

UNRAVELLING THEIR MISREPRESENTATIONS AND UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSE:

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY INTO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CONCERNING GAY MEN

By Daniel Malcolm Nixon¹



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Abstract

The concept of domestic violence has predominantly been understood within a heterosexual context where women are situated as the victims of both her gender and by her partner. Very little research has been conducted to explore domestic violence in non-heterosexual relationships. Many misconceptions have surrounded the occurrence of abusive behaviours within the relationships of gay men, which have most importantly contributed to its concealment, rejection and fundamentally its very existence as a problematic issue that society faces within the contemporary world. Therefore, this study pursues to unravel and enlighten this topic by exploring how such violent behaviour is caused, constituted, constructed and understood in late modernity by those gay men who have been subjected to it. The research adopts a qualitative approach using semi structured interviews to obtain 'thick descriptions' of how men have experienced domestic violence within intimate same sex relationships. The data gathered has been thematically analysed using grounded theory to explore what appear to be the central causes, processes and societal perspectives of the topic. The notion of crystallisation has also been used to drive its exploratory aim in providing a deepened understanding of domestic violence from various viewpoints. The findings indicate that domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men lack recognition, are misconceived, gay men struggle to self realise their victimized position and that current service provisions are inconsistent as well as ineffective at confronting the problem due to both heterosexist and sexist stereotypes. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that through exploring the lives of gay men, domestic violence is potentially an occurring feature within the discourse of a gay mans life, and that exploration must be continued if a thorough understanding of such a concealed topic is to be revealed.

Contents

- 1.0 Chapter One: Introduction: Stating the Cause - Page 1
- 2.0 Chapter Two: Reviewing the Literature: Same Sex abuse in a wider society -
Page 3
- 3.0 Chapter Three: Reviewing the Literature: Narrowing the Scope of Same Sex
Abuse - Page 7
- 4.0 Chapter Four: Methodological Approaches to Investigation - Page 13
- 5.0 Chapter Five: Presenting the Findings: Analysis and Discussion: Domestic
Violence in the Gay Relationship and Self Realisation - Page 19
- 6.0 Chapter Six: Presenting the Findings: Analysis and Discussion: Psychologies
and Help Seeking Behaviour - Page 25
- 7.0 Chapter Seven: Conclusion to the Study - Page 31
- 8.0 Appendices - Page 33
- 9.0 Bibliography - Page 88

1.0 Chapter One

Introduction: Stating the Cause

Over the last few decades the topic of domestic violence has substantially been brought to light by many feminists within the battered women's movement. The occurrence of domestic violence, its cause as well as the impacts that such a horrific ordeal subjects women to have therefore been illuminated and placed at the forefront of many broken heterosexual relationships (Leventhal and Lundy 1999). Indeed such a prosperous development has increased the societal recognition of battered women within heterosexual relationships by providing women with empowerment to prevent and overcome their suffering. However other socially disempowered groups have not been so fortunate to be included within such a paradigm and embrace similar comforts, empathies, support and assistance they require to prevent as well as overcome their suffering. Although gay men are achieving an egalitarian status within late modernity there is still much more to recognise and understand (Giddens 1991, Giddens 1992).

The centrality of heterosexual relationships within the paradigm has therefore overshadowed homosexual relationships. Particularly, the intimate relationships of gay men have been restricted to voice their suffering and experiences due to the heterosexist gender imbalance of patriarchal structures, dominating notions of masculinity, societal pathologizations, stigma and legal sanctioning (Spender 1985, Connell 2005, Berrill and Herek 1990, Leventhal and Lundy 1999, Renzetti 1996, Merrill 1996). Even as homosexual identities are continually obtaining an egalitarian status research is limited due to these restrictions (McClennen 1999). Little is known about the mechanisms, processes and above all the causes of such abuse. Particularly as heterosexist and essentialist discourses can misrepresent an existing problem, such as assuming that violence within the intimate relationships of gay men is understandable as men are biologically predetermined to be aggressive (Merrill 1996). Conversely, also assuming that abuse between two gay men is comprehensible and less severe because a woman is not involved (Merrill 1996). Similarly, the assumption that one of the two male partners must ascertain a butch or a femme role throughout the administration of abusive behaviour in contrast to domestically abusive heterosexual relationships also conceals same sex abuse (Merrill 1996). Most importantly the misrepresentative stereotype that gay male domestic violence does not even exist due to the assumption that two partners of the same gender can equally receive and perpetrate similar abusive acts (Merrill 1996).

In recognition of these misconceptions, this study intends to further illuminate the topic of same sex domestic violence by exploring the lived realities and experiences of such abuse by the people who were unfortunately subject to it. Through examining their experiences, views as well as their perceptions, further understandings of same sex abuse can potentially be provided, which better reflect the actual reality of the social constructs and constitutions of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men.

With the underlying intention to explore, the study will primarily seek to understand how is violent behaviour constituted, constructed and understood within the context of male same sex relationships? By pursuing whether domestic violence is a predominant feature within the lives of gay men? If so what is considered to be acts of abuse within intimate gay relationships? Subsequently, what are the causes and the mechanisms which influence the occurrence of these abusive acts? In order to explore whether these acts are recognisable by society and how so? In reference to this, do societal perceptions of homosexuality influence the constructs of violent behaviour and the reactions to such behaviour? Particularly the ability of gay men's help-seeking behaviour and the capacity of support services to help those suffering abuse?

To explore these questions, the study will initially discuss and critically evaluate sociological understandings of feminism and masculinity. To sequentially explore, discuss and critically evaluate the current prevailing theoretical perspectives that have attempted to explain the social, socio-political as well as the psychological causes that underpin domestic violence, most particularly same sex abuse within the intimate relationships of gay men. Subsequently, the aims and objectives of the study will be examined, alongside the recruitment, sample, data collection, analysis and ethical strategies that the research undertook to explore the lived abusive experiences of gay men as well as the lived experience in confronting the cause from an organisational representative. The study will then progress, and analyse, discuss and evaluate the data that was collected through the conduction of the research in order to fulfil the study's primary intention to explore how violent behaviour is constituted, constructed and understood within the context of male same sex relationships. Ultimately, the study will collaborate the central themes and issues explored throughout the research, in order to conclude on the current perceptions and understandings of same sex domestic violence. Whilst critically reviewing what benefits the research has brought upon the topic of domestic violence in order to suggest future research studies that could further explore, in an attempt to understand the concealed nature of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men.

2.0 Chapter two

Reviewing the Literature- Same Sex Abuse in a Wider Society

The ability and accessibility to effectively study and research gay and lesbian behaviours throughout history have been near impossible (Island and Letellier 1991). Issues such as stigma, legal sanctioning and a high rise of hate crimes for disclosed men have created difficulties to effectively study the lives of gay men (Berrill and Herek 1990). However, due to relentless queer activism, societal perspectives are changing (Leventhal and Lundy 1999). Particularly, the processes of modernization have actively encouraged the experiences of gay men to be understood in late modernity (Giddens 1991). According to Giddens (1991) late modernity has created a self reflexive society which has forced people to re develop their own societal norms and life patterns to understand their social experiences. Giddens (1991) also argues that this process is enhanced and continually redeveloped when an individual undergoes a crucial moment in their life or what he refers to as a 'fateful period'. It is not a striking realisation that domestic violence, as a crucial moment, has created a necessity for the redevelopment of its understanding. Consequentially individuals have the opportunity to empower and shape their own self identity (Giddens 1992). Homosexual experiences and lifestyles have therefore been offered a more democratic egalitarian position for expression (Klesse 2007, Giddens 1992). Gay men are continually being given a voice as their cultural diversity is becoming increasingly identified (Leventhal and Lundy 1999, Fawcett and Hearn 2004). Ultimately, gaining access to study such a social group has become easier within late modernity.

Indeed, since the nineteen seventies both legal and social movements that have attempted to prevent partner abuse have almost predominantly focused on heterosexual couples, where women are considered the victims (Renzetti 1996). Historically, this notion has been predominantly associated with women due to the influences of feminism (Renzetti 1992). Patriarchal structures where men have been argued to dominate subservient women, socially, politically and economically have provided an explanation for abuse (Renzetti 1992). However as patriarchy has allowed little scope for differentiating discourses there is a wide misconception that domestic violence is exclusively heterosexual (Merrill and Wolfe 2000). Due to this misconception literature and research that has been conducted upon which to base theories regarding same gender partner abuse is limited (Merrill 1996). Although it has been argued that "*same sex commitments are nothing new; only the demand for equity and recognition have changed the landscape*" (Lewin 1998 cited in Weeks, et al 2001:12). Ultimately, there is a necessity to increasingly recognise and explore domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men; as such abuse is not at all a new phenomenon (McClennen 1999). In particular, statutory definitions of domestic violence have adopted a generic framework, emphasising greater necessity

to explore, as the terminology used has been advocated to lie within a heterosexist format (Merrill and Wolfe 2000)

Domestic violence has been defined as “*any violence between current and former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever the violence occurs. The violence may include physical, emotional and financial abuse*” (Home Office 2003 cited in Burton 2008:3). Although the definition recognises multifaceted acts of violence from physical to emotional abuse in order for the perpetrator to control the victim, the definition is heterosexist (McClennon 1999, Merrill and Wolfe 2000). The terminology does not specify sexual orientation; therefore the intimacies of gay men are socially excluded and misrepresented (Merrill and Wolfe 2000). However, according to Donovan et al (2006) intimacies between gay men have become more inclusively defined within the current statutory definition of domestic violence.

The most recent statutory definition of domestic violence has been defined as “*any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of their gender or sexuality. The violence can be psychological, physical, sexual or emotional. It can include ‘honour based violence’ female genital mutilation and forced marriage*”. (Home Office 2005 cited in Burton M 2008:3). This definition is more inclusive of intimate gay male relationships due to the specification of gender and sexuality (Donovan and Hester 2010). However as physical acts are so heavily specified it can be difficult to include psychological behaviour (Donovan and Hester 2010). Evidently so, as physical acts predominantly relate to female victims, physical violence concerning men and gay men in particular can be difficult to specify (Donovan and Hester 2010). Although the definition has incorporated intimate male relationships within a statutory understanding; criminological thought has delved in deeper.

Academics have also attempted to define same sex domestic violence as “*the pattern of violent coercive behaviours whereby a lesbian or (gay man) seeks to control the thoughts, beliefs or conduct of his/her intimate partner or to punish the intimate for resisting the perpetrators control over her/him*” (Hart 1986 cited in McClennen 1999:3). In addition academics have definitively recognised that abuse can include physical violence, both physical and verbal degradation, economic exploitation, psychological and sexual abuse (McClennen 1999). At the outset the criminological definition provides the opportunity for successful understanding. However it is important to initially account for broader societal perspectives. Feminist perspectives on patriarchy and gender have indirectly influenced the nature of domestic violence and the intimate nature of gay men (Spender 1985, Connell 2005).

According to Spender (1985:3) “*Language helps form the limits of our reality. It is our means of ordering, classifying and manipulating the world. It is through language that we become members of a human community, that the world becomes comprehensible and meaningful, that we bring into existence the world in which we live*”

Subsequently Spender (1985) argues that the constructs of linguistics has created a gender imbalanced patriarchal society. Within a patriarchal society there is a resounding belief that the male sex is superior, that superiority is then reflected upon the social institutions and occurrences within society (Spender 1985). Once this superiority is accepted society deems this social group as more important, as the more valid sex (Spender 1985). Conversely, the female sex is viewed as inferior, although the male sex only offers a partial view of the world; they impose their views on to the female sex, inevitably their views become irrelevant (Spender 1985).

However, it has been regarded that Spender's (1985) reliance on language as the main cause for patriarchy is rather superficial, as language and actual speech can be conflated (Holmstrom 1982). Sweeping philosophical claims are also asserted which do not always reflect the complexity of society (Holmstrom 1982). Although Spender (1985) rightly recognises that there is a strong relationship between language and masculine and feminine gender roles within the order of society (Holmstrom 1982). This recognition of gender roles emphasises the evident gender imbalance within patriarchal societies (Holmstrom 1982). Subsequently this imbalance can also relate to other disadvantaged social groups in connection with race, class and in relevance to the study non heterosexual groups.

Subsequently the societal misconception that women are solely the victims of domestic violence has been legitimised due to female inferiority (Merrill and Wolfe 2000, Walklate 2007). The gender imbalance that has portrayed men superior to women has therefore hidden male victims, regardless of sexual orientation (McCue 2008). Indeed, as same sex relationships do not obtain a gender imbalance, determining superiority between intimate partners of the same gender can be problematic (Renzetti 1992). Therefore, there has been little acknowledgement that gay men can be victims of domestic violence within a patriarchal society. Most particularly, as compulsory heterosexuality is advocated, homosexuality as a sexual identity has been unrecognised (Weeks et al 2001). Consequentially society has failed to recognise the domestic entity within the intimate relationships of gay men (McClennen 1999).

This lack of societal recognition also poses concerns surrounding the nature of masculine superiority within the patriarchal order (Connell 2005). Connell (2005) has introduced the concept of hegemonic masculinity. 'Hegemonic masculinity' is regarded as the dominant cultural representation of what constitutes being male (Connell 2005). Within patriarchal societies this representation is considered normative and subsequently portrays masculinity to be aggressive, authoritarian and heteronormative (Connell 2005). The male gender is therefore restricted to live up to this typology (Connell 2005). However male homosexuality does not ideological fit the hegemonic discourse, therefore the superiority of gay men subsequently represents inferiority (Connell 2005).

However, Connell's depiction has been criticised for adopting an uncertain meaning (Collinson and Hearn cited in Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). According to Petersen (1998 cited in Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:386) "*the concept of masculinity is flawed because it essentialises the character of men or imposes a false unity on a fluid and contradictory reality*". Its consensus therefore depicts a heteronormative conception of masculinity which does not always reflect individualism (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Most significantly this conception subsequently over emphasises the division between masculinity and femininity due to the disregard of differential characteristics (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

Although, it has been recognised that Connell (2005) is right, to suggest that hegemonic masculinity extends beyond superiority over women (Demetriou 2001). Subordinated masculinities such as homosexuality are also inferior, as sexual desires run counter to those of heterosexuality, the reproduction of patriarchy is therefore undermined (Demetriou 2001). Ultimately, the subordination of gay men supports hegemonic masculinity in re enforcing patriarchal structures (Demetriou 2001). Most particularly, this subordination has created difficulties in the understanding of domestic violence within intimate gay relationships due to the societal pathologization of homosexuality (Demetriou 2001, Leventhal and Lundy 1999)

This pathologization that gay men have been succumbed to for failing to adopt a hegemonic identity has again reinforced the heterosexual domestic violence portrait (Connell 2005, Merrill and Wolfe 2000). The perceived illegitimacy of same sex relationships, particularly the criminalisation of homosexuality prior to 1967 has created heterosexist legalities in confronting domestic violence (Connell 2005, Leventhal and Lundy 1999). Homophobic perceptions of the criminal justice system have also added to the perceived illegitimacy of same sex domestic violence (Witzer 1999). Conversely, such illegitimacy and exclusion has supported the high degree of stereotype that heteronormative structures obtain the correct mechanisms for domestic violence (Renzetti 1996).

Ultimately, patriarchal and gender structures have contributed in creating a generic stereotype of domestic violence, which is only partially justified through a heterosexist lens (Merrill and Wolfe 2000). Nevertheless such a hostile environment for gay men has rejected their perceptions and inclusions within the issue of domestic violence (Island and Letellier 1991). Understanding the direct dynamics of such behaviour is ultimately essential in understanding wider societal perceptions, within which the next chapter will progressively explore.

3.0 Chapter three

Reviewing the Literature- Narrowing the Scope of Same Sex Abuse

In order for the dynamics of domestic violence to be understood within intimate male homosexual relationships, underlying explanations must be accounted for. Renzetti (1996), Allen and Leventhal (1999), Island and Letellier (1991) and Merrill (1996) have attempted to account for such coercive behaviour.

Renzetti (1996) and Allen and Leventhal (1999) have illustrated that socio-political depictions withhold the underlying explanation of domestic violence. The gender of each partner is not solely the accountable explanation for the occurrence of partner abuse (Renzetti 1996). Rather the oppression of socially disempowered groups is its cause (Renzetti 1996). Inferior or superior social characteristics of an individual such as social class, race, age and sexual orientation determine whether an individual will be subject to abuse (Renzetti 1996). Ultimately, intimate same sex intimidation and abuse is not only a gender issue but controversially a power issue (Renzetti 1996).

Abusers who repeatedly abuse their partners will do so as a method of control as they feel that there is a significant part of their lives within which they have no control (Elliott 1996). Within a sexist society this lack of control is justified as women are considered inferior, perpetrators can therefore escape responsibility for their inflicted abuse (Elliott 1996). Likewise, within a homophobic society this lack of control is also justified as homosexuality is also considered inferior (Elliott 1996). Consequentially it is power imbalances that determine abuse and subsequently societal perceptions of those imbalances will determine whether abuse is recognised (Renzetti 1996). In particular same sex abuse can be misrepresented as mutual battering (Merrill 1996). With both partners consisting of the same gender, there is a misconception that both partners can equally receive and perpetrate equal levels of abuse (Merrill 1996). In addition as there is no historic societal structure in determining the superiority or inferiority between intimate gay men in comparison to heterosexual relationships (Giddens 1992, McClennon 1992). Power imbalances within same sex relationships are more problematic to determine (Giddens 1992, Renzetti 1992). According to McClennon (2005) *“historically men have been imbued with power over women...for gay male partners, the factors contributing to power imbalance remain anomalies”* (McClennen, 2005: 151).

Subsequently this problematic power imbalance that Renzetti (1996) advocates, is supported and reflected by Allen and Leventhal (1999) assertions that there are differences between heterosexual and homosexual abuse. Although the principle of one partner withholding superiority and control over another is still present, the context is culturally differentiated within homosexual intimacies (Allen and Leventhal 1999). The varied levels of oppression that homosexual people face in

their daily lives, allows greater scope for the creation of a negative queer identity (Allen and Leventhal 1999). Therefore, there are greater possibilities for a gay man to inflict abusive acts towards their intimate partner in comparison to heterosexual women (Allen and Leventhal 1999). Additionally, the stereotype that men are naturally violent has portrayed violence and abuse as significant features of intimate gay relationships (Island and Letellier 1991). Consequentially the victim is forced to believe that violence is an inevitable part of their relationship and therefore they choose to stay with their partner regardless of the increasing severity of abuse (Island and Letellier 1991). Indeed it has been asserted that,

“Domestic violence within our communities has everything to do with the hostility and condemnation directed against them. GLBT batterers can use the conditions created by homo/bi/transphobia and heterosexism to wield highly effective weapons against their partners” (Allen and Leventhal 1999:76).

Negative senses of safety and security and an already fearful consensus of identity inevitably enforce consistent and predominant levels of power and control in an intimate relationship (Allen and Leventhal 1999). Alongside this, the societal condemnation of homosexuality encourages the breakdown of many healthy intimate same sex relationships, as they are far more difficult to sustain within a heterosexist society (Allen and Leventhal 1999). Ultimately, heterosexism additionally assists and continually influences the occurrence of domestic violence between intimate gay men in comparison to heterosexual women (Allen and Leventhal 1999). Most particularly as men are less likely to seek help in comparison to women the continuation of same sex abuse is far more likely (McCaughan and McKenna 2006).

On the contrary to this culturally differentiated context and problematic power imbalance however, it has been recognised that both genders regardless of sexual orientation can enact abusive behaviours towards their intimate partner (Burke and Follingstad 1999). Both homosexual and heterosexual partners obtain similar psychological and physical abusive traits (Island and Letellier 1991). Aggression, control, attachment, resentment, insecurity, fear and the ultimate necessity of power runs parallel within both heterosexual and homosexual relationships (Island and Letellier 1991). Equally, Renzetti's (1996) socio-political assertions have overarched the experiences of heterosexual women and do not fully reflect the full extent of the problem (Island and Letellier 1991). Due to this over emphasis of heterosexual domestic violence, same sex relationships have been precluded (Letellier 1996). In particular the theory excludes female enacted abuse (Fishbein 1992). Within which if female perpetrators were included this would contradict the feminist paradigm, as white heterosexual men are seen to be responsible for society's social injustices (Merrill and Wolfe 2000). Consequentially, how can feminism be an appropriate explanation for domestic violence due its ideologies originating from a biased gendered perspective? Ultimately, feminist perspectives have been criticised for not being 'gender neutral' and in doing so contributing to the concealed nature of same sex domestic violence (Letellier 1996).

