# A Discursive Analysis of What Sexual Violence Perpetrators Say to Their Victims

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**Abstract**

This research study aimed to examine the way in which sexual violence perpetrators talk to their victims by critically investigating the discursive strategies drawn on by perpetrators, the discursive constructions of their actions and their victims, and the consistencies with the talk of sexual violence perpetrators and rape myths and discursive and social practices promoting sexual violence. Over two-hundred photographs were collected from a photographic art project called Project Unbreakable. The photographs were of sexual violence survivors, from all over the world, holding a poster with a quote from their attacker. The words that survivors chose to represent for Project Unbreakable served as the data for this research study. The data were analyzed using the six stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis outlined by Carla Willig. The analysis revealed that by drawing on discourses of pleasure, desire, romance, marriage and consent, perpetrators discursively constructed their actions as sex. Furthermore, perpetrators discursively constructed their victims as sexually passive and dependant on men, as gate keepers of men's sexuality, as sexual instruments for male satisfaction, and as consenting persons. On the other hand, perpetrators were also found to discursively construct their actions as a legitimized form of punishment, humiliation and intimidation. In addition, their victims were discursively constructed as deviant, deserving of their victimization, worthless, damaged and powerless. These discursive constructions of their actions and their victims enabled perpetrators to normalize their behaviour, blame their victims, minimize the incident, assert their innocence, justify their actions, silence their victims and reinforce their position at the top of the gender hierarchy. Consistencies were also found between the talk of perpetrators and rape myths, stereotypes and discursive and social practices promoting sexual violence. Another interesting finding in the data was that of quotes from a third party, not the perpetrator, which further illustrated the existence of rape culture. This research draws on the idea that a rape supportive culture does not only capture the hostile nature of the social environment that many survivors experience in the aftermath of sexual violence, but it also provides a social pattern for coercive sexuality to occur.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction to the research

## 1.1. Introduction

Sexual violence is widely recognized as a significant social problem in many human societies (Ellis, 1989). However, it is only since the 1970s that we have witnessed a serious scientific effort to understand and ultimately help curb the prevalence of this (Ellis, 1989; Jones, 1999; Lea & Auburn, 2001). Allegations of sexual assault provoke more scepticism and victim-blame than do most other crimes (Weiss, 2009, 2010). According to Weiss (2009), victimization can be disempowering and leave victims feeling violated and defeated. Also, victims of sexual crimes may be especially susceptible to shame because of how rape and victims of rape have been constructed by a rape supportive culture constituted by cultural narratives and institutional practices related to gender, sexuality and sexual violence (Weiss, 2009).

Rape myths, defined by Burt (1980) as "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (p. 217), have been found to play a central role in the misperceptions and treatment of rape victims by increasing people's willingness to blame the victim, and decreasing people's willingness to blame the perpetrator (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013). According to Williams (1984 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007), social stigmatization of victims in the aftermath of rape has been identified as a form of 'secondary victimization'. Williams' argument was that by engaging in victim-blaming and generally unsupportive practices, society and community also become offenders (Williams, 1984 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007). Anderson and Doherty (2007) call attention to Russell's (1982) argument that victim-blaming in cases of rape is so widely and uncritically practiced in Western cultures that they could accurately be characterized as 'rape-supportive' or tolerant of rape. The notion of a 'rape supportive culture' usefully captures the hostile nature of the social environment that many survivors experience in the aftermath of sexual violence (Anderson & Doherty, 2007).

According to Brownmiller's (1975) seminal work on rape, "a world without rapists would be a world in which women moved freely without fear of men," (p. 209). Before the 1970s, little research focused on rape. However, the second wave of feminism saw research into sexual violence flourish in the social sciences, including Psychology (Lea & Auburn, 2001). Feminist literature challenged the view that rape is merely another form of heterosexual sex committed by one individual on another and made explicit the conceptualization of rape as involving issues of male power and violence (Anderson & Doherty, 2007; Brownmiller, 1975; Ellis, 1989; Gavey, 2005; Lea & Auburn,

2001; Russell, 2003). Sexual gratification is not considered a prime motive by feminist theory but rather, rape is seen as the use of sexuality to establish or maintain dominance and control of women by men (Brownmiller, 1975; Ellis, 1989). Also, according to Brownmiller (1975), any woman can be a victim and any man can be a rapist.

Despite the rise of feminist and critical approaches to the study of sexual violence, there remains an unwavering tradition of research in psychology that seeks to reduce this phenomenon to an individual level of analysis (Lea & Auburn, 2001). The area in which this type of research is perhaps most prevalent is in research on the perpetrators of rape and their treatment and/or rehabilitation. A great deal of practice associated with sex offenders remains firmly informed by a medical/clinical model and a cognitive-behavioural model (Lea & Auburn, 2001). For instance, sexual violence has been said to be a symptom of mental illness (Bryden & Grier, 2011; Donat & D'Emilio, 1992; Jones, 1999). This kind of research tends to offer studies of the identified traits or characteristics of convicted sex offenders, sometimes compared with so-called normal controls. Results tend to indicate higher levels of 'psychopathology', 'hostility', 'denial' and 'minimization' in the sex offender group thereby serving to reinforce the view that sex offenders are different to, and distinct from, so-called 'normal' men (Bryden & Grier, 2011; Lea & Auburn, 2001; Scully & Marolla, 1984). Sexual violence has also been theorized as a result of distorted beliefs (Abel, Becker, & Cunningham-Rathner, 1984; Ciardha & Ward, 2013; Polaschek & Ward, 2002; Ward, Hudson, Johnston, & Marshall, 1997). A notable feature of sexual offenders is the way they frequently justify or minimize their sexually abusive behaviour (Gannon & Polaschek, 2006; Ward *et al.*, 1997). Statements that are used to explain away, justify or minimize their actions have been called cognitive distortions (Abel *et al.*, 1984). According to Abel *et al.*, (1984), cognitive distortions are beliefs that individuals have developed as a result of a mismatch between their (deviant) sexual interests and their perception of societal norms. The notion of distorted beliefs or cognitions construct the aetiology of sexual violence as rooted in individual cognition, not in the organization of social relations. Such research, then, stands in direct contrast to current feminist thinking and continues to maintain the status quo by reproducing the view that sexual violence is a psychologically and pathologically isolated, idiosyncratic act limited to a few "sick" men (Scully & Marolla, 1984).

The beliefs of sexual offenders are argued to be based on the way they describe their actions and the context in which they occur (Ciardha & Ward, 2013). From a cognitive view, the assumption is that people's verbal expression of their beliefs/attitudes provides information about the cognitions that exist in their minds (Willig, 2008). The problem with this sort of cognitivist view is that by drawing

on rape myth acceptance and cognitive distortions as causal explanations for rape, it locates the problem at the level of the individual (Lea, 2007). This view also theorizes the concepts of 'individual' and 'society' as two separate entities and does not allow for accounts of how the individual becomes social (Lea, 2007). Furthermore the diagnosis of the problem of rape as located within people's minds rather than in the cultural fabric implies that the site for change is individual psychologies (Gavey, 2005). However, in the absence of concomitant wider social changes, changing individual attitudes/beliefs is likely to be of only limited success (Gavey, 2005). This is because it requires people to embody new values and codes of behaviour in a particular social environment that may resist their efforts to change, especially if that change challenges normative cultural constructions (Anderson & Doherty, 2007).

Further, the assumption that talk is the route to cognition is challenged by a discursive perspective where language is seen to construct versions of social reality and achieve social objectives (Willig, 2008). Discourses are "a product of social factors, of powers and practices, rather than an individual's set of ideas" (Hollway, 1983, p. 231, as cited in Gavey, 2005). Thus, it is not the individual psychology of 'deviant perverts' that should be studied but rather the normalizing constructions or cultural understandings that provide a social pattern for coercive sexuality (Anderson & Doherty, 2007; Gavey, 2005). Discourses of gender and sexuality, for instance, provide a framework of cultural norms for behaviour and offer a range of socially acceptable excuses and justifications that can be mobilised to legitimate an act of rape (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). This does not only allow the testimony and subjective experience of victims to be dismissed but also allows rapists themselves to mobilise socially condoned excuses and justifications for rape and to act within these societal norms (Anderson & Doherty, 2007).

### 1.2. Rationale and research aims

Previous research into perpetrators of sexual violence has focused on the accounts of their offences in prison or treatment settings (Abel *et al.*, 1984; Auburn & Lea, 2003; Gannon, 2009; Polaschek & Ward, 2002). However, Willig (2008) explains that from a discursive perspective, people's speech is understood as social action and is analysed in terms of what it accomplishes within a social context. In other words, people's accounts depend on the discursive context within which they are produced (Willig, 2008). Accordingly, sex offenders in a prison or treatment context may use language to fulfil certain objectives and to achieve particular effects. A speaker may assume one of a range of possible subject positions (reformed character, victim of circumstance) for different reasons (early parole, successful completion of treatment) (Lea & Auburn, 2001). Furthermore, offenders' accounts may

include culturally derived vocabularies and the reproduction of rape myths, which could be used to diminish responsibility and to negotiate a non-deviant identity by disclaiming, excusing, or justifying rape (Scully & Marolla, 1984). The present study will focus particularly on what sexual perpetrators say to their victims. This allows for an analysis of a more natural context, of what is said in the moment rather than looking at retrospective justifications. It may also allow us to examine how discourses regarding sexual violence are drawn on when interacting directly with the victim and what perpetrators are doing with their words at the time of the assault. By deconstructing the talk of perpetrators in the moment, directly to the victim, it is hoped to shed light upon the social processes that may create the opportunity for rape and not just excuse or explain it away at a later stage.

My research proceeds from a perspective where it is argued that a rape supportive culture does not only contribute to the blame and shame of sexual assault survivors, but it also provides a social pattern for coercive sexuality which allows perpetrators to act in this way and be excused. This research will contribute to the literature by looking at sexual violence from a different angle. This study will divert attention to understanding the phenomenon through explicit focus on, and the deconstructing of, the talk of sexual violence perpetrators to their victims. I think that it is important to look at sex- and gender-based violence (SGBV) from this angle, as it may provide further insight into how the social definition of rape/sexual violence insidiously creates opportunities for it to occur.

The aim of my research was to critically investigate:

- the discursive strategies and resources drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators when talking to their victims,
- the way in which sexual violence perpetrators discursively construct their actions and their victims, and
- whether or not what sexual violence perpetrators say to their victims is consistent with rape myths, stereotypes and discursive and social practices promoting rape/sexual assault.

### 1.3. Structure and outline of report

The following chapter of this research report, **Chapter two**, includes an overview of the feminist understanding of sexual violence. This is followed by a discussion of the rape supportive culture. The concept of rape myths is included as well as a review of the widespread rape myths documented to date. I then discuss the issues of secondary victimization which is characterized by victim blaming, disbelief and a lack of support for survivors of sexual violence. I also provide a review of

the literature and research on perpetrators of sexual violence. This includes theories regarding rapists as mentally ill, evolutionary understandings of sexual aggression, cognitive distortions, and social learning. I then briefly discuss men as victims and women as perpetrators of sexual violence. The chapter will then turn into an in-depth discussion on the social constructionist understanding of rape and sexual violence. This will include discussions about discourses of gender, sexuality, and sex and the contribution to the social meaning of sexual violence. This is followed by a discussion about sexual violence as an explicit form of punishment or discipline.

**Chapter three** will explain my methodology and how my research was carried out. This includes a comprehensive discussion on the social constructionist paradigm and discourse analysis as theory and method. Following this is a description of the data used as well as the collection thereof. I then explain how I went about analysing my data. I also discuss the necessary steps taken in order to ensure the credibility of research such as dependability and trustworthiness. There is also a brief overview of the ethical considerations relating to my study.

In **Chapter four**, the analysis and discussion of my research data is presented in three broad sections. The first section focuses on the way in which sexual violence perpetrators discursively constructed their actions, their victims and by implication, themselves. The second section looks at the discursive strategies drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators when talking to their victims. The third section illustrates the consistencies with perpetrators' talk and the rape supportive culture.

My final chapter, **Chapter five,** concludes my research by providing an overview of my findings in response to my research aims. I briefly discuss variation and the implications thereof. I then discuss the limitations of my research and future recommendations, as well as a personal reflection.

## Chapter 2: Literature review

### 2.1. Sexual violence: a (feminist) overview

The cultural and legal understanding of rape has changed dramatically over the past 30 years (Chasteen, 2001). Largely as a result of the contemporary feminist movement, society and individuals no longer think of, respond to, or talk about rape as they did prior to the 1970s (Best, 1999; Bourque, 1995 & Plummer, 1995 as cited in Chasteen, 2001). The contemporary feminist anti-rape movement challenged traditional assumptions about the prevalence of rape, its causes, and consequences and provided an alternative framework for defining and interpreting sexual violence (Brownmiller, 1975; Chasteen, 2001; Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Brownmiller (1975) and Chasteen (2001) explain that the anti-rape feminist movement formulated several radical new ideas about rape. Three main ideas include any woman can be a victim of rape; any man can be a rapist; and rape itself occurs in many forms, including acquaintance or date rape and marital rape (Brownmiller, 1975; Chasteen, 2001).

Feminists argue that, rather than searching for physical evidence of a woman's loss of chastity, the law and public should focus on a woman's consent or lack thereof as the key element in deciding whether an act constitutes rape (Chasteen, 2001). Feminist discourse has sought to judge acts of rape based on a woman's interpretation of the situation, rather than on a man's perception of a woman's interest or virtue (Chasteen, 2001). Chasteen (2001) further explains that by constructing rape as any violation of any woman's non-consent, feminist discourse broadened the meaning of rape to include a wider variety of situations (e.g., marital relationships ) and to include acts that did not contain overt physical violence. The idea of the rapist as a rare, fringe character was also consequently reconstructed in feminist discourse (Chasteen, 2001). Chasteen (2001) explains that prior to the feminist movement, the image of the stranger rapist in the proverbial dark alley was commonplace. Feminists argued that this mythology hid the reality that the vast majority of assaults are committed by someone the woman knows - not unknown assailants, but men that women think they can trust (Chasteen, 2001).

Diana Russell's work (1982, 1984 as cited in Gavey, 2005) confirmed feminist suspicions about the hidden nature of sexual violence. Russell's empirical research was specifically designed to overcome the limitations of previous estimates of rape prevalence, such as the nondisclosure of rape/sexual assault as well as the likeliness that women only reported their assault if it matched the stereotypical patterns of violent rape by a stranger (Estrich, 1986; Gavey, 2005). Women were not just asked

whether they had been raped, but rather whether they had had any experiences that matched behavioural descriptions of rape (Gavey, 2005). For example, they were asked whether they had ever had sexual intercourse when they did not want to because of some degree of force (Koss, Leonard, Beezley, & Oros, 1985). Furthermore, several more questions were asked about specific behaviourally defined experiences with different categories of men, for example, strangers, friends, lovers (Gavey, 2005). Such methodological refinements were designed to be sensitive to women's reluctance to report rape and they were seemingly successful as the body of research produced new data showing widespread rape and sexual victimization (Russell, 1982, 1984, as cited in Gavey, 2005). According to Gavey (2005), two other important changes to the picture of rape emerged from Russell's research. Russell showed that women were more likely to be raped by husbands, lovers, boyfriends, and dates than by strangers, and that rape should be regarded as being on a continuum with more subtle forms of coercion as a result of continual verbal pressure (Gavey, 2005).

Brownmiller (1975) has argued that the typical rapist might be the "boy next door" (p. 189). Similarly, Chasteen (2001) explains that men who rape are from every strata of society, sharing only the desire to dominate and control women through violence. As any man can be a rapist, feminists argue, any woman can be a victim of rape regardless of class, age, race, and background (Chasteen, 2001). It was also argued that people learn scripts of male aggression and female passivity that encourage sexual assault of women; thus a "rape culture" exists that promotes widespread assault of women by men who are in some ways hypermasculine (Chasteen, 2001).

### 2.2. A rape supportive culture

The views of feminists sparked research within Psychology to examine the "rape-supportive culture" that provides the context for sexual assault (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Burt (1980) hypothesized that our culture and the status of women within that culture play a significant role in the attitudes toward sexual violence held by persons, particularly rapists. Burt (1980) also puts forward the idea that myths about rape (e.g., women ask for it) might act as facilitators of sexual aggression. These myths were proposed as part of a larger attitudinal structure that serves to bring about sexually aggressive acts in our culture (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Attitudinal factors that were found to predict rape supportive myths were sex role stereotyping, adversarial sexual beliefs, and acceptance of interpersonal violence (Burt, 1980). Burt (1980) explains sex role stereotyping as involving assessments of the appropriateness of familial, work, and social roles being based on the sex of the individual considered. For example, "it is acceptable for a woman to have a career, but marriage and

family should come first" (Burt, 1980, p. 222). Adversarial sexual beliefs refers to the view that male-female relationships are naturally filled with conflict and competition (Burt, 1980). For example, "most women are sly and manipulating when they are out to attract a man" (Burt, 1980, p. 222). Lastly, acceptance of interpersonal violence refers to the belief that violence is an appropriate way of interacting with others, especially in male-female relationships (Burt, 1980). For example, "sometimes the only way to get a cold woman turned on is to use force" (Burt, 1980, p. 222).

Furthermore, Koss *et al.*, (1985) explain that culturally transmitted assumptions about men, women, violence, sexuality, and myths about rape constitute a rape supportive belief system. Rape myths are present at both the individual and institutional/societal levels and are one way in which sexual violence has been sustained and justified throughout history (Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, & Gidycz, 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994).

### 2.2.1. Rape myths

The concept of rape myths was introduced in the 1970s in order to explain a set of largely false cultural beliefs that were thought to underlie sexual aggression perpetrated against women (Edwards *et al.*, 2011). These myths include elements of victim blame, perpetrator absolution, and minimization or rationalization of sexual violence (Edwards *et al.*, 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Burt (1980) defined rape myths as "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists," which serve to create "a climate hostile to rape victims" (p. 217). Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) proposed a modified definition of rape myths: "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false, but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women" (p. 134). Examples of rape myths include: many women have an unconscious desire to be raped; women routinely lie about rape; only certain women are raped; women ask for it by their dress or behaviour; it is not rape unless he has a weapon (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994); only bad girls get raped; any healthy woman can resist rape if she really wanted to; rapists are sex-starved, insane or both (Burt, 1980); and husbands cannot rape their wives (Edwards *et al.*, 2011). These are just a few of the rape myths that exist. According to Boakye (2009), the majority of rape myths have been found to cut across cultures, both Western and non-Western.

There are many, multi-layered functions of rape myths, however according to Brownmiller (1975) and Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994), an especially important function of rape myths is the denial and trivialization of a crime that affects a substantial proportion of the female population. It is further explained that such a justification is achieved by shifting the blame from the rapist to his victim

which protects individuals and society from confronting the reality and extent of sexual assault (Brownmiller, 1975; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Furthermore, it has been suggested that "Rape myths are the mechanism that people use to justify dismissing an incident of sexual assault from the category of 'real' rape...such beliefs deny the reality of many actual rapes" (Burt, 1991, p. 27 as cited in Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Estrich (1986) explains that a 'real rape' is recognised as occurring when a virginal young woman, of the most respectable standing, is violently accosted by a stranger either outside or at home in the sanctity of her own bedroom. She resists but is brutally raped sustaining multiple, serious, lasting physical injuries and she runs to report immediately (bloody panties in hand) in a highly emotional state to the police (Estrich, 1986).

Chennells (2009) explains that the enormous gap between the 'real' rape template and rape in real life effectively works to exclude the majority of rape claims and exonerate perpetrators. The 'real rape' idea exposes social reasoning about what constitutes rape, and what does not; it rests on prejudices, assumptions and normative expectations about gender roles and behaviour that are deeply rooted in patriarchal beliefs (Anderson & Doherty, 2007; Brownmiller, 1975; Chasteen, 2001; Chennells, 2009).

### 2.2.2. Secondary victimization and victim blame

Studies of rape victim experience have increased the understanding of how survival in the aftermath of rape can be seriously impaired by negative reactions- of either disbelief, blame or a general lack of sympathy and support- in a process termed by Williams in her landmark paper as 'secondary victimization' (Williams, 1984 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007).

Anderson and Doherty (2007) refer to Williams' paper which emphasizes the need to undertake a critical examination of the social context of rape and the social environment that victims must confront in the aftermath of an attack. Her point is that, by engaging in victim-blaming and generally unsupportive practices, society and community also become offenders (Williams, 1984 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007). Russell (1982 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007) argues that victim-blaming in cases of rape is so widely and uncritically practised in Western cultures that they could accurately be characterized as 'rape-supportive' or tolerant of rape.

Another matter of concern to feminists is that rape survivors are not protected by the law (Chennells, 2009). The police, lawyers, and judges work in the context of not only the law but also within the rape supportive culture that exists (Boakye, 2009). The law of rape is not merely a piece of

legislation, a string of words that can be taken on their own (Chennells, 2009). It is the judicial interpretation of that legislation and, in that interpretation, traditional assumptions about the possessive and coercive nature of heterosexuality can be, and have been, imported into law (Naffine, 1994 as cited in Chennells, 2009). The discrepancy between the socially sanctioned 'common sense' model of real rape and the reality of sexual aggression has profound consequences for victims of the crime (Chennells, 2009). The rape victims' unique position in the criminal justice system is that they are treated with unequalled suspicion (Chennells, 2009). The effect of this distrust and its location in ideas about what constitutes real harm and real rape can be seen most poignantly where discretion is exercised by police, prosecutors and ultimately judges (Chennells, 2009; Estrich, 1986).

According to Temkin and Krahé (2008), an extensive body of research from social psychology and criminology demonstrates the influence of stereotypes and myths on judgements about rape. Analyses of police files, trial observations, and interviews with legal professionals have shown that holding women responsible for sexual violence is a common aspect of legal decision making (Brown, Hamilton, & O'Neill, 2007). Historically, numbers of women complainants in rape trials have been regarded suspiciously, or prejudiced in that their credibility has been seriously called into question, or undermined (Stevenson, 2000). Arguably, pubic and legal ideas as to the expected conduct and behaviour of the stereotypical rape victim have been grounded in the idea that 'genuine' victims do not put themselves at risk for rape (Stevenson, 2000). This disparity is significant because it is the few rapes which most closely conform to the stereotype of what amounts to real rape, that are more likely to be investigated, prosecuted and have higher chances of conviction and meaningful sentencing (Chennells, 2009).

Where sexual violence by a sexual partner is concerned, the intimate nature of the woman's relationship with the man enables the sexual violence to be dismissed legally (Rumney & Bijl, 2010). According to Edwards *et al.*, (2011), religious institutions have reinforced the myth that husbands cannot rape their wives. For instance, Fortune (2005 as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2011) found that some people use Biblical verses such as Ephesians 5: 22, "wives submit to your own husbands, as to the lord," or 1 Corinthians 7:4 "the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does", to justify sexually aggressive behaviours. Subsequent Biblical Scripture instructs husbands to submit to their wives and suggests that wives have control over their husbands' bodies as well (Edwards *et al.*, 2011). However, given the patriarchal structures of many religious institutions, it is most often the right of the husband to his wife's body that is emphasized (Edwards *et al.*, 2011).

Such understandings have been upheld for many years in laws relating to marital rape; husbands were indemnified against rape of their wives because consent was always already implied (Powell, 2007). Historically, men who rape their wives have been exempt from legal punishment (Martin, Taft, & Resick, 2007). The first documented legal statement regarding marital rape was by Sir Matthew Hale (1736, as cited in Martin *et al.*, 2007, p. 331);

> "but the husband cannot be guilty of a rape committed by himself upon his lawful wife, for by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given up herself in this kind unto her husband, which she cannot retract" .

Consistent with the Hale doctrine, Blackstone developed the 'unities theory' that man and wife become one entity when married and that "the legal existence of the wife is suspended during marriage" (Blackstone, 1765 as cited in Martin *et al.*, 2007, p. 331). Blackstone's theory also states that the wife becomes the property of the husband during marriage. Thus, marital rape could not exist because a husband could not steal his own property or commit a crime against himself (Martin *et al.*, 2007). Muehlenhard and Kimes (1999) applied social constructionism to marital rape and asserted that definitions of marital rape are shaped by the interest of people with power in society. Men have historically dominated the political arena and therefore the lawmaking process due to concepts such as "separate spheres," in which men dominated the political and public realms of life while women were restricted to the family and private spheres (Bennice & Resick, 2003). These laws have affected the way people conceptualize rape today (Bennice & Resick, 2003; Martin *et al.*, 2007; Muehlenhard & Kimes, 1999). It was not until the Women's' Movement of the 1970s that marital rape was raised as a serious issue, as feminists advocated for changes to the legal system (Brownmiller, 2005; Chasteen, 2001). The past three decades have seen a substantial change in marital rape laws however, sexual violence by a husband or intimate partner is still considered to be less serious than stranger rape and is often not classified as rape (Muehlenhard & Kimes, 1999). This is because being raped by one's husband does not fit into the 'real rape' construction (Bennice & Resick, 2003).

In a landmark paper on the social definition of rape, feminist scholars Burt and Estep (1981 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007) highlighted the difficulties that sexual assault victims routinely encounter. A key point communicated in this work which explained by Anderson and Doherty (2007), is that victimhood is a social creation. Definitions of what counts as rape and who is to be treated as a 'genuine' victim - innocent rather than accountable - are constructed in discourse and

practices that reflect the social, political, and cultural conditions of society (Anderson & Doherty, 2007).

Anderson & Doherty (2007) emphasize that social participants might offer several potential arguments that challenge a sexual assault claim. First, they note that arguments may be put forward that 'what happened' was consensual as opposed to coerced intercourse - that is, that the encounter was 'just sex' (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). The second broad type of argument is that coerced intercourse probably did occur however no damage was done either because the victim was not particularly injured or because the victim is somehow unimportant and not worthy of sympathy, which further minimizes the significance of the event (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). Thirdly, even if it is accepted that forced intercourse occurred, there is still an argument insisting that an alleged victim either provoked the attack or was somehow reckless in his/her behaviour and is thus blameworthy in failing to prevent the attack (Anderson & Doherty, 2007).

The concept of victim responsibility has assumed a central place within psychological research into rape and rape victims (Lea, 2007). Lea (2007) cites Jones and Aronson (1973) as the first to have used the term 'victim responsibility' to explore the influence of information pertaining to the respectability of the victim on judgements about her responsibility for the rape. Research findings generally agree that the victim's dress, physical attractiveness, previous sexual history, level of intoxication, level of resistance during the attack and relationship to the perpetrator are implicated in the blaming process (Lea, 2007).

A problem in South Africa, and in most other parts of the world, is that families, peers, the media and society often focus on the role of women in rape prevention (Bonnes, 2010). Women are taught to be careful, to avoid walking alone and to avoid getting drunk with strangers (Bonnes, 2010). When rape prevention targets women it helps contribute to victim blaming by fostering the idea that if it is the woman's job to prevent rape, then she must be at least partly to blame if she is raped (Bonnes, 2010). This is in line with Cahill's (2000) feminist analysis of the social construction of the female body and the belief that women are culpable for rape:

> "In specific moments and movements of the body are written the defence of the sexual offender: she was somewhere she should not have been, moving her body in ways that she should not have, carrying on in a manner so free and easy so as to convey an utter abdication of her responsibility of self-protection, that is, of self-surveillance" (p. 56).

Cahill (2000) further asserts that women are expected to monitor, police, restrict, and even hinder their movements in an attempt to ensure the safety of their bodies.

Media coverage of rape cases also have elements of victim blame by insinuating the victim is at fault for being in a dangerous area or behaving promiscuously for instance (Caringella-Macdonald 1998 as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2011). Howitt (1998 as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2011) argued that media stories are often constructed from a viewpoint that is more favourable to the perpetrator rather than the victim. Media coverage and culturally transmitted ideas are mutually reinforcing that is, media coverage of rape is shaped by myths and stereotypes about rape while it also creates and sustains these ideas (Berrington & Jones, 2002).

According to Bufkin and Eschholz (2000), only a small proportion of rape cases receive attention in the media and those cases that do receive coverage are often presented in ways that replicate rape myths. It has been argued that there is a distorted view of rape victims in the media (Bonnes, 2010; Carll, 2003). For instance, media coverage suggest that women should avoid certain behaviours and ways of dressing in order to avoid rape (Bonnes, 2010). When a woman does not avoid these things she is often depicted in the media as to blame for the rape (Benedict, 1992 as cited in Bonnes, 2010). A woman who avoids such behaviours is portrayed as the 'responsible woman'; she is extremely careful and takes all the 'correct' precautions in order to avoid being raped (Berrington & Jones, 2002). Bonnes (2010) explains that newspaper articles shift the blame from the perpetrators to the victims by reporting on the victims' attire at the time of the rape or by emphasising the dangerous location or time of the night. The focus is therefore on the role played by the victim and not the perpetrator. Furthermore, media coverage do not often report on the self-defence of the victims which suggests that they had not done enough to prevent the rape (Bonnes, 2010). Thus, victims are often portrayed as responsible for rape or 'asking for it' (Bonnes, 2010).

