Narratives, Identity, and Cases of Non-Recent Child Sexual Abuse in Football

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Abstract

In 2016, Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in football was brought into public consciousness when ex-professional footballer Andy Woodward waived his right to anonymity by speaking out about the abuse he suffered as a child at Crewe Alexandra Football Club. Woodward broke the silence that had long plagued the sport, resulting in a surge of disclosures of non-recent CSA across numerous grass-roots and professional football teams across the UK. Through drawing upon twenty-one interviews with victims, victim advocates, practitioners, and criminal justice professionals, as well as a victim questionnaire and victim autobiographies, this thesis explores the narratives of the victims of non-recent CSA in football who disclosed their abuse either privately or in the public domain. Victim questionnaire participants identified as male, White, over forty years old, and as coming from a working-class or lower middle-class background. This thesis, therefore, focuses on how their identity, including their gender, class, and age, and their own self-perception, has been impacted by, or impacted on, their experiences from abuse to the pursuit of justice. Although certain identities are more fixed, many are tied to societal constructions and expectations, with the role of the audience influencing an individual's self-perception and experiences. Through using the theoretical tools of agency and communion (Bakan, 1966; Abele and Wojciszke, 2013; Pemberton et al., 2019a), I explore how the victim's sense of self can be rebuilt by speaking out, either individually or collectively, about the abuse they suffered. I also introduce a third concept of 'action' to explore the crucial impact of victim-led advocacy and activism on victims' narratives and identify how their intersectional identities impacted on their status in this space. Doing so highlights the significance of identity on every facet of the victims' experiences.

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List of Abbreviations

APPG: All-Party Parliamentary Group

CPS: Crown Prosecution Service

CUREC: Central University Research Ethics Committee

CSA: Child Sexual Abuse

CSE: Child Sexual Exploitation

FA: Football Association

FC: Football Club

IICSA: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

NAPAC: National Association for People Abused in Childhood

NHL: National Hockey League

NPCC: National Police Chiefs' Council

NRCSA: Non-Recent Child Sexual Abuse

NSPCC: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

ONS: Office for National Statistics

PFA: Professional Footballers' Association

RASSO: Rape and Serious Sexual Offences

SFA: Scottish Football Association

VIS: Victim Impact Statement

Table of Statutes

The Sexual Offences Act 1956 (p.26)

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (p.209, 249, 258)

Chapter 1

Introducing the Cases of Non-Recent Child Sexual Abuse in Football

Introduction

In November 2016, Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) in football was brought into public consciousness when ex-professional footballer Andy Woodward waived his right to anonymity[1] by speaking out about the abuse he suffered as a child at Crewe Alexandra Football Club. Woodward disclosed the abuse he suffered at the hands of his football coach in an article with Daniel Taylor (2017) for The Guardian and later on live television with Victoria Derbyshire on BBC Two (2016a), where he shared:

> Initially it was sexual touching and then it rapidly got worse and he raped me [hundreds of times]. […] It's wrecked my life, that's an understatement. […] The impact has been catastrophic. […] Everyone always says to me how do you cope with it? How do you deal with it? I think we survive and that's it. We *survive* (emphasis my own, ibid).

Soon after the interview was broadcast, other victims came forward to disclose the abuse they had suffered in football by coaches and scouts across the UK, with some waiving their anonymity, including Chris Unsworth, Steve Walters, and Jason Dunford who carried out a further interview on the Victoria Derbyshire show a week later (BBC Two, 2016b). The men shared that their dreams of a professional football career stopped them from speaking out at the time for fear of the repercussions. As one victim stated, his perpetrator 'knew where I wanted to get to [in professional football]. I thought this is what I had to go through' (ibid). Woodward's account broke the silence that had long

[1] By waiving his anonymity, he withdrew his right to not be named publicly.

persisted in the sport, resulting in a surge of disclosures of non-recent[2] CSA across numerous professional and grass-roots football teams, implicating clubs such as Manchester City FC, Chelsea FC, and Newcastle United FC. Soon after this information came to light, the Football Association (FA) set up a helpline in collaboration with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) for victims to come forward to disclose their abuse. Within the first two hours of the helpline opening, it received over fifty phone calls (BBC Sport, 2016) and within three weeks calls totalled more than 1,700 disclosing instances of abuse in football (Rawlinson, 2016). Recent statistics have revealed that 849 former and current players have since come forward against 300 suspects, with 340 clubs being implicated and 1,886 incidents reported (Taylor, 2019). These revelations mirror other non-recent cases coming to public attention, with countless examples of professionals (e.g. teachers, residential care workers) exploiting their position of trust to abuse children in numerous institutional structures. It is very clear that the true extent of non-recent abuse has yet to be realised, with the police stating in 2020 that they are unveiling an 'epidemic of sexual abuse' which occurred in the 1970s and 80s (APPG Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, 2020). As former Chief Constable Simon Bailey stated, 'Policing today is having to deal with the sins of the past' (Dodd, 2020).

Research Design

At the core of this thesis is the exploration of victims of non-recent CSA in football who disclosed their abuse either privately or in the public domain, with specific focus on victims' individual identities, narratives (both individual and collective), and the

[2] This thesis will adopt the term 'non-recent', instead of historic, as stipulated in the Media Guidelines set out by the National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC, 2016: 4). This will refer to abuse suffered in childhood that is disclosed to the authorities when the victim is over the age of eighteen.

subsequent impact their experiences of several 'critical moments' (Thomson et al., 2002; Shildrick & MacDonald, 2008) had on their perception of self. These three concepts (identities, narratives, and sense of self) are closely intwined and inter-linked, although all focus on a slightly different aspect of a victim's self and experience. These terms will be defined and expanded upon throughout this thesis; however, as an introduction, identities in this context refer to an individual or collective representation of social categories, such as race, gender, and class, while also touching upon a victim's self-perception which refers to the characteristics and identities one perceives to define oneself. As a result, identities and self-perception will be widely used interchangeably, focusing on both an individual's sense of self and those identities placed on victims by others. Finally, a narrative is the subjective retelling of events (Maruna & Liem, 2020: 3; see also Ricoeur, 1994) and as such is a platform whereby a victim can construct and develop their sense of self through their recollection of significant moments. Through this exploration, I identify whether their identity and self-perception, has been impacted by, or impacted on, their wide-ranging experiences, from abuse to the pursuit of justice. Doing so highlights the significance of identity on every facet of the victim's experience.

More specifically, this thesis looks at the barriers, with a focus on identity, which stopped the victims from disclosing as children and examines the reception that their narratives then received from the public, the media, and the State once they disclosed in adulthood. The response to the narratives inevitably influences the victims' identity and sense of self, due to coalescing and intersecting identities holding varying levels of significance and power within society. Although certain identities, such as age, are more fixed, many are tied to societal constructions and expectations which influence an individual's self-perception. To explore such ideas, the research questions of this thesis are as follows:

1. Which barriers, with a focus on victim identities, stopped victims of sexual abuse in grass-roots and professional football in the late 1960s to 1990s from speaking out at the time of the abuse?
2. How did the victims of non-recent CSA in football construct individual and collective narratives after disclosing as adults and how were these received by the public and the State?

This thesis contributes to the limited but important work undertaken into the abuse of young boys[3] by male perpetrators in sports sociology (e.g. Hartill, 2009) by being the first academic piece of research to explore the experiences of non-recent victims of CSA in football. There is a considerable lack of attention to CSA of boys in criminology in the UK, specifically non-recent abuse, despite considerable work having been conducted in Ireland and Australia (e.g. Keenan, 2011; Mathews et al., 2017). More generally, Ring, Gleeson, and Stevenson (2022) have drawn important attention to non-recent CSA through their exploration of the legal responses to such cases in three jurisdictions (England and Wales, Ireland, and Australia), as has McAlinden (2022) in her discussion of the impact of State apologies for victims of non-recent institutional abuse in Ireland[4]. This thesis expands on the work on non-recent through an in-depth analysis of a significant context of non-recent CSA of boys within the UK: football.

A small number of scholars have drawn important attention to some key challenges which have arisen when investigating non-recent CSA in the UK, such as investigative approaches to non-recent abuse cases (e.g. Aldridge, 2018; Maslen & Paine, 2019). Yet, despite the many disclosures having come to light in the UK, there is a notable lack of attention to these cases, the experiences of victims, and victim identities, within academia (see chapter 2 for full discussion). Identity is a core component which is often, for a

[3] The rights of transgender and non-binary individuals will not be covered here as it goes beyond the scope of this project; however, the sexual assault of individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ is an under-acknowledged, yet highly important, area for further research.

[4] Within the context of Ireland, McAlinden (2013; 2018) has also drawn crucial attention to barriers to 'truth discovery' in the aftermath of institutional abuse and a wider analysis of various public inquiries into institutional sex offending.

multitude of reasons, disregarded in empirical research within victimology. The grounds for this will be discussed in the following chapters, with this thesis focusing on the relationship between victims' identity and experiences not only of abuse, but of disclosure, and the criminal justice system. To capture the nexus between identity and experience, this thesis uses a qualitative mixed methods approach to explore the stories and experiences of victims who have come forward to disclose childhood sexual abuse in football in the UK.

I conducted a victim questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with victims, victim advocates, and interviews with police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) personnel. The University of Oxford's Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) granted approval for this fieldwork in February 2020. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fieldwork faced numerous restrictions, delays, and obstacles which will be expanded on in the Methodology chapter (4). The thesis draws upon twenty-one interviews and seven questionnaire respondents. Ten interviews were conducted with victims and victim advocates with lived experience of abuse[5] (one participant had two interviews), six with victim advocates and practitioners, and five with criminal justice professionals (four police and one from the CPS). With consideration to two interviewees identifying themselves as having completed both an interview and filling in the questionnaire, this means a total of fourteen victims and victim advocates with lived experiences of abuses' accounts were considered in this research. Furthermore, I analysed the rich resource of victim autobiographies (*Position of Trust* by Andy Woodward, *Shades of Blue* by David White, *Damaged* by Paul Stewart) and a full victim

[5] Victim advocates with lived experience of abuse were victims who were abused in football and went on to take up an advocacy role.

account available online[6] (*The Truth* by David Lean) to add to my data on victim's experiences. I also used victim testimonies, which have been made public through interviews, reports, and blogposts.

White Working-Class Football

Although the sample size of this study is too small to make any quantitative observations, the characteristics of participants broadly reflect those of the victims who waived their anonymity and have appeared in the media since November 2016. Questionnaire participants identified as male, white, over forty years old, and as coming from a working-class or lower middle-class background. Their stories are significant as, along with instances of clergy abuse, abuse in football is a distinct case study of CSA predominantly targeted at young boys (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017; Sheldon, 2021). With regards to the Catholic clergy, studies suggest that boys faced a higher rate of victimisation due to perpetrators encountering increased access to them while victims acted as altar servers, for example (e.g. IICSA, 2017). Research found the abuse was likely to be a function of opportunity, rather than male victims being purposefully targeted more than female victims (Holt & Massey, 2012). This is similarly the case in football, with youth teams being predominantly male at this time. Through using the methods described above, I explore the victims' identities as White working-class boys[7] and what these cases tell us about their identities, how they perceive themselves individually and collectively, and how this may be shaped, and to some extent shape, how State actors – in particular the criminal justice process – perceive

[6] David Lean shares a ninety-page full and unabridged account online of his experiences of abuse and his fight within the criminal justice system.

[7] The majority of victims identified as coming from a working-class background, with a small number opting for lower middle-class.

them. Identity is central to this thesis due to its role in creating vulnerability, silencing the boys, and impacting on their experience of disclosure and beyond (see chapter 2). At the heart of these cases is the role of masculinity, particularly hegemonic masculinity, and the expectations placed on the victims. For example, a study of a small sample of non-recent CSA victims in Norway (Halvorsen et al., 2020) noted how gender stereotypes influence men, as 'disclosure of sexual abuse may be in conflict with social expectations and stereotypes so that men may encounter even more shame, self-blame and identity issues than women' (Ring, Gleeson & Stevenson, 2022: 134). I explore masculinities in detail in chapter 2 of this thesis.

Masculinity was just one component of the victims' complex and evolving identity, yet it had a considerable impact on their response to the abuse and their subsequent perception of self. These challenges faced by White working-class boys have been well publicised and are explored further in this thesis; however, such challenges have 'little to do with being white and much to do with being working-class' (quoted in a newspaper article by Malik, 2020). Class is a crucial component of this thesis, despite often being disregarded when exploring identity within criminology. Maguire (2021) recently brought some attention to White working-class men in prison, with this thesis expanding on this research to include victims of CSA. The relevance is clear: football has been at the heart of working-class culture, with the allegiance towards professional football teams being closely connected to self-identity (Thompson, 1996). Many young boys grew up playing football, with the late 20th century being epitomised by images of children playing football outside council estate housing (Goulstone, 2000). The interviews reveal this was the culture in which the victims in this thesis were raised, with class being at the core of football since its development as an organised and structured sport both in and between communities.

Kitching traces the origins of football in what he describes as the making of the 'people's game' (2015: 127), arguing that it was the working class who did the shaping of the game into what it is today and in so doing, embedding it within the social life of the UK. As Dave Boyle, Former Vice-Chair of the English Football Supporters' Federation stated in a report produced for the FA on the future of the game in 1990, 'The trouble with football is that it's too working-class' (cited in Tempany, 2016: 222). Most of the original Football League teams, such as Tottenham Hotspur FC and Leicester City FC, were founded by churches in an attempt to provide help and support to the poor and deprived in their local area, while also socialising them within middle class values. For the working-class, football was seen as a potential form of income generation and social mobility. In contrast, for the middle-class, it was perceived as a form of recreation (Conn, 2006).

An example of this was Anna Connell, the daughter of the rector of St Marks church in Gorton, founding a team in 1880 that eventually became Manchester City FC. Connell founded the team with the aim to provide recreation and exercise, along with cooked meals, to attract the boys and men into the church. Gorton was a low-income, working-class town without much opportunity for young men beyond low-paying factory work. As Conn describes, Gorton was a 'hell-hole, thrown up to cram rural and Irish immigrants arriving as factory fodder' (quoted in a newspaper article by Conn, 2016). Connell founded the team to socialise young boys and men into the more middle-class values of the church, thereby decreasing the rough and working-class landscape of Gorton (ibid). Middle-class clerical benefactors, like Connell, aimed to spread the message of the church, with the Football League structure in Britain subsequently born out of teams formed in communities similar to Gorton. Class relations were inherently at the core of their creation. Arguably, it is not a coincidence that the church and football are the key

institutions in which the systemic abuse of children, now coming into the public domain, was endemic. This is partly due to the structures of power present in various denominations of the church and footballing organisations which created a culture in which victims were silenced and abuse could continue unchecked (IICSA, 2017; Sheldon, 2021).

Child Sexual Abuse in Sport

Child sexual abuse and exploitation is a widespread and deep-rooted problem in British society, reflected clearly by the recent figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in January 2020. These figures also mark the first time ONS collated data from different government agencies and the third sector[8] when reporting figures on the prevalence of child sexual abuse and exploitation. ONS (2020[9]) estimates that there are currently around 3.1 million adults in England and Wales who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Although this figure is very large, an advocate who works at a charity supporting adults abused in childhood believed this to be an 'underestimate' (VA2), as the statistics do not take into account the many individuals who will never go on to disclose their abuse. The scale of abuse brings into question whether CSA is particularly common in sport or simply a reflection of what is happening in British society more generally. Though this is a valid observation, it does not deter from the necessity of examining those places where abuse is occurring on a large scale. Child sexual abuse scandals revealed in the Catholic church, care homes, and other institutions in the UK[10],

[8] The third sector, also known as the voluntary sector or independent sector, is an umbrella term to refer to organisations which are neither operated by the Government public sector or for-profit private sector.

[9] At time of writing, these are the most recent figures available.

[10] Although studies have found levels of abuse to be consistent across numerous jurisdictions, such as the United States, Germany and Australia (e.g. John Jay College of Criminal Justice, 2004; Rassenhofer et al., 2015; Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017).

highlight the specific vulnerabilities that can arise in organisational structures tasked with the care of children (Nolan, 2001; Waterhouse, 2000; IICSA, 2017; IICSA, 2019). Most simply, organisational structures pose a distinct opportunity to repeatedly abuse children away from the family home. Similarly as young players are under the care, protection, and authority of the sports coach, in religious settings, 'the power of those who abuse may be enhanced by their position as "God's representatives"' (McNeish & Scott, 2018: np). The power and influence of the perpetrator is a key factor which stop victims disclosing in cases of institutional child sexual abuse, although this can also be seen in intra-familial abuse cases where there is a close relational connection to the perpetrator. As will be explored below when introducing the process of grooming, themes of power and identity are at the core of this thesis, with football offering a significant opportunity for perpetrators to abuse children.

Child sexual abuse and exploitation in sport was first brought onto the public agenda in the early 1990s, with the conviction of Great Britain swimming coach Paul Hickson for the abuse of female athletes spanning fifteen years (The Independent, 1995). Many other cases were also detected throughout sport at this time; however, all were viewed as isolated incidents not indicative of a wider culture within British sport. It was only due to a shift in academia (see Brackenridge, 2001, 2004, 2006) and through the work of child protection proponents (Whittier, 2011), that the problem began to be acknowledged as endemic in sport, rather than a few isolated incidents that could not have been prevented. The numbers draw attention to sport as another institutional environment that has and continues to foster the abuse of children (Murphy, 2018). As Hartill argues, the 'concealment of CSA is an historical feature of organised sport' (2013: 241), yet it has only been brought to public attention in recent years. The focus has tended to be on the 'female-victim, male-perpetrator' paradigm, muting the experiences of male victims

either by female perpetrators or, as in this project, male perpetrators (Brackenridge, 2001; 2006). Hartill (2009) started to explore the role of masculinity in the experiences of male victims of CSA in sport, upon which this project builds upon.

Research has found that sport has been used as a cover by the perpetrators of CSA (see IICSA, 2020), as it presents an opportunity for unfettered access to young children:

> The necessity for touch/bodily contact during exercising; changing and showering associated with physical exertion; physiotherapy and massage; residential/overnight stays during training camps and competitions; and transport. Indeed, the car appears again and again in the narratives of VOICE participants[11] as the location for sexual violence (VOICE[12], 2019: 58).

Perpetrators in this thesis utilised opportunities for close contact with players, drawing attention to a key theme which came up in both the IICSA[13] and VOICE reports which was the power and influence that coaches had on the athlete's everyday lives and even professional dreams. Coaches were often well-respected members of the community, with their 'high social status' acting as a barrier for athletes to speak out about the abuse they were suffering (VOICE, 2019: 56). The power imbalance between the coach and athlete leaves young people with little control or voice, resulting in prolonged periods of abuse for each player. It is the coaches who are often solely responsible for the player's career, meaning that for ambitious young athletes 'speaking out against a coach, about anything, let alone the taboo issue of sexual abuse, is virtually impossible for the young athlete who wants to succeed' (VOICE, 2019: 78). The risk of 'being dropped' from a team, for

[11] The VOICE project explores the accounts of survivors of CSA in sport across seven European countries.

[12] The authors of this report are Rulofs, B. et al.; however, the in-text citation in this research is VOICE, 2019 for ease of reference.

[13] The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, chaired by Professor Alexis Jay OBE, is a statutory inquiry for England and Wales which explores organisations and institutions which may have failed or are continuing to fail to protect children from sexual abuse.

example, was translated to athletes through a number of means, sometimes explicitly but often through mere suggestion. This is deeply troubling when 'the fear of rejection and failure can often trump any other considerations' (VOICE, 2019: 61).

The process of grooming would often entail targeting a player, lavishing them with gifts, offering perks, and crucially, always picking them for the squad. Buying presents and takeaways was particularly a technique used with working-class or lower middle-class athletes who may not have been able to afford these otherwise (IICSA, 2020: 29). Grooming, in this context, refers to building trust with victims through forms of manipulation which aim to silence them from speaking out about the abuse. Moreover, McAlinden's definition of 'institutional grooming' is particularly astute here as she explains it is 'the process in which offenders make use of the unique features of an organisational environment—such as power, authority, opportunity, anonymity, secrecy, and trust— to abuse children, often over a period of time, with sometimes complete impunity' (2012: 147-8. See also McAlinden, 2006). The themes of power, authority, and trust are central to facilitating CSA, specifically with a view to creating a false feeling of complicity which limits a victims' propensity to report abuse and to engage with the criminal justice system. Buying victims presents and takeaways is a method in which perpetrators can make victims feel complicit in their abuse due to accepting such treats. Families and their background were often manipulated, as the process of grooming did not stop at the individual players, but extended to their parents and families. This was revealed to be a significant theme in this thesis, with young players often wishing to protect their families from the pain and anguish of knowing they may have inadvertently allowed the abuse to take place (VOICE, 2019: 72).

Sociologists Brackenridge (2001) and Hartill (2017) have also both drawn attention to the hyper-masculine sporting culture which fostered the abuse of athletes, while

maintaining their silence due to feelings of shame and embarrassment. This can be specifically seen through the sporting environment and the treatment of players in the 1960s to 1990s. Football has a proven history of racism, sexism, and homophobia (VOICE, 2019: 11), which despite progress is still prominent in the game today (see NPCC, 2021; Pope et al., 2022; Smith, 2022). The role of deep-rooted homophobia in the game was a key theme in this thesis, as the VOICE report concurred, 'In other words, real men (sports-men) are heterosexual, strong and dominate others – and they are definitely not victims. Therefore, many psychological problems are encountered by boys, or young men, faced with the necessity of integrating "homosexual" forced or coerced sex into their developing male identity' (2019: 60). This thesis, therefore, further explores the barriers to disclosure described by the men who participated, in particular in relation to gender and sexuality.

The Cases of Child Sexual Abuse in Football

At the start and centre of the revelations regarding non-recent abuse in football is the case of Barry Bennell[14], affiliated with professional teams Manchester City FC and Crewe Alexandra FC, who has been convicted in five separate trials for charges against boys in his professional care. The abuse spanned over thirty years during which he coached at various institutions across the UK and abroad. His behaviour continued even after complaints were made, as football clubs opted to simply release Bennell from his contract rather than report his conduct to the authorities. This failure to report enabled the abuse to spread to the next club that employed him, allowing more boys to be abused. One advocate noted, 'We see this all the time with institutions, church and boarding schools,

[14] Name changed to Richard Jones after early convictions.

almost daily across the world, people being moved on, paedophiles being moved on, because it's such a thorny issue to tackle' (VA9).

Organised sport is dominated by organisations and structures that place adults in positions of power over children, with children and their potential future livelihoods dependent on these interactions. It is the structures, not the game, which fostered the abuse that has started to be unveiled in recent years. Although early charges were brought in the 1990s against Bennell, made possible by the courageous actions of a small number of victims highlighted below, the extent of the abuse was not recognised by the system or society despite indications of wide-scale abuse having taken place. Some of these accounts are noted in this thesis, honouring those that paved the way for others to come forward years later. However, it was not until Andy Woodward, who had been abused by Bennell, waived his anonymity in 2016 that the extent of what happened started to emerge with over a hundred men coming forward against Bennell alone. This resulted in two further convictions for charges against twelve victims in 2018 and a final two victims in 2020, where Bennell eventually pleaded guilty.

Other allegations were made in the 1990s about football coach Bob Higgins, affiliated with Southampton and Peterborough United football clubs. Higgins was found not guilty at this time. However, in 2016, a large number of victims came forward, culminating in his conviction in 2018 of forty-six charges against twenty-four victims[15]. Similarly to Bennell, George Ormond, a former Newcastle United FC youth coach, received a prison sentence for CSA in 2002. Yet, the exposure of the issue in 2016 led to many more victims coming forward, resulting in him being convicted of a further thirty-eight charges against nineteen victims in 2018. Child sexual abuse in football was not just

[15] It should be noted that one of these victims was abused outside of a football context.

a pertinent issue in England but also in Scotland, reflected by a number of individuals revealed to have sexually abused boys in youth football, including Jim McCafferty and Jim Torbett, who both shared affiliations with Celtic FC. In the cases mentioned above charges of sexual abuse ranged from indecent assault to buggery[16]. Other perpetrators named in subsequent investigations include Edward 'Ted' Langford, who worked at Aston Villa FC and Leicester City FC, Christopher Gieler at Queens Park Rangers FC, Eddie Heath at Chelsea FC, Frank Roper who had close links to Blackpool FC and Michael 'Kit' Carson at Norwich City FC and Peterborough United FC (Macinnes, 2021). Many other abusers also operated in the sport and have since been convicted (for full exploration see Sheldon, 2021 and SFA, 2021). The purpose of this research is not an examination of each individual investigation but to explore the experiences each of the victims participating in this research had in the criminal justice system, drawing attention to how their experiences impacted on their sense of self. I have briefly outlined these cases here to provide some contextualisation of a number of the key cases in which the victims in this thesis were involved[17] (see Figure I timeline below).

In 2021, after numerous delays, the highly anticipated findings of the Sheldon Inquiry Report were released. The Independent Review was commissioned by the FA in 2016 to look into allegations of non-recent CSA in football. It found the FA to be culpable of 'institutional failures' in its responsibility to keep players safe, with a number of clubs being shown to have ignored allegations and rumours surrounding coaches and scouts in their organisations (Sheldon, 2021). Similarly, the Scottish Football Association

[16] The Crown Prosecution Service has to charge a perpetrator using the legislation in place at the time of abuse. Under The Sexual Offences Act 1956, the offence of rape would be classed as buggery in reference to non-consensual anal penetration.

[17] For further information see reporting by Daniel Taylor at The Guardian (now The Atlantic) on the issue from 2016-2020.

(SFA) released their report[18] (2021) which identified suspicions of abuse that were not acted upon. Prior to this, important investigative documentaries including Deborah Davies' *The Wall of Silence* (2018) and Mark Daley's *Football Abuse: The Ugly Side of the Beautiful Game* (2017), and public accounts from victims and those working in the game at the time, highlighted key areas of concern. These sources suggest that the warning signs of the systematic abuse of young players in some of the clubs were pervasive, yet no meaningful action was taken.

Heffernan's definition (2012) of wilful blindness is useful to help understand how the consistent and widespread institutional failures in football were able to persist for so long (Saker, 2019). Heffernan uses the legal definition of wilful blindness to describe a situation where 'you are responsible if you could have known, and should have known, something which instead you strove not to see' (ibid: 1). The concept is used in US law to describe a scenario where an individual chooses to remain unaware of a situation, so as to avoid being held criminally liable. Though not yet entrenched in the UK legal system, it still holds significance and is often culturally invoked, shown most notably by its use in the Leveson Inquiry[19] (Deans & Plunkett, 2012). Although it was not labelled as such, this concept was present in Brackenridge's (2001) work to explain how the sporting community ignored abuse of girls within their own institutions. This is evident when Brackenridge states 'collective denial effectively blinded sport administrators to the possibilities that they might actually be harbouring or facilitating sexual exploitation in their own organisations' (ibid: 237). Even a worrying level of systematic error within the institutions could not explain how CSA could be ignored on such a large scale, especially

[18] See SFA report https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/media/7516/independent-review-of-sexual-abuse-in-scottish-football-final-report.pdf

[19] The Leveson Inquiry was a judicial public inquiry into the 'culture, practices and ethics' of the British press following the News International phone hacking scandal. It was chaired by Lord Justice Leveson, who went on to publish his final report in November 2012 (BBC News, 2012).

with numerous reports of abuse being made throughout the football community. The concept of wilful blindness, therefore, proves crucial in understanding the phenomena of CSA in football.

After the Sheldon Inquiry Report was published, the BBC released a three-part documentary, *Football's Darkest Secret* (Gordon, 2021), which examined non-recent CSA in youth football across England between the 1970s and the 1990s, and the culture of silence that surrounded it. At time of submission of this thesis (October 2022), a number of investigations and prosecutions against coaches and scouts are on-going, with cases against specific football clubs also having being heard in the civil courts. In January 2022, a high court judge ruled that Manchester City FC cannot be held responsible for the abuse suffered by eight men at the hands of Barry Bennell (Siddique, 2022). This drew particular controversy after Manchester City FC called Bennell as a witness in their case (ibid). For a full breakdown of the key moments since Andy Woodward drew public attention to non-recent CSA in football in 2016, see the timeline below.

Figure I: Timeline of key moments (from 2016) concerning non-recent CSA in football

November 2016
Andy Woodward waives his right to anonymity to publically disclose his experiences of non-recent child sexual abuse by football coach Barry Bennell to The Guardian newspaper. The following day he speaks on BBC Two's Victoria Derbyshire show. Others follow suit.

The NSPCC set up a helpline with the FA dedicated to helping footballers who've experienced sexual abuse in football. In the first week the helpline receives 860 calls, leading to a number of police investigations launching across the country.

February 2018
Barry Bennell, with associations to Manchester City and Crewe Alexandra football clubs, found guilty of 43 sexual offences against boys at Manchester City and Crewe Alexandra. He is sentenced to 30 years in prison.

June 2018
The Scottish Football Association's (SFA) independent inquiry releases interim report stating Scottish football's child protection protocols were not fit for purpose and that children in the game were still at risk.

July 2018
Youth coach George Ormond, who worked for Newcastle United's youth system in the 1990s, is convicted of a string of sex abuse offences spanning 25 years.

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January 2019
Michael 'Kit' Carson dies in a car crash on the first day of his trial at Peterborough Crown Court, which is ruled as a suicide. He denied charges related to 11 boys under the age of 16. He worked at Norwich City, Peterborough United and Cambridge United.

May 2019
Jim McCafferty, a coach and kit man for the Celtic youth team, is given a further jail sentence after admitting a series of child sex abuse charges.

Bob Higgins is found guilty of 45 charges of indecent assault against teenage boys. Most of his victims were trainees at Southampton FC and Peterborough United.

July 2019
Charles Geekie QC releases report commissioned by Chelsea FC investigating non-recent CSA in the club, particularly concerning ex-chief scout Eddie Heath. Evidence suggests that several staff members at Chelsea must have been aware of Heath's abuse but 'turned a blind eye'.

October 2020
Barry Bennell receives fifth custodial sentence after previously pleading guilty to further charges of non-recent child sexual abuse.

February 2021
SFA releases final report finding although no-one in the game had concrete evidence of abuse at the time, there were varying levels of suspicion which should have been acted upon.

March 2021
After numerous delays, independent inquiry led by Clive Sheldon QC found the FA to be culpable of 'institutional failures' in its responsibility to keep players safe, with a number of clubs being shown to have ignored allegations and rumours surrounding coaches and scouts in their organisations. The following week a three-part BBC documentary 'Football's Darkest Secret' first airs.

May 2021
Celtic Boys Club founder Jim Torbett charged for further instances in connection with alleged non-recent child sexual abuse.

The narratives of the victims in this thesis are focused on their experiences since disclosure, although several referenced details of the abuse in the interviews. To capture the experience of a victim of abuse in football and provide context of how the abuse took place, below I have included a passage from a survivor account in the Sheldon Inquiry Report:

> Football was my passion from the age of being able to kick a ball really. From the age of about 10, I think I realised that I was a little bit better than most kids and that's when I thought, coming from a council estate, that I could better my life. I went through all the channels – got in the school team, then was picked to play for my town, then for my County. And that's when the scouts started coming in for you. At age 13, a professional club started showing an interest and I started training there. I went on to sign schoolboy forms[20] with them and everything was great. I was being looked after and playing for the youth team and basically loving life. I mean, they made me feel very privileged. I was put on a day release and I only had to go to school four days a week.
>
> My abuser more or less appeared from nowhere within about six months of me signing as a schoolboy. He had been a scout for another club and he became kind of my mentor. He was always there. By the time I came to sign as an apprentice I knew there was something wrong, but by then it was too late. He had already started picking me up and dropping me off home on a regular basis. He'd come and met my parents and won them over. My parents thought 'yeah, what a lovely guy'. That was fine for about two months, but then something changed. He started to rub my legs as we were driving, basically testing me. And I pushed him and said "I'm not like that". But it went on for about a month. Then he started parking the van out of view of the house. And it was all hands up the shorts and 'rubbing me down' after showers when we were the only people left in the club in the evening. And you know, you're 14, you're questioning your sexuality. Everything goes on. He'd say "I'm only messing about, I'm only messing".
>
> In the end I let him do what he wanted. My day release had turned into hell for me because I knew that every time I went to training something would happen. Eventually, I retaliated and I beat him up. He was a big man as well. But I couldn't take it no more. I just snapped. I gave him a couple of black eyes. And I knew that was my way out, my revenge. I knew he wouldn't come near me again. I carried on training after that, but I was too far gone and I went out one night and I got completely wasted. I got charged by the police and that's my first ever offence for assault. And that's all because of him, you know. I'd never been in trouble before and I haven't been in trouble since. I just flipped and it's all the abuse and everything else going round in my head. I went to rehab later because I basically lost the plot. I was drinking too much and taking drugs and I needed help. I hit rock-bottom. It was the rehab centre that prompted me to try and put it to bed, to disclose it and try and get it out of my head (Survivor Account 7. Sheldon Report, 2021: 92-3).

[20] An official agreement between a club and a youth player.

Terminology

It is important to note that the victims in these cases are now all adults, largely aged between forty and sixty years old. The reasons and contexts surrounding late disclosures of non-recent abuse, specifically with regards to male victims, are explored in this thesis. However, as a victim of non-recent child sexual abuse powerfully stated, he is more than the label of 'victim' or 'survivor'. That was not his identity. He went on to describe himself as a husband, a father, and a friend (Sport England Safeguarding Advisory Panel, 2019). It is easy when describing the colossal impact of CSA on the lives of victims to inadvertently define them by their abuse. Unfortunately, this thesis cannot escape the use of such labels, particularly with the linguistic barriers when anonymising participants. Therefore, the term 'victim' will predominantly be used unless the individual has previously expressed a preference for the term 'survivor'. Although there is widespread debate on the use of these terms (see Van Dijk, 2009 for discussion), the research mainly follows the legal language of 'victims' and 'perpetrators', as they were mostly being referred to within this context. Furthermore, although the process of anonymising the participants is outlined in the Methodology section (see chapter 4), it is important to reiterate that behind every letter and number is somebody who faced appalling abuse while playing the game they loved. Although not referring to a participant by name was crucial for maintaining anonymity, it should not result in the reader forgetting the person behind the acronym.

Although the project initially started using the more contemporary term, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), I felt that this did not have widespread currency in these cases. After gauging some initial responses from the victim questionnaire, I decided child sexual abuse would be a more appropriate term as it had been harnessed more widely in both media reporting and victim accounts. Child sexual abuse is defined by The

Children's Society (2022) as 'when a child or young person is forced or tricked into sexual activities. They might not understand that what's happening is abuse or that it's wrong. And they might be afraid to tell someone. Sexual abuse can happen to anyone and it can happen in many different places, including home, school or work'. Yet, child sexual exploitation refers to 'a type of sexual abuse when an adult tricks a child into performing sexual acts by offering them something. This might include gifts, drugs, money, status or even affection. Once they have gained the trust of the young person, they can then control them through violence or threats' (ibid). CSE is more widely seen in the experiences of victims of on-street grooming gangs (Jay, 2014; Saker, 2018) and child trafficking victims within the UK (Hallett, 2017; Saker, 2022). Despite the lines between the two terms being blurred, for example, gifts being used by coaches as a method of grooming, I believe their experiences are more aligned with CSA due to a transaction not being at the core of the abuse. This term was adopted by both professionals and victims alike, therefore is used in this thesis.

A final linguistic point to note is instead of adopting 'historic' to refer to the abuse, this thesis uses the term 'non-recent', as stipulated in the Media Guidelines set out by the National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC, 2016: 4). This refers to abuse suffered in childhood that was disclosed to the authorities when the victim was over the age of eighteen. It is clear the victims are living with the consequences of this abuse today, with references to 'historic' having the potential to undermine this fact. As other crimes are not referred to as historic when they occurred years prior (ibid), non-recent CSA should not be stigmatised further through this language. This was summed up by an advocate stating, 'It bothers me and [my organisation] when we hear the word "historic" abuse, or "historical" abuse, because there's nothing historic about this, people are living with the effects everyday' (VA2). Although 'non-recent' does not fully portray

the current impact of abuse experienced by victims, it does elicit fewer stigmatising associations, therefore is widely used by victims and professionals alike. Additionally, NAPAC state the term non-recent better reflects that many CSA cases are successfully prosecuted decades after the crime occurred, therefore using such language encourages more victims to disclose (ibid). These decisions surrounding terminology, and the power that use of language can confer, were carefully considered in this project, yet these decisions may not be the preferred choice of all victims and survivors. Central to this project was the understanding that each victim is an individual, with his own experience and life circumstances.

Thesis Overview

Leading on from the introductory chapter, chapters 2 and 3 outline the theoretical tools used in the thesis, introducing the literature on hegemonic masculinity, intersectionality, and narrative victimology, to explain how each concept is used to unpack the victims' experiences and narratives. The methodology chapter then outlines the qualitative mixed-methods approach I used to answer the research questions, including the use of a victim questionnaire, semi-structured interviews which were undertaken remotely, and use of victim autobiographies. Additionally, I discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on my methods, as well as other ethical and positionality issues faced.

The first empirical chapter, chapter 5, introduces the victims and their identities as White working-class, or lower middle-class, boys at the time of the abuse. I explore factors which played a significant role in enabling the victims' vulnerability and which acted as a barrier for them to disclose (first research question). Particular attention is brought to how an intersection of identities, such as age, gender, and class, impacted on this experience. To understand the role of such identities, the literature on subordinated

masculinities (e.g. Connell, 1987) and intersectional invisibility (Crenshaw, 1991; Purdie-Vaughans & Eibach, 2008) is used. These concepts highlight how each of these identities interact and coalesce to result in the disempowered and ignored status of the victims.

Chapter 5 highlights the men as individuals, although many found some commonality through their intersectional and coalesced identities. Leading on from this, chapter 6 then examines how and when the victims' narratives were heard and began to be acknowledged, identifying those who found their voices as individuals and the many victims who found a collective unity by joining their voices together. Using the theoretical tools of agency, communion, and action, I explore how the stories in football came to light and how the victims who disclosed constructed individual and collective narratives (first part of research question two) and the subsequent impact this had on their sense of self.

Building on the first two empirical chapters, chapter 7 explores how the victims' narratives were then received by the public, media, and State, including the criminal justice system (second part of research question two). The status of the victims was highly dependent on the response of an 'audience' (see Walklate et al., 2019), which in this context comprised of the public, media, and State response to the victims' individual and collective narratives. I specifically focus on how their individual and collective identities are shaped by and shape how the audience perceived them. I focus on the victims' experiences in the criminal justice system to explore how their treatment impacted on their sense of self.

The final chapter then draws together the key findings and themes of this thesis. I also highlight the theoretical contribution this thesis makes to research in hegemonic masculinity and narrative victimology. Finally, I note some of the limitations of the research and indicate future directions for further research.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework Part I: Identity and Intersectionality

Introduction

Despite the growing scholarship within the field of victimology, no singular theory is versatile enough to make sense of an individual's complex and comprehensive experience of victimisation and its aftermath. For instance, this thesis not only explores a victim's unfolding 'narrative' (see Presser, 2009; Pemberton et al., 2019a) but specifically examines how they perceive themselves individually and collectively and how this may both be shaped, and to an extent shape, how the public and the State perceive them. As a result of this, I needed to integrate several concepts and theories to fully encapsulate the experiences of the victims in this study. Several scholars have used 'theory-knitting' (see Kalmar & Sternberg, 1988; Ward & Siegert, 2002) to bring together various concepts and ideas to provide a more exhaustive and fuller exploration of their data and subsequent findings. Ward and Siegert use this approach to build a more comprehensive theory of CSA, which involves identifying specific and relevant features of a number of theories to build 'a framework that can account for the major aspects of the phenomenon in question' (2002: 322). They highlight the benefits of piecing together strong aspects from various concepts and theories to produce their own model for examining sexual offenders (ibid). Similarly, Rock, when discussing victimology theory, states, 'it should perhaps be observed that there is no good reason why so diverse and complex an entity as victims and victimisation should or could be covered by one consolidated set of arguments' (2007: 37).

Therefore, this thesis draws upon several theories that tie closely to identity, victimhood, and narratives to understand a victim's experience of harm – both from the abuse and how victims make sense of and understand their interactions with the criminal justice system. This attempts to avoid forcing complex and multi-faceted data findings through the lens of a singular pre-prepared theory. Core concepts from theories such as hegemonic masculinity, intersectionality, critical feminism, and narrative victimology are central to this research. Applying the concepts of hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality can illuminate how the victims were silenced. Key ideas from the field of narrative victimology serve as a crucial aid in understanding how victims found the courage to speak out decades later, as well as the importance of how these narratives were received by both the public and the State.

Part I of this theoretical framework chapter draws on the principal concepts within hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality literature, specifically focusing on identity and power, which I use in this thesis to explore a victim's sense of self, their status within society, and how this experience of victimhood has impacted on their identity. Identity is used in this context to mean either an individual or collective representation of social categories, such as class, gender, age, ethnicity, etc. Ascribed identities can be placed on individuals, such as hegemonic masculinity, with this thesis exploring the identities placed onto victims by the audience. This chapter illustrates the significance of an intersectional approach to identity to better understand the experiences of victims of non-recent CSA in football, specifically focusing on the individualised identities of the victims (see chapter 5).

Hegemonic Masculinity and the 'Male' Victim

To better understand the significance of socially constructed masculinities for men and how it can act as a barrier to disclosure for young boys facing abuse, we need to explore an academic analysis of traditional masculinity. The most influential theory in critical masculinity studies is hegemonic masculinity, coined by Connell (1987; 2005; 2016) in the late 1980s. Hegemonic masculinity is 'the socially dominant conceptions, cultural ideals, and ideological constructions of what is appropriate masculinity' (Gerschick & Miller, 1997: 456), derived from the class-based theory of hegemony established by Italian sociologist and political activist, Antonio Gramsci. The theory was brought about by social feminist theorists highlighting that 'people's overall life experiences are shaped by the mutual interaction of capitalism and patriarchy' (Messerschmidt, 2018: 98). This definition has been nuanced and expanded by numerous academics and theorists, which is touched upon below, yet as Murray and Hopkins state, hegemonic masculinity remains one of the most 'informative and powerful tools for explaining gender dynamics and power' (2014: 7). A focus on plurality and power is key to this thesis, as it emphasises that not all masculinities are created equal (Kimmel, 1997). Hegemonic masculinity is viewed as the ideal in contrast to other subordinated and marginalised masculinities, which result in a lower perceived status within society. Also pertinent to this thesis is how the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been applied and developed within criminology, such as studies on specific crimes by boys, for example, football hooliganism (see Messerschmidt, 1993; Newburn & Stanko, 1994; Maguire, 2016). Furthermore, within sports sociology, Messner (1992) has highlighted the enactment of hegemonic masculinity in professional sports (see also Jansen & Sabo, 1994), which is significant when exploring the environment of professional youth football in which many of the victims in this study had their identities cultivated. However, there has been little

attention to class in criminological research exploring hegemonic masculinity, although a small number of other disciplines have utilised it in their own research, such as Barber's exploration of class, race, and heterosexual masculinity in US hair salons. She explains that, 'By placing white, middle-class, heterosexual men at the center of analysis, I investigate the meaning of beauty work for a population that has been overlooked in research on gender and the beauty industry' (2008: 455). In this thesis, I similarly explore class with consideration to the experiences of White men, yet focusing on working-class identities within the context of victimisation.

However, a number of criticisms, which I explore in this section, have been levelled at the concept of hegemonic masculinity (e.g. Donaldson, 1993; Wetherell & Edley, 1999; Demetriou, 2001; Flood, 2002), including the assessment that the theory only emphasises the negative traits of masculinity (Collier, 1998). A number of scholars have stated that the concept is unclear, with the ambiguity leading to overlap and over-extension in subsequent research studies. Flood notes that in early work Connell in fact used the term inconsistently, which led to confusion as to 'whether hegemonic masculinity is a particular configuration of gender practice related to patriarchal authority, or describes whatever type of masculinity is dominant in a given social order' (2002: 208). Although Connell (2000) clarified that at the core of hegemonic masculinity was the upholding of patriarchal ideas and structures, there has been an inconsistent appropriation of hegemonic masculinity ever since (Beasley, 2008; Martin, 1998; Messerschmidt, 2012). According to Messerschmidt, scholars have 'equated the concept with a fixed type of masculinity or with whatever type of masculinity that happened to be dominant at a particular time and place' (2012: 71). Confusion surrounding the concept has also led others to criticise it for being too rigid, for example, representing a static notion of traditional masculinity. This has led to widespread questions of what hegemonic

masculinity looks like practically (Wetherell and Edley, 1999), in essence: who actually represents hegemonic masculinity? (Whitehead, 1998: 58; 2002: 93) For example, 'Is it John Wayne or Leonardo DiCaprio; Mike Tyson or Pele? Or maybe, at different times, all of them?' (cited in Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 838).

In response, Connell, alongside collaborator James Messerschmidt, defended the underlying concept of hegemonic masculinity, but acknowledged the criticisms and suggested instead a reformulation of the concept into a more fluid, dynamic, and complex model of gender hierarchy. This would both emphasise the agency of women and provide a more explicit acknowledgement of the 'body' in contexts of privilege and power. However, perhaps most significant is the recognition of the geography of masculinities, stressing the interplay among local, regional, and global structures (2005: 829). Connell and Messerschmidt define local as 'constructed in the arenas of face-to-face interaction of families, organizations, and immediate communities, as typically found in ethnographic and life-history research,' regional as 'constructed at the level of the culture or the nation-state, as typically found in discursive, political, and demographic research,' and finally global as 'constructed in transnational arenas such as world politics and transnational business and media, as studied in the emerging research on masculinities and globalization' (ibid: 847). This thesis pays particular attention to the local, and to some extent regional levels, more specifically looking at the influence of footballing institutions and communities.

This expansion was introduced to better support empirical studies using hegemonic masculinity, with the links and connective nature of the different geographical levels being crucial for contextualising constructions of masculinity (ibid: 849-50). It also draws attention to Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) elaboration that there can be more than one hegemonic masculinity within a society and that multiple ideals can exist within sub-

groups. This nuance is crucial as recognising that the 'ideal' masculinity will differ across groups and communities allows space for the theory to develop and evolve. Furthermore, the hegemonic masculinity literature also acknowledges those who do not conform to the gendered expectations within society. 'Protest masculinities' (see Connell, 1987) is an attempt for men who do not embody hegemonic masculine ideals to feel superior through acting out against the gendered expectations levelled at them. This theory has recently been used by Maguire (2016) to explore how White working-class men in prison, marginalised in the masculinities hierarchy and often from urban and impoverished neighbourhoods, perform protest masculinity as an act of resistance. Although protest masculinities is touched upon in this thesis, it is not representative of many of the victims in this research. More recently, Connell has acknowledged the previous empirical focus has been on hegemonic masculine ideas in the global North, calling for a post-colonial exploration of masculinities with specific focus on research and explorations in the global South (Connell, 2014).

