Sacred & profane: sacred & violent: towards understanding priestly sexual violence

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NOTE

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SACRED & PROFANE: SACRED & VIOLENT: TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING PRIESTLY SEXUAL VIOLENCE

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

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Faculty of Arts

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All I did was listen. For I believe full surely that God's spirit is in us all
(Julian of Norwich C14).
SYNOPSIS

In the last two decades 'clerical sexual abuse' emerged as a specific category within the more general phenomenon of male sexual violence. The Australian Catholic Church formulated policies to address this coercive sexual activity by some of its clerical men. I employ a feminist approach to call into question these Church responses by examining the significance of gender to issues of male violence and by indicating the Church's disregard of either the systemic or gendered aspects of the problem. This thesis situates Catholic clerical sexual abuse into the religio-social context in which this highly particularised violence occurs.

Reading Durkheim's sacred/profane concept through a feminist lens I situate men who are priests in the Roman Catholic tradition into the social/sacred location in which they perpetrate sexual violence. This thesis thus reiterates crucial feminist perspectives on male sexual violence to insist that these acts of sexual abuse by priests constitute violence; that they are not indicative of individual psychopathology or sexual aberration; and that priesthood, as a specific social structure, supports this violence. Gender analysis of some of Catholicism's discourses and ritual practices reveals an implicit gender bias in the priest/priesthood distinction and allows critique of the Church's failure to examine priesthood as the structure to which its perpetrators belong. This thesis demonstrates that Durkheim's sacred/profane dichotomy provides a valuable theoretical tool to develop an understanding of the connection between religion, gender and violence that is most terribly enacted in priestly sexual violence.
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ABBREVIATIONS

ACBC  AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
ACLRI  AUSTRALIAN CONFERENCE of LEADERS of RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES
AFTF  AUSTRALIAN FEMINIST THEOLOGY FOUNDATION
CASA  CENTRE AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT
OCW  ORDINATION OF CATHOLIC WOMEN
PCF  PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY
SCDF  SACRED CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH
WATAC  WOMEN AND THE AUSTRALIAN CHURCH
WSRT  WOMEN SCHOLARS OF RELIGION AND THEOLOGY
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank those members of Friends of Susanna and Broken Rites whom I interviewed. The gatekeepers of both groups were unstinting with their time and the help they gave me in approaching their members with my requests. They also showed me concern and advocacy for their members' wellbeing in many ways. My first acknowledgment honours the women and men whose generous self-revelation of their experiences of suffering clerical sexual abuse led me to hear that underneath their pain lies an organisational Church that is deeply flawed by this violence embedded in its clerical core. Richard Sipe says that women and men like these are the Church's 'prophets'. That is, they tell people what they do not want to hear.

I have found the long research thesis process a difficult task and have relied on academic support to keep going. So at the same time as I say that I am indebted to the woman who supervised the project I am struck by the paucity of meaning that conveys. Lenore Lyons brought a marvellous degree of intellectual rigour to the project and challenged me to seek out questions when I bogged down in description. Along with her academic excellence Lenore brought incisive editing skill. Soon after she became primary supervisor of this project a transfer into another area of tertiary education meant that Lenore's generously given supervision was in her own time and without recognition. I cannot repay such a gift and sincerely hope that the personal time she regains after this task's conclusion will be richly rewarding for her.

Thanks are due to Rebecca Albury who read and commented on portions and a complete draft of this thesis. Mike Donaldson, as head of Sociology Program at Wollongong University, gave succinct advice at a time when it was most needed. Robyn Foster willingly gave skilled technical assistance and helped me with administrative requirements. Jane Anderson, Marie Porter, Emma Mayhew, Angela Pratt and Gillian Vogl are women also travelling the doctoral candidate path. Their supportive conversations and e-mails meant a great deal to me in the dark moments and always showed me that I was not alone in the
experience. For that I thank them and wish them well in their own progression towards completed theses.

I am indebted to Margaret McGovern for suggesting I read feminist theology and to Kath McPhillips who introduced me into the circle of Women Scholars of Religion and Theology from whose scholarship I benefited greatly. Janet Morrissey gave me references to useful readings. My sustaining friends are the women of WATAc at state level and especially members of Wollongong WATAc whose creativity in being church is an ongoing source of joy. Jan Ryan, who is in the unenviable position of having both a husband and a friend (both of whom are old enough to know better) as doctoral students, is the loyalist of friends and I thank her for listening over the years.

Throughout my candidature I have drawn deeply on an inheritance of love given by many members of my family whose physical presence I no longer have. Gran (Margarita) Nolan, Gran (Lucy) Downes, Mum and Dad (Eileen and Vin Downes), The Boss (Frances Nolan), Bill Nolan (loving patriarch) and years of "mutual love and prayers" with my dear mentor and friend Charlie Mayne SJ.

I have depended through the years this thesis has taken on Bruce who is my dearest friend and husband and my greatest debt is to him. It is no small thing to be endlessly (and involuntarily) drawn into conversation about Catholicism and feminism often before sunrise and often well after sunset. His enduring support sustains me on a daily basis and his encouragement enriches me and becomes my greatest source of strength. During these years our children have known their mother as preoccupied and I'm sure often wondered why. So I give this thesis with my love to Stephen, Paul and Louise, Gabrielle and Christopher, and Matthew, and to their children, our delightful grandchildren, who I hope will experience a more inclusive and generous Church and a more present grandmother.
Thesis Certification

Certification

I, Mary L. Medley, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Arts, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Mary L Medley

29th June 20001
INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of a widely acknowledged crisis in contemporary Roman Catholicism. Increasing numbers of the men who comprise the religious ministry of the Roman Catholic Church are being shown to be sexually active in abusive ways against women, children and men. My contention throughout is that these acts are more than an individual's violence and therefore need to be understood within the tangible reality of the cultural and historical circumstances in which they occur. The reality of any religion is primarily recognised as a collective reality that is, "a source of personal and collective power, or disempowerment" (Erickson 1993, p. xi). Taking this collective approach leads me to share the opinion of Dorothy McRae-McMahon (1995, p. v) who says that she sees the church as "a Body, not a group of individuals expressing our devotion to God". From that viewpoint it seems critical, to me, that the specificities of Catholic clerical sexual abuse are seen as related to, and scrutinised within, the context of the Catholic Church. Dorothy McRae-McMahon then points to an important direction to take in order to do this when she says:

As we look at the subculture of violence and abuse that lies within our whole society and face that it also runs through the life of the church, we cannot avoid asking the essential questions about the source of this evil. Why is this violation there? ... Does it raise questions about our teachings and underlying assumptions about the right relationship between women and men? (McRae-McMahon 1995, p. vi).

The simple contradiction is that these sexually abusive men, because they are priests and religious Brothers, share Catholicism's ethos of clerical ministry and they are pledged to celibate nonsexually active lives. The aim of this thesis is to examine some of the systemic
aspects of that seeming paradox. It broadly uses the terms spelt out in Dorothy McRae-McMahon's honest, common-sense approach. To pose questions, however, about notions of a 'right' relationship between women and men underpinning Catholicism's teachings is to pose questions about gender relations. Taking that perspective brings the matter very quickly to a sociological view of Catholicism's interface with the concept of gender.

This thesis demonstrates that while gender is critically relevant to the clerical sexual abuse issue it also remains overlooked as a contributory factor in the Church's official responses. In fact I show that the same gendered views that are embedded in Church teachings about women can be detected in those policy documents developed in response to the abuse issue. In these documents the material actuality of sexual abuse as form of male violence is disregarded in favour of views that present abused persons as 'victims' and perpetrators as suffering psychological disorder and/or a moral lapse from celibacy (sin). Both these views are located with the individual and thereby the collective structure to which these men belong is neglected. However, in spite of that primary focus on the individual either contrarily, or conveniently, the physicality of the perpetrating individual is also overlooked. Sexual abuse involves embodied acts, whether or not such act/s include activity between the genitalia of the perpetrator and abused. However, in Church teaching, the body of the priest is ostensibly presented as abstracted from embodiment and sacralised to the extent that it is impossible for the Church to deal with priests' sexual activities in ways other than it presently does. That is, by regarding these sexual activities as psychological illness or moral failure.
This study of clerical sexual abuse, with its focus on Catholicism and gender and by centring the social aspects of systemic priesthood, differs markedly from existing works on clerical sexual abuse. These important gender and systemic aspects are worthy of examination because, although the thesis follows what are now accepted as well-utilised feminist methods, it leads to a new perspective by highlighting the specificities of clerical male violence and by distinguishing it from other forms of male violence. Sexually abusive men bear no external, identifiable, differentiating marks. They occupy and fit into their particular social landscapes such as families, workplaces and churches. Feminist research covers a broad canvas in its work of revealing the gender protection that these social structures afford to abusive men. While Catholic clerical men may be marked apart (by their clerical dress and unmarried lifestyles) from secular society and Protestant clerics, clerics who are abusive are not differentiated within their own organisations. Maurice Hamington (1995, p. 40), however, identifies Catholicism's absolute clerical particularity when he states, "the most obvious, singularly significant characteristic of the hierarchical Catholic Church is that it is exclusively male".

A sociological examination of Catholicism, as an institutional belief system with a masculine organisational process around those beliefs, is central to this work. Clerical sexual abuse is an individual material act occurring within a collectively constructed discursive context. Australian priest Paul Collins (1997, p. 102) argues that clerical sexual

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abuse is widespread and "its causes are pervasive and deeply embedded in the institutional church". Retrieving some of these structural and pervasive factors is the sociological task undertaken here. Much of the existing writing on clerical sexual abuse is psychologically based and focussed on the behaviour of perpetrators as individuals and/or the detrimental outcomes for abused persons as individuals at the expense of systemic analysis (cf Rossetti 1990a, 1990b; Briggs 1995; Parkinson 1997). Relying on this 'deviant individual' approach allows the Church to exempt itself from undertaking a self-examination of the dominant ideologies of Catholicism. Further, the existing body of literature is mainly centred on the emotive issue of child sexual abuse (cf Rossetti 1990a, 1990b; Berry 1992; Jenkins 1996; Gill 1997) thus overlooking the numbers of women (and some men) who are sexually exploited by clerics. This thesis then is about Catholic clerical sexual abuse and it specifically examines the discourses and practices enveloping the men who are the perpetrators in this study: namely Catholic priests and Catholic priesthood.

Secular feminist studies of male violence uncover important connections between the sexual and physical abuses of women and children and the systemic protection provided to men through the structures of patriarchy. The sociological works of feminist theologians likewise illustrate how the abuses of women and children are tied to patriarchal religious structures. Drawing on this body of work assists me to develop a counter discourse to the prevailing male voice resonating through the Church's responses. Rita Nakashima-Brock, as one example, says that:

Religious ideas evolve to reflect patriarchal social structures. Male dominance is supported by male deities, a male clerical class, and ideologies of female
subordination, including women's physical weakness and uncleanness, and emotional and moral inferiority (Brock 1992, p. 5).

Elizabeth Johnson makes plain that all women are located on the margins of the church especially those concerned with the also marginalised 'liberation theology' within which feminist theology is contextualised. Johnson importantly connects the circularity of structural and individual sexism within the church. She says:

From the margins feminist liberation theology sees clearly that society and the church are pervaded by sexism with its twin faces of patriarchy and androcentrism. This social sin ... interlocks with other forms of oppression to shape a violent and dehumanized world (Johnson 1994, p. 22).

Clerical sexual abuse is a prime exemplar of male violence and Rosemary Radford Ruether (1989, p. 31) argues such oppression in the church is "rooted in and is the logical conclusion of basic patriarchal assumptions about women's subordinate status". Numerically, clerical perpetrators are, as in any society, overwhelmingly men and those they offend against are overwhelmingly women and children (Parkinson 1997, p. 29). Much of the Church's response to women's and children's disclosures of these human violations has, to date, been to employ tactics that charge complainants with secrecy. While some of those previously silenced voices are to some extent recovered here this is not the primary purpose of this study. The gendered reasons for silencing those voices that are at the heart of this work.
My own interest in this issue stems, as do a great range of women's investigations of social issues, from making the personal political. In the small rural community where I grew up over fifty years ago the parish priest was a serial sexual predator against many children in that parish and he was also involved in an ongoing sexual relationship with a married woman. However, only a decade ago I learned of the treatment meted out by the bishop in the capital city when he was notified of that priest's sexual practices. He silenced the woman complainant (my late mother) and without investigation of her allegations he moved the priest to another district that same day. (Apparently he was aware that the priest was a repeat offender). The time at which I heard about those formal patriarchal acts coincided with my mature-age undergraduate studies of feminist theory. That study provided me with the theoretical tools to leave aside personal anger and develop a framework to understand how clerical sexual violence is more than individual aberration. Alongside of this was a concurrent burgeoning interest in feminist theology and membership of religious, feminist activist groups that kept my interest alive. Women and the Australian Church (WATAc), Australian Feminist Theology Foundation (AFTF), and Women Scholars of Religion and Theology (WSRT) and Women-Church are all variously concerned with the politics of questions about women's relationship/s with church. Their scholarship encouraged me to see this as a systemic and political issue. Finally, the thesis would not have taken shape without the human contribution of those abused persons I interviewed for this study. The insights of those women and men into their own experience and their questions about the contradictions of abuse in the Church in general, are foundational to the formation of this thesis. Material from those interviews crucially informed the directions of the research.
Terms and Definitions

All sexually abusive acts are acts of sexual violence (Easteal 1998, p. 227). For this reason the often used term 'sexual misconduct', although used by the Church and other writers, is rejected throughout this thesis. Clerical sexual abuse and clerical sexual violence are the terms I use. In the context of clerical sexual abuse all sexualising of a pastoral relationship is treated as an actively violent deed and not a simple and passive failure of virtue on the part of the perpetrator. Sexualisation of a ministerial relationship traverses boundaries of sexual, emotional and religious identities, trust is betrayed and injustice is perpetrated (Fortune 1994, p. 17).

Part of the injustice perpetrated by clerical sexual abuse is the devaluing of women and children. This thesis argues that such human devaluation is deeply pervasive in the Church. It is not only a consequence of clerical sexual abuse but it is also seeded in the causes of clerical sexual abuse and in the Church's official responses to complainants. I consider instances where women and children appear to have lesser human value than clerical men or are subjected to abusive treatment to be instances of misogyny. The term misogyny, then is used throughout to refer to those discourses and practices in which women's physical, rational and spiritual inferiority is assumed; where women are (mis)represented by their absence; and where there is a presumed understanding of female only in relation to a normative male order. It does not expressly rely on a literal, stated hatred of women.
Writers frequently use 'institutional church' and 'organisational church' as interchangeable terms. However, this thesis follows Gary Bouma's (1998) argument that, particularly in relation to religion, definitions of institution and organisation ought to be distinguished. He says that:

The concept, social institution, is used in social theory ... to refer to something larger than the corporation, something trans-organisational yet socially constructed, something which shapes social interaction and is in some way susceptible to being shaped (Bouma 1998, p. 233).

Organisations, by contrast, are structures of social relationship, social actors arranged in positions and roles; usually, but not always, deliberately arranged and designed to achieve some means and ends. Organisations are distinct from institutions by being arrangements of roles and positions (Bouma 1998, p. 235).

Taking Bouma's definitions I view Catholicism then as an institution whose norms and values regulate aspects of society and the Catholic Church as an organisation which arranges those norms and values for its own particular purpose. Separation of these definitions is particularly significant for later discussions in this thesis, which demonstrate how the institutional discursive devaluing of women is reflected in the organisational practices against women and children. For this reason I use the term 'organisational church' to emphasise its organisational basis.

Catholic male religious have two categories: 'priests', who are ordained to Holy Orders with the authority to administer sacraments, and vowed 'Brothers' who are members of men's
Religious Orders without the powers of priesthood. Both groups of men are required to uphold celibate practice. Sexual offences, against people in this study, were committed by both categories of men. However, the differences between the institutional and organisational aspects of the two categories of men place a detailed study of both systems outside the range of this thesis. Section Three deals with priesthood and some of the rituals of Roman Catholicism only performed by ordained priests and for that reason attention is only given to priests and priesthood in this thesis. See Gill (1997) as one example of recent discussion of Catholic Brothers and the sexual abuse of boys.

Christology is the term given to the branch of theology related to Christ. Its understanding in the Roman Catholic Church, is that Jesus Christ has two natures, human (Jesus) and divine (Christ) "concurring into one hypostasis" (Johnson 1994, p. 35). I draw on this concept because it is crucially related to priesthood. From Chapter Four onwards I use the anthropological work of Roy Rappaport (1999) to show that by considering 'divinity' as a discursive assertion it is possible to bring theological concepts into sociology. Church teaching genders the Christological discourse and as a consequence of this distortion the "human man Jesus is used to tie the knot between maleness and divinity very tightly" (Johnson 1994, p. 35). The Catholic Church, however, constructs only Jesus' maleness as

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2 Some cited works use the term 'institutional' church where I would use 'organisational' church (cf Collins 1997, p. 103) given on page 4 of this Introduction. I do not alter other authors' word use.

3 Rappaport (1999) is relied on throughout this thesis because of his extensive focus on ritual as religion's central component. Rappaport uses an anthropological method to demonstrate 'how' theology (faith in search of reason) may be drawn into social theory without the requirement of a 'faith' aspect for either writer or reader. Works such as Milbank (1990) Theology & Social Theory: Beyond Secular Belief, for example, give
endowed with divinity (his characteristics of age, ethnicity or social class are not regarded as divine). Attributes of a divine nature are also ascribed to particular functions of its all-male priesthood and this makes possible a gender discussion of priesthood as a highly particularised form of masculinity.

The terms 'women' and 'religious' are variously coupled throughout. The distinction includes as 'religious women' all women who claim religion as an aspect of identity and 'women religious' as being those women who are committed to dedicated lives by vow or religious profession and who are commonly referred to as nuns. Finally, the convention of presenting the terms 'Catholic' and 'Catholic Church' in upper case 'C' is followed and these are to be taken as referring to Roman Catholicism rather than catholic in the sense of universal and church as a general term. Likewise 'The Church' is used here to mean Roman Catholic Church unless otherwise specified.

Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis has three sections in which the religious manifestation of gender provides the over-arching theme. It does not propose a theory of gender so much as it views the implications of gender-related religious discourses and practices in clerical sexual abuse. comprehensive analyses of the relationship between theology and social theory and question the present enterprise of the sociology of religion. These perspectives, however, are less pertinent to this thesis topic.
Part One (Chapters One to Four) begins by following the trajectory of media publicity that brought clerical sexual abuse to public attention and the Church's policy responses to that public gaze. Media reporting and the Church's responses highlight the fact that clerical sexual abuse is a very gendered occurrence yet in both of these gender remains unremarked. I explore the significance of that absence and argue the need for gender analysis. This is taken up by drawing on the theoretical concept of 'separate spheres'. The perspectives of public/private utilised by feminist social theory are followed by Durkheim's (1971 [1915]) postulation of a sacred/profane division premised on and sustained by ritual. The latter is retained and drawn on to inform the remainder of the thesis. Part Two (Chapter Five) gives an account of the methodology used for the empirical component of the thesis. Part Three (Chapters Six and Seven) connects back to the chapters in Part One by examining the ordaining of men alone into priesthood, with particular reference to the embodiment aspects, and some rituals that are central to Catholic populations but whose enactment is reserved exclusively to the ordained. The examination in these two chapters particularises sexual abuse by priests as a systemic flaw created by Catholicism's gendered divisions between the sacred/profane.

A broad range of sociological issues is canvassed to search out the discursive processes and social practices whereby the sexually abusive behaviour of some men, who are celibate for religious motives, is not viewed as a systemic problem by the hierarchy of the Roman

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4 The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life first published [1915]. From this point on only the later (1971) edition used for this thesis is cited.
Catholic Church. Throughout this thesis the gendered nature of Catholicism persists in order to ask thematic questions. What are the processes that have allowed this practice to happen? What processes have informed the organisational Church's ability to comprehend and respond to the issue? What feminist perspectives reveal misogyny as a social process, of which clerical sexual abuse is a concrete manifestation violently expressed, in a history of devaluation of women?

**Chapter Outlines**

Because clerical sexual abuse has aroused public controversy in Australia since the late 1980s, in Chapter One I make my point of entry a consideration of whether an explanation of that abuse lies with the concept of moral panic. Stanley Cohen's (1980) influential theory of moral panic is "chiefly concerned with contemporary social phenomena" and the explication of the sudden newsworthiness of the characteristics of these events (Morgan 1997, p. 17). The sequence begins with a sudden high media exposure of specific behaviours (in identifiable groups) that are generally deemed to be deviant behaviours followed by the "reaction to deviance both by the public as a whole and by agents of social control" (Cohen 1980, p. 16). The prime ingredient in the Church's crisis is popularly perceived as sexual behaviour and sexuality which, "is a fertile source of moral panic" (Weeks 1985, p. 44). I apply Cohen's theory to three particular examples of Australian clerical sexual abuse. In each case, however, I show that there is not a neat fit between the example I use and the familiar sequence of moral panic; perceived deviance and the reactions to it. However, as part of that examination I found that some specific Australian
Broadcasting Commission (ABC) television programs, screened between 1992 and 1996, shifted their emphasis from 'victim' to 'perpetrator'. As a consequence of this media action, I contend the Church could no longer procrastinate about issuing formal responses. Thus the media was an instrumental actor in the publication of response documents.

In Chapter Two I examine three official documents of the organisational Australian Catholic Church to analyse the approaches on which the Church bases its responses. The first is a policy document, *Towards Healing: Principles and Procedures In Responding To Complaints Of Sexual Abuse Against Personnel Of The Catholic Church In Australia* (1996). The second is guidelines for a code of professional practices, *Integrity in Ministry: A Document of Principles and Standards for Catholic Clergy & Religious in Australia* (1999). In 1996 the Australian Catholic Bishops detailed a nine-point plan of action as part of its response to clerical sexual abuse. Point seven in that plan was the undertaking of a study of factors specific to the Catholic Church, which might lead to sexual abuse by priests and religious (*Eureka Street* 1996, p. 15). The publication *Towards Understanding: A study of factors specific to the Catholic Church which might lead to sexual abuse by priests and religious [Draft] (1999)* is the outcome of that step. In this chapter I begin to critique the absence from these Church responses, of factors that I consider are specific to sexual abuse

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5 These two publications are available without cost on request or from bookshops.

6 The National Committee For Professional Standards (A Committee of the Australian Catholic Bishops & the Australian Leaders of Religious Institutes) readily made this Draft document available to me on request. It is described to me as "a document for discussion and further research and analysis. The document is presented in this context of a discussion document and not as a definitive statement of conclusions. In providing a copy of this document you are asked to respect its status". Any reference to the document in this thesis includes the
by Catholic priests. Most attention is given to the policy document *Towards Healing* (1996) because it is the one that directly impacts on the ways in which the Church responds to complainants.

In Chapter Three I examine feminism's insistence that coercive sexual activity is 'violence' and that male violence is supported structurally. I turn to feminist theorists' use of the implications of the public/private division in social life as a framework to examine patriarchal (structural) influences that provide systemic support for abusive men. While the secular public/private distinction upholds the notion that women are not equal to men, Catholicism also uses 'separate spheres' as its means of support for gendered divisions. Here complementarity endorses the idea that women are equal to, but different from, men and it is in the socially-constructed Church discourses of this distortion that clerical violence is embedded. Dominant male theologies argue that the concept of women as equal to but subordinate to men is divinely sanctioned. These discourses thus divest women, and their dependents, children, of bodily rights and seemingly sanction sexual violence against them. An examination of the small body of literature dealing specifically with Catholic clerical sexual violence highlights the glaring absence of structure in mainstream analyses. I critique the predominant use of psychological approaches to, and the gendered nature of, these works on which the Church's responses rely. However, the public/private distinction term "Draft" and (as requested) I have not made the document itself (or any portion of it) available to any other person. My sincere hope is that it is widely disseminated and generates broad discussion.

2 Chapters Six and Seven deal at length with these 'absent factors'.
has limited application in this situation and that leads me to draw on the sacred/profane
dichotomy as an analytic tool.

I continue using the concept of separate spheres in Chapter Four by turning to Durkheim's
(1971) sacred/profane dichotomy on which he bases his sociology of religion. Durkheim
theorises the sacred/profane to show that it is in fact the discursive pre-condition for
religion with ritual as its sustaining practice. While on the one hand Durkheim's theory
could be dismissed for its gender blindness, on the other it is valuable because, as Victoria
Erickson's work (1993, p. 190) shows, "implicit in his sociology of religion is a theory of
gender". Durkheim argues that the sacred is not a unitary category. The sacred holds an
internal contradiction allowing the moral and the immoral to coexist without internal
conflict. In Catholicism that contrariety manifests as a distorted Christology that "functions
as a sacred justification for male dominance and female subordination" (Johnson 1994, p.
151). This sacred distinction is foundationally detrimental to all women while at the same
time being advantageous to all priested men and it affords protection to abusive priests
because they remain within the sacred. However, Durkheim's gendered account omits two
aspects of religion: women and God. Feminist writers on religion do not resile from
accounting for these aspects and in so doing provide a more inclusive account of
Catholicism with particular reference to the legitimation of abuse. Feminist theology
explains misogyny and its expression as violence in the realm of the sacred through
attention to those theological perspectives "on the role of Christian theology in
undergirding an abusive culture" (Carlson-Brown & Bohn 1989, p. xii). There is, however,
little feminist writing that deals specifically with sexual violence by priests or clerics. Using this body of literature to re-read Durkheim from a feminist perspective facilitates my attempt to relocate clerical sexual abuse outside the Church's presentation of passive individual acts of moral failure.

Chapter Five accounts for the empirical aspect of this project and is set out in two sections. The first section provides a summary of the sample by outlining details of the sample and data collection. The study may be categorised into what (Stake 1994, p. 237 emphasis original) names as an "intrinsic case study". That is, this study provides a means of gaining a greater understanding of the grounded and concrete particularities of Catholic clerical sexual abuse, as shown in Part One, and the discourses of the structural arena within which these flourish, as demonstrated in Part Three. In the second section I discuss the application of that data in light of the body of literature debating the interpretations of feminist tradition of social research, as these are applicable to this study. Central to this is a discussion of what I call 'intimate listening' as a qualitative data collection technique.

The data (transcripts) from the interviews are personal accounts of what Dorothy McRae-McMahon (1995, p. v) calls "the agony of their experience" alongside of graphic pictures and discourses of priests' sexual practices that are widely marked apart from the espoused ideals of priesthood. In listening intimately to the experiences and questions raised by the interviewees two things became apparent to me. Firstly, that to continue to recount
individual experiences of abuse is to continue to locate clerical sexual abuse with the abused and not the perpetrator. Secondly, that part of the "repeated failure of the church to face this issue" (McRae-McMahon 1995, p. v) lies in its broad generalisations that conflate priests and religious. For these reasons, rather than providing respondent's accounts of individual clerics' abusive behaviour towards them and the Church's treatment of them as complainants, my emphasis is on abusers rather than abused and priests as distinguished from other religious or church workers. This project's value as a case study lies in its illustration of the connection between an 'intrinsic' (interest) in the priest and the 'instrumental' (understanding) of priesthood suggested by Stake's (1994) method.

Chapters Six and Seven stem directly from listening to participant's taped interviews and their transcripts. Thinking through issues that participants raised I recognise that it is important to distinguish priest from priesthood. Hence I broadly describe these two chapters as 'who priests are' and 'what priests do'. This needs some disclaimer. This study is concerned with what I argue are the underlying systemic factors that contribute to or perhaps even foster the sexual violence of some priests. As such there is no claim for this section as an objective study of priesthood as either a functionary system or an ecclesial system. Thus it does not account for the enormity of good done by great numbers of priests. The language of economics, often used in relation to religion as an exchange system (cf Turner B. 1991), is not applicable here. My continuing contention is that sexual violence must be viewed in its own arena; that is not as sex but as violence. Hence there is no credit
of good deeds to offset the debit of violent deeds. I agree with Paul Collins that clerical
sexual abuse,

indicates that at the heart of the hierarchical and clerical lifestyle there is a
pervasive dysfunction that is slowly becoming more obvious. The issue is not
one of individual priests, but of an increasingly dysfunctional institution that
serves neither the needs of those within it nor the needs of the ministry
(Collins 1997, p. 103).

In Chapter Six I examine what I regard as a major disjuncture in the priesting of men that
apparently segregates the first requirement for ordination (a sexed male body) from the
sexed instrumentality of that body. Hence I speak about mandatory celibacy as inducing a
'disembodied masculinity' which gives further evidence of Durkheim's sacred/profane split.
In Durkheim's terms ordination may be read as the establishment of a negative cult. The
Roman Catholic Church does not ordain women to its priesthood. The Church's main
argument for its non-ordination of women is that they cannot give iconic representation of
Christ. This stems from the distortion of Christology that wrongly constructs Christ as
ultimately male. Therefore I raise the question of the non-ordination of women in the
Catholic Church, not to present pro-ordination arguments, but to have a clearer view of
embodiment and ordination by seeking the meaning of the non-ordination of women's
bodies. Sacred/profane and disembodied/embodied splits, I show, are preserved by acts of
male violence.

In Chapter Seven I focus on ritual as the most pertinent factor to understand the systemic
aspects of priesthood. Taking this perspective is a direct result of reflecting on interviewees'
comments about their experiences that link ritual and sexual abuse. Rituals as the "sequences of formal acts and utterances" (Rappaport 1999, p. 27) of liturgical orders are a unique facet of priesthood and thus these commonly held practices are a source for understanding the gendered nature of priesthood. The individual priest by being ordained into a priesthood that is collectively sacred is thereby likewise identified as sacred. Again the sacred/profane division is reflected in the distinction of ritual into ordinary (profane) and extraordinary (sacred) gendered temporal periods. Thus ritual's ability to separate and distinguish is a useful tool to examine gender characteristics. Three specific rituals; the Washing of the Hands within the Roman Mass, Eucharist, and Confession; all the exclusive preserve of the ordained, are examined for their gender dichotomies. These hold explicit and implicit instances of priestly power to engage in coercive sexual acts and to separate the priest from those acts. In the last section dealing with the confessional ritual I demonstrate priests' ability to move between discursive positions, in relation to themselves as confessor (and abuser) and the penitent, by bringing in examples from the interviews.

In my conclusion I argue that this thesis, as an intrinsic case study, provides a relevant account of the social context of clerical sexual abuse. Its sociological perspectives give insight into the gender significance of the structure that ordains men alone into priesthood and thereby the thesis develops a context to examine a highly sacralised masculinity. This is a broader view than those current works that are limited to consideration of an individual priest as perpetrator. I attribute the analyses of feminist theorists, most notably Victoria Erickson's work on Durkheim's sacred/profane theory, with being a valuable and insightful
work from which I gained a clearer understanding of the importance of gender to this issue. If the Church is to advance beyond seeing clerical sexual abuse as a crisis in need of 'healing' then my contention is that it will be through study of the gender aspects that it will be able to move 'towards understanding'. Numerous theologians and writers within the Church have already broken this ground and Church hierarchy now needs to 'listen intimately' to these women and men.
PART ONE

REVIEWING CLERICAL SEXUAL VIOLENCE
CHAPTER ONE

CLERICAL SEXUAL ABUSE: MORAL CRISIS / MORAL PANIC?

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic (Cohen 1980, p. 9).

The church's law on celibacy is unnatural and, being imposed, could cause unnatural acts by their priests and brothers. The Catholic law that prohibits priests from having sex, I take it with females, which is the most natural action of all living creatures would ... bring into the clergy men who have no desire for women ... that would make Catholic ministry a natural occupation for those with homosexual tendencies. Suppression of natural instincts ... can only find expression in deviate behaviour (Illawarra Mercury, 'Letters', 6/11/1993, p. 28).

Clerical sexual abuse in Australia since the 1990s has become an ongoing matter before courts of law, was brought before a government Royal Commission (1996) and intermittently appears and reappears as grist for the media mill. Particularly in the earlier part of the past decade newspaper headlines proclaiming clerical sexual abuse became such a regular occurrence that popular understanding now 'knows' these pronouncements refer to sexually abusive acts committed by, and not against, a male cleric. Television programs, such as 'Sins of the Fathers' (two unrelated programs used this title), and book titles, such as When Ministers Sin (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995) and Lead Us Not Into Temptation (Berry 1992), seem to inherently imply sexual sin rather than any other spiritual or temporal misdemeanour. On the one hand, confused social reaction to this increased media reportage, as exemplified in the 'Letters' quoted above, seems to bear the characteristics of a 'moral panic'. On the other, however, the model of moral panic is also, "frequently invoked
by those in positions of power ... in order to defuse legitimate challenges to their power" (Horsfield 1997, p. 32). It is this aspect of determining whether clerical sexual abuse meets the criteria for moral panic that concerns me in this chapter.

Studies of sudden public revelations of social phenomena, especially those concerned with "insecurities around sexuality, crime, violence and youth culture", are often understood as coming under the umbrella of 'moral panic' (Morgan 1997, p. 17). Since heightened awareness about clerical sexual abuse, and Church and other societal responses to it, is central to this thesis, I begin by testing these factors against moral panic theory. In this chapter I examine the fit between my interests in clerical sexual abuse and sociological literature's accounts of moral panic. My interest is not in a content analysis of media publications/broadcasts or the stereotypes of popular prejudice epitomised in a London detective's remark that, "people always want their paedophiles to be judges or politicians" (Jenkins 1992, p. 78, Goode & Ben-Yehuda 1994, p. 131). I consider the appropriateness of using a moral panic theoretical approach through analysis of three specific instances of controversial reporting of Australian Catholic clerical sexual abuse in the 1990s. The first instance shows that the Church itself, in an effort to retain social control, draws on the paradigm of moral panic to contest specific television programs representations. In the following chapter I argue that those television programs ultimately influenced the Church's responses to sexual abuse. For the second examination I take a narrow focus on an exemplary case of print media 'enthusiasm' that erupted as a 'local' clerical sexual abuse moral panic in Wollongong. The third case deals with what seems to be an 'invisible' moral
panic. Of necessity these involve scene setting (description) of the arena in which these separate dramas occurred. Although the subject matters of these examples differ markedly from each other there is no question that clerical sexual abuse was perpetrated in each case.

Unfolding a moral panic


Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereo-typical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved (or more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. Sometimes the object of the panic is quite novel and at other times it is something which has been in existence long enough, but suddenly appears in the limelight. Sometimes the panic is passed over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself (Cohen 1980, p. 9).
Cohen's moral panic theory is about forms of group behaviours and group responses to that behaviour. He classifies the actors involved into three groups: the group whose perceived deviance poses a threat; the media as disseminator of information that heightens public awareness; and 'right-thinking people' who self-select as arbiters of moral respectability. However, Cohen does not ascribe equal importance to each group. In fact the behavioural questions about the first group's perceived deviance he considers are "background questions" and he places his emphasis on the "variable of societal reaction" (Cohen 1980, p. 24). In the to and fro between the three groups, issues are constructed in specifically self-interested ways. However, Horsfield's (1997, p. 32) interpretation of Cohen's moral panic thesis argues that although Cohen gave less weight to the concept of deviance it is in fact "central to Cohen's analysis". Horsfield's argument is that Cohen's model of moral panic has a political dimension that,

creates the possibility of normalising and legitimising the governing classes in society and de-legitimising those who hold alternative positions or experiences by branding them as 'deviant' and associating them with 'panic' behaviour (Horsfield 1997, p. 32).

In relation to clerical sexual abuse I show, as Horsfield does, that the political dimension of determining who is to be considered the deviant group can become contested terrain. To demonstrate this I situate the current 'crisis' of Catholic clerical sexual abuse into its contemporary Australian context. I examine whether this is a mass media constructed panic or whether salient features are also diminished or glossed over by Cohen's theory, thereby normalising the Church, as the legitimate or rational body, in an otherwise irrational panic.
During the mid-1980s in Australia, reporting of child sexual abuse "indelibly erupted in the media" and "the level of reporting in The Sydney Morning Herald increased from 1 in 1979 to over 50 in 1985" (Redfern 1995, p. 1). This reflects similar patterns in the United Kingdom and North America (cf Rossetti 1990a; Berry 1992; Jenkins 1992, 1996; Sipe 1995, 1998). Concurrently, great many adults also began to disclose sexual abuses to which they had been subjected either as children or adults. Increasingly these people named Catholic clerics as their abusers. Support groups were established. Broken Rites (Melbourne) and Friends of Susanna (Sydney) were set up in 1992 specifically for and by people who had suffered clerical sexual abuse. Collectively these groups began to articulate their experiences and through group action gained media coverage. Television and print media continued to regularly and increasingly report incidences of charges and court proceedings and the several class actions that were being instigated by law firms against individual priests and Religious Orders. All this follows Schoener's (1995) historical overview of professional (including clerical) sexual abuse in which he concludes that awareness of the extent of the abuse, like the abuse itself, has a very long history. Schoener (1995, p. 16) adds, however, "it seems that a certain critical level of visibility is necessary before either the profession itself or the community attempts to intervene in a major fashion to prevent or remedy sexual misconduct". I contend that between 1992 and 1996 the Australian national broadcaster (ABC Television) was a catalyst in raising 'a critical level of visibility'.
The religious program *Compass* (ABC Television 15/3/1992) aired 'The Ultimate Betrayal: Sexual Violence in the Church', using dramatised accounts of sexual assault by clerical men. It also discussed the findings of a study on sexual violence in the church by the Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) located in Melbourne's Royal Women's Hospital. The intensity of the ensuing publicity was unusual for a religious program (Horsfield 1997, p. 34). Following the broadcast Ormerod & Ormerod (1995, p. 4) say, "the events were sensationalised and the issue received national media coverage for a week or so". But embedded in the ensuing coverage of responses the contested terrain of moral panic is first identified. While to all intents and purposes the program indicated sexually abusive clerical men as the 'deviant' group Church spokesmen and other media responses to the program challenged this.

Comments from a CASA educator, who questioned whether the Church was a safe place for women, were countered by labelling the woman 'feminist'. Church hierarchy and some journalists often use 'feminist' as a pejorative term (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 78, Horsfield 1997, p. 35). Anglican priest and *The Australian's* religion writer James Murray opined the program was "made in response to those more feminist agendas to which the ABC, or certain members of its staff, seem so committed" (in Horsfield 1997, p. 35).

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8 I video recorded and transcribed the television programs discussed in this section.
9 The program and the CASA study were of church - including but not entirely Catholic Church.
their responses to this program church leaders adopted "the public demeanour of calm father figures managing the irrational outburst of an adolescent ... to give the impression there was no social reality underlying the allegations" (Horsfield 1997, pp. 34-35). These spokesmen argued against quoted statistics of offender numbers claiming the figures were "fanciful" and suggested feminist and media groups were causing a panic (Horsfield 1997, p. 35). Their attempt to claim that someone else is panicking is also an attempt "to make a claim for the high rational ground" (Lumby 1997, p. 40).

The following year another Compass program 'Conduct Unbecoming' (ABC Television 27/6/1993a) omitted all dramatisation and brought together clearly identifiable women and men to discuss clerical sexual abuse. While all had experienced abuse they did not discuss their own circumstances but acted as spokespersons, for Broken Rites, Friends of Susanna and Project Anna (Melbourne), referring to various encounters that had taken place between their group members and Church hierarchy. Friends of Susanna produced a copy of an insurance policy held with Catholic Church Insurances Limited against damages claims for sexual abuse by clerics. Standard insurance procedure (non-admission of liability in any circumstance) put the Church in a very bad light in relation to disclosures of clerical sexual abuse, with Friends of Susanna arguing that the distinction between non-admission of guilt and denial of guilt is a slight one (ABC Television 1993a). In matters of legal redress and insurance litigation the Church appeared to be adhering to secular standards rather than

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10 Such insurance provides cover for the organisation. Individual perpetrators cannot be insured against criminal behaviour (Gill 1997, p. 531).
concerned for pastoral care. Asked by the program reporter whether the Church's insurance cover is "an admission that it goes on?" spokesman, Bishop Connors laughing, perhaps nervously or perhaps indicating the female reporter's 'irrational' question, replied, "we admit it goes on - you can't deny it" (ABC Television 1993a). Broken Rite's spokespersons insisted that most perpetrators have a history of abuse and that the Church, fully aware of this, relocates them to another place and therefore has complicity in criminal offences (ABC Television 1993a). Again a print journalist attempted to revive the media panic argument by redefining the deviant group. He declared, "the ABC has predictably been in the forefront in ardently pursuing this scandal ... [with its] promulgation of such vague and sweeping declarations" (Devine 1993, p. 11).

The 'Conduct Unbecoming' reporter interviewed Bishop Peter Connors in his position as chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Special Issues Committee. The program revealed that in April 1992, four years after the obscurely titled 'Special Issues Committee' was set up to deal with issues of sexual abuse, a fifteen page policy document, *The Protocol*, was submitted to the national Catholic Bishops' Conference. Marked 'Strictly Confidential: For Bishops' Eyes Only' it had been kept secret for four years (ABC Television 1993a). Questioned about the secrecy and the lack of consultation surrounding the document's preparation Bishop Connors said:

Well it's confidential from the fact we were trying to make certain it was satisfactory. That it was not going to interfere with anyone's rights. We had to make sure it was not going to interfere with due process of the civil law. That it was going to be able to be put into practice in a satisfactory way. That's the reason that it has been kept as a *reserve* document up until now (ABC Television 1993a, my emphasis).
In spite of its years of preparation and emphasis on the protection of 'anyone's rights' The Protocol dealt exclusively with child sexual assault and detailed these five areas for Church priority:

1. Church responsibility in dealing with allegations;
2. The underlying values of The Protocol;
3. How to receive and investigate complaints;
4. How to treat the accused clergy; and
5. What to keep confidential.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference determined that The Protocol required further drafting and although several draft documents and working papers were produced they were never ratified or published (Gill 1997, p. 523).

'Conduct Unbecoming' was not a fiction between a sexually active priest and a 'temptress' or a dramatised or sensationalised account of unidentified abusive events. Its great significance lies in the fact that, more authoritatively than 'Ultimate Betrayal', it moved the discourse away from a central concern with the 'stories' of unfortunate but (in the Church's eyes) maybe partly responsible abused persons and onto the Church and its spokesmen. In so doing it called the Church out from its self-defined protected place into a public arena. Placing the male hierarchy rather than 'tragic victims' on centre stage irrevocably altered the potential for clerical sexual abuse to be read as simply another moral panic. The Church spokesman gave the first very clear (if unintended) illustration of patriarchy at work. Other examples followed.
In 1996 the New South Wales the Royal Commission into Police Corruption began inquiring into paedophilia. April 24 1996 saw an unprecedented step when the then Catholic Bishop of Wollongong, William Murray, was called before the Commission to respond to allegations that he failed to act against a recently convicted priest and a Christian Brother school principal whom he knew were engaged in abusive sex. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and other media, reported this exchange:

Ms Patricia Bergin (Counsel assisting the Royal Commission)  
"You had also the possibility of the matter being aired in a way that could not be controlled by the procedures of the church?"
Bishop Murray ( Appearing before the Royal Commission)  
"Yes"
Ms Patricia Bergin  
"One of the problems is that you did not do anything about it?"
Bishop Murray  
"Not at that stage. I have to admit I moved fairly slowly in this matter".
Ms Patricia Bergin  
"Indeed you did not move at all?"
Bishop Murray  
"Not at that stage"
Justice Wood (Royal Commissioner)  
"It means in fact that you did not tell anyone?"
Bishop Murray  
"That is right Your Honour" (Brown 1996, p. 5).

One month later a *Four Corners* program 'Twice Betrayed' (ABC Television 27/5/1996) revealed the following matters. Church insurers would no longer pay compensation if concealment of offences was shown to have occurred; the Church claimed it was neither a company nor a registered incorporated body and therefore did not exist as a legal entity; the Church also argued that a convicted priest was not under the control, supervision or even subject to the jurisdiction of the Church. The program also demonstrated that the Church
hierarchy had a great deal of knowledge about the extent and level of sexual abuse by its clerics. In one case Bishop Mulkearns, Catholic Bishop of Ballarat, knew of an abusive priest's activities for eighteen years yet he escaped being charged as an accomplice when the priest was first charged in 1993 with 'indecent assault' and 'gross indecency'. These offences are not classified as felony but misdemeanour and there is no charge for aiding and abetting a misdemeanour. Asked by the reporter, "the police did not find proof that you were criminally culpable - do you find now that you were at least morally culpable?" Mulkearns replied, "I don't. Because I believe I acted in accordance with my conscience and you're morally culpable if you go against that" (ABC Television 1996).

The program stated that the Church paid off abused people in return for their silence and secret payments were exchanged for an agreement never to discuss their complaints. Melbourne Vicar General, Monsignor Gerald Cudmore, when asked, "Isn't the Church buying people's silence?" replied, "I guess that's a conclusion - but it's a same conclusion (sic) that would exist in the commercial world. I mean is there harm in that?" (ABC Television 1996). Church hierarchy repeatedly insisted to a young woman that her rape claim against her parish priest could not be substantiated. After encounters with several members of the hierarchy the young woman's mother said her daughter wept, saying, "what's the use nobody believes me?" She committed suicide soon after. Later, police evidence against that priest supported her allegation and a male witness told the court that he wrote, at Church request, that the woman had set out to seduce the priest. After that he received a letter from Cudmore thanking him for his statement. Cudmore, when asked by
the reporter whether he was satisfied with his actions, replied, "Yes. I am satisfied with what I did. I have terrible regrets about what Stephanie did in taking her own life" (ABC Television 1996).

These various Church spokesmen's comments clearly illustrate Horsfield's (1997, p. 34) argument that, "the model of moral panic was an influential one, whether consciously or unconsciously, in male church leaders' understanding of what was happening and in shaping how they responded to it". Two strategies are at work here. One is that Church spokesmen employed the model of panic in their constant effort to remain the 'rational' party and keep the illusion of an externally manufactured media panic. Concepts of informed conscience, moral culpability and acting within general social standards were all invoked to claim the rational and moral highground. The second strategy was to shape the panic by attempting a broad inclusivity in their responses that deflects the focus away from the hierarchy as 'the Church' towards a communitarian less personally identifiable 'whole church'. The Catholic Bishop of Perth firmly declaimed, "I am not the Church. I am Barry James Hickey" (ABC Television 1996). Likewise Church spokesman, Father Brian Lucas, defending the argument that the Church did not deal with abusive priests, retorted, "that's the stereotype, "the Church". The Church is 4.7 million Australians. A person somewhere, some bishop, church official, didn't do what he should have done. And it becomes "the Church"" (Gill 1997, p. 522).\footnote{Chapter Six further elaborates this disjuncture between the sacramental community as a 'priesthood of all believers' and the ordained all-male priesthood.}
Three main points ensued from these television programs in relation to the Catholic Church: exposure of the high level of abuse in spite of Church attempts to minimise the numbers; that women and some men are abused as well as children; and the Church's lack of any appropriate systemic response mechanisms became evident. I am not suggesting that the media was a passive vehicle providing an empty stage on which an abstract concept and concrete evidence came face to face. However, the descriptive passages given above do not give witness to sensationalism in those programs. Church spokesmen, responding as members of a professional group (priesthood) made public that a very high level of unethical and immoral clerical behaviour accompanies individual acts of clerical sexual violence. Those high-ranking clerical men were not subjected to unexpected or impromptu media intrusions for which they were unprepared. As members of a profession they demonstrate that they "live quite intently within that group and assume unreflectively its identity along with an assimilation of its values, ideas and ways of thinking and acting" (Daniel 1998, p. 97). These Church leaders had assimilated, as their terms of reference, a notion that preservation of priesthood is above and beyond all other requirements even to the detriment of other persons.

I emphasise that these responses reflect that priesthood is a profession; a very particular all-male profession whose members, like those of other professions, are "banded together by common interests and are given to specific ways of thinking and acting" (Daniel 1998, p. 25). In matters of sexual activity involving priests, the Church's pre-occupation lies with the possibility of false accusations. Sanctions exist, in the Church's Code of Canon Law, for
persons making false allegations against a priest, but there is no corresponding canon for a priest's false denial (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 76). Media scrutiny and heightened public awareness of clerical sexual abuse rendered the seemingly fixed notion of priesthood, as a non-sexually active state, tenuous.

From the first of these programs, that began by fitting into Cohen's moral panic model, the whole tenor shifted from that perspective to what Horsfield (1997, p. 32) importantly demonstrates was the "breaking [of] a political silence". Breaking that political silence, Horsfield (1997, p. 32) argues, resulted "in the coherence of a previously suppressed common social experience and the stimulation of significant and legitimate social resistance and moral action". This was achieved by the media (intentionally or otherwise) moving its focus away from personal 'story telling' about the violent acts of individual priests to concentrate instead on responses of spokesmen for the organisational Church. Ann Daniel's (1998, p. 1) point that, "the standards of a group are seen most clearly when these are transgressed" is patently illustrated in the direct quotations from the television statements of those men. Those television programs exposed a face of Church patriarchy and the male clericalism so central to it. At that point a 'shift' in the understanding of clerical sexual abuse as moral panic commenced. To that extent the media was a forceful agent, not of moral panic, but in the generation of Church policy. The first of the Church's response policies Towards Healing was published in December 1996, and I review these responses in the next chapter.
Clerical sexual abuse: a local panic

Moral panics do not occur in isolation or all follow a single pattern. They are, "by their very nature volatile; they erupt fairly suddenly (although they may lie dormant or latent for long periods of time, and may reappear from time to time)", thereby uncovering "historical antecedents" (Goode & Ben Yehuda 1994, p. 38 emphasis original). In this example I trace threads of volatility and show that there are capricious elements embedded in this particular panic that connect its historical and prevailing social contexts. In the preceding example I used the national television programs' slow progression through the issue to illustrate an unfolding of a moral crisis rather than a moral panic. Those programs were spread over a period of three years. In comparison, the following account of clerical sexual abuse in Wollongong (that occurred during the same time) shows how a local newspaper acted in two capacities, as media presenter (reporter) and moral arbiter (editor). In combination these two generated a moral panic that was indicative of media amplification.

Under its front-page headline, 'Brother, parish priest molested us', Wollongong's tabloid newspaper the Illawarra Mercury revealed to the local population six young men's allegations that a parish priest and a Christian Brother school principal sexually assaulted them during their school years (Martin 1993c, p. 1). It was further claimed that some of the men had reported the incidents at the time they occurred to the then Bishop of Wollongong,
William Murray, who took no action. Reporter Brett Martin\textsuperscript{12} and editor Peter Cullen devoted four full pages to the matter on that day and at the same time established their own significance and dual capabilities to identify and publish 'the guilty' and protect 'the innocent'. "The Mercury today makes no apologies for publishing the stories. They are stories which had to be told to protect others" (Illawarra Mercury 1993, p. 4).

\textbf{A brief chronology}

- 1991 (month unknown) Priest Maurie Crocker informed Bishop Murray of the young men's allegations. Murray failed to act against the alleged perpetrators;
- 1991/92 (month unknown) Crocker went to the police who took the matter to Department of Public Prosecutions. DPP did not proceed because of elapsed time and lack of evidence;
- 1993 (month unknown) Crocker went to Illawarra Mercury;
- 1993 (October) Illawarra Mercury published the allegations;
- 1994 (March) Priest, Peter Comensoli, charged and released on bail;
- 1994 (June) Priest, Peter Comensoli, pleaded guilty to the charges,
- 1994 (October) Priest, Peter Comensoli, sentenced to prison;
- 1994 (December) Christian Brother, Michael Evans, committed suicide prior to his arrest;
- 1996 (April) Resignation of Bishop Murray accepted in Rome;
- 1996 (April) Retired Bishop Murray castigated by NSW Wood Royal Commission for his failure to act;
- 1997 (January) Philip Wilson appointed as Bishop to Wollongong diocese;
- 1998 (March) Priest, Maurie Crocker, hanged himself.
- 2000 (December) Retired Illawarra Mercury editor died suddenly.