Furthermore, according to Prater (2013), fantasy literature is one more culturally powerful genre in which rape is narrated, and given that the genre is widely read and popular, it has some power to reinforce and naturalise rape culture. Myths, language and metaphors produce meaning, they shape the way an event is experienced in the world (Prater, 2013). Fantasy narratives in particular are a place where rape myths can be reiterated as they often feature ideas of heterosexuality marked by aggressive 'seduction'; a model in which an overbearing man ignores his partner's resistance (Pineau, 1989). This mirrors the belief that women have an unconscious desire to be raped and that they can resist if the really wanted to (Brownmiller, 1975; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). It is

interesting to consider Charlotte Lamb, a Mills and Boon writer, who has sold over 100 million copies worldwide (Philadelphoff-Puren, 2005). According to Philadelphoff-Puren (2005), her novels are marked by a specific stylistic signature; that is, her consistently violent representation of heterosexual sex. The heroines in her books can be expected to resist all sexual advances very strongly, while her heroes determinedly ignore all refusals on the part of the heroines, even those refusals which include expressions of pain (Philadelphoff-Puren, 2005). Another perpetrator of the myth that women enjoy rape is arguably the pornography industry (Edwards *et al.*, 2011). Dworkin (1981 as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2011) asserted that pornography portrays sexual violence as something that is desired and enjoyed by women, and serves to bring these beliefs to the surface and reinforce such already held beliefs. Rape is sexualized when people believe that rape is motivated by sexual passion rather than power and precipitated by a victim who is provocative in appearance, manner, and action because she secretly wants to be rape (Bond & Mosher, 1986; Groth & Birnbaum, 2013).

As can be seen, victim blaming ideologies are so pervasive that they factor in the legal framework, media coverage of rape, rape prevention as well as media genres such as romance novels and pornography (Bonnes, 2010; Edwards *et al.*, 2011; Grubb & Turner, 2012; Prater, 2013)

### 2.3. Men as victims of sexual violence

Until relatively recently, the study of rape has focused largely on female victims of male perpetrators (Davies & Rogers, 2006). The publicity that rape has received as a feminist issue has meant that male victims of sexual assault have been neglected both by research and by the wider public (Mezey & King, 1992). White and Yamawaki (2009) affirm that some people define rape as solely a man forcing a woman to participate in sexual intercourse. Focusing exclusively on female victimization is problematic, because in the attempt to rectify the invisibility and marginalization of women's experiences, little feminist research has considered the male experience (Owen, 1995 as cited in Graham, 2006). The feminist concern to highlight the victimization of women by men is understandable, given that sexual victimization is an 'everyday' experience for women. But conceptualizing men as offenders and women as victims assumes that a clear distinction can be made between victims and perpetrators of the crime (Graham, 2006). This distinction makes male victimization difficult to understand, as the existence of male victims directly challenges dominant understandings of victimization. However, despite the fact that men can be victimized, research

suggests that the majority of sexual assaults against men are also committed by men (Turchik & Edwards, 2012).

Rape myths are related empirically to victim blame (Krahé, 1988 as cited in Davies & Rogers, 2006), with traditional negative views about women and heterosexual relationships (Burt, 1980), and with hostile aggression in men (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Findings that male victims are also blamed for rape are difficult to account for within the traditional feminist explanations of rape, which emphasise negative gender stereotypes pertaining to women (Graham, 2006; Turchik & Edwards, 2012). However, myths are also prevalent in society that refer to male victims of rape and sexual assault and that are associated with victim blame for male rape (Davies & Rogers, 2006). Kassing *et al.* (2005, as cited in Sleath & Bull, 2010) listed six broad categories into which male rape myths fall: Men's physical size and strength means they are unlikely to be overpowered or forced into sex; men are the instigators of sexual activity and so would not be targeted for rape; men who are victims of rape lose their manhood; the occurrence of male rape is rare; men are strong enough to cope with the experience of being raped; and male rape only happens in prisons. Rape myths regarding male victims generally stem from traditional views of masculinity, which dictate that men should be strong, assertive, sexually dominant, and heterosexual (Davies, 2002, as cited in Sleath & Bull, 2010). According to Sleath and Bull (2010), these categories should not be considered to cover the full breadth and diversity of male rape myths. One significant male rape myth not encompassed by these categories is the idea that all male victims of rape (those perpetrated by men) are gay (or appear gay) (Sleath & Bull, 2010). There is also the myth regarding the enjoyment of sex, which suggests that men are always ready and wanting sex, and as rape is only a form of sex, that a man would therefore enjoy being raped (by a woman) (Sleath & Bull, 2010).

According to Davies & Rogers (2006), it is commonly believed that women cannot force a man to engage in sexual intercourse, because people are socialized to believe that women are sexually passive and men are sexual initiators. Therefore, it is difficult to imagine a dominant woman coercing an unwilling man to have sex, or for the man to be unwilling if the opportunity for sex occurred (Smith, Pine, & Hawley, 1988; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1994, as cited in Davies & Rogers, 2006).

According to Davies & Rogers (2006), male victims of female perpetrated rape will be ridiculed because of the belief that men should always take, rather than resist, any opportunity of sex with a woman. Gender role beliefs, such as 'men should always be sexually available to women', serve to

minimise the perceived effects that sexual assault has on men assaulted by women (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1994, as cited in Davies & Rogers, 2006).

## 2.4. Perpetrators of sexual violence

Owing to the alarming incidence of rape and other sexual offences, researchers have been trying in earnest to answer the question 'What causes men to rape?' (Blake & Gannon, 2010; Ward & Siegert, 2002). Researchers such as Abel, Becker, and Cunningham-Rathner (1984), Auburn and Lea (2003), Groth (2001), Lea and Auburn (2001), Polaschek and Ward (2002), Scully and Marolla (1984), and Thornhill and Palmer (2001) have postulated many theories in an attempt to answer this question.

### 2.4.1. Perpetrators as mentally ill

Some of these theorists were psychiatrists and in their view, rapists were sick individuals and their behaviour reflected mental illness and "irresistible impulses" as a function of personality, adjustment, or bio-chemical abnormalities (Jones, 1999). Groth (2001) claimed that rape was always a symptom of some psychological dysfunction, either transient, or chronic and repetitive. It was also said that "the rapist is, in fact, a person who has serious psychological difficulties which handicap him in his relationships to other people and which he discharges, when under stress, through sexual acting out" (Groth, 1979, pp. 5-6 as cited in Jones, 1999).

Psychotherapists' interest in understanding the causes of sexual aggression tended to emphasize their clinical impressions; often interpreted through the lens of Freudian motivational theories which looks closely at the unconscious desires that motivate people to act in certain ways (Bryden & Grier, 2011). Freud himself had said hardly anything about rape (Forrester, 1991), but some psychologists created theories based on their clinical observations (Bryden & Grier, 2011). Here, rapists behaviour was sometimes viewed as the result of bad parenting (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Noting that rapists tend to be hostile toward women, some authors attributed this to their excessively lenient, overbearing, rejecting, or inconsistent mothers and sometimes their harsh or remote fathers (Bryden & Grier, 2011; Cohen, Garofalo, Boucher, & Seghorn, 1971; Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). It was also argued that rapists are trying to overcome anxieties about their masculinity such as feelings of sexual inferiority and inadequacy, doubts about their attractiveness to women, or repressed homosexual inclinations (Bryden & Grier, 2011; Cohen *et al.*, 1971; Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). These might also be due to 'virtually absent' fathers combined with dominant, overly protective mothers (Bryden & Grier, 2011). Another theory to explain rapist behaviour is that of castration anxiety (Bryden &

Grier, 2011; Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Freud believed that when young boys first realize that girls do not have penises they assume that girls are created by fathers who castrated their sons (Bryden & Grier, 2011). It is further argued that at a conscious level males outgrow this belief, but some unconsciously fail to resolve their castration anxiety (Bryden & Grier, 2011; Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Rape, some Freudians declared, is an effort to cloak and negate the castration feelings by overriding them (Bryden & Grier, 2011).

These theories reduced the rapists responsibility for his actions since he was considered unable to control his pathological impulses (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Simply put, a woman's victimization was just a product of his pathology. Furthermore, rape was conceptualized primarily as an act of sex rather than violence and rapists were considered more as deviants than as criminals (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992).

### 2.4.2. Perpetrators as a product of evolution

Other scholars conducted research on genetic causes of conduct and this type of research began when several scientists laid the foundations of an evolutionary understanding of the mind (Bryden & Grier, 2011). Exploration of rape in nonhuman animals and a wider application of evolutionary principles to human behaviour have generated an alternative evolutionary view of rape as a potentially adaptive rather than a necessarily pathological act (Shields & Shields, 1983).

An evolutionary psychology approach to the study of the human mind and human nature claims that millions of years of evolution provided specific environmental challenges that have resulted in specific cognitive mechanisms to meet those challenges through the processes of natural selection and sexual selection (Ellis, 1989; Thornhill & Palmer, 2001). Thus, our minds and their information-processing mechanisms are just as much products of the evolutionary process as our bodies (Ellis, 1989; Shields & Shields, 1983; Thornhill & Palmer, 2001; Ward & Siegert, 2002). Thornhill and Palmer (2001) argue for an evolutionary theory of rape on the grounds that human beings are essentially animals and part of the natural world. Therefore, they conclude that all human traits and behaviours are likely to be a product of natural processes and subject to naturalistic and scientific explanation. Since sexual coercion is a human activity, it should be explained naturalistically and given the prominence of evolutionary theory, in terms of natural selection (Thornhill & Palmer, 2001).

It has been theorised that certain behaviours (called "adaptive") were conducive to individual reproductive success over our evolutionary time span (Bryden & Grier, 2011). Because those who engage in adaptive behaviours were by definition more likely to pass on their genes, a tendency toward such behaviours eventually became innate (Bryden & Grier, 2011; Thornhill & Palmer, 2001). Furthermore, reproductive differences between men and women led to different psychological adaptations (Thornhill & Palmer, 2001). For men, the minimum investment necessary for reproductive success- a brief copulation- was exceedingly slight and as a result, a man's genes were most likely to multiply if he was promiscuous, casually mating with many fertile partners (Ellis, 1989). That is why an ability to enjoy impersonal sex became part of men's natures, along with a preference for youthful (fertile) mates (Ellis, 1989; Shields & Shields, 1983; Thornhill & Palmer, 2001). In females, the genetic logic supposedly created different tendencies. While men can sire thousands of offspring in a lifetime, women can produce much less so their genes gained much less advantage from promiscuity (Bryden & Grier, 2011; Ellis, 1989). If only because of pregnancy and nursing, the minimum cost to a woman of having a child is much higher than to a man (Shields & Shields, 1983; Thornhill & Palmer, 2001). For females the adaptive strategy was to choose mates carefully, seeking men who would assist the mother and child through enduring commitments and provision of resources (Ellis, 1989). As a result, women evolved to be more reserved and selective in the choices of mates (Bryden & Grier, 2011).

Essentially, evolutionary theorists consider aggressive copulatory tactics as an extreme response to natural selection pressure for males generally to be more assertive than females in their attempts to copulate (Thornhill & Palmer, 2001). However, because forced copulations reduce the ability of females to confine coitus primarily to males who will help care for offspring that they produce, females should have evolved strong tendencies to avoid or resist forced copulation (Ellis, 1989). This notion reinforces the real rape myth- it is not rape if she didn't fight (Estrich, 1986).

Evolutionary theories can be problematic because they view rape as inevitable- a product of biology (Thornhill & Palmer, 2001); as sex for reproduction purposes (Ellis, 1989); they draw on widespread notions of sex roles (Burt, 1980); and they ignore sexual violence as a social issue. Evolutionary understandings of sexual violence suggest the inevitability of violent heterosexuality which underpins rape supportive beliefs.

### 2.4.3. Perpetrators' cognitive distortions

In theories of sex offending, there is also a growing emphasis on the role of cognitive distortions in the commission of offences (Abel *et al.*, 1984; Murphy, 1990 as cited in Lea & Auburn, 2001;Ward, Hudson, Johnston, & Marshall, 1997). Abel and colleagues are widely accepted as the first researchers to use the term cognitive distortions in the context of sexual offending (Abel *et al.*, 1984; Ciardha & Ward, 2013). Abel *et al.*, (1984) pioneered an important hypothesis that child molesters and other sexual offenders hold unusual beliefs that separate them from non-sexual offenders. They described these beliefs as 'cognitive distortions' which suggested that sexual offenders hold some degree of cognitive pathology leading them to severely distort social information (Abel *et al.*, 1984). According to Abel *et al.*, (1984), cognitive distortions are beliefs that individuals have developed as a result of a mismatch between their (deviant) sexual interests and their perceptions of societal norms. In later work, Abel, Gore, Holland and Camp (1989 as cited in Ciardha & Ward, 2013) explicitly incorporated justifications, perceptions, and judgements used to rationalize offending behaviour in their definition. Since these seminal works, a number of authors have adapted and expanded the scope of the term considerably (Ciardha & Ward, 2013).

Significantly, men convicted of sex offences were often identified as 'holding' such beliefs more strongly than other groups in society (Feild, 1978). A further development of this approach was to equate the endorsement of such beliefs with cognitive distortions which in turn led to the development of psychometric instruments which could be used specifically to assess sex offenders (Auburn & Lea, 2003). Such studies/instruments typically ask rapists and nonrapists to rate their agreement with a range of beliefs deemed to be rape supportive (Blake & Gannon, 2010). An important assumption of this approach was that cognitive distortions were a 'property' of the person expressing the belief and were also causally implicated in the commission of that persons offence (Auburn & Lea, 2003). However, research using this method has been disappointing as it was found that rapists could not be differentiated from other offenders as well as community controls (Harmon, Owens, & Dewey, 1995; Polaschek & Gannon, 2004; Sattem, Savells, & Murray, 1984; Segal & Stermac, 1984). It was further argued that this kind of research focuses on measurement of surface cognitions at the expense of developing an understanding of the underlying architecture responsible for generating and organizing them (Polaschek & Gannon, 2004; Polaschek & Ward, 2002; Ward *et al.*, 1997; Ward & Keenan, 1999).

Ward and colleagues sought to rectify this deficit by suggesting that schemata (organized patterns of thought) should be considered as causal theories that interact with personal experiences to form coherent structures that help to both explain and predict our own and others' behaviour (Ward *et al.*, 1997; Ward & Keenan, 1999). Terming these theories *implicit theories (ITs)*, Ward and his colleagues began to examine the possibility that sexual offenders hold schemas that may explain their offending behaviour (Polaschek & Ward, 2002; Ward & Keenan, 1999). Here, the term *implicit* refers to an unconscious process that takes place largely outside of an individual's awareness (Blake & Gannon, 2010).

Polaschek and Ward (2002) speculated about implicit theories that may guide rapists' interactions with their victims. To aid in the construction of rape-supportive implicit theories, Polaschek and Ward (2002) reviewed a variety of scales and research sources of attitudinal statements that have been found to be endorsed by rapists. The scales and sources were Bumby's (1996) Rape scale, Burt's (1980) Adversarial Sexual Beliefs scale, Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence scale, and Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, Check *et al.*'s (1985) Hostility Towards Woman scale, Larsen and Long's (1988) General Attitudes Towards Rape scale, Nichols and Molinder's (1984) rape scale from the Multiphasic Sex Inventory, and Young and Thiessen's (1992) Texas Rape Scale (Polaschek & Ward, 2002). By taking into account the numerous distortions contained in these sources and by analyzing them for common themes, they arrived at five implicit theories (Polaschek & Ward, 2002): women are unknowable/dangerous; women are sex objects; male sex drive is uncontrollable; entitlement and; dangerous world theory. Soon after these implicit theories were constructed and outlined, Polaschek and Gannon (2004) found evidence for these five theories in offense process descriptions generated from interviews with imprisoned rapists. Polaschek and Gannon (2004) explain that when rapists talk about their offending, they often reveal fascinating aspects of their world views. Intuitively, these perceptions of the world seem related, perhaps, causally, to their sexually assaultive behaviour. Polaschek and Gannon (2004) claim to have found that rapists usually provide insight into their beliefs and perceptions whether or not they admit that their sexual behaviour was criminal in nature. According to Polaschek and Gannon (2004), talking to offenders, or rather, listening to them provides frequent observations of perceptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs that seem obviously offense supportive. As with rape supportive cognitive distortions, it is important to note that some of the implicit theories that have been found to be used by rapists may also be held by non-offending members of the community, both men and women (Polaschek & Gannon, 2004).

From the perspective of cognitive distortions and implicit theories, the cause of rape is located in an internal psychological state rather than in the unequal gendering of society (Lea, 2007). However, cognitive distortions and implicit theories overlap, in content and function, with feminist and discursive notions of rape myths. Thus, these beliefs or cognitions can be relocated from the internal and individual, and located in the realm of social practices and discourses used to constitute understandings of the social problem of sexual violence.

### 2.4.4. Perpetrators excusing themselves

The social learning theory of rape explores the dimensions by which sex and rape become socially scripted behaviour that further contributes to the pervasive rape culture (Deming, 2009). This theory proposes that individuals are taught, through the socialization process, the appropriate actions for their genders regarding their expected behaviours in society and that gender-based violence is normative (Ellis, 1989). It is proposed that frequent and repeated displays of violence towards women through gendered aggression, mass media, and the adherence to rape myths produces a tolerance where these acts of violence are deemed as less offensive due to repeated exposure (Ellis 1989).

Scully and Marolla (1984) view rape as behaviour learned socially through interaction with others; convicted rapists have learned the attitudes and actions consistent with sexual aggression against women. Learning also includes the acquisition of culturally derived vocabularies of motive, which can be used to reduce responsibility and to negotiate a non-deviant identity (Scully & Marolla, 1984).

According to Scully and Marolla (1984), it has long been noted that people can, and do, commit acts they define as wrong and, having done so, engage in various techniques to deny deviance and present themselves as normal. Through the concept of "vocabulary of motive", Scully and Marolla (1984) cite Mills (1940) as among the first to shed light upon this seemingly perplexing contradiction. Essentially, by anticipating the negative consequences of their behaviour, wrong-doers attempt to present the act in terms that are both culturally appropriate and acceptable (Scully & Marolla, 1984). In problematic situations, excuses and justifications are used to explain and remove culpability for an untoward act after it has been committed (Scully & Marolla, 1984). Scully and Marolla (1984) further explain that excuses admit the act was bad or inappropriate but deny full responsibility, often through appeals to accident, or biological drive, or through scapegoating. In contrast, justifications accept responsibility for the act but deny that it was wrong - that is, they show in this situation the act

was appropriate (Scully & Marolla, 1984). In essence it is the actor's attempt, through various means, to bring his or her conduct into alignment with culture.

Scully and Marolla (1984) did an analysis of interviews that they had conducted with a sample of incarcerated rapists. An analysis of their accounts demonstrated how it was possible for these convicted rapists to view themselves as non-rapists. When rapists' accounts were examined, a typology emerged that consisted of admitters and deniers. Admitters acknowledged that they had forced sexual acts on their victims and defined the behaviour as rape but attempted to excuse it or themselves. In contrast, deniers either eschewed sexual contact or all association with the victim, or admitted to sexual acts but did not define their behaviour as rape and further justified their actions (Scully & Marolla, 1984).

Scully and Marolla (1984) found that the first form of denial was buttressed by the cultural view of men as sexually masterful and women as coy but seductive. Injury was denied by portraying the victim as willing, even enthusiastic, or as politely resistant at first but eventually yielding to "relax and enjoy it" (p. 542). In these accounts, force appeared merely as a seductive technique. Scully and Marolla (1984) explain that rape was disclaimed: rather than harm the woman, the rapist had fulfilled her dreams. In the second form of denial, the victim was portrayed as the type of woman who "got what she deserved" (p. 542). It became evident that through attacks on the victim's sexual reputation and, to a lesser degree, her emotional state, deniers attempted to demonstrate that since the victim wasn't a "nice girl," they were not rapists (Scully & Marolla, 1984). Scully and Marolla (1984) also found that admitters accentuated their own use of alcohol and drugs as an excuse and deniers emphasized the victim's consumption in an effort to both discredit her and make her appear more responsible for the rape. It is important to remember that deniers did not invent these justifications. Rather, they reflect a belief system which has historically victimized women by promulgating the myth that women both enjoy and are responsible for their own rape (Scully & Marolla, 1984). Justifications and excuses are supported by the cultural view of women as sexual commodities, dehumanized and devoid of autonomy and dignity. In this sense, the sexual objectification of women must be understood as an important factor contributing to an environment that trivializes, neutralizes, and, perhaps, facilitates rape (Scully & Marolla, 1984).

### 2.4.5. Perpetrators of male/male rape

Research surrounding the concept of male/male sexual assault is sparse, especially regarding the perpetrators of the offence (Almond, McManus, & Ward, 2014). However, the little work that has

been done is divided into two schools of thought: that male sexual assault is predominately a homosexual encounter, and/or that male sexual assault is an expression of social dominance conducted by heterosexual offenders (Almond *et al.*, 2014; Groth & Birnbaum, 2013; Sivakumaran, 2005; Turchik & Edwards, 2012).

Groth and Birnbaum (2013) explain that in cases of male rape outside of prison, one might assume that the gender of the victim is an important and psychologically significant determinant of victim choice as compared to sexual assaults in institutional settings where there is no option in regard to the sex of the victim. It was apparent in the research done by Groth and Birnbaum (2013) that for the offender who rapes other men in prison, the assault may be a counterpart to his sexual offences against women in the community and that the selection of a male as his victim, to a significant extent, is situationally determined.

According to Groth and Birnbaum (2013), offenders who rape males in the community fall into two groups/categories/types. For the one category of offenders, the genders of their victims are not of special significance; their victims could be males and females (Groth & Birnbaum, 2013). This lack of discrimination would tend to suggest an undifferentiated or multisexual orientation (Groth & Birnbaum, 2013). The victim may symbolize what they want to control, punish and/or destroy-something they want to conquer and defeat and the sexual assault is an act of retaliation, of power and assertion of their strength or manhood (Groth & Birnbaum, 2013). The second category of offenders specifically target men. According to Groth and Birnbaum (2013), this is related to homosexuality; the selection of a male victim constitutes a counterpart to the selection of a female victim by a heterosexual rapist. It has also been said that men who are conflicted over and uncomfortable with their sexual attraction to and involvement with other men may target other men in their assaults as an expression of this unresolved aspect of their lives (Groth & Birnbaum, 2013). This is an reiteration of Groth and Burgess's (1980 as cited in Almond *et al.*, 2014) motivational components of male on male sexual assault: conquest and control; revenge and retaliation that are motivated by anger; sadism and degradation; and conflict and counteraction that involved issues of unresolved sexuality.

Hodge and Canter (1998 as cited in Almond *et al.*, 2014) also concluded that there are two distinct types of perpetrators of male/male sexual assault. First, there are those sexual assaults committed by heterosexual men in which the assailant is not victim specific and that all males are potentially victims. These assaults tend to be stranger attacks motivated by dominance and control, with no

sexual gratification involved (Hodge & Canter, 1998 as cited in Almond *et al.*, 2014). It is suggested that this need to control and humiliate the victim "may be further motivated by feelings of unresolved sexuality or gay hatred" (Almond *et al.*, 2014), drawing parallels with the assumptions of previously mentioned explanations by (Groth & Birnbaum, 2013). Second, there are those sexual assaults that are more likely to be committed by homosexual men, in which sexual gratification is a primary motivation for the attack (Hodge and Canter, 1998 as cited in Almond *et al.*, 2014). They concluded that the victim and the offender were more likely to have had previous social encounters and to have some form of established relationship.

That male/male sexual assault is an act associated with homosexuality is/has been reiterated by the medical discipline. Turchik and Edwards (2012) explain that medicine is an important institution as its members are responsible for the health of society's people and the transmission of medical information. Both historically and culturally, there have been aspects of medicine that promote the notion that male sexual assault is related to homosexuality and that homosexuality is a mental and physical disorder (Turchik & Edwards, 2012).

These understandings of the perpetration of male/male rape locate the motivation or cause of sexual violence as an internal psychological process. Furthermore, these explanations rely on characterising rape as linked to sexual orientation as opposed to power. For instance, Sivakumaran (2005) states not that male sexual assault is a homosexual act, but that part of the intention of the perpetrator in committing the assault may be to cast (negative) aspersions of homosexuality on the victim. Power is equated with masculinity and further equated with heterosexuality (Sivakumaran, 2005). When a man forces another man to commit acts typically associated with homosexuality, his intention is to 'taint' the victim with homosexuality, essentially stripping him of his power (Sivakumaran, 2005). It is further explained by Sivakumaran (2005) that men who are sexually assaulted are stripped of their social status as men. They are feminised; made to serve the function and play the role customarily assigned to women as men's social inferiors (Sivakumaran, 2005). The notion that a male victim of sexual assault has been stripped of his masculinity and has been made weak and effeminate, forms part of the intention of the perpetrator (Sivakumaran, 2005). Thus, according to Sivakumaran (2005), notions of power, dominance, and gender, which all play key roles in feminist analysis of male/female rape, also feature heavily in an analysis of male/male rape and, that even when rape appears to be motivated by sexuality, it is still an act of power.

2.4.6. Female perpetrators

Female sex offending is an under-researched area compared to male sexual offending (Beech, Parrett, Ward, & Fisher, 2009). However, the possibility of female sexual assault was recognized in academia as early as the 1980s (Finkelhor and Russell, 1984 as cited in Kramer, 2015).

The primary challenge in researching female sexual abusers is that, compared with their male counterparts, very few women that commit sexual crimes are actually convicted and sentenced making it difficult to access these women and their victims (Kramer, 2015). Additionally, as a result of ingrained and socialized beliefs that men are aggressors and women are victims, reports concerning female sexual assaults are often dismissed by police and mental health services (Brockman and Bluglass,1996 as cited in Kramer, 2015).

Those women that are apprehended and researched by the justice and mental health systems tend to have committed a sexual crime against a child and are most often an accomplice to a male offender (Beech *et al.*, 2009; Denov, 2001; Gannon, Rose, & Ward, 2008; Hayes & Carpenter, 2013; Kramer, 2015; Strickland, 2008). This does not necessarily indicate that women only act under the coercion of a male accomplice and that they only sexually abuse children, but rather that, given the conventional construction of the male aggressor and the female victim, women acting outside of this 'acceptable' framework for the female gender, are often ignored, dismissed or denied (Kramer, 2010). This is problematic as it results in research being conducted only on those female sexual abusers that have male accomplices and child victims, therefore narrowing the already constrained scope and range for describing female sex crime (Kramer, 2015).

While some studies claim that female sex abusers are a heterogeneous group (Gannon *et al.*, 2008; Sandler & Freeman, 2007) others have attempted to construct generalizable profiles, typologies and classifications (Higgs, Canavan, & Meyer, 1992; Vandiver & Kercher, 2004) in order to indicate any existing similarities across female sex abuser samples.

Over the last two decades, the traditional means of understanding female sexual assault has been to place the abuser into one of three categories. These categories originate from a study conducted by Mathews, Matthews and Speltz (1989 as cited in Kramer, 2015) whereby qualitative data from interviews conducted with 16 convicted American female sexual offenders were used inductively to develop typologies. The first category is the Lover/Teacher type who rarely inflicts physical harm and views herself as a sexual educator (Higgs *et al.*, 1992). Her victims are primarily male children

and adolescents (Vandiver & Kercher, 2004). Both prepubescent and adolescent male victims seldom view an incident of assault as traumatic and subsequently criminality in this category of abusers is often overlooked (Denov, 2001; Kramer, 2015). This lack of recognition is in line with the prevailing belief that sexual interaction with an older woman provides the ultimate educational experience (Sandler & Freeman, 2007). The second category is the Predisposed type. These women are regarded as arising from 'a long transgenerational familial history of sexual abuse [resulting in] intense feelings of worthlessness' (Higgs *et al.*, 1992, p.136). This type is described as very emotionally disturbed, psychotic or sociopathic (Travers, 1999 as cited in Kramer, 2015). Such pathologizing discourse is often used by the medico-legal system as a means to justify and rationalize female sexual assault crimes (Denov, 2001; Kramer, 2015). It also fails to recognize that there are cases where sexually violent women were raised in homes with positive emotional climates or come from families that have never been abusive (Bourke, 2007 as cited in Kramer, 2010). The third category encompasses the Male-Coerced type, which describes female sex abusers that act under the often abusive instruction of a male accomplice (Higgs *et al.*, 1992). In most of these cases the female abuser is romantically involved with or married to the male abuser and the victim is usually a family member or their own child (Vandiver & Kercher, 2004). While the majority of these relationships are described as abusive, there are cases where the female accomplice is an aggressive rather than a coerced participant (Vandiver, 2006). Either way this typology reinforces traditional sexual scripts which implicate females as passive or as victims of male sexual aggressors without considering the alternative (Denov, 2003). It also ensures that responsibility for the sexual abuse is placed on the male rather than the female accomplice and that the female abuser becomes the female victim (Bourke, 2007 as cited in Kramer, 2010). Consequently, the persons subjected to the sexual abuse are perceived exclusively as objects of male sex abuse (Kramer, 2015).

Significantly, none of the abovementioned typologies or theories of causation locate the responsibility for the crimes entirely within the abuser (Kramer, 2015). The fault seems to have an indirect frame of reference rather than the more direct one that is often applied to male abusers (Kramer, 2015). It appears that female sexual assault is likely to be justified according to a variety of aetiologies whereas male sexual abusers are often simply understood as being unable to control their apparent natural tendency to be sexually aggressive (Denov, 2003). This is because of the way that heteronormative discourses consistently link masculinity with aggression and dominance, and femininity with passivity, submissiveness and vulnerability (Butler, 1993). This differential construction renders female perpetration of rape invisible or not harmful.