Despite expansion of the theory, Demetriou's early critique of hegemonic masculinity is still pertinent, reflecting the need for a 'constant process of negotiation, translation, hybridization, and reconfiguration' when exploring the continuing evolution of hegemonic masculinities (2001: 355). Demetriou (2001) further suggests labelling the interconnected functions at the heart of the theory 'external' and 'internal', to reference 'hegemony over women' (external) and 'hegemony over subordinate masculinities' (internal). I focus on Demetriou's 'internal' differentiation, as where the victims stood within the hierarchy of masculinities resulted in the status and power they were afforded and was, therefore, of particular relevance to this study. However, this thesis also notes how the men's status compared to that of women during the time of the abuse and when they disclosed, with particular reference to the sporting environment and in the culture

found in football. Although the language of 'internal' and 'external' is useful for highlighting the duality of hegemonic masculinity, others have stated the original theory does not leave space for masculinities to develop beyond these two concepts. A number of scholars have called for a theory of 'inclusive masculinity' to demonstrate the acceptance of more diverse and inclusive gender norms (see Anderson, 2009; McCormack, 2012; Roberts, 2013). In line with the work of Maguire (2016), I also believe this critique is unnecessary as Connell left space for expansion within the framework, stating they wanted to prevent 'multiple masculinities collapsing into a character typology' (1995: 76). In addition to this, the inclusive masculinities theory fails to acknowledge the 'historicity of gender and ignores the massive evidence of change in social definitions of masculinity' (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005: 838). Although Demetriou (2001) illustrates the trap which many could fall into when exploring hegemonic masculinity on a surface level – for example, viewing it is a character typology of traditional masculinity – there is space for hybridisation and development within the original theorem without the need for a 'hybrid bloc,' as he suggests. Demetriou (2001) believes the hybrid bloc will move away from the confusion associated with hegemonic masculinity and embrace the evolving nature of masculinities and all its contradictions. Ultimately, I believe there is space for this development within the original theory, with much of the recent criticism failing to acknowledge the remnants of more traditional notions of masculinity and femininity still present in our diverse, inclusive, and contemporary society.

This thesis focuses on traditional masculinity from which a wide array of empirical literature on hegemonic masculinity has been based, primarily due to its prevalence at the time of the abuse and its influence on the victims. Although perceptions of masculinity have changed and evolved, in the 1970s and 1980s, when much of the abuse of the

victims in this study took place, traditional notions of masculinity were powerful, particularly in the White working-class world of football. This is identified and explored in chapter 5 when considering the barriers, with relation to identity and gender norms, that stopped the victims from speaking out about the abuse they suffered. This study contributes to the growing field of male victimisation, as the literature is not yet thorough and wide-reaching enough to understand the experiences of male victims of sexual abuse (Chan, 2014: 251). This empirical gap is unsurprising when in the 1950s, early academics of the field had highly problematic views towards the sexual abuse of children, with some arguing it was not harmful to young boys (see Kinsey et al., 2003). Although these views have since been cast aside in academia (Smith & Woodiwiss, 2016), they have resulted in gendered assumptions of a male-offender, female-victim paradigm in our society (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Male victims are deemed an anomaly or as the 'victimological other' (Davies, 2011), belittling their experiences and failing to acknowledge the scale of male victimisation. Lisak's (1994) early study on the issue of non-recent CSA against boys found that many men expressed the feeling of isolation they faced as male victims of sexual abuse, as 'though they belong to a non-existent category in the culture's lexicon: "male victims"' (ibid: 546). Gendering victimhood makes it challenging for men socialised amongst these ideas to accept the label of victim given to them when they disclose. This adds further complexity, as male victims are less likely to self-identify as a victim due to associations with weakness and femininity.

At the heart of these gender norms, any show of 'weakness' by a man is viewed as a threat to hegemonic masculinity (Kimmel, 2003). Lisak's (1994) interviews revealed that survivors struggle to reconcile their experiences as victims with the pressures that society places on them to be 'masculine.' As Clark highlighted in her exploration of masculinity and male sexual violence, the social construct of a 'real' man does not allow men to

recognise and discuss their vulnerabilities (2017: 293). Chan concurs by stating, 'To maintain an identity that matches the predominant masculine ideology, men are less likely to reveal their traumatic experience or express frailties that might threaten or destroy such an identity' (2014: 242). Though Chan's research refers to adult victims of rape and sexual assault, these ideas are applicable to the victims of abuse in this study who were abused in the 'ladish' and hyper-masculine context of football. Javaid (2015) makes the important link between societal gender norms and the impact on an individual when they are challenged. He draws particular attention to the harm caused to a man's identity after experiencing rape (ibid: 274), which often leaves men questioning their sense of self. The expectations of men from society are to be 'tough, powerful, strong, invulnerable, impenetrable, and self-sufficient' (Javaid, 2015: 274), yet this stands in contention with the experience of victimisation. Furthermore, men can feel emasculated when they are unable to protect themselves from abuse (Chan, 2014: 248). As Mathews and colleagues state when speaking of male victims of abuse, 'Admitting victimisation undermines images of masculine strength, heightening shame at inability to prevent the abuse' (2017: 10). These ideas have become so entrenched in the male psyche that the vulnerability leads to feelings of shame in the victim, which is explored further in this thesis. Shame can silence victims (Morrison et al., 2018), allowing perpetrators to continue unchallenged. There is a growing literature on shame and its role as a barrier for adult victims to disclose child sexual abuse (e.g. MacGinley et al., 2019; McElvaney et al., 2014; MacIntosh et al., 2016). As McElvaney and colleagues have concluded, 'The child who does not disclose within a timely manner is deprived of the opportunity of having their negative self-attributions challenged. Their avoidance and withdrawal, characterized by non-disclosure, provides a ripe context for shame to flourish' (2021: 17). For male victims, it can also result in victims not getting the adequate support they may

need to help them process the abuse they suffered due to their invisibility to support services (Lisak, 2017). The long-term impact of this silencing for victims and their families will, therefore, also be looked at in chapter 6.

Further literature exploring the challenges faced by male victims of sexual violence outlined three key reasons why they do not report their experience to the police: the fear of being seen as 'gay', the fear of being seen or labelled as a perpetrator, and the threat that victimhood poses to their masculinity (Gartner, 2017). There are very few studies within mainstream criminology focusing on male sexual abuse, but studies from other fields can provide some insights into the influence of identity on victimisation, the public response, and a complainant's experience of the criminal justice process. In transitional justice, for example, Clark (2017) has researched the role which masculinity plays for male victims of sexual violence in conflict settings. She argues that it is impossible to separate their experience as a man from their experience as a victim, which is a theme throughout this thesis; Clark points out 'how masculinity norms and expectations have shaped the men's stories, coping strategies, and current needs' (ibid: 287). Clark's research is important, as she concurs that sexual violence goes beyond simply an attack on masculinity but states that it can 'amplify the way in which masculinity shapes thoughts and feelings' (ibid: 301). For example, socially constructed ideas of hegemonic masculinity do not allow for any expression of vulnerability, often leaving the victims silenced (ibid). The notion of 'hegemonic' and 'subordinated/marginalised' masculinities in this context is established in chapter 5 of this thesis, while also noting the influence that the patriarchy had in upholding hegemonic masculinity (hegemony over women) operating in tandem at this time. I explore the men's socialised identities and perceptions of self in order to make sense of what created vulnerability and maintained their silence. In particular, these identities are framed within the gendered notions of hegemonic

masculinity and hetero-normativity which were at the core of footballing culture at the time.

Previous research touches on related themes, as many men speak about the fear of the negative reactions they may face from those around them if they spoke out, particularly disdain or judgement (Javaid, 2015: 284). This continues into decision-making over whether to disclose to the police, as men often feel shame in disclosing their abuse to the authorities as they anticipate being 'disbelieved, ridiculed, or laughed at' (Javaid, 2015: 287). Breaking down the barriers male victims face in society required acknowledging the stigma men faced as victims. This is reflected in Kassing, Beesley, and Frey's (2005) study which found that participants frequently judged male victims of sexual assault more negatively than female victims. The reasoning for this was the perception that men had failed to adequately protect themselves, which Javaid highlights is their assumed 'masculine duty' (2015: 267). Rumney (2007) goes on to demonstrate how these perceptions are carried through into the criminal justice system, with police particularly holding assumptions that victims of sexual assault will be women. This has caused common male rape myths, such as 'men cannot be raped', impacting on public opinion and subsequent responses to male victims of sexual violence (Walfield, 2018).

Through exploring how the victims' narratives were received by the public and the State in chapter 7, we can better understand the evolving societal response to male victimisation at the time of the abuse and now. It was important to, therefore, look at the response to CSA of boys in the literature, with only a few academics having pursued sexual victimisation of men in the field of criminology (e.g. Javaid, 2015). In 1993, Stanko and Hobdell highlighted that we are led to believe that the silence surrounding male victimisation is due to a lack of reporting, as 'criminology's failure to explore men's experience of violence is often attributed to men's reluctance to report weakness. This

silence is, we are led to believe, a product of men's hesitation to disclose vulnerability' (1993: 400). Although there is some truth to this, particularly with relation to crimes such as sexual violence, it is not the only reason. Academics in the past have failed to look closely at the high statistics of violence towards men (ibid). The lack of data on male victimisation is similarly a result of studies on male rape victims being focused more readily on the offender (Javaid, 2015: 273). The avoidance of victims more generally may be honourable, as the intention is often to avoid any form of victim-blaming or insinuation that victims played any role in their abuse. However, by academics avoiding the issue altogether, there is little understanding within research of the vulnerabilities associated with certain victims. There is no doubt this research project came with many challenges, particularly ethical concerns such as causing retraumatisation and further harm.

A Critical Feminist Approach

There is an added dynamic to men's silence that, because women are statistically more likely to face sexual violence, the focus should remain on them. As Owen states, 'in necessarily attempting to rectify the invisibility and marginalization of women's experiences, little research has considered the male experience' (1995: 256). Nevertheless, researching the sexual abuse of boys better supports the work of feminist scholars researching sexual violence against women, with opportunities for mutual learning. In fact, this thesis acknowledges that societal constrictions of masculinity would not be possible without the subjugation of women. Therefore, this theoretical framework takes a critical feminist perspective.

Connell's assertation that hegemonic masculinity takes a feminist and anti-essentialist stance is crucial, moving away from the more simplified sex role theory

literature widely accepted in the 1970s and 80s (see Hochschild, 1973). It set the theory apart from other early research in 'men's studies' or more contemporary positions held by Men's Rights Activists[21], which 'not only constituted masculinity as an unchanging essence but, picking up on the backlash against feminism, portrayed men as damaged or as in need of restoring' (Wedgwood, 2009: 333). As outlined above, this embodiment of hegemonic masculinity also subordinates women, with gender inequality being at the core of both the theory and the lived experience of women. However, this does not take away the disadvantaged and marginalised status of White working-class boys at the time of the abuse. Connell's clarification that hegemonic masculinity is not just a typology but a vessel for legitimising the patriarchy is considered in this thesis by exploring the victims' position in football and the attention they received when the cases broke in the public domain. The role of the masculinised culture in football is crucial, as it helps us to understand the conflicting, complex, and changing status of the men which allowed them to eventually speak out and be heard. The extent to which their status would allow them to be recognised is explored in depth in chapter 6 and 7.

Feminism has played a particularly important role in both the literature and activism surrounding CSA. Therefore, to understand constructions of CSA and contemporary academic analyses, it is useful to look back to how the social problem of child sexual abuse emerged into the mainstream. The close and historical linkages between CSA and feminist activism was emphasised in Nancy Whittier's (2011) book, *The Politics of Child Sexual Abuse*, as she plots how CSA started to be brought to public attention through the feminist activism of the 1970s. In the 'anti-rape movement' at that time, it was feminists that fought to raise this issue of abuse against both girls and boys. As Whittier highlights,

[21] Men's Rights Activism arose as a backlash against feminism, fighting for issues that adversely impact, or in some cases structurally discriminate against, men and boys, including child custody, male suicide, and conscription.

this group viewed the sexual abuse of children as a 'product of the patriarchy' with fathers acting as key perpetrators (Whittier, 2009: 7). Feminists ultimately played a crucial role in paving the way for both male and female survivors of abuse, despite it being widely accepted that feminism and victimology have a complex and challenging relationship (see Rock, 1986; Walklate, 2003). Yet within the realm of feminism, there is a more collaborative history of CSA and exploitation. Sociologist Celia Brackenridge (2001) later studied CSA in sport through a feminist lens, as she 'offered a gendered account of male violence towards women and children within a sports system, underpinned by [a] hetero-patriarchal ideology that celebrated masculine privilege and sexualised the feminine' (Hartill & Lang, 2014: 608). While Brackenbridge's research brought attention to CSA in sport, her 'female-victim, male-perpetrator' approach necessitates expansion to capture the experience of male victims of abuse in football. Through the utilisation of intersectionality, which is introduced below, this thesis will examine cases of 'male-victim, male-perpetrator' CSA in football, which so far has received limited attention within academia.

Additionally, the community of scholars who have looked into non-recent cases of abuse is small and dispersed across various fields. Yet, important work has emerged, including Ring's exploration of non-recent cases of CSA in Ireland. Ring looks at the role of feminism in child abuse activism, stating, 'The voices of survivors were amplified in the national discourse and feminists resisted attempts to allow the significance of disclosures of non-recent childhood sexual abuse to be lost in an urge to move on from the past' (2018: 150). Ireland has faced extensive allegations of non-recent abuse, most notably the abuse by clergy within the Catholic church. When these stories came to light, Ring discussed the extensive work of the feminist activists in Ireland who laid the groundwork for these stories to be accepted into public discourse (2018: 149). This can

similarly be seen with the impact of the #MeToo Movement, which was underpinned by the work of Black feminists who created the activist framework for dealing with sexual harassment and the rallying cry of 'Me Too' years prior (Leonard, 2017).

However, the relationship between child abuse and feminism has also faced challenges through the years. For example, Wolmar (2014) notes the attempts of a group of paedophiles to co-opt several feminism groups in the 1970s to justify their 'non-normative' practices. The Paedophile Information Exchange presented itself as a 'legitimate' pressure group which infiltrated a number of LGBTQ+ and women's groups in an effort to conceal themselves as children's rights activists (ibid). The intention to normalise the abuse of children, and the failure to quickly dismiss it, highlights how CSA was able to proliferate across the UK. This is important to remember when considering barriers the victims faced in speaking out within the specific culture of the time. It is only in the past decade that CSA has been so vehemently challenged in the public sphere, with the recognition of cases of non-recent abuse coming forward. The response from society to the disclosures is explored further in chapter 7.

Intersectionality and the Interconnection of Identities

Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity can help us understand the status of the victims at the time; however, the concept does not fully capture the intersection of class and age combined with a thorough understanding of the hetero-normative and hyper-masculine environment of football which is described below. Despite hegemonic masculinity having a feminist core (Connell, 1987), acknowledging both the subordination amongst men and the patriarchy, the theory seems to only touch upon how men are hierarchically stratified within society depending on identity factors such as race, class, age, and so on (ibid, 2002). Due to these limitations, an intersectional approach, in

conjunction with the core understandings from hegemonic masculinity, is a key component of this thesis' theoretical framework. Although the concept does acknowledge other identities which impact on the male experience and place in the hierarchy, it refers to these as individual identities, rather than the coalesced and entwined nature of the experience of White working-class boys. Therefore, intersectionality elevates and builds on the foundation blocks of Connell's hegemonic masculinity to help us understand the experiences of these boys, fully taking into account the interlinked nature of their identities (or perceptions of them) in creating a specific disempowered status. This is supported by Messerschmidt who includes intersectionality theory in the 'amplification' chapter of his 2018 book *Hegemonic Masculinity: Formulation, Reformulation and Amplification* in which he lays out theories which he describes to 'enlarge upon and contribute to the further conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinities' (Messerschmidt, 2018: 71). Although the amplification of hegemonic masculinity was not the original purpose of intersectionality, the robust theory has the potential to be used to draw attention to the invisibility of male victims of sexual abuse.

Intersectionality is useful to understand how identities interact and impact on a victim's experience of abuse and the subsequent response and treatment by the public and the State. The influence the public and the State have on a victim's sense of self and identity is significant. Therefore, it is important to consider the intersection of the numerous identities which make up our experience. As anthropologist Marianne Gullestad stated, 'Students of gender tend only to see gender; class analysts tend only to see social classes. The research questions are often crudely put as being questions of gender or class instead of asking how gender and class interact in the lives of historically situated social groups' (1992: 62). This is of particular concern within the field of criminology, as Parmar (2017) notes that researchers do not integrate race, gender, and

class frequently in mainstream criminology. Yet identity is at the core of understanding the disempowerment which resulted in the silencing of the victims in these cases.

The intersectionality component of the theoretical framework brings together the close and historical linkages between CSA and feminist activism, as it is rooted in the 1990's work of Black feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991). The theory of intersectionality was developed to give voice to the lived experience of Black women ignored in mainstream feminist theory. At the heart of the theory is the relationship between power and identity, as Potter states, 'Identities are socially constructed, fluid, and dynamic, and power—or the lack thereof—is situated differentially throughout the many social identities. Identities and power are relevant throughout all social aspects of human life, so they must also be considered within the contexts of criminality, victimization, and informal and formal responses to crime' (2013: 305). Crenshaw outlined the stories of Black women, as individuals who embody multiple and interlocking identities such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and so on (ibid, 2015: 2). Similarly, to the hegemonic masculinity literature, the theorem was born out of multiple layers of injustice— analysis has shown that Black women are oppressed both in wider society and within feminism and the Black community— 'subordinated statuses within each of these areas of classification' (Potter, 2013: 308). Intersectionality has since evolved as a theoretical tool to consider why and how intersecting identities influence an individual's lived reality, with Hillary Potter in her 2015 book, *Intersectionality and Criminology: Disrupting and Revolutionizing Studies of Crime*, arguing that the approach should be used in the study of criminology to better identify individuals' lived experiences in relation to the identities they hold. Potter defines intersectionality as 'the concept or conceptualization that each person has an assortment of coalesced socially constructed identities that are ordered into an inequitable social stratum' (ibid: 3). Potter

argues that it is possible to understand how numerous identities have multiplicative effects, particularly when coming into contact with the criminal justice system. In her review, Peace supports Potter's advocacy for intersectional approaches to criminology, as well as other disciplines, stating that intersectionality 'expands far beyond just women of color, it can be utilised to better understand individuals' lived experiences in relation to the identities they hold' (2016: 574). Intersectionality has now become a practical and theoretical tool to explore how coalescing and conflicting socially constructed identities impact upon an individual's lived experience, particularly in how they disempower and disadvantage marginalised communities. As is shown in this thesis, identities are important to understand how the victims were treated by the football clubs, the State, and by the criminal justice system.

Ultimately, 'whitemaleness' (see Potter, 2015) is the normative default location against which people are measured. Though it may seem problematic to use intersectionality to make sense of the experiences of White men, it is male victims in football that have been largely ignored in CSA research. To be clear, this thesis acknowledges that no comparisons can or should be drawn between the experiences of different groups, with the history of intersectionality and its origins in Black feminism remaining central to the framework. Nevertheless, this approach can be very useful in the context of CSA, as it needs to be highlighted in academia and society that CSA impacts both girls and boys (e.g. McAlinden, 2014). Studies on gender, in particular within feminist criminology, have often failed to recognise male victimisation, as a result of the focus on the large number of incidents of sexual violence against women (ONS, 2021). Ignoring or minimising CSA towards boys is a symptom of a larger patriarchal system that is explored in this research. US sociologist Michael Kimmel (1993; 2003) has spoken of the importance of addressing and theorising masculinity in sociology and wider

academia. While acknowledging the highly important research of marginalised communities (see Crenshaw, 1991), Kimmel notes a lack of research on more mainstream identities, such as 'Whiteness' and 'heterosexuality'. The need to focus on marginalised groups is apparent due to the deep-rooted and serious issues facing individuals, such as racism, sexism, and homophobia. However, he went on to note:

> We talk about those who are marginalized by inequality and discrimination. So we talk about people of color, but we really don't have much of a theory of whiteness. We talk about LGBT people, but we don't have a theory of heterosexuality. And we talk about women, but we don't talk about men. That is, we don't name straight, white, middle-class, able-bodied, cisgender men. (Kimmel & Wade, 2018: 235)

Although this group arguably needs less attention in our society because their wants and needs already receive exposure, the lack of research and theorising on these identities leaves such areas under-theorised and vulnerable to being ignored. This vulnerability is best shown by the non-recent CSA in football which impacted young White boys explored in this research. There is a need to refine our understanding of which voices hold power, particularly looking at the influence of class to understand which voices are elevated and which are cast aside. Purdie-Vaughans and Eibach (2008) drew attention to this by developing the term 'intersectional invisibility' to illustrate the individuals who are unseen as they divert from the dominant social group (or sub-section of one). As Kimmel summed up, 'Our analysis of patriarchy is not simply men's power over women; it's also some men's power over other men. Patriarchy's always been a dual system of power, and unless we acknowledge that second one, we won't get an idea of why so many men feel like they're complete losers in the gender game' (Kimmel & Wade, 2018: 237). This is intrinsically linked to hegemonic masculinity and despite the perceived simplicity of such a statement, it is important to acknowledge that engrained inequalities such as race, for example, hold immeasurable influence regardless of gender or sexuality.

However, for the purpose of furthering the understanding of CSA in football, I look to the identities that impact most on the victims' experience[22].

The value of using intersectionality to explore the experiences of boys or men has also been noted by Potter herself:

> Because intersectionality theory is based in Black feminist theory (and, by extension, women of color and multicultural feminist theories), certainly, it has been natural that a significant amount of the criminological research conducted on women of color by feminist criminologists employs an intersectional approach, such as that detailed above. However, as summarized above in the development of intersectionality theory in the social sciences generally, many scholars argue that this standpoint can be applied beyond those who are situated within oppressed or subordinated identities. As follows, because of intersectionality's strong emphasis on the social construction and ensuing differential treatment of individuals, from this viewpoint, intersectionality can be seen in criminological research on those positioned at the pinnacle of societal hierarchies. In this vein, intersectionality can be seen in the work of James W. Messerschmidt (1993, 1997). In his consideration of boys who participate in criminal activities, Messerschmidt (1993) has been mindful that ''[b]oys will be boys' differently, depending upon their position in social structures and, therefore, upon their access to power and resources.... Collectively, young men experience their daily world from a particular position in society and differentially construct the cultural ideals of hegemonic masculinity'' (pp. 87–88; emphasis added). Further, Messerschmidt's applications include the impact of role expectations surrounding masculinity and sexuality for males (Potter, 2013: 315).

An intersectional approach provides the possibility to highlight how multiple, interwoven identities in the context of sport leave certain groups cast aside and ignored by individuals and systems of power. Potter explores Messerschmidt's comments on the impact of differing social identities in criminological studies by stating, 'to better understand crime generally, we need to bring criminology 'out of the closet' by supporting extensive historical and contemporary research on the relationship among sexualities, gender, race, class and crime' (2015: 83). Giulianotti draws attention to the need for a critical lens when exploring how football indeed mirrors societal inequality, specifically with regard

[22] See Jackson's (1996) book entitled 'Racism and Child Protection: The Black Experience of CSA' for an exploration of the impact of race on CSA in the US.

to gender, class, ethnicity, and age (1999: 170). Brackenridge and colleagues have also been critical of the way in which 'knowledge' is generated in football research, and in particular the discipline of sports sociology (2004: 56). This research, therefore, has the purpose of addressing 'the role and impact of identities and power dynamics' (Potter, 2015: 151) in influencing the concealment of non-recent CSA in football and the subsequent experience the victims have faced as a result of their intersectional identities. Chapter 5 explores the ways in which the intertwining of identities, in particular in relation to class, gender and age, have served to prejudice institutions into ignoring the abuse, thereby silencing the victims. A criminological view of intersectionality will provide a more nuanced understanding of the construction of identities within the game of football, which ultimately impacted on boys vulnerable to abuse.

However, drawing on narrative victimology, caution is also needed when exploring the identities of victims, as too close a focus on identity can lead to unhelpful stereotyping and victim blaming (see Best, 1999; Polletta, 2006). It also runs the risk of adversely impacting those who do not comply with the stereotype and its terms (Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019b: 410). Therefore, attention is given when applying this theoretical lens to ensure the victims are still centred as individuals, as Pemberton, Mulder and Aarten demonstrate, 'imposing a generic script on a victim's experience is at odds with the deeply personal process of coming to terms with the meaning of victimization in the context of an unfolding life story' (ibid: 410). This work will, therefore, acknowledge Garland's concern for the 'dangers of homogenizing diverse communities' (2011: 32), with the emphasis on the individual, while attempting to decipher commonality and differences between victims' experiences. This is discussed in more detail in the methods chapter, as I detail the ethical considerations of researching the experiences of victims of childhood abuse.

White Working-Class Boys

Expanding upon the introduction to intersectionality, it is important to look more thoroughly at the literature on a number of the key identities which were central to the victims' experiences of abuse and their subsequent treatment by the public and State authorities. For ease of reference, these are introduced individually, in continuation with the literature previously outlined on masculinities, however they are intrinsically inter-linked which is explored in chapter 5.

Hetero-Normativity

It is clear the discussion on masculinity needs to be more nuanced, as it is the intersection of gender with sexuality that makes the silence surrounding CSA more complex. Building on Gartner's (2017) assertion that a barrier for men disclosing abuse is the fear of being seen as gay, I explore another dimension of traditional masculinity, the assumption of hetero-normativity, that appears to be particularly upheld in football. To explore such sensitive issues, we must highlight that the sexual abuse of a child is 'a violent act of contempt, not an expression of sexuality or affection' (Cassese, 2016: xxiii). Secondly, a young person questioning or exploring their sexuality is no way wrong, nor does abuse impact on an individual's sexual orientation. Discussions can be easily misconstrued; therefore, a sensitive exploration is required to understand how abuse compounds feelings of confusion, which perpetrators often weaponise to ensure silence. The abuse outlined in this thesis needs to be contextualised in a time when homophobia was pertinent in both society and footballing culture. Chapter 5 explores how by declaring their abuse, the victims believed they would be labelled as gay, meaning they would lack the masculinity

required to play football at the highest level. Hartill states simply, 'Heterosexuality is presumed' on the pitch (2009: 238) and the victims were expected to conform to this.

Furthermore, there is a perceived notion that male rape brings about 'feminisation' of the victim, which violates hetero-normative principles held in society (Javaid, 2015: 275). Although this is an example of both victim-blaming and homophobia, such ingrained values held within society leads to feelings of shame being prominent amongst men who have faced sexual abuse. This is particularly harmful amongst boys, as Plummer outlines 'how male insecurities, especially in adolescence and early manhood, can harden hegemonic male sexuality' (2005: 195). Although, a further complexity is that even if the victims do not face inner dilemmas surrounding their sexuality, they often still do face the fear that if they speak out about what happened they will be perceived as gay (Mathews et al., 2017: 10). This is made particularly concerning when the threat of 'outing' is often used as a method of silencing victims. Hartill draws attention to the case of Sheldon Kennedy, who was a former National Hockey League (NHL) player abused by his coach in a ice hockey junior league in Canada. His coach used the threat of spreading the rumour that he was gay as a technique for ensuring his silence (2009: 238). Therefore, it is not just gender that plays a role in the men's victimhood, but attitudes to sexuality. Scholars have noted that Connell's (2005) hegemonic masculinity does not give enough attention to perceptions of sexuality, in this instance, hetero-normativity, which is needed to gain a richer understanding of the barriers young male victims face (e.g. Plummer, 2005). Plummer (ibid) further believes hegemonic masculinity can be taken a step further with developing an understanding of the 'hegemonic male sexuality'. Again, I would argue current hegemonic masculinity theory leaves space for acknowledgement of more inclusive ideas surroundings sexuality. However, it is important to highlight the power of

hetero-normative expectations on a young person, which is where intersectionality theory can help to fill in any lacuna in the analysis.

Unwanted Arousal

A key reason why boys who have experienced abuse can be confused about their sexuality is due to certain physical responses they experience during the assault. Unwanted arousal, otherwise known as *arousal nonconcordance* (Chivers et al., 2010), is when the genital response does not match the individual's internal feelings. In the context of this research, it is when the victims had erections or even climaxed during the abuse they suffered in childhood. Shame often stops men from speaking about this aspect of the abuse. However, it is deeply important to address this as raising awareness can stop other victims from placing unwarranted blame on themselves for what happened. This confusion surrounding a physical response to abuse is highlighted by Chan in his study on male victims of childhood abuse in Hong Kong, where he found male victims experienced erections when recounting their abuse (2014: 247). This is a common but unacknowledged response, as the human form responds to 'sex-related' suggestions, regardless of the individual's wants or likes. This certainly has not received adequate attention in the literature due to the lack of attention on male victims. By not addressing this it leaves the public and even victims unaware of this issue. This becomes dangerous when prejudice enters courtrooms, particularly influencing juries. Additionally, there are other impacts of abuse with regards to sex and sexuality, as Chan's study found the majority of men interviewed about their abuse 'showed signs of developing a strong desire for sex after having experienced sexual abuse. They became very curious about sex and wanted to re-experience the physical arousal evoked by past sexual assault(s)' (Chan, 2014: 247). Although this is not always the case with abuse, these factors should be

acknowledged and present as warning signs to practitioners who specialise in working with victims of childhood abuse.

A Young Athlete

Much of the literature so far has been on experiences of sexual violence against men. However, age is a crucial element in the victims' experiences of abuse. Specifically, there can be vulnerability in the gendered dynamics operating in the game, which is particularly conducive in abuse scenarios. Brackenridge and colleagues argue that football is a societal construction that is weighted with values which children are expected to accept and comply with (2004: 48). These ideas are internalised by boys in the sporting environment, which has come to be associated with 'locker room banter' and highly sexualised hazing of young players. In an investigation by Brackenridge into professional youth teams, one witness statement found that the clubs were 'an aggressive, masculine environment in which bad language, threatening behaviour and verbal abuse features quickly' (Calvin, 2017: 1). Hartill explains how the locker room in male sports is viewed as a sacred space where it is mutually agreed amongst the team what occurs or is said in that space goes no further (2009: 242). When phrases such as, 'what goes on tour stays on tour' are commonplace, it creates a culture of the concealment of problematic behaviour – with those who speak out being ostracised from the team (Wade, 2017). Although teammates are often aware of abuse by other players and coaches, few speak out, perpetuating an environment entrenched in silence (ibid). Teammates do not wish to jeopardise their own place in the team, isolating the victims further as they receive no peer support.

Sports provide a key opportunity 'to construct boys as pseudo-men' (Hartill, 2009: 237), as the lifestyle of a young player is rooted in travel away from home, being

surrounded by adults, and being placed in high pressure situations. This blurring of the boundary between 'boy' and 'man' (Brackenridge, 2001) was employed particularly in elite football for various commercial and competitive reasons. This left young people believing they could not show any gendered sense of 'weakness,' as they would be viewed as less of a man and athlete. Lang and colleagues (2018) have drawn attention to the assumption that aggression and impenetrable strength are essential qualities of being a male athlete. Yet, there seems to be a contradiction within this, as although they attempt to portray a hyper-masculine bravado of 'no pain, no gain,' these pseudo-men are ultimately treated as children who must comply and fulfil their coach's demands (VOICE, 2019: 63). The extreme masculine ideals are reflected in Robertson's study, 'If I Let a Goal In, I'll Get Beat Up,' showing the depth of the damaging impact of conforming to such a toxic form of masculinity within the sport (2003: 709). He identifies that 'macho' culture is perpetuated through attitudes such as playing through pain when injured and not complaining. His research identified that in some cases this approach had led to temporary or permanent body impairment. In this instance, the 'no pain, no gain' mind-set (McKay, 1991) is in reference to playing through injury, but is also reflective of how the victims felt the sexual abuse was something to be endured to play the game they love (see chapter 5). Identifying with this version of masculinity would in itself act as pressure on the victims not to complain or speak out against their treatment (Fallon, 2018). In showing physical or mental weakness, the victim would be stepping away from the expected masculinity being demonstrated within the sport, leaving no option but to suffer in silence. Hartill (2013) draws attention to the fact that stories of male victimisation are rarely illustrated in sport, as they go against everything that is revered in sporting culture. Although this began to be dismantled when news of the cases in this research broke, there is still a long way to go.

In addition to this, evidence from several studies suggests that young people in sport are often silenced, as Brackenridge and colleagues state in both research and the sporting environment itself that the voice of the child holds no more than a 'marginal position' (2004: 43). When the voices of young people are ignored in the game, it leaves children highly vulnerable to abuse and its concealment due to the likelihood they will be ignored. Yet, despite constructions of 'pseudo-men' by the sporting culture and perhaps even institutions, the players are still just children. Subordinating 'athletes' and their welfare fosters a culture where abuse can occur and continue unchecked (VOICE, 2019: 63). Hartill suggests that the widespread abuse in sport and its subsequent concealment is a result of the 'structural oppression of children' (2013: 249). Even accepting this perspective, it should be acknowledged that not all young people are treated equally under systems of oppression. Certain young people face more intensified discrimination based on the intersection of characteristics such as race, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation, and so on. This is important to note as 'the way young people are perceived throughout society, particularly in lower socio-economic areas, often creates a deliberate veil of ignorance towards them' (Dobson, 2018). This is demonstrated when exploring the public, the media and the criminal justice system's response to the victims.

Class & Background

Although sociologists such as Hartill (2009) have used masculinity to explore how abuse has affected victims of non-recent CSA in sport, there appears to be a failure to take an intersectional approach to acknowledge class and background in this early work. The need for an intersectional lens is apparent, as it was the entwining of a number of marginalised identities which impacted the victims and their treatment by the clubs and society. It has recently been argued that the class structure is now an outdated historic

phenomenon, being superseded by the rise of neoliberalism in economic and social policy (Pakulski & Waters, 1996: 667). This has seen a shift away from the focus on class in academia, towards the role of race and ethnicity as it relates to inequality (Pakulski & Waters, 1996; Morgan, 2005; Tyler, 2013). Therefore, by the end of 20th century the interest in class theory appeared to wane as many argued for its lack of relevance in the current system[23]. There are also other difficulties with the inclusion of class in research, a key one being that it is difficult to define (Morgan, 2005: 166). Does it pertain to household income, geography, family lineage, or all of the above?

This lack of understanding means when working-class individuals are targeted in abuse scenarios, this identity factor does not receive much attention. The more modern assumption that 'class is dead' has left class widely ignored in discourse, yet such a position fails to recognise that identities such as race, gender, and disability are 'class categories' (Tyler, 2013: 155-6). Socio-economic structures intersect into all other categories such as race and gender, and it would be counter-productive and ineffective to attempt to disentangle these. This is not to say that there no such thing as socio-economic class; however, because identity factors are interwoven, we need to include intersectionality in the examination of disempowered identities.

Football was at the centre of the victims' worlds in both grass-roots and professional teams, being culturally significant and prominent in many towns and cities around the UK. Their identities as working and lower middle-class boys are closely tied to their childhoods and communities, best illustrated by John B. Thompson's (1996) work on tradition and identity. Thompson explores both an individual's sense of self and collective identity bringing about a sense of belonging and collective fate. This is propelled by tradition that reproduces these identities for generations to come. Young

[23] See Devine, 1997; Lee & Turner, 1996; Pakulski & Waters, 1996; Savage, 2000.

boys were both playing football and supporting local teams, which tied them to a strong sense of communal identity. Yet, the construction and proliferation of demonised working-class characterisations, such as the 'football hooligan', by the media and political leaders demonstrates that class remains a major factor in contemporary society (Tyler, 2008: 18). This type of alienation has the power to disenfranchise young, working-class boys, as their love of football – an integral part of working-class communities – can be over-policed and viewed with contempt by the State authorities (Davison, 2018). Young boys are raised witnessing such attitudes to their footballing communities, as Fine and colleagues explain: 'Ironically, working-class boys and men […] enjoy little of the privilege accrued to their gender/race status' (Fine et al., 1997: 55). Therefore, class holds an important position and should be intersected with other identities to reflect the authentic reality that the victims faced.

Still, it is interesting to consider that representations of working-class struggle traditionally came from masculine imagery (Morgan, 2005: 167). An early text exploring men and masculinities specifically poses class and class differences at the core of its analysis (Tolson, 1977). However, when looking at the relationship between gender and class it is often 'implied rather than explicit, latent rather than manifest' (Morgan, 2005: 166). Although this research similarly faces such challenges, it will attempt to make more coherent linkages between class and other identities that impacted on the victims. As class is often overlooked, it is the pivotal early texts (e.g. Thompson, 1980; Charlesworth, 2000), which have the most standing. The key link between these texts and this research is they all attempt to highlight the lived experience of working and lower middle-class communities. As British historian, E.P. Thompson once expressed, class is an historical relation 'embodied in real people and in a real context' (1980: 8). The intersection of class with gender is of importance here as Adler's (1992) and King's (1992) research

illustrates that male victimisation is under-reported mainly because of the stigma surrounding 'informing' in working and lower middle-class male cultures (Hall, 2002: 44). Therefore, their identity as working-class boys ties closely to their experiences of disclosing abuse (see chapter 5).

Class provides a person with a context as to how they can live out their life, creating both vulnerabilities and set behaviours for young boys. The literature on the criminalisation of White working-class boys and young men due to classism has been established (Maguire, 2021); however, there has not been the same level of focus on victimisation. This attitude leads to what Charlesworth calls the 'invisibility of working-class life' (2000), with Nayak illustrating that although class is never discussed by young people, 'it continues to be threaded through the daily fabric of their lives: it is stitched into codes of respect, accent, dress, music, bodily adornment and comportment. In short, the affective politics of class is a felt practice, tacitly understood and deeply internalised' (2006: 828). A key example would be the relationship between class and language. Willis (2018) raises such issues surrounding classed notions of communication in her study exploring the intersection of class with restorative justice processes for young people in the UK, as scripted restorative justice processes are built on middle-class notions of communication. She draws on Lareau's work bringing attention to how those from working-class families often employ more practical language with their young children, whereas middle-class parents instead engage in constant and extensive discussions with them (2011: 96-103). Studies have found this language style enables the middle-class young children to communicate in detail and with more comprehensive vocabularies, giving them confidence to engage with professionals (Willis, 2018: 19). Working-class homes prefer to use short directives, using body language and expressions to communicate, rather than extended conversations (ibid: 3). This linguistic imbalance

adversely impacts upon working-class participants, as different individuals and groups communicate in differing ways (ibid). Therein, a form of power is exerted over these working-class participants as it implies there is a 'right' way to communicate and they, not possessing this way, are disadvantaged. It is important to stress that a lower socio-economic background does not mean a family supports their child's personal and linguistic development less; however, class often results in different linguistic styles. With a strong connection between a working-class background and involvement in football youth teams, this could provide a further linguistic barrier for young people to speak out to the authorities, which is discussed later in this thesis.

The role of language is significant in that it is one of the fundamental ways in which people identify an individual's classed background, but also the means by which people self-identify. The concepts of economic, social, and cultural capital have been widely accepted since Bourdieu (1984, 1991) used the three dimensions to propose the underpinning difference between the middle and the working-classes. He argued that people could be identified by their class, based on their standing in each of the three areas. More specifically, writers such as Lareau (1987) and Weininger (2003) have suggested that particular cultural capital is built upon skills and abilities, where language is seen as a significant cultural resource. The middle-class focuses on an upbringing based on interaction and dialogue, which gives a stronger linguistic underpinning than those from a working-class background, whose upbringing is focused on clear directives and instruction. This suggests that language can be used to exert power over people by restricting their engagement in the communication process. Therefore, it could be argued that young people from working-class backgrounds would have less confidence in speaking out to the authorities. This linguistic difference, based on class-based values, results in silencing which can continue into adult life, as men from working-class

backgrounds may struggle to talk in detail about highly traumatic incidents that have occurred to them. This means they may not come across as favourably when disclosing. Young boys, now men, are perhaps discouraged from disclosing, which needs further research and exploration.

Charlesworth references the importance of exploring language and class in his research, finding 'that working-class people are aware of themselves as speaking a devalued linguistic form, as lacking the authority to speak in public and even semi-formal situations' (2000: 133). This is not necessarily the case for the men in this research who provided a clear and detailed account of their experiences. However, it can and should be acknowledged as a possible barrier for many individuals who have not disclosed their abuse. When this is intersected with masculinity it adds a further dimension, as 'the crucial point is that masculinity and the pressures that men experience to be 'masculine'—can critically constrain what is narrated and how' (Clark, 2017: 293). Charlesworth believes this has led to the silencing of communities (2000: 136-7), which is particularly noteworthy when intersecting with the disempowered voices of young children. Additionally, a few studies have started to draw attention to how factors such as socioeconomic status and education level have impacted on the different levels of disclosure among men (see Doherty and Kartalova-O'Doherty, 2010). Silencing is at the core of these cases, from childhood to adulthood, therefore it is powerful for victims to have a platform where their voice and story can be heard. This demonstrates the importance of having a narrative focus in this thesis. It is important to acknowledge how different voices are elevated and silenced in society and the impact this could have in cases of abuse. As Clark stated, 'Fundamentally, in a social order where men are not supposed to suffer sexual violence, how can these experiences be easily put into words and articulated?' (2017: 293)

For ease, each of those identities have been introduced separately to draw attention to the previous literature and research on each of the different components of the victims' intersectional identities. This provides a foundation for understanding the influence of their identities on their experiences of victimisation and subsequent treatment by the public and criminal justice system. However, it is how these identities inter-link and coalesce which resulted in the specific status of the victims. Their experiences were not a result of being male, young, White, and working-class; rather, it is the specific status of White-working-class-boys which is of interest and is explored in depth in chapter 5 of this thesis. Despite hegemonic masculinity originating from class analysis and theory, it has since been widely left out of the empirical texts which have followed. David Maguire (2021) in his analysis of White working-class men in prison highlighted the important role of class, with this thesis shifting the focus onto victims of sexual violence. While acknowledging the methodological and theoretical challenges of bringing in class, this research provides a picture of a community of men who have been generally ignored in wider society, as the intersection of class is at the core of the men's experiences.

Hyper Masculine Sporting Environment

Building on this, the context in which identities were developed and perceived is crucial, as no experience occurs in a vacuum. Footballing culture is important to understand and in so doing acknowledge the influence that it had on the victims in this study. Its importance is reflected in it being described as a 'cultural practice that sustains structured relationships of domination and subordination' (Hall, 1985: 109). Football remains a male-dominated environment, shown through the numbers of men (in comparison to women) who play and the ideas of hyper-masculinity and aggression exhibited (Passero, 2015). The influence of masculinity on sporting cultures meant the boys learnt values

such as ‘competition, toughness, and winning at all costs’ (Messner, 2007: 50). Holt (1989) and Beynon (2002) suggest that it is a means of building character and moral fibre, while Frosch and colleagues argue that football plays a role in the construction of ‘popular’ masculinity (2002: 77). However, Dunning (1986) takes a more negative perspective, believing football generates a particular type of hegemonic masculinity that creates a culture of misogyny and homophobia. These masculine traits are similarly valued off the pitch in mainstream society (Messner, 2007: 50), as boys do not take part in their first sporting experience without any previous socialisation (ibid). Drawing on the hegemonic masculinity literature, football is a ‘masculinity making site’, as it does not just reproduce societal norms but is active in constructing particular forms of masculinity and femininity. It leads to important questions over whether the hyper-masculine environment reflects wider society or if it in fact influences society. It seems feasible that it is both, which is why it is worth acknowledging and investigating further in this research.

This research shows that the silence of the victims was in part achieved through the restrictive versions of masculinity available to boys and men in society, in particular the sporting environment in which they were fully immersed. In their research on CSA in sport, sociologists Brackenridge (2001) and Hartill (2017) have both drawn attention to the hyper-masculine sporting culture which fostered the abuse of athletes while ensuring their silence due to feelings of shame and embarrassment. Traditional (and in this case hegemonic) masculinity ideas exist and are embedded throughout Western culture (Messner, 2007: 3), with football being one such cultural institution where the performance of masculinity is stressed. As Hartill states, ‘Sport is a key site in contemporary society for the acting out and reaffirming of gender identities (McKay, Messner, and Sabo 2000; Hargreaves 1994)’ (Hartill, 2009). The difference between

hegemonic and hyper-masculine can be blurred, yet in this thesis it is the hyper-masculine sporting culture which is identified as creating an environment in which the abuse could take place. The hegemonic masculine ideal meant that the boys were not afforded the status to be acknowledged or noticed. These definitions and understandings are expanded in chapter 5.

Ultimately, football has provided boys with a blueprint of how to act and behave. As Sabo and later Messner state, male athletes tend to 'adopt the visions and values that coaches are offering: to take orders' (2005: 87). Adams and colleagues' (2010) examined the micro-social environment within a British football team through the lens of discourse analysis and the subsequent power relationship that exists between the players and a coach. Although this study looked at one specific team, they suggest that the 'toxic practices of masculinity' (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 840) seen in their case study are replicated throughout British football. Giulianotti describes this form of sporting masculinity as 'uniformly aggressive and humourlessly chauvinistic' (1999: 155). Adams and colleagues found that the asymmetrical relationship between the players and the coach, with the coach wielding power and influence over the players, meant that for many 'being a man' meant accepting unquestioningly the opinion of the coach and then demonstrating a response on the pitch (2010: 290). Cushion and Jones (2006) state that obeying authority is celebrated as being a characteristic of masculinity within football clubs and the wider sport environment. This culture allowed for a discourse that permits homophobic and misogynistic language and included concepts of extreme sexual violence (Eveslage & Delaney, 1998; Fine, 1987; Hasbrook & Harris, 2000). Within such a context, the normalisation of extreme dialogue creates a culture where it is near impossible for players to speak out against their coaches.

