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Understanding the Harm of Rape

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--ABSTRACT--

The aims of this thesis are twofold: to provide an account of the lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies and, on the basis of this account, to generate suggestions that could be of use in the recovery process for survivors of this type of rape. In order to reach these aims my thesis is divided into three parts.

In the first part, I propose a phenomenologically based account of women's situation *as a group* under patriarchy, according to which women as a group are subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. I argue, further, that the meaning, place and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy typically results in women's alienation from their bodies and creates an atmosphere of threat under which women *qua women* are especially vulnerable to rape.

In the second part, I explore the lived experience of the harm of rape; focusing, first, on the reflexive process whereby a survivor attempts to understand how she has been harmed and, second, on providing explanations based on shared features in the lives of women for two phenomena reported to be experienced by rape victims in the aftermath of the trauma, which I call 'shattering' and 'fragmentation'. My discussion of the lived experience of the harm of rape is meant to supplement existing accounts in the contemporary literature that, I argue, are limited to a third-person, objective point of view and so fail to provide a link between the harms they describe and the victim's actual experience of these harms.

Finally, I defend two suggestions for the building up of the survivor's agency and personhood in the aftermath of rape—the deliberate therapeutic use of feminist consciousness-raising and the use of narrative understanding.

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--PREFACE--

I would like, above all, to thank Tom Martin who supervised and read countless drafts of this thesis. I would also like to thank Ward Jones, Samantha Vice, Marius Vermaak and other members of the Rhodes University Philosophy Department, as well as Catriona Macleod, Ann Cahill, and the members of the Philosophical Society of Southern Africa without whose feedback and guidance this work would not be what it is today. Finally, I am indebted to the financial support of the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the National Research Foundation.

This thesis is dedicated to those it aims, ultimately, to serve—the innumerable women who have suffered the harm of rape.

--INTRODUCTION--

Rape is an overwhelming issue in the lives of South African women.¹ While it is false to claim that the victims of rape are always women, it is certainly not controversial to claim that *for the most part* women are the primary victims of this crime. As Keith Burgess-Jackson writes:

One could not be said to understand rape if one did not recognize that it is perpetrated by men against women... Rape—the act and the practice—treats women as second-class citizens. Whatever else is wrong with rape, and much is, it wrongs in this way... No society committed to moral, political, or legal equality can allow that, and every woman, qua woman, is wronged by it.²

Similarly Ann Cahill writes:

The vast majority of sexual violence is perpetrated by men, and the vast majority of the victims are women. To ignore this disproportionality (which, of course, I do not view as natural or biologically necessary) is to misunderstand the phenomenon at the outset.³

Given that rape affects so many South African women each year, it is crucial that we understand the *harm* of rape. The subject of my thesis is the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies. Focusing on the harm of rape is relatively new to the philosophical literature on rape. Most of the work on rape surrounds the definition of rape—in particular, whether to define rape in terms of consent and whether to define rape as a sexual or violent act.⁴ Much work has also been done on war-time rape—especially in light of the ruling passed by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia that war-time rape is a crime against humanity.⁵ In order to situate, and

¹ The South African Police Service's annual report released in 2010 reported 36 093 cases of sexual offenses committed against women over the age of 18, an alarming increase from the 30 124 cases of sexual offenses committed against women reported in 2008-2009. There is good evidence that the actual numbers of cases are probably a lot higher than this. It is estimated that one in three South African women have been raped, and that a woman is raped every twenty seconds in South Africa. These statistics are confirmed by South Africa's *Treatment Action Campaign* (TAC) as well as by the *George Mason University Sexual Assault Services Unit* in 2005, which includes a statistic provided by the *World Bank* in 2001 that in Africa a sex crime occurs every twenty seconds.

² Burgess-Jackson, K., 'A crime against *Women*: Calhoun on the Wrongness of Rape', pp. 287-289

³ Cahill, A., *Overcoming Objectification: A Critical Analysis* p.128

⁴ For example see the collection edited by Keith Burgess-Jackson *A Most Detestable Crime: New Philosophical Essays on Rape*.

⁵ See, notably, Bergoffen, D. 'Exploiting the Dignity of the Vulnerable Body: Rape as a Weapon of War'

motivate for, my project, it is first necessary to provide some background information on the theoretical accounts of the harm of rape presently available in the literature.

Most accounts of the harm of rape focus on either or both of what I will call the direct and indirect harms of rape. Direct harms are those done *to the victim* of the rape, some of which are due to the nature of the act itself. Indirect harms are harms done *to other women qua women*, and are typically concerned with the social effects of rape. Jean Hampton, Ann Cahill, and Louise Du Toit, for example, all provide accounts of both the direct and the indirect harms of rape. I have chosen to focus primarily on these three accounts for two reasons. First, they indicate the trend in contemporary accounts to explore both the direct and indirect harms of rape; and, second, each places emphasis on the repercussions of rape to the personhood and agency of the rape survivor. For Hampton, Cahill, and Du Toit the direct harm of rape is built into the nature of the act itself. According to Hampton, rape directly harms its victim by representing her as having less value than she has; rape is “an affront to the victim’s value or dignity.”⁶ For Cahill, rape directly harms its victim by attacking her bodily (sexual) integrity and identity. Finally, Du Toit argues that any act of rape drives a wedge between, and places in opposition, the victim’s embodiment (and sexuality) and her subjectivity (or selfhood). For all three, rape harms the *personhood* of the victim, and, on all three accounts, this harm depends on—is built into—the nature of the act itself; the act of rape is such that it commits us to recognising these harms—it is either expressive or indicative of these direct harms of rape.

As I have just mentioned these accounts not only indicate a trend in contemporary accounts on the harm of rape, they also rightly focus on the repercussions of rape to the personhood—and thereby agency—of the victim. While there are certainly differences between the accounts each author puts forward, for our purposes these differences are not so important. That is, for our purposes in this thesis, the fact that they all emphasise the direct harm to the agency and personhood of the victim will be crucial. I agree with these accounts in this regard and accept that rape directly harms the personhood of the victim

⁶ Hampton, J., ‘Defining Wrong and Defining Rape’ p. 123

by misrepresenting her value,⁷ attacking her bodily integrity and identity, and dichotomising her embodiment and subjectivity. However, while these accounts provide insight into how the victim's personhood is attacked—and are therefore fundamental to fully understanding the harm of rape—they are incomplete because they are limited to adopting an external perspective towards the harm of rape; Hampton herself claims that the injury inflicted by rape can be read off of the act itself by any member of society who comes to understand the act. She writes:

A person is morally injured when she is the target of behaviour whose meaning, *appropriately understood by members of the cultural community* in which the behaviour occurs, represents her value as less than the value she should be accorded.⁸

That the direct harms of rape are built into the nature of rape itself entails that the personhood of *any* victim is harmed regardless of whether she believes her personhood to be, or experiences her personhood as, harmed in these ways. Again, Hampton emphasises that:

A moral injury [such as rape] is an “objective” and not a subjective injury. By this I mean merely that the existence of the moral injury does not depend on whether or not the agent *believes* she has received dishonouring treatment.⁹

While I do not deny this; I argue that any account of the harm of rape according to which the direct harm is built into the nature of the act of rape itself is committed to this view; that is, is committed to the fact that the harm they put forward is ‘objective’ in the sense outlined by Hampton. Given this, those accounts that focus on a harm built into the nature of rape itself do not provide us with a link between the harms they defend and the victim's internal *lived experience* of being harmed.

‘Lived experience’ is a fundamental concept in existential phenomenology, which captures shared, fundamental features present in everybody which affect the structural features of experience. Existential phenomenology, therefore, allows us to provide generalisations about the nature and meaning of experience itself. Sonia Kruks in her work *Retrieving Experience* argues that “we have unwisely cut ourselves off from the rich heritage of existential thought. Feminist (and other social) theory would now do well

⁷ Hampton employs the concept of diminishment to capture the ‘appearance of degradation’. This concept is central to Hampton's account because it emphasises that the value of the victim is not in fact degraded.

⁸ Hampton, J., ‘Defining Wrong and Defining Rape’ p.126

⁹ *Ibid* p.127

to retrieve it.”¹⁰ One of the primary reasons she gives in defence of this claim is that “Individuals who are similarly situated will have roughly similar experiences—and they thus will be able to communicate and share them.”¹¹ Given this, “feminist theory must continue to hold onto the concept of experience.”¹² Joan Scott, in her essay ‘Experience’, also places importance on explaining experience—collective as well as individual—arguing that experience is “that about which knowledge is produced.”¹³ When talking about experience, then, I mean to refer to the shared structures of experience.

In order to supplement these accounts, I suggest that instead of focusing solely on the nature of the act itself, as read ‘from the outside’, as it were, we focus on the first-person point of view and attempt to appreciate the subjective meaning of the lived experience to the survivor, focusing especially on the process of meaning-making in the survivor’s attempt to understand how she has been harmed. I argue that adopting a phenomenological approach allows us to focus on the meaning of experience¹⁴—particularly on those shared fundamental features that, in being partly constitutive of the experience, personhood and agency of women, affect the *structural* features of the lived experience of the harm of rape.

I aim to add to the available literature on the harm of rape, then, by providing an account not only of *why* the act of rape is harmful but moreover of *how* the act of rape comes to be understood as harmful by its victim given the shared features that affect the structure of experience for women *qua* women. I am not claiming that all victims come to understand their experience in the same way. Nor am I proposing that philosophy can say anything about any one victim’s particular subjective experience of the rape—as this would be an empirical question requiring knowledge only readily available to each individual victim. The exploration of individual victims’ subjective experiences of rape as well as patterns of these experiences are better left to the social sciences, such as psychology, anthropology or sociology. Philosophy is, however, particularly well positioned to speak of the shared influence of patriarchal ideology on this subjective

¹⁰ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience*, p.6

¹¹ *Ibid* p.41

¹² *Ibid* p.133

¹³ Scott, J., ‘Experience’, p.26

¹⁴ I agree with Du Toit that philosophy is best suited to exploring the meaning of rape, and add to this that adopting a phenomenological approach to the question of the meaning of rape is well suited to explaining the falling apart of the normal fabric of experience.

experience, and, thereby, on the meaning of rape to a female rape survivor. Understanding this aspect of the harm of rape allows us, I claim, to defend promising avenues towards rebuilding the personhood of the victim by emphasising the particular meaning of the experience to the survivor.¹⁵

Broadly speaking, then, the goals of my research are twofold: to conceptually situate and explore the harm of rape and to provide phenomenologically-generated suggestions about the rebuilding of personhood and the recovery of agency in the aftermath of rape.¹⁶ In order to reach these goals my thesis is divided into three parts; the first two parts focus on the harm of rape and the third part focuses on recovering from this harm.

Outline of Thesis

In the first part of my thesis, I aim to *conceptually situate* the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies such as ours by exploring the particular situation and lived experiences of women living in these societies.¹⁷

In Chapter One, I defend a phenomenologically based account of the situation of women as a group in patriarchal societies. I take my lead from the existential phenomenologists Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Simone de Beauvoir, as the accounts they put forward of the human condition focus particularly on the meaning of lived experience and as such are fundamental to understanding the particular situation of women under patriarchy.¹⁸ In particular, I argue that the particular situation of women as a group under patriarchy should be understood as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology—the concept of hegemony being derived primarily from the work of political philosopher Antonio Gramsci. Although the work of Gramsci and those

¹⁵ I am aware that using the term ‘rebuilding’ here implies that survivors of sexual violence can return to their previous state of being. However, I do not believe that this is the case—while the survivor needs to be built back up, so to speak; the result of this ‘building’ is not the same person as the person who was originally harmed. (Thanks to Ann Cahill for suggesting that I stress this point.)

¹⁶ The suggestions I provide are not meant to be taken as sufficient for recovery.

¹⁷ This is not to say that rape can only be explicated in terms of patriarchy and that nothing else important needs to be added to our understanding. Rather, throughout my analysis I claim that the situation of women under patriarchy is *partly* constitutive of the harm of rape. There are other important dimensions to understanding rape that could explain, for example, differing rates of prevalence in different countries, but I will not focus on these issues here.

¹⁸ I defend my phenomenological approach to the question of women’s situation in more detail in the introduction to Part One.

influenced by him, notably Michael Rosen, could be seen as *prima facie* incompatible with the existential-phenomenological base upon which I build my account of women's situation, I hope to show that the insights gained from these accounts can be phrased in existential-phenomenological terms.

In Chapter Two, I argue that sexual objectification plays a fundamental role in the particular situation of women under patriarchy.¹⁹ In particular, I argue that the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women creates an atmosphere of threat that women *qua* women are especially vulnerable to rape in virtue of their position and status in patriarchal societies. Moreover, I argue that the sexual objectification of women *qua* women in patriarchal societies typically results in the alienation of women from their bodies through the internalisation, on the part of women, of the objectifying gaze of the (male) other. My work in this chapter differs from the extensive scholarship on rape culture—that rape is to some extent a natural extension of patriarchal culture itself—by elucidating exactly how the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification results both in the alienation of women from their bodies and the atmosphere of threat under which women live.

In Part Two I focus on the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies. I aim to provide an account of the lived experience of the harm of rape to supplement the contemporary accounts of the harm of rape. In particular, I aim to develop an account of the harm of rape that takes into account the particular situation of women in patriarchal societies defended in Part One, and argue that this situation is itself partly constitutive of the lived experience of the harm of rape.

In Chapter Three, I provide detailed expositions of the accounts of the harm of rape put forward by Hampton, Cahill, and Du Toit. As I have already mentioned, I endorse their overall conclusion that rape harms the personhood and agency of the victim, but argue that more needs to be done to provide a link between the harms that they discuss and the survivor's experiencing and believing herself to be harmed in the ways described. My phenomenological approach allows me to supplement their accounts. Like

¹⁹ My focus on sexual objectification should not be taken to mean that I think that patriarchy can be reduced to sexual objectification. There are numerous other practices involved in the situation of women under patriarchy—and are other aspects of patriarchal discourse that are relevant to the social and political inequality of women—however a number of these practices, I believe, can be reduced, ultimately, to sexual objectification in one form or another.

Hampton, Cahill, and Du Toit, I focus on the symbolic and psychological dimensions of rape, and argue that the indirect harms discussed by each author could, because they inform patriarchal ideology itself, be seen as informing any survivor's reflexive attempt to understand how she has been harmed.²⁰

In Chapter Four, I continue to focus on the lived experience of the harm of rape and examine two phenomena that I call shattering and fragmentation—which both impinge on personhood and agency by cleaving apart subjectivity and embodiment.²¹ Shattering refers to the challenging of fundamental *beliefs* that the survivor has about the world and her safety in it and fragmentation refers to a particular kind of change to an individual's *self-identity*: a fragmented individual's self-identity arguably fails to reflect a fundamental part of what makes her who she is. I will focus on one particular kind of fragmentation—namely, when the survivor comes to experience her body as an enemy and as entirely distinct from her subjectivity. Both phenomena, I argue, should be understood phenomenologically as *lived experiences* explicable in terms of shared fundamental features in the lives of women under patriarchy. Using the phenomenological account of women's situation under patriarchy, developed in Part One, which focused precisely on such features, I offer explanations of both phenomena that focus on the fundamental underpinnings of women's experience *qua* women. Shattering, I argue, ought to be understood in terms of what it means for the threat of rape to be fulfilled—namely the confirmation of women's status as second-class citizens as well as of the meanings associated with femininity under patriarchal ideology.²² Conceiving of rape as shattering because it is both destructive and confirming, allows us to provide an explanatory link between the phenomenon of shattering and the second phenomenon of interest in this chapter—fragmentation. Fragmentation, I argue, is a particular species of

²⁰ This is not to say that the victim has to be aware of the indirect harms of rape or of the influence of these on her attempt to understand how she has been harmed.

²¹ These phenomena are well documented in the empirical literature, provided especially by psychology, and are often accompanied by an examination of dissociation and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). (See the work of Judith Herman, Lynn Hecht Schafran, Mary Koss and Mary Harvey, Steve Haines, and Bassel van der Kolk and Rita Fisler)

²² In this chapter I deal explicitly with the concern that my account seems to be contradictory. This concern could be spelled out as follows: 'if rape is the fulfilment of a threat that a woman has experienced all her life, why would it undermine her fundamental beliefs? Wouldn't one of her fundamental beliefs be that she is rapable?'

the genus ‘shattering’—shattering as it pertains to self-identity. Shattering-as-confirmation of the *content* of the threat, I argue, compounds the alienation that women have already been shown to typically experience as a result of internalising the objectifying gaze of the (male) other. I propose, then, that the combination of alienation plus shattering, as the confirmation of women’s status in patriarchal societies, provides us with a platform for explaining fragmentation insofar as the estrangement from one’s body that results from internalising the objectifying (male) gaze is itself just one step away from an attempt to entirely separate one’s embodiment off from one’s subjectivity; and this step is provided by shattering-as-confirmation. While this may be difficult to follow at this point, it will become clearer in the chapter itself, where I will have more space to explicate this fully.

In Part Three, I aim to defend two distinct suggestions for the rebuilding of personhood and recovery of agency, which both focus on the promotion of integrity and coherence. In the introduction to Part Three I provide a brief exegesis of three central psychological approaches to recovery—the psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioural and existential-humanistic or person-centred approaches. I do this to distinguish the suggestions I put forward from these approaches.

In Chapter Five, I defend my first suggestion for the recovery of personhood and agency—feminist consciousness-raising. This suggestion focuses on uncovering the meaning of the experience *in context*; that is, it focuses more generally on understanding how the situation of women under patriarchy is partly constitutive of the harm of rape. This type of understanding differs from narrative understanding in that, here, the victim would not be looking at the meaning of the experience to herself; rather, she would be looking at what it typically means to be a woman under patriarchy *simpliciter*. Drawing on the work of Sandra Bartky on the phenomenology of feminist consciousness-raising, I describe this distinct process, which Bartky describes as developing “a radically altered consciousness of oneself, of others, and of... ‘social reality.’”²³ Understanding one’s situation as a woman under patriarchy can, I argue, contribute to the undoing of the alienation women experience in terms of their bodies and thereby the particular type of fragmentation I am interested in.

²³ Bartky, S., ‘Towards a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness’, p.23

In Chapter Six, I defend a narrative model of recovery—a defence of narratively understanding one’s experience of being raped inspired by Susan Brison’s work on recovery. Narratively understanding an experience is put forward as one way of making sense of the experience that places emphasis on meaning-making rather than on truth. Meaning, on most accounts of narrative understanding, is made through the construction of the narrative. Given this, my focus, here, is on this process itself rather than on the particular content of the narrative constructed. The construction of the narrative itself, I argue, drawing on the work of David Velleman, provides emotional resolution to the victim by resolving the emotional cadence of the experience—“The story begins with the circumstances that initiate some emotion, or sequence of emotions, and it ends when that emotional sequence is in some way brought to a close.”²⁴ The emotional resolution gained from constructing a narrative uncovers the meaning of the experience for the victim in emotional terms; it provides her with a stable, conative attitude towards the experience and thereby reveals a stable cognitive judgement of the experience. Narratively understanding her experience, then, I argue, provides the survivor with self-understanding that, through the promotion of integrity and control, promotes the personhood and agency of the individual. While I defend narrative understanding insofar as I argue that constructing and having a successful narrative aids in the recovery of the survivor, I do not intend to defend Susan Brison’s stronger claim that one must tell one’s narrative to an audience. Renee Heberle argues, drawing on Elaine Scarry’s work on torture, that pain cannot be adequately expressed in language and that, in fact, the making visible of pain enlarges the world of those inflicting the pain so as to reify their power. She warns that the current feminist trend to make visible the reality of the pain of rape in women’s lives may, self-defeatingly, only serve to reify patriarchal reality.

‘Victim’ versus ‘Survivor’

I use both the terms ‘victim’ and ‘survivor’ in this work. Where I have used the term ‘victim’, I am typically speaking about the individual enduring the rape as it occurs. Where I have used the term ‘survivor’, I am typically referring to the individual who has endured and quite literally *survived* the trauma. At other times, I use the term ‘survivor’

²⁴ Velleman, D., ‘Narrative Explanation’, pp.19-22

to refer particularly to an individual who has begun to recover—perhaps by speaking out about her experience, or perhaps by having a successful narrative of her experience.

As a brief aside, it is more often than not the case that an individual who has been raped remains silent about her trauma—either in terms of not telling *anyone* about it or in terms of not reporting the rape to the police. (The South African Police Service works on an estimate of 1 in 35—that is, only 1 in every 35 rapes is reported.²⁵) J.M. Coetzee’s character, Lucy, in his novel *Disgrace*, remains silent about her rape. Graham St. John Stott argues in ‘Rape and Silence in J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*’ that Lucy’s silence should be seen as her bearing witness to the experience. He draws his account from Primo Levi’s work on trauma and argues that Lucy bears witness in two ways—by neither leaving the Eastern Cape or indeed the house where the rape occurred nor aborting the pregnancy that results from the rape. Stott writes that “Lucy refuses to escape her past, and in that refusal witnesses to it.”²⁶ There are interesting implications here concerning the nature of rape itself—that rape may be, by its very nature, a silencing act—perhaps because it marks such a strict divide between the individual and her agency. If this is the case then one could argue that to be silent is to remain a victim and speaking out is to start on the road to recovery—although Stott would deny this. Importantly, I do not wish to create an ethical imperative to ‘speak out’ that may be imposed unjustly on a victim; again, Heberle’s article makes voicing such an imperative, in my opinion, even more problematic.

Concerns could be raised about the use of these two terms—and, in particular, about the different implications these terms have on, for example, our understanding of agency. The concern here would be that the term ‘victim’ seems to freeze the individual in that moment—to essentialise her *as a victim* and as fundamentally passive. On the other hand, the term ‘survivor’ captures a sense of continuing beyond this moment—implying activity and agency. Where the term victim has negative connotations with respect to agency, the term survivor has positive ones; the survivor is an agent, the victim is not.

²⁵ South African Police Service, Crime report 2010/2011

²⁶ Stott, G. St. J., ‘Rape and Silence in J. M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*’ p.357

Brison raises a further concern associated with the use of these terms; namely, whether we are truly able to speak of a person's having survived a severe trauma at all. For example, according to Brison, survivors of Auschwitz often question whether they are the same person they were before the trauma. As Brison puts it: "Some who survived the Holocaust... have written about a distinct self that emerged in the camps and then, in some sense, stayed there after the liberation."²⁷ If survivors of traumatic experiences cannot properly be said to be the same person after the event, then can we really speak of that person having *survived*? Understanding this question requires distinguishing between surviving in terms of being alive after an event and in terms of being the same person after the event.²⁸

While acknowledging the concerns associated with using the term 'victim' in particular, I think that avoiding the term serves only to obscure the fact that individuals who have been raped are in fact victims of a crime. Denying that these individuals are victims, I think, dangerously undermines the gravity of the harm they have suffered. To acknowledge that these individuals are victims should not be taken to be equivalent to essentialising them as victims or as positioning them as forever marred by victimhood. Although agency can be constrained it can never be utterly destroyed by the actions of another—unless of course one is murdered. A woman who is raped *is* the victim of a crime that has been perpetrated against her, however, this does not preclude her survival—however we wish to think of this. To call a woman who has been raped a victim, then, is not to say that the nature of the act somehow transforms the woman into *nothing but* a victim, and it is certainly not to say that *all* women are essentially victims. Rather, it is to acknowledge that the woman has been the victim of a crime—of a severe depersonalising trauma—and one from which she may survive.

Finally, before I begin, I want to briefly mention another possible area for concern that arises out of my chosen way of proceeding. Given that I am not focusing particularly on South African patriarchal conditions, but, rather, more broadly on patriarchal conditions simpliciter, it could be objected that I run the risk of essentialising patriarchy

²⁷ Brison, S., *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self*, p.48

²⁸ This concern would be particularly salient in discussions of personal identity, for example. However, these accounts could be challenged on the basis of assuming that we start with an assumption of a stable, constant person, where this assumption is questionable.

itself and thereby rendering it a-historical, with the concomitant result that resisting patriarchy seems doomed from the start. While I acknowledge that there are various ways in which patriarchy can play out, I believe that the claims I make about patriarchy in this work are cross-cutting and foundational to patriarchy itself. That is, in what follows I am interested in capturing core features of patriarchy that underlie any variations. Importantly, I do not wish to be committed to the view that patriarchy cannot be resisted; without giving too much away here I will try to show that the foundations of patriarchal power that I outline are open to evaluation and criticism, as is evident in the very existence of feminist scholarly work.

--PART ONE--

CONCEPTUALLY SITUATING THE HARM OF RAPE

INTRODUCTION

“What peculiarly signalizes the situation of woman is that she – a free and autonomous being like all human creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the Other. They propose to stabilize her as object and to doom her to immanence since her transcendence is to be overshadowed and forever transcended by another ego (conscience) which is essential and sovereign.” – Simone de Beauvoir²⁹

In the first part of this thesis, I focus on conceptually situating the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies by providing an analysis of women’s situation under patriarchy—and, in particular, the role that women’s bodies play in this situation. This part consists of two chapters entitled: ‘Women’s situation under Patriarchy’ and ‘Sexual Objectification, Alienation and the Threat of Rape’.

In the first chapter I take my lead from the existential phenomenologists. Before I begin, then, I would like to say more in the way of motivating my choice of this approach. Moira Gatens argues that:

The cluster of terms ‘the female body’, ‘femininity’, and ‘woman’ needs to be analysed in terms of its historical and discursive associations. If discourses cannot be deemed ‘outside’, or apart from, power relations then their analysis becomes crucial to an analysis of power. This is why language, signifying practices and discourses have become central stakes in feminist struggles.³⁰

Given this, much feminist theory has adopted a post-modern or post-structuralist approach precisely because of this approach’s focus on discursive practices and signifying practices. However, according to Sonia Kruks, such a stance is inadequate to the task. Kruks writes:

To become a woman is not freely to choose one’s identity or attributes. But neither is it to be the effect of a set of discursive practices. Insofar as postmodern feminism tends to posit “women” as the latter, it is often too one-sided. For it fails to

²⁹ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex: Introduction*, p.29

³⁰ Gatens, M., ‘Power, Bodies and Difference’ p.71

acknowledge the active assumption of gender, with all its practical and ethical implications... This one-sidedness has its costs for feminism.³¹

And again:

[The] one-sided attribution of agency to discursive systems, made at the cost of evacuating all initiative or freedom from the individual subject, reduces the latter to no more than a hapless vehicle or conduit through which agency passes... change is mediated through the actions of individual agents who are not passive vehicles... Here, certain existential accounts of the subject as situated and embodied may serve us well. For they offer us ways to grasp the *freedom-in-constraint*, the socially imbued interiority, of a subject that is neither constituted through and through nor yet a pure constituting consciousness.³²

Rather than adopting a post-modern, post-structuralist approach to understanding women's situation, Kruks argues that feminist theory must continue to hold onto the concept of experience and must attend to the ways in which "experience can exceed discursivity."³³ According to Kruks, adopting an existential, phenomenological approach allows us to do both. She argues that:

We have unwisely cut ourselves off from the rich heritage of existential thought. Feminist (and other social) theory would now do well to retrieve it... Existentialism may be broadly characterised as "the deliberate and intentional use of the *concrete* as a way of approaching the abstract, the *particular* as a way of approaching the general" (Warnock 1970, 133)... This open-ended attempt to describe our experiences... still remains valuable today. It is a method that feminist theory can usefully draw upon. *For it enables us to destabilize commonly held or naturalised attitudes and assumptions that are constitutive of gender relations, and it opens up valuable spaces for new ways of seeing and understanding.*³⁴

I do not want to commit myself to the claim that post-modern and post-structuralist theories focus exclusively on how discourse produces certain types of bodies. However, I endorse the existential-phenomenological approach of recognising subjects as both constituted and constituting. Moreover, I agree with the emphasis that Kruks places on the ability of this approach to both make sense of freedom-in-constraint and to challenge the assumptions which ground and partly constitute gender relations.

Existential phenomenology refers particularly to the study of the constitution of meanings and values in experience, and focuses especially on the ways we relate to the world and its beings. Sarah Heinämaa writes:

³¹ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience*. p.51

³² *Ibid* pp.12-13 [my emphasis]

³³ *Ibid* p.133

³⁴ *Ibid* pp.6-8 [my emphasis]

Phenomenology is a study of experience and its meanings... the phenomenologist *suspends* his judgements and prejudices about existence and non-existence in order to be able to describe the world as it *appears* to the subject... the phenomenologist aims at understanding *how meanings are constituted in experience*.³⁵

Existential phenomenologists focus on the meaning of experience—on the way the world appears to the subject—and generate abstract models about the way the world works from these particular experiences. This approach is represented most notably by Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Simone de Beauvoir, who I draw on extensively in the first chapter. Importantly, the existential phenomenologists take the body to be central to subjectivity and freedom itself; a conception of the self—of subjectivity—that, at the time of its conception, radically reformulated the previously dominant view of the self as defined primarily by the ability to reason.³⁶ Given that the situation of women under patriarchy originally stems from sexual difference at the level of the material body, it is crucial that the account I draw upon, in this first chapter, stresses the importance of embodiment and of the subject/object relations that arise out of this embodiment. As Heinämaa puts it:

one can develop a genuine ethics only by taking the phenomenological understanding of the subject-object relation as the basis.³⁷

One of the primary concerns with adopting this approach in feminist theory is that focusing on experience in this way tends to universalise white, middle class, heterosexual women's perspectives and thereby excludes the perspectives of other more marginalised groups of women. This concern is sometimes expressed more broadly as the concern that speaking about women as a group involves the universalisation, essentialisation and normalisation of one perspective and, concomitantly, the exclusion of certain individuals, who should be included, in the group 'women'.

In her defence of the phenomenological approach, Kruks suggests that there are at least minimal bodily commonalities shared by women that "are not wholly irrelevant to women's experience in general, even though they do not determine it."³⁸ She argues that:

Contrary to the claim that to seek for commonalities in women's experience is to essentialise women or to deny difference, I argue that giving attention to

³⁵ Heinämaa, S., 'What is a Woman? Butler and Beauvoir on the foundations of the Sexual Difference' p.25 [my emphasis]

³⁶ With perhaps the exception of Friedrich Nietzsche.

³⁷ Heinämaa, S., 'Simone de Beauvoir's Phenomenology of Sexual Difference', p.118

³⁸ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience* p.150

commonalities of experience, even to the minimal ones of feminine embodiment, is one of the most important ways that we can become open to others different from ourselves. An exclusive focus on the discursive construction of identities risks occluding, in the name of pre-given categories of difference, concrete embodied experiences that we well might find we share. For feminism to endure as a movement that can encompass differences among women without reifying them, it is urgent that we explore areas of possible common experience: notably those of the lived feminine body.³⁹

Ann Cahill, too, adopts and defends a phenomenological approach in her work on rape. Recall that existential-phenomenological accounts take the living body as primary—“The body is not a thing but a way of relating to things, a way of acting on them and being affected by them.”⁴⁰ It is precisely this living body that Cahill focuses on to respond to the concern mentioned above. She argues that:

Rather than claiming that each individual subject is just as likely to have a certain experience as any other subject, the emphasis on embodiment necessitates a consideration of the embodied effects of the discourse and environments that have surrounded the always-becoming subject... The particular material conditions of that person’s development are thus partly shared, allowing for communal experiences and significant similarities.⁴¹

The bodies of women, for Cahill, place women in certain situations because of the discursive practices that surround these bodies. Because women have at least their embodiment in common, we are able to say something about the shared experiences of, and ‘significant similarities’ between, women that depend on their embodiment.

I hope that what I have said above justifies my adopting an existential-phenomenological approach to the question of women’s situation under patriarchy. As I mentioned above, this approach allows us to make sense of freedom-in-constraint and to challenge the assumptions which ground and partly constitute gender relations. Moreover, it allows us to focus on how meanings are constituted in women’s experiences and, given this, to make *general*, abstract predictions about the *typical* constraints and expectations that *most* women live with under patriarchy.

The account of women’s situation developed in Part One serves as a platform for the rest of the thesis since the harm of rape, I argue, does not just occur within women’s situation under patriarchy, but, rather, is partly constituted by this situation; and fully

³⁹ *Ibid* p.152

⁴⁰ Heinämaa, S., ‘Simone de Beauvoir’s Phenomenology of Sexual Difference’ p.123

⁴¹ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.114

recovering from this harm, I argue, depends in part on a survivor's coming to understand her situation as a woman under patriarchy.

--CHAPTER ONE--
WOMEN'S SITUATION UNDER PATRIARCHY

“What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing—the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others. It may be asserted without scruple, that no other class of dependents have had their character so entirely distorted... by their relation with their masters.”—John Stuart Mill⁴²

“The disciplinary power that inscribes femininity in the female body is everywhere and it is nowhere; the disciplinarian is everyone and yet no one in particular... The anonymity of disciplinary power and its wide dispersion have consequences which are crucial to a proper understanding of the subordination of women.”—Sandra Bartky⁴³

In this chapter, I argue that women's situation under patriarchy should be understood as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. While many, notably Iris Marion Young, have argued that women's situation is oppressive, failing to distinguish subjugation as one particularly harmful form of oppression means that these accounts are not able to fully capture the situation of women *qua* women under patriarchy. Moreover, understanding women's situation as one of subjugation is, I argue, essential if we are to fully understand the harm of male-on-female rape. That is, I argue that appreciating the extent of the harm caused by this type of rape requires understanding that the typical situation facing women *qua* women in patriarchal societies is one of subjugation, since the subjugation of women *qua* women is partly constitutive of this harm.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, I present an account of the *general human condition* derived from the work of the existential phenomenologists—notably Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Simone de Beauvoir. In the second, I apply this general account to the particular situation facing women under patriarchy. Here I focus especially on the role played by a woman's embodiment and her

⁴² Mill, J.S., *The Subjugation of Women* p.452

⁴³ Bartky, S., 'Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power', pp.74-75

relations with (especially male) others in her situation, drawing again on the work of Beauvoir as well as, notably, that of Iris Marion Young, Moira Gatens, Sandra Bartky, and Toril Moi. Finally, in the third section of this chapter, I develop my account of subjugation, arguing that we should understand the situation of women, as a group—and, in particular, the further social ambiguity inherent in the situation of women under patriarchy—as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

From the outset, I wish to emphasise the scope of the claims I am making in this chapter. I am claiming that women *as a collective* are subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology—my interest lies in making *structural* claims about the position of a group—women—in relation to another group—men. Women *as a group* are subjugated to patriarchal ideology. Although, as we will see, this means that *most* women under patriarchy lack a critical awareness of the shared situation of women, I am certainly not committed to the claim that each and every woman who lives in a patriarchal society lacks such an awareness. My claims, insofar as they extend to the position of a group in relation to another group, extend to cover *most* women; not each and every individual woman.

It could be objected that the account that I develop here of women's situation under patriarchy only makes sense because of the model that I am using to approach it—that the answer to the question, “How does it work?” flows from the phenomenological model provided, but only makes sense because of that model. In order to clarify, the objector could appeal to the distinction provided by Stephen Grimm between ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ understanding. On Grimm's account, objective understanding is only acquired if one's mental model of the world is accurate. On the other hand, one can acquire subjective understanding if “one has grasped a model of how the world works that ‘makes sense’ to the person doing the grasping.”⁴⁴ Subjective understanding, according to Grimm, has two distinct aspects that are capable of coming apart, namely (1) being able to show how the different elements of the model depend on, and relate to, one another; and (2) given one's experience, the model makes best sense or seems likeliest. The objection, then, is that I only provide the reader with subjective understanding, and not with objective understanding, as I do not show that my account accurately reflects

⁴⁴ Grimm, S., ‘The Value of Understanding’ pp.107-108

reality, but, rather, only show how my account fits together and that it is the likeliest explanation of the world as I experience it.

However, remember that approaching the question of women's situation under patriarchy from a phenomenological point of view means that I am describing the world *as it appears* to the subject in order to understand how meanings *are constituted* in experience. To object that I am not providing the reader with objective understanding because I fail to show that my model accurately fits reality rather than merely making the best sense of our experience is to miss the point of adopting a phenomenological approach altogether. Precisely by making the best sense of our experience, the account that I develop here should be considered a plausible candidate insofar as reflecting the way the world works. That is, precisely because the account that I develop has explanatory power in terms of our experiences, it is also likely, I argue, to map onto the way the world actually works.

It could also be objected that the account I provide offers no hope for change—that if most women are subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, then the likelihood of changing this situation is very slim indeed, if not impossible. I do not believe that this is the case. On the contrary, I believe that patriarchy—because it is not, I will show, based in fact, but is rather merely a matter of social convention—is inherently unstable and that feminist consciousness-raising practices provide one possible avenue to its destruction. (Feminist consciousness-raising practices are precisely the reason I, as a woman, am able to make sense of this situation, and of the experiences of women as a group.)⁴⁵

1.1 The general human condition

Jean-Paul Sartre, in his *Being and Nothingness*, argues that the human condition is constituted by both transcendence—or radical freedom—and immanence—or facticity. We are transcendent, he argues, because we are conscious beings who project ourselves into the future and in so doing posit a state of affairs that is not yet the case—we imagine ourselves as we are not yet, as what we hope to be. On the other hand, we share in immanence because of our facticity—we are necessarily embodied, have a past, a place in

⁴⁵ I will return to an examination of feminist consciousness-raising in the final part of the thesis.

the world, and relations with others. These facts—captured under the term ‘facticity’—are, typically, not within our, or at least not within our immediate, control to change; for the most part they are features of ourselves that we have to accept and factor into our lives as given.⁴⁶ Despite being seemingly contradictory our transcendence and immanence relate dialectically to one another inasmuch as our transcendence is at once conditioned and allowed for by facticity.

To elucidate the relationship between our transcendence and our facticity, Sartre introduces the concept of ‘situation’. Our situation is, for Sartre, the structural relationship between our freedom and facticity—between our projects in the world and the world itself and the facts given in our facticity. He writes:

Freedom is originally a relation to the given... We shall use the term situation for the contingency of freedom in the plenum of being of the world inasmuch as this datum, which is there only in order not to constrain freedom, is revealed to this freedom only as already illuminated by the end which freedom chooses.⁴⁷

We are, for Sartre, always in a situation. It is being in a situation which allows for freedom, and the having of freedom which brings about our situation. On his account, freedom exists in condition and “it is the relation of this condition to freedom that we are trying to define by making clear the meaning of the situation”.⁴⁸ For Sartre, while we all have the same ability to choose, our facticity limits what we may choose.

For the existential phenomenologists, the body plays a profound role in our situation—it is implicated in both transcendence and immanence, in both our freedom and our facticity; our embodiment allows for freedom but also conditions our freedom. Merleau-Ponty argues that there is no freedom without, what he calls, “a field”; while we give significance to things in the world through our free projects—which he terms ‘centrifugal meaning-attribution’—the world has meaning, which it draws from us, that we do not choose—which he terms ‘centripetal meaning-attribution’. Our embodiment places us in certain relations with objects in the world—because we are embodied we exist in a field of potential action. He writes:

[my freedom] does not draw the particular outline of this world, but merely lays down its general structures... In so far as I have hands, feet, a body, I sustain around

⁴⁶ As we shall see, the fact of our embodiment differs from the rest of the facts captured in our facticity.

⁴⁷ Sartre, J-P. *Being and Nothingness* pp.486-488

⁴⁸ *Ibid* p.519

me intentions *which are not dependent upon my decisions and which affect my surroundings in a way which I do not choose.*⁴⁹

Moreover, the body, according to Beauvoir, is both a situation in its own right and always in a situation. On the one hand, “the body is a situation... it is the instrument of our grasp upon the world, a limiting factor of our projects.”⁵⁰ We live as embodied agents and because of our embodiment are able to express ourselves in action in the world—to transform our intentions into action within the field of potential action which is our world. However, our bodies also limit the ways we can express ourselves; because of their material nature they both enable and restrict us. To use an oversimplified example, I may wish to fly and have the ability as a transcendent being to choose to do so, but my body is not capable of flying and so limits my project in this regard. Our bodies allow us to act but they also restrict the nature of the actions we may perform. On the other hand, the body is also always *in* a situation. We not only live as embodied agents, using our bodies to express our intentions in action in the world, our bodies are also engaged in a relationship *with* the world which imbues them with meanings that we do not choose. Toril Moi explains that:

When Beauvoir writes that the body is not a thing, but a situation, she means that the body-in-the-world that we are, is an embodied internal relationship to the world. Understood as a situation in its own right, the body places us in the middle of many other situations.⁵¹

What this means is that the body, in addition to existing in a material environment, is always *also* lived within a social and historical setting—the body is “always engaged in interaction with ideologies and other social practices”⁵²—in short it is *situated*.

Given that the very meaning of the word ‘situation’, in this context, denotes a structural relationship between our projects and the world, to say that the body both *is* a situation and is always *in* a situation is to allow for the fact that the meaning of the body is intertwined both with our projects—with the way we live our bodies—and with the world—materially, socially and historically. This is precisely what Merleau-Ponty means when he claims that the meaning of the body is attributed to it both centrifugally and centripetally. As embodied agents, then, we live and experience our bodies as this

⁴⁹ Merleau-Ponty, M., *The Phenomenology of Perception* pp.215-216 [my emphasis]

⁵⁰ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex*, pp.66-67

⁵¹ Moi, T., *What is a woman*, p.67

⁵² *Ibid* p.59 (footnote 88)

structural relationship—as both the instrument through which we express ourselves in the world, and as the site for meanings which the world assigns to our bodies given the prevalent ideologies and social practices of the time. The human condition itself, as defined by Sartre, is played out at the level of the human body; the ambiguous relationship between transcendence and immanence—between our free projects and our facticity—that constitutes the lived experience of the human condition is revealed in our very nature as bodily beings both in its own right and in its relationship to the world.

Moreover, the importance of the body to the human condition is intricately wrapped up with the importance of our relations with others, or with our being-for-others to use the terminology handed down by the existential phenomenologists. The social realm, which makes up part of the world with which our bodies are engaged, is itself made up of other individuals and the ideologies, beliefs, and values held by these individuals. For the existential phenomenologists, our relation to, and with, the other is of utmost importance; this relation not only provides us with knowledge of ourselves which we could not have come to have by ourselves, but which also potentially presents us to ourselves as objects in the world of another—under the gaze of another subjectivity—and in so doing provides us with identities as individuals, but also, importantly in the form of social collectives which we may not ourselves have chosen to identify with. According to Sartre, then,

in the midst of this world already provided with meaning I meet with a meaning which is *mine* and which I have not given to myself, which I discover that I ‘possess already’... the for-itself experiences itself as an object in the Universe beneath the Other’s look... It is at this moment... that there appear in the world—bourgeois and workers, French and Germans... the Other’s existence brings a factual limit to my freedom. This is because of the fact that by means of the upsurge of the Other there appear certain determinations which I *am* without having chosen them... All this I am *for the Other* with no hope of apprehending this meaning which I have *outside* and, still more important, with no hope of changing it... we are dealing with objective characteristics which define me in my being-for-others... *here I suddenly encounter the total alienation of my person: I am something which I have not chosen to be.*⁵³

The Other presents me to myself as I appear to him *as object* and in virtue of this appearance assigns to me meanings and values which are not my own in the sense of my having chosen them, but which I now *objectively embody for the Other*. This becomes

⁵³ Sartre, J-P. *Being and Nothingness* pp.510-524, [my emphasis]

especially important in terms of women's situation in particular, which is the topic in the next section of this chapter.

Before we move on to examining the particular situation of women, however, it is important to briefly note that Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir diverge from Sartre on certain fundamental issues, and where they diverge I agree with Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir. One of these issues is the belief, held by both Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir, that our social situation can and does in fact place *actual* limits on our freedom. For Sartre, this is never the case—while he believes that the basic facts of our embodiment limit or condition our projects, he does not follow this line of thought to its logical conclusion that our *situation* can effectively *diminish* our freedom. Sartre infamously claims that “the slave in chains is as free as his master”⁵⁴ because he believes that we are at all times, and in all situations, radically free—that the mere fact of our transcendence allows us choice, and having *any* sort of choice, no matter how slight, means, for Sartre, that we are radically free. The slave, despite his situation, remains, then, for Sartre, a radically free being. At this point Sartre's account diverges from our intuitions—we hesitate to confirm such a claim precisely because we intuitively feel as though there is more to freedom than merely the having of options, which the slave indubitably has. Intuitively, we feel as though the slave *is less free* than his master precisely because of the fact that their situations are so very different.

On this point Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir diverge from Sartre and follow our intuition. They both take on board Sartre's basic account of the human condition as constituted by transcendence and immanence, but take more seriously the claim that our situation—the structural relationship between our transcendence and immanence—can in fact diminish our freedom. Sonia Kruks, commenting on Merleau-Ponty's embodied or ‘incarnate’ subject writes: “to be embodied is to exist in ways that always outstrip individual consciousness. For embodiment effects a conjunction of subject and world”.⁵⁵ Here what Kruks refers to as our ‘world’ is partly constituted by our social situation, and

⁵⁴ *Ibid* p.703

⁵⁵ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience*. p.32

it is this social situation that, for Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir, can effectively diminish freedom.⁵⁶ Merleau-Ponty writes:

What then is freedom? To be born is both to be born of the world and to be born into the world. The world is already constituted, but also never completely constituted; in the first case we are acted upon, in the second we are open to an infinite number of possibilities. But this analysis is still abstract, for we exist in both ways at once. There is therefore, never determinism and never *absolute choice*, I am never a thing and never bare consciousness... Taken concretely, freedom is always a meeting of the inner and the outer... and it shrinks without ever disappearing altogether in direct proportion to the lessening of the *tolerance* allowed by the bodily and institutional data of our lives.⁵⁷

Similarly, Beauvoir, focusing in particular on the situation of women under patriarchy, argues that situation can effectively diminish freedom. On Beauvoir, Kruks writes:

In the notion that freedom can “fall back into the ‘in-itself,’” that the for-itself can be turned, through the action of other (that is, masculine) freedoms, into its very opposite, Beauvoir has radically departed from Sartre... The embodied subject of *The Second Sex* is social through and through, a gendered subject whose freedom is situated, at best always partial, at worst rendered immanent.⁵⁸

While Sartre’s account of the general human condition inspires those of Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir—and thereby my own—I follow Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir in disagreeing with Sartre on this issue; like Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir I believe that one’s situation can effectively diminish one’s freedom. Moreover, I agree with Beauvoir that women’s situation under patriarchy effectively diminishes the freedom of women. Let us turn now, then, to examine this particular situation.

1.2 *The situation of women under patriarchy*

For Beauvoir, women are fundamentally characterized by a doubled (ontological and social) ambiguity and conflict. The specific contradiction of women’s situation is caused by the conflict between their status as free and autonomous human beings and the fact that they are socialised in a world where men consistently cast them as Other, as objects to their subject. Woman’s transcendence is objectified by another transcendence. The effect is to produce women as subjects painfully torn between

⁵⁶ Importantly, this does not mean that they believe we can be reduced to un-free beings—like Sartre they believe our transcendence remains with us no matter the circumstance that we find ourselves in. The distinction that is being drawn here between Sartre’s account, on the one hand, and those of Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty, on the other, is that the latter both argue that our situation can diminish our freedom whereas the former does not; for Sartre we always remain radically free, whereas for Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty our freedom can ‘[shrink] without ever disappearing altogether’.

⁵⁷ Merleau-Ponty, M., *Phenomenology of Perception* pp.453-454 [my emphasis]

⁵⁸ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience* pp.44-49

freedom and alienation, transcendence and immanence, subject being and object being. This fundamental contradiction is specific to women under patriarchy.⁵⁹

Here Moi explicates a second ambiguity, put forward by Beauvoir, which is specific to women's situation under patriarchy. Further to the ambiguity of the general human condition discussed above—the 'ontological' ambiguity between transcendence and immanence, between freedom and facticity, which both men and women experience—women experience a further 'social' ambiguity *particular* to their situation *as* women. This ambiguity is the result of the relation between men and women under patriarchy. Beauvoir writes:

A free and autonomous being like all human creatures—[a woman] nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the Other. They propose to stabilize her as object and to doom her to immanence since her transcendence is to be overshadowed and forever transcended by another ego (conscience) which is essential and sovereign.⁶⁰

According to Beauvoir, the subjectivity of women is objectified, in the social realm, by the subjectivity of men.⁶¹ Under patriarchy, that is, women are defined in opposition to the male subject and positioned as the inessential other in relation to the absolute male subject. This claim is reiterated by Kruks who writes: "woman is not only the other; she is the unequal, the subordinate, other"⁶² and again by Catherine MacKinnon who writes:

it is men socially that are subjects, women socially who are other, objects... Of course, this is all a social matter; we live in society, not in the natural world.⁶³

Women, then, experience not only the ambiguity between transcendence and immanence general to the human condition itself, they also experience a further social ambiguity between transcendence and immanence that positions them as second-class citizens—as deviant from, and inferior to, the absolute male subject on the hierarchy of sexual difference.

