendency: the men's prison is studied from an androcentric (Eichler, 1991) perspective that is confined to it being an institution containing prisoners and staff as separate entities. From this perspective, prisoners are conceptualised androcentrically as *objects* in relations between staff and prisoner because of the imbalance of power in favour of staff. When considered in terms of men constructing masculinity *inter-subjectively, as men*, however, the men's prison can be seen as an institution in which men are concentrated, constructing ourselves, as men, in relation to each other, including *across* the social divide of staff and prisoner.

Some literature on the men's prisons takes a step in the direction of examining the construction of men's identity, as men, within the men's prison, by recognising that the prisoners within it are also men. Sim (1994) for example, links Connell's (1991) work on masculinity to prison studies. Sim (1994) points out that thus far, these studies have been concentrated on '*...men as prisoners rather than prisoners as men.*' (Sim, 1994, p. 101, original italics). This standpoint resolves the problem of androcentricity in traditional literature on the criminal/prisoner by allowing that men *prisoners* are also men. At the same time, however, this standpoint generates a number of problems by placing the focus of study on *prisoners as objects* as opposed to recognising that *men* in the men's prison, as men, interact *inter-subjectively* with each other, as men, *between and across* the roles of staff and

prisoner. As I have shown in Chapter 3, I incorporate myself as a man, in the role of staff, in studying men as men in the prison.

The imbalance of power in favour of staff and at the expense of the prisoner in the men's prison does not negate inter-subjectivity between men, as men, within the prison, across this power divide. Giddens (1979, p. 93) argues that power, conceptualised as 'transformative capacity', is inevitably two-way, no matter how large the imbalance of power between the parties, because of the ability of each party to exercise agency.

Nor is 'staff' a homogeneous group, although Sim (1994, p. 112) homogenises men working in the men's prison into the 'prison officer' through his interchangeable use the terms 'prison officer' and 'prison worker'. Men are employed in the men's prison in the same range of roles in which we are employed in wider society, for example as psychologists, teachers, administrators, work supervisors, doctors and probation officers among other roles. Men in the men's prison relate intersubjectively with each other, as men, across all those roles, to each other, to prisoners and to prison officers.

Men in the men's prison are not only there in the role of prisoner or employee of the prison: men also visit the prison in other roles as fathers, sons or as religious representatives, for example. Thus men in the men's prison relate to each other as men not only across the role of prisoner or prison officer, but also across the *same range* of social roles which exist in wider society. Also, as in wider society, we move *between* those roles and we may occupy more than one role at once. Some men who have been prisoners have worked in the men's prison and vice versa, to my personal knowledge. Men across all employment roles and the role of prisoner also exist as fathers, sons, husbands and brothers. The population of the men's prison is not static or homogeneous, producing a static, homogeneous culture; rather it is highly fluid, reflecting the fluidity and heterogeneity of culture in wider society.

The conceptualisation of the 'criminal' and the 'prisoner' as an object of study, found in literature on crime and prisons, is reinforced by equally androcentric literature on institutions (Goffman, 1991) which regards the men's prison as a 'total institution', peculiar and different to wider society through its isolation. Prison walls, however, are highly permeable on a day to day basis, not only for men staff and visitors, but also for men prisoners. Prisoners commonly go outside the prison to work, visit home, or play sports, for example. Family and friends visit the prison. Telephones, television, radio, newspapers and even the Internet are available to prisoners. In brief, a range of everyday means of

communication between prisoners and wider society attests to close links between men in the prison and wider society.

When the men's prison in viewed as an institution containing *men*, rather than prisoners and prison officers, it can be seen to contain a transient population of *men* drawn from diverse elements of wider society, occupying the same range of shifting roles that we occupy in wider society. In this situation, as in other masculine institutions with a transient population of men from diverse elements of society in a diverse range of shifting roles, like barracks or oil rigs, our identity as men is prominent as a *common denominator* between us. Men in the men's prison are *temporarily* staff, prisoners or visitors, but *permanently* men. The men's prison can thus be seen as a concentrated *microcosm* of relations between men, as men, from a wide spectrum of society. Within the men's prison we construct ourselves *inter-subjectively*, as men, *between and across* staff, prisoner, bureaucrat, visitor and researcher divides, according to masculinity, which we *import* to the prison from wider society.

From this perspective, the men's prison is of the same value as other masculine institutions like barracks or oil rigs, where similar conditions obtain, as a place where man to man interactions are easier to study because of their greater visibility than in wider society. The men's prison, however, is unique among masculine institutions in that it is the principle sanction within the Criminal Justice System through which the state purports to regulate crime. The men's prison is an institution in which the relationship between the man who defies the authority of the state and the man who asserts authority on behalf of the state can be studied on a day to day basis. It is therefore not only an institution that reflects, like other masculine institutions, the *construction of masculinity between men within patriarchy*, but also an institution that reflects the *control of men, by men, within the state*. I show in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that these two processes take place simultaneously in the men's prison, that they are linked inextricably and that they have their roots within broad-based myths of idealised manhood in England.

**A Paradigm of Masculinity within Patriarchy in England:**

Masculinity within patriarchy in England is difficult to theorise because it lacks an explicit definition in literature, as I have shown in Chapter 2. I take patriarchy to signify the power of men, as a gender category, over women as a gender category (Dworkin, 1981; Eisenstein,

1979; Firestone, 1971; Greer, 1971). I take masculinity to be an abstraction of what it means to be a man: *manhood.* I take manhood to be the definer of men within patriarchy, as men, beyond other axes of identity, such as race, class and sexuality, in the production of practices which in their multiplicity, result in the maintenance of patriarchy. Men are men, however we are positioned in social hierarchies, as I have explained in Chapter 2. I argue that masculinity within patriarchy serves two, inter-related functions:

1) Primarily, that of subordinating men at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid to men at the top of the socio-economic pyramid.

2) Secondarily, that of subordinating women, as a gender category, to men as a gender category.

The operation of these two functions results in men's collaboration, as men, between and across social divides in institutionalising masculinity within patriarchy and patriarchy within the state.

Such a hegemonic conception of masculinity within both patriarchy and the state, and any theorisation which derives from it, risks straying into essentialism, reification or determinism unless it can meet three criteria:

1) It must be capable of incorporating differentials between men's experience along a multiplicity of social dimensions, such as class, race and sexuality.

2) It must be capable of incorporating differentials between men's experience, as individuals, beyond such axes of identity.

3) It must be capable of explaining men's deviance, as well as conformity to masculinity.

A conceptualisation of masculinity as *manhood* meets these criteria by taking masculinity to be one axis of identity among many axes of identity, such as race class and sexuality, in the individual man, all internalised and experienced differently by him. This conceptualisation allows for a dynamic relationship between masculinity as internalised by

the individual man and other social axes of identity, such as class, race and sexuality, as also internalised by him. It also allows for the possibility of the individual man conforming or deviating from masculinity as internalised by him, according to it's relationship with any number of variables, at any particular moment in his experience.

Defining Masculinity within Patriarchy in England:

Masculinity, as manhood, within patriarchy in England can be defined in accordance with its ideal, exemplary form: *Heroism*. Heroism can be understood as transcendental courage in the face of danger. The boy becomes the man by transcending his fear. The man affirms his claim to manhood in the same way. The Hero is replicated in mythology and entertainment in England in a way that overarches social boundaries, be that through Arthurian legend (Guerin, 1995), Victorian poetry (Kipling, 1963) or imported American films such as 'Die Hard 2' (Pallot, 1994, p. 202) or 'Rocky 3' (Pallot, 1994, p. 730) as an exemplar of the ideal state of manhood within patriarchy. The Hero sets a standard of masculinity that *over-arches* social divisions between men: a man's claim to manhood does not depend on his position in the socio-economic order, but rather on his ability to display transcendental courage. The Hero thus provides a *common denominator* among men in England in terms of an understanding of what it means to be a man within patriarchy.

Men at the top of the socio-economic pyramid within the state define the causes to which the individual man should properly apply transcendental courage in order to claim manhood. Such men are able use the individual man's masculinity to manipulate him into subsuming his interests *as an individual* to his perceived interests *as a man*. At its most effective, as an instrument of social control, masculinity in the individual man can make him *more afraid of being unmanly than he is of dying*. The ability of powerful men in the state to manipulate less powerful men into fatal acts of transcendental courage by calling on our internalised, Heroic masculinity is exemplified by Army recruiting posters during the First World War: 'Your Country Needs You!' where Lord Kitchener points an accusing finger at the individual man (Gilbert, 1994, p. 72, illustration 15).

Heroic masculinity, disseminated through popular culture, is institutionalised within the state through masculine organisations such as the army or the men's prison as a means for men at the top of the socio-economic pyramid to subordinate other men to serving their interests. In this light, the construction of *masculinity within patriarchy* can be seen as a

function of the *control of men, by powerful men, within the state*. The status quo of the socio-economic pyramid within the state depends on the willingness of young men to be prepared to risk death in defending the state by force.

Within the state, the practical function of masculinity in making men pliable to powerful men needs to be cloaked, because its exposure would reveal a conflict of interests of the individual man who is required to risk his life and the powerful man who benefits from that risk. The Hero is therefore a *protector* of women and children, in accordance with a patriarchal ideology of family. The role of the ideal man as protector is evident in another Army recruiting poster from the First World War in which a little girl sitting on the individual man's lap asks him innocently, 'What did you do in the Great War, Daddy?' (Fussel, 1975, p. 21). This shamed, individual man has failed his family as patriarch in the role of protector, his country, but worst of all, himself as a man among men who have died heroically *in his place*: thus he has been displaced from manhood.

The role of protector thus drives a wedge not only between the individual man's perception of his interests as an individual and his desire to be a man, but also between individual men, *as individuals*, rather than *as men*. The role of protector offers the individual man a stark choice: he can either be a man among men, an *agent* belonging to the *superior* gender category within patriarchy, or he can be a shamed *object* of contempt to other men, aligned with the *inferior* gender category of women. The Hero's role as protector thus anchors the individual man's internalised, Heroic masculinity within patriarchal ideology and allies it to the interests of the state, as defined by powerful men within the state. The individual man's willingness to question 'The old, old lie. Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.' (Owen 1985, p. 117) is thus inhibited, primarily, by his relationship to other men, as men, who are locked into the same need as him to enact masculinity, *against our interests as individuals*, if necessary.

The Hero's role of protector also implicitly subordinates women as a gender category by defining women as vulnerable objects, dependent on the protection of the patriarch, in exchange for functioning in the service of the Hero. The innocent question of the little girl recalls in the individual man the falsity of his claim to manhood and therefore the falsity of his authority, as a father, a patriarch, over her. The public domain of masculinity, expressed through relations between men and men is thus echoed in the private domain, expressed through relations between men and women.

In this light, the *primary* function of patriarchy, as institutionalised within the state through

a Heroic mythology of masculinity can be seen as that of subordinating men to other powerful men within the state through generating cohesion between men as a gender category. The production of such cohesion is a pre-condition to the operation of the *secondary* function of patriarchy, which is that of subordinating women to men. Both functions are interdependent: men can only be a *superior* gender category in the *public* domain, bound by an ideology of the Hero as protector, if women are an *inferior* gender category in the *private* domain requiring control and protection. The function of women as an inferior gender category is that of servicing men in order to enable us to serve the interests of powerful men in the state. I show how men construct women as an inferior gender category, through our relations with each other as men, in Chapter 7.

The role of protector of the vulnerable, including women, effectively extends the Hero's role of defending the state on behalf of powerful men, into policing patriarchy in other men and women in his day to day relations with them, as men and women. The individual man's sense of belonging to the category 'man' depends on him interacting with other men and women in a way that he can frame as congruent with what he understands as manhood. The resultant policing of men and women within patriarchy, by men, extends into both public and private spheres as I show in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

The Heroic ideology of the ideal man as defender of the state and protector of the family also extends into him policing sexuality. The Hero is heterosexual, within narrow bounds. His sexual focus is on women within childbearing years and outside his family (Guerin, 1995; Kipling, 1963; Pallot, 1994). If his sexual focus were on men, or women who fall outside childbearing years by virtue of age or youth, or incestuous or not directly concerned with heterosexual, penetrative sex which *he* controls, his ability to continue his line, on his terms, would be impaired. I show in Chapter 7 that the emergence of men's non-conformity to the Heroic standard of sexual behaviour from the private to the public sphere can result in their expulsion from the category 'man' by other men. In turn, the heterosexuality of the Hero *requires* heterosexuality in his woman and children, within equally narrow bounds. His woman is heterosexual in order to produce his children. His son is heterosexual in order to continue his patriarchal line. His daughter is heterosexual in order to function as a commodity to be traded for the daughters of men from other patriarchal lines. As MacKinnon (1987) points out, rape is a *property* offence against the man who owns the women who is raped: rape reduces the value of a woman as a commodity of exchange in relations between men within patriarchy. I show how women are constructed as

commodities in regulating relations between men in Chapter 7.

The ideal man, symbolised by the Hero, embodies a fusion of transcendental courage and narrow heterosexuality. He defends the state externally and internally and he polices the behaviour of men and women in public and private spheres, including the sexual sphere, in order to ensure that it is consistent with the maintenance of patriarchal lines, patrimony and ultimately, patriarchy. I show in Chapters 5 and 6 that the Hero is *internalised* by the individual man in patriarchal society as an *Ideal Heroic Self* that is capable of transcending fear and exercising narrow, sexual conformity

## The Instability of Masculinity in the Individual Man: Masculine Anxiety

The internalisation of Heroic masculinity traps the individual man within a paradox. His sense of identity as a man, as opposed to his sense of identity in other dimensions, is dependent on him enacting Heroic masculinity. Although the individual man may achieve Heroic masculinity episodically, however, he cannot achieve it as *a state of being*, as Kipling (1963, p. 273) demonstrates through his poem If, where he illustrates an impossible transcendence of vulnerability required to achieve manhood. Masculinity is effectively a *zero-sum condition*: the individual man who performs an act of transcendental courage does not thus win the right to run away from the next challenge to his masculinity. Rather he is obliged to transcend his fear whenever and wherever a challenge may arise. Thus his identity as a man is under permanent siege by contingent factors, which threaten moments of crisis in which he may be obliged to either display courage, or suffer damage to his claim to be a man, without any acceptable alternative category being available to him.

The individual man thus faces challenging situations with a double fear: he is both afraid and *afraid of being unable to transcend his fear*. He may admit to the surface fear, since his claim to masculinity does not depend on him being unafraid, but rather on him transcending his fear. Explicit awareness of his deeper fear, as a man, however, would, in itself, expose him as not belonging to the category 'man', since it would cast doubt on his ability to transcend fear. He is therefore obliged to *deny* to himself that he lives in fear of a critical challenge to his masculinity. This deeper, *denied* fear can be characterised as *Masculine Anxiety*. I show my experience of discovering Masculine Anxiety in myself and other men in Chapter 5. I show in Chapter 6 how men in the prison regulated Masculine Anxiety through constructing *safe* and *unsafe Masculine Space*, which I define in that Chapter.

At first sight, the concept of Masculine Anxiety appears to be absurd in the sense that men, generally speaking, are aware that we are not Heroes: the Hero is simply an abstraction of the ideal form of manhood in patriarchy, internalised by the individual man. The risk that the individual man suffers from internalising Heroic masculinity, however, is not resident in his failure to *be* the Hero. Rather it is resident in the *instability* of his construction of himself as a man, which is based on him continuously *organising and re-organising perception, behaviour and memory* of particular events in order to support that construction. The individual man may fail, in his own eyes, to perform as a man, to an extent that he cannot frame or re-frame his failure in a way that is consistent with his construction of himself as a man. Such a moment of truth, of which he is at continuous risk, threatens to expose to him that perceptions, actions and memories on which he has previously relied to affirm his claim to manhood are unreliable and open to interpretations which negate it. In the absence of any clear understanding of masculinity within patriarchy as distinct from other axes of identity, these perceptions, actions and memories are inevitably bound-up with his sense of himself in those other dimensions. A moment of truth, as a man, therefore threatens a *crisis of identity* in the individual man *both as a man and as an individual.*

In order to avoid the risk of ontological collapse, therefore, the individual man is obliged to *deny* that he experiences Masculine Anxiety and to *rationalise* behaviours that stem from it as rooted in other motivations, for example the motivation to attain social status. The ensuing pattern of his behaviour, as a man, is characterised by him attempting to avoid situations in which the exposure of his false claim to manhood may occur and in seeking situations in which it may be affirmed, while denying, through cognitive distortion, that he is engaged in this process. I show the operation of this process of cognitive distortion and behaviours that ensue from it in myself and other men in Chapter 5.

Just as Heroic masculinity has a sexual element, Masculine Anxiety also has a sexual element, as I show in the conduct of other men and myself in Chapters 6 and 7. Although men's sexual conduct normally takes place in *private*, the individual man is nonetheless obliged to maintain a *public* appearance of Heroic, sexual conformity. I show in Chapter 7 that this conformity depends on the individual man being able to be seen *by other men, as opposed to women,* to be able to confine his sexual interest entirely to women of childbearing age. It also depends on him being seen *by other men* to be able to maintain a sexually dominant position in relation to women and to be able to perform sexually, as a matter of will. Tension in the individual man between this Heroic model of sexuality and his

ability to match it generates Masculine Anxiety in him in a *sexual* dimension, producing instability in his *sexual* sense of self as a man. This sexual instability surfaces in moments where he is confronted with situations that expose his inability to conform to the Heroic model of sexuality.

Managing Masculine Anxiety - The Hero/Villain/Non-Man Matrix of Masculinity:

The Hero cannot exist without his enemy, the *Villain*. Each defines the other through conflict in which each attempts to impose his will on the other. Each is *interdependent*, divided by social or ideological difference, but *bound* by a common ideology of masculinity in which the transcendence of fear makes a fearsome counter-force necessary: the more fearsome the Villain, the greater the Hero and vice-versa.

The enactment of masculinity by the individual man, however, is *not* dependent on his achievement of moral probity, as the myth of the Hero as protector would suggest, but rather on his ability to transcend fear and maintain sexual conformity. Heroic masculinity has to be *separable* from codes of morality, ideology or ethics that exist *outside* its key indicators of courage and sexual conformity, in order to be harnessed to the interests of powerful men in the state, because this year's enemy may be next year's ally and vice-versa. The Hero and the Villain are therefore, necessarily, not only interdependent, but also *interchangeable*. The construction of the Hero as a paragon of morality, therefore, can be regarded as a cloak of respectability that conceals the true function of masculinity from the individual man.

The negation of the Hero is not the Villain but rather the *Non-Man*. The Non-Man may be the coward, who is defined by his failure to enter the Hero/Villain dynamic of masculinity as a public performance, as I show in Chapter 5. The Non-Man may also be defined by being discovered in failing to meet the Heroic ideal on a sexual level, as I show in Chapter 6. This may be through him being gay and thus a non-participant in continuing the patriarchal line. Or it may be that he represents a threat to the patriarchal line as a sexual offender who threatens to disrupt that line through interfering with the individual man's woman or daughter as commodities, or his son as an extension of himself as a man. The function of the Non-Man within the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity is to *define* the Hero and the Villain *united, as men,* by the key qualifications of masculinity, transcendental courage and sexual conformity, while divided, *as individuals*, by issues beyond masculinity. The Non-Man achieves this function by enabling men pretending to engage in the Hero/Villain

dynamic to *displace* failures in achieving masculinity from us onto him.

The Non-Man is positioned, through *collaboration, between men, as men,* outside the category 'man'. In the absence of any alternative gender category to 'man', other than 'woman', he is *feminised* in order to align him with women as a non-participant in exchanges of power between men, as men. Connell (1995) points to this phenomenon within patriarchy. The construction of the Non-Man by the Hero and the Villain is explored in its prison context in Chapter 6, in reference to the work of Preistley (1980) on segregated prisoners. I show that prisoners are segregated because of their visible failure to enact masculinity as defined by its two key indicators: transcendental courage and heterosexual conformity.

Women, by virtue of being a subordinated gender category, do not count as an opposing force to the Hero. Thus we men prove ourselves to be men *in relation to other men, rather than in relation to women*, as Levi-Strauss (1970) observes. In Chapter 7 I show that men construct women as subordinate to men in order to regulate relations between men. Women are thus effectively excluded as participants in discourses of power between men by virtue of not being men. Although women have the power to subvert masculinity by refusing to act as subordinate to men, patriarchy can accommodate such women by defining them as *defective*, as I show in Chapter 7. Women also have the power to subvert masculinity by exposing men who fail to conform to the Heroic ideal, by sexually assaulting children, for example. Men, however, can accommodate such exposure by defining such men as Non-Men. Men who sexually abuse children are defined as *other* than normal men because such behaviour is incompatible with the concept of manhood. The segregation of failed men in the prison is reflected in the marginalisation of failed men in wider society: the 'nonce' in the prison is the 'paedophile' in wider society.

The individual man thus experiences a powerful, internalised pressure to conform to his Ideal Heroic Self on pain of finding himself in the category of Non-Man. While the category of Hero has the attraction of being socially sanctioned, *masculinity can also and equally be achieved within the category Villain.* Thus it is possible for the individual man to enact masculinity not only by means which are *legal* and *socially acceptable*, but *also and equally* by means which are *illegal* and *anti-social*. I argue in Chapters 5 and 6 that for many men, much of the time, if the category of Hero is not available, the category of Villain is greatly preferable to the category of Non-Man.

Conclusion: Masculinity as a Taboo Subject between Men:

My research experience suggests that if the individual man should examine his own masculinity on the basis of his construction of himself, as a man, *inter-subjectively*, in relation to other men, he would generate anxiety in himself. This anxiety can be understood as Masculine Anxiety, the function of which is to protect him from discovering, in a way that is subsequently undeniable, that he is what he, as a man, fears most: the Non-Man, pretending that he lives in the Hero/Villain dynamic. The depth of Masculine Anxiety in men is evident in the reaction of my men colleagues in Chapter 6, Example 12, when I inadvertently threatened to make masculinity, in this case, in a sexual dimension, visible in our *interactions* with each other, as men.

Masculinity is a powerful, denied force in shaping the day to day conduct of the individual man in relation to other men as I show in Chapters 5 and 6 and women, as I show in Chapter 7. Men, as men, collaborate in both maintaining the *illusion* that it is possible for the individual man to conform to masculinity, while collectively *denying* that such collaboration takes place. This denial of collaboration between men across social divisions in maintaining masculinity is reflected in literature by men on 'masculinities' (Brittan, 1989; Connell, 1991 and 1995; Hearn and Collison, 1994; Morgan, 1992; Seidler, 1994) as I have shown in Chapter 2. So long as masculinity is understood in terms of narrow, personal identity, and men are studied as objects, denial of men's collaboration with each other in constructing masculinity is possible. In this light, the lack of an explicit definition of masculinity within patriarchy can be seen as symptomatic of men's collaboration with each other in denying that, *as men*, we are engaged on an absurd project against our interests, *as individuals*.

I do not argue that the conduct of all men within patriarchy in England is determined or even influenced all the time by masculinity. If masculinity were an *essential* condition in men, automatically shaping our behaviour, it would not need to be ubiquitously asserted and re-asserted through the propagation of Heroic mythology, and through behaviours that support such mythology. Conscription would not have become necessary during the First World War (Greives, 1988). I argue, rather, that *sufficient* men are influenced for a *sufficient* amount of time by an internalised desire to conform to the Heroic ideal to produce practices by which men, as a dominant gender category over women, maintain *cohesion* as such in patriarchal society. I also argue that the *effect* of this cohesion among men, as men, is not to serve the interests of the individual man, but rather the interests of men at the pinnacle of

the socio-economic pyramid in English Society. The individual man may be motivated to such collusion by gaining privileges over other men and women, but such privileges, as the experience of men in the First World War illustrates, may cost him his life. I explore these arguments in Chapter 8.

**The Men's Prison as a Masculine World:**

Social scientists (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Priestley, 1980; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Adams, 1994), along with creative writers who have spent time among prisoners (Campbell, 1986; Smith, 1990) and prisoners themselves (Boyle, 1977) have written extensively about *prisoner's* experiences of living in an alienating environment with a constant fear of violence. I show in Chapters 5 and 6 that I found such a climate to exist in the men's prison. The climate of fear and violence in the men's prison, however, is *incongruent* with the reality that most prisoners are serving time for minor property-related offences which do not place the public at direct risk of serious harm (Home Office, 1995). The bulk of the prison population in England is composed of young men serving short sentences for offences that pose a nuisance rather than a danger to the public (Home Office, 1995). When the men's prison is examined in the light of the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, however, its climate of fear can be understood as a *product of the men within it constructing masculinity*, inter-subjectively, as men, between and across staff and prisoner.

The pressure on the individual man to enact masculinity is particularly acute in the men's prison, where the man prisoner is positioned by the state as the Villain and the man employed in the prison is positioned, by implication, as the Hero. The men's prison thus *heightens* Masculine Anxiety in the individual man who finds himself *trapped* within the Hero/Villain dynamic by virtue of being cast one of two opposed categories: Staff or Prisoner. The individual man in the men's prison is thereby placed under acute pressure to both *avoid* the Non-Man position, to displace it onto other men and to *deny* that he is attempting to avoid it. Other men who are equally and similarly anxious surround him. Thus his Masculine Anxiety is echoed and magnified. The overt enactment of his masculinity becomes his *defence* against the day to day risk that other men will cast him in the ontologically, emotionally and physically dangerous Non-Man position. At the same time, however, the overt enactment of masculinity feeds Masculine Anxiety among men in the prison, who become trapped in a *cycle* of fear and violence as I show in Chapters 5 and 6.

The cycle of fear and violence that men experience, *as men*, in the men's prison cannot be illuminated from an androcenric or positivist perspective, whether prison staff or the prisoner is positioned as the Villain. Sim (1994) for example, homogenises prison staff, who are neither all prison officers nor all men, as the *man* prison officer and places him in the Villain Position. By implication this places the prisoner, with whom Sim (1994) is aligned, in the Hero position:

> 'This argument also applies to those few Prison Officers who refuse to work within the bounds of accepted practices organised around discourses of power, authority and domination which underline, underpin and give meaning to the working lives of the majority of prison workers both on the ground and within the bureaucracy of state. The ideologies and behaviour of these officers can be contrasted with the 'dogs' who work at the opposite end of the masculist continuum.' (Sim, 1994, p. 112)

This inversion, which is rooted in Sim's conceptualisation of the prisoner as *object*, is not informed by the consideration that men in the prison are permanently men, but temporarily in the role of staff or prisoner. While Sim's view of the men's prison as a brutal, state institution is accurate, as I show in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, his *explanation* of that brutality is misleading. The brutality of the men's prison does not result from the simple imposition of the state's will on the man prisoner as object, but rather from the intersubjective construction of masculinity between the men within it, *as men*, between and across the role of staff and prisoner. Although the men's prison is a punitive institution, the *day to day* brutality within it is a product of the men within it constructing masculinity intersubjectively, as men. The fact that it is a punitive institution sets it in a context that *intensifies* Masculine Anxiety, thus ensuring an intensification of the fear and violence that results from men's enactment of masculinity in relation to other men, which can take place in *any* setting.

**The Function of the Men's Prison within Patriarchy and The State:**

Prison is the principal, punitive sanction with which the state, through the Criminal Justice System, purports to deter men from offending. When considered in the light of the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, however, the concept of deterrence through punishment, symbolised by the men's prison, can be seen as *antithetical* to that aim on four

levels:

1) Offending by men can be seen as a *conventional* rather than *deviant* means for the individual man to enact masculinity. Offending by men only *seems* to be deviant until the interdependency and interchangability of the Hero and the Villain within the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity is understood. The conventionality of offending by men is evident in the fact that 33% of men in the UK have been convicted of a criminal (non-motoring) offence by the age of 30 (Graef, 1993, p. 1). Thus offending can be considered as a *normal* part of a range of practices engaged in by young men in enacting masculinity through adopting the Villain position. In this light 'crime' can be seen as a 'phenomenon of masculinity' (Campbell, 1993, p. 211). Crime by men can be related to other forms of anti-social behaviour by men, for example, aggressive driving, as a means of adopting the Villain position. These behaviours in men are characterised by the individual man's assertion of willingness to engage in competition with other men, as men, thus indicating his participation in the Hero/Villain dynamic.

2) The large scale of offending by men means that the individual young man who offends *is unlikely to be caught and punished.* Crime surveys show that the courts process only a small fraction of actual crime (Heidensohn, 1989; Mayhew, Aye Maung and Mirrlees-Black, 1993; Koffman, 1996). Thus, through offending, men are able to enter into the Hero/Villain discourse at a *low risk* of attracting sanctions by the state.

3) The individual young man *does not need to commit a serious offence* in order to place himself in the Hero/Villain discourse: he can align himself with the *dangerous* Villain through committing a *minor* offence. In the unlikely event of being caught, he would probably attract only a minor sanction.

4) The individual man can frame running *the risk of punishment as an act of transcendental courage*, which reinforces the masculinity he enacts through his adoption of the Villain position. The risk of negative consequences in other forms of anti-social behaviour in men can be seen to serve the same function of reinforcement.

Within the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, *the individual man's masculinity*

*increases in proportion to the magnitude of his crime and the severity of the punishment he risks by committing it*, providing the crime is consistent with transcendental courage and narrow, heterosexual conformity. Thus the men's prison, as a site in which masculinity is generated within patriarchy, institutionalised within the state and reinforced in the individual man, can be seen as more likely to *generate* crime than it is to deter it. In the event of being caught and processed by the Criminal Justice System, the individual man is likely to suffer *as an individual* through him being objectified as a criminal. The label of 'criminal', however, elevates him *as a man.* The fact that *young* men (Graef, 1993) commit most recorded crime suggests that they experience acute pressure to enact masculinity, in the form of Masculine Anxiety, during the course of transition from boyhood to manhood.