The later of those events occurred in the early stages of my candidature and were partly instrumental in bringing me to read moral panic literature. As I infrequently read the

\textsuperscript{12} "In 1994 Brett Martin, then a reporter with the Illawarra Mercury, gained a Walkley award for uncovering sex scandals involving a priest and a prominent New South Wales Christian Brother" (Gill 1997, p. 80).
I made archival searches of that newspaper in order to situate these Wollongong print media 'revelations' into their wider contemporary social settings. In the course of that process I 'discovered' another form of panic, one that generates fear by tapping deeply into the unspoken, or perceived fears, of a community. Panics of this type "describe extreme, rather than routine examples, aspects or practices of target groups of behaviours" and are classified by Goode & Ben-Yehuda as,

an atrocity tale - a real or imagined summary event that represents all that is wrong with one's opponents and enemies and is intended to evoke moral outrage and generate action against the alleged perpetrators (Goode & Ben-Yehuda 1994, P. 63 emphasis original).

Satanism is the most frequently used example of an atrocity tale (Richardson 1997). Lack of substantiating evidence for the claims about these tales means they mostly fail to find support outside of "rural or small-town, blue-collar, relatively uneducated fundamentalist Christian social circles" (Goode & Ben Yehuda 1994, p. 63). It appeared, however, from my Illawarra Mercury searches that Wollongong was given two panics 'for the price of one'.

Heart of Darkness

Almost twelve months before Brett Martin began reporting the clerical sexual abuse scandal in Wollongong he alerted the same population to a different set of demons in its midst. Over five consecutive days the Illawarra Mercury devoted ten full pages to 'Heart of Darkness - In Satan's Service' (Martin 30/11/1992-4/12/1992). The newspaper promoted the
series as a community service "after hearing allegations Wollongong teenagers had attended a human sacrifice on the escarpment" (Martin 1992, p. 13). Extraordinary, but unsubstantiated, claims of human sacrifices, satanic ritual and multiple personality disorder, as well as, ritual and sex magic, filled those ten pages. "The first sacrifice I saw was a burning ... All you could hear were her screams" Martin (1992, p. 12) reported.

Nine months later (16/9/1993) the issue reappeared with the warning "senior satanists from England, Canada and the United States are headed to Wollongong" (Martin 1993a, p. 3). This time Illawarra Mercury enlisted the city's Anglican Bishop who, the paper reports, "called on members of all Christian denominations to take the allegations seriously" (Martin 1993a, p. 3). One month later (15/10/1993) a call from police was published to, "avert hysteria ... we don't want a witch-hunt - there is nothing illegal about being a pagan, witch or satanist. ... these people aren't here to randomly snatch people's babies out of cribs or children off the streets" (Martin 1993b, p. 3). Eleven days later (26/10/1993) this mercurial newspaper claimed that the information had now escalated into "a wave of religious hysteria sweeping the city". That day a "former satanic high priestess ... who cannot be named for legal reasons" told Illawarra Mercury that "she held real fears for the safety of herself and her family" (Martin 1993c, p. 2). Barely three weeks later (13/11/1993) the 'investigation' ended with the announcement, 'The Witch-Hunt That Wasn't: Wollongong spared a satanic hell' (Martin 1993e, p. 27). Martin posed the rational questions. "Where was the human sacrifice? Where was the blood ritual and sex magic?" (1993e, p. 27). A 'therapist' said that police investigations were hampered "by
sensationalism ... by sections of the media and several Illawarra "born-again" Christian churches". She added, "therein lies the main lesson ... To approach allegations of ritual abuse with anything but an open mind is to confuse the issue" (Martin 1993e, p. 28).

There was a remarkable lack of evidence for the presence of Satan and satanists in Wollongong between September and November 1993. Richard Guilliatt (1996, p. 144) says that the Heart of Darkness series "stands as an unfortunate example of the way that child abuse allegations can be confabulated into a parable of evil which is then 'authenticated' by investigators and experts". But it was more than an unfortunate example; explicit media induced notions that confused but connected religion and sex were left hovering around waiting to lodge, or be lodged, in the population's imagination. There was no lengthy delay. The day after Martin's 'wave of religious hysteria', his headline 'Brother, parish priest molested us', (27/10/1993) arrived on the agenda. In terms of a failed atrocity tale it seems that the parish priest and Brother appeared at a very fortuitous moment. Here, concrete evidence (front-page photographs of the alleged offenders) gave substance to the amorphous subject matter of sex and religion. Those four pages included anonymous statements (supported by statutory declarations) from the complainant men; approaches to, and refusals by, the accused men to reply to the allegations; and an interview with the priest who informed the newspaper. Obviously that 'news' required a considerable preparation period including legal advice. In drawing all these features together the paper indicated to its audience its shift into the genre of news and "news media holds particular authority because it is seen as reporting 'facts' rather than constructing a fictional account" (Lupton 40
1998, p. 36). However, those preparations for a 'real' panic were obviously taking place concurrently with the concluding stages of reporting on the atrocity tale. And the significantly confused themes of sex and religion remaining from that 'tale' then required the Illawarra Mercury to take up its self-awarded dual roles of rational presenter and moral arbiter of highly complex circumstances on behalf of the community. With the rational and moral high ground reclaimed the paper's failed atrocity tale was able to subside.

Illawarra Mercury editorials, continued to man the moral barricades repeatedly claiming that the paper acted in the community's best interests by revealing "the facts of this tragic chapter in the life of the church in the Illawarra" (Cullen 1994, p. 5 my emphasis). With the appointment of a new Catholic Bishop to Wollongong the editor heralded, 'At last ... a Bishop who cares' and exhorted the population to "give him all the support we can as he calls on his reserves to deal with, and resolve, an excruciating problem which continues to tear away at the fabric of the church in the Wollongong Diocese" (Cullen 1997, p. 5). The remnants of 'all that is wrong with one's opponents and enemies and is intended to evoke moral outrage' lingered on from the atrocity tale and found a new home in a media-shaped moral panic that set together very old and relatively new forms of 'folk devils'.

Mediacentrism, exemplified in the case of clerical sexual abuse in Wollongong, illustrates the limitations of the adequacy of Cohen's moral panic theory. Cohen (1980, p. 15) critiqued and regarded as outdated the then prevailing sociological concept of 'deviance'
because it, "in a sense emerges and is stabilized as an artefact of social control". However, Horsfield (1997, p. 32) argues that, "the model of moral panics requires a structure of norm and deviance as a hermeneutical device". And Cohen, Horsfield (1997, p. 33) says, associated the term, without distinction, with "a range of both legal and illegal activities". It is this lack of distinction, I argue, that allows his backgrounding of the identified group's behaviour in favour of the "variable of societal reaction" (Cohen 1980, p. 24). Establishing the 'construction' of deviance is central to the determination of what qualifies as moral panic. In the case of Wollongong, if clerical sexual abuse is to be regarded as illegal (deviant), in any event, then the interplay between deviance and reaction is highly unstable if newspapers are the arbiters.

Clerical sexual abuse: an 'invisible' panic

On December 19th 1994 the then Catholic Bishop of Parramatta, Bede Heather ordered the dissolution of a Religious Order (Brothers of St Gerard Majella). This small, teaching Order began in 1958. Three priests, the founder and two other men, operated a novitiate for the training of young men as Brothers, acted as local parish priests and administered and taught in local Catholic schools. At the time it was disbanded there were between 30 and 40 men members of the Order. Subsequently the three priests John Sweeney (Founder and Provincial), Peter Joseph Pritchard (Vicar General of the Order and High School Principal) and Stephen Robinson (Novice Master and Spiritual Director) were all sentenced to prison for sexual offences against boys and young men. The Sydney Morning Herald religion writer Chris McGillion speculated:
I have reason to believe that we haven't heard the last of the Brothers of St Gerard Majella and that before we do the shock will shake the Catholic Church to its core. If so, the Church will largely have itself to blame (McGillion 1995, p. 17).

Two years later Alan Gill stated:

In terms of convictions ... NSW sets a relatively good example although a scandal concerning the now disbanded Brothers of St Gerard Majella could blow this out of the water (Gill 1997, p. 476).

Neither author is regarded as sensationalist and neither prediction eventuated. Small news items reported the separate trials (one in 1997 and two in 1998) and sentencing of the three priests for periods from 18 months to 6 years (Cooke 1997, 1998a, 1998b). In a two-page article, one Sunday newspaper (The Sun Herald) reported that one of the priests (Pritchard) was previously given a community service order in 1993 for acts of indecency against a naval cadet (Mitchell, A. 1997, p. 57). The article also states that following that incident a canon lawyer priest conducted an internal inquiry into the Order for the bishop. Nothing from that 'inquiry' is published. In another case, also in Parramatta but unrelated to the Religious Order, the Vicar General of Parramatta diocese was sentenced on December 9th 1994 to 2 years imprisonment for sexual offences with a minor. His superior, Bishop Heather, refused to cooperate with police and they returned with warrants and searched the bishop's office and chancery. Three days later the bishop ordered the disbandment of the Brothers of St Gerard Majella (Mitchell, A. 1997, p. 57). Yet there was no moral panic.

Print media has been the only source of the scant amount of available information concerning this putative panic thereby demonstrating the high variability of media response
patterns. Deborah Lupton (1994, pp. 26-27) points out that public demand for information is also partially dependent on media set agendas of what issues will be deemed newsworthy and the extent of information released about those issues. On the one hand "the press has always shown a tendency to oversensationalize events that occur, simply to increase viewer/reader/hearer interest" (Richardson 1997, p. 68). On the other hand issues that originally hold "shock value" can later "become a stale subject matter for the news media" (Lupton 1994, p. 140). Alongside these polarities are the important features of Cohen's definition of moral panic stating that,

ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates … Sometimes the panic is passed over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory (Cohen 1980, p. 9).

The case of the Brothers of St Gerard Majella seems to have fallen somewhere between the cracks. Substantial real estate owned by the Order has been sold and the Order itself seems to be consigned to the realm of oblivion. The particular cases of sexual abuse by these clerical men may well, under these circumstances, 'pass over into folklore' and, with the current growing conservatism in the male hierarchy, again become a matter for internal (in)action by that hierarchy. The bishop took early retirement and his incoming successor (Bishop Kevin Manning) is reported as saying that keeping the Church viable would require,

a sacramental and hierarchical structure based on Christ's autonomy not a "democracy", not an entity spawned in discussion, compromise and resolutions, which ignore sacred Scripture and Catholic Church tradition (Mitchell A. 1997, p. 57).
Identifying 'construction' in reports of clerical sexual abuse

As well as various news media sources, there are other actors whose part in the construction of moral panic need to be noted. Philip Jenkins is a noted moral panic theorist whose book *Pedophiles & Priests* (1996) deals directly with the topic of Catholic clerical sexual abuse as a moral panic and he primarily aims to identify the contributory factors shaping societal reaction to the issues. Following Cohen's theory fairly closely Jenkins (1996, p. 5) says that analysis and contextualising of sites of construction of social problems, "offers rich opportunities for understanding the fears, concerns, and prejudices of the society that comes to view a given issue as uniquely dangerous". Jenkins does not refute the existence of clerical sexual abuse and he (1996, p. 5) clearly states that arguing a problem is socially-constructed "does not mean that it is not founded upon perceptions that might have some validity". What Jenkins does overlook is that not all analyses of underlying contributory factors draw the same conclusions from their findings. This leads me to suggest the theorists themselves become involved as actors. For example, Jenkins (1996, p. 72) finds, as I did in respect of the ABC television programs discussed above, that Church spokesmen "contributed by default to promoting the bleak image of the clergy". This led me to see a need to examine Church patriarchy as reflected in its priesthood. Jenkins (1996, p. 72) conclusion, however, is simply that longstanding favourable media coverage of the American Church left it "poorly prepared for the onslaught of denunciation over abuse".

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In regard to sexual abuse, Jenkins' work (1992, 1996) identifies several other contributory factors in the creation of a panic. The contemporary interest in clerical sexual abuse, Jenkins (1996, p. 17) claims, "could not have erupted so quickly if there was not a pre-existing public demand or expectation about the likely veracity of the charges". Popular fiction, television and film portrayals are sources, apart from news media, through which these social expectations of sexually active priests are developed. I accept Jenkins' assertion and agree that the works footnoted below all demonstrate his point. I hasten to add, however, that these portrayals rely on dominant male-view constructions of women as sexually dangerous (especially to priests) and depict priests as contrarily 'sexually active and celibate' adult males engaging in consensual but 'naughty' sexual relationships.

There is a parallel conscientisation (construction) of 'forbidden' sexual activity that did not arise out of popular culture. It was brought about by the women's movement and feminist writers in the area of sexual and other abuses of women and children (cf O'Donnell & Cranny 1982, Hanmer & Maynard 1987, Horsfall 1991, Bell 1993, Finch 1993, Darlington 1996). Acts of male power used coercively for sexual purposes against women and children are not new phenomena. Mary Maynard (1993, p. 99) carefully reminds us that "whilst violence against women is a contemporary concern, 'first wave' feminists who campaigned and wrote in the nineteenth century were keenly aware of its existence and significance". In the context of the construction of problematic social issues as moral panic, however,

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13 Examples include Colleen McCullough's fiction *The Thorn Birds* (1977), the works of prolific writer and best selling author Andrew Greeley (Catholic priest and Sociology Professor), the film 'Priest' (1995), popular
Jenkins (1996, p. 16) argues that views such as these are simply indicative of changes in prevailing social attitudes. Jenkins (1996, p. 16) acknowledges (and blames) activists whose claims, in his view, merely revised former "professional and scholarly opinions" about adult sexual activity with children from insignificant and harmless into sexual abuse. Thereby "a revolutionary gulf separates us from the thought of the 1970s and before".

Furthermore, Jenkins (1996, p. 16) asserts, a range of liberal Catholic activists, on matters such as "sexual ethics, academic freedom, and the role and status of women" coopted sexual abuse into their political agendas in a "Catholic civil war". Jenkins reserves his most scathing charge of 'construction' for political self-interests for second wave North American feminists. Feminist activists, he argues, conflate their views of patriarchal values with their views about the disciplines of Catholicism so that they,

stood to profit from the abuse issue in ideological terms and also in the practical sense of advancing women's interests within churches. In fact, feminists advanced beyond the mainstream construction of "clergy abuse" in their assertion that sexual exploitation should be defined more broadly than simple priestly pedophilia (Jenkins 1996, p. 17 my emphasis).

Jenkins introduces the legal system as another influential player in clerical sexual abuse panics. He (1996, p. 136) opines that, "the radically adversarial nature of the civil legal environment creates intolerable ideological conflicts for a religious entity such as the Catholic Church and there is rich potential for these contradictions to be exploited by television series 'Ballykissangel'.
activist groups and mass media". Jenkins (1996, p. 137) goes on to argue that, influenced by media reports, jurors may award generous compensation payments thus making "clergy-abuse litigation a tempting field". Feminist analyses show the direct reverse of that allegation by revealing that women in fact experience entrenched gender bias related to sexual matters in the Australian court system (cf Graycar & Morgan 1990, Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs 1994). These studies show that the concept of deviance is highly gendered and as a consequence litigation in sexual matters is not a 'tempting field' at all for women.

The limitation of Jenkins' constructionist perspective (apart from his personal anti-feminist prejudice) is that his data relies on tracing shifts in media reporting styles about Catholic priests as well as general anti-Catholic traditions and, what he sees as, the vested interests of groups like the therapeutic and legal professions. Jenkins (1996, pp. 58-66) simply follows style variations, from the presentation of the pre-1970s priest in "heroic or saintly guise" to the 1990s "pedophile priest model", thus it remains unclear whether it is media reporting styles or priesthood itself that underwent this marked shift. More importantly, he completely omits any understanding of the experience of abused persons. Thus the issue of clerical sexual abuse per se, although not denied, remains as socially-constructed and is not dealt with either individually or systemically. In contrast Kelly et al (1996, p. 84) illustrate that sexual violence was 'constructed' by feminists by being "unearthed from layers of historical disbelief and denial". The concept of 'construction' as it is used in moral panic
theory is entirely inadequate if what is being constructed as deviance is actually deviant in any event.

Conclusion

An exploration or examination of some of the ways that clerical sexual abuse entered Australian (particularly Australian Catholic) social life in the last decade provides a backdrop for interpreting some events as 'panics'. It also provides a departure point for this study. Approaching this issue as a moral panic highlights the impact of various media representations, the variable level of intensity of media reporting about the issue, as well as Church and societal responses to clerical sexual abuse. Moral panic theory offers the opportunity to consider the construction of the social factors contributing to the high level of general population awareness that arose in response to the media revelations. However, in this instance publicity and exposure do not account for the entirety of clerical sexual abuse or the responses to it, and thus demonstrate the limitations of confining my questions about clerical sexual abuse to that theoretical approach.

In examining three specific contemporary examples of the way clerical sexual abuse came to popular awareness, a number of issues clarified for me the limitations of taking a moral panic approach to this thesis. The three examples of media presentation that I use demonstrate more about the vagaries of the media's need for sensationalism in topics and its almost inevitable ennui with the same topic than they do about the issue of clerical sexual
abuse itself. Moral panic theory, as exemplified by Cohen's (1980) work, is a key contributor to the idea that societal responses act as a kind of social barometer for particular instances of what is seen to be a social upheaval, or deviant behaviour, of particular groups at particular times. In the three examples I outlined it is unquestionable that clerical men did perpetrate sexual violence. However, it is also possible to see that the concepts of 'deviance' and a 'typical' response are highly questionable in relation to clerical sexual abuse. I am left tapping the barometer glass to draw together the interplay between what I understand to be the deviance (clerical sexual abuse) and the (mainly media) reaction to that.

Part of the 'sudden' telling of clerical sexual abuse is that it appears to be a seemingly recurring phenomenon possessed of a long and silent history. For me, the revelation of priests as not only sexually active but also sexually violent destabilises notions of what the Church professes and constitutes as priest and priesthood. This avenue raises questions far more in need of understanding than analysis of the 'construction' and self-interests of the categories of actors and the general underlying societal fears (prejudices) about groups suddenly assumed to threaten their society with instability. These fears are well exemplified as the sub-text of the issue in the 'Letters' cited at the opening of this chapter. Their catalyst includes confused notions about the 'naturalness' of heterosexual sex as opposed to the 'unnaturalness' of homosexuality that is assumed as consequential to a commitment to celibacy. In the case of clerical sexual abuse moral panic theory is a useful, but inadequate, explanation for two main reasons: by backgrounding the group about which the panic occurs moral panic theory limits distinction between 'actual' and 'fictional' potential for
harm; and more importantly, it relates clerical sexual abuse to sexual practice rather than sexual violence. However, I consider that moral panic theory also shows that the television programs discussed in this chapter served as a much-needed trigger to bring the Church to act in response to its perpetrators. Those programs and the Church's release of formal response documents have a connection and the next chapter turns to the Church's responses to clerical sexual abuse.
As bishops and leaders of religious institutes of the Catholic Church in Australia, we acknowledge with deep sadness and regret that a number of clergy and religious have sexually abused children, adolescents and adults who have been in their pastoral care. To these victims we offer our sincere apology (Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, *Towards Healing*, 1996, p. 1).

These introductory words of *Towards Healing* (1996) sounded the first official voicing of acknowledgment and response by Australian Catholic Church leaders that sexual abuse is prevalent in the Church. *Towards Healing* is a policy document of procedural guidelines and an ecclesiastical statement of the Australian Catholic Church on the issue of sexual abuse perpetrated by Church personnel. It is a response to high public awareness of the extent of clerical sexual abuse and a formal apology to those who were abused. However, as I show in the previous chapter, it was only when particular media reports focussed on the Church rather than on the 'victims' of clerical sexual abuse that any response was forthcoming. *Towards Healing* unfolded as a 'product' of particular historical circumstances of Australian Catholicism. I consider that these responses, like the abuses themselves, are "coloured by a long history of sexist thinking, a marked ambivalence of religion towards sexuality, and a gross under representation of women in decision making and church discipline" (Houts 1995, p. 373). The evolution of *Towards Healing* took eight years and was a long, slow process. While its release seemed a matter of political expediency for the
increasingly damaged reputation of the Church, a seemingly remarkable lack of urgency marked its production.

**Unfolding Church responses**

Between 1996 and 1999 the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference (ACBC); the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes (ACLRI); and the National Committee for Professional Standards (A Committee of ACBC & ACLRI) produced three self-explanatory response documents.


3) *Towards Understanding: A study of factors specific to the Catholic Church which might lead to sexual abuse by priests and religious [Draft]* (ACBC & ACLRI, July 1999).

Two external influences shaped their production. First, the media's ability to sensitise the public to an issue and its capacity to act against a political authority, such as the Church, makes such bodies sensitive to the media's input (Pollard 1992, pp. 26-27). I suggest that the ABC television programs discussed in the previous chapter carried some weight towards the first of these documents in particular. Initiating policy, Pollard (1992, p. 28) says, "is about ideas whose time has come: ideas which seem relevant, desirable and feasible. ... The motivation may not be entirely disinterested". Seemingly the release of a policy document was an idea whose time had come or at least it was an idea which the
Church could no longer postpone. Second, there was a more general recognition growing in public organisations of the legal importance and necessity to establish operational procedures for dealing with allegations of sexual abuse or harassment. McFarlane and Fisher (Churches, Clergy and the Law 1996, p. 206) stress that, "the church especially must be seen as responsible in this area and as having in place public procedures for dealing fairly with these sensitive issues".

Regardless of any limitations or distortions present in media representations of clerical sexual abuse they nonetheless indubitably heighten public perceptions that such abuse is prevalent. Church hierarchy are not excluded from this increased awareness and their responses took the form of production of social policy. Thus in this chapter I leave aside discussion of moral panic in favour of concentrating on the Church's responses as a matter of policy. The three documents named above directly espouse Australian Catholic Church' policies and in this section I analyse and comment on these documents. I regard these three documents as a direct formulation of 'social policy in response' and draw in comparative arguments, especially feminist arguments and critique, in relation to social welfare policies postulated by secular agencies in relation to sexual violence. I take this policy analysis approach as a useful means of showing the links between the policies' discourses and other more general discourses of the Church especially those with a gender bias against women. Terms, such as 'victim' and 'offender', are purposefully used to be consistent with, and give significance to, the way these terms are used in the Church documents. In the concluding
part of this chapter I return to an ABC Compass Television program (1998) that reflected on Catholic clerical sexual abuse in light of the Church's generation of response policies.

**Towards Healing: Policy**

*Towards Healing* (1996), as a statement of objectives for "responding to complaints of sexual abuse", is by definition a formulation of social policy. Most social policy is commonly understood to be related to the economic and social aspects of government activities that are, "aimed at decreasing social inequalities" (Pollard 1992, p. 22). Apart from these welfare related forms of policy there are other forms embracing actions that effect both non-government organisations and individuals (Palmer & Short 1989, pp. 22-23). *Towards Healing* falls into that classification and may be categorised as a regulatory policy. That is, it is intended to impose "limitations or restrictions on the behaviour of individuals" (Palmer & Short 1989, p. 23). These policies Palmer & Short (1989, p. 23) define as "reasonably specific and narrow in their impact. They determine who is restricted and who is given greater freedom". As well as being regulatory *Towards Healing* is also self-regulatory, in that the body producing the policy is the same body to which accountability is owed in the first instance. Perpetrators are of course also accountable before the law if charged. For an organisation self-regulatory policies can be "a means of promoting its own interests" and may also "benefit an organisation directly or indirectly since being seen to be self regulatory may enhance the official credibility of the organisation" (Palmer and Short 1989, p. 23). Social policies in the governmental sense,
David Pollard (1992, p. 23) says are the "outcome of a highly conflictual process". The approach to understanding their function lies in seeing the conflict between, "an exercise in disinterested decision-making where the outcomes are determined by rational decision-making processes which are value neutral", or process that is "entirely value biased and lies wholly within the realm of politics" (Pollard 1992, p. 23). Towards Healing reflects both these aspects.

In releasing Towards Healing the ACBC and ACLRI gave the first public acknowledgment of the existence of the Church's seemingly inherent problem that some clerical persons engage in coercive sexual behaviour. Although it followed on from the unpublished The Protocol it did not replace an existing policy. The document sets out 'Principles' and 'Procedures' For Dealing With Complaints Of Sexual Abuse. The Principles deal with clergy and religious, "because of the added betrayal of trust that is present in such cases" while the Procedures are deemed to include all Church personnel and other employees (Towards Healing 1996, p. 6). Church discourse is located in the Principles and these are therefore the place to identify any commitment to organisational change. For this reason in the following overview of the contents of Towards Healing (1996) I give greater attention to the Principles. I have chosen Principles 1, 4, 5, 7, and 28 (set out below) as indicative of the tenor of the Principles concerning; definition of abuse (1); 'victims' (4, 5); perpetrators (7) and prevention (28). The Procedures deal with the regulatory and legal requirements when a complaint is lodged and are therefore the external mechanism that may change action but not commitment.
Principles

Any attempt to sexualise a pastoral relationship is a breach of trust, an abuse of authority and professional misconduct. Such abuse may take the form of suggestive comments, unnecessary questions and physical contact. Failure by the other person to reject such conduct does not necessarily imply meaningful consent. Even when the other person concerned is the one who seeks to sexualise the relationship, it is the professional responsibility of clergy or religious to guard the boundary against sexual contact (Principle 1, *Towards Healing* 1996, p. 2).

Victims of sexual abuse can experience fear, shame, confusion and the violation of their person. They can feel guilty, blame themselves and take responsibility for what has happened. Children and adolescents can suffer distortions in the process of determining their sexual identity, and even their identity as persons (Principle 4, *Towards Healing* 1996, p. 2).

The intensity of the effects of sexual abuse on victims will vary. Some of the factors involved are the age and personality of the victim, the relationship with the offender, the duration and frequency of the abuse, the particular form of abuse, the degree of force used, the threats used to compel secrecy, and the degree of violation of trust and abuse of power involved (Principle 5, *Towards Healing* 1996, p. 2).

In most cases of sexual abuse free choices are made and many serious and sacred obligations are violated. Vulnerable persons are carefully selected as potential victims (Principle 7, *Towards Healing* 1996, p. 3).

We commit ourselves to making every effort to reduce the risk of abuse by clergy or religious. We continue to review the selection of candidates for priesthood and religious life and their ongoing formation. We commit ourselves to a process of community education and awareness in recognising and responding to sexual abuse (Principle 28, *Towards Healing* 1996, p. 5).

Further, the document states that any sexual behaviour involving minors is immoral and criminal. Approaches to adults are stated to be either sexual harassment or sexual assault and both are subject to legal procedures. And, "Even when there are no grounds for
As my Introduction states I regard clerical sexual abuse as active violence and do not subscribe to a hierarchy or prioritisation of offences committed against people. This is not to develop an 'upwards' conflation of all coercive sexual activity to the highest rank of criminality. Rather, it is to take a feminist perspective that makes clear that "rape, sexual assault and sexual exploitation" must all be understood as "acts of violence that disempower the victim" (Easteal 1998, p. 227). Towards Healing, I contend, employs a convergent principle or 'downwards' conflation that collapses "physical contact" to the lesser offence of "suggestive comments". This study, and other literature, shows that what Towards Healing [1] defines as "physical contact" includes vaginal rape of women and girls, anal rape of men and children, digital penetration and use of another person's body as an aid to masturbation (cf Flanagan 1995; Ormerod & Ormerod 1995; Parkinson 1997). The nature of these acts has to be made clear in policy terms and it is the process of making them clear that has become the domain of feminist policy analysts. Lois Bryson (1992, p. 34) points to the work of feminists who, in relation to the formation and analyses of welfare and social policy, were "instrumental in broadening the focus ... as well as pointing to the limitations of the traditional boundaries". I see an absence of recognition of gender issues in these Church documents in the same way that Bryson (1992, p. 34) sees that male writers on economic welfare suffer from, "lack of a systematic perspective on gender" resulting in an "assumption of the subjects of their analyses to be genderless". Given that women and
children are those who are most disadvantaged by clerical sexual violence, in the same way they are disadvantaged in terms of economic and social welfare, I begin by raising gender issues to do with disadvantageous language and myth in *Towards Healing* (1996).

Although she does not elaborate her claim, Jan Horsfall (1991, p. 23) argues that male policy makers "determine 'acceptable' levels of violence against women in general". *Towards Healing*, I suggest, gives two apt examples of this in relation to language. The (mis)use of the euphemism 'physical contact' is the first. Rape, unwanted sexual touching and kissing all find shelter within a facade of the apparently minor act of 'physical contact' thereby concealing the power imbalance and minimising the experience of that 'physical contact' for the victimised person. Second, the consistent use of plural personal pronouns throughout the document avoids any indication that the majority of the policy makers (we/us) like the great majority of perpetrators are men while most of the abused persons (them/they) are women and children. References pertaining to masculinity are studiously avoided through the entire document. By employing such innocuous language the Church maintains "silence and secrecy" in its discourses so that they "are a shelter for power, anchoring its prohibitions; but they also loosen its hold and provide for relatively obscure areas of tolerance" (Foucault 1981, p. 101). An exclusively male hierarchy has pocketed within it 'areas of tolerance' for its sexually abusive members and is also seemingly reluctant to speak clearly about or totally abandon these shelters.
Naming clerical sexual violence

The Church's dilemma about how it names clerical sexual abuse arises in part from the fact that since the defining characteristic of priests is celibacy, speaking of priests' sexual activities, coercive or consensual, is to speak a contradiction. However, clerical sexual violence occurs and is exactly the same as other sexual abuse in that it must be accurately named. Elizabeth Stuart gives the clearest statement I have found. She simply says:

As Carol Adams has put it "if you hit someone over the head with a frying pan you don't call it cooking". Similarly, if someone threatens you with parts of the body commonly associated with the sexual act, do not call it sex; call it violence (Stuart 1996a, p. 14).

Responses to acts of clerical sexual violence engage the Church hierarchy in a "politics of naming" (Kelly et al 1996, p. 77). Such politics articulate the nexus between clerical men and sexual activities connected with violence. Therefore the language used to name clerical sexual abuse is crucially important. The language or terminology used to discuss any sexual violence is pivotal in determining what is vocalised and what is silenced, what practices are implied through language and following this the relevance of implemented preventive strategies. The Church's ways of naming sexual abuse by priests interlock with Church language across the range of its liturgies and theologies to raise "a question about the more general nature of religio-sexual systems of meaning" (Maddox 1994, p. 39). A very contradictory and selective linguistic practice operates in the Church. In its liturgical language the Church traditionally speaks of all its members as 'men' when presumably it
means everyone. "Pray for us men". Even in the face of ongoing feminist critique and general societal rejection of this androcentric practice there is a great unwillingness to move away from use of exclusive language. Yet, in parallel, there exists an extraordinary reluctance to name its all-male priesthood as men in relation to clerical sexual abuse and thereby the Church employs language to the advantage of those who abuse over the people abused.

The definition of abuse that Towards Healing [1] holds is a fine example of the persistence of a sexist myth and "illustrates how powerfully androcentric thought functions to legitimate patriarchy" (Johnson 1994, p. 25). In Catholic doctrine all sexual activity is assumed to be heterosexual. Thus it follows, "when the other person concerned is the one who seeks to sexualise the relationship" (Towards Healing [1]), the other person alluded to will be a woman seeking to sexualise the ministerial relationship with a male priest or religious. In other words, not a male person homosexually approaching a male cleric or heterosexually approaching a female religious. The sexist roots of the discourse of the lure of women are thinly veiled in that phrase. Introducing the notion of 'temptress' into the document's opening statement represents a "subtle complicity with a pattern of violence" against women (Hamington 1995, p. 147). Centuries dissolve each time this stereotype of woman as seductress is again brought out. Jerome, in the Fourth century, warned:

> It is not the harlot, or the adulteress who is spoken of, but woman's love in general is accused of ever being insatiable; put it out; it bursts into flame; give

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14 Chapter Six elaborates how priestly celibacy has also come to mean non-sexual.
it plenty, it is again in need; it enervates a man's mind, and engrosses all thought except for the passion which it feeds (in Salisbury 1991, p. 23).

More recently practice still remains cautious of the temptations of the 'Daughters of Eve'. Michael Costigan (1977, p. 6) relates that following ordination, "fathers and brothers were admitted to the festive meal ... but mothers and sisters ... were fed separately". Paul Collins (1986, p. 77) refers to representations of women, in seminary training, as "innocent, slightly neurotic and basically manipulative; they 'wanted' the priest in an ill defined but sexually threatening way". Underscored by these sexist myths "the professional responsibility of clergy or religious to guard the boundary against sexual contact" seemingly becomes a near impossible task in the face of women who might "seek to sexualise the relationship". This statement is indicative of a complete failure on the Church's part to recognise that "sexual assault and sexual exploitation are not about uncontrollable male libidos provoked by women, but about control and violence" (Easteal 1998, p. 227). Towards Healing [1] harbours Catholicism's gendered myths and women remain,

labelled the sinful ones ... we are constantly reminded of our inferior status through language, theological concepts of sin, and perpetual virginity - all of which relate to sex, for which, of course, women are responsible (Carlson-Brown & Parker 1989, p. 3).

In producing Towards Healing the Catholic Bishops' bonds of priesthood limited their ability to abandon the gender myths of patriarchy. One woman who holds a unique location from which to understand, and articulate, the functioning of clerical gender bias is Anglican Bishop Penny Jamieson. She says:
All the other bishops that I have known, all male, who have been called upon to deal with incidents of clergy sexual misconduct have found it incredibly hard to break the bonds of brotherhood with their male colleagues ... I have watched them make every excuse in the book (Jamieson. 1997, p. 123).

'Victims'

Principles [4] and [5] simply enumerate a list of general detrimental psychological outcomes of sexual abuse. There is no reference to any specificity of the significance of that abuse being perpetrated by a clerical person. These potential outcomes are for an undifferentiated group of people categorised together as 'victims'. Representing persons who have experienced sexual abuse as 'victim/s' has been, and still is, an accepted terminology in the literature and practices of therapeutic work. Many feminist writers also freely employ 'victim' in relation to those subjected to sexual violence (cf Scutt 1990; Fortune 1994; Briggs 1995; Easteal 1998). While the term is an accurate description for a person injured by another's act of victimisation, Kelly et al (1996, pp. 90-91) argue that 'victim' is stigmatising and also functions to overlook other aspects of an abused person's identity.

'Victim', in those same arenas, is often replaced by what is perceived to be its corollary, 'survivor'; thus a binary negative/positive opposition of 'passive victim' and 'active survivor'

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15 Principle 6 "recognises" and apologises for the fact that "responses to victims by many Church authorities vary greatly".
is set up. Underpinning this is the simplistic notion that the transition from the first to the second is a 'journey' frequently expressed as 'child victim' to 'adult survivor' (Kelly et al 1996, pp. 90-95). What then for the abused adult person? In simple terms persons who remain alive after sexual abuse do survive so that those who commit suicide cannot be considered as survivors. Further, this notion of 'victim' connotes the person as a passive subject of abuse. It overlooks the agency of those abused and the fact that many abused people (including children) protested and struggled against their victimisation by both the individual perpetrator and the Church hierarchy if the abuse was disclosed. While discussion of personal recovery from abuse is outside the parameters of this thesis I suggest that the notion of moving 'towards healing' is imbued with a problematic pathological ethos described by Kelly et al:

The medical metaphors of 'healing' and 'recovery' offer a false hope that experiences of abuse can be understood and responded to in similar ways to illness: where symptoms and cause 'can be got rid of' if one can simply find the right 'treatment' (Kelly et al 1996, p. 94).

'Symptoms', 'cause' and 'treatment' are all factors that should be located with the institutional and organisational Church, not the abused person.

'Offenders'

Offenders, like victims, are presented as a unitary category. This is a critical concealment and is taken up in the discussion of Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999) in the next section. In so far as any 'Perpetrator' actively performs, executes or commits an evil deed
that perpetrator is instrumentally responsible for the acts committed. However, *Towards Healing* [7] applies the term of lesser intent 'Offender' to those who abuse. This passive meaning, to stumble morally, to commit sin or to transgress holds overtones of moral offence and stops a long way short of a feminist insistence of sexual abuse as violence. Connection to the moral concept of improper choice retains the notion of sin, passive moral failure, rather than active violence. The selection of 'vulnerable persons' infers vulnerability as a personality trait of submissive compliance on the part of abused persons. Vulnerability for most abused people, including those in this study, lay in their belonging to Catholicism. Priests gained sexual access to these Catholics either through the Catholic piety of the parents of children who constantly welcomed the presence of clergy into their homes or an understanding held by Catholic adults of priests as having a sacred integrity and therefore to be trusted. Emphasis is placed on 'victim/s' throughout the document; however, its corresponding verb 'victimise' is entirely absent which also serves to deflect attention away from the abusers.

**Prevention**

Prevention [28] is conceptually included as an ideal; however, the single process for this is located in the selection and ongoing formation of priests and religious. This holds the notion that the 'symptom' causing sexual abuse is imported into the priesthood; and again focuses on the individual and avoids any examination of the system. Sipe (1995, p. 19), however, presents a strong argument that "these men cannot be screened out. They are
instead products of the system". If, as this thesis insists, sexually abusive acts are acts of violence based in a structural misogyny then the 'formation of priests and religious' will require a far more active and centralised strategy than review. It would impose as a very minimum duty the undertaking of a systemic program of gender education. These issues are taken up in Chapters Six and Seven. As it stands Principle [28] elaborates that prevention is reduced to a matter of risk reduction. Risk reduction is simply a stop gap measure. It is not a primary means for the elimination of the violence. As John Gonsiorek argues:

Prevention is not educating clients about their rights or about how to spot early stages of inappropriate conduct, although these are important. Prevention is having professional abuse never happen at all (Gonsiorek 1995, p. 393).

**Procedures**

*Towards Healing's* (1996) preventive strategies Procedures [Item 10] are focussed on and discussed as matters of sexual behaviour. The following are necessary strategies for prevention but are geared first towards protection of the organisation. For example Church personnel:

- 10.1 should be warned of behaviour that is inappropriate or might be misunderstood as involving improper sexual behaviour;
- 10.3 who feel they might be in danger of committing sexual abuse shall be offered opportunities to seek both spiritual and psychological assistance;
- 10.4 cleric or religious makes a request for a transfer [will be asked for a statement] that there are no known circumstances that could lead to a complaint of sexual abuse;
- 10.5 before candidates are accepted into a seminary or religious institute they must be asked to state in writing that they are not aware of any circumstances that could lead to a complaint of sexual abuse against them (*Towards Healing* 1996, p. 16).
Church authorities are required to make personnel aware of the seriousness of sexual abuse; to dismiss any seminarian where there is a proven complaint of sexual abuse; to have in place procedures for police checks and reference checks; and to provide honest references and "not act in a way which would allow an offender to obtain employment where others might be at risk" (Towards Healing 1996, p. 16).

The limitations of these attempts at prevention become immediately obvious when a comparison is drawn with the prevention strategies of a Position Paper of the National Committee On Violence Against Women that states:

- Violence will stop when men stop being violent and the community stops condoning it;
- Women will live relatively free from violence when they achieve social, economic and sexual equality;
- Children should be educated in environments which are free of sexism, so that the concept of gender equality is taken for granted;
- The criminal justice system must respond to violence against women in accordance with the law and address the inadequacies which still exist (Office of the Status of Women 1991, p. 16).

In contrast to Towards Healing (1996) the procedures set out in that paper use explicit language, propose direct (organisational) action, and general population recommendations that are concerned with the social aspects of violence and not individual sexual behaviour.
Integrity in Ministry

The stated aim of this code of conduct is "to provide positive guidelines both for healthy lives among clergy and religious, and for the highest standards of pastoral practice" (Integrity in Ministry, 1999, p. iii). Primarily it seeks to generate a positive theology for those living ministerial or religious lives. This thesis recognises and agrees with Integrity in Ministry's (1999, p. iii) statement "that the majority of those professed or ordained for service in the Church live in a committed effort to follow and serve the mission of the Church faithfully". The procedures of Towards Healing (1996) remain supplementary to Integrity in Ministry (1999) in relation to breaches of sexual conduct. In conjunction these documents externalise the Church's body of principles from being an internal Church code of law/theology into the wider legal/social Australian context.

There are important legal and ethical reasons for the Church to have in place public documents citing procedures to be implemented in the matter of clerical sexual abuse. Sociology augments these reasons with analysis of the dominant interests present in the formulation and administration of such policies (cf Palmer & Short 1989, Beilharz et al. 1992, Pollard 1992). Both Towards Healing (1996) and Integrity in Ministry (1999) arose from within the male-dominated Church whose priesthood enjoys "professional autonomy, that is, freedom from outside evaluation" (Palmer & Short 1989, p. 43). Further the Church is able to shape society's beliefs in regard to Church' problems and "how they should be managed" (Palmer & Short 1989, p. 43). Integrity in Ministry (1999) was produced for
ACBC and ACLRI by its National Committee for Professional Standards whose membership in 1998 comprised three bishops, four priests, one brother, two nuns and one diocesan office laywoman (Broken Rites 1998-9, p. 23).

The 'explicit' codes of *Integrity in Ministry* embrace ethics for Catholic clergy and religious across the broad band of ministerial life. This places an analysis of its entirety beyond the bounds of this thesis. Therefore I comment briefly on 'implicit' issues of gender as they relate to language and clerical sexual abuse. I have already commented on the Church's reluctance to embrace inclusive language in its liturgy. However, *Integrity in Ministry's* application of inclusive language demonstrates precisely how the inclusion of women into the Church on an equal basis is a highly selective process. The document painstakingly alternates the terms 'clergy' (male priests and bishops) and 'religious' (male Brothers and women nuns). In that process equal responsibility for maintaining standards of integrity is allocated to women religious in spite of their unequal representation in other aspects of Church life and their unequal numbers in terms of those who sexually abuse. Item 1.1 sets out procedures to be followed in cases of "serious violation" of the document's principles. It states:

> For matters concerning diocesan clergy, the members of the council of priests of the diocese shall elect at least four priests and two independent civil lawyers to a stably established group (*Integrity in Ministry* 1999, p. 21).

In a scenario of abusive sex by a diocesan priest, four priests and two independent civil lawyers, who would almost certainly be men, would follow 'procedures' which are highly unlikely to prioritise the best interests of the abused person over the organisation. Item 1.2
uses the same wording for 'religious'. The Church may well argue that, as a matter of balance, an abusive woman religious would then have an opportunity to have four religious women and two female civil lawyers hear the matter against her. As already stated there are very few instances of sexually abusive women religious.

Policy makers/policy administrators

While *Towards Healing* is presented as a consensus document of the ACBC and ACLRI quite contrary views are held between members of those bodies. The following example contrasts significant differences between two members of the ACBC. Auxiliary Archbishop of Sydney, Geoffrey Robinson (1996, 1998, 1999), repeatedly states that sexual abuse is a violation of persons. He consistently argues that the reasons for it must be sought out and eradicated as an obligation of corporate responsibility. He says:

> To limit conversation to criticism of the media ... is a form of denial of the existence of the problem. After people have finished blaming the media, they must admit the abuse has happened, that it has been widespread and that we ourselves do not know just how much more remains to be uncovered, especially when we go beyond the current topic of abuse of minors and consider all forms of abuse. It is only when we acknowledge the reality that we can begin to deal with our own sense of shame and humiliation and then have the energy to move on from there and seek the causes of the abuse (Robinson 1996, p. 16).

On the other hand, George Pell, Archbishop of Melbourne, appears to accept sexual abuse as an unavoidable facet of clerical life. He says, "you're not going to radically reform human nature, but we do have a system now which gets onto the problems as soon as we humanely can" (Lyons 1999, p. 30). Biologically determinist notions inclined towards an
irrepressible male sex drive, as expressed by Pell, mean that clerical sexual abuse is inevitable and further indicate that "the best policies and procedures will mean nothing unless the underlying attitudes of those who administer them are changed" (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. ix). As a recent example, Fiona Stewart (1999, p. 14) records that (in a Melbourne case) the Towards Healing procedures simply ended when the perpetrating priest opted to withdraw from the process. That priest's solicitors then advised the hearing commissioner that he, "does not formally accept your (the commission's) jurisdiction or process at civil or canon law". Pell's 'humane system' seemingly reflected his 'underlying attitudes' in that instance.

Towards Understanding [Draft]

Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999) is premised on an empirical study, literature review and analysis. During 1997 and 1998 the researchers distributed a survey questionnaire (copy not provided in the [Draft]) to 405 unspecified persons "with an interest in the research area". There were 66 forms returned and 30 face to face interviews were conducted (unstated whether these 30 are included in the 66). It is stated that 50 percent of bishops and 20 percent of religious responded (Towards Understanding [Draft] 1999, p. 19). Lack of sufficient detail makes comment on the survey findings impossible therefore I focus on the analysis.
Three main criticisms of this document are made here: the findings are psychologically based on findings about sexual behaviour; an inappropriate definition of abuse is used; and there is a lack of distinction between 'priests' and 'religious' perpetrators. First, in posing the question "why is it that some men abuse?" the document (1999, p. 10) states that, "there is no single factor" and goes on to list and define the reasons as "emotional congruence, sexual arousal, blockage, disinhibition". The question seeks no specificity of 'clerical' men as abusers and social and gender aspects of sexual abuse as violence receive very little consideration. Although "male dominance and negative attitudes towards women and children" are mentioned (1999, p. 11) there is no indication as to what is understood by these. Diana Gittins (1993, pp. 169-182) poses the same question, "why do men abuse children sexually?" After surveying a range of elements, including the psychological, she lists as contributory factors, "children as property, male violence, masculinities, the eroticisation of power and the strength of patriarchal ideology to enforce silence on issues which threaten its credibility" (Gittins 1993, p. 182). All these are pertinent to clerical sexual abuse but all remain unaddressed in Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999).

Second, the document (1999, p. 5) relies on a 1976 definition of child sexual abuse cited as,

the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities that they do not fully comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent.

16 It is difficult to estimate these numbers. For instance, the ACBC website shows that there are 40 active and 17 retired bishops in Australia at 1/2/2001. http://www.catholic.org.au
17 Chapters Six and Seven also include critique of this document.
18 The reference given is Schechter & Roberge (1976). As the bibliography detail is incomplete in this Draft document I was unable to trace the original source. Other writers also rely on this definition and I discuss this more fully in Chapter Three.
The document (1999, pp. 5-6) immediately goes on to define "types of abusers" and distinguish these terms; "paraphiliac, paedophilia, paedophile, ephebophilia, ephebophile and pederast". However, the document's bibliography shows these researchers had available to them the following definition drawn from the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops' response to clerical sexual abuse document, *From Pain to Hope* (1992, p. 20).

Contacts or interactions between a child and an adult when the child is being used as an object of sexual gratification for the adult. A child is abused whether or not this activity involves explicit force, whether or not it involves genital or physical contact, whether or not it is initiated by the child, and whether or not there is a discernible harmful outcome (in Loades 1998, p. 52).

It is unclear why preference is given to the former version when the researchers had available the latter: a more recent, more relevant definition from within the Church. Similarly the position paper of the National Committee On Violence Against Women that I referred to above is cited for some statistical data (1999, p. 30). Again there is no indication that it has been drawn on for its insights into the social context of violence against women and children.

Thirdly, and I regard very significantly, the document combines (as does *Towards Healing*) the categories of 'priests and religious' into a single unit. I emphasise again that these must be treated as separate entities and that the distinction is important for these reasons. The category 'religious' includes men who are Brothers and women who are nuns. Both of these groups of men and women have some authority in the Church usually associated with their

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19 I was unable to access this Canadian document through interlibrary loan so I rely on Loades' citation of it.
other occupational categories such as teachers. Men who are priests are invested at ordination with the powers of priesthood. As members of "a sacrificing priesthood" they are "indelibly ordained in the one line of apostolic succession" (Jay 1992, p. 114). Since the final section of this thesis is an analysis of priesthood I pre-empt one aspect here. That is, sexual violence perpetrated by priests is not an abuse of 'authority'. The 'authority' of a religious, I contend, is gained from their position more than it is religiously induced. Sexual violence by a priest is a direct abuse of "the priest's sacramental power" (Cozzens 2000, p. 7).

Distinguishing priests from religious would also challenge the unreliable 'statistical information' that the greater preponderance of those abused by priests and religious are boys. Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999), as I discuss below, also makes this claim as one of its important research findings. However, in their large study of 19,272 clinicians and related professionals on religion-related abuse Bottoms et al (1995, pp. 96-97) state, in reply to the frequent claim that more boys than girls are subjected to Catholic clerical sexual abuse, "our data did not support these assumptions". They find for abused children boy and girl numbers are "equally common" and more female than male for adults. Thus the Church's numeric emphasis on boys is incorrect because, "either the media emphasis on the abuse of boys is skewed by a presupposition of homosexual tendencies of priests, or there is a substantial underrepresentation of reports of male abuse to mental health

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20 In 'Terms and Definitions' given in the Introduction I also stated that the distinctions between the organisational and institutional aspects of Church as a reason for separating these two.
professionals”. From those interviews I conducted, relevant literature and anecdotal
evidence I know of no instance where a man who is a Brother abused other than
boys/young men. From all these same sources there is much evidence of priests abusing
boy and girl children and women and men adults. This seems to me just one sufficient
reason to examine priesthood as a separate and significant underlying factor. Yet, this is
studiously avoided in the Church's responses. Perhaps it is also a sufficient reason to keep
the categories blurred as a protective mechanism for priesthood. American seminary rector
Donald Cozzens, from his long experience of dealing with issues of priestly sexual abuse,
says:

    We became absorbed with the task at hand: how to handle the present crisis, this crisis. I recall no thoughtful discussion about the causes of the problem, its meaning or implications (Cozzens 2000, p. 113 emphasis original).

Chapters Six and Seven, deal with the structures and prevailing cultures of priesthood;
address aspects of the relationship between mandatory celibacy and the ministry of priestly
life; and draw together questions of abuse and celibacy. These issues are the substantive
matters of the final section of the thesis. In order to anticipate that later section at this point
I insert these points from Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999) to show that they indicate
a moral panic understanding of clerical sexual abuse as a matter of 'sex' and not 'violence'.
Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999, p. 44) finds that, "there was unanimity in the
comments of respondents about how offenders rationalise the contradictions between their
commitment to celibacy and their committing of sexual abuse". These include:

- For many offenders, it seems celibacy simply infers two negative
  impositions: no sexual expression and no marriage.

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offenders in the main seem to dissociate their abusive behaviour from their notional commitment to celibacy and in so doing they split and compartmentalise aspects of their daily life and behaviour.

respondents were underlining the dissociated and distorted thinking that there is in offenders between their chosen lifestyle and their actual behaviour.

offenders believe that by engaging in sexual offences with children, they have observed the rules about adult women vis-a-vis celibacy.

offenders demonstrate an ability to live with the inconsistency of their lives without seeking help or guidance (Towards Understanding [Draft] 1999, p. 44).

Before leaving this overview of Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999) I make a radical critique of one conclusion that the Report formed from its literature review. That conclusion states, "child sexual offences by priests and religious are more frequently homosexual rather than heterosexual in nature - this is the opposite of the pattern for child sex offenders in the community at large" (Towards Understanding [Draft] 1999, p. 17). Plainly put, I contend that there is no concept of consent or mutuality in any sexual activity instigated by an adult towards a child (cf Redmond 1989). Therefore such activity cannot be discussed within the context of sexual orientation. When an adult male engages a boy child in sexual activity he perpetrates paedophilia which, by Towards Understanding [Draft] own definition, is "the activity of sexual abuse of a minor by an adult or a person at least five years older than the child" (1999, p. 5). That adult is not engaging in homosexual sex and discussions of his activities should be located outside of the field of sexuality. Wallis (1995, p. 10), for example, argues convincingly that his study of imprisoned child sex offenders shows, "these paedophiles do not see themselves as having a homosexual orientation". Sexual preference belongs as a matter for the realm of adult sexual engagements. Adult to
child sex is victimisation. This is where the word victim has its place, not as an identity, but to make clear Anne Loades (1998, p. 46) statement that, "this word signals that the abused child is not to blame for what has happened, or is happening, that responsibility lies elsewhere".