## 2.5. Sexual violence: a different angle

In previous sections, multiple explanations of the causes of rape were presented. These included that rape is a result of mental illness and psychological dysfunctions; that it is a process of natural selection and; that rapists hold distorted beliefs about the act of rape. Although these explanations may have some validity, to generalise these conclusions to all perpetrators of sexual violence is problematic because it perpetuates the rape myths that rape is about sex and rapists are sex-starved or insane (Burt, 1980). Such explanations can also provide comfort to men and women because they allow them to distance themselves and their own behaviours and experiences from the possibility of being victims or perpetrators of rape (Ryan, 2011). Drawing on feminist analyses of rape, Burt (1980) argued that rape myths play an important role in cultures that tolerate high rape prevalence, by creating a social climate that is hostile to rape victims and by denying the reality of many rapes.

Feminists refuted the long-held belief that rapists were men who were helplessly controlled by their overwhelming and deviant sexual impulses (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Rape is now recognized as an act of violence, not of sex as previously mentioned theories have held. Rape is a form of domination and control, a weapon used to "enforce women's subordinate role to men" (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992, p. 15). Furthermore, normative gender relations were argued to be thoroughly implicated in the maintenance and support of rape (Gavey, 2005). Within radical feminism, rape came to be seen not simply as an outcome of individual male deviancy, but as an act of gender terrorism (Gavey, 2005). Thus, sexual violence was redefined as a social problem. Social constructionism provides a perspective for exploring the social problem of sexual violence (Muehlenhard & Kimes, 1999).

Constructions of sexual violence have the power to label some acts negatively, while ignoring and, by implication, condoning other acts (Muehlenhard & Kimes, 1999). How sexual violence is constructed effects how people label, explain, evaluate, and assimilate their own experiences as well as the experience of others (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992; Gavey, 2005; Weiss, 2010). Furthermore, the social constructions of sexual violence convey numerous assumptions about power and coercion, sexuality and gender (Anderson & Doherty, 2007; Gavey, 2005; Lea & Auburn, 2001). Thus, from the beginning of the feminist discourse on rape, rape was framed as both an instance and example of larger patterns of gender inequality (Brownmiller, 1975; Chasteen, 2001). Many social scientists and other writers came to agree that rape was the endpoint on a continuum of heterosexual interactions where male aggression and female passivity are fundamental to the social construction of sexual violence (Gavey, 2005). Furthermore, social constructions of rape affects reactions to the

phenomenon for example, by denying the high prevalence of rape, positioning the victims as responsible, or normalizing some forms of coercion such as rape by intimates (Gavey, 2005). The following sections include an in-depth discussion on the social constructionist understandings of sexual violence which challenge the notion of the cause of rape as located within individual perpetrators and, discusses the social constructions of gender, sexuality and sex in relation to the construction of sexual violence.

### 2.5.1. Social constructionist understandings of the individual/perpetrator

It has been argued that in order to understand why perpetrators rape, one needs to look beyond the personality traits of individual rapists to the 'practical ideologies' that govern acts of rape (Lea & Auburn, 2001). As Parker (1992) has noted, the nature of individuals at any time flows not so much from their 'attitudes' or 'motivation' but from the overall ideological context. In other words, subjectivity, or a sense of self, is a 'socially constituted product' (Hollway, Venn, Walkerdine, Henriques, & Urwin, 2003) and is, therefore, inseparable from the social domain.

Mainstream psychology remains unable to transcend the individual-social dualism that remains at its core (Hollway *et al.*, 2003; Lea, 2007; Lea & Auburn, 2001). This form of dualism, according to Hollway *et al.* (2003), refers to the way in which the vital concepts of 'individual' and 'society' are theorized as two separate entities engaged in interaction with one another. In other words, the 'individual' and 'society' remain fundamentally separate, and no account is made of how the individual becomes social (Hollway *et al.*, 2003; Lea, 2007). As a result, mainstream psychological research remains unable to address 'the social component of psychological functioning' (Hollway *et al.*, 2003, p. 13).

Furthermore, conventional social psychological perspectives view individuals as unified rational subjects who have a core self that dons social roles (Weatherall, 2005). Alternatively, subjectivity (a sense of self) can be theorised as multiple, not purely rational and potentially contradictory. This latter view of identity and of subjectivity was initially proposed in Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn and Walkerdine's (1984 as cited in Hollway *et al.*, 2003) landmark critique of traditional psychology. The aim of the arguments put forward by Henriques *et al.* (1984) was to demonstrate how the individual-society dualism that functions at the heart of much of psychology reproduces and naturalises the idea of a rational self-contained self, freely choosing its life course. By rejecting the dualism, Henriques *et al.* (1984) wanted to point to the complexity of the relationship between the self and society in the production of identity and subjectivity (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). Particularly

influential on Henriques *et al.*'s (1984) work was Foucault's theoretical ideas about subjectivity being the product of discursive practices or epistemic regimes (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). According to this perspective, a sense of self emerges not from an inner core but out of a complex of historical, cultural positions in discourses. Identities are ascribed through positions in discourses. Individuals are seen to be located in and opting for a variety of different positions depending on the social, historical, political and economic aspects of their situations. Therefore, subjects are positioned within discursive practices (Weatherall, 2005). Hollway (1984 as cited in Hollway, 1989; Hollway *et al.*, 2003) applied these ideas to an analysis of how discourses of gender and sexuality position women and men in different ways. For example, Hollway illustrated how what she called a 'male sexual drive' discourse positioned men as sexual aggressors and women as sex objects (Hollway *et al.*, 2003) (These discourses will be discussed in more detail later). The notion of 'positioning' was also discussed by Davies and Harre (2001) as a replacement for the more conventional psychological concept of 'role' for understanding identity. Whereas the idea of role suggests a characteristic that is relatively fixed and unique to the individual, the idea of positioning captures the more dynamic and multiple locations that any one individual may inhabit during their lifetime. According to Davies & Harre (2001, p.263), positioning is the idea that:

> An individual emerges through the processes of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate. Accordingly, who one is always an open question with a shifting answer depending upon positions made available within one's own and others' discursive practices and within those practices, the stories through which we make sense of our own and others' lives.

The overall ideological context in which sexual violence is perpetrated is one in which various rape myths circulate freely (Lea & Auburn, 2001). These myths operate as 'practical ideologies' which are 'often contradictory and fragmentary complexes of notions, norms and models which guide conduct and allow for its justification and rationalization' (Wetherell, Stiven & Potter, 1987, p.60 as cited in Weatherall, 2005). Thus, it is argued that perpetrators of sexual violence draw on practical ideologies available in their language community in order to render their social action intelligible (Lea & Auburn, 2001). However, by theorizing them as individual 'attitudes' or perceptions they remain located at the level of the individual, and the social component of their formation is lost (Lea, 2007). By taking a social constructionist approach, it is possible to move beyond seeing the individual and society as locked into some form of interaction and to show how individuals and their attitudes, beliefs, values, as well as their rationales for acting in certain ways, are constituted through the social domain (Lea, 2007).

### 2.5.2. Social constructionist understandings of sexual violence

The theoretical battles over the social meaning of rape that have transpired since the early 1970s illustrate how social problems can be constructed and reconstructed in various public arenas (Chasteen, 2001). The reality of sexual violence is not new but the construction of this condition as a social problem is a relatively recent consequence of activist effort and ideological shifts (Chasteen, 2001).

Socially we are taught that sex is about pleasure and intimacy and, for the most part is okay. Rape, in contrast, is about violation and domination and, for the most part, is not okay (Baker, 1999). However, in some cases there is uncertainty on how to tell the difference. When a stranger with a weapon attacks a woman in the middle of the night and has intercourse with her, it is rape and everyone knows it. But when an acquaintance has sex with a woman who invited him into her house, or a husband forces his wife to have sexual intercourse, many people are confused about whether the event could be rape (Baker, 1999; Chasteen, 2001; Estrich, 1986). Captured in the societal discourses regarding 'real rape' are related assumptions of 'normal' and consensual sex, in which men's active sexual desire is situated against women's passive receptivity (Powell, Henry, Flynn, & Henderson, 2013). For instance, Gavey (2005) was interested in unpacking what could be called the scaffolding of rape, that is the discourses of sex and gender that produce forms of heterosex that set up the preconditions for rape – constructions of women's (a)sexuality as passive and acquiescing and men's heterosexuality as oriented towards the urgent pursuit of sexual "release". These constructions script a relational dynamic that authorizes sexual encounters that are not always clearly distinguishable from rape (Gavey, 2005). In this sense, it is about the construction of cultural norms and practices that support rape (Gavey, 2005).

Hollway *et al.* (2003) emphasise the importance of understanding how at a specific moment several coexisting and potentially contradictory discourses concerning gender and sexuality make different positions and powers available for men and women. According to Speer (2005), discourse is often gendered and it forms one of the primary means through which patriarchy and oppressive norms and social practices, such as sexual violence, are instantiated and reproduced. When we use discourse to communicate we 'naturalize' and perpetuate oppressive understandings of gender and 'gender role behaviour' (Speer, 2005). Speer (2005) further explains that these understandings become deeply ingrained in our commonsense views about the world, and become regarded as normative and expected.

### 2.5.3. Gender as a social construct

As mentioned, rape/sexual violence has been reframed as both an instance and example of larger patterns of gender inequality that exist in the social domain (Brownmiller, 1975; Chasteen, 2001). Thus, it is important to consider the social constructions of gender and sexuality, and how these constructions are implicated in the maintenance and support of rape.

The distinction between sex as biological and gender as social was, and continues to be, important in challenging arguments that use biology to rationalise and police people's lives (Weatherall, 2005). For instance, rape is viewed as inevitable- a product of biology- and from this perspective it is concluded that human traits and behaviours are likely to be a product of natural processes (Thornhill & Palmer, 2001). Thus, it is expected for males to be more sexually assertive than females in attempts to reproduce. From the perspective of biological determinism, any man or woman defying the natural order of things is deviant (Weatherall, 2005). However, it has been argued that roles such as housewife or man of the house, for instance, are viewed as the result of social learning rather than biology (Weatherall, 2005). Therefore, an argument is made that it is not biology, but social learning that limits what women and men think they can do. The social learning theory of rape proposes that individuals are taught, through the socialization process, the appropriate actions for their genders regarding their expected behaviours in society, and that sexual violence is normative (Ellis, 1989). A social learning explanation sometimes gets confused with social constructionism (Bohan, 1992 as cited in Weatherall, 2005). However, the two approaches are fundamentally different. Social learning approaches treat gender (norms, roles, speech styles, etc) as something that is acquired and becomes part of the internal psychological make-up of an individual (Weatherall, 2005).

Furthermore, the social learning argument construes gender as the social 'trimmings' of sex and it has been assumed that the social is malleable and less foundational than biological (Weatherall, 2005). Butler (2004) explains that for social constructionism; gender is something that is done, not something that is just acquired. Gender is produced by a complex, contradictory and fluctuating set of social norms, it does not reside in the psychological make-up of the individual (Weatherall, 2005). This approach to gender as discourse offers a radical critique of biological determinism and of the sex/gender distinction. Instead of viewing sex as primary and biological while gender is secondary and social, the order is reversed and the boundaries made less distinct (Weatherall, 2005). A constructionist view is that social and cultural beliefs are primary and cannot be separated from biological 'knowledge' and the meanings associated with the two gender categories unavoidably

obscure every aspect of thought, perception and behaviour (Weatherall, 2005). Furthermore, a social constructionist approach changes the focus from biological to the discursive as the prime site for understanding individuals, social groups and society. Discourses are an essential part of social life, and a central activity of social life is, of course, language and talk (Weatherall, 2005). Therefore, gender can be understood as a discourse because it is an integral part of social life that is produced through everyday language and talk.

According to feminist theory, gender inequality leads to the construction of sex role stereotypes or traditional gender roles that determine the appropriate social standards of behaviour for men and women (Burt, 1980). Prentice and Carranza (2002) use the masculine and feminine characteristics that appear on the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1981) to illustrate the differences in gender roles, at least as they existed in the early 1970s. Feminine characteristics are: affectionate, cheerful, childlike, compassionate, does not use harsh language, eager to soothe hurt feelings, feminine, gentle, gullible, loves children, loyal, sensitive to the needs of others, shy, soft-spoken, sympathetic, tender, understanding, warm, and yielding (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Masculine characteristics are: acts as a leader, aggressive, ambitious, analytical, assertive, athletic, competitive, defends own beliefs, dominant, forceful, has leadership abilities, independent, individualistic, makes decisions easily, masculine, self-reliant, self-sufficient, strong personality, willing to take a stand, and willing to take risks (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Traditional gender roles maintain gender disparities by reinforcing the patriarchal practice of the masculine, aggressive male and the passive obsequious female (King & Roberts, 2011). These roles place the man in the role of the protector of the naive, defenceless woman and as the punisher of the "bad woman who falls from the metaphorical pedestal of virtuosity" (King & Roberts, 2011, p. 2).

Furthermore, gendered stereotypes assume that male sexual aggression is a natural and apparently hard-to-restrain part of men's genetic make-up (Weiss, 2009). Thus, it is deemed acceptable for a man to persist with sex if a woman has aroused him because it is assumed that men are unable to stop once their sexual drives have been set into motion (Weiss, 2009). As women are constructed as inferior to men, women then are assumed to exist as sexual objects in response to male sexual aggression (Donaldson, 1993). Sivakumaran (2005) and Whitehead (2005) argue that masculinity and femininity are not truly bipolar opposites. The power dynamic theory behind rape considers that there is a hierarchy of power in society, with men placed at the top and women at the bottom (Sivakumaran, 2005). The power dynamic reason has been explicitly recognized in cases of women being raped by men (Brownmiller, 1975; Sivakumaran, 2005). Accordingly, rape is an act of

dominance over women that works systematically to maintain a gender-stratified society in which women occupy a disadvantaged status as the appropriate victims and targets of sexual aggression (Brownmiller, 1975; Chasteen, 2001; Sivakumaran, 2005). Therefore, not only does the patriarchal nature of society contribute to gender inequality and sex role stereotyping, but also to the continued occurrence and rationalization of sexual violence (Brownmiller, 1975; Burt, 1980; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994).

### 2.5.4. Normative heterosexuality in relation to sexual violence

Hegemonic constructions of gender prescribe conformity with the heterosexual matrix (Gear, 2007). Key features of this matrix are that it defines gender into categories that exist in opposition to each other (manhood versus womanhood) and in hierarchal relation to each other (manhood holds the pivotal position) (Gear, 2007). Individuals are required, within this framework, to fulfil a stable gender role that expresses a stable (heterosexual) sex in the compulsory practice of heterosexuality. Sexuality and gender are therefore made dependent on each other. At the same time, each category's difference to its 'other' becomes an essential component of its being (Gear, 2007). In other words, the matrix is a regime that requires one either to be a 'man' (a heterosexual male) or a 'woman' (a heterosexual female) (Gear, 2007). Social constructions of gender, equating male sexuality with competition and conquest, and linking female sexuality with passivity and restraint, blur definitional boundaries between rape and normal heterosexual behaviour (Weiss, 2009).

Hollway (1989) explores gender differentiation in discourses by taking the example of women's and men's different positions in discourses concerning sexuality. She focuses on individual women's and men's subjectivity, that is the product of their history of positioning in discourses, and the way this constructs their investments in taking up gender-differentiated positions in heterosexual relations (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). She also considers the multiple meanings, deriving from discourses which produce the practices of heterosexual sex (Hollway *et al.*, 2003).

The male sexual drive discourse represents one dominant construction of heterosexuality (Hollway, 1984a as cited in Beres, 2014). Within the male sexual drive discourse heterosexuality is constructed as driven by men's insatiable sexual desires and urges (Beres, 2014). Its key tenet is that men's sexuality is directly produced by a biological drive, the function of which is to ensure reproduction of species (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). The discourse is everywhere in common-sense assumptions and is reproduced and legitimized by experts (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). The male sexual drive discourse relies on the more general claim that sex is natural and not mediated socially, but in practice this applies

only to men's sexuality (Hollway, 1989). Women's sexuality, if it is not seen as an absence in contrast to the presence of the male sexual drive, is seen as governed by the biological need to reproduce, rather than to have sex (Hollway, 1989). Within this discourse, there is a space for male desired and initiated sex. However, space for female desired and initiated sex is not available (Beres, 2014).

Another discourse relating to the doing of heterosexuality is the have/hold discourse which plays an important role in shaping women's sexuality in relation to men (Hollway, 1989). Within the terms of this discourse, women are seen as asexual beings for whom sex is a means to an end- that is monogamy, intimacy, partnership, and family life (Gavey, 2005; Hollway, 1989). Here, sex is constructed as essential to emotional connectedness and the maintenance of relationships (Frith, 2015). Underneath the insistence on women's asexuality within this discourse is the belief that their sexuality is rabid and dangerous and must be controlled. The implication is that women's sexuality is inevitable and dangerous, and the only way to preserve family honour is the total subservience of women to male control (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). The have/hold discourse is commonly evoked to produce required norms of conduct for women (Hollway, 1989).

Since at least the 1970s, women's rights to sexual pleasure have been staunchly argued and reiterated in the popular realm (Gavey, 2005). Hollway's permissive discourse, which is the offspring of the male sexual drive discourse, assumes that sexuality is entirely natural and therefore should not be repressed and, takes the individual as the locus of sexuality, rather than looking at it in terms of a relationship (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). This discourse offers an anything goes approach to heterosexual sex in which freedom of sexual expression is taken as a right for both women and men as long as it is consensual and without harm (Frith, 2015). Thus, women are assumed to be equally sexual, with 'natural' drives and urges just like men (Hollway, 1989), and are increasingly depicted as having a sexuality that is active, desiring and seeking sexual pleasure (McKenzie-Mohr & Lafrance, 2014).

Discourses make available positions for subjects to take up (Hollway, 1989). These positions are in relation to other people. Like the subject and object of a sentence, women and men are placed in relation to each other through the meanings which a particular discourse makes available (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). Because traditional discourses concerning sexuality are gender-differentiated, taking up subject or object positions is not equally available to men and women. The same applies to practices understandable in terms of gender-differentiated discourses (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). Hollway (1989) describes how the male sexual drive discourse and the have hold discourse work together, in highly

gender-differentiated ways to prescribe cultural forms of heterosexual sex and relationships. The male sexual drive discourse positions men as having an insatiable appetite for sex and motivated by physical pleasure, and women are positioned as passive and responsive, either acquiescing or resisting men's demands (Frith, 2015). This feeds into the myth that rapists are sex starved (Burt, 1980) and the Implicit theories claiming that the male sex drive is uncontrollable and that women are sex objects (Polaschek & Ward, 2002).

According to Scully and Marolla (1984), the sexual objectification of women trivializes and facilitates rape. Furthermore, because it is the women's role to receive or reject men's sexual advances, women "set the limits" on sex (Gavey, 2005). This notion mirrors the myth that a woman can resist rape if she really wanted to (Burt, 1980) and furthermore enables victims to be blamed for rape and perpetrators to deny any harm done (Scully & Marolla, 1984). The have/hold discourse positions men as wanting sex while women are positioned as motivated by desire for a relationship (Frith, 2015). In effect we end up with a double standard in which men are rewarded and praised for desiring and engaging in sexual contacts whereas women are derogated and stigmatized for similar behaviours (Hess, Menegatos, & Savage, 2015). This reinforces the idea that victims of sexual violence got what they deserved (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994) or that only bad girls get raped (Burt, 1980). Furthermore, love and intimacy represent socially approved ways for women to express sexual desire and pleasure however; discourses of romance and love serve to put women at a distance to their own bodies and their own physical pleasure while prioritising the sexual needs of men (Frith, 2015). Because women's pleasure is assumed to be of little or no importance, the idea of women as sex objects is reinforced and the harm of sexual violence is made invisible (Frith, 2015; Polaschek & Ward, 2002). Also, the sexual double standard excludes women from the possibility of sexual subjectivity based on erotic voices, bodies and sexual feelings (Costa, Nogueira, & López, 2009). Similarly, traditional constructions of female sexuality have been problematized as a risky positioning for women that denies them a positive and powerful sexual subjectivity and autonomy (McKenzie-Mohr & Lafrance, 2014).

Situated within a permissive discourse, both men and women are positioned as desiring sexual agents with the right to (casual) sex and sexual pleasure. However, based on an enduring sexual double standard, women's casual sex is still fraught with moral unease and cultural contradictions in which women are encouraged to be more sexually active in their sexuality, but still need to manage the fine line between being sexually liberated and 'slutty' (Beres & Farvid, 2010; Crawford & Popp, 2003). This variation in what is appropriate for female sexuality allows for victims of sexual violence to

either be blamed- that is, she asked for it by being 'slutty' (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994) or by being sexually liberated, she is denied as a victim because women should not complain about sexual violence. The sexual double standard invokes traditional discourses of heterosexuality to negatively construct women's desire for, and participation in what is socially, culturally or morally defined as 'too much' sex (Farvid, Braun, & Rowney, 2016).

Crawford and Popp (2003) concluded that while women now have greater sexual freedom than in the past, contemporary double standards still represent covert means of controlling women's sexuality by judging its expression more harshly than men's sexual expression is judged. Gavey (2005) explains the importance of recognizing that the changes that did occur in the direction of freeing women up to be sexual, have always been moderated by specific or cultural norms. Women have now been caught in a dilemma, where they are seen as either 'pure and virginal or promiscuous and easy' based on their perceived sexual conduct (Crawford & Popp, 2003). On the other hand, the call to being sexual has almost become a new imperative for women who may be deemed prudish or old fashioned if they are not always 'up for' sex (Gavey, 2005). It is no longer simply the case that women are expected to have sex when they do not want to, but within certain parameters they are expected to want it most of the time (Gavey, 2005). This makes sexual freedoms which have been bestowed upon women inherently difficult to embody and enact in everyday practice (Burkett & Hamilton, 2012; Gavey, 2005). Thus, the rape of women by men can be understood as located in normative patterns of heterosexuality; as a practice that is intimately connected to everyday forms of heterosexuality, and as something that is fundamental to men's oppression of women (Gavey, 2005).

Heteronormativity is the suite of cultural, legal, and institutional practices that maintain normative assumptions that there are only two genders, that gender reflects biological sex, and that only sexual attraction between those opposite genders is natural and acceptable (Bell & Perry, 2015). Institutionalized, normative heterosexuality regulates those kept within its boundaries and sanction those outside of them (Rich, 2005 as cited in Jackson, 2006). In this sense, sexual violence serves the interest of maintaining heteronormativity by punishing non-heterosexual sexualities (Ochse, 2011).

### 2.5.5. Sexual violence: reinforcing heteronormativity and punishing 'deviance'

Heterosexuality is considered to be the outcome of a normal and healthy psychosexual development, while same sex sexuality tends to be considered a pathological divergence from the supposed norm. According to Ochse (2011) the consequence of thinking within such binary labels has led to heterosexuality becoming privileged over same sex sexuality. It is further stated that heterosexism is

'the use of heterosexuality as the dominant and institutionalized form of sexual identity for dominance and privilege' (Ochse, 2011, p. 5). Punishment, in the Foucauldian sense, is often meted out to those who transcend dominant constructions of 'normal' heterosexuality (gay men, lesbian women, trans, independent women, vulnerable men etc) (Ferfolja, 2008). So called "transgressive" sexual and gendered subjectivities challenge dominant constructions of gender and sexuality, for example women's dependence on men; heterosexual normativity; and power relations inherent in the male-female binary relationship (Ferfolja, 2008). As a result of this social non-compliance, individuals who inhabit such subjectivities are often constructed as deviant, abnormal or sick (Ferfolja, 2008). This seemingly legitimizes harassment, abuse and/or other forms of social regulation, which simultaneously police the gendered and sexual behaviours of those who witness such punishment (Ferfolja, 2008). Therefore, one should examine the discursive constructions of gender and sexuality, in relation to the way rape is used as a disciplinary mechanism for non-normative sexuality (Morrissey, 2013).

Curious about the ways that power and discipline were executed within society, Foucault (1995) developed a theory suggesting the ways in which power is executed and by whom. As he articulated, changing public punishment and reducing the demonstrative spectacle of the scaffold were accompanied by friends, neighbours and family members exercising discipline among one another (Foucault, 1995). Foucault (1995) argued that this new form of communal discipline was even more effective than the state's performance of public punishment because it led to greater maintenance and control of the population, ultimately producing "subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies" (p.138) that could be more easily moulded to fit the needs of the state and other governing entities (Morrissey, 2013). In this way, a culture of specifically selected qualities and characteristics developed, and anyone deviating from these standards was subject to scrutiny from both the government and their neighbours (Morrissey, 2013).

Foucault's work suggests that the effects of power are not simply repressive / disciplinary (in the sense of regulatory and/or punitive), but productive as well (Henderson, 2007). Foucault (1995) chronicles the emergence of the "norm" and its replacement of the "law" as the primary instrument of modern social control (p.183). Foucault (1995) suggests that the production of a norm behaviour (which classifies individuals along a spectrum of normalcy versus degeneracy) individualizes populations and leads to the development of a multitude of specialist and disciplinary knowledges and practices, aimed at surveilling and maintaining the idea of the norm (upon which they are supposedly based). Foucault (1978) explained that certain human behaviours warranted greater

degrees of social control and in this way, sexual desire became something to be regulated, and deviations from what became the norm were subjected to various forms of discipline.

Seeing rape as a tool to discipline non-normative sexuality expands the conditions under which we understand rape functioning; rape reinforces normativity and punishes 'deviance' (Morrissey, 2013). Fixed in heterosexism is gender and gender roles that are viewed as naturally masculine or feminine (Bell & Perry, 2015). 'Doing gender' involves interactions and activities that encourage others to identify us as male or female, that is, we demonstrate our gender by engaging in culturally approved behaviours that are perceived as either masculine or feminine (Bell & Perry, 2015). Therefore, LGBT people are understood to have deviated from the masculine and feminine behaviours that are natural to their assigned sex (Bell & Perry, 2015). Moreover, because LGBT people challenge the fundamental assumptions of what it is to be a man or a woman, they are seen to be doing gender inappropriately (Meyer, 2012). For this reason they are vulnerable to harassment and punishment (Cowan, Heiple, Marquez, Khatchadourian, & McNevin, 2005; Lombardi, Wilchins, Priesing, & Malouf, 2002; Witten & Eyler, 1999). Sexual violence against LGBT people has been characterized as a hate crime (Bell & Perry, 2015; Cowan *et al.*, 2005). According to Bell and Perry (2015), the term hate crimes in legal speak generally refers to a criminal offense committed against a person that is motivated by bias or prejudice against race, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability. However, this understanding suggests that hate crimes are individual responses to difference rather than violent acts that take place in the social and political context of structural inequality and hierarchies of power (Perry, 2001 in Bell & Perry, 2015). They do not recognise bias as acts being perpetuated by social arrangements that foster competition for privilege and allow minority groups to be marginalised, stigmatized and oppressed (Bell & Perry, 2015). Perry (2001 in Bell & Perry, 2015, p. 10) defines hate crime as:

> Acts of violence and intimidation usually directed toward already stigmatized and marginalized groups. As such, hate crime is a mechanism of power and oppression, intended to reaffirm the precarious hierarchies that characterize a given social order. It attempts to re-create simultaneously the threatened (real or imagined) hegemony of the perpetrators group and the 'appropriate' subordinate identity of the victims groups.

Thus, such crimes cannot be properly understood separated from the social and cultural arrangements that perpetuate normative heterosexuality and heterosexism (Bell & Perry, 2015) . Furthermore, these crimes are not responses to individual difference but are intended to intimidate those who identify with one or more of the victims characteristics. Therefore, the threat of sexual violence

functions to punish 'deviant' sexualities and, has productive effects in terms of disciplining subjectivities (Meyer, 2012).

Ferfolja (2008) examined the way lesbian identities are silenced through anti-lesbian harassment. She found that the 'lesbian' was reduced to and defined by her sexual subjectivity where all other aspects of her identity are ignored, and moreover where her sexuality is read as deviant and based on personal pleasure and gratification instead of heterosexual procreation (Ferfolja, 2008). Indeed lesbians are perceived to threaten the nuclear family. Also, discriminatory discourses continue to prevail about non-heterosexual people, and are manifested in popular mythologies constructing them as sexually deviant, voraciously hypersexual, and sexual recruiters of others, particularly minors (Ferfolja, 2008). The struggles lesbians face are thus not only internal conflicts, but are also entangled with broader norms of society (Ochse, 2011). Family, friends and religion can be sources of conflict if they mirror heterosexist ideologies and are thus opposed to same sex sexuality. Therefore, the powerlessness of lesbians in a patriarchal society effects their lives in many different spheres, such as their family life, work environment and social gatherings- in fact, any heterosexual space in which they find themselves (Ochse, 2011). Accordingly, Herek (1990 as cited Bartle, 2000) explains that sexual violence against lesbians is an extension of the heterosexism that pervades our society.