Inevitably, socio-political assertions have been advocated to not be the solely representative explanation (McClennen 1999). According to (Elliott 1996 cited in McClennen 1999:5) “*new theories of violence and models of intervention must be developed if same sex [partner abuse] is to be confronted*”. Conversely there are other explanations that have attempted to illustrate partner abuse concerning gay men, in particular psychological explanations (Island and Letellier 1991).

Island and Letellier (1991) assert that the psychological personality of the perpetrator is the root cause for such abuse. They propose that perpetrators are not in the correct mental state of mind, a psychological sadistic mental disorder exists in the conscience of an individual who abuses his partner (Island and Letellier 1991). Although they stress that the perpetrator should not be put under the same view as the psychotically insane, they strongly argue that the perpetrator is rational in doing so (Island and Letellier 1991). Subsequently a perpetrators decision to abuse stems from rational intentions that are premeditated to inflict harm, however dysfunctional; a conscious intention is present (Island and Letellier 1991). Ultimately, Island and Letellier (1991) propose that perpetrators should be acknowledged by their psychological behaviour rather than gender characteristics.

“Yes. We think that batterers are not mentally healthy. Further we believe that most batterers suffer from some kind of diagnosable, progressive, psychological disorder or mental condition. They are not insane or psychotic..... At the very least, we believe that just before, during and right after a battering incident batterers are dysfunctional.... completely rational. Therefore by definition abusers are ill” (Island and Letellier 1991:58).

In support of this explanation it has been recognised that perpetrators of domestic violence will suffer from a form of personality disorder (Hamberger and Hastings 1988). “*The Psychopathology of abusers can best be viewed as that of a disordered personality, as deeply ingrained, highly treatment resistant and often perplexing set of behaviours*” (Hamberger and Hastings 1988: 769). Inevitably it has been argued that the psychological attributes of an abuser must be taken into account to successfully identify and determine perpetrators (Hamberger and Hastings 1988). Furthermore, it has also been argued that an individual who has suffered an abusive childhood influences the possibility that they will become abusers themselves (Caesar 1988). Equally abusers can learn to be violent, particularly if they have suffered an abusive childhood, this learning ability can be developed from the abuse they experienced in their childhood (Bandura 1973).

However this psychological model has received controversies (Island and Letellier 1991). Indeed, it has been regarded as an inappropriate explanation for domestic violence as it re-establishes the notion that homosexuality is a psychological disorder in itself (Island and Letellier 1991). The assertion that perpetrators in male homosexual relationships suffer from a sadistic psychological mental disorder contributes in the pathologization of homosexuality (Island and Letellier

1991). Ultimately the possibility of a stigmatised label is reassigned to an already oppressed social group (Island and Letellier 1991). Conversely, this stigmatized label can also induce further psychological damage to the already dysfunctional perpetrator, by assigning their actions to run parallel to the mentally unstable (Island and Letellier 1991).

Subsequently, the psychological depiction also fails to account for the victim who obviously plays an integral role (Merrill 1996). Most particularly, as criminological understandings have recognised that certain victims can be more prone to victimization (Hentig 1940 cited in Marsh et al 2004). Equally, it has been asserted that victims themselves are pathologically vulnerable to crime, and therefore are responsible for their own victimization and victim status (Hentig 1940 cited in Rock 2007). Consequently, suggesting that due to certain individual socio-psychological characteristics and status they are far more prone to become victims of crime (Hentig 1940 cited in Rock 2007).

Similarly, Mendelsohn (1963) also argues that perpetrators and their victims exist in a 'penal couple', within which both the actions of the perpetrator reflect the actions of their victim. Sequentially, the victim is seen to influence or provoke the actions of their abuser as well as the abusers actions towards the victim (Mendelsohn 1963). The victim is therefore seen to obtain a degree of culpability and blameworthiness in the harm they suffer (Mendelshon 1963). Ultimately, with both understandings suggesting that victims have a degree of causation in influencing their partner's violent behaviour, solely focusing on the psychology of the perpetrator is too narrow in focus to explain partner abuse. In contrast, Walkers (2006) depiction of the cycle of violence interrelates with both explanations.

Indeed, Walker (2006) advocates that the cycle of violence sequentially occurs in three stages, initially tension builds between the two partners as the possibility of inflicted harm escalates. The second phase proceeds as "*the acute battering incident*" (Walker 2006: 146) where harm is evidently inflicted by the perpetrator upon their partner (Walker 2006). Finally what results is a period of "*loving contrition*" (Walker 2006:146), where the abuser portrays loving and emotional behaviour towards their victim in order to sustain the relationship (Walker 2006). Inevitably in doing so, this cycle continues and becomes more severe (Walker 2006). What this explanation provides is an individualistic account of repetitive acts of abuse between both the perpetrator and the victim, as acts of abuse can and often do occur repeatedly over a period of time, psychological models fail to incorporate social interaction (Walker 2006).

Subsequently, Merrill (1996) also asserts that psychological explanations are inadequate. Indeed if a gender neutral perspective is essential to understand same sex abuse then this could illustrate that heterosexual women abuse their partners at the same rate of heterosexual men (Merrill 1996). Even so when it has been advocated by many theorists that male psychological characteristics are more likely to predispose aggression than females (Maccoby and Jacklin 1974). Similarly, social

characteristics are also ignored, regardless of gender it has been recognised that an individual who has been apart of a violent family in their childhood increases their likelihood to be abusive (Ceaser 1988, Bandura 1973). Ultimately, Island and Letellier's (1991) assertions are not fully explained, as other psychological and social determinants which play a central part in the structure of interpersonal violence are unconsidered (Maccoby and Jacklin 1974).

Leading on from these psychological critiques, Merrill (1996) also illustrates inadequacies with socio-political perspectives as they *"leave many questions unanswered and makes many experiences invisible"* (Merrill 1996:12). Most significantly as socio-political explanations lie within a heterosexist perspective and psychologies fail to account for the disproportionate rate of heterosexual male perpetrators (Merrill 1996). Indeed, Merrill (1996) suggests that both social feminist and psychological explanations should be collaborated into a socio-psychological model (Merrill 1996). Intending to encapsulate the psychological traits of perpetrators and accounting for the societal inequalities of homosexuality (Merrill 1996). Ultimately he asserts that,

"Domestic violence must be understood as a social and psychological phenomenon and must be explained simultaneously in order to be completely understood" (Merrill 1996:14)

Indeed, Merrill's (1996) socio-psychological model relates to the works of Zemsky (1990 cited in Merrill 1996) who separated causation into three categories; *"learning to abuse; having the opportunity to abuse, and choosing to abuse"* (Zemsky cited in Merrill 1996:14). Subsequently, Merrill's (1996) socio-psychological model asserts that abusive behaviour is learned and develops due to the process of socialisation during an individual's childhood within their immediate family (Merrill 1996). The process on which this occurs therefore derives from the perpetrator psychologically experiencing beneficial rewards for their inflicted abuse (Merrill 1996). Sequentially, this is based upon the correct opportunity for abuse, within which this opportunity could derive from feminist understandings of culturally differentiated power relations (Merrill 1996). The perpetrator consequently acknowledges that within a homophobic society their abusive acts will result in limited consequences (Merrill 1996). Most particularly as homophobic societies create the correct conditions for isolation; their victims may not seek help due to the fear of disclosing their sexual identity (Merrill 1996). Ultimately, choosing to inflict abuse relates to psychological elements of perception, whether the abuser perceives this power imbalance to work to their advantage and whether their partner will act subserviently or retaliate (Merrill 1996).

Undoubtedly, Merrill's (1996) Socio-political model has been regarded as one of the leading theorists of same sex domestic violence (McClennen 1999). In particular, the collaborative model acknowledges the existence of same sex domestic violence, as societal homophobia is evidently recognised and power imbalances are not essential for abuse to occur (Merrill 1996). Similarly, the recognition of lateral power

relations also creates the possibility for abuse if the potential victim is less likely to report an incident and or conversely, reporting the incident will have no effect on the actions of the perpetrator (Merrill 1996).

However, despite its prosperous understanding, criticisms have arisen. How can the model explain instances where the victim has more social power than the perpetrator (Merrill 1996)? Subsequently the model does not consider the whole picture of same sex abuse as female perpetrators are unexplained (Merrill 1996, McClennen 1999). In addition, Merrill (1996) has also recommended that due to the differentiation in severity between perpetrators, an additional psychological variable is necessary.

“I posit here that the more severe, the degree of severity of the batterer, the more likely the batterers are to choose to abuse, regardless of the level of opportunity” (Merrill 1996:18).

Ultimately, this model needs to be redeveloped and reflect the degrees of severity, if a clearer understanding of domestic abuse within the intimate relationships of gay men is to be conjured (McClennen 1999).

In summary sociological understandings of patriarchy, masculinity and gender have contributed in the explanation of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men throughout wider society (McClennen 1999). Whilst socio-political, psychological and socio-psychological explanations of same sex domestic violence have contributed in highlighting and revealing many central issues to its cause (McClennen 1999). Subsequently as homosexuality is no longer a hidden phenomenon in late modernity, the processes of same sex domestic violence in late modern societies can now be understood from a beneficial democratic stance, allowing greater flux for understanding and developing explanations (Weeks et al 2001)

According to Ristock (2002) future explanations should concentrate more on diversity rather than purely homosexual and heterosexual paradigms. Similarly, Mason (2002) also advocates that domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men should rather focus on the social and psychological power relations between gender and sexuality, in order to acquire more appropriate explanations, particularly as late modernity steadily progresses. Additionally as it has been recognised that heterosexual sexual history is interrelated and interdependent in the understanding of homosexual sexual history and vice versa; both are needed to understand the other (Weeks et al 2001). Outlawing one without considering the other is too simplistic, ultimately both heterosexual and homosexual identities must be considered in the construction of future explanations (Weeks et al 2001). Perhaps the best hope for organising, and understanding the influential causes for intimate same sex abuse is to base theories in consideration of the dynamics of heterosexuality and homosexuality. However in doing so, it is also essential to segregate focus to both homosexuality and heterosexuality. Particularly heterosexist explanations must be avoided to better reflect the causes of domestic violence within

late modernity (McClennen 1999). Indeed, progressing prevailing understandings of domestic violence through the methodologies that the study undertook will be explored in the consecutive chapter.

4.0 Chapter four

Methodological Approaches to Investigation

4.1 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

The aim of the research was to progress the prevailing understandings of domestic violence in the context of intimate gay male relationships. In doing so, a broader insight of such ordeals could deliver a significant contribution to the understandings of intimate gay male relationships in the twenty first century. Residing from minimal theoretical understandings, its context was to explore domestic violence throughout Manchester and Western England. A necessity for deep and extensive exploration was embedded within the research to achieve maximal contribution to existing theoretical understandings.

Subsequently, the objectives of the research were to examine the lived realities of domestic violence from the positions of gay male victims. Through the examination of their experiences, views and perceptions; societal recognitions and understandings of such abuse could be provided. In doing so the social constructs and constitutions of domestic violence could be explored in relation to the lives of the gay male population. Ultimately, the necessity for further recognition of such ordeals could be fulfilled within the constructs of late modernity in the contemporary era. Consequentially the objectives of the research constructed several questions.

Whether domestic violence is a predominant feature within the lives of gay men? If so, what is considered to be acts of abuse within intimate gay male relationships? Are these acts recognisable by the victim and wider society? Subsequently, what are the causes and the mechanisms which influence the occurrence of these abusive acts? In order to explore whether these acts are recognisable by society and how so? Similarly, do societal perceptions of homosexuality influence the constructs of violent behaviour and the reactions to such behaviour? Ultimately and most importantly, how is violent behaviour, constituted, constructed as well as understood within the context of intimate male same sex relationships?

4.2 Approach qualitative and quantitative

In order for these aims and objectives to be achieved through the answering of such pressing questions, the research pursued a qualitative approach for data collection. Qualitative methods were absolutely crucial in exploring the practices, processes and understandings of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men, as

previous research on the topic is limited (De Vaus 2002, Merrill 1996). By initially obtaining an inductive and objective stance an exploratory setting led the direction of the research (David and Sutton 2004). With this established intention to explore, qualitative methodologies enabled richer sources of data to potentially be obtained (De Vaus 2002). In doing so, real life situations of domestic violence could be delved into through the in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of such an impacting ordeal (De Vaus 2002).

Through the conduction of recorded semi structured interviews face to face and over the phone, this allowed greater possibility for the pursuit of exploration and a thicker description of the participants abusive experiences to be gathered (Geertz 1973). Through the semi formal social interaction between the researcher and the participant, intended domestic violence issues could be covered whilst maintaining an undetermined response from the participant (Babbie 2010). Personal experiences, stories, attitudes and opinions were therefore brought to the surface as greater flux was given to the participant when elaborating on their lived realities (David and Sutton 2004). Flexibility within the interview process indeed provided wider scope for the exploration and examination of personal experiences (Bryman 2008).

In comparison to the exploratory qualities of qualitative methodologies, quantitative methods of data collection were inadequate for the conduction of an exploratory study. Undoubtedly, if the research was to use numerical methodologies they may be unsuitable to recognise social situations, interactions and the lived realities of domestic violence (Schutz 1962 cited in Bryman 2008). The study would therefore no longer be exploratory, as the scope for exploration would be limited, however many would argue that such an approach would be just as suitable (Bryman 2008). Although this would also mean that numerical data would be collected, this could disconnect the meanings of their experiences by portraying a static social world which is out of touch with the real social world (Bryman 2008). Similarly, quantitative survey research methodologies may also misrepresent and generalise the gay male population as the exploration of personal experiences would be restricted (Campbell 1957 cited in Bryman 1988). Ultimately, qualitative methods through the conduction of semi structured interviews provided the research with the appropriate recipe to intensively explore the lives of gay men in connection with domestic violence. Where as quantitative surveys would have been limited in scope and therefore possibly undermined the reliability of the data.

4.3 Participants and sample strategies

The recruitment of the participants was no easy task, most particularly due to the investigations purpose focusing on a sensitive typology this could have possibly undermined the engagement of participants. Similarly, as the study required individuals from a stigmatised social minority, accessing and recruiting the participants was difficult. However, it can be surprising how highly cooperative participants can be in disclosing personal experiences (Sigelman 1981 cited in Clark 2010). Most particularly the great length of information participants may wish to disclose in highly sensitive topics has been remarkable (Sigelman 1981 cited in

Clark 2010). The study therefore had the potential to explore undisclosed social issues from various participants within the sample.

Subsequently, the sample size included six male victims and one housing officer from Sandwell Homes whose employment role dealt with domestic violent situations within the gay community (Appendix 7). The sample also included the Lesbian and Gay Foundation and Broken Rainbow who provided information, support and assistance, particularly in the recruitment process (Appendix 8). Geographically, the majority of the participants resided from Greater Manchester, apart from two that originated from Gloucestershire and the West midlands (Appendix 7). The recruitment of this sample involved a purposive strategy in the selection of appropriate participants, as certain social characteristics such as sexual orientation, gender and encounters of intimate same sex relationships were to be examined (David and Sutton 2004). Again this was also crucial to the study as the correct characteristics of participants needed to be obtained to successfully explore and account for domestic violence within the intimate same sex relationships of gay men. In doing so a snowball sample was adopted, in ensuring that a wide cross section of appropriate participants was selected to gather differentiated experiences (David and Sutton 2004). In relation to previous studies a snowballing sample was essential, as encouraging participants to engage and talk about their experiences within such a sensitive topic was a heavy obstacle to overcome (Lees 1996). Most particularly in order to gain continuous access to conduct the semi structured interviews within the gay community and most importantly domestic violence victims. As a mechanism of informal '*social networking*' (David and Sutton 2004:152), entry to the snowball sample was obtained through negotiations with various gatekeepers (Crano and Brewer 2008).

By establishing contact with various domestic violence groups and gay and lesbian charities such as the Lesbian and Gay Foundation as well as Broken Rainbow this enabled wide publicity over the internet (Appendix 6, Appendix 8). Through promotion of the study within social networking sites and organisational news bulletins, this provided the greatest catalyst for entry into the social group and the recruitment of appropriate participants (Appendix 6).

4.4 Data collection

Data was collected through the recording of thirty to forty five minute semi structured interviews either face to face or over the phone and transcribed ready for analysis. Through the initiation of face to face interviews, greater discussion on domestic violence issues could be covered, cloudy issues could be clarified and participants could be offered greater ethical reassurance of confidentiality through the interview process (David and Sutton 2004, Appendix 5). Particularly such a qualitative approach is grounded within the experiences of the participant, as it is the participant who unforeseeably directs the discussion and by doing so adds a greater depth which quantitative methods cannot provide (David and Sutton 2004). Indeed, while qualitative methodologies lack numerical rigour, the current research rather

adopted a variety of strategies to ensure a richer source of data collection, which would be far more reliable, credible and in line with the explorative intentions of the study (Bryman 2008). Indeed to do so, the crystallisation perspective was adopted to capture data from an array of positions and viewpoints (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005).

Subsequently, in reference to the conduction of over the phone interviews this also contributed to gaining access to a diverse mix of participants across a wider geographical area (David and Sutton 2004). Additionally this also contributed in preserving participant anonymity as no visual contact was made (David and Sutton 2004). In relation to similar positive factors from face to face interviews such as greater flux, authenticity, clarification of complex issues and the ability to further explore their experiences (David and Sutton 2004, De Vaus 2002). Conducting quantitative survey research lacks this flux and authenticity, as vague as well as abstract concepts are drawn (Bryman 1988). Within which they frequently obtain a limited theoretical and sociological approach, particularly through the use of numerical data in the measurement of research (Bryman 1988). Ultimately, by avoiding quantitative methodologies through the pursuit of qualitative approaches, the participants could confidently 'voice' their experiences in reflection of their lived reality (Fawcett and Hearn 2004).

4.5 Analysis

Analysing the semi structured interviews involved the procedures of thematic analysis (Green 2005). The purpose of thematic analysis was to identify the central issues and explore the reoccurring themes that emerged from the data (Green 2005). This process initially involved the detailed reading of the transcripts, where the data could be coded and categorised into themes (Green 2005). Subsequently, the data was then re read in order to interlink the coded data between the transcripts so that significant patterns, differences and similarities could be identified (Green 2005). Ultimately, through the systematic process of reading, re-reading and scrutinizing the data, the hope was that an authentic and a consistent wider picture of domestic violence would emerge (Ezzy 2002). Thematic analysis in its initial stages therefore aimed to provide a focused format in the identification of the central themes as well as providing the foundational structure of the study's findings (David and Sutton 2004). In addition to this analysing process, the understandings of triangulation were rejected. Crystallisation perspectives and grounded theories were therefore incorporated in order to ascertain a consistent exploratory understanding (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005, Strauss 1976 cited in David and Sutton 2004).

In relevance to this, the triangulation approach would seem the most logical in order to analyse the most authentic data thereby enhancing the studies focus (Bryman 1988). However triangulation approaches require a fixed point and due to the minimal amount of previous research, ascertaining a fixed point would be inappropriate particularly as the study adopted a qualitative approach this could possibly undermine its exploratory aim (Bloor and Wood 2006). Indeed the analysis

of qualitative semi structured interviews would be favoured due to the main advantage that a far better quality of data could be gathered (Bloor and Wood 2006). In comparison to quantitative methods, which would provide a more statically defined analysis, however if contradictions with the results arose from the qualitative data analysis, the data may have to be rejected to secure validity (Bloor and Wood 2006). If both methods portrayed differentiating results, this may have been a difficult obstacle to overcome in providing authenticity and reliability within the study, but the study was not concerned about such contradictions due to its exploratory focus. Furthermore, as triangulation does consist of seeking a fixed point, qualitative methods rely on a relativist view which acknowledges that the data could have an array of valid outcomes (Barbour 2001). Therefore, the research adopted purely qualitative methodologies to pursue the aims and objectives of an exploratory study. In relation to the rejected approaches of triangulation, the research therefore adopted a postmodern analytical perspective of crystallisation (Richardson 1994).