⁵⁹ Moi, T., *Simone de Beauvoir: the making of an intellectual woman*, p.155

⁶⁰ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex: Introduction*, p29

⁶¹ This is not to say that women cannot and do not objectify men and, indeed, other women. Rather, my claim is that the objectification and *sexual* objectification *of women by men* is the archetypal expression of this practice. I will return to the role played by sexual objectification in the lives of women in Chapter Two.

⁶² Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience* p.38

⁶³ MacKinnon, C., 'Desire and Power', p55 (Although it may be argued that MacKinnon's position is ontologically incompatible with that of the existential phenomenologists, this claim is both insightful and ontologically neutral as it stands.)

The split between transcendence and immanence—doubly experienced by women under patriarchy—is complicated and compounded by the role that women’s bodies play in their situation under patriarchy. Again Kruks writes:

Woman’s situation is one in which her body comes to define her as the other, even as it remains the locus of her grasp upon the world, integral to her subjectivity and her projects.⁶⁴

Given that women, under patriarchy, are positioned and defined in opposition to men, the characteristics attributed to women are typically the binary opposites of the characteristics attributed to men. Most notably, for our purposes, masculinity under patriarchy is aligned with activity, dominance, independence and transcendence and femininity under patriarchy is aligned with passivity, submission, dependence and immanence. The otherness of woman—the dichotomous relation between men and women—is derived from sexual difference, however this is spelt out. According to Moira Gatens:

The otherness of the female body, for both sexes, takes on a special significance at the level of psychology and feminine sexuality. It is this body and its capacities, after all, that ‘justifies’ the restraint and passivity that society expects from feminine behaviour.⁶⁵

At the time Beauvoir wrote *The Second Sex* the prevalent picture propping up the opposition between men and woman was biological determinism, which at its extreme saw sex as pervasive and biology as destiny. Although these ideas are now (thankfully) outdated, I will briefly provide two examples, for the sake of clarity. According to proponents of biological determinism, there exists what can be called a ‘feminine essence’ that pervades the entire existence of a woman and which springs solely from her biology. In extreme cases, this essence is seen to spring from the nature of the ovum.

For radical proponents of biological determinism, that is, the alleged fact that the ovum is passive in the moment of conception translated into the fact that passivity is a fundamental feature of femininity, and moreover, an *essential* feature of every woman’s nature. The corollary of this idea is that the sperm is allegedly active at the moment of conception and so, along the same lines as before, activity is fundamental to the ‘masculine essence’ and an essential feature of every man’s nature. Moi discusses various examples of what I am here calling radical biological determinism in her seminal work

⁶⁴ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience*. pp.46-47

⁶⁵ Gatens, M., ‘Woman as the Other’ p.55

What is a Woman? Here she presents, notably, the view of scientist W. K. Brooks and quotes from his 1883 work *The Law of Heredity*:

According to this view, the male element is originating and the female is the perpetuating factor; the ovum is conservative, the male cell progressive. Heredity or adherence to type is brought about by the ovum; variation and adaptation through the male element... If there is... a fundamental and constantly increasing difference between the sexes... the clear recognition of this difference must form both the foundation and super-structure of all plans for the improvement of women... The positions which women already occupy in society and the duties which they perform are, in the main, what they should be if our view is correct; and any attempt to improve the condition of women by ignoring or obliterating the intellectual differences between them and men must result in disaster to the race.⁶⁶

A less radical position was held by V.H. Mottram who, in 1944, argued that “no one would deny that sex determines personality”.⁶⁷ Mottram’s position was less radical than the one described above because he allowed for the possibility that environment influences what he called personality. Despite this qualification, however, he writes that:

Psychologically speaking we mean by secondary sexual characteristics initiative, forcefulness, dominance, extraversion in the male, and conservatism, timidity, submissiveness and introversion in the female... Lack of testosterone: passivity, apathy, defeatism. Testosterone: activity, initiative, aggression... Probably evidence from the gonads gives the strongest, the most certain grounds, for believing that the endocrine organs are potent in *determining our personalities*.⁶⁸

Outdated ideas such as these were believed to ground and justify the roles and positions that men and women were endorsed to take up in society.⁶⁹

Beauvoir accepts the importance of biology; she argues that biological facts about women’s bodies play an important role in women’s lives insofar as they are part of facticity and, so, a part of our situation. Moreover, while she maintains that there is a sexual difference between men and women, which is seen in the difference between male and female bodies, she argues that the meaning of this difference is always fundamentally *open* to change, and the fact that male and female bodies are biologically different in certain crucial respects does not *and cannot* justify attributing features, such as passivity and activity, which are associated with certain evaluations, which in turn are themselves hierarchically ordered—such that activity is better than passivity. Neither do these

⁶⁶ Brooks, W.K., *The Law of Heredity* pp.84-263

⁶⁷ Mottram, V. H.n *The Physical Basis of Personality* p.30 [my emphasis]

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, pp.99-114

⁶⁹ I am not here talking about accounts which accept the importance of biology but do not move to determinism.

differences justify social roles and norms for women and men respectively. She argues that:

The body of woman is one of the essential elements in her situation in the world. But that body is not enough to define her as woman; there is no true living reality except as manifested by the conscious individual through activities and in the bosom of society. Biology is not enough to give an answer to the question... why is woman the Other?⁷⁰

Recall that for the existential phenomenologist, the material body is lived within a social and historical context and that value is the product of the activity of human consciousness. Given this, the female body does not have some inherent value waiting to be discovered or emanating from its very materiality; rather, the value of the female body, whatever it is taken to be, is assigned to it by individuals in society—or, in this case, by individuals in patriarchal societies. As Gatens puts it, “discourses... and social practices... construct female and male bodies in ways that constitute and validate the power relations between men and women.”⁷¹

While biological determinism is not advocated today, the associations endorsed by such accounts between, for example, masculinity and activity and femininity and passivity—between masculinity and agency and femininity and inertness—still appear to be widely upheld and still seem to ground, and are considered to justify, gendered social roles and activities. I am of course not claiming here that the roles, norms and behavioural ideals associated with women have not shifted over time. Women have to a large extent been emancipated from the private sphere and are now able to have jobs, and pursue careers, previously denied them—where women were once typically seen as mothers and housewives, and then as secretaries and administrators, they are now able to hold almost any job and pursue almost any career. Other examples include being awarded the right to vote, the recent abolition of the cautionary rule—which stated that the testimony of women bringing rape charges should be treated with caution⁷²—and the dramatic shift in certain denominations of Christianity, for example—which were once seen to exemplify the patriarchal order and now allow women to be ‘priests’. While these

⁷⁰ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex*, p.69

⁷¹ Gatens, M., *Imaginary Bodies* p.72

⁷² See, for instance, ‘Case Note: Abolishing the Cautionary Rule in Sexual Cases in Namibia’ in *Journal of African Law* 1993, 37 and ‘A Clear Message: The judges and the Cautionary Rule’ in *Rhodes Journalism Review* July 1998

positive changes should not be shrugged at, they do not entail that the situation of women as a social collective under patriarchy has changed. While biological determinism is now out of favour, I argue that the same results obtain by replacing the pervasiveness of sex with the pervasiveness of gender.⁷³

Sally Haslanger, who could be seen as offering us a *gender-based* account of sexual difference, does a fine job of clarifying socially entrenched distinctions between sex (male and female), gender (men and women), and gender-norms (masculine and feminine).⁷⁴ For Haslanger, one's gender prescribes certain roles and activities deemed suitable for men and women. Gender-roles, she argues, correspond with certain gender-norms—those virtues deemed appropriate to gender and according to which men and women are judged to exemplify or fail to exemplify masculinity and femininity based on their attributes and the way they behave. According to Haslanger:

In the traditional privileged White Western scenario, to be good at being a man (that is, to be masculine), one should be strong, active, independent, rational... to be good at being a woman, one should be nurturing, emotional, cooperative.⁷⁵

MacKinnon, too, writes that, “[w]omen are socialised to passive receptivity.”⁷⁶ It is because of this socialisation process that “under male scrutiny, women will avert their eyes or cast them downward; the female gaze is trained to abandon its claim to the sovereign status of seer”.⁷⁷

Whether we refer to biological determinism or to a gender-based account of sexual difference, then, it seems as though the same results obtain; to excel at being a man—to be masculine—is to be active, strong, independent, rational, and to excel at

⁷³ Although I agree with Toril Moi that the sex/gender distinction should not be read into the work of Beauvoir (in *What is a woman*) and with Moira Gatens that the sex/gender distinction is unhelpful when exploring subjectivity (in ‘A critique of the sex/gender distinction’), I feel that it will be helpful to briefly examine the distinction here for the purpose of elucidating the meanings typically associated with each sex.

⁷⁴ Once again, it could be argued that Haslanger, through reinstating the sex/gender divide, supports an ontology that is incompatible with that of existential phenomenology. However, I present her account here not to endorse this divide but to clarify the associations between, for example, masculinity and activity and femininity and passivity. As I mentioned in the previous footnote, I agree with Toril Moi that the sex/gender distinction should not be read into the work of Beauvoir. My purpose here is merely to elucidate the meanings associated with men and women respectively. Moreover, although Beauvoir certainly never speaks in terms of the sex/gender distinction she is aware of the roles, norms and ideals associated with being a woman in patriarchal societies as is evident in *The Second Sex*, and these are what I hope to elucidate in this discussion.

⁷⁵ Haslanger, S., ‘On Being Objective and Being Objectified’ p.89

⁷⁶ MacKinnon, C., ‘Rape: On coercion and consent’ p.177 (Again, this insight from MacKinnon is by itself, I believe, ontologically neutral.)

⁷⁷ Bartky, S., ‘Foucault, Femininity, and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power’ p.68

being a woman—to be feminine—is to be passive, weak, dependant and emotional. Both pictures provide the same results, and, importantly, under both pictures these results are ultimately taken to be natural, fixed and inevitable.

To summarise, women's situation under patriarchy is doubly imbued with the ambiguity between transcendence and immanence; on the one hand woman shares with man the ambiguity of the general human condition and, on the other hand, her subjectivity is objectified by the subjectivity of men—she is positioned as other and object-like in relation to the absolute male subject. Furthermore, the bodies of women are imbued with meanings which further align women with immanence by assigning those qualities to female bodies that are most typical of objects or inert things rather than agents, and on the basis of which are prescribed both behavioural ideals and gender-roles.

1.3 Women's situation under patriarchy as subjugation

Rather than scrutinising the socialising processes which teach these norms to children as they grow up as male or female, we lazily hold onto the view that masculinity and femininity are the fundamental essences or essential qualities of male and female individuals, and this, according to many feminist scholars, is both the result of, and the means by which, patriarchy maintains the status quo. As Haslanger puts it:

those social relations that constitute gender... provide a context in which children tend to internalize the locally endorsed gender-norms. Thus conformity to our proper gender roles comes to seem right and good, and perhaps most significantly, internally motivated rather than socially entrenched. As a result, we should expect that socially endorsed gender-norms will reflect and reinforce the local pattern of gender relations... the prescriptive role of the norms is not acknowledged, and gender differences are taken to be natural or inevitable.⁷⁸

Given that men and women are taken to have certain essences that are taken to be 'natural or inevitable', the behavioural ideals, roles and norms associated with these essential natures typically come to be uncritically accepted by both men and women. To adopt one of Sartre's quotes and place it specifically in the context of a woman's experience of the world, we can say that as a woman "I am not only thrown face to face with the brute

⁷⁸ Haslanger, S., 'On Being Objective and Being Objectified' p.90 (Again, I am not here reinstating a sex/gender divide. Those uncomfortable with the talk of gender in this quote can simply replace gender with sex. The point being made, I believe, is ontologically neutral.)

existent... I am thrown into a [woman's] world, which offers me its meanings without my having done anything to disclose them.”⁷⁹

In order to explain how this process occurs—how conditions can be such that roles and norms assigned to each sex typically come to be uncritically accepted as both natural and inevitable by both men and women—I argue that we must understand patriarchy as hegemonic. The situation of women as a social collective under patriarchy, then, and in particular the further social ambiguity that women experience between their freedom and facticity, should best be understood, I argue, as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

In order to defend this claim, I will first explain what is meant by hegemony. Second, I will focus on the passivity of the hegemonically ruled, suggesting that both men and women, to some extent, necessarily embody patriarchal norms, ideals and values due to a pre-reflective inheritance, and acceptance, of patriarchal ideology. Finally, drawing on the work of Michael Rosen, I argue that *most* women pre-reflectively embody these norms, ideals and values as a result of the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. It is only by coming to understand the situation of women as a group under patriarchy as hegemonic that we are, I argue, able to explain how roles, values and norms associated with each sex have come to be pre-reflectively accepted as natural and inevitable.

Once it is established that the situation of women as a group under patriarchy is one of subjugation, I will first, contrast subjugation with domination, and second explore the relation between subjugation and oppression—arguing that subjugation is one particularly harmful form of oppression.

1.3.1 Hegemony

Antonio Gramsci famously argued that man is not ruled primarily by force but rather primarily by ideas; the ruling ideas of society, on his account, preserve the “ideological unity of a whole social bloc.”⁸⁰ In examining the work of Gramsci, Joseph Femia writes that “the term [hegemony] refers to a situation wherein a social group or class is

⁷⁹ Sartre, J-P., *Being and Nothingness* p.514

⁸⁰ Bates, T.R., ‘Gramsci and the theory of hegemony’ p.245

ideologically dominant.”⁸¹ For a social group to be ideologically dominant means that the ideas of that group are the ruling or dominant ideas in society.

Importantly, hegemony is to be distinguished from *domination* by the state. The latter would be aligned with rule by force whereas hegemony is said to be rule by consensus; that is, the supremacy of *institutional civil society*—made up of private institutions such as schools, churches, and clubs—contributes to the formation of a harmonious social and political *consciousness*.⁸² Femia argues that

Hegemony is... the predominance obtained *by consent rather than force* of one class or group over other classes [or groups]; it is attained through the myriad ways in which the institutions of civil society operate to shape, directly or indirectly, the cognitive and affective structures whereby men perceive and evaluate problematic social reality... On one extreme, consent can flow from wholesale internalization of dominant values and definitions; on the other, from their very partial assimilation, from an uneasy feeling that the *status quo*, while shamefully iniquitous, is nevertheless the only viable form of society.⁸³

If an ideology is hegemonic, then its norms, values and ideals come to be—through the operations of civil society—*uncritically accepted* and *consensually internalised* as natural and inevitable. Given this, where a society is governed by the hegemonic rule of a certain ideology the social order remains, for the most part, tranquil precisely because it is governed by a generally accepted world view—the uncritically accepted norms, values and ideals of the ruling ideology neutralize conflicts within society.

William Shaw points out a number of important considerations to bear in mind when thinking about hegemony. First, that the ruling class or social group does not self-consciously or intentionally ‘make sure’ that their ideas are dominant. Rather, they take for granted that their ideas are both valid and obvious. Second, one should not assume that only one mechanism is involved in the dissemination of these ideas, rather, “in a given society, more than one process is likely to be at work, with several different mechanisms, each promoting the dominance of ruling class ideas.”⁸⁴ Third, and perhaps most important, there exists no *exact set* of beliefs shared by every member of a

⁸¹ Femia, J.V., ‘Hegemony and consciousness in the thought of Antonio Gramsci’, p.264

⁸² Bates, T.R., ‘Gramsci and the theory of hegemony’

⁸³ Femia, J.V., ‘Hegemony and consciousness in the thought of Antonio Gramsci’, pp.265-266

⁸⁴ Shaw, W., ‘Ruling Ideas’, p.429

hegemonically dominated social order, rather one will find “a core subset of ideas, shared by the vast majority”⁸⁵ that legitimise the existing social order. According to Shaw:

A ruling class invariably tells itself and others a story about the nature and justification of the social order. This story is, if you like, a legitimating myth, one that at least implicitly flatters the ruling class... Members of the ruling class gravitate toward some version of this story because it enables them to interpret their reality in a psychologically comfortable way... subordinate classes have a need, similar to that of the rulers, to construct for themselves a world view that not only makes sense of the existing order, but that also to some extent rationalizes or justifies it, thus bringing them some peace of mind.⁸⁶

Recall our earlier discussion of the meanings typically associated with women and men respectively; to excel at being a man—to be masculine—is to be active, strong, independent, rational, and to excel at being a woman—to be feminine—is to be passive, weak, dependant and emotional. Moreover, recall that ideas such as these, which align passivity with femininity and activity with masculinity, legitimate the existing social order. According to Shaw, the ruling ideas of a society must connect with salient aspects of experience in order to dominate popular consciousness.⁸⁷ He argues that this can occur in any number of ways, namely: the naturalness of everyday life—material circumstances are taken for granted and the social world is seen as representing a natural and inevitable social order, “tradition rules, the past legitimates”⁸⁸; the personalisation of social experience—it is difficult to see one’s individual experience in its wider social context; economic illusions—our relations structure our experience so that the dominant outlook reflects the way in which social reality is experienced; and the shaping of our world by superstructures—the day-to-day operation of super-structural institutions, like the law, underpin certain way of looking at the world.⁸⁹

Hegemony, then, refers to a situation in which the ideas of a dominant group become the ruling ideas of society. These ideas are disseminated through civil society and come to be uncritically accepted by most members of society as natural—as not the sort

⁸⁵ *Ibid* p.431

⁸⁶ *Ibid* pp.439-440

⁸⁷ *Ibid* p.443

⁸⁸ *Ibid*

⁸⁹ *Ibid*

of thing you would question—fixed and inevitable rather than as changeable social convention.⁹⁰

I claim that patriarchal ideology should be understood as hegemonic. Patriarchal ideas and value systems are reinforced and maintained in civil society, which means that most women (and men) come to pre-reflectively accept the ideas of patriarchy and, thereby, patriarchal values, norms and ideals. Moreover, this means that the relative norms that are deemed appropriate for each sex are taken to be natural and inevitable, most women (and men) cannot locate their own personal experiences within the wider patriarchal context, and patriarchal ideology is reflected in the way that most women (and men) experience social reality. What is also implied is that super-structural institutions reflect patriarchal values.

1.3.2 Pre-reflective acceptance of patriarchal ideology

It was standardly assumed that to understand how hegemony works—in terms of why the ruled, in particular, remain passive—required understanding false consciousness. In accounts of hegemony it is the presence of false consciousness in the ruled that results in their passivity, because

The very framework for [their] analysis of the existing system is fixed by the dominant vision of the world... Hence, while the [ruled] may be dissatisfied, while they may sense the contradiction between the positive official definition of reality and the starkness of their own subordination, they are unable even to locate the source of their discontent, still less remedy it.⁹¹

However, the concept of false consciousness has recently come under attack on a number of fronts.⁹² Accepting that this concept is problematic, however, does not mean, in my opinion, that we should throw the baby out with the bathwater. Rather, I argue that we can hold onto useful insights offered in accounts of false consciousness and reframe them in terms consistent with an existential-phenomenological approach. In what follows, this is what I shall attempt to do—reframe the problematic concept of false consciousness in

⁹⁰ John Stuart Mill claims that in the case of society unnatural means uncouth. If something is uncouth, that is, it comes to be seen as natural. He writes: “unnatural generally means only uncouth... everything which is usual appears natural.” (‘The Subjugation of Women’ p.441)

⁹¹ Femia, J.V., ‘Hegemony and consciousness in the thought of Antonio Gramsci’ p.268

⁹² See particularly the extensive scholarship produced by Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin.

terms of a pre-reflective inheritance and acceptance of patriarchal norms, values and ideals, which I will continue to refer to as patriarchal ideology.

1.3.3 Women as pre-reflectively accepting patriarchal ideology

If women as a group are in fact subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology then we should expect to see most women under patriarchy as pre-reflectively accepting this ideology. Michael Rosen, talking in particular about Adorno's theory of ideology, argues that there are three possible modes of false consciousness; cognitive false consciousness, practical false consciousness and distortions of identity. In what follows, I hope to show that we can reframe these three modes in terms of a pre-reflective inheritance and acceptance on the part of most women of patriarchal ideology explicable from an existential-phenomenological standpoint.⁹³

(i) Cognitive acceptance

The first mode that Rosen discusses is cognitive in nature and refers to "disorders of the system by which we perceive, judge and reflect upon nature, society and ourselves."⁹⁴ These cognitive disorders can be reflected in our (a) beliefs, (b) attitudes and (c) perceptions. In what follows I will first discuss the typical beliefs and perceptions that women pre-reflectively inherit from patriarchal ideology and, second, will focus on the concomitant attitudes that most women typically inherit towards their bodies, as these attitudes will play an important role later in the thesis. Crucially, I will not refer to these beliefs, perceptions and attitudes as 'cognitive disorders' as this implies pathology on the part of those who inherit them.

Let us begin, then, with beliefs. According to Rosen, ideological beliefs are related to society in two ways. First, they preserve a particular structure in society and, second, they are social in origin. Ideological beliefs, that is, are said to "*stabilize, promote, or maintain* a particular society or structure."⁹⁵ Rosen claims that ideological

⁹³ Importantly, I am not claiming that men *qua* men do not also pre-reflectively inherit and accept patriarchal ideology—this acceptance is not a peculiar cognitive defect affecting only women. However, this does not concern us here. I am only interested in the way that women's pre-reflective acceptance of patriarchal ideology is played out in the context of patriarchy.

⁹⁴ Rosen, M., *On Voluntary Servitude: False consciousness and the theory of ideology* p.31

⁹⁵ *Ibid* p.33

beliefs involve category mistakes, such as “treating what is historical and contingent as if it were something fixed or inevitable.”⁹⁶ Importantly, ideological beliefs are beliefs *about ideas*. When examining ideological beliefs, then, we are interested in an individual’s beliefs *about* her ideas rather than the *content* of these particular ideas. As has already been suggested, adherence to patriarchal norms, values and ideals comes to be seen by most women (and men) as not only proper and right, but more importantly, as natural. This means that most women (and men) typically hold the belief that their ideas about themselves, others and the world are natural and inevitable—a belief that is both social in origin and which serves to stabilize, promote, or maintain patriarchal society. It is crucial to emphasise that these ideological beliefs are pre-reflectively inherited centripetally—to use Merleau-Ponty’s terminology—they are given to members of society from outside as it were; recall that centripetal meaning attribution refers to meanings that the world gives to us that we do not choose. In fact the formation of these ideological beliefs needs to remain pre-reflective precisely because they are more often than not oppressive of those who form them.

At the perceptual level, the claim is that women (and men) inherit certain inadequate, partial or misleading concepts from patriarchal ideology that to some extent organise their perceptions. This implies that the perceptions organised according to these concepts do not reflect reality. Women who have pre-reflectively inherited patriarchal ideology, then, perceive not only their own bodies but also space itself using concepts given to them from this ideology. The way that women typically live their bodies in the world—as requiring constant attention, vigilance and beautification (as shown in Chapter Two)—indicates that women largely perceive their bodies using the concepts given to them by patriarchal ideology.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ *Ibid*

⁹⁷ It could be suggested that the prevalence of eating disorders in women results from pre-reflectively inheriting and accepting patriarchal ideology. That is, it is standardly accepted that eating disorders result partly from a distorted perception of the body—most typically from perceiving the body to be obese (this is exemplified in *anorexia nervosa*). These disorders could possibly be explained in light of the judgement that one’s body is deficient when organised using the concept of the perfect female form promoted by the institutions of civil society—most notably by the media. As Bartky writes: “We are presented everywhere with images of perfect female beauty—at the drugstore cosmetics display, the supermarket magazine counter, on television. These images remind us constantly that we fail to measure up... the female body is revealed as a task, an object in need of transformation.” (*Femininity and Domination* p.40)

Finally, pre-reflectively formed attitudes indicate “a failure to acknowledge and express a fundamental truth about the human condition”⁹⁸ that expresses itself in experience before it is theorised about or reflected upon. If we adopt the existential account of women’s situation under patriarchy put forward in the previous section, then most women can arguably be said to fail to reconcile their conception of themselves as subjects with their representation under patriarchy as fundamentally other—they fail to *acknowledge* a fundamental truth about their condition, namely that they are estranged from their human condition on both an ontological and social level. Furthermore, this estrangement, while not critically reflected upon, is certainly lived and manifested in experience. Crucially, this is not a criticism of women but rather merely the result of the further social ambiguity inherent in the lives of women in patriarchal societies.

Iris Marion Young’s work in her seminal paper ‘Throwing like a Girl’, can be seen as lending support to the claim that women pre-reflectively inherit an ideology that significantly affects their attitudes towards their own bodies and space itself. In this work, Young examines feminine bodily comportment, spatiality and motility in patriarchal societies. Remember that in using the term ‘femininity’ Young is not designating an essence that all women share in virtue of being biologically female, but is rather referring to “a set of structures and conditions that delimit the typical *situation* of being a woman in a particular society, as well as the typical ways in which this situation is lived by women themselves”.⁹⁹ She adopts a Beauvoirian approach to women’s situation under patriarchy writing that:

The culture and society in which the female person dwells defines woman as Other, as the inessential correlate to man, as mere object and immanence. Woman is thereby both culturally and socially denied the subjectivity, autonomy, and creativity that are definitive of being human and that in patriarchal societies are accorded the man... as human she is a free subject who participates in transcendence, but her situation *as a woman* denies her that subjectivity and transcendence.¹⁰⁰

Moreover, she adopts, as I have done, the concept of the lived body espoused by Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir. She says that:

In accordance with Beauvoir’s understanding, I take “femininity” to designate not a mysterious quality or essence that all women have by virtue of their being biologically female. It is, rather, a set of structures and conditions that delimit the

⁹⁸ *Ibid* p.35

⁹⁹ Young, I.M., ‘Throwing like a Girl’ p.31

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid* [my emphasis]

typical *situation* of being a woman in a particular society, as well as the typical way in which this situation is lived by the women themselves.¹⁰¹

Young argues that women's social status as Other, as promoted by the particular situation of women under patriarchy, is reproduced and expressed in the behaviour of most women. As a result of existing as the object of the gaze of another, women typically come to experience the lived body, she argues, as laden with immanence. She writes:

Insofar as [women] learn to live out [their] existence in accordance with the definitions that patriarchal culture assigns to [them], [they] are physically inhibited, confined, positioned and objectified... it is in the process of growing up as a girl that the modalities of feminine comportment, motility and spatiality make their appearance.¹⁰²

To explain, Young claims that there are three modalities expressed in feminine motility: an ambiguous transcendence, an inhibited intentionality and a discontinuous unity with its self and its surroundings. She claims that:

a source of these contradictory modalities is the bodily self-reference of feminine comportment, which derives from the woman's experience of her body as a thing at the same time that she experiences it as a capacity.¹⁰³

Recall that women experience, further to the ambiguity of the general human condition, a social ambiguity where their transcendence, as Beauvoir writes, is forever to be transcended by another (male) transcendence. Again, the meanings attached to the female body under patriarchy result in "the bodily self-reference of feminine comportment"¹⁰⁴ and exhibit this tension between transcendence and immanence.

First, then, Young argues that feminine motility expresses ambiguous transcendence. Recall that the lived body:

is the first locus of intentionality, as pure presence to the world and openness upon its possibilities. The most primordial intentional act is the motion of the body orienting itself with respect to and moving within its surroundings.¹⁰⁵

Given that femininity is aligned with immanence the relation of the female to her world, while transcendent, is imbued, Young argues, with immanence. Of course, Young makes allowance for the fact that all bodies—insofar as they are material are immanent, but, she argues that:

¹⁰¹ *Ibid* pp.30-31

¹⁰² *Ibid* pp.42-44

¹⁰³ *Ibid* p.35

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid* p.35

The transcendence of the lived body that Merleau-Ponty describes is a transcendence that moves out from the body in its immanence in an open and unbroken directedness upon the world in action... Rather than simply beginning in immanence, feminine bodily existence remains in immanence or, better, is overlaid with immanence, even as it moves out toward the world.

Second, she argues that feminine bodily motility expresses inhibited intentionality. Young accepts Merleau-Ponty's claim that intentionality is located in motility—that “the possibilities that are opened up in the world depend on the mode and limits of the bodily ‘I can.’”¹⁰⁶ However, based on the examples of feminine bodily motility provided earlier in her paper she claims that feminine bodily existence “simultaneously reaches towards a projected end with an ‘I can’ and withholds its full bodily commitment to that end with a self-imposed ‘I cannot.’”¹⁰⁷

Finally, she argues that feminine bodily motility exhibits discontinuous unity. Once again, Young bases her account on that of the ‘lived body’ of Merleau-Ponty and accepts that the body functions to unify and unite itself to its surroundings—“through the vectors of its projected possibilities it sets things in relation to one another and to itself.”¹⁰⁸ Insofar as this is the case the surrounding space becomes an extension, so to speak, of the individual's being. Young claims that feminine bodily existence is discontinuous with both itself and its surroundings; to use only one part of the body to perform an action that requires the involvement of the whole body expresses a discontinuous unity between the individual and her own body, and thereby a discontinuous unity with the body's surrounding space.

Next, Young turns her attention to feminine spatiality arguing that “[f]eminine existence lives space as *enclosed* or confining, as having a *dual* structure, and the woman experiences herself as *positioned* in space”.¹⁰⁹ First, Young claims that the space used by women when they move is typically less than that which is available to them. Referring back to women's inhibited intentionality, Young claims that the typical timidity of women expresses a “limited space for the feminine ‘I can.’”¹¹⁰ This in turn results in a distinction between the space that the woman occupies, which Young calls the ‘here’, and

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid* p.36

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid* p.37

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid* p.39

¹¹⁰ *Ibid* p.40

the space outside of the women's enclosed space, called the 'yonder'. The yonder, according to Young, exists as a space that women can look—but not move—into. Again, this is linked to the inhibited intentionality expressed in feminine bodily motility. Finally, Young claims that women experience themselves as positioned in space. Once again referring to Merleau-Ponty, Young notes how the lived body as transcendence is, un-like an object, not positioned in space. However, because women experience their bodies as laden with immanence, or object-like, they do experience themselves as positioned in space. She writes.

To the extent... that feminine bodily existence is self-referred and thus lives itself as an *object*, the feminine body does exist *in* space... The tendency for the feminine body to remain partly immobile in the performance of a task that requires the movement of the whole body illustrates this characteristic of feminine bodily existence as rooted *in place*.¹¹¹

To repeat, Young argues that feminine bodily comportment, spatiality and motility are learnt as girls are socialised *as women*. Young writes that “in assuming herself to be a girl, she takes herself to be fragile”¹¹² and this attitude is, according to Young, reflected in her bodily comportment, spatiality and motility.

Young's account of feminine comportment, motility, and spatiality flows neatly out of an existential account of the 'lived body' and 'lived experience'. Moreover, she does a good job, I believe, of defending her position against objections in the paper itself—by setting out, for example, precisely the kinds of behaviour that she is interested in. For this reason, I will not go into these objections here. Suffice it to say that *if* we accept her account of feminine comportment, spatiality, and motility, as I do, then we can take her account to offer support to the claim that women's typical attitudes towards their own bodies and space itself are significantly affected by a pre-reflective inheritance and acceptance of patriarchal ideology.

In the foregoing discussion, I have aimed to show that women are cognitively affected by a pre-reflective acceptance of the meanings given, primarily, to their bodies by patriarchal ideology; that is, the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of most women *qua* women express a pre-reflective acceptance of the norms, values and ideals of patriarchal ideology.

¹¹¹ *Ibid* pp.40-41

¹¹² *Ibid* p.43

(ii) *Practical acceptance*

Pre-reflective acceptance of patriarchal ideology is also played out practically in terms of (a) desire and the will; (b) values, end or norms; or (c) emotion.

When thinking about desire and the will, we must, Rosen argues, distinguish between desires involving my subjective states and desires involving the subjective states of others. If I form a desire on the basis of what I believe that others desire me to desire, then I have detached myself from active engagement in the formation of my desire and, thereby, lost authority over my will to external power. The argument has certainly been made before that women often base their desires on what men want them to desire. Beauvoir examines the female narcissist, who, she argues, bases her desires on what she believes men want her to desire—most notably beauty. Often these desires flow from the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions discussed in the previous section. For example, a desire to be seen as beautiful may stem from beliefs about ideas about the place and situation of women under patriarchy; for example, that a woman must secure a male partner.

Rosen argues that ‘disorders’ of values, ends and norms, are more controversial given that values are often seen as mere expressions of social interests and forces. However, it may be the case that features of reality may obscure the fact that values are simply the expression of social interests and forces leading one who has pre-reflectively inherited them to accept them as natural and inevitable. A woman may seem to value above all else getting married and having children when in fact she only pre-reflectively values this end because it is purportedly natural, good and right that women get married and raise children. While this value is certainly outdated in most contemporary patriarchal societies, I use it for the sake of clarity. It is certainly the case that until recently even the education provided women readied them for marriage and child rearing. This education is considered by Mill in *The Subjection of Women* and is made visible in the recent film *Mona Lisa Smile*—in which Julia Roberts plays the role of a young educated woman teaching art at ‘a finishing school’ for girls. That the education of women has changed, and that this had a considerable effect on the psychology of women is considered in Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* and in the work of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry: Committee on the College Student’s *The Educated*

Women: Prospects and Problems. The point at hand is that the values, ends and norms upheld by the civil societies of patriarchy at any time can typically be said to be inherited by women as they are brought up *as women*, and the effects of these values and norms on the ends that most women strive to achieve should not be underestimated.

Finally, Rosen argues that certain emotions can be understood as inappropriate responses to certain circumstances. An example is provided by Cahill, who claims that women who have been attacked or raped often blame themselves for what happened. She writes:

The typical reactions of a rape victim, marked by overwhelming guilt and self-loathing, are the reactions of a person who should have known but temporarily forgot that she was constantly at risk. To have believed for even a moment that she was not in danger, for whatever reason, is felt to be the cause of the attack.¹¹³

Understanding one's being raped, in this instance, as being one's own fault—this punitive emotional response—is inappropriate, and, it could be argued, is the result of internalising the norms, values and ideals of patriarchal ideology.

(iii) Distortions of identity

Finally, distortions of identity “involve the deformation of a subject and may be divided initially according to whether the subject in question is (a) individual, (b) collective or (c) metaphysical.”¹¹⁴ I will only focus here on individual distortions of identity. Individually, the failure to express one's self—where Rosen sees expression as essential to both making oneself open to understanding and to releasing or discharging emotion—can result in a loss of identity. If women pre-reflectively accept patriarchal ideology, then it is plausible to claim that their actions—based in part upon the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of patriarchal ideology—fail to express their individual characters but instead express the values, norms, and ideals of patriarchy. Failing to live one's body to its full potential—whether in throwing a ball or walking (both examples used by Young in her analysis of feminine bodily comportment)—expresses the norms associated with femininity by patriarchal ideology. The identity of most women under patriarchy, then, could plausibly be seen as distorted by a lack of expression.

¹¹³ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.164

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*

1.3.4 Patriarchal ideology as hegemonic and women as subjugated

I have just suggested that pre-reflectively inheriting and accepting patriarchal ideology affects most women cognitively, practically and in terms of their identities. That is, most women have come to pre-reflectively accept the roles and norms that have been imposed upon them as natural, fixed or inevitable by patriarchal ideology, and this acceptance affects not only their identities, but, moreover, certain of their beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, desires, ends and emotions. Crucially, this is the direct result of the *hegemonic* nature of patriarchal ideology. That is, patriarchal ideology is maintained and promoted through civil society—and particularly through education—that reflects the status quo, and which is typically taken to be legitimate given the internalised accounts of the so-called essential natures of each sex. The apparent ‘consent’ of most women to patriarchal ideology results from the centripetal inheritance of the norms, values and ideals that are disseminated through civil society by those institutions, such as schools, churches and clubs, which educate and form the minds of each generation as it is brought up. Recall Haslanger’s claim that:

those social relations that constitute gender... provide a context in which children tend to internalize the locally endorsed gender-norms. Thus conformity to our proper gender roles comes to seem right and good, and perhaps most significantly, internally motivated rather than socially entrenched. As a result, we should expect that socially endorsed gender-norms will reflect and reinforce the local pattern of gender relations... the prescriptive role of the norms is not acknowledged, and gender differences are taken to be natural or inevitable.¹¹⁵

Given the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology, children, from an early age, are taught legitimating stories about the fundamental natures and essential qualities of both men and women, which justify the status quo and prescribe certain norms and roles to men and women. John Stuart Mill claims that:

[Men have] put everything in practice to enslave [the minds of women]... The masters of women wanted more than simple obedience, and they turned the whole force of education to affect their purpose. *All women* are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal of character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others.¹¹⁶

Understanding that women as a group are subjugated by the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology makes sense of both Haslanger and Mill’s claims. It is because hegemonic

¹¹⁵ Haslanger, S. ‘On Being Objective and Being Objectified’ p.90

¹¹⁶ Mill, J.S., *The Subjection of Women*, pp.443-444 [my emphasis]

ideologies are transmitted and maintained by the institutions of civil society that they typically come to be seen as based in natural fact and therefore as inevitable and inescapable. These institutions themselves propagate the dominant ideas of society and instil these ideas in the minds of individuals who, crucially, do not choose them. In being taught that women have essential natures—to be passive, submissive and yielding, among other things—women typically come to pre-reflectively accept the norms, ideals, values and roles that are prescribed to them by patriarchy, and so, to a certain extent, can be said to ‘consent’ to these norms, ideals, values and roles.¹¹⁷ However, this pre-reflective acceptance of patriarchal ideology, which results from the centripetal attachment of certain meanings to male and female bodies and thereby the prescription of certain roles, norms and ideals respectively, serves, in this instance, to propagate the patriarchal social order and the subjugation of women to the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology.

1.3.5 Subjugation, Domination and Oppression

I have been arguing that the situation of women as a group under patriarchy be understood as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. In this final section of Chapter One, I will argue, first, that subjugation and domination are mutually exclusive—that while both are forms of the genus ‘oppression’, a group cannot at the same time with respect to the same things be dominated and subjugated; and, second, I will suggest that subjugation is a particularly harmful form of oppression.

First, then, domination is overt while subjugation is covert. If a group of people is dominated by another group then the power relations that exist between them typically involve force, or what we might call the rule of might. Contrastingly, we have already seen that subjugation does not involve rule by force, but rather rule by ideas.¹¹⁸

Second, given that domination is overt and attained, and perhaps maintained, by force, those subject to power as domination are typically reflectively aware of both the

¹¹⁷ Of course, this does not mean that women are unable to remove themselves from this situation. On the contrary, this situation is unstable given that it is not justified by natural fact. Given this, it must always remain covert, if the subjugation of women by patriarchal ideology becomes overt then processes like feminist consciousness-raising can spontaneously get a foot in the door. This is precisely what has occurred during waves of social change brought on by women who have come to reflectively scrutinise their situation as women under patriarchy.

¹¹⁸ Recall that for Gramsci, subjugation ought to be contrasted with domination by the state for this very reason.

injustice of their situation and the source of their discontent. On the other hand, given that to be subjugated is covert and attained, and maintained, by the rule of a pervasive ideology, those subject to power have typically pre-reflectively accepted their situation as natural, fixed and inevitable rather than as the result of changeable social convention. For our purposes, this is a crucial difference between the situation of the dominated and that of the subjugated; that is a difference between the relevant groups' awareness or non-awareness of the injustice of their situation and of the source of this injustice. On the one hand, members of dominated groups are consciously struck by the contradiction between their own self-conceptions and the unjustified conception of themselves—as members of a group—given to them from outside. On the other, members of subjugated groups pre-reflectively accept the conception of themselves—as members of a group—given to them from outside as natural, fixed and inevitable, and so, if they do experience conflict between this external conception of themselves and their internal self-conceptions, they are typically “unable even to locate the source of their discontent, still less remedy it.”¹¹⁹

This second difference, leads to a third and notable difference between dominated and subjugated groups. Groups that suffer from domination will typically come to resist being dominated and retaliate or revolt, while groups that suffer from subjugation typically remain passive as a result of pre-reflectively ‘consenting’ to the ideals, norms and values of the ideology that subjugates them as well as to the conception of themselves given to them from outside.

To elucidate, let us contrast Hegel’s master-slave relationship with Nietzsche’s master-slave moralities. The first will serve to explain the consciousness of a dominated group and the second the consciousness of a subjugated group.¹²⁰

According to Hegel, master-slave relations involve a constant struggle for recognition in which both parties attempt to subordinate the other and thereby win the position of ‘master’. If one party succeeds in subordinating the other then he becomes the master and, correspondingly, dooms the other to the situation of the slave. We see a dependency relation at work here: both master and slave define themselves in terms of

¹¹⁹ Femia, J.V., ‘Hegemony and consciousness in the thought of Antonio Gramsci’, p.268

¹²⁰ I realise that Hegel’s master-slave dialectic is not designed to talk about the situation of groups, however, I feel that it can easily be translated from the individual to the group level and thereby used to clarify the consciousness of dominated groups.

each other—both parties realise that their relative positions are only made possible through the existence of the other. Given the presence of this struggle, the party condemned to the situation of slave is consciously aware both of the injustice of his situation and, importantly, of the changeability of this situation. Importantly, this is a constant struggle for recognition, the slave can and does exercise his power in an attempt to change his situation.

On the other hand, we have Nietzsche's master/slave moralities. Here we do not see a reciprocal relation between two groups but rather two distinct ways of approaching the world. On the one hand, Nietzsche claims that the essential subject, the master, is value-creating:

[he] does not need approval; [he] judges, 'what is harmful to me is harmful in itself', [he] knows [himself] to be that which first accords honour to things, [he] is value-creating.¹²¹

Master—or noble—morality, then, is an *active* mode of evaluation that is self-affirming and promotes creative engagement with the world. Slave morality, on the other hand, is a *reactive* mode of evaluation that begins in other-negation and defends the individual from a hostile world. What this means is that if an individual has a slave morality then she does not actively create value but only reacts to the values created by those with a master morality.

I argue that we can apply these two distinct situations to domination and subjugation respectively. A dominated group, as I have already claimed, is aware of the injustice of their situation and of the changeability of this situation. Understanding Hegel's master-slave dialectic allows us to make sense of how this comes about. On the other hand, a subjugated group can be seen in certain respects to have a slave morality as described by Nietzsche—members of a subjugated group are not themselves value creating but instead are merely reactive in terms of the values created by those with a master morality.¹²²

Nietzsche's master-slave morality is picked up by Sonia Kruks and applied to the situation of women when she claims that:

¹²¹ Nietzsche, F., *Master and Slave Morality*, p602

¹²² While slave-morality as Nietzsche describes it involves some countering of oppression, this will not apply to women as subjugated. The analogy with Nietzsche here, then, can only be drawn so far, but this is of no great importance for our purposes here.

“man” is the one who defines “woman” as other and creates for her a situation of inferiorized otherness... this situation is not constituted by the relations of particular women with particular men. For subtending such direct, personal relations, women also encounter as fundamental to their situation a set of social institutions.¹²³

Under patriarchy, it is men who are value creating. Women come to unconsciously and uncritically accept these values as well as the norms, roles, and ideals that are ‘justified’ by them as natural, fixed and inevitable. This, as Young shows us, is reflected in feminine bodily motility, comportment and spatiality. Furthermore, there was never a struggle between the two sexes—necessary to the dialectic of domination. Beauvoir writes that, “Throughout history [women] have been subordinated to men, and hence their dependency is not the result of a historical event or a social change—it was not something that *occurred*.”¹²⁴ Women, then, never actively resigned themselves to the situation of slave, the position of slave, or more appropriately, the position of Other, was assigned to them from the start. The dependency relation at work in Hegel’s master-slave dialectic does not find room here. Women are defined as the opposite of man—as man’s other—however this relation is non-reciprocal; man does not need woman to define himself, he is able to define himself as man in relation to, for example, other men and nature. Women, then, depend significantly on men for their gendered identity whilst men do not need women to define themselves at all. It is because of this that Beauvoir claims that “woman cannot even dream of exterminating the males. The bond that unites her to her oppressors is not comparable to any other.”¹²⁵ Unlike members of dominated groups who are consciously struck by the injustice of their situation, women are socialised to see their situation as natural and therefore just.¹²⁶

Given this discussion, it should be clear that subjugation and domination are mutually exclusive situations.¹²⁷ Let us move on, then, to the second aim of this section,

¹²³ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience* p.39

¹²⁴ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex* p.18

¹²⁵ *Ibid* p.19

¹²⁶ I am not claiming that this situation is irrevocable. On the contrary, through feminist consciousness-raising exercises women can be brought to be aware of the injustice of their situation under patriarchy. I will return to this thought in Part Three.

¹²⁷ Also of interest here is Foucault’s distinction between sovereign power and disciplinary power. Sovereign power refers to situations where a person/state explicitly exerts their will over another. Disciplinary power (like Nietzsche’s bad conscience) is an insidious form of power that I exert over myself—not necessarily to my benefit. Interesting connections could be drawn between domination and sovereign power, and subjugation and disciplinary power. While these connections are certainly worth

namely to show that subjugation is a particularly harmful form of oppression. In order to do this, I will briefly set out Young's account of oppression and explore the reasons she provides her reader to think of women as an oppressed group. As I go through each 'face' of oppression, which Young argues applies to women *qua* women, I will show how both domination and subjugation are consistent with Young's account of oppression—that both domination and subjugation, properly understood, are situations of oppression. Moreover, I aim to show that, in most cases, subjugation could be seen as a more harmful situation of oppression given the nature of subjugation.

Young argues that oppression be understood as a family of concepts and conditions that constrain the self-development of an individual in virtue of her belonging to a certain group. By self-development Young means the developing and exercising of one's capacities and the expression of one's experience, thoughts and feelings.¹²⁸ Any account of oppression, for Young, must explain this inhibition of self-development. So, according to Young, then, oppression involves the inhibition of an individual's self-development based on his or her membership in a certain social group. Furthermore, she argues that:

Oppression has often been perpetrated by a conceptualisation of group difference in terms of unalterable essential natures that determine what group members deserve or are capable of.¹²⁹

What is seen as the essential nature of an oppressed group is taken to determine, and thereby justify, the norms and roles assigned to this group. Importantly, oppression, for Young, is most often structural. She writes:

Oppression... refers to systemic constraints on groups that are not necessarily the result of the intentions of a tyrant. Oppression in this sense is structural... Its causes are embedded in unquestioned norms, habits, and symbols, in the assumptions underlying institutional rules and the collective consequences of following these rules.¹³⁰

Young presents us with five 'faces' of oppression: exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Any one of these 'faces' is, by itself, she claims, sufficient to count as oppression, however, she points out that more often

exploring in other work, I have not discussed Foucauldian theory here because I do not want to be committed to Foucault's structuralism or the theoretical underpinnings of Foucauldian theory.

¹²⁸ Young, I. M., *Justice and the Politics of Difference* p.37

¹²⁹ *Ibid* p.47

¹³⁰ *Ibid* p.41

than not more than one is involved in the oppression of a group.¹³¹ According to Young, women are exploited, powerless, subject to the threat of violence in virtue of being women and culturally imperialised—note that she does not claim that women are marginalised, which I will return to later. Women, as a social group, that is, are, according to Young, oppressed in these *four* ways.

First, women are exploited—where exploitation, she argues, “occurs through a steady process of the transfer of the results of the labour of one social group to benefit another.”¹³² Cases of exploitation, then, involve one social group working under the control, for the purposes and to the benefit of another group. Women, then, on Young’s account, are exploited by men, and so are oppressed. Young’s account of the exploitation of women is consistent with my account of the subjugation of women. While exploitation can obviously occur within situations of domination, it can also obviously, I argue, occur within situations of subjugation. The relevant difference, again here, lies in the exploited group’s awareness of their exploitation. Women, on my account, would typically be unaware of their exploitation *as a group* by men *as a group*, and this is the direct result of the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology. If most women have come to pre-reflectively internalise the norms, ideals and thereby *roles* associated with the feminine ideal, then, typically, they will not see their fulfilment of these roles as sometimes explicable in terms of exploitation, but, rather, will take their fulfilment of these roles to be natural, right and good. Exploitation, I argue, is more harmful to the subjugated subject than it is to the dominated subject. This may seem counterintuitive, since the dominated are aware of their exploitation, it may seem that this awareness itself makes their situation more harmful—they live with the knowledge that they are exploited. However, this knowledge, I argue, means that the dominated are able to resist—or challenge—their exploitation. In contrast, remember Femia’s claim that the subjugated “are unable even to locate the source of their discontent, still less remedy it.”¹³³ The uncritical acceptance of ideological values, ideals and norms that results from the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology means that most women lack the resources to

¹³¹ Young agrees with Marilyn Frye that to be oppressed is to be caught within a network of systematically related forces which confine and restrict one’s movements in virtue of one’s belonging to a particular group. (Frye, M., ‘Oppression’ in *Gender Basics: Feminist Perspectives on Women and Men* (2nd edition))

¹³² *Ibid* p.49

¹³³ Femia, J.V., ‘Hegemony and consciousness in the thought of Antonio Gramsci’ p.268

even notice or challenge their exploitation as a group by men as a group—and this, I argue, makes the exploitation of women harmful on an altogether different, and perhaps, more serious level. If women lack the resources to even notice that they are, as a group, exploited, then the exploitation of women can continue unimpeded.