Also relevant is the notion of feminising or emasculating victims of male/male rape. Just as men benefit from the subordination of women, so too do some men profit from the subordination of other groups of men (Bell & Perry, 2015). Thus, beneath a hegemonic masculinity are a series of subordinated masculinises, where at the bottom are homosexuals, such that both masculinity and heterosexuality is privileged (Connell, 1995 as cited in Bell & Perry, 2015). According to Light and Monk-Turner (2009), Sivakumaran (2005), and White and Yamawaki (2009), men who are sexually assaulted are thereby stripped of their social status as men, they are feminized: made to serve the function and play the role customarily assigned to women as men's social inferiors. For a man to be sexually attacked, lowers his status, making him inferior as a man by social standards. Furthermore, it places him in a woman's role. Significant in this understanding is the recognition of the ways in which femininity is equated with something value-less. Thus power is equated with masculinity, and by masculinity one is referring to heterosexuality (Sivakumaran, 2005) and as a result, gay male respondents regularly perceived their violent experiences as a masculinity contest, with heterosexual men trying to impose notions of weakness onto them (Meyer, 2012). Gear (2007) explains that

masculinity is 'precariously' achieved by constantly warding off its threats, specifically by rejecting femininity and homosexuality.

This helps to explain dominant responses to male rape as it brings to mind notions of both femininity (vulnerability is constructed within dominant notions of gender as a fundamental facet of femininity), and homosexuality (sexual contact with another man - even unwanted - is associated with homosexuality) (Gear, 2007). This linkage therefore demolishes a male victim's claims to 'manhood' (a notion built on the belief that 'real men cannot get raped'). Male rape can also be considered one form of what Whitehead, (2005) conceptualized as 'exclusive' violence- violence perceived to function by 'excluding the male victim from the category "man" as unworthy of belonging there' and often characterised by sexual humiliation (p. 417). By negating the victim's masculinity, and positioning him as a 'non-man', the violence affirms the masculinity of the perpetrator (Whitehead, 2005). The 'non-man' is so defined because of his failure to meet the key qualifications of masculinity (Gear, 2007; Whitehead, 2005). Sexual violence serves to punish the homosexual man by further reinforcing male heterosexuality. On the other hand, another way in which heteronormativity is reinforced is by the convergence of discourses of male sexuality as ever-present and driven (Hollway, 1989), and discourses of masculinity that portray men as in control and invulnerable (Sleath & Bull, 2010). This convergence denies the possibilities that sex could be unwanted by men, or even that men could be vulnerable to being pressured into sex against their will (Braun, Gavey, & McPhillips, 2003; Davies & Rogers, 2006; Sleath & Bull, 2010). These kinds of experiences can be thought of within a broad understanding of sexual coercion, as arising from pressures and obligations produced through restrictive and prescriptive cultural norms including dominant discursive constructions around masculinity and male sexuality (Braun, Schmidt, Gavey, & Fenaughty, 2009).

Transgendered people are also considered as those who do not follow traditional gender norms and at various times in their lives become the focus of attention of people who are invested in enforcing gender norms (Lombardi *et al.*, 2002). According to Witten and Eyler (1999), distinguishing the motivation behind sexual violence against transgendered people is complicated by the intersection between misogyny and hatred of persons whose existence challenges male supremacy and the gender dichotomy that is its underpinning. For example, a male to female transgender may be victimized as a woman targeted because of anti-female hatred or as a perceived effeminate, homosexual male (Witten & Eyler, 1999). Thus, it is argued that sexual violence against transgendered persons represents a form of gender terrorism whose underlying motivation is the maintenance of the social

system in which males dominate females through emotional, verbal and physical acts of force, and in which the line between the genders must be rigidly maintained in support of this social schema (Lombardi *et al.*, 2002; Witten & Eyler, 1999). Perpetrators of violence against transgendered people often believe that a person who transgresses the norms of gendered sexuality either by, engaging in sexual relationships with members of the 'non-opposite' gender, or by behaving as the other gender, is deviant or morally defective, and thus a deserving victim of sexual violence (Witten & Eyler, 1999).

Discriminations of non-heterosexuals results in an environment in which covert if not overt permissions is given to society to 'punish' people for gender transgressions (Lombardi *et al.*, 2002). Similarly, according to Herek (1992 in Cowan *et al.*, 2005), heterosexism is the contextual factor that supports and maintains sexual violence against LGBT people. Not all heterosexists are likely to commit sexual violence against LGBT people, but heterosexist attitudes provide a social climate that condones and minimizes sexual violence against them (Cowan *et al.*, 2005).

### 2.6. Concluding remarks

The social constructionist understandings of gender and sexuality and sexual violence provide a challenge to the notion that the problem of rape is rooted in the individual. For instance, as illustrated, and in line with Gavey's (2005) argument, normative forms of heterosexuality work as a cultural scaffolding for rape. This is not to say that these normative forms of sex are rape, or that they are the same as rape but rather it is argued that the problem lies in the way that normative heterosex is patterned or scripted in ways that permit far too much ambiguity over distinctions between what is rape and what is just sex (Gavey, 2005). Furthermore, the pervasive nature of heteronormativity and heterosexism provides the context that supports and maintains sexual violence against LGBT people. In this sense, sexual violence is a tool to discipline non-normative sexuality and gender by reinforcing heteronormativity and punishing those who do not conform (Morrissey, 2013).

Thus, dominant discourses of gender and sexuality provide a framework of cultural norms for behaviour and offer a range of socially acceptable excuses and justifications that can be mobilised to legitimate an act of rape (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). This does not only allow the testimony and subjective experience of victims to be dismissed but also allows rapists themselves to mobilise socially condoned excuses and justifications for rape, and to act within these societal norms (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). However, the politics of discourse is not one-dimensional. Speer

(2005) argues that discourse can also be used to expose and 'denaturalize' commonsense understandings of gender and sexuality, and to challenge ideas which create and sustain sexist and heterosexist social practices. Accordingly, this research hopes to shed light upon the social processes that enable sexual violence to occur by deconstructing the talk of perpetrators. By studying the talk of sexual violence perpetrators, and by exploring how dominant discourses of gender, sexuality and rape are created or resisted in discourse, we can acquire knowledge that can be used to inform social change for the better (Speer, 2005).

The following chapter will explain my methodology and how my research was carried out. This includes a comprehensive discussion on the social constructionist paradigm and discourse analysis as theory and method. Following this is a description of the data used as well as the collection thereof. I then explain how I went about analysing my data. I also discuss the necessary steps taken in order to ensure the credibility of research such as dependability and trustworthiness. There is also a brief overview of the ethical considerations relating to my study.

# Chapter 3: Methodology

## 3.1. Research paradigm

This research is situated within a qualitative social constructionist paradigm. Qualitative research is rooted in a philosophy of knowledge that challenges quantitative, positivist approaches to knowledge development within social sciences (Elliott, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999). The aim of qualitative research is to understand and represent the experiences and actions of people as they encounter, engage, and live through situations (Elliott *et al.*, 1999). Willig (2001) further explains that the focus of qualitative inquiry is on how people make sense of the world and how they experience events in naturally occurring settings. Elliot (1995 as cited in Elliott *et al.*, 1999) has taken the position that qualitative research lends itself to understanding participants' perspectives, to defining phenomena in terms of experienced meanings and observed variations, and to developing theory from field work. The central purpose of qualitative approaches is to contribute to a process of revision and enrichment of understanding, rather than to verify earlier conclusions or identify cause-effect relationships (Elliott *et al.*, 1999; Willig, 2001). Simply put, the objective is not to predict, but rather to describe and explain events and experiences (Willig, 2001).

Social constructionism can be understood as a postmodern theoretical orientation (Willig, 2008). This means that social constructionists adopt a critical stance towards assumptions and knowledge about the world (Burr, 1994). Burr (1994) explains that all ways of understanding are seen as historically and culturally relative. Thus, knowledge is specific to and the product of particular cultures and periods of history (Burr, 1994). Knowledge is constructed through social interactions and social processes and this constructed nature of knowledge means that there can be several ways of understanding the world (Burr, 1994). Therefore, as Burr (1994) explains, we can talk of numerous possible social constructions of the world and each construction brings with it a different kind of action from human beings. Constructions of the world then sustain some patterns of social action and exclude others (Burr, 1994).

Social constructionist research looks at the constitutive nature of language and is aimed at identifying the numerous available constructions of social reality in a given culture (Willig, 2001). It also looks at how these constructions are used, and what the implications might be for human experience and social practice (Willig, 2001). Parker (2004) explains that language renders objects and events

"thinkable and understandable" in the sense that they are given shape and meaning so that we can hold onto our sense of what is happening (p. 157).

Burr (1998) describes the concept of 'constructive alternativism' which is the idea that there are a potentially infinite number of alternative constructions of reality (p. 13). The focus is therefore not on some objective reality but upon the different meanings with which our worlds become invested (Burr, 1998). If what we take ourselves and others to be are constructions and not objective descriptions, then social categories such as race, gender, and sexuality are taken as human constructions, not fixed and naturally occurring. Thus, in principle it should be possible to re-construct categories, and critically examine those that construct people in oppressive and limiting ways (Burr, 1998). Discourse analysis, the research approach that will be used, is underpinned by social constructionism. It will be used to interpret, analyse and point out discourses around the phenomena being studied (Bryman, 2012).

### 3.2. Discourse analysis as theory and method

Discourse, in general terms, refers to actual practices of talking and writing (Woodilla, 1998 as cited in Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Phillips and Hardy's (2002) use of the term is more specific. They define a discourse as "an interrelated set of texts, and the practices of their production, dissemination, and reception that brings an object into being" (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p.3). This means that social reality is produced and made real through discourses (Parker, 2014; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Thus, language is not merely a tool for description and medium of communication; it is a social practice, a way of doing things (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Parker (2014) argues that discourses allow for things that are not 'really' there to be seen and that once an object has been elaborated in a discourse it is difficult not to refer to it as if it were real. The task of a discourse analyst is to explore the relationship between discourse and reality (Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

Discourses are embodied and enacted in a variety of texts (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Texts may take a variety of forms including written texts, spoken words, pictures, symbols, artefacts and so forth (Parker, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Texts can thus be considered a discursive "unit" (Chalaby, 1996 as cited in Phillips & Hardy, 2002). However, texts are not meaningful individually; it is only through their interconnection with other texts, different discourses on which they draw, and the nature of their production, that they are made meaningful (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Discourses are shared and social, emerging from interaction between social groups and the complex societal structures in which discourse is embedded. Accordingly, to understand discourses and their effects,

there should also be an understanding of the context in which they arise (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Therefore it is important to make reference to the social context in which the texts are found and the discourses are produced. The connection between discourses and social reality that they constitute makes discourse analysis a powerful method for studying social phenomena (Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

Discourse analysis shares the concern of other qualitative approaches with the meaningfulness of social life but it attempts to provide a more profound interrogation of the precarious status of meaning (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Traditional qualitative approaches often assume a social world and then seek to understand the meaning of this world for participants (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Discourse analysis tries to explore how the socially produced ideas and objects that populate the world were created in the first place and how they are maintained and held in place overtime (Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Wood & Kroger, 2000). Thus, an important contribution of discourse analysis is that it examines how language constructs phenomena, not how it reflects it. In other words, discourse analysis views discourse as constitutive of the social world- not route to it- and assumes that the world cannot be known separately from discourse (Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Wood & Kroger, 2000).

Discourse analysis involves a number of assumptions that are important in their own right and as a foundation for doing discourse-analytic research (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Firstly, a discursive approach moves away from a distinction between talk and action to an emphasis on talk *as* action (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Secondly, it moves away from a view of talk as a route to internal or external events to an emphasis on talk as the event (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Thirdly, this approach moves away from a view of variability as an irregular feature of action to an appreciation of variability both within and between people (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). To better understand the nature of discourse, an elaboration of the key underlying assumptions is necessary.

### 3.2.1. Function

To appreciate the wider importance of language, language must be seen as action, but this is not always easy to do (Wood & Kroger, 2000). In part, this is because both social science and everyday discourse make a distinction between talk and action. Both systems privilege action and tend to down grade talk (actions speak louder than words) (Wood & Kroger, 2000). The emphasis in discourse analysis is on what talk is doing and achieving. Potter and Wetherell (1987) explain that talk has multiple functions such as to form requests, to persuade or accuse, to name a few. What a person is

doing with talk depends on the other persons involved and the circumstances (Wood & Kroger, 2000). The discourse analyst will look at discourse for what is being done, not primarily what it is about. Talk is action (Wood & Kroger, 2000); language has a performative function (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). More specifically, a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis (which will be discussed in more detail later) focuses on the constitutive role of discourse; how available discursive resources constitutes the social life and subjectivities of it participants (Willig, 2008; Wood & Kroger, 2000).

### 3.2.2. Construction

Construction refers to how accounts of events are discursively created drawing from linguistic resources (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). People use their language to construct versions of their social world. Construction also suggests active selection where some resources are included and others are not (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). However, it is not the assumption that constructions are always deliberate or intentional. Potter and Wetherell (1987) explain that it may be that the person providing the account is not consciously constructing, but a construction emerges as they try to describe or make sense of a phenomenon. Thus, all language, even language which passes as a simple description, is constructive and consequential (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). In terms of the Foucauldian approach, the focus is on how discourse *constructs* subjects and objects (Willig, 2008).

### 3.2.3. Variation

The third major assumption of the discursive perspective involves a recognition of variability as a feature of discourse (Wood & Kroger, 2000). According to Potter and Wetherell (1987), if talk is orientated to many different functions, then any examination of language will reveal considerable variations. Furthermore, talk constructs different versions of the world, variation is therefore expected between persons and within persons (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). For instance, the Foucauldian approach assumes there is no one 'world' that can be described and studied; rather, there are numerous versions, each of which is constructed through discourse and practice (Willig, 2008). Thus, a discourse analysis would include the identification of different constructed versions of events and would consider the different functions of these varying constructions (Wood & Kroger, 2000). The goal is to understand variation and to employ it for analytical purposes (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

### 3.3. Foucauldian discourse analysis

When looking at discourses, Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates (2001) identify as many as six different ways of doing discourse analysis. Two major versions are 'discursive psychology' and 'Foucauldian discourse analysis' (Willig, 2008). Discursive psychology has been used in research with the talk of convicted sex offenders (e.g. Lea, 2007; Lea & Auburn, 2001). Discursive psychology was inspired by ethnomethodology and conversation analysis and their interest in the negotiation of meaning in local interaction in everyday contexts (Willig, 2008). This approach explores what people do with language and it emphasizes the performative qualities of discourse. In other words, discursive psychology is primarily concerned with how people use discursive resources so that interpersonal and social objectives are achieved (Willig, 2008). Discursive psychologists look at how language is used for instance, to disclaim, rationalize, justify or blame (Willig, 2008). For example, a convicted sex offender emphasises the attractiveness of his victim in order to provide motivation for the attack and render his actions intelligible (Lea, 2007).

Foucauldian discourse analysis, on the other hand, explores the role of language in the constitution of social and psychological life (Willig, 2008). The focus here is on the availability of discursive resources within a culture and its implications for those who live within it (Willig, 2008). From a Foucauldian point of view, discourses facilitate and limit, enable and constrain what can be said by whom, where and when (Parker, 1992). Within this framework, discourses may be defined as 'sets of statements that construct objects and an array of subject positions' (Parker, 1992). These constructions in turn make available certain ways-of-seeing the world, and certain ways-of-being in the world (Willig, 2008).

Foucauldian discourse analysis is also concerned with the role of discourse in wider social processes of legitimation and power (Willig, 2008). Since discourses make available ways-of-seeing and ways-of-being, they are strongly implicated in the exercise of power. Dominant discourses favour those versions of social reality that legitimate existing power relations and structures (Willig, 2008). However, given that there are always a number of discourses surrounding an event, each offering an alternative view, each bringing with it different possibilities for action, it follows that alternative constructions or counter-discourses can, and do emerge (Burr, 1995).

Foucauldian discourse analysts also take a historical perspective. Discourses are located in history; the objects they refer to are objects constituted by earlier discourses (Parker, 1992). Thus, the

Foucauldian approach explores ways in which discourses have changed over time, and how this may have shaped historical subjectivities (Willig, 2008).

Unlike discursive psychology, which is primarily concerned with interpersonal communication, Foucauldian discourse analysis asks questions about the relationship between discourse and how people think or feel (subjectivity), what they may do (practices) and the material conditions within which such experiences may take place (Willig, 2008). For example, Hollway's (1989) identification of the 'male sexual drive discourse' serves to show how men and women are invited into different kinds of self-experience with different behavioural implications (Burr, 1995). For this study, Foucauldian discourse analysis was therefore deemed the most suitable approach. This is because it allowed for prevailing discourses relating to sexual violence to be examined and their implications for subjectivity and practice to be explored (Burr, 1995; Willig, 2008).

### 3.4. Data collection

The interest in discourse analysis is in language use rather than language users (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Thus, the units of analysis are texts or parts of texts rather than participants (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Potter and Wetherell (1987) point out that, discourse analysts mostly work with records and documents of interaction as opposed to material gained from the researchers own dealings with participants. Traditionally, one of the most important advantages of collecting naturalistic records and documents is almost complete absence of researcher influence on data (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Such data are features of social fabric that the researcher has had no part in producing. From the discourse analysis point of view in particular, this material is useful because it allows the researcher to capture the widest possible variation in accounts (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Furthermore, naturally occurring texts are considered a better source of data for discourse analysis because they are actual examples of language in use (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). The text forms part of the discourses that constitute the phenomena under investigation (Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

Decisions about the sample to be selected in discourse analysis are similar to those in other research, in that the sample should be relevant to or representative of the phenomenon of interest (Wood & Kroger, 2000). In many cases, practice will be governed by what is available: if you have access to an extensive archive of relevant text then that is the analytic starting point (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). For discourse analysts the success of a study is not dependant on sample size; it is not the case that a larger sample necessarily indicates a more painstaking or worthwhile piece of research (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). In fact, a large number of linguistic patterns may emerge from a few

people, small samples or few interviews (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The interpretative nature of analysis means that the researcher does not seek to exhaust categories, but to generate them by way of identifying how people use language (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Consequently, the notion of saturation in discourse analysis is "elastic". The endpoint comes not because the researcher stops finding anything new, but because the researcher judges that the data are sufficient to make and justify an interesting argument (Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Wood & Kroger, 2000).

There is no 'natural' boundary line to be drawn in these cases, or no point at which sampling can be said to be complete. It is simply the case of giving a clear detailed description of the nature of the material one is analysing and its origins, as well as explaining why this chosen text is important to the study (Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Taking the above guidelines into consideration, data were collected from a photographic art project called Project Unbreakable. In October 2011, a photography student started a project to spread awareness about sexual assault but it has since evolved into a healing project for sexual assault survivors (Project Unbreakable, 2013). The photography student, Grace Brown, began by taking photos of sexual assault survivors that she knew holding a poster with a quote from their attacker. This project later became known as Project Unbreakable. Brown then travelled around North America and Europe taking photos of sexual assault survivors (Project Unbreakable, 2013). The Project Unbreakable team mostly visited universities and colleges, and when enough money was raised they visited others off campus. For the survivors who were located too far from university or college campuses, Project Unbreakable made it possible for photographs to be submitted by anyone who had experienced any form of sexual abuse. The survivors who participated, whether by submitting an image or being photographed by Grace Brown, were all over the age of 18 (Project Unbreakable, 2013). Brown's aim was to make a difference in a world where sexual assault is shamed and kept quiet by allowing survivors to take back the power of words used against them, to give survivors a voice (Project Unbreakable, 2013).

In line with the aims of this study, what perpetrators say was analysed by looking at elements of their talk that survivors have chosen to represent in the photographs for the purpose of Project Unbreakable. Thus, it is important to consider that the quotes do not represent the full breadth of what perpetrators have said. That is, participants in Project Unbreakable volunteered to report on their victimization possibly as part of a healing process in which they relieve emotional tensions for themselves by representing the words that may have had the biggest impact on them. Also, because

of the silencing and stigma regarding their violations, the words represented may have been selected for shock value. Thus, the context and aims of Project Unbreakable may be significantly responsible for the expressed content of texts that were produced. The photographs to which the texts are attached are of individuals from different gender, racial and cultural backgrounds, displaying different facial expressions. They are holding a white poster with quotes that have been hand written. These photographs have been taken at different locations and at different times of the day. Some survivors have covered their faces with their posters, others have not.

The words that survivors have directly quoted are not first-hand access to all that perpetrators say. However, these representations of perpetrators speech have been chosen as the best source of material to answer the research questions. It provided an opportunity to investigate the kinds of things that perpetrators say to their victims in a more natural context as opposed to analysing transcripts/reports of what convicted perpetrators say after the incident to a third party. This material has also been chosen in preference to direct interviews with sexual assault survivors and/or perpetrators. This is in view of the fact that such individuals form part of a vulnerable population. There is a high risk of inadvertent harm due to the nature of the information required from survivors as well as the likelihood of social expectancy effects on data when interviewing convicted and/or 'rehabilitated' perpetrators.

Discourse analysis is an extremely labour-intensive approach (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The challenge is not to find texts but deciding which texts to choose (and to justify your choice) (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). For this study, I retrieved images from the Project Unbreakable archives for analysis. However, to avoid the danger of becoming overwhelmed by too much data and not being able to let the linguistic detail emerge from the large amounts of text (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), some form of limits on the data were required. I retrieved photographs that were taken by Grace Brown herself instead of images that were submitted by the sexual assault survivors. This was to ensure some kind of limited bias on the selection of photographs. Furthermore, these photographs taken by Grace Brown were retrieved for this study between December 2013 and July 2014.The initial time limit that I had set was between December 2013 and March 2014 however, it yielded too few results. The revised time frame allowed for the retrieval of a wider variation of quotes. A time frame had to be used, though, as new photographs were continuously being taken and added to the archive thus the time frame allowed for enough time for the collection and analysis of data to be completed for submission. A total of 242 images were retrieved for this study. Of those images, 40 of them had quotes from a third party instead of the sexual violence perpetrator. These 40 images were

kept for their significance in addressing the third aim of this study; the consistencies with perpetrators talk and a rape supportive culture. The words that survivors directly quoted in all 242 images were transcribed for analysis (see Appendix A and B).

### 3.5. Data Analysis

Once the data were transcribed, my reading of the data was guided by the existing theory discussed in chapter two. I then used Potter and Wetherell's (1987) advice on coding the data as a starting point before using Willig's (2008) six stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis to guide my analysis of the data.

#### 3.5.1. Coding of data

The first thing to note regarding coding is that it is quite distinct from doing the analysis itself. According to Potter and Wetherell (1987), the goal is not to find results but to squeeze an unwieldy body of discourse into manageable chunks. The categories used in coding should be significantly related to the research questions of interest (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). As such, when reading and rereading the data, I considered the way in which perpetrators' talk constructed sexual violence, their victims and themselves as discursive objects. In doing so, I also used the first stage of Willig's six stages of Foucauldian analysis as a guide in coding my data in to relevant categories. According to Willig (2008), a key question to ask in the first stage of the analysis is 'How is the discursive object constructed through language?' (p. 129). By reading each quote with this question in mind, I started grouping quotes together based on similarities regarding the construction of sexual violence. By highlighting all instances of reference to sexual violence, themes began to emerge in the data. The themes in the data included references to sexual violence as:

- A game or fun
- Sex in relationships
- Sex characterized by a lack of control and a compulsory 'finish'
- Sex as a man's entitlement
- Relating to men and their sexuality
- A hidden desire of women
- A consensual act, thus just sex
- A non-consensual act, thus rape
- Relating to a struggle or fight between two parties

- A punishment/consequence of deviance
- A form of personal destruction
- A silenced topic

According to Potter and Wetherell (1987), coding has the pragmatic rather than analytic goals of collecting together instances for examination, as such it should be done as *inclusively* as possible. Therefore, all borderline cases, and instances which seem initially only vaguely related, should be included (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). With this in mind, it should be noted that some quotes fell into more than one category and were more implicit than others with regards to constructing sexual violence. Once these categories were determined, I started the analysis which was guided by Willig's (2008) six stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis.

### 3.5.2. Willig's six stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis

As mentioned, in doing my analysis I followed Willig's (2008) six stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis. However, it must be noted that these six stages do not compose a full analysis in the Foucauldian sense (Willig, 2008). For instance Willig's (2008) stages do not address Foucault's discussion of the "historicity and evolution of discursive formations over time" (p. 115). The stages however provide a useful framework within which I could use to identify discursive resources and subject positionings used within a text, and explore the implications they may have on subjectivity and practice (Willig, 2008). The six stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis are discussed below.

#### 3.5.2.1. Stage one: Discursive constructions

The first stage of analysis is concerned with the ways in which discursive objects are constructed (Willig, 2008). As mentioned, this required me to identify the different ways in which perpetrators' language constructs sexual violence and their victims as well as how perpetrators' words constitutes the perpetrators themselves as discursive objects. This stage does not simply rely on looking at keywords but instead looks at how these discursive objects are spoken about (Willig, 2008). According to Willig (2008), the fact that a text does not contain a direct reference to the discursive object can also tell us something about the way the object is constructed. The themes that emerged when coding my data are examples of the way in which sexual violence was constructed. For instance, it was constructed broadly as just sex and more directly as rape. Accordingly, perpetrators were constructed as biologically driven and powerful, while victims were constructed as passive and powerless.

3.5.2.2. Stage two: Discourses

The second stage of analysis aims to locate the various discursive constructions of the object within wider discourses (Willig, 2008). Having identified the sections of text that construct the discursive object, I looked at the differences between constructions (Willig, 2008). Willig (2008) explains that the same discursive object can be constructed in different ways and that this enables the researcher to situate discursive objects within wider discourses. For example, sexual violence was constructed as sex in various ways which indicated wider discourses such as discourses of pleasure or romance. On the other hand, wider discourses of humiliation and punishment enabled sexual violence to be explicitly constructed as rape; an act of control.

3.5.2.3. Stage three: Action orientation

The third stage of analysis focuses on the action orientation of the text, and involves closely examining what the various constructions of the discursive object are capable of achieving (Willig, 2008). Here, I looked at what was gained from constructing sexual violence, victims and perpetrators themselves, in a particular way at a particular point within the text. For example, sexual violence was normalized by drawing on discourses such as discourses of desire or men's (overt) sexual desires which constructs sexual violence as 'normal' heterosexual sex; perpetrators as biologically driven; and victims as sex objects. Also sexual violence was justified by drawing on discourses of entitlement and punishment which constructs sexual violence as a means to punish; victims as deviant; and perpetrators as entitled to shape women's subjectivities.

3.5.2.4. Stage four: Positionings

The fourth stage of analysis looks at the subject positions that are made available within a discourse (Willig, 2008). Willig (2008) explains that discourses construct subjects as well as objects and, as a result, make available positions within networks of meaning that speakers can take up as well as place others within. Having previously located the discursive objects within wider discourses, this stage identifies subject positions offered by the various constructions. Davies and Harre (2001) explain that an individual emerges through the process of social interaction, as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate. Accordingly, who one is, is always an open question with a shifting answer depending on the positions made available within discursive practices (Davies & Harre, 2001). For example, discourses of pleasure and men's and women's sex drives, positioned the male perpetrators as sexually competent and

skilled, while female victims were positioned as dependant on a man for sexual gratification. Also, within discourses of punishment and intimidation, perpetrators were located in a position of power/authority, while victims were positioned as powerless and worthless outside of sex.

#### 3.5.2.5. Stage five: Practice

Stage five of the analysis is concerned with the relationship between discourse and practice (Willig, 2008). It explores the ways in which discursive constructions and the subject positions within them can affect opportunities for action (Willig, 2008). Particular constructions and subject positions can enable and constrain what can be said and done (Willig, 2008). Willig (2008) further explains that certain practices become legitimate forms of behaviour within particular discourses and such practices in turn reproduce the discourse that legitimate them. For example, within discourses of marriage and romance, forced sex is considered a legitimate form of behaviour because it was constructed either as an obligation or as a way to maintain relationships. On the other hand, within a discourse of punishment, sexual violence was considered an acceptable way to punish women's unsuitable conduct. Furthermore, these practices of 'sex' and 'punishment' reproduce the discourses that legitimate them.

#### 3.5.2.6. Stage six: Subjectivity

The sixth stage of analysis explores the relationship between discourse and subjectivity (Willig, 2008). It traces the consequences that taking up various subject positions can have on individuals' subjective experience (Willig, 2008). Having asked questions about what can be said and done from within different discourses (stage five), the concern is now with what can be felt, thought and experienced from within various subject positions (Willig, 2008). For example, within a discourse of desire perpetrators took up the position of a victim of sexually provocative women which allows them to disclaim responsibility and to experience less guilt about what had occurred. Furthermore, a discourse of humiliation that positioned women as 'damaged goods' may result in victims feeling unlovable, unwanted and worthless.

### 3.5.3. An additional analytical stage

Throughout the analysis I linked the specific discourses that were identified to prevalent rape myths presented in chapter two. The widespread acceptance of rape myths is argued to be a key feature of the existing rape culture (Burt, 1980). This helped with the third aim of my research which was to

investigate the consistencies with perpetrators talk and the rape culture. I also included the quotes from third parties into the final section of my analysis to illustrate the pervasiveness of rape culture by highlighting similarities between the talk of perpetrators and third parties, as well as other discursive and social practices promoting sexual violence.