‘The central image for validity... is not the triangle- a rigid fixed, two dimensional object. Rather, the central imaginary is the crystal. Crystallisation provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic. Ingeniously, we know there is always more to know’ (Richardson and St.Pierre 2005:963).

The crystallisation perspective therefore allowed the research to look at domestic violence within intimate gay male couples from all possible angles and positions. The perspective thereby created fluidity in gathering and analysing data in the research (Richardson and St.Pierre 2005). Rather than restricting the study to the mechanisms of triangulation at the analysis stage, the crystallisation perspective transgressed the boundaries of triangulation. In doing so a far wider, in-depth and complex spectrum of gay men’s lives could be portrayed and a ‘thick description’ of their lives could be gathered (Geertz 1973). Most importantly, the crystallisation perspective allowed the consistent gathering and analysing of data, which complimented and created a necessity for grounded theory to be incorporated into the study.

Subsequently, although differences arise between thematic analysis and grounded theory, the grounded theory perspective was also implemented into the analysis of the data to allow concepts and issues to be generated consistently throughout the conduction of the research (Strauss 1976 cited in David and Sutton 2004). The process of grounded theory was an extremely important tool at the analysis stage. In relation to Glazer and Strauss’s (1976) who stress that analysing, comparing and generating concepts is a continual process in order for a theoretical understanding to develop and underpin the research. The study could therefore widen the scope for the possibility of further data inclusion as the study progressed, and thereby increase the level of exploration which was the significant purpose of the study. Where as thematic analysis provided the method of analysis, grounded theory gave the research immense flux in the development of the data and by doing so, provided an interchangeable theoretical understanding of domestic violence. Additionally, the

study would also be constrained and restricted without the understandings of grounded theory. Central issues and themes cannot be predetermined through the logical separation of data; grounded theory therefore enables alteration and modification of the analysis structure (Covan 2007). Ultimately, thematic analysis, grounded theory and crystallisation perspectives complimented each other in the analysis stage, as themes could be drawn and continually re-developed from all angles of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men.

4.6 Ethics.

Prior to the conduction of the semi structured interviews and the recruitment of the sample, certain ethicalities of the research had to taken into account. According to Diener and Crandall (1978) an ethically sound study should include, identifying possible harm, obtaining informed consent, obtaining confidentiality and anonymity and to avoid any techniques that may deceive the participants. Indeed, the British Sociological Association suggests that:

“Sociologists have a responsibility to ensure that the physical, social and psychological well-being of research participants is not adversely affected by the research. They should strive to protect the right of those they study, their interests, their sensitivities and privacy, while recognising the difficulty of balancing potentially conflicting interests” (BSA 2006:2).

Ensuring the physical, social and psychological stability of participants involved protecting the participants from harm, as otherwise the study would have immediately been considered unacceptable in its initial stages (Bryman 2008). Significantly, the nature of harm that the participants could possibly endure was emotional and psychological instability, due to the sensitive typology of the research. In comparison, the well being of the researcher was at a far greater risk and in need of protection. Most significantly, through the conduction of face to face interviews and the sensitivity of the topic, this could have potentially endangered the researcher’s position (David and Sutton 2004).

In order to appropriately protect the participants and the researcher’s well being, informed consent was obtained in order for participants to have participated with their eyes open and the researcher to conduct the semi structured interview safely (Bryman 2008). This was achieved through the issuing of the information sheet which explained the intent of the study and the purpose of the research (Appendix 2). A consent form was also issued which listed the details of their participation and the role of researcher, which the researcher and the participant both signed and obtained a copy (Appendix 1). Subsequently through obtaining informed consent, the study operated within ethical guidelines by obtaining confidentiality and anonymity. The study also anonymised the data by disregarding all the participants’ identifiable features, particularly as the participants did not have to provide their credentials (David and Sutton 2005, Appendix 2). In terms of achieving confidentiality, it was explained to the participants that their information would be

electronically secure, edited if they wished and destroyed after use (David and Sutton 2004, Appendix 2). All of the data that the participants voluntarily revealed was secured by the principal researcher, most importantly their details were transcribed anonymously and their personal credentials that they disclosed to identify themselves and their location were securely kept separate.

Through the issuing of the consent form and the information sheet, deceptive issues were also avoided (Appendix 1, Appendix 2). Although it has been argued that deception has been a useful tool in research, as restricting studies to avoid deceptive techniques '*can interfere with the freedom to pursue knowledge*' (Hunt 1982:9). However the study did not crave a necessity to adopt covert research, as what the research intended to reveal and explore was the personal experiences of domestic violence. Therefore deception would blur the boundaries of what the study set out to achieve. An example of avoiding deceptive techniques was that the participants were briefed on the processes of the interview prior to data collection, and given the option to contact the researcher after the data was collected (Appendix 2). An ethical checklist was also considered and filled out by the researcher with the participant to ensure that the study was within ethical guidelines (Appendix 5). Ultimately, avoiding deceptive measures influenced the direction of the research in aiming to explore domestic violence within the lives of gay men, most predominantly at the analysis stage which the next chapter will progressively explore.

5.0 Chapter five

Presenting the findings: Analysis and Discussion- Domestic violence in the gay relationship and self realisation

5.1 Domestic Violence: Is it really only a heterosexual Phenomenon?

Domestic violence has predominantly been perceived to occur solely within intimate heterosexual relationships (Merrill and Wolfe 2000). Equally, such a misrepresentative discourse conceals that domestic violence is restricted to heterosexual relationships, but it also occurs within the intimate relationships of gay men (Merrill and Wolfe 2000). Indeed, this unjust paradigm was clearly evident throughout the research, as it was discovered that gay men do not feel that domestic violence directly concerns same sex relationships within contemporary society (Kamal:28, Anthony:27, Peter: 28). Rather the accounts of several of the participants considered such abuse to be solely centred to intimate heterosexual relationships, where a man dominates and controls a subservient woman (Kamal: 28, Donald:27, Reece:28). Whether such abuse could possibly filter into intimate same sex relationships was similarly seen by Anthony (27) as an exclusive societal taboo. Subsequently this was the case due to the failure of society to appropriately recognise such a cause and to rather inadequately stereotype heterosexual women as

solely the victims (Peter: 28). Ultimately a heterosexual archetype of domestic violence was continually evident (Donald: 27). For instance as a twenty eight year old physiotherapist Peter stated that;

“There is little awareness of gay and lesbian domestic violence. You have definitely got stereotypes. For example that lesbians would be more violent... I think wider society hasn't got any idea or concept, it is not in their consciousness I wouldn't think. I don't think it is seen to be an issue. When people think about domestic violence, they think of a man and a woman and that's pretty much where it stops” (Peter, 28: p 92).

In relation to patriarchal understandings, the dominant views of male heterosexuality have subsequently subordinated the views of women (Spender 1985). This societal stereotype that men are superior to women has restricted the male sex to be the unfortunate victims of domestic violence (McCue 2008). This heterosexist stereotype has also conversely misrepresented domestic violence to solely occur within heterosexual relationships where women are considered the only victims (Merrill and Wolfe 2000). Most significantly, the mechanisms of patriarchy where heterosexuality is regarded as compulsory and homosexuality is considered exclusionary (Weeks et al 2001). Society has ultimately failed to recognise the existence of domestic violence within the relationships of gay men (McClennen 1999).

This societal invisibility is striking, as it has been estimated that one in four gay men will experience domestic violence at some point in their adult life (Broken Rainbow 2010). All of the participants interviewed also knew other gay men who had been involved in an abusive relationship, particularly as Kamal (28) stated that:

“Having now been through it and having known some of my friends been through it as well...I was actually quite surprised at how many other people had known people who had been themselves in a domestic violence relationship” (Kamal: 28, p 66).

Therefore, society's perception of same sex domestic violence is out of touch with what appears to be occurring within the intimate relationships of gay men. Its concept is far wider than society perceives it to be and is as just as much of a problem for homosexual relationships in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts. Indeed, this misconception is also alarming as all of the participants' abusive relationships were recognisable by their close friends and or their immediate family members. Even more so, Donald's (27) close companions frequently noticed bruises and changing psychological temperament after an abusive episode. To elaborate further and using the accounts of Kamal (28) again, he pointed out how many of his friends had seen subtle changes in his character:

“Yeah all my friends knew, especially when I used to come into university with shades on in the middle of winter.... They would just grab them off me and see my eyes. And they would be like ‘again, you know why are you with this guy?’” (Kamal: 28, p 69).

Additionally, the degree of invisibility is also concerning, particularly as the participants accepted their partners irrational behaviour. In Particular Donald (27) also acknowledged that it was apart of being in an intimate relationship, also alongside this, Anthony (27) chose to stay with his abusive partner to offer him psychological and emotional support. Indeed, Reece (28) elaborated on how is mother was involved in resolving a physically violent episode between him and his violent partner. His mother had previously been in a violent relationship with his father when Reece (28) was a child and subsequently accepted that abuse is a natural part of relationships.

“My mum was the only one who accounted for his temper. But in the past she was a victim of domestic abuse herself with my father and she kind of, I wouldn’t say convinced me to stay with him. As she was calming down the situation she said that it happens in life” (Reece: 28, p 117).

Inappropriate acceptance additionally contributes to the invisibility of same sex abuse by supporting the patriarchal structures of hegemonic masculinity where men are socially restricted to be aggressive and superior (Connell 2005). Subsequently, acknowledgment of abuse also reflects the stereotype that all men are naturally violent and consequentially, battered gay men inevitably accept that abuse is a naturally occurring feature in their relationship (Island and Letellier 1991). Conversely, accepting or continuing to suffer abuse is re enforcing the disempowerment that minority groups such as homosexual men are subjected to (Connell 2005). Ultimately, it is victim self realisation of domestic abuse that will enable gay men to seek help and consequently increase the societal visibility of same sex domestic violence.

To evaluate, the social restrictions and gender socialisations that patriarchal structures have placed upon men, regardless of their sexual orientation is continually characterising domestic violence to be a central social injustice against women (McCue 2008, Elliott 1996). It is therefore no surprise that same sex domestic violence is equivocal and ambiguous to determine, even within late modernity where gay men are acquiring a more egalitarian position; the heterosexual misconception will stifle any attempt at identifying a domestically violent relationship (Giddens 1992, Klesse 2007). Similarly, as same sex domestic violence can potentially occur and become a consistent feature within the lives of gay men, it must not be mistaken or accepted. Particularly as the research has identified that many of the victims close companions recognised the occurrences and the suffering that they were undergoing. Ever still, as this research as well as other research studies such as Walker’s (2006), have highlighted that victims are psychologically pressured by their partners to continue the relationship and choose to disregard the encouragement of their close friends and family to end the relationship. Therefore, why is domestic violence between intimate gay men still not widely recognised when their unfortunate situations are clearly apprehensible? The research is sequentially a small step to reconcile this problem.

Equally on a societal level, the ignorance that surrounds domestic violence whether perceived to be domestically violent or mutual harm must not be considered to be a naturally occurring phenomenon if such abuse is to be confronted. If society is apprehensible to consider the experiences of heterosexual women, surely society can look past patriarchal structures and gender socialisations to account for the experiences of vulnerable gay men? To do so, will inevitably contribute to the increasing recognition of same sex domestic violence, which will also hopefully encourage the self realisation of victims to accept their situation and act upon it. Indeed another predominant theme that the research encountered was the consistent problem of self realisation.

5.2 Wake up and smell the grass! Is the other mans grass always greener?

Retrospectively, the participants acknowledged their partner's irrational behaviour; they did not fully accept that they were in an abusive relationship and that they were the unfortunate victims. The lack of self realisation not only contributes to the invisibility of same sex abuse it also additionally influences its occurrences, particularly as Andrew (27) did not apprehend his victim status.

“When you say domestic violence I always think there's a victim. And I never felt like that, whether he made me feel like I deserved it. I never really thought of the term to be honest. I knew it was unacceptable what was going on. I know two people shouldn't treat each other that way. But I obviously didn't know the severity of it until it was too late I suppose” (Anthony: 27, p 80/81).

Theoretically, this reflects the illustrations made by Merrill (1996) that same sex domestic violence can frequently be misrepresented as mutual abuse. Due to both partners consisting of the same gender, there is a misconception that both partners can perpetrate and receive acts of abuse, particularly due to the heterosexist assumption that the male sex should dominate within an intimate relationship (Merrill 1996). Equally all of the participants, most significantly Anthony (27) and Kamal (28) argued that this could possibly be why they did not realise the severity of their inferior position. Ultimately, all the participants did not successfully realise their victim status throughout the relationship.

Subsequently, due to this misrepresentation influencing self disbelief in their victimization, the majority of the participants recognised that the possibility of abuse was far greater in same sex relationships. The participants acknowledged that as there is no societal structure to predetermine the dynamics of homosexual relationships (Donald: 27). The identification of gay men as victims is blurred, as power roles are not signified by their gender (Donald: 27, Peter: 28). Similarly, the gender socialisation of men to be dominantly aggressive portrays the view that they can fight back, further contributing to their misconception that they were not

victims. Recalling from the arguments raised by Peter he suggested that *“if a guy beats another man around there is an idea that he can fight back and give as good as he gets”* (Peter:28, p 92).

The data here also emphasises the socio-political arguments by Renzetti (1996) that power relations between two members of the same gender are far more problematic to determine. Although men have historically dominated over subservient women, the contexts within which power relations are divided within same sex relationships is culturally differentiated (Allen and Levenhal 1999). In addition to this historical paradigm of subservience and domination between men and women, Giddens (1992) notion of same sex relationships representing a far more democratic ‘pure relationship’ is not always the case, as the research has highlighted that in reality power imbalances although culturally different, do frequently occur within intimate same sex relationships. Similarly, these relationships are therefore as important as any other relationship, but appear to be ignored under the discourse of gender and the notions of democracy within late modernity. Indeed this should come as no surprise as their relationships are emerging within a late modern context. Subsequently the stigma and societal condemnation that has been regarded to culturally differentiate power relations was also acknowledged by the participants (Allen and Leventhal 1999, Kamal: 28, Reece: 28). In particular, problematic power relations also influenced other factors that contributed to their lack of self realisation. Particularly the participants persistently believed that their partner would not repeatedly inflict abusive acts against them. For instance Anthony (27) withheld this belief and stated that:

“I wanted to be with this person and I knew he wanted to be with me. And I thought he wouldn’t do it again, every time something happened I would think ‘he won’t do it again” (Anthony: 27, p 81).

Indeed, it has been recognised that this believe stems from the three stage cycle of violence attributed by Walker (2006). Initial tension building lies with Anthony (27) wishing to stay with his partner regardless of inflicted abuse, secondly due to this build; abusive behaviour occurs (Walker 2006). Consequentially, afterward Anthony (27) receives loving and emotional behaviour by his partner in order to convince Anthony (27) not to end the relationship. Ultimately, the cycle becomes repetitive, particularly as there is not a consistent flow of abusive behaviour within the relationship (Walker 2006). Even more so, Kamal (28) acknowledged that due to the inconsistency of abuse and intense honeymoon periods was predominantly the reason why he stayed. Similarly Peter’s (28) experiences coincided with Anthony’s (27) experiences.

“He just started laying in to me, while I was sat in the chair, got a black eye. He cried like a baby, and then he did the same again and cry like a baby and then he would do it again and continue to cry like a baby” (Peter: 28, p 93).

Even as the severity of their abusive episodes increased and their occurrences became more frequent (Walker 2006). The participants chose to ignore, put up with or even persuade themselves to stay with their partner. Frequent feelings of subordination, disempowerment, helplessness, disappointment, belittlement, blameworthiness, guilt and even hope that things would change kept the participants locked in their abusive relationship (Kamal: 28, Anthony: 27, Peter: 28, Donald: 27, Reece: 28). In relevance to this Anthony (27) recalls his experiences which occurred a day prior to the conduction of the interview.

“In the end you know he did come, we did go to bed and then he carried on with hitting really... Because of what happened in the past I would never fight back anymore. So I just blame myself I suppose, I thought that I could have had him gone if I really wanted. But I told the police that nothing had happened and that I would let him back in” (Anthony: 27, p 85).

Subsequently, Donald's (27) experiences were similar, as he felt sympathetic towards his partner for the abusive behaviour he suffered, in disregard of how tormented he felt in the relationship. Conversely however, Reece (28) described that after an abusive episode rather than his partner portraying loving behaviour to convince him to stay. His partner abused him further through intimidation; in order to make Reece (28) feel guilty if he was to leave him. Something which could contradict Walker's (2006) cycle of violence, particularly at its third stage.

“On certain occasions when I would say to him that I would leave him. His response would be ‘well I am not the best in the world but there are certainly worse people out there. Also, the fact that ‘I drove him to his mood swings and his violent temper’. I believed him” (Reece: 28, p 114).

The uncertainty of power relations, the lack of the individual self realising their victim status withholds victims within their relationships. Victims of abuse therefore appear psychologically trapped within a vicious cycle of abuse which bears little sign of ending, a cycle which has been advocated by Walker (2006) to be the persistent pattern of domestic violence. Consequentially, the only way that victims will escape is for them to recognise possible forms of abuse, and for their perpetrators to be accountable for their actions (Renzetti 1996).

When exploring the narratives of the participants in this study, it became evident that an individual's incapacity to self realise their abusive situation as well as to come to terms with their victimization status is an important factor in determining the consistent progression of same sex abuse. Particularly as the research as well as previous research studies have highlighted that same sex abuse is far more likely to occur in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts due to the complexity of power imbalances (Renzetti 1996). More importantly however, as Giddens (1992) has identified that same sex partners do not have socially specified roles and therefore should be more democratic as same sex relationships are not socially restricted to pursue a dominant or a subservient role. This is not always the case as

both partners can and do adopt these roles, therefore determining whether a same sex relationship is suffering domestic abuse is far more problematic.

Inevitably, its recognition rests on the ability of the victim to self realise that their partner's behaviour is not irrational and that they are not involved within a mutually harmful relationship, but they are the unfortunate victim of an abusive perpetrator. Even if an individual self realises their victimization and the harm that they are suffering, whether they will believe themselves or fall for the loving sentiments of their abusive partner after a violent episode will determine the continuation of their suffering. It is therefore essential that Walker's (2006) cycle of violence is broken to confront such abuse. How society will encourage such a rupture due to the heteronormative assumptions of sexual identity alongside the aggressive and dominating characteristics of hegemonic masculinity is sceptical (Connell 2005). Ultimately, breaking this cycle also requires the actions of perpetrators to be accounted for and their psychological attributes must be considered. Within which, the psychological attributes of the perpetrator greatly influenced the pattern of abuse, a theme which the next chapter will explore.

6.0 Chapter six

Presenting the findings: Analysis and Discussion- Psychologies and help seeking behaviour

6.1 What was their partner thinking? Every rose has its thorn

The typologies of abuse that the participants experienced included a diverse mix of physical, psychological and emotional acts of violence. Physical acts of violence often included hitting, scratching, punching, strangulation, kicking, restraining, biting and violently pushing their partner. The physical acts of one participant experiences Kamal (28) were so severe, so extreme that they felt that their life was in jeopardy.

"We came back home and he got violent again and he had me on the floor and he was strangling me. I could feel myself loosing consciousness. It actually went through my mind 'oh my god this bastard is going to kill me!' Luckily... there was a vase next to me and I smashed it over his head. That was the only reason I got out of that situation" (Kamal: 28, p 70).

In contrast to physical abuse, the participants also suffered psychological abuse. According to Island and Letellier (1991) although psychological acts are a relatively unforeseeable side to abusive relationships, they leave their own scars and bruises on the mental stability of their victims. In relevance to the study, the participants felt very much manipulated, controlled, fearful, anxious, alone and ashamed. One

participant in particular Reece (28), suffered from an eating disorder and several nightmares after the relationship had ended. Conversely, the participants also described the way they perceived their abusive participants to feel. Dominance, empowerment, acceptance that they could abuse, anger, possessiveness and ultimately the need to control the actions of their partner were perceived by all of the victim participants (Donald: 27, Reece: 28, Anthony: 27, Kamal: 28, Peter: 28).