Second, women, Young argues, are powerless—are treated with disrespect because of their inferior status; they lack power insofar as they “do not regularly participate in making decisions that affect the conditions of their lives and actions.”¹³⁴ For Young that is, “the powerless are situated so that they must take orders and rarely have the right to give them.”¹³⁵ Again, it is easy to see how both dominated and subjugated groups could be said to be powerless in this sense, and so oppressed. The dominated will typically lack the opportunity to make decisions about the conditions under which they live; for the most part, they will ‘take orders’ from their master and would rarely have the opportunity to give them. Powerlessness, then, is clear—is evident—in the case of the dominated. However, it is still at work, only more surreptitiously, I argue, in the case of the subjugated—in the case of women. Given that the so-called ‘nature’ of women includes submission and passivity as key traits, the opportunity to ‘give orders’ or to seriously impact on their own situation *qua women* is limited—is constrained by the norms and ideals of patriarchal culture which they have typically come to internalise. In the case of the subjugated, then, I argue that this powerlessness is more profound. My reason for thinking this is much the same as my reason for thinking that the exploitation of women—as subjugated—is more harmful than the exploitation of the slave—as dominated. Again, women have typically come to pre-reflectively accept their situation as women under patriarchy—they have *consented* to this situation. Given this, the fact that they are relatively powerless to change their situation—to notice or challenge their lack of power to make decisions that impact on their living conditions—is more detrimental than the contrasting awareness that the dominated have of their situation, and therefore the resources the dominated have, that the woman lacks, to challenge their powerlessness.

¹³⁴ *Ibid* p.56

¹³⁵ *Ibid*

Third, Young argues that women live with the threat of random, unprovoked violence. According to Young, certain acts of violence when understood within, and against, the social context in which they occur are systemic in virtue of the fact that they are directed at members of a group simply in virtue of belonging to that group. She writes that:

The oppression of violence consists not only in direct victimisation, but in the daily knowledge shared by all members of oppressed groups that they are liable to violation, solely on account of their group identity. Just living under such a threat of attack... deprives the oppressed of freedom and dignity.¹³⁶

If we think of the practice of lynching, then we are easily able to see how the threat of violence is applicable in the lives of black people, and in particular African Americans. Seemingly random acts of violence have been extensively perpetrated against black people. Similarly, as I will argue in Chapter Two, women live, particularly, with the threat of rape. Both dominated and subjugated groups, then, can live with the threat of random, unprovoked violence. I am not comfortable claiming, at this time, that the threat of being raped is more harmful than the threat of being lynched. I will say more in Chapters Two and Four about the threat of rape. For now, let it suffice that both dominated and subjugated groups can be said to live with the threat of violence.

Finally, Young argues that women are culturally imperialised; where this involves “the universalisation of a dominant group’s experiences and culture, and its establishment as the norm.”¹³⁷ According to Young, that is, “since only the dominant group’s cultural expressions receive wide dissemination, their cultural experiences become the normal, or the universal, and thereby the unremarkable.”¹³⁸ Under cultural imperialism, members of the non-dominant group are taken to have an essential nature that is typically attached to their bodies and, given this, not easily denied. Importantly, according to Young, these culturally imperialised stereotypes “so permeate the society that they are not noticed as contestable.”¹³⁹ As a result, members of this group find themselves “defined from the outside, positioned, placed, by a network of dominant meanings they experience as arising from elsewhere.”¹⁴⁰ Moreover,

¹³⁶ *Ibid* p.62

¹³⁷ *Ibid* p.59

¹³⁸ *Ibid*

¹³⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*

while the subject desires recognition as human, capable of activity, full of hope and possibility, she receives from the dominant culture only the judgment that she is different, marked, or inferior.¹⁴¹

While Young's account of cultural imperialism may make intuitive sense, and could be seen to apply neatly to both the dominated and the subjugated—in both the case of black people and women, members of these groups are defined from outside, by either the 'master' (typically a white man) or by patriarchal ideology itself. However, I take issue with her claim that women are culturally imperialised—understood as she defines it.

That is, on Young's account, groups that are oppressed through cultural imperialism do not notice stereotypical images of themselves as contestable, but are nevertheless aware of the injustice of their situation. There is a tension here. If these stereotypes are not recognisable as contestable then how can members of culturally imperialised groups resist them? Either they *are* recognised as contestable by members of culturally imperialised groups, which would lead members of the group to resist them—which is typically how dominated groups behave—or they *are not* recognised by members of culturally imperialised groups as contestable and are, thereby, not resisted—which is typically how subjugated groups behave. Young cannot claim both that members of culturally imperialised groups are aware of the injustice of their situation and that the stereotypes attached to members of culturally imperialised groups are not recognised as contestable. On the one hand, the subjugated do not recognise these stereotypes as contestable precisely because they have typically come to pre-reflectively internalise them as natural and inevitable rather than as a matter of social convention. On the other hand, the dominated *do* recognise the stereotypes attached to members of their group as contestable because they are aware of the injustice of their situation.

Even if we accept that this tension exists in situations of cultural imperialism, it remains the case that the situation of women under patriarchy is not adequately captured by Young's account of cultural imperialism. We have already seen that the majority of women pre-reflectively inherit and accept patriarchal ideology as based in fact—as justified by the so-called essential nature of women. Women, then, typically do not recognise these stereotypes as contestable, in this Young and I agree, however, rather than being aware of the injustice of their situation, as Young would have it, and thereby

¹⁴¹ *Ibid* p.60

resisting these stereotypes, the majority of women, I argue, ‘consent’ to these stereotypes precisely because they have inherited and internalised them.

However, this disagreement does not mean that we should disregard Young’s overall account of oppression. Rather, it means that we need to amend her account of cultural imperialism by distinguishing carefully between those oppressed groups that are dominated and those oppressed groups that are subjugated. Before concluding the chapter, I want to briefly question the fact that Young omits to include that women are marginalised. Marginalisation is the fifth ‘face’ of oppression that she explores, which refers to the ‘expulsion’ of a social group from what she calls “useful participation in social life.”¹⁴² The members of marginalised groups are prevented, she claims, from exercising their capacities in “socially defined and recognised ways.”¹⁴³ As a result of this expulsion from the social sphere, marginalised groups, she argues, often experience “severe deprivation and even extermination.”¹⁴⁴ While I do not want to defend the claim that women are marginalised here, it seems odd that Young has not considered this ‘face’ of oppression given the Beauvoirian influence on her work. That is, Beauvoir would probably make a case for the marginalisation of women—especially insofar as this relates to the prevention of the exercise of capacities in “socially defined and recognisable ways.”¹⁴⁵ Beauvoir spends many pages defending the claim that women have been expelled from the social or ‘public’ sphere and have been relegated to live out their lives in the ‘private’ sphere—doing housework, raising children, etc. Perhaps Young does not consider women to be marginalised because of the changes to women’s roles over the course of history—I have already mentioned some of these changes, and, in particular, mentioned the fact that women are now able to hold jobs and pursue careers that were not previously available to them, jobs in the ‘public’ sphere. However, given that these changes have not resulted in the extinction of patriarchal ideology, there may be a case to be made that women remain marginalised in virtue of their subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

¹⁴² *Ibid* p.53

¹⁴³ *Ibid* p.54

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid* p.53

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid* p.54

In the foregoing discussion, I hope to have shown that both the situations of domination and subjugation count as forms of oppression. I have shown that each ‘face’ of oppression, discussed by Young, could apply equally to both cases. I have, however, suggested that subjugation could be seen as a more harmful form of oppression than domination given the *nature* of subjugation itself. That is, I have suggested, with particular reference to the exploitation and powerlessness of women, that the subjugated, because they are *unaware* of the actual facts of their situation are more *surreptitiously* harmed than the dominated. The fact that women—as subjugated—are typically unable to even notice and therefore challenge their exploitation and powerlessness as a group means, I have claimed, that subjugation could be seen as a more harmful form of oppression than is domination.¹⁴⁶

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have put forward an account of the situation of women as a group under patriarchy as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. I argued first that in order to understand women’s specific situation under patriarchy it is crucial that we take our lead from the account of the general human condition put forward by the existential phenomenologists—particularly Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir. Adopting this account allowed us to identify the further *social* ambiguity between transcendence and immanence particular to the situation of women as a group. Moreover, an exploration of this social ambiguity led us to see that patriarchal ideology is hegemonic and serves to subjugate women. That is, the particular relations between men as a group and women as a group—which constitute this further social ambiguity between women’s transcendence and immanence—are oppressive and should be understood particularly as subjugatory.

In the following chapter, I focus on one of the systematically related forces that subjugate women as a group and thereby confine and restrict the movements of individual women; namely, sexual objectification.

¹⁴⁶ It is not essential for my purposes that the reader accepts this claim. In the final part of this thesis I will suggest that feminist consciousness-raising results in the divided consciousness of the dominated. There, again, I will suggest that this divided consciousness is an improvement upon a pre-reflective acceptance of patriarchal ideology precisely because of the awareness that the consciousness-raised woman has of her situation.

--CHAPTER TWO--

SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION, ALIENATION AND THE THREAT OF RAPE

“The use, consumption, and circulation of [women’s] sexualised bodies underwrites the organisation and reproduction of the social order, in which they have never taken part as ‘subjects’”— Luce Irigaray¹⁴⁷

In this chapter, I focus on one of the systematically related forces that subjugate women *qua* women—namely, sexual objectification. I argue that when we focus our attention on the role that sexual objectification plays in the lives of women as subjugated to the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology, we are able to explain the origins of both women’s typical alienation from their bodies and the atmosphere of threat under which women *qua* women live as especially vulnerable to rape. It should be noted that neither the claim that women are typically alienated from their bodies, nor the claim that women live with the threat of rape are original to this work. However, my discussion here, in bringing together the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women with my account of women’s situation as a social collective as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, allows us, I argue, to fully capture the *origins* of both women’s alienation from their bodies and the threat of rape.

The chapter will unfold as follows. First, drawing on the work of Martha Nussbaum, Sandra Bartky, Rae Langton and Ann Cahill, I elucidate what I mean by sexual objectification and explore the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women. Crucial to the account that I develop here is the claim that there are distinct differences between being treated *as a woman* and being treated *as an object*. For one thing, an object cannot be humiliated and often the treatment of women *qua* women is precisely this—humiliating. The same goes for a number of other ways in which women are treated in their relations with men that cannot be captured by being treated merely as an object—such as degradation, autonomy violation, the denial of subjectivity, all of which must be involved in any adequate account either of

¹⁴⁷ Irigaray, L., ‘This Sex which is not one’ p.84

objectification *simpliciter* or of *sexual* objectification. Despite the fundamental role that sexual objectification plays in the lives of women, one should not, I argue, view the treatment of women under patriarchy as comparable with the treatment of other objects; women are positioned as object-like in the patriarchal hierarchy of sexual difference and, so, the relations between men and women *in the context of patriarchy* are such that to be treated *as a woman* is, sometimes, to be treated as an object in virtue of the ideals of femininity, but it is not simply to be treated as an object. The particular relations between men and women under patriarchy should not be obscured by an overly-strict analogy between women and objects.

Second, drawing on the work of Sandra Bartky and Simone de Beauvoir, I explain what is meant by alienation and elucidate why most women can be said to be alienated from their bodies.¹⁴⁸ I then put forward an explanation for the origin of women's alienation from their bodies that develops out of my account of the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women and of the situation of women as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. Women's subjugation as a social collective, I argue, makes sense of women's coming to internalise the objectifying gaze of the (male) other, as well as the content of this gaze, and this explains the resulting alienation that women typically experience in terms of their bodies.¹⁴⁹

Finally, drawing on the work of Scott Anderson, I explore the notion of a threat and how a threat comes to be seen as credible. I then explore the claim that women live with the threat of rape and, answering Young's call for a theoretical account that connects the three feminine modalities she discusses with the threat of bodily invasion, I argue that the threat of rape is constituted, again, by the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal

¹⁴⁸ This should not be taken to mean that I do not think that positive symbolisations of the feminine body exist or are possible. Importantly, on an existential-phenomenological account, meaning is attributed to, for example, bodies both centripetally (from outside) and centrifugally (from inside). Positive meanings can certainly be attributed by both men and women to the bodies of women—this is not precluded by my account.

¹⁴⁹ Importantly, my account of women's typical alienation from their bodies under the context of patriarchy should not be seen to be endorsing masculinity as an undistorted way of living the body or a neutral standard that women should strive to emulate. Men's relationships with their bodies are obviously also distorted by the meanings centripetally associated masculinity by patriarchal ideology. However, the relationship of men with their bodies is not of interest to me here.

ideology. Moreover, it is partly because of women's situation *qua* women under patriarchy—and the apparent legitimacy of the patriarchal regime—that, I argue, this threat becomes credible.¹⁵⁰

2.1.1 Objectification

Let us begin with objectification. *Prima facie* it seems as though objectification is fundamental to the situation of women under patriarchy since if the ideal to be achieved by women is femininity, and femininity is aligned with passivity—the nature of objects or inert things, as we saw in Chapter One—then to be a woman, typically, would seem to involve, at some fundamental level, being treated and/or seen as a type of object, or, at least, as object-like in certain respects. Again, the thought here is that women are, given their very status under patriarchy, aligned with immanence, passivity and inertness—characteristics typically reserved for objects—from which it seems to follow *prima facie* that objectification will play a role in their situation under patriarchy. If this is the case then it is important to understand what it means to objectify another.

Before we begin, however, it is important to note that being gazed upon as an object is *not necessarily negative*. That is, we need to distinguish between a morally objectionable objectifying gaze and other kinds of 'objectifying' gazes that are not morally objectionable, and could be seen as ethically neutral or even positive. One such ethically neutral gaze is described by P.F. Strawson as the 'objective attitude', which is adopted by, for instance, doctors towards their patients. In this case, the patient is also the 'object' of a gaze insofar as her physical or chemical states are of interest to the doctor rather than her subjective states. However, despite this, such a gaze is neither experienced

¹⁵⁰ Although I am here examining merely one of the forces which constrain women living under patriarchal rule, and could be accused, therefore, of viewing women's situation microscopically, I do this because I think it is important to understand the particular force of sexual objectification in order to see how it is related, macroscopically, to the greater oppressive situation of women as subjugation to patriarchal ideology. The terms microscopic and macroscopic are taken from Marilyn Frye's paper 'Oppression'. Much work has already been done on other of the systematically related forces which oppress women under patriarchy: such as that done by Sandra Bartky on the dieting, dress and cosmetic requirements and expectations facing women in patriarchal culture, and by Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin on the pervasiveness of pornography under patriarchy which displays women as sexual commodities. The pervasive force of sexual objectification of women seems to me to be so obviously systematically related to the flourishing pornography industries (as well as the popular media's) portrayal of women, and the related dieting, dress and cosmetic expectations imposed on them, as well as the concomitant typical bodily comportment and spatiality of women under patriarchy, that I will not spend any time here defending these relationships.

as detrimental by the patient nor typically seen as morally questionable. On the contrary, the ‘objective attitude’ is seen as an appropriate stance to adopt towards a patient. To imagine an instance where objectification can be positive we need only think of examples where lovers focus lovingly on body parts of their beloveds. When I speak of the objectifying gaze of the male other below, I am referring to a particular kind of *morally objectionable* objectifying gaze.

Standardly, one is taken to objectify another in a morally objectionable manner if one treats that other as merely a means and not as an end-in-themselves (this formulation being taken from the Kantian maxim). Persons are taken to be ends-in-themselves and so it is standardly regarded as morally wrong to treat a person as, or like, an object—that is, in any of the ways one would deem it appropriate to treat an object.¹⁵¹ However, recent work has begun to show that to treat another as a means is not the only way to objectify them; as Onora O’Neill puts it, “Merely not to be used is not enough for being treated as a person. Making another into a tool or instrument in my projects is one way of failing to treat that other as a person; but only one way.”¹⁵² Following this trend, Martha Nussbaum argues “that in all cases of objectification what is at issue is a question of treating one thing as another: One is treating *as an object* what is really not an object, what is, in fact, a human being”¹⁵³ and proceeds to outline at least seven notions that she claims are involved in the idea of treating as an object. These are (in exactly the way she sets them out—i.e. this is her own list):

- 1 *Instrumentality*. The objectifier treats the object as a tool of his or her purposes
- 2 *Denial of Autonomy*. The objectifier treats the object as lacking in autonomy and self-determination
- 3 *Inertness*. The objectifier treats the object as lacking in agency, and perhaps also in activity
- 4 *Fungibility*. The objectifier treats the object as interchangeable (a) with other objects of the same type and/or (b) with objects of other types

¹⁵¹ It is of course possible to treat an object as an end-in-itself—such as a valuable Ming vase, for example. However this is atypical. Typically to treat something like an object is not to treat it as an end-in-itself. Martha Nussbaum also discusses other atypical examples in her paper, ‘Objectification’.

¹⁵² O’Neill, O., ‘Between Consenting Adults’ p.105

¹⁵³ Nussbaum, M., ‘Objectification’ p.218

- 5 *Violability*. The objectifier treats the object as lacking in boundary integrity, as something that it is permissible to break up, smash, break into
- 6 *Ownership*. The objectifier treats the object as something that is owned by another, can be bought or sold, etc.
- 7 *Denial of subjectivity*. The objectifier treats the object as something whose experience and feelings (if any) need not be taken into account”¹⁵⁴

For Nussbaum, one objectifies another human being if one treats him or her in one or more of these ways. She argues that “we sometimes treat any one of these features as sufficient, though more often a plurality of features is present when the term is applied.”¹⁵⁵ For Nussbaum, when treating a human being as an object the most problematic, or as she puts it “morally exigent,”¹⁵⁶ of the seven features is instrumentality; since when an objectifier treats a human being as merely a tool for his or her purposes, treating the human being in other of the seven ways naturally seems to follow: if I treat you as a tool for my purposes then it may very well turn out to be the case that I see you as lacking in autonomy and subjectivity, as well as potentially fungible, inert and violable. Again, while Nussbaum argues that these other features are not necessarily *entailed* by treating you instrumentally they do seem likely to follow in practice, for if I see you merely as a tool with which I can secure my own ends, this seems to deny that you are a self-determining agent whose experience or feelings need to be taken into account, at the same time as it seems to take you, as a tool for my purposes, as potentially interchangeable with other tools that could secure the same end. Importantly, depending on the end in question, treating you as a tool for my purposes may lead me to seeing you as violable, “as something that it is permissible to break up, smash, [or] break into.”¹⁵⁷ As Nussbaum puts it:

a certain sort of instrumental use of persons, negating the autonomy that is proper to them as persons, also leaves the human being so denuded of humanity, in the eyes of the objectifier, that he or she seems ripe for other abuses as well... The lesson seems to be that there is something especially problematic about instrumentalising human beings, something that involves denying what is fundamental to them as human

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid* pp.218-219

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid* p.221

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid* p.219

beings, namely, the status of being ends in themselves. From this one denial, other forms of objectification that are not logically entailed by the first seem to follow.¹⁵⁸

While Nussbaum's list covers some central ways in which one can objectify another in a morally objectionable way, one could consider Nussbaum's list—or her treatment of certain notions—to be incomplete. Following Langton, I believe that an important amendment needs to be made to Nussbaum's list—this amendment, we will see, contains a distinction that is crucial to a proper understanding of the harm of rape. As Langton shows, there are two distinct ways to *deny autonomy*: the non-attribution of autonomy—which is captured under Nussbaum's second feature, denial of autonomy—and the violation of autonomy—which requires the attribution of autonomy to the objectified person by the objectifier. So the amendment we need to make to Nussbaum's list would look like this:

2* *Denial of Autonomy*. (a) Non-attribution of autonomy: the objectifier treats the object as lacking in autonomy and self-determination or (b) violation of autonomy: the objectifier attributes autonomy to the 'object' and violates this autonomy through his or her behaviour towards the 'object'.

Perhaps, eighth and ninth features should also be added to this list. First, following Bartky, we may want to add something like the following:

8 *Representing a part as the whole*. The objectifier separates out a part or feature from the 'object' and treats this part as representing the whole.

For Bartky, this is one of the ways in which sexual objectification takes place. She writes:

A person is sexually objectified when her sexual parts or sexual functions are separated out from the rest of her personality and reduced to the status of mere instruments or else regarded as if they were capable of representing her... One way to be sexually objectified, then, is to be the object of a kind of perception, unwelcome and inappropriate, that takes the part for the whole.¹⁵⁹

And finally, we may want to add

9 Treating a feature of someone as natural (and perhaps inevitable) when it is not.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid* p.223 It is important to note that for Nussbaum, the context of the relationship is important when claiming that instrumentalisation is problematic. That is, instrumentalisation *per se* is not necessarily problematic, as in the example she provides of using your lover's stomach as a pillow. The context of the relationship, then, is fundamental, for Nussbaum, to the moral assessment of objectification.

¹⁵⁹ Bartky, S., *Femininity and Domination: studies in the phenomenology of oppression* p.26

¹⁶⁰ Thanks to Marius Vermaak from the Rhodes University Philosophy Department for this suggestion.

These amendments will become important later on, when we discuss alienation and the threat of rape.

One might, as Ann Cahill does in her recent book *Overcoming Objectification: A Critical Analysis*, object to the heritage, and therefore theoretical underpinnings, of these standard ways of understanding objectification—an objection that I endorse. She argues that accounts such as Nussbaum's—which she takes as representative of such standard accounts—because they are fundamentally Kantian in nature, cannot adequately account for women's experiences and so cannot serve feminist ends.¹⁶¹ She argues that these standard accounts fail for three primary reasons. First, they fail to recognise the central role that embodiment plays in subjectivity and indeed vilify the body, which means, she argues, that they are unable to adequately account for positive sexual interactions. That is, on standard Kantian accounts, autonomy is taken to be the most important characteristic of persons, and so to undermine autonomy—insofar as one is treated as bodily—as a thing—is to harm the individual. However, any adequate account of positive sexual interactions has to allow for the loss of autonomy in the act of sex given that the success of the act depends in certain ways upon both parties relinquishing certain amounts of control to each other. Second, because these accounts assume such a stark contrast between materiality and subjectivity they place undue restrictions on subjectivity, agency and personhood. These approaches obscure the importance of embodiment to subjectivity, which has become, particularly in feminist theory, central to accounts of subjectivity. Finally, she objects that women as sex objects are not to be understood in the same ways that objects *simpliciter* are understood—she writes that women “seem to occupy an odd, confusing space between subject and object, a space perhaps that does not recognize the subject/object distinction, but complicates and troubles it.”¹⁶² Because the Kantian approach marginalises the body and privileges non-embodied attributes, and distinguishes so sharply between persons and things (bodies) any concept of objectification derived from such an approach cannot, she argues, serve feminist ends.

¹⁶¹ She also levels criticisms at Rae Langton and Linda LeMoncheck's accounts of objectification and at the way in which the concept of sexual objectification is used in the accounts put forward by Catherine MacKinnon and Simone de Beauvoir of the situation of women under patriarchy.

¹⁶² Cahill, A., *Overcoming Objectification: A Critical Analysis* p.31

She writes that: “What is needed, then, is a way of analyzing these phenomena without falling into the trap of alienating the body or the other from the self.”¹⁶³

Cahill attempts to solve this problem with a renewed focus on intersubjectivity and the central role that embodiment plays in subjectivity itself. Cahill proposes that we replace the standard concept of objectification with what she calls ‘derivitization’. She writes:

To derivatize is to portray, render, understand, or approach a being solely or primarily as the reflection, projection, or expression of another being’s identity, desires, fears, etc... The derivatized subject exhibits (and, I would argue, experiences) a particular kind of subjectivity—a subjectivity that is stunted, or muted, as I argue later, but a subjectivity nonetheless.¹⁶⁴

Cahill’s account denies the stark opposition between subject-hood and object-hood; to be seen as an object, she argues, is not necessarily to have one’s subjectivity undermined. In fact, she argues that to be seen as a body is, in certain crucial respects, affirming insofar as our bodies are central to our identities. What is harmful is not being treated as bodily but, rather, to be treated as a mere projection of another’s identity, desires and so on; in short, to be derivatized. According to Cahill, the derivatized woman’s desires, actions and choices “are required to mirror nothing but the desires of men. Beyond those desires, a derivatized woman cannot exist, cannot speak, and cannot act.”¹⁶⁵ Central to Cahill’s argument is the claim that women who are derivatized are not used as *things* they are used as *subjects*—albeit as particular kinds of subjects. She writes:

The objectified woman is not constituted, properly speaking, as an object, but rather as a particular kind of subject: one who has (among other characteristics) little to no concern for the respect she is due from herself and others on account of her personhood.¹⁶⁶

While I will not discard the insights we gain from the standard approaches to the concept of objectification—in particular, I will continue to refer to the list of the nine features of objectification explicated above—and while I will continue to use the term ‘objectification’ in what follows, I do take on board Cahill’s concerns with the heritage and theoretical underpinnings of these standard approaches to the concept of objectification. However, my particular account, insofar as it is not grounded in a Kantian

¹⁶³ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid* pp.32-33

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid* p.34

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid* p.28

approach to embodiment, but, rather, in a phenomenological approach to the embodied subject, should not be seen as falling prey to the concern that my understanding of the practice cannot serve feminist ends. Moreover, Cahill also argues, as I do, that the objectifying treatment of women does not position them as objects comparable to other inanimate objects. Recall that I have emphasised that, on my account, to objectify a woman is not to treat her as an object, but is, rather, to treat her *as a woman*—precisely because of the positioning of women as a group in relation to men as a group and the associations made between the position of women as a group and the qualities usually associated with things that are object-like. Cahill would agree with this.

2.1.2. Sexual Objectification

While we may accept that objectification plays a role in the situation of women under patriarchy—given the hegemonically established associations between women and the characteristics of objects—I argue further, following Beauvoir and MacKinnon, that women not only live as other and object-like but, importantly, they live as *sexualised* other. MacKinnon claims that: “All women live in sexual objectification the way fish live in water.”¹⁶⁷ She also claims that: “In the society we currently live in, the content [of] sexuality is the gaze that constructs women as objects for male pleasure.”¹⁶⁸ According to MacKinnon, sexuality itself is defined according to the eroticisation of femininity as submission and masculinity as domination. I do not wish here to defend MacKinnon’s particular account of women’s situation under patriarchy, however, like MacKinnon, I will argue that sexual objectification pervades the lives of women under patriarchy. While sexual objectification is not the only kind of objectification that women suffer under patriarchy—women can be objectified as, say, mothers—I focus on sexual objectification, here, because of the intimate connection that, I will argue, exists between sexual objectification and rape.

What distinguishes sexual objectification from objectification *simpliciter* is the particularly sexual nature of the practice as well as the focus of the former on the sex of the individual—it is *in virtue of* her sex that a woman is objectified in the first place, and,

¹⁶⁷ MacKinnon, C., ‘Sexuality’ p.149

¹⁶⁸ MacKinnon, C., ‘Desire and Power’, p53

importantly, also in virtue of her sex that it is deemed socially appropriate to objectify her. (This is not to say that women cannot and do not objectify men and, indeed, other women. It is just to say that the sexual objectification *of women by men* is the archetypal expression of this practice.¹⁶⁹) Bartky captures both features in a description of her own experience of sexual objectification. She writes:

It is a fine spring day, and with an utter lack of self-consciousness, I am bouncing down the street. Suddenly I hear men's voices. Catcalls and whistles fill the air. These noises are *clearly sexual in intent* and they are meant for me... The body which only moments before I had inhabited with such ease now floods my consciousness. I have been made into an object... But I must be made to know that I am a 'nice piece of ass'. I must be made to see myself as they see me. There is an element of compulsion in this encounter, in this being-made-to-be-aware of one's own flesh... *What I describe seems less the spontaneous expression of a healthy eroticism than a ritual subjugation.*¹⁷⁰

One interpretation of this scenario is that Bartky is *sexually* objectified here insofar as the gaze of the workmen make her aware of herself *as a woman* and thereby, crucially, *as a sexual object*. She reports experiencing the encounter as 'a ritual subjugation' precisely because she is made to be aware of herself in this way—as a woman—it is precisely in virtue of her being a woman that she is 'made into an object'—it is precisely because she is female that this encounter takes place.

Interestingly, wolf whistling (and similar activities) typically takes place in group situations like the one described by Bartky; typically, that is, it is a *group* of men that wolf whistle at a passing woman. It has been suggested that, given this, wolf whistling could plausibly be seen as a type of communication between men, or with other men. In this case, the woman in the scenario—Bartky—would exist purely as a means by which the men—the workmen—show themselves and other men that they have power.¹⁷¹

Recall that my purpose here is to argue that sexual objectification plays a fundamental role in the lives of women under patriarchy. In what immediately follows, then, I will turn to an exploration of the meaning, place and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives that women lead in patriarchal societies.

¹⁶⁹ Ann Cahill in her recent book *Overcoming Objectification: A Critical Analysis* discusses the distinct qualities of sexual objectification in relation to women and in relation to men. Given that I take the sexual objectification of women to be the archetypal expression of this practice I will remain entirely silent on the stereotyping of men for the benefit of female consumers as well as the concomitant expectations placed on them.

¹⁷⁰ Bartky, S., *Femininity and Domination: studies in the phenomenology of oppression* p.27 [my emphasis]

¹⁷¹ This suggestion was made by Pedro Tabensky of the Rhodes University Philosophy Department.

i. The meaning of sexual objectification

If we look at the features of objectification listed above, it seems that sexual objectification meets, at least, features 1, 4, 7, and 8: instrumentality, as the woman is treated as merely a tool to satisfy the man's sexual desire for arousal; fungibility, as the woman is treated as merely an instance of a kind that has the ability to bring about arousal through being gazed upon; denial of subjectivity, as the woman is treated as something whose experience and feelings need not be taken into account; and representing the part as the whole, as the woman is taken to be represented by a sexual part or function.

The meaning of sexual objectification, I argue, can be drawn from this treatment. That is, to be sexually objectified *means* to be treated—in virtue of one's sex—as *less* than a person (although a subject nonetheless) insofar as one's identity is distorted, one's subjectivity is treated as irrelevant and insofar as one is treated as though one is both instrumental and fungible. Moreover, the meaning of this practice should be understood within the specific context of patriarchy; that is, that the practice of sexual objectification reflects the already existing, socially entrenched, conception of the feminine ideal. Recall that under patriarchal conditions women are positioned and defined in relation, and as inferior, to men, and that femininity, as a deviation from masculinity, is typically aligned with passivity, a characteristic standardly afforded only to objects—or, put differently, to things that are not agents, that do not act. Given that women are positioned in this way in virtue of *sexual difference itself* it should come as no surprise that the meaning of this practice reflects this positioning—reflects what it means to be a woman under patriarchy. Women, as second-class citizens, are positioned in such a way as to become the inevitable and seemingly natural targets of sexual objectification.¹⁷²

ii. The place of sexual objectification

Next, let us turn our attention to the *place* of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy. The sexual objectification of women is systematically related, I argue, to

¹⁷² It is the very construction of masculinity and femininity that creates the distinction between first- and second-class citizens in this instance.

the exploitation, powerlessness and cultural imperialisation of women under patriarchy—there are clear connections, that is, between the sexual objectification of women and the flourishing pornography industry's (as well as the popular media's) portrayal of women and the related dieting, dress and cosmetic expectations imposed on women, as well as the concomitant typical bodily comportment, motility and spatiality of women under patriarchy.

An extensive amount of literature exists on the portrayal of women in the media and the pornography industry. Given this, I will not spend time here exploring these portrayals. Needless to say, women are often portrayed as sexual objects in, for example, advertising. Images of women as alluring sexual objects rather than free and autonomous agents pervade the popular media—it is commonplace to hear advertising types use the expression 'sex sells'—and enshrine a certain view of women that comes to be seen as the norm.

Consider, then, the influence that these sexually objectifying images have on women themselves. These images not only entrench a view of the ideal woman into the minds of male consumers, they also promote beauty ideals that are followed, sometimes with extremely damaging consequences, by women themselves. According to Bartky:

Subject to the evaluating eye of the male connoisseur, women learn to evaluate themselves first and best... a truly 'feminine' woman... has been seduced by a variety of cultural agencies into being a body not only for another, but for herself as well.¹⁷³

Women are positioned as object-like under a hegemonically dominant patriarchal ideology, and, as object-like, women are expected to embody what is considered the feminine beauty ideal of the time. As Beauvoir writes:

She will be called upon for youth and health... The ideal of feminine beauty is variable, but certain demands remain constant; for one thing, since woman is destined to be possessed, her body must present the inert and passive qualities of an object... In woman dressed and adorned, nature is present but under restraint, by human will remoulded nearer to man's desire.¹⁷⁴

Regardless of how they are expressed, feminine beauty ideals result in the fact that women "[become] infatuated with [their] feminine persona and waste [their] powers in

¹⁷³ Bartky, S., *On Psychological Oppression* p41

¹⁷⁴ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex: Facts and Myths* pp.157-159

the more or less hopeless pursuit of a *Vogue* figure, the look of an *Essence* model.”¹⁷⁵

Women strive everyday to attain the beauty ideals portrayed by society until eventually,

weighted down with fat, or on the contrary so thin as to forbid all effort, paralyzed by inconvenient clothing and the rules of propriety ...woman's [bodies seem] to man to be his property, his thing.¹⁷⁶

The sexual objectification of women under patriarchy forms part of a systematically related network of forces that constrain and restrict women's movements by positioning women, in various ways, as desirable objects under surveillance.¹⁷⁷

iii. The pervasiveness of sexual objectification

Finally, let us examine the *pervasiveness* of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy. Seemingly casual and overtly sexual comments made by men to women in bars and public places, and catcalls, wolf-whistles and car-hooters directed at women as they walk down the street are all overt exemplars of the pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women. However, sexual objectification often plays a far subtler role than this. It seems to me that so-called glass-ceilings in work places as well as typically endorsed gender-roles and norms rely on the sexual objectification of women to reinforce the necessary passivity on the part of women required to maintain the status quo. Put differently, it seems to me that these phenomena are the result of the hegemonically internalised and thereby socially entrenched meanings attached to women in virtue of their sexual difference and subsequent (deviant) otherness.

However, the sexual objectification of women is not only revealed in the treatment of women under patriarchy, it is further revealed in the epistemological realm. Both Rae Langton and Sally Haslanger discuss this aspect of sexual objectification in their work, which I will now briefly discuss.

Langton explores the epistemological realm of objectification through an examination of *projected beliefs* driven by desire. On her account, sexual objectification is generated by ordinary sexual desires through the process of desire-driven projected

¹⁷⁵ Bartky, S., *On Psychological Oppression* p.25 Amy Farrah Fowler, a character in the television series *Big Bang Theory*, says “Sheldon, sometimes you forget I’m a lady, and with that comes an oestrogen-fuelled need to page through thick glossy magazines that make me hate my body”.

¹⁷⁶ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex: Facts and Myths* p.158

¹⁷⁷ This will become very important later in the chapter when I discuss alienation and the atmosphere of threat under which women live.

beliefs. She distinguishes between three varieties of desire-driven projection. The first she calls phenomenological gilding, which generates beliefs about the *value* of the thing desired. In this instance, Langton argues that sexual objectification takes place when women's sexual desirability comes to be seen as inherent to women themselves in the same way as any commodity has value; given the prevalence of pornography in patriarchal culture, women could be seen as pornographic commodities and if so would be treated as things. The second she calls wishful thinking, which is able to generate beliefs about *anything at all*. In this instance, Langton argues that men often project or attribute a matching desire to the woman who they are objectifying, which takes the form of 'I desire her to desire it, so I believe she desires it'. The third and final variety of desire-driven projection she calls pseudo-empathy, which attributes one's own beliefs to others, generating beliefs about the desires of others. In this instance, Langton argues that the form of the belief generated is 'I desire it, so I believe that she desires it'. In both the second and third varieties of desire-driven projection the subjectivity and autonomy of the person is denied and the person is treated instrumentally.

Langton goes on to provide an account of how these desire-driven projected beliefs evade notice and thus both help and hide sexual objectification. Crucial to her account is that the direction of fit of the belief to truth runs in the opposite direction: the belief does not fit the world (although it aims to), rather the world comes to seem to fit the belief. Given that the origin of the belief lies in non-epistemic features of psychology, these origins must remain hidden to the believer so that the belief can be upheld and maintained. Moreover, since counter-evidence would likely destroy the belief, maintaining the belief requires that something is done about the evidence, namely the mind creates the subjective appearance of confirming evidence for the projected belief and allows the world to create the objective appearance of confirming evidence for the belief. In this way, it seems as though the world literally makes the desire-driven, projected belief true, that is, changes to fulfil the projected belief. Clearly, this process is unstable and epistemologically vulnerable, but by its very nature it is hard to notice; noticing it is the first step to doing something about it.¹⁷⁸ Given such an account Langton claims that:

¹⁷⁸ Langton, R., 'Projection and Objectification'

Objectification is a process in which the social world comes to be shaped by perception, desire, and belief: a process in which women, for example, are made objects because of men's perceptions and desires and beliefs.... Objectification is a process of projection supplemented by force, whose result is that women are made subordinate.¹⁷⁹

Haslanger provides support for Langton's account. She claims that:

the point that men view women as objects is not simply the point that men view women as something to use for their pleasure, as means and not as ends. To view women as objects is to view women as a (substantial) kind; it is to view individual women as having a Woman's Nature. As the objectifier sees it, it is distinctive of this (alleged) kind that those features he finds desirable or arousing in women are a consequence of their nature, and so under normal circumstances women will exhibit these features... From the point of view of the objectifier, his view of women captures their individual nature... A successful objectifier attributes to something features that have been forced upon it, and he believes the object has these features 'by nature'.¹⁸⁰

According to Haslanger, the norms of objectivity—neutrality and distance—secure the hierarchical order of gender. With regards to practical reasoning or making decisions about how to act with regards to another thing, neutrality demands that our actions be constrained by accommodating the nature of things, which is discovered by observing regularities in behaviour and ignoring or denying our own contributions to the circumstances we observe. Further, distance demands that these observations are neither conditioned by the social position of the observer nor impacted on by the observer. Together, neutrality and distance reinforce the existing gendered social roles. On neutrality, if we observe typical gender differences we will notice that more women than men embody the norms of femininity and so we will assume that femininity is in fact essential to the nature of women and, in light of this, structure social arrangements to accommodate these natures. She writes:

if we consider a context of gender hierarchy... we may assume that there will be generally observable differences between men and women that are a consequence of men's forcing their view of women on women. Individuals in this context who are aware of these differences and who satisfy the norm of assumed objectivity... will view the differences as 'natural' and will act to accommodate gender difference.¹⁸¹

On distance, we ignore the empirical research showing that these attributes of women are *not* in fact natural but are rather the products of contingent social forces, masking the power of the objectifier: "under conditions of gender hierarchy [the objectifier's

¹⁷⁹ Langton, R., 'Feminism in Epistemology' p.284

¹⁸⁰ Haslanger, S. 'On Being Objective and Being Objectified' p.104

¹⁸¹ *Ibid* pp.109-110

projective beliefs] enable the objectifier to use the observable consequences of his domination to justify his continued domination.”¹⁸² So:

if the ideal of assumed objectivity is generally endorsed, then the inference to the projective belief and the consequent practical decisions will be broadly recognized as legitimate. Thus general endorsement of the ideal of assumed objectivity reinforces the objectifier’s position of power and contributes to his ongoing success.¹⁸³

This discussion suggests that women living under patriarchal conditions are not only objectified in the sense of being treated or viewed as object-like—and sexual-object-like to boot—but, further than this, are being sexually objectified on the epistemological level as well. That is, men not only view and treat women in objectifying ways—exemplifying the ethical realm of objectification—they also objectify the desires of women, for example, by desire driven projection in one of its three varieties and come to view women as having essential natures which then arguably justify the social structures as they stand—exemplifying the epistemological realm of objectification. Together, these two realms of objectification suggest that the sexual objectification of women living under patriarchal conditions is exceedingly pervasive.

On my account, then, both objectification and *sexual* objectification are fundamental to women’s situation under patriarchy. Furthermore, the particular meaning, place and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women has consequences in terms of the way women relate to their bodies and the world itself. These consequences will be the topic of the next two sections entitled ‘Alienation’ and ‘An atmosphere of threat’ respectively.

2.2 Alienation

In this section, I focus on the alienation that women are said to typically experience in relation to their bodies. First, I explain what is meant by alienation and elucidate why most women can be said to be alienated from their bodies. I then provide a phenomenologically derived account of the *origin* of women’s alienation from their bodies—one which develops out of my respective accounts of the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women and the situation of women as a social collective as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

¹⁸² *Ibid* pp.106-107

¹⁸³ *Ibid* p.109

Women's subjugation as a social collective, I argue, allows us to make sense of how women come to internalise the objectifying gaze of the (male) other, as well as the content of this gaze, which explains the resulting alienation that women typically come to experience in relation to their bodies. On my account, then, alienation is directly causally related to the endemic sexual objectification of women under patriarchy—that is, alienation is a particularly devastating consequence of the role played by sexual objectification within the context of women's subjugation as a social collective to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

2.2.1 *An account of alienation*

Very broadly:

Alienation [is] understood to arise from the unreflective internalisation of social norms and attitudes—in short, to be the result of internalised oppressive ideologies.¹⁸⁴

Generally speaking, then, if a member of an oppressed group comes to internalise the norms, ideals and values of the very ideology that oppresses her, then she will inevitably become alienated from herself in some way—typically due to the meanings associated with her group as well as the relative status or positioning of this group in relation to other groups within the public or political context.

Importantly, it is standardly accepted that alienation is an unconscious psychological matter—the individual herself is typically unaware of her own alienation from some part of herself.¹⁸⁵ It is for this reason that Bartky describes alienation as *psychological oppression*—referring to “the estrangement or separating of a person from some of the essential attributes of personhood.”¹⁸⁶ She writes that:

Psychological oppression is dehumanizing and depersonalizing; it attacks the person in her personhood... the nature of psychological oppression is such that the oppressor and the oppressed alike come to doubt that the oppressed have the capacity to do the sorts of things that only persons can do, to be what persons, in the fullest sense of the term, can be.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Gatens, M., *Imaginary Bodies* p.35

¹⁸⁵ In the particular case of women, alienation is obscured by the woman's pre-reflective acceptance the norms, ideals and values of patriarchy, which we have seen to result from the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

¹⁸⁶ Bartky, S., *Femininity and Domination: studies in the phenomenology of oppression* p.30

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid* p.29

When a member of an oppressed group internalises the values of the ideology that oppresses her, she inevitably comes to see herself—and judge reality—through the lens of this ideology; her own experience of herself is, hereafter, partly informed by and expressive of the very norms, values and ideals that oppress her. According to Bartky:

A person whose being has been subjected to these cleavages may be described as ‘alienated’ [which] in any form causes a rupture within the human person, an estrangement from the self, a ‘splintering of human nature into a number of misbegotten parts’.¹⁸⁸

In elucidating the concept of psychological oppression, Bartky turns to Karl Marx’s work on the alienation of the worker under capitalism. On Marx’s account, alienation

is the consequence of a form of social organisation which has given to some persons the power to prohibit other persons from the full exercise of capacities the exercise of which is thought necessary to a fully human existence.¹⁸⁹

According to Marx, under a capitalist system the worker loses control of both the product he has created and his very productive activity itself. That is, the created product of the worker is, for Marx, an extension of the worker’s self and the very activity of production an essential function of the human being. When the created product is taken away from, or split off, and turned against the worker, as it is under capitalism, the worker experiences alienation which occurs

when activities which not only belong to the domain of the self but define, in large measure, the proper functioning of this self, fall under the control of others. To be a victim of alienation [then] is to have a part of one’s being stolen by another.¹⁹⁰

While Bartky claims that the Marxist concept of alienation should be incorporated into a new critique of patriarchal discourse, she maintains that “women undergo a special sort of fragmentation and loss of being *as women*”¹⁹¹ that is not captured by the standard Marxist account.

2.2.2 Women as suffering from alienation

Recall that for Moi, the result of the doubled—ontological and social—ambiguity and conflict particular to the situation of women under patriarchy—which I have claimed should be understood as subjugation—

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid* p.31 [my emphasis]

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid* p.34

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid* p.32

¹⁹¹ *Ibid* p.34

is the production of a specific psychosexual subjectivity characterized above all by alienation, understood as an uneven rift between the woman's freedom and her own identification with the alienating image of femininity as objectified otherness.¹⁹²

Bartky explains the alienation of women by arguing that women *qua* women are psychologically oppressed under patriarchy. First, she discusses the cultural domination of women arguing that women are alienated in cultural production. Cultural expression, for Bartky, is an instrument of male supremacy, which denies women the right to develop and exercise capacities that partly define what it means to be human—capacities standardly associated with the mind and transcendence.¹⁹³ Second, she argues that women can become estranged from their sexuality insofar as they are too closely identified with their bodies. Recall that, for Bartky, sexual objectification involves the separation of a sexual part or function from the whole of a person and the characterisation of this part or function as representative of the whole of the person. The characterisation of a woman as wholly (sexual) body results, for Bartky, in her inevitable estrangement from her sexuality—an essential attribute of personhood—and, thereby, in alienation from her body *simpliciter*. She argues that:

To be dealt with in this way is to have one's entire being identified with the body, a thing which in many religious and metaphysical systems, as well as in the popular mind, has been regarded as less intrinsically valuable, indeed, as less inherently human, than the mind or personality... much of what is held out to us as 'femininity' is in fact alienation.¹⁹⁴

For Bartky, then, this estrangement from sexuality is a manifestation of a larger alienation from the body. She cites Young's work on typical feminine bodily comportment, spatiality and motility as expressive of women's larger alienation from their bodies. Recall that for Young, women come to experience the lived body as laden with immanence as a result of existing as an object under the gaze of another. In particular she claims that:

Insofar as [women] learn to live out [their] existence in accordance with the definitions that patriarchal culture assigns to [them], [they] are physically inhibited, confined, positioned and objectified.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Moi, T., *Simone de Beauvoir: the making of an intellectual woman* p.174

¹⁹³ Bartky, S., *Femininity and Domination: studies in the phenomenology of oppression* p.35

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid* pp.35-36 This is not to say that *all* of femininity is irrevocably alienating; some aspects of femininity, such as giving birth, can be empowering and imbued with positive meaning.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid* p.42

This is to say that women who have internalised the norms, values and ideals of patriarchal ideology exhibit behaviour that expresses these very norms, values and ideals. The typical woman is said to confine herself to what she supposedly regards as a safe space within which to move, and her motility expresses an ambiguous transcendence, inhibited intentionality and discontinuous unity, as already discussed. Young's account of women's comportment, spatiality and motility reflects, for Bartky, the fact that women are typically alienated from their bodies.

Bartky acknowledges that the case of the female-narcissist could be seen as a counterexample to her claim that women are typically alienated from their bodies. The female narcissist treats her own body as a sexual object and is said, moreover, to take *pleasure* in her infatuation with her body *as* a sexual object. Bartky, however, argues that this case only helps to "reveal the nature of a mode of self-estrangement which lies at the heart of the feminine condition itself."¹⁹⁶

In order to defend her position, Bartky draws on the work of Beauvoir. In Beauvoir's elucidation of women's situation in *The Second Sex*, she claims that women's bodies are always destined to be for another—for a man—and as soon as a woman realises this fact about her situation (normally during puberty) she comes to view her body as an object which must be transformed into something beautiful and desirable. Beauvoir writes:

For the young girl, erotic transcendence consists in becoming prey in order to gain her ends. She becomes an object and sees herself as object; she discovers this new aspect of her being with surprise: it seems to her that she has been doubled; instead of coinciding exactly with herself, she now begins to exist outside.¹⁹⁷

It is precisely this '[existing] outside' of the body that is at issue; the doubling that Beauvoir refers to is the splitting of the person into subject and object, where the person is simultaneously the subject gazing at an object *and* the object of her own gaze. That is, the young girl in coming to internalise the gaze of the (male) Other, becomes 'doubled' so that *qua* subject she comes to see her body *as* object, and, in so doing, becomes estranged from her body and her sexuality. While it is typical of the general human condition—as set out in Chapter One—that one experiences oneself as constituted by both transcendence and immanence, and that one's body in particular plays a role in both

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid* p.37

¹⁹⁷ De Beauvoir, S., *The Second Sex* p.361

one's transcendence and immanence—in both one's freedom and facticity—in the case of women one's immanence looms large insofar as one is also positioned as object-like in virtue of one's sex. The female body, then, is doubly mired in immanence and so the object-like nature of the female body looms large over one's experience of oneself as subject.