The choice that the individual young man makes to offend is formed in his internalised Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, which is further reinforced and institutionalised within the state through the Criminal Justice System and the men's prison. Within this matrix, *fear,* in the form of Masculine Anxiety underpins the individual man's decision to offend: the fear is that of being positioned as the Non-Man by his equally anxious peers. In a moment of critical challenge to the masculinity of the boy or the man who exists within this matrix, when the Hero position is unavailable to him, the only means of avoiding this eventuality is that of positioning himself as the Villain.

In this light, *punishing* the boy for his offending, without helping him to understand the Masculine Anxiety in which he formed his decision to offend seems likely to be counterproductive, not only on the basis of failing to deter him or others from re-offending, but also on an *intergenerational* basis. The boy will become the man. He will engage in behaviours that *reproduce* the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, *whichever* side of the law he finds himself on in the future, because he has *no means of conceptualising his experience in a way that will enable him not to reproduce it*. He will therefore position himself and other men and boys within the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix that he has internalised, *whatever his future relationship with offending and offenders*. It would be difficult for him to remove himself from such dynamics, as my experience in Chapters 5 and 6 illustrates, in the absence of a conceptual framework that permits him to become self-visible as a man.

**The Failure of the Criminal Justice System and the Men's Prison to Effect Social Justice:**

This Hero/Villain dynamic between men operates within and throughout the Criminal Justice System, which serves the function of legitimating state authority as patriarchal. The primacy of this function is illustrated by the *negligible* effect that the Criminal Justice System has on the actuality of crime, as experienced by the general populace. The irrelevance of the men's prison to crime *as a practical problem* is illustrated by the consideration that only a small fraction of offenders are processed by the Criminal Justice System, and only a small fraction of those offenders who are processed receive prison sentences (Home Office, 1995). For practical purposes, therefore, the Criminal Justice System and the men's prison can be said not only to be *ineffective* in controlling crime, but more significantly, to be *irrelevant* to controlling crime. As Foucault (1986) points out, the prison plays a symbolic rather than practical role within the state, by legitimating state power, rather than regulating crime. My paradigm of masculinity shows that the men's prison legitimates state power in its patriarchal dimension, with a particular emphasis on subordinating men on the lower socio-economic levels to men on higher socio-economic levels.

'Crime', however, is not an absolute phenomenon: certain people, notably those who are low in the socio-economic orders, which include a high proportion of black people, are policed and prosecuted with disproportionate enthusiasm by the state according to social and political expediency. This reality has been explored by Box (1991) in relation to the function of the Criminal Justice System in maintaining divisions of social class in the UK. When considered in the light of the Hero/Villain dynamics, by which masculinity is constructed within patriarchy and institutionalised within the state, the differential policing of the lower socio-economic orders takes on a *new* significance. *The Villain is likely to be constructed in terms of race and class that support the mythology of the Hero as white and belonging to the pinnacle of the socio-economic order.* Thus the construction of masculinity through Hero/Villain dynamics is likely to reinforce social injustice by casting the Villain as *poor and black*, as the composition of the prison population suggests (Prison Reform Trust, 1995). Thus the institutionalisation of *both racism and masculinity* within the state, through the Criminal Justice System, takes place in the same process.

The inequitable policing of offending by young men, according to race and class,

reinforces the institutionalisation of racism and class prejudice in the Criminal Justice System on the level of producing a disproportionate number of convicted offenders who are poor and black (Insitute of Race Relations, 1991). The alliance of masculinity to class oppression and racism, however, produces a further, institutionalised injustice: within a positivist framework of conceptualising 'masculinities' in the plural, those groups appear to contain men, who are more problematic, *as men*. Thus black, working class men, for example, can be cast as belonging to a *different* and more *problematic* masculinity than the masculinity of the white, middle class men who study and police *them* as *objects*. An *intersubjective* approach to masculinity, however, suggests that the construction of the Villain as poor and black reflects a difference in socio-economic status between white men and black men, *which requires justification by white men*, rather than a difference between white men and black men, *as men*.

The state's *purported* aim of regulating crime through the Criminal Justice System and the men's prison is antithetical to the construction of masculinity through relations between men as men, *within* the men's prison and the Criminal Justice System. The aim that the Criminal Justice System *actually* achieves is the *regulation of masculinity within patriarchy and the institutionalisation of patriarchy within the state*. It constructs the Villain, as a man from the lower echelons of the socio-economic order, as a means of constructing the Hero, the exemplar of masculinity within patriarchy, as a man from the upper echelons of the socio-economic order.

The Criminal Justice System effectively *generates* crime with the effect of binding men together as a gender category in the Hero/Villain discourse of power, from which women are excluded, and within which women are subordinated to men. The state constructs the Villain, in the form of the 'criminal', along lines that affirm the power advantage of white men at the pinnacle of the socio-economic order. The 'criminal' is constructed as *other*, as both a citizen *and as a man*, in order to conceal the fact that 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) *is* the criminal. To paraphrase Voltaire (Mason, 1992), if the Criminal did not exist, it would be necessary for patriarchy to invent him. The men's prison is *irrelevant* to the *practical* problems of crime, which, to add insult to injury, are experienced with disproportionate severity by disadvantaged socio-economic groups (Box, 1991; Prison Reform Trust, 1995), whose men are cast inaccurately in the role of 'Villain'.

**Conclusion:**

Within patriarchy, the men's prison can be seen as a symbol of a Criminal Justice System that *generates* crime by men. The function of the generation and regulation of crime by men is that of constructing and institutionalising masculinity within the state according to a Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix that validates the authority of powerful men over other men and women. Within this matrix, young men offend as a matter of *convention* in order to enact masculinity. This consideration has major implications for the Criminal Justice System in terms of both philosophy and practice.

On a philosophical level, it would appear that until masculinity within patriarchy is understood as a hegemonic force and *disestablished* from the Criminal Justice System, men will continue to behave in anti-social ways, including through offending, *whatever* reforms are made to the Criminal Justice System. If the Criminal Justice System becomes *more* punitive, the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity seems likely to be reinforced, producing *more* crime by men.

On a practical level, the Criminal Justice System and the men's prison have little relevance to regulating crime. This suggests that a reduction in crime by men is unlikely to be achieved within existing Criminal Justice structures. The sheer scale and conventionality of crime by men, which renders existing Criminal Justice structures tokenistic, suggests that realistically, a reduction in crime can only be achieved if men cease to *choose* to offend. A scenario in which young men may make such choices would involve by a large-scale deconstruction of masculinity within patriarchy, and a *disestablishment of masculinity from the institutions of state*. Such a scenario would require a serious and sustained challenge to the maintenance of political power by *men, as men,* within institutions of state, by reference to 'crime' and 'criminals' as a means of maintaining power by inaccurately casting themselves in the Hero position as protectors.

Men on *both* sides of the law and at *all* socio-economic levels, share responsibility for incorporating new knowledge about masculinity into our interactions with each other *as men* and in behaving in ways that promote pro-social behaviour *above* enacting Heroic masculinity. On a practical level, these considerations suggest that the Criminal Justice System should be reformed as a system whose aim is *public protection*, rather than promoting Heroic masculinity. I discuss in Chapter 8 how such a reformed Criminal Justice

System might look and how interventions within it, including the men's prison, might work.

## CHAPTER 5: HOW MEN ARE MADE: THE HERO VERSUS THE VILLAIN

### Introduction:

This Chapter deals with the data and its analysis in terms of how men in the prison, as men, both staff and prisoner, included ourselves and other men into the category 'man' within the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, through enacting the Hero/Villain dynamic I have described in Chapter 4. I consider my experience of the *collaboration* of men prisoners and staff, *as men*, in conserving and stabilising formal hierarchies of authority in the prison *within that dynamic*. I show that the maintenance of those formal hierarchies of authority was inextricably bound-up with men's *inclusion* of each other as men into the category 'man'. I also show that this process of inclusion into the category 'man' took place between men, as men, between staff and staff, prisoner and prisoner and staff and prisoner. I further show that the individual man, whatever his position in the prison, was pressured by other men into maintaining hierarchies of authority in the prison by a collective need to remain within the category 'man'.

I explore my observation of and participation in this simultaneous process of men stabilising formal hierarchies of authority and including each other into the category 'man' in the light of the work of Goffman (1991). Goffman (1991) conceptualises the relationship between staff and prisoners as simply *conflictual*, on the basis that each group has opposing interests. I show that Goffman's (1991) perspective is limited by virtue of being androcentric: it does not consider prisoners or staff *as men* by virtue of incorporating our condition as men as normative. Goffman's (1991) androcentric perspective is not able, therefore, to take into account *man to man* dynamics in the construction of formal and informal hierarchies among men. If the relationship between men staff and prisoners were simply conflictual, one might expect that major disturbances would occur in the men's prison on a day to day basis. I did not find this to be the case. This raises a problem with the concept that the relationship between staff and prisoners is one of simple conflict. Is the lack of major day to day conflict between prisoner and staff in the men's prison, therefore, explicable in terms of men prisoners, as powerless objects, being *controlled* so effectively by men staff, as powerful agents, that they dare not risk engaging in significant conflict, and if so, how? Or is it that men passing through the prison, both staff and prisoners, *collaborate* with each other, *intersubjectively, as men*, on a day to day basis, in the stabilisation of

formal hierarchies of authority, in order to *avoid* significant conflict, as a matter of *mutual interest, as men*?

I also show in this Chapter how I discovered this latter question through my reflexive recording of my experience and how I addressed it during the course of my fieldwork. I describe a process of discovery and *externalisation* on my part of my *internalised* masculinity, in the dimension of discovering my insecurity within the category 'man': my Masculine Anxiety. I show how my day to day behaviour in the prison was shaped by that anxiety in the form of my seeking *inclusion* into the category 'man', by other men. I further show how my discovery of these dynamics within myself enabled me to observe them in other men and to begin to map dynamics between men, *as men*, in stabilising formal hierarchies of authority and constructing masculinity *in the same process*. I show the mechanisms of dominance and submission among men, by which we colluded in stabilising *formal* hierarchies of authority in the prison by constructing *informal* hierarchies of authority among ourselves *as men*. I show that in relation to masculinity, the function of both formal and informal hierarchies of authority among men is that of enabling the individual man to preserve his *illusion* of security within the category 'man'. I show that men, *as men*, were impelled by internalised masculinity and compelled by the external masculinity of other men to collaborate in those processes. I also show how the individual man experiences this impulsion and compulsion as a denied fear of rejection from the category 'man', which can be conceptualised as Masculine Anxiety.

I am not able to show the extent to which other men shared or departed from my interpretation of events in this Chapter, because of the semi-covert nature of my research method, which I have described in Chapter 3. My need to keep my interpretation of events to myself was shaped not only by my relatively powerless position as an employee of the prison and the probation service, but also by pressure that I experienced from other men, as men, to include myself and other men within the category 'man' while functioning in my role as employee. My sharing of my interpretation of events with other men, in order to test its relative validity, was opposed directly to men's enaction of the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity on which order in the prison depended.

**Discovering Masculine Anxiety**:

Within a matter of days of beginning to record and reflect on my observations in the

prison, it became evident that my daily experience of the prison was dominated by fear. My notes show my surprise at this discovery. I had not realised that I experienced a high level of fear in the prison on a day to day basis. My recording of my experience in its totality, which included my *feelings* as well as my *thoughts*, as I describe in Chapter 3, revealed that although I did not *think* I was vulnerable to violence from prisoners, I *felt* it. A recording of thoughts alone would not have revealed this discrepancy. On a professional level, my reaction to this discovery was that of feeling inadequate in my professional role. How could I adequately provide services to prisoners if I felt afraid of them? My reaction as a man was equally disturbing. Was I a coward?

As I have explained in Chapter 4, literature on British prisons contains many descriptions of the climate of fear within the men's prison (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Priestley 1980; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Adams, 1994; Campbell, 1986; Smith 1990; Boyle, 1977). Yet this literature addresses only one aspect of fear in the men's prison: that experienced by the *prisoner*, as opposed to the man on the prison staff, or the man researcher. This partial view of men's experience of fear in prisons is consistent with a positivist view of the prisoner as object. When fear is considered on a subject to object basis, the man with lesser power in the relationship, in this case the prisoner, tends to become the object of focus. The man who has the greater power is the one who inflicts fear; the man who has lesser power is the one upon whom fear is inflicted. From this perspective, as a man on the prison staff, I could not justify my fear since I had greater power than the prisoners did. My inability to justify my fear suggested that I was unduly anxious about a relatively small risk. I could accordingly consider myself as a coward and therefore deficient as a man. In this light, my inadequacy as a man could be seen as an impediment to me functioning in my professional role.

My early contemporaneous notes reflect that I was puzzled by what I then thought to be the irrational nature of my fear. I could see no justification for my fear. I reasoned that the risk of me being subject to violence in the prison did not seem to be high when compared, for example, to my experiences as a young man, drinking in pubs and clubs in city centres, when I had been assaulted on more than one occasion. The validity of this view is evident in the fact that during the period of over two years that I spent in the prison, I was never directly subject to, nor even threatened with *any* kind of physical violence. Yet on an almost daily basis, my notes began to reveal a pattern of actual or *imagined* conflict with prisoners, in which I *felt* fear of being subject to violence by prisoners.

I found that my fear was most acute at times when I was dealing with, or *anticipating*

dealing with, prisoners I did not know, especially when they were in informal groups and I was alone. I also found that my level of fear was raised by *forecasts* of disturbances in the prison. I therefore reasoned that my fear was driven by my imagination, as opposed to the actuality of my experience. Early in my observation period, after I had discovered my fear but before I had learned how to re-conceptualise it as Masculine Anxiety, I found myself in an actual as opposed to imagined situation in which I felt fear acutely:

Example 1:

*As part of a work routine, I visited a building in the centre of the prison, where prisoners were free to gather at certain times of the day. Several small-scale disturbances had occurred during previous days, for example, prisoners had barricaded themselves into dormitories and caused minor damage. A major disturbance had been forecast, but it did not occur until several days after this incident. I found myself alone among a crowd of approximately thirty prisoners, who seemed to be angry and agitated. I immediately felt frightened, and wanted to leave, but was prevented from doing so by a prisoner who wanted to talk to me about his application for home leave. The man seemed agitated and incoherent, and although he was not directly aggressive to me, he faced me directly, at an uncomfortably close distance. I was unable to step back, because of the crowd behind me. I dealt with the query and made my way to the door, but another prisoner, part of a group, who aggressively demanded my attention, halted my exit. I was on my way to deal with an attempted suicide, and tried to put him off, but I was met with the response, 'This is fucking important!' By this time I could feel my hands shaking, and I put them in my pockets to conceal the tremor. I managed to get out of the building after listening to the man's concerns.*

My notes, which I wrote up shortly after the incident, reflect my puzzlement at my fear, which I thought to be unjustified by the circumstances in which I felt it. Although I had been in a tense situation in that the prison had been close to a major disturbance and I had been dealt with aggressively by two prisoners, I had not been subject to a direct threat of physical violence. My experience of dealing with prisoners told me that I was under no significant threat. My experience also told me that a riot was unlikely to break out at that time of day, in that place.

My reflexive recording revealed what, at the time of recording, was a difference between

what I *actually* felt and what I thought I *ought* to feel. The discrepancy between my *actual* and *imagined* position suggested to me that as a man, I was subjecting myself to a process that I was unable to explain to myself. That process caused me to feel fear on a level which was not explicable within the terms available to me: I could not adequately explain my fear in terms of fear of the prisoners. I reasoned, therefore, that the process was connected to my *imagination* rather than my *experience* because I was afraid of what I imagined *might* happen to me, rather than what actually had been happening to me. Nonetheless, I had no means of explaining to myself why my imagination was dominated by a fear of being subject to violence by prisoners, in contradiction of my experience. I knew only that this was the case and that I had concealed this knowledge from myself, as was evident in my surprise at discovering it.

Once I had discovered that I *felt* a level of fear which I was unable to explain or justify to myself in rational terms, I began to observe the same phenomenon in men around me, both prisoners and staff. I observed that other men appeared to experience high levels of fear of being subject to violence in respect of *imagined* violent confrontations with other men. I also observed that other men, like me, found ways of suppressing that fear from their knowledge. The contradiction between *thought* and *feeling* in men in relation to fear was consistently evident in other men's body language. Body tension and watchfulness increased in other men according to the same conditions in which it increased in me: facing groups of men who were strangers, particularly in informal situations.

The wide space of what had been the former parade ground of the military camp on which the prison was based appeared to be a particularly fearful space. Men, both prisoners and staff, who crossed that space alone, consistently displayed both tension and watchfulness, especially when approaching other groups of men. Yet these bodily manifestations of feeling under threat were contradicted by body language that spoke of casualness: the stiffness of the upper body would be contradicted by what appeared to be a casual stroll. Eye contact would be avoided by focussing on objects or events away from the group of men, sometimes accompanied by a change of course that took the individual man away from the group. I became aware that men were afraid of men who were strangers and that the individual man dealt with this fear in the same way as myself: by denying it.

I observed a high level of men's *denied* fear of other men, in both others and myself. I was aware from my conversations with uniformed staff and prisoners that their risk of being subject to violence was greater than mine was. These men, therefore, had a sounder rational

basis than me for experiencing fear. Yet I hypothesised, on the basis of my experience, that the fear which other men in the prison experienced was not only a rational fear of being injured, but also that it reflected a process of rationalisation through which a deeper fear was buried. The consistently contradictory body language of men who felt fear suggested that we were both *afraid, and afraid of owning that fear*: thus we were subject to a double fear.

My externalisation of my internalised fear, through my reflexive recording of my day to day experience, as a man, caused destabilisation and anxiety within me, as I describe in Chapter 3. In discovering that I experienced a high level of fear, I had closed-off the protective mechanism of rationalisation from myself. I therefore felt fear directly and acutely, on a day to day basis, without having a means of accounting to myself for that fear, or any means of sharing it with men around me, who relied on *denial* as a day to day survival mechanism. The memories, perceptions and behaviours on which I had based my sense of identity as a man who could transcend fear no longer appeared to be reliable. I became unsure of the value of my perceptions as recorded through my observations. I was destabilised as a man on an internal level and alienated from other men on an external level. I had no means of reinstating my internalised self-image once I had externalised it through reflexive recording. My opportunities for seeking emotional support were constrained by my inability to explain my experience to others: I could not even explain it to myself during the early part of my observation period. In terms of emotional and intellectual survival, I had no viable choice but to move forward in beginning to construct the paradigm of masculinity that appears in Chapter 4, as a means of coming to terms with my experience.

Once I had externalised my internalised fear it became acute, to the extent that I began to display symptoms of stress, as I describe in Chapter 3. With hindsight, I see that the anxiety I experienced can most accurately be described as Masculine Anxiety, which stemmed from my resistance to the knowledge that I was the Non-Man. I took the view that my psychological survival depended on me managing my fear, and that managing the fear depended on me gaining insight into the nature of my fear. I therefore used the frequent opportunities in which I felt fear to record and reflect on it. I gained some insight into the nature of my deeper fear, as a man, in relation to other men, by recording and reflecting on my fear in a moment when it was particularly acute:

Example 2:

*I was recording and reflecting on my fear at the prospect of dealing alone with a group of*

*up to sixty prisoners who were going through the process of being inducted into the prison. This was a task that was regarded with some trepidation by my colleagues and myself because it involved facing a large group of men who were normally upset and anxious at being brought into the prison. Displays of hostility by anxious prisoners were not uncommon in this environment. I take the following excerpt directly from my contemporaneous notes:*

*'As I grow older, I seem to experience fear much more acutely. I have always been nervous of man violence, but especially so since I began working here. There are times, particularly during the riot season (August), when I am scared of going into the category 'C' compound. Inductions and the segregation unit worry the hell out of me. This is irrational because the physical risk to me is, statistically speaking, minimal. I am, perhaps, afraid of fear, or showing vulnerability through fear. I am anxious now at the thought of doing inductions next Tuesday. I guess my real fear is that I will be* ***humiliated as a man****, rather than hurt. As I write, I have an image of myself cowering in a corner with my arms raised to protect myself, shouting 'Leave me alone.' This image dredges-up ghosts of my childhood failures, when I was too frightened to defend myself in some fights. The thought of fights where I did not fail bring me no comfort. I must have inflicted similar pain and humiliation. If it feels like this for me, how does it feel for prisoners who, unlike me, have no escape? How does it feel for other prison staff?' (Bold added later)*

I used my field notes to reflect on my fear of violence from man prisoners in the *moment* of feeling that fear, before I had time to reconstruct it, like Gans (1967, quoted by McNeill, 1990, p. 78). I was thus able to arrive at a view of my fear of being subject to violence as formed by a *deeper* fear than that of being hurt, or of suffering the ignominy of a beating. I became aware that I was afraid of being humiliated by other men, *as a man*. My fear, specifically, was that of *failing to give the appearance to other men and myself of being able to transcend my fear*. In other words, I was afraid that I was the Non-Man, and that I would be discovered as such not only by other men, *as men*, but also, and more critically, by *myself*. My fear of losing my sense of identity, *as a man*, is reflected in an imagined return to childhood. My deep fear was magnified by my denial of it. My discovery of the nature of my fear, through my reflexive recording, enabled me to account for the hitherto inexplicable gap between what I *actually* felt and what I thought I *should* feel. This discovery enabled me

to understand that my denial of my fear was functional in preventing me from understanding that I was insecure in the category 'man'.

I discovered that as a man, I was locked into a dynamic of *cognitive distortion*, where I was subject to an internalised fear that I felt, but could not conceptualise, articulate or own. My first line of defence against that fear had been simple denial: I had suppressed that fear in my consciousness. My second line of defence had been displacement: I had translated my fear of being the Non-Man into a fear of being subject to physical violence, and located the prisoner, the Villain, as the threat.

Having arrived at this understanding of my fear of discovering my insecurity within the category 'man' I was also able to see that the more acutely I had *felt* this insecurity, as *fear*, the more strongly I had been obliged to deny and rationalise it. The process of denial had set up a resonance between my deep fear and my rationalised fear: the more fear I felt, the more I was obliged to justify it in terms of being in danger of being subject to violence. Thus I had been *magnifying* my rationalised fear. I had *felt* I should be the Hero, whereas I *knew* I was the Non-Man. I had suppressed this self- knowledge by constructing the prisoner as the Villain and myself, by implication, as the Hero. For as long as I had been able to *think* that my fear was negligible and that I could justify it in terms of a rational fear of violence at the hands of the Villain, I had been able to pretend to myself that I could occupy the Hero position. But my reflexive recording of my thoughts and feelings, as a man, had revealed a distinct gap in reality between thought and feeling: I had *felt* far more frightened than I had been able to admit to myself. Once I had faced and accepted my fear, and further accepted that I could not belong to the category 'man', it became clear to me that my sense of identity as a man was no longer tenable and that I had nothing with which to replace it. I had recognised that my sense of belonging to the category 'man' could not survive the exposure of the cognitive distortion necessary to it's maintenance. I was no longer able to deny the actuality of my experience or to displace my fear of ontological collapse onto a fear of violence.

Having arrived at this understanding of the ontological nature of the fear I had been experiencing, I was able to reconceptualise that fear as Masculine Anxiety – a man's fear of facing the knowledge that he is, inevitably, the Non-Man. Once I had faced that knowledge in relation to myself, my anxiety abated and I found that my previous sense of being a man was a dysfunctional illusion which I was happy to live without. I did not desire to *replace* masculinity in myself because I had never actually *possessed* it.

**Masculine Anxiety Operating between Men in the Prison:**

Once I had constructed the concept of Masculine Anxiety, I was able to apply it to my experience in relation to other men as recorded in my field notes. I revisited recorded experiences in which I had found myself behaving fearfully in relation to other men, in ways that I had not previously been able to understand. For example:

Example 3:

*I was sitting on a board, composed entirely of men on this occasion, which made decisions on prisoners' applications to return home for short periods. A case arose in which a prisoner with a long history of emotional instability and extreme violence, including recent violence to prison staff, was unanimously felt to be an unsuitable candidate. The convenor of the board suggested that since I was associated with the part of the prison where the man was housed, I should personally convey the boards' decision. I dissembled, arguing that the matter could best be dealt with by staff on the wing, who knew the man and would therefore be in the best position to know how to break the news. I added that they also had the option of acting collectively. The convenor, a high ranking uniformed officer of many years experience, looked directly at me and told me, with stinging accuracy, that I had 'Teflon shoulders'. I felt that I could detect both contempt and triumph in his eyes.*

*After I left the meeting, having won the point, I found that I could not live with the feeling that I had allowed his fear to get the better of me, regardless of the sense of my argument. As I reached the gate to the category 'C' compound, I suddenly turned and opened it. I walked to the wing, frightened, but determined to do the job. I told myself that I had never 'bottled out' in my professional career, and that I would not be able to look myself in the eye if I did so now. When I arrived at the wing, uniformed staff told me that they had already told the man the news. Feeling both validated and relieved, I asked how he had taken it. They looked at me quizzically and explained that he had accepted it, since no one with his record would regard the acceptance of a home leave application as anything other than a remote possibility.*

At the time of recording the incident, immediately after it happened, I felt pleased with

myself. My record of not 'bottling out', as I put it to myself at the time, remained unbroken. I felt faintly ridiculous, in a Quixotic (Cervantes, 1950) sense, that it had not occurred to me that the prisoner would be unlikely to expect to get his home leave, but that felt insignificant in the light of my perceived success in transcending my fear. Once I had constructed the concept of Masculine Anxiety, however, and applied it to this behaviour on my part, I began to see my behaviour in a less flattering light. The Principal Officer had adopted the Hero position and he had effectively and accurately accused me of being the Non-Man, by virtue of my fear of confronting the prisoner as Villain. This accusation had caused my Masculine Anxiety to become acute, with two, primary effects:

1) I became anxious to *deny* to myself that I was unable to transcend my fear, as a matter of course: my constructed *history* as a man, in the sense that I had built-up a construction of myself as never having failed to transcend fear in moments of critical challenge to my masculinity, was under threat.

2) I *rationalised* the actuality that I was experiencing ontological insecurity within the category 'man' by displacing my anxiety onto the prisoner, of whom I then became disproportionately afraid.

In revisiting my recording of the incident, post my construction of the concept of Masculine Anxiety, I noted that my concern at the time was *not* a fear of losing face. I was not particularly concerned about the reaction of the men on the board, including the Principal Officer, because I had won the argument in terms of putting forward the best way of giving the prisoner the news. I knew that I was on solid ground in terms of my professional argument and in any event, this was a relatively minor matter in the day to day running of the prison.

The problem I had been trying to resolve, *as a man,* had not been that of losing face, but rather of dealing with the *accuracy* of the Principle Officer's implication that I was a coward and therefore the Non-Man: he had found me out in lying to myself. Up until the moment of eye contact between the Principal Officer and myself, I had been able to *pretend* to myself that my arguments were motivated entirely by professional concerns. The hidden *actuality* of my motivation, however, had been fear of failing to transcend my fear in encountering the prisoner as the Villain. From the moment my self-deception was discovered, I was unable to

avoid the surfacing in my consciousness of my cognitive dissonance in denying, displacing and rationalising my Masculine Anxiety. My subsequent journey across the fearful space of the parade ground was not motivated by a desire to put myself in a position where I could later tell the Principle Officer what I had done. Rather it was motivated by my desire to *re-bury* my Masculine Anxiety, in order to conserve my illusion that I belonged within the category 'man'. The moment of truth which I had faced in the encounter with the Principle Officer did not only call into question the validity of my masculinity in that moment, but also in terms of my *history* as a man. I recognised that the cognitive distortion that the Principal Officer had exposed in me called into question memories on which I had previously relied to support my illusion of masculinity. I recognised that those memories had been constructed and re-constructed within the same distorted, cognitive framework. If I admitted cognitive distortion to myself in relation to that particular moment of truth, I inevitably called into question my entire *history* as a man.

The power of the drive in me to re-bury my ontological insecurity within the category 'man' in this example is evident in the way in which it eclipsed my view of what constituted the best professional approach to the problem of breaking bad news to a prisoner. Despite having won the argument and having avoided loss of face in relation to the other men on the board, I felt impelled to cut across my professional judgement by embarking on a course of action which I *knew* to be foolhardy. My resolve to confront the prisoner served no function other than that of avoiding facing the knowledge that I was the Non-Man. I had denied that I felt fear. When confronted with my fear, I had displaced the problem onto the prisoner, rather than own it myself. I had then behaved in a way which I knew to be ill-advised and I had rationalised it to myself as a courageous act, which placed me in the Hero position in relation to the prisoner as Villain. And throughout this entire process, it had not occurred to me to consider the motivation of the Principal Officer, as a man, in effectively accusing me of being the Non-Man.

In reconsidering my field-notes in the light of the concept of Masculine Anxiety, I gained some insight into the motivation of the Principle Officer through re-examining another, later example of my own anxiety-driven behaviour as a man:

Example 4:

*A prisoner serving a life sentence for murder, which I was supervising, had recently returned from home leave. The prison had been given reliable information that while on*

*home leave, he had seized his wife by the throat during an argument. She had feared for a moment that he was going to strangle her, before, as she put it, he 'regained control of himself.' The responsibility to put this allegation to the prisoner fell immediately to a Prison Officer and me. We planned the interview a day in advance and agreed that I would put the allegation to him, and the other man would observe. We both dreaded the interview, not so much because of a fear of violence, but because of the grimness of confronting a man who had been close to release with information, which could add years to his imprisonment. At the crucial moment, when I had gone past the point of no return in beginning to reveal the allegation, the other man stood up and said he was going to make a cup of tea in the next room. I looked him in the eye with the same triumph and contempt as the Principal Officer on the home leave board had previously looked at me, and said, 'Two sugars please'.*

At the time of recording this incident, immediately after it had happened, I experienced it as moral and professional valediction. I felt that I had coped well in difficult circumstances. I had done my job even though my colleague had let me down at the critical moment. I felt I had let him off lightly for his failure, his 'bottling out', in terms of avoiding his responsibility in his job. Once I applied the concept of Masculine Anxiety to his behaviour and mine, however, I was able to see our respective behaviour in a different light.