In relation to psychological abuse, Island and Letellier (1991) also stress that the psychology of the perpetrator is the root cause for abuse. Their actions are the consequences of a sadistic mental disorder which are predetermined and are rationally intended to inflict abuse on their partner (Island and Letellier 1991). In relevance to the research there is a degree of truth in this understanding. In particular the abusive actions of Kamal's (28) abusive partner were described by him to inflict abuse in such a way that continually degraded him and asserted his partner as superior. He describes his abusive partner to be very clever in manipulating him to act the way in which he saw fit, what he wore, his hairstyle, even when he went out with his friends his partner attempted to talk him out of it, in order to assert total control and domination over him. Most significantly, his partner rationally played on his emotions to keep the relationship intact and his superiority asserted. Theoretically this reflects Merrill's (1996) socio-psychological assertions that perpetrators intentionally choose to abuse. Kamal's (28) partner consequentially perceived that his inflicted abuse would suffer no retaliation or consequence (Merrill 1996).

"I did begin to press charges. But he got back in, he got back hold of me... he was very very manipulative. And very very clever, always told me how much he loved me and blah blah blah. Before I knew it I dropped the charges, we got back together and I moved back in with him " (Kamal: 28, p 67).

Similarly Peter (28) also argued that his abusive partner knew how to inflict abuse that would severely degrade his position, even though he did not regard him as intelligent he strongly emphasised that he learned to abuse him.

"He always played mind games with me, he wasn't a very intelligent man, so I think the way in which he manipulated me was almost like a learnt behaviour than any kind of him being super clever. It was almost like he learned to be like that and other than that he wouldn't know how to be any different " (Peter: 28, p91)

Relating back again to Kamal (28), his partner also experienced a violent and abusive history with his father. Something within which Caesar (1988) has illustrated that an individual who has been apart of a violent family in their childhood increases their likelihood to be a perpetrator of domestic abuse. In comparison, Peter's (28) experiences were similar; his abusive partner had no contact with his parents and had been in an abusive relationships previously. Similarly to this, Bandura (1973) has stressed that violence does occur through a learning process by the abuser. In particular it has also been argued that men are far

more likely to learn to be violent, significantly due to their gender socialization (Zemsky cited in Merrill 1996). Subsequently this also reflects Merrill's (1996) socio-psychological model that perpetrators learn to abuse due to the psychological acknowledgement of the possible beneficial rewards in inflicting abuse. Interestingly however, after the relationship had ended the abusive behaviour that the perpetrator displayed and the harm that the participants subsequently suffered influenced the participants to think that they were responsible for their partner's behaviour. Or that it was their social and psychological characteristics that attracted abusive partners. For instance Peter (28) described his thoughts and stated that:

"Because I was getting unequal relationships here and there it did concern me, because I thought when I get emotionally involved again I am going to meet someone who is similar" (Peter:28,p 99).

Equally, Kamal's:28 and Reece's:28 thoughts were similar:

"I think I am going to get a CRB check on the next person that I date. I think it has made me a lot more wary of what can happen and what can go wrong. It's made me a lot more wary of who I am in relationships" (Kamal: 28, p 71).

"Giving personal information I tend to be a bit more guarded. Not as much cold but a bit harder. I would say harder and less easier to get to know the real me" (Reece: 28, p 119).

On reflection, it has been criminologically recognised that certain victims can be more prone and even responsible for their own victimization (Hentig 1940 cited in Marsh et al 2004). Equally, it has also been asserted that victims themselves are pathologically vulnerable and due to certain socio-economic characteristics they are more prone to victimization (Hentig 1940 cited in Rock 2007). As the research has already recognized that homosexuality is disempowered and that power relations culturally differentiate within gay relationships, perhaps the possibility for them on a societal level to become victims is far greater (Renzetti 1996, Allen and Leventhal 1999).

Similarly, Mendelsohn's (1963) notions of victim precipitation are clearly reflected upon, as the acts of the victim are seen to influence or provoke the actions of their perpetrator, as well as their actions towards the victim. In relation, the participants sought to help the perpetrator and therefore this allowed their partner to continually abuse them. The opportunity was also evidently provided by the victim for the perpetrator to inflict abusive acts (Merrill 1996).

Ultimately, what the research suggests is that the participant's abusive partners did show signs of psychological instability. Particularly due to their abusive history, the perpetrators knew how to act abusively and proceeded to do so with the correct opportunity. Conversely, this opportunity was created by the victims due to their subordinate characteristics and their intentions as a reaction to abusive acts to help

the perpetrator. Fundamentally, this process must become dysfunctional for the victim to escape their violent relationship.

Whilst exploring the experiences of the participants, the understanding of psychological abuse is far more important to explore the mechanisms of same sex abuse. Particularly the psychological characteristics of the perpetrator are crucial to determine the cause of domestic abuse. Indeed, Island and Letellier's (1991) assertions that perpetrators suffer from a sadistic mental disorder and that their actions are rational, perhaps the traits of their victims do not always contribute to their decision to abuse. Particularly as the perpetrators previous history holds great weight in determining whether they will inflict abuse upon their partner (Caesar 1988). Most predominantly as many of the participant's perpetrators endured a violent history when they were younger this influenced their psychological intentions to abuse (Caesar 1988, Bandura 1973).

In contrast the psychological traits of the victim as well as their perpetrators are equally crucial to determine the cause of domestic abuse. What psychological characteristics do both the victim and the perpetrator have that trigger the occurrence of abusive behaviour within a relationship? Or does it develop between their social interactions? According to Von Hentig (cited in Mash et al 2004) and Mendelsohn (1963) the social interaction of both the victim and the perpetrator influence the psychological intentions of the perpetrator. This could be a plausible explanation for domestic violence, particularly as perpetrators learn and choose to abuse on the basis of the correct opportunity (Merrill 1996). Indeed, the research highlighted that the participants abusive partners learned and therefore knew how to inflict abuse in such a way that would psychologically disrupt them, a process that has been advocated by Bandura (1973) to be a predominant cause for abuse. Ultimately, in correspondence with the Walker's (1979) cycle of violence, perhaps this process of the perpetrator knowing how to inflict abuse upon their partner based on the victim's characteristics as no retaliation would occur, may also have to be ruptured in order to confront same sex domestic violence. However, whether the psychological sentiments of the perpetrator and the characteristics of the victim can be identified to be the cause of a domestically violent relationship is unclear, particularly the inability of victims to seek help creates access barriers in confronting same sex domestic violence. The help seeking behaviour of the victim was therefore another re-occurring theme throughout the research.

6.2 Help Seeking, how adequate are the responses to same sex abuse?

Universally all the participants felt that there was no support or very little services to effectively respond and provide for a gay man who is suffering an abusive relationship (Donald: 27, Kamal: 28, Peter: 28, Reece: 28, Anthony: 27, Samuel). Even more so, previous literature on help seeking behaviours has stressed that men are far less likely to pursue help in comparison to women; an obstacle which additionally contributes to a gay man's inability to seek help (McCaughan and McKenna 2006). Undoubtedly there is a necessity for an increased response socially

in order for services to adequately address a persistently unrecognisable problem. Particularly as Kamal (28) strongly argued that:

“I think the police in Manchester are quite good because they have got their own specific domestic violence unit. Apart from that there isn't much support, the only small network that I know of is 'Broken Rainbow' and that pretty much is the only one. The only helpline and that's not even open twenty four hours. So I think that there isn't that many places to go for gay and lesbian women if they are on the receiving end of domestic violence” (Kamal: 28, p 72).

Most strikingly, as Donald (27), Kamal (28), Peter (28) and Anthony (27) felt that the reasons for this are, that people are frightened to disclose their situation and instead ignore or pretend that their relationship was not what it seemed to be. Fundamentally, this was due to societal stigma and the lack of affiliation with domestic violence in the gay community. Embarrassment, insecurity and anxiety were also expressed due to internal homophobia their situation would not be taken seriously. Above all however they felt that gay men would feel unclear of where they would go to seek help. Most significantly as Reece (28) who works for the gay community still did not seek help for his situation, in particular due to the embarrassment he feared it may cause.

“I wouldn't say that I went to anyone for advice and guidance, even working for the gay community in the area I was humiliated that I was suffering this. We all want that perfect relationship and that knight in Shining armour and because that's what wasn't happening I was embarrassed” (Reece: 28, p 118).

Additionally residing from an organisational perspective, Samuel who works with same sex domestic violence victims stated that due to problematic power relations within a heterosexist society, victims are cautious to reveal their sexual identity and their abusive situations (Samuel). In particular victims fear disbelief, judgement and that their situation will not be taken seriously as they are suffering abuse from a member of the same sex (Samuel).

“People are frightened to come forward. They feel that they won't be listened to. As far as they are concerned, that it is something that they have to put up with. And I'm saying 'no' I think a lot of it is that people look at an authority. They see us as an authority figure that will not believe a thing that they say” (Samuel: p 124).

Indeed, the research appears to also reflect this as during the recruitment process only one organisation that was contacted agreed to be interviewed (Appendix 8). Most strikingly, the local police authorities that were contacted and operated throughout Manchester's gay community were completely reluctant to offer any interest in the research (Appendix 8). The reluctance of support services may therefore be a fundamental explanation that gay men are not seeking help for their situation. Most particularly and relation to Anthony's (27) experiences, when he sought support from the police authorities for the abuse that he was suffering. He felt

that the response that he received for a domestically violent situation was not appropriately dealt with as it would have been, had he had been female in a heterosexual relationship. Sequentially, due to this he asserted that he had lost all faith in the police for the response that he received.

“I did actually think at the time would they be saying that if I was female? For instance if a female made the call and there was a man and a woman stood there and she said no I don’t want him to go. I don’t think they would treat them the same way...I really felt like I had wasted police time and I really had not” (Anthony: 84/85)

Due to his unfortunate situation Anthony (27) considered the necessity for more appropriate action, however despite the inadequacies of service provision he also stressed that seeking this help does not depend on an individual’s sexuality. Rather it is down to the individual and his belief of what to do.

“I think that it would help that sort of situation but because I am so comfortable with who I am and I quite strongly believe that I don’t care whether you think I’m gay or not. I won’t let my sexuality effect a decision that I make, if I need help I will get help and I don’t really care what anyone else thinks” (Anthony:27,p 86/87).

Ultimately, it is not only the availability and consistency of support that needs developing. Increased awareness, recognition and above all the encouragement of individual victims to voice their situation is an absolute crucial task if same sex abuse is to be effectively tackled. However, how should society encourage victims to seek support as every individual is different? Previous research has recognised that societal homophobia can induce same sex abuse; particularly in the criminal justice system which has failed to protect homosexual victims of domestic violence (Allen and Leventhal 1999, Witzer 1999). Conversely, the gay community itself frequently denies the existence of same sex domestic violence (Island and Letellier 1991). Particularly due to the already oppressive sentiments of a heterosexist society with regards to the pathologization of homosexuality and the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the gay community has attempted to ignore the problem to improve their societal equality (Hamberger 1996). It is therefore no surprise that men feel that authorities are unapproachable and incapable in tackling their situation, most fundamentally as Peter pointed out *“it’s more of political correctness which is going to stop its progression”* (Peter: 28, p 102). Additionally however, recent changes in the legislative definition of domestic violence have offered a more widely encompassing spectrum of intimate partner violence to reflect the realistic situation (Donovan et al 2006). Although conjured predominantly within heterosexist guidelines and highly emphasises female abuse, there is still along way to go provide appropriate and unbiased support (Donovan et al 2006, Renzetti and Miley 1996). From exploring the participants lived realities, encouraging gay men to seek help for their situation is fundamental for their safety and well being, however, lack of recognition and the concealed nature of the topic will prevent gay men to seek the necessary support. Indeed, as the research has identified there is inconsistencies in

the availability of service provision, services lack transparency to appropriately provide for gay men, compared to the services on offer for female victims of domestic violence (Allen and Leventhal 1999). Equally, not only are the available services heterosexist, they are also sexist in solely providing for female victims of domestic abuse. Its inconsistencies are therefore evident as service provisions do not have a clear foundation within the lives of gay men. Similarly if services are expanded to encompass a much wider cross section of potential victims and awareness is increased, the current strategies to do so are ineffective in confronting the problem. Most strikingly, as the research has highlighted that due to fear, embarrassment and disbelief gay men will not use support services, even if they are aware of their existence. Particularly the perceived illegitimacy of homosexuality within a predominantly heterosexist society alongside the degree of ignorance of the gay community to recognise the problem, has created an impenetrable barrier for gay men to seek help and access it (Weeks et al 2001, Hamberger 1996).

Although everyone is different and as the research has also identified that sexual identity may not be an obstacle to overcome, it sequentially is down to the individual to accept their situation and belief in themselves to seek the help that they need. Indeed, increasing recognition and further empowering gay men within society will encourage help seeking behaviour. Undoubtedly, through expanding services by attempting to include the gay community and most importantly recognising that the domestic violence paradigm of power imbalance is also exclusive to all the relationships of intimate gay men is crucial (Elliott 1996). To determine whether they will seek help, self realise their position and break their cycles of violence and psychological entrapment to secure their safety (Elliott 1996). There is hope however, particularly the process of self reflexive development that Giddens (1991) refers to in late modernity will trigger individual self realisation, alongside the increasing egalitarian position that gay men are achieving should curb the progression of same sex domestic abuse both within an individual and a societal perspective (Giddens 1992, Klesse 2007).

7.0 Chapter seven

Conclusion to the study

With the study's primary intention to explore domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men, the research achieved this through conducting semi structured interviews to explore the accounts and the lived experiences of the men who have suffered abusive same sex relationships. The study's most significant finding was that domestic violence is an occurring possibility within late modernity and can potentially be a consistent feature throughout the discourse of gay men; however the discourse lacks recognition by our late modern society and most importantly by the partners involved (Merrill and Wolfe 2000).

Indeed, it was also identified that its occurrence is possibly more likely in comparison to heterosexual relationships due to culturally differentiated power relations, predetermining power relations is unclear. Alongside this, the disempowered socio-political characteristics that gay men are subjected to contribute to the occurrence of an abusive relationship (Renzetti 1996). Strikingly despite the possibilities of its occurrence, abusive acts are misconceived and often stereotyped as rather mutual abuse (Merrill 1996). Ever still gay men are excluded from the domestic violence paradigm, even though close friends and family may recognise their suffering and attempt to talk them out of their relationship. This therefore highlights the question why is wider society not fully recognising a persistent problem?

Similarly, due to its misconception, many gay men do not self realise their victimization status despite support from their close companions; they instead choose to accept their partners abuse as irrational behaviour that they could resolve by staying with their partner. This inevitably leads to the continual degradation and repetition of their suffering, potentially trapping them in their abusive relationships. Sequentially, what was also found reflects the assertions made by Island and Letellier (1991), Allen and Leventhal (1999), Caesar (1988) as well as Merrill (1996) that the societal disempowerment of gay men and their partners violent previous history could be what drives their partners psychological temperament to act abusively by learning as well as choosing to abuse based upon the correct opportunity. This is conversely also influenced by the socio-political vulnerability of their victim, within which in same sex relationships is the misconceptions of domestic violence and the disempowerment of their social group. Most importantly, as the severity of the abusive relationship progresses and their suffering is in need of support, many victims are reluctant to seek help due to feelings of disbelief within the underpinnings of a heteronormative society. Equally, if they wish to seek help, support services are consistently unreliable to manage the problem, particularly the reluctance of police authorities to participate in the research as well as the ignorance of the gay community to accept responsibility, supports this unreliability due to the fear of further disempowerment by mainstream society in late modernity.

Undoubtedly these findings hold great weight as a snowballing sample was adopted a much more diverse cross section of experiences could be explored. This therefore provided a far richer source of data for the study to work with through conducting the semi structured interview. In particular those interviews that were conducted over the phone did not restrict the study to a locality as national accounts were analysed. Similarly, the conduction of the study was predominantly within a gay friendly city, therefore acquiring access to sensitive criteria from a marginalised social group was achieved.

Although the ability to explore a diverse mix of participants was achieved, the research was not widely representative enough of gay men. Indeed as a purposive sample was adopted to acquire the correct participants to explore; many of the participants were of similar age, ethnicity and background. Equally the size of the

sample was relatively small, five gay men expressing their situations as well as one member from an organisational body is not enough to truly account for such a concealed topic. Similarly, although the research focus was exploring same sex abuse within the lives of gay men, women were unaccounted for. In its initial stages the study's scope was to include women, and during the interview process the participants did discuss abuse within lesbian relationships in order to fully explore the abusive relationships of intimate gay men. However recruiting lesbian participants proved challenging and implausible, possibly due to the male sex of the researcher, lesbian participants were unwilling to share their experiences. Inevitably, what must be obtained is the cooperation of the gay community to conduct plausible research, alongside a close relationship between the researcher and their participants to explore their diverse lives (McClennen 1999). Nevertheless, what this research shows us is that although invisible, same sex domestic violence is worthy of more research that uses a larger sample that interrelates to the lives of other non-heterosexual social identities such as the bisexual population.

Subsequently, in addition to the intimate relationships of gay men, research on domestic violence within intimate lesbian relationships must be further explored, particularly as various feminisms dismiss the occurrence of abuse in lesbian relationships due to the fear of possible contradictions to feminist arguments (Merrill 1996). Similarly, as previous research is limited future research must also adopt this researches intention to explore. There is always still more to know and there are also still more relationships that need to be listened to if a clear visible understanding of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men is to be successfully apprehended. Most particularly as late modernity is continually allowing greater scope as well as increased access for the lives of the non-heterosexual population to be voiced (Giddens 1991, Fawcett and Hearn 2004).

8.1- Appendix 1-Consent Form



Project Title- Exploratory study into domestic violence concerning gay men

Name of researcher – Daniel Nixon **Name of supervisor-** Dr John E Goldring

Your name.....

Postcode.....
Email Address.....

Contact details principle investigator: Daniel Nixon
Tel- 07725799625
Email- 08115270@stu.mmu.ac.uk
Supervisor's Email- j.goldring@mmu.ac.uk

I confirm that I have read and fully understand the information sheet informing me of the purpose of the research- Exploratory study into domestic violence concerning lesbian and gay people

I have been made aware that I should not experience any discomfort through the participation of this study

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any given reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected.

I understand that I can withdraw all or part of information I give at anytime prior to publication without any reason

If interviewed via email, I understand that I will be sent a full copy of what I have said/written over the course of the research

I understand that I will not be identified from the information I give in any form of academic work

I confirm that I have received no financial reward for the participation of this study and the decision to participate in this study has been solely my own.

I agree to participate in the study and that I have received my own copy of this form

Participant's Signature.....

Researcher's Signature.....

Date.....



8.2- Appendix 2-Information Sheet

Exploratory study into domestic violence concerning gay men

Introduction- My name is Daniel Nixon; currently I am a [BA HONS] Criminology student at Manchester Metropolitan University. I am conducting an exploratory study of homosexual domestic violence. When people talk about domestic abuse, society often assumes that a male has abused his female partner or their children. Too often abuse that occurs between gay men is ignored and is often considered something that doesn't occur within the relationships of gay men. Although the police and the public are beginning to notice, there is still a long way to go before domestic violence between gay men is significantly recognised as a social problem.

The aim of the research is to explore and assess the impact of domestic violence for individuals who are in or have been in same sex relationships. I am interested to explore how the how violent behaviour is constituted, constructed and understood within the context of male same sex relationships.

What will I have to do if I take part- If you participate in this research study you will be interviewed either face to face or over the phone. You will be asked about your experiences of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men in any form, whether personal, through your occupation or someone you know. Your verbal responses will be recorded through the use of a Dictaphone. The information collected will all be classed as highly confidential and destroyed after the completion of my degree. As a gay man myself I am aware of the stigma of being apart the gay community. I also recognise that domestic violence can be particularly difficult to talk about, especially with people you don't know. However rest assured that all the things that you say will be kept in the strictest confidence and anonymised before use. If there is anything you wish to remove from the interview, this can be done by requesting a copy of the anonymised transcripts. Once completed, you may request a copy of the study.