Furthermore, not only is the woman, in her capacity as subject, estranged from her physical self *qua* object of her own gaze, the object upon which she gazes—her own body—is always found wanting; her own body is seen as naturally deficient and, given this, must constantly be adorned, beautified and rigorously maintained in order to live up to the ideals set out for bodily appearance by both the (male) Other and the institutions of civil society. Bartky writes:

On the one hand she *is* [her physical self] and is scarcely allowed to be anything else; on the other hand, she must exist perpetually at a distance from her physical self, fixed at this distance in a permanent posture of disapproval... women experience a two-fold alienation in the production of our own persons. The beings we are to be are merely bodily beings; nor can we control the shape and nature these bodies are to take.¹⁹⁸

The female narcissist, then, should be seen as infatuated with an *inferiorised* body and, given this, cannot be seen as a counterexample to Bartky's claim that women are typically estranged from their bodies precisely because the female narcissist, by internalising the gaze of the (male) Other, splits her whole self into parts. Given this, Bartky argues that the case of the female narcissist should be seen as expressive of the typical alienation that women experience from their bodies as a result of their situation under patriarchy.

2.2.3 The origins of women's alienation

While Bartky provides us with one particular mode of women's alienation from their bodies—namely, the estrangement of women from their sexuality—she does not provide us with an account that explains the larger alienation of women from their bodies, of which the estrangement from sexuality is, she claims, a manifestation. Young, on the other hand, does attempt to provide us with an account that explains women's larger alienation from their bodies. According to Young, women's relationships with their

¹⁹⁸ Bartky, S., *Femininity and Domination: studies in the phenomenology of oppression* pp.40-42

bodies exhibit a *self-referential quality* that derives from women's experience of their bodies as simultaneously capacities and objects, the source of which is the "ever present possibility that one will be gazed upon as a mere body."¹⁹⁹ By the self-referential quality of women's relationships with their bodies, Young means to point to the external perspective that women have come to adopt towards their bodies as a result of internalising the (sexually) objectifying gaze of the (male) Other. However, Young does not provide us with an explanation of why women come to internalise this gaze in the first place.

Understanding women's situation as a group as one of subjugation circumvents this concern. It is due to the particularly hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology that most women come to internalise not only the values, norms and ideals of patriarchy, but also, along with these, the (sexually) objectifying gaze of the (male) Other. As subjugated to patriarchal ideology, that is, most women unconsciously and uncritically accept that which is endorsed and promoted by patriarchal ideology as natural and inevitable, including the situation of women and the constraints it imposes. Marilyn Frye argues that:

Many of the restrictions and limitations we live with are more or less internalised and self-monitored and are part of our adaptations to the requirements and expectations imposed by the needs and tastes and tyrannies of others.²⁰⁰

It is precisely by understanding women's situation as a group as one of subjugation that we are able to explain the typical woman's internalisation of these norms and her subsequent alienation from her body. That is, if women as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, as discussed above, come to internalise the objectifying gaze of the (male) other then it is inevitable that these women will come to experience themselves as estranged from their bodies and, hence, as alienated from a fundamental part of themselves. Again, if most women come to internalise the objectifying gaze of the (male) other then they not only come to see their bodies through the eyes of those who sexually objectify them, they also come to internalise the meanings and attitudes attached to their bodies by the subjugating patriarchal ideology itself as well as the social norms upheld by this ideology.

¹⁹⁹ Young, I. M., 'Throwing Like a Girl', p.44

²⁰⁰ Frye, M., 'Oppression' p.15

Given that we are able to account for women's internalisation of the gaze of the (male) Other, let us, then, return to the role that sexual objectification plays in the alienation of most women from their bodies. This concerns particularly the content of the gaze that is internalised and then reflected in the way the woman experiences her own body. Recall that the (sexually) objectifying gaze not only represents her as wholly a (sexual) object, but also represents her as a fungible, instrumental tool whose experience and feelings need not be taken into account. If a woman internalises the gaze of her objectifier, then she takes on this representation and, given this, comes to identify her body as a sexual object. In doing so she firmly estranges herself *qua* subject from her body-as-sexual-object since maintaining her subjectivity requires that she estrange her self from her body-as-sexual-object. This estrangement splinters her 'self' into a number of 'misbegotten' parts. To adopt this perspective towards one's own body is precisely to be alienated as transcendent subjectivity from the body that one has come to see as a (sexual) object that justifies one's objectification by both oneself and others. As Susan Wendell claims:

Objectifying one's own body is... complex; one must, in a sense, split one's consciousness from it and ignore one's inner subjective experience of it in order to regard or treat it as another person might... if [this] becomes the primary mode of experiencing one's body, it is a source of profound alienation from feeling, from nature, from the unconscious, from every aspect of oneself and others that resists control... the disciplines of normality, like those of femininity, are not only enforced by others but internalized.²⁰¹

In this section, I have defended the claim that most women are typically alienated from their bodies. Most women, that is, come to objectify their own bodies—and are thereby alienated from their bodies—as a result of the role played by sexual objectification in the context of women's subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. In the final section of this chapter I will turn to an examination of the negative consequences that sexual objectification—and the role it plays in the situation of women as a group under patriarchy—has on most women's being-in-the-world.

2.3 *An Atmosphere of Threat*

“I have never been free of the fear of rape. From a very early age I, like most women, have thought of rape as part of my natural environment—

²⁰¹ Wendell, S., 'The flight from the rejected body' pp.55-56

something to be feared and prayed against like fire or lightning... I sensed that danger lurked outside.”—Susan Griffin²⁰²

“Every day you feel like it’s a time-bomb waiting to go off... it is a fact of life that we are in danger, all women live in danger.”—Martin *et al*²⁰³

In this section of the chapter, I focus on the effect that sexual objectification has on most women’s being-in-the-world. I argue that the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy creates an atmosphere of threat according to which women as a group are especially vulnerable to rape.

In order to do this I will, first, set out Scott Anderson’s account of the concept of a threat, next I will put forward an explanation for the constitution of this threat in the lives of women and, finally, I will show that we can draw on Anderson’s account to elucidate why this threat is taken to be credible.

2.3.1 *The concept of a threat*

According to Anderson:

Threats are communicative acts that employ forms of power established by prior exercises of such power (usually by others similarly situated), and/or the accumulation and flaunting of means to inflict harm on others. Threats thus differ from other sorts of communication... in that they don’t just change the epistemic situation of the threatened party, but alter what we might think of as the practical possibility space in which the threatened party lives.²⁰⁴

Anderson argues that in order to understand the concept of a threat—and the wrongfulness of threatening—one must understand, first, the “facts underlying the ability of some to threaten others”²⁰⁵ and, second, “how the communicative act of threatening creates a condition or constraint on the actions of the threatened party that would not otherwise exist but for the making of the threat.”²⁰⁶ According to Anderson, we are able to glean suggestions, here, by focusing on the relations that must exist between the two parties in order for the threat to both be seen as credible and to have the desired effect on

²⁰² Griffin, S., ‘Rape: The all-American Crime’ p.313

²⁰³ Martin, A., Kelly, A., Turquet, L., and Ross, S., *Hate Crimes: The Rise of ‘Corrective’ Rape in South Africa* p.8

²⁰⁴ Anderson, S. A., ‘On the Immorality of Threatening’ p.239

²⁰⁵ *Ibid* pp.231-232

²⁰⁶ *Ibid* p.233

the threatened party. Anderson provides us with five relevant factors. For our purposes only the first three are of interest. These are:

- (1) Acts of the sort threatened are either commonly performed, or else the threatener gives reason to expect the particular act threatened is feasible for the threatener to conduct.
- (2) If the former, the threatener manifests or demonstrates some similarity to others who have carried out such threats.
- (3) The party threatened is in a position of vulnerability, such that she is unable cheaply to deflect, evade, disable, or retaliate for the execution of the threat.²⁰⁷

Anderson sees these features as providing a set of background conditions, which, he argues, “make it possible for a would-be threatener to communicate a credible threat.”²⁰⁸

What these conditions show us, for Anderson, is that the threatener relies on or takes advantage of “a certain kind of power that he possesses relative to the threatened party.”²⁰⁹ As has already been suggested, this power may be drawn from the actions of similarly situated individuals. Anderson writes:

By either accumulating and flaunting the power needed to execute his threat, or else by drawing upon and allying himself with the history of actors who have previously harmed others in the way the threatener proposes, a threatener takes advantage of the power he possesses over the threatened party to create constrictive conditions on that party’s possibilities for action.²¹⁰

According to Anderson, then, in order to properly understand the concept of a threat we must take into consideration the power differentials between the two parties, which make the threat both credible and an effective means of control.

While Anderson’s account deals explicitly only with cases where one individual threatens another individual, I argue that we can use the account he provides to make sense of the atmosphere of threat under which women live—a threat that is not created by the actions of any one individual but rather by the relations between men and women *qua* men and women, and the actions of men as a group towards women as a group.

2.3.2 *Women as living with the threat of rape*

Recall Young’s claim that:

²⁰⁷ *Ibid* pp.236-237

²⁰⁸ *Ibid* p.237

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*

²¹⁰ *Ibid*

An essential part of the situation of being a woman is that of living the ever-present possibility that one will be gazed upon as a mere body, as shape and flesh that presents itself *as the potential object of another subject's intentions and manipulations rather than as a living manifestation of action and intention.*²¹¹

Here Young is claiming that the threat issued by objectification is more than merely that of being seen as 'mere body'. Rather, she argues that objectification signals a further, graver, threat of bodily invasion. This suggestion is made fleetingly in a paragraph at the end of her seminal work, 'Throwing like a Girl', and is followed with this statement:

This essay is a prolegomenon to the study of aspects of women's experience and situation that have not received the treatment they warrant... A further question is to what degree we can develop a theoretical account of the connections between the modalities of the bodily existence of women and other aspects of our existence and experience.²¹²

My earlier discussion of the meaning, place and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy serves to answer Young's call for a theoretical account that connects the typical feminine modalities with the threat of bodily invasion. That is, I believe that my discussion of the role played by sexual objectification in the lives of women—as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology—provides us with a theoretical account that does just this—that connects Young's work on the three typical feminine bodily modalities with the further threat of bodily invasion.²¹³ On my account, we can explain the *origins* of the credible threat of rape, by, again, bringing together the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women with the fact that this situation is best understood as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. I have already claimed that these meanings, when internalised by women as a result of their subjugation to patriarchal ideology, allow us to

²¹¹ Young, I. M., 'Throwing like a Girl' p.44 [my emphasis]

²¹² *Ibid* p.45

²¹³ Young is not alone in mentioning the threat of bodily invasion or rape in the lives of women. Tim Beneke writes: that "Rape and the threat of rape pervades the lives of women ('Men on Rape' p.325 in *Gender basics: Feminist perspectives on women and men. 2nd Edition.*). Marilyn Frye writes: "The threat of rape is a force of great magnitude which is, among other things, applied against our movement about the cities, towns, and countryside." ('The Arrogant eye, the Loving eye, and the Beloved', p.201 in *Gender Basics: Feminist Perspectives of Women and Men*). Catherine MacKinnon writes: "Given the statistical realities, all women live all the time under the shadow of the threat of sexual abuse... Given the effects of learning sexuality through force or pressure or imposition; given the constant roulette of sexual violence; given the daily sexualisation of every aspect of a woman's presence—for a woman to be sexualised means constant humiliation or threat of it, being invisible as human being and center stage as sex object... Given that this is the situation of all women... it does not seem exaggerated to say that women are sexual, meaning that women exist, in a context of terror". ('Sexuality' pp.149-151 in *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*)

make sense of the origins of women's alienation from their bodies; I now hope to show that the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women also constitutes the threat of rape, and that it is partly due to women's situation under patriarchy that this threat is taken to be credible, and therefore limits and constrains the movements of women.

Recall that the meanings attached to the female body by patriarchal ideology position the female body as object-like, passive, and inert. These meanings are further entrenched by the meanings of being sexually objectified explored above. In my discussion of sexual objectification above I claimed that sexual objectification satisfies the following features of objectification *simpliciter*: instrumentality, as the objectifier treats the individual woman as a tool to satisfy his sexual desire for arousal; fungibility, as the sexually objectified woman is typically not seen as unique but rather as merely an instance of a kind that has the ability to bring about sexual arousal through being gazed upon; denial of subjectivity, as the objectifier treats the individual woman as something whose experience and feelings need not be taken into account; and representing the part as the whole, as the objectifier sees a sexual part or function of the individual woman as representative of the whole of this individual. I believe that these meanings when taken together with the place and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women, results, not only in the alienation of women from their bodies but also in the concomitant threat of the following further features of objectification: violation of autonomy, inertness, violability and, under certain circumstances, ownership. This, I claim, is due to the fact that to be sexually objectified—to be treated as something like a generic, sexual object whose experience and feelings need not be taken into account—threatens further degradation. The internalisation of these meanings results not only in most women coming to view their own bodies from an external perspective but also in their coming to see themselves—in virtue of their embodiment—as especially vulnerable to rape, where one is treated as instrumental, fungible and sometimes owned, and one experiences one's autonomy and boundary integrity as violated. A body that has come to be seen as vulnerable and potentially violable presents itself as open to invasion. Or as Moi writes: “an alienated body is an abandoned object exposed to the perils of the world.”²¹⁴ The

²¹⁴ Moi, T., *Simone de Beauvoir: the making of an intellectual woman* p.166

alienated bodies of most women, then, on my account, come to be experienced in these ways—as ‘open to invasion’ and ‘exposed to the perils of the world.’

Remember that according to Nussbaum being treated in any one of the ways exemplifying objectification does not necessarily entail other forms of objectifying treatment. While she is certainly correct to claim that there does not exist a necessary entailment relation between being seen or treated in one of the objectifying ways and other forms of objectifying treatment, I believe that, because of the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy, to be sexually objectified in any one of these ways, *as a woman subjugated to patriarchal ideology*, creates an atmosphere of threat—the threat that women, in virtue of their very position in society—and the role that sexual objectification plays in this position—are especially vulnerable to other objectifying treatment and further degradation and abuse. In other words, to be sexually objectified as a woman living in a patriarchal society—to be treated as something like a generic, instrumental, sexual object whose experience and feelings need not be taken into account—threatens further degradation, such as rape. On my account, then, rape could be understood as either continuous with, or in the same family as, sexual objectification. That is, the meaning of sexual objectification allows us to understand certain of the meanings of rape. Rape, then, can be seen, on a certain fundamental level, as making good on the threat created by the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

2.3.3 Anderson’s account and the threat of rape

Moreover, Anderson’s account allows us to identify why the threat of rape under which women live is taken by most women to be credible and, thereby, functions as an effective means of restricting the movements of most women in society. The threat of rape created by the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women is typically taken to be credible by women—and is, thereby, an effective means of control—because (1) the raping of women is endemic to patriarchal society, and so is a commonly performed practice; (2) the raping of women is typically committed by men and, so, men are seen as having the ability to rape women and (3) the general power

relations that exist between men and women as well as the internalised meanings—internalised because of the very nature of subjugation—associated with the two sexes, crucially the association of women with passivity and submission and of men with activity and dominance, not only reinforce the fact that men can rape, but also reinforce the fact that women are especially vulnerable to rape. Given these three background conditions, the threat of rape constituted by the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy is typically taken to be a credible threat by women themselves, and is, thereby, effective insofar as it keeps the majority of women ‘in their place’—it restricts women’s movements and curtails certain behaviour and as a result women typically become vigilant about where they walk, what they wear, and what they do and say. As Frye argues:

The threat of rape is a force of great magnitude which is, among other things, applied against our movement about the cities, towns and countryside.²¹⁵

From being made to be aware of themselves as desirable sexual objects under surveillance, these women come to self-monitor and to curtail and restrict their own movements. Recall again Frye’s claim that

Many of the restrictions and limitations we live with are more or less internalised and self-monitored and are part of our adaptations to the requirements and expectations imposed by the needs and tastes and tyrannies of others.²¹⁶

Sexual objectification—the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of it in women’s lives under patriarchy—reinforces and perpetuates the dominance of men over women and, in so doing, creates the credible threat of rape, which in turn—as a result of the internalisation of the meanings associated with each sex and, in particular, the meanings associated with the feminine body as a result of sexual objectification—regulates, confines and curtails women’s movements as a group. Importantly, for Anderson, to be threatened is harmful to the threatened party insofar as it is “disruptive to one’s well-being, one’s projects, and the integrity of one’s life.”²¹⁷ As we have seen, the threat of rape with which women live is obviously harmful in these ways—it is clearly disruptive to women’s well-being and projects, and, as has already been shown in my discussion of alienation, to the integrity of women’s lives.

²¹⁵ Frye, M., ‘The Arrogant Eye, the Loving Eye, and the Beloved’, p.201

²¹⁶ Frye, M., ‘Oppression’ p.15

²¹⁷ Anderson, S. A., ‘On the Immorality of Threatening’ p.239

It may be objected that many people live with a general fear of the threat of violence—for example, people living in war-riddled areas. Given this, it could be objected that the threat of rape which I am discussing is no different from this general threat of violence. This objection is, however, misguided. First, the threat of rape is targeted at, and pervades, the lives of women *as a social collective*. Given this, a general indiscriminate threat of violence is not comparable to a threat targeted specifically at one group because of the attributes of that group. While an analogy cannot be drawn to a general threat of violence, an interesting analogy could be drawn, as I have already suggested, between the threat of rape in the lives of women, and the threat of lynching that pervaded, and was specifically targeted at, black people as a social collective. Both the practice of rape and that of lynching are targeted at a social collective in virtue of attributes associated with that collective—rape is targeted at women *qua* women, and lynching was targeted at black people *qua* black people. Second, it is a mistake to equate sexual violence with violence *simpliciter*. Cahill, in responding to second-wave feminist attempts to remove the sexual element from our understanding of rape and, so, to define rape as merely another form of violence, argues that to treat rape as if it were just another form of violent assault would be to ignore the role that patriarchal ‘discourse’ plays in producing essentially violable feminine bodies as well as the role that rape plays in perpetuating this discourse. She writes:

To desexualize the act of rape, to consider it legally only as any other assault, would be to obfuscate—not to weaken!—its role in the production of the sexual hierarchy through the inscription of individual bodies... an assault with a penis is distinct not due to what it claims about the masculine body, but rather due to what it claims about the feminine body, and how those claims are located in an overall power structure.²¹⁸

If we accept Cahill’s argument here, I believe that it provides a second reason against thinking that the threat of rape—of *sexual* violence—is comparable to indiscriminate, general threats of violence.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have focused on the effect that sexual objectification has on most women’s being-in-the-world. I have argued that we are able to explain the origins of both

²¹⁸ Cahill, A., ‘Foucault, Rape, and the Construction of the Feminine Body’ p.60

the typical woman's alienation from her body and the threat of rape under which women live by bringing together the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy with the understanding that women, as a social collective, are subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. Because women as a social collective are subjugated, women typically come to internalise the meanings of sexual objectification, thereby not only coming to see their own bodies through the lens of patriarchy, but, moreover, through the eyes of the objectifying (male) other, and, in so doing, also coming to experience their bodies as especially vulnerable to rape.

This chapter concludes Part One—my exploration of the situation of women as a social collective under patriarchy and in particular the role that sexual objectification plays in this situation. The understandings gained from our discussions in this first part are crucial to my project insofar as it is within this situation that we are to conceptually locate the harm of rape in Part Two, and out of this situation that my first suggestion for the building up of personhood and agency in Part Three is developed.

--PART TWO--

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THE HARM OF RAPE

INTRODUCTION

For the sake of clarity let me briefly rehearse where my argument stands at this point. In Part One I set out to conceptually situate the harm of rape. In Chapter One I established that the situation of women as a social collective under patriarchy is one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. What this means, I claimed, is that most women have pre-reflectively inherited and accepted patriarchal ideology, which has significant effects cognitively, practically and in regards to their identity. In Chapter Two I established that sexual objectification plays a fundamental role in this situation—resulting in both the typical alienation of women from their bodies and the creation of the threat that women are especially vulnerable to being raped. Both alienation and the threat of rape are, I have argued, supported by the internalisation of ideological beliefs; moreover, the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology leads most women to internalise the objectifying gaze of the (male) other as well as the content of this gaze, which causes them to become estranged from their bodies and, crucially, to see these bodies as, in a sense, vulnerable and violable. The threat of rape is taken to be credible in part because of the ideological beliefs that most women have come to uncritically accept.

Part Two is devoted to the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies; in particular to the *lived experience* of this harm. The part is divided into two chapters, Chapters Three and Four, entitled: ‘Understanding the Harm of Rape’ and ‘Shattering and Fragmentation’—in both I focus on the lived experience of the harm of rape.

Recall that, in Chapter One, I argued that we have to understand the situation of women *qua* women in order to understand the harm of rape; I claimed that the situation of women, that is, is partly constitutive of the harm of rape. In both Chapters Three and Four I will demonstrate why this is the case.

In Chapter Three, I set out, with the aim of supplementing, the contemporary accounts of the harm of rape provided by Jean Hampton, Ann Cahill, and Louise du Toit.

I chose to focus on these three accounts because they represent a trend in the literature insofar as, first, they all provide us with an account of both what I will call the direct and indirect harms of rape—harms done directly to the (female) victim of rape and harms done indirectly to all women *qua* women—and, second, because, while they differ in certain respects, they all defend the general conclusion that rape harms the personhood and agency of the victim. I argue that although these accounts are fundamental to our understanding of the harm of rape, they are nevertheless limited to adopting an external perspective towards the harm of rape—because their accounts of the harm of rape develop out of the nature of the act itself it follows that any victim of rape is harmed in the ways mentioned regardless of whether she experiences or believes herself to be harmed in these ways. I will supplement these accounts, then, with a focus on the internal *lived experience* of the harm of rape—that is, by focusing on the harm of rape from within. In particular, in this chapter, I focus on the survivor’s *process* of meaning-making; arguing that any attempt on the part of a survivor to understand how she has been harmed or how her experience is meaningful to her will be informed—typically without the survivor’s awareness—by patriarchal ideology and thereby the indirect harms of rape.

In Chapter Four, I turn to an examination of two phenomena experienced by rape victims—shattering and fragmentation—which both impinge on personhood and agency by cleaving apart subjectivity and embodiment.²¹⁹ I call ‘shattering,’ the challenging, and destruction, of certain fundamental beliefs that the survivor has about the world and her safety in it, and argue that we should understand shattering partly in terms of the confirmation of the second-class status of women under patriarchy. I call ‘fragmentation,’ a particular kind of change to an individual’s self-identity—a fragmented individual’s self-identity utterly fails to reflect a fundamental part of what makes her who she is. In particular, I focus on one form that fragmentation can take; namely, when a survivor’s self-identity fails to reflect her embodiment—when the body has come to be seen as an enemy, and, importantly, as utterly separate from what the survivor takes to constitute her

²¹⁹ These phenomena are well documented in the empirical literature, provided especially by psychologists, and are often accompanied by an examination of dissociation and post-traumatic stress disorder. (See the work of psychologists Judith Herman, Lynn Hecht Schafran, Mary Koss and Mary Harvey, Steve Haines, and Bassel van der Kolk and Rita Fisler)

self. This type of fragmentation, I argue, is a sub-set of—a species of the genus—shattering; it is an effect that shattering can have on the survivor's self-identity and results from the combination of the typical woman's alienation from her body and shattering-as-confirmation.

(Fragmentation can, of course, also take different forms, also often as the result of trauma. An example of a different form of fragmentation can be seen in Multiple Personality Disorder, now called Dissociative Identity Disorder. One often finds that this disorder affects individuals who have suffered from child abuse. The personality of the individual, in this case, has 'split' into different 'characters', sometimes called 'alters', as a means of protecting the 'original' individual from the trauma. Once the personality has split, the trauma is typically only remembered by one of the 'alters' so that the individual is protected from the memory of the trauma. I will not pay any attention to this type of fragmentation.)

I will argue that the phenomenological account that I have developed is well suited to explain both phenomena because of its focus on the shared fundamental underpinnings of women's experience *qua* women under patriarchy. First, in fulfilling the threat created by the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women—and thereby confirming the status of women as second-class citizens under patriarchy—rape undermines, or altogether destroys, certain of the victim's fundamental beliefs about herself, others, and the world in which she lives. More particularly, shattering, I argue, serves to undermine most of the typical survivor's *trust-beliefs* in herself, others and her place in the world. Where the survivor's trust-beliefs could plausibly be said to stem from her own experience of herself as transcendent subject, her ideological beliefs stem from her doubly imbued experience of immanence, and it is these beliefs—her ideological beliefs—that are confirmed; her trust-beliefs are destroyed. The threat of rape is made good on; the survivor's ideological beliefs and the content of both the threat of rape and the typical woman's alienation from her body are confirmed.

And, second, that the alienation that results from the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology lays the groundwork for explaining the particular

type of fragmentation that I am interested in insofar as the estrangement from one's body—that results from the internalisation of the objectifying (male) gaze, which positions the female body as, among other things, passive, inert and potentially violable—is but one step away from experiencing one's body as an enemy and, as a result, failing to reflect one's embodiment in one's self-identity. If alienation is but a small stepping stone away from fragmentation, as I have claimed, it is because it already pits a woman's subjectivity against her embodiment and so prepares the way for the eventual splitting off of her body from what she considers to be her 'real' self. As a lived experience of the harm of rape, then, fragmentation differs qualitatively from alienation; fragmentation is stronger than—and compounds—alienation. This will become clearer in the chapter itself.

Given this, the ideological beliefs of the typical women, as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, are partly constitutive of the lived experience of the harm of rape—in both the survivor's attempt to understand how she has been harmed (Chapter Three) and in her actual experience of harm (Chapter Four).

Part Three—in which I provide two suggestions for the rebuilding of the survivor's personhood and agency—is developed out of our findings here; Chapter Five focuses on undermining shattering and fragmentation and Chapter Six focuses further on uncovering the meaning of the experience to the survivor. The two suggestions that I propose both deal with recovering from the direct harm to the personhood and agency of the survivor and the first, in particular, could bring the survivor to understand the indirect harms of rape to women *qua* women as well as the role played by these indirect harms in not only her own process of meaning-making but, moreover, in the very harm that she has suffered.

--CHAPTER THREE--
UNDERSTANDING THE HARM OF RAPE

This chapter focuses on *the harm* of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies.²²⁰ Most of the accounts currently on offer regarding the harm of rape focus on either or both of what I will call the direct and indirect harms of rape. On the one hand, direct harms are harms done to the victim of the rape herself. Some of the direct harms of rape can be described as inherent in—or built into—the *nature* of the act of rape itself; such as the denial of the victim’s autonomy or attack on her sexual bodily integrity. When speaking about the direct harms *inherent* in an act of rape, I mean to refer to harms done to *any* victim of rape by *any* act of rape—I mean that the nature of the act is such that it harms every victim in these ways. Importantly, this means that victims of rape are harmed in the ways described regardless of whether they believe or experience themselves to be harmed in these ways. Other direct harms are not inherent in the nature of the act of rape itself and are, instead, particular to individual cases of rape; such as, if the rape was violent, the victim contracted HIV/AIDS, or fell pregnant. On the other hand, the indirect harms of rape are harms done to others, and are typically concerned with the social effects of the act of rape.

Most of the philosophical accounts on offer regarding the direct harm of rape provide accounts of harms inherent in the nature of the act itself, which means, I argue, that they are limited to adopting an external perspective to the harm of rape—they are lacking an explanatory link between the direct harms that they put forward and the actual fact of whether the victim experiences herself as harmed in the way described. That is, I argue that an account of the internal *lived experience* of the harm of rape has not received enough attention in the literature.

In this chapter, and the next, I will add to the available literature on the harm of rape by providing further insight into the lived experience of the harm of rape. I focus on providing an account not of *why* the act of rape is harmful (either in itself or because of

²²⁰ As I am only concerned with male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies when I speak about rape, a rape survivor, or the harm of rape in what follows it should be assumed that my comments are limited to these cases—to cases of (adult) male on (adult) female rape in patriarchal societies.

its social effects)—although I will explore some of these accounts in the first section of this chapter to clearly indicate the trend that I have argued exists in contemporary accounts—but rather of *how* the act of rape comes to be *understood* as harmful by its victim. The victim that I am especially interested in, in this chapter, is one who *does* experience herself as harmed and so reflects on her experience in an attempt to understand, or make meaningful *to herself*, how she has been harmed. As we will see, in both this chapter and the next, patriarchal ideology plays a central role in my account of the lived experience of the harm of rape.

3.1 Contemporary accounts on the harm of rape

Initially, it is important to note that rape is a *relational* harm—it is a harm brought about by the actions of an agent; an instance of (at least) one person, A, harming another person, B. Joel Feinberg, talking about relational harms *in general*—i.e. not harms specific to rape—provides six conditions that have to be met in order for us to say that A harms B. He claims that A harms B if and only if:

1. A acts.
2. A's action is faulty with respect to the risks it creates to B; that is, it is done either with the intention of producing the consequences for B that follow, or similarly adverse ones, or with negligence or recklessness in respect to those consequences.
3. A's acting in that manner is indefensible; that is, neither excusable nor justifiable.
4. A's action is the cause of an adverse effect on B's self-interest.
5. A's action is also a violation of B's right.
6. B's personal interest is in a worse condition (usually but not always lower on the interest graph) than it would have been in had A not acted as he did.²²¹

The case of rape clearly satisfies these six conditions and so should be considered a relational harm. The first three conditions as well as condition 5 seem to me to be so obviously met that I will not discuss them further. Conditions 4 and 6 rely on the notion of interest. According to Feinberg, “it is a necessary element in all harming... that it have an effect on someone's interests”²²²—typically an adverse effect.²²³ Feinberg is not alone

²²¹ Feinberg, J., ‘Wrongful life and the counterfactual elements in harming’ pp.6-7

²²² *Ibid* p.4

²²³ Feinberg clarifies his position by referring to a hypothetical graph of interests where one's interests can be set back, defeated, thwarted or impeded. It is not necessary for our purposes to set out or discuss these

in relying on the notion of interests when proposing an account of harm. David Archard – who focuses specifically on the harm of rape—adopts a similar interest-based position on harm and provides us with further details about how we should understand the relations that our various interests have to personhood, or to what he calls the self.²²⁴

Archard adopts a spatial account of interests according to which certain interests are closer to the centre of the space that constitutes the self. For Archard, our interest in our sexual bodily integrity is precisely this kind of interest—he claims that “each of us is a sexed being such that our sexuality, our sexual nature, is central to our identity, to who each of us is.”²²⁵ Given this, he argues that our sexual *integrity* is very important to us; or, put differently, our interest in our sexual integrity is central to our personhood and, thereby, our sense of self. For Archard, rape is wrong because it violates our sexual integrity and so “is an indefensible harming of a legitimate interest in safeguarding what is central to our personhood.”²²⁶ He writes:

On the spatial account, rape is wrong because it denies that [its victim] is, in regard to what is central to her personhood, worthy of respect... It is fundamentally wrong not to think of somebody as a person and hence a source of value.²²⁷

Archard’s account of the harm of rape points to *why* rape is harmful; namely, because the victim’s interest in her sexual bodily integrity is assaulted—is set back as a result of the failure on the part of the rapist to appreciate that the victim is a person and, so, is a source of value *in herself*. Here, Archard is pointing to a direct harm inherent in *any* act of rape; any act of rape directly harms its victim in this way—any victim’s interest in her sexual bodily integrity is, for Feinberg, set back by being raped.

Jean Hampton provides us with another account of a direct harm that is inherent in the nature of the act of rape itself—another account of *why* rape is harmful *in itself* and thereby, harmful to *any* victim. Importantly, Hampton’s account of the direct harm of

various effects on interests; all we need to grasp is that when one is harmed, according to Feinberg, one’s interests are *adversely* affected, which is itself intuitively easy to grasp.

²²⁴ I do not want to be seen as endorsing any account of the self at this point; this is an extensive debate that I am not staking a claim in. However, the harm of rape to the personhood of the victim will become important later, as it turns out that most accounts currently on offer in the literature that focus on the direct harms of rape emphasise the harm of rape to the personhood of the victim.

²²⁵ Archard, D., ‘The Wrong of Rape’ p.391

²²⁶ *Ibid* p.390

²²⁷ *Ibid* p.393

rape, like Archard's, relies of the misrecognition of the victim's value *as a person* by her rapist.

According to Hampton, rape is a moral injury—a particular kind of harm. A moral injury is an act performed by a morally culpable agent that violates our moral standards insofar as it carries a distorted meaning about human value—"insofar as [moral injuries] are also *an affront to the victim's value or dignity*."²²⁸ Hampton writes:

a moral injury is an injury to what I will call the 'realization and acknowledgment of the victim's value'... A person is morally injured when she is the target of behaviour whose meaning, appropriately understood by members of the cultural community in which the behaviour occurs, represents her value as less than the value she should be accorded... the insulting meaning of this behaviour does not, by itself, *constitute* the moral injury.²²⁹

For Hampton, the meaning of rape—that it represents the victim as having less value than she does—inflicts the moral injury by 'diminishing' the victim. The concept of diminishment is crucial to Hampton's argument and is meant to capture the *appearance* of degradation rather than *actual* degradation. Diminishment "constitutes the moral injury"²³⁰ of rape precisely because the victim's value is either denied realization or is not properly acknowledged. As Hampton says this moral injury is inflicted in one of two possible ways; these are either (1) damage to the person's realization of her value and/or (2) damage to the acknowledgement of her value. The rapist behaves wrongfully because he does not accord to the victim the value to which, as a person, she is entitled; by representing and treating her as having less value than she does, the rapist morally injures his victim by diminishing her value—by neither acknowledging her value nor allowing this value to be realized. The concept of diminishment is crucial to Hampton's account of the harm of rape because it emphasises the fact that the value of the rape victim is not *in fact* degraded, it is, instead, diminished—the harm of rape, then, for Hampton, is captured by the *appearance* of degradation. Although Hampton, does not give any explicit indication of who the victim appears degraded to, I think it is safe to assume that the victim could appear degraded to the rapist, to the victim herself, and to members of the cultural community who come to appropriately understand the nature—and meaning—of

²²⁸ Hampton, J., 'Defining Wrong and Defining Rape' p. 123

²²⁹ *Ibid* pp.123-126

²³⁰ *Ibid* p.128

the act of rape. According to Hampton, then, rape is a moral injury insofar as the nature of the act inflicts damage to the victim's value and, therefore, personhood.

Crucially, Hampton argues, as seen above, that when brought to properly understand the meaning of the rapist's behaviour, the moral community cannot but object to the affront to the victim's value and recognise that the meaning of the rape inflicts damage in either of the two possible ways mentioned. And, importantly, this is so regardless of whether the victim understands or believes herself to be harmed in this way. She writes:

A moral injury is an "objective" and not a subjective injury. By this I mean merely that the existence of the moral injury does not depend on whether or not the agent *believes* she has received dishonouring treatment.²³¹

This claim will become extremely important later when I argue that *all* accounts of the direct harm of rape that focus on a harm inherent in the nature of the act itself entail, as Hampton's account does, that the victim of rape is harmed in the way mentioned regardless of whether she experiences herself as, or believes herself to be, harmed in the way described. This will serve as a motivation for my particular focus on the 'lived experience' of the harm of rape—in particular on how the victim herself comes to experience herself as harmed through a process of meaning-making.

Again, Ann Cahill provides us with an account of a direct harm of rape that is built into the nature of rape. However, while the accounts above have focused solely on a direct harm inherent in *any* act of rape, Cahill begins to shift her focus towards a particular account of the harm inherent in any act of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies. According to Cahill, we must

understand rape as an act charged with political and bodily meanings, as a threat to the possibility of the bodily integrity *of women*, and therefore as a threat to *her* status as a person.²³²

Cahill's account focuses on the sexual embodiment of subjects, and argues that our identity and integrity as persons is necessarily connected to this embodiment. In her examination of the feminine body, Cahill turns to the theories of Iris Marion Young, Sandra Bartky, Rosi Braidotti and Elizabeth Grosz. The importance of examining these four accounts of embodiment, for Cahill, lies in each author's focus on the body's

²³¹ *Ibid* p.127

²³² Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.10 [my emphasis]

fundamental importance to agency. The phenomenological accounts of the feminine body given by Young and Bartky both emphasize the vulnerability of the feminine body; for both, the body has become disconnected in some way from the woman's agency; if anything the body is hampering and a hindrance, something that must be vigilantly watched and taken care of. However, Cahill's discussion of the accounts provided by Braidotti and Grosz serves as a reminder that despite the accounts of the feminine body provided by Bartky and Young (accounts of the feminine body which Cahill seems, all things considered, to adopt), the feminine body is not *determined* to be weak and violable by the dominant discourse, but can also be a site for resistance against this discourse. Given Cahill's emphasis on the importance of embodiment to identity and integrity, to attack—to violate—the sexed body of a woman is, for Cahill, then, to attack her very identity and integrity. She writes:

Because all victims of rape are embodied, rape always has bodily significance... As a particularly sexual, bodily attack on an embodied subject, rape constitutes a fundamental and *sexually specific* undermining of that person's subjective integrity.²³³

Moreover, Cahill sees our subjectivity as constituted by intersubjective relationships. She argues that there is “no true ‘self’ that precedes one's social being or underlies the various influences of a specific society.”²³⁴ This intersubjectivity is, again, rooted in embodiment because of the impact that social practices have upon our bodily motility and comportment and, importantly, because of our vulnerability *as embodied subjects* to violation. She argues that:

Rape in its total denial of the victim's agency, will, and personhood, can be understood as a denial of intersubjectivity itself. Here in a radical way, only one person (the assailant) is acting, and one person (the victim) is wholly acted on. This imbalance, in its total nature, renders the victim incapable of being truly engaged intersubjectively. The self is at once denied and, by the totality of this denial, stilled, silenced, overcome... the intersubjective effects of rape, strictly speaking, include necessarily *the violent destabilizing of the existing self*. Rape is an example of the exploitation of the vulnerabilities that an embodied intersubjectivity necessarily entails.²³⁵

²³³ *Ibid* p.115 [my emphasis]

²³⁴ *Ibid* p.128

²³⁵ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.132 [my emphasis]

For Cahill, then, rape directly harms the personhood of a woman by attacking her intersubjective identity and integrity and thereby ‘destabilizing’ her self.²³⁶

Like Cahill, Louise du Toit focuses on a direct harm of male-on-female rape in particular and also focuses on the harm of rape to the personhood of the victim. For Du Toit, the essential damage of rape is what she calls the erasure of female subjectivity. She writes:

The victim of rape... has her home destroyed in the attack where home stands for both a safe place and for feeling at home in one’s body, as well as for the ability to project oneself in the world (to be a subject in the full sense of the word) because one has a secure place to stand from where one can project oneself outwards.²³⁷

On Du Toit’s account, the body, and so also sexuality, is (1) not distinct from the ‘true’ self—and so the self *proper* can be damaged by an action which harms the body—and (2) is always already situated or immersed in a “mediated and interpreted reality”²³⁸—and so emphasis is placed on the interrelatedness of self, other and world, and on the fluidity of meaning insofar as meaning is neither fixed nor necessary but is always partly constituted by the actions of individuals in the world. One of the benefits of emphasising the interrelatedness of self, other and world is, she argues, the ability to compare healthy relations with unhealthy ones. Under healthy circumstances a subject experiences the world as a meaningfully ordered field of possible action that enables and supports her being and projects. Given this, the subject transcends her body as mere object and asserts herself as a subject in the world. Moreover, her relations with others affirm her subjectivity and act as the basis from which she asserts herself in the world. Finally, the self receives affirmation from others, which is necessary to her status as subject in the world and also for her interpretations or understandings of the world. On the contrary, under unhealthy circumstances—such as situations of systemic domination or unequal relations of power, like rape—subjects will experience their selfhood as fragile and, so,

²³⁶ Incidentally, this claim could suggest that Hampton and Cahill diverge as to the severity (for want of a better term) of the harm to the *personhood* of the victim. That is, where Hampton emphasises the fact that the victim is not in fact degraded but only appears to be—she is diminished as a result of the misrepresentation of her value—Cahill’s claim that rape ‘destabilizes’ the self could be interpreted as actual degradation. However, I am not sure that I want to be committed to this interpretation of Cahill’s claim, and since nothing hangs on this difference, for our purposes, I will move on.

²³⁷ Du Toit, L., *A Philosophical Investigation of Rape* p.99

²³⁸ *Ibid* p.56

the world they inhabit as precarious. Under these circumstances the subjectivity of the individual, rather than being enabled and supported, is disabled and undermined.

As just suggested, rape, for Du Toit, is one exceptionally pertinent type of unhealthy relation and is “a form of domination [that] is world destructive (and, concomitantly, destructive of one’s sense of self and one’s relations with others).”²³⁹ That is, Du Toit argues that rape destroys, or aims to destroy, (1) one’s sense of self in relation to the world, (2) one’s sense of self in relation to one’s others, (3) one’s sense of one’s relations with others in relation to one’s world and in relation to one’s self, and (4) one’s sense of the world in relation to oneself and in relation to one’s others.²⁴⁰

First, she argues that rape destroys one’s sense of self in relation to the world. This she calls ‘spirit injury’. In rape, she argues, the woman becomes ‘pure flesh’ in two senses—“flesh as mortal... and flesh as sexual thing, sex object.”²⁴¹ For the woman to be made object in this way results in a transformation both to her relationship with the world in which she lives and to her relationship with her own body. Where before the world supported her agency, it is now experienced as disordered and beyond control; so too, her own body is now experienced as “an alien *Korper*, a dead weight of flesh, a mortal, vulnerable, breakable thing that obstructs, exposes and threatens rather than shelters and enables her agency in the world.”²⁴² Second, she argues that rape destroys one’s sense of self in relation to one’s others. This she calls ‘victim complicity’. Du Toit argues that rape is particularly damaging because the victim is made to see herself through the eyes of her rapist, and has to, in a sense, *allow* for her rapist’s “self-affirmative mirroring to take place through the spectacle of her dehumanisation.”²⁴³ The victim is, given this, at least in part complicit, Du Toit argues, in her own demise and this experience, she claims, destroys the victim’s sense of self in relation to others. Third, Du Toit argues that rape destroys one’s sense of others in relation to one’s self and one’s world. Here she focuses on what she calls ‘loss of voice’ and ‘loss of moral rage’. Du Toit claims that rape is silencing because the victim is seemingly incapable of effectively communicating or expressing herself in language—she is voiceless during the act. She writes:

²³⁹ *Ibid* pp.76-77

²⁴⁰ *Ibid* p.79

²⁴¹ *Ibid* p.82

²⁴² *Ibid* pp.83-84

²⁴³ *Ibid* p.84

If the voice is the way in which one expresses and projects oneself *vis-à-vis* others in the world, then to silence someone who is terrified is to introduce her into... an existence cut off from any hope of human contact and human/e responses to her terror.²⁴⁴

Du Toit goes on to argue that the typical rape victim experiences anger at herself rather than at her rapist. The victim's lived reality, she claims, is distorted by the rape to such an extent that she can come to see the whole event as her fault—as though something inherent *in her* caused the rape. Finally, Du Toit argues that rape destroys one's world in relation to one's self and others. According to Du Toit, rape as a performance creates a space in which the rapist's world is lived out and the world of the victim is destroyed. She writes:

The physical surroundings of the rape victim, the everyday world, shared with others, which she used to inhabit as an intentional subject, turns during rape into a hostile place in which she is reduced to an object amongst others. The falling away of a relatively dependable, predictable world capable of being transformed into conformity with her projects and intentions, I call the victim's 'dereliction' or 'homelessness'.²⁴⁵

According to Du Toit, rape draws its particular meaning from the patriarchal symbolic order—a symbolic order, which, she claims, crushes female subjectivity and political and sexual agency by denying, in various ways, the full subject status of women.²⁴⁶ The meanings associated with femininity in patriarchal discourse already distance women from full subjectivity at the same time as 'justifying' certain practices and particular ways of treating women. Against this understanding of the symbolic order of patriarchy—of the meanings inherent in patriarchal discourse itself—Du Toit argues that any individual act of rape serves as the symbolic destruction of female subjecthood by driving a wedge between, and placing in opposition, women's embodiment (and sexuality) and women's subjectivity (or selfhood). Moreover, it is precisely because rape mirrors the patriarchal discourse of which it forms a fundamental part, insofar as it endorses and perpetuates this

²⁴⁴ *Ibid* p.89

²⁴⁵ *Ibid* p.94

²⁴⁶ Du Toit also limits her discussion to male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies as she, like most feminist philosophers, sees this particular type of rape as archetypal. Women, that is, are typically the targets of rape in patriarchal societies. This is in no way meant to imply that men are not raped or that only adult women are raped; rather, it is meant to suggest that the most pervasive form of rape is that committed against women by men. Moreover, Du Toit, echoing the sentiments of other feminist philosophers, claims that rape draws its meaning from the patriarchal symbolic order in which it plays a fundamental role. I will come back to this.

dichotomisation of women's embodiment and subjectivity, that the essential damage of rape—the erasure of female subjectivity—is not easily understood.

To recap, I have just set out five accounts of the *direct* harm of rape. The first, a general account of harm *simpliciter* put forward by Feinberg, allows us to say that rape is a relational harm—rape satisfies Feinberg's six conditions that must be met before we can say that A harms B—that negatively affects the interests of a person. The second, provided by Archard, adopts a similar stance to Feinberg on interests, and concludes that rape is harmful because it is an indefensible set back to the victim's interest in her sexual bodily integrity—an interest that is close to the centre of the space that constitutes her self. The third, from Hampton, furnishes us with the concepts of moral injury and diminishment—rape is a moral injury that diminishes the value of its victim insofar as the rapist does not accord to the victim the value to which she is entitled and, so, inflicts damage by either denying the acknowledgement of her value or by not allowing this value to be recognised. The fourth account, provided by Cahill, begins to move away from focusing on the first kind of direct harm—a harm done to *any* victim by *all* acts of rape—and focuses more particularly on the harm done to all victims of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies. Rape is, for Cahill, a sexually specific act that targets the identity, integrity and intersubjectivity *of women*. Finally, the fifth account, provided by Du Toit, focuses on the direct harm to female subjectivity that takes place within rape. I chose to set out these particular accounts because I agree with the emphasis each places on the direct harm to the personhood and agency of the victim—either generally or as a woman in particular.

As I have already mentioned, there are some differences between the accounts put forward by Hampton, Cahill and Du Toit; however, for our purposes here, the commonality between all three—the focus that each places on the direct harm of rape to the personhood and agency of the victim—is most important. It is this commonality that will provide the basis for my focus on the building up of the personhood and agency of the survivor in Part Three. Let us now turn to the accounts that each puts forward of the *indirect* harm of rape—on the harmful social effects of rape to women *qua* women.