Despite my dread of the interview, I was reasonably confident that my professional training and experience would enable me to sustain a competent persona, however badly the prisoner reacted to the allegation. I felt that the risk of violence was small, based on my knowledge of the prisoner. I could therefore afford to adopt the Hero position in relation to the prisoner as Villain by dismissing the other man as the Non-Man. Thus I could bury the knowledge of my self-deception which had disturbingly surfaced in the home-leave board incident. I could also add my memory of my performance in this new incident to memories of other incidents in which I had performed Heroically as part of a collection of evidence that I could *be* the Hero when the occasion demanded it. Once again, my Masculine Anxiety had eclipsed my professional concerns in a way into which I had no insight at the time.

Unlike me, however, my Prison Officer colleague had no professional training to enable him to distance himself from the pain of extinguishing the prisoner's hope of an early release. His difficulty in achieving emotional distance from the prisoner was made worse by him knowing the prisoner better than me. The Prison Officer was a kind and sensitive man who was simply unable to bear the pain of the moment of disclosure, where he would have

had to look the prisoner in the eye. His leaving the room was his means of avoiding facing his own vulnerability, in the same way that my dissembling at facing the other prisoner had been my means to the same end.

I had cast myself in the role of Hero, the prisoner in the role of Villain and the Prison Officer in the role of Non-Man. This casting replicated precisely the dynamic underpinning the behaviour of the Principle Officer in the home leave board incident: he had cast himself in the role of Hero, scorning me as the Non-Man in my unwillingness to face the prisoner as Villain.

The juxtaposition of Examples 3 and 4 illustrate how masculinity was constructed between men in the prison, as men, in a Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix, in which the individual man was driven by Masculine Anxiety to displace his fear of being the Non-Man onto other men. These examples also illustrate how the individual man who is positioned himself as the Hero/Villain by casting the other man as the Non-Man was able to reduces the risk of a counter positioning by framing his attack ambivalently. In each of these examples, the accusation of cowardice is *implicit* as opposed to *explicit*: 'Teflon shoulders' and 'two sugars please'. The phrase 'Teflon shoulders' could be explained at face value as a comment on the lack of eagerness on the part of the accused to accept appropriate responsibility. Similarly, the phrase 'two sugars please' could be explained in terms of a simple request to sweeten the drink. The fact that the accusation of 'cowardice' is not explicit allows the accuser the potential to deny the nature of the accusation, thus allowing him the possibility of retreating if challenged by the accused.

The *implication*, rather than the direct accusation of cowardice can be seen as functional in allowing both protagonists to construct masculinity while maintaining face and avoiding the escalation of conflict. If the implicit accusation of being the Non-Man were to become explicit in the encounter, Masculine Anxiety could begin to surface explicitly in both men. This could risk escalation in conflict to the possible extent that each man would feel obliged to prove his masculinity overtly, at the expense of the other man. In this sense, maintaining face in these conflicts can be seen as a collusive enterprise between the men concerned, the function of which is to allow Masculine Anxiety to be exchanged between men without the nature of that anxiety becoming explicit. In this way, maintaining 'face' allowed men within the prison to lock each other into reproducing masculinity a day to day basis, while suppressing knowledge of what it was, or our inability to meet it.

Once I applied this understanding of Masculine Anxiety as a medium of exchange between

men in *covertly* constructing masculinity, my hitherto inexplicable fear of prisoners, evident in Example 1, became explicable: I *was* the Non-Man. I feared that I would find this out in an encounter with the prisoner as Villain. I was *surprised* by my discovery of my fear, through reflexive recording, because my means of coping with my fear was through *denying* it. Once I set out on a course of reflexively examining my experience *as a man, in relation to other men*, my collapse in my ontological security within the category 'man' was inevitable. I breached irreparably my internalised wall of denial that I was the Non-Man. I set myself beyond any means of returning to the phenomenological world of masculinity I had left. In order to survive emotionally, I had no viable alternative to constructing the paradigm of masculinity in Chapter 4.

Masculine Anxiety is a concept which can be related to the *personal* resistance of most men authors on masculinity (see Chapter 2) to locating themselves as a variable in their work. An application of the concept of Masculine Anxiety and the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity within which formed to the experience of 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) would reveal that he *is* the Non-Man. His sense of *identity and history*, as a man, cannot survive this discovery *on a personal level*. I deal with the implications of this consideration in Chapter 8. The function in maintaining ontological security in the individual man. To *refuse*, like Stoltenberg (1990), to be a man, is, paradoxically, compatible with being a man: it is a transcendental act of will. Discovering that one is not, never has been and never will be a man and that one's personal history as such is a fiction is quite a different matter.

**The Institutionalisation of Masculine Anxiety:**

I was able to arrive at this new framework of understanding conflict between men, as men, through the method described in chapter 3. My use of my experiences to externalise and analyse my internalised fear in relation to conflict with other men enabled me to form a hypothesis in respect of conflict between men in the prison, as men:

*Conflict between men, as men, is unknowingly governed by the need of each man to maintain the illusion that he is not the* ***Non-Man***.

I tested this hypothesis against the man to man conflicts I witnessed, heard accounts of and

was involved in, on a day to day basis. The following example illustrates the extent of the power of the need of the individual man to maintain the illusion that he is not the Non-Man. It also illustrates the function of Masculine Anxiety in maintaining a normative construction of masculinity as Heroism, *against* the interests of men in the prison as *individuals*:

Example 5:

*I was approached by a woman colleague who was in a state of distress about an encounter she had experienced moments before the riot broke out. She had been approached by the duty Governor, John, a man in his fifties, who was on his way to try to deal with the trouble which had begun in a residential part of the prison. His experience led him to believe that this would be the ignition point of the riot. His face was white and his hands were shaking. He kept repeating that he was too old to take another beating, and that he had been beaten before, and knew what it was like. Nevertheless, his duty was to go to try to defuse the situation, so he went. Shortly afterwards his worst fears were realised. The riot broke. He was stoned by a mob. A blanket was thrown over his head and he was jostled. He left the prison shortly afterwards and did not return.*

On one level, John's act in doing his duty, regardless of the personal consequences, and in the face of his fear, can be seen as a laudable act of transcendental courage. On a deeper level, however, it can be understood in terms of him being more afraid of failing to transcend his fear than he was of taking an ultimately futile risk. He made himself vulnerable to a mob which he had clear reason to believe would attack him. The risk to him, unlike the relatively far smaller risk to me in examples 2 and 4, was potentially lethal. A Prison Officer had recently died from a heart attack during the stress of a major disturbance at a nearby prison. John risked his life in a gesture that he knew to be pointless.

John's case illustrates that his *externalised* fear of being harmed was amplified by a greater, *internalised* and denied fear that he might be unable to conform to his Ideal Masculine Self. He was experiencing Masculine Anxiety. The fear he *began* to externalise, *in the moment he was experiencing it and before he had time to rationalise it*, was not the fear that he would be harmed; it was rather an emergent fear that he would be *unable to cope with being harmed.* He did not say that he feared another beating, but rather that he '*could not take another beating*', a phrase that he repeated many times. His repetition of this phrase echoed my repetition of the phrase 'never bottled-out' on my own futile mission in

example 3. Like myself in Example 2, contemporaneously recording my fear of facing a crowd of potentially hostile prisoners in a far calmer situation, the greater of his two fears was that of finding himself in the Non-Man position. He therefore faced a physically dangerous situation, of which he was reasonably and rationally afraid, while being impaired in his professional judgement by denied ontological fear. He was both afraid, and *afraid of being afraid.* His method of coping with his Masculine Anxiety, like me in Example 3, was to take on the *lesser* fear of suffering actual harm.

The internalised pressure on John to face the lesser, *expressible* fear of the prisoners, rather than the greater, *inexpressible* fear of being the Non-Man, was increased by the fact that he had to deal with the situation in front of Prison Officers who were presumably frightened in a similar way. Those men could have displaced their fear onto him by placing *him* in the Non-Man position. Despite his professional judgement and his fears about his personal safety, therefore, *as a man*, he was trapped in a Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity by internalised, external and institutional pressures. His survival, *as a man*, depended on him exposing himself to violence by other men in a way which he knew to be tactically *futile*. He effectively became a pawn in a ritualised and institutionalised game in which masculinity was being constructed on a large scale within the prison with staff in the role of Hero and prisoner in the role of Villain. Had he failed to make his futile gesture, both staff and prisoner would have regarded him as the Non-Man. His choice, therefore, was simple: Hero or Non-Man. So, to the puzzlement and distress of the *woman,* an *outsider* to the phenomenological world of masculinity, to whom he had chosen to express his fears, he took his beating. He could not have expressed his fear to another *man* in such a way without his knowledge that he was the Non-Man emerging from the conversation. I deal with the implications of him seeking support from a woman in private in Chapter 7.

It may be that John would have provided me with a different account of events, had I been able to discuss this matter with him. In the event of my hypothesis in relation to masculinity being accurate, he would have been *obliged* to provide a different account of events in order to preserve his sense of masculinity. It may have been the case that he would have explained his actions in professional terms. I was unable to discuss it with him, however, because of his disappearance from the prison immediately after the event; because of the way in which I had received the information about him from a third party; because of my vulnerability to maintaining my employment in the face of the prison authorities becoming aware of my interest in truths behind matters which were covered by an 'official' version of events; but

mostly because such questioning would have been cruel. I had *volunteered* to de-construct my own masculinity, at the cost of considerable stress and destabilisation in myself: he had suffered professional and personal catastrophe, in circumstances far worse than anything I had to face, by virtue of being in the wrong role, in the wrong place, at the wrong time in a punitive, masculine institution.

As I began to understand the strength and the institutionalised nature of the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, internalised in me and apparently in the men around me, I began to reconceptualise men's day to day displays of *willingness* by men to engage in violence with other men. I began to see the role of Masculine Anxiety in shaping such displays. I saw that, as men, we were trapped in the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity and all hostages to fortune in discovering ourselves in our denial that each of us was the Non-Man. The prisoners who had accosted me in Example 1 were experiencing fear of the impending disturbance, *as men*, as well as prisoners. They were afraid of being hurt and that fear was augmented by the greater fear that they would 'bottle out' in the impending conflict. Their aggression towards me was a safe way of exporting their Masculine Anxiety onto me, by making me feel afraid. They did to me what the convenor on the Home Leave Board had done to me and what I, in turn, had done to the Prison Officer in the 'Lifer' incident.

This pattern suggested to me that as men, we were locked into an economy of fear. We passed the parcel of Masculine Anxiety from one to the other, until the one who was in the wrong place at the wrong time felt obliged to accept or inflict serious violence in order to retain his sense of masculinity. Yet on a day to day basis, we found ways of regulating conflict between ourselves as men in such a way that serious violence did *not* occur on a day to day basis.

**Regulating Conflict between Men, as Men:**

During the 7-month duration of my fieldwork in the prison I ran a pre-release course for prisoners with a Prison Officer, as a normal part of my duties. Each course lasted for 2 weeks with a 2-week break between each course. An average of 10 prisoners attended each course. A number of different Prison Officers ran the course with me. I applied the concept of Masculine Anxiety to the interactions between men in the groups, as men, including myself. My aim was to arrive at an understanding of how men in a group resolved the

tension between asserting a claim to Heroic masculinity, as *individual* men, and maintaining stability as a *group* of men. At the beginning of my period of fieldwork, the assertion *individual* masculinity appeared to me to be incompatible with the cohesion of *groups* of men in that individual masculinity depends on willingness to engage in *conflict* with other men, whereas the stability of a group depends on *collaboration* between men. I therefore addressed myself to understanding how men in groups reconcile these two conflicting drives.

As I have explained in Chapter 4, literature on prisons was not helpful in solving this puzzle in that in line with Goffman (1991) it tends to portray prisoners as a homogeneous group conflicted with staff as a homogeneous group, locked in a simple power struggle. Literature on masculinities (Brittan, 1989; Connell, 1991 and 1995; Hearn and Collison 1994; Morgan, 1992; Seidler, 1994) was not helpful in that it tends to conceptualise masculinity as highly fragmented, whereas the data I was collecting suggested that staff and prisoners, as men, were engaged in producing the *same* masculinity. Literature on masculinity and prisons was unhelpful because it is premised on a positivistic view of the prisoner as object and the same understanding as Goffman (1991) of the relationship between prisoner and staff, (Sim, 1994). I therefore concentrated my observations in the pre-release group on conflict resolution between men, *as men*, on the premise that such resolution was achieved intersubjectively, rather than on a subject to object basis. I reasoned that an intersubjective research approach, in which I studied myself in conjunction with other men in managing the apparent paradox between the construction of Heroic masculinity in the individual man and the maintenance of group stability offered greater hope of uncovering useful data than the positivist approach of studying men in the group as objects.

My initial observations in the pre-release group were dominated by what I first saw as disproportionate aggressive reactions to minor disagreements between men in the group – prisoner to prisoner and Prison Officer to prisoner. I started from the assumption that these disputes were driven by a desire on the part of individual men in the group to achieve dominance or to avoid losing dominance in the order of the group.

I found that my role in the group was often that of refereeing in conflicts between men. Before I discovered the concept of Masculine Anxiety I assumed that the function of challenges and counter challenges between men was that the individual man was attempting to secure the highest position possible for himself in a hierarchy of dominance in the group. I found that I was the most dominant man in the group. I assumed that this was because I

ranked highest in terms of institutional power by virtue of being a Probation Officer. Over a period of time, however, I came to realise that this assumption was flawed in that I observed that other men colleagues, including Prison Officers, while having authority in the group by virtue of institutional power, were not necessarily the most dominant *men*, among a group of men. There was a difference between *informal* hierarchies of men, *as men* and *formal* hierarchies between men according to institutional rank.

I also found that dominance in terms of informal hierarchies of authority among men, *as men*, was signalled by *open* body postures and that submission was signalled by *closed* body postures.

The following example represents a typical confrontation between two men, in this case a Prison Officer and a prisoner, and my intervention in that confrontation:

Example 6:

*I was working with a group of prisoners in conjunction with a Prison Officer who was presenting material, which he had created himself, to the group. This work was voluntary on his part, in that it fell outside his normal range of duties. I had observed him present the material on several previous occasions, when it had been well received by prisoners. On this occasion the group kept interrupting him with critical comments and questions. In responding to a particularly difficult question, he apparently felt that the questioner was not lending sufficient importance to his answer, because he suddenly shouted, 'You're not fucking taking this seriously', while glaring at the questioner and taking a step forwards. His outburst took me by surprise, as it apparently did the rest of the group, who fell into silence. He was engaged in eye contact with the questioner, whose face was paler than usual and whose body was tense. The questioner stood up. The posture of each man suggested that they were ready to spring forward. The rest of the group seemed equally tense, as they looked backwards and forwards between the protagonists and me. I judged the situation to be at risk of escalating into violence, so I decided to try to take control of it.*

*By this point in my fieldwork, I had constructed the concept of Masculine Anxiety. I assumed that each man was locked into conflict with the other on a* ***man to man*** *level, rather than as prisoner versus staff. I resisted the impulse to interpose myself between the two of them and suggest that they calm down. Instead, I sat back in my chair, assumed an open, dominant posture, and mildly suggested that the questioner had a valid point that the*

*speaker seemed to have missed. I then went on to elaborate on the point. As I did so, I could see the protagonists relax, along with the rest of the group. The speaker got back into his stride, and the questioner, after keeping quiet for a while, carried on participating, but in a more moderate style.*

My hypothesis that Masculine Anxiety, rather than a desire to maintain or gain hierarchical ground within the group governed this confrontation was supported by the outcome of this incident. The assumption that the conflict was hierarchical would have suggested that I follow my first impulse, which was to focus on the behaviour of each man as inappropriate. My previous experience in such situations was that this would be likely to bring me into conflict with one or both of the protagonists, making myself an element of the conflict. Instead of following this route, I assumed that the conflict originated in the fear of the speaker sparked off by the questioner, that he was an insignificant *man*, whose views were not worth hearing by other *men*. I also assumed that the aim of his aggression was to be taken seriously as a *man*.

The indication that the speaker is primarily concerned with his own credibility as a man lies in the strength and individualised nature of his aggression, in which he confronts another *individual* man is evident in the position of the emphatic *'fucking'* in the phrase, which points to the 'you', rather than the 'this': 'You're not *fucking* taking this seriously'. The speaker did not say, 'You're not taking *this* fucking seriously', for example, which would suggest a primary concern with the *subject* matter, rather than himself.

Just as I assumed that the speaker felt his own identity as a man to be under threat, I assumed that the questioner was experiencing the same feeling. His body posture was open, matching that of the speaker, suggesting he was ready to meet aggression with aggression, rather than to submit. The speaker was evoking the questioner's own Masculine Anxiety, placing him in a situation where he was faced with three options:

1: Submit and accept humiliation *as a man* in front of the men in the group: become the Non-Man.

2: Re-frame the confrontation as non-threatening, for example by treating the challenge to his masculinity as a joke or a small matter that he could readily concede: side step the challenge.

3: Escalate the confrontation by returning the attack: become the Villain.

By virtue of having already, physically risen to the challenge, the questioner had already hampered himself in side stepping the challenge, especially since he was not verbally adept. He was therefore in the position of having to chose, like John to enter the Hero/Villain dynamic or to find himself in the Non-Man position. In putting myself in a dominant position in relation to both men, I removed the responsibility for resolving the situation off them and onto myself. I avoided entering the conflict by *pretending* that the conflict was about the *subject* the speaker was presenting. This allowed the men to unlock themselves from the conflict without losing face, but more importantly, without either of them finding themselves in the Non-Man position. The attraction of both men, *as men*, of that solution to the conflict is evident in the fact that they both seized it. The conflict was governed, on a *man to man* level, by the need of each protagonist, as a man, to avoid finding himself in the Non-Man position.

Having managed this conflict in this way, I found I was able to use the same method of resolving conflicts between men consistently within this group of men, and subsequent groups of men. I found that my ability to allow men to retain the *illusion* that they were able to perform successfully in the Hero/Villain dynamic, without having to face *actual*, physical conflict in which the individual man risked being exposed as the Non-Man, was the key to my *apparent* dominance of the group of men, *as men*.

In the light of this finding, it would appear that my apparently dominant position among groups of men in the prison represented a *positivist* view of power relations which was erroneous. I had not been in the dominant position on a simple subject to object basis where I was *controlling* the men in the group as *objects*. Rather the other men in the group had tacitly elected me into the dominant position, *as men*, on an *intersubjective* basis, because I was skilled at allowing each man in the group to retain the illusion that he was not the Non-Man. I had also isolated and developed the ability to read the language of dominance and submission among men, *as men*, and to respond to what was required by the group without it having to be made explicit. Thus I was able to maintain a façade of competence as a man and I was able to allow other men in the group to do the same. In other words, I was the most effective liar.

The corollary of the men in the group tacitly electing me as head of the *informal* hierarchy

among the group, as a man, was that my position as head of the *formal* hierarchy of the group, as a Probation Officer, was reinforced. I observed that men on the prison staff who appeared to have the trust and respect of prisoners were men who seemed able, as I had learned, to adopt the prime position, as men, in the informal hierarchies among men, as men. The key to adopting this prime position appeared, paradoxically, to lie in adopting what appeared, on the surface to be *vulnerability*. One governor, who was highly respected among both staff and prisoners and who was skilled at maintaining order in the prison, would routinely go alone into situations where disgruntled prisoners had congregated in order to resolve disputes between staff and prisoners. He told me that he felt that many men staff in the prison increased their risk of being subject to violence by keeping their *distance* from prisoners, whereas in his view their safety lay in keeping *close* to prisoners. He appeared to understand that keeping a façade of competence as a man through maintaining a posture of openness was critical to maintaining a prime position among men. He also appeared to understand that in order to maintain this position, he was required to take responsibility onto himself for re-framing man to man conflicts in a way that allowed each man to preserve the illusion that he was not the Non-Man.

I found that some men who were prisoners, as well as staff, appeared to have a good, working understanding of how to manage the dynamics of masculinity among groups of men and to use this understanding to take power, as men, to themselves. For example:

Example 7:

*I was setting out a room in the chapel building, in preparation for running an evening group. Some prisoners were already in the room. The door suddenly burst open and two prisoners, locked in hand to hand combat, fell into the room. I waited for a second, hoping that somebody would intervene, but nobody did. Still being in my early phase of denying my cowardice to myself, I had just resigned myself to intervening physically, when one of the prisoners, to my intense relief, stopped the fight by calmly suggesting that such behaviour was inappropriate in a chapel, because it was disrespectful to God. Although I am unsure as to whether God exists or not, I found myself endorsing the view of the prisoner who intervened.*

The prisoner who intervened appeared to surmise that the two men were unable to find a way out of a physical confrontation *as men*. He offered them a rationale for ceasing to fight

that allowed each of them to avoid the Non-Man position. The accuracy of his reading of the situation is evident in the fact that they stopped fighting immediately. The corollary of his success in reading the situation was that he effectively took power onto himself in an *intersubjective* exchange, where he offered the two men who were fighting what they wanted, *as men*. He thus included them into the category 'man' with himself in the prime position. He, *the prisoner*, in constructing an *informal* hierarchy among these 3 men simultaneously stabilised the *formal* hierarchy of authority by maintaining order and discipline in the prison. I, the member of prison *staff*, however, was paralysed by my Masculine Anxiety into inaction, which I would probably have followed-up with an ill-advised lunge into the fray in order to avoid being in the Non-Man position myself. Thus I may have *reinforced* the man to man dynamics, with negative consequences for all the men concerned.

I observed a similar understanding of Masculine Anxiety displayed by a number of *older* prisoners, who proved to be able to move beyond Hero/Villain dynamics in their interactions with younger, less mature prisoners. For example:

Example 8:

*I was running a group in which a young prisoner of about twenty-two kept violently disagreeing with an older prisoner, who I would guess to be in his early thirties. They were sitting next to each other. The older man took his disagreements very calmly, and whenever he became particularly agitated and vitriolic, he put his hand on the young man's shoulder and told him gently to calm down, then kept his hand in place until the younger man sat still. When the group ended they left together.*

I observed this interaction *before* I had arrived at the concept of Masculine Anxiety. At the time of recording it, I understood that the younger man was angry and that he was displacing his anger onto the older man. This explanation, however, did not make sense of the tolerance of the older man towards the younger man, nor did it make sense of my observation that the older man appeared to be having success in dealing with the apparent anger by offering reassurance. I could not understand what the younger man was being reassured about. When his anger could be understood as a manifestation of Masculine Anxiety, however, through which he was attempting to assert his masculinity through challenges that he *knew* would not result in actual conflict, the interaction between the two

men, *as men*, began to make sense. On some level, the older man *knew*, as I did not know at the time of observation, that the younger man's behaviour was driven by Masculine Anxiety, rather than anger.

**Emotional Alienation through Inclusion into the Category 'Man':**

My discovery of Masculine Anxiety and the man to man, Hero/Villain dynamics by which men sought inclusion and were included into the category 'man' had a radical effect on me as an observer and on a personal and professional level. I found that my insights, gained through reflexive recording, enabled me to *manage* my own Masculine Anxiety in a way that had not previously been possible. I also became able to read Masculine Anxiety in other men and to read dynamics in relations between men, as men. This new knowledge enabled me to be far more effective than previously in managing men in groups or as individuals. I became aware that I was in a position to *abuse* this power had I so chosen. I also became uncomfortably aware of my own emotional alienation as a result of my own, internalised masculinity. I began to see that the gap between what I *thought* and what I *felt*, which was quickly exposed by my reflexive recording, was a reflection of *emotional disconnection* in me. Having become aware of my own emotional disconnection, I was unable to prevent myself from re-connecting to my feelings in moments that I found painful. These moments occurred mainly as I found myself observing emotional alienation, as a result of internalised masculinity, in men around me. For example:

Example 9:

*I was in a conversation with a group of Prison Officers, when we were joined by Bill, who had just returned from driving a number of prisoners to another prison, in the aftermath of the riot. What he had expected would be a straightforward trip had been prolonged to an entire day spent in a van with a number of hostile prisoners. He had been transporting men who had used a table leg to smash the kneecaps of a prisoner who had fought against them during the riot, to save a trapped, elderly Prison Officer, who had been on the verge of heart failure. Bill had been obliged to drive from one prison to another because of confusion over which prisons had places available for the prisoners. Throughout the day he had suffered a constant barrage of threats and abuse from the prisoners. He was distressed, almost to the point of tears. I wanted to embrace him, and reassure him that the hurt and*

*despair that he felt, expressed as anger towards those who were responsible for co-ordinating prison places, reflected his sensitivity and decency, but I knew this could only embarrass him, especially in front of his colleagues. I felt tears start to well in my own eyes, so I quickly left the room, to spare any of us embarrassment.*

I interpreted Bill's expression of anger, rather than hurt, as a *re-framing* of his Masculine Anxiety, which had resulted from him spending the day in a confined space with men who were subjecting him to constant threats of violence. I felt that the unpleasantness of his experience as an *individual* had been exacerbated by the stress he had experienced as a *man.* Hostile men who had adopted the Villain position had effectively cast him in the Non-Man position. His desire to receive emotional support, evident in his distress in recounting his experience was compromised by his inability to identify accurately his *hurt* at having been subject to abuse by the prisoners and his *hurt* at being left in this position by his managers. I felt that he translated his hurt into *anger* as a means of disguising from himself the element of his experience in which he had been threatened *as a man.* His suffering from emotional alienation as a result of his *internalised*, masculinity was exacerbated by the *external*, emotional alienation of the men to whom he recounted his experience. Because of their internalised masculinity, they could offer support only in terms of affirming his ability to *transcend* such an experience of vulnerability: he was the Hero. Support on those terms effectively *reinforced* his alienation from his feeling of hurt by reinforcing his internalised masculinity. The cost of his inclusion into the category 'man' by other men was emotional alienation.

I found that this dynamic of the individual man re-framing *hurt* as *anger* was exacerbated in proportion to the depth of his humiliation by another man. For example:

Example 10:

*Jim, a Prison Officer, approached some other men staff, including myself. He looked worried and despondent, so I asked him what the matter was. He told us that he had been counting prisoners, as part of a work routine. His man supervisor had disagreed with his count, and in telling him that he had done it in the wrong way, had shouted and sworn at him in front of other men staff and prisoners. Jim felt 'embarrassed' by this, so he responded in kind. This resulted in his supervisor telling him that he would report his misconduct in writing. The other men and I assured him that this incident was unlikely to go*

*any further, because his supervisor would risk exposing his own misconduct by reporting that of Jim. This could only result in the supervisor making himself look silly, both for abusing Jim, and for making a report which would lead to an exposure of that abuse. We suggested that it was a silly incident, which he should put behind him. Jim, however, felt that he could not afford to let his supervisor gain the advantage of reporting the incident first, so he went off to prepare his own statement, saying that he was 'looking forward to the battle'.*

Jim's posture was the same when he left the room as when he entered it, giving lie to his expression of pleasurable anticipation at the prospect of further conflict. His shoulders were slumped, his head was bowed, and his hands were in his pockets. While he had been talking to us, however, enjoying our support, his stance had been much more upright, his gestures animated and his body language open. I felt that he had been trying to convince himself that he was *angry*, rather than hurt through being humiliated *as a man*, because taking ownership of that hurt and humiliation risked a surfacing of his Masculine Anxiety, which had been evoked by this incident. In being shouted and sworn at in front of other men, he had been humiliated *as a man, in front of other men, by another man,* his need to avoid the Non-Man position had eclipsed his interests as an employee. Having embarked on casting his supervisor as the Villain and himself as the Hero he had locked himself into an oppositional dynamic which had become *functional* in enabling him to disguise the truth of his experience, from himself. Like me, in the home leave board incident, he had been faced with a *moment of truth* in which he knew that he *was* the Non-Man and his subsequent behaviour had been concentrated on reburying that knowledge.

**Conclusion:**

I found that men's experience of relating to other men, *as men*, was governed by Masculine Anxiety. Men experienced *internalised* pressure and *external* pressure from other men to find ways of including ourselves into the category 'man'. At the same time we needed to *deny* to ourselves both that we *felt* Masculine Anxiety and that our behaviour, *as men*, was governed by it. The cost of this denial in the individual man appeared to be emotional alienation, which was externally reinforced by other men. I found that denial of Masculine Anxiety shaped the behaviour of the individual man in the sense that he was hostage to

being positioned by the other man as the Non-Man. He compensated for this instability through taking opportunities to place the other man in the Non-Man position. This dynamic of pass-the-parcel, however, was conducted on a covert, *deniable* basis. Thus this dynamic was simultaneously *collaborative* and *competitive*.