Reminder- You may withdraw your participation at any given time without having to state a given reason; your participation is truly voluntary. However, through your participation you will be significantly adding to our understanding of the issues surrounding domestic violence within the lives of gay men. Hopefully domestic violence in the gay community can be further recognised, action by the lesbian and gay foundation can be increased, which will inevitably effect how gay and lesbian people are treated in society.

Therefore, I would like to invite you to participate in this study, to do this you need to fully understand and have carefully read this information sheet, alongside the consent form, which you must sign. I will also sign it and so will my dissertation supervisor so that ethical guidelines can be followed correctly. You may also keep a copy of the forms for your personal records as well. Many thanks for your participation, it is greatly appreciated. Hopefully this will be a mutually beneficial study for all involved.



8.3- Appendix 3-Semi-structured interview protocol (individual)

Exploratory study into domestic violence concerning gay men

Category 1- Participants general background.

- 1] What is your age?
- 2] What would best describe your ethnicity?
- 3] Generally what is your highest educational qualification, what is your occupation or what career do you wish to aspire to have?
- 4] How would you best describe your gender?
- 5] When did you first realise you were a gay man? How did you find this experience?
- 6] Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have/had?
- 7] Are you open about your sexuality?
- 8] Has this affected any friend or family relationship you have/had?

Category 2- Relationships.

- 1] How many intimate same sex relationships, however long, have you had in the past five years?
- 2] What were your experiences and views of these/ this relationship/s?
- 3] How did you feel towards your intimate partner/s within these/this relationship/s?
- 4] What do you think they thought of you?
- 5] Were these/ this relationship/s open? Did other people know?

Category 3- Domestic Violence.

- 1] How do you think society views domestic violence?
- 2] Do you feel that gay and lesbian people are just as likely to experience domestic violence as in heterosexual relationships?
- 3] Why do you think this?
- 4] From your own experiences how do you feel about gay and lesbian domestic violence?
- 5] When was your first experience of domestic violence?
- 6] What have been your personal experiences of such violence?
- 7] How did this make you feel?
- 8] Did anyone know it was going on?
- 9] At the time did you realise what was happening?
- 10] Why do you think this was?
- 11] Did you go to anyone for help and advice about what you should do?
- 12] How has this experience affected your general relationship/s with that person/s?
- 13] Has the experiences that you have mentioned affected you as a person? Are you wary of new relationships?

14] Do you now act differently towards other gay men? If so Why?

15] Has the experiences affected your occupation, health, where you live, your outlook on life?

Category 4- Future of domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men?

1] What action by the police, criminal justice systems and Lesbian and gay organizations should be taken to help those who suffer from such violence?

2] Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that they won't?

3] Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well advice on gay and lesbian domestic violence?

4] If such violence was further recognized by the public do you think that more people would seek help? Why?



8.4- Appendix 4-Semi-structured interview protocol (Organisation)

Exploratory study into domestic violence concerning gay men

Category 1- Organisational background

- 1] What organisation/public body do you represent?
- 2] What is your role within this organisation/public body?
- 3] What does this role involve?

Category 2- Domestic violence

- 1] What are your opinions, views and perceptions on the current issue of gay and lesbian domestic violence?
- 2] Why is this?
- 3] In relation to your organisation/body, is there any awareness or recognition of gay and lesbian domestic violence?
- 4] Why do you believe this to be the case?
- 5] Within your role within your organisation/body, have you ever come across a situation that involved the issue of gay and lesbian male domestic violence?
 - a] (yes) How did you respond?
 - b] (no) What would you have done?
- 6] How do you think they felt?
- 7] How did you feel?

Category 3- Organisational response

- 1] What features of your organisation/body offers help and support to gay men and women who are involved in such violence?
- 2] What does this involve?
- 3] Is gay and lesbian domestic violence highly reported within your organisation/body?
- 4] Why do you believe this to be the case?
- 5] If there were an increase in reporting's and incidents of gay and lesbian domestic violence, would your organisation be equipped to handle this?
- 6] What strategies would be taken?
- 7] Generally would your organisation/body approach violence treat intimate same sex relationships differently as opposed to a heterosexual one?
- 8] What factors would determine this response?

Category 4- Future of gay domestic violence within the intimate relationships of gay men

- 1] What action by the police, criminal justice systems and Lesbian and gay organizations should be taken to help those who suffer from such violence?
- 2] Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that they won't?
- 3] Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well advice on gay male domestic violence?
- 4] If such violence was further recognized by the public do you think that more people would seek help?
- 5] Why do you think this is?
- 6] How do you think same sex domestic violence incidents would be treated twenty, thirty or even forty years ago within society and the criminal justice system?



8.5 Appendix 5-Ethical considerations checklist

Project title- An exploratory study into domestic violence concerning gay men

Ethical Considerations prior Interview:

- 1) Has the ethical form been approved for the research to go ahead? []
- 2) Has the participant given their informed consent to participate in the research?
 - a. Has the participant read and fully understood the information sheet?
(Ask before conducting the semi structured interview) []
 - b. Have the participant, the principle researcher and the dissertation supervisor read, signed and date the consent form?
(Ask before conducting the semi structured interview) []
- 3) Is the conduction of the interview safe for the researcher?
 - a. Is the location safe? []
 - b. Does someone know where you are? []
 - c. Does someone know how long you will be? []
 - d. Are you able to contact someone in an emergency? []

Ethical Considerations after Interview:

- 4) Is the participant's information confidential?
 - a. Are the participants consent forms and credentials confidentially kept in a secure place? []
 - b. Is there any information that the participant has given and they do not wish to disclose? []
- 5) Are the participant's interview responses anonymous?
 - a. Are the transcripts anonymous? []
 - b. Is there any data or material that could possibly identify the participant ? []
- 6) Does that participant knowingly accept that they can contact you for any reason concerning the study after the interview process?
[]

8.6- Appendix 6-Evidence of Recruitment



8.7- Appendix 7-Participant Demographics

Individual

Name	Age	Ethnicity	Highest Qualification	Occupation	Residency
Kamal	28	Asian British	BA (hons) Psychology	Student	Manchester
Anthony	27	White British	BA (hons) Performing Arts	Restaurant manager	Manchester
Peter	28	White British	BA (hons) Music	Physiotherapist	Manchester
Donald	27	White British	A Levels	Student	Manchester
Reece	28	Welsh British	BA (hons) Human Resource Management	Human Resource Manager	Gloucestershire

Organisational

Name	Organisation	Role	Residency
Samuel	Sandwell Homes	All aspects of housing, including same sex domestic violence	West Midlands

8.8- Appendix 8-Organisational Contact

Organisation Contacted or representative of organisation	Participated in a semi structured interview	Gave information	Offered assistance	Replied
The Lesbian and Gay Foundation	x	x	✓	✓
Broken Rainbow	x	✓	✓	✓
SandWell Homes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Police Community Support Officer	x	x	x	x

8.9- Appendix 9-Transcript-1 (Anonymous name Kamal)

What is your age?

Kamal -28

How would you best describe your ethnicity?

Kamal - It be Asian, British Asian.

Generally what is your highest educational qualification, what is your occupation or what career do you wish to aspire to have?

Kamal -I've got an undergrad in Psychology and I've just completed a postgraduate in Psychology and Counseling.

How would you best describe your gender?

Kamal –male

When did you first realise you were a gay man? How did you find this experience?

Kamal -Probably when I was about thirteen, going through puberty, I was just attracted to men.

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have or had had?

Kamal - Well my family weren't happy about it. Because their quite traditional, but their quite liberal as well. So what they say is, 'we don't accept your lifestyle' in inverted commas. But you're our son we love you and as long as you don't bring any partners home were happy with that. So they live in Yorkshire and I live in Manchester so my life in Manchester and when I go home are completely different. So it has affected it quite a lot, but the situation and how it is at the moment I am happy with and I think my family is happy with.

Are you open about you sexuality?

Kamal -To a degree yeah, all my friends in Manchester obviously know I am gay, but at home with my extended family no. With my immediate family they know but my cousins and aunties and uncles no.

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have or had had?

Kamal -No just like I explained just those ones

How many intimate same sex relationships, however long, have you had in the past five years?

Kamal - In the last five years there has only been 'the one' which has obviously been the domestic violent one. I've not had an intimate relationship since then, I've had sorta like you know dating people, but its not actually gone into a relationship.

What were your experiences and views of this relationship?

Kamal -Gosh! In general it was a bad relationship and I think now looking back on It., I don't know why I stayed. I mean I kinda know why I stayed, putting it all into perspective you know it was a bad relationship, I should have got out of it a lot lot sooner that I did. And, it was just not good and it was probably exactly five years ago that I met my ex, with which obviously all the violence happened.

How did you feel towards your partner within this relationship?

Kamal -I loved him to pieces. Absolutely loved him adored him. In actual fact when I first saw him I was like wow. He was just so beautiful and I just fell for him really really quickly. And I don't normally fall for people quickly and I don't normally get into relationships very quickly. But I loved him to pieces, when he wasn't being a complete and absolute ergh idiot. He was the most romantic, loving, caring, affectionate. He was just like, you know when it wasn't a bad time, when it was a good time he was perfect, absolutely perfect. And I think that's one of the reasons I stayed.

What do you think they thought of you?

Kamal - Well ha! He actually called me yesterday and he's still in love with me and he's still trying to get back with me. Obviously I've told him, you know it's not going to happen. I do think in his little warped mind that he did really love me and I think he does still love me. But I think the reason that he loves me is that because I stayed with him for so long and now that I have seen all of his bad points. I think in his mind he's like 'oh my god this person is seeing all the shit I am you know, going to put somebody through if he stayed with me'. So 'nobody else is going to put up with that so I need to get him back'. Although I think he loves me I think it's also an element of you know he knows he's completely crazy, so he needs to keep somebody that'll deal with that craziness.

Was this relationship open? Did other people know?

Kamal - Yeah yeah, everybody in Manchester, all my friends knew, all his friends knew we were together. You know and his family.

How do you think society views domestic violence?

Kamal - I think in general I think society does view it as a man beating a woman. And a man controlling a woman and you know a woman being subservient to him. And I think that's pretty much how society sees it. It does not see it, even from like a heterosexual relationship where a woman beats a man and I don't even think society even realises domestic violence exists in same sex relationships either.

Do you feel that gay and lesbian people are just as likely to experience domestic violence as in heterosexual relationships?

Kamal-I think so yeah, having now been through it and having known some of my friends been through it as well. It kind of like opened up conversations between people like you know. That I know which are gay or lesbian and I was actually quite surprised at how many other people had known people who had been themselves in a domestic violence relationship. So I think it is a problem.

From your own experiences how do you feel about gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Kamal -I think it's different, in some ways. But I think primarily it's the same as in heterosexual relationships. I think there's one person in the relationship who's trying to control or trying to manipulate the other person. And the way they do it, you know, there's so many different ways. There's like you know, stopping you seeing your friends, violence obviously, controlling your finances. There's so many different ways especially you know that I saw. And its weird as well, you only sort of realise it in hindsight, all the control and everything. So I think it is very similar, but I think there are like some differences as well because like 'a man and a man' are going to inflict a hell of a lot more violence on each other. Don't get me wrong, he did hit me, but I did try and defend myself and I did hit him back. And I think that there's that difference and I think women in lesbian relationships they tend to be a lot more vindictive towards each other and it's more the mental side of it and the more emotional side of it rather than the physical side of it.

When was your first experience of domestic violence?

Kamal -Well I got into a relationship with my ex five years ago and I'd say the first three to six months were just absolute bliss. Everything was perfect and then after that the arguments started and after that you know the control started and I think it was about nine months in that he was first violent towards me.

What have been your experiences of such violence?

Kamal -I'll go through the physical violence first, it was about nine months in and we had both been out and we'd had a lot to drink, it might have been some cocaine as well or something. The thing with my ex was, even though he was very very very attractive, he was still very jealous. And although there were ten men looking at him he would see the one man that was looking at me. And he just would not be able to cope with it and he would just be like 'oh my god you flirting with him blah blah blah'. And I would just be like, just seriously calm down, chill it out or whatever. But he never seemed able to let it go, he just had this chip on his shoulder that you know that I was seeing other people or that you know he wasn't good enough for me for whatever reason. So we got home and by that point I was living with him, we were living together and we had a flat mate as well. And he just carried on arguing and arguing, and then all out of a sudden just out of nowhere he just hit me. And it was just like a punch in the face. And then we both started fighting, I retaliated and hit him back. I think I managed to knock some of his teeth out and then that was it, he just went crazy. I don't really remember everything that happened after that, but I ended up with two black eyes, ended up with a really bad bruised head. He had bitten me quite a few times on the inside of my leg, my arm and my chest. Even some of these places are even scared now and there was just blood everywhere. Luckily because our flat mate was in he called the police, the police came and arrested him. Actually they arrested both of us because I had hit him as well. And then after that I went to stay with a friend. The police said I could press charges because I had the majority of the injuries and obviously they could see it was him being the aggressor as it were and I did begin to press charges. But he got back in, he

got back hold of me and the thing with him was he is very very manipulative. And very very clever, always told me how much he loved me and blah blah blah. Before I knew it I dropped the charges, we got back together and I moved back in with him. Now that cycle kind of happened for about four and a half years. And you know everything would be fine and the violence would happen again and I'd move out, then you know he managed to talk me back into it. And that happened maybe about six times, moving in and out and serious levels of violence. Apart from that, if we were having an argument he would push me or he would intimidate me. He wouldn't let me leave the room, he'd stand in the doorway so I physically couldn't leave and he would argue with me. He'd spit at me or just say really horrible things. So that's side the physical violence.

Emotional side of it was really he would control everything that I did. He didn't like my friends so he would cut me off from my friends. He didn't like the fact that you know, he didn't have contact with my family. He didn't like my family, he didn't like spending time with my family because he had no control over that. He controlled my finances, like how much I was spending and if he thought I was spending too much money he would start an argument. He would then make me promise or whatever that I would stop it. He'd also manipulate everything I did, even what I wore, even what hairstyle I had. It was like you know every single thing was you know by his say so and what he wanted. Looking back on it now, I'm like I can't believe I let him do all that, but I did. And then the sexual side of it was, he was never violent. But sometimes just to avoid arguments I just kinda had sex with him just to shut him up. Or just you know 'oh god, okay then fine' and it was pretty much always on his terms, whenever he wanted it. So that's like all the different levels of violence and the reason I think I let it all go ahead or carried on for so long was his background. When he was younger he was physically abused by his father. His dad used to beat him quite badly and all of this has been verified when I met like his sister or his brother. So they kinda collaborated all the stories. Because at first I was like 'oh my god' is he lying that can't be true. So his dad used to really really beat him and his mum then left his dad and was meant to take him with her but she left him in social care. And she bugged off to Ireland without him and that was when he was eleven years old. And so you know he had such a horrendous childhood, and then he went into foster care which again the experiences were really bad. And then he got adopted by a family whose father then died. So it was just like his life just got worse and worse and worse, there were just so many things. And I was like 'Oh my god' this poor guy and having a background in Psychology I was like 'I can help him'. 'I can actually help this guy', nobody else can, but you know I've got the skills I can help this guy I can make him better, I can make him the perfect boyfriend. Obviously I couldn't. So I think that's what kinda made me think 'you know what there are 'reasons for his actions'', and that was kinda, that was the biggest excuse that I made. I shouldn't of because that's his baggage, that's his past. It's not my fault that any of that happened and he shouldn't be taking it out on me. The other thing was, because when he was so romantic and loving caring; I mean he really used to make me feel happy, sending me cards and flowers. When he took me on holiday to Sri Lanka or Paris, Berlin, all these places and he would spend all this money on me.

I mean I am a really big fan of Mary J Blidge and he got front row tickets at the O2 arena. All these really nice things that he'd do, still at the back of mind I was like 'you know he's capable of being a really nice person' and I hoped eventually that part of him would prevail. But at the end of the four and a half years I realised that that was not really him and his actual personality was this really vindictive, manipulative, quite violent and aggressive man. And then after four and half years, I just had enough; I just physically and emotionally couldn't cope. I was like I just have to leave this relationship.

Did anyone know it was going on?

Kamal - Yeah, all my friends knew, especially when I used to come into University with shades on in the middle of winter and my friends would be like 'why you wearing shades?'. I was like because? They would just grab them off and see my eyes. And they would be like 'again, you know why are you with this guy?' All my friends at University knew, the ones that I used to go and live with after the violence had happened when I moved out of his. They obviously knew because I was living with them as it all kicked off again. All my friends were like 'look, you need to stop, you need to think of yourself, one of you is going to come out in a coffin, either you or him are going to die in that relationship, your going to kill each other'. Actual fact that reminds me of one of the other times of violence.

Was again we had been out and again there was some altercation with his ex boyfriend coming on to me or something. Anyway we came back home and he got violent again and he had me on the floor and he was strangling me. I could feel myself loosing consciousness. It actually went through my mind 'oh my god this bastard is going to kill me!' So luckily, you know like in a movie you're grabbing around thinking what the hell is near me, and there was this Vase next to me, and I smashed it over his head. That was the only reason I actually got out of that situation. I think when I told my friends about it they were like 'look, what are you doing? He is going to kill you. There will be a point when he is drunk or so fucked of his face on drugs he is just going to murder you. Why do you keep going back?. And I would be like 'no no it will be fine this time, it will get better this time, it will be this, that and the other'. And in the end it was just the same.

At the time did you realise what was happening?

Kamal - I kind of did, but I kind of didn't. I don't know it was weird because, obviously I knew it was domestic violence because he was hitting me. The police had actually given me a leaflet and their domestic violence unit had been in contact with me. They said 'look you have gone through domestic violence, do you want counseling etc'. And I just brushed it all off and thought no; no I don't need any of that. I am a Psychology student I can counsel myself, I have got friends that could do that for me. But because I was making so many excuses for him and because I thought that he would change. I didn't think it was domestic violence in the pure sense of the word. I just thought it was just a little hiccup at the beginning of the relationship that I could sort out, and it was violence not domestic violence.

Did you go to anyone for help and advice about what you should do?

Kamal - My friends were a really good source of comfort for me and they were a really good support network. They really really helped me through a lot. I think it was frustrating for them because they kept on giving me advice, and they were all there for me, all the way through. Even though he managed to cut me off from a lot of them and I wasn't seeing them that often. I think what was frustrating for them was that they were giving me all this advice and I wasn't taking it. I think that they knew that I had to go through the process myself and get to the point where I was ready to leave. When I actually fallen out of love with him and I realised that it had to end. I think because they knew that my friends stood by me. If they had maybe been not so understanding or intelligent as to think right ' this person isn't listening lets fuck them off' then that might of happened. But I think because a lot of them were quite intelligent to know that look, this is just a course that's going to happen, it's going to finish, that we will just stick by him.

How has this experience affected your general relationships with that person?

Kamal - I don't speak to him any more, he gets in contact with me still after all this time. He still tells me that he loves me. Yeah, has it affected it? It's completely destroyed it; there is no relationship there any more as far as I am concerned. He is just some crazy guy.

Has this experience affected you as a person? Are you wary of new relationship?

Kamal - I think I am, I think I am going to get a CRB check on the next person that I date. I think it has made me a lot more wary of what can happen and what can go wrong. It's made me a lot more wary of how I am in relationships. I also know the warning signs of what kind of person might be a violent person or a controlling person. Its good in that sense, but in the bad sense it has really put me off relationships to the point where I am just happy being single. I just can be dealing with any more drama or any more clingy boyfriends. I just want to be by myself.

Do you now act differently towards other gay men? If so why?

Kamal - I wouldn't say so because obviously I have got a lot of gay friends. So I would probably just treat them exactly as I did before. All of there friends and knew people that I meet I don't treat them any differently. If I was dating again then I might treat that person differently but actual just general other people then no.

Has the experiences affected your health, where you live, your outlook on life?