Hampton argues that rape is not only a moral injury to the women who directly suffer it; rather, it is, she argues, a moral injury to *all* women insofar as the nature of this

type of rape both reflects and reinforces the status of women in patriarchal societies. She writes:

One of the most important aspects of rape as it occurs in our society is the way in which it is a moral injury to all women, not merely to the woman who experiences it, insofar as *it is part of a pattern of response of many men toward many women that aims to establish their mastery qua male over a woman qua female...* the action of a rapist... diminishes all women insofar as its message is: 'As a woman, you are the kind of human being who is subject to the mastery of people of my kind'... In our society, to know that it *can* happen to you, is to know that you are the sort of person for whom this confirmation is possible; it is to hear the following message implicit in the rape of *any woman*: 'You are the sort of creature who is for me, and who will be used by me if I choose to do so.'²⁴⁷

This sentiment is echoed again in the work of Cahill who argues that the presence of rape enforces a systematic sexualised control of women *simpliciter*. She argues that:

Rape here can be understood—as indeed it has been understood in traditional feminist theory—as a society-wide means of producing and perpetuating a system of oppression that privileges men and dominates women... the prevalence of rape and the threat of rape literally form aspects of feminine bodily comportment. Rape not only happens to women; it is a fundamental moment in the production of women *qua* women.²⁴⁸

For Cahill, then, rape is a sexually specific act imbued with political and bodily meanings that derive their force from the sexual hierarchy implicit in patriarchy itself. Moreover, the presence and threat of rape in the lives of women under patriarchy play a role in the production of the feminine body and the feminine subject. It is for this reason that she claims that “rape itself is a means of social sexual differentiation.”²⁴⁹

Du Toit also discusses the social effects of rape for women, arguing that an analogical and causal link can be drawn between the erasure of female subjectivity within rape and within what she calls the monosexual culture that is patriarchal society. By focusing on the nature of rape in the way that she does Du Toit joins ranks with the likes of Catherine MacKinnon who also argues that the particular harm of rape is drawn from patriarchal discourse.²⁵⁰ To elucidate, MacKinnon defends a position in which male dominance both defines sexuality and constructs what is, and is not, seen as a violation of sexual integrity. Based upon this account of sexuality, and the power relations inherent in sexuality, MacKinnon claims that rape exists on a continuum with ordinary heterosexual

²⁴⁷ Hampton, J., 'Defining Wrong and Defining Rape' pp.135-136 [my emphasis]

²⁴⁸ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.126

²⁴⁹ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.121

²⁵⁰ Notably in *Towards A Feminist Theory of the State* (1989) and *Feminism Unmodified* (1987)

intercourse. For both MacKinnon and Du Toit there exists a link between rape and the patriarchal symbolic order. For MacKinnon this link is direct—because sexuality is a social construct of male power that aligns eroticized dominance with masculinity and eroticized submission with femininity the only difference between heterosexual intercourse and rape is what she calls ‘the meaning of the encounter to the woman.’ For Du Toit this link is analogical and causal—both rape and patriarchal discourse serve to erase the subjectivity of women. Interestingly, Du Toit claims that the only difference between normal heterosexual intercourse and rape in the context of rape law is the emphasis placed on the woman’s alleged frame of mind. Women’s participation in sexual activity is limited, she argues, to either consenting or not consenting to sex. The upshot of this claim, that patriarchy threatens the sexual agency of women, mirrors sentiments found in MacKinnon’s work, particularly those relating to the potential for feminine sexual subjectivity and agency under patriarchy. However, one might prefer Du Toit’s account over MacKinnon’s if one finds, as I do, MacKinnon’s claim that *all* heterosexual relationships are *inherently* violent too strong. Du Toit asks the reader to focus instead on the “violent act of matricide at the heart of the western symbolic order.”²⁵¹ While the symbolic order may *inform* our relationships one could challenge the claim that it *determines* them. Focusing, as Du Toit does, on the symbolic order itself—which informs heterosexual relationships—is, I believe, far more fruitful; it is to examine the cause of those heterosexual relationships that *are* violent.

For Du Toit, the erasure of female subjectivity that takes place on a symbolic level in rape is difficult to recognise as the essential damage of rape because patriarchy itself—the dominant symbolic order of patriarchy—denies the full subject status of women by dichotomising women’s subjectivity and embodiment—and this dichotomisation is precisely what occurs in rape. Rape, then, on Du Toit’s account, mirrors, endorses and perpetuates a social reality where women’s bodies and their subjectivity are held in conflict. She claims:

rape is therefore in rape-prone and patriarchal contexts not an abnormal or anomalous occurrence—it is rather an extreme expression of a logic already pervasively at work in the society.²⁵²

²⁵¹ Du Toit, L., *A Philosophical Investigation of Rape* p.182

²⁵² *Ibid* p.66

If rape does in fact morally injure *all women* insofar as it forms part of a pattern of response of many men toward many women, as claimed by Hampton, enforces a systematic sexualised control of women, as claimed by Cahill, and mirrors, reinforces and perpetuates the patriarchal societal values under which women's embodiment stands in conflict with women's subjectivity, as claimed by Du Toit, then the prevalence of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies must indeed cause indirect harm to women as a collective.

Given the discussion so far, we are able to say that A's raping B is harmful to B (Feinberg) and we are able to provide a number of plausible accounts as to *why* rape is harmful—both in itself and in its social effects—by focusing on the nature of the act itself.²⁵³ These accounts indicate a trend in accounts that focus on the harm of rape insofar as they all focus on direct harms that are inherent in the act of rape itself and the indirect social effects of the act of rape on women *qua* women. I agree with these accounts insofar as they claim that rape directly harms the personhood of the victim by misrepresenting her value, attacking her bodily (sexual) integrity and identity, and dichotomising her embodiment and subjectivity or selfhood. However, while these accounts provide important insights into how the victim's personhood and agency are attacked—and are therefore fundamental to understanding the harm of rape—they are, as I have already suggested, incomplete because they are limited to adopting an external perspective to the harm of rape. The victim of rape is harmed in the ways described regardless of whether she experiences or believes herself to be harmed in these ways. In other words, the accounts put forward by Archard, Hampton, Cahill and Du Toit of the direct harms of rape *all* entail that rape is inherently harmful in itself and directly harms the victim in the ways each describes.

In order to supplement these accounts, I suggest that instead of focusing on the nature of the act of rape itself, as read 'from the outside', as it were, we focus on the first-person point of view and attempt to appreciate the subjective meaning of the lived experience to the victim, focusing especially on her process of meaning-making in her attempts to understand how she has been harmed. My phenomenological approach not

²⁵³ I have not discussed *all* of the available accounts of why rape is harmful here. Formative accounts have also been presented by Susan Brownmiller, Catherine MacKinnon and Debra Bergoffen. I have not discussed these accounts here as they have been the topic of extensive amounts of literature already.

only allows us to focus on how meaning is constituted in experience but also allows us to pay particular attention to those shared fundamental features that, in being partly constitutive of the personhood, experience, and agency of women, affect the *structural* features of the lived experience of the harm of rape. As we saw in Chapter One, ‘lived experience’ is a fundamental concept in existential phenomenology that is able to capture shared, fundamental features in the lives of, say, women, which affect the structural features of women’s experience *qua* women. Existential phenomenology, that is, allows us to provide generalisations about the nature and meaning of experience itself by examining how meaning is constituted in individual experience. Recall that Sonia Kruks, in her work *Retrieving Experience*, argues that “we have unwisely cut ourselves off from the rich heritage of existential thought. Feminist (and other social) theory would now do well to retrieve it.”²⁵⁴ Recall further that one of the primary reasons she gives in support of this claim is that “individuals who are similarly situated will have roughly similar experiences—and they thus will be able to communicate and share them.”²⁵⁵ Given this, she argues that “feminist theory must continue to hold onto the concept of experience.”²⁵⁶ Again, recall that Joan Scott emphasises the importance of explaining experience—collective as well as individual—arguing that experience is “that about which knowledge is produced.”²⁵⁷

In what follows, I will add to the available literature on the harm of rape by providing an account not of *why* the act of rape is harmful—since we already possess a number of plausible accounts that explain why this is so—but, rather, of *how* the act of rape comes to be *understood as harmful* by its victim given shared features that affect the structure of experience for women *qua* women. Understanding this aspect of the harm of rape allows us, I argue, not only to provide a link between the harm of rape and the victim’s *experience* of these harms, but, moreover, allows us to defend promising avenues towards rebuilding the personhood and agency of a victim by emphasising the particular meaning of the experience to her. I am not claiming that victims come to understand their experience in the same way. Nor am I proposing that philosophy can say

²⁵⁴ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience*, p.6

²⁵⁵ *Ibid* p.41

²⁵⁶ *Ibid* p.133

²⁵⁷ Scott, J., ‘Experience’, p.26 Importantly, Scott also warns against taking a naïve approach to experience.

anything about any one victim's particular subjective experience of the rape—as this would be an empirical question requiring knowledge only readily available to each individual victim. The exploration of individual victims' subjective experiences of rape as well as patterns of these experiences are better left to the social sciences, such as psychology, anthropology or sociology. Philosophy is, however, particularly well positioned to speak about the shared influence of patriarchal ideology on this subjective experience, and, thereby, on the meaning of rape to a victim herself.

3.2 *The lived experience of the harm of rape*

Recall that what follows from, or is entailed by, those accounts that focus on harms inherent in the nature of rape itself is that the victim is harmed in the way described regardless of whether she experiences or understands herself as harmed in this way. It is not necessary, then, that the victim experience herself as harmed in any of these ways for us to say that she *is* harmed in these ways—her actual experience of these harms is not required. These accounts, I argue, are lacking an explanatory link between the harms that they put forward and the actual fact of the victim's experience of herself as harmed in the ways they describe. Given that most of the contemporary accounts of the direct harm of rape focus on harms inherent in the nature of rape itself, an account of the *lived experience* of the harm of rape is missing from the literature. And, given this, so too is an account of *how* rape comes to be *understood as harmful* by a victim who *does* experience herself as harmed.

This particular sort of account is what I will attempt to provide in the remainder of this and the next chapter—namely, an account of the lived experience of the harm of rape. As already mentioned, this means that I am especially interested in those victims who *do* experience themselves as harmed and who, as a result, come to *reflect* on how they have been harmed in an attempt to understand the harm that they have suffered. For the remainder of this chapter, then, I will focus on this process of meaning-making, and, in particular, on the influence that the *indirect* harms of rape have on a victim's process of understanding how she has been harmed.²⁵⁸ Exploring this process allows us to

²⁵⁸ In the next chapter, I will return to look at the lived experience of the *direct* harms of rape to the personhood and agency of the victim.

understand certain links between patriarchal ideology, on the one hand, and the victim's lived experience of the rape on the other, and, given this, allows us to glean suggestions for the recovery of the personhood and agency of the survivor.

Of course, this process might bring the survivor to understand the direct harms that she has suffered, which are described by Archard, Hampton, Cahill and Du Toit. Indeed, if these harms are available upon reflection to any comprehending member of the moral community, as Hampton argues, then the survivor herself also has the capacity to understand how she has been harmed in any one of these senses. However, for our purposes, the particular results of this process do not interest us. What is of interest is the *process* itself, and how this process is informed by patriarchal ideology and, given this, the *indirect* harms of rape.

In particular, my interest lies in the cognitive tools that the victim uses to interpret and understand her experience. I will call these cognitive tools 'frameworks', and will argue that women's frameworks are themselves partly constituted by patriarchal ideology precisely because of the hegemonic rule of this ideology, as discussed in Chapter One. Moreover, I will argue that the indirect harms of rape—its social effects (as described by Hampton, Cahill and Du Toit)—inform the very frameworks that rape survivors use when trying to understand their experience of being raped.²⁵⁹ This is so because patriarchal ideology, and hence our frameworks, is itself reinforced and maintained by the indirect harms of rape. Any attempt on the part of a rape-survivor to make sense of her experience of being raped will, then, necessarily be informed in part by patriarchal ideology, which is itself reinforced and perpetuated by the prevalence of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies as well as the indirect harms that rape causes to women as a collective. When I say that a survivor's attempt to understand how she has been harmed is *informed* by the indirect harms of rape, I mean that the indirect harms of rape are tacitly involved in the formation and maintenance of the frameworks used by the survivor in her very attempt to understand how she has been harmed. This may appear to be vague at this stage but I hope that through the development of my argument it will become clearer what I mean. In brief, if the frameworks that I use to understand my experience

²⁵⁹ Importantly, this account does not commit me to a second-order concern that the victim be *aware* that her process of meaning-making is itself informed by the indirect harms of rape.

are partly constituted through dialogical interaction with hegemonic patriarchal ideology, and the indirect harms of rape serve to perpetuate and reinforce this ideology, then the indirect harms of rape are themselves formative in the construction and maintenance of the frameworks I use to understand my experience. The basic structure of my argument is as follows:

1. Understanding how I have been harmed involves using the cognitive tools—or frameworks—available to me, and these are constituted dialogically.
2. Our frameworks are partly constituted through dialogical interaction with hegemonic patriarchal ideology.
3. So, patriarchal ideology necessarily informs my reflexive attempt to understand how I have been harmed.

Moreover:

4. This ideology both:
 - a. perpetuates rape, and
 - b. is reinforced and maintained, in part, by rape.

Corollary:

5. So, my frameworks are informed by the indirect harms of rape (from 3 and 5b).
6. So, any attempt to understand my experience of being raped is informed by the indirect harms of rape.

Premise 1: Understanding how I have been harmed involves using the cognitive tools—or frameworks—available to me and these are constituted dialogically.

When reflecting on any experience we use the available cognitive tools at our disposal. In what follows, I will call these cognitive tools our ‘frameworks’ and understand them to broadly include our understandings of self, others and the world around us.

These frameworks are formed dialogically, that is, through my interactions and relationships with others. While this claim follows clearly from an existential-phenomenological account of centripetal and centrifugal meaning attribution, I will provide further support from the ‘analytic’ tradition to bolster and enrich the claim. In this regard, further support can be found in the work of Charles Taylor. Taylor argues that we only become full human agents through dialogue with others—it is only through

this dialogue that I am able to learn the languages that I need to understand myself and form and express my identity. As he puts it:

A crucial feature of human life is its fundamentally *dialogical* character. We become full human agents, capable of understanding ourselves, and hence of defining our identity, through the acquisition of rich human languages of expression... we learn these modes of expression through exchanges with others... The genesis of the human mind is in this sense not monological, not something each person accomplishes on his or her own, but dialogical.²⁶⁰

And again, in *Sources of the Self*, he writes:

There is no way we could be inducted into personhood except by being initiated into a language... A self exists only within what I call 'webs of interlocution'.²⁶¹

For Taylor, then, understanding ourselves can only be achieved through the acquisition of languages, which we are only capable of learning through our interactions with others. Language, here, is understood broadly to include all modes of expression from the actual words we speak to gestures and even art. As just mentioned, these languages, for Taylor, are necessary for understanding—and, since they are only learnt in dialogue with others, any understanding I have of myself is necessarily formed dialogically.

The present claim can, I believe, also be defended by one interpretation of Ludwig Wittgenstein's work on private language. For Wittgenstein, a sound or mark is only meaningful within the context of the language of which it is a part. Put differently, a sound or mark is only meaningful insofar as it has a role or use in a human language. This entails that there is a correct and an incorrect way, established by regularity and general practice, of using and responding to certain sounds or marks. Dialogue, that is, sets the rules for language use. It also entails that we can tell whether an individual understands or fails to understand a certain expression by her conformity to, what Wittgenstein calls, the language game. It is for this reason that Wittgenstein's private language argument is often seen as "[standing] opposed to any appeal to an 'inner' or 'mental' object or item as essential to understanding the facts of meaning, understanding and thinking."²⁶² Andy Lock and Tom Strong put the point as follows:

Wittgenstein's private language argument [is] built on how people acquire and use language in ways appropriate to their relationships—their language games... Wittgenstein suggests that... we acquire our means for 'self-intelligibility' through social experience. The means by which we learn to name, judge and share our 'inner'

²⁶⁰ Taylor, C., 'The Politics of Recognition' p.32

²⁶¹ Taylor, C., *Sources of the Self* pp.36-37

²⁶² Stroud, B., 'Mind, meaning and practice' p.316

experiences are, for Wittgenstein, all shaped by the social interactions through which we come to understand and communicate them... Wittgenstein opposes the idea that somehow we have subjectively unique ways of understanding or making sense of our experiences... the grammar of our language games structure what we come to understand, and speak of, as our 'private experience'... correctly recognising and understanding the truth of our private experience is something that begins externally, and relies on externally derived criteria for its later recognition and 'true' sharing.²⁶³

One way of interpreting Wittgenstein, then, is as claiming that we can only make sense of, and communicate, our experiences because of our languages—our being effective members of a language-game. Furthermore, on this reading of Wittgenstein, our subjective states—our thoughts, feelings, values, and opinions—are “bound to the grammars of particular language games in which they find their sense and articulation.”²⁶⁴ This will become important later.

The importance that both Taylor and Wittgenstein place on the dialogical acquisition of language is crucial for our purposes. That is, it is only through the acquisition of language that we are, for both, able to understand ourselves and our experiences; and we only learn these languages through dialogical interaction with actual others. This insight is not only crucial for defending the present claim that our frameworks are partly constituted dialogically, but also to my next claim that in the case of women these frameworks are partly constituted through dialogical interaction with others who have, given the nature of hegemony, come to internalise patriarchal ideology.

Importantly, while I have focused here on the constituting role of discourse and language, it should be remembered that I am not defending a deterministic approach to understanding that does not allow for the possibility of freedom or agency. Rather, my phenomenological approach emphasises that the relationship between subjects and frameworks goes both ways: that is, just as subjects are constituted dialogically, so too language is affected by the subjects that utilize it. Recall, particularly, my endorsement of Merleau-Ponty's claim that meaning is constituted both centripetally—from the outside—and centrifugally—by subjects themselves.²⁶⁵ An individual agent is only able to learn language through dialogical interaction with others, but this does not mean that this

²⁶³ Lock, A & Strong, T. *Social Constructionism: Sources and Stirrings in Theory and Practice* pp.163-164

²⁶⁴ *Ibid* p.165

²⁶⁵ This was also indicated in Beauvoir's claim that the body is both a situation and is always *in* a situation—that is, that the meaning of the body is intertwined both with our projects—with the way we live our bodies—and with the world—materially, socially and historically.

language wholly determines her ways of understanding herself and her experience; rather, these languages are tacitly involved in any attempt she makes at understanding her experience.

Premise 2: So, our frameworks are partly constituted through dialogical interaction with hegemonic patriarchal ideology.

I have just established that our frameworks are formed through dialogical interaction with others. I now need to defend the claim that this entails that they are formed in dialogical interaction with patriarchal ideology.

Remember that women's situation under patriarchy, as established in Chapter One, is one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology and that this means that the ideals, values and norms of patriarchal ideology are internalised by most members of society—have come to be uncritically accepted as natural and inevitable rather than socially entrenched. The ideas inherent in patriarchy, then, are the ruling, dominant ideas of those who live in patriarchal societies. What this means, however, is that the ideas inherent in patriarchal ideology become the ideas that we interact with when we interact dialogically *with individual others*—the ideas of patriarchy, that is, are *typically* the dominant ideas of these individual others with whom we dialogically interact. If we accept the first premise—that our frameworks are constituted dialogically—and accept that patriarchal ideology is hegemonic—then, we must accept that our frameworks are constituted through dialogical interaction with the values, norms and ideals of patriarchal ideology as internalised by most members of society.

I described many of these values, norms and ideals in Chapter One, and argued that, because of the subjugation of women, most women come to pre-reflectively accept these values, norms, and ideals, which subsequently affects them cognitively, practically and in terms of their identity; but it may be worth reminding ourselves of some of them now. Recall that part of any woman's situation under patriarchy involves experiencing a further 'social' ambiguity between her freedom and facticity insofar as women are mired in immanence—defined in opposition to the male subject and positioned as the inessential other in relation to the absolute male subject. The male subject acts as the placeholder for the universal, transcendent subject and the female other acts as a deviation from this norm. In virtue of this sexual hierarchy, the characteristics attributed

to women are typically the binary opposites of the characteristics attributed to men—most notably, for our purposes, masculinity is aligned with activity, dominance, independence and transcendence and femininity is aligned with passivity, submission, dependence and immanence. Femininity, then, is aligned with the characteristics typically associated with objects or inert things, and not the characteristics typical of agents.

Moreover, recall that the body plays a fundamental role in this binary classification because it is in virtue of—though not determined by—sexual difference that the hierarchal ordering between men and women, masculinity and femininity, is set up in the first place.²⁶⁶ It is the body of a woman, then, that becomes the site of these meanings—it is the body itself that is object-like, immanent, and passive and, because the subjectivity of women is typically objectified by the subjectivity of men, as first claimed by Beauvoir, it is the body that women are typically aligned with. Debra Bergoffen claims that:

The sexual difference, instead of revealing our shared human vulnerability... becomes the structure through which only one sex lives the humanity of vulnerability. The vulnerable human body is feminized. Men's lived vulnerable bodies are encased or erased in imaginary, god-like, invulnerable bodies.²⁶⁷

However, if women are aligned with their bodies and their bodies are positioned as immanent, passive and dependent insofar as these are the very meanings associated with femininity then the very conception that women must typically hold of themselves is that of being essentially vulnerable, as I have already shown in my discussion of alienation in Chapter Two.

Women, then, typically learn to experience their bodies as vulnerable, and as in need of constant attention and vigilance—even as requiring outside protection from contrastingly invulnerable men. This socially entrenched view of women as vulnerable and potentially violable contrasts with the equally socially entrenched view of the male other as invulnerable and inviolable. The male other, then, in virtue of his so-called 'natural' invulnerability, and in contrast to women's so-called 'inherent' vulnerability, comes inevitably to be seen as either protector or predator.

These views of the male and female self relate to the view of the world in which women live. If the female self is essentially vulnerable and violable and the male other is

²⁶⁶ See Moira Gatens, 'A critique of the sex/gender distinction' (1989)

²⁶⁷ Bergoffen, D., 'February 22, 2001: Towards a Politics of the Vulnerable Body' p.131

therefore naturally either protector or predator, then the world in which women live is one in which they require protection; and, importantly, the protection they require is often seen as being provided by the very same other who, as predatory, enforces the need for protection.

I claimed above that our frameworks broadly include our understandings of self, others and the world in which we live and that these frameworks are partly constituted in dialogical interaction with hegemonic patriarchal ideology. This entails that any typical woman's understandings of self, other and the world in which she lives are necessarily informed by the patriarchal values and norms mentioned above. Again, this is not to say that the typical woman's frameworks are entirely determined by patriarchal ideology. This is not entailed by my account. Women do not only interact with patriarchal ideology—patriarchal ideology is not the only system of ideas that they encounter in dialogical interaction with others. Remember that the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology does not entail that *everyone* has *exactly* the same set of ideas but rather that there is a *core* set of ideas that *most* members of society share. This is important because if the typical woman's means of understanding self, other, and world are entirely determined by patriarchal ideology then she would be blocked in her very attempts to understand how she has been harmed, and would also, thereby, be unable to recover. My argument in Part Three, Chapter Six will depend on this.

Premise 3: So, patriarchal ideology informs any reflexive attempt to understand my experience of being raped. (from 1 and 2).

If understanding how I have been harmed involves using the frameworks available to me, and these frameworks are constituted dialogically through interaction with individual others, and, given the nature of hegemony, through interaction with patriarchal ideology itself, then any attempt on the part of the rape survivor to understand her experience of being raped is informed by patriarchal ideology. Put differently, any attempt on the part of the victim to understand her experience of being raped is informed by the 'webs of interlocation' within which she lives, and given that these 'webs of interlocation' are themselves constituted by patriarchal ideology, we must accept, that her attempt to understand her experience is itself informed by patriarchal ideology. In other words, if we accept premises 1 and 2 then it follows that patriarchal ideology must inform any

reflexive attempt on the part of a survivor to understand her experience, and, hence, her attempt to understand how she has been harmed.

Premise 4: This ideology both: (a) perpetuates rape and (b) is reinforced and maintained, in part, by rape

Moreover, it seems that patriarchal ideology itself both (a) perpetuates rape and (b) is reinforced and maintained, in part, by rape. I will only briefly address the two parts of this claim before returning to the survivor's attempt to understand how she has been harmed.

In defence of the first part of this claim—that patriarchal ideology perpetuates rape—it is not a far leap from the socially entrenched meanings associated with the two sexes to the idea that women are, by their very nature, rapeable, and that men are, by their very nature, potential rapists. Of course, this is by no means a necessary truth. Just as the attributes aligned with masculinity and femininity are not in fact essential attributes, the so-called natures of men and women are also by no means necessary. Men can be raped by women, and sometimes are. However, the great disparity between the numbers of women who are raped by men and the numbers of men who are raped by women must lead us inevitably to conclude that rape is typically a gender specific act targeted primarily at women. As Keith Burgess-Jackson writes:

One could not be said to understand rape if one did not recognize that it is perpetrated by men against women... Rape—the act and the practice—treats women as second-class citizens. Whatever else is wrong with rape, and much is, it wrongs in this way... No society committed to moral, political, or legal equality can allow that, and every woman, *qua* woman, is wronged by it.²⁶⁸

One possible way of understanding this disparity is by taking into account the very frameworks that individuals living in patriarchal societies are working with. I mentioned earlier that the socially entrenched view that women are passive and submissive is matched by the equally socially entrenched view that men are active and dominant. If these norms are in fact hegemonically entrenched in the minds of men and women, then it is not difficult to understand why the raping of women is endemic in patriarchal societies—the practice stems from the beliefs, norms and values inherent in our frameworks, and these are grounded in the very meanings associated with masculinity

²⁶⁸ Burgess-Jackson, K., 'A crime against *Women*: Calhoun on the Wrongness of Rape' pp. 287-289

and femininity in patriarchal ideology. Recall Bergoffen's claim that "the sexual difference... becomes the structure through which only one sex lives the humanity of vulnerability."²⁶⁹ She goes on to say that:

the rape of [a] woman expos[es] the latent violence of a system that recognizes only one sexed body as vulnerable and allows the other sexed body to enjoy the fantasy of autonomy.²⁷⁰

Bergoffen's claim here can be taken to support my claim that patriarchal ideology perpetuates rape insofar as the meanings associated with masculinity and femininity by patriarchal ideology position men and women as having fundamental natures. Given that men are seen as essentially dominant and active subjects and women as essentially submissive and passive 'objects', the presence and pervasiveness of rape in the lives of women is built into the system of patriarchy itself.

In defence of the second part of this claim—that patriarchal ideology is reinforced and maintained, in part, by rape—we need only turn our attention back to the accounts of the indirect harms of rape put forward by Hampton, Du Toit and Cahill. Recall that these accounts, at least in part, focused on the social effects of rape or the harm done to women *qua* women as a result of any act of rape. For Hampton, rape not only morally injures the woman who is raped but also morally injures all women insofar as it reflects and reinforces the *status* of women in patriarchal societies by forming "part of a pattern of response of many men toward many women that aims to establish their mastery *qua* male over women *qua* female."²⁷¹ Similarly for Cahill, rape enforces a systematic sexualised control of women and, for Du Toit, mirrors, endorses, and perpetuates patriarchal social reality. Under all of these accounts, rape serves to maintain the status quo of patriarchy, either by reflecting to all women their second-class status as citizens or by reinforcing the view of women as essentially vulnerable and violable.

Moreover, recall that women live under an atmosphere of threat that they are, at any time, open to degradation in the form of sexual abuse and rape. We have seen Beneke

²⁶⁹ Bergoffen, D., 'February 22, 2001: Towards a Politics of the Vulnerable Body' p.131

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*

²⁷¹ Hampton, J., 'Defining Wrong and Defining Rape' p.135

claim that “Rape, and the threat of rape, pervades the lives of women”²⁷² and Hampton claim that:

In our society, to know that it *can* happen to you, is to know that you are the sort of person for whom this confirmation is possible; it is to hear the following message implicit in the rape of any woman: ‘You are the sort of creature who is for me, and who will be used by me if I choose to do so.’²⁷³

The fact that this threat is constantly fulfilled perpetuates the fear already instilled in women and reinforces their socially imposed need for protection. Put differently, given that this threat is perpetually fulfilled, and women’s fear of being raped is, thereby, perpetually confirmed by the endemic raping of women in patriarchal societies, women’s hegemonically entrenched view of the world as safe—so long as they are vigilant, and oftentimes only so long as they are protected by an active, dominant, invulnerable male—is reinforced and perpetuated.²⁷⁴

Given the above, I think it is safe to assume that patriarchal ideology does in fact perpetuate rape and that it is itself reinforced and maintained by rape. However, if this is the case then we must accept both:

Premise 5: My frameworks are informed by the indirect harms of rape (from 3 and 4ii) and,

*Premise 6: Any attempt to understand my experience of being raped is informed by the indirect harms of rape.*²⁷⁵

If we accept this argument, that is, then it follows that any victim’s attempt to understand how she has been harmed by rape is informed by the indirect harms of rape described by Hampton, Cahill, and Du Toit—that is, is informed by the idea that as a woman she is a natural target of rape, and, moreover, is very possibly informed by the belief that she was the cause of the rape, that she is to blame. While the indirect harms of rape inform any survivor’s attempt to understand how she has been harmed, typically the survivor’s own

²⁷² Beneke, T., ‘Men on Rape’ p.325 Although Beneke claims that this threat does in fact exist in the lives of women under patriarchy he does not offer the same reasons I have provided for the existence of this threat.

²⁷³ *Ibid* pp.135-136

²⁷⁴ I will say more about the fulfilment of the threat of rape in the next chapter when I begin to make claims about the lived experience of the harm of rape.

²⁷⁵ Importantly, it also seems to follow that attempts on the part of a victim to understand how she has been harmed will likely be informed by experiencing the threat of rape as fulfilled. Again, I will return to this point in the next chapter.

internalisation of patriarchal ideology makes it harder for her to properly grasp how she has been harmed.

Conclusion

In the first half of this chapter I presented a sample of contemporary accounts of the harm of rape. These accounts—which I claimed represent a trend in contemporary accounts—focus on providing accounts of both the direct and indirect harms of rape. They argue that rape directly harms the personhood and agency of its victims. Archard argues that rape indefensibly sets back the victim's interest in her sexual bodily integrity—an interest that is close to the centre of the space that constitutes her self. Hampton argues that rape is a moral injury that diminishes the value of its victim insofar as the rapist does not accord to the victim the value to which she is entitled and, so, inflicts damage by either denying the acknowledgement of her value or by not allowing this value to be recognised. Cahill argues that rape targets the identity, integrity and intersubjectivity of women. And, finally, Du Toit argues that rape is destructive of one's sense of self, one's relations with others and with the world. Importantly, these direct harms are drawn from the nature of the act of rape itself—they are inherent in the act of rape—and this means, I claimed, that these accounts are missing a link between the harms they claim rape causes and the actual lived experience of these harms on the part of the victim. Given this, I have set out to provide an account of the subjective meaning of the *lived* experience to the victim.

In the second half of this chapter, I focused especially on the *process* of meaning-making that a victim undergoes in order to understand both her experience of the rape and, thereby, how she has been harmed. I argued that adopting a phenomenological approach to this question allows us to examine *shared* fundamental features that affect the structure of experience for women *qua* women. In this chapter I have explored particularly how patriarchal ideology—and the indirect harms of rape—inform this reflexive *process*. I have argued that any survivor's attempt to understand how she has been harmed will be informed by frameworks constituted through dialogical interaction with patriarchal ideology. Moreover, that rape is an affront to the dignity or value of its victim; that it is part of a pattern of response of many men towards many women that aims to reinforce men's mastery over women; the fact that it is indigenous to women's

condition, and serves to erase female subjectivity—the indirect harms of rape—also inform these frameworks by reinforcing and maintaining patriarchal ideology.

It could be objected that this entails that the rape survivor is in fact blocked in understanding how she has been harmed because her ways of understanding rape are themselves infected by the kind of practices of which rape is a part—she is blocked by patriarchy in her very attempt to understand her experience and how she has been harmed.

However, this is not a concern for my account at this point. The fault, here, lies, again, in the mistaken idea that the frameworks a victim uses to understand her experience are *fully* constituted by patriarchal ideology. That is, the above consequence—that women are in fact entirely blocked by patriarchy in their very attempt to understand how they have been harmed—would only follow if women’s frameworks were *wholly* constituted by patriarchal ideology. And this is not the case in the account that I have put forward. I have not claimed that women’s frameworks are wholly constituted by patriarchal ideology; rather, I have claimed that these frameworks are only *partly* constituted through dialogical interaction with this ideology. The interaction here is between the embodied subject and the various institutions, norms, values and ideals of patriarchy. And, while the embodied subject is, as Cahill argues, “a particular incarnation of a particular constellation of political, social, historical and material forces,”²⁷⁶ the embodied subject is also always already a *lived body* as defended by the existential phenomenologists. Recall that this means that meaning and value are not only given to the subject centripetally from the outside, but that the subject also gives significance to things in the world centrifugally through her free projects. Again Cahill writes that:

The development not only of a subject’s body, but also of a subject’s conceptualisation and experience of his or her body, takes place in a particular, situated context and thus is linked in important ways to the various specific discourses that constitute that context. It is also to claim that that bodily development is central, not peripheral, to the subject’s subjectivity or being. That a person has developed in the context of a particular discourse concerning race or gender, for example, does not allow for determinative predictions concerning the person’s particular subjectivity and embodiment. However, it does provide a possible explanation for certain aspects of that subjectivity.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.102

²⁷⁷ *Ibid* p.113

Since the victim's frameworks are only *partly* constituted in dialogical interaction with patriarchal ideology, her attempt to understand her experience of being raped—and, thereby, how she has been harmed—is not entirely blocked by patriarchy. In fact, as I will argue in Part Three, it is possible to understand and recover from the harm of rape, and, importantly, it is essential to the full recovery of the survivor that she be brought to be consciously aware of the shared situation of women under patriarchy that results from their subjugation to hegemonic patriarchal ideology.

Finally, let me reiterate the significance of understanding that patriarchal ideology—and the indirect harms of rape—partly informs a victim's attempt to understand her experience of rape and how she has been harmed. First, I do not think that Hampton, Cahill and Du Toit would disagree with what I have said above—all of what I have said is consistent and compatible with their accounts of the harm of rape. On the contrary, my discussion, I hope, can be used to supplement these accounts of the harm of rape. The fact that victims' attempts to understand their experience of being raped are partly informed by patriarchal ideology—and the indirect harms of rape—provides a much needed link between the harms of rape put forward in the contemporary literature and the victim's lived experience of harm. Second, understanding that the indirect harms of rape inform any survivor's attempt to understand how she has been harmed allows us to put forward suggestions for the recovery of personhood and agency, which I will do in the final part of this thesis. The account I have put forward here is phenomenological to the extent that it relies on shared features in the lives of women—such as the threat of rape—which underpin any typical woman's lived experience of the harm of rape.

In the following chapter I return to an examination of how the *direct* harms of rape discussed by Hampton, Cahill and Du Toit affect the survivor's lived experience of the harm of rape. In particular, I explore two phenomena experienced by rape victims in the aftermath of rape—shattering and fragmentation—that both express the harmful effects of rape on the personhood and agency of the survivor. I will argue that the phenomenological account that I have developed is well suited to explain both phenomena by focusing on the fundamental underpinnings of women's experience *qua* women that I discussed in Part One.

--CHAPTER FOUR--

SHATTERING AND FRAGMENTATION

A significant element of the woman victim's experience of rape is directly related to the constitutive element of a power discourse that produces her body as violable, weak, and alien to her subjectivity – Ann Cahill²⁷⁸

In the previous chapter we saw that most contemporary accounts of the harm of rape agree that rape directly harms the personhood and agency of its victim. However, we also saw that these accounts focus on harms that are inherent in or built into the nature of the act of rape itself, and so, I argued, are limited to adopting an external perspective towards the harm of rape. In order to supplement these accounts, I suggested that we should focus not on direct harms inherent in the nature of the act of rape itself but rather on the internal *lived experience* of the harm of rape to its victim. In the previous chapter, I focused on the survivor's process of meaning-making and argued that any attempt on the part of a survivor to understand her experience of rape—and, in particular, how she has been harmed—is partly informed by patriarchal ideology and thereby the indirect harms of rape. The ideological beliefs of a survivor *qua* woman, then, inform her attempt to understand how she has been harmed and so make it difficult for her to properly grasp how she has been harmed.

My aim in this chapter is to further supplement our understanding of the lived experience of the harm of rape. I focus on two distinct but related phenomena commonly experienced by rape survivors that both express the direct harm done to the survivor's personhood and agency—shattering and fragmentation.²⁷⁹ By 'shattering' I mean to refer to the challenging, or destruction, of certain fundamental beliefs that the survivor has about herself, others, and the world in which she lives—particularly regarding her safety in the world. By 'fragmentation' I mean to refer to a particular kind of change to an individual's *self-identity*: a fragmented individual's self-identity arguably fails to reflect a

²⁷⁸ *Rethinking Rape* pp.162-164

²⁷⁹ These phenomena are well documented in the empirical literature, provided especially by psychology, and are often accompanied by an examination of dissociation and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). (see the work of Judith Herman, Lynn Hecht Schafran, Mary Koss and Mary Harvey, Steve Haines, and Bassel van der Kolk and Rita Fisler)

fundamental part of what makes her who she is. While examples of these phenomena are found in both the philosophical and psychological literature and are commonly expressed in the narratives of rape-survivors, it should be noted that I have labelled them ‘shattering’ and ‘fragmentation’. Both phenomena, I argue, should be understood phenomenologically as *lived experiences* of the harm of rape explicable in terms of shared fundamental features in the lives of women under patriarchy. Using the phenomenological account of women’s situation under patriarchy (developed in Part One), which focused precisely on such features, I offer explanations of both phenomena that focus on the fundamental underpinnings of women’s experience *qua* women.

I begin by exploring the phenomenon of shattering. Remember that by ‘shattering’, I mean to refer to the undermining or destruction of certain of the victim’s fundamental beliefs about herself, others, and the world in which she lives. I will agree that rape serves to destroy certain of the typical survivor’s beliefs about herself, others and her place in the world—which I will call *trust-beliefs*—and add to this that rape also serves to *confirm* the typical survivor’s *ideological* beliefs. The threat of rape is made good on and the woman’s status as second-class citizen *qua* woman, as well as the content of both this threat and her typical alienation from her body, is confirmed. Given that this threat is a shared feature in the lives of women as a social collective, it can be assumed to affect the structural features of any survivor’s lived experience of the harm of rape.

Understanding that rape is shattering because it is both destructive—as described in the literature—and confirming—of the survivor’s ideological beliefs—allows us to provide an explanatory link between the phenomenon of shattering and the second phenomenon of interest in this chapter—fragmentation. Fragmentation, I argue, is a particular species of the genus—or sub-set of—shattering; that is, *shattering as it pertains to self-identity*, and results from the combination of the typical woman’s alienation from her body and shattering-as-confirmation. Shattering-as-confirmation, I argue, compounds the alienation that women have already been shown to typically experience as a result of internalising the objectifying gaze of the (male) other. I propose that the combination of alienation and shattering-as-confirmation provides a platform for explaining fragmentation insofar as the estrangement from her body that results from internalising

the objectifying (male) gaze is itself just one step away from a survivor's attempt to entirely separate her embodiment off from her subjectivity; and this step is provided by shattering-as-confirmation.

On the account I provide, then, both shattering and fragmentation are partly constituted by the ideological beliefs of the typical survivor *qua* woman. As lived experiences of the harm of rape, both are partly constituted by the very situation of women as a social collective as that of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology.

4.1 Shattering

My interest in the phenomenon of what I will call shattering springs from the work of Susan Brison, bell hooks and Louise du Toit.²⁸⁰ For all three, this phenomenon refers to a destruction of one's fundamental assumptions about oneself, others, and the world in which one lives. Brison writes:

When [a] trauma is of human origin and is intentionally inflicted... it not only *shatters* one's fundamental assumptions about the world and one's safety in it... it also severs the sustaining connection between the self and the rest of humanity... one can no longer *be oneself* even to oneself, since the self exists fundamentally in relation to others.²⁸¹

It should be noted that Brison is not only referring to cases of rape in her discussion. She is, rather, speaking about human inflicted trauma *simpliciter*; in her work she speaks not only about rape, but also about torture and survivors of the Holocaust. Empirical support for Brison's claim can be found in the work of, for instance, psychologists Mary Koss and Mary Harvey who discuss what they call five schemas that have been found to be challenged by rape—namely: safety, trust, power, esteem and intimacy.²⁸² In brief, they argue that an individual untouched by victimisation may believe that she is capable of protecting herself, that her perceptions and judgements can be trusted, that she can solve problems and meet new challenges, that she has worth or value, and is able to care for herself. However, trauma in the form of victimisation has, they argue, been found to lead

²⁸⁰ While none of the accounts described below explicitly refers to this phenomenon as shattering, I believe that this term captures the essence of this phenomenon.

²⁸¹ Brison, S., *Aftermath: Violence and the remaking of a self* p.40

²⁸² In psychology, a schema refers to a cognitive framework that serves as a guide for action, as a structure through which we interpret information, and as an organising framework for solving problems. (Reber, A.S. (ed.) *The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology* p.665)

to negative alterations to these schemas—leading the same individual to believe that she is unable to care for or protect herself—both in general and, particularly, from future harm—that she is unable to make important life decisions, and is weak, helpless, bad, evil or destructive.²⁸³ Importantly, like Brison, Koss and Harvey, argue that this phenomenon can also be found in non-rape cases of violence—in cases that Koss and Harvey call ‘victimisation’. Given this, while my interest in the phenomenon of shattering springs partly from Brison’s account of human inflicted trauma and Koss and Harvey’s account of victimisation, my own account of shattering—as a lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies—will depart from these accounts—the account that I put forward of shattering pertains only to the lived experience of the harm of this type of rape. What this means is that, on my account, the lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies is distinct in important ways from the harm of other non-rape cases of violence and from the harm of, say, male-on-male rape. This will become clearer in what follows. Let us, then, turn our attention away from these more general accounts of the felt consequences of human inflicted victimisation, and look at two accounts that speak in particular about the felt consequences of *rape*. hooks writes that in the aftermath of rape:

The world one has most intimately known, in which one felt relatively safe and secure, has *collapsed*. Another world has come into being, one filled with terrors, where it is difficult to distinguish between a safe situation and a dangerous one. A gesture of love and a violent, uncaring gesture. There is a feeling of vulnerability, exposure, that never goes away, that lurks beneath the surface.²⁸⁴

Again like Brison, hooks argues that survivors of rape experience a fundamentally altered relationship with the world and the people around them. So, despite the fact that Brison is not only talking about rape, both Brison and hooks argue that, in the aftermath of rape, our beliefs about others and the world are challenged—if not destroyed—rape “*shatters* one’s fundamental assumptions about the world and one’s safety in it”²⁸⁵ and transforms the world into a place “filled with terrors.”²⁸⁶

Du Toit confirms that rape is destructive of certain assumptions about the world and one’s place in it. Recall her claim that:

²⁸³ Koss, M.P. & Harvey, M.R., *The Rape Victim: Clinical and Community Interventions* pp.70-73

²⁸⁴ hooks, b., ‘Violence in Intimate relationships: A feminist perspective’ p.209

²⁸⁵ Brison, S., *Aftermath: Violence and the remaking of a self* p.40

²⁸⁶ hooks, b., ‘Violence in Intimate relationships: A feminist perspective’ p.209

The victim of rape... has her home destroyed in the attack where home stands for both a safe place and for feeling at home in one's body, as well as for the ability to project oneself in the world (to be a subject in the full sense of the word) because one has a secure place to stand from where one can project oneself outwards.²⁸⁷

While Du Toit confirms Brison's and hooks' claims that rape destroys certain of the survivor's assumptions about the world and one's safety in it, she adds to this an emphasis on rape's negative consequences to one's *sense of self*, and in particular to one's sense of oneself as an effective agent acting in the world. Remember that, for Du Toit, rape is "a form of domination [that] is world destructive (and, concomitantly, *destructive of one's sense of self* and one's relations with others.)"²⁸⁸ Recall that for Du Toit rape destroys, or aims to destroy, one's sense of self in relation to the world, which she calls 'spirit injury', one's sense of self in relation to one's others, which she calls 'victim complicity', one's sense of one's relations with others in relation to one's world and in relation to one's self, which she calls 'loss of voice' and 'loss of moral rage' respectively, and one's sense of the world in relation to oneself and in relation to one's others, which she calls 'dereliction' or 'homelessness'.²⁸⁹ Du Toit comes closest to describing what I am calling shattering insofar as she places emphasis on not only the destruction of certain of the survivor's beliefs about others and the world, but also of certain of her beliefs about her self.

Where Koss and Harvey speak about five schemas that are challenged by rape—namely: safety, trust, power, esteem and intimacy—and speak about trust as merely one of these schemas, it seems to me that each of the schemas discussed is, broadly, related to trust. That is, it seems to me that the schemas Koss and Harvey call power and esteem are related to the survivor's trust in her own capacities as an effective agent; that the schemas of trust and intimacy relate to the trust she places in others, and that the schema of safety relates to her trust in the support provided by the world. Given this, I will refer to all of the beliefs that are either challenged or destroyed by rape as *trust-beliefs*. Where prior to the rape she may have trusted her ability to act effectively according to her own will, have believed in the goodness and trustworthiness of others, and have experienced the

²⁸⁷ Du Toit, L., *A Philosophical Investigation of Rape* p.99

²⁸⁸ *Ibid* pp.76-77 [my emphasis]

²⁸⁹ *Ibid* p.79

world as supporting her actions, for example, subsequent to the rape these trust-beliefs are challenged or destroyed.

Annette Baier argues that “we inhabit a climate of trust as we inhabit an atmosphere and notice it as we notice air, only when it becomes scarce or polluted.”²⁹⁰ Trust, she argues, “is reliance on others’ competence and willingness to look after, rather than harm, things one cares about which are entrusted to their care.”²⁹¹ That the things we trust others with are things that we care about is crucial to Baier’s account. She claims that, “the most important things we entrust to others are things which take more than non-interference in order to thrive.”²⁹² Trusting another, then, involves, fundamentally, one’s vulnerability to disappointment and betrayal. Given this, Baier distinguishes between circumstances that make trusting reasonable and those that do not. She writes:

Trust alters power positions, and both the position one is in without a given form of trust and the position one has within a relation of trust need to be considered before one can judge whether that form of trust is sensible and morally decent.²⁹³

In certain circumstances, she argues, to trust is not sensible, indeed, in extreme circumstances, to trust can be morally corrupt. Typically, these circumstances involve unequal relations of what she calls ‘discretionary power’. Given that this is so, she proposes a moral test for trust relationships. She proposes that:

The moral test of such trust relationships... is that they are able to survive awareness by each party to the relationship of what the other relies on in the first to ensure their continued trustworthiness or trustiness.²⁹⁴

Importantly:

to the extent that what the truster relies on for the continuance of the trust relation is something which, once realised by the truster, is likely to lead to (increased) abuse of trust, and eventually to destabilisation and destruction of that relation, the trust is morally corrupt.²⁹⁵

According to Baier, the situation of women under patriarchy presents us with one such circumstance in which the trust of women is at best insensible and at worst morally corrupt. That is, according to Baier:

The important relationships and trust relationships which structured women’s lives for most of the known history of our species... were not entered into by free choice,

²⁹⁰ Baier, A., ‘Trust and Antitrust’ p.234

²⁹¹ *Ibid*

²⁹² *Ibid* p.238

²⁹³ *Ibid* p.240

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*

²⁹⁵ *Ibid* p.255

or by freely giving and receiving promises. They were, typically, relationships of which the more important were ones of intimacy, relationships to superiors or inferiors in power, relationships not in any strong sense freely chosen nor to chosen others. Like the infant, they found themselves faced with others to trust or distrust, found themselves trusted or not trusted by these given others... When the trust relationship itself is corrupt and perpetuates brutality, tyranny, or injustice, trusting may be silly self-exposure... Women... cannot ignore the virtues of watchful distrust, and of judicious untrustworthiness.²⁹⁶

In other words, given that patriarchy entails that women trust within situations of unequal power, the trust that women place in especially men would more than likely not meet the moral test of trust relationships because what women care about *qua* women, and entrust to men, very possibly conflicts rather than harmonizes with what men *qua* men care about. Given that this is the case, Baier claims that it would be most sensible for women *qua* women not to entrust those things that require more than non-interference to men *qua* men.

Interestingly, if we accept Baier's account of the insensibility or moral corruptness of women's (*qua* women) trust-relationships with men (*qua* men), then we could see the destruction of the typical survivor's trust-beliefs in men to be, in some sense, advantageous. Shattering in this regard could, then, be seen to be beneficial to the survivor. Indeed, Baier claims that:

if the networks of relationships is systematically unjust or systematically coercive, then it may be that one's status within that network will make it unwise of one to trust anything to those persons whose interests, given their status, are systematically opposed to one's own. In most corrupt systems there will be limited opportunity for such beleaguered persons to "rescue" their goods from the power of their enemies—they usually will have no choice but to leave them exposed and so to act as if they trusted, although they feel proper distrust. In such conditions it may take fortitude to display distrust and heroism to disappoint the trust of the powerful.²⁹⁷

I will not defend this claim here but suggest that more work on the importance of these trust-beliefs in the lives of persons is needed if we are to say that the destruction of the survivor's trust-beliefs in (male) others is in fact beneficial to the survivor. It could plausibly be argued that our trust in others is a basic ingredient in human life—that human existence necessarily involves exposure and vulnerability, and so rather than giving up this trust we should take to task those that render the world a dangerous place

²⁹⁶ *Ibid* pp.247-253

²⁹⁷ *Ibid* p.259

for women.²⁹⁸ Importantly, it does not follow from Baier's account that the destruction of the survivor's trust-beliefs in her *self* and in the *world* could be seen as beneficial to the survivor; these trust relationships, that is, seem fundamental to agency *simpliciter*—to our ability to act within the world at all.