Furthermore, Adams and his colleagues' (2010) study on the discourses of the coach/team relationship within a football club discovered the linguistic environment to be entrenched in antagonistic language. Whatever the background of the player, the majority of the language used consistently challenged the victims' masculinity, implying that any failure on the pitch was to do with their femininity, genitalia, and a lack of courage. They found that in this discourse the whole interaction was extreme and linguistically violent – for example, half-time team talks that include statements such as, 'Now show some balls and stop acting like a bunch of fucking tarts' (ibid: 288). This antagonistic language presents a major challenge to a young player from speaking out against a coach or scout. It does not create a safe environment for which children can air their concerns or fears. The fact that the verbal abuse is centred on challenging their masculinity reinforces that sexual abuse would also be seen in the same light, presenting a double challenge, both emotionally and linguistically. Although this approach may not be as common today, it is reflective of the sporting culture at the time of abuse (late 1960s-90s), which has proven history of racism, sexism, and homophobia (VOICE, 2019: 11). Football has both legitimised and deepened the entrenched gender norms that are respected by society as a whole. The connection between identity factors, sport, and abuse was indicated clearly by the VOICE report when they stated, 'In other words, real men (sports-men) are heterosexual, strong and dominate others – and they are definitely not victims. Therefore, many psychological problems are encountered by boys, or young men, faced with the necessity of integrating 'homosexual' forced or coerced sex into their developing male identity' (ibid: 60).

These ideas are reflected in Dixon's study on the responses of a range of participants to the child abuse in football scandal, where the public were surveyed on their response to the widespread allegations. The data illustrated that almost half of the participants

believed that football has been responsible for creating a hegemonic masculine infrastructure which the players must conform to, with Dixon stating 'they' take 'pride in creating tough men who are strong but silent and loyal to the implicit masculine codes that underpin the unwritten rules of the sport' (2019: 89). It is interesting to consider who 'they' are – perhaps those who benefit most from the system that is in place, namely the clubs and footballing authorities who profit from the 'no pain, no game' culture.

These ideas continue to permeate the sport with generations of 'football men' passing on such ideals to their sons. Consequently, resulting in many of the participants believing that these ideals likely discourage current footballers from disclosing past abuse (ibid: 89). This is perhaps reflective of the fact that no current footballers have waived their anonymity or have been known to disclose their abuse to the police. Although, there are suggestions that culture is changing, with society addressing issues such as child abuse, homophobia, and sexism, 'it is important to note that the generational attitudes that underpin masculine practice are not easily erased' (2019: 90). The development of hegemonic masculinity to acknowledge local, regional, and global geographies is particularly significant in highlighting the influence of sport, as at the local level hegemonic patterns of masculinity are embedded in specific social environments, with football being the key social environment explored in this thesis (see chapter 5 and 6).

Part I Overview

At the heart of the narratives in this study is the individual's identity, and all that embodies it. By taking an intersectional approach to exploring the victims' identities, we can better understand the barriers to disclosure which the young boys (now men) in this research experienced. As Potter states, we have 'too often and for too long ignored or disregarded the importance of power dynamics in socially constructed identities and how

they effect or are affected by crime' (2013: 316). The victims' experiences are tied closely to their coalesced and disempowered identities, with their status as White working-class boys being fundamental to their experience of victimisation and what followed. It is clear some stories, and some victims, are given a higher status than others. A key focus of this thesis is the perception of the victims' masculinity, with ideas of marginalised masculinities from the hegemonic masculinity literature being useful in framing their subordination to other boys (now men). However, this does not go far enough in exploring the specific status they experienced as White working-class boys at this time. Therefore, the theoretical tool of intersectionality, in conjunction with hegemonic masculinity, is best placed for deciphering the specific yet inter-linked factors which played a role in creating vulnerability and silencing the victims.

Chapter 5 will draw together the intersectional identities of each of the victims through exploring how the men self-identify in their own narratives (e.g. what class background they are from), noting the similarities between each victim and which factors increased their vulnerability, silenced them, and may indeed have impacted on their experiences of the footballing and State authorities. Paradoxically, chapter 7 will then explore how the public and the State actors themselves may have influenced the victims' identity and sense of self. It is important to fully acknowledge the context in which the abuse occurred as a lens to understand the men's experiences of disclosure and what followed. Although this thesis is not able to prove if any chosen identity clearly and categorically impacted on the State response, it can contextualise the victims' experiences into the time and place, reflecting the unequal power they were afforded in the social, political, and legal sphere.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework Part II: Narrative Victimology

Introduction

To better understand how the victims in this research were finally able to break their silence, to construct collective narratives, and how the public and the State received these, I need to draw on some further theoretical tools. I knit together a number of key concepts from narrative victimology to make sense of the victims' unfolding narratives, including experiences of narrative rupture, agency, communion, and the importance of the audience and the socio-political landscape at the time of disclosure. These key theoretical elements compliment the methodological influence of narrative victimology, which is explored in chapter 4. As Maruna and Liem state,

> Although narrative criminology contains elements of method and theory, narrative criminology is neither a particular methodology nor a specific theory of crime. Primarily, narrative criminology represents a clarion call for criminology to take stories seriously in our study of human lives (2020: 2).

This is similarly the case with intersectionality, referenced in the previous chapter, as Potter (2015) outlines that intersectionality is both an epistemology for undertaking criminological research, as well as a theory of criminal offending, criminalisation, and crime control policies. Narrative victimology aims to draw attention to the often-ignored victim's story, while intersectionality shines a light on disregarded voices in academia and wider society. The theoretical framework of this research draws together a number of key concepts from these two critical theories, which are integral to an analysis of the victims and their experiences.

Exploring Narratives

The link between identities and narratives is demonstrated by Johnson and Maruna as they state, 'Philosophers and social scientists have started to understand the concept of identity as an internal narrative or story that individuals tell themselves about who they are and where they are going with their lives' (2020: 116–25). Although, to an extent, this is accurate, in this context it is also important to acknowledge the influence socially constructed ideas, such as masculinity, have on a victim's sense of identity and self. Essentially, this thesis examines what society tells victims about who they are and the subsequent impact this has on their sense of self. The study of narrative victimology centres the victim's voice, yet also understands and draws out its close connection to wider culture (Maruna & Liem, 2020: 4-5). At each stage, identity is thought to 'mirror the culture wherein the story is made and told' (McAdams, 2001: 114). The interaction between culture and identity makes up an individual's evolving narrative, which is explored when considering the socio-political landscape in which the victims in this research disclosed their abuse (see chapter 6). This interaction is then impacted by significant life events; when individuals face severe victimisation, for example, they are forced to undergo an 'intertwined processes of narrating and identity construction in the aftermath of victimization' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021: 2). An individual's sense of self undergoes a process of reconstruction post-victimisation. Therefore, this research explores how victims have used their voice to reclaim their stories and their identities after abuse, with the earlier discussion on the intersectional identities of the victims helping to contextualise their experiences and senses of self. Drawing on the narrative construction of identity in these cases will help to unpack the victim's identity as a victim or survivor and the connotations of such a label. As Cook highlights, the narrative approach employed in this research 'responds to a call within cultural victimology to

understand issues of crime and injustice through victims' sense of self and attempts to situate experiences of harm within their life story (see Pemberton et al., 2019)' (Cook, 2021: 357). Additionally, this emerging field does not just connect identity with a personal and evolving narrative of the individual, but also draws attention to the shared stories which make up collective narratives of specific communities. I utilise these core ideas in chapter 6 when looking at the crucial role narratives played in these cases, as they provide a clear framework to make sense of how the stories of abuse in football came to public consciousness.

Furthermore, it is important to explore the literature in which these key concepts originate for the purposes of this thesis. Although there is a variation in definitions given to narratives, it is widely accepted that they are subjective retellings of events (Maruna & Liem, 2020: 3; see also Ricoeur, 1994). Presser (2009) calls for criminology to embrace narratives as constitutive, resulting in a better understanding of offenders' personal stories. Similarly, narratives give order to victims' experiences and feelings, contrasting earlier victimological literature which primarily focused on quantitative and generalised studies associated with the criminal victimisation survey (see Hope, 2007). Despite the positivist approach being the crux of mainstream victimology, it has been widely criticised by academics for failing to take into account the complexity of victims' experiences and stories (e.g. Walklate et al., 2019). Emerging work in narrative victimology (e.g. Hourigan, 2019; van de Ven, 2020), in particular based on focused case studies, has challenged the earlier approach, instead 'privileg[ing] individual experience over aggregate data' (Walklate et al., 2019: 21). Although critics suggest all qualitative research ultimately uses narratives, not all research addresses the complexities within the narratives and stories. As Walklate and colleagues illustrate, 'there is a complex relationship between the story-teller, the incidents chosen to be "storied," how such

incidents are put into words, how these words intersect with the audience, and what is thereby accomplished by them, if anything' (2019: 19). I explore these ideas when looking at both the victims' narratives and the responses of the national press, justice institutions, and those in power. In chapter 7, I consider if identity in fact influences the public and State response to victims of crime.

Narrative Rupture

At the heart of narrative victimology is the impact of victimisation on an individual's unfolding narrative, altering not only their sense of self but also their view of the world around them. Despite the importance of measuring the impact of victimisation in psychological and medical terms (e.g. Dworkin, 2020), it runs the risk of what van de Ven and Pemberton warn is 'omitting much of what is important to understanding the first-person experience of victimization' (2021: 1). A lot can be gleaned from first-person victim accounts, for example, the crucial fact that 'those experiencing traumatic memories feel they are reliving the trauma again and again, and are unable to experience the time that separates them from the actual event. In this sense, it upsets the way the chronology of the aftermath of victimisation is experienced: rather than being experienced as an aftermath at all, what happens subsequently becomes an integral part of the experience of victimization' (Pemberton et al., 2019a: 397).

Non-recent abuse cases such as the ones this thesis examines have in the past been cast aside as historical and not of equal importance as contemporary violence, being considered as 'a stigmatised form of victimhood' (Ring et al., 2022: 306). However, Sarbin strikes to the heart of the issue, stating that abuse is not 'an event in the past: the event is alive and in the present' (1986: 6). Chapter 6 explores the necessary changes in the socio-political landscape that allowed male victims of non-recent CSA to be widely

recognised, which Ring and colleagues state can be explained in part by the move towards a cultural acceptance of 'trauma':

> On a broader cultural level, the idea of trauma has helped legitimize experiences of past victimization. 'Trauma' has come to signify the lasting impacts of a deeply upsetting event. It is a powerful way of articulating impacts of terrible events (a crime, natural disaster, war, terrorism, colonial dispossession) on a person or on a collective that lasts far beyond the time of the traumatic/originating event. In part due to the work of survivors, discourses of trauma in the media, in political speech, and even in everyday speech are now normalized. The idea of trauma "is thus becoming established as a commonplace of the contemporary world, a shared truth." In parallel, women and men speaking out about sexual harassment and sexual violence in the near and distant past, on social media and in other public fora, have helped further legitimize experience as a form of knowledge. Both cultural developments have helped shift societal attitudes around the enduring nature of some harms, especially harms caused by sexual violence (2022: 136).

When referring to trauma, I will be refencing the cultural notion of the word, explored by Ring and colleagues, which has 'moved beyond the confines of the psychological domain and is now part of everyday language' (2017: 89), which 'connects present suffering to past violence' (ibid: 90). Trauma is at the centre of the victims' narratives in this research, with the concept of a narrative rupture helping us to frame the significance of the abuse on the victims' lives, going beyond the important and well-documented medical and psychological impacts of sexual violence. The impact of severe victimisation on a victims' unfolding narrative and sense of self has been described as an 'ontological assault'— essentially an attack on being (see Pemberton et al., 2019a), which, in narrative victimology literature, is seen as a 'narrative rupture' in the victims' unfolding life stories (Pemberton et al., 2019b). However, the opportunity for rupture does not simply stop there, as other traumatic events post-victimisation can have further consequences for victims' narratives. For example, the criminal justice process can become part of the victimisation, with experiences of retraumatisation illustrating that victimisation is not just the initial experience of abuse. In response to the narrative rupture, victims engage in various 'sensemaking processes', with a key strength of the narrative approach being that

it helps victims to structure and understand their experiences and how it relates to their identity (Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019a: 392).

Trauma can often lead to victims losing their sense of self and control over their narrative (Crossley, 2000). This is a key theme which emerged from the research and will be analysed in chapter 6. Narrative victimology, therefore, explores how narratives can rebuild agency and control[24] in the aftermath of trauma, which is explored further below. This involves constructing new or evolved identities, which has been described as a 'cocreation between individuals and communities' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021: 13)[25], highlighting the importance of links to not only the victims sense of self but also their relationship with their community. Looking at victims' 'sense-making processes' after victimisation can enable us to better understand what victims, and their narratives, require as a response to the aftermath of abuse.

'The Big Three'

Two concepts central to identity, narratives, and ultimately an individual's sense of self are agency and communion. These theoretical tools have been dubbed the 'big two' (Abele and Wojciszke, 2013) since their utilisation by psychologist David Bakan (1966). In Bakan's essay 'The Duality of Human Existence', he described agency and communion as follows: 'I have adopted the terms agency and communion to characterize two fundamental modalities in the existence of living forms, agency for the existence of an organism as an individual and communion for the participation of the individual in some larger organism of which the individual is part' (1966: 14-15). These terms have

[24] The damage to a victim's self and agency after crime is outlined extensively in the literature (see Bakan, 1966; Abele and Wojciszke, 2013; Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019b).
[25] See also Lindemann- Nelson, 2001; Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; van de Ven, 2020.

since been used in narrative victimology, with experiences of crime and victimisation as 'a double-edged attack on both agency and communion' (Pemberton et al., 2017: 683).

Key proponents of the theoretical concepts of agency and communion include Antony Pemberton, who states that he aims 'to further broaden the application of the Big Two by including these two dimensions in the interpretation of victims' experience and evaluation of justice in the aftermath of a crime' (Pemberton et al., 2017: 693). Using work by Simantov-Nachlieli, Shnabel, and Nadler (2013), Pemberton and colleagues have applied the concepts of agency and communion to victimisation: 'We find the distinction between agency and communion motives to be important to calibrate social responses to victimization' (Pemberton et al., 2017: 685). Agency in this context refers to 'self-mastery, status/respect, achievement/responsibility and empowerment' while communion implies that 'love/friendship, dialogue, care/help and community – fundamentally undergird human motivation' (ibid). Similarly, to the narrative rupture illustrated above, experiences of victimisation can rupture both agency and communion (Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019b). However, such damage is not completely irreparable as narratives hold the power to rebuild agency and communion within an individual. These concepts are used to help understand the empirical data in this research, particularly using agency to reflect individual power and control while communion is used to represent connection and community. Notably, victim participation within justice processes can be seen as an opportunity to restore the damage victimisation had on these 'fundamental motivations' (Shnabel and Nadler, 2008; Simantov-Nachlieli et al., 2013; Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019a: 403). These two key theoretical components are used when looking at the restorative impact of a victim sharing their narrative either to loved ones, to the police, or to the public.

Agency and communion are fundamentally inter-connected, as the process of building communion will inevitably be agentic. However, there is a lack of attention to a crucial factor highlighted in the literature: the need for narratives to be allied to action (Pemberton et al., 2019a). Although the importance of action has been noted, it is rarely explored further, often being grouped under agency, despite it being the accumulation of both agency and communion. Particularly in this thesis, the actions, advocacy, and activism of the victim advocates with lived experience have been crucial to how the news story of non-recent CSA broke. Therefore, I propose using action as a third concept to explore the many roles (both figuratively and literally) which victims undertook after disclosing. By giving the concept its own separate label, I hope to give this crucial element in the data legitimacy and encourage further attention to activism, advocacy, and action in further narrative research. Therefore, I use a reconstructed 'big three' of agency, communion, and action to explore both the impact of victimisation and how disclosure, publicly or privately, helped to rebuild these key concepts in a victim's narrative and sense of self.

I. Agency

First, I explore the literature surrounding agency, which 'concerns individual striving, competence, power and instrumentality' (Pemberton et al., 2017: 684). Chapter 6 will explore how agency can be enacted in the victims' individual and personal choice to speak out, as 'rebuilding autonomy following victimization requires people to "remake themselves", and people's own choices and actions are vital to this end' (Pemberton, 2020: 372). A crucial element is control; a key theme drawn out by Pemberton and colleagues is the importance of victims having ownership over their narrative (2019a: 395). Correct representation of victims' stories is crucial for avoiding revictimisation or a

second narrative rupture after victimisation, as 'threats to agency (e.g. feeling incompetent, inferior, or powerless) tend to increase agentic motives (to feel competent, accomplished, and empowered)' (Locke, 2015: 530). However, the lack of control they have over their story once it is shared can tie directly to their identity and sense of self: 'this shows how participants have a feeling of losing grip on the way their experiences and identities are perceived. Participants feel as if they are submitted to a label put on them by others. To counter this deprivation of agency, participants actively [need to be] involve[d] in managing their identities' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021: 9). Any subsequent poor treatment by the public and State hinders this process, potentially leading to retraumatisation and revictimisation. Victims who have experienced their sense of self being damaged in victimisation understandably have a stronger desire to closely manage their own narrative and personal identities.

The audience's response to a victim's experience has a crucial impact on their sense of self. A central aim of this thesis is to investigate the power of speaking out about abuse, which has been a key element in this research (see chapter 6). This has been explored in some depth in narrative criminology whereby various psychosocial benefits have been highlighted when offenders share their stories of redemption publicly (see Bullock, Bunce & McCarthy, 2019). The founder of the ex-prisoner-led activist organisation 'Just Leadership USA' stated the stories of ex-offenders are highly effective in changing public opinion: 'We use that narrative to discuss the system, telling the truth about race and class discrimination in a way that helps people see how the reality of criminal justice does not match up to their ideas about either justice or fairness. People respond to anecdotes. You may forget data but you don't forget stories' (Bader, 2015: 1. See also Maruna & Liem (2020). This thesis similarly explores how victims' stories are received by the public and the criminal justice system, which as Bader notes, has

frequently been forgotten in previous victimological studies, which have focused on generalised data.

However, to speak out often means victims have to waive their anonymity, resulting in their personal narrative becoming a public one. It is important to recognise the key difference between disclosing abuse to the police and waiving your anonymity, which Chapter 6 explains while describing the victims' very personal decision of whether to waive their anonymity, as well as disclosing their abuse to the authorities. For some, speaking out can be 'a way of regaining [your] power from an event that robbed [you] of control' (PCAR, 2018: 1). A study by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) has revealed the many benefits of speaking out for victims of sexual violence, noting the empowerment it provides victims whose abuse forced them into silence. However, it should be noted the positive psychological impact is not guaranteed; risks include the over-simplification of one's story, resulting in possible stereotyping or sensationalism by the press and media (PCAR, 2018: 13). Finally, legal issues can arise when speaking publicly while a case is still ongoing (ibid: 15), suggesting it may be better to give victims the opportunity to reclaim their voice within the criminal justice process rather than publicly.

Nevertheless, taking the step of speaking out publicly could provide many victims with the opportunity to make sense of their victimisation. Narrative victimology centres the need for a narrative approach to coping with victimisation and its aftermath, including the victims' experiences with the justice processes (Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019a). Narratives offer victims a way of making sense of their past, as 'the practice of storytelling in suffering provides an opportunity for coherence to experiences of violence which are unthinkable and unimaginable to those not party to such events' (Cook & Walklate, 2019: 241). Therefore, a narrative approach helps victims make sense of their

unfolding life story, including traumatic incidents which may have changed their life course. Although narrative reconstruction is an incredibly complex and continuous process, this thesis aims to use it to aid in understanding victims' experiences of both disclosing their abuse and of the power they were afforded in the social, political, and legal sphere. Although the narrative approach does not necessarily offer closure, it can become a method for coping with victimisation and its aftermath. While this could be a personal journey undertaken through counselling or through moving on with one's life, the process can also be used to gain public awareness and understanding of the pressing issue of abuse (see 'Action' section).

II. Communion

Moving onto the second theoretical tool, communion has been described as concerning 'social relatedness, warmth, expressiveness and affiliation' (Pemberton et al., 2017: 684). This is highly important as 'without reconnecting to others [victims] would remain selves in the radically lonely limbo to which the victimization banished them' (Pemberton, 2020: 372). Just as victimisation breaks down agency, it also breaks down communion through damaging a victim's relationship with others and with their social surroundings. Lisak states, 'Sexual abuse has the power to fundamentally damage a victim's relationship both to themselves and to other people' (1994: 544). van de Ven and Pemberton refer to a 'taken- for-granted sense of social embeddedness and communion' which becomes lost in victimisation (2021: 3), leading to lost trust in others (e.g. Macmillan, 2001) and in representative institutions (Campbell, 2006). Loss of communion can also further victims' loss of self, as victims' identities are intrinsically tied to their relationships with others. Simantov-Nachlieli and colleagues (2013) highlight that impairment to communion is something that is primarily experienced by offenders,

whereas Pemberton, Aarten and Mulder (2017) shift the focus to victims. Despite the isolation that can occur with victimisation, Locke also notes that 'threats to communion (e.g. feeling isolated, misunderstood or rejected) activate communal motives (to be connected, understood, and embraced)' (2015: 530), with victims seeking out opportunities to repair their ties to their community and social surroundings. The experience of rebuilding communion is, therefore, clearly interwoven with agentic motives, touching again on the inter-linked nature of agency, communion, and action.

However, although speaking out can rebuild communion, shown in the rise in the number of victims sharing their experiences to stand with other victims (McGarry & Walklate, 2015), victims can experience revictimisation and retraumatisation if they are rejected or their motives are questioned, which we saw could happen with agency as well. The response of the public and State impacts heavily on whether there will be a second narrative rupture. Therefore, it is helpful to explore other means or examples of value restoration, most commonly seen through forming a connection to religion (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004; Cook & Walklate, 2019). This is helpful for victims as rebuilding a sense of communion with a higher being can also result in forming meaningful connections within a spiritual community (Mankowski & Rappaport, 2000; Pemberton et al., 2017: 688). Ultimately, at the heart of a victim's motivations is rebuilding connection and a sense of belonging with their social surroundings.

Re-establishing a connection to their community is also formed when individuals who have faced similar experiences form a 'community narrative' (Rappaport, 1993; Pemberton et al., 2017: 688), which I refer to in this thesis as a 'collective narrative,' as it better illustrates the cumulative impact of voices joining together. As outlined previously, this thesis seeks to understand how the victims in these cases constructed collective narratives and how these narratives were received by the public and the State. In relation

to this thesis, the collective narrative was started with Andy Woodward sharing his story and encouraging other victims to come forward. This can be seen in other cases of abuse in sport, most notably many of Larry Nassar's victims in the US waiving their anonymity, leading to a 'snowball effect' of disclosures (Sommerlad, 2021). These stories have formed a collective narrative, which go on to have a powerful impact in the criminal cases and often in policy reform.

The tools to share one's narrative have evolved in recent years, as there are now many platforms to share stories with the proliferation of social media, free blog sites, and so on. This has led to stories spreading and community formation, with many victims reaching out to each other via Twitter. This was most widely seen in the #MeToo Movement which originated and evolved across social media platforms. Maruna and Liem describe it as 'a remarkably swift solidarity-building movement that has changed public narratives about sexual harm' (2020: 6). They go on to illustrate,

> Survivors who had felt silenced or ignored have started to publicly tell their stories, find their voices, and project their "false" shame back onto those who violated them. The #MeToo movement can be understood, at its heart, as a shame management movement against victim blaming rather than simply a movement in favor of the shaming of victimizers. Indeed, #MeToo has redistributed blame not just to specific perpetrators, but also towards justice systems, the military, schools, orphanages, churches and even the totality of society in an attempt to rewrite societal stories about rape, assault and sexuality (see Maruna & Pali, 2020) (Maruna & Liem, 2020: 6).

Although victims can have highly individual experiences, there is also a community that connects with their experiences. Finding communion with other survivors of abuse, which van de Ven and Pemberton refer to as a 'meso-community,' outside of their common social network (2021: 4), can start to repair the isolation perpetrators cause through abuse. A meso-community is also essential as it offers survivors an opportunity to completely open up as a result of the similarities in their experience and emotions. For example, 'participants feel as if some topics and expressions of certain feelings are "not

allowed" in society. They are too painful, shameful or considered inappropriate to talk about. For participants, this leads to further difficulties in expressing themselves. Again, this is an indication of the discrepancy between the two worlds: that of the victimized and non- victimized people' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021: 9). By forging these specialised connections, it is possible that victims can stop feeling marginalised and isolated (ibid). Some victims feel their peers are a significant enough audience. However, this thesis will explore whether the audience needs to be larger to ensure other victims feel acknowledged. Furthermore, there is a potential danger in collective narratives: that the individual victims experiences are subsumed within a collective whole and that the individual nature of their specific narrative will be lost. The challenges this brings are noted in chapter 6.

III. Action

Although the category of action requires both agency and communion, not explicitly highlighting the additional step of taking action fails to acknowledge its significance. Advocating for change is a significant theme raised in narrative criminology as Lois Presser (2009) draws a link between identity and action – narratives guide action (see Sarbin, 1986). This expands on the necessity of control in establishing a victim's sense of agency, as agency is not only about having one's voice heard, but also about holding power going forward. This idea is explored in depth in chapter 7, particularly in exploring the relationship between the narrative and its influence in the criminal cases and later in impacting public policy. At the core of narrative victimology is the impact narratives can have on criminal justice policy, with victim stories increasingly influencing policy

decisions[26]. As Cook states, 'The private grief of victims has been increasingly subject to public gaze and public consumption (Corcoran, 2019; O'Leary, 2018)' (2021: 354).

One example of this is naming laws after victims, such as Sarah's Law, a law which makes it possible for parents to find out from the police if someone with access to their child has a record of committing child sexual offences. The law was named after Sarah Payne, who was abducted and murdered by a man who had past convictions of sexually assaulting children. The Sarah Payne case is a powerful instance that not only led to better safeguarding procedures throughout England and Wales, but also reflects politicians primarily paying attention only to victims whose cases could be used to strengthen punitive controls in the criminal justice system (Garland, 2001). The role of the victim has evolved since the State recognised the power that the construction of the victim could hold; as Garland stated, victims represent 'an all-purpose justification for measures of penal repression' (2001: 143). By bringing in 'emotionality' to the human aspect of crime (De Haan & Loader, 2002), the State created a tool to sway public opinion in favour of punitive laws. This has resulted in the increase of 'memorial laws' (Valier, 2005), such as Sarah's Law, named after victims of prolific cases to place strong restrictions on perpetrators of crime. This is explained further when exploring the influence the victims and their narratives have had in public life.

A key issue with constructing ideas around victims in the public sphere is that not all victims, or even perpetrators, carry the same level of interest in the news or for politicians (McAlinden, 2014: 182). The victims that have often been used to build legislation have been younger, White girls or women, as seen in Sarah's Law (2011) and Clare's Law (2014), who perfectly fit Christie's notion of an ideal victim which is discussed later in

[26] See Bottoms' (2010) for comprehensive analysis of the 1986 Ealing Vicarage Rape Case to note the power of an individual story on policy and response.

this chapter. Although the victims in this research who came forward about the abuse they suffered as children did initially receive a strong press and public response, their unique identities as victims may have had an impact.

An example of the impact of identity on activism is Cook's exploration of the 'charismatic matriarch' in the field of family activism. She explores how identities, such as race and class, impacts on what activists are able to achieve, as 'if victims are to play a greater policy role in the criminal justice system, more attention must be paid to why particular stories resonate in the public and political life more than others' (Cook, 2021: 354). Cook explores 'the story of two bereaved mothers and, in particular, their influence in communicating stories of lethal violence in the public sphere' (2021: 354). She contrasted the case of Rosie Batty, a White middle-class woman living in Australia who achieved national recognition for her work in family violence, to June, a Black British woman working in disadvantaged areas of Manchester who did not enjoy the same acknowledgement, despite her significant community activism. These ideas in reference to the victims will be touched upon throughout this thesis and covered further in the Discussion.

Nevertheless, Ring provides an example of the impact victims can have in discussing the influence of non-recent CSA victims in Ireland publicly speaking out about their experiences. Ring states that victims not only broke their silence but they also forced attention on the country's past. Victims did this through participating in documentaries, taking legal action, and speaking at public events. Alternatively, Cook and Walklate draw clear parallels to the concept of advocacy and redemption (2019: 250), which does not necessarily mean forgiveness in a religious sense, but rather the victims transcending what has happened to them to bring about change. In her research, Ring states that these individuals used their voices to become 'agents of political change' (2018: 149), which is

similar to Meyers' (2016) concept of 'heroic victimhood' and Frank's (2013) expression of a 'wounded healer'. These are examples of where the individuals became more than their cases and became an embodiment of a cause or campaign for change. Chapters 6 and 7 will explore the extent of the impact the victims had in changing certain policies, channelling their experiences of abuse into positive change, while also highlighting the limitations they faced. These actions are posed as instances of altruism, as Pemberton and colleagues illustrate that agency and the narrative can be rebuilt by helping others, particularly through modes of social and political action (2019a: 403). Vollhardt (2009) explores the concept of 'altruism born out of suffering', noting that survivors helping other survivors is a possible outlet. Therefore, this thesis illustrates how the victims' actions are intrinsically tied to their narratives, shown through victims' experiences of campaigning to change laws, child protection policies, and supporting other survivors of abuse.

Victims joining together to help others in a common cause united many of them. As Pemberton and colleagues stated: 'Indeed a sense of victimization by injustice is one of the most powerful frames available to provide cohesion and purpose to social movements (Gamson, 1992)' (2017: 688). The collective joining of injustice is particularly poignant in this thesis and is explored in chapter 7. As illustrated in the literature on communion, peer support can be crucial in a survivors' journey, as through narrating their own experiences, survivors can help others offering 'unique and pragmatic specialized information and perspectives stemming from lived experience' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021: 4; see also Lagrand, 1991; MacNeil & Mead, 2005; Seebohm et al., 2013). It is a personal and embodied knowledge, which connects survivors of sexual violence in similar contexts. It is 'through their similarities that peers diminish feelings of marginalization and isolation and enhance affiliation with others who have a similar

experience (ibid: 4). This can benefit both the individual and groups in the process, showing the collaborative impact of survivor-led support mechanisms. This links to both Cook's 'charismatic matriarch' who creates 'communities of solidarity' (2021: 353) in her activism, and Frank's concept of the 'wounded healer' who is 'ending silences, speaking truths [and] creating communities' (2013: xvii). However, I must also acknowledge the emotional burden this can place on victims of abuse. The complex dynamics surrounding survivor-led peer support and activism will therefore be explored further in chapter 6.

Finally, the links to activism run through both the hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality literature, demonstrating the importance of the link between action, identity, and the narrative. Jewkes and colleagues (2015) explore using hegemony for advocacy and activism through stating, 'The ultimate challenge for gender activists is change in the 'idealised form' of masculinity, which will result in the most enduring impact on a society' (Jewkes et al., 2015: 117). Despite the theoretical and abstract nature of hegemonic masculinity, their research advocates that it is a useful basis for practical interventions in men's ideas of their sense of self and other men and women in society (ibid). Similarly, Potter notes that 'Intersectionality theory is strongly tied to real-world activism' (2013: 314), as it calls for the acknowledgement of those cast aside due to their interwoven, disempowered identities. The themes of agency, communion, and action provide a conceptualisation of what can be damaged in victimisation, while similarly offering victims of sexual violence an opportunity to rebuild these core concepts or 'fundamental modalities in the existance of living forms' (Bakan, 1966: 14-15). Employing these concepts can shift both the narrative and sense of self, and have the potential to go beyond the abstract and theoretical to help victims make sense of the impacts of victimisation they face.

Public and State Response

Although speaking out offers an opportunity to repair and rebuild these identities, a victim's narrative does not occur in a vacuum. I now move to the tools which are helpful for exploring the second half of research question two, namely centring on the socio-political landscape and the audience to explore how collective narratives were received by the public and the State. These concepts are at the heart of narrative victimology as they provide an important context to understanding the response to victims' narratives, while simultaneously influencing them.

The Audience: Is Anybody Listening?

Before the development of narrative victimology, some authors investigated what victims desire from disclosure, with a sense of validation from the community being a common theme (Herman, 2005: 585). Herman found that regardless of the outcome, 'the validation of so-called bystanders was of equal or greater importance' (2005: 585) to victims than justice in the courts. Victims want to be acknowledged, which is particularly the case for those who faced abuse in childhood. As McAlinden notes, 'Indeed, who acquires the label of victim and how and when this occurs depend not only on the attributes of victims themselves, but also on the reactions of others (Holstein & Miller 1990; Rock 2002)' (2014: 182). Many were either silenced or not believed at the time, including by the authorities. Therefore, a key tenet of narrative victimology is the need for a receptive audience (Brison, 2002; Walklate et al., 2019; Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019a), with this thesis exploring the role of the public, State, and criminal justice system in responding to victims. As Brison illustrates, 'In order to construct self-narratives we need not only the words with which to tell our stories, but also an audience able and willing to

hear us and to understand our words as we intend them' (2002: 51). Importantly, Brison also draws attention to the subsequent devastation this can cause when an individual is not listened to after trauma (ibid), which is explored in this chapter.

Walklate and colleagues (2019) provide a very helpful analysis of the impact of the audience when exploring the Batty case in Australia. When a father murdered his young son while playing cricket in 2014, the victim's grieving mother Rosie Batty went on to use her influence as a high-profile victim to lead a powerful campaign to address family violence in Australia. The influence this had in framing the conversation regarding such issues in the news media and policy reform was momentous, leading to the 'Rosie Batty effect' (ibid). The audience listened and became engaged in this cause. The reasons of this have been explored in research (Walklate et al., 2019), with the status of both Rosie and her family playing a large role in the response she received. Her impact led to her being named Australian of the Year in 2015, with Ken Lay, the Victorian Police Chief Commissioner, praising Rosie as the most 'remarkable victim' he has ever met, stating she put domestic violence on the national agenda (Australian of the Year, 2015). This case is particularly relevant to this research as the criminal justice system juggles the increasing numbers of mass disclosures of both non-recent CSA and contemporary networks of CSE operating in the UK, as it is important to analyse which narratives get elevated and which do not. In chapter 6, I explore the hierarchy of voices and what allowed Andy Woodward and the victims which followed to be listened to when others were previously ignored. The issue of whether the victims had the potential to then become 'agents of political change' (Ring, 2018) is analysed in chapter 7 and the subsequent Discussion. This theoretical tool will aid in deciphering what the victims were able to achieve, and in consideration to their status, what, if anything, they were barred from doing.

Through exploring the role of the audience, in conjunction with the socio-political landscape at the time, I have investigated the reception of these victims' narratives by the public and State. The audience was not simply made up of the public and press media but also the institutions and authorities which hold power. I focus on what the victims' experiences of the criminal justice system in these cases tell us about their identities, how they perceived themselves individually and collectively, and how this may be shaped, or to an extent shape, how actors in the criminal justice system perceived them. Research has demonstrated when victims of sexual violence do disclose their abuse to the authorities, they have an overwhelming negative experience (e.g. APPG Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, 2020). When cases are handled insensitively, victims are left feeling disempowered. This thesis focuses on the first-hand accounts of victims to better understand how their experiences within the criminal justice system impacted on their unfolding narratives. A negative experience with the criminal justice system can result in what Stauffer refers to as 'ethical loneliness,' which is the pain caused to an individual when 'an institution designed for hearing fails to listen' (2015: 111). Alternatively, Pemberton and colleagues argue that the criminal justice system can repair agency and communion (2017: 682), with the process being 'an element of the unfolding narrative' and the 'remaking of the self' (Pemberton, 2020: 376). Through this, they call for a move away from conceptualising victims' perspectives through their legal rights (ibid). Although this goes beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to acknowledge the relationship between the criminal justice system and agency, communion, and action.

The last of Pemberton, Mulder and Aarten's key themes within narrative victimology is the need for a narrative approach to understand victims' experiences with the justice processes (2019a: 395). Important to unpacking victims' experiences in the legal space is the literature which explores both the sharing of experience – for example, the need for a

narrative approach to cope with victimisation and its aftermath, including the justice processes – and the incorporation of narratives into the process itself (Pemberton et al., 2019a). The latter goes beyond the scope of this thesis but is an important area for further exploration. The system currently imposes a set narrative on victims (Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019b: 411) which best fulfils their purpose as a useful entity in supporting the Crown's case against the offender. Within the legal framework, victims are often viewed as irrational and passive actors who are clouded by their trauma (Bosma et al., 2018). This stereotyping assumes vulnerability as a weakness. Pemberton, Mulder and Aarten outline the control the criminal justice system wields when they state, 'While victims view their experience as unique and idiosyncratic, the criminal justice process imposes a narrative with a particular plot – including a resolution – that will often be at odds with victims' experience' (2019b: 413). Despite victims being given more opportunity to be heard, for example, through victim impact statements, 'formally giving people a voice within the justice process does not necessarily imply the willingness or ability of receivers to listen to and understand that voice, let alone to empathise with it' (Pemberton, Mulder & Aarten, 2019a: 407). In fact, greater harm can come from misinterpreting a victim's personal story of victimisation and its impact. Therefore, the criminal justice system offers an opportunity for a further narrative rupture and although Pemberton (2020) highlights the potential of the criminal justice system to repair the agency and communion, it can also make the situation worse.

Socio-political Landscape: Is the Timing Right?

It is not just the audience that is essential in hearing victims' stories but also the time and place a story is told (Walklate et al., 2019). Walklate and colleagues reflect on this:

> Why do some stories succeed in capturing the imagination of an audience in such a way that they become resonant of a wider public concern or become particularly

> influential in framing a policy agenda? Is this a product of the story-teller (and their voice)? Is it the product of the particular story? Is it the product of the way in which the story was told so that the audience heard? Is it a product of the time and place? Or is it the product of a complex mixture of these? (2019: 7)

Power is at the heart of this discussion, as where narratives are given precedence in society, change can occur, as shown by the Rosie Batty effect. Part of what gave Rosie Batty's voice power, apart from her status as a White middle-class mother, was that her experience was all too relatable. As Walklate and colleagues state, 'It is the everyday ordinariness of the behavior of playing cricket, juxtaposed, with the brutality of Luke's death, which arguably touched a deep nerve for many Australians' (2019: 11). The concept of 'ordinariness' is of significance, as it is both accessible and familiar. Cricket is an intrinsic part of Australian culture (ibid); English football has a similar status in the UK. This ordinariness arguably allowed for a more sympathetic audience, yet as will be established in this thesis, the status of the victims due to their intersectional identities differed to Batty.

Victims can speak out and advocate for change, yet if their voices hold no power, then progress cannot take place. As Cook and Walklate explain, the shift to focus on the victim narrative has led to discussions on why some stories gain precedence with the public and within policy and others do not (2019: 241). The victims in this research now disclosing are far from the image of Christie's 'ideal victim' with chapter 5 detailing the disempowered status of the victims. In fact, it has been argued they were only able to disclose their abuse as adults due to a change in the cultural climate allowing men to be accepted as victims of CSA. Fleetwood and colleagues acknowledge that 'one of the greatest challenges of narrative criminology [is] taking power and social inequalities into account' (2019: 12). Therefore, the timing of these victims' narratives is central to the theoretical framework of this thesis, as it's crucial to position the victims' stories in the social and political context both at the time of the abuse and now in disclosing.

Ideal Victim

To understand why male victims of abuse have previously been ignored both by the authorities and in the academic literature, Christie's classic notion of the 'ideal victim' (1986) is considered. Christie introduced the ideal victim as 'a person or category of individuals, who, when hit by crime, most readily are given the complete and legitimate status of being a victim' (1986: 18). This legitimacy then affords the victim opportunity for public attention and outcry, which impacts on their reception and the support resources provided. Christie explains the ideal victim as an elderly woman. The criteria is based on a number of factors, most notably if the victim was 'weak' (i.e. female or elderly) and if the offender had no prior personal relationship to the victim (stranger) (1986: 19). Although this has since been critiqued and developed by a number of scholars (e.g. McAlinden, 2014; Ring, 2018), the premise is still useful in understanding that not all victims have been afforded equal status in the criminal justice system and society. Chapter 5 explores how far the victims fit into the ideal victim paradigm and how it influenced their reception by society and the State. It also outlines the intersectional identities which had an influence on the victims' experiences. For example, McAlinden has identified the gendered element which exists in constructing victims of CSA and child sexual exploitation (CSE). As mentioned previously, by focusing on the high levels of abuse against girls, society fails to acknowledge the child sexual exploitation of both girls and boys (McAlinden, 2014: 184). Sexual abuse against boys or men goes against the hetero-normative perception of victimhood, particularly with regards to sexual abuse (Javaid, 2015). It is often viewed that the perpetrator will be male and the victim female. Chapter 6, therefore, explores the change in climate which allowed the men to speak out and be seen as victims of non-recent CSA. This ties to Alexander (2012) pointing to the

cultural impact of whether an incident or a victim is viewed as deserving of 'the status of a narrative of trauma' (Walklate et al., 2019: 4). The normalisation in culture is paramount, with scandals in the Catholic church paving the way for male victims of CSA to be seen as legitimate. However, there still remains a clear prejudice against victims who report late, which has been demonstrated on a number of occasions by the reaction of the State. Those who do not fit this rigid criterion of ideal victimhood are then 'rendered undeserving of the label of victim and consequently denied the validity of their suffering and the full protection of the law' (McAlinden, 2014: 185). The role of the community is important in both recognising and acknowledging victims and offenders of child sexual abuse. However, the perceptions of society have led to a 'hierarchy of victimhood' (Carrabine et al., 2004; McAlinden, 2014), which has 'inadvertently […] facilitated further abuse by ensuring the silence of those victims who do not meet the "real child sexual abuse" stereotype' (McAlinden, 2014: 193).

It is important to investigate the structural and institutional constraints which restricted children from working and lower middle-class homes at this time to speak out and how this may have intersected with the public response. By acknowledging the reality that some victims are erroneously branded as more deserving than others, we can consider the social and political contexts that impact on how the narratives are both shared and received. As Bilz poignantly notes, criminal cases were 'a referendum on the social standing of the victim' (2007: 1088). The ideal victim literature is important, as in this research only small numbers of victims are taken forward in a case where hundreds have disclosed to the police, which leads to questions over what informs this decision-making. Chapter 7, therefore, explores the complex and controversial status of the victims as adults.

As stated, one of the central aims of this thesis is to examine the factors which played

a significant role in creating vulnerability and silencing the victims. Ring (2018) uses the lens of the ideal victim to explore the legal and political responses to reports of non-recent childhood sexual abuse in Ireland. The victims do not fit Christie's notion of an ideal victim (1986), as their experiences and stories threaten the established social hierarchies in Ireland, particularly the absolute power of the Catholic church. Yet the Irish survivors were elevated and given space to share their stories. Therefore, contrary to Christie's conceptualisation, Ring highlights that non-ideal victims may still hold political and social influence. However, in this instance, the victims had to speak publicly about their ordeal, which was also seen in this thesis through the context of football (see chapter 6). As Ring outlines, 'the notion of the ideal victim is inadequate to describe the full complexity of the emergence of these stories because it ignores the agency and courage of survivors, as well as the role of feminist solidarity' (Ring, 2018: 152). Yet, what is most important to draw from Ring's research is how the use of the ideal victim lens offers important insights to the response of Irish society. As she notes:

> The continued ambivalence and inadequate response to the suffering of survivors is indicative of a society that views them as being far from ideal and more like outsiders of a political community who are not full subjects of the law (Lacey, 1998). Therefore, despite the seemingly profound political and legal responses to the revelations of non-recent childhood sexual abuse, strategies of denial and silencing continue to shape the construction of non-recent childhood sexual abuse survivors in Ireland (ibid: 152).

Ring highlights that despite the Irish victims experiencing widespread national attention at the time, their voices had limits. This is explored further in chapters 6 and 7 when looking at the status of the victims, their narratives as adults, and the extent to which their voices could reach.

Feminising the Victim

As highlighted above, Christie's (1986) notion of the ideal victim shows that identity plays a large role on who is listened to. Identities and gender norms play a key role here, as 'a sociological understanding of identity creation and gender expectations of men implies that men respond to and define situations according to both the anticipated or imagined reactions from societies and the reflected appraisals received from other men during social interaction' (Javaid, 2015: 284). Societal expectations and constructions impact on an individual's sense of self and the audience's perception, as Mulder and colleagues (2019) explore whether and how male victims of sexual violence influence perceived gender roles – in effect, whether information about sexual victimisation causes observers to feminise the victim. A number of scholars have highlighted rape as a 'gendering crime' (Marcus, 1992; Mardorossian, 2014), with Quinn stating forms of sexual violence can be 'mechanisms through which gendered boundaries are patrolled and evoked and by which deeply held identities are established' (2002: 399). This leads on from earlier academic research which draws attention to how the 'victim', particularly in relation to sexual violence, often elicits perceptions of passive femininity (Lamb, 1999; Mardorossian, 2014). Bonthuys explains how society might perceive a male rape victim: 'a man who is raped loses his masculine status and becomes, in terms of his sexual role, a woman—while the sexually subordinate status of a woman who is raped is thereby confirmed' (2008: 255). This has highly damaging implications, as Mulder and colleagues note, 'The association of victimhood and sexual violence with (passive) femininity has been hypothesized to obstruct recognition of male victims of sexual assault and to potentially complicate the reaffirmation of victims' own sense of (masculine) identity (Javaid, 2016; Stemple and Meyer 2014)' (2019: 13). As demonstrated in the

previous chapter, there is a need for more research on male sexual victimisation. Mulder, Pemberton and Vingerhoets (2019) note that despite the gradual academic attention (occurring in tandem with slow societal acknowledgement) to male sexual violence, focus remains on particular contexts, for example within gay communities and prison populations (e.g. Cohen, 2014; Javaid, 2015). This is a clear example of how identities tie into the subsequent experiences of victims in the community and interactions with the State.

Part II Overview

Narratives are a useful tool for understanding the impact of victimisation on an individual's identity and evolving sense of self, as 'victims engage in narrating their experiences to make sense of [their] reality. Narrative victimology is the study of this process, which grew from and forms a response to narrative criminology more broadly' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021: 1). Victimisation can be experienced as a narrative rupture, which damages a victim's sense of individual agency and communion with their social surroundings. Yet speaking out offers an opportunity to rebuild these — as van de Ven & Pemberton state, 'it is a way to address the impact of the event on your identity to reassemble a sense of self, provide a sense of order, build community, educate and encourage change' (2021: 14). The reference to 'educate' and 'encourage change' is crucial here, yet has not been fully emphasised through the intertwined concepts of agency and communion (e.g. 'the big two'). As a result, I suggest introducing a third concept, action, to unpack the significance of advocacy and activism in this research.