The final chapter of *Towards Understanding [Draft]* (1999, pp. 49-61) summarises 'Issues Arising from the Research' addressing some of the matters I critique here. Evaluative questions are raised and there is discussion about mandatory celibacy as a requirement for priesthood and rejection of arguments about a causal link between celibacy and sexual abuse. Under a heading 'power, women and celibacy' the Report (1999, p. 55) states that, "as long as the culture of the Church does not put men and women on a basis of true equality, then women and children will remain vulnerable to abuse". The Report concludes with some questions that suggest Church focus needs to be directed towards these matters as having a direct bearing on the structure of priesthood. However, since the draft of this research is published (July 1999) after *Towards Healing* (1996) and *Integrity in Ministry* (June 1999) it is unclear when, where or if, these proposals would be considered or taken up. In the meantime ABC Television produced a further program on the topic after the publication of the Church's responses.
Compass revisited

In its first program for 1998 Compass screened 'A Shifting Heart Revisited' (ABC Television 1/2/1998). Over a year after the release of Towards Healing the topic revisited was once again the question of Catholic clerical sexual abuse and again Church spokesmen were central. Wollongong was featured as the locale of a number of clerical sexual abuse cases and to demonstrate that the policy Towards Healing was effectively in place. The Executive Officer of the National Committee for Professional Standards, Father David Cappo, spoke about Towards Healing:

It's a message from the Church; ... that this is a way in which the Church responds to a crisis. ... I think it's a model for us to use. ... It is the Church trying, trying hard to be honest with something that has affected the very heart of the operation of the Church in Australia (ABC Television 1998).

Cappo has argued elsewhere for the entitlement rights of citizenship in relation to social welfare saying:

Accompanying one's right to human dignity is a corresponding duty to assist others in the community to live with the same degree of human dignity and respect. Alongside the rights attached to human dignity are the rights that come from membership of a community (Cappo & Carlisle 1993, pp. 58-59).

The right to human dignity free from clerical sexual abuse in the Church does not appear in Towards Healing (1996) as part of the rights that come from membership of the Catholic community. It is a delusion to say that Church policy is 'trying, trying hard to be honest' while ever sexual abuse remains 'unspeakable'. Language, as I argued above, must be accurate and clear and name abuse as violence. Kelly et al (1996, p. 84) show feminist insistence on naming abuse as violence is effective. It has "made explicit both violation and
agency" and that insistence now means, "sexual violence has ceased to be unspeakable". Abused people began 'speaking' their experiences of sexual violence and naming the Church's perpetrators as abusers. The Church in its policy acknowledges abuse but violence remains 'unspeakable'.

'A Shifting Heart Revisited' showed that an inability to speak violence still prevails beside a dearth of words to name coercive sexual activity. The reporter, addressing her statement and question to Bishop Philip Wilson, then Bishop of Wollongong and member of National Committee for Professional Standards, said, "Take one of those young men who was the victim of one of the people who went to prison say. How would you, as a Bishop, talk to him - representing the Church - trying to repair a relationship?" Bishop Wilson replied:

... ask him to tell me his story and to tell me the way he sees it and then we could discuss that and dialogue about that, and look then how that might go ahead (ABC Television 1998 my emphasis).

Reporter: "Have you done that? Has that happened to you?"

Bishop Wilson:

*It* has (looking down and away) umm, *it's* all umm, umm well *it's* all umm, so personal I wouldn't say anything about *it* (ABC Television 1998 my emphasis).

Along with this 'mute' language for sexual abuse another interviewed priest used numerous male metaphors relating to football to describe clergy morale in light of the ongoing revelations of abuse. "We've got no-one sittin' on the benches now waitin' to run onto the field with a new guernsey. Some of the players are getting pretty old as far as the clergy are
concerned. They've sort of taken a few tackles in their day and they're not getting up as quickly to play the ball" (ABC Television 1998). A Wollongong parish priest, who took over the parish of an imprisoned priest, was asked, "Would you say that your relationship with the laity has changed as a result of all this?" He answered, "No. I mean I think these days you've only got to be a normal bloke and people love you. I get more invitations to people's places for meals than I can possibly answer" (ABC Television 1998). That program also gave several instances of enabling and caring pastoral work carried out by some parish priests. However, as I have already indicated in the Introduction, this economic notion of balance being restored through good deeds countering violent deeds is not applicable. Neither the Church itself nor 'A Shifting Heart Revisited' seem fully cognisant that sexual violence in the Church is a stand-alone issue to be dealt with within its own terms. Summarising the program the reporter concluded:

I think the crisis wrought by sexual abuse would have come in one form or another. It forced people to re-examine what they meant by the word Church (ABC Television 1998).

This argument of this thesis is that any crisis wrought by sexual abuse would not have come in any other form. Clerical sexual abuse is a highly particularised form of sexual violence in which perpetrators are supported by Church discourses that "provide for relatively obscure areas of tolerance" (Foucault 1981, p. 101). Church spokesmen again revealed to the media (ABC Television 1998) the male Church's blindness to its own gendered position. Although some advantageous forms of due process were put in place through the 'Procedures For Dealing With Complaints Of Sexual Abuse' the male hierarchy is unable to see that its discursive 'Principles' are flawed in myriad gendered ways.

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Lack of critical, external, professional comment leads the Church into a false understanding of the achievements of its policy response.²¹ Programs such as 'A Shifting Heart Revisited' create the impression of a satisfactory solution to a 'problem' and some perpetrators will be sanctioned to a greater degree than in the past. However, there are many instances of the 'Procedures' of Towards Healing (1996) being either ignored or not adhered to in practice (Broken Rites 1997, 1998-9, 2000, 2001). In one recent instance (June 2000) a Monsignor pleaded guilty to the charge of indecent assault of a young woman. Regardless of the Monsignor's guilty plea the presiding judge recorded a conviction against him stating, "the breach in trust involved in your offence, the disparity in your ages, the vulnerability of [the victim] prevent me from regarding it as minor" (Stewart 2001, p. 25). The then Archbishop of Melbourne (George Pell), bypassing the judicial findings and contravening Towards Healing's (1996) procedures, restored the perpetrator to his Monsignorial position, arguing, "the incident was isolated, occurred so long ago and was in stark contrast to his otherwise blameless life" (Broken Rites 2001, p. 7). As well as selective adherence to the 'Procedures' the 'Principles' gendered underpinnings remain unreviewed and the Church's pervasively masculine bias means that the bodies of women and children remain 'vulnerable' to the Church's priestly 'offenders'. The media is not an effective source of external review so the scrutiny, like the formulation of the policy, remains an internal matter for a Church blind to the issue of gender.

²¹ A review of Towards Healing, conducted by Law Professor Patrick Parkinson, began in September 1999 for the National Committee for Professional Standards. The Committee, it is said, hope the review will empower it to compel dioceses to follow its recommended procedures by giving it "more teeth" (Yallop 1999, p. 14).
Towards Healing is stated to be a "public document" so that "if we do not follow the principles and procedures of this document, we will have failed according to our own criteria" (1996, p. 1). External evaluation is a standard part of policy initiatives to qualitatively determine the 'value' of those policies as well as measure their 'effectiveness'. The Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, for example, employed a range of external evaluations as part of its criteria for the 'Here For Life' Youth Suicide Prevention Projects (1995). The gendered Church's own assessment of its gendered Principles means it simply cannot fail 'according to its own criteria'. This is a graphic example of the means by which "violence receives sacred support in a religion created by men for the purpose of suppressing the feminine - suppressing all those people, male and female, who are not necessary to sacred masculine life" (Erickson 1993, p. 44). Eradication of sexual violence is simply inconsistent with the retention of an asymmetric system of gender relations.

Conclusion

Towards Healing (1996) is, I argue, the Church's attempt to regain professional credibility by demonstrating implementation of due processes and altered practices into priesthood as a profession. Ann Daniel (1998, p. 1) says, "professions appear as self important, self regarding, moral communities tightly knit together". In this examination of the Church's response policy some of that knitting is unravelled. These Principles primarily enunciate that the hierarchy's responses to clerical sexual violence are grounded in the individuality of
complainants and focus on detrimental outcomes of abuse. What I want to demonstrate is that while there is an overwhelming need for the implementation of remedial policies there appears to me to be an undue haste to move 'towards healing' through intervention. There is insufficient evidence of any real acknowledgment of the systemic Church aspects of offences and therefore what is presented as an agenda for 'prevention' is an incomplete strategy. I agree with White's observation that,

establishing policy and procedures is not going to solve this problem. It provides the mechanism yes, but there must be a commitment to a much broader and deeper change in our religious institutions (in Fortune 1994, p. 26).

Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999, p. 55) received "a clear and resounding message [about] a lack of respect for women and subsequently their subservient role in the life of the Church". It adds, "a direct consequence of this cultural attitude is the ready victimisation of women through sexual offence". This is not new information but it is challenging information for the Church hierarchy to begin to examine the gender connections between oppressive domination and clerical sexual abuse. Strands of misogyny are woven into and around the multiple processes of clerical sexual abuse as it occurs, as it is reported, and as it is officially responded to. It is not 'moral' and it is not a 'panic' and it needs careful examination away from the vagaries of media. That examination is what the remainder of this thesis attempts to provide. In the following chapter I begin that examination by discussing other literature addressing clerical sexual abuse and I read this in light of feminist work on male violence.
CHAPTER THREE
SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND GENDERED SPHERES

... the public sphere is assumed to be capable of being understood on its own, as if it existed *sui generis*, independently of private sexual relations and domestic life. The structure of relations between the sexes is ignored and sexual relations stand as the paradigm of all that is private (Pateman 1989, p. 3 emphasis original).

The previous chapter shows the need for, and advantage of, moving beyond continual focus on individual instances of abuse towards concentration on the organisational Church and the priesthood of the men perpetrating sexual violence. The Church's Procedures for dealing with claims against clergy show some elements of collective responsibility, however, the Principles on which they are based remain locked in individualism. In contrast, incorporating the effects of the social organisation of gender into analyses of sexual violence is a primary factor in feminist literature (cf Hanmer & Maynard 1987; Segal 1990, 1993; Horsfall 1991; Walby 1990). It is feminism's recognition of gender as a conceptual distinction that accommodates women as "the lesser part of social life" (Yeatman 1986, p. 159) that enables it to provide a focus for an alternative approach to male violence. This chapter begins by following the precedent set by feminist analysts.

In the first part I examine the advantages resulting from these theorists' use of structural perspectives with particular emphasis on the concept of 'separate spheres'. The following section moves on to critique the limitations of the approaches used in the small body of
literature (mainly produced by men) specifically concerned with clerical sexual abuse. In general these writers adopt dominant approaches to the question of clerical sexual abuse by ignoring the question of gender and violence and instead accounting for an individual 'offender' and a 'victim' in psychological terms. Reading the literature in this order quickly makes apparent the restricted nature of this second body of work when read in light of the former.

The choice of perspectives used in analytic approaches to determine the specificities in questions of clerical sexual abuse therefore become highly significant and gender analysis is proven to be the most significant methodological means of associating sexual violence with structures (Segal 1990, 1993; Walby 1990). Understanding the entrenched bias in established social forms of gender inequity prevents single incidences of male violence from freely floating around and being tacitly understood, through "limited definitions of sexual violence", as simply the distinguishing marker between "a 'deviant' minority of men and the 'normal' majority" (Segal 1990, p. 244). Clear and accurate definitions of violence, for example, provide a crucial first step. While gender perspectives make explicit what is known about abuse they also hold the potential to then impact on policy to address that abuse. The Church's official responses clearly indicate that the body of feminist literature, both social and theological, is overlooked in preference for the more general works on clerical sexual abuse. If this is an oversight it points to limited capacity to conduct scholarly studies. However, theologian Rita Nakashima Brock's (1992, 1999) work on forms of
Christian violence points to a more likely and highly significant factor in this avoidance. She says:

It is far safer to identify with victims and want to help them than to look at our own participation in systems of oppression and our responsibility for changing ourselves and the systems from which we benefit. The Christian attitude towards charity is often built on the idea of the superior helping the inferior, which locks paternalism into the relationship (Brock 1992, p. 8).

Feminist studies of sexual violence are quick to spot paternalism and are predominantly concerned with the consequences for women, as a gendered group, of non-consensual sexual acts committed against individual women (cf O'Donnell & Craney 1982, Walby 1990, Eisenstein 1991, Horsfall 1991, Gittins 1993). Feminist theory developed from these studies links acts of aggression, including rape, conjugal demands and sexual harassment, committed by men against women to patriarchal social structures (cf Cockburn 1991, Maynard 1993, Darlington 1996, Adkins & Merchant 1996). These works also incorporate the study of male-dominated professions that have perpetrated their collective forms of violence through medicine (Easteal 1998), law (Graycar & Morgan 1990) and religion (Fortune 1994). Feminist writers theorise social structural forms, the state and religion for example, that sanction, understand or forgive such violence (cf Daly 1986, Pateman 1989, Confoy 1997). Feminist concerns broadly cover the wide range of social/political implications of dichotomy and especially that segmentation of social life "into two contrasting spheres" (Pateman 1989, pp. 2-6). I take up the public/private divide as my point of entry.
Sexual violence and the public/private

What feminist sociological literature now widely refers to as the "public/private dichotomy" (Pateman 1989, p. 5) is utilised here as a key theoretical concept. The categories of public and private "point to societal divisions that have been central to the structuring of gender in modern western society" (Nicholson, 1992, p. 36). This public/private distinction is pivotal in analyses of the complex and fluid workings of patriarchy and is used in feminist literature to show that male sexual violence is an individual act with structural support. The inter-related and paradoxically oppositional connections between the public/private demonstrate that these systemic social factors supportive of male sexual violence are based in gender (cf O'Donnell & Craney 1982, Pateman 1989, Walby 1990, Eisenstein 1991, Horsfall 1991, Gittins 1993). Distinctions between the public and private spheres, "so that 'women' becomes a code name for the domestic domain" (Yeatman 1986, p. 171), are the historical basis for male social theorists' defining of women's social place. Association of women with the domestic remains the characteristic most frequently used to distinguish between the spheres, and consequently to wrongly treat male violence towards women as 'sexual' and hence 'private' (cf Eisenstein 1991, Sydie 1987, Walby 1990).

Carole Pateman (1989) demonstrates that the spheres must be understood as interdependent and not entirely segregated or totally in opposition. "The 'public'", she (1989, p. 3) argues, "rests on a particular conception of the 'private' and vice versa". While male violence against women is primarily perpetrated in the realm of the private it has, in Sylvia Walby's
words (1990, p. 128) "all the characteristics one would expect of a social structure, and that
it cannot be understood outside of an analysis of patriarchal social structures". The public
site of legislation, for example, is not particularly protective of women but rather "acts to
ensure that they fulfil their appointed roles as wives and mothers 'properly'" (Gittins 1993,
p. 153). Although men have access to and privilege in both spheres, and many women have
some access to the public sphere, there remains constant contestation and struggle around
the notion that women ought to be solely within the private. Those notions are formed in
and around, and over and against, the classic male social theory understanding that women
"cannot transcend their bodily natures and sexual passions" (Pateman 1989, p. 4).

Women's bodies, by their specificity in the private and invisibility in the public, are the
focal markers in arguments surrounding the separation of the spheres. Women's relegation
to the private whether for political, cultural or economic reasons relies first on their
biological belonging to womankind. The heterosexual union which underpins marriage and
hence the family has traditionally been viewed as 'natural' and related to women's sexual
and domestic arrangements rather than to men's. This 'naturalness' evolves from the ways
that "women, womanhood and women's bodies", as well as women's dependants (children),
"represent the private" (Pateman 1989, p. 4). On the other hand, male bodily abstraction
almost as naturally symbolises the public. Pateman (1989, pp. 3-4) argues that political
analyses that represent the public as a separate entity inclusive of everyone, and unrelated
to the private, usually posit a disembodied person. That same abstracted individual,
however, is ultimately "revealed as a masculine figure" (Pateman 1989, p. 4). In Part Three
I discuss another form of particular rather than general male abstraction in which the sexed male body of the priest is presented as a highly sacralised form of masculinity which, although exclusively male, is represented as outside of male sexuality.

To gain some insight into male violence against women and children, particular conceptions of the private as a separate unit must be opened to scrutiny and its boundaries with the public seen as a place where gendered violence both prevails and is obscured. Importantly, using the public/private distinction in relation to male violence ensures that it is not explained in liberal/psychological terms as the "behaviour of a few 'sick' or psychologically deranged men" (Maynard 1993, p. 109). Analyses engaged in systemic critique expand beyond theoretical identification of the problem and link into policy and practice thereby providing the potential for structural transformation.

While patriarchy is a structured formation with its bases of authority in the public sphere the tentacles of those formations reach into the private sphere with a certain inevitability because it operates as a "familial-social, ideological, political system" (Rich 1977, p. 57). Male power prevails, but is differently deployed, in each of these systems. The first of these ideologies places women and children into the private as the possessions of men and conjoins this with the "view that family life is private" (O'Donnell & Craney 1982, p. viii). Consequent on these views follows the notion that it is the responsibility of women to keep a family 'happy' and to remain silent about what takes place in their homes. Women are
socially, and often economically, obligated to maintain the 'properly' private nature of family. Conceiving of the family as 'private' has made it at once a "safe fantasy world inhabited by characters like Peter Rabbit" (Eisenstein, 1991, p. 93). And contrarily, for women and children, "a more likely source of abuse, torture and death at the hands of males than is the public sphere of strangers" (Bittman & Pixley 1997, p. 47).

Veils are drawn across violence practised in homes which hide "unpleasant events not meant for public eyes" (O'Donnell & Craney 1982, p. viii). These heavy veils are held in place by the weight of patriarchy and not easily lifted. Jan Horsfall (1991, p. 7) says that she "assumed" that to find the absent perpetrators of male violence in families she must "first look under the cloak of patriarchy". She argues that violence in the privacy of the family is directly attributable to the "public-domestic division" separating men from women in both spheres. From this division men gain "multiple situations for male mutual support and camaraderie" in the public sphere while those same structures "hinder female mutual support and camaraderie" in each sphere and thereby exacerbate "tendencies for male violence" (Horsfall 1991, p. 118).

Feminists, Lyn Segal (1990, p. 252 emphasis original) says, rightly reject explanations of male violence that centre on individual deviance, stating that "violent crimes against women cannot simply be located in pathological individuals". It is this insistence that there is a spectrum of violence against women that enables feminist literature and practice to
"explode much of the conventionally held mythology and many of the stereotypes" (Maynard 1993, p. 113). Included among these myths are notions that rape is committed by strangers outdoors and that violence against women is "infrequent, easy to escape and trivial" (Maynard 1993, p. 113). The strength of these works lies in their empirical demonstrations of the structural aspects related to violence. An overarching sense of this large body of work is that all forms of violence against women have a sexual aspect. They are sexual in the sense that acts of perpetration, from anonymous obscene phone calls to various forms of physical assaults, lack mutuality and "act as a form of social control" (Maynard 1993, p. 106). The spectrum of sexually violent acts are based on grounds of biological distinction, overlaid with cultural meanings, and "directed at women because their bodies are socially regarded as sexual" (Maynard 1993, p. 106). These cultural meanings linking male violence to women as sexualised beings are embedded in societies which, construct 'masculinity' in terms of the assertion of heterosexual power (in its polarised difference from 'femininity') and which continue to see sex as sinful, while locating the object of sexuality in women, and the subject of sexual desire in men (Segal 1990, p. 252).

Acts 'asserting heterosexual power' occur primarily in the family which, as Carole Pateman (1989, p. 20) says, "nestles at the centre of the private sphere". Sexual molestation of children happens most frequently inside the haven socially marked as children's sanctuary; the patriarchal family (Horsfall 1991, p. 9). Redfern (1995, p. 13) shows that the rhetoric of 'stranger danger', with its "emphasis on attacks by strangers" has served to some degree to externalise attention away from the notion of family as an unsafe place. However, the
coercive nature of ongoing sexual violence locks it into patterns of daily life for the perpetrator and those he abuses within his privileged position in the private.

Focussing on the public/private distinction with particular reference to the family highlights the ways in which a feminist perspective uncovers, and then counters, the dominant male worldview of separate spheres. It is the concept of family privacy that shrouds intimacy, cohabitation and male violence in some families. That violence, however, is also "importantly shaped as a result of patriarchal control over women in other areas" (Walby 1990, p. 143). Using the public/private framework as a structural approach clearly shows that systemic support for incestuous men exists even though "Daddy's behaviour is wrong" (Gittins 1993, p. 176). In theorising the public/private structure feminists provide a valuable framework to show 'how', through empirical studies, and 'why', in the theoretical sense, a strand of male violence functions to maintain a sexual politics which consolidates the sexual hierarchy. In relation to clerical sexual abuse, however, the foregoing of family life by clerical men sets limitations on the analytic use of the public/private divide. While there are 'family' connections there are no 'private' connections for the offending priest. He belongs solely to the public. Australian priest Paul Collins states:

The celibate man is the Church's man with no other focus to his life ... He has no other emotional or human home ... Economically, psychologically and spiritually he is the Church's man tied to it through a network of dependency (Collins 1986, p. 77).
Sexual violence and religion's separate spheres

Feminist writers on religion and feminist theologians extensively theorise the multiple connections between the broader issues of the abuses of women and the Christian tradition (cf Ruether 1983, 1989; Daly 1985, 1986; Joy & Magee 1994; Carlson Brown & Bohn 1989; Brock 1989, 1999; Johnson 1994; King 1995b; Confoy 1997). Contrary to its ideals of justice and love "Christianity, victimising women, promotes and models violence in its rituals, scripture and theology, in its administrative structures and legislation, as well as in its tradition and history" (White & Tulip 1991, p. 89). Thematically this feminist body of work on religion argues that religious sexism is profoundly constructed and perpetuated by androcentric systems where there is "the tendency to equate the male sex with the divine" (Daly 1985, p. 66). This 'tendency' that Mary Daly speaks of is developed by the abstraction of God being overtaken by "the exclusively male image of God" (Ruether 1983, p. 47) so that masculinity becomes endowed with divinity. This male imaging of God is supported by exclusive language to denote God (He) in ritual and liturgy thereby setting up a dissonance allowing men "to possess the image of God in a primary way" (Johnson 1994, p. 37). This masculinising of God means that in religion women have been dispossessed of the rightness of their personhood as female. Moreover, many religious practices of spirituality and rituals are based in a pervasive theology of ownership attributing "man's ownership of woman to God's intent" so that the "use of violence against women to maintain control is simply an extension of the rights of ownership" (Bohn 1989, p. 106). A further detrimental impact of this allocated inferiority for women culminates in violence to the self. Maryanne Confoy argues that the,
violence women have done to themselves in trying to conform to the modal practices of spirituality is only now being recognised, as is the impact of this violence over centuries on their understanding of themselves as women in relation to self, others and their God (Confoy 1997, p. 201).

Authoritative religious belief systems underpin much of the gendered ordering of the secular public sphere over and beyond the private sphere of human sociality. Hilary Charlesworth highlights the imprinting of the religious concept of separate spheres into social practice. She says:

The idea of separate spheres based on gender is accompanied by a common image of womanhood presented in the texts of all major religions: it is integrally connected to motherhood, submission, sacrifice and duty - being a woman entails obedience, not only to God, but to fathers, husbands and other male family members (Charlesworth H. 1997, p. 29).

The notion of gendered spheres is premised on separation, classification and forms of social control to maintain order. The selection criteria are based firstly on the biological division between male and female and secondly are ordered to biological procreation. In the realm of religion women are solely related to their 'proper' sexual function, virgin or mother, and constantly (re)defined to fit the needs and serve the purposes of sacred men. For women this social control takes the form of obedience to ranks of men. Half a century ago Simone de Beauvoir articulated the same argument saying:

For the first time in human history the mother kneels before her son; she freely accepts her inferiority. This is the supreme masculine victory ... it is the rehabilitation of woman through the accomplishment of her defeat (de Beauvoir 1949, p. 203).
Hilary Charlesworth (1997), like Simone de Beauvoir, views this as religious control demanding women's subservience to an ascending order of men, an order maintained through separation of the spheres. The notion of gendered spheres prioritising men in religion is most clearly demonstrated in the contradictory concept of complementarity. Taking the equality of women and men as its starting point this dual structure then "differentiates the essence from the existence of humanity" (Ruether 1983, p. 93).

Complementarity

Complementarity, in theological anthropology, is based on the notion of separate spheres. Western philosophy's dualism, of biology versus reason, takes complementarity as one of its forms in the public/private. In the public/private women are seen as not equal to men and their biological association with nature sets them in need of domination. Western cultural correlation then links, but also distinguishes, the biology of woman and the reason of man and places its emphases in the gendered constructions associated with physical 'difference'. I argue that Christian theological complementarity is situated in the sacred/profane division which holds within its conception an insidious principle even more detrimental to women than that of the public/private. That is, it is based in the problematic idea that women are equal to men in the spiritual realm and thereby 'difference' is transcended. This equality rests on the concept imago Dei (image of God); "authentic humanity united with God" (Ruether 1983, p. 93). Woman has at once, in this understanding, her abstracted individual equality in the sacred simultaneously negated by
"her bodily representation as inferior" (Ruether 1983, p. 95). The notion that women can have equality before God does not, as Carol Karlsen (1982, pp. 177-178) says, translate into "comparable equality on earth - even in their relationship to the church".

Contemporaneously the inherently contradictory explanation Equal or Different? (Paul 1999) legitimates women's subjection and is enforced through politics and violence. Understanding the shift to the complementarity or 'equal but different' stance is centrally important for the purpose of showing how the underpinnings of violence against women are seated in this contradiction. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1989, pp. 15-16) provides a rich analysis demonstrating how classical theology's exclusion of women, "on grounds of their deficient reason and nature" (1989, p. 15) shifted towards assigning women to a special sphere of feminine virtues. In that special sphere, Western bourgeois theology holds that, "the true vocation of woman and the fulfilment of her true nature is ... to create the tranquillity and beauty of Eden ... to which men can retreat from their labours in the market place and from the temptations of a secularised, godless world" (1989, p. 15). In return men provide economic support for women and children and sustain "political, spiritual and ecclesial institutions" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1989, p. 15).

This espoused ideal, however, is not the experience of most women. Further, feminist analyses raise public awareness of the incidence of women's and children's experience of sexual violence, poverty, low paid/low status work, psychological and spiritual repression
and thus challenge such notions. However, so long as patriarchal structures remain unchanged, and traditional sexual morality is insisted on, "this knowledge of male violence and patriarchal exploitation" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1989, p. 15) serves to intensify many women's fears. The political and religious Right manipulate these fears in two ways. Firstly, to direct these fears away from translating into political action against the organisation, biblical religion is employed to endorse the 'special feminine sphere' as divinely ordained. Secondly, it directs anger away from the patriarchal organisation by directing it towards other women whom it identifies as the rule breakers. Divorced and pro-choice women; lesbians; pregnant teenagers; women priests; nuns without veils are all set up as the cause of the social problems outlined in the first category and not the elite males and patriarchal institutions (Schüssler Fiorenza 1989, p. 16).

Strands of violence against women run through and rest on the contradictions of complementarity's metaphors of women's mutuality and equality with men intertwine with religious political relations. Feminist analyses of violent treatment of women in ritual, Scripture and theology constantly see these as predicated on male-female power relations. The right of women to be free of violence in the secular sense is assumed as a basic human condition set into charters of the equity of persons. In religion the notion that women, in their abstracted condition, have equality with men before God creates the impression that such equality flows on into their embodied human capacity. Political processes, in which Churchmen act to retain their dominance, however, heavily qualify this equity. There are "dispositions, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functionings" (Foucault 1977, p. 26)
carefully employed in these political processes to "make dualism sound palatable" (Paul 1999, p. 118).

The *Letter to Women* (1995) by Pope John Paul II exemplifies a 'technique' to naturalise dualism. He espouses: "Woman complements man, just as man complements woman: men and women are complementary. Womanhood expresses the "human" as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary way" (John Paul II 1995, p. 11). The culmination of this 'different and complementary way' he argues elsewhere is related to the "mutual relationship of man and woman in marriage" (1988, p. 38 emphasis original) but apparently not in the relationship of men to women collectively. In 1989 John Paul II enshrined his tolerance of violence towards women when he raised a Madagascan woman to beatification. In remaining in a violent marriage this woman retained, what he sees as, "her beautiful womanly qualities" although her husband's "drunkenness and infidelity caused her much pain" (in White & Tulip, 1991, P. 91). This woman's apparent acceptance of violence exemplified, for him, the rightness of complementarity's equation with female passivity. This instance fits into a pattern noted by Elizabeth Stuart (1996, p.8) who says that, "the Vatican wants saints who will project its own theology of marriage, a theology which many women believe has a profoundly androcentric bias". Complementarity's distortion into submission to, or endurance of, male violence evidences clearly that within its terms women are deemed "equal in dignity but not in function" with men (Paul 1999, p. 24).
The embeddedness of violence within complementarity is also demonstrated in another time and different Christian tradition. Nowhere has the expression of religious outrage against women been more violently expressed than in the practices of witchcraft. What feminist analyses of witchcraft do is establish an understanding of the 'social context' in which women were accused and persecuted as witches. Karlsen, for example, looks further than the historical account of what happened to a perspective in which she asks, "why were there witches in colonial New England"? (1982, p. vi). Her analysis uncovers the gendered contradiction of why it was almost exclusively women who were identified as witches. Gender factors in other analyses are, as Maryanne Hester (1990, P. 9) shows, "either not questioned at all, or tend to be dealt with very inadequately". Karlsen's carefully developed thesis by dealing with gender factors clearly reveals that these women were neither "deviant individuals" nor "scapegoats" for social tensions. Rather their persecution was related to a "violent contradiction" within Puritanism itself which at the same time as it celebrated woman as "godly helpmeet" also condemned her as "inherently more evil than men" (Karlsen 1982, p. 258). It was the perception that women's association with the spiritual provided them with an ability for "maleficium, that is, to cause harm to others by supernatural means" (Karlsen 1982, p. 7) that caused the contradiction to erupt as violence against women. However, I argue that the contradiction itself must also be seen as a form of religious complementarity based on a notion of women as equal to but different from men. The pseudo gender equality underpinning religious complementarity similarly aids in masking a contradiction that exists between Christianity's ideals and the practice of clerical sexual violence against women and children.
In light of the Church's ambiguous "affirmation of the equivalence of maleness and femaleness in the image of God" (Reuther 1983, p. 93) and its contrary deployment of complementarity, the public/private becomes a less useful analytic tool to understand religious violence. Therefore, in Chapter Four, I turn to Durkheim's (1971) sacred/profane dichotomy for a structural analysis of clerical sexual violence. First, the remainder of this chapter considers other literature specifically related to Catholic clerical sexual abuse. This literature shows that although women writers address theologies of violence against women it does not deal specifically with clerical sexual abuse. Writing on clerical sexual abuse is produced by men who, by disregarding structural perspectives, facilitate the Church's inability (unwillingness) to incorporate recognition of gender injustice into its responses.

**Clerical sexual violence literature**

The most striking features of the overall body of literature on clerical sexual abuse are its limited size and gendered nature. Until very recently there was a marked disregard of gender inequities as contributory factors to clerical sexual abuse and there has been little broad ranging discussion of this form of abuse distinguished from works on male violence in general. However, feminist writers and theologians emphasise that theologies of atonement can link violence with concepts of redemption through suffering and thus become a source of religious violence and also act as a form of social control for women (cf Daly 1985, 1986; Brock 1989, 1992; Carlson Brown & Parker 1989; Hamington 1995). Further negative effects of atonement theologies accrue from the combination of the
glorification of suffering (abused women and children) and the concept of forgiveness for transgression (priestly abuser). In Christianity the "central image of Christ on the cross as the savior of the world communicates the message that suffering is redemptive" (Carlson Brown & Parker 1989, p. 2). Atonement theologies therefore construe a 'positive' aspect of violence and suffering in a gendered way. However, apart from notations that an added element of betrayal of trust exists when an abuser holds the position of spiritual 'father' the specificities of clerical sexual violence are sparsely addressed (even by feminist writers) outside the arena of psychological and 'recovery from sexual abuse' literature. Further, existing literature focuses mainly on the abuse of children, leaving an absence around the question of non-consensual sexual acts against women.

Marie Fortune rightly claims that her book, *Is Nothing Sacred?: When Sex Invades The Pastoral Relationship* (1989), was the first to name the "violation of the ministerial relationship sexual abuse" (Fortune 1994, p. 23). I deem Fortune's work on the sexualising of pastoral relationships as feminist for two main reasons. First, abused persons are not presented as actively engaging in the sexual encounter. This perspective stands in marked contrast to the definitions of abuse that I have already cited from *Towards Understanding [Draft]* (1999). Second, Fortune addresses the critical factors of the structural (organisational) aspects of clerical sexual violence by relating responsibility for individual acts and the requirement for churches' corporate accountability.
Fortune argues that any sexual contact between minister and congregant contravenes the ministerial role and is therefore abusive. Fortune's contention is that all sexual activity in a pastoral context is "exploitative and abusive" and non-consensual because "the difference in role precludes the possibility of meaningful consent" (Fortune 1995, pp. 32-33). She argues that,

meaningful consent to sexual activity requires a context not only of choice but also of mutuality and equality: meaningful consent requires the absence of fear or even the most subtle coercion (Fortune 1995, p. 33).

Fortune's work led the way in asserting that the "task" of the organisational Church is to both "maintain the integrity" of ministerial relationships and to "protect those persons, who due to a variety of life circumstances are vulnerable to clergy" (Fortune 1994, p. 18). Taking this stance Fortune moralises power and in so doing her perspective began the move away from psychological interest in individual abusive clerics towards the responsibility of the collective body. Her challenge to the Church is to implement processes for changing structures rather than treating individuals.

Some further inroads into addressing the absence of literature on clerical sexual abuse began with the publication in 1999 of the peer reviewed Journal Of Religion & Abuse. The first issue's editorial states, "the time has come for a forum where we can focus and provide an in-depth discussion of the issues of sexual and domestic violence within our religious traditions and institutions. A cursory or occasional discussion no longer suffices" (Journal Of Religion & Abuse 1999, p. 1). Flora Keshgegian addresses the question of splitting power and responsibility in relation to clerical sexual abuse in the new Journal Of Religion
Abuse. She argues the split occurs when, "those with more power are not held responsible for the power they wield and those with less power are made overly responsible" (Keshgegian 1999, p. 37). Thus her argument commences a move towards the nodal point of structural analysis of clerical sexual violence by showing that this splitting, has not only reinforced systems of oppression and abuse, but it has also affected our understanding of power and, correlatively, of responsibility. Legitimacy is granted to power which keeps the split system in place (Keshgegian 1999, p. 39).

It is Keshgegian's use of a Foucauldian approach to power that facilitates her shift away from the popular linear view of 'power over'. Church spokesmen, for example, use the phrase 'abuse of power' in a mantra-like chant yet the basis on which such power is established or abusively deployed is unexamined and the power/responsibility question remains under-theorised. In Chapters Six and Seven I address the 'legitimacy' endowed by the powers of priesthood and show that ritual also endorses an exonerating split between an abuser's priestly power and his responsibility for his violent acts. This power/responsibility distinction is in addition to the splits occurring between an abuser and his victim and an abuser and the authoritative Church structure as discussed by Keshgegian (1999).

The obliteration of liability for the power/responsibility split I contend is also reflected in the literature and Church responses that avoid structural analysis in favour of individual behavioural views. This does not mean that I am arguing that there is no individual psychosexual element involved in coercive sex. Rather, my emphasis is that explanations of clerical sexual abuse that rely on an abusive individual's impeded psychological
development serve to shield the organisational Church from its social responsibility. In a comparable scenario Sylvia Walby (1990, pp. 131-132) argues that applying liberal individual approaches to male violence, and the state's inadequate actions towards it, produces a perception that the state is simply "a little inefficient and faces technical difficulties due to the nature of the offences". The same can be said of the Church and its dealings with abused persons. Accounts of abuse primarily concentrating on abused persons or pathologising perpetrators in fact privilege perpetrators resulting in "an effective denial of violence and an abrogation of male responsibility for it" (Horsfall 1991, p. 7). Surveying some of the remaining body of clerical sexual abuse literature substantiates my argument.

Although this thesis deals with clerical sexual abuse in the Australian Catholic Church most of the small body of literature on the topic does not derive from an Australian cultural context. The 'Catholic' aspect of that literature, however, does provide an apposite contextual location for the following review. North American men have produced the most widely published scholarly body of work dealing entirely with Catholic clerical sexual abuse. The most frequently cited, of these North American works are; Rossetti (1990) *Slayer of the Soul: Child Sexual Abuse And The Catholic Church*; Berry (1992) *Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children*; Sipe (1995) *Sex, Priests And Power: Anatomy Of A Crisis*; and Jenkins (1996) *Pedophiles and Priests: anatomy of a contemporary crisis*. These examples cover a range of perspectives to explicate the issue from biblically-centred Christian responses (Rossetti); revelation of the extent of both abuse and perceived 'cover-up' (Berry); and, as Chapter One shows, moral
panic theory (Jenkins). Although differing in approach, the first two are characterised by orthodox biblical inferences. Jenkins' alliterative title juxtaposing the words 'pedophiles' and 'priests' so that one synonymously infers the other suggests a media-led construction of clerical sexual abuse for the sake of controversy. He also echoes Sipe's title. However, Sipe's (1995) work stands apart from these others for its analysis of priesthood that accounts for sexual violence against women as well as children. Since I draw on Sipe throughout the thesis (particularly in Section Three) I do not elaborate his work here. Jenkins and Berry's books were best sellers and are cited in Australia so I look briefly at each. It is the influence of Rossetti's work in the Australian context that concerns me most of all.

In spite of their paucity of critical analysis these works are important because their potential for influence is the potential to limit the (re)conceptualisation that would enable adequate responses to this form of human abuse in the Australian Church. Collectively these works serve to demonstrate that even though it is women and children who comprise the great majority of those subjected to priestly sexual abuse it is mainly men who are determining what is known about, and therefore what also remains unsaid about, clerical sexual violence. Women and children's experiences of abusive sexual behaviour at the hands of priests are to date largely defined from a male perspective and responded to in masculine terms by men, and a few women, steeped in the traditions of a male Church. Towards Healing (1996), discussed in the previous chapter, reveals this most clearly.
Lead Us Not Into Temptation: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children

Journalist Jason Berry's book followed his 1985 reporting of the trial of Louisiana priest Gilbert Gauthe for the liberal American Catholic newspaper National Catholic Reporter. Gauthe was sentenced to twenty years of imprisonment for multiple assaults on children. One family, whose child Gauthe abused, were compensated $1.25 million dollars. Berry's book (1992), based on his study of the transcripts of Gauthe's trial and several other notable American cases, received wide public acclaim on publication. Although the cases are dealt with as investigative journalism in the tone of expose, sensationalism is generally avoided. The notorious Gauthe case is pivotal to Berry's analysis in which he views sexual abuse as a failing of celibacy and Church officials' awareness of, but failure to deal with, Gauthe's sexual activities as typically reflective of a disreputable Church. Berry's work is flawed by his problematic link between the sexual abuse of children and a failing system of celibacy. Abuse becomes a matter of the sexuality of priests rather than violence as an aspect of priesthood. Consequently, the sexual abuse of children by priests is contrarily presented as both the aberration and the norm for 'celibate' clerical men.

In examining 'The Political Dynamics of Celibacy' (1992, pp. 171-273) Berry's own (unstated) heterosexuality becomes normative in his lengthy discussion of homosexuality in the priesthood. Berry (1992, p. 191) says he came "to see pedophilia as part of a deeper ailment within a culture premised on celibacy". Although decrying homophobia he moves dangerously close to aligning paedophilia with homosexuality. Berry (1992, pp. 243-244)
notes that the increasing numbers of homosexual priests in what he terms "the new gay clericalism" form a site in which gay priests "become power holders rather than victims". This tends towards a linear conflation of celibacy with homosexuality and sexual abuse and gives rise to the notion that male celibacy produces a suspect 'unnatural' sexuality. From here it is a very short step to the populist view in which the child abuser and the homosexual become, in Jeffrey Week's (1985, p. 44) apt phrase, "willy-nilly moulded into one". Setting up connections between these categories Berry presents a situation indicative of a 'moral panic' reaction where "scorn and condemnation are called forth [and] strong, harsh emotionally charged feelings often accompany them" (Goode & Ben-Yehuda 1994, p. 72). By examining priesthood only in terms of celibacy, and hence male sexuality, Berry's argument moves towards the very situation that he seeks to avoid, 'moral panic'.

Pedophiles and Priests: anatomy of a contemporary crisis

I have already drawn on Jenkins' application of moral panic perspectives in Chapter One. His argument is basically that, "the behaviour has unquestionably occurred, but beyond that, much is uncertain" except that it has been accompanied by a "vigorous process of construction" (Jenkins 1996, p. 7). I am interested here in the way his arguments about 'construction' do not problematise the separation of power from responsibility within the Church. Holding the lens to outside groups' self-interests and constructions never reveals that "the pastoral relationship is not one of equality" (Keshgegian 1999, p. 41). For example, when Jenkins questions whose interests are served by revelations of abuse he
finds, as advantaged groups, media, therapists, litigants and feminists. Arguing, as one instance of such constructed self-interest, Jenkins (1996, p. 139 my emphasis) says, the therapeutic profession's vested interest lies in gaining "greatly enhanced authority and visibility" for its practitioners who claim "a peculiar competence in dealing with this problem".

But it is feminists who, in Jenkins (1996, p. 124) view, most advantageously discovered and shaped clerical sexual abuse to their own (ulterior?) ends and in so doing their "expansion of the abuse concept was a model of successful interest-group politics". This is particularly so, he (1996, p. 116) claims, for Catholic feminism whose constituency is found in "present and former nuns and among thousands of women involved in institutes of theological education". In the texts of these feminists, he argues, "sexual exploitation and violence are repeatedly emphasised ... as structural flaws. ... The Catholic church is stigmatized because it has taken the lead in the crusade against women's control of their own bodies" (Jenkins 1996, p. 118). There is one sense in which I see Jenkins' opinion as accurate. It is through the (presently very few) gender analyses of feminist approaches that individual acts of clerical sexual abuse will be linked to structure and thus given a social context. But through his failure to examine the nature of institutional Catholicism or the organisational male priesthood, to which perpetrators belong, Jenkins completely disregards abused persons' experiences as either violent or gendered experiences. This
neglect means Jenkins shifts abuse away from the power of perpetrators and situates responsibility for it with those whom he sees are busily occupied with the business of 'construction'.

It is Jenkins himself who misreads the body of feminist work on atonement theology and misconstrues its application to clerical sexual abuse. By doing this he in fact engages in the extrapolation of which he accuses feminists. There is no large body of feminist literature relating critique of atonement theology to clerical sexual abuse. The ramifications of Jenkins' representation of data, situated outside of both individuals and structures and into self-interested groups, leads to the question of what interest his 'familiar rhetorical technique' of moral panic represents when in accusatory tone he states:

Feminist claims-makers successfully defined the problem of clergy abuse in a broad way that would cause the greatest benefit to themselves and, as they believed, to women as a group. They were here employing a familiar rhetorical technique: seeking to use an issue that is widely known (and accepted as posing a real social danger) to expand the domain of this known issue to include other behaviours that do not obviously appear to be related (Jenkins 1996, p. 124).

I contend that Jenkins' social constructionist approach, by masking the affinity between individual perpetrators and the structure of which they are part, ignores the very important structural nuances between the organisational and institutional Church. What Jenkins sees as a self-interested feminist shaping of this issue, Anne Loades (1998, p. 46) more cogently

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22 Catholic feminism, in Jenkins' view (1996, pp. 115-116), began in the 1960s with Mary Daly and is continued by women such as Rosemary Radford Ruether and Joan Chittister and its "primary demand was for women to be ordained as priests".
sees as a developmental process that is "part of a movement of concern about children that has been developing for some time". Loades, however, adds the new and vital distinguishing point that Jenkins misses. The priority now, Loades (1998, p. 46 emphasis original) says, is "making children's points of view central to our thinking."

Slayer of the Soul: Child Sexual Abuse And The Catholic Church

Stephen Rossetti is a Catholic priest and psychotherapist whose work is widely drawn on by Church authorities. Towards Understanding Draft (1999, p. 20) indicates that its researchers interviewed Rossetti in 1997. Although Rossetti (1990a, p. 3) argues that it "is imperative that we face squarely the issue of child molestation" his own language obscures and avoids either 'facing squarely' or clearly articulating what occurs in 'child molestation'. He contributes greatly towards rendering clerical perpetrators invisible by accepting a prime example, of what Kelly et al (1996, p. 85) call "'common-sense' limited definitions" in the following definition of abuse. In the Foreword to Rossetti's book Marist Brother (Sean Sammon) centres the child as protagonist and omits any reference to a perpetrator by saying,

abuse occurs when dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents become involved in sexual activity which they do not understand fully and to which they cannot freely give informed consent. This behaviour often violates the social taboos of family roles (Sammon 1990, p. vi).23
Coercive sexual activity by clerical men is, according to Rossetti (1990a, p. 7), a pathological condition of perpetrators, a form of misconduct, "by persons who have not found inner peace". Rossetti (1990a, p. 2) argues it is "illness that brings about the sexual abuse of children ... [and] causes the individual to be blind to the disease". Although Rossetti (1990a, p. 2) says he sees "child sexual abuse" as a "problem" on that one page he uses a litany of metaphors for abuse including; "illness ... mental illness ... poison through a living organism ... psychic death and disease". Similarly, Bishop Clark, another contributor to Rossetti's book, says, "abuse arises from an illness which reveals among other things, a warped attitude toward sexuality" (Clark 1990, p. 176). In contrast, Kevin Wallis' Australian study of imprisoned child sex offenders, argues convincingly, "the overwhelming majority of offenders have no psychiatric illness" (Wallis 1995, p. 2).

Employing euphemisms for male violence, as Rossetti does, simply converts into "social denial in public and professional discourses ... as do constructions of experiences as evidence of pathology or wilful carelessness" (Kelly et al 1996, p. 85). Rossetti situates abused children as secondary to those of his fellow priests, who are abusers, when he says:

The sexual abuse of children is a devastating event for all involved. The perpetrators become marked persons who must suffer the ridicule and disdain of an entire society, as well as the more punishing reproach that they often inflict on themselves. The damage caused to the victims is equally severe (Rossetti 1990b, p. 185).

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23 This closely parallels the 1976 definition used in Towards Understanding [Draft]. Sammon, however, gives no citation. He (1990, p. vi) merely states that "Researchers in the field point out that abuse occurs when ...".
In bypassing any concept of power held by specific Church structures Rossetti links clerical men perpetrators to an undefined community to which "we" all belong. In this way Rossetti disperses power away from its place of origin and dilutes accountability away from responsibility. While pastoral care for abusers is not my concern here, I acknowledge that it is the Church's responsibility to provide such care for its ministry and therefore it must be included as part of its responses. That after all, is also a moral deployment of power and responsibility. However, in what seems to be a direct call for sympathy Rossetti (1990b, p. 186) argues that in seeking out the "symptom of an underlying problem ... we should look for the core of the problem in our own hearts". I agree with Flora Keshgegian (1999, p. 50) when she says of Rossetti, "I would contend that clerical affiliation obscures his perspective". Critiquing Rossetti's use of metaphors of illness for abuse, Keshgegian says:

While I do not want to seem to be lacking in compassion, to view clergy who abuse as ill is to obscure the dynamics of power present in abusive situations and ultimately to relieve the clergy of full responsibility and accountability for their actions (Keshgegian 1999, p. 56).

Rossetti shows this in citing an instance of a re-offending young priest who wrongly understood that by confessing his acts of child sexual abuse his problem would be resolved. Rossetti (1990a, p. 2) adds, "although confession cleanses the soul, it does not always heal mental illness". It is inexplicable that a priest would ever theologially conceive of the confessional practice as being in any circumstance a curative medical procedure.
An Australian work replicating individual/psychological approaches and overlooking structure and gender is *Child Sexual Abuse and the Churches* (Parkinson 1997). In Chapter Two I noted that a review of *Towards Healing* began in September 1999 for the National Committee for Professional Standards. Sydney Law Professor Patrick Parkinson, who also chaired the legislative review of The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 in New South Wales, is conducting the evaluation. That review of New South Wales legislation is to provide "the basis for an all-of-government and community approach to child protection" (Parkinson & Cashmore 1999, p. 15). Professor Parkinson's appointment as external evaluator of the *Towards Healing* program provides him with a direct and concrete ability to influence Australian Catholic Church responses. It is in that context that his perspectives raise concerns for me. For that reason I quote lengthy passages of his book to demonstrate why there would be a certain seduction (for the Church) in valuing the respected legal expertise of a reviewer who, while appearing to critique Church process, simultaneously obscures violence in floral language.

Parkinson's book is a referenced, scholarly work and also popularly accessible. His "task", he (1997, p. xi) states, is "to take what is so deeply hidden in church congregations and to try to make it better known and understood". To achieve that end he describes what he sees as child sexual abuse issues, pastoral issues, and responses in both Church and non-Church (family) related abuses of children. However, he fails to provide any apparent linkages that
distinguish the variant social structures of either Church or family. All three sections of the book intersperse 'information' with Biblical citations and 'stories' of individual's experiences of abuse. A generally accessible work of this type (as opposed to academic analysis) can present difficulties. On the one hand, its ease of access may offer a means for abused persons to feel less isolated by reading biographical experiences of others. On the other hand, however, it offers no balancing access to empowering thoughts, let alone action, for those people and its passivity counters any notion that clerical sexual violence will become "better known and understood". In this book the elements of power and responsibility are dispersed away from their source in preference for an ethereal combination of illness and God. This work is an exemplar of the ubiquity of the "power of dominant 'common-sense' limited definitions" (Kelly et al 1996, p. 85) and it presents in Parkinson's work as another form of power. That is, it reflects the power to conceal powers abusively deployed.

Parkinson employs what in other types of literature might simply be passed over as a monotonous repetition, but in this context demonstrate how an inadequate definition of child sexual abuse 'creeps' into everyday acceptance. In the now seemingly standard process the definition re-appears echoing the same uncited ominous sense as it does in Rossetti. He states:

Child sexual abuse is the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities with any person older or bigger, which they do not fully comprehend, and to which they are unable to give informed consent (Parkinson 1997, p. 9).
He continues:

This definition emphasises a number of things. First, sexual abuse may be committed not only by adults. Often the perpetrators of sexual abuse are teenagers who take advantage of the vulnerability of much younger children. Sexual abuse is an abuse of the power and authority that come from being older and bigger than the child victim. ... Not all sexual abuse of children is the result of coercion. Often, sex offenders prey upon needy and vulnerable children who come from difficult home situations and who crave love and attention (Parkinson 1997, p. 9).

I agree that "this definition emphasises a number of things". The first of these is that in the absence of gender based and structural factors no apparent socio-cultural context emerges in which these abuses take place and perpetrator and institution are rendered absent. Power and authority are seemingly derived solely from age and physical size. In Parkinson's usage the abused young person is clearly defined as undeveloped, in psychological terms, (developmentally immature) while the perpetrator is simply described in vague physical terms (older or bigger). Introducing discussion of 'teenagers' as perpetrators when his examination is related to sexual abuse in the churches inaccurately implies people in this age group occupy clerical positions. They do not. Similarly, actively situating abused children as subjects in an abusive sexual encounters distorts, inaccurately defines, and inappropriately personalises those who are abused while perpetrators remain unaccounted for. Sexual abuse, in this definition, is not deemed to be violence unless other forms of 'coercion' are present. Rather, abuse is located as the consequence of a personality defect of children 'who crave love and attention'.
Discussing the incestuous family as a "distortion" of "family roles" the concept of 'family' itself remains unremarked and Parkinson, in the following example, again establishes girl children as protagonists over their incestuous male family members. Citing the biblical condemnation of incest (Leviticus 18:6) he goes on to say, "The proportion of girls who have sexual intercourse in childhood with a father or stepfather is probably about 1.5 percent of the female population" (1997, p. 11). Parkinson (1997, p. 12) links incest and illness stating that abused children have a family situation "that is seriously toxic to their emotional well-being". In this instance the illness now appears to belong with the child and not the perpetrator. Moving between Church and family Parkinson's discussion never articulates why there is a link between clerical sexual abuse and incest. Others, however, do show there is a crucially important connection. Maris & McDonough (1995, p. 362), for example, state that in the dynamic of clerical sexual abuse against children "the great majority of offences appear most closely related to incest rather than to molestation or rape ... offending clergy have usually established a "familial" relationship with their victims". Maris & McDonough make this point to highlight the difficulty for complainants to speak out in these 'familial' type relationships. They do not suggest incest is preferable to rape.