I mentioned above that the account I put forward of the lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape differs from both the harm of other non-rape cases of violence and from that of, for example, male-on-male rape. What then sets the lived experience of shattering *as a result of male-on-female rape* apart from these other cases? Male-on-female rape, I argue, is distinctly shattering not only because it destroys certain of the survivor's trust-beliefs—in others, the world, and her self—but more importantly because it serves to confirm the survivor's *ideological* beliefs. My account of shattering is unique in this regard. That is, given the available literature we are only able to describe shattering as the *challenging* or *destruction* of certain of what I have called the survivor's trust-beliefs. On my account, we are able to add to this that the survivor's *ideological* beliefs—the direct result of her subjugation *qua* woman to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology—are confirmed by the act of rape.

In what remains of this section, then, I aim to defend this claim—that one of the fundamental underpinnings of the phenomenon of shattering, insofar as it relates to rape survivors of male-on-female rape, is the *confirmation* rape provides of most women's ideological beliefs, and, in particular, women's status *qua* women in patriarchal societies and of the content of both the threat of rape and the typical woman's alienation from her body. I have already shown that the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy creates an atmosphere of threat according to which women *qua* women are especially vulnerable to rape. Regardless of whether any particular woman is consciously aware of this threat, we are able to say—given our phenomenological approach—that the threat of rape is a shared feature in the lives of women under patriarchy and that, concomitantly, the fulfilment of this threat could plausibly be seen as playing a central role in explaining how rape comes to be experienced as shattering—precisely because the fulfilment of the threat confirms not only women's apparent vulnerability and violability by confirming the content of both

²⁹⁸ Thanks to Louise du Toit for pointing this out to me.

alienation and the content of the threat, but, moreover, women's status *qua* women as second-class citizens under patriarchy.

The claim that women live with the threat of rape is not itself an original claim. As we have already seen, Beneke claims that "rape and the threat of rape pervades the lives of women"²⁹⁹ and Cahill claims that "women's bodily experiences... tend to incorporate at a basic level an assumption of the threat of rape, to the extent that it forms a kind of backdrop for daily, even trivial decisions."³⁰⁰ While accepting this conclusion on an intuitive basis does get us part of the way to understanding why the fulfilment of this threat is shattering, it only gets us *part* of the way—it allows us to see how, for example, one's belief in one's safety in the world and one's belief in one's ability to protect oneself may be undermined. However, this intuitive grasp does not adequately capture the full extent of the phenomenon of shattering precisely because the threat of rape is a particular kind of threat created by the place and pervasiveness of a *symbolic* practice that positions women *qua* women as especially vulnerable to rape and, in virtue of this, the specific content of the threat must be explored.

To explore the content of this threat we need to return to how this threat was created in the first place. On my account, the threat of rape is created by the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women under patriarchy. Crucially, on my account, the practice of objectification becomes *sexual* when the target is objectified on the basis, or because, of her sex. That women are typically the targets of both sexual objectification and the threat of rape indicates just how hegemonically entrenched the meanings associated with each sex/gender have become. It is, that is, no coincidence that both practices are typically (and historically) targeted at women. The pre-reflective acceptance of the centripetal associations between masculinity and dominance and femininity and submission affects the norms and practices governing both sexes. Since women are positioned as passive and submissive—the qualities usually associated with inert objects rather than agents—it is no wonder that the treatment of women reflects this status. For our purposes here, then, the meaning of sexual objectification in the lives of women is of paramount importance. In Chapter Two, I

²⁹⁹ Beneke, T., 'Men on Rape' p.325

³⁰⁰ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.121

argued that to *sexually* objectify a woman is to treat her as instrumental and fungible, to deny her subjectivity and perhaps to take a sexual part of her as representative of the whole. (Recall that these features were drawn from the work of Nussbaum and Bartky.) I argued, further, that these ‘meanings’, when taken together with the place and pervasiveness of the practice of sexual objectification in patriarchal societies, create an atmosphere of threat that *all* women *qua* women are especially vulnerable to rape—to further degradation in the form of the violation of a woman’s autonomy, and being treated as inert—as lacking in agency—and violable—as something that it is permissible to invade, break up, or smash. Insofar as women *qua* women are traditionally the targets of sexual objectification, women *qua* women also find themselves the target of this further form of degrading treatment. Women, that is, live with the threat of rape simply in virtue of being women under patriarchy. The threat of rape is particularly significant in this regard—it is a threat that is grounded in what it *means* to be a woman according to patriarchal ideology. To be threatened with rape is not only to have one’s personhood threatened—as may be the case in other non-rape cases of violence—it is to have one’s personhood threatened in virtue of one’s sex. This, then, is the content of the threat; that women *qua* women are the kinds of creatures that it is permissible to treat as instrumental, fungible, inert and violable. Finally, because women *qua* women live with this threat, it should be seen as a shared, fundamental feature in the lives of women that underpins experience, and, given this, should be taken into consideration when examining any woman’s lived experience of the harm of rape. Again, I claim that this is the case regardless of whether any individual woman is consciously aware of the atmosphere of threat under which she lives—that is, to speak of experience is not necessarily to speak only of conscious experience.

Rape, then, is an enactment of how women are seen under patriarchal ideology, it is a confirmation not only of the meanings attached to women’s bodies by society but also of the content of the threat created by sexual objectification, and *as a confirmation* of these meanings rape shatters the necessary, despite perhaps motivated, trust that a woman must place in others, and particularly in men, her assumption that the world is a relatively safe and secure place *and*, importantly, her assumption that she is able to

protect herself, is able to make good decisions, and is able to act effectively in the world according to her own will.³⁰¹ Brison writes of her own experience of rape:

Although I experienced and remembered my assault under a wide variety of descriptions, it was, perhaps because of the cultural context, easiest for me to categorize the assault as a gender-motivated bias crime. Not only did the assault resonate with my postmemory of rape, confirming that, yes, women are all vulnerable to sexual violence, but the immediate aftermath heightened my sense of helplessness *as a woman*... I felt like a pawn—a helpless, passive victim—caught up in a ghastly game in which some men ran around trying to kill women and others went around trying to save them.³⁰²

On my account, then, to be raped is not only, or even primarily, to be treated as an *object*—one cannot humiliate or degrade an object—it is also, crucially, to be treated as a *woman*, that is, treated as passive, submissive, inert, instrumental, fungible and violable—the content of both women’s alienation from their bodies and the threat of rape itself. Remember that in my discussion of sexual objectification in Chapter Two, I agreed with Cahill that sexually objectifying a woman is not to treat her as an object comparable to other inanimate objects. Given this, Cahill also agrees with the above claim. She writes:

One cannot rape an inanimate object; nor does rape turn a victim into an inanimate object. She remains, painfully, an embodied being, vulnerable to harm, yes, but a subject nevertheless... Yes, her subjectivity is (temporarily) eclipsed, but in some ways that is the point: she must have a subjectivity that can be eclipsed, she must occupy the role of “person” or “subject” in order for her assailant to feel the thrill of violence.³⁰³

Furthermore, to be raped is partly to be treated *as a woman* because the very meanings associated with being a woman in patriarchal ideology, and which partly constitute the content of both women’s typical alienation from their bodies and the threat of rape itself, are given expression in the act of rape.³⁰⁴ Rape fulfils the threat created by sexual objectification and in so doing confirms the second-class status of women as a social collective in relation to men as a group under patriarchy. If this is the case, then it seems

³⁰¹ My aim here is not to make all men villains and all women victims. Both men and women are equally subject to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology. Men also come to uncritically accept and unconsciously internalise the associations with masculinity. It is our dominant ideology that needs to be changed, not our men or women strictly speaking.

³⁰² Brison, S., *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* pp.89-90 [my emphasis]

³⁰³ Cahill, A., *Overcoming Objectification: A Critical Analysis* pp.136-139

³⁰⁴ In J.M. Coetzee’s novel *Disgrace* Lucy thinks of herself and her rapists in the following way: “They see me as owing something. They see themselves as debt collectors, tax collectors. Why should I be allowed to live here without paying?” (p.158) The fact that she is a woman places her in this situation—the fact that she is raped serves to confirm her status *as a woman* in the patriarchal society in which she lives.

plausible that living through rape could bring the victim to become aware of her low status as a woman under patriarchy.

Becoming aware of one's actual status and the ramifications of this status to one's future life provides a plausible explanation for the experience of shattering. In coming to be aware that one is viewed—and can be treated—in any of the ways associated with being a woman, one's assumptions about one's security and safety in the world and about the trustworthy motivations of others are challenged if not directly undermined. Moreover, beginning to understand what it is to be and live as a woman under patriarchy would very plausibly have an effect of the survivor's sense of self.

Adopting my account of the creation of both alienation and the threat of rape with which women live—consciously or unconsciously—allows us, then, to provide a plausible explanation for the experience that I have here called shattering. Rape, in making good on the threat of sexual objectification, and in so doing confirming the content of both women's typical alienation from their bodies and of the threat of rape itself, as well as the status of women as second-class citizens under patriarchy, is destructive and challenging of a survivor's trust-beliefs in herself, others and the world. My account allows us to grasp not only how the fulfilment of the threat of rape undermines the victim's trust-beliefs in herself, others, and the world—most notably her beliefs in her ability, as a woman, to protect herself, trust others and feel safe in the world—it also allows us to grasp that along with the destruction of the survivor's trust-beliefs comes a confirmation of her ideological beliefs. That is, while shattering, on my account, is certainly reflected in the destruction of certain beliefs—and so should certainly be understood as partly destructive—we should also understand this phenomenon as the confirmation or reinforcement of her ideological beliefs.

My account of shattering should not be seen as counterintuitive. Imagine, for example, that one has a psychological fear of being abandoned. This fear, even if it pervades one's subjective life, if confirmed would be no less destructive. The individual, in this case, has in mind what the worst is, but when the worst presents itself, when it actually happens, when this individual is in fact abandoned, the worst is made real—the individual's pervasive psychological fear of being abandoned is confirmed, and any slight amount of trust placed in others is shattered. Similarly, although women live with the

threat of rape, the fulfilment of this threat (and in particular the enactment and confirmation of the content of both women's typical alienation from their bodies and the threat of rape, as well as the status of women *qua* women) confirms the worst—that women are, under patriarchy, second-class citizens as well as vulnerable and violable.

Finally, before we move on, I claim that understanding that rape is shattering in part because it confirms the survivor's ideological beliefs allows us to offer a plausible explanation of the second phenomenon of interest in this chapter, namely, fragmentation.

4.2 Fragmentation

In this section, I provide a phenomenological explanation of fragmentation in rape survivors. I begin by defining in more detail the phenomenon of fragmentation itself. Next, I contrast the fragmented rape survivor's self-identity with that of a 'healthy' self-identity—arguing that any healthy self-identity ought to reflect an awareness and acknowledgment of the self as both mental and physical. Finally, I put forward an explanation of one particular type of fragmentation.

Let us begin, then, by elucidating further what I mean to point to when I speak about fragmentation. My description of this phenomenon should not be taken to be a discovery on my part of an experience typically suffered by rape survivors—which would require far more evidence than I present here—rather, I am interested in exploring a phenomenon briefly described by psychologists Keith Bletzer and Mary Koss, which appears to be exemplified by Brison's description of her own experience. Bletzer and Koss report that:

[the] language that women use to describe what [they] call *after-rape* generally acknowledges *an inalterable shift in the survivor's self-identity* that pervades the life of a women who has been raped.³⁰⁵

It is precisely this change or 'inalterable shift in the survivor's self-identity' that I am interested in here. Not all changes to self-identity classify as fragmentation. To say that an individual's self-identity has become fragmented is not just to say that her self-identity has changed, rather, it is to point to a *particular* kind of change—the change that results from an individual's failing to reflect a fundamental part of herself in her self-identity.

³⁰⁵ Bletzer, K., & Koss, M., 'After-rape among 3 populations in the Southwest: A time of mourning, a time for recovery' p.9 [my emphasis]

Fragmentation as I describe it here could be seen as a (particularly significant) sub-set of shattering—namely shattering as it pertains to self-identity. We have just seen that shattering should be understood partly as the confirmation of the victim’s ideological beliefs, in the case of fragmentation we may say that her ideological beliefs about her *body* are confirmed resulting in the shattering of her self-identity with respect to the importance she places on her embodiment. This will, I hope, become clearer below.

In the aftermath of her rape, Brison attended support groups with other survivors and became active in the community. From her ample experience with other rape survivors, she claims that “survivors of trauma frequently remark that they are not the same people they were before they were traumatized.”³⁰⁶ Describing her own experience, Brison writes;

*I was no longer the same person I had been before the assault, and one of the ways in which I seemed changed was that I had a different relationship with my body. My body was now perceived as an enemy... and as a site of increased vulnerability.*³⁰⁷

In Brison’s case, the fragmentation that has resulted in the aftermath of rape is such that she has come to separate her bodily self off from her self-identity—she has come to see her body as distinct from what she deems to be her ‘real’ self. Given that the body is so intricately involved in the act of rape, and in women’s situation under patriarchy in general, it does not seem surprising to me that Brison, in the aftermath of her traumatic experience, comes to experience her body in the ways she does. For the same reason it would come as no surprise to me were Brison’s experience of her body a common experience amongst female survivors of rape. This is the phenomenon, then, that I am particularly interested in here—the experience of the body as an enemy, which Brison describes, *as an instance* of the phenomenon described by Bletzer and Koss above—namely, as one particular incarnation of what Bletzer and Koss describe as an inalterable shift in the survivor’s self-identity that pervades the life of a rape survivor.

At this point it is interesting to note the prevalence of what is commonly called dissociation in the narratives of rape survivors. To elucidate, it is typically maintained that when faced with a potentially traumatic event we respond instinctually with either a flight or a fight response. According to empirical, psychological studies—and contrary to

³⁰⁶ Brison, S., *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* p.38

³⁰⁷ *Ibid* p.44 [my emphasis]

widely believed rape myths—many, if not most, rape victims do not offer any physical resistance to rape. There are a number of reasons for this, the most often cited being the state of intense shock or fear which the victim experiences at the time.³⁰⁸ A number of rape victims, that is, instinctually respond by attempting to flee from what they perceive as imminent danger. However, when it is impossible to escape the situation—when the rape seems inevitable—this flight response is thwarted and can turn back on itself causing the victim to distance herself as much as possible from the experience. Catherine MacKinnon writes:

Many women who have been sexually abused (like many survivors of concentration camps and ritual torture) report having distanced and split themselves as a conscious strategy for coping with the abuse.³⁰⁹

The only available means to do this, however, is to distance herself from her body; in a sense to say to herself, “this is happening to my body, but it is not happening to me.” In the psychological literature on trauma, this response is seen as the third and final response, in a hierarchy of responses, to a perceived threat to integrity; the first response being communication and the second mobilisation (often referred to as the flight/fight response).³¹⁰ In the psychological literature, then, dissociation occurs as a final *protective* response when a threat is perceived as inescapable, when communication and mobilisation have failed.³¹¹ Psychologist Judith Herman writes:

Sometimes situations of inescapable danger may evoke not only terror and rage but also, paradoxically, a state of detached calm, in which terror, rage, and pain dissolve... The person may feel as though the event is not happening to her, as though she is observing from outside her body, or as though the whole experience is a bad dream from which she will shortly awaken... This altered state of consciousness might be regarded as one of nature's small mercies, a protection against unbearable pain.³¹²

Fellow psychologist, Lynn Hecht Schafran writes of female rape victims:

women [can] experience one of two terror-induced altered states of consciousness called *dissociation* and *frozen fright* which render them totally passive. For some victims... the psychic stress is so extreme that they dissociate during the rape, saying later that they felt it was a terrible dream, or that it was as if the attack were happening to their body and they were watching it from the outside.³¹³

³⁰⁸ Schafran, L.H., ‘Barriers to Credibility: Understanding and Countering Rape Myths’ p.3

³⁰⁹ MacKinnon, C., ‘Sexuality’ p.147

³¹⁰ Porges, S.W., *The Polyvagal theory: phylogenetic contributions to social behaviour*

³¹¹ In the psychological literature, dissociation is also referred to depersonalisation and derealisation.

³¹² Herman, J., ‘Trauma and Recovery’ pp.42-43

³¹³ Schafran, L.H., ‘Barriers to Credibility: Understanding and Countering Rape Myths’ p.3

The narratives of rape-survivors are littered with references to dissociation. For example:

I left my body at that point. I was over next to the bed, watching this happen... I dissociated from the helplessness. I was standing next to me and there was just this shell on the bed... When I re-picture the room, I don't picture it from the bed. I picture it from the side of the bed. That's where I was watching from.³¹⁴

And again:

Standing on the stage, I felt his hands on me. I felt the blade next to my neck, then next to my chest. I felt the scrape of the concrete wall on my bare back. But that was my body. The rest of me had slipped away... From up above, I watched my body with a strange detachment... I knew I was watching myself, but at the same time I felt like I was watching someone else.³¹⁵

To recap, dissociation is a final-resort coping mechanism adopted by an individual when faced with inescapable, unavoidable, trauma; dissociation is an attempt to protect the self from the traumatic event by dissociating from the event, and is most often manifested as a detachment from the body.

This attempt at distancing or detaching one's self from one's body during the rape can be conceptually linked with the particular kind of fragmentation exemplified by Brison's experience. In both dissociation and this kind of fragmentation, the woman distinguishes between her 'real' self and her bodily self: in the first instance by detaching herself from her body—as the current site of the trauma—and, in the second instance, by coming to see her body as essentially alien to her self—since it is ultimately her body that positions her as passive, submissive, vulnerable and violable in relation to the active, dominant, invulnerable male subject. While dissociation occurs during the rape itself, the kind of fragmentation with which I am particularly interested can endure long after the rape has occurred.

In what follows, then, I am interested in providing an explanation for this phenomenon. I will not be speaking about Brison's specific experience but rather of an abstracted situation derived from her description, which, I take it, could very well be a common one amongst survivors given the particular role that the female body plays in the situation of women *simpliciter*.

http://www.ng.mil/jointstaff/j1/sapr/files/Barriers_to_Credibility.pdf

³¹⁴ Herman, J, 'Trauma and Recovery' pp.42-43

³¹⁵ Connors, J., & De Jong, L., 'Beyond Rape: A Survivor's Story' <http://dartcenter.org/content/beyond-rape-survivors-story>. The phenomenon of detachment is also expressed in the following quote from John Irving's *The Hotel New Hampshire*: "When someone touches you and you don't *want* to be touched, that's not really *being* touched... It's not you they touch when they touch you that way; they don't really *get* you, you understand. You've still got you inside *you*. Nobody's touched you—not really." (p.106)

Let us begin by comparing a fragmented self-identity—one that fails to reflect a fundamental part of the self—with a ‘healthy’ or ‘successful’ self-identity. When speaking about self-identity I am referring very loosely to the *conception* that an individual has of herself. For the sake of ease and clarity, then, and insofar as the following two features, or aspects, are all that matter for our purposes here, I will only focus on two very general aspects of the self which any healthy adult individual ought to include in her self-identity. These are the mental and physical aspects of the self. All persons, that is, have both a mental life and a physical make-up and, so, both aspects should be reflected in any person’s self-identity.

Recall that on the phenomenological account that I have developed embodiment is not only essential to agency, it is fundamental to subjectivity itself. On my account, our bodies situate us in the world and, thereby, open the world up to us as full of possibilities. It is because we are embodied that we are able to act as agents in the world expressing through our actions our beliefs, values, and desires. Edmund Husserl claimed that the body serves as the starting point of all our activities and “appears essentially as the expression and instrument of the spirit.”³¹⁶ Similarly, Sarah Heinämaa claims that “expression is not just one of our bodily functions but our fundamental way of being and becoming.”³¹⁷ On my account, then, our embodiment is necessary for the very possibility of subjectivity and agency. Merleau-Ponty writes:

Without the latter (the gaze) we would not have a world, that is, a collection of things which emerge from a background of formlessness by presenting themselves to our body as ‘to be touched’, ‘to be taken’, ‘to be climbed over’... we should not be in the world, ourselves implicated in the spectacle and, so to speak, intermingled with things, we should simply enjoy the spectacle of the universe... True reflection presents me to myself not as idle and inaccessible subjectivity, but as identical with my presence in the world and to others, as I am now realizing it: I am all that I see, I am an intersubjective field, not despite my body and historical situation, but, on the contrary, by being this body and this situation, and through them, all the rest.³¹⁸

Furthermore, recall that on my account the body forms an important part of our situation—it is a site upon which historical, social, cultural and political values and norms are inscribed; and these, in turn, affect our agency, sometimes negatively. That is, while

³¹⁶ Heinämaa, S., ‘Simone de Beauvoir’s Phenomenology of Sexual Difference’ p.118

³¹⁷ Heinämaa, S., ‘Merleau-Ponty’s Modification of Phenomenology: Cognition, Passion and Philosophy’ p.56

³¹⁸ Merleau-Ponty, M., *Phenomenology of Perception* pp.441-452

the body allows for the very possibility of agency, it is also socially and historically situated and so also serves to curtail or limit the projects which subjectivity can take up. Recall that for Merleau-Ponty:

Freedom is always a meeting of the inner and the outer... and it shrinks without ever disappearing altogether in direct proportion to the lessening of the *tolerance* allowed by the bodily and institutional data of our lives.³¹⁹

And, again, Kruks argues that:

Social situations may modify freedom *itself* and not merely its exteriority... the “lived” body literally is one’s situation insofar as it is defining of one’s possibilities.³²⁰

Given the importance of the body, any individual’s self-identity *ought to* reflect both mental and physical aspects of the self. While this phrase may allude to precisely the kind of dualism between mind and body that I attack by adopting a phenomenological approach—both Merleau-Ponty and Kruks, quoted above, weaken, if not entirely do away with, this distinction—I present my claim in this simplified form to highlight the ‘unhealthy’ nature of the fragmented self-identity. Not all aspects of one’s mental life and physical make-up must necessarily be included in one’s self-identity—I do not, for example, need to acknowledge and be aware of my digestive system and my particular belief that I am not in 18th Century France³²¹—my claim is rather that who I take myself to be must acknowledge generally that I am both a thinking thing—as Descartes put it—and an embodied agent—that both my ability to reason, for example, and my being embodied are essential aspects of who I am. Importantly, this is a normative rather than a logical claim. Under ideal circumstances, then, a person’s self-identity would reflect both of these aspects. Any individual who bases her self-identity upon only one of these two features is failing to reflect, in her conception of herself, all that makes her who she is and has become fragmented. To have a fragmented self-identity, then, is by contrast to have an ‘unhealthy’ or ‘unsuccessful’ self-identity.

Remember that the particular kind of fragmentation with which I am interested is that expressed by Brison as an experience of her body as an enemy and as that which makes her vulnerable to the kind of treatment she endured. Again, this is the particular

³¹⁹ *Ibid* p.454

³²⁰ Kruks, S., *Retrieving Experience* pp.38-44

³²¹ Thanks to Tom Martin from the Rhodes University Philosophy Department for pointing out the need for clarification here.

kind of fragmentation that interests me here—when an individual fails to acknowledge the physical aspect of her self—the necessity of her embodiment to her subjectivity. Again, the phenomenological account of women’s situation under patriarchy that I have developed is well suited to explaining the occurrence of this type of fragmentation.

First, recall my claim in Chapter Three that the formation of self-identity takes place dialogically. Drawing on the work of Taylor and Wittgenstein, I argued that we form our identities using languages that we are only able to learn through interaction with others. This entails that our identity-formation—and in particular the respective importance that each of us places on either of the two general aspects of the self that I have discussed—the mental and the physical—is significantly affected, then, ‘from outside’ as it were. External forces, such as the dominant symbolic order and situation, play a role in our identity formation. The identities of most women, then, are partly formed through dialogical interaction with the internalised patriarchal ideology of the others with which they are in dialogical relations, and this may affect the importance that women typically place on their embodiment in terms of their self-identities. Indeed, we have seen that, due to women’s subjugation as a social collective to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, most women’s self-identities express a tension between an experience of self as subject and an experience of self as bodily and so passive, dependant and vulnerable—the characteristics associated with the female body by patriarchal ideology.

Second, recall that women’s typical alienation from their bodies, discussed in Chapter Two, results from internalising not only patriarchal ideology itself—and thereby the typical characteristics associated with the female body—but, moreover, of the sexually objectifying gaze of the (male) other. This gaze, I argued, partly constitutes, both women’s typical alienation from their bodies and the threat that women *qua* women are especially vulnerable to rape; the bodies of women are not only the primary site upon which the meanings associated with femininity are grounded, they are also that which expose women to rape.³²² Women, I argued, are typically alienated from their bodies as the direct result of internalising the hegemonic norms, values and ideals that are

³²² This claim should be read as pathologising or blaming the victim. The meanings centripetally associated with female bodies are to blame here, not the bodies of women themselves.

expressed in the practice of sexual objectification. When alienation occurs, a woman may become estranged from her body insofar as she adopts an external perspective towards her body—she views it objectively, as it were, from outside. What occurs in alienation—the othering of the body—is, I claim, but one step away from the sort of fragmentation I am particularly interested in here—namely, the failure to reflect one’s embodiment in one’s self-identity. While an alienated woman is estranged from her body, a fragmented woman, in the particular case that I am interested in, has come to view her body as her enemy, and so as *fundamentally* alien to her self. This particular kind of fragmentation can be explained, I argue, by combining women’s typical alienation from their bodies with shattering-as-confirmation.

Remember that *shattering-as-confirmation* results from the confirmation of the content of both women’s typical alienation from their bodies and the threat of rape as well as of women’s status as second-class citizens under patriarchy—all of which depend, in important ways on the view of the female body endorsed by patriarchal ideology. I have argued that shattering-as-confirmation reinforces the victim’s ideological beliefs. What this means is that the alienation that women typically experience from their bodies is compounded; the confirmation that her body does indeed make her vulnerable to rape, is violable and positions her as a second-class citizen under patriarchy results in the experience of her body as an enemy—results, that is, in her coming to reject her body as fundamental to her self-identity. The female victim of rape has come to view her body as fundamentally alien to herself in an effort to protect herself-as-subjectivity from the confirmed meanings associated with her body-as-female. As a result, what she takes to be her ‘real’ self fails to reflect her embodiment precisely because it is her body that imbues her existence with immanence and vulnerability and conflicts with her conception of herself as a transcendent subject.

Bringing together the alienation from her body that a woman typically experiences as a result of her particular situation as a woman under patriarchy with the confirmation of her bodily status as passive, inert, instrumental, fungible, vulnerable and violable results in her coming to experience her body as ultimately alien to her self precisely because she cannot make compatible her conception of herself as subject and the conception of her body given to her by patriarchal ideology.

Once again, alienation can be said to be a shared feature in the lives of women under patriarchy, and shattering-as-confirmation has been shown to result from a shared feature in the lives of women. Given this, the account I have put forward to explain the occurrence of this kind of fragmentation is phenomenological—it focuses on shared features in the lives of women which fundamentally underpin the lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape. Fragmentation, then, as a lived experience in the aftermath of rape, can be explained by focusing on shared fundamental features in the lives of women *qua* women under patriarchy.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have focused on two distinct but related phenomena commonly experienced by rape victims—shattering and fragmentation. I have proposed that both be seen as lived experiences of the harm of rape and have suggested possible explanations for both phenomena that can be drawn from the phenomenological account I have developed—in particular by focusing on shared fundamental features in the lives of women that underpin any women’s lived experiences. I argued first that shattering is explicable in terms of the confirmation of the content of both women’s typical alienation from their bodies and the threat of rape as well as of women’s status *qua* women in patriarchal societies. Second, I argued that fragmentation—a species of the genus shattering, namely, shattering as it pertains to self-identity—is explicable in terms of the combination of shattering-as-confirmation with the already established alienation that women have been shown to typically experience as a result of their situation under patriarchy. I proposed that the combination of alienation and shattering-as-confirmation allows us to explain the occurrence of one kind of fragmentation in the aftermath of rape insofar as a woman’s estrangement from her body—the alienation that has been shown to be shared by most women living in patriarchal societies—is but one step away from an attempt to utterly distinguish between her subjectivity and her embodiment; and she is pushed into taking this step by shattering-as-confirmation of her ideological beliefs associated with her body.

As I suggested above, implicit in this explanation is the prediction that women *qua* women are affected by rape differently from men *qua* men. If I am correct to argue

that these phenomena are explicable in terms of shared fundamental features in the lives of women *qua* women, then it follows that these features will not typically be present in the lives of men. That is, the alienation that women typically come to experience from their bodies as well as the threat of rape are constituted in part by the meanings associated with the *female* body that are given expression in the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of *women*. That these contribute to the experience of shattering along with the confirmation of the content of both alienation and the threat of rape as well as of women's status *qua* women under patriarchy, means that the explanations I have offered of both shattering and fragmentation are only applicable in cases of female rape survivors. I do not deny that men are harmed by rape; rather, my claim is that men *qua* men will not be affected by rape *in the same way* that women *qua* women are. Moreover, the lived experience of the harm of rape will differ between women *qua* women and men *qua* men.

The concern could be raised that on my account it is difficult to keep separate the effect of rape from the effect of ideology. However, I do not take this to be a problem for my account. On the account I am offering of the lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies, ideology plays a central role. Indeed, the ideological beliefs of a female rape victim underpin the lived experience of this harm—they are present in alienation, in shattering and in fragmentation. Alienation results from the internalisation of the sexually objectifying gaze of the (male) other—a gaze that reflects the very meanings associated with the female body under patriarchy and takes these to 'justify' the practice of sexual objectification itself. It is because the female body is taken to be *object-like* that the treatment of this body as instrumental, for instance, seems natural and inevitable. Shattering-as-confirmation reinforces these ideological beliefs and the combination of alienation and shattering-as-confirmation—both underpinned by ideological beliefs—results in fragmentation. Ideology, then, plays a crucial role in the way that rape affects a female survivor. The effect of rape on a female rape survivor is, on my account, intimately connected with the effects on most women of patriarchal ideology.

--PART THREE--
RECOVERING FROM THE HARM OF RAPE

INTRODUCTION

In this final part, I focus on the recovery of the rape survivor. Given the discussion in Part Two, it seems as though key to the possibility of recovery is revitalising the survivor's sense of personhood and agency, and undermining her ideological beliefs. It is important to note that I do not believe that recovery results in the survivor being the *same* person that she was prior to her experience of rape—the process of recovery involves the 'building up' of the survivor but does not result in the 'rebuilding' of the same person—sexual violence changes the person who has suffered it and a return to one's previous state of being is not possible. Moreover, if recovery requires the undermining of the survivor's ideological beliefs then post-recovery the survivor is certainly a different person—assuming that her beliefs partly constitute who she is.

In these final two chapters entitled: 'Feminist Consciousness-Raising' and 'A Narrative Model of Recovery' I put forward two distinct suggestions for the recovery of personhood and agency that flow from our understanding of the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies. Both suggestions are concerned, in different ways, with the harm done to the survivor's sense of personhood and agency, and both focus, in different ways, on promoting the integration, integrity and coherence of the survivor. Ideally, these suggestions should be used in conjunction with one another, since, as I will argue in Chapter Six, the *ideal* narrative is a consciousness-raised-narrative.

Given the role that the typical survivor's ideological beliefs play in her lived experience of the harm of rape—insofar as they inform any attempt on her part to understand how she has been harmed and are partly constitutive of both shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation—it is, I argue, of primary importance that these ideological beliefs are challenged and undermined. First, then, I promote the use of feminist consciousness-raising—understood as becoming consciously aware of the shared situation of women *qua* women under patriarchy, as set out in Part One—as a therapeutic

tool for the recovery of personhood and agency. Feminist consciousness-raising practices, I argue, can bring what was previously pre-reflectively inherited and accepted—particularly in terms of the survivor’s estranged relationship from her body—into conscious awareness and can thereby serve to begin to undermine alienation, shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation, thereby also serving to establish a healthier self-identity by resolving the disconnect between the survivor and her body. That is, we saw in Part One that women under patriarchy typically pre-reflectively inherit and accept patriarchal norms, values and ideals through the centripetal attribution of meaning to, particularly, their bodies, and that this acceptance implies taking these to be natural and inevitable rather than a matter of social convention. The hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology, I argued, can distort a woman’s self-identity by placing in stark contrast her subjectivity and embodiment—a distortion that is reflected both cognitively—in her beliefs, attitudes and perceptions—and practically—in her desires, ends, and values. By bringing her pre-reflective acceptance of these shared norms into conscious awareness, this disconnect should begin to be undermined and the survivor, as a result, should come to have a healthier relationship with her own body—thereby becoming more integrated. Fragmentation, on the one hand, and integration, integrity, and coherence, on the other, are mutually exclusive; one cannot both be fragmented and integrated. In promoting personhood and agency, a means to begin to assuage alienation, shattering-as-confirmation, and fragmentation cannot, I claim, be underemphasised.

This first suggestion focuses on the harms suffered by the survivor *as a woman*—and draws on my claim that women do not just exist in a situation in which the harm of rape occurs, but, rather, that the subjugation of women under patriarchy and the ideological beliefs that most women typically pre-reflectively hold as a result are partly constitutive of the lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape. I argue that feminist consciousness-raising, when used as a therapeutic tool, brings the survivor—through bringing her to be consciously aware of, and understand, her shared situation as a woman under patriarchy as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology—to understand how her subjugation *as a woman* has played a pivotal role in the harm that she has suffered. Moreover, coming to fully grasp the shared situation of women as a social collective enables the survivor to acknowledge what have been called the indirect harms

of rape and, in particular, the role that these play both in women's shared situation as a social collective and in her very attempts to understand how she was harmed. Recall that one of the results of pre-reflectively inheriting and accepting patriarchal ideology was that individual women struggle to situate their experiences in a wider social context. Bringing the shared situation of women as a social collective under patriarchy into conscious awareness makes this possible; that is, makes it possible for the survivor to place her individual experience of rape into the wider social context of patriarchal rule.

My second suggestion focuses on the harm suffered by the survivor *as an individual* and promotes the use of narrative understanding. I suggest that understanding her experience narratively reveals to the survivor what her experience of rape *means* to her—both in terms of how she feels about the experience and how she judges this experience overall.³²³

In this chapter, I will distinguish between *successful* narratives and *ideal* narratives. On the account I develop, a successful narrative can be constructed by *any* survivor. A successful narrative resolves a survivor's 'emotional cadence'—this term being drawn from the work of David Velleman—and so provides the survivor, as Velleman argues, with emotional resolution. Having a successful narrative leads, I argue, to greater self-awareness and self-understanding—both of which, I claim, are required for the sort of control typically regarded as necessary for both agency and personhood *simpliciter*. An ideal narrative, on the other hand can only, I argue, be constructed if the survivor has undergone a process of feminist consciousness-raising and can place her individual experience within the wider social context of women's subjugation. The ideal narrative, that is, not only provides the survivor with emotional resolution but, moreover, reflects 'truths' about her experience that she would not have access to if she was not consciously aware of, and did not understand, the shared situation of women *qua* women: such as, how being female positions her as a likely target of rape given the meanings centripetally associated with femininity (and masculinity). In contrast to a successful narrative, an ideal narrative could also be taken to provide a survivor with what Velleman

³²³ It is important to note that I do not think that all experiences need to be understood narratively. Some experiences are qualitatively different from others—the experience of breaking my leg is qualitatively different from being raped, for example. It is only to understanding experiences of rape that I am referring in this chapter.

calls ‘objective’—and sometimes ‘intellectual’—resolution. (While this may seem vague at this point, and questions about the relationship between Grimm’s distinction between ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ understanding, on the one hand, and Velleman’s distinction between ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ resolution, on the other, may be raised, my argument and this relationship will become clearer in the chapter itself.)

Given that this part of my thesis focuses on the *recovery* of the rape survivor, it seems necessary to first mention various existing *psychological* approaches to recovery. Therapeutic treatments aimed at recovery are, after all, based upon theoretical and/or philosophical assumptions that are then played out in the therapeutic encounter. There exist a number of different approaches to recovery in the psychological literature, which I mention here so that I can distinguish my philosophical approach from these existing psychological approaches. More fundamentally, I want to show that philosophy can offer useful suggestions when it comes to thinking about the possibility of recovery from rape—insofar as this is related to the recovery of the survivor’s sense of agency and personhood.

In what follows, I will give a brief overview of three key approaches within psychology: the psychodynamic approach, the cognitive-behavioural approach, and the existential-humanistic approach.³²⁴ As I set these out, I will suggest why I either reject, or am doing something different to, the particular approach in question.

1. The Psychodynamic Approach

Psychodynamic theory is derived from, or founded upon, psychoanalytic theory, but is to be contrasted with psychoanalysis, which typically refers specifically to the work and orientation of Sigmund Freud. In particular, psychodynamic theory derives and retains from psychoanalytic theory an emphasis on the importance of the unconscious—an emphasis that plays a key role in *all* psychodynamic theories, though they may differ in other respects. The unconscious here is thought to be the site of, for example, our memories and biological needs. These unconscious forces are thought to either drive or directly determine our behaviour; “we constantly act out in our daily lives our

³²⁴ The existential-humanistic approach is most interesting, for our purposes, given that it is also founded upon the philosophy of the existential phenomenologists.

developmental history and our unconscious biological drives.”³²⁵ When speaking of our developmental history, psychodynamic accounts are referring in particular to childhood experience—specifically in terms of infancy (trust), childhood (control), and sexual development.—and what they call ‘object relations’—our relationships with others (especially the mother or primary care-giver) and with important objects in our life. These object relations, during childhood experience, are standardly taken to be determinative of how we behave at present.

In assuming that the roots of psychological problems will be uncovered by examining these key developmental stages, psychodynamic treatment focuses primarily on uncovering how the client’s past influences or determines her present behaviour. One of the central tasks performed by the psychodynamic therapist, then, is providing the patient with ‘insight’, understood as the

total understanding of the unconscious determinants of those irrational feelings, thoughts, or behaviours that are producing one’s personal misery.³²⁶

Although a number of general concerns with psychodynamic theories are expressed in the psychological literature—including the extensive focus of the therapist on the past and subsequent failure to “find solutions and behavioural alternatives to problems in living,”³²⁷ and “relegating the presenting problem to the status of a ‘symptom of something deeper’”³²⁸ importantly in the individual—I am primarily concerned with psychodynamic approaches to treating patients who have suffered trauma.

Typically, psychodynamic therapists will use what they call the ‘regression technique’ to treat survivors of trauma. This technique is aimed at helping the patient *re-experience* the trauma.

Regression occurs when [the therapist] help[s] clients return to old negative experiences, particularly to images of trauma, and encourage[s] them to “relive” the event by describing to [the therapist] what they saw, heard, and felt at the time... The most powerful reexperiencing of trauma is at the sensorimotor level, particularly when the therapist asks the client to envision images connected with the event.³²⁹

³²⁵ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition p.211

³²⁶ Trull, T. J., & Phares, E. J., *Clinical Psychology* 6th Edition p.332

³²⁷ Trull, T. J., & Phares, E. J., *Clinical Psychology* 6th Edition p.344

³²⁸ *Ibid* p.345

³²⁹ *Ibid* p.254

The point of this re-living is to bring repressed memories and feelings to the surface; again, particularly at the sensorimotor level. It is thought that “through discussing thoughts and feelings, the trauma can gradually be brought into focus and made part of conscious experience”³³⁰ by helping the client experience the trauma from a new perspective and in a safe environment.

In Chapter Six, I am also particularly interested in *uncovering* what the experience *means* to the survivor. Moreover, I think that there is something intuitively appealing in thinking that a survivor represses parts of her experience of rape. However, I do not take on board certain assumptions that are fundamental to psychodynamic theory. For example, I accept that experiences in one’s past play an influential role both in how one acts at present and in how one makes sense of, or finds meaning in, experience,³³¹ however, I certainly do not want to commit myself to the idea that experiences *in one’s developmental history*—i.e., infancy, childhood, and sexual development—*determine* all of our subsequent behaviour and meaning-making processes. Similarly, I do not accept that in order to uncover any defence mechanisms we need to explore this developmental history.³³² Finally, and this is a concern that I have with all three approaches discussed in this introduction, the psychodynamic approach is not well suited to making structural critiques of inequality given their focus on the individual and the individuals relationships or capacity for meaning-making.³³³

2. The Cognitive-Behavioural Approach

The cognitive-behavioural approach is based on the work of behaviourist B. F. Skinner who thought that:

Behaviour is determined by what happens to us as a result of our behaviour. If we are reinforced for what we do, then likely we will continue to engage in that behaviour. If we are ignored or punished, the behaviour is likely to cease. In its purest form, behavioural therapy seeks to help control the consequences of our behaviour, thus leading us to change our actions.³³⁴

³³⁰ *Ibid* p.255

³³¹ The former playing a crucial role in Chapter Three, and the latter in Chapter Six

³³² My position here will become clearer in Chapters Five and Six

³³³ Thanks to Ann Cahill for pointing this out to me.

³³⁴ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition p.267

Cognitive-behavioural approaches shift the focus from behaviour alone to a more cognitive orientation—behaviour is taken to be *reciprocally* determined by the client's thoughts, feelings, physiological processes, and resultant consequences, and no one of these elements is taken to be more important than the rest. This shift saw the *client* become more important than the *environment* insofar as clients are thought to create their own realities—often based on cognitive distortions that do not accurately represent the situation. Cognitive distortions negatively affect our everyday emotions and behaviour, and often become self-fulfilling prophecies—it is thought that we often do things that provide us with evidence to support our own negative thoughts. Generally, then, it is assumed that “maladaptive behaviour and emotions are changed by correcting dysfunctional beliefs.”³³⁵ Cognitive-behavioural approaches, that is, assume that changing the way we view something *brings about new meanings*. Given this, a central task of the cognitive-behavioural therapist is to help the client understand how they construct and construe reality and to aid them in finding new perspectives on their situation; to see the world through new frames of reference and to integrate thought, feeling and action. Again,

people often make themselves emotional victims by their own distorted, unrealistic, and irrational thinking patterns... The task of the... therapist is to correct clients' thought patterns and minimize irrational ideas, while simultaneously helping them change their dysfunctional feelings and behaviours.³³⁶

Cognitive-behavioural approaches are antithetical to psychodynamic approaches insofar as they devalue the past and emphasise the ideal of progress and moving forward. Moreover, “Psychodynamic theory talks of removing the repressed event, whereas cognitive theory focuses on completing the learning involved in the event.”³³⁷

Once again, it is important, for our purposes, to examine more closely an instance of how cognitive-behavioural therapists treat trauma. Their typical strategy—‘Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing’—is controversial but has been said to show promising results. This treatment has six important phases. In the first and second phases the therapist identifies the traumatic memory, takes a client history and, with the

³³⁵ Brammer, L. M., Abrego, P. J., & Shostrom, E. L., *Therapeutic Counselling and Psychotherapy* 6th Edition p.44

³³⁶ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition p.317

³³⁷ *Ibid* p.333

client, plans the treatment. These first two phases are seen to empower the client and make her aware of how ‘dysfunctional material from the past’ is arising internally. The third phase of treatment involves developing an image³³⁸ of the traumatic experience on the basis of which a statement is formulated that summarises the client’s thoughts and feelings about the trauma. Key to this phase is replacing negative cognitions—such as, ‘it was my fault’—with positive self-statements—such as, ‘I did everything I could.’ In the fourth phase—called ‘desensitisation’—the client generates an image, identifies her thoughts, and notes any physical sensations in her body while the therapist moves his index finger in front of her eyes. During this process—which is typically repeated a number of times—the client is meant to empty the image of the traumatic experience from her mind and focus instead on both her physical sensations and positive self-statement.³³⁹ During the fifth phase—called ‘installation’—the client’s new positive cognitions are reinforced. Finally the client must hold the traumatic event in mind and search, using a ‘body scan’—an exercise during which the client focuses on each body part in turn—for any remaining bodily tension.

A possible concern with this approach is that to focus solely on the presenting problematic behaviour and thoughts, entirely ignores the question of why these behaviours and thoughts developed as they did, which may be a primary concern for the client. Following on from this concern is the worry that “cognitive-behavioural approaches... tend to put the problem “in the client”... [which] can result in clients returning to oppressive systems with the idea that the “fault” is in them rather than in the environment.”³⁴⁰ This is extremely concerning in terms of a rape survivor’s meaning-making processes. Further, “behaviour therapy has... been criticised as ameliorative but not productive of any inner growth... Although it may alter behaviour, it falls short of promoting understanding.”³⁴¹ This is, in part, because focusing on a “limited range of

³³⁸ Cognitive-Behavioural approaches assume that images are the basis for automatic thoughts.

³³⁹ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition pp.290-291

³⁴⁰ *Ibid* p.346

³⁴¹ Trull, T. J., & Phares, E. J., *Clinical Psychology* 6th Edition p.400

concepts like locus of control or self-efficacy... [does] not offer a comprehensive account of personality.”³⁴²

I am sympathetic to two of the concerns mentioned above; namely, that “cognitive-behavioural approaches... tend to put the problem “in the client”... rather than in the environment,”³⁴³ and that “behaviour therapy [is] ameliorative but not productive of any inner growth... it falls short of promoting understanding.”³⁴⁴ First, to focus on the survivor’s own cognitive distortions rather than the traumatic experience which produced these distortions places the problem in the survivor herself, which could exacerbate—reportedly quite common—feelings of self-blame amongst female rape survivors.³⁴⁵ Second, while I am particularly interested in self-understanding and self-awareness, the cognitive behavioural approach is not, focusing, instead, on changing maladaptive behaviour. Moreover, I do not want to take on board the central assumption behind cognitive-behavioural therapy—which is played out in the treatment of trauma—that *images* form the basis of automatic thoughts. To defend such a view would require far more work on my part that would take us too far afield.

Despite these concerns, there are a number of aspects of this approach that I accept. First, I accept the idea that changing the way we view something brings about new meanings. When I suggest, in Chapter Six, that understanding one’s experience narratively enables one to understand what the experience means to one, I endorse the view that changing one’s perspective on an experience may enable one to acknowledge different meanings. And second, I endorse the focus of cognitive-behavioural approaches on integration and coherence. In Chapter Six, I will argue that narratively understanding one’s experience promotes integration and coherence.

3. *The Existential-Humanistic Approach*

³⁴² Louw, D. A., & Edwards, D. J. A., *Psychology: An introduction for students in Southern Africa* 2nd Edition p.583

³⁴³ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition p.346

³⁴⁴ Trull, T. J., & Phares, E. J., *Clinical Psychology* 6th Edition p.400

³⁴⁵ See, for instance, Janoff-Bulman, R. ‘Characterological versus Behavioural self-blame: inquiries into depression and rape.’ *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 1979: 37(10); Hill, J.L and Zautra, A.J ‘Self-Blame Attributions and Unique Vulnerability as Predictors of Post-Rape Demoralization’ *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 1989: 8(4); Ullman, S.E, Townsend, S.M., Filipas, H.H & Starzynski, L.L. ‘Structural Models of the Relations of Assault Severity, Social Support, Avoidance Coping, Self-Blame, and PTSD among Sexual Assault Survivors’ *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 2007: 31(1)

The existential-humanistic approach—also sometimes referred to as person-centred theory and practice—is founded upon the philosophy of the existentialists and the phenomenologists. A central assumption on this approach is “that people’s ‘reality’ is that which they perceive. External events are significant for individuals only insofar as they experience them as meaningful.”³⁴⁶ This approach places great emphasis on our relationships and what they call being-in-the-world, borrowing this term from the existential-phenomenologists.