These theoretical tools are used in chapters 6 and 7 to decipher how the victims constructed collective narratives and their reception by the public and the State, in particular, the impact of the legal space on the victims' sense of self and unfolding

narrative. Drawing on the audience and the socio-political landscape helps to contextualise the subsequent response, which is significant as the socially constructed ideas placed on victims, such as specific notions of masculinity, impinge on their sense of self and frame their narrative. As Pemberton notes, 'The remade self of which Brison speaks is a self that is altered by living through the experience, one for whom the victimization and its aftermath, the manner in which it was situated in time, become part of the fabric of existence' (2020: 372).

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

Capturing the experiences and narratives of victims of non-recent CSA is not without its challenges, as there are numerous ethical, logistical, and theoretical considerations to take into account. As the VOICE report on sexual violence in European sport states,

> Empirical research on sexual violence faces many methodological and ethical challenges, in particular the challenge of securing access to those with a lived experience of sexual violence. There are clearly many reasons why individuals with a personal history of being subjected to sexual violence would not want to participate in a research project about sexual violence. These reasons range from straightforward lack of time or interest to concerns about confidentiality and their psychological wellbeing (VOICE, 2019: 15).

As a result of these concerns the methods for undertaking this research were carefully scrutinised, with the ethical responsibility of the researcher when hearing victims' narratives (see Cook & Walklate, 2019) being central to the preparation and undertaking of the empirical data gathered for this thesis. The methodology was inspired by a range of different fields, including narrative victimology, although this study does not employ the traditional narrative interviewing technique. Instead, this research used a qualitative mixed-methods approach which was 'survivor-led' (VOICE, 2019), attempting to centre the voice of the participant throughout the process. Due to these considerations, this chapter outlines the methodological approach employed, including the use of a victim questionnaire, semi-structured and more narrative interviews which were undertaken remotely, as well as the use of victim autobiographies and reports. Additionally, I discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on my methods, as well as other ethical and positionality issues faced.

The Development of the Research Design

My doctoral research developed from my MPhil thesis titled, 'The Ugly Side of the Beautiful Game: Non-Recent Child Sexual Abuse in Professional Football Teams' (Saker, 2019), which drew on the case of Andy Woodward's abuser, Barry Bennell, to trace the history of CSA in football. Focusing on Bennell's charges, the MPhil thesis explored the toxic sporting environment that hindered boys from speaking out about their abuse, while simultaneously protecting their abuser. In that work, I began to employ an intersectional lens to draw together the socially constructed identities of the victims, which perpetuated the silencing of their abuse. By looking at the intersection of gender, class, and age, the project highlighted the discriminated and disempowered status of the boys, which created a culture whereby football clubs put commercial interests over the welfare of the young players in their care. I applied the concept of 'wilful blindness' (Heffernan, 2012), because although warning signs of the systematic abuse of young players were pervasive, no meaningful action was taken. The MPhil thesis provided a structured understanding of the multi-faceted dynamics that enabled the abuse and identifies the previously ignored role that class played in creating a climate where abuse was left to proliferate unchallenged.

Building on this preliminary study, I was particularly interested in the criminal cases which followed as a result of hundreds of victims coming forward against several prolific perpetrators in football from 2016. I followed the Bennell case in the news and was surprised that only twelve complainants were initially being taken forward after the press had reported over a hundred victims making accusations against him. I was interested in what happened to other men and why their cases were not taken forward. Crucially, for those who were not taken forward, what was their experience of the criminal justice

system? My doctoral project originally was going to be focused on these individuals, but the difficulty in accessing those who often turn their back on systems after not having their individual cases taken forward by the CPS would be highly challenging. Therefore, I decided to consider the experiences of all victims in football who had disclosed to the police, whether their cases progressed or not. Early data from the victim questionnaire conducted as part of this research (see 'Data Gathering' section) emphasised the complexity of an individual's experience even when they were perceived to have received 'justice' in the courts. Therefore, I considered this to be an appropriate participant pool to reach, with the assistance and input of victim advocates and criminal justice professionals. A focus on the criminal justice response formed the basis of the FIFA Research Scholarship[27] Final Report, 'The Experiences of Male Victims of Non-Recent Child Sexual Abuse in Football within the Criminal Justice System in the UK'[28] (Saker, 2021b). As part of the scholarship, which was awarded in January 2020, I was tasked with providing an academic report (and two interim reports prior) on my research. Each victim participant was given the opportunity to be sent both a digital copy of this report via email and a physical copy through the post to make it as accessible as possible. Although the experiences of victims of non-recent CSA in the criminal justice system is a highly important area of research, as I started to write up my thesis, it became clear the final two research questions, 'what are the victims' experiences of the criminal justice system in these cases?' and 'what does this group of victims now want from the criminal justice system?', were too broad for a single DPhil thesis. After feedback at my

[27] The FIFA Research Scholarship aims to promote football related research in humanities and social sciences, law, economics, and medical sciences.

[28] The final 50,000 word report is archived in the FIFA Research Library (Switzerland) and International Centre for Sports Studies Library (Switzerland), with a copy available online here.

Confirmation of Status viva, I opted to focus on the first two research questions for the purposes of this thesis:

1. Which barriers, with a focus on victim identities, stopped victims of sexual abuse in grass-roots and professional football in the late 1960s to 1990s from speaking out?
2. How did the victims of non-recent CSA in football construct individual and collective narratives and how were they received by the public and the State?

The victims of non-recent CSA in football are central to this project, with the criteria for participation in this research being that an individual had to be male, had experienced non-recent CSA while playing youth football and had disclosed this abuse to the police. The term 'non-recent' is being used in this context to refer to abuse that occurred during childhood, when the victim was now over the age of eighteen. In the cases explored, this ranged from the late 1960s to 1990s, although the majority of participants referred to abuse which occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. From those who felt comfortable sharing, the age in which the abuse started for the victims in this study ranged from aged nine to fourteen. This includes experiences from those who have waived their anonymity and those who have chosen not to. To capture these stories, a victim questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with victims and victim advocates with lived experience of abuse was used. The terminology used has been outlined in chapter 1. However, for clarification, those who were abused in football and went on to take up an advocacy role will be referred to as 'victim advocates with lived experience' – these were either interviewed solely in their capacity as an advocate, or on their experience as a victim as well if they chose to raise it. The content of these interviews was dependent on what the victim chose to discuss and if their full narrative had already been widely publicised, as I decided there would be no need to risk further retraumatisation if the narrative could be accessed elsewhere (for example, an autobiography). Building on these accounts, victim autobiographies and other sources, such as newspaper interviews and press articles, were

also used to supplement the primary sources of victim narratives. Another component of the empirical research was further interviews with police officers and one Crown Prosecutor who were all directly involved in investigating and prosecuting these cases of abuse. In addition to this, I interviewed a number of professional victim advocates and practitioners to contextualise the victims' accounts.

Core Underpinning: Survivor-Led

There has been widespread discussion over the best method to capture victim narratives (see Maruna & Liem, 2020 for overview). Scholars have used a range of sources to supplement interviews and to enrich the data gathered, including the use of documentary analysis and ethnographic observations (ibid: 13). A victim's narrative does not need to represent scientific fact; it simply has to represent their perspective and lived experience. Using various sources may appease critics who question the 'ecological validity' of the self-narrative (ibid), but this was not the reason for the qualitative mixed methods research design, as is emphasised below. As well as being a key theoretical tool in this thesis, the nature of the narrative victimology enquiry has also inspired and influenced several methodological decisions. Growing scholarship in narrative victimology (see Walklate et al., 2019; Pemberton et al., 2019a; 2019b) has used narrative interviewing methods (e.g. Cook, 2021) to better understand victim experiences of victimisation and the harm caused when a crime is committed. Narrative victimology focuses on how people experience wrongdoing, predominantly 'what has been done to us and how this relates to subsequent motivations, behaviours and actions' (Pemberton et al., 2019b: 393). The traditional approach to hear these narratives has been through in-depth interviews, which allow victims space to reassert a sense of control and agency in recalling what can be highly traumatic incidents (Cook & Walklate, 2019: 241).

The core element of this research involved firstly offering victims the option of completing a victim questionnaire to later introducing victim interviews (both semi-structured and more narrative) subsequently in the study. The victims' choice in how to share their narrative was an essential component when designing this research study, as Green and Pemberton outline:

> … the actions and the choices of the victim are key, as is the manner in which the victim understands these actions and choices. Rather than viewing the victim as a will-less subject of outside forces, our radical victimology seeks to understand the victim on his or her own terms, in which he or she is the lead actor in the narrative under construction. Their choices are radical themselves (2017: 93).

Promoting victims' agency and choice is essential within narrative victimology, as it moves past preconceptions of the passivity of victims in their stories (Pemberton et al., 2019b: 393). The role of the researcher is to provide the space to amplify these voices and provide a third-party perspective in later analysis. Therefore, although this thesis is inspired by narrative interviewing, it is more closely in line with survivor-led research found in sports sociology (VOICE, 2019; CPSS, 2020). Examples include Hartill who has employed a 'survivor-led approach' in the collaborative VOICE Project for Truth and Dignity with which he was closely involved. The VOICE project applied in-depth narrative interviewing techniques to hear survivors' first-hand stories in sport across seven European countries. Although this DPhil is also 'survivor-led', I am instead using a mixed methods approach to provide victims and survivors with the choice over how they wish to proceed and, in so doing, expanding current approaches beyond those used in sports sociology. With both victim questionnaires and interviews, every effort was made to ensure the victim had full autonomy over what they wished to discuss (see 'Data Gathering' section), as I did not want to replicate another environment where control was taken away from a victim. The possibility for harm is summed up well in the VOICE report: 'Harm may be caused by the exercise of talking to individuals who have

experienced sexual violence (even by the act of contacting them); harm may be caused by interpreting their stories' and harm may be caused by the mere action of putting into concrete text (written word) an expression of their experiences that had previously remained (forcibly) hidden and unspoken (see Brackenridge, 1999)' (2020: 16). This will be explored in further detail throughout this chapter when noting the ethical considerations of the research.

Data Gathering

In total, this thesis draws upon twenty-one interviews and seven questionnaire responses. Ten interviews were conducted with victims and victim advocates with lived experience of abuse (one participant had two interviews), six with professional victim advocates and practitioners, and five with criminal justice professionals (four police and one from the CPS). With consideration to two interviewees identifying themselves as having completed both an interview and filling in the questionnaire, a total of fourteen victims and victim advocates with lived experiences' accounts (seventeen with the inclusion of autobiographies) were considered in this project.

Victim Questionnaire

A method which is slowly starting to be used in narrative victimology is the use of online questionnaires to explore key themes in self-narratives (see Johnson & Maruna, 2020). Although there has been controversary over the usefulness of survey data in victimology (Farrall, 2002), questionnaires are not disregarded completely. Still, there is certainly a need for caution when using questionnaire data, due to the risk of over-simplifying complex identities, which can result in stereotyping and marginalising the victims (Sandberg, Tutenges & Copes, 2015). The victim questionnaire operated as a pilot study,

providing a strong indicator of the types of experiences victims who had disclosed to police had faced in the political, social, and legal environment. The choice to include a victim questionnaire in this research was to ensure victims experienced full agency in the process, as they were able to complete it in their own time and space. They could skip questions without unintended pressure from the researcher and with the option to save the progress of the questionnaire to come back to later. This allowed victims to thoughtfully share their narrative, while also not having to reveal their identity, even to the researcher. The questionnaire was conducted through Jisc Surveys software[29], by recommendation of the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC). The key aim of the victim questionnaire was to learn more about the victim's experience of disclosing their abuse and subsequent experience within the criminal justice system. The questionnaire began with an introductory section outlining in simple terms what participation involved, their rights as participants, how what they shared would be used and so on. Once the participant had read this information, they were required to tick a box to say that they agreed to be involved and were above the age of the eighteen. This was to ensure informed consent was gained, despite the anonymous and online platform.

By providing the option of a questionnaire, a narrative methodology was offered into the harder-to-reach groups who have faced stigmatisation and shame as a result of their identity. For example, it has been indicated that men who have suffered sexual violence are not only reluctant to disclose and access support, but also to be involved in research due to the previously stated gendered belief that men should not be victims (Javaid, 2015: 287). Additionally, it is challenging for some individuals to share and communicate their stories in settings which mirror formal police interviews (see Lareau, 2011; Willis, 2018),

[29] This platform ensures survey authors are not able to track IP addresses, guaranteeing full anonymity to participants and is both fully compliant with the University's guidance and UK data protection laws.

especially if their previous experience with the police and the State authorities had been negative. This method ensures the victim maintains agency over their narrative, while still allowing the researcher to gain an understanding of the victim's experiences and the public and criminal justice response. The ethical responsibility of the researcher raised by Cook and Walklate (2019) goes beyond the simple research principle of 'do no harm' and centres each decision around the wellbeing of any vulnerable participant. When designing the victim questionnaire, I aimed to ask clear and open-ended questions which would act as prompts for victims to share any relevant information they wished (see Appendix I). Each question included the option to click 'prefer not to say' which, when selected, skipped to the next page, to make sure victims could ensure their autonomy when participating in this study. An option was also available on the questionnaire to skip to the final page, if the participant would prefer to share their story without any prompts. Once I had prepared a draft design of these prompts, I contacted an expert working in a charity specialising in child sexual abuse and exploitation. This individual had been working alongside many of the victims who have come forward since 2016 and agreed to look over the questionnaire design. Their comments were positive, offering no suggestions for modifications.

As expected, the key challenge of this research was gaining access (see Malloy, 2015), with previously held contacts in the field unable to be used due to unforeseen and tragic circumstances arising shortly before research was due to begin. To circulate the victim questionnaire, I used Twitter, as it is an active platform for survivors in football. It was shared by notable figures and charities in the field such as NAPAC, The Survivor's Trust, and individuals such as Sarah Champion MP, broadcaster Victoria Derbyshire, and other figures working in this arena.

I originally started off by allowing victims to self-select by publicising the research study via Twitter and sharing it with key organisations. Soon after it went public, I also shared the information with a number of key individuals who had waived their anonymity and asked them to consider participation and/or sharing with other victims who may have been interested. The use of Twitter also helped forge connections with victim advocates with lived experience of abuse; their interviews played an important role in understanding the collective identity of survivors of abuse in football. I also forged a connection with a solicitor acting for many survivors in football who sent the questionnaire and further information to his clients. It was also emailed to various professionals to share with interested participants. The questionnaire was available for completion for nine months (March- December 2020), although only actively promoted in the first three of months of it going live.

As there were key concerns over the retraumatisation[30] of participants, I took all available preventative precautions while undertaking the research. Although there was no questioning on the abuse itself, it is impossible to uncouple victim experiences of abuse with their interactions with trauma through disclosure, the criminal justice system, and so on. Therefore, almost every page of the questionnaire included contact details of support agencies. I made an agreement with the National Male Survivor Helpline, operated through Safeline, to use their number and I also added the Samaritans' number and email for more immediate and serious support. As the participants were completely anonymous, I could not offer more comprehensive assistance; however, these numbers did ensure the men could be directed to appropriate support if needed. As my research could result in extra calls to the National Male Survivor Helpline, and taking into consideration the

[30] Retraumatisation is a conscious or unconscious reminder of past trauma that results in a re-experiencing of the events.

increased pressure on mental health resources as a result of COVID-19, I decided to make a donation to the charity that runs its operation; I deemed this as an important use of my fieldwork budget. Although no victim has drawn my attention to this issue, I realise the helpline only supports males living in England and Wales. I had originally not anticipated that any victims from Scotland would participate. However, these victim accounts have provided a useful insight of issues central to the Scottish legal system. Although the issues are fairly similar across both systems, where there is any deviation, it has been noted. Although only seven participants completed the questionnaire, the responses were highly informative and unguarded, highlighting the benefit of the participant being able to remain anonymous.

The response rate did emphasise that although the inclusion of a questionnaire brings benefits, there are downsides to the method as well. For example, the questionnaire requires a dedicated effort to complete, whereas a conversation or interview may feel less laborious. It also requires a certain level of written literacy skills, which may cause problems for any participant with additional needs, such as dyslexia, which could impact on their participation. To counter these challenges, I explored the idea of having an option to record responses and upload them as audio recordings; however, JISC Surveys did not have audio tools available on the platform. Furthermore, although I have discussed the benefits of participants wishing to remain anonymous, even to the researcher, this may result in a lack of trust in the researcher, which could lead victims not to participate. Although participants wrote concisely (which is also reflected in the interviews below), the responses were refreshingly direct. However, it was clear that their experiences would need to be expanded and elaborated on in the survivor-led (either semi-structured or more narrative) interviews. On reflection, the benefits of the questionnaire were two-fold: first, it allowed victims to be included who might not have felt comfortable participating in an

interview and second, it provided a useful context of the types of responses from victims which helped inform the later interviews.

Victim & Victim Advocate Interviews

From the questionnaire, I received an email from a participant who wished to share more about his experiences in a video-call in May 2020. After receiving approval from CUREC to conduct the interview, I adopted a more narrative survivor-led approach (VOICE, 2019), where the participant shared their full experiences from disclosure to the criminal justice system and I asked a few clarifying questions at the end. The first interview with a victim was fruitful and highlighted the use of remote interviewing techniques, an approach of which I had previously been slightly sceptical due to the sensitivity of the subject area. A follow up interview was later arranged to allow the participant to share more information.

Narrative interviewing usually takes a life history or life story approach (see Maruna & Liem, 2020 for overview), where individuals share their narrative, from as early as they feel appropriate. This gives the researcher better contextualisation of how they may have come into contact with the perpetrator, for example, or a better understanding of their response and impact to victimisation. A life history method invests a great deal of time in individual participants and is likely to be the best way of ensuring their story is not misconstrued, due to the high level of contextualisation. However, there is certainly no guarantee that a victim's story will not be misunderstood by a researcher in any study (VOICE, 2019). Life history analysis is also a core method of Connell's (1987) masculinities research, as it is useful for understanding the dynamics and development of mens' identities over their life course (Wedgwood, 2009: 333). Although this may be the simplest way of getting a large amount of data from a participant, there is a need to be

sensitive to the vulnerability often caused by childhood abuse. In this approach, the researcher is demanding a great deal of time and energy from the participant, with added pressure for victims to cover all aspects of their life story in great detail. This process can, therefore, lead to retraumatisation. The risk of retraumatisation needed to be considered seriously as the interview should avoid causing harm, specifically if the researcher (as in my case) is not a trained practitioner and is unlikely to have the adequate tools to help an individual navigate through potentially complex traumatic memories. Therefore, I opted not to use the life history approach for these interviews.

To avoid any misunderstanding, I chose to use semi-structured interviews, or a more narrative approach focused on critical moments associated with disclosing which the participant believed were significant. Brinkmann and Kvale define a semi-structured interview as one 'with the purpose of obtaining the descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to describe the meaning of the phenomena' (2015: 6). Their definition is helpful in that it identifies that the interview has a 'purpose', thus allowing for an explanation to interviewees that helps to prevent any confusion. It also infers the 'obtaining of descriptions', with the desired outcome of allowing the participant to describe experiences without initially either theorising or attempting to put forward solutions that might have produced a more positive outcome for them. Further, within any research project that involves qualitative interviews, there is what Briggs describes as the 'field of communicability' (2007: 556), the socially constructed space in which the interview takes place, which is based on the roles and power as perceived by those involved. By its very nature, the field of communicability defines the boundaries to which the conversation would be allowed to go by either party. My position as a researcher differentiated me from a journalist; therefore, there was potential for the interviewee to see this project as part of a wider campaign for justice regarding the abuse they received

as a child.

Semi-structured interviews tend to focus on the 'critical moments' in participants' lives or stories (Thomson et al., 2002), which the participant 'sees as having important consequences for their lives and identities' (Shildrick & MacDonald, 2008: 339). In this thesis, the critical moments which emerged were the abuse itself, the disclosure, and any involvement in the criminal justice system. This can similarly lead to victims feeling pressured to share certain aspects of their story when they may not feel comfortable doing so. As a result of this pressure, I decided to use semi-structured interviews for victim advocates and criminal justice professionals, with victims having the choice of a semi-structured interview or having a more narrative format to the interview. I referred to this in simple terms via email and then asked participants at the start of the call how they wished to proceed. The key reason for not starting with victim interviews were concerns surrounding retraumatisation, particularly while being conducted remotely during a pandemic. However, after the success of the first remote interview, I opted to amend my CUREC to include interviews over the phone or on Microsoft Teams with both victims and victim advocates with lived experience of abuse in my ethics approval. Before agreeing to participate, each interviewee was emailed an Information Sheet and later an Informed Consent Form to look over and sign. This included the details of helplines, similar to those listed in the victim questionnaire. I particularly drew attention to the fact the interview was to be recorded, as unlike face-to-face interviews, participants could not physically see the recording device. A couple of individuals expressed interest but did not follow up.

The interviews with victims (including advocates with lived experiences of abuse) and victim advocates ranged from forty minutes to two hours in length, the average length of an interview being just under an hour. All participants were informed the call

would take no longer than 45 minutes, If it naturally reached this stage, a check-in took place, with the opportunity to continue if the participant opted to. One victim shared that talking about what happened to him has been 'like lifting a tonne of bricks off my back, and speaking to you now is like off-loading and it's a cliché but it's good to talk' (VA9). Although the interview was clearly presented as an academic interview, such feedback is perhaps reflective of the agency and control victims had in what they shared in this space. No victims expressed any distress in participating in this research, despite the challenging subject area. As was the case with the questionnaire, although there was no questioning on the abuse itself, it was still impossible to uncouple victim experiences of abuse with their interactions with trauma, with many still raising details surrounding the abuse. A couple of victims appeared or sounded emotional at points, specifically when speaking about the impact of the abuse. In these moments I would ask if they would like to take a break or end the interview, stressing there was no pressure to continue. Both participants resumed the conversation after taking a second to gather themselves.

Conducting semi-structured interviews over the phone and using Microsoft Teams with prominent victim advocates and practitioners in the field[31] further enriched the data gathered, as each individual who was interviewed had extensive experience advocating and working alongside this community of men and could therefore refer to a wide pool of experience[32]. The inclusion of individuals who work closely with victims was crucial for reaching such a hard-to-access demographic and aided in a better understanding of the experiences and voices that are often ignored. Victim advocates with lived experience of abuse, in particular, were able to share their own experiences, while also discussing the

[31] Professionals included solicitors for the victims and charity leads and practitioners who worked closely alongside them.

[32] Some victim advocates I have spoken to may also have experienced abuse in childhood but not specifically in a footballing context.

important collective identity of survivors and the experiences of others with whom they were working closely.

Access was gained through connections already forged in the field, 'cold emails'[33], and other participants referring individuals who might be useful to this research. The end of remote fieldwork coincided with the release of the highly anticipated Sheldon Inquiry Report investigating the non-recent CSA in football and the subsequent BBC documentary, *Football's Darkest Secret*. I wrote an article for The Conversation in response to the documentary addressing the issue of why many sexual abuse victims' complaints were left off charge sheets (Saker, 2021a). In the article, I included my university email address and two further victims reached out for an interview. Gaining access to victims who did not have their cases taken forward, specifically if they had not waived their anonymity, was particularly challenging. As a result, I had to ensure I was flexible and prepared to allow for any opportunities which may arise. For example, one victim who participated in this research provided the email address of another victim, with their consent, to contact to arrange an interview. The participant responded by asking me to ring him at my earliest convenience to discuss the interview. Although this was only a preliminary discussion, I made sure I had the list of prompts (see Appendix II) and a charged Dictaphone ready, if necessary. After speaking to the participant, he agreed to being involved and asked if the interview could take place then, as he had the evening off work. Although participants wished to be involved in the research, it could be challenging speaking of their experiences, so it was understandable that participants wished to get it done as soon as possible. As a result of this, when preparing any preliminary discussions with participants, including professionals who had busy work schedules, I always allowed time to conduct the interview straight after if requested.

[33] A cold email is an unsolicited e-mail that is sent to a receiver without prior contact.

Questions were also sent in advance to victim advocates so those with lived experience could understand what the conversation would entail and make an informed choice whether to participate or not. I did not explicitly ask any victim advocates with lived experience of abuse about their own victimisation, although many chose to raise it. Participants were clearly told that the questions were just some suggested prompts, with the conversation focusing on areas they felt were important to this research and were comfortable discussing. Victims who were only discussing their own experiences had the option to share as much of their story since disclosure as felt comfortable or to have the researcher ask questions to aid the conversation. This ensured that even in a more structured interview setting the victims had control and autonomy within the dialogue. Around half of victims wished to have prompts, with the others deciding to simply share their experiences chronologically. I purposefully did not ask any questions about the abuse they suffered, although several opened up about their experiences, which ultimately enriched the data. After each interview, a follow-up email was sent to thank the individual for their participation.

The interviews, in particular those with victims, offered the most significant findings. Although the numbers who reached out to participate were relatively limited, those who were willing invested into the process and shared rich and candid observations. The possible reasons for low engagement in this study is explored in the 'Reflections' section of this chapter. Yet, it is interesting to consider the identities of the men here. The victims, mainly White working-class men, were clear, direct, and very open with their experiences. They had taken the step to disclose and therefore were prepared to speak candidly about their experiences, even raising challenging subjects, such as unwanted arousal. I noticed many of the victims wished to skip pleasantries at the start of the call, as they had mentally prepared themselves to speak about their experiences. Most of the

victims had no desire to ease into the interview, so there was not the same process of building rapport seen in other qualitative research studies. It appeared that if they had agreed to an interview, they were ready to talk without any additional formalities. It was interesting that those who offered the most unfiltered accounts were those who had not waived their anonymity, and in particular those whose cases had not progressed in the criminal justice system. It is understandable that these victims were the ones most affected by the working of the system, as detailed in chapter 7.

Criminal Justice Professional Interviews

In addition to the questionnaire and interviews with victims and advocates, I wanted to add the perspective of criminal justice professionals who were involved in these cases. I conducted interviews with four police officers who investigated cases of non-recent abuse in football, looking at the decision-making and challenges faced. After advice from a contact in the police, I contacted five police forces to request (and follow-up where necessary) their participation, due to each of these forces having handled high profile cases. Following the added suggestion from my contact, I also emailed the safeguarding partnerships in each of the respective areas so they were aware of the project and could encourage participation by the police force. I realised based on the early responses from victims and concerns about possible negative attention that many forces might not want to be involved. Despite the forces and officers being anonymised, I was aware it would be a challenge to find individuals willing to participate. However, as thoughtfully stated by an advocate who specialises in male sexual abuse, police officers who request their assistance tend be more attuned to the impact of non-recent abuse and the importance of prosecuting such cases. This is, of course, true in research as well, as those officers who

were willing to speak to me tended to be experienced and proud of the actions they took, and therefore willing to discuss the investigations.

After seeking permission from the Chief Constable of each of the five police forces that conducted a major investigation into non-recent CSA in football, three forces agreed to allow the research. They sent the information of the research study to those officers who led the investigation and it was up to the police officers to contact me for an interview. This resulted in four interviews, with officers from two forces and an individual from Operation Hydrant[34] on their co-ordination and oversight of abuse in football. Two Chief Constables declined their force's involvement; one cited workload and the other did not wish to give any further information. One officer from another police force agreed to an interview but after multiple attempts to schedule a date and time, stated a lack of availability. This small sample is not an attempt to produce definite findings of how cases such as these are investigated or prosecuted; instead, it aims to provide a useful context of the complexities and challenges which impact on a victim's experience. From the four interviews with police officers, three proved to be highly informative and useful, but one police officer shifted tone soon into the interview when victims' experiences were referenced. The participant shifted to very brief answers and the interview concluded very quickly after this.

Although the CPS do not often participate in academic research studies, I sent out emails to the five CPS Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) teams where there were large investigations of non-recent CSA in football. After following up, I received a response from one individual who said they had contacted their seniors to ask if this would be possible. Their response was that there was no precedent for this, but the

[34] Operation Hydrant is a coordination hub established in 2014 to deliver the national policing coordination of non-recent CSA investigations concerning persons of public prominence, or in relation to those offences that took place within institutional settings.

prosecutor could go ahead if they wished. This unique interview offered a highly informative perspective to this research, with the individual spending time drawing attention to the complexities and challenges with prosecuting cases of non-recent abuse in the current system. This helped contextualise the experiences of the victims and provided a thorough understanding of the realities involved with getting cases such as these through the system. All interviews with criminal justice professionals occurred over the phone and Informed Consent Forms were signed and returned prior to interview. Follow up emails were sent to all participants to thank them for their involvement in this research. The interviews with criminal justice professionals ranged from twenty minutes to an hour in length, the average length of an interview being around forty-five minutes.

Victim Autobiographies & Reports

To support the primary data, I also analysed several victim autobiographies, a method inspired by Copeland's (2019) use of autobiographies in narrative criminology to explore terrorists' motivations and understanding of the world. Similarly, Hartill (2019) used Sheldon Kennedy's autobiography, which outlines the sexual abuse he suffered in ice hockey in Canada, to explore the perspective of the sexually abused male victim in a sporting context. Victim autobiographies ensured I had a full understanding of a victims' narrative without the risk of causing retraumatisation through a further interview on their specific experiences. There were four autobiographies from victims who were abused in childhood in grass-roots and professional football (Stewart, 2017; White, 2017; Woodward, 2019; Lean, 2019[35]); two of these were published after this project began.

[35] This autobiography was released by the author online, not published in print.

These are useful resources that provided the full context of each of the men's experience of abuse, with two also referencing experiences of disclosing to police.

Although the use of autobiographies in research can be controversial, due to the input of ghostwriters and influence of editors, I see the benefit of using these resources, as they reflect the stories that the victims wanted to be circulated. Arguably this can be said for all stories shared by victims, as what is chosen to be shared, either verbally or in writing, is completely down to the victim. This should not necessarily be viewed negatively. Even with the use of ghostwriters in autobiographies, the published book was the narrative the victim was choosing to share. Although these are publicly available resources, I asked permission from the four victims to use their resources in this way, as I believed this would best fit the ethical standards of this project. Andy Woodward, Paul Stewart and David Lean all gave permission for their stories to be used in this research. I was unable to make contact with David White, so his story is used more sparingly. I also drew information from a number of publicly available interviews, podcasts, etc. As none of these were long-form narratives, I did not seek permission to use them in this research, as they only represented snapshots of a victim's full experience. In addition to these accounts from victims, I used several reports from clubs (e.g. 'The Geekie Report – Review of Non-Recent Child Sexual Abuse'[36] commissioned by Chelsea FC) and footballing organisations (FA[37] and SFA[38]), which were released at the end of the empirical data-gathering, to contextualise the victims' narratives.

[36] Geekie, 2019

[37] Sheldon, 2021

[38] SFA, 2021

The COVID-19 Pandemic

Although research is rarely linear, this project has been inevitably impacted and influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although several changes are apparent, such as the shift from in-person to phone and video interviews, it was the more subtle changes to the data gathering which may have had the widest implications. Timing plays a key role in all research. Empirical research was due to start in March 2020 – a week before the first UK lockdown was announced. After careful consideration, the online element of the research was launched, which involved sharing and circulating a questionnaire with victims. I made it clear in promoting the questionnaire that it was only for participants feeling in the right frame of mind to contribute, as I was acutely aware that possible participants were facing major concerns in their work and personal lives as a result of the impact of the virus. I did not wish for participation to take a further toll on victims, especially when support services may not have been as readily available as before lockdowns. Furthermore, many charities were facing intensive pressures, causing problems with circulating the questionnaire as originally planned. I did not wish to ask too much from organisations which were struggling to meet the high demand of service-users. The call for interviews was due to take place the week after the UK was put into the first national lockdown, so I took the decision to pause the recruitment of participants. I believed it was not fair or appropriate to be asking individuals to be partaking in interviews, even remotely, when health, personal, and financial concerns were so great. This experience can be compounded with the additional challenges victims may face in lockdown scenarios (see NAPAC, 2020[39]). For example, victims who live in crowded homes may find it harder to access support services, the use of face coverings can be triggering to victims who had their mouth covered by their perpetrator and as the victims

[39] See https://napac.org.uk/feeling-safe-during-covid-19/

were abused by those in positions of authority, the lockdown may trigger inherent mistrust and make it much harder for victims to comply with the order (ibid).

After the COVID-19 situation became slightly more settled in the UK in the summer of 2020, I decided to begin virtual interviews, shifting to phone or video call interviews, with victim advocates and practitioners. Although there is always a challenge of building rapport with participants, remote interviewing comes with its unique set of challenges both for the researcher and for the participant – for example, a fire alarm going off, issues with technology, someone knocking on the door, or simply being unable to find a private area to take the call. All of these events occurred during the interviews for this research. A number of interviews were paused by Amazon deliveries, for example, which halted the flow of the interview. Furthermore, it can also be a challenge to forge connections with individuals remotely, as small social queues can be missed or misinterpreted, particularly when a poor WIFI connection can lead to calls freezing or a time lag between comments. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was discussion surrounding the use of phone interviews in qualitative research, particularly the benefits of using this method (see Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004; Novick, 2007; Mealer & Jones, 2014). At the time of writing, remote interviewing is now a more common method used in criminology, with benefits including some participants wanting to share their story without staring at the researcher, and feeling safe at home, therefore preferring that environment. There were also logistical benefits to switching to remote interviewing, as I was able to speak to participants across the UK far more easily than in person. This was important, as many participants had moved away from the place where the abuse had occurred. Travel expenses which were originally set aside for this were instead donated to a number of charities supporting men abused in childhood.

Data Analysis

Interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of participants and transcribed. The research data (including recordings and transcripts) were stored confidentially using secure encrypted files, which comply with the Data Protection Act, University policies, and advice from CUREC. Each participant was assigned an identifying number in place of their name to keep their identities protected, with identifying information being anonymised when transcribing the interviews. Many victim advocates with lived experience of abuse also shared their own experiences; despite this they were given a victim advocate identifying number (e.g. VA12). I chose to use identifying numbers, instead of pseudonyms, for all participants to avoid inadvertently using the real names of anonymous questionnaire respondents. I did not want to differentiate between victims' narratives by giving those who were interviewed pseudonyms, as it was important every victim narrative was viewed equally in this research. To analyse the data, pre-defined codes were created such as 'disclosure to police' and 'cross examination' which left space to establish themes within these experiences. What has also been emphasised strongly through the empirical research is the complexity of each victim's experience of the criminal justice system, particularly as many victims' contact with the police has spanned many years with numerous cases against their perpetrator. Individual case studies and further details are not provided to protect the identities of the participants. However, attention needs to then be drawn to the danger of oversimplifying complex stories and accounts when anonymising individuals in a study. It was important to balance protecting the participant's identity and also representing their personal narrative, as this can often become lost or misinterpreted in a thesis of multiple participants.

Although the sample size is too small to make any quantitative observations, it can be seen that the composition of the sample follows the trends seen in the media since

November 2016 of widespread non-recent CSA in football. As mentioned, the demographic data from the victim questionnaire revealed participants to identify as male, White, over forty years old, and as coming from a working class or lower middle-class background. An unexpected result of the questionnaire was the number of individuals from Scotland who participated in this research due to Settle the Score[40] sharing the questionnaire on their Twitter page.

Reflections

Positionality and Reflexivity

Throughout any qualitative research study, it is important the researcher explores and locates their positionality on the topic (Phillips & Bowling, 2003). As reflected throughout this thesis when referencing the victims, an individual's positionality is influenced by their numerous, complex, and coalescing identities. Although certain identities are more fixed, many are tied to societal constructions and expectations that influence an individual's perception and experiences. Although I have attempted to outline key facets of my whole identity, including my gender, class, and race, there will be significant factors I have overlooked. Due to this, establishing a 'complete picture' on my social position in this chapter is not possible (Henne & Troshynski 2013: 467). Nevertheless, I am aware of the importance of exploring my positionality in this research as an individual's perspective inevitably influences every stage of the research process, possibly leading to unconscious bias influencing findings. Firstly, it is necessary to question why this area originally sparked interest for the researcher, including what drew them to this specific research question and then consider from what perspective they

[40] Settle the Score is a support group for survivors, victims, and families of CSA within Scottish football.

might approach such a topic. To reflect on how my own perspective may impact this research, I will briefly introduce my background to contextualise my own position. However, this is deliberately a short account, as the research focus should be foremost on the men and their stories.

I was drawn to this research area while completing my MSc thesis on child sexual exploitation and the on-street grooming gangs operating across the country. Coming from a family of football fans (Leicester City FC), I followed the news of the cases of CSA in football breaking in 2016 and considered it to be an important area for further investigation, particularly with the criminal cases which followed. I noted that the numbers of victims coming forward in the press did not match up with the number of victims being taken forward in criminal cases against the perpetrator. My MSc research used an intersectional approach to argue how female victims of child sexual exploitation in Rotherham and Rochdale experienced discrimination based on the intersection of their class, gender, and age – constructing a perception of the girls as 'undesirables' (Jay, 2014: 69), which led to them being let down by social services and the criminal justice system. This has ultimately inspired the theoretical framework of both my MPhil and DPhil theses. After a literature search, I found limited academic research on CSA against boys and non-recent abuse within the general area of criminology, with no research at this time on the cases in football.

As identity is at the core of my research, it is important to consider the impact of my own identity and background on this study. As Akala stated,

> I was born into these currents, I did not create or invent them and I make no claims to objectivity. I find the whole idea that we can transcend our experiences; and take a totally unbiased look at the world to be totally ridiculous, yet that's what many historians and academics claim to do. We are all influenced by what we are exposed to and experience; the best we can hope for is to try and be as fair as possible from within the bias inherent in existence. The personal is the political (Akala, 2018: 22).

Therefore, I should acknowledge I am a young, educated, White woman, who is studying individuals whose identities and experiences differ from my own. Yet, although my background is unlike many of the men in this research, there is some familiarity in the environments in which we were raised. I also attended a local state comprehensive school in Leicester, where football played a significant role in the local community. Both of my parents came from working-class backgrounds and I witnessed the transition that our family took towards a more affluent middle-class standing as I grew older. However, it was not until I attended higher education that I became fully aware of how subjective and context-specific class identity was. As a result of these experiences and my own childhood, I have been very interested in the role of class on an individual's experience of many different institutions, in particular the criminal justice system. Furthermore, as a woman and a feminist, my decision to incorporate a feminist-inspired approach was crucial to this research as I believed that it was not possible to investigate the sexual abuse of boys without acknowledging the widespread sexual violence against women. Ultimately, the large-scale sexual violence experienced by girls and women (Rape Crisis, 2022) was and is occurring simultaneously to the abuse of boys. The tie between the two is highlighted by Connell's hegemonic masculinity, with the power dynamics being crucial to understand the status of both male and female victims. I believe using a feminist-inspired approach allows space for better collaboration for those studying child sexual abuse and exploitation, as the experiences of male victims and those of female are often viewed as a zero-sum game.

Furthermore, I must also consider how my identity may have impacted on the mens' involvement in this research. A key challenge for most researchers is building rapport with participants to ensure they feel comfortable with sharing their story and experiences.

There is widespread debate on the benefits and challenges of both 'insider' and 'outsider' researchers (e.g. Merton, 1972; Miller and Glassner, 1997). In this context, an insider would be a White working-class man. Despite not being a victim of abuse, familiarity between the victims in this research and a male researcher may have helped build rapport. I am certainly an outsider in this study, despite my own personal experience of seeing the power of football in local communities. Merton (1972) similarly acknowledged the opportunities and obstacles for both insiders and outsiders in research. The benefit for an outsider, he argued, is the experience of 'detachment' often means you will see what others take for granted. Yet, Miller and Glassner (1997) draw important attention to the possibility of outsider confusion which may lead to misunderstandings and misrepresentation. For these reasons, it is important that the voices of the victims are centred, with my position as an outsider being beneficial to observing certain elements to which insiders may be unintentionally blind. From my own perspective, which I acknowledge may be vastly different from the viewpoint of the participants in this research, many victims were able to open up to me precisely because I differed so much from them. I believe I was a non-threatening presence, due to my age and my gender. I do not believe my identity impacted heavily on building rapport with participants once they agreed to an interview, but it may have impacted on them feeling comfortable enough to reach out to me. I was fully aware of the possible downsides my outsider status could have on building trust and rapport with potential participants, so attempted to use the snowball method and receive recommendations by trusted individuals (solicitors, charity executives, etc.). The victim questionnaire also acted as a proxy for those participants who may not have felt as comfortable speaking to me in person (albeit remotely). Nevertheless, it is likely that a male researcher would face similar challenges with getting

a wide participant pool due to the previously documented difficulty of securing the participation of male victims of sexual violence in research (Javaid, 2015).

This type of study requires a skill set and understanding that I believe I have gained through my professional experience in working in various roles with vulnerable individuals. In my position as an Appropriate Adult[41], I saw the rapid increase of non-recent and on-going CSA and CSE cases coming through the system. This meant I was increasingly required to be present in victim support interviews, largely for non-recent CSA cases. Through supporting the victims in writing their Victim Impact Statement (VIS), it became clear the detrimental impact their childhood abuse was having throughout their adult lives. These experiences were essential in framing my approach and understanding of the topic, particularly the emphasis I put on placing victims' voices at the forefront of my research. This experience and other research with vulnerable individuals made me fully aware of issues surrounding vicarious or secondary trauma on researchers (see Williamson et al., 2020), a subject on which I have received training.

COVID-19 and Setting Boundaries

Conducting empirical research remotely at the start of the pandemic understandably produced many challenges. When the state of public health seemed so uncertain, I certainly did not wish to be bothering individuals who were facing their own physical, psychological, and financial struggles, as well as the lockdown exacerbating issues they may have felt more acutely as a result of their abuse and trauma. Although I decided to pause interviews temporarily, when I eventually started interviewing, the UK was still

[41] The role of an Appropriate Adult is to safeguard the interests, rights, entitlements, and welfare of children and vulnerable adults who are suspected of a criminal offence, as well as offering assistance to victims where necessary.

under governmental restrictions and all interviews were conducted remotely. As a result, the empirical data gathering took around nine months, when the allocated time for conducting interviews was originally around four to five months. There were many challenges to contend with for victims when sharing such traumatic memories; these can be compounded when juggling working from home and childcare, for example. A challenge, therefore, was ensuring support would be available while setting appropriate boundaries with participants. This is reflected in the following observation by a participant when a victim did an interview with a newspaper:

> "Right, we're going to do this interview" and they did it and they just said "thanks" and left. What they didn't do was to take responsibility of saying, I need to check back in with this guy in a week's time. They just left. The guy feels elated that they've been spoken to, they feel elated that somebody has listened to them and believed their story. They've got it out there. So you get this big outpouring and the journalist listened and they reported and then, thanks very much, newspapers today is chip paper tomorrow. But you've got to support these people all the way through (VA3).

I was viscerally aware of the power dynamics in place, where a victim sharing their narrative can ultimately help progress a researcher's professional career. As a result of this, the victims' welfare was prioritised in every stage of the research design, including when considering the need for appropriate aftercare. However, it would not be appropriate for the researcher to provide support after an interview takes place, which is why it was important to offer the details for external support resources, such as the agreement with the National Male Survivor Helpline and Online Support Service to promote their services for victims to contact if required.

Although, the challenges faced by the researcher cannot be compared to that of the participants, a growing trend in research is to acknowledge the reflections of the researcher (see Campbell, 2002). The compulsory Vicarious Trauma workshops offered through the Social Science Division were highly informative, as they outlined the danger

of invalidating or dismissing one's own distress in sensitive research. As a quote shared during the Vicarious Trauma workshop highlighted, 'The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet' (Remen, 1996: 51-52). A resilient researcher is one who acknowledges the challenges and tries to mitigate against these throughout the process. However, when preparing for the fieldwork in Michaelmas 2019, no-one could have predicted the pandemic which followed. I was working remotely during the pandemic, conducting fieldwork in a shared house of four with two others also working from home. There were times when I had to ask them to sit in the garden so I could conduct an interview to minimise noise disruption and so sensitive material would not be overhead. This reflects not only the need to be adaptive in research but also the disruption in the everyday lives of researchers. It was also much harder to 'switch off' after undertaking this research, as there was no separation between work and home during this period of lockdown. After conducting interviews, I was unable to easily meet with friends or colleagues to debrief the challenges of conducting fieldwork in a pandemic. Specifically, the experience of 'Zoom fatigue'[42] (Bailenson, 2021) after conducting several interviews resulted in my reluctance to socialise over the phone or using video technology. Therefore, as well as noting the benefits of remote methods, which have now become commonplace in criminology, the challenges should similarly be acknowledged.

Limitations

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study, as this thesis cannot capture every element of a victims' narrative and identity. The sample of participants is

[42] Zoom fatigue is the feeling of exhaustion or burnout that often occurs after attending a series of virtual video meetings.

relatively small and participants are on the whole self-selecting. This means that caution is needed in generalising from the experiences of participants to all victims of non-recent abuse in football. Garland (2011) has readily warned of the danger of generalising experiences of communities. Thus, this thesis will attempt not to tell 'a single story' when speaking of victims' experiences (VA5). Experiences of abuse are incredibly difficult to talk about and to share with a researcher, and the small number of participants likely reflects an understandable reluctance on the part of victims to come forward to participate in research. What I hope this study represents is an in-depth exploration of their experiences and a contribution to a small but growing literature that has started to document the complexities and contours of non-recent CSA. Furthermore, although I have no way of knowing the true impact of the switch to remote interviewing and the overall impact of the pandemic on participation, it would be naïve to not consider its role in shaping this research. Though this thesis has explored a number of victim accounts, further research is necessary. Ultimately, this research would have benefited from a collaboration with an organisation working directly with men. This of course does not reach those who turn their back on such networks after a negative experience of disclosing or of the criminal justice system. Nevertheless, the best results in this research were garnered through the 'snow-ball effect', where men contacted other victims they knew to suggest participation. A partnership with an organisation would allow for this to occur on a larger scale within a network of victims. A further exploration of the limitations of this research study is reflected in the final chapter of this thesis.