Lack of structural perspectives and confusion of concepts is the major flaw of Parkinson's work. Complex concepts appear as self-explanatory notions from which readers are left to draw common sense meanings. The complex concepts of human love and sexuality, for example, are wrongly conflated in the following example that is indicative of many others through the work. Discussing potentially detrimental effects of abuse for children he says.
some of the greatest long-term damage is caused by being introduced to sexual relations when they are far too young to be able to cope with sexual feelings and experiences. In the Song of Solomon, the wise advice is given: 'Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires'. Many abused children have sexual love awakened much too early; they may find it difficult to cope with their awakened sexuality (Parkinson 1997, p. 11).

The Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs) is a collection Old Testament Hebrew love poetry expressing the erotic exchanges between a heterosexual couple in which the sexual love between the man and the woman is valued in and for itself. The couples' exchanges express their "love, passion, desire and longing for each other ... [and] human sexuality is explored and delighted in" (Weems 1992, p. 156). To extrapolate Song of Songs to mean advice to deter predators from engaging in under-age (criminal) sexual activity draws a very questionable interpretation.

Parkinson's (1997, p. 11) passage ends by noting that adults, who were abused as children, may "become promiscuous ... [incur] severe depression, mental illness and marital problems". Illness as well as being responsible for perpetrators' abusive acts now becomes a prognosis for those abused. The sequences immediately following this comprise a brief discussion of incest including a biographical piece, 'Sarah's Story: Abuse at Bedtime'. This is a typical account of a daughter who is disbelieved because her incestuous father is held in high regard in their church community. Although Parkinson says, "the father maintains the secret of abuse by ensuring that the daughter is kept isolated from her peers" he never asks what social structures support such fathers (Parkinson 1997, pp. 11-14). Personal 'stories',

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rather than analysis, are given to seemingly substantiate material such as this so that 'what happens' is given precedence over 'what allows this to happen' and the underlying systemic factors remain hidden.

Parkinson (1997, pp. 196-197) does, however, critique Church practices that regard abuse as "moral and spiritual failure" with counselling seen as a "magic solution" but goes on to elaborate his position in saying that, "the problem needs to be dealt with as a psycho sexual and behavioural problem". Dependence on behavioural approaches, at the expense of systemic analysis of Church patriarchal structures, overlook those social roots which have abusive elements enshrined in doctrinal teachings and that are made explicit in works such as Daly (1986) and Carlson Brown & Bohn (1989). Parkinson (1997, p. 2) argues that speaking out via books, media and child protection workers is remedial because raised public awareness breaks the "conspiracy of silence". This issue of course, as the discussion of media and moral panic shows, does not self-rectify through heightened social awareness. Examination of the social environment where abuse occurs needs to be thorough and substantiated with social theory rather than a selection of miscellaneous events ('stories'). Although Parkinson's book raises an array of questions, "How could someone sexually abuse a child? Why would they want to do so? And can Christians abuse children?" (1997, p. 29), his questioning does not lead him to examine underlying factors of either Church culture or theology. Neither does Parkinson question or show, as does Sipe whose work he

Lecturer's notes from a Sydney University Summer Course 'Sex and the Bible' I took in 1999.
cites, "the degree to which abusive sexual behaviours inhere in the system of priestly power" (Sipe 1995, p. 27).

Accounts of the type given by Parkinson, I argue, contribute further violence to the already violated persons because, although he (1997, p. 2) states his approach is explicitly "as a committed Christian" he sets Christian and analysis of abuse as mutually exclusive categories. He (1997, p. 268) says, "it is appropriate to end this book on a note of optimism", and concludes by saying:

> There will be a new heaven and a new earth before sorrow and sighing will flee away, but we can diminish this pain now by working to prevent child abuse. And we can care, along with God, about all the little ones who are suffering today (Parkinson 1997, p. 269).

Locking into personal pathology approaches leaves Parkinson (as it does all the preceding authors) unable to move from perpetrators' and their victims' identities and thus Christian perspectives remain undisturbed as a paternal and passive sanction for patriarchy. The realms of Christian religion, and the arena where abuse occurs, are separated from being the one place to separate spheres where Christian is privileged as sacred. Without any analytic framework for gender Parkinson has no means of recognising how religion's structures and practices have ignored the important concept of "children as a theological subject" (Brock 1989, p. 42). Consequently he is unable to envisage either structural transformation or personal liberation. Marie Fortune's work demonstrates quite clearly that it is possible to relate gender analysis with activity and transformation while at the same time retaining a Christian ethos. In her Christian feminist analysis of child abuse she says,
we chip away at oppressive attitudes cast in concrete ... we speak boldly of things deemed secret and unmentionable ... By refusing to endure evil and by seeking to transform suffering, we are about God's work of making justice and healing brokenness (Fortune 1989b, p. 147).

This question of children as a theological subject is taken up again in Chapter Four.

Reading these male authors' accounts of clerical sexual abuse in the light of feminist analyses of male violence affirms the value in feminists' structural approaches. There seems to be (in these men's works) a pervading fear that revealing the structural aspects of clerical sexual violence equates with an abandonment of Christianity. This is similarly reflected in the Australian Church's responses. I have already referred (Chapter Two) to *From Pain to Hope* (1992), the Canadian Catholic Bishops' response. Perhaps it is this document's emphasis on 'hope' (rather than the medical metaphor of 'healing') that exhibits the ability for ecclesiastical organisations' recognition of gendered structures. That Church response demonstrates that power/responsibility do not belong in separate spheres. The following Canadian Bishops' statement reflects incorporation of a feminist perspective into a Church response:

Child sexual abuse flourishes in a society that is based on competition and power and which is undermined by sexual exploitation and violence against women. Contemporary society has shown itself quick to reject traditional values, to be unable to offer new ones, and to be unfair to women and children. The challenge to transform society becomes enormous when we recognise the terrible social cost when child abuse is tolerated. Another contributing factor to child sexual abuse is a Church that too readily shelters its ministers from having to account for their conduct; that is often tempted to settle moral problems behind a veil of secrecy which only encourages their growth; that has not yet developed a process of internal reform in which the values of familial communion would predominate. Challenges for personal conversion are far from lacking. We would like to see our Church take firm
steps which would leave no doubt as to its genuine desire to eradicate the phenomenon of child sexual abuse (in Loades 1998, pp. 54-55).

In concluding this review, I comment briefly on two other works that stand apart from the works already mentioned.

When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches

This is a scholarly and generally accessible Australian work (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995) in which the authors Neil Ormerod (theologian) and Thea Ormerod (social worker) demonstrate the practical ways in which the theological and the sociological may be drawn together. Although the 'scholarly and generally accessible' descriptors would also categorise the works of Rossetti and Parkinson this work stands in marked contrast to these. Throughout the thesis I draw on this book so indicate here three of its aspects that informed my understanding.

Structural and gender perspectives are accounted for throughout the work. For example, they state, "multiple abusive relationships appears to be part of the pattern of pastoral sexual abuse" and attribute this to male priests' gendered distortion of conscience. Rationalising his first abusive encounter only as a lapse of his own celibacy, the priest thereby fails to "recognise the consequences of his actions in relationship to another person, the woman involved" (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 16). The power/responsibility aspects
of abuse are linked by showing that the culture of the organisational Church, "encourages those with power, most often men, to have a sense of entitlement more than to act responsibly" (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 53). Critique and re-interpretation of biblical justifications of evil have developed into a "theology of abuse" (1995, pp. 93-107). One instance of this is in their discussion of Abraham's preparedness to sacrifice his son Isaac shows that this is "little more than theological justification for abuse" although it is traditionally presented an act of faith and atonement (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 97).

These brief illustrations are indicative of many in the book and demonstrate an exemplary way of providing a general readership with conceptual analytic tools. This approach allows people to question issues such as responsibility/accountability in clerical sexual abuse or re-interpret their understandings of the popular biblical stories of violence that they have grown up with in Christian churches. The book also contains accounts of individuals' abusive experiences. Again these are not 'stories' but autobiographical (even if anonymous) accounts that are not set outside the context of the organisational Church. In other words these authors make the characteristics of the otherwise complex concept of separate spheres accessible for a general readership.
Richard Sipe, (a former priest) is a psychotherapist and psychiatrist assistant who is currently an American seminary teacher and holds a teaching appointment at The Johns Hopkins University Medical School. He is widely published on the issue of clerical sexual abuse and in addition to his seminary position the American Catholic Church has commissioned him to research particular cases of clerical sexual abuse (Sipe Report 1998 online). In Sex, Priests and Power: Anatomy Of A Crisis (1995) Sipe amply demonstrates that the social context of a structural approach may be juxtaposed with the psychological. Sipe examines priesthood with particular reference to the double standard in the 'sexual/celibate system' and explicitly names abuse. Rejecting outright the "aberration of a deviant few" argument, he states:

Sexual abuse of children, impregnation, abortion, seduction of minors, sexual involvement with adults by those who claim celibate status and privilege are manifestations of the deviation and distortion of spiritual service to a system of power that tolerates subjugation and restriction of the nonselect group at the pleasure of the select (Sipe 1995, p. 169).

Sipe's analysis neither marks celibacy out as a causal factor in abuse nor sexual abuse as symptomatic of a male person's irrepressible sex drive. "Celibacy", Sipe says, "is not the problem ... It never has been. The crisis is the claim to celibate privilege and authority based on ... political or sexual domination" (1995, pp. 162-163). Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999, p. 55) says Sipe's (1996) definition of celibacy "has some merit" and cites his reference to power adding, "we should be aware of the ways in which power operates in our own system". However, it gives more attention to statistics derived from his research
into paedophiliac activities than his wide ranging situating of priests’ sexual activities into a social rather than a medical context. Sipe's work is used throughout the remainder of this thesis.

Conclusion

I began this chapter by exploring the approaches of secular feminist writing to questions of sexual violence enacted by men against women and children. This body of literature demonstrates that the feminist objective to explicate violence is in close agreement on two points. First, that such violence must not be socially regarded as individual aberration by an ill or otherwise momentarily disturbed man. And that such violence has social structural support that is best explained by the concept of the division of social life into separate gendered spheres. However, Catholicism's differentiating of the abstraction of women from their embodied condition presents limitations to the use of the public/private as an analytic tool to understand clerical sexual violence.

Turning to feminist theologians and writers on religion I found that while this literature addresses violence as an influential aspect of Christian theology and organised religious practice there is a scant body of work specifically addressing clerical sexual violence. Lastly, I examined writing on clerical sexual abuse, which shows that those addressing the topic are predominantly men. My particular concerns with this work are the lack of
discussion of any structural support for this form of sexual violence; the use of euphemisms in the naming of violence; and the easy slip into general usage of prevailing definitions of abuse that obscure perpetrators. The Church's responses, I argue, reflect all these factors as they present in mainstream literature on clerical sexual abuse.

In the following chapter I turn to the sacred as the domain of priested men and the sacred/profane as a theoretical instrument to address the particularities of the relationship of gendered social spheres and sexual violence by clerical men. Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 27) says that violence is a "natural or inevitable outcome and precondition of any contact between the sacred and the profane". Her statement is especially apposite to the substantiation of my claims that all clerical sexual abuse must be regarded as an active form of violence. As the public/private has been shown to privilege secular men in both arenas so the sacred/profane, this thesis demonstrates, gives even further privilege to clerical men by excluding women from full incorporation into the sacred and by providing ordained men with a sacred structure to maintain that exclusion: priesthood. Chapter Four views these gendered spheres as sacred public/profane private where the abuse of the bodies of women (and children) by clerical men becomes a defining site of the socio-sexual dimension of Catholicism.
CHAPTER FOUR

SACRED VIOLENCE AND GENDERED SPHERES

"I am the Lord thy God, Thou shalt have no other gods before me" bellowed God the Father, as He seated himself high upon His Cherubim throne ... Having dispelled the quarrelsome Sons of Heaven who disputed his reign, He had finally restored order in Heaven. Earth was a different problem. Ever since the rebellious Sons of Heaven left to rape the daughters of humankind, things had been chaotic down there. From this violence all sorts of monsters had been born (Ruether 1983, p. 1).

Violence is seen as a natural or inevitable outcome and precondition of any contact between the sacred and the profane. Since religion creates social life and its institutions and social life creates religion, the potential for violent contact exists everywhere ... the connection between gender, force and violence (Erickson 1993, p. 27).

In the previous chapter I showed that those feminist analyses demonstrating the gendering of social life into public/private spheres are a major achievement towards understanding male violence. By employing this critique of separate spheres, feminist theory demonstrates that individual men's violent acts have structural support. The question that concerns me here is the extent to which forms of structural support exist for clerical men who are also sexually abusive, and whether the polarising of spheres serves to explain that support. The men and women participating in this study experienced sexual violation at the hands of the ordained men perpetrating violence against them. Catholicism is the characteristic common to and central in the everyday lives and beliefs of the clerical abusers and those whom they abused. Both parties locate their spiritual identity with the Church. It is this intimate interweaving of Catholicism and violence that requires both of these facets to be accounted
for. In this chapter I argue that another social dichotomy; the sacred/profane, as well as being a religious concept, is also profoundly supportive of the gendered structuring of society and thus provides a pertinent arena for the examination of clerical sexual violence as a 'sacred' issue.

Bringing Catholicism into focus factors religion into this thesis. This is not, however, a study of Catholicism in either the sociological sense of interpretation of its ideology, beliefs and practices or the theological sense of hermeneutics. The intention in this chapter is to search out what Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 27) argues is religion's (and for this study particularly Catholicism's) direct "connection between gender, force and violence". Those persons, in this study and beyond it, who suffer abuse by Catholic clerical men, identified themselves as Catholic by belief and practice at the time of their abuse. Some of them continue to do so. The priestly identity of the individual Catholic male abusers is ritually sacralised through ordination into a priesthood that is a highly particularised collective. Feminist theologians (for example Ruether and Erickson cited above) introduce gender as an analytic category into their sociological analyses of theology and thereby interrupt the Church's dominant male discourses. However, in theorising aspects of violence against women in patriarchal religion most of these discussions centre on religiously justified violence, such as atonement theology, as exemplified in *Christianity, Patriarchy and Abuse* (Carlson Brown & Bohn 1989). These works provide overviews of religion's history of denial of women's rights; labelling (for example Aquinas' woman as defective, misbegotten male); and outright persecution (women as witches). While all of these stem from the
dualistic polar tensions constructed around women's sexuality, such as the Madonna/whore split, there is little direct examination of religious life as a divided sociality. Following Erickson (1992, p. 35), I contend, that examining the sacred/profane divide in religion reveals an underpinning gender bias showing that, "men and women have been associated, respectively, with sacred and profane".

In highlighting the part that gender plays in the complex relationship between religion and violence I rely heavily on Durkheim (1971). Following his view of the sacred/profane as the primary characteristic on which religion rests enables me to argue that the sacred/profane is a prime exemplar of 'separate spheres'. Although notions about the sacred/profane, as separate spheres, is a valuable theoretical tool it needs some distinction here from the public/private concept of separate spheres. I envisage the public/private as adjoining spheres with permeable boundaries that allow men free transition between the two. But those same boundaries restrict women's ingress to the public and egress from the private because they are "incorporated into public life in a different manner from men" (Pateman 1989, p. 4). In the sacred/profane, however, the 'image' needs to be visualised as a sacred sphere with an elite and highly segregated centre and internally lined at its inner perimeter by the profane. That is, women are not totally denied 'sacredness' but are confined to the margins and prohibited from any admission to the fiercely defended 'Sacred' centre that is reserved to men alone. These pictorial images are drawn out in the remainder of this chapter.
Durkheim did not articulate his view of either the sacred, or the sacred/profane, as gendered divisions as could be expected of a man of his times and Judaic background. The logic of Durkheim's theory is, however, that social life is divided. Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 5) says his view is that people "categorise things they see (real and ideal) as sacred or profane. … Religion then is a way of knowing about reality". My intention in this thesis is neither to protect nor refute Durkheim's premise nor to simply dismiss it as 'gender-blind'. Rather, I attempt to show that, through a self-conscious feminist reading of his text, I am able to utilise his view to understand the basis of that division as gendered. Durkheim's substantial contribution to social theory lies in his argument that religion is social. "Religion", he (1971, p. 35) says, "is more than the idea of gods or spirits, and consequently cannot be defined exclusively in relation to these latter". Using Durkheim allows me to see the violence of clerical men from a social perspective outside the realm of religious belief without having to enter into (to accept or refute) the theological/sociological debates around the validity of those beliefs. The Church, however, by naming its abusive clerics 'offenders' (Towards Healing 1996), confines these men within a religious/moral context as 'sinner' (and hence 'pardonable'). In taking this position the Church exempts itself from launching into any analysis of social systems supportive of these sexually abusive men. To overcome this problem of engaging with the topic in the terms of individual moral failing that I have already critiqued the issue must be situated into a social context.
There is another problematic aspect that I anticipate and it concerns the method for understanding Church responses (as well as participant's accounts) only from within the confines of religion's (Catholicism's) understandings. Catherine Garrett (1998, p. 100) describes the difficulty "to write about 'spirituality' in academic texts" relative to her participant's narratives attributing a spiritual component to their wellbeing. Durkheim had a similar dilemma in wanting to produce a sociology of religion that remained true to, and would be accepted as, 'positive science'. Garrett (1998, pp. 100-101) attributes this perceived obstacle to, "the Enlightenment idea that real knowledge is rational and scientific; set apart from expressive ways of describing reality" and she sees this has been partially overcome by poststructuralism's "critique of this false distinction". Feminist writers, both secular and religious, contribute greatly to this shift away from reason/expressive dichotomous thinking that is inevitably couched in the "mind/body relation [which] is frequently correlated with the distinction between reason and passion" (Grosz 1994, p. 3).

Two recent Australian feminist works highlight the value of a sociological theory of religion for understanding the individual and collective properties of a social issue. Drawing extensively on Durkheim's theory of religion both scholars illustrate the merit of applying his work to their differing approaches. Catherine Garrett's (1998) study of recovery from anorexia gives specific attention to those spiritual aspects her participants revealed in their narratives as being necessary for their recovery. Garrett (1998, p. 101) says that she found value in re-reading the classical sociological texts (including Durkheim)
"from a late twentieth century perspective [as] another way of understanding 'spirituality', its relation to 'reality' and to each society in which it occurs". Ann Daniel (1998) also uses Durkheimian theory for her investigation into those disciplinary practices of professions that leads to scapegoating of members whose transgressions threaten the status of the group. Thus her work focuses on the affinity between individuals collectivised by professional association. She (1998, p. 8) says, Durkheim's work shows the way in which the "value and goal rationality" of an overarching occupational body, rather than local personal identity groups, "suffuses the whole ... A group will preserve at all costs generic identity, purpose and being. Survival justifies everything". Likewise, I contend that scrutiny of Durkheim's (1971) sacred/profane as a gendered division sets up a theoretical framework for this study. It shows that individual clerical men's sexual violence perpetrated in a religious environment is, as Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 27) argues, the actualisation of the sacred's potential for violence. Secondly, the sacred/profane highlights that the Church hierarchy's collective responses to clerical sexual abuse reflect a primary concern for the self-preservation of its 'generic identity, purpose and being' to maintain an undisputed sacred realm.

Sacred/Profane: an elemental factor on which religion rests

The sacred/profane is the focal tension of, and most fully extrapolated in, Durkheim's The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (1971). Durkheim's central argument is that all religious belief is preceded by a socially-constructed, primary, identifying characteristic.
distinguishing what is sacred from what is profane. Religion is solely produced through social means which "divide the world into two domains" and humankind understands this through its counter-positioning of oppositional categories (Durkheim 1971, p. 37). He states:

All known religious beliefs, whether simple or complex, present one common characteristic: they presuppose a classification of all things, real and ideal, of which men think, into two classes or opposed groups, generally designated by two distinct terms which are translated well enough by the words *profane* and *sacred* (*profane, sacré*) (Durkheim 1971, p. 37 emphasis original).

Things of the sacred realm are characterised by a distinctive, if not fully delineated, heterogeneity. In spite of his lack of clear definition Durkheim (1971, p. 38 emphasis original) nevertheless forcefully propounds the particularity of this heterogeneity: "it is absolute". There are no other social distinctions, he (1971, p. 37) argues, which are so profoundly and radically opposed as the sacred and the profane. The sacred/profane militate one against the other and Durkheim (1971, p. 40) remained constant in his view that this dualistic opposition "manifests itself outwardly with a visible sign ... wherever it exists". It is on the prior existence of this distinctly sacred realm, a universal and unifying force, that religions are founded. While Durkheim's project was to explain the sacred in entirely social terms I suggest that he also articulated it as a moral project. This is evident in his (1971, p. 37) "classification of all things real and ideal, of which men think, into two classes" as social phenomena which, he later (1971, p. 425) argues, ultimately enables the "raising of the individual above himself". Catherine Garrett (1998, p. 102) agrees that Durkheim viewed the religious as "a powerful impetus towards moral self-improvement". However, I see Durkheim's moral project as also being differentiated by gender and want to take up,
what Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 12) sees as an important task, "to underscore the clarity with which the religious sees itself as associated with the sacred and not the profane".

Durkheim is totally explicit that the terms in which he wanted phenomena ('things') to be designated as sacred are understood. He postulates:

Sacred things are those which the interdictions protect and isolate; profane things, those to which the interdictions are applied and which must remain at a distance from the first. Religious beliefs are the representations which express the nature of sacred things and the relations which they sustain, either with each other or profane things. Finally, rites are the rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself in the presence of these sacred objects (Durkheim 1971, p. 41).

Durkheim follows what Grosz (1994, p. 3) says is necessarily the case with dichotomous views, in that he "hierarchizes and ranks the two polarised terms so that one becomes privileged". Viewing the sacred/profane as both universal and persistent Durkheim's priority always lies with the sacred. Interdictions are in place to protect it from the profane. Religions, thus established, are in turn sustained by and maintained through rites (rituals). Turner (1991, p. 47) argues that Durkheim developed his thesis around this dialectical relationship in which "the cult was dependant on the rite, but the rite was also the embodiment of the belief". The twin elements of religion, belief and practice, are for Durkheim "social facts" external to the individual but his "crucial theme" remains "the existence of the sacred/profane dichotomy and the social effects of the practices relating to religious categories" (Turner 1991, p. 46). By examining some of the universal, persistent and social aspects of Durkheim's sacred/profane the thesis is able to see clerical sexual
abuse as a collective issue, and not a matter of individuals' psychosexual behaviour, moral failure or 'sin'.

On first appearances, it may seem that the privileged clerical man's acts of sexual violence must relocate him outside his select position in the sacred. However, Durkheim usefully insists that the differentiated opposition of the sacred/profane is not the distinction between good and bad deeds. These, he (1971, p. 38) says, are simply the polarities of the same category, "for the good and the bad are only two opposed species of the same class, namely morals". Later, he reiterates:

The pure and the impure are not two separate classes but two varieties of the same class, which includes all sacred things. There are two sorts of sacredness the propitious and the unpropitious (Durkheim 1971, p. 411).

Parkin (1992, p. 44) agrees that Durkheim clearly demonstrated that "wicked and evil things are also part of the sacred because they too are 'things set apart and forbidden'. They too inspire awe, if only in the shape of revulsion and terror". Thus while evil representations are 'set apart' they are not recast but remain assigned to the sacred. It is the sacred and the profane that always remain mutually exclusive. "In all the history of human thought", Durkheim (1971, p. 38) insists, "there exists no other example of two categories of things so profoundly differentiated or so radically opposed to one another".

Sacred then is a remarkable 'thing'. It is, as Pickering (1984, p. 126) says, "not 'one' but 'two'". Immorality, either discursive or material, belongs within it and exists there in an
unproblematised way as simply a contrariety of morals. Moral/immoral presented in a unitary category renders the sacred flawed within its own internal working order and that factor holds vital significance for this project. Perpetration of clerical sexual violence, I argue, would conventionally be classified as belonging to 'wicked and evil things'. Yet, in Durkheimian terms, 'evil' does not evidence either the equation of the sacred with immorality or the invasion of the sacred by the profane. This is the first indicator that the method of induction into that sacred must confer an extraordinary power on the individual and likewise draw on equally powerful sources for its self-maintenance. In Part Three of this thesis I discuss the initiation of men into the sacred's core arena: priesthood. The remainder of this chapter is centrally concerned with the implications of a divided sacred as it emerges in Durkheim's work. I show in what follows below that this socially-constructed defect (an internally divided sacred) manifests in Catholicism as a fiercely defended masculine gender dichotomy. First, a brief overview of the construction of the sacred and the profane as separate categories.

**Constructing sacredness**

Without a singular meaning, the term 'sacred' is variously interpreted as; society; religion; sanctity; held together as a collectivised experience by the dynamics of ritual (cf Pickering 1984, Turner B. 1991, Douglas 1996a). In the absence of gods or spirits, and to make meaning, Durkheim's collective sacred must perforce be correlated with the social. In 1899, prior to *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* [1915] he stated, "Sacred things are
those whose representation society itself has fashioned" (in Pickering 1984, p. 120). Other sociologists of religion relate the sacred to being both of 'man' and yet transcending 'him' (cf. Eliade 1957, Berger 1967, Mol 1976). While 'men' form society based on the sacred, the sacred itself is usually only discussed in relation to its counter, the profane. For example, Eliade (1957, p. 10) states, "the first possible definition of the sacred is that it is the opposite of the profane". For Berger (1967, p. 26) "the antonym of the sacred is the profane, to be defined simply as the absence of sacred status". The 'men' in the exclusive language of these texts are more than an historical indicator of prevailing academic norms. They also reflect male theorists' need to define sacred as being over and against an 'other' and signal the setting up of separate spheres. Further, these point toward the normative way that male and sacred become interchangeable and self-referent terms. Male theorists' representations of religion's collective experience are, as Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 10) says, "not a collective experience but a masculine one ... religion was an activity produced primarily to satisfy the needs of men".

In his recent comprehensive work, *Ritual and Religion In The Making Of Humanity*, Roy Rappaport (1999) thoroughly investigates the sacred's properties without any reference to the profane. A major strength of Rappaport's examination is his differentiation between the sociological view of the sacred and the theological view of the sacred as divine. His primary emphasis is that the sacred is recognisably distinct from the divine. Sacred, he says, is a property of religious discourse and not of the objects signified in or by that discourse. ... As a quality of discourse, sanctity is to be distinguished not only from the divinity that may be attributed to the objects of that discourse, but also from all the putative properties of such objects that they are
dangerous or powerful or set apart or forbidden or awesome ... Sacred discourse is about, *among other things*, the divine (Rappaport 1999, pp. 281-282 emphasis original).

Rappaport (1999, p. 282) goes on to caution, however, that sometimes this sacred/divine distinction "is systematically blurred in practice". I will show below that in relation to priesthood the distinction is being 'systematically blurred' in carefully discursive and material ways in Catholicism.

Analysing *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* Rappaport (1999) applies the term 'unquestionableness' as a foundational consequence of Durkheim's concept of sacred. He says:

> When Durkheim defined "sacred things" as those which are protected and isolated from the profane by interdiction he was referring to objects of discourse, but it does seem that sacred discourse and its material representations are often if not always protected by interdictions, that is, set apart from the quotidian by prescription, proscription and punctilio of expression. Such insulation of course contributes to unquestionableness (Rappaport 1999, pp. 282-283).

The discursive sacred, Rappaport (1999, p. 263) says, manifests as understandings, the "formal expression of which is largely confined to ritual, concerning the existence of spirits". Acceptance, even tacit acceptance by participants in ritual, of those discourses imbue them with a characteristic of unquestionableness and Rappaport (1999, p. 371) argues "this quality of unquestionableness is the essence of the sacred". He (1999, p. 263) coins the term "Ultimate Sacred Postulates" to describe religion's hierarchically ordered understandings, such as declarations of faith or creeds, seeded within its discourses. These
"Ultimate Sacred Postulates" are discursive properties which "can be falsified neither logically nor empirically", and at the same time, "can be verified neither logically nor empirically" (Rappaport 1999, p. 281). The verification or falsification of these "Ultimate Sacred Postulates" is a matter of belief and not therefore part of this thesis. Their deployment in Catholicism, however, has vital significance, particularly in the way these are used to segregate the profane from the sacred.

**Naming the profane**

While some sociological, and much theological, attention is given to the sacred the profane remains little theorised. Nancy Jay's (1981, p. 40) observation that "the sacred possesses no objective features that distinguish it from the profane" supports Rappaport's thesis of the sacred's discursive nature. However, I suggest, that while much scholarly ink is poured over the abstract and philosophical notion of a sacred, that which it is defined against is barely mentioned. Yet what clearly seems, at least to some feminist writers, to be the concrete particularity of everyday reality (presumed by male scholars to be the profane) remains largely unremarked in the field of sociology of religion. The absence of sociological comment on the profane as a cultural category could be attributed to sociology's view of it as "merely a residual category of the trivial and ordinary which dominates everyday reality. The core of the profane world is simply the world of work, production and domesticity" (Turner 1991, p. 92). Parkin (1992, p. 44), reflecting Durkheim's gender blindness, also suggests that for Durkheim the profane is simply "the mundane workaday world, the sphere
in which people go about their unremarkable, routine business". Feminists constantly refer to this sphere as the private sphere: that category of social life to which 'people' (women) are assigned for 'their unremarkable, routine business'. Parkin (1992, p. 45) says that the profane, for Durkheim, acted merely as "a residual category, a conceptual holdall for everything that cannot be fitted into the sacred". The profane, in other words, is feminised.

Durkheim himself, although propounding heterogeneity while sparing of full description, was nonetheless absolutely explicit in some passages. Although his work is gender blind it is 'essentially' exact. "Sometimes", he (1971, p. 138) states, "the religious dignity … is not equal for all. Men possess it to a higher degree than women; in relation to them, women are like profane beings". Later, he (1971, p. 308) argues, that if religious life is to fully develop, "a special spot must be placed at its disposition, from which the second [profane] is excluded". Enormous social consequences flow from Durkheim's segregation of social life (religion) into gender differentiated spheres that are selective and exclusive and "cannot coexist in the same place" (1971, p. 308). From Durkheim's sacred, underpinned by a moral philosophy easily accommodating of antithetical categories, he moves to an intractable everyday reality to distinguish the profane from the sacred. We can begin to see here 'the outwardly visible sign' of oppositional categories. Nancy Jay (1981, p. 40) says that "the radical separation of the sacred and the profane leads directly and necessarily to a radical separation of women and men in religious life". The anomaly of the logical consequence of this division reveals how Durkheim "took rigidly dichotomous gender distinction for granted, a biological given" (Jay 1981, p. 43). Although his single interpretation of religious
life created his own sexist dualism it also depicts religion's sexist peculiarities. It explains, for example, why an abusive priest is comfortably accommodated within the sacred and why the suggestion to admit women to priesthood brings forth interdictions to 'protect and isolate' the sacred and ensure the profane 'remains at a distance'. Or, in other words, segregated in a separate sphere.

Women's consignment to the private makes 'separate spheres' an ideal locus to look at why, in the religious sense, Durkheim was drawn to announce that 'women are like profane beings'. In the fairly broad understandings of separate spheres, whether public/private or sacred/profane, women occupy a marginal place. Within their families of origin, and later the families they create, women with their children, are under the jurisdiction of the male who is the biological or nominal father. Behind the male parent (father) in Catholicism, lies the abstraction of the supremacy of the paternal role, God (The Father). Women located within a patriarchal family are surrounded by a hierarchical continuum of masculinity in both human and spiritual form. This is surely the differentiation of discourse and practice.

Durkheim's formulation of the sacred/profane dichotomy exemplifies the tendency of gender blind theories to collapse the way social arrangements 'are' with the way such theories assume they 'ought to be'. Searching for 'elementary forms' Durkheim sought forms that "were structurally basic and persistent" (Turner 1991, p. 45). However, he looked through a "profoundly Western, Judeo-Christian lens" (Erickson 1993, p. 9) where gendered spheres were understood as 'naturally' basic and persistent. For this reason I suggest that a feminist (re)reading of Durkheim's sacred/profane, as an account of the
gendered functioning of organisational Catholicism, has much to offer because "the
distinction between the sacred and the profane is found in thought that has material
consequences" (Erickson 1993, p. 8).

Feminist sociologists challenge the paucity of critique of interpretations of the
sacred/profane from a number of viewpoints. Nancy Jay (1981, p. 40), for example, says
Durkheim's gendered suppositions "offer no functional analysis for the sacred/profane
dichotomy; he never asks what it is for". I agree with Jay but argue that Durkheim, with his
taken-for-granted gender views, does provide a basis for an examination of a socially
achieved set of moral assumptions relegating women to the margins of religion and hence
society. In making the sacred/profane the pivot on which the social world (a universal
society) revolves, Durkheim's unproblematised division does, by his very explicit silence,
illustrate precisely what the rupture is for. Gender is the unnamed characteristic bifurcating
the sacred/profane. If the sacred/profane is understood as a system of gender power
relations through which sacredness is ascribed in a higher degree (if not totally) to men then
for women, as Penelope Magee (1995, p. 109) rightly argues, "the association of gender
with the profane in these terms is notorious". Maintaining this rigidly gendered segregation
is the precondition for "the connection between gender, force and violence" (Erickson 1993,
p. 27). In the following section I use the concepts identified above and look at the
outcomes, from feminist perspectives, for women and children of their association with that
separate sphere labelled 'profane'.
Violence: a sacred issue

All instances of sexual violence by men against women and children stand as reminders that "ours is a patriarchal society and misogyny is part of our man-made world" (Horsfall 1991, p. 6). A nexus between the specifically patriarchal dimensions of the Church and violence is built when sexual violence is perpetrated by men who are "bound by the Church law demanding perfect and perpetual chastity" (Sipe 1995, p. 7). The contradictory association of discursive 'perfect and perpetual chastity' with material coercive sexual activity signals the relevance of using the inconsistencies inherent in the concept of 'spheres' to view these incongruities. In aspects of the sacred and the sacred/profane as gendered dichotomy we are able to see why some clerical men are sexually abusive and why the collective male hierarchy of the Church abrogates its responsibility for their behaviour. In the remainder of this chapter I examine the sacred as a discursive site through analysis of Church discourses about women and children's place in the sacred. Harboured within these discourses (into which the Church imputes 'unquestionableness') are crucial notions supportive of a specific form of patriarchal authority that is, by implication, protective of clerical abusers. Viewing the sacred and the sacred/profane as gender divided spheres also provides a means of moving away from those already critiqued responses that treat clerical sexual violence as individual deviance.

The major factors presently constraining the Church's responses to clerical sexual abuse lie within its construction of the discourse of the unquestionableness of the sacred. The Church
documents, *Towards Healing* (1996), *Integrity in Ministry* (1999) and *Towards Understanding [Draft]* (1999), all demonstrate varying capacity to raise questions about the abusive actions of priests as matters of individual sexuality and psychopathology. On the other hand those discourses about the nature of the propitious sacred arena (priesthood) remain unquestioned and are given an aura that infers unquestionableness. That these three Church documents give little attention to the abusive priest in their limited definitions of abuse, for example, illustrate the Church's holding onto the status of priesthood as sacred and thus unquestionable. The slavish following of the inaccurate definition of abuse, by writers such as Rossetti and Parkinson, that is focussed on "dependent, developmentally immature children ..." is further indication of the persistence of this notion outside of Church hierarchy. However, the most compelling example of unquestionableness, as a linchpin of the gendering of the sacred, is found in the discourses surrounding the (non)ordination of women in the Roman Catholic tradition.

The debate about 'women as priests' is now a focal point around which the conflicts about power, authority and imaging of women are centralised (Allen 1996; Brennan 1995a, 1996; Byrne 1994; Douglas 1992; Field 1991; Hamington 1995; Johnson 1996; Porter 1989; Ruether 1991; Schüessler Fiorenza 1993; White & Tulip 1991; Uhr 1992, 1996). In relation to the (non)admission of women to priesthood (fully sacred), however, the Church does not raise questions. In what Elizabeth Johnson (1996, online) calls the "recourse to sheer power" it attempts to enforce unquestionableness through applying interdictions. In his
letter, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis: On Reserving Priestly Ordination To Men Alone*, Pope John Paul II authoritatively asserts:

> I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgement is to be definitively held by all the Church’s faithful (John Paul II 1994).

Attempting enforcement through this form of interdiction "is happening because those who oppose women's ordination are losing the argument on the field of reasoning" (Johnson 1996, online). Elizabeth Johnson summarises that the Church's stance on the (non)ordination of women appeals to three persistently presented male arguments: Jesus established a male only priesthood, the Church has an unbroken tradition of restricting ordination to men, and women do not provide 'natural' iconic (bodily) representation of Christ. The theological justifications that the Church employs for its categorical opposition to ordaining women have been repeatedly refuted. They are all reasons that now "do not hold up" (Johnson 1996, online).

Most women and men of feminist conviction agree that the bases for women's exclusion are founded in the Church's "explicit arguments about their inferiority and evil nature" (Hamington 1995, p. 108). On the basis of an absence of male physical attributes the Church has traditionally excluded women from priestly ordination. Reflecting the more recent move towards a more insidious and subtle approach John Paul II argues that exclusion,

> cannot mean women are of lesser dignity, nor can it be construed as discrimination against them ... They are the holy martyrs, virgins, and the mothers of families (John Paul II *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*).
'They' [women] are thereby doubly defined. First by their biology (as men are) and then by the deployment of their sexuality (which men are not). John Paul II's romantic appeal to complementarity clearly renders women as 'different' but does not 'construe' them as 'equal'. Even the "holy martyrs", having given their life for their beliefs, remain defined in liturgical discourse by their sexual activity. Anthony Kenny records that saints without their own Office are celebrated in a Common Office:

For this purpose men were divided into martyrs and non-martyrs and then into bishops and non-bishops. Women were divided first into virgins and non-virgins and after that into martyrs and non-martyrs (Kenny 1985, p. 97).

Precluding women from ordination by virtue of their sex provides a prime example that there is an internal differentiation of the sacred along gender lines and also exhibits the false equality present in the concept of *imago Dei*. Although women are admitted to the sacred, that sacred is discursively construed into a gendered inequality. The logic of *imago Dei*, like the logic of sacred/profane, implies radical and total separation of the sexes. However, the futility of a 'males only' realm is recognised in both the secular and theological concepts of separate spheres. Both always opted for women's inclusion on partial terms. In theological terms Rosemary Radford Ruether says that,

patriarchal Christianity never went so far as to completely deny women's participation in the image of God. To link woman with only the sin-prone part of the self would have been to deny her any redeemability (Ruether 1983, p. 94).
Thus the Church shifts towards complementarity to justify its appropriation of sacred into the ecclesiastical, collectivity of an all-male ordained priesthood. Male embodiment remains, however, as the sacred's first principle.

Where Rosemary Radford Ruether (1983) took *imago Dei* to be both the image of God and the image of Christ, more recently Elizabeth Johnson (1994) makes the categories distinct. In the way that *imago Dei* is taken to be human in the image of God similarly the discourse of *imago Christi* is understood as the endowment of humanity into the image of Christ. Christ, like God, is a matter of the divine and therefore outside the bounds of this project. Unlike God, however, Christ has embodiment in the male person of the historical Jesus (Jesus Christ). Rappaport's analysis now gives a sociological means to deconstruct the phenomenological discourse obscuring the distinction between a priest and Christ. He says:

Sanctity is, thus, a quality of discourse and not of the objects or beings that constitute the significata of such discourse. It is not Christ that is sacred. He may be divine, but that is another matter. It is the discourse, ritual and scriptural, asserting his divinity that is sacred (Rappaport 1999, p. 371).

The discursive assertion of *imago Christi*, Elizabeth Johnson says, is detrimental to women because:

A mentality centred on the priority of men has taken identification with Christ as its own exclusive prerogative, aided by a naïve physicalism that collapses the whole of the Christ into the bodily form of Jesus (Johnson 1994, pp. 71-72).
In persona Christi

There is one further underpinning and key characteristic ascribed to priestliness that is apposite to the question of the exclusion of women from full admission to the sacred. It is known as in persona Christi. This notion extends male biology so that "a priest acts not as an ordinary man, but super-naturally in the person of Christ" (Jay 1992, p. 113). This has its most vivid illustration in a priest, acting as Mass (ritual) celebrant, being in persona Christi. The anthropocentric assertion, associating priesthood with in persona Christi, totally reverses the meaning order of all humanity being elevated to Christ by asserting the descent of Christ's divinity to the bodiliness of the male priest. The Church hierarchy's gendered appropriation of divinity solely to this particularised form of masculinity has wrongly established that the most "salient feature about Jesus as the Christ be his male sex" (Johnson 1994, p. 72).

This distortion of precedence of Jesus' maleness over and above his divine characteristics is a highly contested inversion. To maintain patriarchal control the male Church deems it essential to accentuate in persona Christi as an Ultimate Sacred Postulate. To this end it hierarchically orders and divides the sacred. It does this by overlooking that "Christ exists only pneumatologically" (Johnson 1994, p. 72) and asserting that the primacy of the historical male Jesus equates as in persona Christi. Thus John Paul II's prohibition against the ordination of women attempts to insist this unquestionableness through his demand, "that this judgement is to be definitively held" (John Paul II 1994). Excluding women from
the priestly ability to act *in persona Christi* is also essential to mark their place in the profane sphere. It is postulated in such a way so as to divinise the male sex of the priest while at the same time excluding all women from full incorporation into the sacred. Sacred when separated out into a category of its own, and not always read as the corollary of the profane, becomes a place where not only do the sexes not have equality but active exclusion of one of the sexes "is ensured. Religion is what makes "man"" (Erickson 1993, p. 23). Endowing *in persona Christi* to embodied ordained men, I have already argued, diminishes the divinity of Christ. At the same time, however, the discourse attempts to project the notion that an elevation of this form of masculinity to the divine has occurred. Thus the sacred is internally divided into gendered spheres and women's attempts to seek ordination threaten the unquestionableness of the discursive sacred. Women, as I illustrate below, are then put at risk from "the exclusive groups that dominate the excluded" (Erickson 1993, p. 23). Chapters Six (Priesthood) and Seven (Ritual) take up further implications of this concept.

*In persona Christi* exemplifies Durkheim's 'propitious and unpropitious' sacred as gender divided spheres. Sacredness is a splendid status as it differentiates and categorises in religion and social life from a 'sacred male' perspective to insist the primacy of the ordained male. It is also a contested status as religious women claim their place and equality in that discursive space. One of the primary ways this contestation manifests is through women's challenge to the unquestionableness of an Ultimate Sacred Postulate that 'the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women'. Reserving the sphere of the
ordained as sacred and male, through the total exclusion of women, allows the Church to highlight women's nature as lesser within the sphere of the sacred, as well as to highlight it as profane in comparison with the sphere of the sacred.

As I showed earlier in this chapter, paring back Durkheim's sacred reveals a bifurcation so that the seemingly single category is shown to be 'two': a sacred/sacred. So too Catholicism's sacred is not a unitary category. At its core lie discursive elements, presenting a distorted Christology, that privilege priested men with characteristics of the divine and thereby disperse women (and children) to the margins of the sacred. The effects of the sacred/profane divide, on the other hand, are less obtuse and more readily observed in the gendered discourses and practices of religion. That distortion of Christology, however, also persists into the sacred/profane conceptual divide and Elizabeth Johnson (1994, p. 151) argues that "of all the doctrines of the Church" it is the one "most used to suppress and exclude women". Church imaging of a male Christ as head of the patriarchal family further supports her contention. The major practical consequence of this gender divide in religion is the production of forms of misogyny. Presenting these discourses as divinely ordained then allows misogyny, often masked as complementarity, to be seen as a universal (sacred) ideal. The following section challenges the persistence of those notions and addresses them in relation to understanding how clerical sexual abuse, and the Church's responses to it, reflect its more general attitudes about women and children from the perspective of a sacred/profane division.
A theology of child abuse

Use of the analogy of Christ no longer as an abstraction (God) but imaged as male and as 'head of the family' abounds (cf Daly 1985, 1986; Brock 1989, 1992; Carlson Brown & Bohn 1989, Wainwright 1997). Rita Nakashima Brock (1992, p. 3) argues that much of Christian theology overlooks suffering in the patriarchal family and instead "has painted a nostalgic and untrue picture of that family and based much of its theology on its nostalgia".

While there is, as Philip Aries (1973) shows, a historically fluid idea of what constitutes 'childhood' nostalgia does play a thematic part. As Bittman & Pixley (1997, p. 235) say, children "are predominantly thought of as personal delights, sacred, priceless beings". Peter Pierce (The Country of Lost Children: An Australian Anxiety 1999) traces the cultural implications of the literal 'loss' of children to the ravages of harsh terrain in colonial Australia to the moral implications of recent 'loss of childhood' through human exploitation against children. The forced removal of children, for example, from their own families (the private) into state and church welfare institutions (the public) resulted in "punishments and sexual exploitation" (Pierce 1999, p. 195) that are totally devoid of any basis for nostalgia. Orphans Of The Empire (Gill 1997) and Bringing Them Home (HREOC 1997) further elaborate that somewhere between the nostalgic notions and the reality, children are less than visible as human or theological subjects in the private (profane) sphere and childhood is a tenuous category in the public (sacred) sphere.
In the political realms of public/private Jean Bethke Elshtain (1982, p. 289) notes that children "have been the companions of women in the closet of political science". She adds that although some women have made good their escape:

Children remain, with few exceptions, both silent and invisible – relegated to a conceptual space (which is presumed to reflect social reality) that has been declared apolitical (Elshtain 1982, p. 289).

Incestuous abuse of children within their families is, like its victims, 'both silent and invisible' (cf. Gordon 1989, Gittins 1993). The sexually abusive behaviour of a father towards his daughter is contrarily "both ordinary and deviant" but it is "never just an exaggeration of the acceptable" (Gordon 1989, p. 205). It is the hidden persona of the child in the shadow of the higher profile of the father that allows invisibility to develop first around the events as and where they occur. Secondly, there is complicity to maintain children's invisibility through the reluctance of authorities deemed appropriate to intervene in the 'privacy' of the family. Sociological discussions of socialisation and psychological theories of development notwithstanding, a certain obscurity, envelops these 'sacred, priceless beings' after their infancy until they re-emerge as persons bordering on autonomy, becoming sexual actors, and thus verging into a political identity. Absence is similarly replicated in Catholic discourses of childhood where, as well as being apolitical, children are also 'atheological'. Children, at precisely the time they are experiencing clerical sexual abuse, are 'missing' from theology.

Ann Loades (1998, p. 40) pertinently asks, "how does 'child abuse' come to be constructed as discourse". There is nothing abstract or absent about the experience of clerical sexual
abuse for the child who is suffering that violence. It is a highly physical, embodied real experience. Why then are the children out of sight? In the same way that Jean Bethke Elshtain (1982) was challenged to seek out children as political subjects feminist writers on religion have begun to search for children as theological subjects. Seeking to answer her own question Loades engages in a quest to find the missing child as theological subject. She argues that what she terms an "anxiety" exists around the two stages of children's appearances in theology (Loades 1998, p. 44). Theologians and moral ethicists focus anxiously on the embryo and foetus and around moral issues of conception and pregnancy proceeding to full term. Children with congenital and birth defects likewise raise moral anxiety regarding the means used to withhold or sustain fragile infant lives. All of these are of course associated to Church insistence on its right to regulate women's sexuality and fertility. Post-pubertal sexuality later emerges as another anxiety for these same 'experts' who are then concerned with those same infants now bordering on adulthood and becoming another generation whose sexuality and fertility is in need of moral regulation. The outcome of this polarised theological interest in children is that "little attention has been given to the value and significance of the lives of those who may or may not flourish in the period between birth and social maturity" (Loades 1998, p. 44).

This invisibility of children is, I suggest, neither accidental nor a careless oversight. It is carefully linked to a certain form of mobility between spheres. A convenient transition of children in and out the family achieves this goal. Church doctrine intermittently moves children, as theological subjects, between spheres to accommodate its gendered theological
notions about where they belong. The enthusiastic theological interest in the foetus and infant locates the child outside of the private (profane) sphere of its mother into the possession of the public (sacred) realm of the broader male Church. Here clerical men exercise their authority over women's (children's mothers) fertility, sexuality and moral autonomy. After infancy children are relocated back into the 'privacy' of the family where women are held responsible for maintaining that form of privacy that obscures abuse. Loades (1998) argues that Christianity has a blind spot where the care and protection of children is concerned which is aggravated by its general uneasiness with human sexuality. Thus it is predisposed towards sweeping issues of child abuse under the carpet. Prior to instituting formal policies of response the Church used several such means to 'hide' complaints of sexual abuse. Silencing, accusations of vindictiveness, allegations of seeking monetary gain and so forth were all employed to 'protect the Church from scandal'. Such means also ensured child abuse was enclosed in the private (profane) world of women. Ormerod & Ormerod (1995, Ch. 5) provide detailed accounts of these practices and Chapters Two and Three of this thesis have already critiqued inappropriate foregrounding of children in the work of Church advisers and in Church policy. In the case of clerical sexual abuse, however, the attempt to once again move children out of the family, into the sacred (public), is momentary. Children are simply relocated as a means of drawing the focus away from those abusive clerics who already occupy the sacred sphere.

O'Grady et al (1998, p. 16) state that "the continued infantilisation of women in our society leads inextricably to the powerlessness of children, their inability to refuse, like women, the
desires of men". Ann Loades goes on to demonstrate that this practice is also a contributory factor in denying children their own theological position. Children's connectedness to the sphere of women centres attention on child rearing and Christian child education and thus situates them as unseen subjects in an already peripheral place (the private). In Christian theology that association further relegates them to the profane. The previously discussed appropriation of Christology to the form of masculinity producing *in persona Christi* is again evident in the assimilated representations of Christ to patriarchal worldviews of the family. Co-opting the image of Christ to take on the "assumed contours of the male head of the household or imperial ruler" ultimately "functions as a sacred justification for male dominance and female subordination" (Johnson 1994, p. 151). Rita Nakashima Brock is likewise adamant that Christic symbols and metaphors function to endorse male dominance. She says:

Christological doctrines use analogies to the patriarchal family to articulate the meaning of Christ. These doctrines assume the unquestioned norm of the patriarchal family. Hence, I believe, such christological doctrines reflect views of divine power that sanction child abuse on a cosmic scale and sustain benign paternalism (Brock 1989, p. 43).

One of the most striking features of Christology is the Church's (mis)use of it to enforce gender discourses and practices as universal postulates that endure continuously. In that sense Christology bears many similar hallmarks to Durkheim's representation of the sacred/profane as universal that is used here as a basis (but not a conclusion) to view some of the underpinnings of clerical sexual abuse. Universal theories, as Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 45) claims, "will not work to explain oppression. Oppression must be proved on its own terms at each moment in history". At this moment in Church history revelations not
so much of the high incidence of clerical sexual violence but of an apparent sanctioning of these abuses has given feminist theologians and writers numerous reasons to question 'blind patriarchy'. Intentionally obscured theological subjects are being (re)discovered as "oppressed groups are revealing the connections between Christianity and the cultural contexts that harm them and perpetrate violence against them. Women are pointing to Christianity's complicity in the abuse of women and children" (Keshgegian 1999, p. 38).

Challenging discourses that 'reflect views of divine power that sanction child abuse on a cosmic scale and sustain benign paternalism' is to reveal that the violence, held as male and sacred in such discourse, is not benign in practice. Clerical sexual violence is the exemplar of this.

Sacred/profane and violent

There is, I argue, a concrete focal point between the discursive sacred and profane. Its boundary lies at the junction between violence and women in the Catholic tradition. Precisely at this juncture patriarchal Catholic doctrines about women are reconciled with the abuses experienced by women as embodied subjects. The notion of there being a sacred force, that is a "force of collective opinion" (Erickson 1993, p. 23), permeates the whole of Catholicism as an entirely male sacred. The one to one acts of sexual violence perpetrated by priests against the women in this study, and the subsequent ill treatment of those women by Church hierarchy are simply reflective of the enormity that the forms of oppression and suppression of women take in the Church. Such oppressions are mostly defined around
women's bodies, particularly in the zealous force used to control procreative functions and to record those functions as profane. Rosemary Radford Ruether enumerates some of these:

Women's chastity before and in marriage has been rigidly regulated ... Women's ability to make decisions about conceiving or bearing a child are sternly curtailed ... the church intervened to denounce as immoral, and to banish knowledge about, contraception and abortion ... Christianity has asserted that it is gravely sinful for a woman to try to control reproduction ... she must be totally resigned to the outside forces that control her ... referred to in impersonal cosmic terms, such as biological destiny and divine will (Ruether 1989, pp. 38-39).