The existential-humanistic view focuses on men and women as people who are empowered to act on the world and determine their own destiny. *The locus of control and decision lies within the individual*, rather than in past history or in environmental determinants. At the same time, the humanistic aspect of this tradition focuses on *people-in-relationship* one to another. It is this combination of individual respect and the importance of relationship that gives this framework its long-lasting strength.³⁴⁷

For the person-centred theorist, we know ourselves through our relationships with the world and other people and are responsible for our own constructions of the world insofar as we decide what the world means through acting on the world. Central to the existential-humanistic approaches is the emphasis on responsibility—as agents we act in the world and must be seen to be responsible for our choices and intentional actions. Proponents of this approach acknowledge that there are an infinite variety of life experiences and ways of being-in-the-world and recognise this “as an opportunity rather than as a problem.”³⁴⁸

Again, let us briefly mention a couple of techniques proposed by person-centred therapist’s for treating trauma. First, they speak of ‘paradoxical intention’, which refers to the therapist encouraging the patient to do, or wish to happen, the very thing she fears. It is thought that in so doing “the fear itself is not dealt with, but rather the object of fear.”³⁴⁹ Second, they emphasise changing the client’s attitude or changing the way she thinks about the experience. For example, they focus on reframing attitudes—the search for positive in the most difficult of experiences—and deciding for the future—that is

³⁴⁶ Brammer, L. M., Abrego, P. J., & Shostrom, E. L., *Therapeutic Counselling and Psychotherapy* 6th Edition p.38

³⁴⁷ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition pp.350-351 [my emphasis]

³⁴⁸ *Ibid* p.352

³⁴⁹ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition p.386

modifying and changing the way the client thinks about the past, by focusing, for example, on the fact that she has survived:

Modification of attitudes cannot change the past, but it can help people live with the past and the present more intentionally. The point is to find something positive, something to live for out of and beyond the traumatic experience.³⁵⁰

Possible concerns with this approach include, first, the charge that by focusing on the individual and free choice, person-centred theories obscure person-environment transactions, a charge that is particularly worrying in light of my claim that the situation of women *qua* women is partly constitutive of the harm of rape. Second, it has been argued that:

Some humanistic theorists, in emphasising the healthy course of personal growth, seem to underestimate the negative sides of human personality and present a view which is unduly optimistic.³⁵¹

Finally, it is seen as a cause for concern that:

Descriptions of client-centred treatment philosophies and procedures are unique and involve a great deal of undefined terminology. Such words as *being*, *becoming*, *actualizing*, and *congruency* are not clearly defined or seem to carry a surplus of meaning that is difficult to communicate reliably.³⁵²

Given that I adopt an existential-phenomenological approach to the question of women's situation under patriarchy, I accept much of the theoretical underpinnings of this approach—such as the importance of our relationships—our being-in-the-world—and the possibility of alienation resulting from a distorted relationship with the world, oneself or others. I also accept the importance of grasping what the world—and, for my purposes, lived experience—means to us. For these reasons, I am sympathetic to certain of the therapist's central tasks under this approach; such as, helping the client appreciate that the same experience can hold different meanings and helping the client to 'disclose her own struggles with meaning'. In particular I agree with the claim presented on the previous page that changing the client's attitudes can help her to live with her experience. Furthermore, I am sympathetic to the following further tasks of the therapist: getting the client in touch with her *authentic* feelings and values so that she "respond[s] honestly,

³⁵⁰ *Ibid* p.386

³⁵¹ Louw, D. A., & Edwards, D. J. A., *Psychology: An introduction for students in Southern Africa* 2nd Edition p.589

³⁵² Trull, T. J., & Phares, E. J., *Clinical Psychology* 6th Edition p.359

sensitively and with awareness to the full complexity of life as [she] experience[s] it;”³⁵³ aiming for congruence in terms of matching awareness with experience, and “[enabling] alienated clients to see themselves in relationship to the world and to choose and act in accordance with what they see,”³⁵⁴ which serves to help the client “to realise that she can ‘take charge’ of her own life, make decisions, and act on the world.”³⁵⁵ Moreover, insofar as this relates to my argument in Chapter Five, I am sympathetic to the focus placed on the client’s coming to face the *truth* of her situation. In the same vein, the claim that “having examined the world, individuals are... free to act, rather than only to be acted upon”³⁵⁶ is extremely important in the context of Chapter Five, insofar as bringing the survivor to conscious awareness and understanding of her shared situation as a woman under patriarchy allows the survivor to understand the world and society as it is really is, and to a great extent this means that she is no longer ‘acted upon’ by patriarchal ideology.

However, I cannot accept that external events are significant for individuals only insofar as they experience them as meaningful—rape, I argued in my discussion of direct harms in Chapter Three, harms one and therefore is significant regardless of whether one experiences it as such.³⁵⁷ Neither do I agree with the central tenet underlying this approach that we are responsible for our own constructions of the world insofar as *we decide what the world means* through acting on the world. This, I think, is a misrepresentation of the claim made by the existential-phenomenologists that we are both constituted and constituting creatures—we give the world meaning, but the world also gives meaning to us that we do not choose (remember Merleau-Ponty’s distinction between ‘centripetal’ and ‘centrifugal’ meaning-attribution discussed in Chapter One). Finally, I worry about the emphasis on finding *positive* meaning in old experiences—while focusing on one’s survival may be beneficial, I do not think this should obscure that some experiences—such as rape—do not *themselves* hold any positive meaning..

³⁵³ Louw, D. A., & Edwards, D. J. A., *Psychology: An introduction for students in Southern Africa* 2nd Edition p.585

³⁵⁴ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition p.351

³⁵⁵ Note here the distinct difference from psychodynamic approaches that focus on the determinative nature of the past and cognitive-behavioural approaches that focus on environmental exigencies.

³⁵⁶ Ivey, A., Ivey, M.B., & Simek-Morgan, L. (eds.), *Counselling and Psychotherapy: A Multicultural Perspective* 4th Edition p.351

³⁵⁷ Note that it is not incompatible with adopting an existential phenomenological approach to speak about experiences that the subject is not directly aware of, as mentioned in Chapter Three.

I hope that this discussion suffices to distinguish my philosophical approach to the question of recovery from these three major psychological approaches. Let us turn our attention, then, to my two suggestions for the recovery of the survivor's personhood and agency.

--CHAPTER FIVE--
FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

In this chapter, I put forward my first suggestion for building up the personhood and agency of the rape survivor; namely, the deliberate therapeutic use of feminist consciousness-raising. I will defend the claim that engaging in a process of feminist consciousness-raising—understood as being brought to awareness of the shared situation of women under patriarchy as I described it in Part One—brings the survivor to understand how this situation is partly constitutive of her lived experience of the harm she has suffered and thereby begins to undermine shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation by beginning to undermine her alienation from her body. Moreover, coming to properly understand the situation of women *qua* women in patriarchal societies, can bring her to understand the indirect harms of rape—as discussed in Chapter Three—and how these harms feed into the shared situation of women *qua* women as well as her individual attempts to understand how she has been harmed.

Drawing on the work of Sandra Bartky on the phenomenology of feminist consciousness-raising, I describe this distinct process, which Bartky describes as developing “a radically altered consciousness of oneself, of others, and of... ‘social reality.’”³⁵⁸ I argue that feminist consciousness-raising—coming to understand one’s situation as a woman under patriarchy and, thereby, also the role that the indirect harms of rape have played in this situation and in her lived experience of the harm of rape—can begin to undo the alienation a woman typically experiences in terms of her body and thereby the particular type of fragmentation I described in Chapter Four. By bringing into conscious awareness the ideological effects of living as a woman under patriarchy—especially insofar as these relate to her body—and placing in stark opposition a new conception of self with the older, pre-reflectively inherited and accepted conception of herself *qua* woman, feminist consciousness-raising can repair the survivor’s fragmented

³⁵⁸ Bartky, S., ‘Towards a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness’, p.23

relationship with her body.³⁵⁹ The primary focus of this chapter, then, is the possibility of undoing fragmentation through a process of feminist consciousness-raising.

I first examine Bartky's work on the phenomenology of feminist consciousness-raising, since the phenomenological transformation she describes is, I argue, worthy of attention when thinking about the possibility of recovering from the lived experience of the harm of rape. Second, drawing on her account, I provide a defence of the claim that feminist consciousness-raising can serve to undermine fragmentation.

As I mentioned in the introduction to this part, I will focus here on those survivors who do suffer from alienation and, thereby, both shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation. In this chapter, I will show that undergoing a process of feminist consciousness-raising serves to undermine these survivors' ideological beliefs and, thereby, begins to assuage their alienation from their bodies and both shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation.

5.1 Feminist consciousness-raising

Bartky describes the process of feminist consciousness-raising as one of developing "a radically altered consciousness of oneself, of others, and of... 'social reality.'"³⁶⁰ Those women who have undergone this process *perceive* their social reality as *contradictory* and, given this, begin to engage in a transformative project. She argues that:

feminists are not aware of different things than other people; they are aware of the same things differently. Feminist consciousness... turns a "fact" into a "contradiction;" often features of social reality are only apprehended *as* contradictory from the vantage point of a radical project of transformation.³⁶¹

According to Bartky, this transformation only takes place when contradictions in our society are made visible; and these contradictions become visible when the position of women in society is altered. Bartky focuses on such changes as women entering the marketplace, becoming more prolific in institutions of higher education and having access to cheaper and easily available supplies of contraception. These changes, she argues, brought into conflict a woman's new conception of herself and society with

³⁵⁹ Throughout the rest of the chapter when I speak of fragmentation I mean only to refer to the particular type of fragmentation that I am interested in, and which was explored in Chapter Four; namely, the failure of a survivor's self-identity to reflect her embodiment.

³⁶⁰ Bartky, S., 'Towards a Phenomenology of Feminist Consciousness', p.23

³⁶¹ *Ibid* p.26

“older ideas about a woman’s role, her destiny, and even her ‘nature.’”³⁶² Feminist consciousness-raising, then, comes about, for Bartky, when changes in society allow for the possibility of transformation; and this transformation is brought about when a woman comes to view certain features of her social reality as ‘intolerable’ because contradictory, and, importantly, as *not* natural, inevitable and inescapable. As she puts it:

To say that feminist consciousness is the experience in a certain way of certain specific contradictions in the social order is to say that the feminist apprehends certain features of social reality *as* intolerable, as to be rejected on behalf of a transforming project for the future.³⁶³

According to Bartky, feminist consciousness-raising transforms a woman’s behaviour and consciousness, and one such transformation allows the feminist to be conscious of her, and, indeed, all women’s, victimisation under patriarchy. She writes:

To apprehend oneself as victim is to be aware of an alien and hostile force which is responsible for the blatantly unjust treatment of women and for a stifling and oppressive system of sex-roles; it is to be aware, too, that this victimization, in no way earned or deserved, is an *offense*... One is victimized *as a woman, as one among many*, and in the realization that others are made to suffer in the same way that I am made to suffer lies the beginning of a sense of solidarity with other victims... the consciousness of victimization is immediate and revelatory; it allows us to discover what social reality really *is*.³⁶⁴

Moreover, one’s consciousness of victimisation is divided—it is at once to experience oneself as victimised and as powerful. Bartky writes:

The consciousness of victimization is a divided consciousness. To see myself as a victim is to know that I have already sustained injury, that I live exposed to injury, that I have been at worst mutilated, at best diminished, in my being. But at the same time, feminist consciousness is a joyous consciousness of one’s own power... Thus, feminist consciousness is consciousness both of weakness and of strength.³⁶⁵

Because a ‘feminist’ has come to view her shared situation as a woman as neither inevitable nor natural she becomes aware of the possibility of changing this situation. Furthermore, given the solidarity she begins to feel as a woman with other women—given her awareness of her situation as shared—the feminist is mobilised not just to change her situation, but, rather, to change the situation facing *all* women.

Bartky’s account of feminist consciousness-raising deserves attention when thinking about the possibility of recovering from the harm of rape. The transformative

³⁶² *Ibid* p24

³⁶³ *Ibid* p.25 (*sic*)

³⁶⁴ *Ibid* pp.26-27 [my emphasis]

³⁶⁵ *Ibid* p.27

project that Bartky describes as feminist consciousness-raising could, I claim, be used as a deliberate, therapeutic means to bring pre-reflectively inherited and accepted norms and ideals that the survivor holds *qua* woman into conscious awareness and can, thereby, begin to assuage the alienation and concomitant fragmentation that she experiences in the aftermath of rape. While I agree with Bartky that this form of consciousness-raising does arise spontaneously through changes in the social position of women, I argue that feminist consciousness-raising can be further used as a therapeutic tool to undermine the harmful effects of male-on-female rape.

It must be noted at this point that what I suggest here, while it draws on the phenomenology of feminist consciousness-raising described by Bartky, diverges from Bartky's own proposal. For Bartky, changes in technology and access to resources open up possibilities that clearly contradict those imposed by patriarchy, and this leads to a spontaneous critical questioning of patriarchy—"Society told me I was just *x*, but now I see that I could be *y*, so there can be nothing 'natural' or 'inevitable' about my being *x* after all." Under my thesis, however, rape is not *contrary* to patriarchy, but rather a *culmination* of it—recall that part of the lived experience of the harm of rape is the confirmation of the victim's status as second-class citizen—"Society told me I was *x*, and now I have been shown that I am *x*." On my account, there is no contradiction *per se* in the nature or meaning of the act of rape within patriarchy. However, I do not wish to argue that rape results in feminist consciousness-raising in the same way that changes in technology and access to resources do. Rather, I wish to argue that a process of feminist consciousness-raising can be deliberately initiated as a therapeutic tool in a survivor's treatment—that a survivor can be brought to be aware of the impact that patriarchal ideology has had upon her experiences and conception of her body. A survivor can be brought to understand her shared situation as a woman under patriarchy as contradictory and 'intolerable' by being brought to be aware of, and understand, the role that her being a woman has played not only in the occurrence of her being raped but also in her lived experience of the harm of rape. That is, I argue that a survivor, if brought to be aware of, and understand, the shared situation of women as subjugated to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, would also come to perceive the contradictions between how she perceives herself and how she is represented by patriarchal ideology and would, thereby,

also come to engage in the transformative project that Bartky describes; coming to view her situation under patriarchy as intolerable can result from being lead through a therapeutic process of understanding how her *being a woman* is the fundamental cause of not only her vulnerability to rape—that the very meanings centripetally associated with women *qua* women position her as especially vulnerable to being harmed in this way—but moreover, of the role that her pre-reflectively inherited ideological beliefs play in her attempts to understand how she is harmed, and in her actual lived experience of this harm. Understanding that this is the case, and again, importantly, being brought to understand that this situation is not in fact natural, inevitable and inescapable but rather the result of the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology, must, I think, bring about this same transformative project—must result in feminist consciousness-raising. Being brought to understand her situation as a woman under patriarchy and “grasp the significance of [this] situation [remains] contained in the way she apprehends her current situation.”³⁶⁶

Feminist consciousness-raising, then, on my account, rather than having to arise spontaneously through a change in women’s social position, can be intentionally brought about through bringing a survivor to be consciously aware of, and understand, her shared situation as a woman under patriarchy, and to be aware that this situation is unnatural and imposed.

5.2 Feminist consciousness-raising and the alleviation of shattering and fragmentation

As we saw in Part Two, adopting a phenomenological approach—specifically geared towards investigating the constitution of the meaning of reality by studying and making sense of lived experiences—allows us to offer phenomenologically grounded explanations of both shattering and fragmentation. Recall, first, that rape is shattering in part because it enacts and thereby confirms the status of women *qua* women under patriarchy. That is, by confirming the *content* of the threat of rape with which women live, rape confirms that the survivor is—like *all* women—a second-class citizen vulnerable to the capricious will of men. Second, recall that combining alienation, which women typically come to experience in relation to their bodies as a result of living under

³⁶⁶ *Ibid*

patriarchy, with shattering-as-confirmation of the survivor's status *as a woman*—explains why she experiences fragmentation—why she eventually comes to experience her body as an enemy of her self.

Both shattering and fragmentation, on my account, are primarily caused by shared features in the lives of women—the status of women as second-class citizens applies to all women living under patriarchy, and alienation, I have argued, is the typical result of one's body, as female, being the target of certain sexually objectifying practices and meanings. The very situation of women *qua* women under patriarchy, then, is partly constitutive of both lived experiences of the harm of rape.

It is my contention that feminist consciousness-raising can be used as a means to undo, or at least begin to undermine, both shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation. That is, feminist consciousness-raising—coming to be aware of and properly understand one's shared situation as a woman under patriarchy and all that this means to one's relationships with one's self, others and the world—establishes, I argue, a healthier self-identity by undermining fragmentation. I argue that, in bringing the survivor to properly understand that the situation of women *qua* women under patriarchy is neither natural nor inescapable, one has brought her to conscious awareness of what she had previously pre-reflectively inherited and accepted about herself as a woman; she is brought, that is, to experience the divided consciousness of which Bartky speaks—a consciousness of women as subjugated, or victimised—of the striking contradictions between the patriarchal concept of 'woman' and her own experience of herself as transcendent subject;³⁶⁷ and of the unjust practices that target women *qua* women as a result of patriarchy. If the survivor is brought to be critically aware of the contradictions inherent in her situation *as a woman* in this way, it is plausible to expect that a healthier relationship between the survivor and her body could be established through the challenging of alienation and thereby both shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation. My argument will run as follows:

³⁶⁷ One may object that if we accept that patriarchal ideology is hegemonic then her conception of herself would be that dictated by patriarchy. This is to misunderstand the intricacies of her situation. The dialogical nature of identity formation means that this ideology will inform her identity formation, but it will not determine it. Moreover, we must not forget the existential account of the general human condition set out in Part One out of which we were able to understand women's situation simpliciter. Any person is constituted by freedom and facticity, and her experience of herself as transcendent cannot ever be totally negated.

- i) Feminist consciousness-raising brings the shared situation of women into conscious awareness.
- ii) Bringing the shared situation of women into conscious awareness begins to undermine alienation.
- iii) Bringing the shared situation of women into conscious awareness can serve to undermine shattering-as-confirmation.

So, (iv) bringing the shared situation of women into conscious awareness can serve to undermine fragmentation.

So, (v) feminist consciousness-raising can undermine fragmentation.

I will discuss each premise in turn.

i) Feminist consciousness-raising brings the shared situation of women into conscious awareness.

I have argued that most women under patriarchy typically pre-reflectively inherit and accept the norms, values and ideals of patriarchal ideology as natural and inevitable rather than as socially entrenched. Indeed, this is necessary if the patriarchal status quo is to persist and remain dominant. That is, in order for patriarchal values, norms and ideals to persist, the majority of women need to be ‘unconscious’ of the fact that these norms, values and ideals are neither natural nor inevitable.

Recall that in Chapter One I discussed the cognitive and practical effects of pre-reflectively inheriting patriarchal ideology as well as the damage this can cause to an individual woman’s self-identity. I will briefly remind the reader of these three modes and the evidence given to suggest that most women suffer from all three.

First, cognitively, I claimed that pre-reflectively inheriting and accepting patriarchal ideology affects “the system by which we perceive, judge and reflect upon nature, society and ourselves,”³⁶⁸ and this can be reflected in our (a) beliefs, (b) attitudes and (c) perceptions. We have seen that, as a result of the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of most women express an pre-reflective acceptance of the norms, values and ideals of patriarchy. In terms of belief, it was shown that women typically believe that their ideas about themselves, others and the world are

³⁶⁸ Rosen, M., *On Voluntary Servitude: False consciousness and the theory of ideology* p.31

natural and inevitable—a belief that is both social in origin and which serves to stabilise, promote, or maintain patriarchal society. As already mentioned, the survivor that I am especially concerned with in this chapter suffers cognitively in these ways, and crucial to our purposes are her ideological beliefs about her ideas about her body. The survivor I am primarily concerned with, then, has not only internalised the meanings centripetally associated with her body by patriarchal ideology—namely, that the female body is passive, submissive, and essentially vulnerable and violable—but, moreover, believes that these ideas are natural and inevitable—that these characteristics belong to the very nature of her body *qua* female. It is partly because her ideological beliefs reflect those of patriarchal ideology in this regard that she is alienated from her body and takes the threat of rape with which she lives to be credible. I came across one particularly extreme example in the case of a young black woman brought up in rural South Africa. This woman remarked that she expected to be raped at some point in her lifetime given that all of the women in her family before her had been raped. Cognitively, we are concerned here not with the content of her idea but rather with her belief that rape was a ‘fact of life’ for women in her community.³⁶⁹

Second, I argued that women who have pre-reflectively inherited and accepted patriarchal ideology typically fail to reconcile their conception of themselves as subjects with the centripetally acquired representation of women under patriarchy as fundamentally other—thereby failing to *acknowledge* a fundamental truth about their condition, namely that they are estranged from their human condition on both an ontological and social level. Moreover, these attitudes are expressed in experience. In elucidating this claim, I drew on the work of Iris Marion Young, and claimed that we could take her claims about typical feminine motility, comportment and spatiality, to lend support to the claim that most women express attitudes towards their bodies and space itself that are significantly affected by patriarchal ideology. My claim, then, was that these three typical feminine modalities could be seen to express the failure on the part of

³⁶⁹ This particular example is derived from the story of an actual survivor at the debriefing of a recent protest against male-on-female rape in South Africa. This survivor related that she had always known that she would be raped because her mother and grandmother had both been raped—that the raping of women was commonplace where she had grown up. She considered rape, then, to be a normal part of life. While the content of this idea is itself strikingly depressing, it is her belief about this idea that is crucial for our purposes; that is, her belief that her ideas about the world she lives in are both natural and inevitable.

a woman to acknowledge her estrangement from the human condition. A survivor, then, may express her attitudes towards her body in the manner described by Young—as, for instance, inhibited, positioned in space, and discontinuous with her self.³⁷⁰

Finally, most women, it was argued, perceive not only their own bodies but also space itself using concepts given to them from outside—from patriarchal ideology. These perceptions of the body stem directly from her ideological beliefs about her body. The survivor with whom I am concerned perceives her body as a hindrance—as something that needs to be constantly maintained; she perceives her body through the lens of patriarchal ideology, and, often, through the objectifying eyes of the (male) other. Importantly, because she perceives her body through the lens of patriarchal ideology, this survivor also perceives her body as something that must be adorned and beautified—as something that in its ‘natural’ state does not live up to the ideals of femininity. Her perceptions of her body mirror her pre-reflectively inherited ideological beliefs and attitudes.

Second, recall that practically this inheritance affects “the way in which we respond to and act within the world,”³⁷¹ and can be expressed by ‘disorders’ of (a) desire and the will; (b) values, end or norms; or (c) emotion. Often these desires flow from the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions affected cognitively, as discussed above. For example, a survivor’s desire to be seen as beautiful may stem from her beliefs about her ideas about the place and situation of women under patriarchy. Moreover, given that the values and norms of patriarchal ideology are inherited by this survivor as she is brought up *as a woman*, the effect of these values on the ends that she strives to achieve should not be underestimated—such as, for instance, the end and value of marriage and child-rearing. Finally, we have seen that certain of women’s typical emotional responses are punitive and inappropriate. If, for example, a survivor focuses on how the rape was her, and not her rapist’s, fault—she questions her behaviour prior to the rape, for instance, repeatedly wondering if she could have avoided being raped by behaving differently—then she is

³⁷⁰ Importantly, when I use the word ‘failure’ here, I do not mean to imply that these women are responsible for not acknowledging this estrangement. Rather, failing to acknowledge an estrangement from the human condition both ontologically and socially is a direct result of inheriting patriarchal ideology, and women who have done so should not be seen as pathological or irresponsible.

³⁷¹ *Ibid*

experiencing punitive and inappropriate responses to her experience that are the direct result of internalising the norms, values and ideals of patriarchal ideology.

Finally, distortions of identity “involve the deformation of a subject.”³⁷² Key, here, is the failure to express one’s individual character. It could be argued that some of the actions performed by women—based in part upon the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of patriarchal ideology—fail to express their individual characters but instead express the values, norms, and ideals of patriarchy. For example, failing to live one’s body to its full potential—whether in throwing a ball or walking—expresses the norms associated with femininity by patriarchy. If a survivor—as is typical—remains passive and silent during a rape, perhaps even dissociates from her body, then she fails to express herself. This failure, I claim, could be seen as stemming from the distortion of her identity resulting from the inheritance of patriarchal ideology. Importantly, I am not claiming that this survivor, in remaining passive and silent during her rape, is *consciously* expressing the values, norms and ideals of patriarchy; instead, my claim is that she could be understood as *unconsciously* expressing these norms, values and ideals—there seems, that is, to be a conceptual connection between remaining passive and silent during the event of rape and being positioned as passive and silent by patriarchal ideology. Again, my use of the terms ‘failed’ and ‘failure’ here should not be taken to indicate any sense of blame or responsibility for the effects of patriarchal ideology upon her self-identity.

In summary, the survivor that I am concerned with here is negatively affected both cognitively and practically, and her identity is in some sense distorted as the result of internalising the norms, ideals and values of patriarchal ideology. Patriarchal ideology, that is, is not only expressed in her beliefs, attitudes and perceptions, but also, concomitantly, in her desires, values, ends and emotions, and, importantly, in her ability to express herself authentically.³⁷³ Given her ideological beliefs, moreover, this survivor becomes alienated from her body by internalising the sexually objectifying gaze of the (male) other.

When I claim that feminist consciousness-raising can bring the shared situation of women under patriarchy into conscious awareness, I am referring to the possible

³⁷² *Ibid*

³⁷³ This should come as no surprise given that, on the existential-phenomenological account that I endorse, the freedom of individual women can be significantly diminished by their situation.

alleviation of all three modes affected by pre-reflectively inheriting and accepting patriarchal ideology. Cognitively, feminist consciousness-raising will challenge and undermine this survivor's (a) belief that her ideas about herself, others and the world—and, in particular, her body, are natural and inevitable and based in 'fact'; (b) her 'failure' to acknowledge her estrangement from the human condition, which is reflected in her attitudes towards her body; and (c) her perceptions—especially insofar as these are of her own body. In coming to be aware of her shared situation as a woman as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, this survivor, that is, will come to be aware that certain of her beliefs, attitudes and perceptions are informed by this ideology, and so can come to consciously examine and question these beliefs, attitudes and perceptions. Practically, because feminist consciousness-raising challenges and undermines certain of the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions expressed cognitively, it will also bring into doubt certain of the survivor's desires, values, ends, and emotions. As a result, she may come to challenge what she pre-reflectively took to be her role in bringing about her rape; realising that it was not her fault but, instead, that rape is endemic to patriarchal societies themselves because of the very meanings, values and norms associated with femininity and masculinity. This survivor is now able, that is, to see the connection between the indirect harms of rape and the maintenance of patriarchal society and this should undermine any punitive or inappropriate emotional responses she harbours toward herself as a consequence of the rape. Finally, feminist consciousness-raising, in bringing into conscious awareness the cognitive and practical effects of inheriting patriarchal ideology, may also lead to the active, conscious, expression of her individual character rather than her pre-reflective expression of the values, norms and ideals of patriarchal ideology.

Bartky's account of feminist consciousness-raising is crucial for our purposes here. Recall her description of victimisation, and in particular her claim that being conscious of oneself as victimised in virtue of one's sex is a divided consciousness that at once acknowledges one's weakness and one's strength, and, importantly, the injustice of one's shared situation as a woman. Feminist consciousness-raising, according to Bartky, results in the experience of this divided consciousness of victimisation.

In contrast to this divided consciousness, recall that pre-reflectively inheriting and accepting patriarchal ideology involves an unawareness of the injustice of one's shared situation as a woman precisely because the ideology internalised is seen to represent what is natural and inevitable. Essential to the picture I have painted is that the typical woman pre-reflectively accepts a subjugating ideology that is neither natural nor inevitable *as* both natural and inevitable. Coming to understand, through a process of feminist consciousness-raising, that her shared status as a second-class citizen is neither natural nor inevitable but merely the product of the dominant patriarchal ideology brings the survivor's pre-reflectively accepted cognitions into conscious awareness, where they are now able to be criticised, challenged and resisted.

If a survivor undergoes a process of feminist consciousness-raising, then she can no longer be said to pre-reflectively accept patriarchal ideology—her *awareness* of the injustice of her shared situation, as being neither natural nor inevitable, results in what Bartky calls the divided consciousness of victimisation. Importantly, while divided consciousness is far from ideal, it is certainly, I argue, an improvement upon the pre-reflective acceptance of patriarchal norms, ideals and values.

ii) Bringing the shared situation of women into conscious awareness begins to undermine alienation

If divided consciousness results from a survivor's becoming aware that her shared situation as a woman is unjust precisely because the norms, ideals and values of patriarchal ideology are now consciously recognisable as neither natural nor inevitable, then the survivor is in a position to be aware of the *socially entrenched* nature of the particular meanings associated with her body as that of a woman.

The survivor's coming to understand that her body is not naturally or inevitably passive, submissive and vulnerable, but that she has come to see her body in these ways because she pre-reflectively inherited and accepted patriarchal ideology, can lead to her rejection, or at least challenging, of these meanings; and it seems plausible to me, that as soon as she begins to challenge these meanings, she begins to undermine the alienation she has come to experience from her body. My claim here is not that feminist consciousness-raising is sufficient for undoing the survivor's alienation—even a

‘feminist’ can be alienated from her body—rather, I claim that it *begins a process* of undermining alienation.

Recall that alienation was said to be, in part, the result of the internalisation of oppressive norms and, in part, the internalisation of the sexually objectifying gaze of the (male) other. In the case of alienation, these norms are based on the distinction between the active male body and the passive female body. The survivor has come to accept that her body, for example, is naturally passive as the result of inheriting and internalising patriarchal ideology and this sexually objectifying gaze. Bringing her to be aware of the shared situation of women under patriarchy—particularly insofar as this is cognitively, and practically related to her body—begins to undermine her alienation from her body because once she no longer perceives the norms of patriarchy to be natural and inevitable, her pre-reflective acceptance of her body as naturally passive begins to be undermined. Her body, once freed of the internalised associations given to it by patriarchal ideology and the practice of sexual objectification, presents the usual limitations to freedom that any body, in virtue of its role in facticity, presents to subjectivity. Her body is still centripetally positioned in the same way, but she is now consciously aware that this positioning is neither natural nor inevitable. Moreover, recall Bartky’s claim that the divided consciousness of victimisation is at once a consciousness of weakness and strength. The survivor’s alienation does not start to be undermined only because she comes to reject or challenge the conception of her body as passive that is given to her by patriarchal ideology and the place, meaning and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in her life, rather this rejection as well as the divided consciousness of victimisation that results from feminist consciousness-raising allows the survivor to experience her body as, at least in some ways, powerful.

Being in a position to reject, or challenge, the associations made by patriarchal ideology between the female body and passivity, and coming to experience her body as powerful, follows from bringing what was pre-reflectively accepted into conscious awareness as a result of feminist consciousness-raising. Feminist consciousness-raising, then, because it brings the shared situation of women under patriarchy into conscious awareness can begin to undermine the survivor’s alienation from her body.

iii) *Bringing the shared situation of women into conscious awareness can serve to undermine shattering-as-confirmation*

The role that bringing the shared situation of women into conscious awareness plays in the dissolution of the shattering phenomenon is slightly more complicated. Becoming consciously aware of women's shared situation cannot undo all of the harm the survivor experiences from shattering. That is, this conscious awareness does not negate the fact that her status as a woman under patriarchy—as that of a second-class citizen who is, in virtue of her sex, the kind of creature who is especially vulnerable to rape—has been confirmed by another, or that the content of both her alienation from her body and the threat of rape with which she lives has been confirmed. However, the confirmation of her status as a woman under patriarchy does not equate to the confirmation of the truth of this status. While her conscious awareness of the shared situation of women cannot negate the damage done by this status' being confirmed, it does show the survivor that her status as second-class citizen is neither natural nor inevitable—it undermines the *truth* of what is confirmed. Her experience is still in some sense shattering—it is still destructive of certain of what I have called her trust-beliefs. However, as we saw in Chapter Four, some of these trust-beliefs may actually be seen as insensible or morally corrupt (as Baier suggests they are). If this is the case then their destruction should not, in principle, be mourned. In this I diverge from Brison. According to Brison:

Shattered assumptions about the world and one's safety in it can, to some extent, eventually be pieced back together, but this is a slow and painful process. Although the survivor recognises, at some level, that these regained assumptions are illusory, she learns that they are necessary illusions, as unshakable, ultimately, as *cognitively impenetrable* perceptual illusions.³⁷⁴

On my account, the divided consciousness that results from bringing the survivor to be conscious of her shared situation as a woman allows her beliefs about the world and her safety in it to reflect her new cognitive judgements—reflect, that is, her understanding of women's shared situation as a social collective under patriarchy. I do not believe that these illusory beliefs are necessary or unshakeable in the way that Brison does. However to defend this claim here would take us too far afield.

Importantly, the survivor's experience is no longer shattering in other ways. Becoming consciously aware of, and understanding, the shared situation of women means

³⁷⁴ Brison, S., *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* p.50

grasping that, yes, under patriarchy women *qua* women are positioned as second-class citizens. But it also means grasping the possibility that this situation can be changed; precisely because of the fact that the ideology that perpetuates social reality is not based in natural or inevitable facts about men and women—facts that are seen to justify social roles and norms. Knowing that social reality and her status as a woman are entrenched through the perpetuation of patriarchal ideology—itsself reinforced by the indirect harms of rape—and *do not* map onto the way the world actually is, takes some of the bite out of the survivor's lived experience of the harm of rape. Becoming consciously aware of the shared situation of women under patriarchy means that she is able to form beliefs that are based on the truth of her situation as a woman, and this undoes some of the harm she experiences as a result of the confirmation of her status and of the content of both the threat of rape and her alienation from her body.

(iv) Bringing the shared situation of women into conscious awareness can serve to undermine fragmentation

If we accept that the survivor's fragmentation can be explained by the combination of her alienation from her body and shattering-as-confirmation, and we accept that bringing the shared situation of women under patriarchy into conscious awareness can begin to undermine both her alienation and shattering-as-confirmation, then it follows that bringing this situation into conscious awareness can serve to undermine her fragmentation.

(v) Feminist consciousness-raising can undermine fragmentation

Finally if we accept that bringing the shared situation of women under patriarchy into conscious awareness can serve to undermine fragmentation, and we agree that feminist consciousness-raising serves to do just this, then it follows that feminist consciousness-raising can be used as a means of undermining a survivor's fragmentation.

5.3 Feminist consciousness-raising and recovery

Feminist consciousness-raising, then, brings the survivor to be aware of, and properly understand, her shared situation *as a woman* under patriarchy, which in turn can serve to

dissolve her fragmentation by undermining both of its constitutive elements. Feminist consciousness-raising begins to undercut her alienation from her body and leads to a rejection of the ‘truth’ of her confirmed status. Moreover, understanding her situation as a woman under patriarchy includes understanding the role that the indirect harms of rape, discussed in Chapter Three, play, first, in the perpetuation of patriarchal ideology and, second, in her lived experience of the harm of rape; insofar as patriarchal ideology is reinforced and perpetuated by the indirect harms of rape and is partly constitutive of her experience of fragmentation.

Furthermore, recall that for Bartky feminist consciousness-raising results in a divided consciousness of victimisation, where this is at once to experience oneself as victimised, and so vulnerable, and powerful. Not only does feminist consciousness-raising challenge the basis upon which the survivor has come to see her body as passive and vulnerable, it also restores to her body a sense of power or strength. Feminist consciousness-raising, then, can aid the survivor in the reformulation of a healthy self-identity by undoing the dichotomisation of her ‘self’, on the one hand, and her body on the other—both by undermining her sense of her body as essentially passive and vulnerable and by actively restoring to her body a sense of power.

One may worry that to have a divided consciousness is itself dichotomising—that this seems to be implied by the name itself. However, this is not a concern. In the pre-reflective stance the survivor *accepts* the dichotomisation of her self and her body—she ‘accepts’ that her body is weak, passive, and vulnerable. When suffering from a divided consciousness the survivor no longer accepts this dichotomisation and is instead aware of herself as at once vulnerable and powerful. To be aware that she is victimised as a result of her body and the centripetal associations made between the female body and, for example, passivity and submission, is not comparable to accepting that her body is the way it is represented.

If we accept that the body is essential to subjectivity—as it is in the phenomenological account that I have developed—then the ability of feminist consciousness-raising to establish a healthy connection between the survivor and her body should be considered beneficial to the building up of her personhood and agency when thinking about the possibility of her recovery from the harm of the rape. By

bringing into conscious awareness the shared situation of women under patriarchy and, thereby, beginning to undermine her alienation from her body, a healthy relationship between the survivor and her body is created precisely because properly understanding the shared situation of women as subjugated by patriarchal ideology undermines both the basis upon which she originally pre-reflectively accepted her body as passive, submissive and vulnerable and her inherited belief in the inescapability of her status as a woman. That is, grasping that her perception of her self and her body is largely informed by the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology—which she now understands *not* to be based in natural, inevitable facts about herself, others and the world—serves to undo the damage caused by her internalisation of patriarchal norms, ideals and values, and reconnects her with her body as fundamental to her subjectivity and self-identity.

Moreover, we can assume that, in becoming aware of, and acknowledging, the central role that patriarchal ideology's unjustified conception of women has played in the formation of her self-identity, the survivor will want to reconstruct or reformulate her self-identity. This, of course, is no small task and presents difficulties of its own—such as trying to ascertain how and in what ways her conception of self remains informed by patriarchal ideology or which of her beliefs about her self stem from her shared situation rather than from herself. However, being in a position where she is capable of challenging the status quo by critically reflecting on these questions is certainly a step towards the kind of personhood and authenticity typically denied women under patriarchy.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have hoped to show that feminist consciousness-raising—a process of coming to understand the situation of women under patriarchy—should be taken seriously when thinking about the possibility of recovery from the harm of rape. Feminist consciousness-raising, I have argued, brings into conscious awareness the shared situation of women under patriarchy and, thereby, begins to undermine alienation and shattering-as-confirmation. Moreover, given that these are constitutive of fragmentation, feminist consciousness-raising can serve to undermine fragmentation.

Feminist consciousness-raising will also play a role in my next suggestion for the recovery of personhood and agency. As will become clear, a survivor—post feminist consciousness-raising—is able to construct an *ideal* narrative (in part because she is able to see how patriarchal ideology and the indirect harms of rape inform her attempts to understand how she has been harmed), whereas—prior to feminist consciousness-raising—she is only able to construct a *successful* narrative. I will explain this distinction fully in the next chapter.³⁷⁵

³⁷⁵ While this chapter, given the focus of this work, aims to promote the use of feminist consciousness-raising as a means to recovering the personhood and agency of a rape survivor, I believe that all women should be exposed to the process of feminist consciousness-raising precisely because *most* women pre-reflectively inherit and accept their situation due to the hegemonic nature of patriarchal ideology, and, as a result, must be understood to typically experience alienation from their bodies. Moreover, if we accept that patriarchy itself denies the full subject status of women, as is argued by a host of feminist philosophers—notably Du Toit—then we must accept that the personhood and agency of all women is under attack at all times. To promote feminist consciousness-raising as a process that all women should undergo is to promote the building up of the personhood and agency of women across the board.

--CHAPTER SIX--
A NARRATIVE MODEL OF RECOVERY

This chapter focuses on my second suggestion for recovering from the lived experience of the harm of rape—namely, that understanding her experience of rape narratively can, by providing her with self-understanding and self-knowledge, promote the rape survivor’s personhood and agency.

In the previous chapter I focused on the rape survivor’s coming to be aware of, and understanding, the situation of women as a social collective under patriarchy and thereby beginning to assuage the lived experience of the harm of rape reflected primarily in shattering-as-confirmation and fragmentation. In this chapter, I also focus on understanding, but on a type of understanding distinct from that gained from feminist consciousness-raising. In this chapter, I focus on uncovering the *meaning* of the experience *to the rape survivor*, and argue that narratively understanding her experience promotes the survivor’s agency and personhood through heightened self-awareness and self-understanding and, thereby, heightened control and integrity. This type of understanding differs from that gained from feminist consciousness-raising insofar as here the survivor is looking at the meaning of the experience *to herself*, rather than at what it typically means to be a woman under patriarchy *simpliciter* and how this shared situation has played a role in her lived experience of the harm of rape. Despite these differences, I will argue, at the end of the chapter, that feminist consciousness-raising plays an important role here as well insofar as a raised consciousness enables a survivor’s narrative to track certain features of reality and thereby constitutes an *ideal* rather than merely a *successful* narrative. While any survivor is able to construct a successful narrative—and reap the benefits of doing so, which will be the main focus of this chapter—only a survivor who has undergone a process of feminist consciousness-raising is able to construct an ideal narrative. This will become clearer at the end of the chapter.

I first came across the idea that it is essential to be able to incorporate a traumatic experience into one’s narrative in order to recover from the harm of this experience in Brison’s *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self*. Brison argues that “Victims of

human-inflicted trauma are reduced to mere objects by their tormentors: their subjectivity is rendered useless and viewed as worthless.”³⁷⁶ Given this, she claims that one of the most important obstacles to recovery is “regaining one’s voice, one’s subjectivity, after one has been reduced to silence, to the status of an object, or, worse, made into someone else’s speech, an instrument of another’s agency.”³⁷⁷ Overcoming this obstacle, she argues, involves working through one’s traumatic memories of the experience by constructing a narrative, since, for Brison, constructing such a narrative “involves going from being the medium of someone else’s... speech to being the subject of one’s own.”³⁷⁸ For Brison, then, “the central task of the survivor [is] regaining a sense of control, coming up with a coherent trauma narrative and integrating it into one’s life story.”³⁷⁹

What does Brison mean when she speaks of a narrative? She explains:

As I use the term, a “narrative” does not need to have a beginning, middle, and end, unless that is taken to mean, simply, that it starts and ends, with something in between... [a narrative] is *a social interaction*—actual or imagined or anticipated or remembered—in which what gets told is shaped by the (perceived) interests of the listeners, by what the listeners want to know and also by what they cannot or will not hear.³⁸⁰

So, a narrative, as Brison is using the term, refers to a story of an event told to an audience—at its core a narrative is, for Brison, a ‘social interaction’. On Brison’s account, one’s audience plays a fundamental role in the construction of one’s narrative insofar as the narrative that one tells depends in certain crucial ways on one’s audience—particularly on the *interests* of one’s audience. To elucidate, she compares the kind of narrative one would tell one’s therapist with the kind of narrative one would tell in a courtroom; where the audience’s interest in the former is to work through the experience and the audience’s interest in the latter is to hear the details of the experience exactly as it occurred.

One’s audience also plays another fundamental role; that of listening—being receptive to—and engaging empathetically with one’s narrative. Without one’s audience engaging with one’s narrative in an understanding and empathetic way, it is, according to Brison, very difficult, if not impossible, for the survivor to recover. She writes:

³⁷⁶ Brison, S. *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self* p.40

³⁷⁷ *Ibid* p.55

³⁷⁸ *Ibid* p.56

³⁷⁹ *Ibid* p.103

³⁸⁰ *Ibid* p.102 [my emphasis]

In order to construct self-narratives we need not only the words with which to tell our stories, but also *an audience able and willing to hear us and to understand our words as we intend them*. This aspect of remaking a self in the aftermath of trauma highlights the dependency of the self on others and helps to explain why it is so difficult for survivors to recover when others are unwilling to listen to what they endured.³⁸¹

Twice Brison suggests that this social interaction—and, indeed, one's audience—can be imagined. We saw above that a narrative is “a social interaction—actual or *imagined* or *anticipated* or remembered.”³⁸² And earlier she writes:

Psychologists writing about trauma stress that one has to tell one's trauma narrative to an empathic other in order for the telling to be therapeutic. But some survivors are helped by telling their stories to imagined others—to potential readers, for example... Narrating a trauma involves externalising it, but this can be done in a variety of ways. Simply writing in a journal can facilitate this, by temporarily splitting the self into an active—narrating—subject and a more passive—described—object. Even this can help to resubjectify a self objectified by trauma.”³⁸³

However, this suggestion appears only twice. In contrast, Brison mentions the social dependency of the survivor on *actual* others frequently. For example:

On this view the self is both autonomous and socially dependent, vulnerable enough to be undone by violence and yet resilient enough to be reconstructed *with the help of empathic others*.³⁸⁴

By constructing *and telling* a narrative of the trauma endured, *and with the help of understanding listeners*, the survivor begins... to integrate the traumatic episode into a life with a before and an after.³⁸⁵

A survivor *needs* to construct a narrative and tell it to an empathetic listener, in order to reexternalize the event... And to the extent that *bearing witness* reestablishes the survivor's identity, the empathetic other is *essential* to the continuation of the self.³⁸⁶

It is not sufficient for mastering a trauma to construct a narrative of it: one must (physically, publicly) say or write (or paint or film) the narrative and others *must* see or hear it in order for one's survival as an autonomous self to be complete.³⁸⁷

The victim's inability to be—and to assert—her self in the context of a rape constitutes at least a temporary social death, one from which a self can be resurrected only with great difficulty and with the help of others.³⁸⁸

One cannot recover in isolation... one can become a human subject again through telling one's narrative to caring others who are able to listen.³⁸⁹

³⁸¹ *Ibid* p.51

³⁸² *Ibid* [my emphasis]

³⁸³ *Ibid* p.73

³⁸⁴ *Ibid* p.38 [my emphasis]

³⁸⁵ *Ibid* pp.51-54 (*sic*) [my emphasis]

³⁸⁶ *Ibid* p.59 [my emphasis]

³⁸⁷ *Ibid* p.62 [my emphasis]

³⁸⁸ *Ibid* p.46

³⁸⁹ *Ibid* p.57

Survivors' testimonies must be heard, if individual and cultural recovery is to be possible.³⁹⁰

And to the extent that bearing witness reestablishes the survivor's identity, the empathic other is essential to the continuation of the self.³⁹¹

For the most part, then, Brison focuses on the existence of an actual other—an audience distinct from the self—who must engage empathetically with the survivor's narrative in order for the survivor to recover. Brison's account, that is, focuses on the relational nature of the self and the dependency of the self on others—especially during recovery from trauma.

Recall that the purpose of constructing and telling one's narrative, on Brison's account, is for the survivor to regain *control*. First, because it enables the survivor to 'externalise' the event (which I will say more about later); second, because one has control over what goes into one's narrative and who one tells it to; and, third, because constructing and telling one's narrative leads, she claims, to greater control over intrusive memories of the experience. She writes:

In contrast to the involuntary experiencing of traumatic memories, narrating memories to others (who are strong and empathic enough to be able to listen) enables survivors to gain more control over the traces left by the trauma. Narrative memory is not passively endured; rather, it is an act on the part of the narrator, a speech act that defuses traumatic memory, giving shape and a temporal order to the events recalled establishing more control over their recalling, and helping the survivor to remake a self³⁹²

Again, whether this occurs "depends, as [she has] argued, on other people."³⁹³

While I took my lead from Brison's work on the subject of recovery—insofar as Brison inspired my foray into narrative understanding—and certainly maintain that Brison is on the right track insofar as she focuses on the importance of narratives to recovery, I am, first, concerned that her emphasis on *telling* one's narrative to an audience creates an ethical imperative to 'speak out' that could be unjustly imposed on rape survivors, and, second, am unsatisfied with her treatment of the potential benefits of narratively understanding a traumatic experience and think that her claims regarding narratives and what they can achieve require supplementation.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid* p.58

³⁹¹ *Ibid* p.59

³⁹² *Ibid* p.71 Also see p.40 where she writes: "...one can control certain aspects of the narrative and that control, repeatedly exercised, leads to greater control over the memories themselves, making them less intrusive and giving them the kind of meaning that enables them to be integrated into the rest of life."

³⁹³ *Ibid*

Renee Heberle, drawing on Elaine Scarry's work on torture and what she calls 'the silence of pain', argues that the current feminist trend to hold 'speak outs' and protests that make visible the reality of women's pain may, self-defeatingly, serve to reify patriarchy. Scarry argues that because pain does not relate to an object in the world it is not only unable to be adequately expressed in language, but actually destroys language and our ability to communicate. Scarry claims that, given this, the practice of torture serves to 'enlarge' the world of the torturer and, thereby, reify the power of his regime. Importantly, on Scarry's account, the use of torture is indicative of what she calls the 'limits' of the regime—it indicates the instability of the regime in its present state. Drawing an analogy between the use of torture and the use of rape, Heberle argues that rape, by destroying the victim's ability to communicate, when made visible, enlarges the world of patriarchy and rather than showing up the instability of patriarchy serves to reify the power and 'reality' of the patriarchal regime. She writes:

On the politicised terrain of gender relations the reality of women's pain may translate into the reality of male power... we risk participating in the construction of the spectacle of women's suffering.³⁹⁴

If Heberle is correct, then Brison's emphasis on the telling of the narrative to an actual audience may not only impose unjust ethical imperatives on rape survivors to speak out, but could in fact drastically undermine feminist strategies to stop the endemic raping of women by contributing to the identification of women with 'real sexual vulnerability' and men with 'real sexual power' and, thereby, problematically reifying patriarchy. The concern Heberle presents here is not a problem for the defence of narrative understanding that I will put forward. First, because I do not defend Brison's emphasis on telling one's narrative to an audience, and, second, because I am not interested, in this chapter, with the prospect of making one's narrative public. I am speaking about the survivor herself constructing and having a successful narrative—in no way am I defending any imperative to relate this narrative in the public sphere. (Scarry's concern with the ability of a survivor to express her pain in language could make the process of constructing a narrative more difficult; however I do not think that this should make us throw the baby out with the bath-water.)