I also found that Masculine Anxiety shaped informal hierarchies among groups of men, *as men*, among and across staff and prisoners. The leaders of informal groups of men were tacitly elected because of their ability to replicate the denial of Masculine Anxiety in the individual man on a group basis. The primary qualification of the leader was the ability to *include* the men in the group into the category 'man'. His primary skill was that of managing the Collaborative competition that characterises the Hero/Villain dynamic, without allowing any man in the group to be exposed as the Non-Man. The construction of *informal* hierarchies among men, as men, effectively underpinned *formal* hierarchies of authority in the prison: both successful formal and informal hierarchies were characterised by their ability to allow men to adopt *postures* of readiness for conflict without needing to engage in *actual* conflict. Both formal and informal hierarchies, therefore, were in a symbiotic relationship in constructing masculinity and maintaining order in the prison.

In this light, the tendency of literature on the men's prison (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Priestley 1980; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Adams, 1994; Campbell, 1986; Smith 1990; Boyle, 1977) to conceptualise the prisoner as an object in staff/prisoner relations, rather than to conceptualise the relationship in terms of inter-subjectivity is *misleading* in terms of understanding how order is maintained in the men's prison. Men staff do not *control* men prisoners, although both staff and prisoners, *as men*, have an *interest* in portraying the relationship as simply conflicted: Hero/Villain, as do men criminologists and men writers on 'masculinities': the man who writes about the other man as a problematic *object* casts himself in the role of Hero and the other man in the role of Villain. Rather men prisoners and men staff engage in *collaborative competition*, in maintaining order in the men's prison, on formal and informal levels, between and across prisoner and staff as a matter of mutual interest, *as men*.

## CHAPTER 6: HOW MEN FAIL: THE HERO/VILLAIN VERSUS THE NON-MAN

**Introduction:**

I have shown in Chapter 5 that Masculine Anxiety led men within the prison to seek affirmation of the illusion that we were secure in the Hero/Villain dynamic in which 'man' is defined through engaging in *collaborative competition* with each other. In this Chapter, I show that men in the prison also found a means of gathering into in-groups which *excluded* the Villain and the Non-Man in order to avoid the *stress* of engaging in collaborative competition with each other, as men. I define the space that men created in forming these groups as Safe Masculine Space.

This Chapter is concerned with men's creation of Safe Masculine Space. I include pairs of men, *as men*, as in-groups within Safe Masculine Space. I show how men in the prison formed in-groups, constructing ourselves according to Heroic masculinity by *excluding* other men, constructed as the Non-Man or the Villain from their particular in-group. I show how men formed these in-groups, *between and across prisoner and staff.* I examine the processes that took place *within* in-groups of men, in the dimensions of policing and support, and the processes of policing by which men are *excluded* from those in-groups. I show that for the individual man within the prison, the cost of being *excluded* from Safe Masculine Space, defined by in-groups, could be not only lack of support, but also policing through violence of varying quality, depending on whether he is excluded as the Villain or the Non-Man. I show how the Non-Man is subject to a quality of violence that is intended to *feminise* him. I show that the Villain is subject to violence of a quality that recognises him *as a man* and allows for him to be *integrated* or *reintegrated* within the in-group.

I explore these two, distinct forms of sexualised and non-sexualised violence between men in the prison in the formation of in-groups in the light of the work of Campbell (1981), who shows how men *affirm* the masculinity of each other through ritualised Hero versus Villain violence. I contrast this ritual violence with Connell's (1995) observations on the victimisation of gay men by other men through sexualised violence, which can be considered as Hero/Villain versus Non-Man violence. I discuss the differences between Hero versus Villain and Hero/Villain versus Non-Man violence among men in the prison in the light of Preistley's (1980) study of segregated men prisoners. I show that *sexual* offenders, 'nonces' in prison terminology were subject to *sexualised* violence that denoted

their Non-Man status, whereas men who had upset social order among men prisoners, for example as 'grasses' (police informers), were subject to *non-sexualised* violence. I locate my own experience as a man researcher in being threatened with expulsion from an in-group as the Villain within the experience of non-sexualised violence.

I examine the construction and exclusion of three categories from the in-group: the Villain, the Non-Man and women. Although I deal primarily with men's *construction* of women and the violence with which men police women in Chapter 7, I focus briefly in this Chapter on how men define space as *masculine* through the *exclusion* of women from Safe Masculine Space. I also show in this Chapter how the construction and exclusion of the Villain and the Non-Man, as well as women, function in maintaining the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity, which I have defined in Chapter 4. I also chart the development of my concept of Safe Masculine Space through my reflexive recording of my day to day experience in the prison.

**Discovering Safe and Unsafe Masculine Space:**

In Chapter 5, I have shown how my reflexive recording revealed that Masculine Anxiety dominated my experience of the prison and apparently that of men prisoners and staff. My reflexive recording also revealed that other men and I sought *relief* from Masculine Anxiety through the construction of Safe Masculine Space. In Chapter 5 I found that Masculine Anxiety in the individual man was at its most acute in confrontations with the Villain, which held a high risk that his knowledge that he was the Non-Man might come to light. Masculine Anxiety in other men and myself appeared at its least acute in Safe Masculine Space.

I found that the spaces in the prison where I felt the most Masculine Anxiety were characterised by containing a high risk of encounters with groups of men who were strangers to me, particularly prisoners. I conceptualised such space as Unsafe Masculine Space, which I define as space in which women are absent and the individual man is open to a *high* risk of an encounter, real or *imaginary*, with the Villain in the form of a rival man. The parade ground, which I have described in Chapter 5, is an example of such space. Safe Masculine Space, by contrast, can be defined as space in which the individual man is open to a *low* risk of an encounter with the Villain and with women. In my case, and that of other men staff, the gym at lunchtime appeared to constitute Safe Masculine Space.

The gym, which was used by prisoners throughout the day, was available to prison staff at lunchtimes. It was used occasionally by women staff in conjunction with men staff, but mainly by men staff only. In the *absence* of women, it represented a popular space for men prison staff, including myself. My initial reflexive recording in respect of my experience in the gym at lunchtimes told me that I found it to be the least fearful space in the prison. By contrast, women staff told me consistently that they did not feel at ease within the gym.

I initially attributed my feeling of ease and the same apparent feeling in other men in the gym, to the ritual of physical exertion followed by cleansing, combined with the fact that the absence of prisoners meant that we were not under pressure to perform in our work roles. If this were the case, however, how could the differential between men and women's experience of the gym be explained? During my period of observation I noted no sexual harassment of women in the gym, in contrast to the negative experience of women in Unsafe Masculine Space as described in Chapter 5. I n addition, I found no evidence of women being discouraged by men from using the gym. Following my construction of the concept of Masculine Anxiety, however, I began to see that the gym had a function in terms of the construction of masculinity through relations between men, *as men*, within it.

Having constructed the concept of Masculine Anxiety through my reflexive recording, I was able to apply it to an observation for which I had previously been unable to account. I had recorded that men staff who entered the gym at lunchtime appeared to suspend the conflicts that fragmented us while we were in that space. Men colleagues, with whom I would frequently disagree, particularly over issues relating to gender, would drop their animosity at lunchtime to ask if I was going over to the gym with them then resume hostilities in the afternoon. I found this to be an arrangement in which I was happy to reciprocate. For example:

Example 11:

*On two consecutive days, I found myself invited over to the gym by a man colleague who had been moved by my stance on masculinity to put up a number of right-wing newspaper articles on the office walls near my desk. The main theme of those articles was that of ridiculing 'political correctness,' with particular reference to masculinity. The articles remained in place for several weeks. I left them there to see if anyone would take them down. Nobody did.*

My observation notes show that at the time of recording these incidents, I attributed my invitation to the gym entirely to my men colleagues being generous in setting aside ideological differences between us in order to be friendly. Once I had constructed the concept of Masculine Anxiety, however, I began to consider what function the invitation might serve in terms of constructing masculinity. On reflection, I discovered that what I recorded as my 'happiness' in reciprocating in the invitation had an element of me being pleased to be included into the category 'man' by my man colleague. I hypothesised, therefore, that the invitation functioned as a means of my colleague and I expressing *intersubjectively* a commonality between ourselves, *as men*, in transcendence of ideological differences which separated us as *individuals*.

In the light of this hypothesis, I focussed my observation on whether men related differently to each other in the space of the gym, with a view to discovering what function that space served in regulating relations between men, *as men*. I found that the same dynamic which had occurred between me and the man who had invited men to the gym was replicated in relation to other men staff: they would suspend conflicts with each other during the time they were in the gym. Over my period of observation, during which time I visited the gym on most working days, I *never* observed any conflict between men staff while they were *in* it, whereas conflict between men staff *outside* the gym was something I observed on a day to day basis. I also observed that whereas the positioning of men within the formal hierarchies of the prison appeared to be significant in shaping encounters between men *outside* the gym, these hierarchical differences appeared to be suspended *within* the gym.

In view of these observations, I hypothesised that the gym represented a space which was governed by rules of conduct among men, *as men*, *beyond* other axes of identity. The fact that we were men was our common link, which transcended rank and rivalry among us: in other words, we were *safe* there, *as men*. We existed there not in other roles, but rather, *as men*. We also had in common the fact of being staff as opposed to prisoners. The suspension of the normally significant differences of rank, however, suggested that our commonality, *as men*, was of greater significance, in this situation, than our commonality *as staff*. It appeared that within the confines of the gym, we supported each other as men, above the differences that separated us as staff. I discovered, through a gaffe on my part, that this support of men, *as men*, within the gym relied on an unspoken rule that men should not challenge each other, *as men*, within its confines:

Example 12:

*I found myself calling a group of men who were immediate colleagues to me 'a bunch of Jessies' (gay and/or effeminate men) because they were hesitant about getting under a cold shower after the hot water system had broken down in winter. This caused them to protest vociferously about my oppressive attitude. One man, with whom I had several heated debates on the subject of masculinity, suggested, 'Put that in your notes,' to a chorus of agreement from the other men present. 'I will,' I replied.*

My intention in making the remark was that of being ironic. My remark, however, was taken at face value. I inferred that I had broken a tacit contract of not challenging men, *as men*, within Safe Masculine Space, by calling their masculinity into question: I had implied that *real* men would not be afraid of a cold shower. I had also *externalised*, as my colleague implied accurately, an *internalised* dynamic within me of homogenising gay men as an exemplar of the Non-Man, in *contradiction* of what I believed on an ideological level. While the reaction of my colleagues could be interpreted as annoyance at my perceived hypocrisy, the speed, strength and unanimity of the other men's reaction to the remark suggests that I broken a *taboo* as well as a rule.

By ironically challenging the masculinity of other men through questioning their sexuality, I had effectively *externalised* our *internalised* homophobia. The other men were able to recognise *my* internalised homophobia before I recognised it in myself because they experienced homophobia in the same way as me: as an internalised belief, *as a man*, which *coexisted* with a contrary belief, *as an individual*, that homophobia was wrong. The *rule* I had broken was that of introducing man to man conflict into Safe Masculine Space, thus rendering it unsafe. The *taboo* I had broken was that of bringing to the surface of men's consciousness contradictions between our internalised beliefs, *as men*, and contrary beliefs, *as individuals*: the instability of masculinity lies in this gap. As I have explained in Chapter 4, masculinity is a concept that cannot survive clear articulation because, since no man can attain it, *every man* is what he most fears, as a man: the Non-Man. I had effectively brought the absurdity of masculinity into play between my men colleagues and myself, thus threatening their ability to survive in their work, as men, by denying the high level of Masculine Anxiety they felt. In order to retain the illusion of being secure within the Hero/Villain dynamic, they had no viable option to silencing me, in order to retain that illusion. The threatened means of silencing me was that of excluding me from the in-group

as the Villain. I could *equally* have been excluded as the Non-Man through a counter to my remark that, for example, by asserting I was a bigger 'Jessie' myself, which was why I was doing the research on masculinity. Such a strategy, however, would have undermined the position that I was hypocritical in my homophobia.

I had discovered that the function of Safe Masculine Space was that of allowing the individual man to *manage* such contradictions by being allowed by other men to affirm himself, *as a man*, without such contradictions being challenged. The narrow point in the exchange between the other men and myself had been about internalised homophobia. The broad point had been about the individual man's requirement for Safe Masculine Space as a place in which he can escape the pressure of living with contradictions between the *internalised* ideology of masculinity and other, sincerely-held ideologies that clash with it.

I had also discovered that my men colleagues understood my role as researcher as *threatening* to their internalised masculinity, but that I was tolerated in my role as researcher provided that I mounted no *immediate* challenges to the masculinity of the men around me. I understood the corollary of that tolerance to be that I would experience *exclusion* from Safe Masculine Space if I failed to respect the rules that governed it. The gym was a resource I relied on, like other men staff, to cope with the stress of my job. This resource, however, was available to me only on *terms that were consistent with the construction of masculinity through relations between men.* My access to an important resource within my workplace, therefore, was *dependent on me colluding, at least passively, with the construction of masculinity.*

While I feel that it would have been unlikely that I could have been *excluded* from the gym as a *physical location*, it did seem likely to me that I would have been *excluded* from the gym as Safe Masculine Space. I inferred that my men colleagues, as men, were giving me complex and contradictory messages. I understood that I was being given a message, through the newspaper articles that my research subject was nonsense. This message, however, was undermined by another message that my research subject was of such significance that it might result in my *exclusion* from Safe Masculine Space. The first message was further undermined by suggestions that I was a self-serving hypocrite, who ought to look to his own conduct as a man, rather than that of others. If the research subject was nonsense, what threat could I pose by pursuing it? Both messages were further confused by a third message that my continued inclusion into Safe Masculine Space did not depend on my integrity in abandoning my nonsensical, but threatening, self-serving and hypocritical

research, but rather on me *ceasing to draw attention to the fact that I was doing it.*

This latter inference suggested to me that my men colleagues, like me, were *aware* that the masculinity in which we were collectively engaged as men was contradictory and problematic, but that the *cost* of *externalising* that *internalised* masculinity was too high for them to contemplate. I felt sympathy with them on this point, since I knew from my experience of the anxiety that my research had generated in me that the cost *was* high. And I had *chosen* to do the research, whereas they had not. And I might benefit from the research, whereas they would not. And I had been hypocritical in problematising *them* rather than *us*, as men. I also understood that Safe Masculine Space, as exemplified by the gym, was the *key resource* within the prison to men's management of anxiety of all kinds generated by the job, including Masculine Anxiety. I felt that I had no right to spoil that space for other men who were struggling to survive the stress of their work, in the same way that I felt it would have been wrong of me to have tested my insights on masculinity on the governor who disappeared after the riot (see Chapter 5).

I felt, at this point in my research, my men colleagues were effectively offering me an unspoken deal: *leave us the means of surviving the working day and we will not interfere with your research.* In pursuit of my interests as *an employee and researcher*, I effectively took that deal. The deal could not be spoken because, as I have explained in Chapter 4, masculinity as it applies to the individual man is a taboo subject. I chose from that moment to avoid drawing to the attention of immediate men colleagues my role as researcher, *even though we all seemed clearly aware that I was researching us as men, on a day to day basis.*

In the time that I spent in the gym, I witnessed no other men making similar gaffes to the one I made in challenging the masculinity of my men colleagues. The rule of not challenging the masculinity of other men within Safe Masculine Space thus appeared to be internalised firmly and consistently within the men who constructed that space.

**Support within Safe Masculine Space:**

I found that the lack of challenges of each other as men within the Safe Masculine Space of the gym was bolstered positive support between men in performing our exercise routines. Men would support and encourage each other, morally, practically and sometimes physically. For example, I found no shortage of man colleagues who were prepared to

advise and encourage me on exercise regimes. This element of support was extended to men who were unfit, or starting to exercise in a gym for the first time, as I was. In some exercises, like those involving the lifting of weights or raising the body from the ground, the support that was offered was physical. For example:

Example 13:
*On one occasion I saw a man pulling himself up to chin height on a horizontal bar above his head, while his colleague encouraged him. As he was struggling to pull himself up for the last few times, his colleague helped to lift him by putting his arms around his waist.*

Since this gesture served no purpose other than to allow the man to complete his exercise routine, it appeared to me to be a physical expression of emotional support. I observed such physical contact between men in the gym on a daily basis, in contrast to situations outside the gym, where I made virtually no recording of physical contact between men. I also observed that men in the gym appeared to be *playful* with each other – teasing each other, telling jokes, singing in the showers. While the gym appeared to be unique within the prison in terms of allowing men to engage in *physical* contact with each other, it was not unique in terms of being an environment in which men were allowed to *play*. I discovered that the suspension of rank and rivalry, the lack of challenges to masculinity and playfulness between men could be replicated in other situations, for example:

Example 14:
*I was present at a large meeting with men prison staff of various ranks. While we were waiting for the last person, a woman, to arrive, the informality of the atmosphere was evident in men, who knew each other well, calling each other by first names, swearing, teasing each other, throwing balls of paper at each other and engaging in mock fights. When the woman arrived, the playful behaviour gradually ceased: the swearing stopped, formal titles were used and playful behaviour was replaced by competition on an individual and departmental level, for exculpation from the various problems which had caused the meeting to be called. I found that my own behaviour followed the same pattern.*

The behaviour of the men in the group prior to the entrance of the woman denoted that it was Safe Masculine Space. The common elements between the gym at lunchtime and that

particular space were the absence of women, the absence of rival men in the form of the prisoner, the suspension of engagement in formal work. The presence of these three elements allowed the men in this in-group to engage with each other *as men*, in a way which was different from the collaborative competition which characterised man to man relations in the *formal* setting of the pre-release groups which I describe in Chapter 5. The difference between *formal* and *informal* groups of men appeared to be that men in *informal* groups constructed their space as Safe Masculine Space in which it was then possible to *suspend* the Hero/Villain dynamic of collaborative competition.

I observed that men staff constructed Safe Masculine Space wherever the conditions made it possible. Since the enactment of collaborative competition appeared to be hard work, at least in my experience of it, I inferred that Safe Masculine Space functioned as a means of allowing men to conserve the *energy* required for engagement in collaborative competition.

I found that the pressure which men, including myself, experienced to engage in collaborative competition could result in men constructing Safe Masculine Space through in-groups on an informal basis, as opposed to the formal setting of the gym. In these situations men would be prepared to make explicit revelations of self-doubt. I found that on a number of occasions, men were prepared to seek support from me in respect of their ability to overcome anxiety or uncertainty. I also found, however, that men while might *admit* to self-doubt within Safe Masculine Space, they would be likely to *deny* self-doubt outside such space. For example:

Example 15:

*I was obliged on one occasion to leave a man colleague to deal with a group of prisoners on his own, because of other, more pressing duties. I was able to finish my other business unexpectedly early, so I returned to see if I could help him, having gained the sense that he was unhappy about being left on his own. When I returned, he was standing outside a room full of prisoners who were watching a film, talking to two men colleagues. When he asked me why I had come back, I replied that I had come to offer him moral support. He looked at his colleagues, who were friends of his, then looked directly at me and said 'I don't need moral support, mate'. Some time later, we were planning a course together, in a hurried way, because of time pressures. As we were discussing some of the difficulties that might arise, he looked at me anxiously and asked, 'This is going to be alright, isn't it?'*

In this instance a colleague was expressing self-doubt in relation to his ability to manage a large and potentially difficult group of prisoners. His doubt on this point was reasonable, in view of the difficulty of managing such groups, as I illustrate in Chapter 5, because of the dynamics of collaborative competition within such groups. While my man colleague was prepared to own reasonable doubt on this point within the Safe Masculine Space of a private conversation with me, he reverted to a dynamic of collaborative competition with me when I spoke to him in front of other men, *outside* that space. I had failed to recognise first, that our initial conversation had taken place within Safe Masculine Space, and second, that the conversation was taking place in Unsafe Masculine Space.

His reaction of *denial* of a need for support in our first conversation, while his colleagues were present was premised on my suggestion that he might *need* moral support being a competitive bid to place him in the Non-Man position. From this perspective, he had placed me, as a competitive man, in the Hero role I had played in the 'lifer' incident in Chapter 5 and that the Principal Officer had played in the 'home leave board' incident in the same Chapter. In the light of him perceiving me, as a man, in Unsafe Masculine Space, placing him in the Non-Man position, his reaction, like my reaction to the Principle Officer, was that of moving to deny that I was the Non-Man. Once Safe Masculine Space had been re-established between us, however, he was able to return to expressing reasonable self-doubt, without feeling threatened *as a man.*

I found that men's preparedness to display vulnerability to other men inside Safe Masculine Space but not inside Unsafe Masculine Space was replicated consistently throughout my observations. This dichotomy was particularly sharp in relation to men's fear of being subject to violence by other men. Whereas I never heard men admit to such fear in Unsafe Masculine Space, I made frequent observations of men admitting to such fear in Safe Masculine Space. For example:

Example 16:

*A man colleague confided to me in the car park, at the end of a long and difficult working day, that 'At the end of each day, I am thankful that I did not get my head kicked in.' I said that I shared his sentiments. On another occasion, he described his experience of being in the prison as 'Living in a permanent state of anxiety, with the occasional flash of panic.'*

On both occasions, in the discussion that resulted from my colleague's remarks, my

reaction was to support him by admitting that I shared his fear and assuring him that he could overcome it. At that stage in my research, I had not yet been able to arrive at an understanding of such fear in terms of representing a displacement of Masculine Anxiety. I subsequently recognised that in supporting him as I did, I had probably reinforced his Masculine Anxiety by effectively colluding with his displacement of it onto the prisoner as Villain. I had also probably reinforced the masculine dynamic within both of us of achieving manhood by transcending vulnerability. Even with the benefit of hindsight, however, I did not feel able to share my new concept of Masculine Anxiety with him because he formed part of the group of men in Example 12, who had made it clear to me that as far as they were concerned my continued enjoyment of Safe Masculine Space depended on me not making my research visible. Unfortunately, this left me unable to check the validity of this viewpoint with him.

**The Exclusion of Women from Safe Masculine Space:**

I found that the entrance of a *woman* into Safe Masculine Space denoted that the space was no longer safe. I observed that changes in man to man behaviour that denoted the end of a *suspension* of collaborative competition occurred consistently whenever a woman entered Safe Masculine Space. Men would revert from being playful with each other, for example, by ceasing to swear and tell jokes. Rather we would become overtly *competitive* with each other. In the gym this would take the form of men lifting heavier weights. In other settings such as informal gatherings within the prison, it would take the form of collaborative competition over work issues.

The exclusion of women from Safe Masculine Space effectively meant that men excluded women from a *key resource* of emotional support within the prison. I observed that whereas men in the prison were occasionally able to construct Safe Masculine Space *across* the divide between prisoner and staff, it was never possible for women to be included in such space, *by virtue of being women.* At the same time, it was impossible for women to be in Unsafe Masculine Space or to engage in the collaborative competition that took place there *by virtue of being women.* Thus men, both staff and prisoners, routinely disadvantaged women staff in two key dimensions of day to day life in the prison: *access to emotional support and recreation* and *access to the informal exchanges of power between men.* This disadvantaging of women, combined with men's sexual harassment of women described in

Chapter 5, effectively reduced the effect of formal power held by women.

Women had access to *physical* spaces in which men exchanged power and received support, but *solely by virtue of being women*, their entry into such spaces *changed the nature of those spaces*. The mechanisms which men employed to regulate relations between men were thus effectively made *invisible* to women. At the same time, men constructed Masculine Space on a level that operated *in parallel* with ideologies that clashed with the ideology of masculinity in the individual man, as a means of allowing him to accommodate that tension. Thus it was possible for the individual man in the prison to hold sincerely views that were *consistent* with feminist analyses of men's disadvantaging of women, while participating actively in day to day practices which *constructed* that disadvantage on a practical and immediate level.

The *exclusion* of women represented a pre-condition to the creation of Safe Masculine Space by men. I discovered, through my reflexive recording that although I *thought* that women should not be excluded from spaces which I later conceptualised as Safe Masculine Space, I simultaneously *felt* more comfortable in the prison when women were absent. I *felt* that women were disruptive. I found that the sense of unease I felt in the presence of women in the prison, in both formal and informal group settings appeared to be shared by other men, both staff and prisoners.

Men's desire to create Safe Masculine Space as a means of obtaining relief from collaborative competition appeared to be directly opposed to a working environment that was favourable to women. Not only was it impossible for men to create Safe Masculine Space when women were present, it was also the case that women also had the potential to *disrupt* tacit and delicate negotiations between men, as men, in the construction of informal hierarchies among men, as men.

My experience of women as disruptive revealed a clash in me between two conflicting ideologies: *external* ideology as an *individual* and *internalised* ideology *as a man*. My security, *as a man*, depended on my ability to resist experiencing this clash of ideologies. At the time of my research, I had not achieved sufficient clarity on the potential dichotomy between the individual man's *external* ideology in relation to women and his *internalised* ideology in relation to masculinity, to test it within the prison. But this dichotomy does raise the question of whether men in the prison gave a contradictory message to women staff, *welcoming* women on an *external* level, as individuals, while *rejecting* women on an *internalised* level, as men, while denying the latter through our inability to conceptualise it.

I also found that it was necessary for men to *exclude* women from Masculine Space in order to *construct* women. I explore men's construction of women in Chapter 7.

**The Exclusion of Men from Safe Masculine Space:**

The support that I observed men offering to men, and experienced myself, can be seen as an invitation to become one of 'us' *as a man*, despite conflict through other roles. I found that Safe Masculine Space could be constructed not only across differences in rank between staff, but also across the divide between staff and prisoner. For example:

Example 17:
*After running a course for prisoners on the use of drugs and alcohol, during which I had been more than usually honest about my own past experiences, I was approached by two prisoners. They asked me if I had ever served a prison sentence, since I seemed to know 'how things were'. I had some difficulty in getting them to believe that I had not served a prison sentence. I found, however, that I* wanted *to be able to say that I had served a prison sentence, for reasons that were not entirely clear to me at the time of recording the incident.*

This example illustrates the construction of Safe Masculine Space across the divide of staff and prisoner. It also illustrates the power of a desire in me to be included into the category 'man', as Hero *or* as Villain. At the time of recording this incident I *felt* pleased although I could not quite *think* why. This dichotomy between what I *thought* and what I *felt* echoed the dichotomy between my thoughts and my feelings, which I describe in Chapter 5. I understood my pleasure as stemming from the incident evidencing my effectiveness in my job and as a researcher. This explanation, however, did not accord with the high level of my pleasure. I could not understand why I had *wanted* to be able to say that I had served a prison sentence.

Once I had constructed the concept of Masculine Anxiety, however, I was able to arrive at a fuller explanation of my feelings: my desire, *as a man*, was to be able to move into the Safe Masculine Space that the prisoners were offering me. The dichotomy in me between thought and feeling represented a *dual* level of consciousness in me: what I *felt* was concerned with my identity *as a man*; what I *thought* was concerned with my identity *as an individual*, dealing with complex reality. My pleasure, *as a man*, was that of receiving

affirmation that I could find such space with the Villain: not only could I be the Hero, I could also be the Villain – hence my desire to be able to say that I had served a prison sentence. The cost of entering the Safe Masculine Space that was being offered to me was that of *excluding* from that space other men, who had not been sufficiently *manly* to have *been* the Villain.

I found that the experience of having *been* the Villain appeared to be significant to men staff in the prison in terms of affirming our identity *as men*. I engaged in a number of informal discussions on this point with men staff on all levels in the prison, who would readily admit that, like myself, they had been engaged in illegal activities as young men. I did not appreciate the significance of such exchanges in affirming masculine identity until I found myself in a discussion with a number of men staff, in Safe Masculine Space:

Example 18:

*I was in an informal discussion with a number of men prison staff. We were discussing casually the offences we had committed as young men. One of the men said that he had never been in trouble as a youth. The other men seemed genuinely surprised, as was I. The man who had made the admission seemed mortified to find that he was exceptional in the group. The group tried to find a way of maintaining him in the in-group by questioning him in a way that might reveal previous youthful misdemeanours on his part.*

This example illustrates not only the efforts that men make to include each other into in-groups in Safe Masculine Space, echoing my experience in the gym, but also the *primacy* of masculinity over socially responsible behaviour in young men. Even as older men, we apparently regarded youthful offending as a *conventional* indicator of masculinity, to the extent that we made a collective effort to re-cast the other man as a youthful offender. It seemed more important to him that he should maintain his identity, *as a man*, rather than taking pride in his socially responsible behaviour as a youth.

My experience of having my masculine identity affirmed by prisoners represents the opposite of my exposure as the Non-Man in the Home Leave Board incident in Chapter 5. In this light, the *attraction* for the individual man of being *included* into the category 'man' through being invited by other men into in-groups in Safe Masculine Space appears to be a powerful force. The cost of such inclusion, however, appears to be that of *excluding* other men from in-groups as the Villain or the Non-Man.

**Excluding the Villain:**

I found that invitations I received to enter, or remain in Safe Masculine Space were frequently qualified by a requirement to *exclude* other men from such space as the Villain. For example:

Example 19:
*In the course of a casual conversation with a group of uniformed Prison Officers, I was asked my opinion of how the regular returners to prison, who were distinguished from the other prisoners by being referred to as 'shit', should be dealt with. I declined the invitation on the grounds that I objected to the term. The men turned away from me, effectively excluding me from the conversation.*

Taken in isolation, the actions of these men could be interpreted as a simple challenge in relation to my professional views on prisoners who served several sentences. I found, however, that such incidents formed a pattern in which groups of men would fix the identity of their group in relation to another group of *men*, who were perceived to be deficient, as men. Shortly following this incident, for example, I found myself invited into a similar conversation among higher-ranking prison staff who were speaking in similar derogatory terms about a perceived group of uniformed Prison Officers. A similar invitation to join the 'us' was extended to me, and for similar reasons I declined, with similar results.