Overview

For this research study, I took inspiration from the methodologies used in narrative victimology and the 'survivor-led' approach found in sports sociology. However, instead

of using a full life history technique, this thesis instead used a number of methods and resources to reflect the stories of victims, including a questionnaire and semi-structured (and narrative) interviews. Traditional narrative interviewing is certainly not appropriate for all vulnerable participants, due to the time and energy required to participate, as victims are asked to share their life stories. Therefore, there were no expectations placed on any victims to share more than what they felt comfortable, with the option of having prompts to guide the conversation if necessary. At the core of this approach was the victim's choice in how to proceed, as it was important for victims to feel as comfortable as possible in this process. Although victim advocates and criminal justice professionals offered useful context in this study, it was ultimately the victim's perspective which helped to give an understanding of the barriers that stopped them from speaking out. The victims' narratives are not aiming to establish scientific fact (see Maruna & Liem, 2020), but explore the victim's own perspective of events, their method of sense-making, and its influence on their perception of self. Therefore, survivor-led and narrative inspired methods were the most appropriate techniques for answering the research questions and unpacking the impact of identity on victimisation and its aftermath. As highlighted in the previous section, this research has a relatively small number of participants; however, I hope to empirically contribute to the limited but important work undertaken into the abuse of young boys by male perpetrators in sports sociology (e.g. Hartill, 2009). Previous literature which has touched upon identity and male victimisation has focused solely on masculinities, with no attention to other factors linked to identity and the societal constructions and expectations attached to it. Therefore, these methods were viewed as the most effective for hearing as many victims as possible and making sense of how their identities both influenced, and were influenced by, the State and criminal justice response.

Chapter 5

Individual Victimisation and Intersecting Dimensions of Powerlessness

Football is more than a means for boys to grow into an adult world, and to earn the respect of our dads or grudging older brothers;
it is a way of writing our identities as we grow (Tempany, 2016: 158).

Introduction

Identities are complex, coalescing parts of ourselves, which hold varying levels of significance and power due to being tied to societal constructions and expectations. These projections can influence an individual's sense of self. As previously stated, the demographic data from the victim questionnaire reveals the participants are male, White, over forty years old and come from mainly a working-class or lower middle-class background. This is reflective of the identities and characteristics of the victims who waived their anonymity and spoke out in the media as the football scandal broke in 2016. As the theory and methodology chapters note, central to these findings is that each victim is an autonomous individual and is acknowledged as such. Nevertheless, a number of key themes emerge from the narratives of the men that help us understand which factors played a significant role in enabling their vulnerability and acting as a barrier to stop the victims from speaking out. By drawing on the tools of hegemonic masculinity, hetero-normativity, and societal perceptions surrounding age and class, we can better understand how the victims were disempowered and silenced in the hyper-masculine sporting environment of the time. The societal construction of hegemonic vs. subordinated and marginalised masculinities (Connell, 1987) is central to this discussion, with the latter part of this chapter investigating sites in which these identities were cultivated, such as in

the footballing environment. I argue that an interconnection of identities left the boys intersectionally invisible, therefore vulnerable to both abuse and being ignored by the football clubs, authorities, and wider society. These characteristics and themes have been garnered from the victim's narratives, including the autobiographies, victim questionnaires, and interviews, to explore the victims' own reflection on their sense of self.

Ideal Victim

Societal expectations regarding gender norms and their contribution in silencing the boys needs to be acknowledged, as male victims of sexual violence tend to disclose later than women throughout their life course (O'Leary, Easton, & Gould, 2017). This is reflected in the child abuse statistics, with the NSPCC noting that girls are over five times more likely to speak up about sexual abuse than boys, even though rates of abuse are fairly consistent between the sexes (BBC Sport, 2016). For clarity, in relation to silencing, this research is referring to the barriers created within society which dissuaded victims from speaking out and ultimately ensured their silence. Building on the notion of an 'ideal' victim introduced in chapter 2, it is quite apparent the men now disclosing are far from the image that Christie (1986) first prescribed of archetypal victimhood, i.e. an elderly woman attacked by a stranger. As Gabrielle Shaw, chief executive of NAPAC explains, 'Adult survivors don't always present as the perfect victim' (quoted in a newspaper article by Roberts, 2019). This certainly placed those few who did come forward prior to Andy Woodward's disclosure at a disadvantage, as the legitimacy of acceptance often affords the victim opportunity for public attention and outcry. It impacts both on their reception and the support resources provided. Yet, even as blameless and vulnerable children, the victims in this research did not fit into the ideal victim paradigm.

For example, Christie's perception of an ideal victim is that they must be harmed by a stranger, whereas in cases of CSA, the perpetrator is most often known to the victim. A key method of grooming employed by the football coaches was accessing the victims through their own families, often ingratiating themselves into a victim's home. At a time when the sexual predator was often assumed to be a stranger lurking in an alleyway, the charismatic football coach who was well-liked by the victim's family and within the wider community was rarely suspected. The stereotype of perpetrators at this time is reflected by Lean stating, 'Child Abusers were in those days, seen as very strange people, who lived alone and they most certainly were not talented young football coaches with girlfriends in their mid 20's' (2019: 36). This highlights that having an ideal perpetrator was arguably as important as an ideal victim in influencing the audience's, i.e. society's, response to CSA. The fact the victims were also boys further impacts on the perception of them, as sexual abuse against boys or men goes against the hetero-normative perception of victimhood, particularly with regards to sexual abuse. Commonly held misconceptions by society often led to assumptions that the perpetrator will be male and the victim, female (Cromer & Goldsmith, 2010). Therefore, the intersection of age with gender is pertinent and is explored in greater depth in this chapter.

Nevertheless, despite this, age should fit the boys within parts of Christie's notion of an ideal victim, as by law, the boys did not have the capacity to consent, meaning they in fact meet the criteria of 'weak'. Yet, as highlighted by their opponents callously referring to the victims as the 'paedophile lads' (Fallon, 2018) or 'Barry's bum boys' (Davies, 2018) and later, with the failure by the media to report on incidents when they started to be revealed in the 1990s (Conn, 2016b), this was not the case. The prevailing culture at the time did not acknowledge the victims as significant, due to their intersectional

invisibility. This draws attention to the erroneous reality in society that some victims are branded more deserving, or rather more 'ideal,' than others. Christie identified that certain crimes generate differing levels of sympathy from the community as the societal response shows that individuals 'must have power and visibility if they are to gain legitimacy as victims' (1986: 1). Ring's use and development of this theoretical tool to focus on the legal and political responses to reports of non-recent CSA in Ireland is pertinent, as although the victims broke into the public consciousness there was a limit to what they could achieve with their voice due to being viewed as 'outsiders' by the Irish State (2018: 152). The response of the public and the State to the victims in this research is developed in full in chapter 7, with consideration to how White working-class boys were far from being regarded as the type of victim of sexual violence which would generate public attention and outcry. By looking at the victim's identities in this chapter, I start to unpack if their ambiguous status influenced their treatment at the time of the abuse and in their disclosures as adults.

White Working-Class Boys

At the time of the abuse, the victims were all White working-class boys, with a small number identifying as being raised in lower middle-class homes. Many victims lived in council housing near and around areas facing socio-economic deprivation across the UK. Although the experiences of White working-class children have undoubtedly evolved since this time, their status in society remains negligible. An example of this was demonstrated in the report, 'Underachievement in Education by White Working-Class Children' (House of Commons Select Education Committee: 2014), showing that British working-class boys are the lowest performing cohort in the country. Schooling is perhaps the clearest way to see class difference and is reflective of the contemporary experience

of those at the same point of their lives as the victims in this thesis. Academic author Kenan Malik, writing in The Guardian (2018), states ethnicity is not, as widely believed, a primary cause of academic disadvantage. Rather, ethnicity distracts from the crux of the problem: class. He highlights, 'So fixated (are) academics and policy-makers by ethnic categories, that they largely ignored (social class). The 2000 Ofsted report, for instance, demonstrated that the impact of social class on school performance was more than twice as great as that of ethnicity. Yet, it disregarded its own data and focused on the problems posed by ethnic differences.' Malik's remarks are perhaps too simplistic, as there is need to acknowledge the structural and historic differences regarding race and ethnicity. However, for the purposes of this thesis, I focus on the specific experiences and disadvantages of White working-class boys.

Malik goes on to say: 'The debate about the White working-class … poses the problem as a zero-sum game. It pitches the interests of working-class Whites against those of minority ethnic groups and imagines that too great a focus on black and Asian children has undermined White working-class culture.' This ties back to the literature on the lack of theorising of 'whitemaleness' (see Potter, 2015), leaving them theoretically invisible and often disregarded in public policy. This is starting to be addressed with the publication of the House of Commons Select Education Committee's (2021) 'The Forgotten: How White Working-Class Pupils Have Been Let Down, and How to Change It', acknowledging the multi-generational disadvantage, place-based factors, including regional economics and underinvestment, family experience of education and a lack of social capital which impact on White working-class boys' experiences (ibid). As Maguire states, 'boys' low academic attainment rates coupled with men's high unemployment, crime, incarceration and suicide rates have fuelled male 'crisis-talk' since the start of the nineties' (2016: 39). It is only in the last few years that White working-class and lower

middle-class men have been able to start to speak out ‘en masse’ about abuse, with the reasons why this was previously discouraged in society being explored below and in the next chapter of this thesis. For ease of discussion, I attempt to introduce each of the intersectional identities individually to investigate what societal constructions related to identity were barriers to them speaking out about sexual abuse. Although, it should be emphasised that the power lies in how these identities coalesce together to form the specific and unique status of White working-class boys.

Masculinities

It was noted previously that males historically disclose abuse suffered in childhood later than females (O’Leary & Barber, 2008). The reasons for this are complex and dependent on the individual, yet fears about others’ perception of their masculinity were raised by various participants of this research as a barrier for disclosing both in childhood and since becoming an adult. It is perhaps impossible to separate their experience as a man from their experience as a victim, which is a theme throughout this thesis. Nevertheless, societal expectations surrounding masculinity appear to be particularly pertinent in sporting environments which prescribe certain expectations and behaviours for their players, as one advocate stated, ‘I think when you’re in a hyper-masculine environment there can be rigidity [in what is expected]’ (VA7). The abuse, and response to such trauma, did not fit the determined narrative which boys, and particularly young footballers, were expected to follow. It did not allow for complex expressions of emotion, leaving the boys feeling that they had no choice but to suffer in silence. One advocate noted this was aggravated by ‘social stereotypes’ that ‘boys don’t cry’, which was upheld vigorously in the sporting environment (VA4). These characteristics were associated with femininity, which at this time was viewed as the antithesis of acceptable masculinity.

This is summed up by a participant stating, 'So just that culture where [you] were judged [… for] just being in touch with your emotions and [being] in touch with your pain is seen as inherently feminine and therefore thought to be denigrated or dismissed. All of this stuff around gender norms basically' (VA10).

The theoretical tool of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987) can help us make sense of this, as the archetypal man (or boy) in this community and context does not express any perceptions of weakness. Hegemonic, in this instance, represents a hyper-masculine or traditional perception of acceptable masculinity, one who is physically strong, assertive, and confident. In fact, any show of a 'feminine' characteristic, such as vulnerability, is viewed as a threat to masculinity (see Kimmel, 2003). It is also significant to note the hierarchies of men which Demetriou (2001) refers to as 'internal' masculinities are operating in parallel (or perhaps as a result of) the subordination of women: the 'external' hierarchies. Gender norms similarly offer women limited expectations of behaviour, with deviations from accepted variations of femininity being widely unaccepted. This ensures Connell's (2005) assertion that hegemonic masculinity is both at the top of a hierarchy of masculinities and above women. The marginalisation of certain types of boys and men and the subordination of women can occur in tandem, with hegemonic masculinity dominating over all.

In many communities and groups a clear example of hegemonic masculinity is the football player, as highlighted in the introductory chapter, football is rooted at the heart of working-class communities and has since grown to become a much loved national sport. Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) expansion of hegemonic masculinity to bring in geography is crucial here, as in this specific local context of White working-class culture, the professional football player was the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity. Stewart described being a professional footballer as 'The chance to be a hero, to mean something

to someone, if only for 90 minutes' (2017: 262). Sporting stars are often the epitome of hegemonic masculinity, as they are strong, competitive, authoritative, and confident; however, these young boys were not afforded an elevated status as youth players in professional teams. They were instead viewed as White working-class boys which resulted in their disempowered and subordinated status. In this context, hegemonic masculinity ultimately referred to a traditional version of masculinity, with anything which did not conform being viewed as subordinated or marginalised. However, each boy held the potential to move away from their subordinated/ marginalised identity through progressing in a career in football. This gave the boys vested interest in becoming professional footballers, as it provided an opportunity to elevate up the hierarchy of masculinities, while offering financial gains, class mobility, and raised status to their families. This goal, and all it entailed, is unpacked in the 'Hyper Masculine Football Culture' section of this chapter.

Additionally, in this hegemonic masculine ideal, boys and men are expected to 'fight back' if attacked. This was even noted in the response by some public figures when the abuse came to light in November 2016, with a public declaration of such attitudes shown by darts champion and Sky Sports pundit, Eric Bristow. He launched a Twitter rant after the scandal of abuse in football was revealed, making comments such as: 'Might be a looney but if some football coach was touching me when I was a kid as I got older I would have went back and sorted that poof out.' He went on to say, 'Dart players tough guys footballers wimps. Bet the rugby boys are ok ha ha' (De Menezes, 2016). Bristow reflected the stereotype that men should fight off abusers, feeding into a sense that true masculinity meant being able to stop any form of sexual victimisation. Despite the comments being widely condemned, it shone a light on the attitude which many had previously, and in some cases, currently hold regarding the sexual abuse of boys. Dixon

refers to Bristow's comments in his study exploring the public's response to the allegations of widespread abuse in football. He found that many survey participants agreed with Bristow, reflecting the stereotype that footballers should be tough men who fight off abusers (2019: 78). These perceptions are still present in society and can act as a barrier for men to break their silence and disclose their abuse.

A number of victims reflected these ideas, as one shared in his autobiography, 'I also felt angry and ashamed with myself for not having the presence of mind to shove him away or to shout for help' (White, 2017: 58). Despite being children, the boys were left feeling emasculated due to not being able to fight off their abusers (Chan, 2014). Many participants noted that shame was at the centre of this, as rigid notions of masculinity, or hegemonic, or hyper-masculinity, were able to continue through shaming any boys who did not conform. Perpetrators utilised these feelings of shame to manipulate a false sense of culpability, as victims were made to 'feel complicit, if you didn't fight back physically like 'men are supposed to do', that you must have wanted it or at least you didn't mind it' (VA2). Societal expectations over how men should protect themselves ensured they never showed any perceived weakness which could be used to question their masculinity. Hegemonic ideas such as these did not allow space for men to be victims, keeping the boys silent over the abuse, as they were worried how they would be judged if it came to light.

Fighting back is also at odds with the 'weakness' required in the ideal victim archetype introduced by Christie (1986). This is important in a society which failed to consider that boys could also be victims. Even linguistically, women are still represented as the common victim in discussions of victimhood and sexual violence. This misconception permeates popular culture with victims often automatically assumed to be 'she' and perpetrators gendered as 'he.' One participant summed it up well stating, 'With

boys and men, they're less likely to recognise they're being abused, less likely to be identified by professionals as being abused or at-risk of it, less likely to disclose and they're less likely to engage in services' (VA7). This puts young boys in a precarious position and reveals how non-recent abuse of boys in institutions could continue for so long. Gender has an impact not only on the victim's experience of abuse but also their experiences in the social, political, and legal space which is unpacked in the following chapters of this thesis.

Unwanted Arousal

A further barrier for boys and men speaking out about sexual victimisation is experiences of unwanted arousal and ejaculation during the abuse, which was introduced in chapter 2. A few participants powerfully articulated this issue, drawing important attention to feelings of complicity which such a response can denote. As one victim stated, 'How do you know that first time if you've never done it, how do you tell somebody and how do you put it into words that maybe you were sexually aroused yourself, maybe in some cases ejaculated, or in some cases made him ejaculate, whatever it may be. To have that come out and talk about it is obviously very difficult' (VA6). There is stigma attached to unwanted arousal and ejaculation, with the lack of education on biological and physical responses to sexual violence acting as a barrier for speaking out even as an adult. This false idea of culpability was often used by perpetrators to silence boys, as they told victims they were enjoying it and their physical response was an act of consent. Unwanted arousal 'gives that extra leverage to the perpetrator to enforce silence, to enforce compliance, to maintain secrecy' (VA4). As discussed above, shame and embarrassment is at the core of ensuring victims did not speak out.

Several professional advocates and practitioners shared that this was a familiar problem in their work, with many male victims of childhood abuse feeling traumatised by their own biological response. Specifically, feelings of self-loathing and low self-worth materalised as a result of feeling a sense of responsibility for their abuse (e.g. Woodward, 2019). Confusion over their physical response gave perpetrators a hold over an individual, with one victim stating, 'I'd got no voice, I didn't really know what was going on to be honest, because you'd never had a sexual experience at that age, at 11. […] You know it's wrong but once you've gone along with it once or twice, you've sort of come complicit in it or it feels complicit and you don't want to rock the boat' (VA9). These feelings of complicity continued into adulthood indicating the need for better acknowledgement and understanding of unwanted arousal and other physical issues which impact on male victims of abuse in society more generally. The impact of the abuse also had a lasting effect on many of the men, with one victim stating that they struggled to engage in certain sexual acts and foreplay as a result of the abuse (Lean, 2019: 22). As demonstrated above, the dominant hegemonic masculine idea did not leave space for male victimisation, which resulted in the victims remaining silent so as not to have their status diminished any further.

Confusion Around Sexuality

Leading on from this, physical responses tied into confusion surrounding a victim's sexuality, with shame often stopping them from seeking help in the hetero-normative environment of football. Andy Woodward sharing his thought process at the time of the abuse sums this up, as he considered, 'Am I gay, maybe? This bloke has been fucking me and I've not stopped him, have I? He talks about loving me. What do I do about that?' (2019: 114). A sensitive exploration is needed to understand how abuse compounds

feelings of confusion, which perpetrators often utilise to ensure silence. One participant who discussed these feelings stated, 'Very often, a lot of confusion – "did it make me gay?" "Am I gay?" All that sexual orientation stuff can become very confusing, particularly in adolescence when hormones are kicking in strong' (VA4). Andy Woodward further outlined the confusion: 'Well, I'd enjoyed the physical sensation of an orgasm, which I'd never experienced before. What did that say about my sexuality, though?' (2019: 50) By declaring their abuse, the victims believed they would be labelled as gay.

This needs to be contextualised at a time when homophobia was particularly pertinent in both society and footballing culture. As Woodward recalled, 'It's only thirty years ago, but in the wider world, and especially in football, homosexuality wasn't accepted the way it is by most people today. Think about it: this was the mid-eighties; AIDS was happening and the papers were calling it the 'Gay Plague', weren't they? AIDS made that worse. The idea of being gay unsettled me. So did the idea of that being what people would assume if they knew about me and Bennell' (2019: 114). The intersection of gender and sexuality is crucial, as boys were playing at a time when heterosexuality was presumed in the game (Hartill, 2009). It was only in May 2022 that the seventeen-year-old Blackpool footballer Jake Daniels become the first active[43] openly gay professional football player in Britain. Any diversion from hetero-normativity at this time would often be met with homophobia and bullying, as Andy Woodward shared some of the slurs which boys aimed at himself and other victims at the time of the abuse, with older players taunting – 'Oh you're Barry's bum boy, aren't you? Bet he does such-and-such to you, doesn't he? Does he touch you up the arse?' (2019: 106) and 'Oh, bet

[43] Justin Fashanu came out came out as gay in an interview with the tabloid press while still playing professionally in October 1990, becoming the only player in professional English football to do so until Jake Daniels in 2022.

Bennell's been banging you all these years' (ibid: 121). The fact that such slurs were made towards boys by their peers and even other coaching staff reflects the attitudes towards abuse in society at the time. Even today, referring to Bristow's Twitter comments about the boys not fighting back, it is interesting to note he refers to the perpetrators as 'poofs'[44], rather than paedophiles. To Bristow, the fact that the abuse involved two males was more problematic than it being the sexual abuse of a child. Of course, sexual abuse is not a reflection of anyone's sexuality, nor does any sexual identity come as a result of the abuse. Although questioning one's sexuality is a common rite of passage, in the context of abuse this has not stemmed from natural inclinations and curiosity, leaving boys confused of what the result of the sexual abuse is and what are common adolescent feelings.

Framed in the societal and gender norms of the time, the abuse was particularly harmful to men's perceptions of their sense of self. As a participant stated, 'It just really epitomised that model of this is what it is to be a man and therefore if you're a victim of abuse then you're not a real man' (VA10). The idea of a 'real' man ties into Javaid's research on male rape resulting in society's 'feminisation' of the victim, as it is violating hetero-normative principles (2015: 275). This impinges on the boys' individual and authentic view of themselves and is shown in the challenges which the men faced in developing relationships after the abuse, as they try to perform a version of 'hyper-masculine' or 'hegemonic male sexuality'. Woodward shares when he first started to have relationships with women: 'I needed the sex: the physical contact and the reassurance about my sexual identity' (2019: 131). Also stating, 'I've always felt I needed to prove myself to women, to prove to myself that I'm like any 'normal' bloke' (ibid: 100). This led some men to struggle to form healthy relationships and to trust their

[44] A derogatory and offensive term to reference a gay or effeminate man.

sexual partners. Although this was not explicitly elaborated on in the interviews, Woodward's remarks can be seen to have partial links to protest masculinities (see Connell, 1987) as he seemed to be attempting to embody a form of hyper-masculinity; however, his actions indicate a lack of control with his behaviour. Many of the men discussed acting out in anger and frustration after the abuse in an attempt to regain control. At the core of these issues was shame, which Woodward refers to as 'the poison that seeps into the rest of your life' (2019: 47). The expectation of hetero-normativity posed a real challenge for the victims to speak out about the abuse, as they were lead to feel complicit and ashamed of their so-called involvement in what happened to them as children.

Age

Another factor at the core of the victims' identity was their age, intersecting with other identities such as gender and class, which gave the boys their status. Sports provide a key opportunity 'to construct boys as pseudo-men' (Hartill, 2009: 237), as the lifestyle of a young player is rooted in travel away from home, being surrounded by adults, and being placed in high pressure situations. This blurring of the boundary between 'boy' and 'man' (Brackenridge, 2001) was employed by various perpetrators in these cases to normalise the abuse for the players. Hartill (2009) has shown that the welfare and voice of young players was being increasingly ignored in sport due to the 'adultification'[45] they undergo. The association between childhood, vulnerability, and innocence can, however, be highly problematic. This is touched upon when Bennell made a chilling comment in reference to the first victim he was charged with abusing in 1994 when leaving court: 'Little boy? He

[45] Adultification is often experienced by Black women, but there is research highlighting the experiences of Black boys as well. For more information, see Davis & Marsh (2020).

wasn't a little boy; he's as big as me, 14' (quoted in Davies, 2018). This is in reference to a 13-year-old boy he abused at a training camp while in Florida, USA. Bennell's assertion points to the attempts of perpetrators to adultify their victims, having the public view them as 'mini adults' (Boswell, 2018) rather than innocent children.

Young age normally invokes perceptions of innocence and purity; however, when considering older or teenage boys, more complicity is placed on them. These societal constructions linked with masculinity can be seen in the responsibility of young men to act as breadwinners, which is discussed later in this chapter. A contemporary example of the adultification of young boys is their recent association with the strong rise in knife crime (Shaw, 2019). This is particularly racialised and targeted against working-class youth. Young, working-class boys are viewed as violent thugs, not children; arguably influenced by 'uncontrollable' hormonal changes. Although this is particularly the case for young Black boys, it is also experienced by White working-class young people as well. Associating young boys with their sexuality in such a way is highly problematic, particularly when it comes to implying any kind of culpability for their abuse. This will undoubtedly impact society's perception of young boys, as they are not seen as the 'innocent' victims that society associates with CSA. In fact, age was an identity factor which made them both vulnerable to abuse, while also ensuring their silence. Boys faced the paradox that despite them being seen as adults in the game, they had no legitimate voice to speak out and be heard due to the unyielding power of the coach which is discussed below. The voice of the athletes was not considered (see Brackenridge et al., 2004), with the role of the sporting culture playing a critical role in allowing the perpetuation of abuse.

As has been noted, coaches often targeted boys who exhibited perceived vulnerabilities, with Andy Woodward noting the coach would 'settl[e] on the softer, more

vulnerable boys' (2019: 334). David White similarly comments, 'He'd handpicked me as an ideal victim, of course, well aware that I was an obedient, compliant sort of kid who'd meekly go where I was told with no questions asked' (2017: 65). This draws attention to not only the hierarchy of masculinities but hegemony over women, as more feminine characteristics are perceived as making the boys vulnerable to sexual violence. As has been previously shown, girls and women are presumed to be victims of sexual violence, with men as the perpetrators. Although the boys were viewed as 'ideal' by the perpetrators, the authorities and wider society did not view the boys as vulnerable to abuse. In essence, their status resulted in their silence, as even if they had spoken out, it is highly likely they would not have been listened to due to their low position of power. As young White working-class boys, they did not represent the hegemonic ideals which would have been listened to at the time. However, through the more recent publicity about large-scale cases of non-recent abuse against young boys and girls, perceptions are starting to change. As a result, there has been a shift in the socio-cultural landscape towards attitudes and understanding of CSA which is explored in depth in the following chapter.

Language was further identified as a barrier for the boys, as it is important to acknowledge that many of the victims simply may not have had the words as children to understand or disclose what was happening to them. One simply stated, 'So we're talking about the late 60s, early 70s. We didn't have the words, didn't have the language for the issue' (VA8). Some of the boys were as young as nine years old, so didn't understand what was happening to them. Woodward poignantly notes, 'I was like a little boy, upset but with no words to explain why' (2019: 153). This left many victims feeling a sense of culpability through their initial silence. The interviews highlighted that these concerns were utilised by perpetrators when manipulating the boys into thinking no one would

believe them if they did speak out. This research reveals for many this belief stayed with them into adulthood and is explored in more depth in chapter 6. Age played a key role in the victims' intersectional invisibility as an environment was created through which hierarchical power differences within the clubs and society meant that the victims did not feel that they had a legitimate voice that would be listened to by those in authority (see Brackenridge et al., 2004). This is particularly pertinent for the importance of narratives in these cases, as it offers a way for men to reclaim their own story through speaking out.

Race, Power & Class

Although gender and age are important elements of a victims' whole identity and sense of self, I wish to emphasise the often ignored influence of class and background and how it has acted as a barrier for boys to speak out. Although, of course, not all victims of abuse are working-class, shown by the high rates of abuse which occurred in private boarding schools in the same era (e.g. Renton, 2014). Nevertheless, there has always been an evident and dominant class structure operating in the UK, with George Orwell describing England as 'the most class-ridden country under the sun' in 1941 (1968: 67). This British sense of class is unique and inherently politically driven, yet there has been a shift away from the focus on class in academia, towards the role of race and ethnicity as it relates to inequality (Pakulski & Waters, 1996; Tyler, 2013). However, such a position fails to recognise that identities such as race, gender, and disability are 'class categories' (ibid: 156). Socio-economic structures play into all other categories such as race and gender; it would therefore be counter- productive and ineffective to attempt to disentangle these. Although the significance of hegemonic masculinity has been outlined through this chapter, specifically for understanding the hierarchies over both masculinities and women, there is a need to build on this foundation. By introducing intersectionality to

factor in the interlinked and interwoven nature of these characteristics, adequate attention can be given to how the factors work with one another. Although the hegemonic masculinity literature does mention other identity factors, they are seen more as a patchwork, acknowledging the boys as young, male, White, and working-class, rather than the specific status of White-working-class-boys. This is useful for demonstrating the dynamic of class with gender and age, which so far has been widely ignored in the discussion on male victims of CSA.

The victims faced abuse at a time when relations between working-class communities and the State were at a low. A lack of trust in the authorities can also be seen through working-class masculinity often being constructed in opposition to authority (Charlesworth, 2000; Messerschmidt, 1994; Connell, 1995). Identities could be formed as a result of the mistreatment, or perceived injustice, felt by communities. As highlighted in the introductory chapter, football is now embedded in the fabric of the everyday lives of British people; which was particularly the case in working-class communities. This local geographical context (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) placed the professional football player as the embodiment of hegemonic masculinity at the time. The significance of football is clear, as a survivor and ex-England football player stated: 'as a working-class kid on a council estate in Manchester you either played football or you didn't fit in with the rest of the 'gang', the lads who lived around the area' (Stewart, 2017: 41). Building on Thompson's (1996) work on working-class belonging introduced in chapter 2, in this context, football was a tradition which was passed down to future generations, as young boys found belonging in both playing football and supporting local teams. This love of the game provided working-class boys a strong sense of class identity and belonging (ibid), with the commercialisation of the game then offering young working-class children the hope of supporting their families while playing a game they loved. This

hope of social mobility was tied to the opportunity of providing a sense of pride amongst their family and within their community.

Sadly, these ideas were utilised by the perpetrators to groom children and their families, as the Sheldon Inquiry Report found that a number of survivors believed they were targeted because they were from 'less privileged families' (2021: 79). A method of grooming by a number of coaches was buying victims gifts and luxuries that they otherwise would not have been able to afford. As Stewart says, 'We came from a relatively poor family. When someone turned up offering you those things – Adidas boots, fancy sports gear or whatever – then your eyes lit up. Why wouldn't they?' (2017: 43). The victims now recognise that this was a way for the perpetrator to 'ingratiate' themselves into the boys' lives (ibid: 80), as Stewart described that the day trips were especially 'a big thrill to a normal kid from a council estate like me' (ibid: 86). Since waiving his anonymity, Woodward has become an active campaigner against CSA and exploitation in sport. He draws interesting parallels to the coverup of abuse in Brazil to the circumstances he personally experienced in youth football, stating, 'Football is one way – maybe the only way – to escape a life of poverty for both the boy and his family. They'll do anything to make it happen' (2019: 325). Although Woodward is certainly not comparing the poverty existing in the slums in Brazil as comparable to working-class families across the UK, the similarity in power dynamics should not be ignored. Football for a number of victims in this study seemed like the only way out. Ultimately, class is essential here as it left victims vulnerable to abuse, yet left them with little protection from the authorities.

A clear illustration of how football and class have intersected in the persecution of a

community is shown by the horrors of the Hillsborough disaster[46] in 1989. Haywood (2016) brings together three football related tragedies that occurred in the 1980's, the Heysel and Hillsborough stadium disasters and then relates them directly to the abuse being conducted by coaches during this time. He describes this period as one that was characterised by 'injustice and ineptitude' by the police, the clubs, and the authorities (ibid). Haywood (2016) identified the event as being instrumental in creating a defamatory perception of the working-class people involved in the sport generally. A culture which he described, in reference to Bennell, as one where 'children knew the impossibility of disclosing abuse to people in authority in the game and the probable futility of telling the police' (ibid). At a passing glance the abuse of boys in football and a disaster at a football stadium in Sheffield may only have football as the common theme. However, Haywood suggests there may have been pervasive contempt by the authorities to working-class football fans, or 'football hooligans', as they are referred. As has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, the boys were intersectionally invisible, and if they had spoken out, they would likely have been disregarded. To some extent, this can be seen by the response received to those who initially spoke out in the 1990s (see Conn, 2016b). Power is at the heart of this discussion, as it deciphered which voices were heard. This is unpacked further in the following chapter.

Although each victim involved in this research was White, reflective of the overall makeup of the teams at the time, there are issues involving race in these cases that also need to be acknowledged. Several advocates working closely with victims of CSA in

[46] During the FA Cup Semi-Final between Liverpool FC and Nottingham Forest FC at Sheffield Wednesday's Stadium, a fatal crush occurred due to over-crowding of a stand allocated to Liverpool supporters resulting in 96 fatalities and 766 injuries. The events of Hillsborough shocked the nation, particularly with what occurred in the following weeks and months after the disaster. South Yorkshire Police (SYP) was found to feed false stories to the press, stating that hooliganism and drunken behaviour among supporters were the key causes of the disaster. However, the Taylor Report revealed the main cause of the disaster was a failure by SYP to control crowds upon arrival (Taylor, 1990).

football referred to race, with one stating, 'So one issue that I feel strongly about is that all the footballers that have come out are all White men and I cannot believe that this hasn't happened to Black men or Asian or other minority ethnic groups. […] How do we get these people, these cohorts of individuals from different groups to start recounting their stories?' (VA3). Another acknowledged the additional barriers which non-White players face speaking out (VA1), which identifies a need for further research and exploration. It is also important to consider the relationship between the police and those from ethnic minority communities at a time when the police were found to be 'institutionally racist' (Macpherson, 1999). Research has found that victims and survivors of CSA from ethnic minority communities do not trust the police or social care (see Kaiser et al., 2021). The fact that the majority of the victims who spoke out were White indicates that those from ethnic minority communities appeared to face additional barriers which prevented them from reporting abuse.

The interwoven nature of all these identity factors resulted in a disempowered status experienced by the victims. To draw on Messner's (1992) work regarding injured athletes, it is important to take this one step further to look at the disposability of male bodies. In this thesis, I refer to disposability in reference to the precarious position in which men, and male bodies, are placed in society. This has been introduced within academic research through the expendability theory (see Baumeister, 2010 for overview), the idea that individual male lives are less valuable to a species than female lives. This is often claimed by men's rights activists, such as Warren Farrell, to reflect their view that men have it worse in our gendered society. The example of war is often used, with male bodies being described as 'canon fodder' as they make up the majority of front line troops. This argument, of course, ignores that women are sadly also used as weapons through sexual violence (while also acknowledging male victims of sexual violence in

conflict settings). Therefore, this line of argument would benefit from drawing on the feminist approach of hegemonic masculinity, which draws out that some men hold power, with it usually being working-class men which make up the front-line forces in 'conventional' warfare, so it may be the disposability of working-class male bodies that has more resonance. Again, there is a hierarchy of men all holding different levels of power. This can be helpful to making sense of the experiences of victims in this study as Messner (1992) emphasised the vulnerability of young players' to injury, again reflecting the potential disposability of young male bodies. Coaches at this time were unconcerned with injuring young players due to the vast numbers available to take their place. During this time, it was White working-class boys who made up most of the professional youth teams, with the term 'disposability' representative of the lack of power which the young players possessed and their precarious status.

Hyper-Masculine Football Culture

The intersecting identity characteristics explored above became clear barriers to stop the victims from disclosing their abuse. However, these identities were exacerbated in the footballing culture in which the boys were raised. In this thesis, there have been a number of references to the 'hyper-masculine sporting culture' which existed and to an extent continues to be influential within football today. This is in line with Brackenridge's (2001) and Hartill's (2017) findings that a hyper-masculine sporting culture acted both as a barrier which stopped boys speaking out about abuse and crucially acted as a site in which the victim identities could be cultivated. Football taught the victims how to behave (Brackenridge, 2004) and what might be acceptable and unacceptable versions of presentation of self. Woodward describes the culture within football as 'macho, secretive, controlling' (2019: 317), while a participant in this study stated, 'football may be one of

those societal places where some of these notions of masculinity are particularly dominant and therefore men and boys are facing more of those barriers as it were. We look at football and we know it is still not a conducive place of coming out as gay. The whole football culture does seem to buy into certain ways of being a man and being in control, 'ladish' – it's a space where unfortunately homophobia, racism, and sexism flourished at certain points' (VA10). There is a lot to unpack here, reflecting again the barrier of homophobia. Football offered the perceptions of, and the opportunity to perform, a version of 'acceptable' traditional masculinity, whether hegemonic or hyper-masculine. It became a masculine-making site for the young boys whose identities and sense of self were being developed.

When all these factors and identity characteristics are coupled with football's widespread influence in British society, it created an environment where the abuse of boys could continue unchecked. Although it is important not to generalise the harrowing and unique experiences that the victims faced, it appears the grooming methods used in non-recent CSA in football follow similar trends. Each perpetrator in these cases was either a football coach or scout who exploited their position of trust for their own sexual gratification. Particularly at this time, coaches were left solely responsible for the boys during training sessions, which provided an ideal setting for abuse to occur. One advocate stated, 'In sport, there is touch, showers, locker rooms. It could be argued the world of sport is a perfect environment to abuse boys' (VA7). The abuse occurred in a number of scenarios in these cases, often locker rooms, the perpetrator's home and car, and even more brazenly in open areas within training facilities. Targeting of the boys while away at training camps or tournaments abroad was also used by several perpetrators, as when the young players were taken away from their family home, the coach had ample opportunity to manipulate and abuse players. How abusers garnered trust varies considerably, yet

often included targeting a player, lavishing them with gifts and takeaway meals – particularly pertinent to poorer families who may not have been able to afford such luxuries. As one victim stated, 'You're at a professional club and he's very charismatic and you don't know it at the time of course, but the grooming side – the gifts, the kit, the clothes, the fast food' (VA9). The culture in which the abuse occurred should also be pointed to, as perceptions of what a perpetrator looked like or how they behaved were still fairly rigid. As one advocate stated, 'That whole monster myth about who is a paedophile, they're a monster, rather than they can be people who might actually be very nice in many other parts of their life. They look like the rest of us' (VA10). At the time, the idea of a paedophile was not the charismatic football coach who got on well with parents and was well respected in the community. Stewart stated that his abuser's 'secret was his apparent "normality"" (2017: 53), as White went on to write, 'during the 1970s and '80s the stereotype of a child abuser tended to be a scruffy old bloke in a grimy raincourt, not a handsome young chap in an Adidas tracksuit' (2017: 66). As a result, football coaches, such as Barry Bennell, were not viewed as a possible threat to children. This also goes against Christie's (1986) perception of the ideal perpetrator, causing a further challenge in having the abuse recognised. Stereotypes such as these insured coaches were trusted implicitly.

Locker-Room 'Banter'

Football blurred the lines of acceptability as its harsh environment meant that the boys were not sure what was appropriate from coaches. From a number of the interviews, it is apparent that perpetrators carefully exploited the love and passion players and their families had for the sport, with many boys believing they had to withstand the abuse to progress in football. As Andy Woodward stated, 'I still had my heart set on becoming a

footballer. Consciously or unconsciously, in my mind, the abuse had become the price I had to pay' (2019: 82). Messner (1990) has highlighted the vulnerability of young players' bodies to injury and how young athletes are taught to play through pain in professional youth sports. This laid the foundation for victims to believe they had to withstand sexual abuse to progress in the sport, believing suffering would lead to success. They were taught to embody the hegemonic masculine ideals of impenetrable strength, despite being seen as disposable, with a long line of other talented individuals waiting to take their place. This takes on a deeper level when considering their disposability and their class status explored above, which reflects the lack of power they were afforded at the time.

The merging of abuse with football was further utilised through the coach's language, and use of inappropriate sexualised 'banter' with players. Abusers could hide behind this aggressive and vulgar sporting language, shown by perpetrator Eddie Heath's 'sexual banter', which he used in the locker room (Geekie, 2016: 54-55). This attempted to introduce and normalise sexual abuse in the boys' lives, as their age and vulnerability meant they could not understand what was happening to them. Hartill's previous explanation of how the locker room was viewed as a sacred space, where what is shared goes no further (2009: 242), is important here. As the literature has made clear homophobic and sexist language was commonplace in the locker room, as it was the physical embodiment of the masculinity making site of football. This enactment of hyper-masculinity ensured their silence as their perceptions surrounding the abuse was not in line with the masculine ideals forced upon them in football. Other perpetrators instead simply threatened the boys, utilising ideas of shame and culpability to keep them silent. This was effective due to cultural ideas of the time regarding masculinity, age, and sporting culture. The landscape did not provide a space for children's voices to be heard,

or to encourage children to even believe they were entitled to speak out. The young boys thrown into this culture were internalising such behaviour as the norm, creating an environment where it would be highly difficult to fight back on their own against verbal and physical abuse. Therefore, it can be argued that the climate within the clubs created a license for the sexual abuse to take place, as there was little respect shown to adult players and subsequently even less to the junior trainees.

Power of the Coach

Sport offered up a dream to many young men, often from working-class homes, of a future earning a living playing a game they loved. The boys looked up to the coaches as role models because they had built successful careers in football. Bennell himself had previously been a talented youth player at Chelsea Football Club, who was struck with injury at a young age. The status of the coaches contrasted with that of the boys, meaning many of the victims idealised and looked up to their perpetrators (e.g. Lean, 2019). Therefore, coaches in sport were placed in positions of unequivocal power and authority, as they were responsible for building or alternatively destroying the careers of young athletes. The coach or scout is the ultimate gatekeeper into professional football, controlling the entry into this potential career path, as the coaches were 'in charge of everything, including our futures' (Woodward, 2019: 51). As David White stated, 'Bennell's abuse was physiological as well as sexual. He knew that, with all his promises of stardom, he had a hold over me' (2017: 65). The boys were aware of their position in the club, with many believing they had to put up with abuse to progress into a professional footballing career. When this is coupled with other grooming techniques, it left the perpetrators with considerable control and power over the players they abused. As one participant stated, 'Your dream would have burst [if you had spoken out]' (VA9).

Two perpetrators in particular were even nicknamed the 'star-maker' (Sheldon, 2021), reflecting the power and respect they yielded. The coaches represented an outward embodiment of hegemonic masculinity to the boys (despite their actions behind the scenes), due to their footballing prowess and being the gatekeeper to their dreams. As 'this coach-player relationship is still one we haven't come to grips with […]. In elite sport, the coach has so much power to determine your future' (VA8). Due to the perpetrator's ulterior motives, it was in their interests to encourage perceptions of traditional masculinity which ensured the boys suffered in silence. Additionally, as one victim advocate explained: 'It's also about being believed, "who's going to believe me against that well known football coach, or pillar of the community?"' (VA3). Again victims were left to believe their voice did not hold any power in the footballing culture (see Brackenridge et al., 2004). The perpetrators held status, particularly as many had close links to professional and prominent football clubs, whereas the boys who were subordinated and marginalised were often viewed as just kids from the local council estate. Not only did society not view these boys as ideal victims, but the boys themselves were left feeling like they were not significant enough to be believed. The men's struggles since the abuse indicate this had a damning impact on their self worth, which for some only started to be reconciled when speaking out and finally being acknowledged by the public and the State.

Selling the Football Dream

Coaches sell the dream to young players and their families, as football did not just offer a career playing a game they loved but the opportunity for social mobility for many working-class and lower middle-class players. This was not just for themselves but for their families, as the boys were socialised in the hegemonic masculine idea of the 'male

breadwinner', with many boys wanting to provide for their families, and evoke community pride. Inevitably, this placed a lot of pressure on the boys' and their burgeoning careers, which was a unique barrier to disclosure which these victims faced. Woodward notes, 'for me, it was the promise of life as a footballer. That was all that mattered' (2019: 54-5). It appears that the intersection of class and age can lead boys to be disregarded in their abuse, due to their disempowerment in society and vulnerability to be exploited by the adults charged with their care (Hartill, 2009: 235). In tandem to this, the footballing culture was perpetuating further hegemony over women, with the key reason why young girls are not being discussed is due to the fact a professional sporting career in football was not possible for them at the time of the abuse. Girls were not in the professional youth teams of this time, which laid some of the groundwork to the inequality seen in much of men's and women's sport today. Despite growing work in this area, one just needs to look at the number of women in professional football and their salaries in comparison to many men playing at a commensurate level.

Grooming of Parents

Ultimately, the process of grooming did not just stop at the individual players but extended to their parents and families. Abusive coaches exploited values such as family pride, with complexities at home often playing into a young person's vulnerability. This was a theme raised by many victims and advocates, as it is clear parents were manipulated by perpetrators to keep victims silent. The coaches often ingratiated themselves into family life, for example, staying for dinner and popping round to the family home unexpectedly. This led to many families having a close bond with their son's coach, highlighted by cases where parents vouched for the perpetrator when allegations first started coming to light (Davies, 2018). Parents were similarly sold the

'footballing dream' for their sons, as one victim stated, 'The family invests in this idea that they're going to make it in football. That was exactly the same as my family, working-class family, exactly the same' (VA8). This link to class was clearly a method of grooming parents, as a promise of social mobility offered hope, pride, and promise to families. This made it more challenging for victims to tell their families what happened to them, as one participant stated, 'How do you do tell the parents this is happening to you when the parents are really encouraging you to go and play sport. They are taking you; they want you to succeed. How can you tell the parents this?' (VA3). Similarly David White spoke of his father's passion, as he states, 'People like my Dad were so blinded by the lure of professional football, and were so in awe of "The King" and his promises, that Bennell could dupe and deceive them with ease' (White, 2017: 66). The coaches offered a representation of hegemonic masculinity and all the perceived success it entailed. Although this was a mirage, it meant the coaches were put on a pedestal, leaving the boys vulnerable. The extent to which this was the case is summed up in the following quote describing one of the perpetrators: 'All the Dads wanted to be Bennell, all the Mums wanted to marry him and all the sisters wanted to date him' (Davies, 2018).

Almost all the victims who participated in this research noted their parents were completely unaware of what was occurring to them, due to being groomed themselves by the perpetrator. Additionally, changes in the boys' behaviour as a result of the abuse were often simply put down to adolescence. Nevertheless, one participant went as far as to say that there were cases where parents had more knowledge: 'It seems to be so much at stake – a career at stake. I know some parents were complicit and knew it was happening, but decided it was the price worth paying, which is hard to hear but it's actually true' (VA8). This is a highly complex and challenging assertion, with no victim having stated or insinuated that their own parents were wilfully blind to their abuse. Nevertheless, the

level of emotional investment that parents had placed in the potential success of their sons, coupled with the relationship cultivated with them by the coaches, placed the victims in a vulnerable position. It should also be noted that safeguarding and child protection concerns were very different than they are today. Many parents were simply not aware of the extent of risk in such scenarios. For many parents, coaches offered their children opportunities they could not. In Paul Stewart's memoir, his parents both write a chapter, with his mother saying, 'He was paying me, bribing me to get to Paul, but I did not realise, and had no way of knowing' (2017: 98). This again highlights the importance of class and background, as perpetrators hold increased leverage over a family, often without the family even realising. The power of the coach coupled with the well wishes and background of the family could increase the victims' vulnerability.

Overview

This chapter sought to reflect on the identities of the victims to decipher which factors played a significant role in enabling both victim vulnerability and silencing the boys. There will very likely be other identities that played a considerable role in the victims' experiences of abuse, which both the victim and I may not have recognised. Individuals have 'endless constellations' of intersecting identities (Davis, 2008: 77), therefore this approach remains open to development. Nevertheless, the identities discussed above appeared to be the most prominent this research, with the analysis reflecting it was not just one of these identities (e.g. class, gender, age) that left victims vulnerable to abuse but an amalgamation of them all, operating simultaneously. Class in particular has previously been ignored in academic discussion, yet their status as White working-class (or lower middle-class) boys is crucial to understanding why, and how, the boys suffered in silence. Although CSA extends across class and background, the experiences of this

group of men does demonstrate a common context where abuse can proliferate. This chapter also explores the role of the hyper-masculine footballing environment in placing certain societal constructions and expectations related to masculinity and sexuality onto the victims, ultimately influencing the victims' behaviour and in effect, sense of self, due to the culture which disempowered and disenfranchised them as a result of their status as White working-class boys. The role of the public and State in influencing the victims' identity is investigated in chapter 7.