Women's bodies (and those of their cohorts: children) form the barrier between the sacred and profane. In clerical sexual abuse they are momentarily taken closer into the male realm of the sacred and then expelled back into the female profane boundary. Clerical men's ability to effect this exercise of power occurs when, as Foucault (1977, p. 26) defines, "the body is conceived not as a property, but as a strategy". In celibacy the clerical man has forgone an individual woman's body as property but all women's bodies become strategies in which,

the effects of domination are attributed not to 'appropriation', but to dispositions, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functionings; that one should decipher in a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess; that one should take as its model a perpetual battle rather than a contract regulating a transaction or the conquest of a territory (Foucault 1977, p. 26).

A 'perpetual battle' rages between the sacred and the profane and women's bodies mark out the sacred's battle lines. Carol Pateman's (1989, p. 4) statement that "women's bodies symbolize everything opposed to the political order" easily transposes to 'everything opposed to the sacred order'. This opposition arises because women "have been included as
'women'; that is, as beings whose sexual embodiment prevents them enjoying the same political [sacred] standing as men" (Pateman 1989, p. 4).

Abusive acts committed in the sacred against women and children are the culmination of the range of status inequities of women in religion who, by being denied the fullness of humanity, become lesser human [sacred] subjects. Women in religion who, in Elizabeth Johnson's words (1994, p. 26), "are called to honour a male saviour sent by a male God whose legitimate representatives can only be male, all of which places their persons precisely as female in a peripheral role". Women's bodies, as profane, make women peripheral against the primacy of the sacred. In the concept of the sacred/profane division, as with the public/private spheres, it is predominantly men who have greater mobility between spheres. While secular men traverse from the public to the private for their sexual and domestic arrangements, sacred men (priests) bring women from the profane to the sacred for purposes of coercive sexual activities after which women are returned to the profane. The sacralised man remains undiminished in the sacred's essential core, its sine qua non: priesthood. Thereby the sacred is never diminished and remains a "thing set apart" (Durkheim 1971, p. 47). For the purpose of sexual abuse women and children are momentarily admitted to a higher echelon of the sacred and their female (or child) bodies become the material substances on which sacred violation takes place. Abusive clerical men do not leave the sacred in this process and the discourse asserting their Christic attribute remains intact thus demonstrating that "clergy power and authority rooted in certain charisms, also verge on being absolute" (Keshgegian 1999, p. 40).
Enacting gender, force and violence

Recently, the absolute tension between the sacred/profane and its connection to clerical violence was illustrated in a manifestly violent incident concerning Lavinia Byrne. Byrne is British woman religious, academic, writer and BBC broadcaster. Her fourth book, *Woman At The Altar: The Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (1994) was typeset for publication when *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* was issued. Byrne, at her own expense, halted publication and appended *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* to her book. From that time she has neither spoken nor taught on the topic. Byrne, along with a number of male theologians, including Australian priest Paul Collins, is under investigation as a heretic, by the Sacred Congregation For The Doctrine Of The Faith (SCDF). "The SCDF has launched an investigation into her orthodoxy and ordered remaining copies of the book to be destroyed" (Leonard 1998, p. 17). While secular publishers act independently of the SCDF, in the USA the distributors Liturgical Press of St John's Abbey Minnesota, complied with the order and burned one thousand three hundred copies of the book. While the male theologians under investigation are subject to the same anonymous, inquisitorial processes as Lavinia Byrne they have not had an act of violence committed upon them. Clerical men destroyed Byrne's intellectual work but not her spirit. She says:

Now you can go to a rape therapist or a grief counsellor, but there aren't too many book-burning counsellors around. My spirits got lower and lower. ... what eventually pulled me back from the brink was a grimly funny detail ... The monks allegedly made an eco-friendly decision. They didn't pulp the book or wantonly burn it in some refuse dump. ... they put it in the monastery incinerator so they were lit and fuelled by it. When I read that I laughed aloud and some of the shame and pain began to evaporate (Byrne interview with Leonard 1998, p. 17).
Lavinia Byrne, from her location within the profane sphere, identified the unquestionableness of an Ultimate Sacred Postulate and questioned it. Further, by presenting her work in scholarly, generally accessible and personable terms, she made possible a way for a wide readership of women and men to understand the gendered consequences of the bias of *in persona Christi*. To her personal detriment she (1994, p. 110) argued, "not only can women offer each other witness or apostolic identity of leadership but we can also stand *in persona Christi". The retaliation came swiftly in a deeply symbolic act redolent of violence against all women that must be seen as an act of 'sacred violence'. Contemporary incidences of this kind substantiate Carol Karlsen's claim that, witchcraft did not end in 1692 ... Women who threatened the dominant and sex defined interests of society did not escape obloquy and reprisal. Nor did the symbol of the witch herself disappear (Karlsen 1982, p. 391).

After being an active member of religious life for thirty-five years Lavinia Byrne left her religious congregation. Byrne declined to sign a statement, for the Sacred Congregation For The Doctrine Of The Faith, demanding that she give public assent to two fundamentally misogynist declarations on women, *Humanae Vitae* and *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, (*The Tablet* 2000, p. 61). Byrne says that while she would happily "profess my faith ... to recite the Nicene creed" but to sign the documents demanded would "make the Church in Britain a laughing stock". "There was", she adds, "no way I was prepared to do that, because it would confirm that the only things the Catholic Church was interested in were sex and keeping women in their place" (Byrne in Collins 2001, p. 179).
Conclusion

This chapter set out to examine the recurring and inter-related phenomena of Catholicism and violence. The sacred/profane dichotomy is the analytic tool employed to explore what lies behind individual acts of clerical sexual violence. Using Durkheim's analysis reveals processes of sacralisation being "used by particular men to create and sustain society from which women, and the rest of the profane collectivity, are excluded" (Erickson 1993, p. 46). From that view clerical sexual abuse is clearly seen as violence. It is neither a matter of individual psychosexual pathology or a wrongly expressed sexuality. Clerical sexual violence blends a complex mix of dominance and power and a particular form of male authority, enacted as violence, which serves to protect the collective body to which priestly abusers belong. The discursive form of that authority stems from a distorted Christology.

The Church in setting up discursive postulates as unquestionable, particularly in regard to cultic priesthood, establishes an aura of divinity on which it alleges a profoundly sacred masculinity is established. This discourse is practiced as gender inequity and corroborates Victoria Erickson's argument (1993, p. 49) that "a feminist sociology and theory of Western rationalised religion would do well to view religion as that space in social life where gender is created". The maintenance of gender boundaries ensures the internal division within the sacred, and the separation of the sacred from the profane, of necessity rest on a dynamic of abuse. However, at the same time as Durkheim set up his oppositional categories, that seemingly doom the profane (women) to a life of domination and violence, he also provides
a way for women's exodus away from the "connection between gender, force and violence" (Erickson 1993, p. 27). He emphasises that:

The force isolating the sacred being and holding the profane beings at a distance ... lives in the minds of the believers (Durkheim 1971, p. 365).

Religious women exercise their minds and with a feminist insistence demand an answer to Ann Loades' (1998, p. 55) question. "What is being believed about God that licences earthly fathers to behave this way?"

This chapter identifies the undercurrents of separation that give 'licence' to the behaviour of 'earthly fathers'. The methods of separation of the profane from the sacred and the violence necessary to maintain the inner core of the sacred as exclusively male are important to relate my analysis of clerical sexual abuse to structural violence and not individual 'sin'. This is crucial in allowing me to demonstrate that clerical sexual abuse is a matter of violence and not sexual behaviour. In the final section of this thesis (Chapters Six and Seven) I search out the material practices of the discursive sacred as these are made intrinsic to the elevation of men into priesthood. The following chapter deals with the interviews I conducted with women and men who were subjected to clerical sexual violence and confirms my decision to move the thesis' focus from 'victims' to their perpetrators. It also provides an opportunity to evaluate the relationship between the first and final sections of the thesis, which reflect this decision as pertinent to providing a social context for clerical sexual violence.
PART TWO

LISTENING TO AN INTRINSIC CASE STUDY
One of the false gods of theologians, philosophers, and other academics is called Method. It commonly happens that the choice of a problem is determined by method, instead of method being determined by the problem. This means thought is subjected to an invisible tyranny (Daly 1986, p. 11).

He sat the whole time with his hands in front of his mouth in an upright position and looking down and hardly said a word. He occasionally wriggled round in his chair but he didn't look at me. It went on for an hour. ... I was aware from the start that the body language from that priest was just: you are a piece of shit, I don't value you, I suppose I have to go through this. ... I certainly didn't get the sense I was being heard or understood or that there was any concern or compassion (Anna).

This chapter represents Part Two of this thesis. In it I give an account of the empirical research conducted for the thesis. This research project brought me (a mature-age woman research student) into engagement with women and men who had been subjected to sexual abuse by avowedly celibate clerics of the Catholic Church. However, rather than focussing on individuals' circumstances my aim was to connect their experiences with the responses of the collective body to which the abusers belong, namely: the institution of Catholicism and the organisation of the Catholic Church. The thesis asks: why does the Roman Catholic Church respond in the manner it does to the practices of sexual violence perpetrated by some of its priests? To answer this question I had to move beyond interviewees' accounts of their experiences of abuse and saw two ways by which this transition could be achieved. First, I sought respondents' accounts of how their complaints were handled by Church hierarchy. Second, I sought to examine a range of theoretical reasons why this would be the
case. I wanted to determine whether any measures of structural support for individual abusers were evident in the hierarchy’s responses to complainants. This was a new and untested path in relation to sexual violence and the Church. Feminist research provides a strong precedent of uncovering the underpinning forms of structural support for male violence in other areas and I wanted to expand these.

As indicated in the Introduction, at the time my candidature commenced (1996) there had been no official response by the Catholic Church in Australia to clerical sexual abuse. I began conducting interviews in early 1997. Shortly after that I withdrew from candidature to visit and eventually nurse my dying mother. By the time I returned to the project, Towards Healing (December 1996) was released. I continued to conduct the remaining interviews using the same approach I had taken with the earlier respondents. Most participants were either unaware of, or did not mention, Towards Healing (1996). Before the Church’s formalised acknowledgment of the existence of its sexually violent clerics its actions and attitudes toward complainants were at that time also coming to light through published literature and increased media attention. Those sources publicly articulated, even if indirectly “This is how the Church responds”, and media reports such as those cited in Chapter One made public the injustice in those (un)official Church responses.

25 The dates on Church documents are the dates these publications are submitted to Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference (ACBC). This is some months before their public release.
It could be argued that with the release of *Towards Healing* (1996) any further interviews were no longer necessary as the Church now formally contributes its answer to this study's question. However, the few interviews I had already conducted pointed to the discrepancy between complainants' lived experience of their engagement with a Church representative (all prior to the documents release) and the new 'policy language'. The nuances of participants' sense of, for example, attitudes towards and treatment of them, body language and the recurring word 'cold' to describe Church officials stand at odds with the policy formula. My assertion is that the 'Principles' in the Church's current responses have not "become an opportunity to create a better Church" (*Towards Healing* 1996, p. 17). Its 'Procedures' likewise are inadequate in terms of eradicating the abusive sexual practices of some clerical men. The Church is ultimately concerned with 'The Church'. In contrast, a particularity of this study from its inception remains based in concern for the participants.

*Towards Healing's* introduction states, "it is a public document that establishes public criteria to which the community may judge the resolve of Church leaders to address sexual abuse within the Church" (1996, p. 1). Yet, its conclusion also states that, "all matters of interpretation are reserved to the National Committee for Professional Standards" (1996, p. 17). Such an authoritarian statement of closure appears contrary to the procedures the document asserts it is seeking to overcome. Although what American priest Donald Cozzens (2000, p. 125) calls, "the systemic structures of clerical culture which appear to be important variables in the etiology of the crisis" are apparent, these are not open to any interpretation but the Church's own. And it indicates that encounters, such as the following,
that took place between a woman and a high level Church spokesman in the year leading up to the publication of *Towards Healing*, will not be instantly rectified by a policy release.

I would have spent about an hour with him there. ... I remember challenging the transfer of responsibility to me about this whole thing. ... He kept telling me that they had this procedure but he wouldn't tell me what it was. I wanted some specifics of what we could do but he was evasive ... I remember he said "don't push me, don't put words into my mouth". ... And he got quite upset with me saying again "don't put words into my mouth". ... But in the end I left there feeling that I had no answer and that I wasn't going to be believed. I asked, "are you trying to say that I fabricated some of this?" and he said "maybe you don't have it clear and maybe you've added things". ... My overwhelming feeling was this is going to be a huge uphill battle. I'm not being treated like a credible person and I'm having to prove my integrity. ... But at that time he was very distant and smug, his attitude was incredibly smug. Would I ever be happy? Would there be more? Because his experience was that victims were never happy. You do this and they still want more, you do that and they still want more. And I said "are you saying that I'm obsessed" and he sort of grinned and said, "maybe, you know". I said, "do you think I would go through this sort of hell - it's not exactly my idea of a holiday - why would I be putting myself through all of this?" He was a very shrewd and a very clever man, he wouldn't allow words to come out but he made facial gestures to indicate 'well! well!' So I asked him are you saying that I fabricated it and he said, "maybe, some of it, yes" and I knew at that point I wasn't going to get anywhere. I realised that I might need a psychiatric report to at least back me up as some sort of credible human being. 'Cos that was very much what I felt that my credibility was in tatters, and was being questioned. It wasn't in tatters, it was actually up for question with them. ... This time I thought I would see what other options I would have and I mentioned legal. Which, he said, would be not a good move that his experience was that that was a terribly long thing, it was costly and it didn't bring healing. So basically I was being encouraged not to think along those lines and I just said that that would be my choice. And that was the last time I had contact with him. I knew at that point I wasn't going to get anywhere and that was my whole feeling for all of my 3 sessions with him (Frances - my emphasis).

Frances' encounter exemplifies those of many others, and chairman of the National Committee for Professional Standards, Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, acknowledges his awareness of the 'gap' between policy and procedure. Ultimately the response to victims, he
says, "depends on the person in charge of the diocese or religious order ... The response from some diocese is excellent; from others it's very bad. ... The process can be as abusive as the abuse" (Broken Rites 1999-2000 p. 13).

Framework for a case study

This chapter has two sections. Section One provides details of the sample and data collection. Section Two discusses the process of the interview situation and draws together literature concerning the feminist tradition of social research as distinguished from male-centred scientific approaches. Overall this empirical project is a case study informed mainly by the body of literature concerned with the theoretical and practical accounts of feminist research experiences. It fits into the bracket of empirical research that Shulamit Reinharz (1992, p. 249) describes as being, "guided by feminist theory, and sometimes by critical and mainstream disciplinary theory". What I hope to show is, what Stanley & Wise (1990, p. 22) call, "detailed descriptions of actual feminist research processes sited around an explanation of feminist consciousness". By reflecting on the interview process and drawing on the interview transcripts I develop a counter-discourse to the hegemony of the dominant male discourse of the Catholic Church.

As I contend in Chapter Two the Church's response documents obscure the particularities of the 'clerical' aspect of its sexual abusers. There is a broad intention in this case study to
mark out some specific aspects of Catholicism that engender clerical sexual abuse. In seeking first hand information from voluntary participants of their experience of clerical sexual abuse, I wanted to relate that material to analyses of a number of Catholic discourses to particularise the issue as 'clerical sexual abuse'. Ensuring this distinction means the matter is not subsumed into the generalities of either sexual violence or paedophilia. Thus the project is categorised into what Stake (1994, p. 237 emphasis original) defines as an "intrinsic case study". That is, it provides a means of gaining greater understanding of the grounded and concrete particularities of Catholic clerical sexual abuse. Simultaneously this "intrinsic interest" in the specific circumstances of abuse for an individual facilitates a wider understanding of the arena within which this violence is located and flourishes. Church discourse, as both perpetrators and hierarchies employ it, then becomes the focal interest. Shifting the attention in that manner moves the research towards being an "instrumental case study". Stake (1994, p. 237) argues that often "there is no line distinguishing intrinsic case study from instrumental; rather, a zone of combined purpose separates them". There is, however, neither a particular search for a 'distinguishing line' nor an aspiration to label the work in an objective way. Rather, my emphasis is simply to argue that this type of case study is both an appropriate sociological tool for the task of this project and can be deemed feminist in that it follows Mary Daly's approach of allowing the problem to determine the method. The interest that feminists have in case studies, Reinharz (1992, p. 168) says, "stem from a desire to rectify research tainted by gynopia, misogyny and male-dominant theorising". Part One of this thesis shows clear evidence of these three distortions in the Church's present research and responses into clerical sexual abuse alongside an absence of the particularities of clerical sexual violence.
While lively critique proliferates in debates surrounding the value of a feminist approach to method/methodology questions in social science, agreement exists around the value of the case study as a feminist research tool (cf Harding 1987, Stanley & Wise 1990, Reinharz 1992, Cotterill 1992, Maynard & Purvis 1994, Lyons & Chipperfield 2000). The reasons underpinning feminist use of case studies are no different than those of non-feminist researchers (Reinharz 1992, p. 167). That is, case studies provide a means of enriching social understandings of particular issues by highlighting the specificities distinguishing the study's subject from the general category to which it otherwise belongs. Shulamit Reinharz (1992, p. 167) claims that studies, "of the exceptional case have great heuristic value" particularly when used to illustrate that "generalisation is invalid". The exceptional cases of clerical sexual abuse are used here as a heuristic tool to 'discover' elements of abuse in Church discourse. At the same time they show the limitations of the Church's insistence on the generalisation of the status of its 'celibate' priesthood when many priests are not only sexually active but also often sexually violent.

An intrinsic case study, Stake (1994, p. 243) says, "is not undertaken primarily because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because, in all its particularity and ordinariness the case itself is of interest" (1994, p. 237). This applies to the issue of Catholic clerical sexual abuse. Although I want to know why the Church responds in what I perceive as an inappropriate way to disclosures of clerical sexual abuse, I did not directly address my question to 'The Church'. In conducting interviews with people who experienced clerical sexual abuse I neither sought their opinions on, nor their
answers to, my question. Rather, the material from the interviews informs an examination of certain structural aspects of the organisational Church, discursive aspects of the institutional Church and cultic priesthood and the impact of these on its responses to complainants.

This case study begins from the premise that utilising a feminist-centred view addresses the experiences, questions and concerns of participants ahead of those of the Church, and thereby begins to imagine responses to priestly sexual abuse outside the confines of the exclusively male Church. In similar vein to Mary Daly's statement, Sandra Harding (1987, p. 8) says that, "in the best of feminist research the purposes of research and analysis are not separable from the origins of research problems". An objective of the study is to follow those understandings to build a cohesive work in which method and methodology incorporate a feminist approach distinguishing the work from existing studies. The perpetrating men in this study share commonly held institutional beliefs coupled with the organisational practices of Catholic clerics. It is this factor, which holds the potential to keep the issue located within the domain of the patriarchal church. For this reason, I argue that only a feminist methodology can broadly examine why corrupt clerical men engage women and children, and some men, in coercive and criminal sexual encounters. Furthermore, only feminist analyses can explain why their peers, who are otherwise concerned and responsible clerical men, collaborate to conceal such malevolence.
Section One: Summary of the sample

Approaching Participants

Persons experiencing clerical sexual abuse are by and large a 'hidden' population. Although much media publicity surrounds the issue of clerical sexual abuse the identity of those offended against is usually given anonymity. Even if persons are not anonymous no contact details are given for them. Seeking potential respondents was therefore problematic. I sought respondents via these three means:

• through victims' support groups
• personal contacts
• snowballing via agreed participants

I chose these three methods for two reasons. First, I recognised and was concerned about the potential for any emotional and psychological impact of the interviews for participants. I believed that approaches made through relevant support groups would yield people who were not making a 'first time' disclosure and who would therefore be less liable to suffer emotional distress as an outcome of the interview. People belonging to such groups have already given accounts of their experience in at least the group situation while some have engaged in more public political activity. And, since my emphasis is on the Church's responses, people who had not previously disclosed their abuse would not have engaged with the Church in any formal way. Further, membership of a group provides a supportive

26 These three methods also meet the ethical standards required by the University of Wollongong when involving human subjects in research procedures.

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network for people should they feel emotional distress or simply want to discuss their interview experience. I have noted instances where radio programs, for example, present guests who either describe personal experience of clerical sexual abuse or offer expert opinion on the issue. Listeners, who identify with these speakers and contact the program to relate their own abusive experience, often for the first time, frequently suffer emotional distress that the program presenter is unable to alleviate. Ormerod and Ormerod also note this form of identification. They state that on one occasion after the national broadcaster (ABC) presented a dramatised television account of clerical sexual abuse several persons contacted the station claiming that their own 'case' was used without their consent (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. xiv).

I preferred not to place public advertisements as a means of initiating contact for the same reasons. Also, I am located in Wollongong where, at the time I commenced this study, several young men disclosed sexual abuse by a local parish priest Peter Comensoli (later sentenced) and a former high school principal Christian Brother Michael Evans, who committed suicide prior to his arrest. I knew of both these men through their public profiles in the local community. The disclosing men (anonymous in media reports of their allegations) are in the same age group as my three sons. Although unnamed I assumed that through social contact I could know some of them and thought that if any of these men became known to me it could be a potential source of embarrassment to them. There was also the profound impact of newspaper reportage about this case that is discussed in Chapter One. Furthermore, a narrow sample (two perpetrators) could have ensued leading
to the possibility of this study being regarded as so particularised it could be interpreted as a local issue (a 'one off' occurrence) not indicative of the general category of clergy abuse.

Prior to any approaches to respondents I was obliged to obtain ethics consent (Human Research Ethics Committee at University of Wollongong) for the research. For the duration of the project this approval has required annual review. Early in 1998 that Ethics Committee contacted me regarding a complaint received from a woman regarding the Committee's approval of my engagement with people who had experienced sexual abuse. This woman herself was not approached as a respondent but she had seen my Approach Letter. Her complaint is indicative of a population's perception of the highly sensitive nature of human research related to matters involving sexual violation. At the same time, however, it overlooks human agency and provides an example of the view that there is no social context to sexual abuse. That woman's view pathologises abused persons (in the same way the Church does) by suggesting that such people remain "distraught" and therefore the only proper approach to them must be in psychological terms by a clinically qualified person. I append the Ethics Committee letter (Appendix D) and my response (Appendix E) to demonstrate this.

Data Collection

Fourteen interviews were conducted from a total of forty-four distributed approach packages. Thirteen of these were initiated through the support groups (from a total of thirty-seven approaches). I approached two support groups through their known contact persons
I made contact with Friends of Susanna via the authors of *When Ministers Sin: Sexual Abuse in the Churches* (Ormerod & Ormerod, 1995). This is a Sydney-based support group formed for women and men who had been subjected to clerical sexual abuse. Members of that group no longer formally meet. I also contacted Broken Rites, a Melbourne based national support group for persons who have been sexually abused by clergy and other Church personnel. This organisation publishes a national newsletter, *In Fidelity*, and is listed in the telephone directory. Membership of both groups is non-denominational and comprises men and women. My approach was purposive in seeking only respondents whose experiences are related to the Catholic Church. In each case the support groups' gatekeepers spoke with me at length about the project. They also read and commented on my Approach Letter and Consent Form before agreeing to distribute them.

Copies of the Approach Letter (Appendix A) and Consent Form (Appendix B) are attached. Three central points of the Approach Letter are extracted here to highlight my presentation to potential respondents.

- As part of the empirical research I want to examine the matter of clerical sexual abuse of women and children, both boys and girls. My particular focus is on the way this behaviour and practice, if reported, was handled by the hierarchy.
- My concern is not with the psychology of perpetrating individuals.
- I should state that I do not have any therapeutic assistance to offer you.

The gatekeepers initiated first contact with possible respondents by addressing the outgoing letters. Consequently, I have no knowledge of who was contacted or who did not respond. As the responses were sent directly to me the gatekeepers would not know who responded unless their members chose to tell them. This system provided a degree of confidentiality for all parties. The gatekeepers drew up their list of contacts based on their assessment of
members' vulnerability to interview-induced distress. I do not know how the gatekeepers represented me to those they approached but know that Broken Rites included a statement with my Approach Letter indicating that they were acting on my behalf.

A fellow member of Women And The Australian Church (WATAC), who understood the nature of the project and knew some survivors of clerical sexual abuse distributed four other packages but no contacts were received from that avenue. Snowballing by two participants, who contacted other survivors known to them, resulted in one interview from three approaches. That interview was with a man who was psychologically but not sexually abused. I interviewed him because he belonged to an organisation from which numerous cases of abuse were reported and telephone conversations with him indicated to me his wide understanding of the systemic nature of abuse in that organisation.

Participants initiated first contact with me by mailing me their Consent Form with contact details and I responded to them by telephone. We usually discussed the project at length and in all instances we had several telephone conversations before meeting. Our meeting was arranged in due course at a time suited to their availability around their family, work, and other commitments. All but one interview took place in the respondent's home and all were recorded with his/her consent on a small unobtrusive tape recorder. One interview was conducted in an office at the university where I was employed at that time. This was at the respondent's suggestion; he was visiting Wollongong and wanted to save me travelling. The
geographic spread of people who volunteered to give interviews included Sydney, Newcastle, Canberra, Melbourne and some rural areas of Victoria and New South Wales that I leave unnamed because of their small populations.

In addition to these fourteen interviews seven other women approached by the support groups contacted me but did not proceed to interview for various reasons. One requested that the interview take place at her therapist's rooms with the therapist present. And, that I would "cover the cost of that session at $80 per hour and if it jeopardised my therapy we would have to stop and discuss it". I thanked the woman for her offer but declined stating that under the terms of Human Research Ethics Committee approval I am obliged not to put her at risk of 'jeopardising her therapy' and as a student I would be unable to pay the costs of her therapist. Two other women replied and asked me to telephone them to discuss the project further. After long conversations both indicated a willingness to sign the consent form but neither did this and I do not know the reason that they did not do so. Another said that because her abuser was a bishop she considered him to be a 'significant' perpetrator. She felt, however, that revealing his status could identify him. At the same time, not revealing this and subsuming him into the category 'priest' would diminish what she saw as the importance of his offence. We had several long telephone conversations with each reverting back to this issue, and because her dilemma remained unresolved the woman did not participate. Another two interstate women who had not accurately read the given dates for my travel to Victoria contacted me after my trip. After a conversation they understood that I was unable to travel again to interview them. Another woman replied that a now
deceased priest abused her over a long period. She did not wish to participate but thanked me for offering (through Broken Rites) an interview opportunity. Her letter concluded "For my part I have been healed of the terrible emotional hurt – and for your part I do admire you and wish you every success".

As evidenced by the number of packages distributed (forty-four) and the number of interviews (fourteen) the final responding sample (thirty two percent) is small and self-selected. The study, however, reflects the range of forms of abusive acts and practices, the clerical capacities of offenders and the inadequacy of Church responses seen in other Australian works (cf Ormerod & Ormerod 1995; Parkinson 1997; Gill 1997). Restricting potential interviewees first to members of support groups, and then only Catholic members in those non-denominational groups, was a significant factor in limiting the sample size. Reliable statistics of people who are abused is difficult to determine (see Sipe 1995, Cozzens 2000 for some US figures). Also a great many abused people have not made formal complaints to the Church so have not experienced Church responses.

Several precedents demonstrate the usefulness of small-scale qualitative studies. Cynthia Cockburn's (1991) study of men's organisational resistance to women in the workplace exemplifies her (1991, p. 4) observation that the "legitimacy" of this type of qualitative work "does not spring from numbers [but] gains what authority it has from the depth of insight made available". From a group of ten participants, Yvonne Darlington (1996)
provides exceptional insights into women's "moving on" from their experiences of childhood sexual abuse. Catherine Garrett (1998) presents a finely nuanced study of recovery from anorexia without discussion of sample representativeness. From a mainstream sociological theory perspective Stake (1994, p. 245) states that the "purpose of the case study is not to represent the world, but to represent the case".

**Conducting the Interviews**

The primary data gathering technique was unstructured interviews which are "variously described as naturalistic, autobiographical, in depth, narrative or non-directive" (Holland & Ramazanoglu 1994, p. 135). The following account records the conduct of the interviews that took place subsequent to the telephone conversations with each participant. After meeting the person and sharing some informal general conversation I began by saying:

> I am asking everyone the same five questions. When I turn the tape on I'll start by asking you those five questions and then I'll leave it up to you to tell me as much or as little as you feel comfortable to do about your circumstances. These are the five questions I'll ask you:

- How old were you when the incidences occurred? Just to distinguish between child and adult survivors.
- Who was the perpetrator? Not necessarily the name, that's up to you, but the clerical capacity of the person.
- Did you tell anyone at the time?
- Have you ever made an official complaint?
- Have you ever received any monetary compensation? For anyone who has I'm not asking details - just whether or not they had to sign a disclaimer.
As I said in my letter to you that this is not an investigation. I accept what you say about what happened. I'm not interested in the psychology of the perpetrator.

My main interest is in the way the Church handled your disclosure if you made a complaint.

I'm very conscious of confidentiality and so if I speak to you while the tape is on I don't use your name. I hope this doesn't sound too unfriendly but it means that the only indicator on the tape is today's date so if there was some circumstance where, for example, it was taken out of my car on the way home or something like that there is no identification.

If you want to stop the tape at anytime that's OK we just turn it off.

Is there anything that I haven't explained that you'd like to say something about before the tape is turned on?

After starting the tape I asked the questions (as stated) leaving an opportunity for the interviewee to respond to each one. Because each person easily knows the answers to these questions, they serve to open dialogue and focus on the issue. After the five questions I said "thank you for that, and now as I said I'll just leave it up to you to tell me as much or as little as you feel comfortable to do about your circumstances". Participants then spoke thoughtfully for periods of up to half an hour without interruption. They provided reflective accounts of their experience, which they also attempted to keep chronological, relating how the abuse occurred as well as other factors that were concurrent in their life. Those who had engaged with Church hierarchy as complainants spoke about those encounters. For the interview with the one man who did not experience sexual abuse I related the five questions to him and offered him the opportunity to give his insights into the structural ways in which he perceived abuses were perpetrated in his organisation. All interviews are between one and a half and three and a half hours in duration.
Although there is no intention to extrapolate numeric information from the data collected, two tables are included as Appendices. The first, Table A (Appendix C) gives a 'sketch' of participants and illustrates the range of their sex, their age when the abuse commenced and how many of their perpetrators were convicted. It is important to note that none of those convictions apply to the perpetrators' offences against people in this study although those offences infer criminality. Included amongst these are: vaginal and anal rape, oral sex, digital penetration and other physical assaults, using a participant as an aid to masturbation, psychological threats and religious 'blackmail'. While some participants made claims for monetary compensation against the Church, none took steps towards those legal procedures against their perpetrators that lead to charges or convictions. Table A reflects (for adults and children) the pattern Wallis (1995, p. 17) found showing that in Australia "only about 2 per cent of reports of child molestation lead to official action". In summary then, thirteen people in this study were abused by a total of sixteen perpetrators. Of those sixteen men, nine were convicted. In total, those nine men were convicted on more than one hundred and sixty three charges against more than eighty-two women and children (boys and girls).

Other data sources

In addition to the interviews some respondents also provided me with a range of documents and these provide another source of relevant data. Included are police statements made by respondents; transcripts of court proceedings; correspondence from Church officials and
government departments. Some respondents gave me copies of their psychiatric reports and psychological assessments.

Since 1996 I have made a donation to Broken Rites for its newsletter In Fidelity. In 1992 I began keeping newspaper clippings (The Sydney Morning Herald and The Australian) of reports and opinion articles concerned with the Church and sexual abuse (some of these relate to people I interviewed). All these sources provide further insight into the Church's responses as well as accounts of the experiences and outcomes of abuse. Correspondence to complainants from Church officials, for example, reveals a tendency for Church representatives to be 'on leave'. Apologies for the delay in replying ("I have been on leave") or advance notice that ("I will be absent on leave from" - no return date provided) begin to appear as thematic when seen in more than one participant's communications. The state likewise engaged one participant in a correspondence of 'regret'.

A committal-hearing magistrate sent a perpetrator to trial on three abuse charges but the Office of Public Prosecutions pressured Geoff to drop the charges for "lack of corroborating evidence or eye witnesses". After that meeting Geoff wrote to the Premier of Victoria expressing outrage at this decision. The Minister for Youth and Community Services responded on the Premier's behalf. "I deeply sympathise with people who were abused ... particularly where this involved a previously trusted figure ...I wish to assure you that the Victorian Government and my Department view child abuse as a matter of major concern". He provides contacts for two state and one Catholic counselling services and concludes "thank you for writing to the Premier". Geoff's letter was also passed on to the Attorney General who further referred it to the Director of Policy Division. After expressing regret for the delay in replying the Director explains, "the standard of the test ... [is] on the balance of probabilities". She concludes, "I appreciate the trauma you have suffered as the result of the decision made in your case. I am enclosing for your information some literature about Victims
Referral and Assistance Service which may be of assistance to you. Thank you for bringing this matter to the attention of the Attorney General".27

As another qualitative research technique, in 1998 I attended (at the invitation of Friends of Susanna) a one-day seminar conducted by Margaret Kennedy, the founder of UK-based Christian Survivors of Sexual Abuse. My observations from that day are that the participants' comments are reflective of interview data for this study.

The first table referred to above is about participants the and second, Table B (Appendix C), is about their perpetrators. This is compiled from a number of sources about those perpetrators whom participants named in their interview. Newspaper reports of court proceedings and In Fidelity articles about the convictions of those perpetrators were the main sources I used to draw up this table. News media often state the number of charges against and the number of victims of convicted perpetrators, however, because I did not engage in direct questioning of participants about their perpetrators, and some publicly recorded details are incomplete or unavailable for some perpetrators, there is an absence of all particulars. These are recorded as 'unknown', that is, not known by me. Clare, for example, spoke of her perpetrator serving a prison sentence but as she did not use his name in the interview I was unable to search any record for details about him. However, although Table B lacks complete detail it does show the extensive range of the abusive activities of those nine convicted men. One of the participants experienced a single abusive encounter

27 Copies of Correspondence provided by participant to researcher.
with a woman religious. For all the others the abuse was ongoing and frequent, to a maximum of ten years duration. From this table, a broad picture of the extent of abusive actions and church culpability emerges. This is an indicative list only as it does not in any way provide the full limit of the sexual violence of these nine men.

Summary

I have argued that an *intrinsic case study* as theorised by Stake (1994) provides an appropriate research tool (method) and I have given an account of the ensuing collected data. In undertaking the research, however, I believe that the participant's interview experience should differ significantly from the examples above or any other instances where Church authorities may have already "cross-examined [them] as though it were they who are on trial" (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 44). One means I used in setting up this research (contacting participants) and carrying out data collection (interviews) was to give respondents an opportunity to speak without interruption or questioning. The form of this 'semi' or 'unstructured' data collection then became deeply personal and entirely involved in what is classified as 'sensitive topic' research (cf Watson & Mears 1989, Bergen 1993, Kelly et al 1994).

Data emerging from this type of interview is emotive material in which thematic aspects of participants' experiences may be discerned and drawn on. For instance, the interview
material alerted me that the context of abuses committed by priests and Brothers significantly differ, and consequently those categories need separate examination. And, Part Three of this thesis is based on interview material that showed me the need to distinguish the entities 'priest' and 'priesthood'. Examples, such as these two, come directly from taking up Mary Daly's (1986) critique of "methodolatry". Daly cautions that, because this type of material does not fit into "Respectable Categories of Questions and Answers", mainstream research "hinders new discoveries" by classifying it as "nondata, thereby rendering it invisible" (Daly 1986, p. 11). It is in the actual process of data collection, reflecting the feminist concern with "actually doing research in the field" (Maynard & Purvis 1994, p. 1 emphasis original), that method translates to methodology and I take this up in the following section.

Section Two: Intimate Listening

Surveying some literary accounts of incest led Veronica Brady (1994, p.87) to speculate there must be a sense of, "appalling isolation, of being drawn into a nightmare" present in the incestuous moment. Beyond the participants' sense of isolation pervading the moment of priestly sexual violation was the subsequent verbalising (telling) of that 'nightmare' in becoming complainants. In inviting women and men into an interview situation and asking them to discuss the Church's treatment of them as complainants I self-consciously insert myself at the juncture of those critical moments. I draw here on some key scenes from women's writing to encapsulate the transition from the first to the second of those moments.
when participants were asked to recall and recount their abusive experience/s in a different one-to-one encounter: the research interview.

I could hear my voice, a thin reedy cry like something choking and not being rescued. Father said nothing at all, but the sound of his breathing was like a thudding machine in the silence. All around us, the house stood shocked, repelling the sounds we made. ... 'No!' I heard myself cry with a feeble piping sound. 'No! No!' The house gave back only silence, and the panting of the desperate machine that was Father. ... I could not start the sentence that would tell her what happened ... Whatever had happened, and I would not ask myself just what that had been, had happened to a mass of flesh called Lilian, not to me. I cowered in that flesh, my self shrunk to the size of a pea (Grenville 1985, p. 121).

All I did was listen. For I believe full surely that God's spirit is in us all (Julian of Norwich C14).

I must go on with the story. Or the story must go on with me, carrying me inside it, along the track it must travel ... When you are in the middle of a story it isn't a story at all, but only a confusion; a dark roaring, a blindness, a wreckage of shattered glass and splintered wood; like a house in a whirlwind, or else a boat crushed by the icebergs or swept over the rapids, and all aboard powerless to stop it. It's only afterwards that it becomes anything like a story at all. When you are telling it to yourself or to someone else (Attwood 1996, p. 298 emphasis added).

Mainstream theory's intrinsic case study provides this study with a research method, but it is Margaret Attwood's afterwards that expressively illustrates the transition from method to methodology. I refer back to Section One where I intimated the usefulness to this project of Stanley & Wise' (1990, p. 22) notion of "detailed descriptions of actual feminist research processes sited around an explanation of feminist consciousness". What follows in this section, then, is intended as 'detailed descriptions' of this 'actual' piece of sensitive issue
research. It is not given as prescriptive. The main application of a feminist methodology to this study lies in the interpretation and understanding of the relocation process between these two situations. My key methodological tool was 'listening' which I 'see' as being situated at the contextual intersection illustrated in the two texts. Listening provided the bridge for participants between their abusive experience/s and the 'telling' of the experience. It is an appropriate tool for the interviewee to transpose the event into an account of that event and for the listening researcher to ensure that the abuse inherent in the experience is not replicated in the interview context. My analogy is that the researcher moves with the participant towards that bridge by a variety of means such as; the time and place of interview being comfortable and familiar to the participant; the opening non-threatening questions to approach the topic; and the assurance for the participant that s/he is able to bound the discussion with 'as much or as little as s/he feels comfortable with'. Together the researcher and participant approach and step onto the bridge. The researcher is then attentively present (an embodied non-interrogating listener), a companionable-traveller into the crossing, while the participant traverses at her/his own pace. The significance of the story to the storyteller is later reflexively theorised by a researcher. At the same time the social engagement between participant and researcher (the interview moment) weaves into the body of work. This is not to arrive at some measurable form of objective 'truth'. Rather it describes a piece of qualitative research devoid of 'invisible tyranny' where the "No", that participants had heard themselves ineffectually cry to their abuser, becomes a culturally reflective story told to 'someone else'.
'Intimate listening' is the term I use for the particular form of listening I employed to hear the repetition of that "No". By situating the quotation from fourteenth century Englishwoman mystic Julian of Norwich, (as listener) between the contexts of an event and its retelling, I ground the basis on which I established a relationship with participants and I point to the interview style I employed for this study. It also reveals an obvious bias of belief. That belief was shared by, but not imposed onto, those who chose to tell me their account of abusive experiences and subsequent complaints. Participants' expressions of their spiritual identities, whether or not their experiences led them to abandon the practices of Catholicism, remain centred on its monotheistic beliefs. Raising the issue of belief here also allows me to deal 'upfront' with the subjectivity question. There is a concern in feminist qualitative research to move beyond the detached objectivism of "traditional social research" that, Sandra Harding (1987, p. 8 emphasis original) says, "has been for men". And, a detached objectivism I would add is evident in treatment of complainants by men whose "Christian theology refined the blame of women [and I add children] to a high art form and established it as the bedrock justification for celibacy, power and male control" (Sipe 1995, p. 163).

Sandra Harding (1987, p. 9) argues that the situated presence of feminist researchers' own "cultural beliefs and behaviours" permeates aspects of her study and inclusion of these subjective elements "increases the objectivity of the research and decreases the 'objectivism'". Although undeclared to participants (and unqueried by them) my shared understanding of Catholicism serves to illustrate Harding's insistence that I (as "inquirer")
"be placed in the same critical plane as the overt subject matter" (Harding 1987, p. 8). The shattering of their Catholic identity was one of the crucial factors that interviewees brought to the interview situation alongside their accounts of the sexual violence perpetrated on their bodies. From our telephone conversations I already understood that these women and men participants do not make a belief/practice distinction in the way that I have come to. And as a result they are grieving as the contradiction of their abusive treatment grinds hard against the age-old gendered traditions of the Church.

Listening intimately

The framework of this form of intimate listening is based on one utilised by some bereavement counsellors whose central approach is that a grieving person does not have a psychopathology condition. S/he is seen as a person who is passionately sad. I have several years training and experience as a bereavement counsellor, which brought me into contact with men and women overwhelmed with grief usually, but not only, caused by death. For those situations I was taught (and learnt) to focus on their need and overcome my tendency to 'fill' long silent breaks in their reflections with my voice or offer sympathetic understanding to crying clients. The need, in that situation, is the need for freedom to express their sense of loss, not to be pacified. Most people who seek bereavement counselling do so because they are unable to get intimate listening when they express their feelings of grief in other social relationships. A bereaved person frequently expresses his/her emotional pain as self-blame for the person's death. This is usually in terms such as,
'I feel so guilty; responsible; if only I had taken some sort of preventive action - I could have - should have - taken different steps'. What needs to be recognised is that these people are expressing feelings and not making rational statements based on 'I am, or I know I'm responsible'. Their listener, experiencing a sense of inadequacy in this situation, frequently offers rationalised responses. Unable to actively do something to relieve grief s/he replies with statements like, 'of course it's not your fault, you mustn't blame yourself, you couldn't have done anything else'. Responses such as these arise out of the difficulty "to experience the helplessness that is an inevitable part of the supportive role" (McKissock & McKissock 1991, p. 677). Grief counsellors skilled at intimate listening do not interrupt with rationalisation or suggest behaviour modification as a form of consolation. Their injunction could well be 'don't just do something, sit there'. In unstructured interviews on sensitive topics, I suggest that a researcher (as intimate listener) attunes to the participant's expression of helplessness in the face of what happened and recognises the inappropriateness of a reasoned response. Just as a bereaved person wants only one thing, which is beyond any other person's capacity to give, so as researcher I was helpless to alter any aspect of the participants' "'No!' I heard myself cry". The researcher's position is "afterwards ... When you are telling it to yourself or to someone else". The researcher's 'style' of listening could be considered as her/his contribution to the interview.

There are no references in sociology's methods literature to the specifically 'intimate' style of listening that I describe above. However, the perspective of how listening is undertaken is seen as essential part of successful unstructured interviewing (cf Anderson & Jack 1991;
Reinharz 1992, Parr 1998). Dana Jack (Anderson & Jack 1991, p. 18) says that as a researcher she found, "the first, and hardest, step of interviewing was to learn to listen in a new way". A valuable aid for this is recorded interviews that assist listening by lessening a researcher's burden to accurately note the spectrum of details, such as chronology of events and participant's self-perceptions, at the time of the interview. More advantageously these provide for 're-listening'. Like Beverley Skeggs (1994, p. 84) I find "re-listening to tapes is a lot more inspiring than re-reading transcripts". I frequently replayed the tapes and this became a means to (re)hear, (re)see and (re)experience the interview moment and to pick up fine details like voice inflexions, laughing or crying, that enrich spoken meanings. Recording interviews on sensitive topics makes it is possible to listen 'intimately' during the interview and 'carefully' to the tapes afterwards.

While what I am calling intimate listening is a non-interventionist process for the participant it is not suggested that it is an inactive process for the researcher. Jack (Anderson & Jack 1991, p. 18) goes on to say she found as well as learning to listen she needed, "to hold in abeyance the theories that told me what to hear and how to interpret". Adding that dimension illustrates that intimate listening is a learned skill involving, "listening to others while also attending to my own response to them" (Anderson & Jack 1991, p. 19). Further, I propose that the basis for intimate listening needs to be established prior to the interview encounter. It is a continuation of an already established relationship that is often referred to as 'rapport'. The Approach Letter and telephone conversations I had with participants were the vehicles that established a rapport between us. When we first met...
Rapport and engagement

Rapport, in the sense in which it became incorporated into feminist methodology, is now elevated to highly significant status. Rapport became mystified into the magical ingredient whereby women researchers interviewing other women established equity between researcher and researched in an encounter based on shared gender (cf Roberts 1981, Finch 1984). However, as Lenore Lyons and Janine Chipperfield (2000, p. 34) argue, in their critical analysis of unstructured feminist research interview techniques, it now seems that a "recommendation to build rapport with respondents" has to escalate into a "continued commitment to building rapport". Notwithstanding rapport's apparent importance there is little discussion of what rapport actually is. It does not, for example, have an index entry in respected qualitative research texts such as Reinharz (1992), Maynard & Purvis (1994), Ribbens & Edwards (1998). Using rapport's common-sense meaning this literature infers equity is present between a woman interviewer and her woman respondent if the interview situation is built on rapport. Rapport took on something of an 'essentialist' trait in the burgeoning feminist methodology literature, in the works of Roberts (1981) and Finch (1984) for example, because it was seemingly only woman to woman interviews on which equitable qualitative research was based. More recently Pamela Cotterill (1992) uses the term "participatory model" to describe those research approaches assumed to be compatible
with feminist concerns because interviewee equity is situated as central to the philosophical goal.

An early instance of this is seen in the work of Janet Finch (1984, p. 72) who says that she found that the informal one-to-one approach in unstructured interviewing meant her expectation that she would need to work at establishing rapport was unfounded. Women openly responded because "it's great to have someone to talk to" (Finch 1984, p. 70). She further explains that, after finding another interviewer already with her respondent asking a formal structured questionnaire about housing, there was a "relaxed discussion of some very private material which the same interviewee offered in her interview with me" (Finch 1984, p. 73). In her concern to advocate the advantages of 'relaxed' unstructured interviews I suggest that Finch conflated rapport and engagement. A sharp distinction needs to be drawn between the two aspects for the conduct and proposed outcomes of each data gathering exercise. I concur that rapport is necessary in all research circumstances. But, I also agree with Lyons and Chipperfield (2000, p. 34) that the intense emphasis now on establishing rapport presents as a feature that,

...greater attention needs to be paid to what actually happens in an interview, including the question of who exerts power and how (Lyons & Chipperfield 2000, p. 34).

What happens in this specific interview situation, I argue, is 'engagement' leading to a fluidity of power relations between interviewer and interviewee that are relatively...
uncontested and therefore inconsequential. Engagement links into and builds onto rapport and has two forms, which I term 'intimate engagement' and 'distant engagement', each with its own valid purpose. There is some support for this position in Kelly et al's (1994, p. 32) critique of the "orthodoxies" that have arisen around the idea that "no self respecting feminist would use quantitative methods". Kelly et al (1994, p. 36) go on to argue that, in some circumstances, structured questionnaires may reduce "the potential for harm" by giving respondents anonymity to reveal their painful experiences. This position, I suggest, illustrates my term 'distant engagement'. For some sensitive topics participants benefit from being afforded a degree of emotional distance to respond about distressing personal events. In other similarly sensitive situations discussing people's experiences with them 'intimate engagement', whose prime feature is listening, needs to be in place. Engagement that allows respondents uninterrupted telling demonstrates interviewees' active participation in the interview rather than their being seen as passive subjects of questioning. Each form of engagement can be successfully used in research for sensitive topics without privileging 'intimate' as the specifically feminist form. The following example distinguishes interviewing rapport and engagement.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) employed me as an interviewer for twenty-three years on household and other surveys. During those years I conducted face-to-face interviews with thousands of respondents and in that capacity established rapport on the basis of professional neutrality. That is, I simply acted agreeably regardless of either structured or unstructured interview format. This is not to suggest I am more proficient at
research interviews but simply to note that the interview as process is demystified for me. For example, as well as direct answers to survey questions some respondents frequently express views on a range of other issues. To these unsolicited opinions I vaguely intimated interest in, or agreement with, these by an "mmm" or eye contact. I did not, for example, give any direct (or indirect) signal of disagreement to those expressions of sexism that in other circumstances would appal me and evoke my response. This established an environment of harmonious (but detached) agreement in which as interviewer I offered common everyday courtesies and in return respondents cooperated by supplying information. My argument is simply that, establishing interview rapport is a particular practice that is not, in and of itself, a feminist characteristic. Rapport can (and does) exist in otherwise disagreeable interview circumstances. Establishing a feminist ethic, I suggest, more importantly resides in those decisions made around the choice of research method as the basis of building a feminist methodology that ultimately contributes to a 'feminist understanding' of the research topic. For sensitive topic research I regard the skill to establish a feminist understanding as more significant to the research process than rapport building. And, I wholly concur with Sandra Harding's (1987, p 11) statement that, "neither the ability nor the willingness to contribute to feminist understanding are sex-linked traits!" The selection of a research method rests on any researcher's pre-interview understandings of the types of demands made on respondents by asking them to articulate their personal accounts of distressing human experiences that are usually related to sensitive topics. Finally, if rapport is only achievable through an ability to talk freely because of shared gender, then one sex will be unable to research aspects of the other. And, as Sandra
Harding (1987, p 10) cautions, "it is sometimes also falsely imagined that men cannot make important contributions to feminist research and scholarship".

**Effect and affect of intimate listening**

There are, as Elizabeth Watson and Jane Mears (1989, p. 16) say of their study of carers, "significant moral and political dilemmas in research such as this". Looking to the affect for participants Watson and Mears (1989, p. 12) state that, "interviews of this kind, exploring the experiences and feelings of people ... cannot be dispassionate, unemotional experiences in which the respondent gives all and the interviewer gives nothing of herself". In contrast Holland and Razamanoglu (1994) focus on the affect for the researcher. Noting that while this interview style allows for flexibility and responsiveness, they point out that there are interviewer ramifications of this intensely personal style that can be "emotionally draining and demanding" (Holland & Razamanoglu 1994, p. 137). On the other hand, Judith Stacey, (1991, p. 113) found herself "wondering whether the appearance of greater respect for and equality with research subjects in the ethnographic approach, masks a deeper, more dangerous form of exploitation". Stacey's (1991, p. 113) concern is that ultimately interview data provides "grist for the ethnographic mill, a mill that has truly grinding power".

There are also impacts of ethnographic research on a researcher, regardless of how well s/he is prepared, that should not be overlooked. As Holland & Ramazanoglu (1994, p. 137)
say, "just reading the transcript is emotionally shocking". Although I came to the interviews with some prior understanding of each participant’s experience of clerical sexual abuse, I was still vulnerable to the scope and impact of those experiences as they unfolded in our face-to-face meeting. For one interview I drove in a journey taking four hours to a man whose sexual abuse (ongoing anal rape by a priest - that began when he was aged nine) was concurrent with a great range of other human deprivations and physical violence in the now infamous Neerkol orphanage. His name is David Owen and his history is given in Gill (1997, pp. 274-286) and Parkinson (1997, pp. 141-143). We had spoken by telephone several times prior to the interview and when I arrived he greeted me with a kiss and offered cool drinks and food he had brought in. During his long interview he cried several times and I cried with him on some of those times. Fortunately my husband had travelled with me and when I met him after the interview he drove the return journey. I was barely able to speak and I was so physically exhausted that I would not have been able to make the long drive home. Dave gave me a copy of his Psychiatric Report. It says in part:

Mr Owen has survived a grossly abusive childhood and is a grossly damaged man. He was subject to systematic sexual and physical abuse and mental abuse and none of his caretakers appear to have made any effort to protect him. The gross sexual abuses resulted in complete inhibition of sexuality and he has never had any sexual drive at any time in his life. The mental abuse (or torture) that Mr Owen experienced, and which utterly confounded his world as a child, was the simultaneous preaching about the sins of sexuality and the ongoing sexual activity by the priest.