This pattern of men's collaboration in creating Safe Masculine Space by constructing groups of *deficient* men represents an extension of the Hero/Villain dynamic from an individual to a group basis. The collective *safety* of the group of men appears to depend on *mirroring*, in the sense that the *deficiency* of the *other* group of men reflects the *normalcy* of the in-group. The construction of the *other* group of men within Safe Masculine Space sets-up *imagined* confrontation with this group, thus replicating the Hero/Villain conflict necessary to the construction of masculinity, without the *actual* risk of confrontation.

The 'us' and 'them' dynamics involved in the construction of Safe Masculine Space, through constructing and problematising groups of 'other' men is reflected consistently in literature on 'masculinities' which I refer to in Chapter 2.

I found that the construction and exclusion of the Villain, as opposed to the Non-Man,

from exclusive groups of men in the prison, as a means of creating Safe Masculine Space, was sometimes conducted with a substantial degree of violence. For example:

Example 20:

*While I was running a group for prisoners, I noticed that one of the prisoners looked ill. I took him to one side during a break and asked him what the matter was. He told me that he had been 'bedlegged', i.e. hit about the head with an iron bed-leg by other prisoners because they suspected him of being a 'grass'. I insisted on taking him to hospital where he was examined by medical staff who suspected he might be suffering from concussion. He initially resisted my pressure to go to the hospital, but I sensed that he wanted me to take the responsibility from him. Once he had been medically examined, however, he refused to be admitted to hospital on the grounds that if he were to stay there, his disappearance from the wing would confirm suspicions that he was a 'grass'. He felt that he would be better-off reintegrating himself on the wing on the grounds that he had already been punished.*

This example echoes Preistley's (1980) experience of the *redeemability* of men prisoners who have offended against other prisoners in a social, rather than a sexual sense. The prisoner felt, as did I and the man nurse who spoke to him, that he was capable of being accepted back among his fellow prisoners. He had been perceived to have offended against the *social*, rather than the *sexual* order, effectively being cast as the Villain, rather than the Non-Man. The function of his exclusion by the other prisoners, as men, was that of maintaining and defining Safe Masculine Space among those men. He recognised that he had been subject to ritual violence, which had served its function in defining that space. He had a choice, as did I in relation to my access to the Safe Masculine Space of the gym, of accepting his role as Villain in the form of 'grass' in defining that space, or of allowing himself to be permanently excluded from it. Like me, he chose the former option.

Preistley (1980) observes the same dynamic of rehabilitation through ritualised violence in relation to segregated prisoners. He notes that a prisoner, segregated because he did not honour his debts, is offered rehabilitation by other prisoners, providing he is prepared to accept 'a medium kicking' (Preistley, 1980, p. 34).

I found that this dynamic of *temporary* exclusion of the man as Villain from the exclusive group of men was also applicable to me, when I committed a disciplinary offence within the prison by losing my keys and I was obliged to accept my own 'medium kicking':

Example 21:

*I left my prison keys behind me after using the gym one lunchtime. A Prison Officer who worked in the gym picked them up and handed them into the security office, before I had time to retrieve them. The security office left a message for me to say that they had my keys, and the governor would be in touch with me. Two days later, I was summoned to the office of one of the governors, a man. He politely told me that I would not have my keys returned to me for one week, during which period I would be obliged to wait at gates for staff who had keys to let me through. He also told me that had I been a uniformed Prison Officer, I would have been subject to disciplinary action and possible dismissal. He added, however, using the phrase 'because of who you are', which I took to mean one of 'us', as someone who did not need to wear a uniform, as opposed to one of 'them', who did, I would merely be obliged to accept this punishment, and an extra, standard lecture from security staff on how to deal with prison keys. Responding with equal politeness, I made no resistance to his proposals.*

During the two days preceding my visit to the governor, I received sympathetic advice from a number of Prison Officers, who felt that I had been badly treated by the Prison Officer who had 'grassed me up' to 'them', meaning the prison management. The advice consisted of suggestions that I should not attempt to argue with the governor while I was being reprimanded. The assumption behind the advice was that I would experience my reprimand and punishment as humiliating, *as a man*, and that I would therefore feel obliged to attempt to assert myself on that level. The governor who conducted my reprimand and ordered my punishment was equally sensitive to the elements of my position *as a man* in this situation. The Prison Officers offered me support, *as a man*, rather than as an individual. Their advice amounted to accepting 'a medium kicking', (Preistley, 1980, p. 34) in order to be rehabilitated in the powerful role, within the prison, of key-holder. The governor, by contrast, softened my humiliation *as a man* by reminding me of my superior *social* status, in relation to Prison Officers. Significantly, neither the governor, nor the Prison Officers, however, mentioned the difficulties my situation might cause me in terms of conducting my *professional* role.

My contemporaneous notes reflect that I *felt* like a school*boy*, after I had been caught

misbehaving. My punishment, therefore, had a dimension of temporary *exclusion*, as a man, from the group of men who were key-holders in the Prison. My function, therefore, as a man who was being punished was that of affirming the *exclusivity* of the group of men who held keys within the prison. I knew from experience that my rehabilitation within that group depended on my willingness to affirm that order, by taking my punishment without complaint, regardless of my culpability, or the merits of the particular punishment. I hypothesised, on the basis of this experience, that a display of willingness on my part to *transcend* the temporary humiliation of punishment, would *enhance* my status as a man.

My woman supervisor, operating outside masculine dynamics by virtue of being a woman, was bemused and irritated by the absurdity of this situation. She could see no point in depriving me of my keys unless I exhibited a *pattern* of misplacing them. Her concern, unlike that of the man governor and the Prison Officers, was that the deprivation of my keys caused pointless interference with my ability to perform my *professional* role, which depended on me having keys in order to move around the prison quickly. While agreeing with her, I persuaded her not to intervene, on the grounds that it was useful to my research to let events follow their course, in order to discover what function my deprivation of my keys *did* serve.

I spent a week in the prison without keys, waiting to be let through gates by key-holders, to an amused but sympathetic response from Prison Officers, a number of whom told me that they had been through similar processes. Thus I affirmed the *exclusive* group of men as key-holders, while being reintegrated into that group of men. The governor who had punished me was inclined to joke about it afterwards, thus indicating, after the high seriousness of my interview with him, that it was an event he had placed in the past. I was therefore reintegrated into that *further*, exclusive group of men who had keys but no requirement to wear uniforms. By taking my 'medium kicking' (Preistley, 1980, p. 34) with equanimity, I ultimately suffered no loss of status, *as a man*. In terms of affirming the boundaries of exclusive groups of men, *as men*, therefore, my punishment was effective and well understood by men staff, as men, as symbolic. The man who had handed in the keys became the Villain who had 'grassed me up' and I was rehabilitated into the heroic in-group. Thus the formal order of the prison was constructed according to the Hero/Villain dynamic, which took precedence over professional concerns, in the same way that it did in relation to the governor who disappeared after the riot. The process was, as my woman supervisor pointed-out, absurd.

Campbell (1981) points to the absurd nature of ritualised violence among men in affirming masculinity through the Hero/Villain dynamic. Campbell (1981) refers to Fox (1977) in respect of fights between rival men on Tory Island, off the coast of Ireland:

> 'The two combatants choose to fight in public places where intervention by friends and relatives is bound to occur. Each has a number of allies on his side, who attempt to talk him out of further action. The fight itself is composed largely of insults, with occasional sallies forward toward the opponent. Following this, the men shout they will surely commit murder unless someone holds them back. Their allies obligingly restrain them. At worst there are a few bruises and grazes, but the main point is that honour has been satisfied.' (Campbell, 1981, p. 137, quoting Fox, 1977)

I found that suspected police informers within the prison, 'grasses', or 'pad thieves' (prisoners who stole from other prisoners) or debtors (in relation to drugs, tobacco or gambling) were subject to violence by other prisoners, as dishonourable men, to an *extent* that departed greatly from the 'fights' between men on Tory Island. I also found, however, that such violence between prisoners was characterised by a Hero/Villain dynamic that *affirmed* the masculinity of both aggressor and victim. In addition I found that this dynamic was replicated in relations between staff, as men, through my own experience. The drive behind such violence appeared to be the need of men, as men, to create Safe Masculine Space through *excluding* the other man as Villain, by which he was effectively *included* into the category 'man'.

In this light, Sim's (1994, p. 112) portrayal of prison staff, homogenised as men Prison Officers who are mainly 'dogs' in conflict with men prisoners, who, by implication, are mainly not 'dogs', can be seen as a misleading. Formal and informal power and masculinity are negotiated between men, *as men*, between and across prisoner and staff divides, on a dynamic basis. By constructing men prison staff as the Villain Sim (1994) effectively constructs the prisoner and by implication, himself as the Hero. Sim (1994) thus reveals that he is unable to expose the Hero/Villain dynamic in which masculinity is constructed because, *as a man, he is in the process of constructing it*, through his work. This dynamic is not unique to Sim (1994), however. Rather it appears to be an inevitable result of men writing about men in the absence of a theoretical framework that recognises the intersubjective construction of masculinity through relations between men, as I have shown in Chapter 2.

**Excluding the Non-Man:**

I found that in every group I ran for prisoners, sooner or later, the group would express its collective abhorrence of 'nonces' ( sex offenders). Failing to positively express such abhorrence, once the subject had been raised, was not a viable option, either for men staff or prisoners. If any man in the group failed to join the chorus, he would be asked directly by the other men what he thought about 'nonces'. Any perceived failure by any individual man to engage in moral condemnation would result in his collective castigation by the rest of the group. I also found that overt expressions of hatred for 'nonces', by prisoners, was an almost daily occurrence as I moved about the prison. I rarely heard accounts of the violence that resulted from these sentiments, however. Those accounts which I did hear, both from prisoners who witnessed such events, and staff who dealt with their aftermath, tended to be allusory rather than narrative, and accompanied by verbal and physical expressions of horror, and empathy with the victim:

Example 22:

*Prison Officers told me that late at night, when prisoners were left unsupervised in an accommodation block, they held a 'kangaroo court' in respect of a prisoner whom they suspected of being a 'nonce'. Inaccurately, they found him 'guilty'. After being stripped naked, he was subject to a variety of tortures. These included him being used as a table, and as an ashtray. A game of cards was played on his back, and cigarettes were extinguished on his body.*

Example 23:

*Prison Officers told me that in similar circumstances to the above, another prisoner was stripped, tortured, and had his body completely covered in oil-based paint.*

Example 24:

*A prisoner told me that in similar circumstances another prisoner had a broom handle pushed up his rectum.*

Example 25:

*A prisoner told me that again, in similar circumstances, a prisoner was held down while*

*another prisoner defecated on his face.*

In all four of these examples, I was told that a range of other, unspecified humiliations had been inflicted on the victim. I found that the difference between the violence inflicted on the Villain as the 'grass' or 'pad-thief', for example and the violence inflicted on the Non-Man, the 'nonce' was one of *quality*, rather than *extent*. Whereas the Villain could be subject to extreme violence, for example, being beaten about the head with an iron bed-leg, the Non-Man was both subject to extreme violence and humiliation of a sexual quality. The 'grass' was attacked as the rival man; the 'nonce' was attacked as an *object*, outside the category 'man'. The sexualised objectification of the 'nonce' is enacted in these examples in literal terms, through stripping and rape. Thus the purpose of ritualised violence to the 'nonce', the Non-Man, appears to be that of excluding him from Safe Masculine Space in a way which also *excludes* him from the category 'man'. This suggests that the function of the 'nonce', the Non-Man is that of defining Heroic masculinity on a sexual level.

The convention of the violent exclusion of men prisoners whose offences are sexual, or suspected of being sexual: 'nonces', by other men prisoners whose crimes are not sexual, is well documented in literature on British prisons. It is referred to by sociologists (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Scraton, Sim and Skidmore, 1991; Sim, 1994), creative writers who have spent time among prisoners, (Campbell, 1986; Smith, 1990) and prisoners themselves (Boyle, 1977). As the above examples illustrate, the prison I worked in was no different. If other prisoners discovered sex offenders as such, they were routinely removed from the prison for their own protection. Literature on violence to 'nonces', in prisons however, despite being a well-documented phenomenon, does not consider the function of such violence by men in terms of men's assertion of normative manhood in a sexual dimension.

Sim (1994), for example, while noting the phenomenon, unquestioningly sees the 'nonce' as being outside the range of 'normal' masculinity:

> 'Normal manhood and *abnormal perversion* live together in the same institution.' (Sim, 1994, p. 104, my italics)

In the light of feminist critiques, however, which point out that 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) rather than Mr. Deviant is the sex offender and Dominelli and McLeod's (1989) observation that the sexual abuse of girl children by man relatives is a common phenomenon, the construction of the 'nonce' takes on a different meaning. In the same way

that Hero/Villain dynamics reflect men's denial that masculinity is unachievable in the dimension of transcendental courage, Hero/Villain versus Non-Man dynamics reflect men's denial that masculinity is unachievable in terms of sexual conformity. Men's creation of Safe Masculine Space through the construction of the Non-Man and 'nonce', or to use Sim's (1994, p. 104) terms the 'abnormal pervert' raises questions of what normal manhood is, what version of sexual practice it entails, and whether actual practice differs from ideal practice. I address these questions in chapter 7, where I discuss Masculine Anxiety on a sexual level, in relation to women.

The function of Non-Man as opposed to the Villain is evident in the way that the violence to which he is subject seems intended to *obliterate* him rather than *punish or control* him. The function of constructing the Non-Man and excluding him from Safe Masculine Space is that of enabling men within that space to claim that they are *not* the Non-Man. Priestley (1980, p. 103) observes from his own research into segregated men prisoners that one of the perpetrators of the worst kind of violence, was actually a sex offender himself.

I found that the construction and violent expulsion of the Non-Man as a means of upholding normative masculinity within the prison was not used solely by prisoners. A high-ranking Prison Officer told me that in the event of failing to manage a particularly disruptive prisoner, he would sometimes resort to taking the prisoner to one side and threatening to allow other prisoners to get the impression that he was a 'nonce'. He added that this strategy had been so successful that he had never needed to carry out his threat. Thus the policing of masculinity in its sexual dimension, the Hero/Villain versus Non-Man dynamic, was linked to the maintenance of order in the prison, in the same way as the Hero/Villain dynamic. Both dynamics *unified* men, as men, to the extent that we policed each other, *as men*, between and across prisoner and staff, in accordance with an internalised ideology of masculinity that operated *in parallel* with conflicting external ideologies.

The high-ranking Prison Officer subscribed *sincerely* to a view that sex offenders were entitled to the same rights as other prisoners. Yet in a crisis of order in the prison, he was able to call upon the policing of *men by men*, in reference to an ideology of masculinity, in order to resolve that crisis. He was thus able to employ an *ideology of masculinity* to maintain order in the prison, in the same way as me in relation to running groups for prisoners, as I show in Chapter 5. The difference between our approaches was that I employed the Hero/Villain dynamic in order to police masculinity, whereas he employed the Hero/Villain versus Non-Man dynamic in order to police masculinity. Both strategies were

successful in terms of both policing masculinity *and* of maintaining order in the prison.

The policing of masculinity through Hero/Villain versus Non-Man violence between men is replicated outside the men's prison through the same *quality* of violence being employed by men against gay men. Connell (1995) writes of a man, known to be homosexual, who is lured to a deserted place by a group of youths, presumably male, though Connell does not specify so:

> '...in this case it involved stomping on the head, jumping on the genitals, and snapping the ribs by dropping on the torso with the full weight of the attacker's body.' (Connell, 1995, p. 155)

This *quality* of violence parallels the quality of violence that is applied to the 'nonce' in the prison; it has a sexual element through the attack on the genitals; it is humiliating in the sense that the individual is attacked as an object rather that a man; it is calculated, rather than arising from a situation; it is collectively organised; it is sustained and the vertical dynamic, jumping on the victim's body suggests a desire to *obliterate*, rather than control or punish. The fact that the men who committed the assault were *young* may also have fuelled the violence. I show in Chapter 4 that *young* men appear to experience pressure, through *acute* Masculine Anxiety to offend in a general sense in order to avoid the Non-Man position: offending represents a means to enter the Hero/Villain dynamic. It follows that young men are also under acute pressure to enact masculinity on a sexual level. Obliterating the sexual outsider, as the concept of homophobia suggests, functions in the same way that it did for Priestley's (1980, p. 103) sex offender attacking 'nonces': the outsider becomes the scapegoat, reflecting the impossibility of attaining masculinity.

I found that men within the prison did not necessarily regard the 'nonce' and the 'pouf' (gay man) in the same light. I did not find, for example, that 'poufs' were attacked in the same way as 'nonces'. I did find, however, that both the 'nonce' and the 'pouf' could be regarded as falling into the category of Non-Man as a function of defining normative masculinity, particularly in Unsafe Masculine Space, where men engaged in collaborative competition.

When running groups for prisoners in conjunction with uniformed prison staff I found that some of my men colleagues would assume that the group was composed exclusively of heterosexual men, who would share their view that it was acceptable to call homosexual men 'poufs'. For example:

Example 26:

*On two occasions, working with two different men colleagues on an exercise which was designed to demonstrate the unreliability of the first impressions which we gain of people, my men colleagues referred to images of faces which were shown by projector by singling out a particular individual as looking like a 'pouf'. Yet I had also observed both of these men, on different occasions, taking on both prisoners and other man staff, as had I, for homophobic remarks and attitudes.*

This example illustrates that the term 'pouf' is used as a means of the man who uses it among a group of men to signify commonality among that group, *as men*, across prisoner and staff divides, in the same way that the term 'nonce' was used. The dynamic expressed in unifying men in this way, as a sexual category, can be seen as Hero/Villain versus Non-Man. The Villain and the Hero are unified and affirmed, as men, by the exclusion of the Non-Man from the category 'man'. In this sense, the figure of the 'nonce' and the figure of the 'pouf' serve the same function in that they fall into the category of the Non-Man.

This example also illustrates the difference between safe and unsafe Masculine Space. Within *safer* Masculine Space, where Collaborative competition was less likely to occur because of the *informality* of the situation, the Prison Officer was under less *internalised* and *external* pressure to demonstrate conformity to a common ideology of masculinity. He was experiencing less Masculine Anxiety and less pressure from the Masculine Anxiety of other men. He was thus able to exercise his *external* ideology, which accepted gay men as ordinary men, above his *internalised* ideology of masculinity, which *rejected* gay men from the category 'man'.

**Conclusion:**

I found that other men in the prison and I appeared to experience intense, *internalised* and *external* pressure, from other men, to affirm our belonging to the category 'man'. The intensity of this pressure was evident in behaviours that frequently ran *contrary* to ideology other than the ideology of masculinity, despite the *sincerity* with which that other ideology might be held. Rather than revealing simple hypocrisy, the differences between our ideology as individuals and our behaviour as men revealed that the individual man was subject to an

*internalised* ideology of masculinity which ran *in parallel* to *external* ideologies. The likelihood of the ideology of internalised masculinity becoming paramount over other ideology was governed according to the individual man's level of Masculine Anxiety. The level of safety of the Masculine Space he occupied influenced the individual man's level of Masculine Anxiety.

Masculine Space, however, was not created by the *individual* man, but rather by men collaborating with each other, as men, in the creation of that space by the construction and exclusion of the Villain, the Non-Man and woman. While the experience of Safe Masculine Space therefore, took the pressure off the individual man to *demonstrate* masculinity, the cost of being in such space, as my experience in the 'gym' example illustrates, was that of not *challenging* masculinity. Thus no safe space existed *between men*, for men to be *able* to challenge masculinity without *reinforcing* it. Challenges in Unsafe Masculine Space risked the man who made the challenge being perceived as the Villain or the Non-Man, or of accusing other men of being the Villain or the Non-Man. Challenges in Safe Masculine Space effectively changed that space to being *unsafe*.

The cost for the individual man of being *excluded* from Safe Masculine Space as the Villain was high: not only could such exclusion result in a loss of resources and support in terms of day to day survival in the prison, it could also result in the experience of serious, physical violence. The cost of being excluded from Safe Masculine Space as the Non-Man, however, was far higher: it amounted to violent *exclusion* from the category 'man' and *inclusion* into a category which attracted further violence.

The cost for women of the creation of Masculine Space was that women, simply by virtue of being women, were *excluded* from sources of support which were available to men. Men, in creating Masculine Space, also excluded women from *informal* hierarchies of power between men, *as men*, by which formal hierarchies of power were maintained in the prison. Men, *as men*, thus disadvantaged women, *as women*, in terms of emotional support, access to informal power and the ability to exercise formal power, *independently* of the ideology we held, *as individuals*. Yet at the same time, men used women to gain access to support *outside* Masculine Space, *beyond* masculinity, as I show in Chapter 5. I show in Chapter 7 how men, as men, constructed women as Woman in order to facilitate the *exclusion* of women from Masculine Space. I also show how men's *construction* of Woman functioned in assuaging the sexual element of Masculine Anxiety that I deal with in this Chapter in relation to the Non-Man.

# CHAPTER 7: HOW MEN CONSTRUCT WOMEN

## Introduction:

This Chapter deals with intersubjective relations between *men and men* in the prison, in the dimension of our *construction* of women, as women, both present and absent and inside and outside the prison. My research method cannot incorporate an intersubjective study of relations *between* men and women in the men's prison. Such a research would require a method that could incorporate the intersubjective observation of *women, as women* within the prison as well as *men, as men* in order to *bridge* the different phenomenological worlds (Scully, 1990, p. 2) of men and women, as I have shown in Chapter 3. This Chapter represents a beginning in building that bridge by offering an analysis of the phenomenological world of men in the dimension of our construction of women, *through relations between men, as men.* Although the data contain *conversations* with women staff in respect of their experience of men in the prison, therefore, they do not contain *observations* of women.

I have shown in Chapter 4 that within my paradigm of masculinity, women figure as objects, rather than agents in relation to men. This denial of the agency of women, as women, is echoed in androcentric literature on the men's prison, which constructs prison staff as a homogeneous body of *men*, as I have shown in Chapter 5. Sim (1994), for example, in line with other androcentric literature on the men's prison (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Priestley, 1980; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Adams, 1994), homogenises prison staff as the *man* Prison Officer, portraying the men's prison as a peculiar, isolated institution containing two conflicted groups of *men*: prisoners and prison officers. In *reality*, however, many women work in English prisons, occupying exactly the same work roles as men, passing through the permeable walls in the same way that men do. Although the prison in which I worked employed no women discipline officers, i.e. Prison Officers who are directly responsible for maintaining order among prisoners, women were beginning to be appointed to that role at the time that I left the prison. A high-security men's prison nearby employed a number of women discipline officers at the time of my field research. The prison in which I worked employed women across all work roles, with the exception of the discipline role. Women were represented at governor grade and in every other level and dimension of employment within the prison, sometimes heading departments like that of Education or

Probation. My manager was a woman. I worked alongside women as a matter of routine. Women represent a significant presence in the men's prison, exercising agency there in the same way that they represent a significant presence, exercising agency, in the Criminal Justice System, and in wider society. The androcentricity with which criminology views the men's prison is reflected in a dearth of literature on women's experience of working there. I could locate only a small amount of literature in relation to the experience of black prison workers (Alfred, 1992) and none that was specifically concerned with women working in the men's prison.

In this Chapter, I show how men in the prison, *as men*, denied the *reality* of the agency of women there, *as women*, on a day to day basis, through constructing women as objects, in accordance with my paradigm of *fantasised* masculinity in Chapter 4. In Chapters 5 and 6, I have shown how men in the prison generated Masculine Space as a means of *excluding* women, as women, from interactions between men, as men in order to facilitate our construction of ourselves as men through enacting the Hero/Villain dynamic. In this Chapter, I show how this exclusion also facilitated men's *construction* of women as relational objects to masculinity, through our interactions with each other, as men. I show that within Masculine Space, men in the prison, as men, experienced women, *as women*, as a *threat* to masculinity and a resource for *affirming* masculinity. I show that women's success in resisting objectification resulted in men framing women as *defective* within the category women. Thus, within Masculine Space, men effectively placed women in a position where, simply by virtue of being women, men could affirm masculinity in relation to them, *in collaboration with other men, as men*, without women being able to influence the outcome of that process.

I also show that *outside* Masculine Space, however, men in the prison sought to experience women as *source of escape* from masculinity, on both a real and *fantasised* basis. This was evident in women's accounts of experiencing requests for emotional support from men in *private* encounters, for the benefit of men *as individuals*, while also experiencing objectification by men in *public* encounters, within Masculine Space, for the benefit of men, *as men*. It was also evident in the contrast between men's construction of women as sexual objects, reflective of masculinity as a dominant, sexual *performance* in Masculine Space, and men's fantasies of being dominated sexually by women in private. Masculine Space enabled men to escape masculinity, *as individuals*, in *private* interactions with women, while retaining the ability to move back into Masculine Space in order, *as men*, to construct

and reconstruct women in a way that reflected masculinity. Thus Masculine Space functioned in allowing the individual man to reconcile the clash between his needs as a *man, in relation to other men,* denying women's agency, *and his needs as an individual, in relation to women,* benefiting from women's agency. Unlike women in the prison, the individual man was able to move inside and outside Masculine Space according to his fluctuating needs as both a man and an individual. It may also have been the case that men expressed such fluctuation in *private* relations with women and that research in this area may have produced evidence of less objectification of women, by men, within such private relations, but that area falls outside the scope of this research.

I demonstrate parallels between men's construction of women and men's construction of the Non-Man, which I have described in Chapter 6, where I have shown that the Non-Man reflects a high degree of instability of masculinity in the individual man on a *sexual* level. I show that men's violent and *sexualised* construction of the Non-Man as a *feminised* object is echoed in the *sexualised* nature of men's violence to women in constructing women as relational objects to masculinity. I consider the centrality *of relations between men* in generating instability in the sexual identity of the individual man in the context of literature (Rutherford, 1992) that places *relations between mothers and sons* at the centre of such instability. I comment on the implications of the instability of masculinity in the individual man for men's sexual violence towards women.

I am unable to comment on dynamics in sexual relations between men in the prison because of the taboo nature of such relations, which risked the individual man being cast by other men as the Non-Man, as I have explained in Chapter 6. This taboo was reinforced, on an official level, by the prison authorities. At the time of my research, prisoners were denied condoms, despite fears of the spread of HIV infection, on the basis that prison was a *public* place, within which homosexual acts were illegal. The fact that I was able to collect data in relation to men's fantasies of being dominated by women in a sexual sense suggests that the ownership of such fantasies in man to man relations is *less* of a taboo than homosexuality in relation to masculinity. This may be because, within my paradigm of masculinity relations between men and men belong to the *public* domain, in which the construction of masculinity takes place, whereas relations between men and women belong to the *private* domain, where men are able to seek escape from masculinity.

Although men may have offered women emotional support in *private* encounters between men and women, my research method does not incorporate these encounters. This Chapter,

therefore, cannot be read as in any way representative of the range of relations *between* men and women in the prison. Rather it can be seen as a snapshot of the difficulties experienced by the individual man in relating to women, as a result of internalising masculinity, in a prison environment where he is placed under acute pressure to enact masculinity.

**Men Subordinating Women in the Men's Prison:**

As I show in Chapter 6, men, *as men*, within the prison, both prisoner and staff, collaborated in constructing Masculine Space within the prison, to the disadvantage of women. I found that men in the prison routinely subordinated women, *as women*, as opposed to within their professional roles, inside Masculine Space. *All* the distinct vignettes that I collected in relation to men's construction of women in the prison were characterised by men's subordination of women. For example:

Example 27:
*My woman manager told me that, in her experience, only three roles were available to her in relation to men within the prison:*

*1: Mother: a woman who was prepared to play a nurturing role in relation to the men she worked with.*

*2: Girl: a woman who is prepared to defer to men, as men, rather than in relation to respective hierarchical positions within the prison.*

*3: Honorary man: a woman who exerted authority as a woman playing the role of a man.*

*In her experience, women were not allowed to exercise authority over men in the prison, as women. Those who did so were liable to be referred to in dehumanising terms, 'bitch', being the most common example, to indicate that they were 'bad' or 'defective' women.*

Thus my women manager's experience, *as a woman*, of being placed in a subordinated role in relation to men, as men, is consistent with men's requirement of women, as women, to reflect Heroic masculinity. Her roles *as a woman* were confined to the dimensions of

*daughter* or *mother*, operating in the *service* of the Hero within patriarchy, in conformity with maintaining the patriarchal line. The fact that she was a woman enabled men, as men, between and across prisoner and staff, to deny her agency, *as a woman*, by allowing her to exercise agency in her public, employment role, as an *honorary man*. Thus her ability to function in her employment role was allied to her resistance to, or collaboration with men's enaction of masculinity, as determined by *men*. In the event of her resistance, men could construct her as a *defective woman*, through de-humanising terms. I found that men constructed women as reflective of Heroic masculinity both in their *presence* in Unsafe Masculine Space and in their *absence*, in Safe Masculine Space.

**Men Constructing Woman in Unsafe Masculine Space:**

I found that *all* the distinct examples I was able to collect of men's construction women in Unsafe Masculine Space were conducted through *sexual* harassment, in a crude and direct form. I was surprised by this discovery when collating my data because it did not accord with my *sense* that men in the prison, including myself, were *not* hostile to women on a sexual level. Nonetheless, the following example is typical of women's experience of being constructed as a sexual object by men in Unsafe Masculine Space, as relayed to me in conversation with women in the prison:

Example 28:
*A woman staff member approached me, in a state of anger and distress, immediately after having been verbally attacked by one of a group of six prisoners, who were walking behind her. She was too distressed to tell me what the prisoner had said, but she agreed to write it down: 'I want to bite your fucking cunt. Go on Miss, can I bite your fucking cunt?'*

The man's desire to conform to his internalised masculinity on a sexual level is expressed in the nature of the attack, which takes the form of an invitation to a sexual encounter. At the same time, however, the invitation is made at an inappropriate time and place and framed in a hostile way, which seems more likely to *repel* the woman than to *attract* her. Thus the man appears to experience the woman as both a source of desire and a source of threat, on a sexual level. Men's sexual ambivalence towards women has been explained within psychoanalytic tradition as stemming from conflict in the boy child between a desire

for the mother and a desire to be free from the mother. For example:

> Sex is the most powerful expression of this desire (desire for the mother) - the site where men want and need most and therefore feel vulnerable .... Men 'enter' women when they make love. There is a metaphorical slippage between the womb of the mother (the ultimate in protection and security and the antithesis in separation) and the vagina, wherein they can feel engulfed in the love of the Other/Mother. Women's vagina's can thus be dangerous places - dangerous because men's identity depends on separation from the mother; a maintenance of fragile ego boundaries which are most vulnerable ... when attraction to the woman heralds desire for the Other/Mother. (Holloway, 1983, cited by Rutherford, 1992, p. 42).