Hegemonic masculinity is important for understanding the subordinated and disempowered status of the boys in contrast to the elevated status of the abusers, who outwardly, reflected a perfect embodiment of hegemonic masculinity. Yet, although the hegemonic masculinity literature does mention the use of other identity factors, they are seen more as a patchwork, acknowledging the boys as young, male, White and working-class, rather than the specific status of White-working-class-boys. Drawing upon intersectionality theory, in conjunction with hegemonic masculinity, can help us to understand how the coalesced identities result in the boys' lack of power. Intersectionality is a tool that highlights those voices which are often ignored or disempowered, with the boys' identities in the cultural and socio-political landscape meaning they did not fit Christie's notion of an ideal victim. The identities, as a result of intersectional invisibility, became barriers for victims to disclose both as children and into adulthood. To acknowledge and understand the experiences of disempowered identities, we need to centre the victims' own narratives in victimological research. Narratives are a way of reclaiming voice and agency, with speaking out having played a crucial role in revealing the staggering scale of child abuse that occurred in football during this period. This is explored in depth in the following chapter.

Chapter 6

Collective Victimisation and Reclaiming the Narrative

But speaking up and putting my name to my story set me free. It had been all about silence for so many years. Now, all of a sudden, I'd found my voice. And I had something I wanted to say (Woodward, 2019: 311).

Introduction

Narratives are at the heart of how, and why, CSA in football broke into the national consciousness in 2016. The 'snowball' effect, which began after Andy Woodward first waived his anonymity to speak publicly about his abuse, can similarly be seen in other instances of large-scale sexual violence coming to light around this time. For example, in sport, victims of gymnastics coach Larry Nassar drew global attention (Sommerlad, 2021). In the past few years new methods have been used by victims of abuse to share their stories, which include going on national television, writing books, blog posts, and participating in podcasts. This goes beyond the critical step of disclosing abuse to a loved one or making a report to the police, with many victims choosing to waive their anonymity to publicly share their stories. The previous chapter reflected the men as victims with individualised experiences of abuse, although many found some commonality through their intersectional and coalesced identities. Here, I consider the collective unity many found in joining their voices together, and the subsequent impact it has had.

This chapter answers the first part of my second research question exploring how victims construct individual and collective narratives, with the public and State response to these narratives being explored in the next chapter. To unpack this question, I use

themes found in narrative victimology, specifically *narrative rupture* and the 'big two' (Abele and Wojciszke, 2013): *agency* and *communion* to understand the men's experiences of disclosing and the subsequent impact on their sense of self. To broaden the 'big two', I also introduce a third category of *action* to make sense of the advocacy and activism which was central to many of the men's evolving narrative and identity. To better understand the impact that the stories had they will be explored in the context and socio-political landscape in which they were first articulated. In particular, the influence and status of football is noted as a factor in heightening the public interest and attention towards CSA of male victims.

Narrative Rupture

The victimological literature has highlighted the extensive impact that severe victimisation can have on many facets of a victims' life (Pemberton, 2020). In this study, victims revealed the physical, psychological, emotional, and financial impact of the abuse that they suffered in childhood on their current lives. The men spoke powerfully about this impact, as one said: 'This is a life sentence no matter how I portray myself to others' (V-S7). They described a traumatic impact leading to instances of severe mental health issues, substance abuse and in some cases, even suicide. As reflected in all the reports released and findings from academics in a range of disciplines (e.g. Lisak, 1994; Easton et al., 2014; Gartner, 2018), the impact of child sexual abuse on an adult is 'extensive and diverse' (IICSA, 2020: 4). The APPG Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse report showed that abuse had negatively impacted survivors' intimate relationships (90% of respondents), their mental health (89%), family life (81%), career (72%) and education (65%) (2020: 4). This thesis briefly touches on how abuse and trauma has manifested in the lives of some of the men; however, it cannot fully portray the complexity of the

impact in each victim's life as a result of their abuse. Although the impact can manifest in a myriad of unique ways, one individual spoke of their partner's reaction when he finally disclosed to her in 2016, 'I decided I would, I told [my wife] about it and she was a bit shocked, but she said "that explains a lot" – my behaviour, which seemed to be obvious to her but not to me' (VA8). Another example is when a prosecutor spoke of the impact on an individual's career and life, stating 'He was tipped to probably be a professional footballer and play for England, […] but just couldn't cope with what had happened and it ruined his life really' (CPS1). The long-term impact of the abuse which many victims are still experiencing to this day explains their desire to speak out and to receive a sense of justice.

However, this impact was not just limited to the individual, but also had a subsequent effect on family, friends, and communities. Victims and advocates noted what was referred to as 'the ripple effect' (VA9, V-S8) in two key areas. First, loved ones found themselves living with the emotions expressed by the victims, such as deep-rooted anger, and second, having to manage disclosures when they finally came. As one participant stated, 'the ripple effect with your family is massive, it is, because they took you there and the shame and guilt is there, they are victims as well' (VA9). This is particularly with reference to parents of the victims who in most cases inadvertently helped facilitate the abuse. The close connection to the victim meant they also dealt with the aftermath, often unaware of the reasons for the behaviour in the years after the abuse. As one victim shared, 'These are human lives that have been… that have been tainted forever. You never get… sorry I'm getting upset. You never get your childhood back ever' (VA11). As touched on in the previous chapter, the abuse had a considerable impact on some of the men's romantic relationships, as Woodward spoke of bringing trauma into his marriage. He shared that his abuse meant that 'me being a victim made her a victim too'

(Woodward, 2019: 218). Some men, therefore, struggled to form healthy intimate relationships as a result of the trauma they had experienced in their childhoods.

Pemberton and colleagues (2019a) have also drawn attention to the impact that victimisation has had on peoples' unfolding narratives and life stories. This is often ignored in the victimological literature but is highly relevant in this study and can be seen in the accounts that the men have given. The narrative reflects a victim's evolving sense of self and identity which can be left in disarray after experiencing severe victimisation. It 'pose[s] a threat to such narrative identity: causing a narrative rupture in people's lives, who struggle to make sense of the relationship between their lives before, during and after the victimization and the implications of this moving forward into the future (Crossley, 2000)' (Pemberton, 2020: 360). Woodward reflects on his changing identity:

> We all need to tell ourselves who we are: I was the boy who dreamed he'd be a footballer. Then I was the guy who really was a footballer. Then I was the policeman. I was a husband: too many times! I was a father. A brother and a son. But all those pictures I had of myself were always blurred, spoilt, in jagged fragments. I was never completely any of those people. I was never the person I should have been or could have been. And those around me suffered because of that, just as much as I did maybe (Woodward, 2019: 337).

This quote reflects the impact of the abuse on his evolving identity and narrative, as a rupture breaks down a victim's sense of agency and communion with their social surroundings, which is fundamental to feelings of self-acceptance and belonging. This is reflected by Woodward: 'But it's in the emotions that linger – the shame and confusion and psychological hurt – where real trauma sits, eating away at your sense of yourself, sucking you back into a past you can never really shake off' (2019: 113). For the victims in this research, many spoke of their lives before the abuse and then thereafter, with the after being marred and shaped by their victimisation. Therefore, previous harmful assumptions that non-recent abuse is simply in the past, and therefore not requiring of attention, as has been reflected in the backlash to the term 'historical abuse', are quite

clearly false. To a victim 'there is nothing non-recent about it - I live with it everyday' (V-S1). One of the key elements of both the psychological and cultural conceptions of trauma, described in the theoretical framework, 'is the passage of time, the violent event is said to cause such a rupture in the psyche of the individual that time stands still' (Ring, 2017: 91). Many victims described their experiences as being as painful for them in the present day, one victim expressed, 'Some want to stay strong on the surface and hide behind a mask covering the real pain and torment inside. I choose to hide behind the mask and at times the mask falls and people think "what's his problem?" The fact is: I am a ticking time bomb that blows every now and again' (V-S7). Ultimately, trauma is present in the men's narratives, particularly if their experiences are not acknowledged and they do not receive adequate intervention from professional support services. A key theme across many of the accounts was the impact on a victim's self-worth and esteem (e.g. Woodward, 2019), yet reflecting on the impact of abuse on the men's sense of self and identity is not to define the men by their abuse or generalise the experiences of this community of victims. Many of the men went on forge successful careers and lives after victimisation, yet this section highlights the challenges which they came up against as non-recent victims of abuse.

Socio-political Landscape

As has already been highlighted, the socio-political landscape at the time of the abuse was one where hegemonic masculinity represented a more traditional and less inclusive notion of masculinity. Perceptions of self were shaped by the cultural and wider political environments victims found themselves in. At that time, homophobia, sexism, and racism were particularly rife within society, with public expressions of discrimination being commonplace. Therefore, for the victims to be able to speak out there needed to be a

cultural shift, with the timing of the mass disclosures being a consequence of radical whistleblower, Andy Woodward, giving the boys a feeling of 'permission' (e.g. VA8) to use their voices. This is explored in the following section, focusing on the significant context in which the victims shared their narratives.

Cultural Shift

A key factor which influences and sways public opinion is the level and tone of press reporting and media attention to a specific issue or event. The media has been criticised for its previous under-reporting of CSA cases in sport (Conn, 2016b), meaning the public were left with a lack of awareness about the issue. It was not until 2016, when a number of ex-professional footballers came forward with their stories, that it hit the headlines. The men's experiences of waiving their anonymity in 2016 was purely dependent on the cultural shift in recent years which allowed space for the men to come forward and be recognised. Individuals such as Ian Ackley note the difference the societal changes have made, as when he first disclosed his abuse in the 1990s it failed to receive any serious recognition. Ackley, along with a small number of other victims, disclosed their abuse despite all the barriers they faced (see chapter 5). Initial reports of abuse led investigative journalist Deborah Davies to explore the subject on a Channel 4 documentary *Dispatches: Soccer's Foul Play* (1997). This incorporated interviews with players who had come forward since Bennell's first conviction in the US (Cooper, 1997), including Ian Ackley who had waived his right to anonymity to appear in the documentary. However, it did not garner widespread consideration at the time, with Ackley referencing a particularly 'damning article' by Giles Smith in The Daily Telegraph, who believed the documentary to be 'scare- mongering' (Ackley, 2018). The socio-political structures and

cultural landscape at the time were not a conducive environment for victims to speak out, and particularly not for boys in the protected and closed off world of football.

However, by 2016, there had been a shift in attitudes to recognise non-recent cases of CSA, which allowed Andy Woodward to be both listened to and acknowledged when he did waive his anonymity. Practitioners and advocates noted the Jimmy Savile revelations[47] of widespread abuse, and later the #MeToo movement[48], to have been instrumental in laying the groundwork, allowing Woodward's account to gain publicity and cause a 'domino effect' with other survivors coming forward. Through these accounts of male sexual abuse in football being widely accepted, it encouraged more diverse expressions of masculinity and femininity, moving away from the traditional hegemonic masculine ideals in which the boys were raised. The normalisation of male survivors within the prevailing culture was paramount, with scandals in the Catholic church (Nolan, 2001) and in care homes (see Waterhouse, 2000) creating a culture in which male victims of CSA can be seen as legitimate. Woodward's first disclosure was identified by some victims as crucial to their decision to speak out, as some shared that if they had they not seen the media coverage of the case, they would never have disclosed. One victim powerfully stated, 'There is no way I was ever going to talk about it. It was just buried, gone' (VA8). For many, the press reporting brought suppressed memories to the forefront, leading one victim to describe their memories of abuse having 'come back like a volcano erupting' (V-S1) after seeing a photo of their abuser in a newspaper. This is not to say the abuse had been forgotten, as suppressing traumatic memories can be a common coping mechanism for victims of sexual violence. However, hearing other

[47] Jimmy Savile was an English TV personality, who used his status to sexually abuse children throughout his career (Gray & Watt, 2013). This was revealed in 2012, almost a year after his death. The scandal was a major factor in leading to the establishment of the Independent Inquiry into CSA launched in July 2014.

[48] The #MeToo Movement is a movement whereby sexual abuse and harassment is challenged through the publicisation of allegations of crimes of a sexual nature.

footballers share their experiences publicly ensured each victim no longer felt alone in their abuse. This led to a large number of victims disclosing to their families and friends for the first time, with many then going on to report their abuse to the police. As one participant stated, 'They were empowered, the people they had played football with and that macho culture and finally someone was saying, 'wait hang on a minute this isn't right. I'm not embarrassed and I'm not ashamed and it's not our fault'. That was so empowering for the lads' (VA9). The power of traditional notions of hegemonic masculinity which had made it impossible to speak out was reduced, with the men joining their voices together giving strength to alternative ideas of masculinity.

Permission

Hearing highly regarded footballers speak out about sexual abuse gave permission for not just those abused in football, but men abused in other sports and other areas of society to speak out. Charities and helplines supporting victims of non-recent abuse noted that in November 2016 and the months following that there was a spike in the numbers of men who were abused in a range of different sectors and institutions coming forward. Andy Woodward and the subsequent footballers that spoke publicly created an environment in which men felt able to disclose their abuse. One support line for survivors stated that they usually received a ratio of 70% female to 30% male callers; however, in the first weeks this shifted to 55-60% male callers vs. 45-40% female callers (VA2). As one victim advocate explained:

> There is so much shame and guilt and secrecy about abuse, and what we hear so often on the [support] line is "I thought I was the only one." So when men, male victims, who generally would never have spoken about it before, suddenly saw high profile male footballers, public figures, standing up publicly and saying 'this happened to me, I was abused and I'm struggling with it' and it's like "oh that's like me." It gives that caller, that person, permission to start to reach out and look around for what support is there (VA2).

The impact of these men speaking out was clear as it allowed for open discussion about the prevalence of male CSA in society. Footballers are held in high esteem by many in British culture, so their disclosures made it acceptable for other men to speak out and begin 'changing the landscape' (VA10).

Andy Woodward was not the first to speak publicly about CSA in football; however, he was the first to be listened to. As a journalist noted, 'Woodward was hailed as the hero: a proto-#MeToo whistleblower who broke the cycle of stigma, shame and silence' (Marsden, 2020). After the story hit the national press, the public were quick to listen to his story (Dixon, 2019), allowing Woodward to inspire other men who had suffered sexual violence to come forward. Before then, this research has shown the largest barrier for men coming forward was the fear of not being believed. This was raised in various forms in most of the questionnaire responses and interviews with victims and advocates. As one individual powerfully stated, 'So belief, belief is the biggest thing. That was what stopped me for nearly forty years disclosing. Would you be believed? Would people think 'oh it's just a little story in his head'? That's the main thing' (VA11). This was further supported in the literature as a 2002 study of victims who took part in a large-scale investigation into non-recent abuse in residential institutions stated, 'the single most important aspect of the investigation for survivors was that they were believed' (Colton et al., 2002: 545). Although all victims of abuse may share this fear, it was of particular concern for male victims of sexual abuse who historically had not been represented in the victimology literature or received acknowledgement both by the system and wider society.

This was an important contextualisation in narrative victimology, as Pemberton and colleagues outline, that 'individual narratives of crime have been positioned within a wider set of cultural and/or community narratives' (2019a: 392). These narratives were

heard and understood within the political and socio-cultural landscape in 2016, with others having previously tried to draw attention to this in the 1990s (Davies, 1997), yet were ignored. Therefore, both Andy Woodward speaking out and the response he received gave the message to all other male victims that they were not alone, with their disclosure meaning that they could join a community of other survivors. Not only that, their stories and narratives could join a collective, as there was most certainly a strength found in the high numbers of victims coming forward, which enabled the men to report their abuse to the authorities. In cases of widespread and institutional abuse, it often takes one courageous individual to step forward leading to a 'snowball effect' of others joining, but only if the time is right for them to be truly heard.

'The Big Three'

To explore how victims construct collective narratives, it is useful to bring in the theoretical tools of the 'big two': *agency* and *communion*, before introducing a third concept of *action*. These concepts help to understand how a victim's sense of self was damaged in victimisation, as the abuse and the traumatisation surrounding it can cause a rupture in their unfolding narrative. Victimisation can result in victims losing a sense of agency and communion; however, as the narrative victimology literature (Pemberton, 2020) and the victims' experiences in this research highlights, there was potential to repair these concepts through disclosing one's abuse. Building on agency and communion, a third concept of action can show the further steps victims can take to reshape their narratives and their sense of self, shifting focus from their victimisation to their advocacy.

Agency

To break the stigma surrounding male CSA, men needed to take the agentic step of disclosing their victimisation. Severe victimisation such as CSA, worsened by the manipulation they experienced from their perpetrators, often breaks down an individual's agency. However, the opportunity to speak out can rebuild a victim's sense of autonomy, shifting their narrative away from ideas associated with victimhood to an embodying of power and control. As White stated, 'My willingness to speak up demonstrated that the old abuser-versus-victim, control-versus-vulnerability dynamic that existed between Bennell and me had all but disappeared' (White, 2017: 274). This step was necessary, with some victims in the interviews referring to it as freeing, as one victim shared, 'I need to get rid of this, get it off my shoulders' (V-S10). After Bennell was convicted in 2018, a number of his victims walked out of the Crown Court together to deliver a statement, and Micky Fallon stated, 'We broke the silence and took back our voice' (Channel 5, 2018). The importance of the victims coming forward and taking ownership of their stories was powerful, as several victims in this research spoke of feelings of empowerment (e.g. VA9 comments on p.174) and reclaiming strength that was taken from them as children. They made the active decision to share their story, many publicly, and to reinstate their voice, as White said, 'Only by finding their own voices, and by telling their own stories, may that healing process begin' (2017: 275).

It is unsurprising, therefore, that the idea of speaking out ties into a traditionally masculine idea of taking action and control. A participant spoke about notions of masculinity and how certain ideas of what it was to 'be a man' acted as a barrier to disclosure, as men should remain in 'control' and be 'agentic rather than a victim' (VA10). In this quote, agency, which is a core facet of hegemonic masculinity, and victimhood, are seen on opposite ends of the spectrum. This view is held widely as

McAlinden notes, 'public and official understanding of victimhood concerning child sexual abuse is rooted in victim passivity as a key predicator of legitimate victim status' (2014: 192). The men, therefore, had to re-define their perception of masculinity to be accepting of male victims of sexual abuse. The participant went on to say, 'So when one is disclosing abuse, one is having to negotiate those notions of masculinity, rejecting them or forming a different relationship to them' (VA10). This was made possible by specifically focusing on those victims highlighted above who were now taking back their agency to forge a narrative which embodied power, control, and strength. By reformulating the core ideas which had once been barriers to speaking out, space was given for someone to be both an archetypal 'man' in a gendered society and also a victim of sexual violence concurrently. In both the interviews and the media reception to these stories, there were several references to the 'bravery' and 'courage' demonstrated by the men in speaking out, this reframed the idea of hegemonic masculinity to be an individual who takes back their power regardless of the obstacles they had faced. This expression could be to a trusted friend or on a primetime news channel, yet could completely reframe a victim's sense of self and mend the narrative rupture. One individual spoke of his children, stating, 'I've always taught them to stand up for themselves and do the right thing, for a number of years I've always felt a fraud telling my kids to do that, yet they don't know their Dad has not done that with something major in his life' (V-S9). His children ultimately gave him the strength to speak out when the news broke in 2016. However, there was some complexity surrounding whether this was trapping victims into another label, insinuating that to be agentic and brave they have to disclose their abuse. This was highlighted in the following quote: 'it helped me to take back the power, or at least make him feel that was what I was doing' (V-S7). It seemed that for some, these actions caused a real shift in their sense of self, empowering them and rewriting their

narrative and attitude to their status of being a victim. Yet, for others, this action was fairly performative, simply having to abide by a new version of masculinity. Despite progress in expanding notions of masculinity, these new iterations did not leave space for a truly individual and authentic expression of self.

To get a better understanding of the significance of these ideas, I will break down the concept of agency in this context into two parts. To rebuild agency, a victim needed to be 'heard by society and by the sports industry, or the residential industry, or the religious institutions. Being heard and being recognised' (VA3). However, the second part, which was crucial to restore agency in the victims' new framing of masculinity, was to take back control. One victim highlighted this when talking about the lack of control he has experienced since disclosing his abuse:

> One of things, I say this to clients always, "you need to tell me, you need to lead me on what you want and there is a capacity to what I can do and a limit to what I can do and there's never any guarantees, but I always advocate for you the best I can." The reason I do it that way is because I know from my own personal experience the very moment I disclosed my abuse, I lost total control of my life. Everything was out of control. The police were in the control, solicitors were, everyone around me, my employer had an opinion. I just felt totally out of control and arguably the last twenty years, I have been trying to regain some sense of control of my life. So what I say to survivors, 'you need to lead this, you need to feel like you're in control of it and you own it. My job is to assist and support you along that journey – but not make it my thing or take it over, or tell you what you should and shouldn't do' (VA5).

Although speaking out can feel like victims are taking some kind of control from their abusers, participants described the response that was received from the public and State, including the criminal justice system, ultimately having the ability to challenge this perception. Chapter 7 will explore in detail the impact of the audience's response on the victims' sense of self, which can ultimately lead to retraumatisation and further narrative ruptures. From the victims' accounts, narrative ownership is at the heart of agency, although reflected in a myriad of ways, as some victims in this research study decided to report their abuse to the police, some decided to waive their anonymity to speak publicly,

and others decided to tell their family for the first time what had happened to them as children. In this context, narrative ownership referred to the level of control and agency the victims had over their account. It was important victims kept ownership over their narrative to avoid others misinterpreting or misusing their story. Narrative victimological research has found victims can experience 'a feeling of losing grip on the way their experiences and identities are perceived. Participants [in the research study] feel as if they are submitted to a label put on them by others' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021: 9). van de Ven and Pemberton's study (2021) on what is shared at various victim support groups in the Netherlands reflects the challenges victims face once disclosing their abuse, as it gives others the opportunity to misconstrue their words and put certain labels on them with which they do not themselves identify. Therefore, it was crucial that victims' narratives were handled sensitively, with academic research also being at risk of causing damage (see Methodology chapter). Victims can easily be exploited for their trauma, yet not given any positions of real power. As a victim shared, 'my experience as a survivor is that we get asked to speak at lots of different places and conferences and sit down and chat about what we have 'been through' for the professional experts to go, "we'll take those insights and work upon them"' (VA5). This is unpacked further in the 'Action' section of this chapter.

Another important element to consider was that the majority of the victims were only able to speak out when they had the power as men, not as White working-class youth players. Societal expectations started to shift as emphasised above, with victims breaking down ideas of acceptability, moving away, or simply renegotiating the barriers explored in the previous chapter. In addition, simply the impact of growing older held a lot of significance for many victims, as one stated, 'I think it is only when you grow older that you realise, I don't care what people think' (VA9). The pressure placed on children while

they are exploring their identity and figuring out who they are is significant, specifically in the fairly limited hegemonic masculine and hyper-masculine world of football in which they spent a lot of their time and socialisation. For some, ageing meant letting go of these ideas and growing in confidence to be able to speak out. It seemed that the earlier suggestion of whether these ideas were performative is not as important here, as at the heart of narrative victimology is a victim's own interpretation and expression of self. The victims' accounts are not a scientific calculation of 'truth', instead, what is interesting, is their evolving narrative and identity which was at the core of this research.

Suppression of Narratives

The importance of being acknowledged was at the centre of why the victims shared their narratives with an audience. The devastation caused when victims' cases were not taken forward, explored in the following chapter, was indicative of this. The response of the audience expands beyond the actions of the State to the actions of the footballing clubs and authorities, with numerous allegations of wilful blindness occurring throughout the sport (see Saker, 2019; Sheldon, 2021). A heavily criticised response to allegations was Chelsea FC paying £50,000 to silence Gary Johnson about the abuse he faced by Chelsea's chief scout, Eddie Heath, at the age of thirteen (The Guardian, 2016). Gary Johnson has since spoken out saying, 'I hope and pray no clubs are allowed to cover this up – no one should escape justice. We need total transparency now for the good of the game. What makes me so angry is that I went to them to say I had been abused and they basically said, "prove it"' (quoted in The Guardian, 2016). Another victim of Eddie Heath stated it was clear that the club valued their brand and image more than child protection.

By using non-disclosure agreements[49] in victim compensation, their pain and trauma was viewed as transactional (Sport England Safeguarding Advisory Panel, 2019). Other top clubs have also been accused of buying the silence of victims with confidentiality agreements (Mendick & Rumsby, 2016). By paying off the victims, the clubs effectively avoid taking responsibility for any institutional failures that lead to their abuse. Chelsea FC apologised for this (The Guardian, 2016) and more recently, more clubs have taken steps to accept responsibility for failing in their duty of care to protect their young players. This came about particularly after the publication of the Sheldon Inquiry report which found the Football Association (FA) to be culpable of 'institutional failures' in its responsibility to keep players safe, with a number of clubs being shown to have ignored allegations and rumours surrounding coaches and scouts in their organisations (Sheldon, 2021). The impact of curtailing the voice of victims for decades is still very much felt today, as it took away agency and ownership from the victims. It also created a two-tier experience of victimisation, with some victims being allowed to express their narratives, while others had their voices suppressed. This breaks communion and a sense of community victims can find in one another and is explored in more depth in chapter 7.

Communion

In a similar way to agency, communion or a victim's sense of connection to their social surroundings was often broken down through through victimisation. This was highlighted in this research as White shared 'the Bennell situation had certainly made me less trusting and more wary of people' (2017: 110), as Lean also stated 'As time went by, life seemed to continue, with the exception of my mixed emotions and my lack of trust in many

[49] A non-disclosure agreement is a legal contract that outlines confidential material, knowledge, or information that the signing party is restricted from sharing.

people; well basically men, as well as feeling unsure about who I was' (2019: 21). It was not only their sense of self that they questioned, but also their relationships with others. As was noted in the previous chapter, the players idolised their coaches, so to then have them abuse that trust left many victims guarded. This started to be rebuilt when Andy Woodward gave voice to the collective experiences of a community who had been silenced for many years, as 'the stories told by individual victims have been used to provide a narrative not only for their pain but to stand for all those victims who might have had similar experiences' (Walklate et al., 2019: 3). So, for many individuals who did not disclose before 2016, seeing ex-footballers speak publicly gave them the sense that it was now or never (e.g. V-S9). Some even saw fellow teammates and friends on the television, and in press reporting, whom they did not know had also been abused. This gave them the strength they would require to both disclose to loved ones and for many to start criminal proceedings. As one victim shared, 'when I saw this individual on the television, it kind of gave me a bit of strength to think well, if he's doing it, I've got other people to draw strength from if that makes sense' (V-S9). A sense of belonging through social connection could be found from realising they were not alone in their experiences. This also helped them rebuild connection with others, as victims started to open up and show vulnerability.

The tools to share one's narrative have evolved in recent years through social media and other digital platforms providing ample opportunity for victims to share narratives publicly reaching both national and international audiences. This has led to stories spreading and communities forming, with many victims reaching out to each other via Twitter. This was most widely seen in the #MeToo Movement which originated and evolved across social media platforms. Through a victim reconnecting to other individuals having faced similar experiences, a 'meso-community' (van de Ven &

Pemberton, 2021) and a 'community narrative' (Rappaport, 1993; Pemberton et al., 2017: 688) is formed. I refer to 'collective narrative' in this thesis as I believe it better illustrates the cumulative impact of voices joining together. The 'meso-community' (van de Ven & Pemberton, 2021) allows victims to open up and discuss the unique challenges faced in victimisation, as one victim shared, 'I actually met with a male survivor of non-recent sexual abuse last week, he actually told that basically he's got a partner, he's got money, supportive family who are aware of what happened, he's also a few good friends and yet he's got nobody he feels he can talk to about what happened to him. He's one of the lucky ones in a way because he has got all those other people, yet he still doesn't feel like he's got anybody' (VA6).

As an Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse report stated, 'Connecting with other victims and survivors and disclosing their experiences after years of not telling anyone was felt to be a positive strategy' (IICSA, 2020: 61). After feeling alone in their abuse, the men had a sense of homophily, bonded to others through a shared experience but also a shared identity. Peer support was a crucial support mechanism for many victims, as several voiced that only other survivors truly understood what they were going through. Men needed to have their authentic self recognised in this process, as being misunderstood can have a detrimental impact on a victim's sense of self. This did not mean that all the stories of abuse could be reflected in one single collective narrative, as the challenges of representing the views of many in a collective are noted below. Nevertheless, many of the victims in football sadly faced similar experiences of abuse, with the scale of the problem reflected in the number of narratives joining together. This led to victims grouping together to generate change in a number of areas, which is unpacked in the 'Action' section of this chapter, with the transformative effect of communion being seen in the powerful work of survivor-led organisations that formed as

a result of the mass disclosures in 2016, such as The Offside Trust[50] and SAVE Association[51].

The narrative victimology literature has shown the disconnect between victims and non-victims which was caused as a result of victimisation, as van de Ven and Pemberton's study shows 'participants feel as if some topics and expressions of certain feelings are "not allowed" to be shared in society. They are too painful, shameful or considered inappropriate to talk about. For participants, this leads to further difficulties in expressing themselves. Again, this was an indication of the "discrepancy between the two worlds: that of victimized and non- victimized people"' (2021: 9). As one victim in this study shared, 'I can clear a room in thirty seconds by starting to talk about my abuse and what happened to me. You watch people twitch and switch and get out the way quickly. It makes people really uncomfortable; it's not a common conversation so I get people's hesitancy' (VA5). Others don't want to hear it, which is examined when looking at the public and State's response to the abuse. Nevertheless, among the men themselves, their stories started to break down traditional notions of masculinity, as forming connections was often associated with femininity, while 'real' men remain silent and stoic. The impact of this on men's mental health can be seen through the suicide statistics, with it being the single biggest killer of men under the age of 50 in the UK (ONS, 2017[52]). Although there was not the data available to break this down further via race and ethnicity, we are aware that men working in the lowest-skilled occupations had a 44% higher risk of suicide than the male national average, with men in skilled trades being

[50] The Offside Trust is a survivor-led organisation committed to supporting survivors and working to make sport safer for children. See http://www.offsidetrust.com/who-we-are for more information.

[51] SAVE Association aims to effect positive change in safeguarding and victim engagement, through football, by working collaboratively with governing bodies. See https://twitter.com/saveassociation for more information.

[52] At time of writing, this is the latest release of figures.

35% higher (ibid). Despite this, there is progress, albeit slow, occurring as more men are openly seeking therapy and other support mechanisms, with the majority of participants in this study now receiving support from various victim support agencies.

However, not all individuals forged communion with other victims as the hierarchies we have seen as a result of the hegemonic/subordinated/marginalised masculinities can also be found in amongst this community of men. Differences in power amongst the victims ultimately breaks down communion, as one participant shared,

> There's a sort of hierarchy. If you look at… take me as a benchmark, it happened to me in the 70s, I'm old, it happened a long time ago, nobody knew me, I never made it as a top pro, whereas if you look at ours who played more recently, with people like Dave White, Paul Stewart – who peoples still know, international players, they are much more likely to get a voice in the media etc. to keep it going. Even in football, there is that sort of hierarchy there. People are less likely to sit up and listen to me than Paul Stewart now, talking about this. So there is something there going on, but that's just society, like celebrities. That's not meant to sound bitter on my behalf at all, I haven't played football for many years now. It's just reality (VA8).

Although this victim was not showing any signs of jealously, he reflected the spectrum of response different victims can receive from the public. As boys, the victims were equal in their disempowerment; however, as they grew older some went on to play professional football. This was not to say that those who did or could not pursue a sporting career are in any way less important; however, in this arena of mass disclosure, the ones who were known to the public held greater prominence. The narratives of the players who went on to play professionally, some for their national team, ultimately received the most attention. Some even had their stories immortalised in print through autobiographies detailing their experiences of their career as well as the abuse and its impact on their lives (Stewart, 2017; White, 2017; Woodward, 2019). Those men represented the epitome of hegemonic masculinity as sporting stars, therefore were given elevated status in the public sphere. The disconnection this caused was expressed by one victim who stated, 'I am angry because I started this process and no one listened to me, and a footballer comes

forward and everybody listens' (quoted in newspaper article by Kelso, 2016), in reference to Andy Woodwood's professional footballing career. This hierarchy amongst the victims can be seen in the State's response to only take forward a certain number of victims in each case. Chapter 7 builds on the collective narrative paradigm to highlight how collective narratives do not equal collective justice.

However, it should be noted all these men have now retired from playing professionally. The fact that despite the numbers of players abused in the game and in wider society, no current professional player has waived their anonymity to speak out about abuse is notable. One participant stated,

> One of the big issues is, it's all right for an old guy like me and various others to come forward but the people involved in sport at the moment, particularly at the elite level, there are so many barriers to them coming forward. One being they're in the midst of their career, they may well be abused in whatever way, emotionally or whatever, it is a much bigger step. Everything is at stake. I think this is part of the issue with this [elite sport], it is held in place by a power system which is endorsed in governing bodies – they turn a blind eye, as we see in gymnastics. I think it's really problematic (VA8).

This specifies that many of the barriers the boys faced still exist today, with the stakes being raised due to business interests now being a major feature in the game. This was a key factor why many victim advocates with lived experience of abuse went on to campaign to raise awareness of safeguarding and child protection in sport, using their lived experience and expertise to evoke change, reflecting the power of these victims' narratives in their strive for progress.

Despite the hierarchy amongst the victims, as can be seen in the hegemonic masculinity literature (Connell, 1987), there is a paradox at play. Although the men were not 'ideal victims', their voices were elevated above many other victims of sexual assault, including women, when they did speak out. Participants in this research reflected on the influence and significance of football in British culture, with one victim comparing the larger platform football survivors were given in comparison to other survivors of sexual

abuse (VA6). One participant noted this perhaps led to the exclusivity amongst the group of football survivors. As they stated, 'there was something about being a football survivor, survivor of football-related abuse, emphasis on football, we are our own group and I didn't see much relating, there wasn't a huge amount of connection between them and other survivors' (VA10). Although it certainly does not reflect the attitudes of all victims in this research, it seems an exclusive communion amongst victims in football was formed. This is analysed further in the Discussion chapter of this thesis.

Leading on from this, it appears there is the need to introduce a third theme building on agency and communion as we start to explore those victims who became advocates with lived experience of abuse. The duty to use their voice and platform for good played a key role for this collective, as they did not take the decision lightly. One participant reflected,

> In a lot of respects, I represent other survivors so I have a responsibility to make sure I don't give professionals the opportunity to what I call – 'write the single story' – the idea that it is the professionals in the field who write the single story about other colleagues, and they have the power to change people's perception about who they are by that single story. Professionals have a responsibility to not tell a single story but tell a big picture, so they don't pigeon-hole people as one thing: survivors are broken, fragile etc. – cautious to work with, and taking away these stereotypes. I have a responsibility I think in my role to show that we're not all daft, cracked and broken, or unfixable and we have value as people, just like everybody else in society (VA5).

The role of victim advocates with lived experience of abuse is explored in the following section; however, these remarks again reflect that this community of victims are all individuals with a diverse range of experiences and opinions. Victim advocates with lived experience of abuse, similarly to victims who did not take up advocacy positions, wish not to be 'pigeon-holed' or have societal perceptions and expectations placed on them. These comments also express the great responsibility victim advocates had placed upon them when speaking publicly, as they understood with visceral clarity that they were representing hundreds, if not thousands, of other victims. The idea of a collective

narrative was powerful, however it can be problematic. It offers a significant reminder that these men are individuals, with their reasons for speaking out about abuse being highly personal.

Action

After disclosing their abuse, a significant number of victims went on to waive their anonymity and become involved in activism and advocacy. To explore the experiences of these victims, it is important to differentiate between agency and action as despite agency reflecting the capacity to take action, it does not go far enough to emphasise the additional step of becoming an advocate for change (see chapter 3 for discussion). It has been noted that narratives are often allied to action (Pemberton et al., 2019a), yet action is often grouped under agency, despite it being the accumulation of both agency and communion. Victim advocates with lived experience of abuse used their agency to re-write both their narrative and relationship to their victimisation, as they were no longer just victims but became advocates as well. However, due to the publicity of the cases and many others taking this step, there was confusion amongst victims of abuse in football who had not yet come forward about whether disclosing meant waving anonymity. With so many people speaking to the media about their abuse, some victims believed that they had to disclose publicly when they made a complaint to police. As a result of this, the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) and the FA set up an information booklet[53] which was developed in 2020 in partnership with survivors. This document was particularly based on the reflections and expertise of survivor Ian Ackley, who had created a previous resource a couple of years prior in response to the lack of information

[53] See resource here: https://www.thefa.com/-/media/thefacom-new/files/rules-and-regulations/safeguarding/section-9/9-2-waiving-anonymity-a-guide-black-and-white-version.ashx

available to him when waiving his anonymity in the 1990s. The PFA and the FA resource provides much of the information needed for a victim to make an informed decision about coming forward, however this was not available at the time participants in this study were navigating whether or not to waive their anonymity. The gravity of waiving anonymity was highly significant, as the impact after withdrawing anonymity on the victim and their family and friends is considerable – particularly in high profile cases. As one victim stated, 'It was the anonymity which was the big one, because you're never quite sure what you are letting yourself in for' (VA8). Some victims were given advice from the police about how best to combat media attention, although this varied depending on the investigation team. Victims' expression of agency can be found in their choice in how to tell their story, with this thesis including experiences from those who have waived their anonymity and those who have chosen not to.

Empowerment

Several victim advocates with lived experience have spoken of the decision to waive their anonymity as 'empowering' (VA9), reclaiming their voice and speaking out with the hope to encourage others to come forward. Through going from being a victim of childhood abuse to a victim *and* advocate they rewrote their narrative and identity to one that could invoke change, as one victim shared they were 'utilising a lived experience for the greater good' (V-S5). It was apparent that if many of the ex-professional footballers had not shared their experiences on national television, it would not have encouraged as many other victims to speak out. In fact, the press attention would most likely have been very different if Andy Woodward and others had all remained anonymous. This was the precise reason many victims wished to use their unique platform as ex-footballers to encourage others to both come forward and seek support. As one victim expressed, 'I

wanted to encourage others to come forward and try to deal with what has happened rather than bury it' (V-S6). This was in line with others who shared disclosing their abuse meant they could finally start to deal with the trauma they had been coping with for decades. Others wished to use their platform to bring about accountability, with individuals going to the press, as 'the truth for all victims has to be addressed by clubs and governments' (V-S2). This was a significant theme for those victims who were seeking justice from both the clubs and the State.

Privacy

Some men took the decision to disclose to the police but not waive their anonymity, as one victim said, 'personally, it's not a route I'd like to go down' due to concerns about privacy (V-S8). There was no right decision for victims to take, therefore it was important this decision was considered and supported by family and friends. Although many victims spoke about feeling empowered, some expressed feelings of being rushed into a decision, in both disclosing and in waiving their anonymity. As highlighted above, the victim's choice was central to ensuring control and ownership over their narratives. It is important to note that not all victims were ready to make such a personal and life-changing decision in November 2016, yet nevertheless the 'snowball effect' encouraged them to do so. Regret was expressed in two key areas: for those who disclosed but did not waive their anonymity, they expressed regret with making a report to police and for those who waived their anonymity, some found the media attention to be intensive, yet anonymity cannot be retracted once it is waived. There has been a lot of attention to the positive impact of disclosing, however there are many challenges which follow, particularly in high-profile cases that gain a lot of media attention.

Regret

For those who did not speak publicly, the nature of press reporting and others doing so meant details of cases against the same perpetrator were all over the media. As one victim stated, 'The impact on my wife and [child] has been absolutely massive. My wife had no idea, I'd not told anyone what the details were so they never knew anything, just knew I was involved previously. Now it's splashed all over the papers' (V-S8). This was particularly felt by victims who had previously waived their anonymity, as one victim who spoke out in the early 1990's was then faced with intense media attention when the story broke again in November 2016 (Ackley, 2018). In an article, Ian Ackley shared the difficulties generated by waiving anonymity (ibid). This potentially could impinge on a victim's ability to move on once a case has finished, particularly in this instance with high numbers of victims continuing to come forward against Bennell. Although Andy Woodward's actions empowered many men to speak out, the media attention which followed did mean that some victims felt that the agency that they had regained through disclosing had been lost once more as the media started to dictate the nature of the narrative. One victim noted that the press shared details of the abuse with which they were not comfortable, as they wished to control what aspects of their experience their family and friends were aware of (V-S8). This is summarised in the following quote:

> It knocked me for six. It's had such an impact on everybody who's been involved this time around. More so than previously. More so because it's in the public domain. So much more information has come out so previously you could… telling someone you suffered abuse as a child is one thing but them knowing the actual level of abuse that was involved has been very difficult for everybody. Some people had never disclosed previously, were never going to but were taken up by this whirlwind that they were sucked into it. Some people disclose to the police or family and then they'll struggle with that for the rest of their lives because they would have preferred not to. Sometimes, for me personally, it was the worst thing it could have happened in 2016, it coming out, I know for a lot of other people it was as well (V-S8).

There is good reason for caution highlighted by Andy Woodward describing 'going through hell and back' (Dodd, 2020) since publicly disclosing. Although he did not express regret, he notes the negative experiences he has faced as a result of waiving his anonymity. Notably, Andy Woodward experienced trolling and online abuse, which ultimately lead to convictions brought against two individuals who set up fake Twitter accounts pretending to be his perpetrator (Taylor, 2017). The cruel messages sent by the pair led him to experience flash-blacks and psychological distress (ibid). However, regret can work both ways, as one victim, who in fact started criminal proceedings against his football coach prior to Andy Woodward waiving his anonymity, spoke of the fear over leaving it too late. He stated, 'a massive thing is not regretting, that was a big driver for me […], it suddenly dawns on you I don't want to be sat in my eighties, not very well, wishing I had said something and had my say and been recognised. That was a massive part for me, and the lads have said that as well' (VA9).

These narratives held clear power, as ex-England footballer and survivor Paul Stewart states, 'It came to me then, for the first time, that this was a story which went far beyond my own, and would have implications for our national game' (2017: 32). As a result of the publicity, many victim advocates opted to become involved in campaigns to raise awareness and support other survivors. As one victim shared when becoming an ambassador after receiving support from the same survivor group, 'It was an honour really you know. They've done a lot of work with me and they'd helped me a lot through some quite tough times' (VA11). This example of peer support also ties in closely to the masculine notion of action, of doing something practical, which many of the men relished. The collective joining of injustice is particularly poignant in the following chapter, as victims shared comments such as there will only be justice when there is 'justice for all victims' (V-S2). Many utilised the anger they felt, which was driven from

the unjust nature of their experiences of abuse and lack of response from the football clubs, the FA, and the State. This is also a hyper-masculine trait, with anger being at the core of 'protest masculinities' (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), where subordinated and marginalised men act out in anger as a performance of their masculinities (see Maguire, 2016). It is important then to consider the status of the men as adults, no longer White working-class boys. Many men went on to have careers which allowed them to join the middle-classes, however many people still resonate with the class background into which they were born and socialised. The status the men now exhibited is touched upon in the Discussion chapter.

Raising Awareness & Activism

Many advocates who did waive their anonymity wished to use the platform they were afforded as football survivors to raise awareness of wider abuse. This included setting up charities to support other survivors of abuse in football and running campaigns to raise awareness of abuse in sport. As Cook and Walklate state, 'Importantly many of these stories are not only private ones, they are also public ones' (2019: 250). The reasons for this are both interesting to note and important, as many victims stated they wanted 'some good' (VA6) to come from their experience, namely that no other child would be abused in football. Furthermore, some spoke of providing support for other victims which did not exist for them when they disclosed. This was discussed in depth in the interviews and victim responses and is an important component of this study. Offering this support allowed them to rebuild a sense of agency which had previously been taken from them and develop communion with their peers. Essentially, the victims were able to rewrite their identities as advocates, reflecting a narrative approach to coping with victimisation and its aftermath introduced in chapter 3 (Pemberton et al., 2019a). This is explored in

further depth in the 'Helping Others and Healing' section. For some victims in these interviews, becoming an advocate was a way for them to come to terms with their abuse and their identity as a victim and as an ex-footballer, as one victim stated, 'It made me realise that our fame was a powerful tool in this fight to raise awareness of a taboo subject' (Stewart, 2017: 63). For example, Vollhardt (2009) has drawn attention to altruism born out of suffering, which can be seen in these examples. However, it should be noted that advocacy takes various forms, both privately and in the public domain.

Platform

Many victim advocates with lived experience of abuse in this research chose to take their advocate role one step further by utilising their stories to campaign for changes in law and safeguarding procedures. This goes further than speaking out about their experiences, but attaches a victim's story to a political standpoint or cause. This has been explored within narrative victimology with regards to how a single victim can influence public policy, e.g. what Walklate and colleagues have described as 'the Batty Effect' (Walklate et al., 2019). In these cases, as was seen in the #MeToo Movement, it was the power of numbers and a community of victims which championed the cause and invoked change. Although there have been examples of individual victims leading to changes in the criminal justice system, for example, football survivor David Lean's experience influencing the updating of the CPS guidance towards cases of non-recent CSA (2019), this was not commonplace. This was clearly shown by the attempts of a group of football survivors to change the double jeopardy legislation with regards to non-penetrative CSA, which have been repeatedly refused by the State (see chapter 7). Despite invoking essential changes in safeguarding in sport at a grass-roots level, the men were unable to generate change on a national level. This is explored in chapter 7 and the Discussion

chapter of this thesis, exploring the extent of the victims' status and power through the lens of the ideal victim.

Helping Others & Healing

Two other reasons victim advocates with lived experience of abuse articulate as a cause for their advocacy was to help others, which for some, helped them come to terms with their own abuse. Pemberton and colleagues (2019a) indicated that agency and communion could be rebuilt by helping others, reflected in the positive experiences of victim advocates with lived experience in these roles. As one stated, 'I can use my history and experience to positively effect and help change the culture and landscape of safeguarding and survivor engagement utilising a lived experience for the greater good' (V-S5). This passion to evoke change and help other survivors is powerful, shown by individuals and groups, such as The Offside Trust and SAVE Association. This formed communion between victims, as Pemberton and colleagues pose the question, 'Is helping someone in a similar position beneficial to one's self-respect or is it helpful in making a connection to that person? Is post-traumatic growth a matter of learning or finding spiritual and moral connections?' (2019a: 403). As has been illustrated in the Communion section of this chapter, forging relationships after isolation was significant, with several victims speaking in the interviews of the strong bonds they formed with other victims. One noted, other victims 'helped me a lot through some quite tough times' (VA11). Others spoke of the therapeutic benefits, with a participant stating, 'I feel when I do this work it helps my healing journey knowing I may be helping others' (V-S7). This is backed in the literature, as 'For many the opportunity to help others and give something back was incredibly powerful in their journey to recovery' (IICSA, 2020: 61). No action will make up for the impact the abuse has had on a victim's life, but the power of

survivor-led activism for the individual and for society should not be overlooked.