Kamal - It hasn't affected my occupation or my health. I do have more scares that I used to. My general outlook on live would maybe a little more jaded. I think I have a more pessimistic view of love now. I think before I used to think that unconditional love would be meeting somebody and falling deeply in love, now I don't believe in unconditional love. I think there is always conditional love. There has to be conditions there and there has to be give and take. I also don't think that that whole idea of complete and absolute romance is right either. I think I would be more happier in the future to meet somebody who was just more on my wave length. And just a bit more sedate and normal and not have all those highs and lows as it were.

What action by the police, criminal justice systems and Lesbian and gay organisations should be taken to help those who suffer from such violence?

Kamal - I think the police in Manchester are quite good because they have got their own specific domestic violence unit, so I think that's quite good. Apart from that there isn't much support, the only small network that I know of is 'Broken Rainbow' and that pretty much is the only one. The only helpline and that's not even open twenty four hours. So I think that there isn't many places to go for gay and lesbian women if they are on the receiving end of domestic violence or in that position. There are a lot of places for heterosexual people, especially heterosexual women. There are refuges, there are tonnes and tonnes of help lines catering for different types of ethnicities, different groups etc. So I think there does need to be a bit more resources given for that problem.

Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that they won't?

Kamal - I think that no society is changing. I think there used to be the view, especially as having speaking with older people in the gay community. Before the police were very homophobic, having dealt with the police myself I don't find them homophobic, if anything I find them slightly racist, but not homophobic. A lot of my friends have had dealings with the police and they don't think that there that homophobic. I think attitudes are changing in that respect. Overall yeah, I think they will because there is not that much; there is not that perceived feeling of homophobia any more. Also because being gay or lesbian it's slightly a lot more acceptable. I think they are more likely to utilise resources and services because of that yeah.

Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well as advice on gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Kamal - Yeah I think there is, obviously there is a lot less resources. I think also there is a lot less general information out there. I don't think that that many people know about it. All my friends that have been in violent relationships, they all keep it 'quiet quiet' or 'hush hush' and they don't want anyone to know. If it ever comes up in a general conversation, they don't say anything they just keep quiet. I think part of it is obviously embarrassment that you have been in a domestic violence relationship. I think the other part of it is I just don't think it is that acceptable in society. So there is kind of this stigma attached to it as well.

If such violence was further recognised by the public do you think that more people would seek help? Why?

Kamal - Yeah, I think they would. I think more people would seek help. I think its just because like I said before there is a stigma attached to it. If more people recognise it as a problem then there isn't that much stigma. For example if a heterosexual women goes into a refuge, society doesn't look down on her. They think well oh good for her, she got out of that relationship, she got help, she went somewhere where she could be safe. That's only because it is recognised that there is

a problem. Where a man beats a woman, so the woman needs to leave that situation and go somewhere. So the stigma there has kind of been taken out of it. If it's slightly realised that there might be a problem where there might be two lesbians and one might beat the other one up. She also needs to go somewhere and there wouldn't be as much stigma, she might be more willing to get help.

End of interview.

8.10- Appendix 10-Transcript-2 (Anonymous name Anthony)

What is your age?

Anthony -27

How would you best describe your ethnicity?

Anthony -British

Generally what is your highest educational qualification, what is your occupation or what career do you wish to aspire to have?

Anthony -I have a University degree in performing arts, I'm a restaurant manager. Well I'm happy with that at the moment.

What would best describe your gender?

Anthony -Male

When did you first realise you were a gay man? How did you find this experience?

Anthony -Young, very young, primary school age, hard a suppose, knowing that your different from everybody else. And I suppose properly realised it in, the age of about thirteen, fourteen, and again hard. Until like, I told everybody, then it came easy.

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have or had?

Anthony - Yeah it did at first, before like, before I told my family, I think they found it hard cause I was going through a bad time. So they didn't really know what was wrong, they just saw me being upset all the time. And then when, I think when the time came, I was going through counselling, then I think when the time came, that they knew. In the end I think its brought us closer together probably. So its not had a negative effect and friends, its never had a negative effect on that.

Are you open about your sexuality?

Anthony - Yeah

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have or had?

Anthony - No I don't think so, I mean I think I'm quite careful with what sort of information I disclose, to what sort of people so I'm obviously not going to go into detail about relationships with my family, I find it inappropriate. But with friends like I don't think I've lost any friends. To be honest I've probably made more.. from it.

How many intimate same sex relationships, however long, have you had in the past five years?

Anthony - Long term, four, in the last five years.

What were your experiences and views of these relationships?

Anthony - I suppose all four of those have been quite intense, with my views looking back on them. I mean at the time, I could never imagine me being with anyone else than the person I was with at the time. And then now, I am still in contact with them all. And..... so... maybe I don't know if finishing was the right thing or what. By the time I suppose I thought it was the best thing. They were quite intense I suppose and I thought I found someone that I could spend at least, you know, years with if not the rest of my life. And that's what I became, that accustomed to I suppose, until like, things started to go wrong and then, then you start coming distant. But I suppose, in each point in those four relationships, I though I would be with them for the long term.

How did you feel towards your intimate partners/ within these relationships?

Anthony - Each one different, but I suppose I had the same feelings towards them, obviously I loved them and cared for them and wanted to like to the best I could, for them. But at the same time appreciating that their individual, and I would not expect them to be anything than they were I don't suppose.

What do you think they thought of you?

Anthony - Well I suppose the same feelings that I felt towards them, love and affection, wanted to be there and do their best they could for me.

Were these relationships open? Did other people know?

Anthony - Yeah all of them, I'm quite good with, well I say good. But I mean I do introduce any partner to my friends and my family. Where as I don't think I've ever. I think I've met one person, two relationships parents. So I always find that like the relationship I have, they'll come into my life, rather than I'll become apart of theirs. Because I don't necessarily meet a lot or any of their friends or family it always seems to happen that, they meet mine.

How do you think society views domestic violence?

Anthony - Generally I think it's not as taboo as it used to be, I think it's spoken about a lot more openly and there's a lot more awareness on the TV, radio. I think even like on chat shows and things like that people talk about it quite openly. You know, they'll sit their and they'll say ' you know I've done this, I've done that'. Obviously its like looked down upon, but I think it's easier for people to admit, admit it because society sees a strength in someone, well a weakness in someone doing it but when they can admit that their doing it. I think that society sees a strength in this guy or girl who wants to change or make a change.

Do you feel that gay and lesbian people are just as likely to experience domestic violence as in heterosexual relationships?

Anthony - Yes, yeah because I don't think it's like the case of male or female. I think its more down to personality and temperament, you know relationships and you know upbringing, anything that can affect someone, the person that someone is. And

if they have a relationship with someone else, I don't think it matters at all if it's male or female. I think if anything its more likely to happen between the same sex.

From your own experiences how do you feel about gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Anthony - I think it's hard to be apart of because. For a man, I suppose society views a man to be like the strong person. I think if you are on the receiving end of it, I think it would be quite hard, to go and like talk to someone about it because I don't think its like the man's trait to play the victim not that I think its a female trait to but. And I do think in a same sex relationship, sorry a heterosexual relationship, I do believe that its viewed that, there is a lot more a man must not do this and man must not do that, so it sort of, I think. I think the woman has an upper hand automatically. That sounds like I'm condoning it, I'm not. What I am trying to say is like, like in a same sex relationship is there's domestic violence there's no sort of like automatic victim or 'you shouldn't do this or you shouldn't do that'. Because it's two of the same sex it's hard to determine, where the blame lies or what's right and what's not, if that makes sense.

When was your first experience of domestic violence?

Anthony - three years ago, in what was the second in these four relationships that I have had. Do you want to know about it?

Yeah.

Anthony- He was young I mean I was then twenty six and he was eighteen. So I had a lot to take on board, that like the whole 'gay' acceptance was new to him and I appreciated that I was his first serious boyfriend. So I knew like what was coming along with like, you know what would come along with the relationship. But, I mean it was fine like at first, he was very sweet and because it was very new, I felt like I was not the leader but like he would do like whatever I was doing because he didn't really know any different. And then I think as time got on, (what I touched on before about him like coming into my life), I think it got like to the point where, he felt like he didn't have any control any more because he had moved in with me. And the girl I was living with had given him a job, so he really did like not depend on me, but he really was living under my roof and you know what I mean? But then his problem was, when he drank, like he had a temper and like we would argue about stuff and if he drank then I'd drank so we would mostly be arguing about the most stupid things. And then it would come, he would like using like force or whatever, if I was saying like 'you need to go' or 'like leave me alone' whatever it may be. I think it just got to the point where, he would always start it, I know that, but like I know it was only two years ago I have grown up a lot since then so it would turn into a fight more than like. I would never ever be sat there and... be battered. We would end up fighting, but then towards the end of the relationship, because I had given up on the relationship, I sort of let him just do it. Because I thought I'm not going to make myself, 'lower myself to your level'. So because I wasn't using physical force, I think it was hard to like, I mean he would never lay into me so, he would do other things. Because I wasn't fighting back he couldn't fight with me any more, he like kicked a

whole in the door punched a whole in the wall. And he would do stuff like; he would squirt, spit in my face. Things that weren't direct physical contact to try and demoralise me instead of like a fight that I'd stopped.

How did this make you feel?

Anthony - Like I say, I'd given up so, I did care about him a lot and I think the age came into it again. I felt sorry for him, I felt like god if I end this he's got to go back to where he's from. He wasn't from Manchester where I was living and I felt stuck I suppose. When he wasn't like that he was so sweet. It was really really difficult like to, I'm quite forgiving, so the next morning or like a couple of hours after he would come round and be like I'm so sorry. But I think like because I never really saw an end until he did it, like he would never do it in front of people before. Then once he did it, in like front of a friend, she was like in the other room. He pushed me so hard on the bed that he broke my rib, and she came in and obviously I went to hospital. That was the starting to like the real downturn I suppose, but then because I forgave him for it, like that was probably the worst thing I could have done because it escalated even more to when other people were there. Soon after that he like picked up one of my friends and threw them and took a knife as well. But not in a threatening way, just because I don't think he knew what to do really. So obviously again the police were called and he was in a cell for a night.

Did anyone know it was going on?

Anthony - Probably not until the night when my house mate had to come to hospital with a broken rib, because we would fight but I would never have a black eye or anything like that. And then with the rib, apart from her, as far as anyone else knew, work, family I'd just fallen. So no.

At the time did you realise what was happening?

Anthony - I don't like, when you say domestic violence I always think there's a victim. And I never felt like that, whether he made me feel like I deserved it. But again that makes me sound like a victim. I never really thought of the term to be honest. I never thought of it, I knew it was unacceptable what was going on. Because I know two people shouldn't treat each other that way. But I obviously didn't know the severity of it until it was too late I suppose.

Why do you think this was?

Anthony - Well I did know what was happening but I just let it go because I wanted to be with this person and I knew that he wanted to be with me. And I thought he won't do it again, every time something happened I would think 'he won't do it again'. So I didn't realise how severe it was and I don't think I realised what he was capable of. I mean when he broke my rib I don't think it was intentional that he thought 'right I'm going to break his rib'. But actually opening a draw and taking a knife out.. that is... that is... that..... is on purpose. You don't do, that's not an accident. That's what I mean, that's when I realised and that's when it stopped.

Did you go to anyone for help and advice about what you should do about it?

Anthony - No

How has this experience affected your general relationship with that person?

Anthony - God erm... I saw him, not like a few times, maybe like once a month after. We just met up in secret, no one would know. Because I wanted to help him still, I felt that he had issues outside of our relationship that I wanted to be there for him with. And like I said I cared about him and I did love him. I still speak to him to this day, nothing more for like anything platonic relationship. So I think that's how it affected it, I won't be intimate with him because I would feel like I would be betraying all my friends that were there that night and what he did in front of them and to them even if they didn't know.

Have the experiences that you have mentioned affected you as a person? Are you wary of new relationships?

Anthony - No not really, I think I put it down to the individual. Like I said because I didn't feel like the victim. You know you hear about people that it has happened to and they don't trust anyone. So it has never got that bad. So not really no.

Do you know act differently towards other gay men. If so Why?

Anthony - No I don't think it has, it's not changed my opinion on gay men at all. Its a personal thing that you can't generalise and I think its just as likely to happen in any relationship. Not just, you know gays.

Has this experience affected your occupation, health, where you live, your outlook on life?

Anthony - No... It's not affected my occupation. It's not affected where I live but I will always be more comfortable living with another person 'in case'. If my friend hadn't of been there night, I was in no fit state to call anybody, because I couldn't move. So I don't know what he would have done or, he might have run away. You think the worst don't you, he could have run away or been scared or whatever. It is nice having someone else there; it's not affected where I live. I mean I would never move to his home town but that's about all. Oh with my ribs, ribs never really heal, like you can still feel the scar tissue there, when I get tired or I have done to much It will, I say it 'pops out' but I don't think it medically 'pops out'. But it definitely like causes me agro all the time. I suppose it effected my occupation at the time because I couldn't work for about six weeks, you can't treat, you know they don't bandage it up or anything like that it has to heal by its self. And it couldn't if I moved a lot and like it stopped my breath so it wasn't appropriate.

What action by the police, criminal justice systems and lesbian and gay organisations should be taken to help those who suffer from such violence?

Anthony - I think they should treat it the same way in any relationship. I've had other domestic violence incidents since then. Would you like me to talk about that?

Yeah you can do yeah?

Anthony - Because it involved the police. So the current boyfriend that I have had, you would never ever think, you would never see signs. I mean he has got an extremely good job. Yes again he was younger than me, he was twenty four so it was not like he was a teenager. I lived with him when I lived outside of Manchester and he lived with me, not like properly, he didn't pay me any money or anything like that, he would stay with me. Now I have moved back to Manchester he has found it quite hard. So he's under pressure because he's worried about like where I am and things like that, also who I'm living with and he feels like I have forgotten about him. So last week he came over and he doesn't really see like his actions as being inappropriate, he won't really listen, he is not really good in like empathising with somebody and putting himself in somebody else's.... shoes. He will like just do something and think that that's the right thing to do, because I have lived with that with him for so long, it got so bad last week. We were arguing all I wanted him to do was leave; he only had one drink so I knew he could drive. His car was outside; he lives in Burnley so I knew he had somewhere to go. And he wouldn't go, this went on for hours and he would just not leave the flat. I didn't know what to do because I didn't want to call a friend my family because I don't want them to worry about me. I was thinking if this ever gets resolved I would find it hard to carry it on if I knew for example my mum or my sister or a friend of mine knew what he done. You know what I mean because of what they would think. So instead I rang 118 to get the number for the police, I said to him 'look I'm ringing the police now and your not going to leave' in the hope that they would remove him. I know how important his job is to him and I thought he would never ever risk it, I think he like called my bluff. I gave him so many chances that night and I said 'look I will ring them, I will ring them now'. Anyway when I tried to I ended up getting threw, I think it got to him when he heard the voice on the other end and I said to the police 'there is someone in my house I do know who he is, but he is refusing to leave' and the person I spoke to transferred me to someone else. And they asked me 'what's the situation?' so I repeated what I said. When they asked me for my address he ripped the phone out of my hand, threw me on the floor and I think this is what kinda led him to get this violence out of him because he never ever thought that I would do anything like that. So when I was on the floor I shouted the name of the address and the phone like fell on the floor. As far as I know the phone stayed connected. They turned up anyway so they obviously heard like me shout. They came in a matter of minutes, you could hear the sirens as well, I think because I was screaming and he was absolutely like yelling yelling yelling. He punched me in the shoulder while I was lying in the floor and I think they heard that and come. Or I literally said there was someone in my house and they won't leave. So they had listed to what had gone on and they made the choice to come. You know what I mean? They turned up, he realised what he had done and was very apologetic and they were like 'what's the situation?' So I told them and asked them what would happen to him? They then said 'well if he's got no where else to stay, they were going to take him away'. And he told them that he can't drive because he had too much to drink. And I don't know whether he felt like he had too much too drink, I don't think he had, I don't know really why he said that. So then I said to the police 'I really don't want him to go, like that was not my intention for the phone call this it what it come to. Then the police gave me a

big lecture about 'do I understand how important and how severe it is to call the police and how they had come all the way from Chorlton and they had driven on the wrong side of the road and that the sirens were going'. And I just felt like of course I know I'm not stupid. I kinda felt like they were trying to influence my decision and they wanted me to say yes and that I wanted him to go down. It's really hard to explain, I did actually think at the time would they be saying that if I was a female? For instance if a female made the call and there was a man and a woman stood there and she said no I don't want him to go. I don't think they would treat them the same way. In the end they told him to go for a half an hour walk and come back, and I don't know if they would do that either if it was a man and a woman. I did feel like I was treated differently, I don't think it's from homophobia or anything like that. I just think because they think, oh well your a grown man, you can defend for yourself or whatever. But to say to him to go for a walk and come back (which I said to them if he does go I will let come back in). I don't think the liked that and I really felt like I had wasted police time which I had really not. I rang for advice on what to do and this person wouldn't leave, he took the phone from me so the made the choice to come. In the end you know he did come, we did go to bed and then he carried on with hitting really. And I thought I'm not ringing them again so I just let it happen and went to bed.

How did you feel about that?

Anthony - Because of what happened in the past I would never fight back any more but I just think right, I do believe in defending yourself but I just think if I start fighting it's only going to get worse and then that will make me worse. So I mean I just blame myself I suppose, I thought that I could have had him gone if I really wanted. But I told the police that nothing had happened and that I would let him back in.

Did anyone know about this new experience that you have told me?

Anthony - I've not told anybody

Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that the wont?

Anthony - (Paused) Its a really hard question because I don't really know, all I can talk about is if I knew that people or that they were campaigns about it in foundations or by the police or if I had a flyer on my door, if I saw something on the TV about same sex domestic violence it wouldn't make it any different for me. I wouldn't think its less accessible, I don't think its harder for a lesbian or a gay man to come forward as it is for a straight man or a straight female in the same situation. I don't think it's about that. I think it's about the person that you are. If you don't want to talk about it or you blame yourself for it, if you think it's going to get better or if you think it's going to make it worse by going to someone, you are just not going to do it. Whether you think it's accessible to so so or not.

Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well as advice on gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Anthony - I've never seen any support, but I mean I don't involve myself in lesbian and gay foundations or anything like that. I'm sure if I was to go to a centre they would be leaflets on it. But I have never seen anything like that. But as I said, I don't know about my situation and the police, I don't know how they would handle it in another way. I think it was the way he spoke to me not the decision that he made because at the end of the day I said to them please don't take him away and he did what I said. But the police made me feel... I probably wouldn't ring them again. Because I felt I wasn't worthy of the call out. I mean they didn't say it in so many words, but they made it sound like if your just going to say if he can stay here tonight, you have just wasted our time, you made us drive on the wrong side of the road and put the sirens on and made us drive XX amount of miles an hour all the way from Chorlton. I don't think that's the right thing to say to somebody who's in that situation. I think they must be feeling bad enough.

If such violence was further recognised by the public do you think that more people would seek help? Why?

Anthony -No, when it was happening to me I never thought owe I must not say anything because I'm in a gay relationship. But that's because I am open about it. I think it would be a lot harder to be in a gay relationship suffering domestic violence and seeing no promotional help from anyone its going to be hard to seek help if your not 'out' or your not comfortable with yourself. Where as if you did see like you know promotions saying like 'you can come to us' or 'we will listen' or something like that. I think that would help that sought of situation but because I am so comfortable with who I am and I quite strongly think that I don't care whether you think I'm gay or not. I won't let my sexuality effect a decision that I make, if I need help I will go and get help and I don't really care what anyone else thinks. So personally it wouldn't help me, but I can see how it would help other people in relationships that like you know. They can't say it was happening in a relationship and someone wanted to go and tell their friends but they couldn't because they didn't know they were gay. I can see obviously that that is going to help them but personally not me no.

End of interview.

8.11- Appendix 11-Transcript-3 (Anonymous name Peter)

What is your age?

Peter- 28

What would best describe your ethnicity?

Peter- White British

Generally what is your highest educational qualification, what is your occupation or what career do you wish to aspire to have?

Peter- A degree in Music and I am a physiotherapist.

How would you best describe your gender?

Peter- Male

When did you first realise you were a gay man/ lesbian? How did you find this experience?