In many interviews I felt deeply distressed across a range of emotions. While re-listening to tapes was advantageous to me for interview analysis it also had its own affect in terms of my emotional responses to participant’s experiences. As well as enormous sadness for
participants, that clerical men could inflict such sexual violence on them, I frequently felt angry at the profoundly gendered gauge by which women participants had been socialised to measure themselves. These include notions of gender the Church has instilled in women so that they "internalise the images and notions declared about them by the ruling group and come to believe it of themselves" (Johnson 1994, p. 26). Helen, as one example, shows how she held such internalised beliefs to her self-detriment. She said, "I didn't mind going to Hell because I knew I was keeping him being a priest. He was happy being a priest so my soul didn't matter because he was being this wonderful priest and he kept assuring me of that" (Helen). She continues to hold the notion she will go to Hell because she has learned well that "no penance is ever enough, not even death ... because women are doing penance for the unforgivable sin - the sin of having been born female" (Maitland 1987, p. 136).

My Approach Letter (Appendix A) offered assurances of confidentiality and anonymity, and like Watson and Mears (1989, p. 16) I was "surprised how many were not much worried about such issues". In this study there are, however, marked gender differences in respect of this aspect. All except one man wanted his own name used while all of the women opted for pseudonyms. The men directly challenge the Church's responses to their complaints and see use of names (their own and the perpetrators) as a means of bringing (shaming) the Church into a different response. In comparison the women participants are fearful of being 'branded' as blameworthy for the abuse in both Church's responses and popular perception. Helen burned the correspondence she had from Church authorities
(potential evidence for a compensation claim) because she feared for her family's distress if she died suddenly and they found the letters. An example given in Ormerod & Ormerod (1995, p. 133) reflects a feeling commonly expressed to me by women participants, "more formidable than any outside opposition was the guilt that gnawed away at me on the inside, in spite of all the understanding I had gained".

None of the participants saw (or wanted) any personal advantage from contributing interview material. Many were concerned that the ways in which they were treated as complainants will be repeated for other complainants if the Church is not held accountable outside of itself and I give some examples of Church (mis)treatment below. There was a prevailing ethos of 'this might stop someone else going through what I have been through'. Mary Maynard (1994, p. 17) says that, "even if research has little impact on the lives of those included in it, it may be important for the category of persons they are taken to represent". The quality of participants' concern for others reflects an unconscious agreement with Maynard's point. However, as stated above, most men participants saw that repetitious 're-telling' of their personal story is a direct means to effect change. To that end they have appeared on popular current affairs television programs and been quoted in and photographed for newspaper reports. In this thesis I avoid discussions of individual deviance of perpetrators and the psychological consequences of their actions for individual 'victims', opting instead for the examination of collective priesthood that I undertake in the final two chapters. However, not following the men's intentions (repeating the circumstances of their abuse) presented an 'ethical' dilemma for me and makes my
conclusion (to focus on abusers rather than the abused) a political decision. It illustrates that there is "a very active and complex process of social construction that raises questions about what we mean when we claim that feminist knowledge should be believed" (Holland & Ramazanoglu 1994, p. 125). My decision to choose that course, however, arose directly out of the interviews with those men. While the men made their claims for the advantages of media (or any) publicity their own accounts of their engagements with the Church hierarchy directly contradict those claims as the following instances show.

The response of the Church

Various complainants' experiences of Church hierarchy's treatment of them are documented elsewhere (cf Flanagan 1995, Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, Gill 1997, Broken Rites 1996–2001). Providing people the time to be heard in an uninterrupted forum allowed them to explore for themselves (and of course for me) just how those attitudes of Church hierarchy towards them took the form of devaluing them as Catholic persons. The violation done to their bodies by an individual perpetrator was often replicated verbally in their encounters with Church authorities. Ormerod & Ormerod cite this example of the "leadership's lack of compassion" concerning a particular situation involving a serial abuser:

In many hours of discussion the senior clergy showed almost no concern for the survivors ... made no references at all to the survivors' suffering or needs ... showed no awareness that the survivors might have had to deal with deep psychological and spiritual scarring ... it didn't occur to them that some of the survivors may have contracted sexually transmitted diseases ... that some may
have become pregnant ... raised children ... had abortions or grappled with suicide (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 173).

Eamonn related to me that when he was writing his autobiography, *Father and Me* (Flanagan 1995), he approached a priest who had shared a house with his perpetrator during the years of abuse. Eamonn said, "I wanted to ask him, did you know?" He records this encounter:

I'd just like to talk to you about Sam Penney.  
I don't know anything about Sam Penney ... If you're writing a book you're alright ... I saw nothing I knew nothing. ... Look, I think what you're doing now is all crap, damn the lot of you. You and your parents should have done something about it at the time.  
I was twelve.  
I don't care if you were twelve or six, you should have spoken out at the time. Would you want your child to speak out? (Flanagan 1995, p. 160).

Another priest approached Eamonn after his book’s publication. The priest, apparently unable to comment on the book’s content of ten years of sexual violence, was limited to an observation about the acknowledgments. "The only comment he could make to me was that I'd chosen to use the word 'partner' for Heather, who I'm married to, instead of using the word 'wife' and he was most angry with me about this" (Eamonn). Various other Church spokesmen made the following statements to three women complainants in this study.

- "You are obviously a very sick woman and I can arrange counselling for you" (Archbishop).
- "What is it that you want me to do?" (Priest).
- "That was a long, long time ago and he would have sought forgiveness and might commit suicide if you bring it out again now" (Priest, Archdiocese spokesman).
In contrast with these cited responses, the task the Church now sets for itself in response to complainants (as stated in Principle 10) will call for a most extraordinary seachange from its present culture.

The Church makes a firm commitment to strive for seven things in particular: truth, humility, healing for the victims, assistance to other persons affected, an effective response to those who are accused and those who are guilty of abuse, and prevention of abuse (*Towards Healing* 1996, p. 3).

**Conclusion**

This research problem's origins lie in the evidence that, contrary to the Church's stated moral and ethical teaching, great many Catholic priests engage in abusive sexual practices and Catholic women, children and men suffer that violence. Of the men and women participating in this study, some speak out; some quietly left the practice of Catholicism but retain their belief and thereafter mourn their loss; while others stay and struggle with their anguish. This raised for me a motivating question to seek a feminist view of the contradictions entrenched in the responses of the Church and the Catholicism of clerical sexual abusers. The questions and uncertainties raised by participants in the interview situation inform the basis of each chapter so that the participants' experiences of sexual violence are "seen to derive from a social context" (*Reinharz* 1992, p. 170). In the processes of listening and writing about participants I use his/her own name as a means of retaining the sense of connectedness and allocated pseudonyms (for those who wished) at the last possible moment of thesis writing. It is strategies such as these that I regard as feminist in concept. Method fans out into methodology, so the one is not independent of the other, and
the research ties into a broader agenda of feminist politics. Participants are neither shown as a homogeneous group of 'victims' nor subsumed to the discourses and practices of the socially-constructed systems that allowed their oppression. In this way the oral history of individuals is used as a lamp to shine light on the organisation so that the purposes of this research and analysis, to provide a counter-view, are not separable from the origins of the research problems.

The ultimate affect arising out of intimate listening is that together with the participants I too eventually heard myself cry 'No!' along a continuum of understandings. 'No' to the sexual violence. 'No' to the sustained ambivalence of the Church's responses. 'No' to the Church's ongoing appeals to complementarity as a means of continuing to subjugate women and children. 'No' to the violence used to maintain the total exclusion of women from being in persona Christi. These affects lead me to take up afterwards as a research position that produces a counter view to the hegemony of the male Church. In the following final section I move into an examination of the men (priests) and their structure (priesthood) that became the topic arising out of the interview engagement that I had with the participants.
PART THREE

PRIESTS AND PRIESTHOOD
CHAPTER SIX

PRIEST & PRIESTHOOD: EMBODYING CELIBACY

There is no record of Melchisedech's father or mother or any of his ancestors; no record of his birth or death. He is like the Son of God; he remains a priest forever (Hebrews 7:3).

Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech (Hebrews 7:17).

In this final section I turn to those specificities that mark out what it is that the Church regards makes a man 'a priest forever' and how priesthood, as the collective condition of priested men, functions. These specifics might be broadly described as who priests are and what priests do. This chapter deals with the implications of a sacramental ordination circumscribed to men alone with particular emphasis on the complexities surrounding the embodiment of priests. The following chapter focuses on the Church's use of ritual as the foundation through which it legitimates the gendered structures of its sacred/profane division. Helen Rose Ebaugh summarises many of these features when she says:

The Roman Catholic Church has traditionally been a prime example of classic patriarchy; the male dominated hierarchical structure of the church is legitimated by sacred doctrine. ... only men have had access to the sacrament of ordination, a rite of passage that confers special power and status on those who are ordained (Ebaugh 1993, p. 401).

Priesthood is seldom examined as a highly particularised form of masculinity possessed of 'special power and status'. Looking at priesthood as a form of masculinity I agree with Lynne Segal's (1993, p. 629) analysis of a social context for masculinities showing that "the
power and meaning of "masculinity" do not derive "from any fixed set of attributes that all men share but from wider social relations". So, in this section, I search for the sexual meanings of priesthood's masculinity as these are established within the Church's system of social relations as a means for understanding priestly sexual violence. This approach also serves to indirectly highlight the limitations of the Church's individualistic responses to clerical sexual abuse already discussed in Part One. At the outset of this thesis I argued that priestly powers possessed through the rite of ordination distinguish priested men from vowed Brothers without the powers of priesthood in both the religious rituals (institution) and daily functioning (organisation) of each group. On that basis I contend that the Church's present generalised responses about priests and religious, as a unitary group, glosses over both the complexities within priesthood and the organisational differences between ordained and religious men. To re-emphasise those distinctions and avoid any notion that there is a 'fixed set of attributes that all men share'; the following examination is specific to sexual violence committed by priests. I show that the Church's inability to deal with priests' abusive sexual activities in ways other than it presently does (regarding them as illness or moral failure) stems largely from its failure to examine the masculinities of priesthood.

Although priesthood does not auspicate group homogeneity it does nonetheless establish a social category whereby perpetrators may be defined in other than psychological terms. After ten years work assessing imprisoned male sex offenders against children, Kevin Wallis (1995, p. 4) concludes, that these men "are not a homogeneous group either in their
socialisation, their psychology or in the situations in which the abuse occurs". However, if
the "making of masculinities" is, as Connell (1996, online) says, "a collective project as
much as an individual one" then an overview of the Church's part in the 'making' of its
priests is vital to the instrumental task of understanding priesthood. Since I argue that views
about individual predatory priests need to be broadened, I now include a wider analysis of
the particularity of priesthood as the social location of a unique masculinity. Before turning
to the ordination of men into priesthood I begin with a brief outline of what the cultic form
of priesthood means for the sexuality of priested men and the distinctions between priest
and priesthood.

**Cultic priesthood**

Cultic priesthood is a commonly used term originating in the "Old Testament priests' cultic
obligations" (Porter 1996, p. 32) that were associated with belonging to the temple. Muriel
Porter's (1996, p. 32) analysis shows that this ancient form of priesthood later moved to
become "cultic purity", accommodating the belief that "sexual intercourse - even in
marriage - was somehow always defiling". This is distinct from the celibacy of an
unmarried priesthood and is directly attributed by Porter (1996, p. 33) to a pervasive "fear
and denial of women". Underpinning this form of radical sexual separation of (married)
priested men from women (including their wives) are attitudes and ideas that assume it is
through their total rejection of women that men are fit for priesthood. Pius XII, in his
encyclical *Sacra Virginatas*, harks back to antiquity saying, "even the priests of the Old
Testament had to abstain from the use of marriage during the period of their service in the Temple, for fear of being declared impure by the Law just as other men" (1954, n. 23). In these remnants of cultic purity lie the concepts of priesthood that give that rise to notions that,

only men who abstain from all women are pure enough to handle the Body and Blood of Christ, are sufficiently set apart from the laity to lead the Church, are holy enough to maintain strict morality (Porter 1996, p. 33).

The primary and pervasive notion of cultic priesthood is separation. It is a sexual separation of the priest from women, and this segregation, through sexual abstinence, is presumed to set all priests apart from all humanity. This reflects Durkheim's (1971) gendered concept of the sacred being 'set apart'. There is a gendered violence reflected in the internal separation of the Church's established system of cultic priesthood that is absolutely dependent on the sacred/profane distinction. Revealed priestly sexual violence is now explicit and visible in society. But it is scrutiny of the rationales of priesthood that uncovers the otherwise repressed problems of sexuality and human embodiment implicit in the Church's responses to the violence of priests against women and children. One of those problems, dealt with in a later section, reveals that in the Church's mandating of celibacy for its priesthood the 'interdictions' remain against women but sexual activity is not precluded.
Priesthood's sexuality

Since I am employing the notion that priesthood is socially arranged as a particular form of masculinity my approach in this section is to build into the discussion critique of aspects of masculinity and male sexuality as these are presently represented in relation to Catholic priesthood. I argue that the priested body is the site of highly particularised concepts of gender and male sexuality yet in the ordaining of men into priesthood these attributes are represented as having being obliterated. I trace what appears to be a movement, from a corporeal to a non-corporeal state, effected by the ordination of men to priesthood resulting in a sacralised abstraction of the embodied priest. This transition is effected in opposition to women's bodies and thus further reflects Durkheim's gendered sacred/profane division. I then go on to show the ways that these features are related to clerically based violence against women as well as priestly sexual violence.

A gender-based analysis of clerical sexual violence, by pointing beyond individual priests' sexual activities, uncovers what was previously unmentioned (and thus assumed non-existent): the sexualities of priesthood. In setting the priest apart, the sexuality of priesthood has been 'lost' through two historically shifting but purposive discourses. The first promotes the notion that priested men are 'separated' from their own sexuality and the second promulgates the idea that women "are quite simply, beyond the pale, for any contact with them renders men, and particularly priests, impure" (Porter 1996, p. 33). Understanding that there are gender aspects of sexualities intrinsic to priesthood is essential to any analysis of
sexual violence perpetrated by priests. Yet many writers looking at the sexual abuse issue avoid attitudes or questions related to sexualities and focus entirely on the categories of 'ministry' and/or 'celibacy' without providing any social link between these and priesthood (cf. Parkinson 1997; Rossetti 1990a, 1990b; Berry 1992; Jenkins 1996). These two aspects, although related, are not solely particular to priesthood. Members of the caring professions, including women, practice varied forms of pastoral care and ministry and a great many people live productive celibate lives outside of any religious system.

Connell's definition of gender illustrates an applicable method for a gender analysis to cut across the ambiguity that the Church creates in relation to the sexuality of its priesthood. He says:

"Gender is, in the broadest terms, the way in which the reproductive capacities and sexual differences of human bodies are drawn into social practice and made part of the historical process. In gender, social practice addresses bodies. Through this logic, masculinities are embodied without ceasing to be social" (Connell 1996, online).

Gender analysis shows that the sexuality of priesthood is just as much a gender construct as is the masculinity of priesthood. This approach is important to show the connections of priesthood's sexuality to violence and then to hold that link in place and see that clerical sexual abuse is violence and not 'sinful' sexual acts. The subtleness of priesthood's sexuality makes it less overt than the masculinism of motor bike and football clubs; it is nonetheless founded in the same way. The Church's attachment of sexuality to 'reproductive capacities' builds the sexuality of priesthood in opposition to women and their reproductive capacity.
and rests on the assumption that the priest's foregoing of reproduction nullifies his sexuality. Priesthood's sexuality, however, is neither non-existent nor absent. That sexuality, exists and effectively contributes to the "cultural enhancement of violence as sexualised and associated with male dominance and the objectification of women" (Held 1993, p. 141). In chapter Four I showed that the bonds between religion and violence are related to gender. The remainder of this chapter builds on that by showing that the construction of sexuality in priesthood is also connected to violence and directly related to the sexual abuse of women and children (as well as the more general oppression of women in religion). Later in this chapter I use specific examples of priesthood's sexuality that are directly connected to the use of violence for the preservation of the all-male priesthood. Following these steps keeps the thesis linked to the gender concerns of its empirical foundation. The project's value as a case study, as defined by Stake (1994), lies in connecting its 'intrinsic' (interest) in the priest with the 'instrumental' (understanding) of priesthood.

**Priest and priesthood**

There is a crucial ambiguity in Roman Catholic priesthood such that the term priest is not simply a referent term denoting ordained man, and priesthood a term denoting the collectivity of these men. It is more than a distinction of role and capacity as in the case of judge/judiciary, doctor/medical profession where the collectivity is comprised solely of role occupants. Within post-conciliar Catholicism there is an understanding of priesthood as
being comprised of all those persons who are inducted into Church membership through baptism. These baptised believers (women and men) thereby come to belong to, and understand themselves as belonging to, what is categorically named as a priesthood of all the faithful (Hastings 1991a; Laishley 1991; Schüssler Fiorenza 1993, 1998; Johnson 1994, 1996; Collins 1997). Catholicism's divisive distinguishing of ordained men into cultic priesthood, presumes an "ontological superiority of the clerical priesthood over the laity" (Collins 1997, p. 120). Contemporary social movements seeking Church reform, away from the present system based in clericalism, argue that "the title "priest" refers to all the believers and to Christ, but not to any church "office"" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1993, p. 34).

The politics of this debate, between an official ministry based on the "essential difference" of the male priest and an inclusive "participatory priesthood of the laity" (Laishley 1991, p. 237 emphasis original), have great significance for the future survival of the Church and both concepts of priesthood. However, while awareness of these arguments is indicated here it is also acknowledged that the details are beyond the bounds of this thesis. My discussion concerns the outcomes of the Church's positing the existence of a "theological connection between priestly ministry and celibacy" (Laishley 1991, p. 235). That connection, I show rests entirely on a curious form of disembodied masculinity. For this reason I focus on the existing sacramental ordination where men are inducted into a structured system based on cultic priesthood. The primary requisite enabling this formal shift couples maleness with celibacy. As a result male celibacy has become priesthood's
identity and organising structure. While the Church treats this change as specifically ontological I see it in terms of the sacred/profane dichotomy.

**The ordination of men**

The Roman Catholic Church ordains men alone to its priesthood, which operates as "an all-male hierarchical system" (Uhr 1992, p. 16). This all-male priesthood's *sine qua non* therefore is the total and radical exclusion of women from Orders. Priesthood's first postulate, male physiology, throws the sexed bodies of priestly men into relief. However, at the same time as it categorically demands one specific type of sexed bodies for its priests, the Church's Magisterium\(^{28}\) authoritatively mandates (with its requirement for a celibate priesthood) against any sexual thoughts, desires or genital activity for those sexed bodies. Tension must then exist between, on the one hand the Church's absolute criterion of male sex for individual priests and on the other its assumed absence of male sexuality in the collective. This is why I use the term *disembodied masculinity*. The physical, sexed body seemingly has no purpose for the sexed instrumentality of that body thereby exemplifying Durkheim's (1971, p. 299) argument that, "by definition sacred beings are separated beings".

\(^{28}\) The authoritative teaching body of the Church.
Durkheim (1971, p. 299) calls the rites achieving such separations "negative cults", arguing that these are established through rituals which have "the object of realizing this state". These rites "do not prescribe certain acts for the faithful, but confine themselves to forbidding certain ways of acting" (Durkheim 1971, p. 299). In his discussion of negative cults, Durkheim sees them as "a system of abstentions" whose purpose is to separate the sacred from the profane. The 'man' entering into religious life "has purified and sanctified himself by the very act of detaching himself from the base and trivial matters that debased his nature. So the negative rites confer efficient powers" (Durkheim 1971, p. 309). Earlier Durkheim (1971, p. 211) referred to 'men' being enabled to see "more and differently" through ritually-induced forces that change him. These "changes", he argues, are not merely of shades and degrees; men become different. The passions moving them are of such an intensity that they cannot be satisfied except by violent and unrestrained actions, actions of super-human heroism or of bloody barbarism (Durkheim 1971, p. 211).

The accomplishment of such severance (via ordination) firstly between men and women and then between the sex, and its deployment as sexuality, of those men has a sacred violence seeded within it. The 'efficient powers' of negative rites coupled with the 'super-human heroism' of the ordinand cut him away from women (profane); cut him away from his own sexuality. Durkheim's ascetic negative rites, as Catherine Garrett (1998, p. 102) perceptively notes, involve suffering. The "exceptional circumstances" which so sever the ordinand are not confined to the ritual but establish the ongoing "current of energy" which "because he is in moral harmony with his comrades" produce "as it were, a perpetual sustenance" (Durkheim 1971, p. 211). From that perspective, ordination can be read as a
contemporary ritualistic attempt retained in order to accomplish and perpetuate ancient
'cultic purity'.

After a long period of study and preparation, men are initiated into a sacramental priesthood through ceremonial ritual acts of ordination. Elevation to Orders, endows the man with priesthood and thereafter he is said to eternally possesses priesthood's three distinguishing sacred powers:

the power to offer up the Holy Sacrifice, the power to forgive sins, and the power to bless. The indelible character of the priesthood is impressed upon the priest's soul: and for all eternity he shall be "priest according to the order of Melchisedech" (Biskupek 1954, online).

Rituals investing individuals with transformation of identity usually include characteristics that signify birth and death (Rappaport 1999, p. 230). In the specific instance of sacrificial priesthood in Roman Catholicism the re-birth is through patrilineal descent (Jay 1992, Raab 1997, 2000) and I return to that aspect of the ritual in the next chapter. This language of birth and death clearly runs through formal Church writing about priesthood. Paul VI's encyclical (Sacerdotalis Caelibatus 1967) for example, reiterates the persistent Old Testament concept that in the transition (ritual ordination) to priesthood the man becomes 'forever' set apart. "The Christian priesthood", he says,

introduced into time and into the world a new form of life which is sublime and divine and which radically transforms the human condition (Paul VI 1967, n. 19).
Following such a radical transformation as re-birth into priesthood, Paul VI (1965a, n. 8) says, priests become "united among themselves in an intimate sacramental brotherhood". Excluding women from any possible initiation into this 'sacramental brotherhood' appears to be an apposite example of Durkheim's separation of the sacred from the profane.

The segregation of the sacred from the profane, for Durkheim (1971, p. 39), is ritually marked and highly specific and "implies a veritable metamorphosis" for the initiant. Initiation is not a simple transition such as that occurring via the aging process from child to adult. Durkheim saw in ritual initiation a 're-birth' providing (to men only) a means to separate themselves (sacred) from the profane. Initiation, Durkheim says,

is a long series of ceremonies with the object of introducing the young man into the religious life: for the first time, he leaves the purely profane world where he passed his first infancy, and enters into the world of sacred things. It is said that at this moment the young man dies ... Now this state of change is thought of ... as a transformation totius substantiae - of the whole being. ... He is re-born under a new form. ... Does this not prove that between the profane being which he was and the religious being which he becomes, there is a break of continuity? (Durkheim 1971, p. 39)

Re-born into a sacred collective: totius substantiae

Consequent on the man becoming priest via the rite of ordination (ritual) Rappaport (1999, p. 153) says that, "a union of form and substance is explicitly recognised". Ordination's visible sign of this union (the Bishop's laying on of his hands to the candidate) complies with ritual's requirement for "proper matter" (Rappaport 1999, p. 154). This is the ritual's
most solemn moment, "in which that wonderful transformation takes place in the soul of
the ordinand, which makes him priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech"
(Biskupek 1954, online). The Bishop lays both his hands on the candidate "without saying
any prayer, and after him all priests present do the same; then the bishop and all priests
raise their right hands and hold them extended over the candidate". He continues, "all is
hushed in silence - it is as if the heavens opened" (Biskupek 1954, online). Or, as
Rappaport (1999, p. 230) more lucidly puts it, it is a movement in social time when "the
eternal is made vital so the vital may be made eternal".

This liturgical order, that causes the animation of a physical life force (vital) to be linked to
eternal (forever), is more than an abstract transformation of the soul. Eternity's intrinsic
elements, "endless repetition and absolute changelessness" (Rappaport 1999, p. 230),
cohere in this ritual. In other words these embodied men symbolically leave the temporal
(profane) and move into the eternal (sacred) and although they seemingly become
disembodied they retain their masculinity. Such initiation is more than deeply redolent of
Durkheim's explanation of 'man' being 're-born under a new form'. Ordination is re-birth
and, as Rappaport notes,

representations of birth are common in rites of passage and that, of necessity,
they generally follow representations of death. If icons and symbols of birth
were not preceded by those of death they could not represent rebirth
(Rappaport 1999, p. 230).
What is of the highest significance in ordination's rite of passage is that these men are born of men. Unlike the rest of humanity their (re)birth is effected without any woman as biological or symbolic mother. I return to this issue in the following chapter on ritual.

Church discourses on ordained priesthood clearly demonstrate Durkheim's (1971, p. 39) claim that "appropriate ceremonies are felt to bring about this death and re-birth, which are not understood in a merely symbolic sense, but are taken literally". In Durkheim's terms ordination relocates the initiated man outside the external 'profane' world through his absorption into the internal 'sacred' world. If, as I have been arguing, this separation is one of gender where the sacred is male and the profane is female then the separation to 'priest forever' is essential rather than positional. The permutation, from male person to priest, depends entirely on his masculinity as it discursively transposes him from his 'temporal now' to an 'ontological eternal'. *In persona Christi* continues the discourse's separation by endowing the corporeal (and hence mortal) priest with a disembodied Christic element of perpetuity: sacred priesthood. Such 'foreverness' infers an immutability that, although vigorously defended and documented by Church hierarchy, is questioned by theologians and many of today's priested men (cf Hastings 1991a, Laishley 1991, Collins 1997, Schüssler Fiorenza 1998, Johnson 1996, Raab 2000). The distinguishing, through ordination, of the embodied male priest from the priesthood of all the faithful, has, in Paul Collins words,

created a double difference: (1) of nature - the priest undergoes a 'metamorphosis' from an ordinary Christian, to become (2) a superior 'superchristian' whose priesthood is essentially different from that of the baptized (Collins 1997, p. 120).
Collins (1997, p. 121) then goes on to ask, "why talk about priestly ordination in terms of ontological or 'essential' change?" He answers his question in terms of the prioritisation of ordained men in the two forms of priesthood. However, I suggest that it is a gender question related to the perpetuation of (sacred) masculinity. Processes of this kind of sacralisation, of which ordination is a prime exemplar, are fundamentally gendered. They serve to transform a male initiate from,

being a member of the feminine community in his mother's house, he becomes a religious brother in a community of men. He has his god to thank for his new life; a god that requires in return control and sacrifice and gives him power to impose his will over -- to exclude by violence -- the nonsacred, the profane, in the name of the sacred, as a means of protecting the sacred from the profane (Erickson 1993, p. 25).

Sacred masculinity

Initiating only male bodies to priesthood is an attempt to forge, what Lynne Segal (1993, p. 635 emphasis original) calls, "some form of exemplary masculinity, a masculinity that is solid all the way through". Masculinities of this type are founded in contradiction and the greater their assertions of self-worth the more they simultaneously call that worth into question (Segal 1993, p. 635). Catholicism's exclusively male priesthood arguably presents an absolute and categorical instance of the Church's attempt to establish for itself an exemplary masculinity. The theological perspective of Elizabeth Johnson (1994) may be well applied to understand the setting up of priesthood as an exemplary masculinity. In Johnson's (1994, p. 252) view men holding dominant positions (and I argue priests do this) equate freedom from "entanglements with others" with being in control. Johnson (1994, p.
252) sees these contradictions of freedom/dominance are built on skewed anthropomorphic constructions of God. "Furthermore", Johnson (1994, p. 252) adds, "the attribute of omnipotence, modeled on the power of an absolute monarch reflects patriarchal preference for dominance and control". Male disconnectedness and separateness consequent on this kind of masculinity has detrimental outcomes for the male individual and the system. Johnson argues that:

In the patriarchal system the nonrelational human male exercising unilateral power sits at the pinnacle of perfection. Relationality and the inevitable vulnerability that accompanies it are correspondingly devalued as imperfections. Being free from others and being incapable of suffering in one's own person because of them becomes the goal (Johnson 1994, p. 252).

However, as is usual in these oppositional categories, this "pure" masculinity "cannot be displayed except in relation to what is defined as its opposite: first and foremost, in relation to "femininity"" (Segal 1993, p. 635 emphasis original). But I would also propose that the effort to establish such a 'form of exemplarv masculinity' is in fact the effort to establish, in Durkheimian terms, a negative cult. The negative cult's attributes of suffering and violence are all present here in this form of masculinity. Because exemplarv masculinity dispenses with the feminine, it can itself be "easily understood as a form of masochism or obedience to some more powerful authority or ideal" (Segal 1993, p. 635). However, this form of masculinity, in Segal's theorisation, cannot remain constant without,

...
The male body presented for priestly ordination is initiated into a negative cult whereby 'efficient powers' create an *exemplary* masculinity that is ultimately injurious to the individual man and to the cultic purity of the collective. Sacralisation of the male body initiates a form of masculinity that most purposely defines the maleness of priesthood as sacred and thereby holds the potential for male sexual violence against the profane (women and children). But this radical separation from the profane is not a constant; the perfection must be maintained. This implicates the sacred in maintaining control of women's (profane) bodies,

> violence and a search for power are necessary for maintaining the separation of the human community into gender-specific persons with gender-specific functions (Erickson 1993, p. 44).

By positing its 'gender-specific' priesthood as an essentially different form of masculinity the Church defines, describes and values this maleness over and against femaleness. I use the term 'masculinity' here in the way that Connell (1995, p. 84 emphasis original) does when he describes it as "a configuration of practice within a system of gender relations". In order to understand the gender order effected in that shift, from priest (embodied man) to *disembodied masculinity* (celibate priesthood), I follow Connell's (1995, p. 84) direction "to map the crisis tendencies of the gender order". My undertaking is to understand this shift as one example of a crisis tendency. It is not to debate for or against a celibate priesthood per se. That subject is located beyond the thesis' boundaries. However, I agree with Lisa Sowle Cahill's (1996, p. 182) position when she says, "the worth of celibacy itself, in Christianity today, must be measured in communitarian terms, not in either those of personal perfectionism or of a new sexualization of the celibate state". My intention here is to seek 220
those sexual meanings within the 'crisis tendencies of the gender order' that underscore the rationale for clerical male celibacy, but not as a matter of defining moral/immoral sexual behaviour or celibacy as a natural/unnatural life practice. Rather, it is to show that, as Richard Sipe argues, contrary to the celibacy inspired by the Gospel that "seems unconditionally and irreversibly nonviolent" there are now examples of "tolerance for violence in the service of the celibate/sexual system and its power" (Sipe 1995, p. 177). Using feminist readings for this mapping task I include among these the violent actions of the dominant masculinity to preserve the non-ordination of women as well as sexual violence against women and children. I return to those questions after the following exploration of the dimensions of, and rationales for, priestly celibacy.

**Celibacy and the body of the priest**

Within Christianity the Roman Catholic Church now stands alone in its requirement of permanent celibacy for its priesthood (Cahill 1996, p. 168). The first demands for clerical chastity in the third century were set out as an ascetic practice of sexual abstinence for married clergy. This "driving motive" for a form of "cultic purity" shows that it was "sexual activity and not marriage itself that was prohibited to the clergy" (Porter 1996, p. 32). However, by the twelfth century the Church had enshrined in Canon Law its requirement for an unmarried celibate priesthood (Paul VI 1967, Brown 1988, Porter 1996, Cahill 1996, Anderson 1998). Revealing that his own asceticism (against marital sexual activity) is little removed from that of eleventh century monk Peter Damian, Pius XII says,
sacred ministers do not renounce marriage solely on account of their apostolic ministry, but also by reason of their service at the altar. ... is it not much more fitting that the ministers of Jesus Christ, who offer every day the Eucharistic Sacrifice, possess perfect chastity? St. Peter Damian, exhorting priests to perfect continence, asks: "If Our Redeemer so loved the flower of unimpaired modesty that not only was He born from a virginal womb, but was also cared for by a virgin nurse even when He was still an infant crying in the cradle, by whom, I ask, does He wish His body to be handled now that He reigns, limitless, in heaven?" (Pius XII 1954, n. 23)

Church doctrinal teaching and discourse about chastity and celibacy (as cited above) completely, and intentionally, masks the corporeal reality that "celibate persons are also sexual persons" (Goergen 1974, p. v). Likewise, the two concepts themselves are blurred. The concept of chastity relates to the notion of non-sexual activity whereas the concept of celibacy infers non-marriage (Cahill 1996, pp. 168-170). However, the bodily aspect of non-sexual practice in priesthood is given little official account. Instead celibacy and chastity are focussed on in a disembodied way. Pere Lacordaire's expression, for example, holds a "sacral mediatorial view of priestly ministry" (Laishley 1991, p. 235) alongside an entirely non-corporeal, idealised conception. He said:

To live in the midst of the world without wishing its pleasures, to be a member of each family, and yet belonging to none; to share all sufferings; to penetrate all secrets; to heal all wounds; to go from men to God and offer him their prayers; to return from God to man to bring pardon and hope; to have a heart of fire by charity and a heart of bronze by chastity; to teach, console, and bless always; my God, what a life! And it is yours, O priest of Jesus Christ! (in Windsor 1996, p. 10)

Sexual continence for clerical men is seen in views such as these as a mental and spiritual state with extraordinary non-corporeal rewards. Likewise the opening words of Paul VI's
(1967) encyclical *Sacerdotalis Caelibatus (The Celibacy of the Priest)* metaphorically show that he regards celibacy as unrelated to the embodied condition on which it depends. He says, "priestly celibacy has been guarded by the Church for centuries as a brilliant jewel, and retains its value undiminished" (Paul VI 1967, n. 1). Even in the concrete specifics of its *Code Of Canon Law* (1983) the Church attaches the notion of disembodied choice to something it otherwise sees as its priesthood's primary requisite (the male body). Canon 277: §1 states:

Clerics are obliged to observe perfect and perpetual continence for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven, and are therefore bound to celibacy. Celibacy is a special gift of God by which sacred ministers can more easily remain close to Christ with an undivided heart, and can dedicate themselves more freely to the service of God and their neighbour.

Canon 277's contrary positing of celibacy as both bestowed gift (special gift of God) and mandated obligation (obliged to observe) means that "to choose the priesthood is to be made to choose celibacy" (Cahill 1996, p. 181). Chosen celibacy then has a highly sexual meaning. It is the choice not to participate in sexual practices but it is not an abandonment of, or severance from, sexual orientation.

In its presentation of mandatory celibacy as a non-sexual, rather than a sexual, reality the Church connotes it as being disembodied or outside of sexuality. But, as the work of Elizabeth Grosz (1994, p. viii) shows, sexuality, although a "slippery and ambiguous term", is corporeal and "renders even the desire not to desire, or the desire for celibacy, sexual". In other words, the indispensable sexed maleness of the body on which priesthood is conferred
cannot, metaphorically or literally, have sexual invisibility. The priestly ordination process can be seen as one where the candidate incorporates "social categories into the physiological interior" (Grosz 1993, p. 199). Grosz's argument shows that the mandatory injunction of Canon Law is as impractical to achieve a non-sexually active priesthood as is Lacordaire's fanciful prose. She shows that in an embodied social process, such as that of ordaining men to priesthood, there is correlation between the male body and the spiritual notion of celibacy. They cannot be split one from the other: both are embodied conditions. She says:

Bodies *speak*, without necessarily talking, because they become coded with and as signs. They speak social codes. They become *intextuated*, narratavised; simultaneously social codes, laws, norms, and ideals become *incarnated* (Grosz 1993, p. 199 emphasis original).

Within its current theological framework the Church holds an elision between chastity and celibacy that erroneously infers absence of sexuality. While priests' male bodies are 'intextuated' as a sign of celibacy, it is celibacy as law that, in Grosz's terms, becomes 'incarnated'. The Church contrarily implies through its narrative of celibacy as bestowed gift (and therefore non-voluntary) for its ordained male bodies an inevitable link with the intentionality of voluntary chastity in a bodily form. Sally Cline (1994, p. 21) highlights the significance of voluntary choice by qualifying celibacy as 'passionate' so that it becomes "the choice to be without a sexual partner for positive reasons of personal, political or spiritual growth". Cline's valuable distinction between chastity and celibacy is both intentional and positive whereas the Church's position seemingly assumes the latter infers the former. Chastity, Cline says,

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is a physical state of complete genital abstention ... only if it becomes purposeful can it be incorporated into a celibate philosophy. Chastity (at its simplest, when it is not purposeful) starts in the genitals. Celibacy starts in the mind (Cline 1994, p. 143).

The Church connects the process of celibacy (non-marriage) with the state of chastity (sexual continence). Paul VI (1967) refers to chastity twelve times and celibacy sixty-six times throughout his encyclical. The twelve references to chastity are further qualified as 'perfect chastity' (five times) and as 'priestly chastity' (five times). In note 72, as one example, he says,

the candidate ... will be in a position to take onto himself the heavy and sweet burden of priestly chastity ... in this way the obligation of celibacy ... is accepted by the candidate ... he will not feel the weight of an imposition from outside (Paul VI 1967, n. 72).

The 'obligation of celibacy' (non-marriage), however, does not guarantee the 'sweet burden of priestly chastity' (sexual continence) as practice. And as current research shows neither does the "golden law of sacred celibacy" (Paul VI 1967, n. 3) always result in "living their life of voluntary and consecrated celibacy in the most exemplary way" (Paul VI 1967, n. 13). Philosopher (and former priest) Anthony Kenny makes the distinction more clearly than the doctrinal Church. Kenny says that,

a vow of celibacy, that was a promise to God, not to the Church, ... monks and nuns vowed celibacy, but parochial clergy like myself were merely bound to it by an arbitrary law of the Church. (This was and is standard Catholic teaching) (Kenny 1997, p. 27).
Apart from media disclosures of clerical sexual abuse there are other studies and works now revealing a widespread degree of sexual activity among priests. This visible evidence of the acts of abusive priests, Sipe (1998, n. 92 online) argues, "threatens to expose a whole system that supports a lack of celibate conformity within the priesthood". There is another indication of the discrepancy between the priesthood's celibacy and chastity. The Sipe Report (1998, n. 89 online) estimates that priests are involved in sexual relationships with four times as many women, and three times as many adult men, as those priests who act abusively with children. Sipe (1998, n. 90 online) goes on to state that reliable studies and "knowledgeable observers, including authorities within the Church" show that forty to fifty percent of Catholic priests are of homosexual orientation and that half that number are sexually active. Sipe's own estimates, however, are lower, attributing thirty percent of priests are of homosexual orientation and "half of those are sexually active". These estimates are in line with those of Cozzens (2000) and McManus (2000). The figures given in Table B (Appendix C) are likewise indicative of the high level of sexual activity of some priests. What all these studies show is that Canon 277 obligating all priests 'to observe perfect and perpetual continence' is simply not being practised. Broad disregard for the obligation not only evidences that the Church's promulgation of male clerical chastity is negligent it is also central to the abuse issue because as Sipe argues,

a community that publicly proclaims the sexual safety of its members at the same time that it tolerates sexual activity restricts the ability of bishops, vicars, pastors and priests to properly supervise, discipline and explore the criminal activities of priests (Sipe 1998, n. 92 online).
Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999) shows absolutely that this is the case. Stating their research shows that there are "considerable numbers" of sexually active priests they go on to give a prime example of the Church's conflation of celibacy with chastity as well as its misconception that it is possible to be simultaneously celibate and sexually active. Without comment on the ambiguity the report states:

A significant number of priests consulted in the course of the research could instance priest colleagues who lead a lifestyle where they are privately in a personal relationship, while celibate in respect of official ministry (Towards Understanding [Draft] 1999, p. 37).

That statement further illustrates that mandatory celibacy for priesthood operates on the double standard that Sipe (1995, p. 114) calls "sex condemned and sex indulged". The Church, however, continues to insist that sexual abuse "is a human, moral problem, not a systemic problem" and the Vatican continues opposition "to even discussion concerning the systems undergirding the priestly lifestyle" (Cozzens 2000, p. 119). These, I contend, along with the Church's abstraction and sacralisation of the embodied priest leaves it without a means to deal with priests' sexual activities in ways other than it presently does. Sufficient evidence is now available to show that complete absence of sexual activity cannot be assumed as priesthood's identifying norm. Furthermore, as Sipe (1995, p. 6) says, "sexual activity among presumed celibates is symptomatic of dysfunction of the system". This renders the basis for a celibate priesthood in need of examination.
Rationale for celibacy

The maleness of the priest is compartmentalised away from the sexuality of the priesthood through the Church's arguments about celibacy. There is, however, a growing post-conciliar view challenging the Church's continuing demand for a celibate priesthood. Adrian Hastings (1986, p. 67) articulates this position and argues that it is "unquestionable theologically and historically, that celibacy as such has nothing to do with the ordained ministry". However, the Church retains celibacy as its absolute requirement for priesthood and relies on two explanations to demonstrate that there is interdependence between celibacy and ministry. Those reasons are, the time availability of an unencumbered man to spend in service to others through ministry, and celibacy as a sign of personal spiritual commitment based on the example of the unmarried Jesus (Hastings 1986, Laishley 1991, Ormerod & Ormerod 1995). Neither reason relates to priests' own sexed bodies and sexuality, but what is most applicable to this project, neither do these reasons "provide grounds for an absolute prohibition of sexual relationships in the setting of ministry" (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 29).

Availability for the service of others is set out in Paul VI (1967, n. 32) as the motivation for the consecration of priests under a "lofty title like celibacy" which facilitates "continuous exercise of perfect charity. This charity will permit him to spend himself wholly for the welfare of all". "Celibacy", he adds, "obviously guarantees him a greater freedom and flexibility in the pastoral ministry". In these terms it is committed and ongoing
relationships, and not sexual activities per se, that constrain the priest's capacity to 'spend himself wholly for the welfare of all'. The underpinning rationale for the Church's celibate system then opposes the marriage relationship; "since it is marriage that would make the priest "less available"" (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 29). From that perspective it can be seen that casual sexual relationships, whether abusive or consensual, do not impair celibacy's motive. In fact Ormerod & Ormerod (1995, p. 29) argue that casual sexual encounters or relationships may even be encouraged by this precept because ultimately these will be seen as ""sexual sins" regrettable but not against ministry".

Instances from my interviews show that two priests, both of whom abused married women, used exactly that kind of approach with the women. Anna's abuser was arguably bodily 'available' to her as minister while at the same time he remained celibate (disembodied) in the service of God. He told her, while he engaged her in bodily sexual activities that she was "beautiful" and that what was happening between them was "simply an expression of loving affection". Sipe (1995, p. 121 emphasis original) says of this type of occurrence "if repentant, the priest is forgiven, with great compassion for his human failing". It is not the concern of this thesis to ascertain either his repentance or spiritual forgiveness. His 'human failing', however, was dealt with by consultation sessions with a psychiatrist who was his long time friend and to whom that priest had referred many patients. The resulting psychiatric report judged him "to be fit for the priesthood" and diagnosed that "his main
problem is impotence because [priest] did not see all this as sexual". Throughout that process the perpetrator remained (and continues to be) in active priestly ministry. Towards Healing's (1996) procedures are obviously not applied retrospectively.

In the other instance, Helen's abuser would telephone her at night, when her husband was at work, telling her "isn't it wonderful that we've met. God has chosen me to bring out all this sensuality and all your feelings and all your orgasms. He [God] has chosen you as somebody special because that makes me [priest] not leave the church because I can still function as a wonderful priest because I have you to love me". That man later left priesthood and is estimated to have been sexually active with some twenty women while still a priest. According to Sipe (1995, p. 121) priests in multiple sexual relationships frequently continue these as a pattern for their entire priesthood. When Helen brought her complaints to Church hierarchy she was told "I think if we can get some help for you then you will be able to cope ... I've got a lady downstairs who can help you ... she'll be able to handle people like you". Common attitudes of the Church towards complainant women, and priest's rationalisations, are reflected in that particular case. Sipe (1995, p. 121) says there are three usual explanations given for priests' sexual activities with women, all of which denigrate the woman concerned. The woman "is to blame for the priest's dalliance; she should be grateful and silent for the privilege of such selection or closeness; it is part of the special grace and gift of a woman to be able to save a priest by her love".

29 From the text of the perpetrator's psychiatric report shown to me.
Sexually active priests employ rationalisations that allow them to presume celibacy while being sexually active. These include rationalising that sexualised relationships with women that do not proceed to genital intercourse do not contravene the law of celibacy. Many priests who abuse children also consider they have maintained their celibate status vis à vis the prohibition against sexual relations with women (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 26, Towards Understanding [Draft] 1999, p. 44). And of course the prevailing notion that celibacy is a spiritual matter and therefore outside of embodiment. Bypassing the bodily allows active sexual engagements to become abstracted and considered as sin, followed by forgiveness. Further the Church itself, in its "forgiveness for" and "rehabilitation of" priests who are sexually violent and its total exclusion from ministry those men who leave priesthood to marry, amply demonstrates it does not regard sexually abusive acts as an impediment to celibate priesthood (Ormerod & Ormerod 1995, p. 29).

Alongside these are the many documented examples of women's bodiliness as the source of temptation for priests (cf Costigan 1977; Ruether 1974, 1983; Daly 1985; Collins 1986; Hamington 1995; Ormerod & Ormerod 1995; Sipe 1995; Uhr 1996; Confoy 1997; Keshgegian 1999; Cozzens 2000). Richard Sipe (1995, p. 121) points out that even male saints, Augustine and Ignatius are prominent examples, who, after a history of sexual relationships from which they ultimately abandoned their women partners to adopt celibate lifestyles, "leave no traces of gratitude to their former partners". Furthermore, as Elizabeth Stuart (1996a, p. 17) records, in the categorisation of men and women saints into virgin/non-virgin there are no men in the latter category even though these two (as fathers
of children) "obviously fit the bill". Sally Cline's (1994, p. 143) phrase that "celibacy starts in the mind" is particularly apposite here. The concept of celibacy as a disembodied mental state, as it is in the Church's gift/law Canon, produces another dichotomy: the sexually active celibate. Individual sexually active (but assumed celibate) priests, and the collective priesthood to which they belong, continue to demonstrate that "the cultic symbol is still powerfully operative: it provides an ideological rationale for what is acknowledged to be a juridical link" (Laishley 1991, p. 235).

Paul VI's (1967, n. 25) encyclical sets out the second premise for celibacy. A freely chosen celibacy, he says, "associates our ministerial priesthood with the priesthood of Christ ... the bond between priesthood and celibacy will be more and more seen as closely knit -- as the mark of an heroic soul". Although this idea, as Ormerod & Ormerod (1995, p. 29) rightly argue, "has no intrinsic connection to ministry" its expression of altruism does hold a place in Christian spirituality which, as I have already stated, is outside of this thesis. However, one pertinent point made by Laishley about the bodily aspect of Christ needs to be made.

He says:

Christ's humanness (and his maleness and his celibacy) tell us something about the fact of the goodness of God. ... They tell us nothing about the description of God for God has no description (Laishley 1991, p. 238 emphasis original).

Laishley's statement is important. It highlights how, in elevating men only to in persona Christi, the Church attempts to 'describe' God into their sexed bodies and thereby make those bodies irrevocably sacred. A celibate priesthood may represent conceptual
commitment to the service of ministry to others or to the "sheer reality of God as transcendent ... But there is no necessary connection between celibacy and particular forms of ecclesial service" (Laishley 1991, p. 238). By 'necessarily connecting' maleness to celibacy and presenting these as the rationale of priesthood the Church's position is highly problematic. Firstly, focussing on celibacy in a disembodied way disregards the corporeal fact that celibate persons are also sexual persons and secondly, viewing chastity as consequential to celibacy leaves the Church in a fraught position for dealing with clerical sexual abuse. Neither celibacy nor priesthood precludes sexual activity for clerical men. It is in the dichotomy between celibacy and chastity that the priest has open to him that which is forbidden to him: "a wide latitude of sexual exploration" (Sipe 1995, p. 58).

The logical conclusion of the process of initiating a material male body into priesthood and then seemingly disregarding the sexuality of that body is that a "negative cult" is established. The function of these cults, Durkheim (1971, p. 299) says, "is to prevent undue mixings and to keep one of the two domains from encroaching upon the other, they are only able to impose abstentions or negative acts". Celibacy "as a cultic symbol of 'the man set apart' for the service of the divine fits well into this pattern" (Laishley 1991, p. 235). Priestly celibacy is a 'cultic symbol' that may or may not indicate actual abstention from sexual activity. However, the cult's objective function to 'keep one of the two domains from encroaching upon the other' is a gendered function that again raises the concept of separate spheres. To that end, Victoria Erickson (1993, p. 23) argues, "sacred force is necessary to maintain the separation between the spheres and the superiority of the sacred sphere". That
segregating sacred force is most fully employed (and violently expressed) in upholding the Church's declaration by the Sacred Congregation For The Doctrine Of The Faith ([SCDF] *Inter Insigniores* (1976, n. 1) that the Church has "never felt that priestly or episcopal ordination can be validly conferred on women".

**The non-ordination of women's bodies**

The ordination of women to priesthood in some Christian denominations places a direct focus on the sexuality of the Roman Catholic priesthood in a concrete (embodied) way. As a corollary of the ordination of both women and men there is now general recognition "that most clergy are male, as opposed to neuter" (Raab 2000, p. 205). Kelly Ann Raab's (2000) study of Episcopalian women priests shows that an effective social awareness now prevails "that celibate men are not asexual any more than are women priests" but it is women priests' bodily presence that "force the issue of sexuality out into the open" (2000, p. 207). In spite of issues of sexuality being 'out into the open' the Catholic Church remains coy, resorting to the use of analogy and metaphor, about the matter of priesting men's bodies. However, parallel with its quietness about men's bodies the Church remains vocal that women's bodies remain excluded because their bodily differences (sexual differences) preclude iconic representation of Christ. Sexually-endowed characteristics hold out the potential for sacred abstraction from them (for men) and permanent profane cementing to them (for

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30 Recent publications revealing high levels of homosexuality in the Roman Catholic priesthood also serve to 'force the issue of sexuality out into the open'. See Sipe (1995), Cozzens (2000), McManus (2000).
women). The Church wants its connections between priesthood and the maleness of Christ to remain "an untouchable mystery on a metaphysical and symbolic plane" (Hoad 1984, p. 103).

Earlier I suggested that the Church's intimation of a 'natural' linkage between celibacy and chastity fabricate a disembodied masculinity, so attempting to locate priesthood beyond embodied sexuality. This highly refined and 'exemplary' form of masculinity is developed by being defined and described over and against female bodiliness. This opposing of disembodied masculinity over embodied femininity means the central issues at stake in the (non)ordination of women into cultic priesthood are primarily issues about women's embodiment and sexuality. Elizabeth Johnson (1996, online) emphatically argues that it must be "plainly stated that women are icons of Christ ... There is a natural resemblance between women and Jesus Christ in terms of a common humanity". The Church's appeal to an imperative for 'iconic representation of Christ' is unrelated to matters of theology or the divinity of Christ. It is a purposeful social practice for the exclusion of women as corporeal beings.

Although I argue that neither an individual priest's male body nor ordained priesthood can be (re)located outside of male sexuality, Durkheim proposes a way the Church could occasion disembodiment. He says, "men have never succeeded in imagining themselves as forces mistress over the bodies in which they reside ... in a word, they must think of
themselves as souls" (Durkheim 1971, p. 366). By employing abstraction the Church collapses the male bodiliness of Jesus into the divinity of Christ extending this as equivalent to a male only Christ. *In persona Christi* (which should be *in persona Jesu Christi*) becomes a disembodied male state thereby nullifying the female body. Potential for Christic relationship is then available to only one type of sexed body and woman is "absence, negation and non-being, a body surrendered to animality with no access to the symbols of theological personhood" (Beattie 1999, online). Former seminarian Gerard Windsor illustrates how this abstract thinking ('of themselves as souls') while continuing to be masculine was part of his training for priesthood. "The Christian vocation", he says,

> demanded of each soul that it cast aside all disguise and come out naked into the presence of God. ... It encouraged me by emphasising that I was little less than the angels ... You act as Christ acted. As Christ acts now. The priest donned the vestments and evacuated his own personality (Windsor 1996, p. 121).