### 3.6. Dependability and trustworthiness

According to Golafshani (2003), reliability and validity are two factors which any qualitative researcher should be concerned about while analysing results and judging the quality of the study. Reliability refers to the degree to which research results are repeatable, and it is a valued criterion used to indicate accuracy and conclusiveness (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). However, it is largely informed by a positivist paradigm which takes reality as stable and unchanging (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). Validity looks at the extent to which a study measures what it aimed to measure or how truthful the research results are (Golafshani, 2003). It is also rooted in the positivist tradition. The terms reliability and validity are important criterion for quality in quantitative research. Golafshani (2003) explains that the quality of a study in each paradigm should be judged by its own paradigms terms, thus qualitative quality checks differ.

#### 3.6.1. Dependability

The social constructionist paradigm takes reality as constructed and unstable therefore it is not expected that the same results will be found repeatedly (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). Rather, it is expected that individuals or groups will behave differently and express different experiences in changing contexts (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). Qualitative researchers thus propose dependability over reliability. Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher says they did (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). Accordingly, dependability is achieved through rich and detailed descriptions that show how certain actions and experiences are rooted in, and developed out of, contextual interaction (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). Dependability is also achieved by providing the reader with a frank statement of the methods used to collect and analyze data (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006). For this reason, special attention is paid to explaining theoretical and methodological positions as well as reporting on the processes undertaken in doing my research.

### 3.6.2. Trustworthiness

While some researchers argue that validity is not applicable to qualitative research, the need for some kind of quality check has led to the concept being redefined (Golafshani, 2003). Qualitative researchers look at the trustworthiness and rigor of research (Golafshani, 2003). Here, the focus is on the interpretations or conclusions drawn from the data (Elliott *et al.*, 1999). In discourse analysis, the documentation of procedures and the display of arguments contribute to the readers' trust that the analysis was carefully done (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Documentation of data and data excerpts is particularly important because readers need to be able to perform their own evaluations of the analytic conclusions (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wood & Kroger, 2000). It also provides a context for understanding claims (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Furthermore, it points to the accountability of the researcher, who is answerable for the way in which the research was carried out (Wood & Kroger, 2000). This was done by including quotes from the data in the presentation of the analysis. The quotes used were considered the most relevant to illustrate the findings of the analysis. I chose quotes according to how clearly and concisely they illustrated points that recurred throughout the talk of perpetrators. I looked at how typical or representative the quote was by considering whether the point of the analysis would remain the same if an alternative quote was used. The analysis also identified variation within discourses (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), as such, I included quotes that indicated variation.

I also considered Potter and Wetherell's (1987) advice on analytic techniques which can be used to validate the findings of this kind of research. It is advised that a researcher be mindful of coherence, new problems, and fruitfulness. The validity of the study depends on its 'coherence': an analysis should reflect how the discourse fits together and how discursive structures produce effects and functions (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). To increase coherence, the analysis should also involve looking at exceptions to the analytic pattern and this involves looking at instances of variation (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Potter and Wetherell (1987) explain that cases that lie outside the explanatory framework of a theory are almost always more informative than those that lie within. 'New problems' require that an analysis be thorough enough to not only solve problems, but also lead to new questions (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). 'Fruitfulness' refers to how a researcher should be able to make sense of new kinds of discourse and to produce novel explanations and insights regarding the topic at hand (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

An essential element of rigor is the assumption that the research process displays an objective method and that for research to have any validity or truth value it must remain free of bias and researcher values (Davies & Dodd, 2002). However, Davies and Dodd (2002) argue that rather than by applying standardizes rules, rigor can be achieved by paying close attention to the research process. This can be done through reflection and reflexivity and by rendering visible the research process even when seemingly disordered and chaotic (Davies & Dodd, 2002).

Reflexivity draws attention to the point that findings of discourse analysis apply equally to the social texts produced by discourse analysts as to anyone else (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Richardson, 1996). It is not consistent for researchers to claim that science is an uncertain, contingent, reflexive activity, and then to act as if they can stand apart from that activity as a detached observer and make objective, factual statements about it (Richardson, 1996). However, Potter and Wetherell (1987) explain that it is possible to acknowledge that one's own language is constructing a version of the world, while proceeding with analyzing texts and their implications for people's social and political lives. It is thus important for me, as the researcher, to acknowledge that my own work is not immune from the social process being studied (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). It was also important for me to be aware of my own position in relation to the research project and my contribution to the discursive world (Richardson, 1996). Acknowledgement of my own reflexive role in the research process was necessary to ensure rigor.

Elliott *et al.*, (1999) and Wood and Kroger (2000) suggest an analytical auditor, or someone with experience in this research area, to assist in validating the analysis. When reflexive practice became difficult for me, my research supervisor checked my processes as well as assessed the quality of the claims I had made. He also examined my analysis for credibility and coherence.

### 3.7. Ethical considerations

A starting point in thinking about ethics must be to consider what the term means in general (Forrester, 2010). In its broad sense, 'ethics' refers to questions about how we conduct ourselves morally (Forrester, 2010). The notion of 'research ethics' is concerned with providing guidance to researchers in particular disciplines as to how they should carry out their work in a morally defensible manner (Forrester, 2010). Ethics concerns the morality of human conduct and in relation to social research, it refers to moral deliberation, choice and accountability on the part of the researcher throughout the research process (Miller, Mauthner, Birch, & Jessop, 2012). Discussions about ethical principles in social research, and perhaps more specifically transgressions of them, tend

to revolve around four main areas: whether there is harm to participants; whether there is lack of informed consent; whether there is an invasion of privacy; and whether deception is involved (Bryman, 2012).

This study did not directly include human participants so there was little risk of harm. The data were obtained from the photographs taken by Grace Brown for Project Unbreakable. It is important to state that participants involved in said project grant Project Unbreakable permission to publish it on the site or elsewhere including print publications (Project Unbreakable, 2013). The data is therefore considered public property so publisher permission was not required.

Names and other personal details are not included or distributed. Also Project Unbreakable does not discriminate as to who can participate. They welcome anyone who has experienced any form of sexual assault (Project Unbreakable, 2013). The photographs were not reproduced in the thesis therefore copyright infringement was not a concern. The researcher initiated contact with Grace Brown to inform her of this study via email. I was also mindful throughout the research process of the fact that ethical responsibilities for researchers do not only relate to direct interaction with participants (Forrester, 2010). Researchers, including myself, are expected to act honestly and with integrity as well as to have good intentions and outcomes throughout the research process (Forrester, 2010; Miller *et al.*, 2012).

### 3.8. Concluding remarks

The aim of this research was to discursively analyse the talk of sexual violence perpetrators to their victims. This was done within a social constructionist paradigm which looks at the constitutive nature of language and is aimed at identifying the numerous constructions of social reality (Willig, 2008). More specifically, Foucauldian discourse analysis was used as a method to analyse the data. Willig's (2008) six stages of Foucauldian discourse analysis guided my analysis by proving a framework within which I could identify discursive resources and subject positioning within the data, as well as explore the implications they may have on subjectivity and practice. Over two-hundred photographs were collected from a photographic art project called Project Unbreakable. The photographs were of sexual violence survivors, from all over the world, holding a poster with a quote from their attacker. The words that survivors chose to represent for Project Unbreakable served as the data for this research study. My research proceeds from a perspective where it is argued that a rape supportive culture does not only contribute to the blame and shame of sexual assault survivors, but it also provides a social pattern for coercive sexuality which allows perpetrators to act in this way

and be excused. In the following chapter, the analysis and discussion of my research data is presented in three broad sections. The first section focuses on the way in which sexual violence perpetrators discursively constructed their actions, their victims and themselves. The second section looks at the discursive strategies drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators when talking to their victims. The third section illustrates the consistencies with perpetrators' talk and the rape supportive culture.

## Chapter 4: Analysis and discussion

The research aimed to identify how sexual violence perpetrators talk to their victims. The analysis aimed to critically investigate what discursive strategies and resources were drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators, and how they discursively constructed themselves, their actions and victims through talk. It further investigated whether or not what sexual violence perpetrators say to their victims is consistent with rape myths, stereotypes and discursive and social practices promoting rape/sexual assault. Deconstructing the talk of sexual violence perpetrators directly to their victims enables a discussion on how the social definition of rape/sexual violence creates opportunities for it to occur.

To facilitate discussion, the analysis findings are organised into three main sections. The first broad section relates to an aim of this study which was to investigate how perpetrators discursively constructed their actions, their victims and by implication, how they constructed themselves. This section focuses on the discourses drawn on by perpetrators as well as implications for such discursive constructions. The second broad section relates to the discursive strategies and resources drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators. This is also in line with the aims of this study. This section looks at how drawing on the different discourses enabled perpetrators to normalize their actions, blame their victims, minimize the incident, justify their behaviour, silence their victims, and maintain and reinforce their power. The last broad section relates to the final aim of this study which was to investigate whether or not there were consistencies with what perpetrators said to their victims and rape culture. This was done by pointing out similarities with the discourses and discursive strategies drawn on by perpetrators to rape myths, stereotypes and discursive and social practices promoting sexual violence that has been reported in the literature review chapter.

When looking at discourses and discursive strategies, it is important to note that they are never entirely uniform, coherent or consistent. This is significant when considering how the analysis revealed multiple discourses and strategies, as well as variation between and within them. While these discursive themes are presented categorically for the sake of clarity, they should not be read as fixed and separate entities. Rather, the discourses interlink across one another and various subthemes speak back to other overarching subthemes. What is presented below provides a window into the analysis process. As discussed in the methodology section, the quotes used below were considered the most relevant to illustrate the findings of the analysis that was conducted on a total of 242 quotes/photographs.

## 4.1. Discursive constructions of sexual violence, victims and perpetrators

### 4.1.1. A discourse of pleasure

Pleasure can be defined as the state or feeling of being pleased; as an enjoyment or satisfaction derived from what is to one's liking; and as recreation and amusement (Jewell, 2006). The perpetrators from this study drew on a discourse of pleasure by constructing sexual violence (their actions) as something fun, as a game, as something playful:

Image 5: "C'mon cousin its fun...it's just a game"
Image 28: "Hey, wanna have some fun?"

This implied that it was for enjoyment or pleasure. It achieves a sense of innocence; what the perpetrator is doing is not wrong. Accordingly, Lonsway and Fitzgerald's (1994) myth of rape being a trivial event is present within this discourse; it's fun, a game, just sex. Furthermore, according to Pemberton and Wakeling (2009), sexual pleasure is seen as an elemental aspect of human sexuality. Within the discourse of pleasure, there is an emphasis on sexual pleasure. The actions of the perpetrators are associated with feeling good and enjoyment (of sex):

Image 83: "you like it"
Image 104: "c'mon really didn't you enjoy it"

It is illustrated above that perpetrators also utilise the myth that women want to be raped by implying that they enjoyed it (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). There were instances where perpetrators inquired about the victims' enjoyment of what had occurred. This implies that their actions were intended to sexually satisfy their victims, which further trivializes sexual violence:

Image 69: "Do you like it?"
Image 70: "Does that feel good?"

The discourse of pleasure drawn on by perpetrators constructs sexual violence as merely sex. Discourses of sex, though, are highly gendered. 'Proper' heterosexual manhood involves being sexually competent and skilled at sexual intercourse with women. Sex is something active men do to passive women, and it is centred on sexual intercourse, within which female orgasm/pleasure is a means to assert male potency (Bertone & Camoletto, 2009). In image 69 illustrated above, the victim is lesbian and the perpetrator knew that. This reinforces the idea that a woman needs a man to be sexually pleasured or that men are able to sexually pleasure all women. Furthermore, it denies the

existence of women's sexual subjectivity. Thus, within this discourse male perpetrators are able to establish a sense of individual power and potency, which are essential elements in the construction of the ideal masculine (Cowburn, 2005):

> Image 137: "You're wet. I knew I could turn you on. You just needed practice. Now you have the easy job. Tell me how good this feels-now your turn. Get on top"

The use of the discourse of pleasure allows the perpetrators to ward off the charge that they are acting in a harmful manner and constructs their actions as sexually pleasing. By implication then, they construct themselves as non-violent and ideally masculine. This discourse allows perpetrators to avoid possessing the identity of a sexual violence perpetrator which further closes down the possibility for the victim to be a victim of sexual violence. By resisting the identity of a sexual violence perpetrator, the speakers may then feel less guilty for their actions and further locates the victim in a position of an equal sexual partner and a sexual being. This functions as a way to minimise the actions of perpetrators and the experience of the victims. The discourse of pleasure serves to locate sexual violence within the realms of sex; for pleasure/fun, as an act that is enjoyed. Furthermore, within the notions of heterosexual practice, this discourse can be interpreted as being about the technical ability of the heterosexual man to 'give' a woman sexual pleasure/orgasm. Women's experience of sexual pleasure can be understood as being a man's responsibility and achievement (Chung, 2003). Men taking responsibility for their partners pleasure allows them to position themselves as powerful as they take away women's ability to be an independent sexual agent (Chung, 2003). Within this discourse, there is variation in the way in which victims are constructed. For instance, perpetrators drew on a discourse of pleasure which constructed victims as an equal sexual partner by inquiring about their experience of 'sex'. On the other hand, victims are constructed as dependent on a man for sexual gratification which allows for men to deny their victims' sexual agency. Furthermore, within this discourse, women are constructed as sexually present and experiencing 'enjoyment' as well as sexually passive and as an instrument to assert male potency.

### 4.1.2. A discourse of desire

Lea (2007) found that in the talk of convicted sex offenders, the physical attractiveness of their victims was oriented to in their accounts. Likewise, some perpetrators in the data corpus explicitly pointed out 'attractive' attributes of the victim:

Image 13: "You're tight just the way I love it"
Image 82: "Come on I think you're really cute"

The emphasis is on the attractiveness of the victim to the perpetrator. Sexual interest is then legitimated. There were also references to a lack of control experienced by the perpetrators which emphasized the degree of desire:

Image 132: "I can't help myself- you are so beautiful"

Perpetrators not only highlight physical attributes of their victims but also emphasise the way in which victims made themselves attractive to them, thereby stimulating their interest in them:

Image 16: "Well you shouldn't have worn that"
Image 114: "If you sit like that, someday someone will spread your legs and want to fuck you"

The central notion is that physical attractiveness is a key component in sexual allure (Lea, 2007). Desire becomes a motivating factor for sexual behaviours. Thus, these perpetrators construct their assault in terms of desire for the victim. Claiming to sexually desire someone attractive provides a partial explanation for subsequent behaviour (Lea, 2007). This is in line with the rape myth that a perpetrator did not mean it (because of his uncontrollable desire) (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Furthermore, the victims' physical attributes and actions therefore become a partial justification for the perpetrators actions. The implication is that, if the victim had not been so attractive, sat in a particular way and dressed in a particular way, the assault would not have happened. This reiterates the rape myth that victims of sexual violence ask for it through their dress and behaviour (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Thus, the victim becomes partially responsible and crucially, the crime itself revolves around issues of sex and not violence. As mentioned earlier, discourses of sex are highly gendered and within the discourse of desire, a difference between men's desires and women's desires emerge from the data.

#### 4.1.2.1. Men's (overt) sexual desires

Male heterosexual desire is considered as the 'natural' expression and foundation of masculinity (Bertone & Camoletto, 2009). In contrast to the 'secret' sexual desires of women, men's sexual desire is more explicit. It is expected from/of a man to desire sex openly, as part of being a man:

Image 31: "Be a man and just do it"

Image 99: "Don't you want to know what boys like?"

Within this discourse, men's sexual desires are not only explicit but their sexual urges are easily triggered and difficult to control:

Image 94: "Shhh just lay back...you can't say no now"

There is a heavy presence of Hollway's (1989) 'male sexual drive' discourse which is based on biological and reproductive reasoning which positions men as having a natural drive to have sex. An uncontrollable sex drive thus takes away from the responsibility of the perpetrator. It positions men as having little conscious control over their sexuality and since they are at the mercy of a primal biological sex drive they cannot possibly be held accountable either for becoming sexually aroused or for their actions thereafter (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). Once again, the rape myth that the perpetrator did not mean to do it (because of his uncontrollable sex drive) is present in the talk of perpetrators (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). This discourse is also used against male victims stripping their status as a victim because part of being a man is being ever-ready for sex. This functions to minimize the severity of the experience and constructs sexual violence as 'normal'. Within the terms of the discursive convergence of the male sexual drive discourse and Gavey's (2005) discussion of what she terms the 'coital imperative', it would not be right or fair for a woman to stop [sex] before male orgasm. In Gavey's (2005) terms, it is only sex if it is heterosexual and there is penetration; it only counts if it is completed and it is only completed when male orgasm is achieved. This ties in strongly with the idea of an irrepressible biological urge:

Image 62: "Man this sucks, I didn't get to finish"
Image 87: "It won't take me long to finish"
Image 109: "but you didn't let me finish"

It is the perpetrator who is deemed to be the victim of women's sexual allure. His behaviour is normalised, exonerating him from responsibility for the act and the victims' behaviour is positioned as deviant and thus blameworthy:

Image 16: "Well you shouldn't have worn that"
Image 171: "It wasn't rape. You were being such a tease"

By blaming the victim, perpetrators reproduce the rape myth that women ask to be raped (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). The victim is constructed as responsible, via her choice of clothing and implying consent, as well as for the sexual arousal of the perpetrator. Thus agency and responsibility

are removed from the perpetrator by positioning the victims as the gatekeepers of male sexual desires (Anderson & Doherty, 2007).

4.1.2.2. Women's secret sexual desires: No means yes

Sexual violence has been constructed as sex and furthermore as sex that women secretly desire. Male perpetrators drew on this discourse by disregarding their victims' resistance:

> Image 48: "Stop lying, I know you want this"
> Image 91: "We both know you don't really mean it when you say no. It would be over faster if you stop struggling"

In line with the rape myth that women want to be raped, this discourse constructs the victims as having a secret underlying sexual desire and their lack of consent and struggle is a pretence to protect their femininity. This draws on psychoanalytical and sexological notions of female sexuality as driven by a masochistic female desire that needs aggressive masculinity (Gavey, 2005). Furthermore, because over the years women have been constructed as shy, passive and retiring (Conaghan & Russell, 2014), it is expected within this discourse that some force might be necessary in obtaining sexual gratification. Brownmiller (1975) speaks of the belief that "All women want to be raped" (p.312). She explains that once the proposition that all women secretly wish to be ravished has been established, it is bolstered by the claim that no woman can be raped against her will. The concept seems to imply at first that if the will of the woman is strong, or if she is sufficiently agile, she can escape unscathed (she has control). This was illustrated in the data:

> Image 36: "You know how I know you didn't mean it? You just kept repeating yourself. If you meant it, you would have tried something else. I know the kind of games girls like you play"

Here there is a variation in the use of the trope of 'games' that is different from the one deployed earlier in the discourse of pleasure. In this construction, playing games does not refer to 'sex' but rather to the victim acting in a deceitful or manipulative manner when interacting with the perpetrator. This ties in with the myth that women lie and with the idea of women being unknowable, that is women are unable or unwilling to communicate honestly with men (Polaschek & Ward, 2002). Here, victims are constructed as deceptive.

On the other hand, women's desire and pleasure remain under-thematised (Bertone & Camoletto, 2009) and their role is reduced to 'letting go' or 'giving in':

Image 175: "you know you want it. Come on, give in to pleasure"

This positions men as in control of women's sexuality. The victim is constructed as dependant on a man for satisfaction therefore is not a victim of sexual violence. Therefore, sexual violence is constructed as sex; something active men do to passive women. Due to female passivity any force used is seen as part and parcel of normal sex. However, there is a variation in terms of the construction of the victim within this discourse. On the one hand, she is constructed as sexually passive, but there is also the idea that women's sexuality is present and desiring. Accordingly, perpetrators are constructed as knowing what women want and 'giving' it to them.

4.1.2.3. A discourse of romance

Sexual violence was constructed as sex associated with love, trust, care, relationships and marriage. This was accomplished by drawing on a discourse of romance. Within this discourse, sex plays an important role in contributing to the establishment, maintenance and stability of romantic relationships; sex is intertwined with feelings of intimacy and affection for a romantic partner. Partners are expected to love, trust and care for each other. Within a discourse of romance, sex is detached from reproduction and is mainly interpreted as a way of showing a sense of emotional closeness (Bertone & Camoletto, 2009):

Image 33: "I want to show you how much I care"
Image 152: "I'm just trying to show you how much I love you"
Image 155: "I love you baby"

Within this discourse, the possibility for these women to take up the role of a victim is shut down and the actions of perpetrators are constructed to fit into a romantic framework which translates sexual violence into romantic seduction or normalized sexual behaviours in relationships. This notion reiterates the myth of rape being a deviant event; that sexual violence cannot happen in relationships (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Furthermore a discourse of romance and dominant constructions of men as protectors of women (Alison, 2007), allowed perpetrators to construct their actions as acceptable:

Image 9: "shhh its okay"
Image 34: "shhh...I'm just checking on you"
Image 43: "Hold still, you're safe"

This served to locate sexual violence in the realms of sex in the safety of a relationship. For women, sex is bound up with relationships and love (Shefer & Foster, 2001). Dominant constructions of

loving relationships offer warmth, safety and protection (Power, Koch, Kralik, & Jackson, 2006). Thus, women are constructed in terms of Hollway's (1989) 'have/hold' discourse as less sexual and as needing a committed relationship to safely explore sexuality. Sex in a committed romantic relationship is viewed as something done irrespective of subjective desire; rather it is situated as an expression of love. The love and desire to maintain a relationship is a position associated with dominant femininity (Power *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, within a discourse of romance and in terms of gender roles, victims are expected to 'do femininity' in the relationship. Furthermore, the position for women within this discourse as primarily driven by desires for love, intimacy and security strips them of their own subjective sexual desire which further contributes to the silencing of female sexual desire. For perpetrators, a discourse of romance allows for them to gain sexual access to their victims by constructing themselves as good lovers and as caring for women's emotional needs. Furthermore, perpetrators are able to own the identity of a man capable of giving as well as receiving companionship.

4.1.3. A sexual contract discourse

These notions of women as gatekeepers of male sexuality and men as sexually entitled bring to the analysis another model of sexual interaction; women who are perceived to have initially consented are obliged to follow through:

Image 2: "You said yes. We can't stop now...just a little longer"

Here, perpetrators draw on a sexual agreement/contract discourse. Because the victim had initially agreed to an encounter, her agreement automatically makes all subsequent sexual activity legitimate. Furthermore, perceived sexually provocative behaviour, taken beyond a certain point, generates the same agreement. This is in line with the rape myth that victims actually wanted it (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). This discourse positions the victim as entering into some sort of contractual obligation whenever her behaviour is interpreted as seductive. It does not allow for her to change her mind because the perpetrator has the right to force her to continue because of the sexual contract (Pateman, 1988):

Image 75: "you started it and I just kinda went with it"
Image 105: "you invited me over now you think you're too fucking good for me"

The logic here seems to be that at some point the victim's behaviour/actions committed her to the encounter and the perpetrator is entitled to demand that she satisfy the terms of the agreement; if you

start you can't stop until you finish it. The peculiar nature of male and female sexuality places such agreements in a special category, one in which the possibility of retracting an agreement is ruled out, or at least made unlikely (Pateman, 1988). In this sense, sex is constructed along the lines of culturally held adversarial sexual beliefs in which female-male relationships are naturally filled with conflict and competition (Burt, 1980). Thus, sex is understood as the endpoint of a competitive game in which men and women enter into knowingly and aware of the implied contractual obligations. By constructing victims as having entered into such activities, they can be accused of bad faith. Therefore, victims can be further constructed as untrustworthy which reiterates the rape myth that women lie about rape. This undermines the integrity of victims' claims to have been victimized. Also, within this discourse there are traces of the male sex drive discourse (Hollway, 1989) that claims that male sexuality cannot be contained once sparked as well as the coital imperative (Gavey, 2005) that claims it is unfair for a women to stop sex before male orgasm. Victims are then constructed as acting unfairly by attempting to withdraw perceived consent. By implication then, perpetrators are constructed as reasonable and entitled. Furthermore, a sexual contract discourse reinforces the idea of men's rights over women and positions perpetrators as having orderly access to women's bodies (Pateman, 1988). Here, there is a variation regarding the constructions of sex that differs from a discourse of pleasure and desire. That is, instead of understanding sex as a means for sexual gratification directly, within this discourse it is associated with fulfilling sexual obligations relating to the competitive nature of relationships between men and women.

#### 4.1.3.1. A discourse of consent

Perpetrators drew on a discourse of consent which in turn constructs sexual violence as sex. However, within this discourse there is ambiguity about what counts as consent and what does not. In line with the sexual contract discourse, there is the idea that verbal consent given initially counts as consent to follow-through to the end. Victims have no option to withdraw consent once it is given:

Image 2: "You said yes. We can't stop now...just a little longer"

By establishing that consent had occurred at a particular point during the encounter, perpetrators construct their actions as legitimate. Furthermore, within a discourse of women's secret sexual desires 'no' means 'yes'. Thus, perpetrators do not consider the victims 'no' or struggle as nonconsent because of the belief that women are protecting their femininity/reputation and that they are enjoying the encounter. This coupled with the belief that if a woman can stop rape if she really wanted to reinforces the idea that it was not really rape because of a lack of resistance from the

victim. It is also assumed within this discourse that women routinely lie about wanting sex which further contributes to the construction of sexual violence as merely sex:

Image 48: "Stop lying. I know you want this"
Image 91: "We both know you don't really mean it when you say 'no'. It would be over faster if you stop struggling"

Perpetrators drew on a discourse of consent to construct their victims' actions/behaviours as that of consenting to sex:

Image 171: "It wasn't rape. You were being such a tease"
Image 53: "I thought you were screaming because you liked it"

Rape myths such as she wanted it and she asked for it is thus reproduced through perpetrators talk. Additionally, it is suggested that the victims specific behaviour, whether it is sexual or not, reflects sexual consent (Pineau, 1989). It is argued that women sometimes behave in ways that are indicative of sexual consent, even when they do not intend to consent to sex. Furthermore, victims who are not explicit or aggressive enough in rejecting sexual activity have then consented to it:

Image 55: "You never said I couldn't"
Image 60: "But you weren't kicking and screaming, so you must have wanted it. Besides it was just oral, it doesn't matter"
Image 66: "If you want me to stop then do something about it"

As illustrated, there is the idea that rape has to be physically violent in ways that lead to injury, or that it has to be physically resisted in order for it to be real rape. Thus, once again, perpetrators draw on the myth that it wasn't really rape (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994) to construct their victims as consenting participants. This implied version of consent assumes a strictly behavioural account in which victims' 'unclear' non-consent is emphasised while perpetrators are able to ignore a lack of enthusiastic consent. Therefore, regardless of the victims' desire or willingness, or the context associated with sexual activity, she could inadvertently consent to sex by behaving (or not behaving) in certain ways considered 'typical' indications of consent for example, being a tease or not preventing the assault. Within this discourse, victims' nonconsent becomes irrelevant to the assault. Thus, it is not possible for women to withdraw consent or to not consent at all. This is due to the power relations between men and women. Mackinnon (1989 as cited in Powell *et al*., 2013) argued that systems of patriarchy are such that men have power over women, thus women do not have the freedom to consent.

4.1.3.2. A discourse of marriage

Whether for emotional, pleasurable or reproductive purposes, sexual interaction has always constituted an integral part of the live of couples (Brousseau, Bergeron, Hébert, & McDuff, 2010). Perpetrators explicitly pointed out sexual obligations within their romantic relationships, specifically within their marriage. Sexual violence was constructed as sex that is expected in a marriage; as a duty of the wife to provide to the husband:

> Image 79: "I didn't get married to learn how to masturbate"
> Image 116: he said it was my duty as a "good Christian wife" whether I liked it or not

This highlights assumptions about women being men's property, women being responsible for keeping family and relationships together, and men being the head of the house hold. Feminist scholars have named the family and heterosexuality as central institutions in patriarchal society (Wendt & Zannettino, 2014). That is, power and gender relations are built into the family and the marital relationship. Thus, within this discourse the wife is constructed as having to help and serve the head of the household, more specifically as sexually available to her husband and having to comply with his sexual demands. It further constructs her as an object of desire or as her husband's possession. She is not given a choice and her consent is irrelevant within this discourse, rendering her powerless. By implication, perpetrators are constructed as entitled to having sex with their wives and as having authority over their wives. This is based on the notion that once married, women are bound to their husbands morally and legally (Bennice & Resick, 2003). Thus, claiming his rights to his 'sexual property' becomes an acceptable practice. Furthermore it positions the perpetrator as superior subsequently positioning his wife as inferior. Religious symbolism of the husband as the head of the household and the wife as the passive subordinate was also invoked. Religious values and ideals often reinforce and sanction strict adherence to stereotypical gender roles (Boonzaier & Rey, 2004).

Social constructions of gender and a discourse of romance saddle women with the responsibility for sustaining relationships and marriages. In this sense, sustaining a marriage is accomplished by keeping the husband sexually satisfied. This discourse serves as a justification for sexually violent behaviours and sexual violence becomes a legitimate form of behaviour between husband and wife. This is in line with the rape myth that husbands cannot rape their wives or that married women are unrapeable (Edwards *et al.*, 2011). Where sexual violence by a partner is concerned, the intimate nature of the woman's relationship with the man and the implied sexual contract between them

enables sexual violence to be dismissed as normal (Rumney & Bijl, 2010). This allows for the perpetrator to feel less guilty about his actions and feel powerful and in control of his wife. Furthermore, within a marriage consent is always already implied. Putting pressure upon his wife to 'have sex' is framed within notions of women's subordinate role and men's right to possess their bodies.