Overview

It was ultimately Andy Woodward waiving his anonymity and speaking out publicly that gave 'permission' (VA8) for men to speak out about the abuse they experienced in childhood. This chapter shows that the cultural landscape needed to be right for the audience to listen, with timing being key for these narratives to get the public's attention. The popularity of football, and the fact men were predominantly the victims, likely led to wider public interest and appeal. Through voicing their experiences, victims reclaimed a sense of agency and although it did not necessarily bring about closure, it can be a step towards coping with their victimisation and its aftermath. For some, speaking out helped them to take back the power they felt they lost through victimisation. At the centre of this discussion remains power and its creation of hierarchies, both amongst the victims in football and other victims of childhood abuse. This chapter sought to highlight how victims constructed collective narratives, with the strength in numbers giving the men a collective sense of unity and community in one another, which formed communion. Despite the victims' sense of agency and communion being damaged in their experiences of abuse, through speaking out, victims were able to rebuild their individual sense of self, including agency and sense of collective unity with their social surroundings.

In addition to this, a number of victims went on to waive their anonymity and take on the identity of victim advocates, with their efforts resulting in incremental change in safeguarding practices and policy. The need to bring in 'action' as the third component of this theoretical framework is key, as it represents the victims' empowerment in rewriting their narrative as advocates. Although no individual victim was given the elevated status noted by Walklate and colleagues (2019) as the 'Batty effect', the victims were

collectively able to advocate for change while supporting other survivors. The complexity of the relationship between their status and what they were able to achieve is explored further in the Discussion, with the next chapter exploring the public and State's response to these narratives and the impact of this on the victims' sense of self and identity.

Chapter 7

Evolving Narratives:
The Audience's Impact on Victims' Sense of Self

On a very fundamental level, there is something about us as a society not acknowledging abuse and trauma and for me, this is behind a lot of the issues that we are coming across. We're not facing the pain (VA10).

Introduction

At the heart of both narrative victimology and the accounts of victimisation in this thesis is the need for an audience to listen and acknowledge victims' narratives. Acknowledgement by an engaged audience allows victims to rebuild a sense of agency and communion which often are damaged in their experiences of victimisation (Pemberton et al., 2019a). The audience can be made up of a victim's inner circle, for example their friends and family, however this can be extended when a victim discloses to the police or speaks out publicly, expanding the audience to include the general public, the media, and the State. This chapter focuses on these three groups, specifically drawing out the criminal justice response to the victims' narratives and how a victims' individual and collective identities may both be shaped, and to some extent shape, how the audience perceives them. Through concentrating on the victims' experiences in the criminal justice system, I explore how their treatment within the legal space impacted on their perception of self and the extent to which their perceived status was mirrored in the socio-political landscape.

Gauging the different audience reactions to the victims' narratives required the use of a number of differing surrogate measures. The response of the general public was based on Dixon's study where he sampled the public response to cases of non-recent CSA in

football (2019), specifically looking at the response to Eric Bristow's negative Twitter remarks (De Menezes, 2016), and the general reaction the victims themselves believed they received from the public. The State's response, which in this context referred to the UK Government, was reflected by any law reform and awards or recognition given to notable victims. For ease of discussion, the criminal justice response was separated from the State's response, as the victims' experiences in the legal system were noted as a critical moment in their unfolding narratives. Although the accounts of criminal justice professionals' helped provide contextualisation of the cases, these evaluations were derived from the accounts of victims to understand the impact the criminal justice system had on their perception of self.

Importance of the Audience: The Public's Response

When the stories first came to light the response from the public was initially positive, however Dixon's (2019) study found that there were sections of the general public who did not fully sympathise with the victims' experiences. The importance of a receptive audience is clear, with Ring stating, 'if there is a fate worse than that of being a trauma victim, it is that of not being recognised as such by one's community' (2017: 97). The community ultimately determine the 'hierarchy of victimhood' (Carrabine et al., 2004; McAlinden, 2014) and there are many examples of how this lack of empathy and understanding was and potentially still is embedded within the general football audience. In chapter 5, it was established that the culture found in football at the time created an environment where victims feared speaking out about abuse, as a former professional player stated, 'can you imagine what 60,000 fans would chant […] on a Saturday when I ran out onto the pitch?' (Davies, 2018). This showed that players were concerned by the response they would receive from fans, reflecting what they perceived to be homophobic

prejudice present in society. A recent example shown in football is the common chant of 'rent boys' at matches, most commonly aimed at Chelsea FC (Smith, 2022). This derogatory term refers to 'underage male prostitutes', who are in fact exploited and abused children. Chelsea FC's in-house historian, Rick Glanvill, stated, 'The chant is "Hello! Hello! Chelsea rent boys, Chelsea rent boys", to the tune of convicted sex offender Gary Glitter's "Good to Be Back", and it's been sung by opposition fans when playing Chelsea since the late '80s, early '90s' (quoted in an online article by Smith, 2022). Not only is such language homophobic, but it also minimises and misrepresents male sexual abuse. In January 2022, the CPS announced that the 'rent boys' chant would now be considered a hate crime. Whether this acts as a deterrent is yet to be seen.

However, the 'public' does not simply represent a singular view. Cook's differentiation between public (with a small p), reflecting the local and regional public, and capitalised Public to reflect a national perspective, which leads to national policy reform and political debate (2021: 365), can help us to understand the nuances with exploring the public reception to these stories. I will be referring to the public, which Cook refers to with a capitalised 'P', to focus more on a general consensus which was felt by the victims and resulted in policy reform and debate. Hartill (2019) spoke of the ascribed masculine traits prescribed to footballers, in particular stoic silence, with anything diverting from this being seen as a weakness (which could hinder the team's success). These prejudices articulated in football either influenced fans, or were already commonplace in mainstream society (see Dixon, 2019). Although how these victims were generally perceived is of less significance by comparison to what the players thought the public's attitudes were. Our understanding of the perceptions of CSA against boys at this time would prove their assumptions to be fairly accurate (ibid). As identified in chapter 5, male victims of CSA were seen as an anomaly or as the 'victimological other' (Davies,

2011). White expressed such ideas when he shared, 'I was frightened that fans, managers and teammates might react in a negative way – with disgust, even – because paedophilia still remained hugely taboo, both in football circles and within society in general' (2017: 129).

The previous chapter reflected on the public's response to darts player Eric Bristow's comments in 2016, with several participants in Dixon's (2019) study revealing they agreed with the remarks that the boys should have stood up for themselves and fought back. This perception both belittles the experiences of boys/men and fails to acknowledge the scale of male victimisation. These comments were wrapped in misogynistic language and hyper-masculine expectations placed on the victims, which are associated with traditional perceptions of acceptable masculinity, femininity, and victimisation. One participant referenced Bristow's comments stating, 'It just really epitomised that model of this is what it is to be a man and therefore if you're a victim of abuse then you're not a real man' (VA10). This was further reflected in the literature exploring how society's perception of male victims changes after sexual abuse, with the victimisation 'feminising' the victim in the eyes of the public (e.g. Jewkes et al., 2015). This feminisation showed that identity was still at the core of how the public responds to victims, with society being socialised to assume victims of sexual violence to be female. This was a crucial barrier which prevented many victims from speaking out sooner about their abuse.

When victims face a negative reception, it can minimise their experiences of harm, shown by the reaction of the survivor community to Bristow's comments. One survivor shared he was 'disgusted' (quoted in Demianyk, 2016), with Owen Jones (2016) writing in The Guardian: 'Such comments inflict genuine damage on people too: if you've internalised a "maybe it was my fault" sense of shame, if you feel emasculated, then Bristow's rant will be a source of hurtful anguish.' This chapter highlights how a

subsequent poor reception from the public and negative treatment by the State hinders this process and can lead to retraumatiation, revictimisation, and a further narrative rupture, leaving the men in this research questioning their identities as victims. As Ring and colleagues comment when comparing inquiries into sexual abuse in England and Wales, Ireland, and Australia, 'Each inquiry's work might seem nonsensical without appreciation of the role of trauma discourse in informing the reception of adults presenting decades after their abuse to tell of their life-changing, harrowing experiences, some-times for the first time' (2022: 221). Narrative victimology has shown the importance of the audience in listening to victims (Walklate et al., 2019), particularly after these individuals have been silenced for so long, therefore the acknowledgement of the public, media, and State plays a crucial role in victims' evolving narratives and self-perception. Nevertheless, some change has taken place, with Dixon's study (2019) also noting that despite many agreeing with Bristow, more inclusive masculinities are slowly starting to be accepted within football albeit there are still contemporary examples of homophobia, racism, and many other instances of discrimination (see NPCC, 2021; Pope et al., 2022; Smith, 2022).

An example of the shift can be seen with Jake Daniels, a seventeen-year-old Blackpool footballer, coming out as gay in May 2022, making him the only active openly gay professional football player in Britain. Although his public declaration is monumental, it is important to note that he does not play in the top divisions of English football and likely not under the same commercial pressures. As a result of this, Daniels is less well known and, therefore, likely attracted less press and media coverage than if he was a Premier League footballer. Furthermore, his willingness to 'come out' may reflect his young age and a generational difference in the acceptance of more inclusive masculinities. The hierarchy amongst players exhibited here was also reflected in the

reception that the victims who went on to have a professional footballing career experienced, by comparison to the status afforded to those who remained in the amateur ranks. This issue is analysed in the Discussion section (see chapter 8). Although some of the public agreed with Bristow's comments, the men's experiences were still widely accepted by the general public (Dixon, 2019). This was primarily a result of the timing in relation to other mass disclosures, including the Jimmy Savile allegations, which created a more open culture for the men to speak out and the public to be more receptive in listening (see chapter 6 for discussion).

However, the more negative responses from a small sub-section of the public was a result of more than just the hyper-masculine environment of football. Several participants raised the lack of attention given to CSA more generally in society, as the prevalence of CSA is too challenging to be contended with. A participant shared,

> It's too hard to confront the truth that as a society we hurt children. It's a horrible, horrible thing to contemplate so they turn their face away, they think it happened to someone else far away over here. It hasn't. It's either happened to you or someone you love or someone you work with. The better we can be about speaking about it more openly […] the better we can make up for the failings of the past (VA2).

As another noted, the prevalence of child abuse challenges the 'adaptive illusion' that we live in a 'just world' (VA10), with advocates and victims alike commenting that CSA was widely ignored in society due to making individuals, organisations, and communities feel uncomfortable (VA5).

Despite this, the participants spoke of the generally positive responses they received from the public, which allowed more men to speak out. Woodward stated,

> I'm grateful so many people listened. Just by listening, they've made me feel as if I've done the right thing at last. The calls, the messages, the social media posts. People I run into – old friends and complete strangers – in the street. Those connections make me feel as if I've done something worthwhile. There's a satisfaction in that: doing something necessary and important, no question. Those connections can make me feel happier being me (2019: 338).

By forging new connections with individuals who knew the truth about his childhood, Woodward was able to build connections and communion with others. As has been previously noted in this thesis, victimisation can leave victims feeling isolated, with speaking out and showing such vulnerability helping them forge connections with others.

Importance of the Audience: The Media's Response

The role of the media and press reporting is an essential component in raising public awareness on an issue, as previously highlighted, the media has been criticised for its prior under-reporting of child sexual abuse cases in sport (Conn, 2016). As early allegations occurred before the advent of social media, this meant the public were widely unaware that there were allegations circulating of CSA in football. The Sheldon Inquiry report noted: 'Despite initial widespread media interest, the story did not continue to garner attention. Deborah Davies [reporter who initially investigated CSA in football in the 1990s] told me that she thinks this was because we 'didn't have any star names and that there was no media appetite to move the story on.' She also suggested that 'at the time sports journalists were so embedded with the game that I don't think they were open to criticism of it and I think that's been one of the big changes now, that the concept of a sports investigative journalist almost didn't exist then and now it does' (Sheldon, 2019: 186). The press, specifically the tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, still hold considerable power in ensuring whether a story comes to national attention, with Andy Woodward's experience of abuse being first publicised in an interview with The Guardian (Taylor, 2016). The role of the press and media in reporting on cases where there are many victims (i.e. mass reporting), is particularly important to note, as by printing and circulating stories of those who had waived their anonymity, it encouraged a 'snowball effect' of others to come forward. Almost all tabloid and broadsheet

newspapers published articles when Andy Woodward and other victims came forward in 2016, with it receiving national and international media coverage. The press started to share the collective narrative of the victims, enabling victims to get a sense of strength in numbers, especially when there were concerns surrounding being believed and/or being able to prove abuse occurred. Both victims and police officers spoke of the influence of this as one officer stated, 'I think the more exposure, the more people will come forward and feel emboldened to do so' (P1).

Yet, the cyclical nature of press reporting can mean attention on an issue is fleeting, with one advocate stating, 'So you get this kind of yo-yo of media interest, and that's just the way the media operates' (VA3). One participant spoke about the lessening interest as time went on, comparing the press coverage from Bennell's trial in 2018 with the media interest for his final conviction in 2020 (VA8). This is not to downplay the investigative journalism and considerable activism from survivor groups, such as The Offside Trust and SAVE Association, which have brought and kept the issue in the public eye for a considerable amount of time. It simply reinforces the importance of the subject being kept high profile in the national press and media. Furthermore, when considering which victims received the most coverage, one participant shared, 'it is who the media decide to focus on and what abuse they say is important and there is something around that isn't there?' (VA10). This was discussed when considering the hierarchy amongst football victims, with ex-professional football players receiving the most attention. Despite this, it was widely acknowledged that other sports would not have received the same media attention, with the significance of football as the national game making it a defining moment (P3). Many victims discussed how it was the ex-professional footballers who received the most media attention. One advocate summing up the press attention as, 'What you do get is a footballer coming out, that will make the main news. If you get a

non-league footballer, it makes nothing – you may get local news' (VA3). Although victims in this research did not express resentment over this, it perhaps reflects the commercial nature of media organisations. This again ties into the hierarchy amongst football survivors which was introduced in chapter 6 and will be explored in depth in the Discussion chapter of this thesis.

Although the media was acknowledged as crucial in getting victims to come forward, there were various complications in the police investigations as a result of the intense media scrutiny. One police officer described how the press 'turned into the bane of our lives' (P2), with the example of a tabloid newspaper giving the police only twenty-four hours warning before naming an alleged perpetrator in print. In addition, a few victims spoke of the feeling of being overwhelmed by the nature of the press reporting. One spoke of the shock of what he disclosed in court being published in the newspaper, stating, 'That was difficult again to take, as you feel like you're in a safe environment' (V-S8). For those victims who did not waive their anonymity, intensely private matters can become public property when reported on. The press and media have the important responsibility of holding those in authority to account, with the significant investigative journalism which revealed non-recent CSA in football already having been noted. Still, as Ian Ackley stated, 'In all honesty, my life became totally derailed. Bennell's face was constantly all over every form of media. I couldn't go anywhere without hearing about it or seeing it on the news' (2018). The interviews revealed victims can sometimes lose the control and ownership over their narrative after the story hits the press, which emphasises how agency can be diminished, as well as rebuilt, when speaking out.

Importance of the Audience: The State's Response

The State also holds considerable power in responding to victims of child sexual abuse in football. In this context, I will be referring to the Government, with the criminal justice response being referred to separately in this chapter. A clear example of the State's power is in its handling of the calls to change the double jeopardy legislation regarding CSA. At present there is a loophole in the double jeopardy law, which barred a participant in this research from being involved in the recent proceedings against his perpetrator. This was after a previous trial resulted in an acquittal thirty years earlier. Double jeopardy legislation ('non bis in idem') stops an individual from being tried again on the same or similar charges after a court acquittal. There are exceptions for this, which consist of new evidence being brought forward in the case of twenty-nine 'serious crimes'– including murder, rape, and some class-A drug offences. In these exceptions, suspects can be tried more than once where 'strong and viable' new evidence has emerged. Although in many instances this is an important piece of legislation that protects defendants, it has proven to be problematic in cases of non-recent CSA involving non-penetrative sex, which is not currently categorized as a 'serious' crime. Charities and a group of ex-footballers fought to reform the double jeopardy law in England and Wales so that all child abuse offences would be exempt, however Justice Secretary Robert Buckland QC rejected this call in 2019. A victim who was denied a re-prosecution in his case shared that if the loophole in the legislation was not closed 'there will never be any closure' for him (V-S6). This again illustrates the limited status of the victims as despite their attempts to bring about important legislative reform, they were rejected by the Government. Despite invoking essential changes in safeguarding in sport at a grass-roots level, the men were not able to experience the same impact that other cases had in being recognised nationally (see Walklate et al., 2019; Cook, 2021). They could not be used as political vessels of change

due to limitations in their status and power, which will be analysed in the Discussion chapter.

Despite individual victims not being nationally championed and elevated for their advocacy work, as shown with the 'Batty effect' in Australia (Walklate et al., 2019) and the influence of the 'charismatic matriarch' noted in the UK (Cook, 2021), the attention these cases received has started to invoke some change. Male victims of CSA are now more widely acknowledged as a result of football's widespread influence in society drawing public attention to the sexual abuse of young footballers (VA8). This was highlighted through new legislation being brought by the Government in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, making it illegal for adults in positions of trust, including sports coaches, from engaging in sexual relationships with young people under the age of 18, as is in place for other occupations such as teachers and doctors (House of Commons, 2021). It appears that although attention is being given to the protection of young football players today, the treatment of the victims (now adults) in this thesis, which is explored below, reflects a failure to acknowledge their experiences of harm. This suggests the State's indifference or lack of understanding of the seriousness and long-term impact of CSA (e.g. VA2), most notably shown by former Prime Minister Boris Johnson's comments in an interview with LBC radio station in 2019:

> I think an awful lot of the money, an awful lot of police time, now goes into these historic offences and all this malarkey… £60m I saw was being spaffed up the wall on some investigation into historic child abuse and all this kind of thing (LBC Radio, 2019).

These comments invalidated the victims and their trauma and sparked a strong response from the football survivor community (BBC News, 2019). Chris Unsworth, director of the Offside Trust at the time, an organisation set up by survivors of CSA in football after allegations started coming to light in 2016, stated Johnson's remarks were 'ignorant, dangerous, disgraceful and unbelievably distasteful' (ibid).

Importance of the Audience: The Criminal Justice System's Response

Finally, the most significant of all the audience responses is arguably that of the criminal justice system, due to its role in providing justice for victims of crime. The criminal justice system response refers to the treatment victims received from the police, CPS, and if relevant, during the trial from the defense barristers and the Judge presiding over their case. Where the public and Government response focused more on the collective narrative of the victims, the criminal justice system was tasked with viewing the victims as individuals with individual experiences of victimisation.

In the context of these cases, the relationship between football, class, and the State has been a long and controversial one, with Martin Lacey stating, 'In the first half of the 1980s you had a Conservative government that was trying to dismantle the building blocks of British working-class life, one by one: the unions, the nationalised industries, neglecting education, the health service… and football was part of that' (Tempany, 2016: 136). The demonisation of football fans was a major issue, with a moral panic relating to hooliganism in football during the 1970s-1990s. The Government attempted to supress any power working-class football fans could possess, with boys and men being over-policed and criminalised for their interest in football (ibid). This provides the backdrop and culture which the victims in this thesis, White working-class boys, would have faced to report their abuse to the police, offering a further barrier for boys to disclose as children.

Motivations for disclosing to the police are explored later in this section, however a key theme throughout the interviews was 'being able to tell what happened to me and being believed, that's all that mattered. What he got for his sentence, I don't care. It's irrelevant for me' (V-S10). The victims sought out having their identity and sense of self

validated when speaking out about the abuse they suffered, with this validation being at the heart of their decision to make a report to the police. This was a clear example of agency, with the core motivation of sharing their experiences and being heard, framing the experiences of victims within the criminal justice system and its impact on self-perception.

Early Disclosures (Pre- 2016)

To start, I will refer to those few victims who disclosed prior to Andy Woodward waiving his anonymity and speaking publicly in 2016. Seven victims in this study reported their abuse to the police prior to 2016, with their experiences differing slightly to those who disclosed since 2016. Several victims disclosed to the police up until just a couple of years before Woodward waived his anonymity, with the timing of the disclosure being noted throughout this section. The key themes which emerged from these accounts were:

Police Insensitivity: 'Culture of Disbelief'

With regards to the police, a common theme in the accounts of victims making early disclosures were instances of insensitivity by police officers in handling such cases in the late 1980s and 1990s, which could possibly reflect the culture of policing at that time. One victim believed his age impacted on his treatment by police when he disclosed in the late 1980s, as police officers warned him of the consequences if he was lying. He recalled, 'I was a young lad who was told that if I had lied my football career was over and nobody would believe me ever again' (V-S1). Participants spoke of 'a culture of disbelief' (VA2) within the police towards victims of CSA around this time, with some stating this was custom up until five years ago (ibid). This policing culture draws attention to concerns children and young people had regarding disclosing to the

authorities, as they questioned whether they would be taken seriously or not. This also illuminates some of the treatment young, often working-class, boys, experienced by those in authority in the 1980s (see Tempany, 2013). In reference to Hillsborough, which occurred around this time, Andy Burnham MP stated in the House of Commons, the event revealed Britain's 'flawed judicial system, which gives the upper hand to those in authority over and above ordinary people' (Tempany, 2016: 413). In the case of CSA in football, the victim highlighted above was viewed as untrustworthy, a possible liar, which in part explains why some victims waited many years to disclose their abuse, as seen in the late disclosure figures of male victims of CSA (O'Leary, Easton, & Gould, 2017).

The fear of not being believed was tied closely to their identity and scepticism surrounding the criminal justice system. This was grounded in reality, as former Chief Constable Simon Bailey, who led Operation Hydrant stated, 'Some of the greatest failings of our recent past is because we didn't believe victims – and it's our shame' (IICSA YouTube, 2020). Although the fear of not being believed was experienced by both male and female victims of abuse, it was certainly exacerbated for male victims and ultimately realised for some victims in this thesis. One victim shared when disclosing to the police in 2012, 'I did not feel believed at all. I felt despite the significant detail and list of others abused they merely ticked boxes in their investigation' (V-S7). Another victim recalled, 'One of the officers involved was very open, trying to be reassuring and follow the right protocols. The other one seemed to be very dismissive, wasn't understanding at all, if I tried to speak he would cut me short straight away and tried to talk over me. Even though I was trying to say something he would just raise his voice, until I just thought, you know what – sod it, he doesn't want to listen' (V-S8). The victims were left considering themselves not worthy of being listened to and closed them off from sharing their experiences. The reasons for this treatment were surely multiplicative and complex,

however it appears that at this time these boys were legally invisible (Purdie-Vaughans & Eibach, 2008) as victims of CSA. The invisibility was embedded in the socio-political landscape, highlighted by the systematic CSA occurring across organisations such as the Catholic church, children's homes, as well as in sports clubs. Chapter 5 reflected that boys in particular were simply not regarded as probable victims of sexual violence, due to the gendered perceptions surrounding victimhood. When this was coupled with the voices of children being widely disregarded within the culture at the time, it left victims unable to speak out. This was further complicated by the lack of trust between working-class communities and the authorities at this time being viscerally reflected by the aftermath of the Hillsborough tragedy, which reinforced the social standing of working-class boys, leaving them vulnerable and invisible within the criminal justice system (Haywood, 2016).

Lack of Prioritisation: 'A Reference Number'

Moving onto the CPS, later in 2013, just a couple of years before Woodward waived his anonymity and drew widespread public attention to the issue, a victim was told by the CPS no further charges were going to be brought against his football coach who had abused him. The reason for this decision being the financial costs of putting on a trial. The perpetrator had already served time in prison for child abuse offences, leading to concerns as to whether he would get another prison sentence for crimes against this specific victim. As he powerfully shared, 'It could cost £10,000 a day – a 3 day court case would be £30,000 and for that money he might not get a conviction. They said they think he might be found guilty but he might not get a prison sentence and as such, it wasn't worth spending £30,000. However, it would be worth spending £30,000, regardless of what happened after – the fact that over 100 boys have come forward. It was worth

£30,000 for me' (VA6)[54]. Attempting to put a cost on the trauma of abuse proved to be particularly harmful for victims and was reflective of the insensitivity shown to many victims of CSA at the time, leaving the victims feeling that their experiences were transactional. Although financial implications are the reality of operating public services, it does reflect a common critique levelled at the criminal justice system by victims and practitioners in the interviews, which was that the process was focused on getting a conviction over getting justice for individual victims. As one victim stated, 'The police wanted a conviction and that was all that was on their agenda' (V-S5). Many victims spoke of the decision being a reflection of how they were seen by the criminal justice system, with one voicing, 'You're just a reference number and I still believe that to this day' (VA6). This impacted on a victims' sense of self, from feelings of not believed as a boy, to an apparent lack of interest in their experience of victimisation as adults.

Experiences such as these have a detrimental impact on a victims' self-perception, as the criminal justice system often failed to acknowledge their narrative. In this case, after originally being told he was not going to be taken forward, he shared 'I went off the radar if I'm honest, I lost the plot a little bit.' He went on to say, 'All I can is, I was completely completely devastated. I've obviously spoken to lots of people, not just survivors in sport, but the impact it's just life-changing' (VA6). This was made ever more apparent by the fact this case met the evidence threshold to prosecute but the CPS deemed it not in the public interest to take any further. Although this is legal terminology, it connects to the core of the victims' need for recognition by the public after waiving anonymity. The fact this victim, and many others, were not prioritised left victims feeling like a 'reference number' (VA6), not an individual human being who had faced severe victimisation and

[54] This decision was eventually reviewed after the victim made an official complaint and charges were brought against the perpetrator.

trauma. Participants who made early allegations have since highlighted that many changes and improvements to the system have been enacted since the first allegations were made in the late 1980s, as one advocate stated, 'It's an awful lot better than it was' (VA4). However, it should be noted that these early experiences framed several of the victims' encounters with the criminal justice process, with their inclusion providing context of how some participants in this research first encountered the criminal justice system.

Disclosures Since 2016

Despite improvements being made since the early allegations, this research reveals that the experiences of victims since 2016 were also mostly negative, both for those who were taken forward and those who were not. As one victim shared, the criminal justice system and all those involved have 'left a trail of devastation in their path, it is they who have drawn it out and made it such a painful experience' (V-S8). This leads to important questions regarding whether it is the criminal justice process which is causing harm to victims, or criminal justice professionals simply failing in their duty of care, in this instance it appears the people are representative of the system which let this particular participant down. Pemberton (2020) argues the criminal justice system has an opportunity to rebuild agency and communion, despite its role not being primarily to listen and provide validation to the victims. This approach fails to consider the reality which Ring, Gleeson, and Stevenson (2022) note in relation to adult victims of CSA,

> While the legal responses explored […] may involve partial recognition of the survivor's suffering as a child, this is filtered through the incontrovertible reality that the person presenting before the judge or jury or public inquiry is an adult. The adult survivor has been forced to act as an advocate for their child self because no adult performed this role at the time. Therefore, the full experience of the child, their embodied vulnerability, powerlessness, dependence on others and the full impact of the abuse on them as a child is never, can never, be fully recognized by the law in the

> context of NRCSA[55]. Relatedly, any legal response offered in the present is also far too late to adequately recognize the survivor's suffering during those years when they carried the burden of the abuse alone (2022: 307).

Although considerations about the role of the criminal justice process go beyond the scope of this thesis, I will consider how the victims' experiences of criminal justice impacted on their sense of self, by using the lens of agency and communion. After similar cases of non-recent CSA were seen as not in the 'public interest' a couple of years prior, there was a shift, as a result of the press attention to these cases in football. The perpetrator in the case discussed above was Barry Bennell, one of the key offenders to be convicted again after 2016. Participants stressed the importance of the press attention in making police forces start to listen and prioritise these victims in 2016, as once the stories of abuse in football were circulated in the media, there was a focus on achieving convictions in these cases.

This led to an NSPCC helpline being set up, with hundreds of men using this service to report their experiences to the police or through contacting the police directly. As a result of this, several large-scale investigations were launched by the police into youth football coaches and scouts across the UK. The shift in the cultural and political landscape enabled these cases to be prioritised, as several participants referenced a change in attitudes to CSA and exploitation, with one stating, 'the police believe it now' (VA4). It was interesting to note that despite this, only a few of the victims in each of the large cases were taken forward in the prosecution of the perpetrator. Due to the methodological challenge of deciphering the role of the victims' identities in the handling of these cases, the focus of this thesis remains on the response of the criminal justice system and the impact of being taken forward or not on a victim's sense of self and

[55] Non-Recent Child Sexual Abuse.

unfolding narrative. For ease of discussion, I will look at the experiences of victims who were taken forward and those who were not separately.

I. Victims Taken Forward

Eight participants had their cases taken forward to trial in this research study, they are referred to as 'victims taken forward' or similar variations of this phrase. Despite the desire to be acknowledged within the system and receive justice, many victims spoke of how difficult it was to report their abuse to the police. Participants sharing the distress they experienced providing their account, with a victim describing it as 'extremely stressful and upsetting' (V-S6). Although some police teams understood the importance of getting justice for victims in these cases (Police Federation, 2019), based on the experiences of the victims who were involved in this study; this was not always the case. As one victim clearly outlined, 'It's been very frustrating from start to finish with how it's been handled' (V-S8). Although their experiences are complex, there are three key areas across the process which caused harm to the victims' and their narratives:

Lack of Communication: 'A Passenger'

For victims who had their individual cases taken forward against the perpetrator, their experiences of the criminal justice system and the subsequent impact on their sense of self were widely negative. A key theme of the interviews with regards to the victims' experiences of the criminal justice system was a lack of communication they experienced from the police. It has been described as being 'quite poor, sporadic' to 'a bit of a shambles' (V-S8). One victim shared a particularly damaging experience where he was supposed to be acting as a witness at trial, however in the lead up to the court date, did not hear from the police or any other criminal justice professionals. This led him to call

the officers responsible for the investigation, 'saying "look you haven't been in touch since you told me what the charges were, what's happening? Am I witness? It's like weeks away." They were like, "oh no decided not to use you." Well was anybody actually going to tell me this? Absolutely appalling communication' (VA5). This was particularly damaging when victims were navigating both criminal justice proceedings while trying to continue with their daily lives.

This meant that victims had little sense of agency and control within the process, with one advocate noting: 'the people I speak to, they describe being a 'passenger' in the criminal cases, they disclose the abuse that happened to them and that's it. […] then the day of the trial they have input again' (VA1). As Pemberton and colleagues state in their exploration of narratives in the criminal justice system, 'Lack of respect and/or control is reminiscent of the threat to agency, but being silenced or excluded also confirms the victim's experience of distance and alienation from the rest of society' (Pemberton et al., 2019: 411). The audience is essential in supporting victims and their account of victimisation (Walklate et al., 2019), however by the police officers not keeping victims informed on the progress of their case, they were failing to provide the desired response in their role as the audience. As one participant stated,

> I've had many guys say to me that it's such a momentous experience when you go to the police and you tell them [about the abuse] and then here's just a massive silence. Nothing happens and nobody gets back to you. You're locked into the system but the communication is very, very bad (VA8).

This also highlights a frustration over a disconnection between a victim and their own story, which links to Christie's (1977) traditional argument of the State 'stealing' a conflict from the victim. The victims lost their sense of narrative ownership within the legal space, which contrasts with their feelings of empowerment from speaking out.

The loss of control and agency over their own narrative is tied heavily to the masculine notion of action. However, this goes beyond victims simply being unable to be

proactive in their own cases, with the lack of communication and updates from officers leaving victims not feeling acknowledged or recognised. Many victims made the decision to disclose their abuse to the police because they wanted to be 'heard' and 'recognised' (VA3), indicating the importance of the criminal justice response. This ties in with the theme of 'transparency' (V-S1), in particular keeping victims updated and involved in their cases. It was clear that police investigative teams had to be wary about sharing information that would impinge on the case, however this does not mean that victims should have been kept in the dark over the progression of the investigation. Agency was also directly tied to a sense of communion, with a lack of communication also resulting in a lack of communion in the legal space. Many victims shared the lack of support they received in the criminal justice system, yet there was one example where a police team were identified as having a positive impact in this area.

In one of the large-scale cases, there was a clear example of effective communication which prioritised the victims' wellbeing, as one officer described how regular 'bespoke' emails were sent and they would arrange phone calls when there was a significant update (P2). What was particularly noteworthy was how the team went as far as to send out each update simultaneously, meaning no victim was disadvantaged by being 'the last to know' (ibid). This is an example of how victim welfare can be incorporated into an investigation of this size. They provided each victim with an individual police team member as a first line of contact, giving regular updates, and even arranging meetings with the prosecuting barrister to familiarise the victims with the court process. The officer described how they went above and beyond in 'investing' in each victim (ibid), which revealed an understanding of the importance of ensuring the victim's welfare. The narrative victimology literature highlights that victims often experience 'a lack of connection' to key actors in the justice process, which can alienate them and be harmful to their

experience of justice (Pemberton et al., 2019b: 411). By investing time in the victim, individuals can feel a sense of control and agency that was taken from them in their experience of victimisation. This approach was seen as going 'above and beyond' (P2), however it was recognised as being needed when supporting such highly traumatised victims. This is a clear example of the power the authorities (i.e. the audience) can offer regardless of the outcome of the case. If policing resources and priorities are in line with a victim-centric approach then victims can be truly acknowledged and respected through the criminal justice system, a stark comparison to the legal invisibility which many men had previously experienced.

It was not just the silences that caused harm, but also how some police officers and teams communicated. Any sense of disrespect can lead to victims losing a sense of communion they may have experienced by the generally positive public reaction to the cases of non-recent CSA. The victims wished to feel seen, heard, and treated with sensitivity and respect by the authorities, however some victims spoke of how this was not apparent in their own experiences. One victim stated,

> Especially with the way the police contact you or the CPS, there is no emotion attached to it, so they will ring you out the blue, they'll ask a couple of questions, they go away and go and speak to somebody else. They don't realise each contact they make with somebody, it takes two, three, four days to get over the fact I had just been contacted again. It is just a constantly revolving door, it never actually stops (V-S8).

In many cases, the victims had not even told a loved one of their abuse until disclosing in 2016. Therefore, how the police respond to their disclosure was essential to avoid causing further harm.

Long Waits: 'Almost Reliving the Trauma Over and Over Again Each Day'

Moving onto their experiences with the CPS, a key theme noted by all participants was the length of time it took for the cases to go to trial. As one advocate stated, 'The wheels

of justice turn very slowly don't they?' (VA2). The sheer numbers of victims coming forward caused delays in the police investigations, the CPS decision making, and caused numerous logistical challenges in preparing for trial. One such investigation took four years for final charges to be brought, meaning victims had to wait years for a final decision on their case. This may be reflective of some wider-issues in the criminal justice system, with cuts and restructuring causing victims to have prolonged wait-times (House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution, 2021). Still, one large investigation took just five months to complete. The length of time in bringing some cases to court was also hampered by some investigations opting for multiple trials against a perpetrator. The length in between each trial going to court was problematic, resulting in a large proportion of victims waiting years before knowing whether they would be taken forward or not. From confronting their past, victims were then forced to wait, which was described as 'almost reliving the trauma over and over again each day' (V-S10). In this instance, retraumatisation occurred from inaction, which differs slightly from those experiences noted below in court. The impact on the victims was also exacerbated for some by a continuation in the lack of communication or updates from the police team or CPS in their case, specifically a failure to manage the victims' expectations which was noted by several participants. The experience for victims who are awaiting a decision is truly important to consider, with one stating,

> It's just far too long. From my side of things, you're trying to do it, as lots of people will be, you're trying to do it under the radar, you're trying to do it with maybe just some immediate family knowing, most of the world won't know that you're a non-recent survivor of sexual abuse […]. It's not something you're going to sit and openly broadcast and tell lots and lots of people, so you've got this year you're trying to function, trying go to work, trying to be a Dad, or a brother, or a son. You've got it in your mind all the time […] and it's horrendous. It's a very, very difficult period for people to cope with (VA6).

The victims were being asked to cope with the stresses of the criminal justice system for years, while also continuing their daily lives and responsibilities. Some individuals might

not identify with the label of 'victim', and the stigma attached, which the State places on the victims when they become involved in a criminal investigation. It also reflects how the narratives were not being prioritised, as the long waits showed a lack of proper consideration to the men's stories and wellbeing. As highlighted above, this was not a reflection of the challenges which come with mass disclosure or non-recent cases, as one participant noted, '[The delays] could be just down to sheer numbers but the question is: why were there not more police officers, CPS prosecutors put in place as soon as we knew what the scale of this issue was' (VA1). The fact the men had no control, or agency, over this process as they had lost narrative ownership over their story exacerbated the situation. The only way of taking back control would be to pull out of the process, meaning they could not get justice in their individual case. Several victims took this step.

The toll of this wait for victims was so great that advocates spoke of it stopping others from disclosing, due to the process being 'so lengthy and so painful' (VA1). One victim shared, '[It] took two years to get to trial. So, as you can imagine not only did I have the 30-odd years of living with what had happened, I then had another two turbulent years on that' (V-S10). Some victims had withdrawn from their cases because it was taking too long and having a detrimental impact on their personal life. This was voiced by a victim,

> I know it was really frustrating there was another lad, I know that his case was potentially going to be taken up as part of [the larger] case but he chose not to in the end. One, the delays which were involved and he didn't feel comfortable enough to go through the process. You know it has a massive impact on your whole family and circle of friends, you might be ok yourself but you don't want to impact your family as well (V-S8).

The damage caused is extensive, as a victim shared how one of his close friends attempted to take his life due to the impact of the delays on his case, he noted simply, 'the CPS have no idea and the police have no idea the impact that it has' (V-S8). Not only was the impact severe, but the ripple effect was not just on the individual victim but expanded

to his family and friends as well. Similarly, the victims' loved ones were at risk of being retraumatised in the criminal justice system.

Retraumatisation in Court: 'Out of Body Experience'

A further way in which the victims whose cases were taken forward had their agency and communion ruptured was in the courtroom. Even in a supportive setting re-telling one's story of severe victimisation can retraumatise victims, showing the need for narratives to be handled both appropriately and with care. However, in the antagonistic setting of the trial, the risks were higher, specifically if their narrative or account was questioned. In the interviews, victims identified cross-examination as the key instance in which this damage occurred. Although reforms have come about to improve a victim's experience of cross-examination, in an adversarial system a victim still has to face scrutiny. As an advocate noted, 'You are going to be cross-examined by a very well paid defence barrister who is going to call you a fantasist and a liar, as that is what they are paid to do. That is incredibly hard work to cope with' (VA4). The process has been described as 'ferocious', as one victim simply stated, 'It was absolutely fucking horrendous' (V-S10). Victims spoke of how defence barristers tried to steer them off track when answering questions in court (V-S8), with one individual describing feeling 'railroaded' (V-S10). The victims faced distress from having their narratives questioned, as Pemberton and colleagues state, 'Many victims experience distress through the confrontation of their story with other narrative perspectives on that same victimization occurrence' (2019a: 404). The perpetrator's defence led to the breaking down of any sense of communion with those in authority, with victims being made out to be liars. Victims were left with their worst fears of not being believed possibly being realised, occurring publicly in a courtroom. As a participant highlighted, these men had their identity as a victim questioned, diminishing

their self-worth and validating what many of the perpetrators told them in the abuse, specifically that no-one would listen to them (VA10).

As a result, victims adopted a number of coping strategies, as 'the only way to deal with it is to detach yourself from the situation, just focus on, blinkered vision, put everything else out the way' (V-S8). Participants discussed the emotional toll cross-examination caused, with a number highlighting that afterwards they were left questioning themselves. The impact was described as 'after you're completely and utterly physically and mentally drained, what I found frustrating was I wasn't able to say what I wanted to say because I'd been instructed in advance to not move from that original statement' (V-S8). This also draws attention to the lack of voice and ownership over their narrative that some of the victims felt they had, as victims had to stick to the prescribed script expected in court. This was not a conducive space for victims to have their voices amplified or to come to terms with what happened to them. As Pemberton and colleagues note, the criminal justice process 'can also seek to impose a particular narrative upon victims' experiences' (2019b: 411). Pemberton and colleagues refer to the impact on a victims' narrative ownership as 'secondary victimisation' (2019b: 416). However, due to the alternative definitions of this phrase, this thesis will instead use retraumatisation. As a participant shared, the victims 'were retraumatised by the criminal justice system and they regret [being involved in the process] massively' (VA4). Retraumatisation, which is discussed below, impacted on the victims' sense of self, causing a narrative rupture and leaving them feeling disempowered and disregarded.

Several victims referred to retraumatisation, as one victim recalled, 'I think back to that experience and I don't remember it in the position I was stood in, I view it from watching above. Almost out of body experience, where you're watching something happening and you're thinking… it's been explained to me through counselling that

you're disassociating yourself from that traumatic experience. By doing that you're putting a distance between you and the pain you are feeling' (V-S10). The State's revictimisation of the victims noted above had a detrimental impact on the men and their life stories (Pemberton et al., 2019a), particularly on the way in which they tried to adjust back to what they perceived was a 'normal' life. A victim stated that in court he was 'almost vicitimised again by having every minute detail of your life pulled apart' (V-S10). In fact, as Horowitz has argued, 'In its compulsive repetition of the moment of utterly vulnerable victimization, trauma is the incessance of injury. It is not the incessant return of the past, but rather the persistence of the thing itself … in its persistence [it is] a broken off piece of suffering' (2009: 38). Despite the abuse being non-recent, the retraumatisation kept their experiences of victimisation in the present for many victims who were interviewed in this research. As Pemberton and colleagues state,

> Those experiencing traumatic memories feel they are reliving the trauma again and again, and are unable to experience the time that separates them from the actual event. In this sense, it upsets the way the chronology of the aftermath of victimization is experienced: rather than being experienced as an aftermath at all, what happens subsequently becomes an integral part of the experience of victimization (2019a: 397).

This was then worsened by a negative experience of the legal system, as the criminal justice process became part of the victimisation. Victims may experience a second narrative rupture when their narratives are questioned, with 'survivors potentially needing support around the impact of the abuse but then also some support around the impact of the criminal justice system' (VA10). These experiences can be clearly explained by one advocate stating,

> Just the fundamental point that [the criminal justice process] is not derived from an understanding of impact, it means justice often becomes another route for injustice, so it's kind of a double whammy. First, experiencing the injustice of abuse and then experiencing the injustice of the response to the abuse, so it becomes a criminal *injustice* system (VA10).

The impact of the criminal justice response on victims is important to consider as their experiences can break down agency, particularly due to lack of communication from the police leaving victims feeling like a passenger, and long wait times by the CPS breaking down communion with those in authority. This is in line with the findings of Ring, Gleeson, and Stevenson who compare legal responses across three jurisdictions including England and Wales, stating, 'In no country are NRCSA survivors afforded access to the complete accountability and recognition that their experiences deserve' (2022: 311). From the account of the victims in this research, they experienced a further narrative rupture through retraumatisation in the system. As one victim shared, 'I look back at it and I think, would I want to go through that again for anything? Probably not. If I knew then what I know now, would I have reported it? I don't know' (V-S10). This goes beyond having a negative experience of the system, but showing how the system itself can damage a victim's perception of self.

II. Victims Not Taken Forward

However, not all victims experienced their case going to court, with six participants[56] in this research not having their individual case taken forward by the CPS in the trial against the alleged perpetrator. For ease, these individuals will be referred to 'victims not taken forward' or similar variations. Due to methodological difficulties in hearing these stories, this will be supported by victim advocates and criminal justice professionals who worked closely with these victims (see Methodology chapter).

[56] One participant included in these numbers did not have their case taken forward due to the perpetrator being deceased.

Two-Tier Hierarchy of Victimhood: 'Am I Not Believed? Is It My Fault?'

For those victims who did not have their cases taken forward, they had highly similar experiences to those who did until the CPS made a decision in their respective cases. However, the impact of the criminal justice response differed greatly, as these accounts suggest a more pressing impact on their sense of self, severely impacting on their self-worth, which will be unpacked below. One victim summed up this experience,

> The hard thing is that I was abused through no fault of my own, so I felt let down by my football club because I believe 100% that they knew what the individual was all those years ago but did nothing about it. […] I get to the age of forty-four it comes out in the press and I finally pluck up some courage to go to the police and then I'm let down by the police. I'm made to feel like I'm not any use to them at that point which makes me feel even worse […] they are not looking at me as an individual, they are not thinking of [me… name of victim redacted], they are thinking of themselves so they can get their guilty verdict. I want that guilty verdict but I want it for me because I believe in me and I know how it affected me. I kind of just feel like the police used me as a… put me to one side and thought "forget him." That happened on two occasions, for the first trial and then keeping me on tenterhooks and the second trial comes around and again you are cast to one side. So I feel really let down through that (V-S9).

The impact on victims was that they experienced a two-tier hierarchy of victimisation, as there were victims who were acknowledged by the criminal justice system and taken forward and large numbers in these cases who were not. They were not viewed as individuals and were left feeling used by their interaction. As one victim shared, 'Those lads – I could cry for those lads – and I know a lot of them that came forward and have been told, that's it, we're not doing it anymore. But where do they go?' (VA9). Bilz described the justice process as 'a referendum on the social standing of the victim' (2007: 1088), taking such an approach would imply the reason why some victims were not taken forward is because of themselves as individuals. Securing a conviction validated the victims' status, with their deep-rooted concerns about not being believed being finally refuted. Therefore, securing justice can impact intensely on a victim's sense of self, with a conviction at trial being representative of a step towards 'retrieving the respect lost and

the power usurped by the offender in the victimisation' (Wenzel et al., 2008; Pemberton et al., 2019b: 411). By having some victims of the same perpetrator being taken forward and others not, it creates a two-tier system of victims, resulting in a further hierarchy amongst this group. The opportunity to restore agency and communion was taken away.