This view however, is not able to explain Example 28 of sexual harassment in terms of its function as a *performance* for the other *men* present. The audience for the attack is not the woman herself, but the *other men* who are present when the attack takes place and complicit by virtue of not challenging it. She is the *object* of the attack, not the *audience* for it. The attack takes place in a space that is public, rather than private. The attack has the effect of *excluding* the woman from that space, by driving her away. Thus the attack can be seen as indicative of Masculine Space. At the same time, the woman is negated as an individual through being defined in entirely anatomical terms. She is denied *agency* through her construction as a sexual object. The attacker thus *constructs* her as a symbol of women: Woman, in relation to himself *and the other men present, as men.* Thus the woman is used, *as a woman*, by the men as an object in regulating relations between the men, *as men.* The attack also serves the function of reinforcing internalised masculinity by asserting sexual *dominance* over a woman, without the running the risk of a failure in performance attendant to an actual sexual encounter.

The *depersonalisation* of the woman in this example goes some way to explaining the gap between my *sense* that men in the prison were not hostile to women on a sexual level and data that *contradicts* that sense. The depersonalisation of the woman suggests that the man attacks her not as an individual woman, but rather as a *symbol* of women: constructed according to the man's internalised masculinity. This suggests that internalised masculinity may generate a *duality* of consciousness in the individual man between his experience of women *as individuals* and his construction of women, *as women*, according to his internalised masculinity. Such a *duality* of consciousness would explain the ability of the individual man to engage in the sexual harassment of women, while retaining a *sense* of not

being hostile to women because of positive relationships with *individual* women.

The *effective* hostility of the individual man to women does not therefore appear to lie in his sense of women as *individuals*, but rather in his *superimposition* of his construction of women onto *any* women who happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. This superimposition can be seen as a means for him to resolve the *dissonance* between his *actual* experience of women, *as an individual*, and his *fantasised* experience of women, *as a man* enacting masculinity. Thus he sexually harasses women within a framework in which women are a threat to him, *as a man*, while retaining a sense that his harassment is motivated by attraction, rather than defensive hostility stemming from Masculine Anxiety. His hostility to women is experienced at a level that he *suppresses* in his consciousness, because the surfacing of his hostility in his consciousness would reveal his inability to conform to his internalised masculinity.

This hostile symbolisation of the woman by men supports Rutherford's (1992) view that men find women threatening to our identity, *as men*. It also supports his view that the threat is experienced as localised to anatomy: the attacker implicitly confers threatening status to the woman's genitals by threatening them with a 'bite'. Rutherford's axis of men's attraction/repulsion in relation to women is supported by consideration that the effect of the attack is to *repel* the woman, in a physical and emotional sense, in contradiction of it being framed as a wish to *attract* her. Rutherford's explanation of the *source* of men's hostility to women being the mother/son relationship is flawed, however, in that it discounts the significance of relations between men, *as men*, in generating such hostility.

The *performance* element of the attack, which is conducted for the other men present as an *audience* aligns the attacker, *as a man*, with other men, *as men*. The attacker may be attempting to demonstrate his ability to move *away* from the mother/son relationship, but what is he moving *towards*? The answer suggested by the *performance* element of the attack is that he is attempting to assert his belonging to the category 'man' in its *sexual* dimension, which I have shown in Chapters 6 and 7 to devolve from relations between *men and men*, rather than men and women. When considered from this perspective, men's hostility to women, expressed as sexual attraction/repulsion, can be seen as a *product* of relations between men and men, *framed* by men as a product of relations between men and women. The function of such framing can be understood as a means for men to *displace* problems generated by internalised masculinity, which is rooted in relations between men, onto relations between men and women. In this light, what Rutherford (1992) understands as

'fragile ego boundaries' in the individual man can be understood as *unstable, internalised masculinity*, which may be exposed in circumstances where the individual woman does not relate to him in accordance with his construction of her, as a woman. He cannot own such an understanding of his experience if he is to retain his sense of belonging to the category 'man' within patriarchy. He therefore displaces his problem onto a woman, as a member of subordinate gender category, who has failed to fulfil her function within that category, as a sexual partner or a mother, in servicing his needs as a man.

In this Example, the problem of Masculine Anxiety in its sexual dimension, which *stems* from relations between men, is *resolved* through relations between men, by their collusion in displacing that anxiety onto a woman. This dynamic suggests that the individual man, as a man, needs to construct women as 'other' in the same way that he needs to construct the Non-Man or the Villain as 'other', as I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6, in order to gain a reflection of himself as a man who can conform to Heroic masculinity. If he then *fails* to attain such a reflection, because the woman does not co-operate in helping him sustain his *illusion* of masculinity, he can blame her, or his mother or women in general, for failing to give him the required reflection: the defect lies with women, rather than with himself, as a man.

Men's tendency to construct women as mirrors of masculinity, who can be experienced as persecutory if they fail to show an appropriate reflection of that illusion of masculinity, is alluded to, in an *oedipal* context, by Rutherford (1992):

> The female body in its very alienness is both idealised and loathed by men. It represents the good maternal object men have lost and still long for but it also mirrors and represents the bad, persecutory elements of the mother, which threaten to overwhelm men's boundaries of self. To maintain the fiction of it's own identity, the masculine must maintain a binary distinction. (Rutherford, 1990, p. 78)

The threat of women to men's illusion of masculinity in its *sexual* dimension in Example 28 is evident in the men's collusion in casting of a woman as hostile and defining her according to her genitals. This much supports Rutherford's (1992) view of men's desire to dominate women as being explicable in terms of oedipal conflict, which causes men to fear women in the dimension of being 'engulfed' by women. A further dimension of fear of Woman, however, is suggested by this example: the attack is intended to repel, while purporting to attract. This suggests that the attacker is seeking credit *among the other men*

for being willing and able to engage in heterosexual *performance*, without having to take the risk of rejection or failure through *impotence* in such a scenario. The collusion of the other men in the attack suggests that they *share* these fears, which can be conceptualised as Masculine Anxiety on a sexual level.

In this light, it becomes possible to move *beyond* an explanation of this example as an expression of oedipal conflict (Masson, 1992), based on mother/son dynamics and *rooted* in relations between men and women. The function of the attack can be seen as that of affirming the *illusion* of masculinity in its sexual dimension in the attacker *in relation to and in collusion with* the other men present, as men. Thus their internalised masculinity is reinforced externally. The woman *has no part to play* in this interaction between the men concerned and no influence on its outcome: she is constructed by the men as an object in facilitating their *interaction* as men. From this perspective it would seem that within patriarchy, the oedipal myth serves the function of allowing men to *displace Masculine Anxiety, on a sexual level, onto women.*

The critical element for success in this example of men's collective construction of an individual women as a symbol of femininity is that of curtailing the possibility of her taking on *agency*, thus potentially ruining her value to the men as a mirror of their masculinity. In this example, men use physical isolation and superiority of numbers to curtail the agency of the woman. In the following example the woman's agency is curtailed by the concealment of the attacker:

Example 29:

*Another woman staff member told me, on two separate occasions, that prisoners had just verbally abused her. On the first occasion a concealed prisoner had shouted at her, 'Hey up, smelly knickers, have you been fingering yourself?' She added that she was used to receiving leers and wolf whistles in that residential part of the prison. On the second occasion, two prisoners had called 'Hello Darling' to her. She added that a concealed prisoner had shouted 'Slag' at her. (It is possible, but unlikely that the attackers were not prisoners, given the locations of the attacks.)*

As in Example 28, the attack is conducted from a contrived position of power against a woman who is on her own, again for the benefit of a collusive audience of *men*. In this case, the audience of men is composed of other prisoners who are in the building from which the

attack is made. Again, the first two attacks in this example are repellent, while framed in terms of a desire to sexually engage with the target. The third attack, conducted through calling the woman 'slag', indicates a disapproval of women's sexual agency, as opposed to men's sexual agency. These attacks also follow a pattern of sexualising the woman as an object through referring to the woman's genitalia. In this case, the element of repulsion is added to the element of threat through the association of disgusting smells with female genitalia. I found that this element of *repulsion* at women's sexuality, which suggested that the agency of women on a sexual level was particularly antithetical to masculinity, was echoed through many conversations between men, in the *absence* of women, in Safe Masculine Space, for example:

Example 30:
*I was sitting in a room writing a report, while a group of men staff was talking at some distance. One of them told the following joke: A man tells another man that he has a dirty job - the other man, not to be outdone, says that his job is far worse - he is a gynaecologist.*

This collective form of men's construction of women as Woman, along an axis of attraction/repulsion, as a means of affirming the collective illusion of masculine identity in the dimension of the ability to sexually dominate women as a matter of will, was not confined to prisoners. I found that men at all levels of the staff hierarchy would engage in such interchanges with each other, in the absence of women, usually in relation to a particular woman target. This targeting would take place in Safe Masculine Space, for example, the men's changing rooms in the gym.

**Men Constructing Woman in Safe Masculine Space:**

In this example the successful symbolisation of a woman as Woman, in this case through her re-construction rather than construction, is achieved by an even safer method of denying her agency than immediate superiority of numbers, or physical concealment: that of her *absence*:

Example 31:
*Another woman staff member was discussed by a group of men in the showers, while I was*

*getting dressed in the adjoining changing room. The expressed perception of the men concerned, who had been under her authority, was that she had been 'over controlling'. She was described as being seen naked on the office floor, having sex with a man. It was also said that she had made sexual advances to the men concerned, and that they found this aversive, since she was not good looking, and badly dressed. I felt torn between intervening and observing. I decided on the latter, in order not to compromise my position as observer. In a second attack, which took place a few days later, while I and other men were together under the communal showers, one of the men previously referred to, suggested we should 'gang-bang' her. This stopped a previously light-hearted conversation. Others and I expressed our disgust.*

This woman is attacked in a way which suggests that what is at stake for her attackers is their ability to maintain their authority *as men in relation to her as a woman*, rather than as employees, in relation to her as a manager. The tried and tested nature of this mechanism is evident in the confidence of the men who engage in it that other men will not challenge them. The challenge, in this example, only comes at the point where the nature of the project threatens to reveal itself through the suggestion of collective rape. The degree of violence with which the woman is attacked can be seen as informed by a number of indicators of threat to the unstable masculinity of her men attackers:

1: *Superior social status to men*: She has superior social status to her attackers, through her employment role in relation to them. Her superior social status gives her greater access to power over objects: 'allocative resources' (Gidden's (1979, p. 93). This superior power increases her ability to be effective in her agency. Thus it is difficult for men to frame her as a woman who needs to be *protected* by them, in accordance with the commodification of women I describe in my paradigm of masculinity in Chapter 4. Thus she threatens masculinity through her ability to act without reference to men's internalised masculinity as *protectors* of women.

2: *Direct authority over men:* She has had direct authority over her men attackers. In Gidden's (1979, p. 93) terms, this can be conceptualised as 'authoritative resources': power over people. This means that she has the capacity to *patronise* her attackers, effectively inverting the mirror image of masculinity, in which she is required, as a woman, to be in

need of *patronage*.

3: *Questioning the validity of patriarchy:* She is known by her attackers as a 'feminist'. This means that she is likely to assert herself *as a woman*, rather than a woman acting in a 'gender neutral', i.e. masculine role. This carries the risk that she will directly threaten the internalised masculinity of her men attackers, by challenging them as members of a superior gender category, rather than as employees.

4: *Sexual agency:* She is perceived by her attackers to be a sexual *agent*, rather than being selectively but *passively* responsive to the sexual attention of men. This diminishes their capacity to maintain the illusion of themselves as *sexually dominant* in relation to her, whether or not she chooses to respond to men's sexual attention. Thus she poses a potential threat to internalised masculinity on a sexual level. She is perceived to be openly expressive of her sexual nature in her conduct to men in general. This moves her from being a negative threat to a masculine self-perception as sexual agent, through not mirroring masculine sexual agency, to being a positive threat, by placing men in the role of sexual object.

5: *The particular exercise of sexual agency:* She is perceived to be openly expressive of her sexual nature in her conduct with her attackers in particular. This places her in the position of being a direct, immediate and positive threat to the illusion of independent sexual agency of her attackers.

The woman is attacked on a sexual level as a means for her men attackers to negate her agency as a woman. As I have explained in Chapter 4, the internalised Hero represents a fusion of transcendental courage and heterosexual conformity, within a narrow band. The *sexual* nature of the attack on this woman and other women in the prison suggests that masculinity in the individual man is particularly unstable in its *sexual* dimension. Men's sexual violence to women and men's sexual violence to men, as described in Chapter 6, stem from the same source: Masculine Anxiety in its sexual dimension, as rooted in relations between *men and men.*

The individual man cannot attack a woman in a way that reveals Masculine Anxiety as his motive: such a revelation would negate the function of the attack, which is that of *displacing* Masculine Anxiety onto the woman target. An understanding of men's sexual violence to

women, as rooted in relations between men and women, effectively *supports* that displacement, by making invisible the function that the attack serves in relation to masculinity. The function of the attack is that of assuring the individual man that he is a *man among men*. Although the *effect* of the attack, therefore, is that of subordinating a woman, as a woman, that is not its *primary* purpose. As I have explained in my paradigm of masculinity in Chapter 4, the primary function of masculinity is that of subordinating men to powerful men and its secondary function is that of subordinating women to men. Thus the *motivation* of the attack in the man can be seen as distinct from the *effect* of the attack on the woman: the motivation is the *displacement* of Masculine Anxiety; the effect is the *subordination* of the woman. The attack is launched from the platform of *a common understanding* among the man attacker and his audience of men, as men, that women, as women, are an inferior gender category, rather than representing an attempt to *construct* such a platform. In this light, the woman can be seen as a *commodity* in enabling men to construct relations between each other, as men, through a *discourse of masculinity* in which she has no voice.

As Examples 28, 29 and 30 show, men can thus construct the individual woman in terms of being a voiceless *object* of attraction/repulsion in a way which does not involve making an ideology of masculinity explicit. In this Example, 31, the attack is stopped by other men *only* when sexual *anxiety* becomes explicit as motivating the attack: in this particular case the trigger is Masculine Anxiety in terms of being able to sexually dominate a woman, implicit in the suggestion of rape. The man who makes this suggestion effectively positions himself as the Non-Man because the context in which he makes the suggestion reveals that his motivation is that of sexual anxiety, rather than sexual desire. This unintended revelation effectively pricks the illusion that all the men involved are operating within the Hero/Villain dynamic.

**Masculine Anxiety in Heterosexual Performance:**

I have shown in Chapter 6 that men's violence to the Non-Man was indicative of instability in the individual man in conforming to a narrow range of heterosexual desire. I found that in relation to women, men experienced the same instability, with an additional element of anxiety about maintaining a sexually dominant position in relation to women in terms of sexual *performance*. For example:

Example 32:

*I was in the changing rooms with a group of men, after a session in the gym at lunchtime. I was party to a conversation in which other men and myself admitted that one of our biggest fears as young adolescents, was that we would have a sexual encounter with a girl who would allow us to push the encounter beyond the point of our own sexual competence. A specific example of how this might come about was through a girl taking hold of a young boy's penis, before he knew what the next part of the sexual script was.*

In this particular example, the anxiety which is being expressed is that of being discovered as sexually incompetent, in the sense of being unable to engage in sexual performance, from a dominant position as a *matter of will*. This admission is qualified by the consideration that the men concerned, including myself, are speaking of ourselves in the past *as boys*, rather than as men. Nonetheless, the commonality of that experience among that group of men, along with the strength of anxiety marked by the clarity of our memory, suggests that being able to maintain a dominant sexual performance in relation to women, is critical to the individual man's sense of competence, as a man.

I have shown in Chapter 4 that the sexual element of Heroic masculinity is centred on *reproduction*. This would suggest that maintenance of a dominant sexual *performance* in relation to women is likely to cause a fear of *impotence* in the individual man. A fear of impotence would explain the careful construction of the attacks in Examples 28 and 29 to maintain a pretence of a desire to *attract*, as a mask for a desire to *repel*, thus avoiding any risk of failure in sexual performance.

Such a sexually dominant position, however, like Heroic masculinity in its general sense, is impossible to achieve *as a state*. It is only achievable briefly, episodically and, as these examples suggest, through men's collaborative construction of women as objects relational to masculinity. Like masculinity in the dimension of transcendental courage, therefore, masculinity in the dimension of sexual conformity is also a zero sum condition: the individual man must assert it continually in order to maintain the illusion that he can conform to his internalised masculinity. Our memories as boys in Example 32 are fixed by Masculine Anxiety in its sexual dimension overshadowing other considerations in the sexual encounter. This dynamic replicates the effect of Masculine Anxiety in its social dimension, as shown in my own behaviour in Example 3, where my need to maintain my

Ideal Masculine Self as courageous overshadowed other considerations.

Men's policing of women in the prison through attacking women in a sexual dimension, echoes men's policing of men through sexualised attacks which reduced men to objects, as I have described in Chapter 6. Men's construction of both men and women as a threatening and defining sexual 'them' is *partially* consistent with Rutherford's (1990) understanding of masculine identity as being related to the other:

> Splitting and psychic projection illustrate how psychic processes are mobilised in defence of frontiers. Blackness and ethnic difference, femininity and homosexuality have, historically, formed the threatening 'others' of the hegemonic white masculinities of our culture. (Rutherford, 1990, p .78)

In the light of the parallels between men's construction of women and men in a sexual dimension, evident in the data, however, it would appear that the 'others' have not simply 'formed' (intransitive verb) as threatening, but rather that men, *as men*, construct 'others' on a day to day basis. It would also seem that 'frontiers' are not simply historical, but rather that they are internalised by the individual man and externalised by men collectively. While the concept of 'hegemonic white masculinities' is unclear, I would argue that conceptualising black men within patriarchy as belonging to a different masculinity to white men is a useful prop to racism, as I explain in Chapters 2 and 4.

The examples of men's sexual harassment of women in this chapter, however, illustrate only the middle of a continuum of oppression of women, as women. One end of this continuum consists of forms of sexual patronisation, conducted by individual men, including myself, for example by the inappropriate use of terms of endearment when addressing women staff. The other end of this continuum became evident to me in an emergence, through reflexive recording, of links between my past, personal experience and a prisoner's extreme violence towards a woman:

Example 33:

*I wrote a parole report in respect of Bob, who was serving a long sentence for attempted murder of his wife, who was having a sexual relationship with another man. I spent some time counselling Bob, who was still suffering from depression and anxiety, having been admitted to psychiatric hospital after his offence. Bob was desperate to understand his actions. He had no history of violence to women. I could find nothing unusual in his attitude*

*to women in general. On the contrary, he seemed particularly sensitive to women, and was critical of the reductive terms in which women were discussed in the prison. He spoke of a positive relationship he had with a woman patient in the psychiatric hospital. Yet he had tried to batter his wife to death in a bloody and sustained assault. The only explanation he could come up with was that he had developed 'a hatred of women' after a series of rows with his wife.*

*This explanation did not ring true to me. I felt he heard a baffled psychiatrist speaking. As I dug deeper, trying to make some sense of this extreme violence, committed by a mild and apparently well-balanced man, I became uncomfortably aware of the parallels between, Bob's history and my own. When Bob spoke of the 'explosion of anxiety' which triggered the attack, I was chilled to hear the echo of a fear he had of myself in a previous relationship with a woman, in which I had used exactly the same phrase to describe my fears to myself.*

The difference between Bob's violence to women and the violence towards women of other men in the examples in this Chapter is one of degree, rather than quality. He panics in the same way in which I panicked in Example 3, when I was confronted with an inescapable contradiction between the internalised illusion I had of myself as a man, and the actuality of my behaviour. In the same way that I was unable to deal with that moment of truth, and eventually resolved it by exporting my Masculine Anxiety onto a Prison Officer while he had a vulnerable moment (Example 4), he exported his Masculine Anxiety onto a woman victim when she is vulnerable. Thus he disguised the source of his anxiety, his inability to be his Ideal Masculine Self, in its sexual dimension, from himself.

Men's violence to women partners frequently revolves around fears by men of sexual infidelity by their women partners (Dobash and Dobash, 1979). As in Example 32, such violence can be viewed as reflective of Masculine Anxiety in its sexual dimension. As I argue in my paradigm of masculinity in Chapter 4, Heroic masculinity, on a sexual level, is founded on the ability of the individual man to enforce the sexual fidelity of his woman in order to maintain his patriarchal line. In this light, Bob's violence to his woman partner suggests an attempt to disguise his inability to *conform* to Heroic masculinity, rather than a choice to depart from it.

This example (33), viewed in conjunction with the preceding examples of men's sexualised violence to women in the prison, suggests that women's agency, particularly in a

sexual dimension, is fundamentally in tension with men's internalised masculinity in a patriarchal setting. This suggests that the primary motivation for men's violence to women, is that of denying ontological insecurity within the category 'man'. Viewed in this light, men's violence to women requires analysis which does not assume that it is *calculated* as a means of subordinating women, or resident in the particularities of an individual relationship between a man and a woman, or resident in the relationship between a man and his mother. Rather it can be analysed as an *exportation* of Masculine Anxiety, generated through relations between men and men, on to a woman who is significant as a symbol of femininity *in the moment of violence*. Men's violence towards women appears to be rooted in *relations between men*, rather than relations between men and women.

In this light, misogyny, expressed in it's purest form in Example 30, where the gynaecologist is said to have a disgusting job, can be seen as an *exportation* onto the Woman, of a fear of failure in masculinity in its sexual dimension. The Woman is constructed through her genitalia, which are portrayed as repulsive. This construction of the Woman as repulsive pre-empts failure on the part of men to conform to internalised masculinity in its sexual dimension, by engaging in a dominant sexual performance. 'Cunt hatred' (Greer, 1971, p. 258) is a masked fear of *impotence,* exported by men onto women.

**Men's Violence to Women:**

Men's imposition of the construction of Woman upon women, in safe and unsafe Masculine Space, is conducted with varying degrees of violence. This violence is characterised by two, apparently contradictory elements of *random* targeting of any woman and of the targeting of *specific* women who are perceived as a threat to the masculinity of an individual man. The compatibility of these two elements of men's violence to women, however, becomes clear when the concept of Masculine Anxiety is applied to them: *men's violence to women does not have it's primary source in relationships between men and women, but rather in relationships between men and men.*

The random targeting of women by men suggests that *any* woman will serve the function of victim/commodity. This indicates that the victim is not targeted by a man as an *individual* woman, but rather as a *symbol* of women, as constructed by him. The motivation behind the attack, therefore, is not resident in the relationship between the victim and the attacker, but rather in the masculine imaginary of the attacker, as formed through his relationship *to other*

*men.* In this light, these random attacks by 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) on women can be conceptualised as attempts to obtain an inverse reflection of masculinity, in the form of femininity as constructed in the masculine imaginary, by violently imposing that construction onto *any* woman.

The targeting of *specific* women stems equally from Masculine Anxiety in the sense that men select women as targets according to their ability to assert themselves *as women.* The assertiveness of women, *as women,* appears to represent a direct threat to the ontological security of men, *as men.* The link between men's random and specific attacks on women lies in the tension between the *imaginary* masculine construction of femininity and the *reality* of women's agency. Women are targeted randomly or specifically by men as a means of affirming our ability to operate within the Hero/Villain dynamic as not being aligned with women as the Non-Man.

When this consideration is related to the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity dynamic in which men enact masculinity, it becomes clear that the individual man experiences internalised pressure to avoid the Non-Man position in relation to *women,* as well as other men. If he is unable to occupy the Hero position in relation to a woman, as her patron and protector, he is able to maintain his masculinity by relating to her as a *defective woman* from the Villain position, through sexualised violence.

Within the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity in Chapter 4, the Hero is the protector of women. If the individual woman is perceived by the individual man as threatening to expose the reality of him being in the Non-Man, however, the role of protector can be replaced by the role of attacker, in which he occupies the Villain position. As in men's relations with men, it is preferable for the individual man to occupy the Villain rather than the Non-Man position. The justification for him attacking as opposed to protecting the woman can be found in him constructing the woman as 'bad', and the fault lying with her as a defective woman, rather than him as a defective man. As Chapter 7 shows, attacking 'bad' women can function as a means for the individual man to affirm his masculinity *in relation to other men.* He only becomes the Non-Man by attacking women who are 'good'. Men construct women through our relations with each other, as men, then define women within that construction as 'good' and 'bad' according to our need to regulate those unstable relations. The 'bad' woman is any woman who is resistant to being defined relationally to the individual man, as a man: she is the woman who asserts, or threatens to assert herself as a woman independent of men.

The 'bad' woman can thus be *any* woman who, by the fact of having agency as a woman and through existing outside the phenomenological world of masculinity, exists as a both potential *threat* to and *resource* for the masculine construction of femininity. This effectively places any woman in a *double jeopardy* in relation to 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34). On the one hand, if the individual woman does not assert herself as a woman, the individual man can sustain his illusion of masculinity by positioning himself as Hero in relation to her. On the other hand, if she asserts herself as a woman she risks a violent response in which he reinforces his masculinity by adopting the Villain position. As the work of Dobash and Dobash (1979) shows, the individual man frequently places his woman partner in a position where she is *obliged* to assert herself, for example by leaving the house, as a *justification* for inflicting violence on her. This suggests that women's assertiveness is unlikely to protect them from violence by men. It also raises the question of whether some men may *choose* assertive women as partners in order to affirm their masculinity through violence that allows them to adopt the Villain position.

The sexualised nature of men's attacks on women in this Chapter is echoed by the work of Dobash and Dobash (1979), who show that many attacks are characterised by obsessive sexual jealousy. When considered in the light of Masculine Anxiety, the element of sexual jealousy suggests that while the attacks are mounted directly against women, the target in the man attacker's imagination is the *rival man.* Thus the woman who is subject to violence by a man, in a 'domestic' situation, is commodified as a means of regulating relations between men, as men, in the same way that women are attacked in the prison. Attacking a woman in a 'domestic' situation can thus be seen as a means for a man to *displace* violence which he wishes to impose on his imagined rival, thus affirming his masculinity through Hero/Villain dynamics, onto a woman. In this way, he affirms his masculinity without the high risk of reciprocal violence attendant to attacking another man directly.

The commodification of women as a means of regulating relations between men links men's 'domestic' violence to women with men's random attacks on women and men's targeting of specific women. All of these elements of violence are rooted in *relations between men,* as internalised by the individual man, as opposed to relations between men and women. This consideration implies that interventions into the career of the man who is violent to women should be informed, *primarily,* by helping him to understand his relationships with other men and *secondarily,* by helping him place his relationships with women within the context of that understanding.

Since women operate *outside* men's discourse of masculinity, the individual woman is likely to lack knowledge of that discourse and is therefore at risk of exposing a man to whom she is relating as the Non-Man. The individual man places directly conflicting demands on the individual woman, depending on whether he is relating to her, at any given moment, *as a man to a woman constructed according to his internalised masculinity*, or *as an individual, relating to an individual woman.* As a man, he avoids the knowledge that he is the Non-Man by relating to her as the Hero/Villain, in which case he treats her on a scale that runs from sexual patronisation to sexualised violence. As an individual, he treats her as an individual woman. In the former case the message he requires from her is that he is the Hero/Villain and therefore not the Non-Man. In the latter case, the message he requires from her is validation of himself as an individual outside the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity. He may oscillate between both conflicting demands, in relation to the *same* woman, in the *same* interaction, with *no insight* into this oscillation in himself. The woman concerned also has no ability to influence the *process or outcome* of his anxious symbolisation of her as a woman.

In this light, interventions which condemn his violence to women as reflective of his defectiveness as an individual, be that *moral* or *cognitive*, are likely to *reinforce* the Masculine Anxiety at the root of his violence. His adoption of the role of Villain in relation to women through violence, is a function of exporting his Masculine Anxiety onto women and the label of Villain validates him *as a man.* Just as general offending represents the individual man's denial of being the Non-Man, so does his violence to women. Additionally, within patriarchy, his adoption of the role of Villain validates the ordinary man and the man in authority as the Hero, *protecting* women. The rapist and the man who batters women thus fulfil a *necessary* function in upholding patriarchy as a system which subordinates men to women: if the rapist did not exist, the Hero, the ideal man, would have *no function in relation to women.*

**Men's Masochistic Fantasies in Relation to Women:**

I found that the Masculine Anxiety that men in the prison experienced in relation to women as social and sexual agents was counterbalanced by a number of examples of men's fascination with the idea of being subject to sexualised aggression by women. Like Krafft-Ebing (1912), who invented the concept of 'masochism', I was surprised to discover a large

number of references in my data that suggested that men commonly engaged in such fantasies. This line of enquiry suggested itself to me as the result of an encounter with a man colleague who was nonplussed by an unexpected reaction from a group of prisoners to a self-revelation on his part:

Example 34:

*A man staff member, who had begun running a therapeutic group for prisoners approached me in a state of concern about developments within the group. He had told the all-male group about a former female partner who had been physically violent to him. To his dismay, two of the other five men in the group responded by saying that they had sexual fantasies about being 'dominated' by women. I tried to help him by distinguishing between consensual and unconsensual sexual behaviour, and discussing his own sexual desire.*

Masochism in men is difficult to explain in an oedipal context, not least because Freud (Rutherford, 1992) defines it as a *feminine* trait. This effectively places the man who has masochistic fantasies in the Non-Man position, as a man who deviates from masculinity in its sexual dimension. Men's masochism is therefore considered, within an oedipal framework, as an expression of suppressed homosexuality, through an inexpressible erotic attachment to the father. This is a view supported by Rutherford (1992), despite his acknowledgement of the contradiction that most of Freud's masochistic patients were men, as were Krafft-Ebing's (1912) case studies.