### 4.1.4. A discourse of entitlement

Perpetrators drew on a discourse of entitlement. Traces of this discourse are evident throughout the analysis thus far. For example, a discourse of marriage positions husbands as entitled to sex with their wives. Also, within the sexual agreement discourse and the discourse of desire, behaviours/actions of women that are interpreted as initiating a sexual encounter in any way or triggering men's uncontrollable sexuality are forced to submit to the sexual needs of men. Furthermore, it is not acceptable for a woman to stop sexual interactions with a man until he has reached male orgasm (Gavey, 2005). Similarly, a discourse of consent dictates that women do not have the freedom to consent or to withdraw consent at all (Mackinnon, 1989 as cited in Powell *et al.*, 2013). These ideas are strongly rooted in traditional patriarchal ideas about men being inherently superior to women (Polaschek & Ward, 2002). Also, because women are thought to be sexually naive and immature, men are entitled to control women's sexuality and to determine what a woman really wants (Polaschek & Ward, 2002). This is evident within the discourse of women's secret sexual desire which explicitly positions men as in control of women's sexuality and positions women as dependent on a man for sexual gratification.

A discourse of entitlement involves the core idea that men deserve sex because it is their right as a male and something that they are entitled to 'take' from women (Pemberton & Wakeling, 2009). Thus, male perpetrators position themselves as superior to, or more important than their female victims. Perpetrators are able to see themselves as being entitled to have sex when they want with those who are less powerful than themselves. Within this discourse men cannot be rejected therefore they are able to make sexual demands as opposed to sexual requests:

Image 51: "I'm horny"
Image 52: "Open your legs"
Image 54: "Turn around"

Victims are not given the choice to reject perpetrators' sexual advances which positions them as powerless against their perpetrator. Perpetrators do not feel the need to justify or explain their actions. This allows perpetrators to construct themselves as strong and powerful, and dominant in their interactions with women which is in line with the idea relating to hyper-masculinity (Pemberton & Wakeling, 2009). Furthermore, a blatant disregard for victims' discomfort and pain is evident in the data:

Image 108: "It wouldn't hurt so bad if you just got wet"
Image 154: "I know you were uncomfortable"

By doing this, perpetrators reinforce the idea that their sexual needs are more important than the needs or experiences of their victims. It also constructs women as merely sexual instruments for male gratification. A discourse of entitlement reduces the role of women to being solely responsible to sexually please men and there is the expectation that female sexuality exists for male pleasure:

Image 98: "I waited so long to finally have this. Shouldn't you be happy?"

Furthermore, female sexual pleasure in of itself and female consent are not considered within this discourse and because men are entitled to women's bodies, forced or non-consenting 'sex' is not considered as rape.

4.1.4.1. A discourse of punishment/discipline

On the topic of entitlement, men are entitled to shape women's sexual and nonsexual behaviour, and to decide what is acceptable or unacceptable. This is because hegemonic constructions of gender place men at the top of the gender hierarchy which further idolises masculinity as a source of power (Gear, 2007). Thus, men are entitled to punish women for unsuitable conduct. Within this discourse, sexual violence is constructed as a legitimized disciplinary mechanism or form of punishment. According to Scully and Marolla (1984), there is the notion that 'nice girls don't get raped' (p. 536). Characteristics or behaviour of the victim that violate normative sex role expectations are perceived as contributing to the commission of the crime. As illustrated in the data, the victim got what she deserved:

Image 100: "I gave it to you because you deserved it"

From the perpetrators perspective, the victim is deviant and his own behaviour is a form of social control in which the objective is to punish wrong doing. 'Wrong doing' in this instance is not

conforming to dominant constructions of femininity or womanhood. This is consistent with the rape myth that women ask for it (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). A woman who violates the norms of respectable behaviour by dressing in a 'provocative' manner or being sexually aggressive is positioned as irresponsible or not respectable, which justifies punishment:

Image 114: "If you sit like that, someday someone will spread your legs and want to fuck you"
Image 133: "That's what you get for being naughty"

Punishment is often meted out to those who transcend dominant constructions of 'normal' heterosexuality (Ferfolja, 2008). For instance, lesbian women:

Image 46: "Now you aren't a lesbian"
Image 149: "I'll prove to you you're straight"

Institutionalised heterosexuality plays a major role in regulating same sex sexuality (Jackson, 2006). Because heterosexuality is considered to be the outcome of a normal and healthy psychosexual development, the lesbian victim is considered a pathological divergence from the supposed norm. As a result of this social non-compliance, the victims who inhabit same sex, particularly lesbian, subjectivities are constructed as deviant (Ferfolja, 2008). As such, perpetrators drew on a discourse of punishment/discipline to legitimize their action as it is a method of punishing deviance by way of correction. Furthermore, sexual violence is constructed as a way of controlling women's sexuality, of "curing" lesbians of their "deviance".

Perpetrators, then, place themselves in a position of power/authority which allows them to feel right and justified for their actions against the victims who are constructed as wrong/deviant. Ferfolja (2008) explains that the 'lesbian' is reduced to and defined by her sexual subjectivity where her sexuality is read as based on personal pleasure and gratification instead of heterosexual procreation. Dominant discourses of heterosexuality construct women's sexuality as passive and dependant on a man. Therefore, women's sexual agency and erotic autonomy are seen as troublesome and worthy of punishment as they are not conforming to what it means to be a 'woman' and for rejecting the heterosexual man. Victims are then held responsible and are deemed deserving of their own victimization. However, sexual violence is not a response to individual 'deviance' but is intended to police those who identify with the victims' characteristics, in this case specifically lesbians (Meyer, 2012). Rape as a form of social control and subjugation of women's subjectivities and sexualities reinforces and reproduces patriarchal and heterosexist ideas; it is a disciplinary practice that produces

the passive and subordinate feminine body (Cahill, 2000, 2001) and, denies and destroys lesbian (or gender non-conforming) subjectivities by rendering them heterosexual. Furthermore, the pervasive threat of rape constitutes an element of the overall social dominance of patriarchy and heterosexuality, to such an extent that practices and subjectivities are in part formed by the presence of the threat of rape (Cahill, 2001). As Brownmiller (1975) believes, rape has played a critical function in keeping women in a state of fear and Gqola (2016) explains that the production of "female fear" is concerned with regulating women's movement, sexuality and behaviour (p. 92). That is, the rape or 'curing' of lesbians is a manifestation of the desire to control, monitor and police all aspects of women's lives (Gqola, 2016).

Within this discourse, perpetrators construct rape as a form of social control and power enacted through sex which contradicts the discourses of desire and pleasure that explicitly construct sexual violence as just sex. These perpetrators do not understand rape as a means of reproduction or an impulsive need for sex; they understand rape as a way of punishing and disciplining women. Sexual violence then functions to maintain the hierarchy of power in society where men are place at the top and women at the bottom.

4.1.4.2. A discourse of humiliation

Perpetrators drew on a discourse of humiliation which is in line with feminist analysis of sexual violence in that it is viewed as the gendered abuse of power- an act of humiliation and control (Brownmiller, 1975). Perpetrators drew on this discourse to explicitly construct their victims as worthless:

Image 40: "You are a worthless piece of shit"
Image 61: "You are nothing to me or anyone else"

Perpetrators' use of crude language when talking to their victims demonstrates intent to humiliate the victim. Furthermore, within a conceptual framework that idealizes and sanitizes women and their sexuality, women who are raped are often considered defiled or damaged goods (Weiss, 2010). Furthermore, by destroying victims' subjectivities, perpetrators minimize the severity of their actions, as well as the guilt that may be attached to it, through constructing her as nothing and worthless. This draws from the rape myth that rape is a trivial event (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994).

Drawing on the discourse of humiliation, perpetrators construct their actions as a way of 'damaging' their victims:

Image 12: "No one will love you after I'm done"

This does not only construct victims as "damaged goods" but also as unlovable and unwanted. Perpetrators construct victims as objects that are worth nothing or that can be broken. Furthermore, because a woman's value is to a large extent based on her ability to attract men and provide sexual and reproductive services (Marshall, Laws, & Barbaree, 2013), victims are then constructed as sex objects within this discourse:

Image 121: "I heard you were a great fuck"

This allows the perpetrator to deny that any harm was caused or experienced. Also, because women's roles are reduced to attracting a man, negative comments about the victims' physical characteristics or behaviours that construct the victim as unattractive in any way are considered to be humiliating and degrading:

Image 71: "I can't fuck a crying girl"
Image 77: "Don't ever cut your long hair. It's the only nice thing about you"

This positions the victim as only good for sex or nothing at all. This is reinforced by attributing attractiveness to the victim based on her performance of sexual acts that are regarded as degrading, as well as mocking a victim after she has been subjected to such sexual acts:

Image 173: "You would look a lot cuter choking on my dick"
Image 165: "You look ridiculous with cum all over your face"

The words that perpetrators have said clearly reflect a great deal of hostility toward, and desire to humiliate, the victim.

Within this discourse, sexual violence represents the denigration of what is considered to be a woman's most valuable asset, thus any forced sex act may be considered degrading/humiliating. According to Darke (1990 as cited in Marshall *et al.*, 2013), humiliation is accomplished from a position of power. Therefore, control and domination can be seen as necessary perquisites, with sexual violence providing the vehicle for humiliation. To perpetrate or forcibly elicit sexual activities against the victim's will represents the ultimate power and control. This positions victims as powerless and to be powerless to stop such violation then represents ultimate humiliation.

4.1.4.3. A discourse of intimidation

Intimidation, like humiliation, is accomplished from a position of power (Darke, 1990 as cited in Marshall *et al.*, 2013). Perpetrators drew on a discourse of intimidation to construct an identity of authority using threats and anger statements. A discourse of intimidation instils fear in the victims which may be considered destruction of the emotional self. According to Gqola (2016), this is an effective way to remind women that they are not safe and that their bodies are not entirely theirs. Perpetrators drew on this discourse by threatening their victims with physical harm and death, degradation and shame, and the harm and death of their loved ones:

Image 10: "If you don't stop fighting, I'm just gonna go rape your sister...you're making this too hard"
Image 73: "If you tell I'll kill mommy, nannie and grandpa"
Image 78: "The only way you'll ever leave me is in a body bag"
Image 176: "By the time I am done, no one will want you, I will break you"

By intimidating their victims, perpetrators deliberately make them frightened enough to do what they want them to do and intimidation is likelier to be used in non-voluntary interactions. By creating fear, perpetrators communicate that they have power over women (Gqola, 2016). Thus, this discourse constructs the perpetrators actions as intentional and against the will of the victim as well as an act of power. The actions and talk of perpetrators can be seen as a form of sexual intimidation because physical or psychological abuse (threats, attacks of self-esteem as illustrated in the data) can be used to enforce sexual compliance.

Perpetrators also drew on the discourse of intimidation to silence their victims that is, according to Gqola (2016) the manufacture of female fear works to silence women by reminding women of their rapability, and therefore "blackmails [us] to keep ourselves in check" (p 79-80). According to LeMoncheck (1997), several feminists have argued that sexual intimidation of women is victimizing not only for its violent and violating intrusiveness but also for its success in instilling terror or fear in women. Furthermore, perpetrators capacity for reprisal terrorises their victims into silence:

Image 76: "remember I can arrest your mom and dad and put them in jail anytime I want"
Image 140: "If you tell I will kill you"

Therefore, the power of the perpetrator to terrorize his victim extends beyond the sexual violence itself, to serving as a barrier to reporting and, contributing to a culture of silence and stigma.

Furthermore, tactics of physical and verbal intimidation enable the perpetrator to dominate and control the victim. The pervasive and often violent sexual intimidation of women by men is evidence of the systematic and institutionalized sexual subordination of women whose intimidation serves a patriarchal status quo (LeMoncheck, 1997). It is argued that in a patriarchal society in which social and economic power and prestige lie in the hands of men, the sexual intimidation of women is a successful means of maintaining dominance over and control of women (LeMoncheck, 1997). This positions the victims as powerless against the perpetrator. A discourse of intimidation enables the perpetrators to destroy any sense of autonomy or authority of the victim and constructs her as vulnerable.

#### 4.1.5. A silencing discourse: Don't tell

In the data, it becomes evident that in a number of cases perpetrators wished to keep their victims from talking about/reporting of what had occurred. They silenced their victims in a number of ways. As previously mentioned within a discourse of intimidation, perpetrators threatened their victims to silence them. Some threats were of physical harm and even death. The extremity of such threats demonstrates the importance, to perpetrators, of silencing their victims regarding their own actions. This may suggest a strong level of recognition of the moral wrongness of sexual violence.

Image 24: "If you tell anyone...I'll kill you"

Sexual violence is then constructed as something that should not be spoken about which further implies that the actions of the perpetrators were wrong and warrant negative consequences. Therefore, perpetrators drew on a discourse of silence to avoid getting into trouble:

Image 1: "The team is going to kill me. Don't tell them"
Image 126: "If you tell everyone, I'll go to jail"

There is no attempt to justify or rationalize their actions; rather there is an attempt to keep the victim from talking about it.

Perpetrators used the negative stigma regarding rape and rape victims as a way to silence their victims:

Image 41: "no one will ever believe you so telling anyone is useless. You're a liar"
Image 80: "if you ever tell ill make you out to be the biggest lying whore"
Image 150: "if you tell anyone you will be in just as much trouble as I am"

By using negative stigma, perpetrators constructed their victims in relation to the rape myth that women lie about rape. By implication then, it might not be the individual victim's integrity that is destroyed but rather the integrity of women. It also builds on the idea that false reporting is a thing that happens regularly. Furthermore, by making claims that the victim will be in some kind of trouble too, not only acknowledges the wrong of rape on the perpetrators part but it draws on the rape myths that women deserve rape or should be blamed (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Thus, rape is constructed as something women lie about and victims as deserving or blamed for the assault. This places perpetrators in a more favourable position as they are constructed as free or safe to perpetrate without any consequences even though it is suggested that their actions are in fact wrong.

Perpetrators also used less threatening/aggressive ways to silence victims. They referred to what had occurred between themselves and their victims as a 'secret' which further reiterates the idea that it should not be talked about:

Image 106: "this will be our little secret"
Image 141: "let's go to our special place. It can be our little secret"
Image 166: "this will be our little secret...don't you trust me?"

However, in this case perpetrators did not feel it necessary to threaten their victims. Also, by referring to sexual violence as a 'little secret', perpetrators minimize the experience of the victim which is in line with the rape myth that rape is a trivial event (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Furthermore, perpetrators use the victim's possible feelings of guilt for talking about or betraying the perpetrator as a way to silence them. This builds on the idea of a 'relationship' between perpetrators and victims. This positions the victim as trustworthy enough to keep such a secret or as disloyal if they do not keep the secret. Because the perpetrator is also keeping a 'secret', they construct themselves as someone that too can be trusted and denies any harm done to the victim.

Perpetrators drew on a silencing discourse because it leads to the literal not knowing about the sexual violence by other people. The consequent lack of knowledge then prevents intervention or negative consequences on the perpetrators part and denies the existence of the harm of sexual violence. Silencing their victims also enables inaccurate ideas about sexual violence to go unchallenged.

### 4.1.6. Gendering of positions

The majority of the photographs analysed were of women survivors referring to male perpetrators. Thus, unsurprisingly the dominant discourses present in the texts are at first glance related to

perpetrators as male and victims as female. However, it is important to acknowledge the positions within these discourses of men as victims/survivors and women as perpetrators. For instance, discourses of pleasure and men's overt desires construct men's sexuality as ever-ready and as an elemental part of being a man. This does not only create an opportunity for men to perpetrate but also for men to be victimized and their experience to be minimized:

> Image 28: "Hey, wanna have some fun?"
> Image 31: "Be a man and just do it"

In both of these instances, the survivors are men and the perpetrators are men too. This illustrates homophobic stereotypes that suggest that men who are sexually assaulted or harassed by other men "wanted it" or got pleasure from it (Kassing, Beesley, & Frey, 2005). Furthermore, men are generally expected to be sexually aggressive. In the case of quote 31, if the male victim engages in the sexual interactions he is stripped of his status as a victim, but if he refuses, he is stripped of his status as a man.

A discourse of punishment/discipline constructed sexual violence as a way of normalising heterosexuality and policing subjectivities. This was not limited to 'bad girls' and lesbians, but applies to the assault of a transgender person by a female perpetrator:

> Image 187: "You're a trans? Oh no don't do that to your body. No one wants a tranny"-before. "See? You're beautiful just the way you are"-after

Thus, the position of a perpetrator who attempts to police gender non-conforming subjectivities is not limited to the male perpetrator. Within this data it is evident that women too may be perpetrators of this kind of sexual violence. Another way in which female perpetrators constructed themselves is in line with dominant constructions of femininity that label women as nurturers. Furthermore, it is in line with the typology of the female sexual offender as a lover or teacher (Higgs *et al.*, 1992):

> Image 68: "don't you want to practice for when you're older? Don't worry, we aren't lesbians if you think of a boy"

Sexual violence by a female perpetrator is thus constructed as a way to teach. By implication then, the female perpetrator is further constructed as a sexual educator.

Thus, sexual violence does not only occur between heterosexual male perpetrators and the heterosexual female victim. However, heterosexual and patriarchal ideas contribute to more than one

form of sexual violence. Sexual violence is always gendered and enacted against the feminine (Gqola, 2016). Gqola (2016) further explains that the feminine may not always be embodied in a woman's body; it may be a child of any gender, a man who is considered inappropriately masculine and, any gender non-conforming people. This demonstrates the pervasiveness of patriarchal and heteronormative society. But by recognizing and considering women acting as aggressors and men being victimized may contribute to the disruption of such dominant discourses of heterosexuality that cast women as passive and men as active (Gavey, 2005).

As illustrated in this section of the analysis, perpetrators and victims were constructed in various ways. Within discourses of pleasure, desire and romance perpetrators were constructed as non-violent, ideally masculine, sexually competent, biologically driven, capable of companionship and caring, and as innocent. Within these same discourses victims were constructed as sexually passive and dependent on men, gatekeepers of men's sexuality, blameworthy, and dishonest. Discourses of marriage, consent and sexual agreement added to these constructions by further constructing perpetrators as entitled and superior while victims were constructed as sexually obliged and as sexual objects. Adding to this is the construction of perpetrators as powerful, controlling, forceful and aggressive and victims as powerless, deviant and worthless, within discourses of entitlement, punishment, humiliation and intimidation. The following section will discuss the consequence/effects of these discursive constructions.

### 4.2. Discursive strategies and resources

In the previous section, attention was paid to the way in which sexual violence perpetrators discursively constructed their actions and their victims. In this section, I look at the discursive strategies and resources drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators when talking to their victims. These discursive strategies are in line with broader social discourses and enabled perpetrators to neutralize their culpability by normalizing their behaviour, blaming their victims, asserting innocence, justifying their actions, minimizing the experience of their victims, and silencing their victims.

#### 4.2.1. Normalizing their behaviour

The analysis revealed that perpetrators normalized their sexual violence by drawing on larger discourses relating to gender and sexuality. By drawing on discourses of pleasure, desire and romance, perpetrators constructed sexual violence as 'normal' heterosexual behaviour:

Image 136: "When you have sex with someone it should be with someone who loves you"

Heteronormative discourses consistently link female sexuality with passivity, vulnerability and submissiveness, and male sexuality with dominance, aggression and desire (Butler, 1993). The availability of a restricted gendered discourse that emphasizes the binary of masculine and feminine as the exclusive means to understand gender made it possible for perpetrators to contextualize their sexual violence in gendered terms. Perpetrators relied on gendered social discourse that implies that male sexual aggression is natural and that men are the inherently superior sex. Thus, sexual violence is considered as a gendered practice whereby men 'accomplish' or 'do' gender (Anderson & Umberson, 2001). By drawing on the male sexual drive discourse, perpetrators further normalized their sexual violence by implying that it is acceptable for a man to persist with sex if a woman has in anyway aroused him, because of the idea that men are unable to stop once their sexual drives have been set into motion:

Image 75: "you started it and I kinda just went with it"

For women, on the other hand, the idea is that sex is bound up with relationships and love, and women's sexuality is passive and dependant on men (Shefer & Foster, 2001). In the data, women were constructed as less sexual (if at all) than men and their sexuality was constructed as intrinsically slow to warm up therefore force was deemed as part and parcel of normal sex:

Image 137: "you're wet. I knew I could turn you on. You just needed practice. Now you have the easy job. Tell me how good this feels-now your turn. Get on top."

When sexual aggression is seen as a normal consequence of male-female relationships, when men are expected to pursue sex at all costs, and when a woman's "no" is seen as part of a game she is playing, the phenomenon of sexual violence is normalized.

### 4.2.2. Blaming their victims

Perpetrators were able to blame their victims for sexual violence by drawing on various discourses which took the focus away from their own actions and placed it on the actions or characteristics of their victims. From the ways in which people interact with one another to the laws defining sexual violence, all practices relating to gender and sexuality are shaped by and regulated by social norms (Jackson, 2006). Thus, what is considered normal or deviant within a society often varies according to the discourses of gender and sexuality that are available. Normative heterosexuality regulates

those kept within its boundaries and sanctions those outside of them (Jackson, 2006). Characteristics and behaviours of the victim that violate normative sex role expectations are perceived as contributing to the commission of the crime. Thus, a woman who violates the norms is to blame for her own victimization. By drawing on a discourse of punishment/discipline, perpetrators were able to justify their actions by claiming that the victim got what she deserved. Punishment is often meted out to those who transcend dominant constructions of 'normal' heterosexuality (Ferfolja, 2008). Accordingly, the analysis revealed that as a result of this social non-compliance, lesbians were constructed as deviant therefore they were held responsible for their own sexual violence:

Image 46: "now you aren't a lesbian"

By drawing on discourses of desire and male sexual drive, perpetrators positioned themselves as victims of a sexually provocative woman. His behaviour is normalized, exonerating him from responsibility for the act, and the victims behaviour is positioned as deviant and thus blameworthy (Anderson & Doherty, 2007):

Image 81: "I can't help it short hair drives me crazy"

Furthermore, the discourse of consent and the sexual contract discourse drawn on by perpetrators positioned their victims as responsible for their sexual arousal and for implying consent. Agency and responsibility are thus removed from the perpetrators by casting the victim as the rightful guardian or regulator of their sexual behaviour:

Image 55: "You never said I couldn't"

Kitzinger and Frith (1999) state that sexual violence is often presented as a result of miscommunication between a man and a woman. In the data, it is evident that perpetrators blamed the sexual violence on their victims because the victim was not clear in her communication of refusing sex. This idea is problematic because it presumes that the victim is responsible for controlling men's 'uncontrollable' sexuality and that it is up to the victim to change the situation so that men will respond accordingly. Kitzinger and Frith (1999) claim that men and women have a sophisticated ability to convey and comprehend refusals. Thus, perpetrators claims not to have understood, which conform to culturally normative patterns, can only be heard as self-interested justifications for sexual violence (Kitzinger & Frith, 1999).

4.2.3. Minimization

When talking to their victims, perpetrators downplayed the severity of the situation. Perpetrators drew on discourses of romance and marriage to minimize the incident or reinterpret the situation as something other than violence. For instance, forced sex in established relationships is not considered rape because of the idea that sex is either an obligation in a marriage or a way to maintain a relationship:

Image 144: "I love you, why are you crying?"

Furthermore, by drawing on discourses of women's secret sexual desires and consent, perpetrators no not consider their victims 'no' or struggle as nonconsent because of the idea that some force is normal in heterosexual interactions. Mackinnon (1989 as cited in Powell *et al.*, 2013) argues that under current constructions of heterosexual intercourse, there is a fine line between the level of force required to define sex as rape and the pressure that is accepted as 'normal' of everyday sexual encounters. Therefore, discourses of romance and marriage, as well as the No means yes discourse allows perpetrators to mask abusive behaviours.

The experience of male victims of sexual violence was also minimized due to gendered discourses. Male heterosexual desire is considered as the 'natural' expression and foundation of masculinity (Bertone & Camoletto, 2009), which suggests that men are always ready and wanting sex. Thus, as rape has been constructed as only a form of sex, the idea is that a man would enjoy the encounter:

Image 26: "Don't worry, boys are supposed to like this"

Perpetrators also drew on a discourse of pleasure which served to locate sexual violence within the realms of sex. This allowed perpetrators to ward off the charge that they are acting in a harmful manner and to construct their actions as sexually pleasing. Denying the harm done to victims thus becomes a part of the minimization process that enables perpetrators to not acknowledge what happened as 'real' rape and to claim that the victims response is an overreaction:

Image 115: "Why are you crying? That was fun"

Furthermore, perpetrators minimized the severity of sexual violence because of the assumption that such behaviours are so ubiquitous that they are rather normal:

Image 156: "Things like this happen, and we should just forgive and move on and learn from it, I don't know why you're so unwilling to that...you make me sound like a monster"

By drawing on this discursive strategy, perpetrators minimized the experience of their victims as well as their actions which then further served to make themselves appear less culpable (Bonnes, 2010).

4.2.4. Asserting innocence

Perpetrators in this study asserted their innocence through the implication that sexual violence is merely sex. By drawing on a discourse of pleasure, perpetrators implied that their actions were for enjoyment or pleasure. This allowed for perpetrators to achieve a sense of innocence; that what they were doing was not wrong. Furthermore, because sexual violence was constructed in gendered terms in that it is seen as a natural consequence of male-female relationships, perpetrators did not consider their actions as deviant but rather as normal. It therefore becomes evident that perpetrators did not view themselves as transgressors. This avoidance of acknowledging their actions as sexual violence/rape was possible because perpetrators drew on normalizing strategies:

Image 74: "I don't know why you're acting like this I'm not doing anything wrong"

Claims of innocence were further supported by blaming strategies that attempted to hold the victim responsible. By locating a scapegoat for their actions, perpetrators are then able to maintain their subjective innocence (Kramer, 2010). The analysis revealed that perpetrators drew on numerous discourses which served to blame their victims for the incident. By blaming their victims, they attempt to remove responsibility from themselves. One way in which perpetrators blamed their victims was by drawing on discourses of desire and men's uncontrollable sex drive. The focus is placed on characteristics or behaviours of their victims that trigger an uncontrollable sexual impulse. Furthermore, a notion of women as gatekeepers of male sexuality reiterates the idea that men are the innocent victims of seductive or provocative women. Positioning the victim as deviant exonerates perpetrators from the responsibility of the act. This avoidance of agency assists perpetrators in maintaining their subjective innocence.

Additionally, perpetrators drew on religiosity in producing themselves as social subjects. Sexual deviance is deemed unnatural or immoral from a religious perspective (Kramer, 2010). Therefore, by producing themselves as religious subjects, perpetrators further asserted their innocence:

Image 96: "... I am a man of God I would never do something to a woman I wouldn't want to happen to my own mother"

Claims of innocence were also supported by discourses which constructed the perpetrators actions as in favour of the victim. Discourses of women's secret underlying sexual desire and consent allowed perpetrators to ward off the charge that they are doing something wrong. This was done by making claims that the victims was willing or that she enjoyed it.

### 4.2.5. Justifying their actions

Justifications are used when perpetrators acknowledge their sexual violence against their victim but deny that it was wrong (Scully & Marolla, 1984). That is, they show that in that particular situation the act was appropriate (Boonzaier & Rey, 2004). Furthermore, this discursive strategy is used in conjunction with the blaming strategy in that they both locate the responsibility of the sexual violence with the victims. Perpetrators in this study justified their actions by presenting the victim in a light that made her appear culpable, regardless of their own actions. This was done by drawing on discourses of desire and uncontrollable male sexuality which positioned the victim as responsible for the sexual arousal of the perpetrator, via her attractiveness, choice of clothing and implied consent. Perpetrators also justified their behaviour by implying that their victims actually wanted it and that if she did not, she should have done more to prevent it. This was made possible by the no means yes discourse where the idea is that women have an unconscious wish to be raped (Brownmiller, 1975).

Perpetrators further justified sexual violence by representing it as an entitlement. As discussed previously in the analysis, perpetrators drew on a discourse of entitlement which reduced the role of the victim to being a sexual instrument for male gratification. Within this discourse, because men are entitled to women's bodies, forced or non-consenting 'sex' is justified. Men's entitlement is not limited to sex. Within a discourse of discipline, perpetrators take up the position of being entitled to shape women's sexual and non-sexual behaviours. Because these perpetrators decided on what is acceptable or not, they were also entitled to punish women for unsuitable conduct. This also became a justification for sexual violence as perpetrators constructed their actions as a response to women's deviance.

Even though perpetrators' talk constructed their actions as sexual violence (instead of just sex), their actions were still constructed as not entirely wrong. To accomplish this, perpetrators attempted to discredit and blame their victims while presenting their own actions as justified. However, not only

do these vocabularies neutralize perpetrators culpability and justify sexual violence but also sustain a sexual double standard whereby woman are punished for being openly sexual, whereas men are excused for it (Weiss, 2009). Weiss (2009) explains that justifications reify a good girl/bad girl dichotomy with "good girls" expected to avoid placing themselves in situations where they can be assaulted, while "bad girls" who "misbehave" are seen as deserving victimization. These justifications transpose identities of perpetrator and victim; the victim becomes the deviant or wrong doer who is seen as responsible for and deserving of sexual violence (Weiss, 2009).