Peter- I first realized I fancied men when I was thirteen, fourteen something like that. Just when other boys fancy girls, I fancied boys and that was it. I knew I felt that way at the time, didn't think I'd fancy girls. But I didn't say anything to anyone; I kind of waited because you hear people being a bit confused at that age or hormones take a while to settle down. So I kept it to myself and I think when I was about fourteen I told a friend and then when I was fifteen/sixteen I told my parents. At this point I was fully out.

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have/had?

Peter- Family, well my grandma is French and she doesn't know because she hasn't even forgiven the Germans for world war two, so I think she wouldn't be able to understand that sort of thing. Grandparents are dead on the other side of the family. My mum was okay with it, hasn't affected any relationship there. Although things are very difficult with dad because I think his head was a bit mixed up really as both my parents were going through a divorce at the time anyway. And when I told my dad it was too much for him to cope with. At the time it was awful because he thought I was too young to know, as I was sixteen and I hadn't had a relationship. Over the last few years he has come round. Although my relationship is different between my mum and dad, I'd say when it comes to the gay thing I am closer to my mum than I am with my dad because my dad will say the occasional joke which he thinks is funny, and thinks it shows understanding where it can be a little bit inappropriate. Or a little bit shortsighted lets say. Where our relationship was damaged in the past, or there was a little bit of distance he has now kind of realised now because he saw me being gay as a threat to his masculinity. So in the end he realized it was more of a problem in his head than it was mine.

Are you open about your sexuality?

Peter- Completely, yeah I don't advertise it and I don't hide it. So if someone asks I will say yes I have got a boyfriend. But I don't force it on anybody.

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Has this affected any friend or family relationship you have/had?

Peter- When I was eighteen/nineteen which was ten years ago. With my mum and dad being brought up in a different generation, they were worried that I would be prejudice. So they have had concerns about me being open about my sexuality, thinking that I would get some repercussions. A couple of things with strangers, but I can't say that it has adversely affect friends or family because as I don't hide it, those people who had a problem with it would have never become my friend in the first place. So they would have gone or I would have cut them out anyway.

How many intimate same sex relationships, however long, have you had in the past five years?

Peter- Well, sexually I have lost count, quite a lot, probably eighty odd, something like that. I'd say encounters with different people. When it comes to emotional relationships and how long and how many, the first relationship was the ex who I am going to talk about today. I met him when I was around nineteen/twenty and that lasted about eighteen months. After that I was single for quite a while, then between twenty one to twenty seven I considered myself single for five years. A couple of encounters that lasted a couple of weeks, one which lasted a month and another couple of encounters which literally just lasted a couple of weeks. They were just literally a couple of weeks, I mean they were not emotional attachments; it was like I dated them, it didn't work out and that was it. After all that I am in a relationship now and we have been together for a year and two months and its going strong.

What were your experiences and views of these/ this relationship/s?

Peter- I didn't have any experiences of domestic violence before I met this ex partner. I was about twenty; I met him in a club, just fancied the pants off him. I think one of us approached the other, we hit it off really well and when I look back I think I was really young and naive. Although obviously I didn't think so at the time, so I met him, fell in love after three days. We said 'I love' you after three days, obviously really really fast and he was twenty nine. The second time I met him he sat me down and said 'look I need to tell you a few things; I like you so I want to have everything out in the open as we start, because if it goes anywhere I want us to be honest from the start'. I really commend him for that. He had a history; he had been in prison for credit card fraud to feed a heroin addiction. He hadn't been violent or threatened people in the past; he had no contacts with his parents for whatever reason. So it went on, it went on really well for a few months, the cracks started to show after six to nine months. We moved in, I lived in a flat share because I was nineteen so I lived with three student girls. He moved in everyone was kind of chilled out, because that's what you do when you are nineteen. He was living at his ex's house previously so then he moved in. The cracks started to show when he started to get really possessive, he didn't like it when I went out with my friends. And I was always like oh 'I can help him' 'I can help him'; love concurs all and all of that. It started off with, him getting upset, when ever I went out, he would threaten to leave and say oh I am not good enough for you. Then he would threaten to leave, and then when he would leave I would cry my eyes out, call my friends. Then he would call the house and say well actually I am outside and I have been in

the car all along. He always played mind games with me; he wasn't a very intelligent man, so I think the way in which he manipulated me was almost like a learnt behaviour than any kind of him being super clever. It was almost like he learnt to be like that and other than that he wouldn't know how to be any different. It carried on like that for a while and all my friends knew. Because of what he was doing, none of them liked him, then he picked up on that and he got more jealous when I was with my friends. I ended up making up things, by saying that they were better than they were.

How did you feel towards your intimate partner/s within these/this relationship/s?

Peter- Well I loved him at the time, now I look back I can see that it wasn't a grown up love. It was more of a idealistic love. Even when things started to bad, I always thought that we would be together forever and all that.

What do you think they thought of you?

Peter- Oh I think he loved me completely. I mean there was possessiveness there, but I can't judge whether that was down to what his relationship was with me or whether that was how he was with everyone. As I don't know how he was in past relationships. Yeah he loved me.

Were these/ this relationship/s open? Did other people know?

Peter- Yeah, he met. Well I didn't meet his family because he didn't meet them apparently. He met my mother's side of the family; he came over to France to meet my mum. He met my grandma obviously she didn't think we were together, she thought we were just friend. So yeah as open as any relationship should be.

How do you think society views domestic violence?

Peter- I think there is little awareness of gay and lesbian domestic violence. I think on what society you would speak to, people would have different views. If you speak some gays and some lesbians, you have definitely got stereotypes. For example that lesbian's would be more violent as there is lots of anecdotal evidence of fights outside bars. I think wider society, hasn't got any idea or concept, it is not in their conscious I wouldn't think. I don't think it is seen to be an issue. When people think about domestic violence, they think of a man against a woman and that's pretty much where it stops.

Do you feel that gay and lesbian people are just as likely to experience domestic violence as in heterosexual relationships?

Peter- I don't know if they are more likely to or not. But I can see why it would happen. I mean with two men for example, I mean I think it could be easier to be violent towards someone if that person is going to be more evenly matched. Because in society it is seen as one of the really big taboos that a man must never hit a woman. I mean it's seen as only a really weak man who could do something like that, if anything it's a threat to your masculinity to start beating woman around. Where as if a guy beats another man around there is an idea that he can fight back

and give as good as he gets. So I think the person who is going to be the victim is more blurry and I mean the same stands for lesbians.

From your own experiences how do you feel about gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Peter- The violence wouldn't have started with the impact. I mean there were times where we would argue and he would not let me out the room. He was six two and a bigger build, so he was definitely, physically the stronger one. So I would never have been able to out power him. So he would stand in the doorway and wouldn't let me out until we had resolved the argument to his satisfaction. He liked to drink, a lot of the time he would come home drunk, wouldn't make a lot of sense and I had to just ride the storm out.

When was your first experience of domestic violence?

Peter- The first time he hit me, I think we were arguing over something minor and he completely flipped out. So basically he just started laying into me, while I was sat in the chair, got a black eye. He cried like a baby, and then he did the same thing again and cry like a baby and then he would do it again and continue to cry like a baby. So that kind of weakness was an outpouring of his anger or what ever. After the first time he did it, I went to work the next day, my friends knew about him, didn't like him and spotted the black eye. So I told them a completely bullshit story that I landed on his wrist or you know something totally unbelievable and they knew I was lying, but couldn't do anything. So that's the first violence side of it there.

What have been your personal experiences of such violence?

Peter- Other times he bit me as well when I tried to get the phone of him and he basically in order to stop me getting the phone, he bit my forearm. Then there was another time where I couldn't get out of the room. It was on first floor of a building, cant remember where, he was acting really threatening so I climbed out of the window and he acted like he was going to push me out of the window. I stopped myself and felt as if I was going to go. So that sort of blocking and that threatening didn't happen all that many times as such but there was always that sense of physicality and that sense of having physical power, in a sense that if they wanted to do something, you couldn't do anything. I mean the last time it happened I ended up running out the house to my friend's house.

After that the violence was still all there, although he started to realize that he was loosing control over me and that I was starting to fall out of love with him. I mean this a year and bit into the relationship. It started to get more depressive and more mental violence, with things like emotional blackmail. For example I'd bought him a car, I bought a car for his use as he had been banned for driving without insurance, three weeks late he got banned for drink driving. So I ended up driving him to work and back everyday at six in the morning before university because he managed to manipulate me into doing that. One day one of his friends came over and told me he was threatening to kill himself with an overdose of heroin. So obviously I knew that if he wanted to do it he would know where to get it from. That sort of thing

happened a few times. There was another time where he got out a Stanley knife and started cutting his wrists in front of me, but by that time I was so desensitized to his cry's for help. So any he was bleeding everywhere and I just rolled my eyes and called an ambulance. The ambulance came and he was all relaxed and I knew it was all a ploy for him to fuck with my head basically. By the end of it, was when I moved out and he wasn't speaking to me, he wormed in this story that there were these people after me and made out that they were like these drug dealer people that he knew were after me I didn't do something. It tied into other event that had gone on. He managed to interweave it with previously unexplained parts of the relationship. I was getting texts telling me that I was going to get raped and stuff, by using random numbers. In the end it had to go to the police station, it was reported as a crime, but eventually it worked out that it was coming from another phone that he had and the police were able to trip him up in his own lies. It was at that point we eventually met, he thought I was going to lend him some money, as he owed me a thousand pounds at the time. And I told him basically never see me again; never contact me again, I told him to forget about the money etcetera.

The other thing that can kind of come in as violence was that he had hepatitis C from his drug days. I mean you can only catch it from blood by blood contact but he didn't know that and we had gone for like sexual tests and we past for negative, but they don't test for hepatitis C. So we started having unprotected sex and it was after we had been doing that for a while that he started crying and he told me that he had hepatitis C and he didn't know how it was transmitted. For all that he knew he could have passed on a permanent virus which I would consider, maybe not violent but definitely abusive.

How did this make you feel

Peter- Well I wouldn't change it, because it happened at the same time of my finals in my first degree in music I ended up pretty messed up obviously in the head. Because people often make the same mistakes in any relationship as they often do in domestic violence ones and I have seen that happen in people. So I went to counseling through the University had about six sessions or so, and that really helped. I thought it was absolutely fantastic because, for example I have always been quite proactive for instance 'coming out' very young age. I kind of worked through everything and worked out why and what it was about me that attracted people like that? Again what it was about him that attracted people like me? The kind of things that mirrored the negative parts of my childhood. And all those things, the kind of cycles of emotional in emotional behaviours and all of that. So as a result long term, it's actually helped me grow and it has helped me be who I am now. I mean I did volunteer and worked at Samaritans and without having gone through that experience and growing from it I don't think I would have been able to do that job half as well.

Now I am a physiotherapist and you get all sorts of stories as your working with the public. Now I feel a lot more confident with dealing with people, and at the time I was nowhere near as competent, I have always been outspoken. But I am much more

confident and assertive about it now. So with regards to how it has made me as a person, it doesn't upset me anymore to talk about it. I hated him for a year or two, I mean fantasy is a strong word, but the idea of jumping up from behind a bush and beating him with a baseball bat was all I could think about. But, you know as time went on I learnt to forgive him actually, and I did, one day I just quietly thought I should forgive him for what he did. Mainly because he had a lot of problems and I never really knew a lot about his life as I didn't really know a lot about his past, but I think there was a lot of trauma there.

Did anyone know it was going on?

Peter- Yeah my friends knew, they knew before I knew that they knew. When about half of those stories were building up I didn't tell my friends because they would have been right all along. I would have also hoped we could have salvaged it and if I had told my friends, that wouldn't help things because I wanted everyone to be one happy family in my idealistic nineteen/twenty year old head. So yeah they did, and a time went on I began to accept it within myself I have been able to tell people more and more and now I am pretty open about it. Also, when people talk about it and it comes up generally as an issue, even if I don't know people that well, I'll mention it because they can see I can talk about it without being in a measured way without being overly upset so I don't feel awkward about it. I think that's good because the more people that are less awkward about talking about these things its how things get sorted out. My mum and my dad still don't know, purely because I think it would break my mums heart or dad.

At the time did you realise what was happening?

Peter- Yes.

Why do you think this was?

Peter- Because I got hit in the face, you know it was my boyfriend it was in our house and that was it. It pretty much fits for definition a 100%. I'd say the bit where it is blurry with domestic violence is when it's not just physical. I mean you know the physical blocking and potential of transmitting STD's without telling your partner. I would count all of that as violence, it is at least abusive. Even so, those were easier to forgive, I suppose I would have known that they were violent, but I would not have considered that he was doing it with violent intent. So therefore it starts to get blurry there because I thought it was apart of his problems or his weaknesses or it is something that I can help him with. And because I loved him I thought it was part of being in a relationship. If this person is really upset and they harm you in some way, if they learn from it and you can pick yourself up from that then that's fine. But obviously when I look back it totally was. The biggest part of my misunderstanding was thinking that it would improve, I wouldn't have denied it as domestic violence but I would of justified it.

Did you go to anyone for help and advice about what you should do?

Peter- Not during it no, I don't think. I hid it from everybody. I mean I did suffer, I mean this may answer some of your previous questions, but my lowest moment I

never felt suicidal or anything like that. My lowest moment was when I took like the maximum does of over counter painkillers and then took like two or three sleeping pills as in Nytol not Tramadol or anything. In order so I could knock myself unconscious because I didn't want to be conscious as it was too painful. You know just being me was that difficult, you know just knock it out of me and wake up a week or two down the line, it was too much at that instance in time.

How has this experience affected your general relationship/s with that person/s?

Peter- Yeah I don't speak to him anymore. When it ended it was in the bus stop, I told him 'fuck off', don't ever contact me I don't want to see you ever again, don't try and speak to any of my friends. It could not have been clearer to him. He tried to come up to me a few times, late on in the clubs. So a couple of months later I saw him out and I pretty much screamed in his face or told him to 'fuck off' and it was trendy bar, I made a scene and everyone in about fifty meters saw, and he did indeed 'fuck off'. Another time he was chatting to one of my friends, obviously trying to get near me. And like another of couple of months after that again he tried to get near so I told him to 'fuck off' and put the V sign in his face. Even when he was trying to talk to me and saying 'why are you doing this for?' It was quite clear that there was an impenetrable barrier. When I am angry it scares everyone, even him he knew to go and again strangers were looking and all that. Although the nice thing about what happened was that when he went I was fine and I had a good night. I didn't give it another thought. So it helped sort of knowing that I could get over that. Finally there was one last time when I was out in a club, thinking that I was 'fancy free' blah blah blah. He was standing on the end of the stage when I was trying to pull this guy and I completely ignored him and started pulling this guy anyway.

Oh again, because so much happened, there was another domestic violence thing. When we were on a break I ended up pulling somebody and when he found out, he basically trashed the whole house. He then rang me to say that we had been burgled to get me away from this other guy. When we got back the whole house was turned over and loads of my stuff was missing, and I had a saxophone that was completely smashed against the wall. When we were walking through the park the next day, I found some bags with my stuff in and he made out that the burglars had stashed it there. So violence towards my possessions and monetary violence was there.

Have the experiences that you have mentioned affected you as a person? Are you wary of new relationships?

Peter- Because I was getting unequal relationships here and there it did concern me, because I thought when I get emotionally involved again am I going to meet someone who is similar. I think the first couple of guys were just normal guys. But one that I saw a couple of other time, there was this spark without a doubt. We had both been drinking one night and he told me that his dad died of alcoholism and that he was an alcoholic on a relapse and I was like oh god here we go another one. So that concerned me because I was being attracted to and getting attracted by someone who I later found out had substance abuse problems. I would have previously chased it, but I knew that he would push every button and that it would turn out to be a

poisonous relationship. There after the guys that I became attracted to it was quite clear that they did have common points of an abuser.

After the violent relationship I started going for shorter people, I mean he was six two and I was five eleven and I ended up going for people who were about five six. It was almost like a running joke, I mean it's still my taste now but for a while I thought I must have been put off the physicality of someone who is bigger than me. But now I just think probably its just changes of taste.

My wariness I never went looking for it, but as time has went on my fears have dispersed.

Do you now act differently towards other gay men/ women? If so Why?

Peter- Not generally in life, no, afterwards I would have done in clubs because I did realize I was attracting these sorts of people. I mean that guy who I went home with on a break he told me that he had been to prison for beating someone up. Again I was like oh god no! So after that relationship I was hyper aware and hyper vigilant that I was attracting people who had serious problems. As if I had a sign on my head saying dump all your shit on me. So for a while afterward I probably had a little bit of a front up, even if I was available I would act unavailable because I was like look don't give me your problems. I might have gone too much the other way, but I think no I have matured and I don't think that my views towards gay men are biased in anyway because of what happened. Only in general, the way in which things would shape me into the way I am now.

What action by the police, criminal justice systems and Lesbian and gay organizations should be taken to help those who suffer from such violence?

Peter- Difficult because I don't know what they are all doing however, the police I believe that they are doing everything that they can. Some of my friends who have been involved in domestic violence, gay as well and it's been dealt with pretty well. Because you know it's happened in front of me and on the front line it seems to be managed fine.

Publicity wise, if they did some sort of domestic violence campaign I'd hope they would include a port of same sex couples. Criminal justice system, I mean all I would ask is for them to treat it preferentially or not so preferentially. I suppose when it comes to psychology there are differences that occur, because you are talking about two people who are evenly matched or may not be so evenly matched you know I wasn't. For lesbian and gay organizations I think it is about victim support and it will be different with everyone. When I went counseling that was enough for me. It was never sexuality or gender specific, as far as I am concerned I am sure there is a common thread between gay domestic violence and gay domestic violence. So I would hope that lesbian and gay organizations would offer some sort of focus group or even if it was just a switchboard service, they don't have to be doing it themselves as long as they can have an idea of where to go, overall to publicise in that sort of thing.

Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that they won't?

Peter- It is difficult to know when because I didn't want to say. I think I suffered a lot more domestic abuse than I suffered domestic violence, I mean violence was only one part of it.

From my experience yes, because I didn't, but that was because of people I would have come forward to would have been my friends and they were close friends who I trusted. But I wasn't going to come forward to them and also realizing it admitting it yourself. When I was justifying his actions, then I am not going to seek help in some way because I am almost qualifying it, and I am not going to change it because I have already tried to give it some sense. So, I only think it is once that person knows that things are definitely not right and things aren't going to change. That's when I think people will come forward. The big concerns in doing this are obviously that the person is going to be violent towards them again, so I think it has to be discreet anonymous, confidential and impartial.

I mean when I worked at Samaritans, I have had those calls from women who are in their house upstairs whispering 'please don't call me back'; he will hear the phone ring. Between coming forward and not coming forward and being able to speak to someone, even if there is no influence that helps to get that person thinking about their relationship. I mean there are no tangible events that will happen from that phone call, but it's helping that person process it and externalise and just hearing things said back and validating your thoughts of somebody else I think are enough to get things moving forward. Between coming forward and not coming forward they are huge steps for a person to talk to an anonymous individual or perhaps to someone who doesn't know the situation, realising that people do know and realising when it is safe to come forward.

Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well advice on gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Peter- I'd say there is little help and support that is overtly shown. I'd say the knowledge of what help and support is out there is very low. I suspect it's there, especially, I mean I have lived in Manchester since I was eighteen so it is one of the gayest cities you can come across. In Manchester there is all those big gay scenes, those free magazines and say I was suffering and I was wanting to get some help I would personally call either something that which isn't specifically specific such as Samaritans, you have got your lesbian and gay switchboard you can find them in the yellow pages and the internet. So I reckon the help is there, I wouldn't say it's advertised, I don't know whether it needs to be or not because if people are suffering from domestic violence people are not going to pick up a leaflet in case you get found with it. So leaflets and things like that wouldn't help but I think that any sort of visual publicity that can give that knowledge can help.

If such violence was further recognized by the public do you think that more people would seek help? Why?

Peter- I think it's recognized by people because when you speak to people about domestic violence, most people I speak to know someone who has gone through it and has gone through these sorts of thoughts. I mean there are always people in live who will not understand it and there will be those who will. I would say it needs to be able to be discussed openly, mentioning it casually to one or two people is fine, but it doesn't really come up, its quite taboo and people get upset when they talk about it and they don't want to offend. You know its more political correctness which is going to stop its progression. Most people know that its there and I think everyone would speak about it with their close friends but not in open discussion in general terms with anyone.