If 'masochism' in men, however, is considered in the light of an internalised pressure on men to *publicly* rehearse an unattainable readiness to sexually dominate women, it seems unsurprising that men should seek a *private* release from such pressure through 'masochistic' fantasies in relation to women. In this light, men's masochistic fantasies in relation to women can be seen to stem directly from the internalisation of masculinity, which stems from relations *between men and men.* 'Masochism', when considered in these terms, can be seen as an expression of the individual man's *ambivalence* towards his Ideal Masculine Self. On the one hand, he attempts to *sustain* his Ideal Masculine Self *inside* Masculine Space; on the other hand, he attempts to *annihilate* his Ideal Masculine Self *outside* Masculine Space, with the same *quality* of sexualised aggression that men employ in the construction of the Non-Man in Chapter 6. (see Krafft-Ebing, 1912)

I found that masochism in men in the prison, towards women, was occasionally, tacitly

acknowledged, when, as in Example 34, a degree of privacy was afforded by a group in which rules of confidentiality had been agreed:

Example 35:

*Towards the end of my period of observation, another man and I jointly ran a therapeutic group for prisoners who had been violent to woman partners. I used the opportunity to float the thought that men's violence to women might be indicative of a displacement of inadequacy by the perpetrator, onto the victim. To my surprise, this suggestion sparked off a discussion about sexual 'domination' by women, in a tone which suggested both a keen interest in the subject, and that such practices were seen in not undesirable terms. When the question of women's violence to male partners arose, later in the day, several of the men said that their women partners had physically assaulted them, generally with fists and feet. From the light-hearted tone of these revelations, and their reception, I gained the impression that the idea of physical aggression to men, by women, had a certain attraction for the group.*

This particular group contained several men who had *killed* their women partners, a fact that suggests that the incidence of the men's masochistic fantasies in relation to women and the incidence of violence, including extreme violence, to women may be related to each other, through the internalisation of masculinity. It also suggests that the men in this group experienced an extreme degree of oscillation between attempting to *enact* masculinity and attempting to *escape* masculinity in a relationship with the *same* woman. I found that men in the prison, when relating to women, were capable of expressing both 'masochistic' fantasy and sexual harassment in the same process, oscillating between the enaction of and escape from internalised masculinity:

Example 36:

*A woman was informally discussing a minor professional matter with several men staff, over whom she had no direct authority. I was in the background, ostensibly doing paperwork. In the course of a mildly heated exchange, one of them said, 'You wouldn't like to sit on my knee, would you?' She treated the remark as a joke, as I hovered between the desire to intervene, and the desire to observe, settling on observation since she seemed unperturbed, and the parties appeared to know each other. She advanced an argument*

*which found no favour with the men, another one of whom, in the course of advancing a counter-argument, said that he disliked being 'told what to do'. He implied that this related to her. She politely gave up the argument and made to leave. As she walked away, with a slight frown on her face, the man who had made the original remark said 'You're beautiful when you're angry'. While I considered the possibility of intervention, the group of men dispersed.*

The man's inappropriate invitation to the woman to engage on a sexual encounter in response to a perceived challenge to his authority represents a shift in him moving from relating to her on an individual to individual basis to him, as a man, constructing her, as a woman. His assertion of sexual dominance over her is underscored, however, by a sub-text of 'masochistic' fantasy, in which he is subject to sexualised aggression, by her. On the one hand, the remark *'You're beautiful when you're angry.'* can be interpreted as a display of sexual dominance, in the sense that he is telling her that her anger is inconsequential to him. On the other hand, however, it can be interpreted as an expression of sexual excitement at the possibility of becoming an object of her aggression, and as a provocation to such aggression. I found that men's fascination with, and excitement at, women's aggression to men could emerge through casual conversation:

Example 37:

*I was conversing casually with another man on the prison staff. The man asked me if I had seen a television programme the previous evening, in which a woman had kicked a man in the groin. When I replied that I had not, the other man, in his eagerness to convey the drama of the event, accidentally kicked a metal waste-paper bin across the room.*

This example suggests that the object of 'masochistic' fantasy need not necessarily be the man who has the fantasy, but that it may be displaced onto another man. This possibility is also illustrated in the following example, where the aggression of a woman on another man was the subject of collective interest among a group of men:

Example 38:

*I was running a group for prisoners, in conjunction with other male prison staff. When group members were asked to make a disclosure about themselves, one prisoner chose to*

*explain how he had lost his front tooth. He was walking along the street with his girlfriend, when she saw him looking at another woman. She immediately punched him in the face, knocking his tooth out. The group immediately, collectively winced, then laughed, then expressed amazement, tinged with admiration. The expression 'What a woman!', used by at least one group member, was accompanied by what I felt to be a wistful nodding from the rest of the group, including myself.*

In the light of the above examples, men's overt symbolisation of women as objects to be sexually dominated by men appears to be counterbalanced by a covert symbolisation of women as sexual dominators of men. The public attraction/repulsion axis of men's fantasised relationships with women appears to be replicated, but inverted, in men's private, erotic imaginary. In this sense men's 'masochistic' fantasies in relation to women can be regarded as functional in upholding the axis of attraction/repulsion which characterises men's construction of women as mirrors of masculinity. The interdependence of the actuality of men's overt sexual domination *of* women and the men's covert fantasies of sexual domination *by* women is evident in Example 35, where men imprisoned for violence to female partners were also fascinated by the idea of being sexually dominated by women. In both overt and covert forms, the imposition of symbolism, by men, on women, appears to be rooted in men's internalised masculinity, produced through relations between men.

This explanation of 'masochism' in men differs significantly from explanations that stem from oedipal theorisation (Rutherford, 1992), in which masochism in men is treated as a *feminine* trait. Men's masochistic fantasies in relation to women in the private sphere would appear, like crime, to be a 'phenomenon of masculinity' (Campbell, 1993, p. 211), representing a covert escape route from the pressure experienced by the individual man to enact masculinity in the public sphere, in relation to other men.

**Men Seeking Support From Women outside Masculine Space:**

My observations of men seeking support from women were confined by the fact that men sought such encounters on a private basis, outside Masculine Space. I was reliant on women to volunteer accounts of such encounters to me. My field notes reflect a number of allusions to such encounters, but the only full and clear account I obtained of such an encounter is alluded to in Example 5. In this example a man prison governor told my woman supervisor

about his fears of what might, and subsequently did happen to him in a disturbance in the prison.

The pressure of being in a situation of imminent danger led him to seek support on an emotional level. He sought such support *outside* Masculine Space, *in private*, from a *woman*. He sought escape from a high level of Masculine Anxiety immediately before feeling professionally obliged to move into Unsafe Masculine Space, leading men who were also likely to be suffering in the same way. He and they would be unable to admit such anxiety to each other, least of all in a situation of direct conflict with another group of similarly anxious men. In the light of an understanding of Masculine Anxiety, it seems possible that all the men in that conflict were locked into it by a fear of the emergence of the kind of moment of truth which surfaced for me in the Home Leave Board incident, Example 3. John's experience illustrates that in a situation of emergent Masculine Anxiety, the individual man may be torn between the conflicting needs of receiving emotional support that does not reinforce that anxiety and of maintaining the illusion that he can transcend fear as a matter of will. In a situation where women are subordinated to men, he can resolve that conflict by seeking *private* support from a woman in escaping his Masculine Anxiety, while maintaining his illusion of masculinity in collusion with similarly anxious men in the public sphere. The corollary of him exposing such vulnerability as a man to a woman, however, is that he may later seek to compensate for such exposure of his instability within the category 'man' by casting her or another woman, as a symbol of women, reflecting his internalised illusion of masculinity.

**Conclusion:**

Men in the prison appeared to experience women as a threat to men's internalised masculinity, a resource for the support of men's internalised masculinity, and a source of support *outside* men's internalised masculinity. Men in the prison appeared to relate to women according to a fluctuating need to receive a reflection of internalised masculinity and a contradictory need to receive reassurance *outside* masculinity. Thus it appears to have been necessary for men to resolve these contradictory needs by constructing women through relations between men in safe and unsafe Masculine Space, while finding a different space in which to relate *privately* to women. The Masculine Anxiety, of men, generated and sustained through relations between men, *as men*, generated emotional insecurity which was

*incapable* of being met *within* relations between men, *as men*. Men in the prison were thus *privately* dependent on women for the enjoyment of social and emotional support and sexual pleasure *outside* the anxious bounds of internalised masculinity. At the same time, however, we were in *public* denial of that dependency, simultaneously denying women the advantages that we gained from being able to move between being *inside* Masculine Space with men and *outside* Masculine Space with women.

Both the Non-Man and women are constructed by men, through sexualised violence, as the *negative* of the Hero/Villain. Thus the Non-Man and the Woman are instrumental in regulating relations between men, as men: each is necessary to the Hero/Villain discourse in which masculinity is constructed. The key difference between the Non-Man and the woman, however, is that while the Non-Man is *feminised*, the woman is *feminine*. All men, as defined by unattainable, Heroic masculinity, *are* the Non-Man and are liable to be *discovered* as such. Yet, by virtue of our physiology, we are able to *cover* ourselves with the appearance of being men. Women, however, by virtue of physiology, have no such cover and require only to be in the wrong place at the wrong time to be used by men as commodities in the construction of masculinity. The Non-Man is 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34), living in the phenomenological world of men (Scully, 1990) whereas as women live *outside* that world. Thus, women are unable to *escape*, in the way that men are, being constructed, by men, as men, as commodities in regulating relations between men, as men, through a discourse of masculinity that women cannot enter. Until much more is understood about the discourse between men, as men, in which we construct women as commodities in regulating relations between us through displacing Masculine Anxiety onto them, the study and practice of intersubjective relations between men and women, *as men and women*, seems unlikely to progress.

# CHAPTER 8: TOWARDS A NEW MODEL OF MASCULINITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

## Reconceptualising the Men's Prison:

This study shows that rather than being a peculiar, isolated institution (Goffman, 1991), the men's prison is a *normative* institution for men, *as men*, with permeable walls. The men's prison reflects the state of relations between men, as men, within the Criminal Justice System and wider society in England. It only appears to be peculiar and isolated from an androcentric (Eichler, 1991, p. 2) and positivist perspective in which the man criminal and man prisoner and the men's prison are studied as objects (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Priestley, 1980; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Adams, 1994), rather than as men.

I have shown in Chapter 3 that this positivist, androcentric perspective cannot recognise that it reflects a normative view of masculinity, internalised in the man researcher. From this perspective, the men's prison can only be conceptualised as a peculiar institution, containing *different* men. The cathexis of the concept of *bias* onto this perspective (Mc Neill, 1990; Burgess, 1990) further impedes inquiry into masculinity. The concept of bias erroneously assumes that the man researcher is able to adjust himself to a neutral position. The 'neutral' position of the man researcher, however, represents a hegemonic masculist perspective, internalised by him, reinforced by his unwitting, intersubjective construction of other men, as men, and validated by the positivist history of ethnographic research. The deconstruction of this positivist, androcentric perspective, through examining the intersubjective relationship between the man who researches and the man who is researched, as men, is a pre-condition to producing the new concepts that are required to understand the function, construction and operation of masculinity within patriarchy and the state. The researcher is thus inevitably a key element in her/his research (Stanley and Wise, 1993).

I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6 that masculinity is constructed through relations between men, primarily within Masculine Space, from which woman are excluded. Masculinity, therefore, can therefore be *externalised* and studied, *at its source*, only by research methods that recognise that it is constructed in the relationship between the man who researches and the man who is researched, *as men*. When the men's prison is examined by a man, from this perspective, which is informed by feminist methodology (Stanley and Wise, 1993; Eichler, 1991) and feminist questions about women's experience of men (Dworkin, 1981;

Eisenstein, 1979; Firestone, 1971; Greer 1971), a new understanding of its function within patriarchy and the state becomes possible.

When the men's prison is seen as an institution whose primary functions are that of validating masculinity within patriarchy and patriarchy within the state, as I have explained in Chapter 4, men in the prison no longer appear to be different from men outside the prison, *as men*. Masculinity, as constructed between men in the men's prison, does not appear to belong to the prison, as positivist approaches to research on masculinity might suggest (Morgan, 1992). Rather masculinity, as constructed by men in the prison, emerges as being rooted in and inseparable from men's construction of masculinity through relations between us, as men, in the Criminal Justice System and in wider society in England. The men's prison emerges not only as a *producer* of masculinity, but also as a *product* of masculinity, constructed by men passing through it and men outside it.

As I have shown in Chapter 5, men on *each* side of the law pass through the prison, spending short periods of time there and having close contact with wider society while doing so. While in transit through the prison, men are divided by that fact of being *temporarily* prisoner or staff, while being united by the fact of being *permanently* men, responding variably to the *same internalised and external, Heroic masculinity.* In this light, masculinity can be understood as a powerful, internalised and external, hegemonic, cohesive force, which unites men, *as men*, across divides of socio-economic class, race and positioning in relation to the law. The climate of fear and violence in the men's prison therefore (Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Priestley 1980; Fitzgerald and Sim, 1982; Adams, 1994; Campbell, 1986; Smith 1990; Boyle, 1977) reflects the climate of fear and violence which shapes relations between men, as men, within the Criminal Justice System and within wider society in England. Men's abuse of each other in the Prison, which I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6, and men's abuse of women in the Prison, which I have shown in Chapter 7, reflect similar behaviour by men, as men, within wider society. On this basis, I consider the implications of the findings of this study, contained in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, for men in the Criminal Justice System, on both sides of the law, and in wider society.

## Re-examining Relations between Men, as Men:

I have shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that masculinity is not constructed through relations between men and women, but rather through relations between *men and men* in the

Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity which I have described in my paradigm of masculinity in Chapter 4. I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6 that this matrix produces instability in the individual man in the form of Masculine Anxiety and that it produces unstable informal hierarchies of dominance among men, supported by violence on physical, sexual, emotional, economic and intellectual levels. I have also shown how these informal hierarchies of dominance among men support formal hierarchies of dominance among men, to the exclusion of women and *against the interests of the individual man.* I now consider how my paradigm of masculinity may be employed to enhance the ability of the individual man to manage his relations with other men, with particular reference to the violence involved in the construction and maintenance of hierarchies among men.

The Individual Man:

If the individual man is to increase his ability to manage his conduct in relation to other men and women, he needs to understand the operation of masculinity within himself, *in relation to other men*, rather than in relation to women. The risk of not gaining such understanding is that his daily conduct as a researcher, a functionary in the Criminal Justice System, an offender or a member of the public will be shaped by his internalised agenda of masculinity. The reduction of such risk depends on him finding a means of *externalising* the Heroic mythology he has *internalised* as an Ideal Heroic Self and of examining how his relationship to it affects his daily conduct and relationships. Thus he can begin to locate himself in the phenomenological world of masculinity (Scully, 1990, p. 2), within which he forms perceptions and makes decisions. His ability to externalise this internalised world should then enable him to define his relationship to it, as a matter of *choice*, rather than by *default*. This, in turn, should increase his perception of the range of choices available to him in the conduct of his relationships with men and women and in his personal and professional conduct on a day to day basis.

I have shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that the individual man has a relationship with his internalised masculinity *whether or not he should choose to acknowledge it and bring it to the surface of his consciousness.* This relationship is fundamental to the way in which he perceives the world and lives his life. Since masculinity is fundamental to the individual man's identity as a man, which in turn is fundamental to his identity as an individual, it would seem *unrealistic to expect that he could abandon, re-define or substantially alter it.* It

is imbedded in contemporary men and constantly reinforced through relations between us, as men, as I show in chapters 5, 6 and 7. Masculinity is also institutionalised on an intellectual level within male-stream academia as I have shown in Chapter 2, as well as a practical level, as I have shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The internalised masculinity of men, therefore, is reinforced ubiquitously through formal and informal acculturation, across private and public spheres within England.

The introduction of new knowledge about masculinity into English culture has the potential to create room for men to construct new means of defining what it means to be a man. Such change has the potential to reduce the incidence of men's violence to men and women in the contemporary, individual man, since the hitherto internalised, invisible pressure to engage in the violence necessary to sustain the illusion of being the Hero/Villain can be externalised and examined by him. He could thus be freed from a powerful and ubiquitous element of cognitive distortion, which *validates* men's choices to be violent in the same process of validating us *as men.*

Such change has the potential for future generations of men to *redefine* masculinity. In the anxiety-driven, Hero/Villain/Non-Man, zero-sum matrix of masculinity the individual man abuses other men out of fear of being abused by them, then is obliged to deny both experiences in order to deny that he *is* the Non-Man. Within this matrix, power is experienced as *inevitably* contested: the individual man is impelled and compelled to take power by force, both legitimated and non-legitimated: he steals it through acts of violence on physical, sexual, emotional, economic and intellectual levels lest the other man should steal it from him. He becomes the bully and the victim, squandering his courage, energy and creativity on an endless and futile contest he can neither retreat from, nor win, nor understand.

Courage is a valuable and admirable quality in anyone. Masculinity could be redefined around a man's courage in *empowering* others, on a *negotiated, intersubjective basis that recognises the validity of non-masculist perspectives*, as opposed to stealing power from others, on a defensive, subject to object basis. This basis of courage in empowerment would accord more closely with the day to day *reality* of the individual man than the *fantasy* of dominating the other man through acts of transcendental courage. As Giddens (1979, p. 93) observes, power is *always* negotiated. Such a definition would free the individual man from Masculine Anxiety, which generates his need to construct women, the other Hero/Villain and the Non-Man through violence. The courage, energy and creativity that is squandered by

men in pursuit of the current vision of the Hero could be harnessed to the pursuit of social justice for all.

The contemporary individual man, however, is not discouraged from externalising his internalised masculinity only by what has hitherto been a lack of a useful conceptualisation of masculinity, but also by the Masculine Anxiety which that *process* of externalisation seems likely to generate. If the process of externalisation is successful, it would reveal a history of behaviour and reconstruction of perception and memory which functions in suppressing from consciousness his failures to be true to his Ideal Heroic Self. As Chapter 5 shows, my experience of discovering my own internalised masculinity was dominated by increasing anxiety.

I have shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that Masculine Anxiety can result in *cognitive distortion* in the individual man, where he engages in, then rationalises in terms of other functions, behaviours that serve the function of validating him as a man. The causal links between internalised masculinity, behaviour which is driven by resultant Masculine Anxiety and cognitive distortions which facilitate that behaviour are illustrated most clearly by my conduct in Example 3, where I explained such behaviour in myself to myself as serving a professional function. Nonetheless, I found that the anxiety generated by the process of discovering cognitive distortion in myself *lasted only as long as the process of discovery.* The result of discovery was my realisation that I had been dealing with *two* inter-related anxieties: the Masculine Anxiety, to which I was subject to, as a man, and the anxiety which resulted from resisting the discovery of my Masculine Anxiety.

The effect of discovering my Masculine Anxiety was that the anxiety generated by *resisting* that knowledge evaporated. This suggests that *I knew what I was going to discover before I discovered it*, but that my problem was that I had no concepts in which to express my experience to myself. The stress that I felt while externalising my internalised masculinity was heightened by the fact that I was obliged to invent the theoretical framework contained in Chapter 4 to explain my experience to myself.

My experience suggests that:

1) The anxiety generated in the individual man by the process of externalising his internalised masculinity is likely to be acute, but productive of a *release* from Masculine Anxiety.

2) The availability of a theoretical framework of masculinity, as contained in Chapter 4, would be helpful to this process.

3) That the process could be conducted most effectively between men, on an *intersubjective* basis, in Safe Masculine Space, where women and rival men are absent.

Relations between men:

The individual man's attempts to understand the operation of masculinity within himself are unlikely to be helped by the relationship between his *internalised* masculinity and masculinity as enacted *externally* by other men. The processes by which the individual man attempts to maintain his security within the category 'man' take place in the context of an economy of Masculine Anxiety between men, which I have described in Chapter 5. The individual man's Masculine Anxiety is echoed and amplified by the Masculine Anxiety of the men around him. The Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix in which the individual man defines himself as a man is played-out through his relations with other men, without him necessarily being offered a *choice* about whether he engages in such dynamics.

The means by which we conduct this displacement can be violent on physical, sexual emotional and intellectual levels as I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6. As I show in Chapter 4, the Hero/Villain attains masculinity *through* violence by imposing his will upon the other Hero/Villain: each is violent *by definition.* Men who are threatened, as men, by the individual man's externalisation of his masculinity could negate the threat by positioning him as the Villain; the 'grass', serving his own interests. Alternatively, the individual man who chooses to externalise his internalised masculinity could be positioned by other men as the Non-Man, the 'nonce', unable to attain masculinity and therefore aligned with women as a Non-Participant in man to man discourses of power.

Understanding the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity is important to preventing violence on all levels between men because this matrix represents an *ideology of violence.* Unless interventions into the lives of men who display violence on any level are rooted in this understanding, they risk reinforcing the Masculine Anxiety that may have shaped the violent act. It is possible that the man who intervenes with the best of intentions may reinforce the Masculine Anxiety of the man who offends by challenging his offending

*within* the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity. Such intervention risks him engaging in further violence to escape the Non-Man position through adopting the Villain position. This risk is increased if the man who intervenes does not perceive that he, too, is driven by Masculine Anxiety, which is fuelled by his position, by virtue of being the man who intervenes, as Hero.

If, however, the man who intervenes in the career of the man who is violent to other men understands the operation of the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity within himself, he can help the man who is violent to understand his own matrix. It is in this matrix that both men relate to each other, *as men*. It is also in this matrix that it is possible for both men to *deconstruct the operation of that matrix between each other and within each other*. The man who is subject to intervention should thereby have the opportunity to escape from the *cognitively distorted* framework of perception in which he forms choices to behave violently.

This intersubjective approach to men who display anti-social behaviour could be adopted into *existing frameworks of cognitive/behavioural intervention into the lives of men*. The difference in research results produced by an inter-subjective approach to masculinity and a positivist approach to masculinity has significant implications for practice. It suggests that existing interventions into the lives of men are hampered in their effectiveness by a subject/object approach, as exemplified by the ineffectiveness of the Criminal Justice System in stopping men from offending.

As I show in Chapter 5, my experience, as an individual man, of externalising my internalised masculinity, *despite* the disincentive of experiencing external pressure from other men was that I became more adept in conducting myself within groups of men. This suggests that if the individual man is able to overcome the internalised and *external* pressures from other men to deny his Masculine Anxiety, he should be able to learn how to locate himself, at any given moment, within shifting, masculine hierarchies of dominance and submission. If he can gain this ability, his power in relation to other men is likely to *increase*. If theoretical frameworks of masculinity, derived from inter-subjective as opposed to positivist research approaches, find their way into popular currency, men who continue to embrace positivist views of masculinity are likely to be *disadvantaged* in power relations with other men.

Men who embrace the de-construction of masculinity would possess a new form of knowledge, which they would be able to bring into Masculine Space and use to their

advantage. In this scenario the man whose perceptions are formed within an *internalised* Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity is vulnerable to manipulation by the man who has learned how to *externalise* that matrix for himself. The man who is thus able to manipulate does not need to *conceal* his new knowledge from the man that he manipulates: the latter is incapable of *recognising* the new knowledge of the former. In this light, I anticipate that a popularisation of *intersubjective* literature on masculinity may bring about a scramble for such literature among men who do not want to be disadvantaged in power terms in relation to other men. Such a scramble may have the cumulative effect, over time of raising in public consciousness the question of whether patriarchy functions against the interests of *men*, as well as women.

As I have shown in Chapter 2, current literature on masculinity reveals men's *unhappiness* with patriarchy. Unfortunately, the literature disqualifies itself from usefulness to ameliorating that situation by looking in the wrong place; men's relations with women; from the wrong standpoint: positivism. Men's unhappiness with patriarchy may ultimately translate into a rejection of patriarchy if the *source* of patriarchy is understood commonly by men as the cohesive force of masculinity, constructed intersubjectively through relations between men, as men, *against our interests as individuals.*

**Understanding Men's Construction of Women:**

This study does not deal with relationships between men and women, but rather with *the way in which men construct women, through relationships between each other, as men.* I have shown in Chapter 7 that there is a relationship between the Non-Man and women, as constructed by men: both categories define the Hero/Villain through representing his negative. Both categories serve the function of repositories for the displacement of Masculine Anxiety. The key difference between the Non-Man and the Woman, however, is that while the Non-Man is *feminised*, the woman is *feminine*. All men, as defined by Heroic masculinity, *are* the Non-Man, by virtue of the fact that Heroic Masculinity is unattainable (Kipling, 1963). Men, however, do not generally *physically* appear not to be men, whereas women are unable, generally, to disguise the physical fact of being women. Thus, women are unable to avoid, in the way that men are, being constructed, by men, as men, within the masculine category of women.

Men's Violence to Women:

Men's construction of women, which I have discussed in Chapter 7, is conducted with varying degrees of violence on physical, sexual, economic and intellectual levels. This violence is characterised by two, apparently contradictory elements of *random* targeting of any woman and of the targeting of *specific* women who are perceived as a threat to the masculinity of an individual man. The compatibility of these two elements of men's violence to women, however, becomes clear when the concept of Masculine Anxiety is applied to them: *men's violence to women does not have it's primary source in relationships between men and women, but rather in relationships between men and men.*

The random targeting of women by men suggests that *any* woman will serve the function of mirroring the illusion of masculinity in her man attacker. This indicates that the woman victim is not targeted by a man as an *individual* woman, but rather as a *symbol* of women, as constructed by him. The motivation behind the attack, therefore, is not resident in the relationship between the victim and the attacker, but rather in the masculine imaginary of the attacker, as formed through his relationship *to other men*. In this light, these random attacks by 'Mr. Anyman' (Hanmer, 1990, p. 34) on women can be conceptualised as attempts to obtain an inverse reflection of masculinity, in the form of femininity as constructed in the masculine imaginary, by violently imposing that construction onto *any* woman.

The targeting of *specific* women appears to stem equally from Masculine Anxiety in the sense that men select women as targets according to their ability to assert themselves *as women*. The assertiveness of women, *as women*, appears to represent a direct threat to the ontological security of men, *as men*. The link between men's random and specific attacks on women lies in the tension between the *imaginary* masculine construction of femininity and the *reality* of women's agency. Women are targeted randomly or specifically by men as a means of affirming our ability to operate within the Hero/Villain dynamic. The objectification of women serves the same function as the objectification of the other man as the Non-Man: it represents a means of exporting the Masculine Anxiety of the individual man onto the other.

Interventions into the career of the man who is violent to women that do not set men's relations with women in the context of the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity risk

*reinforcing* the Hero/Villain construction of women in which the violence has its source. This risk applies to *both* the man who intervenes and the man who is subject to intervention, since both are engaged in the intersubjective construction of each other, as men. As with men's violence to men, this risk is increased further if the man who intervenes does so without locating himself in the man to man dynamics at the source of men's violence to women and dealing with the violence from an *intersubjective*, as opposed to subject to object perspective. The subject to object perspective in this scenario risks that the man who intervenes will fail to discover the dynamics underlying the violence.

The more significant risk, however, is that the man who intervenes will *reinforce* those dynamics through enacting the role of Hero as protector of women, thus *increasing* the risk of further violence by pushing the other man into a reactive Villain position. Or it may be that the violence is sublimated to a less obvious form than the physical or the sexual. The man subject to intervention by his non-battering counterpart could learn how to oppress women more effectively through the violence of the intellectual negation of a woman's experience *as a woman* and through the violence of emotional manipulation. Such violence is compatible with the Hero as protector position, where, in the masculine imaginary, women live in grateful subservience for protection from *worse* men: the man ceases to batter his female partner because he has become skilled in less crude, more effective forms of violence.

These considerations have implications for the deployment of women in intervening in the career of a man who is *obviously,* as opposed to *discreetly*, violent to women. The threat posed to masculinity by the agency of women is reflected throughout this study in almost all the literature by men and in the data throughout chapters 5, 6 and 7. The entry of a woman into Safe Masculine Space results in increased Masculine Anxiety in men and the redefining of that space as Unsafe Masculine Space, as I have shown in Chapter 5. Women, by definition, cannot be in Safe Masculine Space where men appear to be the least defensive, as men, and therefore at our most amenable to discussing masculinity as a force that makes necessary the creation of such space. Safe Masculine Space is thus the location in which it would seem most productive to *de-construct* the masculinity on an intersubjective basis, between the man who intervenes and the man who is subject to intervention.