### 4.2.6. Silencing

By drawing on a discourse of silence, it becomes evident that perpetrators wish to keep their victims from talking about their victimization. The analysis revealed verbal tactics used by perpetrators to silence their victims, for example, intimidation and threats of harm. Perpetrators' capacity for reprisal terrorizes their victims into silence. Silencing their victims leads to the literal not knowing about the sexual violence where knowledge of the situation will lead to prevention or intervention. The discursive contexts that support silence about sexual violence cannot be understood without addressing the social and cultural understandings that contribute to the silence about sexual violence (Thiesmeyer, 2003). Furthermore, rather than treating silence as an absence of expression, it is important to look at silencing as an active and socially constructed practice (Thiesmeyer, 2003). Instead of explicitly telling victims not to tell like in earlier mentioned instances, perpetrators used the negative stigma regarding sexual violence and victims of sexual violence to silence their victims. This was done by verbally exposing victims to the reality of secondary victimization and the possibility that they will be viewed negatively. Also, perpetrators reiterated the idea that women lie about rape by implying that their victims would not be believed.

By referring to their actions as a 'secret' implies that it should happen without the knowledge of others. Furthermore, by saying its "our" secret implies that both parties (perpetrator and victim) can be trusted not to tell. By doing this, perpetrators use their victims possible feelings of guilt for talking or betraying their trust. By talking, victims are implicated in the severing of certain bonds of trust, thus perpetrators used their relationship with the victims to contribute to the silence.

Silencing operates through discourse. The action of silencing is accompanied by social judgements of what is acceptable and unacceptable. Thiesmeyer (2003) argues that silencing is a process that works best when disguised, that is, when it displaces the silenced material by means of another discourse, or conceals or filters the unacceptable material through a discourse that is more

acceptable. For instance, perpetrators drew on a discourse of marriage which positioned their victims as wives that should be sexually available to their husbands. Constructing marital relationships in this manner contributes to maintaining the silence around sexual violence within a marriage as it is seen as acceptable.

By drawing on discourses of women's secret desires, men's uncontrollable sexuality and blaming and normalizing strategies, perpetrators are able to silence their victims through creating ambiguity and confusion regarding the legitimacy of the act. Victims may be less likely to talk about the sexual violence if they consider themselves to have instigated it. Thus, perpetrators silence their victims through the victims' acceptance of blame.

The silencing of talk about sexual violence helps to perpetuate it. In this study, the discourses drawn on by perpetrators to silence their victims are rooted in traditional patriarchal ideas about men being inherently superior to woman (Polaschek & Ward, 2002). Therefore, silencing is considered as an act of unequal negotiations. Perpetrators use silencing as a discursive strategy which maintains a gender hierarchy.

#### 4.2.7. Exercising power

Chung (2003) explains that feminist activists and academics have, since the 1960s, identified women's subordination within the heterosexual matrix. This has drawn attention to the ways in which heterosexuality continues to sustain gender inequality. For example, (hetero) sex is understood to be 'penetrative' sex, where a man's sexual desire leads to this event (Chung, 2003). Discussions of a woman's sexual desire and sexual practices are largely absent, with a woman being the object of a man's desire, not the active subject of her own sexual desires:

> Image 92: "Whether you let me or not has nothing to do with it baby, I'll fuck you regardless"

As illustrated above, the gender hierarchy is sustained through sexual violence being regarded as men's entitlement over women's bodies. Furthermore, discourses of heterosexuality evident in the analysis situated women's sexuality as passive, dependent and responsive to men's sexuality. In the data, some perpetrators took some responsibility for their victims 'pleasure'. This provided another way for men to abrogate power to themselves by discursively removing women's ability to be an independent sexual agent.

Image 137: "You're wet. I knew I could turn you on..."

In the analysis it also became evident that sexual violence and the words that perpetrators used when talking to their victims were an intentional expression of male authority. Thus, the perpetrators actions were aimed at exerting power and maintaining control (Boonzaier & Rey, 2004). For instance, as mentioned previously, religious ideals were used to reinforce male authority and female subordination. Furthermore, masculinity is typically associated with characteristics such as dominance, aggression, assertiveness, and men are supposed to be the heads of the household (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). Femininity on the other hand is associated with characteristics such as submissiveness, passivity and dependence, and women are supposed to be subordinate to their husbands (Hollway *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, perpetrators used sexual violence as a symbolic reassertion of male power and privilege:

Image 86: "Never question my authority"

Perpetrators used various tactics aimed at degradation, power and control. By drawing on discourses of humiliation and intimidation, perpetrators positioned victims as inferior or powerless:

Image 182: "You're nothing"
Image 78: "The only way you'll ever leave me is in a body bag"

Such treatment of women is part of a larger, overarching effort aimed at men's domination and control of women (LeMoncheck, 1997). Within a discourse of discipline/punishment, sexual violence was constructed as a legitimized disciplinary mechanism or form of punishment. By drawing on this discourse, perpetrators placed themselves in a position of power/authority to punish women for unsuitable conduct. Thus, perpetrators actions and words function to further maintain the hierarchy of power in society where men are placed at the top and women at the bottom. This reiterates the argument put forward by Anderson and Doherty (2007) that sexual violence is both socially produced and socially legitimated as a mechanism that ultimately maintains patriarchal gender power relations.

As illustrated, the different discourses identified in the first section enabled perpetrators to draw on different discursive strategies such as normalizing their actions, blaming their victims, minimizing sexual violence, justifying their behaviours, silencing their victims, and exercising power. The following section will take what was found in these two sections and compare it to rape myths, stereotypes, discourses and discursive practices that promote a rape supportive culture.

### 4.3. Consistencies with Rape Culture

In the literature it has been explained that culturally transmitted assumptions about men, women, violence, sexuality and myths about rape constitute a rape supportive belief system (Koss *et al.*, 1985). It is argued in this thesis that a rape supportive culture does not only capture the hostile nature of the social environment that many survivors experience in the aftermath of sexual violence, but it also provides a social pattern for coercive sexuality to occur. This part of the analysis looks at the consistencies between the talk of perpetrators and rape myths, stereotypes and discursive and social practices promoting sexual violence. An interesting finding in the data was that of quotes from a third party, not the perpetrator. This further illustrated the existence of rape culture as well as the issue of secondary victimization. These quotes are discussed and illustrated in this section of the analysis.

When investigating the discursive strategies drawn on by perpetrators in this study, perpetrators were found to normalize their behaviour, blame their victims, assert their innocence, justify their actions, and minimize the experience of their victims. This is consistent with the functions of rape myths, that is, blaming the victim, absolving the perpetrators, minimizing sexual violence, and justifying male sexual aggression against women (Brownmiller, 2005; Burt, 1980; Edwards *et al.*, 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Furthermore, the words and phrases put forward by perpetrators when talking to their victims replicated rape myths and discursive practices at play on a broader societal level. Also, the talk of perpetrators was consistent with the talk of third parties/members of society present in the data.

There is a common notion that men cannot control their sexual urges, especially once aroused (Hollway, 1989; Polaschek & Ward, 2002). In the analysis, it was found that perpetrators constructed their sexuality in this way. By drawing on discourses of desire and male sexual drive, perpetrators positioned themselves as victims of a sexually provocative woman by making claims that they "couldn't help it". Evidently, perpetrators drew on the rape myth that he didn't mean to (because of his uncontrollable sexual urge) (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994) thus, agency and responsibility are removed from the perpetrators. Victims were constructed as the 'triggers' and gatekeepers of men's urgent sexuality. These ideas were found in quotes from third parties:

> Image 239 (member of community): "are you sure you didn't turn him on?"

Victims were blamed by perpetrators in the same way, as having triggered his sexual desire. Related to the notion that men always want or need sex is the rape myth that men cannot be victims of rape (Sleath & Bull, 2010). In the data, this notion allowed for perpetrators to strip their male victim's status as a victim because part of being a man is being ever-ready for sex. Thus, sexual violence in this case was further constructed in line with the rape myth that it wasn't really rape (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). This was also reiterated by a third party:

> Image 211 (someone he told): "men can't get raped"

Thus, in both instances perpetrators and third parties minimized the severity of the experience for the male victim and blamed female victims for their own victimization.

Perpetrators were also found to normalize their sexual violence by drawing on discourses of pleasure, desire and romance which constructed their actions as normal heterosexual behaviour. Similarly, a quote from a third party in the data reiterated the idea that sexual aggression is a normal consequence of male-female relationships:

> Image 218 (Mother): "Sometimes...you have to when you're not really into it...it's part of being in a relationship...guys want sex...what do you want...to call the police?"

As illustrated above, a 'regular' member of the society also normalized the incident by drawing on discourses of romance and entitlement as well as a male sexual drive discourse which is consistent with the analysis of perpetrators talk. It is also in line the myth that it was not really rape which was explicitly articulated in perpetrators talk (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Another way in which perpetrators drew on the myth that it was not really rape was within discourses of consent and romance whereby rape was constructed as sex. This was done by making claims such as "things like this happen", and that one should "forgive and move on". These ideas were also found in quotes from a third party:

> Image 206 (friend): "It's been a year...you really need to get over it and stop blaming him. Besides he was your boyfriend. It couldn't have been sexual assault"

This is in line with Burt and Estep's discussion on the social definition of rape (1981 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007). They note that arguments may be put forward that 'what happened' was consensual as opposed to coerced intercourse- that is, that the encounter was 'just sex' (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). This argument is also consistent with the talk of perpetrators as it was found that the

encounter was explicitly labelled "sex". Furthermore, the data showed that third parties put forward the same idea:

Image 226 (Prosecutor): "it was just bad sex"

The discursive strategies of normalizing and minimizing work hand in hand in the talk of perpetrators as well as the talk of third parties. According to Rumney and Bijl (2010), incidents of rape are minimized or downplayed, particularly when they take place in existing relationships where sex is seen as an obligation. Similarly, in the analysis perpetrators were found to minimize their actions by drawing on discourses of romance, marriage and sexual agreement. Within these discourses, forced sex was not constructed as rape but as sex as an obligation in, or way to maintain, a marriage or relationship. Where sexual violence by a sexual partner is concerned, the intimate nature of the woman's relationship with the man and the implicit sexual contract between them enables sexual violence to be dismissed as normal (Rumney & Bijl, 2010). Furthermore, perpetrators drew on ideas consistent with the myth that husbands cannot rape their wives (Edwards *et al.*, 2011), to mask abusive behaviours. In the analysis, perpetrators were also found to produce themselves as religious subjects to assert the innocence. According to Edwards *et al.*, (2011), religious institutions have reinforced the myth that husbands cannot rape their wives.

In the analysis, perpetrators were found to blame their victims. Characteristics and behaviours of victims were constructed as deviant and thus blameworthy. This is in line with the commonly known myth that women ask for it by their dress and behaviour (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Similarly, Burt and Estep (1981 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007) made another argument that even if it is accepted that forced intercourse occurred, there is still an argument insisting that an alleged victim either provoked the attack or was somehow reckless in her behaviour and is thus blameworthy in failing to prevent the attack. This too was consistent with findings in the analysis. By blaming their victims and justifying their actions, perpetrators positioned their victims as deserving of what had occurred thus unworthy of sympathy. It was found in the data that third parties also minimized the incident and blamed the victim by implying that victims deserved it or that they were reckless in their behaviour:

Image 233 (Therapist): "Well, what did you expect would happen?"
Image 239 (brother): "you work at a sexual assault centre you should have known better"

A discourse of desire and a sexual contract discourse allowed perpetrators to emphasize the way in which their victims made themselves available or attractive to them and positioned their victims as entering into some sort of obligation when their behaviour is interpreted as seductive. This is in line with Cahill's (2000) feminist analysis of the social construction of the female body and the belief that women are culpable for rape. According to Cahill (2000), women are expected to monitor, police, restrict, and even hinder their movements in an attempt to ensure the safety of their bodies. This underscores the widespread myth that women are responsible for preventing bodily violations and that women who are sexually victimized are culpable (Edwards *et al.*, 2011). The data further revealed that these ideas were, too, drawn on by a third party:

> Image 231 (Friend): "Why are you complaining? You let him in your room"

The rape myths and discourses drawn on by perpetrators of sexual violence are also evident in the legal framework, rape prevention strategies and, media coverage (Bonnes, 2010; Edwards *et al.*, 2011; Stevenson, 2000). According to Temkin and Krahé (2008), an extensive body of research with legal professionals have shown that holding women responsible for sexual violence is a common aspect of legal decision making (e.g. Brown, Hamilton, & O'Neill, 2007). Arguably, pubic and legal ideas as to the expected conduct and behaviour of the stereotypical rape victim have been grounded in the idea that 'genuine' victims do not put themselves at risk for rape (Stevenson, 2000):

> Image 207 (Defence lawyer): "Were you wearing socks? What are skinny jeans? Can you describe them?"
> Image 234 (Defence attorney): "Why did you stay if you say it was so awful?"

Similarly, when drawing on the rape myth that she asked for it, perpetrators were found to make explicit reference to the victim's attire, claiming that she "shouldn't have worn that". Furthermore, perpetrators were also found to imply that their victims did not do enough to stop the rape from happening by making claims that she did not "do something about it".

Media coverage of rape cases also have elements of victim blame (Caringella-Macdonald, 1998 as cited in Edwards *et al.*, 2011). For instance, media coverage suggest that women should avoid certain behaviours and ways of dressing in order to avoid rape (Bonnes, 2010). When a woman does not avoid these things she is often depicted in the media as to blame for the rape (Benedict, 1992 as cited in Bonnes, 2010). This is mirrored in the talk of perpetrators, where victim blame is clearly present in the analysis, as well as in the general public arena.

Furthermore, the focus is on the role played by the victim and not the perpetrator. For instance, media coverage do not often report on the self-defence of the victims which suggests that they had not done enough to prevent the rape (Bonnes, 2010). Thus, victims are often portrayed as responsible for rape or 'asking for it' (Bonnes, 2010). This is consistent with the findings in the analysis of perpetrators blaming their victims for their own victimization by explicitly pointing out that their victim was not "kicking and screaming" which means she "must've wanted it".

The responsibility of the victim to physically prevent rape ties in with the 'real rape' myth that perpetrators drew on. The idea is that rape has to be physically violent or that there has to be some kind of physical threat for it to be considered real rape (Chennells, 2009). By constructing rape within a discourse of desire and romance, perpetrators denied that a real rape had occurred. Also, by telling their victim that she is "okay", perpetrators imply that there was no injury, thus no harm was done. This was reiterated in quotes from third parties:

> Image 242 (reporter): "Did they threaten you?"

In addition to not recognising some forms of sexual violence as real rape, victims are often met with disbelief and scepticism when disclosing or reporting their assault (Anderson & Doherty, 2007; Chennells, 2009). This indicates the presence of the rape myth that victims lie (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). In the analysis it was found that perpetrators also make use of this myth when talking to their victims. Perpetrators explicitly called their victims a "liar" in terms of wanting it, and as a way to manipulate victims into silence by claiming that they would not be believed so "telling anyone is useless". This kind of doubt and disbelief is also present in the talk of 'non-perpetrators':

> Image 244 (friends): "are you sure? That doesn't happen at Uva"
> Image 216 (former friend): "what do you mean you didn't want it?"

As illustrated, it is not only believed that victims lie about being raped, but also that they lie about wanting or enjoying it. There is a myth that all women want to be raped (Brownmiller, 1975) which is present in the talk of perpetrators. It was found that perpetrators blatantly disregard their victims' resistance, or construct their victims struggle as a false pretence. Here, sexual violence is seen rather as a seduction. As mentioned in the literature, these ideas are reinforced and reproduced in media genres such as romance novels and pornography for instance, as they often feature ideas of heterosexuality marked by aggressive 'seduction'; a model in which an overbearing man ignores his partner's resistance (Pineau, 1989). These ideas are mirrored in the talk of perpetrators in this study.

For instance, perpetrators minimized and justified their actions by drawing on discourses of women's secret desires and consent when talking to their victims. This allowed perpetrators to ward off the charge that they were acting in a harmful manner and further mask abusive behaviour by framing their victims' 'no' or struggle as normal in heterosexual interactions. Also, when considering the quotes of third parties, there were consistencies with the talk of perpetrators as well as the myth that women enjoy rape:

> Image 238 (member of community): "she enjoyed it"

Rape is sexualized when people believe that rape is motivated by sexual passion rather than power and precipitated by a victim who is provocative in appearance, manner, and action because she secretly wants to be raped (Bond & Mosher, 1986; Groth & Birnbaum, 2013).

Allegations of sexual violence provoke more scepticism and victim-blame than do most other crimes (Weiss, 2009, 2010). According to Weiss (2009), victimization can be disempowering and leave victims feeling violated and defeated. Also, victims of sexual crimes may be especially susceptible to shame because of how rape and victims of rape have been constructed (Weiss, 2009). Shame is commonly associated with self-condemnation, powerlessness, feelings of disgrace, failure, and inadequacy and persons who feel shame often see themselves as having done something wrong or dishonourable and anticipate disapproval from others thus they remain invisible and hide themselves from exposure (Weiss, 2010). The notion of a 'rape supportive culture' usefully captures the hostile nature of the social environment that many survivors experience in the aftermath of sexual violence and contributes to the underreporting and the culture of silence and stigma (Anderson & Doherty, 2007). In the analysis, it was found that perpetrators used the negative stigma regarding rape and rape victims as a way to silence their victims. This was done by verbally exposing victims to the reality of secondary victimization and the possibility that they will be viewed negatively. This places perpetrators in a more favourable position as they are constructed as free or safe to perpetrate without any consequences even though it is suggested that their actions are in fact wrong. Third parties were found to draw on these same ideas:

> Image 223 (Mother): "don't tell anyone he might go to jail and your cousins will judge you"
> Image 228 (a Dean): "we can't punish him for being a jerk"

Perpetrators drew on a silencing discourse because it leads to the literal not knowing about the sexual violence by other people. The consequent lack of knowledge then prevents intervention or negative

consequences on the perpetrators part and denies the existence of the harm of sexual violence. The silencing of talk about sexual violence helps to perpetuate it. Furthermore, according to Ahrens (2006) studies have documented negative social reactions from significant others and community systems as well as formal support providers. This has been illustrated in the quotes from third parties. Speaking out about the assault may therefore have detrimental consequences for rape survivors as they are subjected to further trauma at the hands of the very people they turn to for help (Ahrens, 2006). This is also known as secondary victimization (Williams, 1984 as cited in Anderson & Doherty, 2007). Being blamed, being denied help or being told to stop talking about the assault by perpetrators as well as society may effectively nullify rape survivors' voices, rendering them silent and powerless.

This study set out to investigate how perpetrators discursively constructed their actions, their victims and by implication, how they constructed themselves. It also aimed to identify the discursive strategies and resources drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators. The final aim was to investigate whether or not there were consistencies with what perpetrators said to their victims and rape culture. When looking at discourses and discursive strategies that were identified in the analysis, it is important to note that they are never entirely uniform, coherent or consistent. This is significant when considering how the analysis revealed multiple discourses and strategies, as well as variation between and within them. The following chapter will conclude my research by providing an overview of my findings in response to my research aims. I will also discuss the variations in the constructions of sexual violence, victims and perpetrators and the implications of this. I will then present the conclusions drawn from the findings in the analysis. I also discuss the limitations of my research as well as future recommendations.

## Chapter 5: Further discussion and conclusions

### 5.1. Overview: The aims of the research

This research is situated within a constructionist paradigm which looks at the constitutive nature of language and is aimed at identifying the numerous available constructions of social reality (Willig, 2001). This paradigm also looks at how these constructions are used, and what the implications might be for human experience and social practice (Willig, 2001). The purpose of this study was to critically investigate the discursive strategies drawn on by sexual violence perpetrators and how their actions and victims were discursively constructed through talk. This study further sought to investigate the consistencies with the talk of perpetrators to their victims and rape myths and discursive and social practices that constitute a rape supportive culture. The talk of sexual violence perpetrators was analysed by looking at elements of their talk that survivors chose to represent in images for the purpose of a photographic art project called Project Unbreakable. By deconstructing the talk of sexual violence perpetrators, this study aimed to illustrate how the social definition of sexual violence not only contributes to the blame and shame of victims but also insidiously creates opportunities for it to occur.

It is important to acknowledge that the context and aims of Project Unbreakable may be significantly responsible for the expressed content of texts that were produced for the photography project and which were analysed in this research. However, it was nevertheless deemed acceptable to use these texts for an analysis of the discourses that perpetrators of sexual violence use, since the status of 'constructed text' does not set the material analysed in this research apart from the constructed nature of other forms of text collected for research purposes using alternative methodologies. That is, other forms of texts (for example, interview transcripts) would still constitute a reconstruction of a particular interaction and it is the context in which this interaction occurs that contributes to the co-construction of the text. The constructionist and discourse analytic approach adopted by this particular research focused specifically on the discursive resources that shape, constrain and enable individual moments of interaction. The analytic process that was followed centred on the use of these discursive resources as social practices and social reproduction, rather than focusing on the intention that is assumed to motivate language use. Furthermore, the high degree of correspondence between the discourses identified as operating in the text contained in the images and the discourse about sexual violence constituted by rape myths and other rape supportive attitudes suggests that the texts used in this research can be deemed to be fairly accurate representations of the language that sexual violence perpetrators use when talking to their victims.

## 5.2. Review of the findings

Perpetrators blurred the line between rape and sex by locating their actions in the realms of sex for pleasure. By drawing on a discourse of pleasure and notions of heterosexual practice, perpetrators were able to interpret their actions as being about the technical ability to 'give' a woman sexual gratification as opposed to explicitly being about domination and control (which is also evident in the analysis). Accordingly, Lonsway and Fitzgerald's (1994) myth of rape being a trivial event is present within this discourse; it's fun, a game, just sex. Perpetrators also utilise the myth that women want to be raped by implying that they enjoyed it (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). By implication then, they construct themselves as non-violent and ideally masculine. Perpetrators were able to establish a sense of individual power because 'proper' heterosexual manhood is centred on sexual intercourse within which female orgasm is a means to assert male potency (Bertone & Camoletto, 2009). Thus, victims are constructed as dependent on a man for sexual gratification and as an instrument to assert male potency. The implication of this is that by taking responsibility for a woman's pleasure, perpetrators position themselves as the inherently superior sex.

Another way in which rape was sexualized by perpetrators was by them drawing on a discourse of desire whereby desire is the motivating factor for sexual behaviours. Perpetrators constructed their assault in terms of desire for their victim. Claiming to sexually desire someone attractive provides a partial explanation for subsequent behaviour; therefore rape, again, is constructed as revolving around issues of sex and not violence. Perpetrators in this study emphasized the role of their victims in the incident by casting them as the gatekeepers of men's sexuality. Perpetrators highlighted the way in which their victims made themselves attractive, initiated the encounter by their actions, implied consent and lacked effort in rejecting sexual activity. This reiterates the rape myth that victims of sexual violence ask for it in their dress and behaviour (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994).

Evidently, perpetrators drew on the discursive strategy of blaming their victims. This not only positioned the victims as responsible but further drew on notions about men's uncontrollable sex drive (Hollway, 1989) which once been aroused, cannot be contained. This is in line with the rape myth that the perpetrator did not mean it (because of his uncontrollable desire) (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). By making such claims, the violent aspect of sexual violence is ignored and sexual violence is normalized. Constructions of men's sexuality as urgent, uncontrollable, dominant and aggressive (Butler, 1993) were drawn on by perpetrators to normalize and justify their actions. In addition, constructions of female sexuality as passive and dependent on a man (Conaghan & Russell,

2014) further constructed forced sex as part and parcel of normal heterosexuality. Perpetrators' actions were thus constructed as a consequence of male-female sexual interactions; as something active men do to passive women. Due to the ideas put forward about female passivity, any kind of force is interpreted as normal. Also, the discourse of desire, or more specifically, the discourse of men's overt desires is also used against male victims stripping their status as a victim because part of being a man is being ever-ready for sex. This functions to minimize the severity of the experience and constructs sexual violence as 'normal'. Thus, perpetrators made use of the myth that men don't get raped (Kassing *et al.*, 2005).

In terms of a discourse of women's secret desires, victims were constructed as having a secret underlying sexual desire and their lack of consent and the struggle is understood as pretence to protect their femininity and 'virtue', or 'reputation'. This ties in with the myth that women lie and with the idea of women being unknowable, that is, women are unable or unwilling to communicate honestly with men (Polaschek & Ward, 2002). Perpetrators also drew on the myth that all women secretly wish to be ravished (Brownmiller, 1975). Again, the victim is constructed as dependant on a man for satisfaction therefore, is not a victim of sexual violence. However, there is a variation in terms of the construction of the victim within this discourse. On the one hand, she is constructed as sexually passive, but there is also the idea that women's sexuality is present and desiring. Accordingly, perpetrators are constructed as knowing what women want and 'giving' it to them.

Sexual violence was disguised as just sex in the romantic framework. Within this framework, sex is detached from reproduction and is mainly interpreted as a way of creating and maintaining a sense of emotional closeness within the couple (Bertone & Camoletto, 2009). Perpetrators in this study drew on a discourse of romance which allowed them to reinterpret their behaviours in ways that were not considered practices of power and control, rather, as intimacy and love. Victims are constructed in terms of Hollway's (1989) "have/hold' discourse as less sexual and as needing a committed relationship to safely explore sexuality. The position for women within this discourse, as primarily driven by desires for love, intimacy and security, strips them of their own subjective sexual desire. For perpetrators, a discourse of romance allows them to gain sexual access to their victims by constructing themselves as good lovers and as caring for women's emotional needs. However, discourses of romance and marriage support the existing gender hierarchy by giving licence to men to pressure woman to have sex or conform to the associated expectations of feminine heterosexuality that being a girlfriend or wife entails (Chung, 2003). For instance, perpetrators also constructed sex in a romantic relationship or marriage as something that is done irrespective of the subject desire of

girlfriends or wives respectively, because it was expected of them to meet the sexual needs of the perpetrators.

Within the discourse of marriage, the victim is constructed as having to help and serve the head of the household, more specifically as sexually available to her husband and having to comply with his sexual demands. It further constructs her as an object of desire or as her husband's possession. This is in line with the rape myth that husbands cannot rape their wives or that married women are unrapeable (Edwards *et al.*, 2011). Discourses of romance and marriage allowed perpetrators to minimize and justify their forced sexual behaviours. As Gavey (2005) argued, language and social constructions of male and female sexuality "provide not only a social pattern for coercive sexuality" but also serves as a "convenient smoke screen for rationalizing rape (within heterosexual relationships, in particular) as simply just sex" (p. 72).

Throughout the analysis it was found that perpetrators drew on a discourse of entitlement when talking to their victims. By drawing on the various previously mentioned discourses which intertwined with the discourse of entitlement, it became evident that the core idea is that men deserve sex and they are entitled to 'take' it from women (Pemberton & Wakeling, 2009). These ideas are strongly rooted in traditional patriarchal notions of men being inherently superior to women (Polaschek & Ward, 2002). For instance, perpetrators drew on a discourse of romance and marriage which allowed them to position themselves as entitled to sex with their significant other. Also, within the discourses of desire and sexual agreement, victims were forced to submit to the sexual needs of men. That is, within a discourse of sexual agreement there are traces of the male sex drive discourse (Hollway, 1989) that claims that male sexuality cannot be contained once sparked as well as the coital imperative (Gavey, 2005) that claims it is unfair for a women to stop sex before male orgasm. Victims are then constructed as acting unfairly by attempting to withdraw perceived consent. By implication then, perpetrators are constructed as reasonable and entitled.

Furthermore, a discourse of consent dictates that women actually do not have the freedom to consent or to withdraw consent. For instance, it is argued that women sometimes behave in ways that are indicative of sexual consent, even when they do not intent to consent to sex, however by establishing that consent had occurred at a particular point during the encounter, perpetrators construct their actions as legitimate. Thus, once again, perpetrators draw on the myth that it wasn't really rape (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994) to constructed their victims as consenting participants. This allowed

perpetrators to position themselves as dominant in their interactions with women and reinforce the idea that their sexual needs are more important than that of their victims.

Men's entitlement was not limited to sex. Perpetrators also took up the position of being entitled to shape women's sexual and non-sexual behaviours by drawing on a discourse of discipline. Perpetrators thus constructed their actions as a legitimized disciplinary mechanism or form of punishment for women's unsuitable conduct. For instance, victims who had violated the norms of responsible and feminine behaviours (Cahill, 2000) by dressing or acting in a provocative manner are positioned as deviant which justifies punishment, in this case sexual victimization. Furthermore, punishment is often meted out to those who transcend dominant constructions of 'normal' heterosexuality (Ferfolja, 2008). Thus, lesbian victims were constructed as deviant and perpetrators drew on the discourse of punishment to legitimize their actions as a method of punishing deviance by way of correction. This allowed perpetrators to take up the position of authority, of being right and justified for their actions against a victim who is positioned as wrong or deviant.