As with the celibacy issue my concern is with the sexual meanings of non-ordination and not with the arguments for or against women's ordination per se. Those arguments are usually couched in terms of gender equity, human rights and questions about the injustices and discriminations in the exclusion of women from full participation in the Church (cf Van Lunen Chenu, 1998). Rather than directly addressing the social justice aspects my intention here is to continue to focus on the social dimensions of embodiedness as it relates to priesthood. Ultimately this is, of course, a matter of social justice. Tina Beattie’s (1999, online) words encapsulate a broad range of feminist views of the Church's traditional approach to women's bodies when she says, "the female flesh has always symbolised carnal weakness and non-Godliness for both sexes". I examine this essential prejudice to highlight
that the Church's opposition to women's ordination is fundamentally a matter of corporeality and to show that violence is seeded in that opposition. I argue that *Inter Insigniores* statement (cited above) could be reworded and read more accurately in essential terms as, 'the Catholic Church has never felt that priestly or episcopal ordination can be validly conferred on women's bodies'.

Since the condemnation and reversal of the first centuries' practice of entrusting "priestly ministry to women", *Inter Insigniores* (SCDF 1976, n. 1) states that, "calling only men to the priestly Order and ministry in its true sense ... has enjoyed peaceful and universal acceptance". This exclusion of women from ordination and the assumed chastity of a celibate priesthood have been effectively interwoven to create a 'silence' around the sexuality of priests. The Church's demand for, yet unspecified detail about what constitutes, 'natural' Christic resemblance does not give positive sexual ascription to its select male bodies but discursively denigrates the sexuality of all female bodies. These illusory discourses are created and function, as Elizabeth Grosz (1993, p. 209 emphasis original) shows, "by positioning women as the body". A long history of reverting to the 'cultic purity' argument to position 'impure' women this way gives Church hierarchy the ability to "project themselves and their products as disembodied, pure and uncontaminated". The imbalance developed in this kind of epistemology has become a highly efficient method for Church fathers to rationalise their domination "by claiming their interests are universal or sexually neutral" (Grosz 1993, p. 208). In the case of priesthood the claim is made for 'peaceful and
universal acceptance' of 'a new form of life which is sublime and divine'. To which I would add and a *disembodied* sign.

The Sacred Congregation For The Doctrine Of The Faith [SCDF] in its *Official Commentary on the Declaration Inter Insigniores* pronounces that,

> the priest is a sign, the supernatural effectiveness of which comes from the ordination received, but a sign that must be perceptible and that the faithful must recognise with ease. ... when Christ's role in the Eucharist is to be expressed sacramentally, there would not be this 'natural resemblance' if the role of Christ were not taken by a man: in such a case it would be difficult to see in the minister the image of Christ. For Christ himself was and remains a man (SCDF 1977, n.5).

Here again is Grosz's (1993, p. 199) theory of bodies being 'intextuated' as a sign and law becoming 'incarnated'. The Church continues to present and defend the notion that the priest is a non-corporeal sign (although at the same time he 'must be perceptible' as a *man*) yet a woman's embodiment disallows her to likewise become a sign. In its arbitrary exclusion the Church uses women seeking ordination as a foil to associate women's sexuality as belonging to the profane (embodied) while men are reflected as sacred (disembodied sign). Silence exists even around the name 'woman' ("if the role of Christ were not taken by a man") rather than if a woman took the role of Christ.

Rosemary Radford Ruether (1983, p. 126) shows that the disembodied sign which is the "essential prerequisite for representing Christ, who is the disclosure of the male God" contrarily rests precisely on the fundamental corporeal feature of "the possession of male
genitalia" to provide 'natural resemblance'. This concept, like the theological arguments for complementarity presented in Chapter Three, further promulgates the 'equal but different' stratagem and is again reduced to essentialism. I see this, using Grosz's (1994, p. 189) words, as an attempt by the Church, "to question the ontological status of the sexed body". However, in this circumstance it is only the female body that needs such questioning for the male priest is symbolic (non-corporeal). Tina Beattie argues that this shift away from the old Augustinian/Thomistic arguments, of women as inferior by nature, towards more essentialist interpretations now give this form of maleness precedence over humanness. She says:

Women are no longer denied access to the sacramental priesthood because we are inferior to men but because by nature we are incapable of representing Christ, because we are not male and the masculinity of Christ is essential to his identification with God ... the saving significance of incarnation ... lies in the fact that Christ was a male body which is essentially different from being a female body (Beattie 1999, online).

The Catholic Church is the exemplar par excellence of women's bodies being used to serve "specifically masculine interests" (Grosz 1993, p. 209). For women, the Church's discursive saturation of their female bodies with sex and sexuality means that imagined forms of disembodiment are not, or never have been, possible. The social body of the Church elevates its priestly bodies to sacred status (by abstraction) while constraining women's bodies to the profane (by embodiment). In Tina Beattie's (1999, online) words, "the doors of symbolic masculinity have been locked and the female body is on the outside". The claim for this 'divinely ordained' masculinity is a claim for the rightness of hegemonic masculinity which exists when "there is some correspondence between cultural ideal and
institutional power, collective if not individual" (Connell 1995, p. 77). In this issue the cultural ideal (of the institution) and the organisational power (of the Church) emanate from the same source. They are compacted in hegemony.

Connell (1995, p. 77) goes on to argue that in hegemonic masculinity, "it is the successful claim to authority, more than direct violence, that is the mark of hegemony (though violence often underpins or supports authority)". Women seeking ordination challenge what the Church perceives as its 'successful claim to authority'. For its part the Church sees women, who call for ordination, "equating themselves with the divine image, they are outraged at impure women claiming dignity and worth as persons also made in the 'image of God' and acting on that claim" (White & Tulip 1991, p. 82). Chapter Four showed that sexually abusive priests are accommodated within the sacred while women who persevere with claims for ordination outrage the Church and evoke what I call 'sacred violence'.

That outrage, I argue, is more concerned with women's claim to bodily representation of Christ than the sharing of other powers of priesthood. An instance of the violence underpinning the outrage exhibited by this specific form of hegemonic masculinity was recently demonstrated in Canberra, Australia.

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31 In Chapter Four I cited the destruction of the work of international author Lavinia Byrne as an example of violence perpetrated against women who advocate ordination for women.
Ann Nugent is the editor of *OCW Newsletter* (Ordination of Catholic Women). While she is publicly known to hold this voluntary position, and obviously supports women's quest for ordination, she took no steps to actively promote the cause within her own parish. In September 1998 her parish priest, Bishop Geoffrey Mayne, instructed that: she was not to receive communion (Eucharist); was not to act as a Church lector; and must resign her position on the parish council.\(^{32}\) The first of these decrees is tantamount to excommunication. Ann was placed outside of the Church that she was baptised into full membership of and in which she practises. At Easter the following year there was a meeting of reconciliation between Ann and her (by then) Monsignor parish priest. He invited her to return to Mass on Easter Sunday and receive communion adding that there would be "a statement of welcome and inclusion" (ABC Radio National, 1999). No such statement was made and in his sermon the priest, in a general reference, said, "if you are not prepared to follow my leadership get out of my way. I will not tolerate banality, bitchery or bullshit from any section of this parish". The Monsignor made it clear, Ann said, "that after Mass he was going immediately home to his family and that if anyone got between him and his car, they'd be run over" (ABC Radio National, 1999). Some Bishops and priests who were approached by the media for their opinion said they would not have taken, and did not condone, those actions. None, however, named the acts as violence and none initiated any comment against their fellow priests.

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\(^{32}\) See Kath McPhillips (1999) for a Weberian interpretation of this incident in terms of women's subjectivity and religious practice within the competing discourses of modernity.
Ann Nugent challenged a negative cult. The ensuing abusive treatment of her reflects how the masculinity of priesthood is constructed as a negative cult within the sacred/profane division. And how it is displayed in relation to the feminine defined as its opposite. This masculinity's claim to authority relies on its ability to represent priestly bodies as non-corporeal while at the same time investing women as corporeal. The individual violent acts of these two men were directed against Ann as an embodied woman. Ann Nugent is a mother and grandmother thus her body depicts a very specific form of female embodiment. On the one hand the maternal (procreative) body is highly commended by the Church. On the other hand she holds political views asserting that women's bodies do not impede Christic representation. Ann Nugent's understanding of the imposed limitations on women's full potential in the Church although abstract could not, it appears, be separated from her bodily presence. Deeply ingrained in this incident are the same characteristics that are masked in the Church's responses to sexual violence perpetrated by some of its priests. In the tension between (dis)embodiment of the sacred masculine and the embodiment of the profane feminine there exists an embedded violence that is called forth to preserve the status of the sacred/profane division along gender lines.

The most frightening aspect of analyzing the structure of the celibate/sexual power system is to realize how it was determined by banal sexual impulses in which women are the object of domination. Power and the glorification of man are necessary goals. Christ is reduced to an idealized symbol, used for justification of control (Sipe 1995, p. 179).

Priesthood is the last and most formidable tenet the Church has to retain its hegemonic masculinity. Its basis lies in the ability of the Church to present its priested men as 'set apart'. The prohibition against women priests is losing ground as a fiat and some Church
authorities therefore resort to direct violence against women on the grounds of their embodiment. As I stated earlier I am not arguing for the ordination of women and also stress that I do not suggest in any way that the clerical sexual abuse issue would be resolved simply by the admission of some women to priesthood. My purpose is to demonstrate that without resolution of this conflict we can see that sexual violence against women and children will remain, within the terms of a negative cult, as a permitted violence.

Conclusion

In this chapter I give an overview of what I describe as who priests are and examine priesthood as a highly particularised construction of one form of masculinity. Through the lens of Durkheim's sacred/profane I add a feminist perspective to account for Durkheim's gendered approach. This locates ordination into priesthood and its accompanying mandatory celibacy as the formation of a negative cult. The concept of the rite of ordination, I argue, effects an elevation of the male priest to sacred status and thus a superior masculinity distinguished as disembodied. Priesthood belongs to "the original professions" (Daniel 1998, p. 26) where dress, language and the enactment of rituals all keep it firmly tied to its sacred/profane (religious) origins. Uncovering some of those origins allows us to see where the source of the violence appears. I argue that it is most of all at the point where the sexed male body, as the primary requirement for priesthood, is separated from its sexuality. And following on from this severance celibacy is wrongly conflated with chastity. The concepts of celibacy and chastity therefore must be seen as
embodied states for men and women. The projection of a disembodied and sacred masculine over and against the embodied profane female sets up a masculinity that "gains its symbolic force and familiar status, not from any fixed meanings, but rather from a series of hierarchical relations to what it can subordinate" (Segal 1993, p. 635).

The negative cult, as Durkheim (1971, p. 326 emphasis original) says, "does not contain its reason for existence in itself". These have to be seen against those things that uphold them "whose regulation and organization is the function of a group of ritual practices ... [to which] we give the name of positive cult". If the preceding examination shows who priests are I turn to 'a group of ritual practices' (positive cults) to see what priests do. Australian priest historian Edmund Campion (1982, p. 33) summarises these links when he says, "the principle function of a priest ... is to lead a liturgical community. Such leadership is not an intermittent activity which starts and stops with liturgical action". That is the subject of the following final chapter that focuses on the Church's use of ritual as the foundation through which it legitimates the gendered structures of its sacred/profane division.
CHAPTER SEVEN

RITUAL: ENACTING THE SACRED

If we stick closely to appearances, rites often give the effect of purely manual operations: they are anointings, washings, meals. ... But these material manoeuvres are only the external envelope under which the mental operations are hidden (Durkheim 1971, p. 419).

To link who priests are with what priests do this chapter examines the social aspects of rituals (also called rites) as its central theme. This, I contend, is one means of addressing the Australian Catholic Bishops own premise for Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999). That is, to undertake a 'study of factors specific to the Catholic Church which might lead to sexual abuse by priests and religious'. I persist with my assertion that accounts focused on psychosexual attributes of priests who are sexually violent and/or individuals' experiences of clerical sexual abuse are limited. Although the latter unequivocally continue to reveal how entrenched and violent the abuse is both fail to address the systemic nature of the problem. Stephanie Dowrick in Tasting Salt (1997, p. 342) has her young female protagonist argue that wars recur because they originate one from the other. She then asks, "How can blind cycles of violence repair violence?" I share that question. Unless the social factors of the sexism embedded in Church rituals are seen by the Church hierarchy, who formulate its responses, to hold an inherent bias against women and children then the rhetoric in the principles and procedures of those responses remain locked into 'blind cycles'. Durkheim's 'external envelope' needs to be opened.
In the previous chapter I argue that ordination to the cultic system of priesthood establishes, in Durkheimian terms, a negative cult that is also a highly particularised form of exemplary masculinity. In the same terms the negative cult has its logical correlative in the positive cult. These positive cults, in contrast to the abstentions of negative cults, lead "men" to believe that they have "positive and bilateral relations with them" (Durkheim 1971, p. 376). These positive cults are more than initiation and their "regulation and organization" is both the function of and seeded in the rites of religion that Durkheim (1971, p. 10) names as "a manner of acting which take rise in the midst of the assembled groups". These become sites of meaning construction through holding an ability that is "destined to excite, maintain or recreate certain mental states in these groups" (Durkheim 1971, p. 10). The meanings constructed via ritual are then the sustaining force on which the sacred relies and ritual itself has sacred characteristics.

If, as I argue, the differentiation between the sacred/profane is a gender distinction and ritual is the foundation on which the sacred rests then ritual must likewise have gendered characteristics. The physical and discursive materials of ritual provide the continuity for the collective of priesthood as sacred. They are formed in the religious beliefs that Durkheim (1971, p. 41) says, "are the representations which express the nature of sacred things and the relations which they sustain, either with each other or with profane things". They are also codes of conduct for priests as individuals; "rites are the rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself in the presence of these sacred objects" (Durkheim 1971, p. 41). In this chapter my interest is centrally concerned with the gendered
aspects of the 'mental operations' rather than the 'material manoeuvres' of particular positive
cult rituals as they impact on questions about sexually abusive priests.

An abusive priest simultaneously occupies the roles of liturgical leader and sexual predator.
He does not cease being a priest when he acts as an abusive man. His actions are the same
as other sexually predatory men who, as Jocelyn Scutt (1990, p. 277) points out, "live a
'normal' life ... whilst occasionally, or monthly, or weekly, or daily, molesting their own
daughters, nieces, step-daughters, and sometimes their sons". Unlike the very disparate
social circumstances occupied by secular men who are also periodically sexual abusers, the
rituals of priesthood, with their commonly held practices and understandings, provide a
unique context for social analyses. However, as I showed in Chapter Two, the Church's
responses avoid analysis of any connections or distinctions between the 'normal life' of the
priest and his sexually abusive acts. Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999, p. 45) states, "it
is undeniable that some of the worst instances of sexual abuse have been committed by
priests and religious who have continued in or returned to ministry". It does not, however,
go on to scrutinise any ways in which the situations of priesthood and predator are
connected.

I have already stated (Chapter Two) that the Towards Healing (1996, p. 2) definition that
sexual abuse, "may take the form of suggestive comments, unnecessary questions and
physical contact", is an exercise in obfuscation of priestly violence. I argue in this chapter
that abusive priests, as sacralised beings, derive advantage from rituals that discursively
function to segregate their abusive acts from their moral intent. This chapter's discussion of
ritual lends further illustration to the ways the Church's silence, around the bodies of priests
'(disembodied masculinity')", is presented as unquestionable. I have already drawn on
Rappaport's (1999) example of the blurring of the distinction between the divine and the
sacred that leads to a representation of discourse as unquestionable. Rappaport (1999, p.
282) then goes on to argue that there can be a "tendency for unquestionableness itself to
become apotheosized as a divine object". I suggest that this has occurred and the Church
has precluded its own discussion of priests as sexually violent by silencing itself through
imputing 'unquestionableness' to discourses around priesthood. By opening the location of
ritual to examination I address the Church's omission and explore the gender aspects of
some of Catholicism's priestly ritual practices.  

The rituals that I concentrate on Rappaport (1999, p. 35) describes as, "liturgical orders:
more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances of some duration repeated in
specified contexts". These are central to priesthood and to Catholic liturgy. They both
construct and underpin individuals' understandings of their spiritual identity as a
specifically Catholic identity. Their function of establishing and maintaining the collective
stem from "the social act, in the rite or ceremony that binds the individual to his kinship
community" (Nisbet 1971, p. vi emphasis original). For the priest, as leader of these

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33 I reiterate that this analysis is not concerned with 'ritual abuse' in the sense of its sometimes-popular media
usage as being related to physical and/or sexual abuses that are satanic or cult based.
'kinship communities', Cozzens (2000, p. 7) names three particular rituals as the locus of the priest's spirituality adding that these are also "understood to be his ontological status as a priest of the Church". Furthermore, he states it is in these three powers, "to consecrate, forgive and anoint" that "the priest's unique sacramental power" is emphasised and confirmed. The first two of these powers are concerned with specific rituals: Mass and Eucharist (to consecrate) and Confession (to forgive) and this chapter's later discussion situates these two in their social context. The power to anoint is related to a range of religious contexts rather than a particular ritual and so I focus only on the other two. The concepts of in persona Christi and Rappaport's theory of Ultimate Sacred Postulates (introduced in Chapter Four) are reintroduced and explored further because they hold key positions in the gendering of these powers of ritual. The discussion begins with an outline of what constitutes ritual (as I am using it) and its temporal aspects which illustrate the continuity of sacred ritual into everyday life. I then turn to the more particular relationship of some rituals to gender and violence.

Facets of ritual

Durkheim pre-empts his own findings at the opening of The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (1971). "The general conclusion of the book", he (1971, p. 10) says, "is that religion is something eminently social". Durkheim insists that the sacred is entirely social and that ritual is always and only related to the sacred and therefore it is possible to account fully for religion in sociological terms (Pickering 1984, p. 329). Durkheim's gendered
presumption of religious experience as masculine experience and ritual as a means of
sacralising male identity is problematic in relation to ritual. His desire to give sociological
explanations that remain true to science's positivistic terms necessitates that he locates
religion entirely outside of the transcendent. His omission of any "God" or "Spirit Being",
as Catherine Garrett (1998, p. 102) says, "hampered his attempts to explain something that
is, by its very nature, 'occult'". However, the groundbreaking work of Rappaport (1999),
already introduced in Chapter Four, shows that it is possible to follow Durkheim and
account for, rather than omit, the 'divine'. The sociological view is distinguishable from the
theological view if the occult is seen as a "putative property of the subject matter asserted in
that discourse" [of divinity] (Rappaport 1999, p. 281 emphasis original). It is essential to
recognise the discourse in Ultimate Sacred Postulates developed through ritual because
these "are generally devoid, or close to devoid, of material significata" (Rappaport 1999, p.
280).

Rappaport spells out in fine details the constituent elements of what Durkheim called
ritual's 'manual' and 'mental' operations. He recognises that ritual is based in "sets of
enduring structural relations" whose definition includes,

the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and
utterances not entirely encoded by the performers logically entails the
establishment of convention, the sealing of social contract, the construction of
integrated conventional orders we shall call Logoi the investment of whatever
it encodes with morality, the construction of time and eternity; the
representation of a paradigm of eternity, the generation of the concept of the
sacred and the sanctification of the conventional order, the generation of
theories of the occult, the evocation of numinous experience, the awareness of
the divine, the grasp of the holy, and the construction of orders of meaning
transcending the semantic (Rappaport 1999, p. 27 emphasis original).
Taken individually, ritual's elements are not peculiar to it alone. "It is in the conjunction of its features that it is unique" (Rappaport 1999, p. 31). In combination the acts and utterances (manual) are reflected in the discursive all-embracing network of identity (mental). Ritual's "generative and regenerative processes" (Turner V. 1982, p. 86) preserve and transmit group cohesion within the social location that provides "the element within which ritual has its life" (Jay 1992, p. 12). So there is close proximity between ritual and everyday life because the elements of religious identity, as Dinges (1987, p. 145) says, "do not stand apart from each other". It is in this complex web that the priestly powers to consecrate and forgive are enmeshed with gender.

Considerable discussion exists around the continuity and discontinuity implicated in the movement from daily life towards and into ritual. These are usually couched in the language of time and the structuring of group cohesion through ritual's process (cf Turner V. 1969, 1982; Douglas 1975, 1996a; Turner B. 1991, Rappaport 1999). Referring to the intervals of time in liturgical orders Rappaport (1999, p. 216) speaks of "the durations encompassed by rituals themselves as "times out of time", "sacred time" and "extraordinary time"". While the movement towards these times out of time away from the ordinary daily temporal conditions is prioritised and often spoken of in "mysterious language" (Rappaport 1999, p. 216) there is little consideration of the reverse transition. That is, from ritual to daily life. While ritual time is seen as an exceptional period inserted into and uplifting daily life, everyday time is juxtaposed as "mundane time" (Rappaport 1999, p. 216). In Chapters Two and Three I identify that ordinary or mundane time as the gendered time and place of

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the private sphere which is also the usual habitat of sexual violence. Clerical sexual violence is sometimes perpetrated in the sacred arena of church but most often in homes, schools, offices and cars, places that belong in the environments of everyday life. In these situations although the sacred appears to move towards, or even into, the profane I argue that in fact the sacralised man as priest remains within the sacred. I also show that the alternation between the two intervals of time is not the same for ritual leader (priest) and congregant (ritual participant). Neither is this transference sharply delineated. It is more a movement through a temporal period than a clearly marked transition.

Ritual: sacred time & sacred beings

The relationship between alterations of the social condition and alterations of the consciousness is not a simple one, but it is safe to say they augment and abet each other (Rappaport 1999, p. 219).

Anthropological analyses of religious rituals focus extensively on the expressive function of enthusiastic participation in the ceremonial events conducted in what they term 'tribal societies' (cf Turner V. 1969; Douglas 1975, 1996a; Jay 1992). All, drawing on Durkheim (1971), concur on the 'social' nature of ritual. Mary Douglas (1996a, p. xv), however, critiques what she sees as a contradiction between Durkheim's stated intention to "speak only about social facts" and his subsequent reliance on the psychological factor of "emotional effervescence, the idea that rituals rouse violent, ecstatic feelings, like crowd hysteria". Douglas (1996a, p. xvi) points out, and I agree with her, that her experience of many Catholic rituals is of being "dignified, but tedious, slow and elaborate". Thus she
(Douglas 1996a, p. xvi) argues that "Australian totemic dances cannot do for a model of ritual in all situations". However, in singling out Durkheim's component of ritual's ability to 'excite' Douglas seems to overlook two things. First, that the social and psychological are not mutually exclusive but 'augment and abet each other' and secondly, that Durkheim equally emphasised social features of ritual that 'maintain and recreate certain mental states'. The distinction, I suggest, is between the formation of a collective's shared identity through ritual (excite) and the relationship between that collective and those individuals inducted as its ritual leaders whose ministerial task is to facilitate (maintain and recreate) that shared identity. My concern, however, is not to identify an all-embracing reference point providing a 'model of ritual'. Rather, I want to relate the continuity of the sacred via ritual with the everyday gender relations of the profane environment. In showing that the sacred liturgical leadership of priests is not, "an intermittent activity which starts and stops with liturgical action" (Campion 1982, p. 33), I place greater emphasis on sacred beings rather than sacred time.

The work of Victor Turner (Ritual Process 1969) introduces the concepts of "liminality" and "communitas", both of which provide analytic categories for understanding the priest within priesthood. Liminal personae are persons who, as ritual subjects, are initiated through three stages of rites of passage in which 'he' is first symbolically separated, then is 'liminal' (in a transitory state) before "reaggregation" in the new state (Turner 1969, p. 81).

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34 Turner, like Durkheim, posited a universal theory of ritual based "solely on male rituals" (Raab 1000, p. 80).
Thus Turner goes on to describe liminal persons as "threshold people" who are "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arranged by law, custom, convention and ceremonial". The celibate/sexual dialectic that is established through ordination as a rite of passage ritual, as shown in the preceding chapter, fits very closely with Turner's summation that liminal entities are,

reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new station in life (Turner 1969, p. 81).

These, I suggest, are precisely the conditions set out in the encyclical *Sacerdotalis Caelibatus* (1967) that lead to what Turner calls "communitas". In 'communitas' there is a synthesising of socially organised polarities offering to liminal persons a blend of "lowliness and sacredness, of homogeneity and comradeship". Moments in these rites, Turner (1969, p. 82) says, are both "in and out of time, and in and out of secular structure". Turner (1969, p. 82) uses, and says he prefers, the Latin term "communitas" because it is more appropriate than the more commonly used term 'community' whose meaning is simply an "area of common living". This distinction, he holds, is much greater, than that between the secular and sacred, because the sacred component of 'communitas' is acquired through the "rites de passage, through which they changed positions" (Turner 1969, p. 82 emphasis original). The liminal state then implies experiential understanding. Turner (1969, p. 83) says "the high could not be high unless the low existed, and he who is high must experience what it is like to be low". He then gives Prince Charles being sent to an Australian bush school to "learn to rough it" as his example of the high/low position reversal.
I refer back to the discussion in Chapter Six (the ordination of men's bodies and the fierce prohibition against ordination of women's bodies) to draw together Turner's concept of the experience of liminality and this analysis of ritual and priesthood. I contend that the maleness/celibacy rationale for priesthood, that I identify as a 'disembodied masculinity', holds the ordinand in a liminal state. The insistence on sexed maleness (high/sacred) while also insisting that the same male person is outside of sexuality (low/profane) locks the ordinand into a stage of liminality such that although he 'changed positions' (from his sex) he remains separated from a means of 'reaggregation' (his sexuality). Church teachings deal with these issues by use of metaphor and imagery because, in Turner's thesis:

The pedagogics of liminality, therefore, represent a condemnation of two kinds of separation from the generic bond of communitas. The first kind is to act only in terms of the rights conferred on one by the incumbency of office in the social structure. The second is to follow one's psychobiological urges at the expense of one's fellows. A mystical character is assigned to the sentiment of humankindness in most types of liminality … (Turner 1969, p. 91).

The elevation of priested men to in persona Christi is seemingly a primary example of assigning mystical characteristics to men in a liminal state. Although "liminality is not the only cultural manifestation of communitas" (Turner 1969, p. 95) it is the indication most recognisable for this project. I am reading 'communitas' here as the difference between the hierarchical Church concerned with its preservation, and priesthood as a variant group comprised of men "who submit together to the general authority of the ritual elders" (Turner 1969, p. 82). In his later work, Turner (1982, p. 44) refers to 'communitas' as "anti-structure" that holds the "liberation of human capacities of cognition, affect, volition, creativity etc., from the normative constraints incumbent upon occupying a sequence of
social statuses". However, in his prior argument, Turner (1969, p. 95) says that from the perspective of "all of those concerned with the maintenance of structure, all sustained manifestations of 'communitas' must appear dangerous and anarchical and have to be hedged around with prescriptions, prohibitions, and conditions". Turner's (1969, pp. 96-97) distinguishing of 'communitas' into two societal models, differentiated and hierarchical/undifferentiated and equitable, fit the situation and debate of the opposing of an ordained male priesthood over and against the priesthood of all believers. Rituals (such as ordination) establish gendered 'communitas' to preserve the sacred for male dominance and thus direct their prohibitions against the dangers of the profane. Such rituals share a commonality of purpose that attempts to exclude women's capacity for effecting human liberation in 'communitas'.

All ritual produces the distinction between the two temporal periods of "ordinary periodic time and extraordinary intervalic time" (Rappaport 1999, p. 216). It is in the duration of the latter that the experiential sense of "being in" that time is produced along with the sense of being away from "mundane time" (Rappaport 1999, p. 217 emphasis original). Rituals inducing liminality are then primarily about time "out of mundane time". In other words they are about maintenance of the sacred as distinct from, and away from, the profane private sphere. In Turner's 'betwixt and between' state we can see how the "construction of orders of meaning transcending the semantic" (Rappaport 1999, p. 27 emphasis original) is also the source of ritual's gender element. This sacralisation process is for the explicit
purpose of sustaining the sacred and furthermore sustaining the sacred as masculine. Ritual establishes these individual and collective understandings by:

The creation of a sacred identity within a collective identity particularizes the sacred by allowing the individual to be identified as sacred, and simultaneously creates a new and particular individual consciousness that now directly relates to the sacred (Erickson 1993, p. 22).

Following the proposal in Turner's work, to give attention to the cultural location in which rituals are enacted, also serves to highlight Rappaport's (1999, p. 27 emphasis original) illustration of, "the generation of the concept of the sacred and the sanctification of the conventional order". The direct consequence of ordination's ritualising is the formation of male priests as liminal personae who in turn enact rituals from their location in the liminal. However, using gender perspectives to further investigate some characteristics of ritual reveals that violence is preserved in rituals that are primarily about the maintenance of male dominance. The expression of male dominance, in religion's rituals, is best exemplified by its "connection between gender, force and violence" (Erickson 1993, p. 27). In the following section I look at the 'homogeneity and comradeship' aspects of 'communitas', as they relate to Durkheim's notion of ritually produced effervescence, by drawing on two instances of ritual in which male violence is both totally explicit and retold without authorial comment.
Ritual and Explicit Sexual Violence

Here, I look briefly at an account of a ritual in which I argue that Durkheim leaves the strand of explicit sexual violence against women crucially unremarked. I attribute this gender-biased absence to Durkheim's resolution to ensure his social science remains true to positivistic science. This, I argue, seemingly silenced him so that he overlooks the gender aspects in the performance of this ritual. To leave this bias unremarked, however, is to "shield the role of violence in shaping women's lives [that] can be found in Durkheim's sociology of religion" (Erickson 1992, p. 37). In the following incident Durkheim (1971, p. 216) simply sees substantiation of his argument that ritual imbues the sacred with "violent super-excitation of the whole physical and mental life". He describes the ritual in its cultural context.

Towards ten or eleven o'clock, the Uluuru and Kingilli men arrived on the ground, sat down on the mound and commenced to sing. Everyone was evidently very excited. A little later in the evening the Uluuru brought up their wives and gave them over to the Kingilli who had intercourse with them. Then the recently initiated young men were brought in and the whole ceremony was explained to them in detail, and until three o'clock in the morning singing went on without a pause. Then followed a scene of the wildest excitement (Durkheim 1971, p. 217).

Accepting the ritual's actions without question and focussing on interpreting the experience (from a male perspective) Durkheim's single question asks how such an experience of ritual could "fail to leave in him the conviction that there really exist two heterogeneous and mutually incomparable worlds? One is that where his daily life drags wearily along ... The first is the profane world, the second, that of sacred things" (1971, p. 218). Sexual violence
against women for the purpose of inducing in men a sense of "violent super-excitation" appears essential to ritual as the foundation on which the sacred is premised.

There is a remarkable similitude between Durkheim's account of the Uluurru and Kingilli men's ritual (taken by Durkheim from Spencer and Gillen) and the Genesis story of Lot and his daughters. This leads me to suggest that Durkheim's understanding of that Aboriginal ritual is filtered through his Judaic biblical education where women were portrayed from a male perspective, hence "the violence with which they [women] are treated" (Ringe 1992, p. 3) is disregarded. In the following instance the entire male population of Sodom participated in the comradeship of a group ritual.

4... the men of Sodom surrounded the house. All the men of the city, both young and old were there. 5They called out to Lot and asked, "Where are the men who came to stay with you tonight? Bring them out to us!" The men of Sodom wanted to have sex with them. 6Lot went outside and closed the door behind him. 7He said to them, "Friends, I beg you, don't do such a wicked thing! 8Look I have two daughters who are still virgins. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do whatever you want with them. But don't do anything to these men; they are guests in my house, and I must protect them" (Genesis 19: 4-8).

There is no way to gloss over the fact that this account, like Durkheim's later example, describes the pack rape of women. Yet, men's hospitality to men at the expense of women is portrayed as the central purpose of the violence ingrained in this ritual. This example, however, also serves as a clear demonstration that "the rules of hospitality in Israel protect only males" (Trible 1984, p. 75). Feminist analysis of this account of a Biblical ritual reveal that, "Lot's right to dispose of his daughters, even so as to offer them to be raped, is taken
for granted. It does not need explanation; hence we can assume it reflected a historical social condition" (Lerner 1986, p. 173).

Left unquestioned the violence in ritual shows the enormity of the unquestionableness of the sacred that Rappaport (1999, p. 823) says, "rests upon neither logic or mundane experience". If the notion, of acceptable and necessary violence against women, prevails from the Old Testament to Durkheim's description it is easy to see how it remains both inherent and unquestioned in some religious ritual performance even until the present time. Religion, Turner (1982, p. 86 emphasis original) says, "lives in so far as it is performed, i.e., in so far as its rituals are "going concerns"" and ritual performance develops both "meaningful experience and experienced meaning". Rituals retaining unquestioned connections between sex and violence demonstrate as, Rappaport (1999, p. 286 emphasis original) argues, that the "quality of unquestionableness is the essence of the sacred". They also demonstrate the necessity for a gender analysis of ritual forms to undermine their social acceptance through "recurrent representation in performances of liturgical orders" (Rappaport 1999, p. 286). Gender analysis of these rituals illustrate that:

The forces which create heroes and butchers (and rapists) find moral grounding outside of the self, in the collective experience of the group. ... The collective is further defined by what it is not: it is not the profane; it is not mundane life (Erickson 1992, p. 39).
Interpreting ritual

Durkheim's treatment of the incident given above substantiates Nancy Jay's (1992, p. 8) argument that interpretation of ritual acts "depends as much or more on the interests, purpose and situation of the interpreter as it does on those of the actor". A highly significant factor in analysis of ritual's gendered nature is the feminist contribution showing the fluidity of meaning and sequence between the act and its interpretation. Feminist (re)readings of religious rituals demonstrate Nancy Jay's (1992, p. 8 emphasis original) statement that, "the meaning of any action not only varies with the way in which it is interpreted, it is the way in which it is interpreted". The act and its interpretation are not synonymous items. Jay's (1992, p. 8) clarification, "that interpretation of action is dependent on the situation of interpreter is not a failing", is crucially important for feminist analysis. If action already pre-possesses its meaning, "like the gin in the bottle, in such a way that you can get it out" (Jay 1992, p. 8), then violence against women would be literally unquestionable rather than discursively constructed that way. Jay (1992, p. 7) points out that it was anthropologist Robertson Smith who began the reversal of social scientists' assumptions that "established meaning preceded its expression in action". The meaning (or myth) developed from ritual was secondary for Robertson Smith, who argued that "myth was derived from ritual and not the ritual from myth; for the ritual was fixed and the myth was variable" (in Jay 1992, p. 7).

The positions of Robertson Smith and his contemporaries, as well as being positivistic and linear, are androcentric. They could not be used to show that perpetrators retain an enduring...
residual sacred force from their performance as ritual presiders if all rituals were 'fixed'. In the later discussion I use the examples of Eucharist and confession to show that linear views of act and interpretation are inadequate to explain the connections between ritual and the gendered aspects of sexual abuse by priests as liturgical leaders. Linear views, by masking the constructed nature of rituals, function to preserve male dominance in the sacred. Priests' ritual acts to 'consecrate', for example, are seen to demonstrate superiority in their male sex that is understood to precede interpretation because in persona Christi is promulgated as divinely created. Likewise their ritual power to 'forgive' is intentionally represented as divine although its institution seems to have been to specifically substantiate and maintain the myth of women's sexual inferiority and hence need for forgiveness.

**Connecting ritual and sexual abuse by priests**

Several respondents raised with me the fact that at the time a priest was abusing them he was simultaneously a [often their] congregational liturgical leader. In the case of some who were abused as children their predator was also their confessor. Most respondents who remarked on this puzzled over what they called 'hypocrisy' on the part of their abuser who was otherwise generally understood to be holding the "indispensable role of the ordained priest in the life of the church" (Cozzens 2000, p. 9). These respondents, however, articulated their comments to me as questions.

How did he stand up there on the altar on Sunday and say God wants you to do this and share love and be strong and so on? (Helen)

How could he do that knowing what he had done to me? (Clare)
What they discern is the dissonance between their understanding formed through participation in (and therefore acceptance of) rituals' meanings and the flouting of Durkheim's prescription of 'how a man should comport himself in the presence of these sacred objects'. Liturgical orders (rituals) are the primary vehicles in conveying discursive meanings to and between religions' members. Rappaport (1999, Ch 4) calls ritual "enactments of meaning" and Mary Douglas (1996a, p. 21) says they are "pre-eminently a form of communication". Respondents' assumptions about discordant priestly behaviours are based on their own conventionally held understandings that priests' public enactments of ritual are reflective of, and also upheld as, the private beliefs and practices of the priest.

In this study as well as in other accounts of abuse Catholic priests appear to abuse only those who share their belief system that is, other Catholics. Neither, it seems do they attempt to disguise the fact of their priesthood from those they abuse. On the contrary, some draw on it to give credence to their abusive acts. In some instances this is by 'forgiving' their child victims' sexual sins or with adults employing discourses about demonstrating expressions of 'God's love' to each other. These kinds of discrepancies Rappaport (1999, p. 107) says occur between "saying and doing" revealing that "acceptance is not belief" (Rappaport 1999, p. 119 emphasis original). Because the first function of liturgical orders is to establish "conventional understandings, rules and norms" rather than "control behaviour directly" they are therefore about how "behaviour is supposed to proceed" rather than how it does proceed (Rappaport 1999, p. 123 emphasis original). A liturgical performer may personally accept and espouse what is doctrinally encoded within a ritual without abiding
by that code. Rappaport (1999, p. 123 emphasis original) uses the instance of adultery to say, "whether or not he has abided by that rule, he has obligated himself to do so". Mary Douglas uses (and critiques) Lienhardt's example of the 'slip' between ritual's implied truth and actual experience, stating that:

If the Dinka perform a sacrifice to turn aside the ill effects of quarrelling, the sacrificer is likely, in his oration, to deny the existence of past quarrels. ... he is not attempting to deceive divinity or hoping to get away with false representation of what has happened. The ritual and prayer are used to control experience, to put an imprint on men's minds of what their life should be like and to bridge the gap between actual behaviour and moral intentions (Douglas 1975, p. 128).

Rappaport (1999, p. 124 emphasis original) says, "it is not ritual's office to ensure compliance but to establish obligation". Hence, it can be understood that ritual's purpose is not diminished by the contrary acts of its liturgical performer. Consequently, I would add that because ritual is always of the sacred and remains undiminished by its liturgical performer's sexual violence then, as Towards Understanding [Draft] (1999, p. 44) acknowledges, it is entirely feasible that, "offenders demonstrate an ability to live with the inconsistency of their lives". This peculiar 'ability' is reflected in perpetrators' attempts to rationalise the apparent (in)consistency to suit their own ends by manipulating knowledge. The sophistry of the organisational Church, shown in its reluctance to name clerical sexual abuse as violence, likewise stems from the same ritually-induced fount of meaning. Durkheim's argument goes on to reveal that the 'communitas' of the priest and the structure of priesthood are neither an opposition of anti-structure/structure nor contrary to reason when he says,
the believer is not deceived when he believes in the existence of a moral power upon which he depends and from which he receives all that is best in himself: this power exists, it is society (Durkheim 1971, p. 225).

Thus ritual supplies to the abusive priest means to distinguish himself from his abusive acts that have tacit organisational support. Dealing with these seemingly contrary pieces of information occurs, as Mary Douglas (1975, p. 4) says "in the elusive exchange between explicit and implicit meanings". This is demonstrated in the following discussion where I apply, as a schematic, a framework adapted from Mary Douglas (1975) to a ritual act of purification based on Psalm 25. Known as the 'Washing of the Hands' this ritual is performed by every priest (and only priests) acting as celebrant in each enactment of the sacrifice of the Roman Mass

**Psalm 25: Lavabo inter innocentes manus mea**

1 Declare me innocent, O LORD, because I do what is right and trust you completely.

2 Examine me and test me, LORD; judge my desires and thoughts.

3 Your constant love is my guide; your faithfulness always leads me.

4 I do not keep company with worthless people; I have nothing to do with hypocrites.

5 I hate the company of evil men and avoid the wicked.

6 I wash my hands to show that I am innocent and march in worship around your altar.

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I sing a hymn of thanksgiving
and tell of all your wonderful deeds.

I love the house where you live, O LORD,
the place where your glory dwells.

Do not destroy me with the sinners;
spare me from the fate of murderers —

men who do evil all the time
and are always ready to take bribes.

As for me I do what is right;
be merciful to me and save me!

I am safe from all dangers;
in the assembly of his people I praise the LORD

This ritual act of symbolic cleansing was "prescribed as early as the fourth century in the Apostolic Constitutions" (Parsch 1957, p. 191). Moving to the left side of the altar table the priest says Psalm 25 as an altar server pours a small amount of water over his fingers. When no servers are present the priest immerses his own fingers. His hands are dried on a small linen towel. The 'acts' of the Washing of the Hands remain unchanged from the Tridentine Mass though the 'utterances' are now in a shortened form as part of the post-conciliar Mass. The priest in his supplication now asks, "wash away my iniquities and cleanse me from my sins". In this analysis I draw on the older, complete Psalm verses to tease out what is implicit in this ritual for all priests and the sexually abusive priest.
A ritual's framework

Mary Douglas, in *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology* (1975), argues that ritual creates a self-perpetuating knowledge that serves as counterevidence against other information which it acts to suppress. She elaborates the steps of this progression through an epistemological interchange of implicit and explicit meanings. Her contentions are applicable here because first, they are grounded in religion and secondly, she demonstrates that of necessity societies develop means for ordering conflicting knowledge. Douglas' proposition (1975, p. 3) begins by stating "that at any given moment of time the state of received knowledge is backgrounded by a clutter of suppressed information". The process of ordering this knowledge (Douglas 1975, p. 3) calls "foregrounding or relevating" and "backgrounding". Backgrounded information, she says,

> is not suppressed by reason of its inherent worthlessness, nor by any passive process of forgetting: it is actively thrust out of the way because of the difficulties of making it fit whatever happens to be in hand. ... At one extreme it is automatically destroyed by reason of its conflict with other information. ... some information is treated as self-evident. The logical steps by which other knowledge has to be justified are not required ... [some] knowledge is destroyed by being labelled untrue [some] regarded as too true to warrant discussion (Douglas 1975, pp. 3-4).

The 'state of received knowledge' about cultic priesthood is firstly privileged as exclusively male. This has been institutionalised since the fifth century (Hakendorf 1992, p. 97); firmly

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35 Carol Karlsen (1982, pp. 246-250) draws on Douglas' framework to illustrate the implicit connections between 'woman' and 'witch' that were embedded in and made explicit by 17thC New England witchcraft.
entrenched during some four hundred years by the ritual of the Tridentine Mass; continued into the post-conciliar Mass and remains continuously upheld by contemporary Church teaching. It is knowledge developed through and sustained by repetitious ritual and through its invariant state it is "indicated to be changeless and without alternative and, thus, certain" (Rappaport 1999, p. 286 emphasis original). Church hierarchy, an abusive priest and Catholic congregations commonly share the certainty of this 'foregrounded' knowledge. The language of the Psalm aids an abusive priest as Mass celebrant. He actively thrusts out of the way those difficulties (his sexual violence) that do not fit comfortably into, or would compromise, cultic priesthood's foundation in 'celibacy'. The abuser's supplication to "declare me innocent" is followed by a litany of self-assurance uttered in the knowledge that by acting in persona Christi the fact that he is not innocent "becomes backgrounded by a clutter of suppressed information".

An abusive priest is confirmed into his priesthood in this process. 'I hate the company of evil men and avoid the wicked'. Saying this he differentiates himself from the social location of others ('I have nothing to do with hypocrites') and the other social locations in which he acts abusively. "I wash my hands to show that I am innocent and march in worship around your altar". The focal point of the ritual is located here and held in tension between the polarities of implicit/explicit. In washing his hands to show that he is innocent and in marching in worship around the altar cultic priesthood does not merely encompass, it entirely suffuses, the priest. Any notion of priest as sexual abuser becomes untrue by reason of its conflict with this ritual and 'innocence' is demonstrated as self-evident. The
distinctions between an embodied priest and his priestliness (the divinised aspect of *in persona Christi*) are reinforced. The coporeality of an abusive priest, demonstrated so powerfully to those he abuses, is denied and cultic priesthood as disembodied, celibate and innocent is confirmed. Douglas' (1975, p. 4) method, when applied to this ritual, illustrates clearly her argument that, "a large part of discourse is dedicated to creating, revising and obliquely affirming this implicit background without ever directing explicit attention upon it".

*Lavabo inter innocentes manus mea* (I will wash my hands among the innocent) is an act of ablation and an act of transformation in which, as a consequence of ritual purification, the celebrant's "bodily perfection can symbolise an ideal theocracy" (Douglas 1966, p. 4). In *Purity and Danger* (1966) Douglas makes clear that while "disorder spoils pattern" on the other hand "order implies restriction". Thus "we recognise that it [disorder] ... symbolises both danger and power. Ritual recognises the potency of disorder" (Douglas 1966, p. 94). Elizabeth Grosz (1994, pp. 187-210) draws on Douglas' work to explicate the bodily significance of corporeality in her discussion of 'sexed bodies'. Pointing out that although Douglas concentrates mainly on the aspect of religious significance of ritual Grosz agrees that:

Douglas makes explicit the notion that the body can and does function to represent, to symbolize, social and collective fantasies and obsessions: ... Rituals and practices designed to cleanse or purify the body may serve as metaphors for cultural homogeneity (Grosz 1994, p. 193).
This act of ritual purification does not serve as mandatory function against disorder, rather it recognises that via *in persona Christi* there is a ritually-induced male perfection in the realm of the sacred which operates as cultic priesthood. Action and language unite in a compatibility of meaning within the sacred sphere to over-ride the dissonance of the abusive clerical sacrificer and provide a 'cultural homogeneity' for Catholicism. In this ritual the body of the priest acts as a point of reconciliation between himself and his congregation to harmonise an otherwise discordant reality. Ritualy ordering conflicting knowledge sets up a reconciliation of the untrue with the true. Through ritual a social product becomes endowed with the meaning of divine practice, thereby substantiating Rappaport's (1999, p. 51) statement that "the transmitters of ritual's messages are always among the most important receivers". The Church as 'the most important receiver' of its rituals' messages is not, however, among the examiners of the powers of those rituals' performers.

**Ritual and priestly power**

In conclusions formed from its literature review, "regarding the specific nature of sexual offences against children committed by priests and religious", *Towards Understanding [Draft]* states,

the 'pedestalisation' of priests and religious by members of the Church, particularly children, as well as the associated belief in and respect for their spiritual authority, have led to misplaced trust being put in them and failure to adequately supervise adult-child interaction and activities. This finding refers to what could be termed a 'modality difference' inherent in clerical or religious vocations that cannot be said to apply to nonreligious child sex offenders (*Towards Understanding [Draft]* 1999, p. 18).
While this point of conclusion leans towards addressing 'factors specific to the Catholic Church' it veers away again without ever asking how does this 'pedestalisation' occur and continue? Thereby the document again avoids the social context of priesthood and remains safely in the arena of psychopathology leading to its insubstantial conclusion that, "sexual disorders involving children ... are a consequence of processes in which a number of psychopathological and situational factors play a role" (Towards Understanding [Draft] 1999, p. 18). By careful, or simply non-recognised, avoidance of 'situational factors' the organisational Church's rhetoric seeks to formulate appropriate responses but fails to admit cognisance of the priest as the central actor. At every turn there is absence around this point. In the conclusion note cited above "members of the Church, particularly children" are (as in Towards Healing's definition of abuse) actively centred as the protagonists in "the 'pedestalisation' of priests and religious". Seminary rector Donald Cozzens, who is also a US vicar for clergy and religious, makes the same critique from within the Church. He says:

Underneath the scrambling efforts of bishops and vicars to respond effectively and pastorally to the crisis, questions about the meanings and implications of the violating behaviors were studiously avoided (Cozzens 2000, p. 113).

Eamonn was one participant who drew me to consider connections between ritual and abusive acts. I interviewed Eamonn, a married high school teacher, at his home. His autobiography Father and Me (Flanagan, 1995) is an account of a sexually predatory priest inveigling himself into Eamonn's large and happy Irish Catholic family when Eamonn was twelve. That priest began committing violence against him and that continued for ten years. Eamonn told me:
As a 12 or 13 year old living in England, Irish parents in an Irish community thought if I told my parents well my Dad will probably go and kill him and that wouldn't have been any good (oh well it might have been good for me). To go to the police wasn't an option because again the story would have come out and everybody would know it would be me and I couldn't face that sort of stuff as a young kid at school. ... We never knew what priests could do to anybody, and I think that if I had my time again I'd do the same thing, which is a bit sad (Eamonn).

Puzzling over the glaring contradiction he discerned between his experience of the priest's sexual violence and the implicit sacredness assumed in and by the priest as ritual celebrant Eamonn says:

He gave sermons from the altar, handed out the sacred host to the congregation and within twenty minutes he would be using that mouth, those hands to kiss and masturbate me. Confession would end and within minutes he'd be back into the presbytery to abuse me. ... It seemed as though being a priest meant everything, but abusing me meant nothing (Flanagan 1995, p. 40).

Eamonn's brief remarks encapsulate several of the major points related to the social context of abuse perpetrated by priests. He identifies the temporal transition involved in moving away from ritual towards abuse; the distinction between priest and priesthood; and the two major priestly ritual powers: to 'consecrate' through Mass and Eucharist and 'forgive' through the confessional. I have addressed aspects of making the necessary distinctions between ritual's temporal aspects and priest/priesthood. I now take up discussion of the powers to consecrate and forgive.
Ritual power to consecrate

Sacrifice and the system of reproduction of those who enact sacrifice (priests) are the crucial aspects of this section.

In the Roman Church, where the sacrificial cult has been most elaborately developed, regular sacrificial practice has never been separable from clearly defined hierarchical social structure organized in unilineal "eternal" continuity of descent between males: the Apostolic Succession of the sacrificing priesthood (Jay, 1992, p. 112).

In Catholicism the word 'sacrifice' is commonly coupled with the word Mass, "the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass" (Dinges 1987, p. 138). There is ritual and symbol but not literal blood sacrifice in the Mass, which is a highly invariant ritual exemplifying the positive cult. The ritual of the Mass contains what Durkheim describes as,

all the essential principles of a great religious institution which was destined to become one of the foundation stones of the positive cult in the superior religions: this is the institution of sacrifice (Durkheim 1971, p. 336).

The Eucharistic ritual in which the Mass culminates is understood, as stated by Vatican II document *Christus Dominus* (n. 30), "as the centre and the culmination of the whole life of the Christian community" (in Hastings 1991c, p. 58). Unlike occasional initiation rites or rituals of other belief systems, the Mass is an integral part of the daily life of the priest and obligated for at least Sabbath participation by practising Catholics. My interest in the priest as Mass celebrant is to investigate those gender aspects of this sacrificial ritual that establish all male celebrants (without distinction) as sacred, and at the same time totally exclude all women (without distinction) from sacrificing. My question is not an empirical
one of whether women could (or should) sacrifice but a gender question of 'what does women's exclusion from sacrifice reveal about the Church?' Importantly, for this study looking at the practice of sacrifice through the lens of gender again emphasises that questions concerning priestly sexual abusers must be examined within the realm of cultic priesthood.

The groundbreaking work of Nancy Jay, *Throughout Your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion and Paternity* (1992) seeks out the gender dichotomy omitted from a broad range of previous anthropological studies of sacrificial institutions. Jay looks at the manifestations of the oppositions between sacrifice and the female gender roles associated with mothering that lead her to understand sacrifice "as a remedy for having being born of woman" (1992, p. xxiii). In her earlier work on gender dichotomy, Jay (1981) examined the Aristotelian positive/negative polarities of sex/gender as the prime example of binary logic leading her to quip in relation to only one sex having positive value, "guess which" (1992, p. 19). In regard to sacrifice and priesthood there is no need to guess; this ritual's meaning is categorically permeated with implicit and explicit instances of priesthood's positive powers.

While I continue to hold a position outside of theology in coming to this scenario I agree with Jay (1992, p. 112) when she says, "even a strictly sociological account must acknowledge a range of theological positions or distort sacrificers' understandings of their own actions beyond recognition".