The risk of deploying women workers alongside men workers in intervening in the careers of obviously violent men is not only that the opportunity to deconstruct the masculinity of both men intersubjectively may be lost, but also that masculinity may be reinforced in the

man offender. The man who is subject to intervention is placed under *increased* pressure by the presence of women, *in a role of asserting herself as a woman*, to compensate for being thus placed in the Non-Man position by adopting the Villain position in relation to her as a *defective* woman. Since the Hero position is occupied by the man worker, the man offender is impelled towards adopting the Villain position in relation to him, positioning him as the opposing Hero/Villain or as the Non-Man. This counterproductive pressure on both the man offender and the man worker is increased further still if the intervention takes place in the presence of other men. All the men present seem likely to be locked into Masculine Anxiety, struggling unwittingly to establish a stable hierarchy of masculine dominance and submission in the destabilising presence of an assertive woman.

Men seeking Support from Women:

I show in Chapter 7 that in addition to being violent to women, men seek support from women, *as women*. Within the phenomenological world of masculinity, women exist as commodified constructions. Outside this world, women, *as women*, exist as resources from which men are able to receive support that cannot be received from other men, and to reveal fears that cannot be expressed between men. The support which men receive from women, as women, cannot be expressed between men, because the expression of such support is antithetical to masculinity, which depends on men maintaining the illusion that it is possible to *transcend* fear. As I have show in Chapter 6, men's support for other men is offered in terms of helping other men *deny* vulnerability, a point which is echoed in the work of Tannen (1992). The individual man's relationship to the woman who asserts herself as a woman is therefore conflicted in the sense that he demands that she should serve two opposing functions. He regulates the conflict between those functions through a binary of public and private: he *privately* seeks support beyond masculinity from her in the absence of other men and he *publicly* imposes the construction of Woman on her in the presence of other men in both Safe and Unsafe Masculine Space. The ambivalence of his relationship with the assertive woman, however, leaks into expressions of *admiration* for her among men, as I show in examples of men in the prison being fascinated by women's aggression. This fascination by men with women's aggression echoes Kraft-Ebing's (1912) finding that his concept of 'masochism' in men, in relation to women, is a common phenomenon, which has also been observed by women authors such as Segal (1994) and Boyle (1995).

When considered in the light of the concept of Masculine Anxiety, and linked to the phenomenon of men seeking support from women *beyond* masculinity, this suggests that the ambivalence of men's attitude to assertive women reflects an *ambivalence towards internalised masculinity*. It would appear that Masculine Anxiety is productive of men's 'masochism', as well as men's violence, and that the relationship between the individual man and the imagined rival man is in play in his construction of women as aggressive. From this perspective, it may be that expressions of admiration for women who are constructed by men as aggressive may reflect expressions of *envy and alignment of identification* with the assertive woman, in which the individual man is expressing his *fear and resentment* of his internalised rival man. While this line of enquiry falls outside the scope of this study, it would appear that men's 'masochism' in relation to women is rooted in *man to man* relations and that, like offending, it merits further study as a *normal* part of the individual man's experience.

**The Relationship between Masculinity and Crime:**

The law, as MacKinnon (1987) points out, fails to protect women, *as women*, because the law, within patriarchy, is concerned with protecting the property of men, which includes women. The law is therefore concerned with the injury that is done to the *man* who owns the woman: if no man owns the woman, by virtue of her being a 'bad' woman who resists being positioned as men's property, then no injury has been done. MacKinnon's (1987) paradigm, however, does not encompass the experience of *men* in relation to the law. The law, *in it's operation through the Criminal Justice System*, also fails to protect men, because it *generates* violence, by men, to both men and women, as an inevitable concomitant of being a prime site in which masculinity is constructed through the State-sanctioned enaction of Hero/Villain dynamics. In the same way that the law propagates inequity between men and women, the law, *in it's operation through the Criminal Justice System*, propagates inequity between men. The likelihood of the individual man being cast in the role of Villain as opposed to Hero is proportionate to his positioning within the socio-economic order of wider society: the Villain is more likely to be poor and black than rich and white; the Hero is more likely to be rich and white than poor and black. Differential policing of the lower socio-economic orders ensures that this is so (Box, 1991).Thus *racism and class prejudice, as well as sexism*, devolve from hegemonic masculinity, as constructed in the Criminal

Justice System.

This analysis does not detract from the fact that the effect of the enactment of the law *doubly* disadvantages women; for example, the woman who is poor and black is further disadvantaged in relation to the man who is poor and black by the fact of being a woman. Rather it points to the consideration that the man in the lower socio-economic strata of society may affirm his *superior* power position in relation to women by engaging in sexist behaviour, but that he does so at the cost of affirming his *inferior* power position in relation to men from higher socio-economic strata of society. Thus his adherence to Masculine Practices, as defined in Chapter 4, can be seen to be *directly against his interests.* It enables him, within a positivist framework of masculinity, such as that proposed by Messerschmidt (1993), supported by Connell (1991) and other men writing on both masculinity and crime from a positivist perspective, to be identified as belonging to a problematic masculinity which is *especially* violent to women. By implication, this *particular* masculinity then requires *even more* policing than the differentially high level of policing (Box, 1991) that lead to him being identified as belonging to a problem group of men in the first instance. Thus the poor man unwittingly colludes in the maintenance of unjust power and privilege, maintained with the collusion of men who support his oppression by maintaining forms of knowledge in which he can be studied as an object *from a superior critical plane.*

Masculinity generates Crime by placing men, particularly young men who need to lay claim to manhood in order to attain ontological security, under pressure to enter the Hero/Villain dynamic. Crime reinforces Masculinity by facilitating the construction of the Hero/Villain. The state provides the stage on which masculinity is constructed: the Criminal Justice System. Male-stream Criminology validates the drama. The roles permitted to men, *as men*, be they criminal, employee of the Criminal Justice System or criminologist, consist of Hero and Villain.

The men's prison is a small stage in the theatre of cruelty that the Criminal Justice System represents. Men within the Criminal Justice System, on *both* sides of the law, reinforce the damage that we sustained in the process of becoming men. In failing to understand what masculinity is and how we construct it, we ensure that future generations of men will go on to replicate the injustices to which we, *as men*, subject each other and women. The men's prison is a symbol of the intellectual and moral bankruptcy of Heroic masculinity within England.

I have shown that de-constructing the men's prison, using a perspective derived from

feminist methodology (Stanley and Wise, 1993), reveals that masculinity is constructed through *relations between men*. I have also shown that the de-construction of masculinity is not only in the interests of women, but also in the interests of *men*, apart from those men at the pinnacle of the socio-economic order. Those men benefit from the construction of the criminal as representative of the lower socio-economic orders by the fact that such a construction justifies their privilege. At the same time, by virtue of wealth, whiteness and class privilege, those men are insulated from the violence and damage to the quality of life produced by masculinity.

I have shown that the Criminal Justice System, in which the men's prison is located, *generates* rather than *regulates* crime by men. I have also shown that a route to preventing offending and re-offending by men and protecting the public can be found in simultaneously helping men *on both sides of the law* to co-operate in externalising our internalised masculinity, and of living in a different relationship with it.

**Implications for Future Research and Practice:**

Replicating the Research:

This study has two unique qualities as a piece of research: it represents a first step into a new field of intersubjective relations between men, as men, and it incorporates the man researcher as research subject, located on the same critical plane as the other men research subjects. Through those two qualities, it has generated new concepts in respect of relations between men, as men. This makes it difficult for any researcher who has read this work to have the experience of venturing into unexplored territory without his consciousness being informed by such pre-existing concepts. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that the study is based on an inter-subjective research method, which necessarily means that the results of any further, similar study will vary according to the idiosyncrasies of the individual researcher.

My research approach runs contrary to an objective, positivist research approach, which anchors new research to old through the precept that knowledge is absolute and that it can be acquired through unidimensional progression. The alternative, relativist inter-subjective approach that I have employed attempts, rather, to create new, subjective knowledge. Within this approach, rigour is required not in the researcher following old formulae, but rather in

him recording, continuously reflecting on and ultimately charting *changes in his perspective* on the relationship between his internalised masculinity and the masculinity of other men. In this way, he can become *self-visible* as a man in relation to other men by capturing the processes through which he *constructs* himself, other men and the data that he is collecting and subjecting to scrutiny. As I have explained in Chapter 3, the researcher *inevitably* constructs that data.

Although it is not, therefore, possible to test this study in an absolute sense by following a specific formula, it may be possible to test it in a relative sense by adopting similar research approach in further studies, which should produce comparable findings. The variations between future individual, inter-subjective and therefore inevitably idiosyncratic studies could be correlated and analysed on a macro level to produce an increasingly sophisticated paradigm, or matrix of paradigms, of masculinity. Thus the validity of the findings of future inter-subjective studies of masculinity could be tested in relation to each other on an evolving, dynamic basis, as I am about to explain.

Future researchers may differ to me in terms of temperament, experience, sexuality, race or ethnicity, to name a few examples. Such differences may make future researchers a different variable to myself in an intersubjective research process and thus be of crucial *value* in mapping masculinity. This is a different proposition to a positivist approach in which idiosyncrasies in the individual researcher are seen as a distorting feature in *discovering* data and which seeks to eliminate *bias* through providing formulae that can be followed by future researchers. Future researchers may also work in masculine space in different environments to the men's prison, thus extending knowledge of the operation of masculinity in different environments. If it serves its intended purpose of opening up a new field of knowledge in relation to masculinity, it should look increasingly naïve with the passage of time, as opposed to being affirmed or contradicted in a positivist, uni-dimensional sense.

While I am thus unable to provide a prescriptive research formula for others to follow, I am able to provide some pointers that future researchers in the same field may find useful in charting their experience and evolving their own insights into their internalised masculinity. I do so by reference to critical junctures, contained in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, in the evolution of my ability to begin externalising masculinity as internalised by me and to see the operation of the intersubjective construction of masculinity through interactions with other men.

As I have explained in Chapter 3, my fieldwork lasted for 7 months because no more new

patterns began to emerge through my field notes after that time. I suspect that this phenomenon was informed by my exhaustion, brought about by the stress of destabilising self-discovery. Reflexive recording proved to be straightforward to accomplish, but that may be because my professional training and experience pre-disposed me to consider myself as an element in interactions with others. A researcher without such professional experience may have more ground to cover in terms of gaining such self-awareness and the ability to analyse interactions as they occur. I recorded my experiences as contemporaneously and fully as possible and reflected on them on an ongoing basis.

Despite my professional training, however, this method proved to be difficult and painful to experience in that it obliged me to constantly revisit uncomfortable moments during the research process. Those moments are reflected in most of the examples in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 where those examples refer specifically to my behaviour: I emerge as confused, fearful and denying both of these by objectifying other men. The method also obliged me to revisit uncomfortable moments that had occurred as far back as childhood (Example 2, Chapter 5). It was in such critical moments, however, that I was able to gain insight into my processes of rationalisation through which I suppressed my knowledge that my *actual* behaviour did not accord with how I *felt* I should behave as a man. Thus I was able to discover the cognitive distortions necessary to my maintenance of my internalised masculinity and to begin to chart how I used other men and how other men used me and other men to experience those distortions on a collective basis. On this basis, a future researcher could reasonably expect that the process of reflexive recording should expose cognitive distortion in himself in relation to other men.

The *key*, critical moment in my discovery of the process of cognitive distortion in myself in relation to other men was, in fact, Example 2, Chapter 5. This example of me recording my experience reflexively represents the precise point in my fieldwork that my growing unease pushed me into an insight from which I could not return. I recognised that previous recorded incidents where I had felt fear in relation to other men, such Examples 1 and 4, had represented moments of *sub-critical*, incipient, ontological collapse, which I had avoided through rationalisation. Once that collapse occurred, however, my level of anxiety dropped bathetically as I began to recognise the absurdity of my behaviour in moments of self-inflicted, Quixotic drama, such as the moment in Example 3 when I strode across the parade ground to face down my imagined Villain. In this instance, my professional training was notably useless in saving me from cognitive distortion resulting from internalised

masculinity and from engaging in behaviour that supported that distortion. My experience was that of *feeling* a build-up of pressure, illustrated by all the examples that chronologically preceded Example 2, where I had increasing difficulty in adequately accounting for the behaviour of men, including myself.

The incident in Example 2 took place close to the end of the fieldwork. It was *only* with the insight that I gained in Example 2 that I was able to begin interpreting preceding examples in the light of key concepts that appear in Chapter 4. The most central concepts, the Hero/Villain dynamic and Masculine Anxiety, began to form in my consciousness immediately after the events of Example 2 occurred. Most other examples are representative of me beginning to refine those concepts. I have difficulty in providing anything other than this crude chart of my shift from one form of consciousness to another because the process was disturbing, traumatic and constantly interrupted. As Example 2 illustrates, my change of consciousness occurred in the context of me being obliged to oscillate rapidly between the roles of researcher and employee in an emotionally demanding job. A precise mapping of my change of consciousness would have required, at the very least, continuity in my role as researcher in order to enable me to disentangle, on an ongoing basis, the intertwined strands of my shifting construction of myself, other men and the data. I cannot, therefore, locate the precise points in the fieldwork in which I arrived at the key concepts. Whether or not such precision is possible even under ideal conditions is a question that is open to future researchers.

My interrogation of the data after the fieldwork does not represent an analysis of the data, so much as a *refinement* of the analysis of the data and a subsequent *refinement* of my key concepts to include the Non-Man and Safe and Unsafe Masculine Space. Most of the data were fixed firmly in my memory through the traumatic effect of the fieldwork on me, as were the embryonic, key concepts that I was obliged to construct on an ongoing basis in order to survive the fieldwork on a psychological level. Through reflexive recording, I had begun analysing the data while I was in the process of constructing it and myself. The data was therefore *never raw* and thus open to the application of a pre-formed method of qualitative analysis. As I have explained in Chapter 7, the only data to surprise me were those concerned with the sexual nature of men's construction of women.

A future researcher with a different identity, in a different environment, informed by this study, could reasonably expect to have different experiences to me, particularly if he *expects*, in way for which I was unprepared, to discover a high level of cognitive distortion

in himself in relation to other men. He could not, therefore, follow the path that I did in drawing-up a theoretical framework on a blank sheet unless he managed to discover nothing of this work. On the basis of my observations of other men, however, it would seem equally reasonable to expect that a future, man researcher would discover that he forms part of an economy of masculinity as constructed through relations between men. It would also seem reasonable to expect that his performance within this economy would rely on him suppressing from his consciousness his knowledge that he *is* the Non-Man in his *actual, day to day behaviour*, as opposed to recognising it in an abstract, non-specific way.

It follows that the better defended he is against how that suppression distorts his cognition and shapes his behaviour, the more stress he will feel in the critical moments of reflection. It also follows that the more acute will be his realisation that his claim to be a man is illusory. He may experience the kind of emotional and ontological collapse that I underwent in Example 2, or he may gain insight into his condition as a man in a more progressive way, taking a much more sanguine look at himself rather than being traumatised as I was. He may not be under the combined pressures of advancing into a destabilising unknown, while coping with a difficult, professional task in a stressful environment. It may be that he can be supported by other men in coping with the stress of the research in a way that was not possible for me, since it took a long time after the research to refine my concepts enough to communicate them to other men. My experience, however, suggests that no matter how well psychologically defended a future man researcher is against new self-knowledge, *as was I*, his consciousness as a man will undergo significant changes if he locates himself as a subject of his own research and if he is rigorously honest with himself. I would speculate that the momentum of the cognitive distortion he would record and thus expose to himself would tip him, like me, into a different consciousness as a matter of psychological survival. Until other men attempt this research approach, however, this study has no basis for comparison and this hypothesis cannot be tested.

Why Men Need to Conduct Further Research into Masculinity:

The phenomenon of a *masculine* construction of femininity through relations between men, as men, contained in Chapter 7, supports Scully's (1990, p. 2) view that men and women live in 'different phenomenological worlds', in the sense that women, as women, are constructed by men in order to support masculinity as internalised by men. Thus the socio-

biological concept of masculinity/femininity appears to be limited in the sense that masculinity/femininity may be constructed *differentially* by men and women. Although this consideration falls outside the scope of this study, it has significant implications for the study of masculinity. It raises questions such as do women construct and internalise masculinity, and if so, how?

Research into masculinity seems unlikely to move forward unless men researchers are prepared to accept the intellectual and emotional challenge of locating ourselves on the same critical plane as the men we research. The study of men as objects, by other men, as current writing by men on masculinity and crime reveals, cannot create new forms of knowledge which are required to interrogate masculinity. The importance of men being prepared to meet this challenge is underscored by the consideration that such *primary* research can only be conducted by men: women are excluded, by definition, from Masculine Space in which masculinity is constructed through relations between men, as men. My experience of doing such research suggests that it is likely to cause emotional and intellectual discomfort to the man who does it. At the same time, however, my experience also suggests that such research is survivable and rewarding on a personal level. On an academic level, the rewards of such research seem likely to be high: masculinity as constructed through relations between men constitutes a *new field of knowledge*. On a practical level, such exploration may ultimately lead to an improvement in relations between men and relations between men and women. These are issues that can become a matter for future research.

Implications for the Criminal Justice System:

The findings of this study suggest that the Criminal Justice System is ineffective in regulating crime within the State because this function is in *direct conflict* with its function of regulating masculinity within patriarchy. In this light it would appear that the principle block to the effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System in regulating crime is that it constructs the Villain as a *man* within the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix of masculinity contained in Chapter 4. Within this matrix, the threat of punishment by imprisonment is likely to be ineffective in deterring the individual man from offending because it may be counterbalanced by the *greater* threat of occupying the Non-Man position: better to be a bad man than *not a man at all*.

It would appear that on the one hand, the Criminal Justice System operates on the *positivist* assumption that the individual man offends as a matter of *positive* choice in order to gain rewards. On the other hand, however, my *intersubjective* paradigm of masculinity in Chapter 4 suggests that the individual man offends as a matter of *negative* choice, in order to avoid a *worse* fate than that threatened by the Criminal Justice System: that of being positioned as Non-Man. The former view suggests that he could be deterred from offending by sanctions which outweigh the rewards of offending, in which case the Criminal Justice System could be made more effective by being made *more punitive*. The latter view suggests that the risk of the individual man offending can be reduced by making masculinity *less punitive*, in which case, the threat of sanctions such as imprisonment will have a greater weight in his decision to offend.

The commission of crime is a *normal* point of entry for young men into the Hero/Villain discourse by which masculinity is constructed, as I have shown in Chapter 4. Young men offend as a matter of convention, not *despite* the risk of attracting punitive sanctions through the Criminal Justice System, but *because* of the risk of attracting punitive sanctions. In this light, it would seem likely that an increase in the punitiveness of the Criminal Justice System could only make offending *more* attractive to young men: the greater the risk, the greater the reward. The pressure on the boy to enter the Hero/Villain discourse of manhood depends on him avoiding being cast by his *equally anxious peers* into the category of Non-Man by failing to take the risk of following the convention of offending. If he fails to distinguish himself as masculine in the eyes of his peers, he risks violent exclusion from discourses of power which take place in Masculine Space, and alignment with women through terms of abuse which *feminise* him (Connell, 1995).

The ineffectiveness of the Criminal Justice System means that young men are unlikely to be brought before the courts, unless they are inept, unlucky, or they belong to highly-policed sections of society, as I have shown in Chapter 4. The likelihood of them *actually* suffering sanctions as a result of offending, therefore, is low. The rewards of offending for young men, however, are high, in terms of a gain in masculine status. Through offending, the individual young man can place himself in the same discourse as the 'prisoner', whose Masculine Status is high, even though his offending is likely to be petty crime against property. In this light, offending by young men, which constitutes the bulk of crime in patriarchal society as I have shown in Chapter 4, can be seen as a *high-reward, low risk, rite of passage from boyhood to manhood.*

The drive *towards* offending by young men suggests a problem in effectiveness for the Criminal Justice System in that it's resources are stretched thinly by a high volume of petty crime by young men, as I have shown in Chapter 4. This not only results in a low likelihood of petty crimes being processed by the system, but also in limited resources being available to deal with more serious crimes, such as crimes of physical and sexual violence, which involve direct, significant harm to men women and children. Such crimes are committed almost exclusively by men, as I have shown in Chapter 4. The Criminal Justice System in its function as a regulator of masculinity within patriarchy therefore, both supports Heroic masculinity that is based on violence and, at the same time, it is unable to deal with the problem of the violence which masculinity generates.

The Criminal Justice System is thus appears to be rendered ineffective in regulating crime by two fundamental problems:

1) It operates on the premise that a crime by the individual man necessarily represents a positive choice from which he and others can be deterred by a condign punishment.

2) Its resources are over-stretched by petty offending by young men who conventionally seek affirmation of their masculinity by risking a condign punishment.

This study does not show that masculinity *causes* crime. Crime is committed mainly, but not exclusively by men, as I have shown in Chapter 4. Women, who live outside the phenomenological world of masculinity, commit the same *range* of offences as men, albeit in different proportions and on a much smaller scale. This engagement by men and women in the same *range* of offending suggests that crime is not an *essential* result of being a man, but rather linked to differential social positioning between men and women. Women's offending is a problem outside the scope of this thesis, but the discovery of the links between masculinity and crime contained in this thesis suggests that the formation of women's choices to offend need to be viewed in a *different light* to those of men.

This study does not show that masculinity necessarily *causes* men to offend. Men may offend for reasons other than those that are relevant to masculinity. The individual man's decision to offend, for example, may have more to do with his heroin habit than his masculinity. At the same time, however, masculinity may be a *significant, causal factor* in his heroin-related offending. It may be that his decision to begin using heroin was informed

by masculinity: he may have been afraid *not* to begin using it for fear of being feminised by his male peers. It may have been that heroin, a depressant drug, was helpful in suppressing his Masculine Anxiety. It may be that he commits house burglaries rather than shoplifting on the basis that shoplifting is a *woman's* offence. It may be that he is disinclined to seek the help he needs to overcome his heroin habit because he fears admitting his vulnerability. It may be that none of the above obtain.

Once the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix in which masculinity is constructed is understood, however, and related to the function of the Criminal Justice System in regulating masculinity within patriarchy, it becomes clear that it is *unsafe to ignore masculinity as a potentially significant factor in any man's decision to offend in any way.* The arguments that apply to heroin-related offending by men also apply to other forms of offending, where a positivistic, androcentric standpoint suggests that the cause, poverty or unemployment, for example, is *obvious* so masculinity *cannot* be an issue in the offence. Yet this positivist standpoint cannot account for why men at the bottom of the socio-economic pyramid seem more inclined to offend than women in the same place, despite the economic disadvantage that women experience in relation to men (Carlen, 1988).

The cost of ignoring masculinity as a potential factor in *any man's offending*, when intervening in his offending career, may be that the intervention makes him *more* likely to offend. As I have shown show earlier in this Chapter, such interventions risk reinforcing his internalised Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix. This argument does not only apply, potentially, to the man who is categorised as different by misleading, positivistic labels such as 'sex offender' or 'domestic violence perpetrator', where the Hero/Non-Man dynamic which pushes the man offender *towards* the Villain position is easily visible. It also applies, potentially in relation to any man who commits any offence.

Because of its role in regulating masculinity within patriarchy, thus effectively *generating* crime by men, the Criminal Justice System, in its current form, does not seem to be an appropriate instrument for *regulating* crime. There appears to be no reason to expect this situation to change unless or until the agencies of which the Criminal Justice System is composed factor masculinity into research, training, structure and practice in a co-ordinated way. This would mean a fundamental shift from treating criminals as objects of intervention to treating crime as significantly symptomatic of relations between men, as men, on *both sides of the law*. Since the Criminal Justice System serves the interests of powerful men at the peak of the socio-economic pyramid, who regulate it, *against* the interests of *women* and

of *men further down the socio-economic pyramid*, such a shift would present a serious challenge to powerful men.

Implications for Professional Interventions into Men's Offending:

An understanding of masculinity as constructed in the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix described in Chapter 4 suggests that the sex offender, the 'domestic' violence offender, the man who is violent to other men and the man who robs the pension fund may all be attempting through their offending to establish themselves within the Hero/Villain dynamic. This points to a major, methodological flaw within existing positivist interventions, including imprisonment, which can hope, at best, to re-establish men offenders *more firmly* in the Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix in which they formed the decision to offend. I would speculate that the effectiveness of such methods depends on the ability of those methods to *stabilise* the offender within that matrix, in much the same way that, as I have described in Chapter 5, I created a stable order of dominance and submission among men prisoners. The limitation of such *stabilisation*, however, is that while it may achieve changes in behaviour, it inevitably *pushes the man offender deeper into the matrix in which he formed the decision to offend.* The best that can be hoped for in this scenario is that the man object of intervention is helped to achieve normalcy, *as defined by the man who intervenes in his offending*. The problem there, of course, is that the man who intervenes is locked into the same Hero/Villain/Non-Man matrix as the man who is the object of the intervention, without him being aware that he is in anything other than an 'objective' position.

At the time of writing, cognitive/behavioural interventions into offending are achieving prominence in England as What Works research (McGuire, 1995; Roberts, 1995) reflects. Such interventions, however, when applied to men, by men, are at risk of being undermined in their effectiveness by a failure to recognise, *within the method*, that masculinity is a *key cognition* in men on *both* sides of the intervention, who encounter each other, *as men*. At the same time, however, cognitive/behavioural interventions seem to be very well suited to dealing with problems of masculinity, since masculinity can be incorporated into such interventions *as a faulty cognition.* From this perspective, masculinity can be seen as *a faulty cognition that interacts with other faulty cognitions to produce a framework of cognitive distortion, in which men make decisions to offend.* Existing cognitive/behavioural interventions that have been shown to be partially successful through What Works research

(McGuire, 1995; Roberts, 1995) can be adapted by men professionals working together to find ways of externalising and coming to terms with their own masculinity within Safe Masculine Space. The insights gained could be used in writing, running and evaluating programmes that incorporate masculinity as both an intersubjective construction and a faulty cognition. Thus the masculine intersubjectivity of men on each side of the intervention could become a *visible asset* to that intervention, as opposed to an *invisible obstacle* to it. Professional interventions could then be conducted in the light of an ongoing, research-based knowledge of the links between masculinity and offending, combined with an expanding field of knowledge about masculinity produced by further, intersubjective research into relations between men, as men.

The men's prison currently appears to be, at best, an expanding (Prison Reform Trust, 1995; Home Office, 1995) storage facility within which a very small, sample of men offenders, mainly from disproportionately policed lower socio-economic groups, are held on no clear basis, for no clear purpose. It provides public protection which is confined to removing a very small, unrepresentative sample of men offenders from public circulation, usually for short, determinate periods of time, after which they may be released back into society *regardless of the ongoing risk they may pose to the general public.* This suggests that consideration could usefully be given to re-structuring the prison system in line with protecting the public, as opposed to punishing the criminal.

# APPENDIX

As I have explained in Chapter 3, I wrote my field-notes in two different ways, both covert: contemporaneously and immediately or shortly after the event. My notes did not only relate to the recording of external events. I also recorded critical moments of reflection, where I struggled to make sense of my experience, as a man, in the light of my shifting perspective. I have already included a direct extract in illustration of the reflexive nature of my recording in Example 2, where I recorded and reflected on my fear in the moment of feeling it. In this appendix, I present two direct extracts from my field-notes, illustrating my two different means of recording events.

1) Contemporaneous note taking: As I have explained in Chapter 3, I was often able to record events as they were unfolding in front of me. I was able to disguise the fact that I was taking notes by virtue of the fact that I frequently sat in different parts of the prison to do paper-work. The following extract forms the basis of Example 36. I was sitting in the same room as the participants in this extract as I recorded it:

> *Woman teacher coming up to complain that course on basic cookery had been cancelled for next pre-rel. - Jocular inuenndo from C. 'You wouln't like to sit on my knee, would you?'. I didn't intervene, she appeared to resp. - not sure of relationship. B., who she wanted, appeared. She upset because Ed. need courses, he upset because he did not like authority questioned - had made choice to fit in other speaker, ( understandable - probably more relevant ) but chucked out baby with bathwater by generalising sentiment to dislike of being told ' what to to do'. To top it all off, C. said, as she left, 'You're beautiful when you're angry.' She gave him a stony - faced look. B. swore as she left. B. (2) said 'Shh! She's still in earshot.' - (referring to swearing - remark itself was not directed at her ). Reply: 'She should be used to it - working in a fucking prison.' –*
>
> *Later B. ( I ) was still muttering about this at end of morning, to the effect that outside speakers were at risk of doing prison officers out of work by bringing in outside speakers. ( sic ). I argued the point, but he was interrupted by a phone call, and I had to go.*

2) Note-taking shortly after the event. This extract from my notes forms the basis of Example 1. I wrote the following extract in my journal in the prison hospital, while waiting to interview the prisoner who had attempted suicide.

*Fri. -Tense day - D.Off. - minor disturbances - but riot anticipated from prev. day has not yet happened. Felt tension in air visiting 'H' wing for duty call. p.m.- took drug workers to chaplaincy- lots of men hanging around. Stopped by one inmate- seemed tense- worried about h. leave- could not quite understand what he wanted- stood very close- head on- made me feel slightly uneasy- we eventually parted with him muttering about 'always having to wait in this place'.*

*-On way out of door when man shouted 'are you a probation officer?' - said yes but in a bit of a hurry (true)-Reacted aggressively 'this is fucking important' - Listened to confused story about his mate who had been trying to stop trouble & was now in Seg. for his pains - 'what do you fucking think about that!' - I thought it was a fucking silly question, but went through pantomine of taking mate's name to 'look into it' I could think of no other way of escaping this man's attentions. I got impression he did not want or expect me to do anything, or indeed imagine I could - What was all that about?*

*-Went on to deal with att. suicide*

My use of the same invective as the prisoner who had confronted me illustrates how fresh the experience was to me at the time of my note taking.

I recorded all of my experiences in one of these two forms, taking notes throughout my working day in the prison. I transcribed my notes, word for word, onto computer, after my period of fieldwork came to an end.

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