Furthermore, within a discourse of humiliation, sexual violence represents the denigration of what is considered to be a woman's most valuable asset, thus any forced sex act may be considered degrading/humiliating. Because a woman's value is to a large extent based on her ability to attract men and provide sexual and reproductive services (Marshall *et al.*, 2013), victims are then constructed as sex objects within this discourse. Drawing on the discourse of humiliation, perpetrators construct their actions as a way of 'damaging' their victims. The implication of this is that victims are constructed as "damaged goods", as unlovable and unwanted and, as worth nothing outside of sex. These constructions of victims enabled perpetrators to minimize the severity of their actions because if the victim is not worth anything then it is 'no big deal'. This also draws on the myth that rape is a trivial event (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Perpetrators also drew on a discourse of intimidation which instils fear in their victims. According to Gqola (2016), this is an effective way to remind women that they are not safe and that their bodies are not entirely theirs. Thus, this discourse constructs the perpetrators actions as intentional and against the will of the victim as well as an act of power. The sexual intimidation of women is a successful means of maintaining dominance over and control of women (LeMoncheck, 1997). This positions the victims as powerless against the perpetrator. A discourse of intimidation enables the perpetrators to destroy any sense of autonomy or authority of the victim and constructs her as vulnerable.

In these instances, perpetrators did not construct sexual violence as a means of reproduction or an impulsive need for sex but rather as a way of punishing, humiliating and controlling women. Sexual violence then functions to maintain a hierarchy of power in society where men are placed at the top and women at the bottom (Anderson & Doherty, 2007; LeMoncheck, 1997).

### 5.2.1. Recognition and implications of variation

According to Potter and Wetherell (1987), talk constructs different versions of the world, variation is therefore expected between persons and within persons. Furthermore, the Foucauldian approach assumes there is no one 'world' that can be described and studied; rather, there are numerous versions, each of which are constructed through discourse and practice (Willig, 2008). Therefore, it is important to look at the variation in constructions of sexual violence, victims and perpetrators.

In the findings of the analysis, variations in the construction of victims became evident. Within a discourse of pleasure, 'proper' heterosexual manhood is centred on sexual intercourse whereby the female orgasm is a means to assert male potency. This implies that the female victims' sexuality is present. Furthermore, a discourse of women's secret desires also constructs victims as experiencing sexual desires. Victims have then been constructed as wanting and enjoying sex. On the other hand, within a discourse of men's overt sexual desires, victims are constructed as sexually passive and as sexual instruments for male gratification. Also within a discourse of romance, victims were constructed as less sexual and needing a committed relationship to explore sexuality. These constructions of the victims strip them of their own subjective desire which is in contrast to victims being sexually desiring subjects. Victims of sexual violence were also constructed as gatekeepers of men's sexuality, implying that the onus is on the victims to prevent the sexual arousal of the perpetrators and to stop unwanted sex. However, the coital imperative claims that it is unfair for women to stop sex before male orgasm. Additionally, a discourse of consent removes freedom to consent from women. Thus, victims are constructed as not having done enough to prevent the assault, but also as not being 'allowed' to stop it at all.

For perpetrators, there were also variations in the way they constructed themselves. For instance, in a discourse of pleasure and women's secret sexually desires they constructed themselves as some kind of sexual 'hero' in sexually gratifying women. Furthermore, within a discourse of romance, they constructed themselves as caring and good lovers, and attentive to the needs of their victims. In contrast, within a discourse of marriage, entitlement and men's overt desires they constructed themselves as indifferent to the desires, wants and needs of the victims. Also, it was found that

perpetrators constructed themselves as in control of women's sexuality. On the other hand it was found that perpetrators constructed themselves as at the mercy of provocative women and as victims were constructed as gatekeepers, the implication is that victims can also be in control of men's sexuality.

Sexual violence was also constructed in varying ways. One way in which it was broadly constructed was as sex. However, there were variations in the discursive constructions of sex. Sexual violence was constructed as being about pleasure and desire for both perpetrators and victims. It was also constructed as a form of intimacy and a means to maintain long term relationships and marriage rather than directly about sexual gratification. In contrast to sex being about desire and intimacy, it was constructed explicitly as rape. It was further constructed as a legitimized disciplinary mechanism. Furthermore, a variation of sex being about male potency in terms of female orgasm, it was constructed as a way to denigrate and terrorise women.

The above examples of variation are important to note because it reveals how subjectivity and practice are discursively constructed (Willig, 2008). The point of discourse analysis is to examine the legitimacy of discourse by revealing and deconstructing what is taken for granted (Wood & Kroger, 2000). If across the data, there was a single dominant discourse that constructed sexual violence, victims and perpetrators in one particular way, this would be difficult to deconstruct. For example, if sexual violence was only constructed as sex, it would be difficult to make sense of it in another way. Although dominant discourses appear to work that way for instance, stereotypes regarding gender and sexuality have become well established, it is important to remember that discourses are socially constructed and therefore not fixed (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Willig, 2008). Thus, subjectivities and practices constructed through discourses are also socially constructed and never taken as complete.

An awareness of variation therefore enables a disruption of dominant discourses, and in the context of the finding presented in this study, allows for the legitimacy of heteronormative patriarchal ideas to be challenged.

### 5.3. Concluding the analysis

The findings in the analysis demonstrated how supposedly 'harmless' or 'normal' ideas are reproduced and taken up by perpetrators of sexual violence. That is, discourses of gender, sexuality and sex provided a framework of cultural norms for behaviour and offered a range of socially acceptable excuses and justifications that perpetrators mobilised to legitimate their sexually violent

behaviour. It also showed that perpetrators make use of rape myths to explain, justify and, deny their sexual crimes.

These findings are not surprising but are nevertheless disturbing because they illustrate how easy it is to make use of everyday culturally transmitted assumptions about men, women and violence as well as cultural tropes about the 'normal' way in which relationships, sex, desire and sexuality are assumed to work as justifications for extreme violation. Furthermore, these findings challenge the notion that the problem of rape is rooted in the individual and demonstrates the social nature of rape.

Thus, it is argued that these everyday taken-for-granted cultural assumptions work as what Gavey (2005) calls a cultural scaffolding of rape. This is not to say that all normative forms of sex are rape or that they are the same as rape. Also, it is not to say that a rape supportive culture - the discursive constructions of gender, heterosexuality and interactions that support rape – is over determining. That is, we are not forced to enact sexually violent behaviours. Rather, sexual violence is recognised as an extreme expression of underlying cultural values that support a continuum of gendered behaviours. Normative expressions of gendered and sexual subjectivities constituted by the discursive cultural context are not directly responsible for enacting sexual violence. Rather, they are mostly complicit with sexual violence through milder articulations of attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours that reinforce the status quo of gender relations and heteronormative patriarchy. Thus, not all heterosex is rape, however in its stereotypically performed guises, may reinforce the ideas and practices that make sexual violence thinkable and doable. Furthermore, discriminations of non-heterosexuals result in an environment where permissions are given to society to 'punish' people for gender transgressions (Cowan *et al.*, 2005). That is, heterosexism is the contextual factor that supports and maintains sexual violence against LGBT people. Again, it is not to say that all heterosexists will commit sexual violence, but discriminatory ideas and practices provide a social climate for it occur.

The significance of Project Unbreakable in the context of my research is that it illustrates how seeming 'harmless' ideas are reproduced in the context of sexual violence. The analysis thus exposes and challenges these commonsense understandings which create and sustain sexist and heterosexist social practices. Also, the variation in perpetrators talk demonstrates that there is no one version, or 'truth', therefore there is a possibility for alternative configurations and enactments of gender and sexuality, and further the possibility for resistance and change.

Taking into account the conclusions drawn from the research, I will now provide a reflection of the research in terms of the limitations of the study, suggestions for future research, and a personal reflection of the research process.

### 5.4. Limitations, future recommendations, and reflections

In line with the aims of this study, what perpetrators say to their victims was analysed by looking at elements of their talk that survivors chose to represent in the photographs for the purpose of Project Unbreakable. Even though these representations of perpetrators speech were chosen as the best source of material, it is not without limitations. In the photographs, it was not always clear as to the gender/sexuality of the survivors and perpetrators. Also, the relationship between survivors and perpetrators were not always made explicit. As such, a range of forms of sexual violence may have been left out of the analysis. A recommendation for future research would be to interview sexual violence survivors directly about the kinds of things their perpetrators have said to them. In this way, the contextual factors that have been left out of this present study can be attended to. Another limitation of the data is that the majority of photographs were of women survivors referring to male perpetrators. Despite the fact that women are still predominantly victims and men perpetrators, by no means are all survivors women and all perpetrators men. And because the analysis represents the dominant discourses within the data, it may contribute to rendering other forms of sexual violence invisible.

A suggestion for future research would be to reach out to survivors of these different forms of sexual violence in order to get a better understanding of such phenomena. Another suggestion would be to maybe focus on the photographs that reflect these different forms of sexual violence, not to ignore the most 'typical' form but rather to bring 'not so typical' forms of sexual violence to the fore. It would also shed more light on the discourses and discursive practices that may promote sexual violence of men by women, and sexual violence against LGBT people, which was limited in this study. Also, the photographs taken by Grace Brown are from all over the world. This meant that the analysis was very broad in the sense that it did not address other possible intersections with gender and sexuality depending on different countries and cultures. An interesting project would be to analyse the same kind of data, that is, perpetrators' talk to their victims, but within a South African context. Being such a culturally diverse country and the significant history of South Africa, the findings of such a study may be different to this one.

As mentioned, the significance of Project Unbreakable in the context of my research is that illustrates how seeming 'harmless' ideas are reproduced in the context of sexual violence. A suggestion for future research is to look at how the entire project or other projects like Project Unbreakable may contribute to resisting a rape culture. One could look specifically at how survivors are presenting themselves in the photographs and what this could mean. A very important recommendation for future research is to find more ways to disrupt dominant discourses and commonsense understandings which create and sustain sexist and heterosexist social practices within the various institutions that support a rape culture. Also, this research demonstrated the variation in perpetrators talk. Therefore, future research can look into the possibility for alternative configurations and enactments of gender and sexuality, and further the possibility for resistance and change.

### 5.5. Personal reflection

According to Phillips and Hardy (2002), when doing discourse analysis, discourses do not come "neatly packaged", and so the researcher is required to construct a linear, coherent argument from the data (p. 74). Writing up my analysis was a challenge for me because at times the content was vague, and ideas did not always follow logically. Also, I kept having to return to my research aims and my rationale to avoid missing the point of my research. In my analysis I struggled with addressing the gendering of the phenomenon. Because the majority of the photographs depicted women survivors and male perpetrators, I found myself analysing sexual violence as a heterosexual enterprise. Without my supervisor having pointed this out, this research may have contributed to rendering some forms of sexual violence invisible. However, after the insight from my supervisor I still found myself focusing on woman survivors. I think that my position as a woman and having been subjected to forms discrimination for being a woman played a role in my focus on inequalities amongst men and women. It is not to say that I as the researcher cannot understand or acknowledge other forms of sexual violence, however I feel that because I could personally relate to women survivors of male aggression I found the quotes that I analysed for this study particularly offensive and my personal biases may have affected the way in which the research was carried out.

Furthermore, from a Foucauldian perspective, all forms of knowledge are constructed through discourse and discursive practices (Willig, 2008). Thus, the findings produced by a researcher are themselves discursive constructions that cannot be evaluated outside of a discursive framework (Willig, 2008). With that being said, the discourses produced in this study did not emerge from the data, rather it was constructed by me as the researcher. Also, it is important to clarify my choice of

terminology throughout this study. I mostly make use of the term 'victim/s', recognising its imperfection and what it implies and reproduces. Naturally there is a range of terminology that applies, none of which are completely unproblematic. I have chosen the term 'victim' because participants in Project Unbreakable have relayed what was said to them in the moment that they were being victimized. This is also what my research was about. The status of 'victim' is recognised by me as something discussed in terms of interaction, in the moment of sexual violence and not as a permanent status or identity. Keeping these points in mind, I hope that this research is read as a single account and that through a brief personal reflection of this process, an authentic, honest approach to the research has been achieved.

Lastly, the most significant finding for me personally was how disturbingly easy it is to make use of everyday assumptions about our genders, sexualities and relationships as justifications for extreme violations. Thus, in the words of Pumla Gqola (2016) "As a society, we can do so much better" (p.19).

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## Appendix A: Perpetrator quotes transcribed

| | |
|---|---|
| PU Image 1 | "The team is going to kill me. Don't tell them" |
| PU Image 2 | "You said yes. We can't stop now...just a little longer" |
| PU Image 3 | "Just relax" |
| PU Image 4 | "What, so now you're going to be weird about it" |
| PU Image 5 | "C'mon cousin its fun...it's just a game" |
| PU Image 6 | "I am gonna tear you to shreds" |
| PU Image 7 | "Just trust me" |
| PU Image 8 | "You're cute" |
| PU Image 9 | "Shhh its okay" |
| PU Image 10 | "If you don't stop fighting, I'm just gonna go rape your sister...you're making this too hard" |
| PU Image 11 | "You don't remember? You wanted it" |
| PU Image 12 | "No one will ever love you after I'm done" |
| PU Image 13 | "you're tight just the way I love it" |
| PU Image 14 | "just go back to sleep it will all be over when you wake up" |
| PU Image 15 | "I know what will help you go back to sleep" |
| PU Image 16 | "well you shouldn't have worn that" |
| PU Image 17 | "I'm not doing anything" |
| PU Image 18 | "I needed some gratification" |
| PU Image 19 | "you make me sound like a monster" |
| PU Image 20 | "A girl like you has never done this before?" |
| PU Image 21 | "being a virgin can't hurt that bad...just stop crying already" |
| PU Image 22 | "Are you seriously crying right now? Am I hurting you? Well I am about to hurt you bad" |

| | |
|---|---|
| PU Image 23 | "just because you don't remember it- doesn't mean you didn't enjoy it" |
| PU Image 24 | "if you tell anyone...I'll kill you" |
| PU Image 25 | "Be a good girl, don't say anything ok?" |
| PU Image 26 | "don't worry, boys are supposed to like this" |
| PU Image 27 | "you don't know what you do to me" |
| PU Image 28 | "Hey, wanna have some fun?" |
| PU Image 29 | "Get your brother in here. You're such a pretty girl. Stop your whining-and if you tell anyone, I will kill your mother" |
| PU Image 30 | "I want you to stick up for yourself" |
| PU Image 31 | "be a man and just do it" |
| PU Image 32 | "You're my special boy. Promise not to tell anyone-no body. If it feels good; why is it so bad" |
| PU Image 33 | "I want to show you how much I care" |
| PU Image 34 | "shhh...I'm just checking on you" |
| PU Image 35 | "c'mon...nobody has to know." |
| PU Image 36 | "You know how I know you didn't mean it? You just kept repeating yourself. If you meant it, you would have tried something else. I know the kind of games girls like you play"" |
| PU Image 37 | "I want to give you what you deserve" |
| PU Image 38 | "Shhh..." |
| PU Image 39 | "I didn't 'rape' you" |
| PU Image 40 | "you are a worthless piece of shit" |
| PU Image 41 | "No one will ever believe you so telling anyone is useless. You're a liar" |
| PU Image 42 | "I told you you weren't a lesbian baby" "you ungrateful little bitch" |
| PU Image 43 | "hold still, you're safe" |
| PU Image 44 | "But we're friends...you can trust me" |

| | |
|---|---|
| PU Image 45 | "beg me for it dyke" |
| PU Image 46 | "now you aren't a lesbian" |
| PU Image 47 | "You should just kill yourself. If you did no one would care. You are nothing" |
| PU Image 48 | "stop lying, I know this is what you want" |
| PU Image 49 | "I know you don't remember, but you were fighting me so hard and I am sorry" |
| PU Image 50 | "Don't worry. We can wait until you are ready..." |
| PU Image 51 | "I'm horny" |
| PU Image 52 | "open your legs" |
| PU Image 53 | "I thought you were screaming because you liked it" |
| PU Image 54 | "turn around" |
| PU Image 55 | "you never said I couldn't" |
| PU Image 56 | "come on, nobody's looking" |
| PU Image 57 | "never again" |
| PU Image 58 | "I don't want this relationship with you, but I'd love to play with your breasts all day long" |
| PU Image 59 | "I thought you were your mother" |
| PU Image 60 | "But you weren't kicking and screaming, so you must have wanted it. Besides, it was just oral, it doesn't matter" |
| PU Image 61 | "you are nothing to me or anyone else" |
| PU Image 62 | "man, this sucks, I didn't get to finish" |
| PU Image 63 | "We can't stop. This is really weird" |
| PU Image 64 | "don't make me make it hurt" |
| PU Image 65 | "oh baby, you're far too sweet to be a dyke" |
| PU Image 66 | "if you want me to stop, then do something about it" |

| | |
|---|---|
| PU Image 67 | "Do you want to play house?" |
| PU Image 68 | "Don't you want to practice for when you're older? Don't worry, we aren't lesbians if you think of a boy" |
| PU Image 69 | "Do you like it?" |
| PU Image 70 | "Does that feel good?" |
| PU Image 71 | "I can't fuck a crying girl" |
| PU Image 72 | "you're lucky I don't kill you" |
| PU Image 73 | "if you tell ill kill mommy, nannie and grandpa" |
| PU Image 74 | "I don't know why you're like this I'm not doing anything wrong" |
| PU Image 75 | "you started it and I just kinda went with it |
| PU Image 76 | remember I can arrest your mom and dad and put them in jail anytime I want" |
| PU Image 77 | "Don't ever cut your long hair. It's the only nice thing about you" |
| PU Image 78 | "the only way you'll ever leave me is in a body bag" |
| PU Image 79 | "I didn't get married to learn how to masturbate" |
| PU Image 80 | "if you ever tell ill make you out to be the biggest lying whore" |
| PU Image 81 | "I can't help it short hair drives me crazy" |
| PU Image 82 | "come on I think you're really cute" |
| PU Image 83 | "you like it" |
| PU Image 84 | "But it was mutual. I love you and I didn't mean to hurt you" |
| PU Image 85 | "it's the only way I know how to show how much I care about you" |
| PU Image 86 | "never question my authority" |
| PU Image 87 | "it won't take me long to finish" |
| PU Image 88 | "Don't fight it. We know you like it" |
| PU Image 89 | I've heard you into this kind of thing. Don't you love me?" |

| | |
|---|---|
| PU Image 90 | "Shhh...It's okay sweetie. Just relax" |
| PU Image 91 | "We both know you don't really mean it when you say no. It would be over faster if you stop struggling" |
| PU Image 92 | "whether you'd let me or not has nothing to do with it baby, ill fuck you regardless" |
| PU Image 93 | "you're so silly" |
| PU Image 94 | "Shhh just lay back. You can't say no now |
| PU Image 95 | "You're fine. You're fine" |
| PU Image 96 | "That's how it's supposed to feel your first time. Just be still" "I am a man of god I would never do something to a woman I wouldn't want to happen to my own mother" |
| PU Image 97 | "No one will ever believe you. I'm your husband and it's your word against mine. |
| PU Image 98 | "I waited so long to finally have this. Shouldn't you be happy?" |
| PU Image 99 | "Don't you want to know what boys like?" |
| PU Image 100 | "I gave it to you because you deserved it? |
| PU Image 101 | "you know we've both wanted this for a while now" |
| PU Image 102 | "kiss me goodnight" |
| PU Image 103 | "I'm sorry I thought you were my daughter" |
| PU Image 104 | "c'mon really didn't you enjoy it" |
| PU Image 105 | "You invited me over and now you think you're to fucking good for me?" |
| PU Image 106 | "this will be our little secret" |
| PU Image 107 | "you know you really liked it too" |
| PU Image 108 | "it wouldn't hurt so bad if you just got wet" |
| PU Image 109 | "but you didn't let me finish" |
| PU Image 110 | "I hate you. Oh fuck yes. God I hate you" |

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| PU Image 111 | "hurry up and clean this mess up" (blood and semen) |
| PU Image 112 | "Am I that repulsive?" (while she cried and said no) |
| PU Image 113 | "Do you want me to sleep over?" |
| PU Image 114 | "if you sit like that, someday someone will spread your legs and want to fuck you" |
| PU Image 115 | "Why are you crying? That was fun" |
| PU Image 116 | He said it was my duty as a "good Christian wife" whether I liked it or not. |
| PU Image 117 | "You're the bad child not me. Remember you started this" |
| PU Image 118 | "see, I told you I would help you" |
| PU Image 119 | "what we have is so special, other people won't understand" |
| PU Image 120 | "it stays between us" |
| PU Image 121 | "I heard you were a great fuck" |
| PU Image 122 | "don't you know it's dangerous here at this hour" |
| PU Image 123 | "If you're tired you should just lie down" "...I didn't mean to make you uncomfortable" |
| PU Image 124 | "I did not take advantage of you by trying to get you to do things you did not want to do" |
| PU Image 125 | "Thank you. This is the most beautiful gift I've ever been offered" |
| PU Image 126 | "if you tell everyone, I'll go to jail" |
| PU Image 127 | "stop pretending that you are a human being" |
| PU Image 128 | "hold it stronger" "you gona shut up about it" |
| PU Image 129 | "tell them you're crying because you fell over" |
| PU Image 130 | "You are nothing. You should thank me" |
| PU Image 131 | "Sure you can kip on my couch"-before. "You won't like it until you try it"-during. "friend me so we can do this again sometime"-after |

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| PU Image 132 | "I can't help myself-you are so beautiful" |
| PU Image 133 | "That's what you get for being naughty. If you tell, your mummy and daddy will no longer love you" |
| PU Image 134 | "You love that, don't you? You always have so stop struggling" |
| PU Image 135 | "if you were only 3 years older this wouldn't be such a big deal" "you will never have it as good as you do with me" |
| PU Image 136 | "when you have sex with someone it should be with someone who loves you" |
| PU Image 137 | "You're wet. I knew I could turn you on. You just needed practice. Now you have the easy job. Tell me how good this feels-now your turn. Get on top" |
| PU Image 138 | "I know you want me. Tell me how you want it" |
| PU Image 139 | "Cunt. Whore. Bitch" |
| PU Image 140 | "if you tell I will kill you" |
| PU Image 141 | "Let's go to your special place. It can be our little secret" |
| PU Image 142 | "If you love us both you will show us both separately. If you don't no one will ever love you" |
| PU Image 143 | "hey, we're going to play a game" |
| PU Image 144 | "I love you. Why are you crying?" |
| PU Image 145 | "I do it for you. I know you like it" |
| PU Image 146 | "it's okay, I'm clean" |
| PU Image 147 | "I thought you were tired and disinterested, but I never thought you were passed out or unresponsive" |
| PU Image 148 | "you're the first to complain" |
| PU Image 149 | "I'll prove to you you're straight" |
| PU Image 150 | "if you tell anyone you will be in just as much trouble as I am" |

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| PU Image 151 | "We're going to play the tickle game. You have to lay still, then we will let you go" |
| PU Image 152 | "I'm just trying to show you how much I love you" |
| PU Image 153 | "There's no way you are a virgin. You have done this before" |
| PU Image 154 | "I know you were uncomfortable" |
| PU Image 155 | "I love you baby" |
| PU Image 156 | "things like this happen, and we should just forgive and move on and learn from it, I don't know why you're so unwilling to do that...you make me sound like a monster" |
| PU Image 157 | "that's not all of it" (forces head) "that's all of it" |
| PU Image 158 | "you're beautiful" "today I thank god for you" |
| PU Image 159 | "just suck it up and get over it" |
| PU Image 160 | "if you scream ill make it hurt more than the last time" |
| PU Image 161 | "it's okay" |
| PU Image 162 | "Come on do this one more time. You don't want your parents to think you're being bad do you" |
| PU Image 163 | "that never happened" |
| PU Image 164 | "when you sober up, don't freak out" |
| PU Image 165 | "you look ridiculous with cum all over your face" |
| PU Image 166 | "This will be our little secret...don't you trust me?" |
| PU Image 167 | "you're too pretty to be a lesbian" |
| PU Image 168 | "if you do not be quiet I will kill your mum, if she hears it will be your fault" |
| PU Image 169 | "tonight we are doing what mommy and daddy are doing" |
| PU Image 170 | "this is the only way I could ever get a girl like you" |
| PU Image 171 | "It wasn't rape. You were being such a tease" |

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| PU Image 172 | "Turn around and shut up. This is just a game" |
| PU Image 173 | "you would look a lot cuter choking on my dick" |
| PU Image 174 | "you were asking for it" |
| PU Image 175 | "you know you want it" "come on, give in to pleasure" |
| PU Image 176 | "By the time I am done. No one will want you. I will break you" |
| PU Image 177 | "you're a dirty little angel" |
| PU Image 178 | "No? Is that all you know how to say?" |
| PU Image 179 | "I know you want it? |
| PU Image 180 | "your parents went to dinner, but don't worry ill take care of you" |
| PU Image 181 | "Do you like it?" |
| PU Image 182 | "you're nothing" |
| PU Image 183 | "you wanted it though" |
| PU Image 184 | "I slit my wrists when the last girl didn't do what I wanted" |
| PU Image 185 | "just because your stepfather molested you, you think everyone is a molester" |
| PU Image 186 | "I don't feel like you're my daughter" |
| PU Image 187 | "You're a trans? Oh, no don't do that to yourself. Don't do that to your body. No wants a tranny"-before. "See? You're beautiful the way you are"-after |
| PU Image 188 | "Can I just smell you?" |
| PU Image 189 | "just let me inside" |
| PU Image 190 | "you girls never seem to go for nice guys anymore" |
| PU Image 191 | "So where is your God now?" |
| PU Image 192 | "you've been avoiding me all day on purpose, haven't you, you little bitch" |
| PU Image 193 | "Come in my room, I have to show you something. Don't be scared" |
| PU Image 194 | "we don't have to hook up...let me get you another drink" |
| PU Image 195 | "You aren't like other people, you have a good heart I can tell"-before. "I will |

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| | be seeing you again this weekend you made a promise don't you dare let me down"-after |
| PU Image 196 | "I stay in the background to give you freedom" |
| PU Image 197 | "Please, pretty please?" |
| PU Image 198 | "you're my princess" "I respect you, I take care of you, I set you free" |
| PU Image 199 | "When you're legal ill take you back to my place. We'll turn the shades down low and I'll show you how it whip it right? |
| PU Image 200 | "the only time I don't want to kill myself is when I'm fucking you" |
| PU Image 201 | "Is it hairy yet?" |

## Appendix B: Third party quotes transcribed

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| PU Image 202 | "here are some birth control pills...in case it happens again" |
| PU Image 203 | "it couldn't have been rape...you are pregnant" |
| PU Image 204 | "Don't be mad at him. He wasn't himself that night" |
| PU Image 205 | "It's been a year...you really need to get over it and stop blaming him. Besides he was your boyfriend. It couldn't have been sexual assault" |
| PU Image 206 | "we heard you screaming so we went in the other room" |
| PU Image 207 | "Were you wearing socks? What are skinny jeans? Can you describe them?" |
| PU Image 208 | "You liked it though right?" |
| PU Image 209 | "How can a girl rape a boy?" |
| PU Image 210 | "man up" |
| PU Image 211 | "men can't get raped" |
| PU Image 212 | "we want to be reasonable" |
| PU Image 213 | "This is not a place for police but a private affair that can be solved over a cup of coffee with him. T is an emotional and not a criminal matter" |
| PU Image 214 | "well, you shouldn't have been lying down" |
| PU Image 215 | "I didn't know whether to punish her or what...I think it's because of all these movies kids watch these days" |
| PU Image 216 | "What do you mean you didn't want it?" |
| PU Image 217 | "it was a misunderstanding, he didn't know that what he was doing was wrong" |
| PU Image 218 | "Sometimes...you have to when you're not really into it...it's part of being in a relationship...guys want sex...what do you want..To call the police?" |
| PU Image 219 | "Lots of fathers hug their daughters. Its fishy, but not criminal" |
| PU Image 220 | "Is that why you're a lesbian?" |
| PU Image 221 | "its 95 and 5%...it's still 5% your fault" |
| PU Image 222 | "don't tell anyone he might go to jail and your cousins will judge you" |

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| PU Image 223 | "Are you sure? That doesn't happen here at Uva" |
| PU Image 224 | "Are you just making this up to get back at me for something or did this really happen?" |
| PU Image 225 | "Are you sure he didn't think it was okay since you've slept together before?" |
| PU Image 226 | "it was just bad sex" |
| PU Image 227 | we can't punish him for being a jerk" |
| PU Image 228 | "well he's been convicted so you can just forget about it all now" |
| PU Image 229 | "even if it was consensual, people would still call you a slut" |
| PU Image 230 | "well, you don't deserve it, but it is your fault that's what you get" |
| PU Image 231 | "Why are you complaining? You did let him in your room" |
| PU Image 232 | "I am not questioning what you're saying but still it takes you a lot of time to answer the questions" |
| PU Image 233 | "Well, what did you expect would happen?" |
| PU Image 234 | "Why did you stay if you say it was so awful?" |
| PU Image 235 | "It's your fault you should have said something. You have caused us all so much grief and pain" |
| PU Image 236 | "he said you consented, it's his word against yours" "obviously you made a drunken mistake and maybe you're a bit embarrassed because you're a lesbian" |
| PU Image 237 | "Are you sure you are remembering correctly? You were very young and sometimes our memories can be wrong" |
| PU Image 238 | "Are you sure you didn't turn him on?" "she enjoyed it" |
| PU Image 239 | "you work at a sexual assault centre you should have known better" |
| PU Image 240 | "Why didn't you just leave or quit tennis?" |
| PU Image 241 | "Did they threaten you?" |