Similarly to victims feeling disregarded through the criminal justice process, for those who did not have their individual case taken forward, it validated concerns which initially stopped them from disclosing: 'it reinforces that core problem of not being believed. Although the police officers take them seriously and they do their best, the message from the State is that you're not believed or it doesn't count' (VA4). The criminal justice system, acting as the audience, failed to acknowledge and validate the harm caused to this group of victims. The impact for those not being taken forward shows the significance of the system in acknowledging abuse and harm caused, which for some, was as much part of gaining a sense of justice as the perpetrator being put in prison. As a victim advocated shared, 'I think there's also something specific about survivors often holding quite negative core beliefs about their own worth and actually to come forward and be knocked back and therefore risk that core belief about my own lack of self-worth being confirmed. That's too great a risk to take' (VA10). For victims,

> There are two aspects, you don't get the end result – the justice, the closure, the conviction, but also the second aspect is the mental side, it's either you are deemed not to be credible, and that can have a huge impact on someone. The question is why me? Why are you not pursuing, is it because there is not enough evidence or am I not believed? Is it my fault? Did I lead him on? It reinforces all those things, the stereotypes and feelings and emotions that you had in your head and people may have been saying (VA1).

The impact of having your status as a victim questioned is extensive, with the increased pain victims faced when they did not get justice in the criminal justice system being a significant theme in the accounts of the victims, damaging their self-worth and questioning their status as victims. One victim noted the impact this had, as he coped by

'just crawling under a rock, not being seen and not being heard and just getting on with life as best as I can and not involving myself with anything else like this ever again' (V-S9). This stopped victims coming forward, with participants identifying friends and teammates who had been abused but chosen not to come forward or pulled out of an investigation due to the emotional toll it was taking.

These experiences damaged the relationship between victims and the criminal justice agencies, resulting in a lasting impact not only on the victim but on their families, friends, and in some instances, communities. As a police officer noted, 'When you are dealing with adults that have been abused as children, especially in a position of trust, their ability to trust and to rely on authority is hugely damaged' (P2). This officer recognised the importance of building trust and investing in each victim, with the most successful investigations embodying this ideal. By acknowledging the barriers victims face in trusting the police with their narrative, steps can be made to effectively and sensitively hear from those who are, or have been, legally invisible. This work is particularly necessary for White working-class boys, who from their experiences of over-policing mean they are deeply distrusting of the authorities, in particular the police. As a result, the levels of communion between the victim and the authorities were further restricted, as the lack of validation placed culpability onto the victim, either implying a problematic level of consent, or viewing them as liars or non-credible witnesses. This, of course, had a significant impact on the victims' outlook, leaving them with a lack of trust in authority, as they were abused by someone in a position of trust and then further let down by the authorities.

Collective Justice: 'A Massive Loss'

The theme of not being viewed as an individual with an independent desire for justice was similarly seen with the idea of victims gaining a collective sense of justice through their perpetrator being convicted in another victim's case. The interviews revealed the victims all have highly individualised motivations for reporting their abuse to the police. 'Justice' was seen as an arbitrary concept, which meant more than a conviction for many victims in this research. For some, justice meant 'being heard and being recognised' (VA3), with others believing justice meant longer sentences issued after conviction: 'an eye for an eye... he took away many years of my life and now he loses years of his. One day he will be freed, but I will never be free from the memories and nightmares' (V-S7). What is particularly relevant to this thesis was several participants reflecting they were unable to gain a sense of justice through the conviction of their perpetrators in other victims' cases. One victim whose case was not taken forward articulated his experience as 'a loss', sharing 'So I went from initially thinking that I would get my justice through these lads with the guilty verdict, but when it came I felt a massive loss' (V-S9). A conviction of their perpetrator in other victims' cases did not result in justice being felt collectively amongst the community of victims. This was also noted by those calling for 'justice for all victims' (V-S2), again identifying that many individuals who came forward did not get charges in their name.

The long-term impact of the abuse they experienced as children is the clearest indicator of how victimisation has impacted on their life stories (Pemberton et al., 2019b). However, the impact went one step further, to not only reveal the impact of abuse but also the response from the legal system, as for some the abuse was tied intrinsically to the need for justice. The impact of not receiving justice for a victim draws attention to the

role the criminal justice system can play for a victim processing what has happened to them, with one sharing, 'If this doesn't happen [justice], there will never be any closure' (V-S6). This thesis certainly does not suggest any kind of closure can be garnered from receiving a conviction in their case, as victims face the impacts of their abuse long after a criminal case draws to a close. However, as one victim articulated, 'Every day that passes without justice brings more pain to me. It never gets any easier like the loss of a parent or loved one. Time does not heal these wounds' (V-S1). By comparing the lack of justice to a sense of grief, it highlights both the rupture which can be caused in a victims' unfolding life story and the intensity of the emotions felt.

The cost for those who were not taken forward is highly significant, with the short sections of this thesis not doing justice to the extensive experiences many of these victims faced in the judicial proceedings. Although this is often calculated in numbers, behind each is an individual who have had their, and their loved ones', lives impacted in a multitude of ways. The experience of this is significant, with one participant stating, 'You feel sorry for all those people that came forward, which were actively encouraged to come forward, whose lives now will have immeasurably changed. A lot of them will be wondering, why did I come forward? What good has it done?' (V-S8). This sense of regret proved to be a key theme throughout the accounts from victims whose charges were not pursued, as they went through the challenging process of providing a victim statement to then receive no justice whatsoever.

Overview

The audience's response played a crucial role in developing the victims' narratives and on their sense of self, as it holds the power to validate and acknowledge the harm experienced by victims. This is at the crux of narrative victimology, with the wider

audience ultimately consisting of the public, the media, and the State, including the criminal justice system. Arguably the most significant of these responses was the criminal justice response, which from the perspective of the victims in this research, has been widely negative. Victims, who were empowered to speak out, were then left feeling invalidated and disregarded in the process and for those who were not taken forward, their biggest fear of not being believed felt as if it was being realised. As one victim shared,

> You've got massive trust issues anyway, most survivors will tell you, they don't trust anybody and if someone to turn around and say "we believe you but unfortunately there's not the evidence" and you think no-one else is going to believe me, my family won't believe me now. Everybody else is going to turn against me, they're just going to think I'm making it up. It was completely devastating (VA6).

For those not taken forward, they were left feeling like second tier victims, this impacted on their self-worth and left them feeling unworthy of the status of victim in the legal process. The impact of this can be clearly seen in the victims' accounts above. For those taken forward, their identity as a victim was instead questioned in the courtroom, with victims' experiences reflecting losing a sense of agency and communion through the criminal justice process. Although, there was one notable case where the police worked closely with the victims, prioritising their welfare, and reflecting that a positive experience is possible, despite the challenges faced within the adversarial system.

There were various risks of retraumatisation for victims in the legal space, which several victims noted experiencing, which can cause further ruptures in their narratives. Pemberton (2020) argues the criminal justice system holds the potential to rebuild agency and communion, although within the current adversarial system and amongst continued budget cuts and restructures, this seems unfeasible. Many victims struggled to juggle their identity as a victim alongside other facets of their life, for example, as a father, son, a colleague, and so on. This left many feeling that they had lost control and a sense of

ownership over their narratives, with victims responding by dropping out of the case and in a more serious instance, attempting to take their own life. The system ultimately encouraged victims to come forward to then be retraumatised within the process. For some, it seemed that the criminal justice system response acted as a second narrative rupture.

Agency, communion, and action are important concepts to rebuild, with the experiences of these victims in the criminal justice system, both for those who were taken forward and those who were not, reflecting the devastating impact the system can have on their ongoing recovery. The response from the public, media, and State, including criminal justice system, although now much more accepting of CSA, still fails to really acknowledge the layers of harm caused to victims, and how this harm can continue and deepen depending on the response of the audience. In the criminal justice system specifically, this is due to the system 'not [being] derived from an understanding of impact' (VA10), reflecting a limited consideration to victims in mass disclosure cases within the current criminal justice process.

Chapter 8

Reflections:
Discussion and Conclusion

Over the past couple of years, I've maybe grown into another identity. I became the victim who survived, the one who found the courage to tell everyone what had happened to him. To tell everyone what had happened to lots of other boys as well (Woodward, 2019: 338).

Introduction

At the core of this thesis has the been the exploration of a group of victims' individual identities, narratives (both individual and collective), and the subsequent impact their experiences of several 'critical moments' (Thomson et al., 2002; Shildrick & MacDonald, 2008) had on their perception of self. These three concepts (identities, narratives, and sense of self) are closely intwined and inter-linked, although all focus on a slightly different aspect of a victim's self and experience. Although certain identities are more fixed, such as age, many of the victims' identities are tied to societal constructions and expectations which influence an individual's self-perception. The audience's response to their narratives and the socio-political culture in which they were raised continuously influence the construction and evolution of the victims' identities. After experiencing victimisation, individuals made sense of their experiences through constructing narratives, which are a subjective retelling of events. As narratives are from the victim's perspective, they are influenced by their own thoughts, feelings, and ultimately identities. This thesis focused on the victims' narratives concerning critical moments in their lives, including victimisation, disclosing their abuse, and pursuing justice. It is clear from this

research that victims' identities and narratives resulted in their perception and sense of self within society.

This thesis illustrated how the experiences of victims of non-recent CSA in football, and their intersectional identities as White working-class boys (now men), impacted on their perception of self and unfolding narrative. The previous three empirical chapters have highlighted specifically which barriers, regarding identities, stopped the victims from speaking out to then exploring how these stories were eventually shared, both publicly and privately. Chapters 6 and 7 focused on how the victims constructed individual and collective narratives and how these narratives were then received by the public and the State. As a result, several key findings emerged which are discussed in further detail below, with a particular focus on the role of ascribed identities, rebuilding narratives and identities, the impact of hierarchies of power for the victims and whether they could be considered as political vessels for change.

Key Findings

Ascribed Identities

A key focus, as explored in chapter 7, was the reception of the audience and how the victims' individual and collective identities were shaped by, and to some extent shaped, how the audience perceived them. As Javaid states, 'sociological understanding of identity creation and gender expectations of men implies that men respond to and define situations according to both the anticipated or imagined reactions from societies and the reflected appraisals received from other men during social interaction' (2015: 284). The identities of the victims were heavily influenced by the perception of others, particularly the ascribed identities placed on them by the audience, which included the public and the

State response. The label of 'victim' is, of course, an obvious example, with the stigma and perceptions attached noted throughout this thesis impacting on how the victims were perceived and subsequently perceived themselves. To understand the identities placed on the victims, I used hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality theories to make sense of the associations attached to White working-class boys. As Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach have stated, 'The politics of research on the intersection of social identities based on race, gender, class, and sexuality can at times resemble a score-keeping contest between battleweary warriors. The warriors display ever deeper and more gruesome battle scars in a game of one-upmanship, with each trying to prove that he or she has suffered more than the other' (2008: 377). While I have not attempted to compare the experiences of these victims to other groups or communities, in the context of football, their identity left them vulnerable to victimisation, yet invisible due to their status in society. Intersectionality is helpful as it was a combination of each of these parts of a full identity which impacted on the victims' experiences and resulted in certain labels, ideas, and identities being forced upon them.

Young working-class boys have historically been subjected to derogatory labels and identities throughout UK history[57], more recently being referred to as 'chavs', 'benefit fraudsters' and 'football hooligans' (see Tyler, 2013). Although, it has been argued, 'while white working-class males are the largest disadvantaged minority, their cause is the least fashionable. In the intersectional pyramid of victimhood, White males are at the bottom, tarnished by ideas of "toxic masculinity" and "white privilege" despite the fact that in Britain class has always been the most significant indicator of true privilege' (Snowdon, 2020). It was not just in football where White working-class boys were targets

[57] Despite the experiences of class identity differing across jurisdictions, the experiences of White working-class men are somewhat similar in countries such as the US (see Kimmel, 2013).

of sexual abuse, for example, care homes were another setting where a high number of boys were sexually abused in the UK (Waterhouse, 2000). Although there is not data available on the background of victims in care homes, many are said to have experienced 'disrupted and chaotic childhoods' (IICSA, 2019: 4) which left them vulnerable to the professionals tasked with their care. Although this was not the case for victims in this thesis, those abused in care homes highlight a multitude of additional vulnerabilities, including lack of parental support, which can stop victims abused in institutional settings from speaking out. The correlation between White working-class boys/men and victimhood is of particular significance, as male victims have long been considered the 'victimological other' (Davies, 2011) within the legal system. As a result of this and other barriers described in chapter 5, the victims suffered in silence, with one victim stating he has 'lived a lie' (Conn, 2016b). This statement reflects how the men were unable to be their authentic selves, as they were forced to perform a version of acceptable masculinity which did not include being a male victim of sexual abuse. The victims, therefore, had to re-define their perception of masculinity to accept their own experiences of sexual abuse. This was made possible by disclosing their abuse and taking back their agency to forge a narrative which embodied power, control, and strength through speaking out. By reformulating the core ideas which had once been barriers to speaking out, space was given for someone to be an archetypal 'man' in a gendered society and also a victim of sexual violence. Hegemonic masculinity was reframed by the victims to demonstrate an individual who takes back their power, exhibiting 'bravery' and 'courage', regardless of the obstacles they have faced. This change was made possible through aging, ultimately placing less significance on the views of others, and shifts in the socio-political landscape to accept more inclusive forms of masculinity. Although, as highlighted in chapter 6, the more inclusive version of masculinity still does not accept a truly authentic male self as it

still relies on gendered notions of acceptability, i.e. male victims having to take the 'brave' and 'courageous' step of speaking out.

The victims in this thesis, along with their voices, were disregarded as children, however it is harder to decipher their status as adults, as their identities continuously evolve. A key example of how the audience impacted on a victim's sense of self and narrative was touched on by a participant (VA9) sharing his decision not to have children as a consequence of the abuse. The participant went on to state that as a result of the abuse, 'I didn't want children. […] I've often thought it myself when I'm with nieces, nephews and I've shied away from contact, physical contact, because of people knowing what I went through and there's this irrational thing, that if you were abused, you might become an abuser. I know it's rubbish but you can't turn it off' (VA9). The victim discussed the decision not to have children to be in direct correlation both his abuse and his concerns over the perception of others. The vast majority of child abuse survivors will never perpetrate sexual abuse; however, it is a widely held belief that they might. The data from Glasser and colleagues' (2001) study supports the notion of a victim-to-victimiser cycle in only a minority of male perpetrators, yet misconceptions surrounding male victims of CSA still permeate popular culture (RSVP, 2018). This participant was viscerally aware that the public and State's perception was that victims go on to become perpetrators, with his decision not to have children enabling him to avoid that potential label. Although he did not view himself as a danger to children, his actions tied into his fears about how others might perceive him. Victims of non-recent CSA alter their identities in response to their perception of how others might view them, reflecting the power ascribed ideals have on individuals.

Rebuilding Narratives and Identity

Previously the victimological literature (e.g. Dworkin, 2020) has focused on the psychological and emotional impact abuse has on an individual throughout their life course, as severe victimisation, such as child sexual abuse, can have considerable long-term effects on a victim. However, as highlighted above, the ripple effect of abuse expands far beyond a medical analysis to include the impact of the audience's reception on a victims' self-perception and narrative. Furthermore, victimisation has the capacity to rupture a victims' narrative, changing their self-perception through damaging their sense of agency, communion, and diminishing their ability to take action. This was reflected by White sharing, after the abuse that 'my confidence [was] shattered, my trust betrayed and my innocence stolen' (2017: 269). Abuse had a fundamental impact on the victims' life stories, with Stewart describing the abuse as 'ripp[ing] me apart' (2017: 12). Central to this thesis was the need to mend narratives after trauma, which consists of rebuilding a victim's sense of agency and communion. Pemberton (2020) suggested this process can be achieved within the criminal justice system, as do Shnabel and Nadler who highlight a victim's need to restore their agency and a sense of identity through their involvement in the criminal justice process (2015: 476). However, for both those taken forward in the criminal justice system and those who were not, the process had a seemingly negative impact on their identity.

Despite one police team having had a positive response from some victims[58], the response from the majority of victims in this research study was overwhelmingly negative. Although, as touched upon in the Methodology chapter, a research study such as this will inevitably attract victims who have had a negative experience of the criminal

[58] For example, Hampshire Police received an award acknowledging the 'feedback from the victims and witnesses praising the exceptional support, professionalism and integrity that the team provided.' (Police Federation, 2019)

justice system. Conversely those criminal justice professionals who consented to be involved in this project were more likely to be involved if they saw the importance of investigating these cases with care to the sensitivity and vulnerability of the victims. Nevertheless, despite the sample size of participants in this research having limitations, the victims were representative of several of the large cases which were undertaken as a result of the mass disclosures in 2016. For many victims, their self-worth was damaged and, for some, reinforced their core fear of not being believed. Victims described the criminal justice system has having 'such a massive bearing on your day to day thinking and ways of behaving' (V-S8). Involvement within the criminal justice system was not just an experience for the victim, but became embedded within their lives.

One reason why the criminal justice system had such a considerable impact on a victim was due to the common misconception that legal mechanisms for justice are synonymous with closure or healing, when for many victims in this study this was simply not the case. Even with a conviction, the criminal justice system did not provide closure or an end to their pain, as one victim noted, I woke up the day after sentencing and thought "is that it?" I've got what I set out to do, to say what had happened and have people believe me. You think, I'm still living with it, it hasn't taken it away in any shape or form. It's just a little bit easier to cope with' (V-S10). When the same individual was asked whether he got a sense of justice from the criminal justice proceedings, he responded, 'In terms of what happened to me, definitely. For what I've had to live with, no (V-S10). Although the victim received justice in the legal sense, the impact of both the abuse and the experiences of the criminal justice system cannot be simply forgotten. Pemberton and colleagues support this by sharing,

> Often the view that the sentence in the trial ends a particular narrative of crime and victimisation and provides *closure* for the victims or his or her survivors (see also Furedi, 2004). Of course, some victims may experience emotional benefit from their participation, but the expectation that this would amount to closure – in any sense of

> the word – has no ground in reality. Victims' narratives of events precede and transcend the justice process: however important the justice process is, it is not the only feature of victims' sense and meaning making (2019b: 412).

Rebuilding from the psychological and emotional damage caused by sexual violence is a complex and non-linear process, which for the victims in this research was not achieved through the adversarial and antagonistic legal system. The criminal justice system ultimately took away narrative ownership from the victim, placing their own set narrative onto each complainant and silencing their individual voice. This was reflective of Christie viewing the State as 'stealing' the original conflict (the crime) and its resolution from the victim and the offender (1977: 1). Despite the victim often having the largest stake in the crime, victims lost 'their right to participate' in their own proceedings (ibid). Many of the victims in this thesis were unable to rebuild their individual narrative and identity through their involvement in the criminal justice system, which was akin to many victims being unable to gain a sense of collective justice through the conviction of their perpetrators in the cases of other victims (see chapter 7).

By comparison, I found that the victims' experiences of speaking out outside of legal processes was a more helpful method of regaining agency, communion, and providing an opportunity to take action. The victims were afforded more control of when and how to disclose, as Woodward described 'talking gave me a chance' (2019: 322). Through rebuilding their narrative either publicly or privately, victims were able to retrieve a sense of power. However, this was not without its complications as former professional football player Paul Stewart, who was abused as a child in the Nova junior team, stated he 'lost his identity' when he disclosed his abuse in 2016 (quoted in Siddique, 2019). Although he has made clear the positive impact speaking out about the abuse has had on his life, Stewart also spoke about the effects of such a decision on his legacy. He said, 'I lost my identity as a footballer and my identity is now that of someone that suffered historical

abuse' (ibid). It was hard for many of the men to identify with the label of 'victim', especially when this was placed on them with little attention to the rest of their identity. One victim stated he was more than the label of 'victim' or 'survivor'; that was not his identity. He described himself as a husband, father, and a friend (Sport England Safeguarding Advisory Panel, 2019). After disclosing their abuse, victims often became defined by it, again diminishing their sense of agency and communion. As reflected in the 'Ascribed Identities' section, it showed that their perception of self was still reliant on the audience's response, which influenced how they would then view themselves. As a victim commented, 'A lot of my issues used to be around what other people might think about me. I had totally irrational thoughts, as if I had a big sign – 'victim' – pointing to my head' (Taylor, 2018). The importance of being heard and recognised was central to how victims were able to rebuild their narrative after victimisation, with the need for victims to be seen as individuals, despite often standing collectively.

An example of an opportunity to rebuild agency and communion outside of the courtroom was when the police in one of the investigations organised a meeting where the victims were able to come together to meet criminal justice professionals after the trial but before sentencing, including the barristers and investigative team, alongside individuals from victim support agencies. This meeting provided an opportunity for victims to ask any legal questions and concerns they may have had, as well as meeting the other complainants in the case. The investigative team had been careful not to identify complainants to each other prior to this meeting, for fear of the collusion argument being made in court, so for the first time the men were able to meet each other. One of the participating police officers described the power of this meeting: 'They had this fantastic evening where they all got to meet and cry and let out all of their emotion, talk about all of their stories and become united as a group of victims, before they went into a very

formal court environment where they were quite stifled, we didn't have the privacy for them to be able to do that' (P2).

It was described by a police officer as a 'great benefit' to all the complainants, as it was facilitated in an environment with adequate support available, which the men were able to access after the trial had concluded (P2). The police officer spoke fondly, sharing that it 'is something that I will forever remember because it was an incredible experience but is something that I learnt, if I ever get into a situation where I have multiple victims again it's certainly something I will do again' (ibid). This officer captured the need for victims to express themselves freely, in comparison to the 'stifling' experience at court. Through victims being able to finally meet each other, they were able to forge their identities as a collective and develop a strong sense of communion. The evening offered them the opportunity to share their narrative away from restrictive structure of the court process. They could also share not just what happened to them but their whole identity, with other victims acting as the audience and offering support to one other. It seems that in an adversarial system, narratives can be heard best out of the court environment. This is backed by Ring who states,

> The need to minimise the trauma of the trial must be tempered with an acknowledgement that it is impossible to ever fully reconcile the need for victims to tell their stories on their own terms with the requirements of the criminal trial. This may prompt a turning towards other ways of acknowledging victims' trauma and, in doing so, developing new forms of truth-telling... that grapples with the possibility of creating new spaces for hearing and debating narratives about the past and the commitment to developing institutional audiences for this purpose (2017: 96).

It is important to note, however, that this case where the meeting took place was a high profile one. The police investigative team that were able to provide this rare but highly beneficial focus on victim welfare acknowledged the circumstances surrounding how and why this could occur were unique. As one stated, 'I suppose there were particular circumstances, I suppose because it was so high profile, everything, all the stops were

pulled out' (P1). Most significantly, the funding was in place to allow this meeting. When I asked if funding would be available for other less high-profile cases, he replied:

> No, is probably the answer. We [were] relatively well placed because the force has recognised the need, post-Saville, post-Hydrant, for this area of work and they've invested in it. That pays dividends, because with the best will in the world, would these offences gone within the hurly burly of day-to-day policing, it would suffer and you would never be able to do it the justice that thankfully we were able to (P1).

This quote draws attention to the importance of policing resources and priorities in responding to cases of non-recent CSA cases in the UK, which is in need of further research and investigation. However, in relation to this thesis, it also highlights the special attention provided to cases which receive increased attention in the media. As CEO of Survivors Manchester, Duncan Craig OBE, shared, 'If those lads weren't part of football, it wouldn't have hit like it did' (Wilson, 2020). Football's position in British society, therefore, had a strong bearing on the policing resources provided to respond to these cases. More generally, this draws attention to the wider influence that football had as it went from being a working-class game to the UK's national sport.

Another way victims were able to rebuild their narrative, in particular a sense of action, was through taking on advocacy positions, both formally and informally. Chapter 6 explores in depth how victims were able to offer practical support to other victims and involve themselves in numerous safeguarding and child protection campaigns. Also offering peer support helped to form 'meso-communities' (van de Ven, 2021) amongst the survivors, conducive with mending community ties and communion. Through establishing new advocacy roles post-victimisation, these victims could reformulate what it meant to be victim, bringing in more masculine notions of control and action as they strove for change in this space. The victims' roles and identities as advocates and activists are further unpacked in the 'Political Vessels for Change' section below.

Hierarchies of Power

From exploring how victims rebuilt their narratives and identities, we should consider how these were then viewed individually and collectively. Hierarchies of power has been another central theme throughout this thesis. To begin, it is clear that the boys had little power as youth team players with one perpetrator telling a victim, 'I've got your dreams in my hand. If you say anything, I will crush them' (Conn, 2018). However, power dynamics started to shift and evolve when the victims spoke out and subsequently were listened to in 2016. Amongst these victims and other survivors of abuse, there was a clear hierarchy at play: those victims who went on to become professional footballers (and become an embodiment of hegemonic masculinity) in comparison to those who left the game. The power of ex-professional footballers, for example Andy Woodward, changed the cultural landscape with regards to male victims of childhood abuse. The differing experience amongst victims of abuse is further reflected in the two-tier experience of victimhood felt amongst those victims who were taken forward in the criminal justice system, and those who were not. This broke down to an extent communion amongst this community of victims, as hierarchies led victims to question themselves and why they were not taken forward in the criminal case, for example.

Another differentiating factor came about when comparisons were made between the victims in this research and other survivors of CSA. One participant in chapter 6 stated, 'there wasn't a huge amount of connection between [the football survivors] and other survivors' (VA10), which reflected the exclusive communion established amongst the victims in football. Although this reflected a clear bond amongst the participants in this research, it also shows the separation felt between victims in football and victims abused in other contexts. This is not to suggest any malicious intent, but highlights a level of

disconnect which can be found amongst different sexual violence survivor groups. It is interesting to note that although their exposure in the media was linked to the cultural shift brought about due to the Savile cases, the victims in this research may have not identified with these victims. There appears to be a gendered element to this separation, despite the high numbers of sexual violence experienced by girls and women, as one in four women have been sexually assaulted or raped as an adult in the UK (Rape Crisis, 2022). This differentiation ties into the masculinities literature (Connell, 1987), as a hierarchy of masculinities amongst men is tied to hegemony over women. Male victims in football initially received widespread news and media interest, with key professional players being noted in the reporting. Despite not being ideal victims, male victims of childhood abuse in football were viewed separately, with perhaps some victims viewing their experiences to be unique to those who experienced CSA in other contexts.

Political Vessels for Change

Despite forming an exclusive communion which insinuated a hierarchy in place where male victims of CSA are positioned above female victims, there were in fact limits to the power that the male victims possessed. Focusing on the State's response to the victims' narratives, it was clear no victim who came forward experienced what Walklate and colleagues (2019) refer to as the 'Batty effect', including Andy Woodward. This was perhaps surprising when considering the similarity between the two cases. Both were crimes which captured national attention, with Walklate and colleagues analysing, 'It is the everyday ordinariness of the behavior of playing cricket, juxtaposed, with the brutality of Luke's death, which arguably touched a deep nerve for many Australians' (2019: 11). The concept of 'ordinariness' linked with sport is of significance, as similarly to cricket being an intrinsic part of Australian culture, football is seen as the national

sport of the UK. This arguably provided a more sympathetic audience, as the collective group of footballers were given widespread public attention. Yet, although the men in this research received considerable attention in 2016, the cyclical nature of press reporting resulted in this attention fading. A victim noted that the most recent trial proceedings were only briefly noted in the media (VA8), reflecting that although the cases were initially prominent in the national press, their influence was not widespread enough to hold public attention.

Furthermore, apart from a few high-profile names being given increased press attention, the men were viewed collectively. Neither Andy Woodward, or other ex-professional football players who went on take up advocacy positions, went on to receive national recognition. Despite survivor-led organisations, such as The Offside Trust and SAVE Association, being set up and multiple campaigns being launched, the men have not had their status elevated through State recognition, such as receiving a commendation or award. Building on chapter 6, it is clear that victims rights' campaigners who have achieved the most success within society have involved victims who are women, with this being a possible limiting factor for the victims in football being taken seriously by the State. Identity, of course, plays a role here and although we cannot categorically state what specifically impacted on the limitations the victim advocates faced, it is certainly apparent male victims of non-recent CSA do not fit the ideal victim stereotype, specifically as many of the key victim advocates are female, for example, Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE and Baroness Helen Newlove[59].

[59] For context, Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE is a campaigner and the mother of Stephen Lawrence, a Black British teenager who was murdered in a racist attack in South East London in 1993. She was appointed to the Order of the British Empire for services to community relations in 2003, and was created a Life Peer in 2013. To name just a few further accolades, in 2012, Lawrence took part in the 2012 Olympic opening ceremony, holding the Olympic flag with seven others and received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 14th Pride of Britain Awards. In 2014, she was named as Britain's most influential woman in the BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour Power List 2014 and has been awarded honorary doctorates from the

Notably, neither Lawrence, Newlove, or Batty, although victims by law, were in fact direct victims. Each tragically having lost a loved one to a violent act of crime and then going on to achieve widespread institutional reform. It seems that gender norms are possibly still at play here as these victims were seen as pure and respectable individuals, wherein it was acceptable that they should inhabit spaces such as the House of Lords and the Victims' Commissioners' Office. This relates to Cook's (2021) concept of the 'charismatic matriarch', where she reflects on how identity impacted on the activism and advocacy of two mothers of murdered children. Similar to the topic of this thesis, their reception was tied closely to their status in public life. When comparing Rosie Batty to June, a Black British activist working in lower socio-economic areas in Manchester, she states 'her position as a White, middle-class woman who was well-educated and articulate in her experienced the profile of the issue across different communities' (Cook, 2021: 363), whereas, 'June's story remained at its most powerful in the local community in which it was heard, often featuring in local media stories on the problem of gun violence, while Rosie's story became part of a national debate on public attitudes and the prevention of family violence' (ibid: 365). Similarly, the victims in this research were not seen as political vessels for change, being more closely aligned to June, whose 'story remains of high consequence for the local and regional public, with a small p, and is able to encourage everyday participation and empowerment on the ground. Rosie's story engages a different Public, with a big P, as she prompts a political debate and voices a demand for national policy reform on the issue of family violence' (ibid). Although no individual victim was championed and elevated to invoke national reform in this research study, the attention these cases initially received and football's influence in our society

University of Cambridge, the Open University and the University of West London. Another example is Baroness Helen Newlove, who is a campaigner and wife of Gary Newlove who was murdered by three youths in 2007. She was appointed as the Victims' Commissioner by the UK government in 2012 and is currently serving as a Deputy Speaker in the House of Lords.

has started to slowly bring about change. This was highlighted through new legislation being brought by the government through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act (2022). It appears that although attention is being given to the protection of young football players today, the failure to fully recognise and support adult victims identified in this research, reflects a level of State indifference and a failure to recognise the status of these victims.

The victims' identities in this study, coupled with the personal struggles they had encountered in their lives, resulted in limitations to the advocacy they could achieve and recognition received. Although this was not common across all of the men, it certainly highlights the impact that CSA can have on victims and is suggestive of why none of the men have been recognised nationally for their advocacy or activism. The men's identities and experiences mean they do not represent an ideal victim, which was also reflected in the experiences of White working-class victims of on-street grooming in the UK (see Saker, 2018). Despite these victims being girls, it was their status as White working-class which resulted in constructing a perception of them as 'undesirables' (Jay, 2014: 69), which led to them being let down by all areas of the system. Amongst the victims in football, they spoke openly in the interviews about the lack of support they had received after disclosing their abuse, which acted as a key incentive for many men to become victim advocates with lived experience of abuse. Many tried to fill the gaps within the system to provide adequate support and care, with former-Prime Minister Boris Johnson's comments about these investigations reflecting the lack of political interest in non-recent CSA.

Conclusion

Academic Contributions and Policy Implications

This thesis is the first in-depth academic piece of work on non-recent victims of CSA in football and therefore empirically contributes to the limited but important work undertaken into the abuse of young boys by male perpetrators in sports sociology more generally (e.g. Hartill, 2009). Despite the sample of participants being small, this research study was able to capture a selection of stories from a hard to access group of victims. Each providing a rich perspective of their own experiences from abuse to the pursuit of justice. Although, it may reflect the ethical and logistical difficulties of undertaking such research, there is a considerable lack of attention to CSA of boys in criminology in the UK, specifically non-recent abuse. Despite the many disclosures of non-recent abuse having come to light in the UK, there is a lack of acknowledgement of these cases, the experiences of victims, victim identities, and so on within academia. Previous literature which has touched upon identity and wider male victimisation has focused solely on masculinities, with little attention to other factors linked to identity and the societal constructs and expectations attached to it. Class has particularly been ignored in the discourse, which is a key focal point of this thesis.

The thesis aimed to further the understanding of White working-class boys who were subject to sexual abuse in a specific social, political, and legal space. It particularly drew attention to the impact of identity on this often-ignored group in victimology, and wider criminology, research. It is important for victimology and wider criminology that identity is studied and considered in this context because vulnerability is at the core of identity perception in many cases of sexual violence. Although identity is challenging to contend with as it can often lead to stereotyping or victim-blaming, it is important to uncover any

unconscious bias or discrimination. Even though this thesis could not decipher if the treatment of victims by the police and other criminal justice professionals was influenced in any way by their identity, identity has previously played a considerable role in influencing the State response to victims. For example, the police have previously been found to be 'institutionally racist' (Macpherson, 1999), with the mistreatment of victims of on-street grooming and child sexual exploitation due to their class, gender, and age also being significant (Saker, 2018). Therefore, identity is a significant area for further investigation in sexual violence and child abuse cases in victimology to ensure victims are treated fairly.

Through this, I have added to the theoretical literature on hegemonic masculinity, by highlighting the use of bringing together intersectionality with masculinities theory in identities research. Messerschmidt (2018) notes the use of intersectionality theory in supporting and amplifying hegemonic masculinity, with this empirical research study showing the collaboration of both these theories in practice. As highlighted throughout this thesis, intersectionality is important for exploring discriminated groups as identity is complex and coalescing. Although hegemonic masculinity leaves space for bringing in a number of identities, intersectional invisibility shows how each coalescing factor results in the disempowered status of male victims of CSA during this period. Despite the numbers of male and female CSA victims being fairly similar (BBC Sport, 2016), male victims of CSA are often ignored in this space. Furthermore, this research makes a contribution to the growing field of narrative victimology, in particularly noting the theoretical significance of adding a third component (action) to the 'big two' of agency and communion in mending and rebuilding narrative ruptures. Action is an important element as it highlights growing attention to the actions of victims post-victimisation, in particular advocacy and activism (e.g. Cook, 2021). This is an important addition to the

narrative victimology literature because it expands the theoretical tools to better understand the power of activism for victims rebuilding their narratives publicly and privately. I believe this contribution will draw attention to action in the narratives of victims, as it is a form of re-establishing purpose for victims of crime.

Although this is an academic exploration of identities, narratives, and victimisation, there are a number of policy implications to also note. In this thesis, several barriers to disclosure for male victims of CSA have been emphasised. These findings are useful for practitioners and policy-makers to understand how individual and collective identities impact on victims' ability to disclose. Specific attention is needed to understand the impact of unwanted arousal which, alongside grooming and manipulation, can lead to feelings of complicity amongst victims. Despite the hyper-masculine environment of football and the promise of a sporting career being distinct features which stopped victims disclosing in these cases, other barriers noted in this thesis are highly applicable to other institutional abuse contexts impacting both male and female victims. In addition to this, the literature from a number of other jurisdictions noted in this thesis, such as Australia (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017; Ring et al., 2022), also reflect these themes are relevant across numerous countries outside of the UK.

Furthermore, chapter 7 reflects on the victims' experiences in the criminal justice system, which is applicable to all victims of non-recent child sexual abuse going through the criminal justice system in the UK. Key themes such as a lack of communication victims experience from criminal justice professionals, lengthy wait times for a CPS decision, and retraumatising instances in court are clear areas of improvement needed to better vulnerable victims' experiences within the system. For mass disclosure cases where multiple victims come forward against a prolific offender, further attention is also needed

to explore the numbers of individual victims who are then taken forward. Policy-makers should consider the reasoning behind these decisions and the support mechanisms in place for victims not taken forward. This discussion should also be expanded to look at the adversarial system as a whole, with the experiences of victims within the criminal justice process being an indicator of the strength of its functioning. Finally, although it was not explored in depth in this thesis, there were a small number of examples of a best practice response to victims disclosing abuse to the police, which shows the potential for more victims to have a positive experience within the criminal justice system.

Limitations

While this thesis makes clear and substantial empirical and theoretical contributions, it is worth reiterating there that the sample of participants in this thesis is limited and on the whole self-selecting. Therefore, caution has been taken to avoid generalising from the experiences of participants to all victims of non-recent abuse in football. It must be noted that these are incredibly difficult experiences to talk about and to share with a researcher, and the small number of participants likely reflecting an understandable reluctance on the part of victims to come forward to participate in research. The literature has highlighted the challenge of individuals recognising the impact of their own identities on their experiences, as Charlesworth stated 'because working-class people do not feel authorised to speak and seldom get the opportunity to articulate their own experience, much of their social experience is repressed, even avoided' (2000: 145). This research has attempted to unpack the impact of identity on their narrative from what the victims felt able to share, however this is of course not all-encompassing. The Methodology chapter drew together the perceived benefits of being an 'outsider' researcher, although it is interesting to consider how different the data would be if the researcher was a White working-class

man. Nevertheless, I am very grateful to those that felt able to contribute to this study, and for the time and investment they made in this project. What I hope this study represents is an in-depth exploration of their experiences and a contribution to a small but growing literature that has started to document the complexities and contours of this problem.

Future Research

Beyond the findings discussed in this thesis, there were also a number of areas for further research generated in the course of this study. First and foremost, I suggest further research should be undertaken in exploring the impact of identity on victimisation in other institutions beyond football – i.e. we must expand the scope of this research. Building on the work of this project and the work of Maguire in the UK and Kimmel in the US, I specifically suggest further exploration of the experiences of White working-class boys and men in various contexts, specifically within victimology. As has been highlighted in this research, there are many challenges with identifying how identity and status impacts on a victim's experience, with further empirical explorations helping to expand our understanding of the experiences of different vulnerable groups. Class is important, yet has been widely ignored, possibly due to empirical challenges of undertaking such research. Victimology will perhaps, therefore, benefit from several different comparative pieces, comparing victims of CSA or sexual violence across class backgrounds to establish any difference in treatment and experiences of critical moments. For example, conducting interviews with victims who experienced abuse in public boarding schools and also those who experienced abuse in State schools in lower-income neighbourhoods may be a beneficial area for further research.

Other possible directions for future research analysing these cases involve using the lens of legal jurisprudence to explore the role of the victim in the criminal justice system. This would be beneficial to understand the experiences of victims of non-recent abuse in the criminal justice system and what these victims who come forward years after victimisation want from the system. Using the data acquired from this project not reflected in this thesis, I intend to write future pieces on these areas (see Saker, 2021b). Specifically, despite the investigations uncovering hundreds of individual cases against prolific perpetrators, only a few selected cases were then taken forward by prosecutors to secure a conviction. Campaigns exist for victims to come forward and disclose their abuse, yet there has been no research on how the process can help those victims whose cases are then not taken forward to trial. It would be important to consider, with regards to identity, are the police and CPS decision-making influenced by victim identities, such as race, gender and class? What constructs a 'credible witness' in these non-recent cases with similar evidence available? All of these suggestions for further research help us to better understand the experiences of victims who have been previously cast aside in mainstream criminology. There is also an international aspect to this area of study. While undertaking this research many incidents of CSA came to light in a variety of sports in both Australia and the US. Similarly in Europe, a number of football authorities have identified cases of abuse in their federations. No comparative research has been undertaken exploring the way in which the victims in these legal jurisdictions were treated and the impact it had on their identity.

Final Remarks

To conclude, although many victims shared the benefits of speaking out about abuse, rebuilding and reframing their identity and perception of self, the accounts from those in

this thesis make it clear the act of disclosure certainly does not simply take away their pain or trauma. The on-going impact of childhood abuse can continue to evolve across a victim's life course, highlighting that narrative victimology's aim of deciphering experiences of harm should not reflect one moment, but the ongoing and non-linear process of living with abuse across a victim's life. This thesis illustrated that non-recent abuse is ever present for the victims in this study, as one participant refers to it as 'a life sentence' (V-S7). Nevertheless, as Stewart also stated, 'I think speaking out, telling the world, has helped in some way. That is what people around me say; it is almost as if a weight has been lifted. It's as if there was a heaviness, a burden deep in my soul. Other victims will know immediately what I mean; you carry it, hidden away. At least that secrecy is gone now. Has it helped to alleviate the shame? I don't know' (2017: 260). Although lingering feelings of shame continue, speaking out played a key role for Stewart and many other victims in this study, as the resilience shown in the victims' narratives and subsequent actions since disclosure, particularly in the extensive advocacy and activism undertaken, reflect the power that narratives hold to both raise awareness and allow victims to grow into a new identity. This should not be underestimated after experiencing traumatic incidents such as CSA, as Woodward's use of tense, for example, shifted when referring to his new identity as an emboldened victim. He no longer was someone who just had to *survive* each day, as he shared on the Victoria Derbyshire interview in 2016. Despite his past experiences and any on-going struggles, there was a shift. From sharing his narrative, he took back his power and his voice, to which he stated: 'I became the victim who survived' (2019: 338).

The overall aim of this thesis was to further understand the impact of crime on every aspect of a victim's experience, specifically their narratives and identities. By focusing more attention onto the experiences of victims, through their own voices, we can better

understand the importance of critical moments in their journey. Nevertheless, accepting these newly forged identities can be challenging. The men in this thesis are so much more than the label of victim, survivor, or advocate. They are fathers, sons, husbands, friends, and colleagues. Stewart shared the challenge of his legacy shifting:

> I had a half-decent football career with the clubs that I played for and if I was recognised, I was recognised for scoring a goal in a [FA] cup final, playing for Tottenham and Liverpool. Whereas now I think I am recognised for somebody who came forward with a story of the abuse I suffered as a youngster. I lost my identity as a footballer and my identity is now that of someone that suffered historical abuse (Siddique, 2019).

From my findings, it is clear that victims' identities and narratives are consistently evolving and changing. The victims started off disempowered, far from the hegemonic masculine ideal of the footballer despite their involvement in the game. However, their status evolved as they became adults, although still heavily influenced by the perception of others, particularly the ascribed perceptions or identities placed on them by the audience. Differing levels of power experienced by participants in this study emphasised that hierarchies were present in different forms throughout. Power differences were particularly apparent in the hierarchy amongst the survivors in football and the hierarchy amongst the survivors and other victims of CSA. Those who went on to play professional football, some for England's national team, received increased press attention, with the public response being reflective of this. As a result of this, some victims felt cast aside due to not ever playing professionally, creating a two-tiered experience of victimhood. A two-tiered experience for victims could similarly be seen in the criminal justice system amongst those taken forward in the process and those who were not.

Yet, even for professional footballers or victims who received a conviction for their individual case, the response they received from the public and the State did not seem to align, as no victim was given a national award. Despite the significance of these

disclosures in changing the landscape for male victims of childhood abuse, neither Woodward or other notable victims working in this field currently, such as Paul Stewart, have received the prominence and commendations which Doreen Lawrence and Helen Newlove have achieved. Identity likely played a role, as they did not represent the 'ideal victim' or reflect the status held by the women listed above. As a result of this, they were unable to become political vessels for change, shown through the repeated rejection to change the law surrounding double jeopardy and child sexual abuse. Although it seems progression in safeguarding measures to help young footballers today is being undertaken, shown by the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act (2022), victim advocates with lived experience in football who were instrumental in these campaigns have not received credit or recognition. No football survivor and campaigner has received a Queen's honour award, with the lack of support after disclosure provided to victims of CSA being widely criticised in the interviews. The status of the victims unpacked throughout this thesis is complex, yet it is clear their evolving and intersectional identities played a significant role in each stage of their experience, including their struggle to narrate their stories and their collective efforts to have them acknowledged.

Appendix I: Victim Questionnaire Questions

If the victim clicked the option to answer questions rather than share their experiences without prompts, the following questions were listed across seven pages.

Background

- What gender do you identify as?
  - Male
    Female
  - Non-binary
  - Prefer not to say
- What is your age?
  - 18 – 29 years old
  - 30 – 39 years old
  - 40 – 49 years old
  - 50 – 59 years old
  - 60 – 64 years old
  - Over 65 years old
  - Prefer not to say
- Where were you raised? *(e.g. North-East of England)*
- What is your ethnicity?
- What class background would you consider yourself from?
  - Working class
  - Lower middle class
  - Middle class
  - Upper class
  - Prefer not to say

Early Disclosure

- How you were introduced to football as a child? Did you play for a grass-roots and/or professional team?
- Did you tell anyone about your abuse at the time? Did you experience any support?

Experiences with the Police

- What lead you to disclose your abuse?
- When did you disclose your abuse to the police? What was your experience of doing this?
- Do you believe the police investigated your case to the best of their ability, and why?
- Do you believe any particular characteristics (e.g. race, class, gender, age) impacted on your treatment by the police?

Experiences with Victim Support Services

- Did you receive support from Victim Support services? If so, what support did you receive? Do you believe it was enough?

Experiences with CPS / Court

- Did your case get taken forward by the CPS? (Yes/No)

[If 'yes' box was ticked]

- Did you deliver your Victim Impact Statement in court? Was this a helpful experience? If not, would you have liked to?

[If 'no' box was ticked]

- What was the reasoning given by the police or Crown Prosecution Service to not take your case forward?

- Have you spoken publicly about your abuse? If so, why?
- Do you feel like you got a sense of 'justice' from the criminal justice proceedings?

Looking Forward

- What could have improved your experience of the criminal justice system?
- What do you want from the system now?

Final Thoughts

- Is there anything that you think is important for us to know/understand about your experiences?

Appendix II: List of Victim Interview Questions/ Prompts

These were either phrased as a prompt, for example, 'can you tell me about your experience of disclosing your abuse to the police' or as questions if the victim requested a more structured interview (see questions below).

1. What lead you to report the abuse you suffered to the police? What was your experience of doing this?

2. When were you notified about whether your case was going to be taken forward? What was your experience of this?

3. (If applicable) What was your experience of giving evidence/cross-examination in court?

4. (If applicable) In your case, did you write a Victim Impact Statement (VIS)? Was this a helpful experience? If not, would you have liked to?

5. Did you receive any support from Victim Support services? If so, what support did you receive? Do you believe it was enough?

6. Any final comments – is there was anything else not covered we've not spoken about which you think is important to note?

Additional Questions for Victim Advocates with Lived Experience of Abuse

1. What was the driving force behind your decision to be an advocate for non-recent child sexual abuse?

2. In your opinion, what factors stop male victims of CSA in particular from disclosing their abuse to the police?

7. What are the biggest issues you've seen victims of non-recent abuse face in the criminal justice system?

8. What is the impact of cases not being taken forward on the victim? How often does this occur in these cases?

3. Do you believe adequate support is generally available to victims of non-recent CSA in sport?

    - If not, what improvements could be made in law, policy or service provision to help non-recent victims of CSA?

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