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The theological position I acknowledge and refer to here is the existing form of cultic priesthood that Cozzens (2000, p. 7) calls "lone-ranger style". This cultic model, he says, "encourages an individualistic approach to ministry by emphasizing the priest's unique sacramental power". However, while Cozzens acknowledges that the priest is imbued with power he discusses that in terms of ministry 'styles' without pursuing that power's source. I differ from Cozzens in that while agreeing there are various 'styles' of ministry and ways of pastoral care shaping individual priest's identity, priested men remain foundationally 'initiated' into ancient cultic priesthood. Following Rappaport's analysis, I suggest that close scrutiny reveals that it is the unique sacramental power of priesthood (rather than priest) that is emphasised in the connection between ritual sacrifice and cultic priesthood. For this discussion I rely heavily on Nancy Jay and accept her caution that in order to "avoid obliteration by interpretation we must recognise that we cannot identify an action as sacrifice except within its own tradition" (1992, p. xxv). Hence I accept the Catholic understanding of Eucharist and Mass as sacrifice (without (re)interpretation) and neither question the validity of belief in sacrifice nor interpret the semiotic content of this specific sacrificial ritual. However, regardless of that acceptance I recognise that, as Jay (1992, p. 113) says, "to take a theological position on whether the Eucharist itself is or is not an actual sacrifice is simultaneously to take a political position". Consequently, any gender analysis of sacrifice is politically implicated in an analysis of a politically held power. It is in her gender analysis showing the legitimation of patriarchal structures through sacrifice that Jay's (1992) work is significant and distinctive. Rappaport (1999) in comparison communicates a fine understanding of ritual but leaves unremarked the gender distinctions embedded within them.
Rappaport (1999, p. 52) says there is "a radical distinction" between what he terms "self-referential messages" (where rituals' transmitted messages are entirely "exhausted" by the performer) and "canonical messages" (where the messages are already encoded in the ritual regardless of the performer). That is, priests act as transmitters of messages already encoded within the Mass ritual (Mass is the example Rappaport's analysis uses). By the very endurance of such encoded messages they "tend towards invariance" making it "obvious that these messages cannot in themselves represent the performers' contemporary state" (Rappaport 1999, p. 52 emphasis original). In the preceding discussion the Washing of the Hands is also shown to be indicative of the priest's relationship to cultic priesthood and illustrates the distinction between "self-referential" and "canonical" messages. Likewise the Mass sacrificer's own understandings of his actions are about the collective of priesthood, he is not encoding the message but placing himself in relation to it. The issue I deal with here is the appropriation of Eucharist into sacrifice and the consequences of, what I see as, a political act of male cooptation whereby Eucharist became embedded into a sacrificial ritual to establish and maintain a hierarchical exclusively male priesthood.

"Nowhere in the New Testament", Nancy Jay (1992, p. 115) rightly says, "is the Eucharist described as being itself a sacrifice, nor is there any indication of a special office for celebrating it". Historically the linking of Eucharist to sacrifice followed the trajectory of a 'man-made' course from what began as a communal meal, commemorative of Jesus' Last
Supper, in private homes. By the fourth century, it was shared in assembled gatherings in large buildings to accommodate increasing numbers where, as Roberta Hakendorf (1992, p. 97) comments, even the very architecture began to demarcate lay/clerical differentiation. Eventually the Fourth Lateran Council decreed in 1215,

valid ordination was required for presidency of the Eucharist ... Emphasis shifted from the community as the Body of Christ to the bread and wine and to the relationship of the leader to the food of the Eucharist (Hakendorf 1992, p. 97).

I contend that this is a form of 'privatisation' that constructed an allegoric restructuring of the sacred/profane resulting in the sacralising of an element of everyday communal Christian life into a gendered exclusion. Eucharist, now coopted into the most significant of Catholic rituals, is invested with every itemised characteristic that Rappaport defines as belonging to ritual. Yet, the basic elements on which it is based: food (bread and wine) and eating, do not form part of the sacred. Durkheim says that as a generality,

all acts characteristic of the ordinary life are forbidden while those of the religious life are taking place. The act of eating is, of itself, profane; for it takes place everyday, it satisfies essential utilitarian and material needs and it is part of our ordinary existence (Durkheim 1971, p. 306).

Eucharist by its very nature was part of the everyday life of everyday people and not in those terms a thing 'set apart'. Practised, as an alimentary, basic human need in a communal group Eucharist belonged to the profane. The profanity of such an everyday act is overcome, Durkheim (1971, p. 306 n. 6) says, "on condition rites attenuating or expiating it

36 Jay's contention is substantiated by many feminist theologians who also address the question of lack of Biblical reference to descriptions of liturgy or Eucharist as sacrificial ritual (cf Schüssler Fiorenza 1983, 1992;
precede or accompany it. However, cultic priesthood further entrenched clerical control by incorporating Eucharist into the sacrificial Mass (and therefore entirely into the sacred). Thereby the abstentions of negative rites are collapsed into and create gendering of the positive rite of sacrifice radically excluding the profane (women and children) from full participation. When the priest acts in persona Christi "the Eucharist and the priest are integrally intertwined" (Raab 2000, p. 84). Moreover an authoritative power of masculinity is imbued into enactment of Eucharistic ritual where such power had not previously existed and its continuity is ensured by the ordination of men only.

Central to Jay's thesis is the concept that male-only sacrifice perpetuates a patrilineal line of descent whereby men in fact bypass women as physiological reproducers to set up for themselves a paternal lineage. Men achieve patrilineal reproduction through enactments of various aspects of birthing and a symbolically-gendered opposition between sacrifice and childbirth that is present in many cultural traditions. For example, Jay says, in Hawaiian sacrifice women were excluded from sacrificial rituals emulating childbirth and "man's childbearing" reproduced gods. As a consequence of sacrifice Aztec men gained divinity daily from opposing birth with the phenomenon of the sun's rising:

The Aztec sun rose accompanied by spirits of male human sacrifice victims whose excised still beating hearts had been rendered to divinities in fire ... it sank passively to its death each evening accompanied by the spirits of women dead in childbirth ... sacrifice is opposed to childbirth as birth done better, under deliberate purposeful control, and on a more exalted level than ordinary mothers do it (Jay 1992, pp. xxiii-xxiv).

Jay's (1992) study of diverse sacrificial practices, including Christianity, lead her to conclude that, "it is a common feature of unrelated traditions that only adult males - fathers, real and metaphorical - may perform sacrifice" (1992, p. xxiii). Bishops alone (themselves priests and hence 'Fathers') in the Catholic tradition possess the power to confer ordination. They ordain men only to a priesthood of exclusivity where they also come to bear the title 'Father'. Thus the sacred realm containing 'sacred masculinity' with sacrificial practice as its legitimating hallmark is perpetuated. As Mass celebrants, priests belong to what Jay calls, a "formally institutionalised "lineage"", which as a,

social organisation is a truly perfect "eternal line of descent", in which authority descends from father to father, through the one "Son made perfect forever", in a line no longer directly dependent on women's reproductive powers for continuity (Jay 1992, p. 37).

Continuity of succession was set in place in Christian sacrifice, in the same way as Hawaiian or Aztec sacrifices, by males intentionally reproducing male succession in a religiously created linear descent of men that is an uninterrupted, intergenerational continuum. Linking Eucharist to the Mass set up a politically advantageous gender barrier so that now "apostolic succession and priesthood are identified by sacrificial power over the Eucharistic body, the criterion of membership is participation in a sacrificial cult ... those who are outside the sacrificial cult are outside the true succession of Christianity" (Jay 1992, p. 127). In instituting in persona Christi the organisational Church created, what Rosemary Radford Ruether calls,

a sacramental materialism that teaches people that only the actions of the validly ordained, according to its rubrics, can cause the gracious life of God to be present, and that they do this by simply performing the ritual acts, whether
or not either the priest or the people interiorize this meaning (Ruether 1999, p. 3).

Sacrifice, as a form of social organisation, leaves women and children vulnerable to the sexual violence perpetrated against them by priested men. The one function of women that the Church employs as evidence of its regard for women (their role as mothers) is voided where this kind of gender imbalance operates. When the reproduction of priests is located outside of the biological (and sexual) and priesthood can be ritually created and maintained outside of "the social relations of reproduction, the entire social order may be understood as dependent on sacrifice" (Jay 1992, p. 37). Creating the most highly esteemed of its members through disembodied reproduction leaves that same Church unable to approach any form of investigation of any concrete embodied 'factors specific to Catholicism that might lead to sexual abuse by priests'. Choosing to view cultic priesthood through the more abstract lens of individual psychology allows the Church to hold to the notion of disembodiment of its priesthood and it is thereby able to avoid the 'situational factors' it purports to be examining.

Power to forgive: bless me Father for you have sinned

The first time he wanted me to put my hand on his penis, Mary, I felt very afraid because I was taught that that was a sin of impurity. And I said Father I'm committing a sin and he said, "I will forgive you" (Dave).
Both the nine-year-old boy and the middle-aged man in this abusive encounter clearly understand their respective ritual confession roles. Although obviously in a state of sexual arousal the perpetrator in this incident remains clearly cognisant of his dual powers: male power to coerce and sacred power to forgive. Sin and forgiveness, separately located in each of two persons, comprise the dual components of sacramental auricular confession within Catholicism.\textsuperscript{3} That it can be categorically stated that these two people have constantly remained the confessor and \textit{his} penitent immediately demonstrates the crosscutting of this ritual with gender. Gender flows, as if through veins, through the confessional ritual yet this is little remarked on outside of feminist analysis. In a personal encounter mediated in an intimate and confined confessional setting the confessor, always a priest, thus always male and the penitent engage in an exchange of penitent's admission of wrongdoing for confessor's remittance of sin. There is an assumed norm of confessor and penitent as separate subjectivities with clearly defined roles. That is, confessor as intermediary between penitent and reconciliation, and penitent, as repentant human subject seeking the reconciliation understood to provide the potential for ultimate salvation. Using instances from the interviews I show in this final section the gendered outcomes of relying on those assumptions in relation to clerical sexual violence.

If, as Bryan Turner (1991, p. 96) argues, the inequalities in the hierarchical distinctions within all religions' stratifications "contain a necessary element of social exchange" then it

\textsuperscript{3}The following discussion of 'confession' is limited to the distinctively Roman Catholic form of sacramental auricular confession. It is not extended to include other 'confessional' social practices.
is in the Catholic confessional practice this is most vividly illustrated. Analogies, between the language of economy and the spiritual, prevail in the "Catholic conceptualisation of confessions of sin" (Turner 1991, p. 102). It is an exchange system. What emerged in some interviews, however, is a clear merging and/or reversal of those roles. Participants related to me instances of the transference of subjective roles where child penitents 'confess' the sins of their confessor and adult women (and girl children) assume moral responsibility for priestly violence. Dave's abusive experience expresses more than the corporeal power differentials of age and status always present in adult to child sexual encounters. It vividly illustrates that confession is a discursive ritual saturated with discourses about sexuality. My focus here is primarily on the historically consistent gender aspects of the confessional encounter and the gender distortions of ritual.

It is interesting to note that the same Fourth Lateran Council (1215), that prescribed Eucharist into sacrifice offered by the ordained only, also effected the existing voluntary confession into a mandated discipline (Foucault 1981, p. 58, Jordan 1999, p. 306). Contemporary analysis of confession (cf Zaretsky 1980; Foucault 1981; Payer 1982, 1984; Turner B. 1991; May & Bonham 1997; Jordan 1998, 1999, 2000) situate the confessor as the dominant party in "a power relationship observable at the micro-level of society" (Jordan 1999, p. 308) and as the conveyer of "an "official" moral viewpoint" (May & Bonham 1997, p. 143). These works also agree with Foucault (1981, p. 63) that sexuality and sexual behaviour were appropriated into the chief matter of confession so that "confession was, and still is, the general standard governing the production of the true
discourse on sex". No discussion of auricular confession as discourse can omit the work of Michel Foucault for whom the confessional was the schematic par excellence where "sex was taken charge of, tracked down as it were by a discourse that aimed to allow it no obscurity, no respite" (Foucault 1981, p. 20).

Although Foucault (1981, p. 62) addresses the uncustomary power inversion present in confession when power is held by the listener rather than the speaker "(for it is he who is constrained)" there is in his work an unexplained 'sameness' of penitents. Gender is the glaring absence in his assumption. While all confessors share the same sex and are similarly and intentionally educated in the modes of confessional discipline, their penitents are highly differentiated by gender. Penitents hold internalised but markedly distinct gender attitudes also intentionally taught by the Church. These attitudes include; that there exists a 'natural' sexual urge that cannot be self-controlled (male) and the other sex (female) is held responsible for controlling the uncontrollable. Foucault, gender blindness notwithstanding, offers a set of tools for analysis of the confessional encounter. Confession, Foucault argues, is a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement; it is also a ritual that unfolds in a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile, a ritual in which the truth is corroborated by the obstacles and resistances it has had to surmount in order to be formulated; and finally, a ritual in which the expression alone, independently of its external consequences, produces intrinsic modifications in the person who articulates it: it exonerates, redeems and purifies him; it unburdens him of his wrongs, liberates him, and promises him salvation (Foucault 1981, pp. 61-62).
Foucault's (1981) project produced a non-linear historical account (genealogy) of the origins of sexuality. His concern was sexual practice and the confessional ritual as the primary institution in the production of knowledge around sexual behaviour. Confessional articulation about sexual activities (rather than keeping these secret) was indicative for Foucault (1981, p. 21), that the "Christian pastoral prescribed as a fundamental duty the task of passing everything having to do with sex through the endless mill of speech". Ultimately Foucault's quest took the form of a search for truth about sex leading him to the "nakedness of the questions formulated by the confessional manuals of the Middle Ages" (1981, p. 18). However, these manuals for confessors, known as penitentials, as Payer's work (1982, 1984) documents, originate from as early as the sixth century.

**Penitentials**

Penitentials link surveillance of human sexual practices to the confessional, as the mode of social control. They illustrate the establishment of sexual practice as discourse and as the primary function and insistence of the confessional. In fact Payer (1984, p. 3) states, "one of the most striking features of the penitentials is the breadth and detail of their treatment of human sexual behaviour". The penitentials, and their ensuing canons, censure the entire range of human sexual behaviour. As one example, the concerns for married heterosexuals relate to "the proper form of marital intercourse [condemning] ... the sexual positions that depart ... from 'the missionary position'" (Payer 1984, p. 29). Penitential writers especially targeted women's sexual activity, particularly (during pregnancy, for example), where
women could not further fulfil their only permitted sexual use, to procreate. Uta Ranke-Heinemann (1991, p. 155) cites this instance, "if it is the woman who demands sex at the holy times, her husband should not grant her wish, but rather "keep her impudence down with fasts and beatings". Ranke-Heinemann notes that of course there is no reverse directive for wives. Payer (1982, pp. 10-11) says penitentials, from as early as Peter Damian's eleventh century Book of Gomorrah, reveal that, "prior to 1048 the church displayed consistent and uninterrupted pastoral concern with homosexuality". But alongside of the Church's condemnation of homosexuality (as sin) the penitentials also show that "it is true that this was rarely singled out for special hostility". Payer, like Foucault, does not comment on the gender discrepancy in this 'consistent concern' with male homosexuality alongside minor penance given for these 'sins'. Evidence of Church attitudes towards sexuality, Payer (1982, p. 11) argues, are readily found "in materials designed to aid the confessor". A thematic concern in Peter Damian's ([1048-1054] 1982) treatise on clergy sexual activity, with emphasis on what he regarded as the 'abomination' of homosexuality, is the question of priests confessing to their homosexual partner priests. He asks,

since confession is also a manifestation, what, I ask, does he manifest who tells the listener what is known; in what way is it to be called a confession where nothing is revealed by the one making the confession except what the listener already knows (Damian 1982, p. 44).

Penitential documents, however, are not simply historical curiosities. In 1997 the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family (PCF) distributed to priests a penitential guide, Vademecum For Confessors Concerning Some Aspects of The Morality Of The Conjugal Life, which "seeks to offer some practical guidelines for the confession and absolution of
the faithful in matters of conjugal chastity" (PCF 1997, p. 7). Even in present times sexual practices remain as the exclusive Vademecum obsessions. These directives for confessors continue to project their ancient beginnings and make apparent the differing approaches to male and female confessional practice. The 1997 guide, like most of its medieval forerunners, is concerned with heterosexual marital sex especially "conjugal acts made intentionally infecund" (PCF 1997, p. 28). Sin it seems is always and only related to the sexual. As Elizabeth Jordan (1998, p. 3) pertinently notes there is no advice for confessors "to ensure that people acknowledge their sins of tax evasion, racism or sexism, or the many other forms of intolerance". Further, the prevailing Church discourse published in these documents continues to completely ignore the differentiating impact of the confessional ritual on the sexual understandings of masculinities and femininities of its members. Even though the Church regards clerical sexual abuse as matters of sexual moral failure (sin), rather than male violence, its highly particularised technical method to examine sin seems unable to examine the sexual violence of some of its priests.

38 English Catholic newspaper The Tablet 9/12/2000 reports that the Vatican has a Vademecum in draft for release in 2001 condemning the use of condoms in the health strategies to halt the spread of AIDS. A Vatican spokesman says it offers "moral and practical guidelines for AIDS ministry" and argues "the best remedy is chastity".

39 This is 'official' Church discourse. There is prevailing counter discourse exemplified by the comment of one priest. "Quite apart from its content, which I thought daft, no one in Rome seems to realize that almost nobody - in England at least - comes to confession, especially not people who are sexually active. In the unlikely event of a sexually active married man or woman coming to confession, contraception would simply not be mentioned" (Butler 1999, p. 68).
Male gendering of sacramental auricular confession

There is very little published material on the gendered aspects of Catholic confession. May & Bonham (1997) and Elizabeth Jordan (1998, 1999, 2000) provide some good discussion. May & Bonham (1997, p. 138) argue the auricular confessional practice, conforms to rigid gendered notions of male and female sexuality which, "helps to legitimate coercively aggressive sexuality". These notions hold, as a basic premise, the innateness of an irrepressible male sex drive alongside a view of female as the cause of, and consequently responsible for, male arousal. From this contradictory gender construction, May and Bonham (1997, p. 141) argue, boys are given "a sense of our masculinity as something both sinful and not controllable by our own wills". Sexual transgression in confessional teaching for boys reflects the ancient penitentials. It is still primarily concerned with masturbation as sinful "which was emphasised over and over but the penances were very minor" (May & Bonham 1997, p. 140). Adolescent boys' internalised understandings are therefore mixed: "sexual transgressions are bad but so common as to be expected; sexual transgressions, no matter how bad, can be easily forgiven so that life may go on as it had" (May and Bonham 1997, p. 138). This leads to an easy diminution of all sexual transgression, including coercive sexual violence, to the minor category of masturbation. May & Bonham (1997, p. 142) state that Catholic moral teaching does distinguish and condemn violent sexual 'sins' as more serious than the lesser categories but through its confessional practice, "male sexual aggressiveness, including coercive sexual behaviour, is legitimated nonetheless".

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What May & Bonham do not point out, however, is that the confessor has also been the recipient of the same form of dominant male socialisation as the boy penitents they discuss. Dave (who was continually anally raped by his perpetrator) continued with this description of his confessional experience:

So when you went to confession, Mary, you'd have to say, Bless me Father for I have sinned. I have committed a sin of impurity. He would say "oh yes, who with my son?" With you Father. Then he would say "what a priest does to a child is not a mortal sin but if you tell anyone it would be a mortal sin and if you die you will go the fires of hell" (Dave).

Thus Dave's abuser easily 'backgrounds' his own acts of rape to concentrate instead on breaking confessional secrecy and thereby breaking confession's redemptive exchange. Foucault's (1981, p. 62) claim, that the "veracity" of the confessional is "guaranteed ... by the bond, the basic intimacy in discourse, between the one who speaks and what he speaks about", is totally reversed and negated in this distortion of the ritual. In this instance the child has no bond with what he confessed. In that encounter the "agency of domination" belongs to "the one who questions and is not supposed to know" (Foucault 1981, p. 62). Even without that distortion Foucault's gender blind view is limited to 'half the confessional process for penitents. He does not comment on how women and men differently experience this primary exercise of male power. Peter Damian's nine-hundred-year-old question persists more germanely, "in what way is it to be called a confession where nothing is revealed by the one making the confession except what the listener already knows"? (1982, p. 44).
Female gendering of sacramental auricular confession

Turning to confessional socialisation for girls, May & Bonham (1997, p. 143) point out that the gender dimension is primarily that girls must take added responsibility for male sexual behaviour. Furthermore, "they are to feel guilt or shame when they do not successfully thwart the aggressiveness of males". Those who do not have to feel guilt are those who lose their lives in the process. The story of Maria Goretti is the most familiar exemplar for twentieth century Catholic women of (even girl children) accepting responsibility for male sexual violence. At twelve, attempting to fight off her rapist she was repeatedly stabbed saying "death but not sin". Thus, she, like all women faced with rape, is purported to have a choice "'submit' and share in the guilt or die" (Stuart 1996a, p. 13). This is an enduring motif in the long litanies of women saints (cf Maitland 1987, Stuart 1996a). Male sexual violence is depicted as sexual sin (not violence) and confessing perpetrators exchange this for forgiveness while the 'choice' for their female victims is co-responsibility for the sin or death (Stuart 1996a, pp. 12-13). Those women who do not choose death would then presumably need to confess their part in the sin.

When the sexual perpetrator is a priest, however, for a girl there is an over-riding of both sin and violence by her understanding of the importance of the sacred nature of priesthood. This is evident in the account of violence given to me by Clare who "wanted to be a saint". She told me she was, "brought up on a diet of saints and martyrs and terrible things happening to people who'd then go to heaven ... I really thought I was going to be Saint
Clare". However, when a priest began committing sexual violence on Clare [digital penetration while masturbating on her] her conflation of God/priest over-rode her otherwise Catholic understandings of sin and sex. She said:

> When he'd done that [violence] he'd go to that thing [prie-deiû] that they have on the side of the altar where they kneel sometimes. He'd get me to kneel at it and he'd sit with his back to me and I'd have to go to confession to him. And he'd tell me what to say ... He taught me what to say off by heart. "I allowed a priest to touch me impurely and I've had impure thoughts". I didn't know what that meant but I just said it. It honestly never occurred to me in my wildest dreams that it was bad, never. I was never traumatised, I thought he loved me, I thought he was God, I thought God loved me more than the other kids, I thought I was going to go straight to heaven, I was going to be a saint and this was my saintly life (Clare).

Although Clare said she was dux of her class and always won the religion prize she shows that at ten she was not yet familiar with the first requirement for being a saint. Saints are all, as Elizabeth Stuart (1996a, p. 41) points out, "dead persons". Death, Stuart (1996a, p. 41) goes on to say, "is essential to make a saint mouldable, it is part of the idealization process". That idealisation is also sufficient to over-ride the curiosity of a bright girl whose abuser dictated to her that she must confess to him. Although she "didn't know what that meant" she would presumably, in circumstances other than the confessional ritual, have asked what it meant. In Clare's formative moral identity priesthood as sacred was 'foregrounded' as a primary perception. God is a man embodied in the man priest who is celibate and therefore outside of the sexual.
Women's moral identity, Elizabeth Jordan argues, is closely related to, and formed against, the discourses surrounding the ritual of confession.

Women's sexuality has been excoriated in extravagant language by successive generations of Christian theologians. It is seen by many as the root of all evil. For women who internalise such teachings, matters to do with sexuality become prime matters in sacramental confession (Jordan 1998, p. 5).

Margaret, Anna and Helen made no direct reference to the practice of confession but all reflect the evidence of its gendered discourse in their interviews. These three women express acceptance of moral responsibility for their perpetrator's sexual violence. Although their perpetrators' relationships with them were outside the confessional confines the gendered discourse of confession runs through their perceptions illuminating Foucault's statement:

We must not forget that by making sex into that which, above all else, had to be confessed, the Christian pastoral always presented it as the disquieting enigma: not a thing which stubbornly shows itself, but one which always hides, the insidious presence that speaks in a voice so muted and often disguised that one risks remaining deaf to it (Foucault 1981, p. 35).

Margaret was thirteen when her parish priest began five years of sexual violence against her. Three years older than Clare she was traumatised by her experience.

The first time he attempted I got such a shock, such an awful shock. I was really traumatised I'm sure for weeks. He saw that and drew back and just said 'you won't tell anyone will you?' And I said no because we'd been taught from the catechism that it was a sin to reveal another person's sins (Margaret).
Trapped in a small country town with her perpetrator Margaret entered the convent at eighteen seeing this as her only means of escape. As well as escaping from the ongoing violence she then regarded herself as, "having to do penance for being involved with a Catholic priest". She consulted her spiritual director (confessor) because she was fearful about her loss of virginity. He told her that "technically" she was a virgin and not to worry about it. However, when she used the name of her hometown in discussion he said, "oh blast now I'll know who it is. I wish you hadn't said that". Margaret, reflecting the confessional concept that women have responsibility for men's sexual behaviour, blamed herself for the abuse of many others by the same perpetrator. When told many years later that the perpetrating priest was charged and convicted for many other offences that took place some twenty years after her molestation she said "oh no, oh no, that's my fault because I didn't speak out then".

Anna's abuser is a religious order priest twenty years older than she is and was her University chaplain. At 19 she sought his help to leave home after the death of her mother and to escape from her father's violence. At that time he sexualised their relationship by hugging and holding her. At first she resisted his advances but later allowed him to kiss her and "become romantic, walking and holding hands". She said that as a student "while I felt privileged to be around him I was also intimidated by him. I felt weak as if all the goodness was in him and none in me" (Anna). Five years later after she was married and he knew she was home alone with her newborn first baby he came over "to talk":

Not long after he walked in the door he started with heavy kissing and tongue kissing. He took me to a bedroom and started getting me to unbutton his
shirt.... I felt incredibly guilty and I said "look I’m married this is wrong" and he said "No - God gave this to us so we could - so people could - show love to each other. It’s beautiful and it’s love and it’s just a physical expression of love" (Anna).

In the case of Anna and Helen (married women at the time of their abuse) their perpetrators use their 'moral authority', established through their role as confessional interpreters of penitents' guilt, to construct a discourse of 'love'. Anna says "I was very confused because there was an element of truth in what he was saying" and Helen "used to think well God must have chosen him 'cos he's telling me that God had chosen him". The distortion in the moral identity of these women reflects the constraining effects of the confessional aim to, "have a specific effect upon the behaviour of women" (May & Bonham 1997, p. 143). The confessional ritual functions in gendered ways to penitents' detriment. But at the same time the abusive priest gains from the same ritual that acts as, "a vehicle for legitimacy of a certain form of sexual hegemony" (May & Bonham 1997, p. 145).

There is now, particularly by western women, an abandonment of individual confession leading Elizabeth Jordan (2000, p. 157) to comment, "Foucault would be delighted with this endorsement of his concept of the effectiveness of local resistance". However, as Foucault himself showed the abandonment of a practice (such as confessional ritual) is not the necessarily the same thing as the death of its founding discourse. Religious women's rejection of the primary notion of confession as a ritual whereby clerical men hold control of others (particularly the sexual practices of women) will not be given up lightly. And this is currently being clearly demonstrated in Rome's assertion of authority in the matter.

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Regrettably, behind Foucault's (presumed) 'delight' can be heard Rappaport's chilling note that echoes Durkheim:

Enmity between separate communities that once did, but no longer do, accept the same Ultimate Sacred Postulates, or that have come to distinguish themselves on less fundamental grounds (e.g., on matters of ritual or exegesis) is likely to be especially bitter (Rappaport 1999, p. 327).

Ritual, as the enactment of the sacred, is well demonstrated to be so endowed with violence that the mental operations Durkheim (1971, p. 419) says are hidden beneath its external appearances are readily summoned to ensure its segregation from the profane. The sacred, in Victoria Erickson's (1993, p. 27) words, "can be purified only through rites of expiation. Purification and violence are often found together. The penalty paid, expiation reestablishes a boundary between the sacred and the profane". It is this firmly established boundary that holds out against examination of priesthood as a contributory factor in the sexual violence of some priests as at the same time it condones the gendered ritual practices of all priests.

Conclusion

In this chapter I examined the context of ritual as the site of enactment of the sacred and show that the gendering of the sacred, demonstrated in earlier chapters, is evident in ritual. Using the work of Victor Turner the priest/priesthood connection is drawn together to show that liminal is both a personal state (priest) and a contextual location (priesthood). Thus an abusive priest and the women and children on whom he perpetrates his sexual acts both
belong on the margins of the sacred. Priesthood, however, is presented as the very centre of the sacred and priests, in their liminal state, are transitory. In this way they never entirely leave the sacred and thus (regardless of their sexual violence) are not contaminated by the profane. The profane, women and children are never fully incorporated into the sacred and therefore, in the situations in which they are abused, are momentarily moved from one marginal position to another.

Close examination of ritual reveals there is no moral contravention between perpetration of sexual violence and liturgical order. What appears superficially as contradiction between the two is shown to be no more than the distinction between acceptance of ritual (by participation) and the private beliefs of the ritual performer. Acts of sexual violence are not a negation of the sacred status of liturgical performer. They simply reveal there is a permitted slip between 'saying and doing'. Rituals, as a form of communication, convey messages that may or may not reflect the private intent of their performer and from that perspective contain an element of violence. On one level ritual may be seen as producing a high level of group cohesion but on another it induces a high level of dissonance.

Gender analysis of ritual illustrates the embeddedness of a degree of 'necessary' violence that is required to maintain (through ritual) the separations already established between the sacred/profane and priest/priesthood. Examination of aspects of three specific rituals (purification for sacrifice, Eucharist and confession) related to the instituting of priesthood
and its consequential endowing of individuals with priestly powers to consecrate and forgive substantiate my claim that ritual is a highly gendered phenomenon. The gendering of ritual is most clearly shown in the confessional ritual and participant's experiences are drawn on to demonstrate the reflection of gendered confessional discourse in their experience of clerical sexual abuse. *Towards Healing* (1996, p. 3 emphasis added) says that in sexual abuse by its 'offenders', "many serious and sacred obligations are violated". To move 'towards understanding' an analysis of what makes those obligations sacred is more than timely, it is overdue.
CONCLUSION

To be sure, it cannot be said at present what point these explanations may be able to reach, and whether or not they are of a nature to resolve all the problems. But it is equally impossible to mark in advance a limit beyond which they cannot go (Durkheim 1971, p. 447).

This study set out to examine questions about a side by side contradiction apparent within Catholicism. Although the men who comprise Catholic priesthood are obligated to mandatory celibacy many of them are sexually active and in much of that behaviour these men engage in coercive sexual acts with women, children and some men. I regard those priests as sexually violent and so my focus throughout has been clerical sexual abuse as Catholic priests perpetrate it and as it occurs within Catholicism. I took as my point of departure Dorothy McRae-McMahon's (1995, p. vi) insightful question as to whether the presence of sexual violence in the Church raises "questions about our teachings and underlying assumptions about the right relationship between women and men?" On that basis, the study is located within the ambit of a particular cluster of religion-based gender relations. The consistent assertion of feminist writers on male violence is that although various abuses are "conventionally considered" to be individual acts by individual men they are, "social facts best analysed in terms of patriarchal social structures" (Walby 1990, p. 128). Throughout I maintain that this insistence by feminist writers is absolutely applicable to priestly sexual violence. The structure of priesthood underpins what the individual man as priest does and this is the thread I see as the one to best draw the work to its conclusion.
The major course of direction for the thesis has been exploratory in order to show the ways in which Church teachings are skewed in regard to the 'relationship between women and men'. In taking that direction I view clerical sexual violence as a systemic problem that cannot be understood apart from the system within which it is based. The separate chapters of Part One begin by looking at the media's considerable impact on this problem then go on to show the progression of steps I took towards gaining an understanding of systemic priesthood. Given that media played a significant and active role in this issue my first approach was to look at clerical sexual abuse as 'news'. Increased media reportage of allegations of clerical sexual abuse and appearances of priests and Brothers in proceedings in the criminal courts provided the population with a heightened awareness that these men are contrarily associated with abusive sexual activity. This was important to demonstrate my assertion that media had an influential role in bringing the Church to formulate response policies. However, to confine the study to analysis of the constructions and self interests of media and others would have been to admit that while the phenomena is real enough it has been amplified into a moral panic. In that case I may have concluded, as do the final words of Jenkin's book, that clerical sexual abuse, 

epitomized the diverse interests and fears of a broad array of social constituencies at a time of dizzying transition in their expectations about matters as basic as gender relations and family structure (Jenkin's 1996, p. 171).

'Matters as basic as gender relations' are, in my contention, the fundamental matters in moving 'towards understanding' the sexual violence of some priests. They are therefore deemed to be a starting point and not the conclusion. The chapter on the Church's formal
responses to the problem and its policy documents provides evidence of its inherent gender bias and also reflect the same gender biased views that prevail in the majority of mainstream writing on clerical sexual abuse. These sources simultaneously demonstrate the absence of analysis of gender and structural factors and the critical necessity for such analysis. I address this deficiency in the two chapters dealing with the concepts of public/private and sacred/profane as separate spheres. Secular feminists have painstakingly searched a range of recognisable patriarchal structures such as the state and paid employment as well as the less visible forms in the private sphere to reveal the forms of protection these afford individual men's acts of violence.

My advantage is that unlike the diverse range of social positions that men in general occupy; priesthood is readily identifiable as the major structure to which all these individual men are related. Situating clerical sexual abuse within the Church, I argue that it is a problem of male violence within a highly particularised male cohort. This stance starkly contrasts with Church responses that exhibit reluctance to move beyond individual perpetrator's sexual morality/psychopathology and steer well clear of examining the systemic body of priesthood distinct from the more generalised category of priests and religious. From the outset my question has been targeted towards priesthood as a social structure and I did not ask, as others have had to, why do these men sexually abuse? With the structure clearly perceptible, my focus has allowed me to wonder why the Church responds in the ways it does when priested men enact violence? Chapters Three and Four address this question and ultimately uncover the discursive assertion present in a distorted
Christology that elevates priested men as unassailably sacred and sanctions clerical sexual violence. This work's particularity is its focus on the priestliness of the abusive priest and not the psychology, sexual orientation or intentions of the man called to be priest. For that reason the central exploration in Part Three of the thesis brings together matters pertaining to the masculinity of priesthood.

In my Introduction I briefly touched on an incident fifty years ago in which my mother sought a meeting with a bishop and told him that a priest of his diocese was engaged in multiple acts of abusive sex. Ten years ago she told me that, "he received me coldly and courteously and I was there for less than fifteen minutes". That bishop then said to her, "leave that to me and I will attend to it. And you may tell no-one". My contention is that in many respects that situation remains unchanged. It is mostly women and children who are subjected to priestly sexual violence and it is clerical men who are the arbiters of what is known about and what is done about that violence. I have called into question the idea that 'principles' and 'procedures' for dealing with clerical sexual abuse, as set out in Towards Healing (1996), have either meaning or effective value without a gender focus. Clerical sexual abuse, when understood from the perspective of gender relations, challenges the Church by calling it to account for the structural oppressions through which it actively discriminates against women while simultaneously declaring they have equality. In other words, I challenge Church hierarchy to 'listen' to the myriad of theological voices of women and men from within the Church who are already providing the gender analyses it so desperately lacks. Situating gender as a category of analysis within the resistant Church,
however, is a difficult task. One means to broach the unwillingness could be the use of 'intimate listening' that I discuss as an interviewing technique. This is a form of human engagement and is not restricted to its use in the interview situation. More broadly applied it could spill over into continued processes including listening to (reading) the voices of theorists. To listen without making authoritative interruptions is to begin to draw away from the exercise of violence.

In seeking to explain priestly sexual violence outside of sexual misconduct or sin in Part Three I drew on the implications of Durkheim's discursive sacred/profane manifest in negative and positive cults sustained through ritual. The two final chapters demonstrate that Roman Catholicism's initiation of men alone into its priesthood depends absolutely on the sexed male body as its primary requisite and at the same time represents that sexed male body as severed from his sexuality. In then mandating celibacy for its priesthood the Church fuses its 'law' of celibacy with a 'gift' of chastity to create what I call a 'disembodied masculinity'. That is, priesthood establishes a negative cult (with attributes of suffering and violence) founded in radical opposition to sexed female bodies. The Church's insistence on a male only celibate priesthood rests on these foundational assumptions: that in persona Christi elevates an embodied male to iconic representation of Christ; that celibacy is a non-sexual state; that the obligation of celibacy guarantees chastity or non-sexual activity (whether coercive or not). These Church assumptions, however, provide a false rationale that consigns the feminine (to its profane rim) but does not preclude sexual activity (from its sacred centre). Chapter Six challenges all these discursive assumptions. Chapter Seven
shows the discourse is deployed as practice through ritual that enacts the sacred power of the priests. Thus the apparent contradiction between sexual violence and liturgical order is obliterated.

On a theoretical level this work is an application of Durkheimian sacred/profane theory extended by its feminist perspective (re)reading. Using feminist excoriation techniques allows me to uncover the violence present in that radical separation and to show how clerical sexual violence points beyond the activity of an individual priest. Victoria Erickson's (1993) work sets a sound precedent for this application of Durkheim. Erickson stands apart in respect of building a social theory of religion that accounts for its strand of violence. In her own words (1993, p. 190) she achieved this by "rethinking the elemental building blocks of sociological understanding of religion". In arguing that Durkheim drew a strong relationship between religion and culture Erickson (1993, p. 190) calls for his work to be "reinterpreted in the light of his gendered understanding of religion and its shaping of knowledge". I argue the sacred/profane is an appropriate analytic tool for reinterpreting priesthood as a sacred (set apart) condition. Like Erickson, I read the sacred/profane as a gendered division irrevocably tying masculinity (of whatever kind) to the sacred; thus my argument shows that Ordination sets men apart and ensures that the relationship of male priests to the sacred remains unassailed. There is specific relevance to Roman Catholic priesthood in Durkheim's (1971, p. 41) statement that "sacred things are those which the interdictions protect and isolate; profane things, those to which the interdictions are
applied". I am indebted to Erickson's Durkheimian analysis and agree with her contention that:

Durkheim produces a brilliant ethnographic account of religion as a gendered social construction made possible by a particular kind of person who is able to grasp the importance of gender and to protect this constructed difference through violent action. Durkheim's work shows that the sacred order presupposes violence and requires violence to maintain its identity and power over the subjugated (Erickson 1993, pp. 190-191).

Durkheim maintained his unwavering insistence on the radical separation of the sacred/profane as a discursive religious process and the foundation for the formation of sociality created through rites. Yet he gave no defining characteristic that was able to force such separation. Following that division to its logical conclusion and leaving the characteristic unnamed would mean, as Nancy Jay cogently argues:

If the capacity for conceptual thought is acquired only through participation in a process that excluded women, how does it come about that women can think? If you hold fast to Durkheim's analysis, there is no way to answer this question (Jay 1992, p. 136).

To argue, however, as this thesis does, that the nameless characteristic along which the sacred/profane is segregated is gender then Durkheim's analysis becomes invaluable for understanding the processes of gendered sacralisation involved in the priesting of men. The sacred/profane dichotomy helps to explain, for example, the basis for the discursive authority that stems from the distorted Christology of in persona Christi. Keeping its priesthood exclusively male is the last bastion of the Church's promulgation of the sacred as male and male priesthood as an unquestionable Ultimate Sacred Postulate. As the sacred is
presently structured within the Church, the disclosures of sexual abuse come from the profane (women and children) against the sacred (priests). This present segmentation into two isolated compartments means abusive acts cannot be adequately dealt with across the gendered division. However, there is a broad middle ground between that division. It is comprised of women and men of skill and enormous human value within the Church. They do not appear in this work because of its focus on the polarities of those men who are sexually violent and the more rigid upper levels of Church hierarchy fearful of change and fearful of gender equity as a human justice principle.

Like Emile Durkheim, on whose work much of this thesis relies, I readily acknowledge that its explanations are not 'of a nature to resolve all the problems'. That was never its intention. However, utilising gender analysis in the questions of the sexual violence of some priests brings the thesis to a final question. Will that form of violence end? By its traditional practice, and I believe this is mostly a limited and ill-informed patriarchal habit in echelons of Church hierarchy rather than a universal wilful intent to maintain authority, the Church's present responses are limited. Any solution will come from the place I referred to above as the men and women of the 'broad middle ground' of the Church who are both within and without its formal boundaries who seem to be forming a 'marginalised majority'. They hold out hope that transcends the prevailing gender biased form of clericalism concerned with what Australian priest Ted Kennedy (2000, p. 21) calls, the "male force and dominating power" that have "developed a one-sided shape" to the Church.
I have left comments on the empirical aspect of this intrinsic case study (Part Two) until last so as to acknowledge again the women and men who contributed their personal and painful experiences to this thesis. While the thesis might have proceeded on a theoretical level without their generosity it would have remained sterile and bereft without their intimately spoken narratives of human violation. Had I approached them with a structured questionnaire, based on theoretical understandings, I would not have been privileged with the opportunity to 'hear' how the abuse of priesthood's powers must be understood if there is to be an end this form of violence. An end of that violence will not eventuate through gendered 'principles' and legal 'procedures' alone. I am deeply saddened to say that it seems that there will be little solace for the grief expressed by many of the women and men in this study. The evil of perpetrators' acts and the callousness of Church responses towards these participants penetrated their human spirit to rob them of the Catholic identity that was their rightful inheritance. Clare encapsulates what many of these people variously told me of the nullifying outcome of their subjection to sexual violence and subsequent dealings with the Church. Clare said, "So I've got a massive over reaction; can't go into a church; can't bear the sight of a priest; I don't trust any of them. But I really mourn my Catholic faith. That was my life. That's what I was. I was so Catholic. You can't really join another religion after being a Catholic so you're nothing. So [very long silent pause - voice soft, sad] I really miss that [crying]."

Theologians like Elizabeth Johnson (1994, p. 61) bring a feminist perspective that "uses human experience as a resource for doing theology". Drawing on experiences like those of
elaborates a theology that has more than preservation of male authority at its centre. It is with these people that a transformation towards hope (rather than healing) resides because:

There is no theoretical solution to the mystery of suffering and evil, but there is an immense field of responsive action towards overcoming what kills women's human dignity. Here and there such action succeeds, granting fragmentary experiences of salvation, anticipations of the human condition where suffering and evil are overcome. Light dawns, courage is renewed, tears are wiped away, a new moment of life arises. Toward that end, speaking about suffering Sophia-God of powerful compassionate love serves as an ally of resistance and a wellspring of hope. But it does so under the rule of darkness and broken words (Elizabeth Johnson 1994, p. 272).

The social perspectives established here set-up a starting point for examination of the complex questions of sexual violence committed by priests. Drawing on the concepts of gender relations makes it possible to map factors of individual psychopathology onto the social rather than the order on which the Church currently relies and that I critique as inadequate. These same steps could open the way for analytic application in other studies of the structural support for sexual violence by men who are Brothers. The trajectory this thesis followed and what it seeks to create is encapsulated by Durkheim when he says, "what must be done is to try the hypothesis and submit it as methodically as possible to the control of facts. This is what we have tried to do" (Emile Durkheim 1971, p. 447). If this thesis contributes any counter discourse to that of a seemingly deaf Church patriarchy then it will be because in my trying: "All I did was listen. For I believe full surely that God's spirit is in us all" (Julian of Norwich C 14).
ADDENDUM

On 1st March 2001 the ACBC and the ACLRI released a revised *Towards Healing* dated December 2000. Two issues that I raised related to the definition of abuse used in the original edition have now been addressed. The revised *Towards Healing* defines abuse as, "not only of sexual relations, but also harassment, molestation, and any other conduct of a sexual nature which is inconsistent with the integrity of a pastoral relationship". And, the sentence "vulnerable persons are carefully selected as potential victims" is deleted. The revised document is expanded to incorporate a growing number of revelations, against Church personnel, of forms of abuse that are not directly sexual. The Principles now include "sexual, physical and emotional abuse", and the Procedures "aim to clarify the steps to be taken and provide a document that is clear and able to be applied to the many and varied matters that can be brought forward" (*Towards Healing* 2000 online).

However, widening the terms of *Towards Healing* (2000) to include these other abuses makes the probability of 'narrowing' its focus onto specific categories of offenders more remote. 'Priests and religious' remain a unitary category thus constraining potential for analysis of specific systemic contributory factors. There is little likelihood, therefore, that my argument regarding the need to examine questions of what constitutes the collective priesthood (as well as an individual priest) as sacred and violent will be given consideration by the ACBC and ACLRI. Meanwhile, media and other sources continue to reveal instances where the procedures in *Towards Healing* (1996 & 2000) are being ignored (or discretionary) in practice. Where *Towards Healing* (1996) was "ad interim ... until further development of it takes place", the revised version indicates no ongoing process. It seems that, although "the goal of moving "towards healing" remains paramount" (*Towards Healing* 2000 online) the more crucial aim of moving 'towards understanding' is now redundant. The conversation has ended mid-sentence.
APPENDICES
I am writing to introduce myself to you and explain why it is that I approached (Name of Organisation) to make contact with you on my behalf.

I am a (very) mature-age woman post-graduate student at Wollongong University enrolled in PhD study. The topic is broadly concerned with women and the Australian Catholic Church and issues of gender and power. As part of the empirical research I want to examine the matter of clerical sexual abuse of women and children, both boys and girls. My particular focus is on the way this behaviour and practice, if reported, was handled by the hierarchy.

My background is in Sociology and it is through the Sociology Department that I am undertaking my degree. I am therefore researching the secrecy and silencing involved in the institutional handling of these instances as a matter of social injustice, an abuse of power and a devaluing of survivors. I must emphasise here that my intention is to demonstrate the human dignity through struggle of survivors and not depict them as victims. My concern is not with the psychology of perpetrating individuals.

As you may be aware there are now some valuable writings on the issue but to date no comprehensive Australian study has been undertaken into this aspect of clerical sexual abuse which locates it within the wider social/political context of the Church. Some media revelations and the courage of members of groups like Friends of Susanna and Broken Rites, who have spoken out, highlight the injustice wrought by the inappropriate response of the Church and my sincere hope is that this thesis will contribute to the work of justice seeking people to rectify these practices.
If you are willing to participate in the study I would want to discuss your experience with you and record our conversation at a time and place you nominate. There will not be a formal questionnaire for you to complete. I offer to you my absolute assurance that I will respect you in every way and will keep confidential every aspect of our conversation. You can at any time ask to have the recording stopped and also withdraw from the study. The attached Consent Form tells you more about this. All your personal details will be disguised in the written thesis and I alone will ever hear the entire tape. It is possible that I may need to consult with my Academic Supervisor, Rebecca Albury Program of Sociology University of Wollongong, to clarify that I have accurately understood and interpreted a specific portion of the recording. In which case she would hear only that portion of the tape and she would not see or have access to personal identifying details. All tapes will be stored under locked conditions at the University of Wollongong for a period of five years. This both ensures confidentiality and would allow you to request the return of the tape if you wish.

I should state that I do not have any therapeutic assistance to offer you.

Two copies of the Consent Form are enclosed. One is for you to keep. If you are willing to participate would you please sign one form and mail it back to me in the reply paid envelope together with your name and an address or telephone number so that I may contact you to arrange a meeting.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my request.

Yours sincerely
CONSENT FORM

My signature on this form shows that I agree to take part in the research project that Mary Medley is undertaking as part of her Doctoral Thesis study in the Department of Sociology at the University of Wollongong.

I am willing to engage in individual, private conversation/s with her to discuss my experience of the manner in which a complaint regarding sexual abuse by a Catholic cleric was handled by the hierarchy. I understand that these conversations will be recorded on a tape recorder and that the only person who will ever hear the entire tape is Mary herself. I will allow her to consult her Academic Supervisor in regard to small portions of the tape if this is necessary. She gives me assurance that she will alter my personal details in her written project so that I cannot be identified.

If I decide at any stage that I do not wish to continue being part of the project I am quite free to tell Mary this and she has given an undertaking that she will accept my decision. Her signature on this consent form binds her to that.

I understand that Mary obtained approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee at Wollongong University and I am free to contact the Secretary of that Committee on 02: 4221 4457 with any queries regarding this project.

The Academic Supervisor of this study and thesis is Rebecca Albury, Sociology Program, University of Wollongong, Northfields Avenue. Wollongong 2522. Phone 02: 4221 3630.

SIGNED .......................................................... DATE..........................

SIGNED ............. .................................. DATE..........................
### TABLE A

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age Abuse Began</th>
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<th>Brother</th>
<th>Nun</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
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<td>1**</td>
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| Clauses     | 13             | 11     | 4       | 1   | 9                      |

* No charges or convictions of perpetrators relate to participants in this study.

** Indicates duplication of one perpetrator.

### TABLE B

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| Clauses     | 9                | 163+               | 82+               |

* Further charges not heard due to illness of imprisoned perpetrator.
Re: HE 97/028 An ethnographic study, as part of a PhD thesis, to understand and explain the way in which the issue of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in Australia connects the gender construction of masculinity and femininity; the responses this organisation uses for dealing with allegations of clerical sexual abuse and the effects of those processes for individual complainants.

Dear Mary,

I am writing to inform you that the Secretary of the Human Research Ethics Committee has been contacted by a woman who had some concerns about the nature and proposed conduct of your research, as outlined in your letter to potential participants. I have since spoken to the complainant and have informed her that I would write to you outlining her concerns and asking for your response.

The complainant, who described herself as a social worker, religious sister and survivor of sexual abuse, had the following concerns after reading the letter:

- the letter is both condescending in tone and sets an unachievable goal, as it suggests that the researcher, 'once armed with the stories of survivors, would be able to do what the survivors were unable to do: get justice';
- the researcher 'doesn't know what she is getting herself into' in seeking to interview survivors of sexual assault because of the array of painful emotions and experiences that would be relived once the participants began talking. The complainant was concerned that there would not be adequate support available for people who became distraught as a result of the interviews.

Further, the complainant questioned whether all participants would, in fact, be approached through support groups, as she had been handed the letter by another nun.

Given the nature of the research and of the concerns raised, I believe that it is appropriate to ask you to write to me in reply to the concerns raised. Assuming a satisfactory response to these concerns, I would then be able to write to the complainant and inform her that I was satisfied with your response to her concerns.

I would appreciate it if you could send me your response by 10 April 1998. I am happy to discuss this matter with you more fully in the meantime.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr Susan Dodds
Chairperson
Human Research Ethics Committee
cc: Rebecca Albury, Supervisor
Dear Dr Dodds

I have your letter outlining concerns raised with the Human Research Ethics Committee about the nature and method of my research in relation to survivors of clerical sexual abuse. The points you raise are addressed as set out in your letter.

The Approach Letter

• I do not patronise my fellow human beings in any circumstances and I deeply regret that condescension has been read into my approach letter.
• The statement "my sincere hope is that this thesis will contribute to the work of justice seeking people" acknowledges the valuable work of others in this area and makes no claim that I, as a sole researcher, 'would be able to do what the survivors were unable to do: get justice'.

Conduct of the Research

• I have previous research experience with other groups who have suffered pain and injustice of kinds other than clerical sexual abuse. I am also well read both at the 'personal story' level and academic level of accounts of sexual abuse and its consequences. This understanding means that in the interview situation I ask participants to relate "as much or as little as you feel comfortable to do about your experience". I also express to them my awareness that after raising painful issues for them I then leave. So far people have appreciated my recognition of this and talk about their response to 'revisiting' their past experience. As members of support groups they have in place a network of people concerned for their welfare.

Support groups formed for, and by, survivors of clerical sexual abuse were approached through 'gatekeepers', their public contact persons, and asked to circulate approach letters and consent forms on my behalf. In all cases these gatekeepers conducted interviews and conversations with me before agreeing to my request. Their primary concern is a sensitivity towards the well-being of their members and on this basis they decide who to contact in their group.
Responses were not received for the total number of letters distributed. The gatekeepers addressed the outgoing letters so I have no knowledge about those who did not respond and the gatekeepers likewise do not know who did respond because the responses are directly to me. This provides confidentiality for all parties and also demonstrates that any approached person who did not wish to participate simply did not reply. There is no further follow-up to that person. However, if the recipient of a letter, who perhaps lacks the gatekeepers' skills of assessment, chooses to pass the letter onto another person this is outside the control of either myself or the support group. I would be reluctant to include a paragraph in the letter asking recipients not pass the letter on because it infers a covert operation.

I hope this reply satisfactorily indicates my careful consideration of the matters raised in your letter for two reasons. Firstly, to allay the concerns of the complainant and recognise her concern for the welfare of others in raising her questions. Secondly, to provide an account to the Human Research Ethics Committee illustrating the ethical conduct of this project.

Yours sincerely

Mary Medley
cc Rebecca Albury
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