³⁹⁴ Heberle, R., 'Deconstructive Strategies and the Movement against Sexual Violence' p.68

My main dissatisfaction with Brison's account lies in the fact that she does not explore what she takes the particular features of a successful narrative to be. This omission, I argue, means that she fails to notice all of the potential benefits of narratively understanding one's experience—particularly benefits that depend on the *nature* of narratives *themselves*. Regaining a sense of control is central to her claims about recovery, and constructing and telling one's narrative, she argues, promotes control. However, the narrative *itself* does not seem to play a large enough role in her account. We are told that the narrative promotes the control of intrusive memories and 'externalises the event, however I find her concept of 'externalising' to be inadequately explained. That is, we are not given much insight into what she takes 'externalising' to mean precisely. We are given clues when Brison mentions that there are a variety of ways in which a survivor can externalise the event—she suggests that writing in a journal, for instance, serves to externalise the event. Perhaps what is implied here is the particular perspective that the survivor adopts towards her memories of the event—whether they are experienced involuntarily and 'internally' so to speak or whether they are experienced voluntarily and made external—either by being written down or spoken. Interestingly, the concept of externalising is used in the field of psychology. To externalise an event, in the psychological literature, is to collapse the individual and social divide by locating a personal narrative within the social domain—perhaps in terms of what they call canonical narratives.³⁹⁵ Externalising an event is supposed to undercut the experience of personal pathology and instead locate the experience within the operations of social discourse and practices. However, nowhere does Brison suggest that she is using the term in this sense. In fact her claim that one can externalise the event by writing about it in a journal suggests that she does not have the psychological understanding of the concept in mind. In contrast, the account that I will put forward of an ideal narrative at the end of this chapter is consistent with the psychological concept of externalising. Moreover, while Brison's relational view of the self certainly throws light on the fundamental role that the people around one play in the recovery process, her focus on intersubjectivity and aim to

³⁹⁵ See, for instance, Russel, S. & Carey, M., *Narrative therapy: Responding to your questions* (Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications: 2004)

defend a relational view of the self obscure that there is far more that can, and ought to be said, about the potential benefits of narratively understanding an experience.

In this chapter, then, I hope to supplement Brison's account by exploring the necessary features of a narrative. This exploration, I believe, supplements Brison's account by emphasising potential benefits of narratively understanding one's experience that are not captured by focusing primarily on the audience's engagement with the narrative. I aim, then, to say what Brison has left unsaid in the hopes of providing a *stronger* motivation for the use of narrative understanding in the process of recovery.

I begin by exploring the essential features of a successful narrative; since it is only in coming to appreciate the particular explanatory force provided by narratives that we are, I think, truly able to supplement Brison's defence of narrative understanding and grasp how constructing a successful narrative of her experience of rape aids in the survivor's recovery process. Next, I explore two different ways in which the self-understanding and self-knowledge gained from constructing and having a successful narrative could restore to the survivor a much needed sense of control. Finally, in the very last section of the chapter, I distinguish between a successful narrative—which has been the focus of the chapter up and until this point—and an ideal narrative. Here I will explore the relationship between Stephen Grimm's distinction between subjective and objective *understanding*—which we encountered in Chapter One—and David Velleman's distinction between subjective and objective *resolution*—which we encounter in my discussion of a successful narrative below. A successful narrative, I will argue, provides a survivor with subjective resolution and subjective understanding, while an ideal narrative could be said to provide her with both the subjective resolution and subjective understanding gained from having a successful narrative, and, moreover, with some level of objective resolution and objective understanding.

6.1 Three accounts of Narrative

There is considerable debate over how we should in fact define a narrative—or more particularly over what the essential features of a narrative actually are. In what follows I will present the accounts put forward by Noël Carroll, David Velleman and Peter

Goldie—siding with Velleman and Goldie over Carrol, and in certain instances with Velleman over Goldie.

Nöel Carrol argues that the essential feature of a narrative is the connection that obtains when a story represents a sequence of temporally ordered events with a unified subject, where earlier events make later events *causally* possible.³⁹⁶ While Carrol speaks of making later events causally *possible*, his account of narratives could also be taken to explain why later events are causally plausible or necessary. A narrative, for Carrol, is a story form just like an annal or chronicle. However, a narrative differs from both annals and chronicles because a narrative is not just a sequence of temporally ordered events; while annals and chronicles are still ‘story forms’, according to Carrol, they “do not display any connection other than that of temporal succession between the events [they recount].”³⁹⁷ A narrative, by contrast, exhibits *particular causal relations* that unify the subject of the story—that is, earlier events make later events causally possible—or plausible or necessary—and therefore understandable. On Carrol’s account, when one understands a narrative, one understands why later events were possible, plausible or necessary, given earlier events. One also sometimes gains, retrospectively, an understanding of the *significance* of the earlier events. For Carrol, a narrative is a common form of explanation—it reveals how things happened and why certain conditions were important in the unravelling of the story. Carrol argues that:

Following a narrative involves understanding what is going on in the narrative. This is a matter of assimilating what is going on into a structure—of integrating earlier and later events into a structure. That structure is comprised of possibilities opened by earlier events in the discourse that function at least as causally necessary conditions. The sense of intelligibility that attends the narrative connection is a matter of later events falling into the range of possibilities opened up... by earlier events... When we follow a narrative successfully that is because we find subsequent events in the narrative rationally acceptable.³⁹⁸

Given this, Carrol claims that: “Insofar as what we call narratives are explanatory, it seems advisable to regard narrative properly so-called as connected to causation.”³⁹⁹ On Carrol’s account, then, a survivor would have a successful narrative of her experience if her narrative exhibits the *causal* connections between events in her experience—she

³⁹⁶ Carrol, N., ‘On the Narrative Connection’

³⁹⁷ *Ibid* p.25

³⁹⁸ *Ibid* pp.39-40

³⁹⁹ *Ibid* p.34

would understand how her rape came about and why certain ‘conditions’ were important in bringing about her rape.

David Velleman, while acknowledging the importance of causal relations by claiming that “a story that merely described one event after another, without mentioning any causal connections, would hardly qualify as a narrative,”⁴⁰⁰ argues that there must be some explanatory force peculiar to narrative that *is not causal*, since causal explanations, he argues, can be presented in non-narrative form. He writes, “a story does more than recount events; it recounts events in a way that renders them intelligible, thus conveying not just information but also *understanding*.”⁴⁰¹ According to Velleman, then, storytelling—providing a narrative of an event or experience—has its own particular explanatory force—a *good* story conveys a particular type of understanding. How storytelling conveys this understanding is, he argues, inseparable from what makes for a *good* story—or, put differently, a successful narrative.

Up to this point Carrol can agree with Velleman; he certainly agrees that there are ways of presenting causal connections that do not qualify as narratives—both annals and chronicles provide us with temporal ordering but do not qualify as narratives—and he certainly agrees that how a narrative conveys the particular type of understanding that it does is inseparable from what makes for a successful narrative. However, where for Carrol a narrative is held together or unified by its causal relations, Velleman sees a narrative as organising events into an intelligible whole that resolves what he calls *an emotional cadence*. He writes:

The cadence that makes for a story is that of the arousal and resolution of affect... we understand the cadence of a story with the natural cycles of our emotional sensibility... the diachronic nature of emotion underlies Aristotle’s analysis of plot, because beginning, middle, and end must ultimately be defined in terms of the arousal and resolution of emotion... There are no beginnings or endings in the chain of causation. The sense in which nothing precedes the beginning or follows the ending of a story is not causal but emotional. The story begins with the circumstances that initiate some emotion, or sequence of emotions, and it ends when that emotional sequence is in some way brought to a close.⁴⁰²

An emotional cadence, then, refers to an emotional *sequence*—some event provokes an emotional response in the audience that must be resolved. It is the emotional

⁴⁰⁰ Velleman, D., ‘The Self as Narrator’ p.213

⁴⁰¹ Velleman, D., ‘Narrative Explanation’ p.1 Again Carrol can agree with this claim.

⁴⁰² *Ibid* pp.19-22

resolution that provides the audience with *meaning*. The audience of a narrative, according to Velleman, will *understand* that narrative not because they were able to rationally anticipate later events but, rather, because they know how they feel—the narrative has lead them through a natural emotional cadence—and because they know how they feel *about the narrative*—“they may or may not understand how the narrated events came about, but [they] understand what [these events] *mean... in emotional terms*.”⁴⁰³ Velleman claims that understanding a narrative “enables its audience to assimilate events, not to familiar patterns of *how things happen*, but rather to familiar patterns of *how things feel*.”⁴⁰⁴ For Velleman, then, it is not causal connections but emotional resolution that is characteristic of a narrative. For Velleman, a narrative has explanatory force insofar as it resolves these emotional cadences and thereby enables the audience to understand how they feel about the narrative, and how they feel about the event narrated. A survivor, then, on Velleman’s account has a successful narrative not when she is able to account for why or how her rape took place, but, rather, when she knows how she feels about her experience.

Interestingly, Peter Goldie, also proposes the use of narrative understanding for gaining emotional resolution. Goldie argues that being able to engage with, evaluate and respond emotionally to events in our pasts is an essential part of what it is to have what he calls a ‘narrative sense of self.’ Although Goldie does not argue that our lives are themselves narratives, with ourselves as the authors, he nonetheless believes that narrative thought can be embedded in, and profoundly influence, the lives we lead. He claims that:

We think, talk and write *about* our lives as narratives, and our doing this can profoundly affect our lives as such, in our engagement with, and response to, our past lives, and in our practical reasoning about what to do in the future.⁴⁰⁵

If we are unable to engage with, evaluate or respond emotionally to a certain experience in our past—perhaps because it was traumatic—then there exists a gap in our sense of self. For Goldie, the desire to ‘close this gap’ is a desire for emotional closure—the desire to achieve a successful narrative by having the right sort of emotional response to what

⁴⁰³ *Ibid* p.26 [my emphasis]

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid* p.25

⁴⁰⁵ Goldie, P., ‘One’s remembered past: narrative thinking, emotion, and the external perspective’ p.303

happened—and the desire for emotional closure reveals a further desire for the kind of self-understanding that is part of the ‘narrative sense of self.’ He writes:

Being able to think back on one’s past life... perhaps with backward-looking emotions of self-assessment such as shame, regret, guilt or pride, is part of what is involved in having a narrative sense of self. And *not* being able to do this reveals a gap in one’s narrative sense of self... One cannot yet look the past in the eye, and respond emotionally as one should.⁴⁰⁶

Closing this gap is, for Goldie, a matter of constructing a successful narrative, where a successful narrative, for Goldie, has three co-constituent parts: (1) coherence—the narrative reveals causal connections between events, (2) meaning—the narrative allows the audience to make sense of the actions of those persons who are internal to the narrative and (3) emotional import—the narrative reveals the narrator’s external evaluation of, and emotional response to, what happened, from the ironic distance that his external perspective allows. Goldie, here, reintroduces the need for causal coherence, which distinguishes his account from Velleman’s. I will say more about this later.

For Goldie, all three of these features cooperate with one another to provide a successful narrative; if a survivor cannot provide a coherent account of the unfolding of an event then that event will lack both meaning and emotional import, as it is impossible, he claims, for a survivor to make sense either of why the ‘characters’ in her narrative acted as they did or to appropriately evaluate and respond emotionally to her narrative without understanding exactly what happened, and it is impossible for her to grasp the coherence and meaningfulness of her narrative, he claims, without understanding the thoughts and emotions of the ‘characters’ involved—thoughts and emotions which provide rationalising explanations for why the ‘characters’ acted as they did. If there exists a gap in what Goldie would call a survivor’s ‘narrative sense of self’, then, this is because she does not have a successful narrative regarding her rape.

The desire for emotional closure is fundamentally, according to Goldie, a desire for a narrative which satisfies the survivor in the sense that she is able to look back *in the right way* on her rape. As Goldie puts it:

not just seeing the causal connections, and making sense of why one then thought, felt and acted as one then did, but also seeing one’s own external emotional response *as the appropriate one*.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid* pp.312-313

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid* p.314 [my emphasis]

Looking back on past events ‘in the right way’ requires, he argues, that we adopt an external perspective on our lives. To look back on an experience from the internal perspective, he claims, would be akin to reliving the experience—like a stream of consciousness—perceiving things as one then did. Without the external perspective, then, Goldie argues that a proper evaluation or appropriate emotional response to what happened is not possible.

So, on Goldie’s account, the survivor is only able to look back on her rape in the right way when she has formed a successful narrative of her experience. That is, she is only able to externally evaluate and respond in an emotionally appropriate way to her experience of rape if she is able to construct a successful narrative of her experience.⁴⁰⁸

However, Goldie’s account of what counts as a successful narrative seems to me to be too stringent. That is, it would be too strong to claim that we *only* engage or respond emotionally to events that are coherently accounted for. One can imagine, for example, that the allied troops that stumbled upon Auschwitz had a variety of powerful emotional responses that were at least compatible with—if not exacerbated by—an overwhelming sense of horror brought about by not being capable of making sense of what took place there.⁴⁰⁹ This notwithstanding, I do agree with the emphasis that Goldie places on emotional resolution and the importance of responding *appropriately* to experiences in one’s life.

If we focus solely on the relationship between emotional import and one’s external evaluation of one’s experience, we can see a certain fundamental similarity between the accounts put forward by Goldie and Velleman. For Goldie, the need to construct a narrative to close the gap in one’s ‘narrative sense of self’ is experienced as a desire for emotional closure. It is only when one *has* emotional closure that one is able to grasp both one’s emotional response to the experience and one’s external evaluation of the experience. Speaking particularly about traumatic experiences, Goldie writes:

After tragic or traumatic events... one both wants to tell the story and wants not to tell it. One wants to tell it because of the desire for emotional closure—the desire to

⁴⁰⁸ As I already suggested, perhaps we should understand Brison’s talk of ‘re-externalising’ the event in this way—as the ability to evaluate the event from an external perspective.

⁴⁰⁹ Thanks to Tom Martin from the Rhodes University Philosophy Department for pointing this out to me.

achieve a successful narrative by having the right sort of emotional response to what happened.⁴¹⁰

Similarly, on Velleman's account, a successful narrative resolves an emotional cadence; narratively understanding an experience means that one knows how one feels and how one feels about the experience or understanding what the experience *means* to one in *emotional* terms.

If one adopts Velleman's account of the explanatory force peculiar to narrative, as I do, and applies it to the survivor's case of understanding her experience, then having a successful narrative of her experience means that her narrative resolves the emotional cadence aroused by the rape such that once the survivor has constructed a successful narrative of her experience she knows how she feels about the experience—she understands what the experience *means* to her in *emotional* terms insofar as she has arrived at a *stable attitude* toward the experience *overall*. Velleman writes:

our story about an action may well convey only subjective understanding—a stable way of feeling about the action in retrospect... We naturally want to know how to feel about episodes in our lives... The narrative intelligibility of episodes in our lives is what gives them meaning... Because our means of attaining them are so similar, rationality and meaning usually come together; but the fact remains that they can also come apart.⁴¹¹

In order to fully grasp what Velleman means here, one has to understand the distinction he provides between *objective* (or intellectual) resolution, on the one hand, and *subjective* resolution on the other. In the above quote we see Velleman contrast rationality and meaning—assigning rationality to objective resolution and meaning to subjective resolution.⁴¹² Moreover, recall that for Velleman a good story conveys not just information but also understanding. On the one hand, then, objective or intellectual resolution comes about from receiving certain *information*—a causal or motivational story—that makes *rational* sense of the experience. Perhaps this is what Carroll's narrative connection provides insofar as earlier events are said to make later events causally possible, plausible or necessary. On the other hand, subjective resolution results from a certain *understanding*—understanding both how one feels about the narrative and how one feels about the narrated experience—and this understanding imbues the

⁴¹⁰ Goldie, P., 'One's remembered past: narrative thinking, emotion, and the external perspective' p.315

⁴¹¹ Velleman, D., 'Narrative Explanation' pp.33-34

⁴¹² This is the distinction which will be contrasted with Grimm's distinction when talking about ideal narratives.

experience with *meaning*—what the experience means to the survivor in *emotional* terms. Velleman argues that narratives provide the audience with subjective rather than objective or intellectual resolution—rather than knowing how things came about (as on Carroll’s account), one understands how one *feels* about the experience. Finally, Velleman argues that to know how one feels about the narrative and the narrated experience brings one to a stable attitude. The emphasis here is on the attitude—knowing how one feels leaves one in a stable *emotional* state.

The subjective resolution emphasised by Velleman is, for our purposes here, more relevant than objective resolution. First, and most basically, obtaining objective resolution requires knowledge of a causal or motivational story that the survivor may not have access to; often the survivor’s memory of the event itself is distorted and/or she does not have access to her rapist’s motivational set—what he, for example, intended in acting as he did. Let me briefly speak to each of these concerns, as the possibility of knowing either affects the relevance of obtaining objective resolution to the survivor’s recovery.

Recall the brief discussion of dissociation in Chapter Four. It has been shown that during dissociation the traumatic experience is not processed properly by the brain and is, given this, not properly encoded in memory. Memory is said to be divided into explicit (or declarative) and implicit (or non-declarative) memory. Explicit memory refers to an active, conscious awareness of facts and events that have happened to an individual and is the function of the hippocampus. If one has explicit memory of an event then that event has been successfully encoded in the brain and is available to become part of the narrative of an individual’s life—for this reason explicit memory is often also called autobiographical memory. Implicit memory refers to memories of skills and habits, emotional responses, reflexive actions and classically conditioned responses, and is the function of the amygdala. Everyday events, since they easily fit into pre-existing schemas, are immediately stored in explicit memory, together with one’s emotional response to these events, through successful communication between the amygdala and the hippocampus. When an event is unusual or distressing or, at the extreme end of the scale, traumatic, it does not fit into pre-existing schemas. Brain imaging studies have shown that during traumatic experiences the amygdala fails to communicate with the

hippocampus and because of this the memory of the traumatic experience cannot be properly encoded in the brain.⁴¹³ As psychologists van der Kolk and Fisler write:

imprints of traumatic experiences seem to be qualitatively different from memories of ordinary events... emotional and perceptual elements tend to be more prominent than declarative components... traumatic memories may be encoded differently than memories for ordinary events... because extreme emotional arousal interferes with hippocampal memory functions.⁴¹⁴

In our example, the survivor experienced dissociation during the rape, and, given this, her memory of the rape may not be properly encoded in memory. Precise knowledge of the complete causal sequence of events may be unattainable for her, making objective resolution impossible.

My second concern regarding the relevance of acquiring objective or intellectual resolution involves the survivor's capacity to provide a complete *motivational* story. While she may have access to her own motivations during the event, having access to her rapist's motivational set may not be possible.

Ward Jones levels a version of this concern at accounts of the harm of rape that collapse the wrongdoing committed and the harm suffered—the harm of rape, on these accounts, depends on categorising the kind of action performed by the rapist as, for example, disrespectful. If we accept these types of account, Jones argues that the survivor's coming to understand how she has been harmed *relies* on knowing her rapist's frame of mind.⁴¹⁵ Jones sets out the following problematising case:

⁴¹³ See Haines, S., 'Dissociation and the Body' and Edwards, D., and Payne, C., 'What services and supports are needed to enable trauma survivors to rebuild their lives?'

⁴¹⁴ Van der Kolk, B., & Fisler, R., 'Dissociation and the fragmentary nature of traumatic memories: overview and exploratory study' p.508 Memories of traumatic experiences are the subject of considerable debate in the psychological literature. Psychologists Matt J. Gray and Thomas W. Lombardo write: "Paradoxically, the extreme emotion and stress surrounding trauma is usually cited for the explanation for both enhanced memories and deficient memories (Shobe and Kihlstrom, 1997). In a review of trauma memory research, van der Kolk and Fisler (1996) propose some resolution for this paradox of extremes of forgetting and retention by partialling observations into implicit and explicit (or declarative) memory types. They suggest that trauma victims often remember the affect surrounding a traumatic event plus sensory information, such as sights, sounds, and even smells in great detail, but may be unable to fully articulate what occurred during the event. A traumatized individual may later vividly reexperience sensory-laden features of the event (i.e. exhibit implicit memories), but declarative memory for the trauma, in the sense of a narrative of the event, is often extremely impoverished, fragmented, and disorganised." ('Complexity of Trauma Narratives as an Index of Fragmented Memory in PTSD: A Critical Analysis' p.172)

⁴¹⁵ For the reader who is paying close attention this means that Jones takes issue with Hampton's account of rape as a moral injury, discussed in Chapter Three. However, for our purposes here, Jones' objection to Hampton's account is not important. I spell out Jones' concern here merely for the sake of problematising the relevance of objective resolution in the specific sense of knowing a complete motivational story.

A woman (W) and a man (M) engage in sexual activity. W neither wants nor consents to M's sexual activity, but M reasonably believes that she both wants sex and that she has given consent to sex. Were M to not have both these beliefs, he would not have engaged in sexual activity with her.⁴¹⁶

Jones argues that this case is a concern for those accounts of the harm of rape that collapse wrongdoing with harm such that the harm springs from the nature of the wrongdoing. Jones argues that in this case, despite the fact that M's action was not, for example, disrespectful, we can still speak of a harm that W has suffered—"W has been in a situation in which, *against her desires and her will*, another person has had sex with her."⁴¹⁷ And again, "although we could say that W was harmed by M, she was not *wronged* by him."⁴¹⁸ In this case, we would still want to speak about the possibility of recovery in terms of understanding how she has been harmed, but, this understanding would have to remain independent of M's action—understood as his *intended* action. That is, our approach to W's recovery would remain independent of knowledge of M's motivational set. Jones writes:

In the face of unsettling questions about the nature of a perpetrator's action, [W] can perform a conceptual shift in thinking about her harm, such that she conceives of it as... a harm that is not dependent upon the kind of action [M] performed. As a consequence of setting aside the unsettled and unsettling questions of what he did, she can turn to address her harm... and start the process of healing... in situations of uncertainty... it may prove important for [W] to re-describe what she has suffered... and then to take steps to focus upon it under that description.⁴¹⁹

While Jones focuses on this particular case, I think that a general concern with the improbability of a survivor's having access to her rapist's motivational set should be taken as a blow against the relevance of objective resolution to the recovery process. Objective resolution may be unattainable given concerns with providing either a complete causal or motivational story, and so objective resolution, it seems, should not be taken to be more relevant, or even at least as relevant, as subjective resolution.

However, not only is subjective resolution, on a certain fundamental level, more readily accessible to a survivor, it also provides her with self-understanding and self-awareness. Remember that subjective resolution provides an experience with meaning insofar as the survivor understands what her experience *means* to her in *emotional* terms.

⁴¹⁶ Jones, W., 'Rape and its Harm: Reviving the Therapeutic Approach to Philosophy' (unpublished) p.13

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid*

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid* p.17

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid* p.19

It has become uncontroversial, I think, to understand emotions as either inherently involving judgements or as being intrinsically connected to judgements.⁴²⁰ Feeling love for someone involves the judgement that one's beloved is a good person—worthy of being loved; feeling anger towards someone involves the judgement that this person has done something malicious; feeling envious of someone involves the judgement that they have something one wants. Often our emotional responses to people, situations or experiences can provide us with insight into how we judge that person, situation or experience. If we accept that there is such a connection between our emotions and our cognitive states then we can say something further about the importance to the survivor's recovery of resolving her emotional cadence. Namely, if resolving an emotional cadence brings about a stable attitude or emotional response towards an experience, then being in this state may provide a survivor with insight into how she judges her experience *overall*. Given this, narratively understanding an experience—insofar as this means that the survivor knows how she feels about her experience or understands what her experience *means* to her in *emotional* terms—entails that she also has access to her overall judgment of her experience. This is, at least, one possible way of cashing out what Velleman means when he says that narrative understanding provides subjective resolution. Given that subjective resolution provides the survivor with a *stable* emotional response or *conative* attitude toward her experience, she also, thereby, comes to understand her *cognitive* appraisal of the experience. The fact that this state is *stable* enables the survivor to reach a *stable cognitive judgement* of her experience. The stability of this state, that is, entails that in coming to understand what the experience means to her she has taken a real step towards recovery, because she now has a solid foundation to proceed from—both conatively and cognitively. Importantly, as far as a *successful* narrative is concerned, I am not interested in the 'truth' of the narrative—this would be to be interested in the *content* of the narrative,⁴²¹ whereas I am interested in the process of constructing a successful narrative—the process of meaning-making.

⁴²⁰ This position is notably defended by Martha Nussbaum.

⁴²¹ There are narrative theorists that place great emphasis on the truth (or content) of the narrative. These accounts, however, typically defend the further claim that the narratives one constructs are constitutive of one's self (see especially Marya Schechtman, *The Constitution of Selves*, Owen Flanagan, *Self Expressions: Mind, Morals, and the Meaning of Life*, David Velleman, 'The Self as Narrator', Daniel Dennett, *Consciousness Explained*, Charles Taylor, *The Sources of the Self* and Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*. (If

5.2 Supplementing a narrative model of recovery with the notion of a successful narrative

Brison is one of a number of philosophers who focus on the implications of rape to the survivor's subjectivity, personhood and agency. Recall that for Brison "[v]ictims of human-inflicted trauma are reduced to mere objects by their tormentors: their subjectivity is rendered useless and viewed as worthless."⁴²² David Archard argues that rape is "an indefensible harming of a legitimate interest in safeguarding what is central to our personhood"⁴²³—in this instance, our sexual integrity. Ann Cahill argues that rape enforces a systematic sexualised control of women by temporarily destroying "the intersubjective, embodied agency and therefore personhood of a woman."⁴²⁴ Again, Louise du Toit argues that the essential damage of rape is the erasure of female subjectivity, which is mirrored in the dominant western symbolic order. Finally, I have argued that rape makes good on the threat of sexual objectification by treating women as inert and object-like rather than as agents in the world. If it is the case that the subjectivity, agency, and personhood of the victim are attacked during rape, then Brison is indeed correct to argue that one of the most important obstacles to recovery is

regaining one's voice, one's subjectivity, after one has been reduced to silence, to the status of an object, or, worse, made into someone else's speech, an instrument of another's agency.⁴²⁵

For Brison this is achieved by regaining control through the construction, and telling, of a narrative of one's experience.

However, recall that the *raison d'être* for my examination of narrative understanding, in this chapter, is my dissatisfaction with Brison's treatment of the potential benefits of narrative understanding. For Brison a narrative is a social interaction in which a person tells her story to an audience whose interests shape the story she tells. The focus of Brison's account is on the relation between the narrator and audience. In order for recovery to take place, she argues that it is necessary both that the narrator tells

one was particularly interested in the content of rape narratives themselves, one might explore the multiplicity of narratives of rape with a view to opening a dialogue between women rape survivors. Comparing the content of female rape survivors narratives may also provide some insight into what Anthony Appiah calls the larger narratives, or life scripts, that pertain to certain collectives. (Thanks to members of the audience at the Philosophical Society of Southern Africa conference 2012 for bringing my attention to these points.))

⁴²² Brison, S., *Aftermath* p.40

⁴²³ *Ibid* p.390

⁴²⁴ Cahill, A., *Rethinking Rape* p.13

⁴²⁵ Brison, S., *Aftermath* p.55

her story to an audience, and that the audience receives the narrative empathetically. On Brison's account, the narrative itself only seems important insofar as the narrator is said to regain control both because she has control over what goes into her narrative and over who she tells it to, and because constructing her narrative allows her to 'externalise' the event. Remember that Brison does not explain precisely what she means by externalising the event, and certainly does not seem to be using the psychological sense of the term described earlier. I suggested that one possible way of understanding her use of the concept is in terms of evaluating the event from an external perspective—recall that this understanding is derived from Goldie's account. This suggestion is supported by her claim that writing in a journal is one way in which to externalise an event. This sense of regained control combined with the support of others is said to aid in the recovery of the survivor. My concern—that Brison has not explored the full benefits of narratively understanding a traumatic experience—stems primarily from the fact that Brison does not provide us with any particular features that she thinks ought to be included in a narrative. Given this, I have sought to supplement her account by exploring the particular explanatory force of narratives themselves.

Remember Goldie's claim that traumatic experiences often leave a gap in one's 'narrative sense of self' because one has not reached 'emotional closure' concerning this event. Goldie spells this out as not having a successful narrative of the event, since having a successful narrative provides this emotional closure. To close the gap in one's 'narrative sense of self,' caused by the traumatic experience, Goldie argues that one must construct a successful narrative. Compatibly, Velleman argues that the explanatory force of a successful narrative derives from its ability to provide subjective, emotional resolution—understanding what one's experience means to one in emotional terms and arriving at a stable conative attitude towards the experience overall. The experience, on Velleman's account, becomes meaningful because, after constructing a narrative, one knows how one feels, both about the narrative and the narrated experience. Further, given contemporary accounts of emotion, we are able to say that arriving at a stable conative attitude towards one's experience entails having access to one's inherent cognitive judgement of the experience.

On the account I am endorsing, drawn primarily from Velleman's account, narratively understanding an experience emphasises meaning-making rather than the completeness or exhaustiveness of the narrative provided of the event. One might understand this in terms of distinguishing between process and content, or in the already familiar terms of reaching subjective resolution over objective resolution. In developing a narrative, one might say that the *process* of constructing this narrative is more important than the exhaustiveness of the *content* of the narrative. That is, it is not in terms of being *exhaustive* that the narrative is beneficial to the survivor, but, rather, in terms of its being *successful*—where I take this to mean that the narrative provides the survivor's experience with meaning by providing her with emotional closure. Given that a narrative provides meaning in this way, the having of a successful narrative should be seen as beneficial to the survivor.

This is not to say that there can be no talk of the *appropriateness* of a successful narrative; it is merely to say that the appropriateness of a successful narrative does not depend on the exhaustiveness of this narrative. On my account, the constructed narrative can be said to be appropriate if the narrative resolves the emotional cadence aroused by the event and results in an appropriate, stable attitude towards the event. Making meaning out of an experience differs from knowing all there is to know about that experience. The success of a narrative, on my account, involves the provision of emotional, subjective resolution and so the exhaustiveness of the content of the narrative is secondary if not entirely irrelevant to my suggestion in this section.

Let us now turn to how constructing and having a successful narrative, on my account, aids in the survivor's recovery of her agency and personhood.

First, understanding how she feels about her rape—because she has constructed a successful narrative of it—and thereby what her overall judgement of her experience of her rape is, provides the survivor with self-knowledge, self-awareness and self-understanding—all of which are, arguably, necessary for agency.

A basic defence of this claim might look like this:

- (1) It is uncontroversial to claim that our experiences in the world inform our beliefs, values, perceptions, desires and these, concomitantly, influence (or directly cause) our actions.

- (2) It is standardly taken to be the case that some form of control over which of our beliefs, values, or desires motivates us to action is fundamental to agency.⁴²⁶
- (3) Acquiring control over what motivates us to action requires self-knowledge, self-awareness and self-understanding.⁴²⁷
- (4) Narrative understanding provides a survivor with self-knowledge, self-awareness and self-understanding.
- (5) So, narrative understanding enables the acquisition of control.

A similar defence can be derived from Catriona Mackenzie's general investigation of "the role played by imaginative thought in self-understanding, self-reflection, and practical deliberation about the self."⁴²⁸ According to Mackenzie, there are connections between imagination, deliberation and self-definition, and in order for an agent to deliberate, make decisions and act effectively she must be unified—the different elements of herself must be, at least mostly, integrated—and this can be achieved through various modes of imagining that promote self-understanding and, thereby, control. On her account, that is, imaginative mental activity can prompt critical reflection and can, thereby, provide us with important feedback from our mental states that, for example, influence our dispositions and thereby our actions. She writes:

The imagination can be, and often is, delusional. But because of its affective force and cognitive power, imaginative mental activity is crucial to the various processes by means of which we try to sort out what we want; what matters to us; and what ideals, goals, and commitments shape our lives.⁴²⁹

And again:

Imaginative mental activity plays a crucial role in self-definition... and in the deliberative processes that precede self-formative choices... imaginative mental activity prompt[s] evaluative judgements, which enable the person to gain some understanding of the significance of past experiences and to gain some measure of control over the psychic force of those experiences.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁶ In discussions of autonomy, for example, Harry Frankfurt, Gary Watson and Alfred Mele all describe some form of control—such as volitional or evaluative control.

⁴²⁷ This basic idea is also fundamental to the practice of psychology. For example, if someone is worried about their behaviour they may speak to a therapist about it. The idea is that the more one understands about oneself the more aware one is of one's behavioural patterns, and the more aware one is of one's patterns the more control one has over whether to act in accordance with those patterns or not.

⁴²⁸ Mackenzie, C., 'Imagining Oneself Otherwise' p.125

⁴²⁹ *Ibid* p.125

⁴³⁰ *Ibid* p.136

According to Mackenzie, mental imagery is ‘psychically forceful’ because it has *affective* force—it has the capacity “to arouse and rekindle emotions and bodily sensations”⁴³¹—and is, thereby, also cognitively powerful. She writes:

By virtue of its power to rearouse or stimulate emotions, imaginative mental activity initiates self-reflection by prompting an emotional response and, through that, an evaluative judgement... “my emotional response to an imagining involves a number of interwoven components, including my response to the content of the representation, my response to the emotions that I perceive to have been aroused or stimulated in me by the representation, and my response to what I perceive the representation and the emotions it generates in me disclose about me.”⁴³²

For Mackenzie, then, imaginative mental activity—of which constructing a narrative is certainly a mode—provides the individual with self-understanding and thereby control.

On my account, the control acquired by the survivor has nothing to do with ‘externalising’ the event or controlling what goes into her narrative or who she tells her narrative to; rather, it results from the particular type of understanding that comes about from having a successful narrative—namely, *self*-understanding in both conative and cognitive terms. Through gaining self-understanding, the survivor’s agency is promoted. Moreover, I want to suggest that narratively understanding her experience of rape in this way, again because it provides her with a greater degree of self-knowledge, promotes the integration and coherence of the survivor’s *personhood*.

6.3 *Successful versus Ideal Narratives*

Finally, I want to distinguish between a successful narrative and an ideal narrative. Up to this point I have only considered the benefits to a survivor of having a successful narrative and have defined a successful narrative, drawing on Velleman and Goldie, in terms of its ability to provide a survivor with emotional (subjective) resolution. Importantly, I spent some time arguing that a successful narrative need not be entirely exhaustive—that the content of a successful narrative need not include complete knowledge of the causal or motivational sequences which led to the rape, given that it may not be possible for a survivor to have access to this information—either because she does not have a complete memory of the causal sequence of events, or because it may not

⁴³¹ *Ibid* p.126

⁴³² *Ibid* pp.136-137 Interestingly, Mackenzie is most interested in cases of *voluntary* imaginative mental activity—when “we visually rehearse events in the past to convince ourselves that they really happened or to try to understand their significance” (p.126)

be possible for her to access her rapist's motivational set. For these two reasons, I argued that emotional resolution should be the goal when aiming to construct a successful narrative. This does not mean, of course, that any narrative will do. There is a distinct difference between a narrative that contains omissions and a narrative that contains outright falsehoods. A narrative that contains omissions, as I have argued, can still be successful; whereas a narrative that contains outright falsehoods cannot be. While I will not spend time defending this claim, suffice it to say that a narrative that contains falsehoods will not and cannot, I think, provide emotional resolution to a survivor because she cannot be said to be responding appropriately to her experience if her account of that experience is outright false.

Underpinning my promotion of constructing a successful narrative is the fact that any survivor is able to construct this sort of narrative is able to access what her experience means to her in emotional terms and thereby gain self-knowledge and understanding that promotes her personhood and agency through increased control and integrity. However, what this means is that a successful narrative is not necessarily an ideal narrative.

I now wish to claim that an ideal narrative would include an accurate reflection of her experience as located within the shared situation of women under patriarchy. Recall the psychological understanding of externalisation as pertaining to the location of a personal narrative within the social domain. The ideal narrative, I argue, includes precisely this—the location of the survivor's experience within the patriarchal domain. What this means it that for it to be possible to construct an ideal narrative, the survivor must have undergone a process of feminist consciousness-raising and understand her situation as that of a woman under patriarchy. An ideal narrative is, in some sense, then, accurate; not insofar as it includes knowledge of the exact causal sequence of events or motivational information, but, rather, insofar as it accurately reflects the role that her being a woman under patriarchy has played not only in bringing about her rape, but moreover in her very lived experience of the harm of rape. That is, despite the fact that a survivor may not be able to provide a complete causal or motivational story, she is able—with a raised-consciousness—to place her experience of rape *in context*; while she may not be able to access her rapist's particular motivational set she is able to understand how

rape is endemic to, and flows out of, patriarchal ideology itself. In a sense, then, she is able to understand *why* she was raped—precisely in virtue of being a woman. Recall that for Velleman, a successful narrative provides the narrator with subjective resolution and not with objective or intellectual resolution. An ideal narrative, I claim, provides the survivor not only with subjective resolution because she knows how she feels about the narrative and the narrated experience, but, moreover, with some measure of objective resolution because, in the sense just described, she is able to understand how her rape came about.

Recall further the distinction provided by Stephen Grimm between subjective and objective *understanding*, which we encountered in Chapter One. According to Grimm, one has gained objective understanding if one's model of the world is accurate and that one has gained subjective understanding if one either understands how aspects of one's model fit together or sees one's model as making the best sense of one's experience. We have already established that when a survivor has a successful narrative she gains subjective resolution in Velleman's terms—she arrives at a stable attitude and, thereby, judgement of her experience overall. We can also say, using Grimm's terms, that she has gained subjective understanding—that her conative and cognitive judgements of her experience make the best sense of her experience—that this is the case is precisely the reason why she arrives at a stable attitude in the first place. In contrast, when a survivor has constructed an ideal narrative she does not only gain subjective resolution and subjective understanding, but, moreover, could be said to gain both objective resolution—in Velleman's terms—and objective understanding—in Grimm's terms. First, recall that for Velleman objective resolution, also called intellectual resolution, is a matter of a survivor's being able to rationalise her experience—to be able to glean how it is that her rape came about. Again, while she may not have access to the particular causal sequence of events or a complete motivational picture, she does, once she has undergone a process of feminist consciousness-raising, have access to knowledge about her shared situation as a woman under patriarchy, and this knowledge, I argue, is able to provide her with a different account of why her rape occurred—of how it came about that she was raped. The concerns I raised about the relevance of objective resolution to having a successful narrative do not apply here because her knowledge of patriarchal society does

not include having a complete causal or motivational story. If I am correct in thinking this, then, a consciousness-raised narrative would provide a survivor with objective resolution. Moreover, because the survivor now understands the ‘truth’ of her shared situation as a woman under patriarchy and can acknowledge how patriarchal ideology—and the indirect harms of rape—inform her attempts to understand how she has been harmed, an ideal narrative can also be said to provide her with objective understanding. An ideal narrative, that is, accurately reflects the way the world—patriarchy—actually works; the survivor’s understanding of why she was ultimately raped—because she is a woman living in a patriarchal society—maps onto an important ‘truth’ of the matter; namely, that she was raped in part because rape is endemic to the society in which she lives. In the two cases there result distinctly different cognitive judgements. In the first case—in which the survivor has a successful narrative—her cognitive judgement reflects her *subjective* understanding of her experience; whereas in the second case—in which the survivor has an ideal narrative—her cognitive judgement reflects the way her society works—reflects, that is, an objective understanding of patriarchy.

Importantly, an ideal narrative must also count as successful in the terms I have already set out. An ideal narrative, that is, is also a successful narrative. On the one hand, one cannot have an ideal and yet unsuccessful narrative. On the other hand, one is certainly able to have a successful and yet un-ideal narrative.

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have defended narratively understanding one’s experience of rape as a means to understanding how one has been harmed—which, I believe, is necessary for full recovery. I have argued that Brison’s relational account of the benefits of narrative understanding needs to be supplemented. In order to do this, I focused on the necessary features, and particular explanatory force, of narratives themselves. I adopted Velleman’s account, and enhanced it with a contemporary understanding of emotion, and have argued that having a successful narrative not only provides the survivor with emotional resolution after the trauma, but, moreover, results in the acquisition or improvement of self-knowledge, self-awareness and self-understanding, all of which foster and promote the agency and personhood of the survivor by fostering control and integrity.

Once Brison's account is supplemented in this way, we can speak not only of the benefits to the survivor of others engaging with her narrative empathetically; we can also speak of the benefits to the survivor of having a successful narrative *simpliciter*. Focusing on the features and characteristics of narratives themselves, then, allows us to say more about the potential benefits to a survivor of understanding her experience of rape narratively. By itself, that is, Brison's account does not get all of the possible mileage out of narratively understanding one's experience of rape. However, when we supplement her relational account with a richer understanding of narratives themselves we are able to grasp more fully the benefits of narrative understanding to a rape survivor. Given the number of available accounts of the harm of rape which point to the harm done to the survivor's agency and personhood, it is surely highly beneficial that coming to understand one's experience narratively fosters both agency and personhood.

While I have focused, for the most part, on successful narratives, I have also put forward suggestions about what would constitute an ideal narrative. I have focused primarily on successful narratives in this chapter precisely because only survivors who have undergone a process of feminist consciousness-raising are able to construct an ideal narrative, and, for the most part, survivors of rape have not yet undergone this process because, as I have shown, this process must typically be brought about through the deliberate therapeutic use of feminist consciousness-raising. While I believe that for a survivor to fully recover, she must undergo a process of feminist consciousness-raising, and would, thereby, be able to construct an ideal narrative, I do want to leave room in my account for those survivors who have not undergone this process. I certainly do not want to claim that feminist consciousness-raising must occur if a survivor has any chance of recovery; a survivor can begin to recover without having undergone this process—for example, by constructing a successful narrative—however, I am more than happy to claim that a full recovery requires having undergone this process and then, on the basis of her conscious awareness, and understanding, of the way patriarchal society works, having constructed an ideal narrative of her experience that accurately reflects this understanding.

--CONCLUSION--

At the outset of the thesis I claimed that my aims were twofold: to conceptually situate and explore the harm of rape and to provide phenomenologically-generated suggestions about the rebuilding of personhood and the recovery of agency in the aftermath of rape. Running throughout the thesis is my claim that the typical woman *qua* woman—in virtue of the shared situation of women as a social collective as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology—pre-reflectively inherits and accepts patriarchal ideology, which colours not only her beliefs and ideas about her beliefs, but, moreover, her attitudes, values, ends and desires, and perceptions, and thereby, her lived experience of the harm of rape. The situation of women under patriarchy, I have argued, plays a constitutive role in the harm of male-on-female rape under patriarchy, such that the lived experience of the harm of this type of rape differs both from the harm of other kinds of rape as well as from other non-rape cases of violence. Also entailed by my claim is that the lived experience of male-on-female rape would differ if women did not live in societies ruled by patriarchal ideology. However, the fact that most women *do* live in patriarchal societies, I have argued, allows us to predict, based upon shared fundamental features in the lives of women, that the ideological baggage that they typically carry—which I described in Part One—informs the lived experience of the harm of rape—which I began to explore in Part Two. It is for this reason that half of Part Three was devoted to feminist consciousness-raising: to bringing into conscious awareness the shared situation of women under patriarchy—letting go of this ideological baggage—so that she is able to begin to properly understand the harm that she has suffered.

I began in Part One by providing a phenomenologically based account of women's situation under patriarchy in order to conceptually situate the harm of male-on-female rape in patriarchal societies. I approached the question of women's situation with a phenomenological framework precisely because this approach is particularly well suited to studying the constitution of meanings and values in experience and so, by examining shared, fundamental features in women's lives, allowed me to make general predictions about the typical constraints and expectations that women *qua* women live with under patriarchy.

In Chapter One, I argued that the particular social ambiguity inherent in the situation of women is best understood as one of subjugation to the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology and argued that, as a result, most women's pre-reflective inheritance of patriarchy ideology affects them cognitively, practically and in terms of distortions to their identities. In Chapter Two, I argued that sexual objectification can be seen as playing a fundamental role in the lives of women *qua* women under patriarchy—both constraining and placing expectations upon women—and claimed that the place, meaning, and pervasiveness of sexual objectification in the lives of women results in the typical woman's alienation from her body and creates an atmosphere of threat that women *qua* women are especially vulnerable to rape.

The subjugation of women and their concomitant pre-reflective inheritance and acceptance of patriarchal ideology, plus the alienation women typically experience from their bodies, and the threat of rape in the lives of women all played central roles in my exploration of the lived experience of the harm of male-on-female rape in Part Two. In this part, I supplemented contemporary accounts on the harm of rape by providing a link between the harms described on these accounts and the lived experience of these harms on the part of the victim. That is, I added to the available literature on the harm of rape by focusing not on *why* the act of rape is harmful (either in itself or because of its social effects) but rather on *how* the act of rape comes to be *understood* and *experienced* as harmful by the survivor.

In Chapter Three, I argued that the indirect harms of rape—as well as patriarchal ideology broadly—inform the typical survivor's reflexive attempts to understand the harm that she has suffered; and in Chapter Four, I provided phenomenological explanations of two phenomena—shattering and fragmentation—arguing that these phenomena should be understood as lived experiences of the harm of rape explicable in terms of shared features in the lives of women under patriarchy. We saw that both alienation and the credible threat of rape play important roles in the constitution of shattering and fragmentation as lived experiences of the harm of rape; and, given that both alienation and the threat of rape are themselves partly constituted by the ideological beliefs of most women *qua* women, these ideological beliefs pervade the lived experience of the harm of rape. In particular, I argued that shattering—standardly understood as the

destruction of certain of the survivor's assumptions about herself, others and the world—should be partly understood in terms of the destruction of what I called trust-beliefs and partly in terms of the confirmation of the survivor's ideological beliefs—the threat of rape is made good on and the status of the survivor *as a woman* and, so, as a second-class citizen under patriarchy, as well as the content of both the typical woman's alienation from her body and the threat of rape, is confirmed. Fragmentation, I argued, should be understood as a particular species of this genus; that is, shattering as it pertains to self-identity, and results from the combination of alienation and shattering-as-confirmation. The ideological baggage carried by the typical woman, as subjugated by the hegemonic rule of patriarchal ideology, is, then, partly constitutive, I argued, of the lived experience of the harm of rape—in both the survivor's reflexive attempts to understand how she has been harmed and in her actual lived experience of the harm she has suffered.

In Part Three I defended two suggestions for the building up of the survivor's personhood and agency that both focused, in different ways, on the control, integrity and coherence of the survivor. Moreover, both suggestions aimed at helping a survivor to understand how she has been harmed—first as a member of the social collective 'women' and second at the individual level.

Given the central role played by the typical survivor's ideological baggage in the lived experience of the harm of rape, Chapter Five was dedicated to bringing into conscious awareness previously pre-reflectively inherited and accepted norms, values and ideals held by the survivor *as a woman under patriarchy*. I motivated, that is, for the deliberate therapeutic use of feminist consciousness-raising as a means to bring the shared situation of women under patriarchy into the survivor's conscious awareness, thereby beginning to undermine both her alienation from her body and shattering-as-confirmation, and, thereby, the particular type of fragmentation expressed in a survivor's failure to reflect her embodiment in her self-identity. I argued that becoming consciously aware of, and understanding, her shared situation as a woman under patriarchy begins to assuage both constitutive features of this type of fragmentation—alienation and shattering-as-confirmation.

Finally, in Chapter Six, I defended a narrative model of recovery, supplementing Brison's relational account with an account of the particular explanatory force of

narrative that derives from the nature of narratives themselves. On my account, narratively understanding her experience enables the survivor—through uncovering the meaning of her experience to her in emotional terms—to understand both how she feels about the experience and, therefore, how she judges that experience overall. This type of understanding—self-understanding—promotes, I argued, the control and therefore agency, as well as the integrity and therefore personhood, of the survivor. Finally, I distinguished between a successful and an ideal narrative, arguing that while the former can be constructed by any rape survivor, the latter can only be constructed by a rape survivor who has undergone a process of feminist consciousness-raising. Moreover, I claimed that while a successful narrative can be seen to provide the survivor with both subjective resolution and subjective understanding, an ideal narrative can be seen to provide her, not only with subjective resolution and understanding, but, furthermore, with both objective resolution and objective understanding, precisely because an ideal narrative would accurately reflect her situation as a woman under patriarchy.

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