When it comes to people seeking help, even having gone through it myself I still don't know what the answer is because as a non psychological background person and not having thought through it all that hard, I sought help when the time was right for me. Knowing help is out there is great but how to get that person to access it I really don't know how you would do that because when I was completely in love with my partner in a way it wouldn't have mattered what society thought because if he meant everything to me and everything else came second, then the way he acts is going to be the biggest influence in whether I am going to seek help or not.

End of Interview.

8.12- Appendix 12-Transcript-4 (Anonymous name Donald)

What is your age?

Donald- 27

How would you best describe your ethnicity?

Donald- White, British, male

Generally what is your highest educational qualification, what is your occupation or what career do you wish to aspire to have?

Donald- My highest qualification would probably, be more likely to be my A levels, two A's and a B. Business studies, IT and English. In terms of my occupation I am a student but I work part time in retail, before that I was a manager at McDonalds. And I would like to, using my degree to get another managers job or go into something more define to my job. Like for example something like regional development.

How would you best describe your gender?

Donald- Male, male complete

When did you realise you were a gay man? How did you find this experience?

Donald - Not too waffle too much, I always kinda new, in all honesty, I. When I was eleven it kinda really hit me and I just put it back. And it wasn't till I was about twenty three until I actually fully accepted it. I just, I always believed that something wasn't in place. That whether it would be my upbringing or something like that, something was just not there. I could correct it if I understood myself. And eventually I just realised that, I could be happy and gay and I accepted it.

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have/had?

Donald - Initially my family were a bit, as you would expect, you know my mum was taken back by it. My dad was, what's it called, a little bit disappointed. But yeah they were fine. Strangely enough my brother and sister were a lot better with it than I was. But I've had a couple of friends that have fallen out with me in finding, but I don't think it was because of that, I just think they were, bad people, if you will. Before that and I think they just used that as a bit of an excuse to fall out with me, homophobic that kinda thing.

Are you open about your sexuality?

Donald - Yes.

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have had?

Donald - Well there was obviously said friends that I'd fallen out with, there was a couple of friends I'd fallen out with because he found out that I was who I was. Again, part of me thinks that they were just angry people in the first place and they just used that as a bit of a, you know excuse to really direct their anger. But generally speaking people have gotten over it.

How many intimate same sex relationships, however long have you had in the past five years?

Donald - Two but one wasn't a full on I would call a boyfriend relationship, it was more....it was just a best friend who kind of things evolved that way, but that was. But yeah I'd say obviously two.

What were your experiences and views of these relationships?

Donald - the first one, the second one, the more recent one was quite a strong relationship but, it was yeah a quite strong relationship. It was compatibility issues, the first one it was kinda not really ever; it was almost like an unspoken relationship. And that was a bit different, I found out a lot about myself from that

How did you feel towards your intimate partners? Within these relationships?

Donald - The first one, I didn't, I was fairly confused at the time, and I was maybe a little bit led on. The second one I felt like it was very strong, it just phased out towards the end.

What do you think they thought of you?

Donald - I feel like the first one, he kinda used me in all honesty and I felt like the second one was really emotional, and he felt very passionate about it. Perhaps that was one of the reasons it finished the way it did.

Where these relationships open? Did other people know about them?

Donald - The first one no, but the second one yes

How do you think society views domestic violence?

Donald - I think there is this archetype of it being the abusive husband on the wife, which is, really bland. In my opinion I think domestic violence is not just a physical thing but it's also a psychological thing. Its also intimidation, its a much wider issue than that and I think to many people are focused on this idea, you know from kinda this Jeremy Kyle culture, lets bring out the guy and lets point at him, that kinda thing and I think that society. I think that there is something in place for it but I think people need to understand its more wider connotations.

Do you feel that gay and lesbian people are just as likely to experience domestic violence as in heterosexual relationships?

Donald - Yes and I think more so because they have the... wider ethics involved. You know there is a common structuring in a typical heterosexual relationship. You know people watch films, people know how to act, gay people don't do that, they don't always have that you know pre determined roles if you will. And I think because of that there is a danger that people in society will reject them, if its not big-gets outside it could also then feed into their own relationships. So I think there in possibly more danger, and typically this is a wider point, but typically gay people I find are much more frail with their personalities. A lot of them struggle to come to terms with it and this brings their personality down somewhat and they feel more, well they just feel more beaten down and therefore more vulnerable.

From your own experiences, how do you feel about gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Donald - Well I have experienced two different encounters of this and both of them are very different. My first experience was with this first relationship it was a very unspoken relationship. He was a very dominating person and I was quite weak at the time and he kinda manipulated me in that sense. Kinda keep me keen style and I really kinda rebelled against that but it was very much an intimidation thing and kinda preying on a more weaker personality. But I learnt a lot from that. The second experience was when I had a partner who showed a lot of signs of insecurity and a bit of a degree of fear in terms of the relationship. But in terms of like keeping hold of the partner and responded in a very what's the word... in a irrational manner, yeah and therefore just kind of it wasn't always like an attack it was sometimes just running off, quite abruptly and it just so happened that in a bit of a drunken whim I got thrown down the stairs twice and elbowed and hit several times. But it doesn't bother me that much.

How did this make you feel?

Donald - The first time I felt very little, I felt very used, but this kinda helped me become a bigger person. The second time I kinda felt like, I was disappointed but I kinda, because I knew the person I felt like, I could figure out why that happened. It didn't bother me as much as I thought it would, I just though right, I need to take this person to one side... and deal with it... and talk about it and so... in both situations it was always very constructive, if it wasn't belittling.

Did anyone know it was going on?

Donald - My family had suspicions about the first one, big suspicions they, they all did not like him. They kinda didn't know because they didn't see any of it. They knew because they saw how I was acting and I... was different. Yeah... and as for the second one, there was a couple of witnesses. But in terms of my mutual family, they didn't know, they didn't expect anything like this, so it was a quite a shock to them when they found out about it. Especially in terms of the manner of the said event so..

At the time did you realise what was happening?

Donald - I didn't. The first time no I really didn't identify it as domestic violence, I just kinda , I accepted my role on the first occasion and it wasn't till I kinda rebelled if you will back , that it occurred to me that you know, what am I doing?, what am I letting myself in for? As for the second time I kinda just accepted it , I accepted it as irrational behaviour. So I never really said that you know it was any form of abuse even though it was, it didn't feel like it. It felt like something I could deal with.

Why did you think this was?

Donald - Well you could say with the first relationship there was a bit of, you know its quite a silly way of putting it but almost 'Stockholm syndrome'. In that I felt like, I had sympathy to this person, even though the gravity of the situation was clear to me and I can't believe I allowed it to happen. But I felt sympathy in that you know, this person kinda needed this confidence boost or something like that I'm not sure. As for the second one I just think it was an issue of, lack of character, I think the person was unable to deal with, as I would describe them, basic adult situations, challenging no doubt but was unable to deal with them and could not control themselves, particularly under the influence of alcohol.

Did you go to anyone for help and advice about what you should do?

Donald - I eventually spoke to mutual friends, quite a few mutual friends to kinda work out the situation. Kinda work out to do. In terms of the first relationship I didn't speak to anyone about it, I kept it very quiet. It might have been because of the circumstance of the situation. Think looking back at it now. But eventually it suddenly came clear to me how everyone just hated this person and I knew I kinda need to act. But I didn't go to any official help for it, but any authorities if you will.

Has this experience affected your general relationship/s with that person/s?

Donald - Well this the first one I don't really know, I don't really want to know, occasionally I speak to him online, but that always turns, well, there is attempts, to turn that thing into an illicit method, 'no surprise in guessing what'. As for 'Brad' I would like to stay friends with him, but its proving difficult right now. As a comment on me as a person I think both situations have made me stronger. I believe that both situations have, I've learnt a lot about myself; I've learnt a lot about dealing with other people and expectations of other people.

Do you now act differently towards other gay men, if so why?

Donald -Yes actually, I sometimes don't trust them. I feel the need sometimes that if I'm going to look for a relationship. I kinda need to know that there is, I need to know their personality. I feel like, I didn't expect what happened with the second one so I kinda feel like coming into it now I..... I am always suspicious because a lot of gay people have this very extrovert personality this very flamboyant you know, attitude. Especially when their drunk and happy so I'm always like how strong is your personality? As for the first relationship, I kinda feel like in general I'm always suspicious of people because again I would say that was also a lack of character. I'd say that both of them are kinda related in that sense.

Has the experience affected your occupation, health, were you live, your outlook on life?

Donald - Like I said I'd say, I think it's something that I learnt from. I think this is a situation that you know I wouldn't take away. You know, despite the dramatic nature of it's an important discipline that I got out of that. It hasn't really affected in terms of where I work and stuff like that, I always feel like that I have to prove myself maybe perhaps so I always feel like, it always adds a bit of motivation for me in University, with work and stuff like that. As for health, its funny you should say that, because when I had the first relationship, I lost a lot of weight in the process of it and (it's a terrible example) but when I used to stay at this persons house, he was a particularly bad person to stay at. He wouldn't look after you at all, there were times when I wouldn't, I mean you do that when you stay at peoples houses you don't always ask for food say for instance, and you kinda wait for them to do it. This would happen. Generally because of that I lost a lot of weight, there was a lot of changes in my personality, and so yeah I can kinda see how it affected my health in that time. But in the second time there wasn't really an effect on my health.

What actions, by the police, criminal justice systems and lesbian and gay organizations should be taken to help those who suffer from such violence?

Donald - I believe some policy has to be placed in terms of, like the Citizens Advice. I think in my situation it wasn't extreme enough, for it well, the second one, could have been extreme enough. But I always felt that like it could always be something that could be dealt with domestically so, it's difficult to say if police involvement would have really helped the situation. I mean some people said I should have phoned the police in my second relationship coz of what happened. I think that was quite extreme, but I think there should be some policy in place some kinda, like a Citizens Advice Bureau. There should be something in the city of Manchester available for people where they can consult someone, not just for advice, I mean I believe there is a twenty four hour call centre that people can phone. I'm not fully aware of it myself, but I think there should be something that can offer legal advice, where people can speak to people. There are a lot of people with struggles I mean we all know from the face book era I get a lot of conversations from people who are. For example a friend of mine spoke to me the other week, he's got kids and he's got a girlfriend and he was telling me that he thinks he's gay and he wants to basically... answer the hard questions for him. I was in a position where I just really refused to tell you look "you need to give up all this that and the other". You know and I feel like maybe something should be in place for people like that. Just to talk, just to realise their situation.

Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that they won't?

Donald; - That's always going to be the trouble, your always going to struggle to get hold of people because with domestic violence there becomes intimidation and fear. So you know, your are essentially betraying a person who is violating you if you

will. That will always be a bit of an issue with this kinda thing and I'm not quite sure how to answer that.

Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well as advice on gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Donald - Yes I do, thanks to this Jeremy Kyle sorta culture, this kinda like the male abusing the wife. I mean you don't hear much stories of the wife abusing the male. It doesn't always have to be physical, it can be intimidation it can be control, it can be manipulation. And I think that there is not enough in place for that kinda stuff, in my opinion. But also in popular culture, a lot of things work themselves out, for example ... when we had the issue when people in Manchester were slightly ever so rallying up against all the polish people moving in Manchester which is quite absurd. You would have a polish character that would show up on Coronation Street and they would be part of the community. They did the same thing with Asian people that moved here in the 1980's. And for people to accept that position as an archetype and I think something like that needs to be done.

If such violence was further recognised by the public do you think that more people would seek help? Why?

Donald - Yes I would, and more people would. I think its important to always get as second opinion with things, to one person it could just be violence to another person it could be just how people are. I remember once, to bring up another example, I had a friend, a girl, who had a relationship and she was. There was one occasion where we stayed over at her house and her boyfriend was downstairs and he was shouting at her and she came downstairs. 'Shouting her name over and over again', she got downstairs. 'Can you turn the volume down on the TV' and I was like how did you let that happen? And she just accepted the fact that, that was her role. It sounds demeaning but you know, that's how they were as a relationship. I think information, this needs to be in the education system in my opinion. In schools kids need to know that they speak to teachers about it, I know I couldn't speak to teachers about this kinda thing.

Probably because gay people are a minority. Obviously it's not suitable in religious ideologies; you know I think there's a lot of resistance to it. And I just think that society just needs to evolve to accept it, like with rights and stuff like that.

End of Interview.

8.13- Appendix 13-Transcript-5 (Anonymous name Reece)

What is your age?

Reece -28

What would best describe your ethnicity?

Reece -White, British, Welsh

Generally, what is your highest educational qualification, what is your occupation or what career do you wish to aspire to have?

Reece - BA undergraduate degree in Human Resource Management with combined studies, currently working as a HR officer.

How would you best describe your gender?

Reece – Male

When did you first realise you were a gay man? How did you find this experience?

Reece - Ow God! Very young age, about twelve or thirteen, didn't come out until I was about fifteen or sixteen though.

Has this affected any friend or family relationship that you have/had?

Reece -No not really, my family were pretty easy going when I came out, came out to my mum first when I was about fifteen, sixteen. And then it escalated from there, told my two sisters and my brother. They were absolutely fine about it, no problems at all.

Are you open a bout your sexuality?

Reece - Yeah completely, work colleagues, mates at the gym. I just find that people tend to make an issue out sexuality if you tend to make an issue about it yourself. Yeah no problems at all.

Has this affected and friend or family relationship that you have/had?

Reece -My orientation, no none at all, as I said I told all my family and friends at a young age. All my work colleagues know that I am gay. Same as my friends, work colleagues, mates at the gym. No people tend to see me as me and not my orientation.

How many intimate same sex relationships, however long have you had in the past five years?

Reece- Same sex relationships in the last five years. Two, one came to an end in the last five years and I had a brief relationship with somebody about a year ago which lasted about nine months.

What were your experiences and views of these relationships?

Reece - Interesting question. The first one was very tough, very tough relationship. I met the person at quite a young age; I was about twenty one, twenty two. Spent five years with him, so that didn't end too well. And the second one, I think I self sabotaged it because I was still quite nervous after my first encounter. I did sabotage the second one and it ended prematurely.

The first relationship was quite tough; there was some abuse which I suffered from my long term ex partner. It was mainly psychological and emotional with him and on some occasions it was physical. He tended to be quite controlling. It got to the point where he would manipulate. On certain occasions when I would say to him that I would leave him. His response would be 'well I am not the best in the world but there are certainly worse people out there', also the fact that 'I drove him to his mood swings and violent temper'. I believed him for a while, and then I woke up one day and had enough and left. The second relationship was pleasant, he was a nice guy but we ended it prematurely because I was still nervous about my first experience. I was worried I was going to end up in the same situation so I sabotaged it by seeing someone else at the same time. Blatantly I used that as an excuse to end it with the chap.

How did you feel towards your intimate partners within these relationships?

Reece - The first one, the long term ex partner, love to begin with. Then things started to go wrong when he started to become violent. When I left him there was resentment for a while, I did resent him, what he put me through. Yeah, I feared him. I remember when I first left him, two months afterwards I broke up in a cold sweat having a dream. The dream was basically on the lines of; he was trying to break in to where I was living. All the fear that I had when I was with him, that came back to me in that dream.

The second person that I had a brief encounter with, he was a nice guy, he was very relaxed with me. But I was so fearful of it turning out like the first one with my long term ex. So I guess I feared him as well.

Where these relationships open? Did other people know about them?

Reece -The first one yes, the long term ex yeah. I was with him for five years, we were both very much apart of each others lives. I knew his family quite well and he knew mine. My nephews and nieces saw him as uncle, same with his nephews and nieces on his side. I became quite close to his parents, his in laws and his brother. The second relationship it was open on my side, but closed on his because he wasn't out of the closet. So it was a bit more secretive, I was never really introduced to any of his friends or family. But I spoke openly to my friends about him.

How do you think society views domestic violence?

Reece -I think society is still a few years behind with it, for example domestic violence. That term itself people just see that as physical abuse. But domestic violence can take many forms; it can be emotionally manipulated, institutionalised from your friends, being cut off from your friends, psychologically humiliated by

that person. Also I still think society views domestic violence and abuse as very much heterosexual, the abuser being the male and the abused being the female. I don't think that society has quite realised that that can be the other way around and that it exists in same sex relationships as well.

Do you feel that gay and lesbian people are just as likely to experience domestic violence as in heterosexual relationships?

Reece - I think they are yes, if not more so because as I said its not that well advertised, its not that well known or realised that domestic violence and abuse does happen in same sex relationships. As I said people just tend to think that it happens in just heterosexual relationships. I think gay couples, lesbian couples are just as likely, they suffer more if they don't report it.

From your own experiences how do you feel about gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Reece - Again, it's a topic which needs some developing. There's not much on it. After I split with my long term ex, to actually come to terms with what he put me through I started to research the subject and I found that there was very little out there. I think the only support I had was the 'Broken Rainbow' group. I think there is not that much training, even in gay support networks, it's just not that well recognised that in society that gay and lesbian domestic abuse happens, and it happens quite often.

Did anyone know it was going on?

Reece - Yes to an extent. I got a lot of help but my ex convinced me to not say much to anybody and that I drove him to it. So no one on his side knew at all. I am still quite close to two members of his family. Even though I haven't seen him since I walked out on him. His brother and his brother's wife know. They only realised at the end of the relationship because they lured me out because they realised I wasn't safe where I was. My mum did see my ex partner's temper once. One of the few times he got physical with me. We went out for a few beers and were there just chit chatting and we got back in and this escalated and he grabbed me by the groin and he twisted my scrotum. To the point where I was in a lot of pain and my mother to stop him with staying with us threatened him with a saucepan lid. At that point he raised his fists to her. He didn't do anything to her because I stood in the middle of it. My mum was the only one who encountered his temper. But in her past she was a victim of domestic abuse herself with my father she kind of I wouldn't say convinced me to stay with him. As she was calming down the situation she said that it happens in life.

At the time did you realise it was happening?

Reece - I've got to say, hands on heart no. I just though that he had a bit of a short temper and for me it really sunk in when the relationship was coming to an end. I mean I was very unhappy within myself. I was very physically overweight. I used to comfort eat just to escape what I was going through with him and I only realised three or four months after I left him. I was asked to run a session on same sex

domestic abuse as a local support group that I work for in the community. When I was getting this research together about the systems of domestic abuse and the characteristics of the abused I was very familiar. I was like 'I used to feel like that' or 'God he used to do that to me so many times'. I think it really sunk in when I realised it wasn't just him having a bad temper he was literally following in the steps of what an abuser is. So I think that's when it really sunk in and hit home that I had actually gone through domestic abuse with somebody.

Did you go to anyone for help and advice about what you should do?

Reece -No I didn't. Quite a few times I told him that I was going to leave him and I always got talked around it, it was quite normal in the relationship. I wouldn't say that I went to anyone for advice and guidance; even working for the gay community in the area I was humiliated that I was suffering this. We all want that perfect relationship and that Knight in white shining armour and because that's what wasn't happening I was embarrassed. Right at the end of the relationship as I said my now ex brother in law who I am close friends with and his wife. They physically moved me out when I turned up on their doorstep one day. They said that I can't cope with him and I broke down in tears and they pretty much moved me out there and then. Didn't tell him where I was going.

How has these this experience affected your general relationship with that person?

Reece - I haven't spoke to him since I moved out which was two years ago, which is quite rare because I live in quite a small area of Gloucestershire County. I haven't actually seen him or spoken to him in a while. When I first left him I thought I would be petrified of seeing him but two years on I have changed completely as a person. I would say hello if I saw him in the street but that's not really happened. I still speak to his family, his parents on occasion, other than the obligatory happy Christmas text or birthday text. But I haven't directly spoken to my ex in two years.

Has the experience that you have mentioned affected you as a person? Are you wary of new relationships?

Reece -Yes, as a person I must say I am a bit stronger now. I take less and less from people, I know exactly what I want. The positive for me is I now know what is acceptable in a relationship and what isn't. Being valued as a human being is what I after and not being belittled, insulted all the time and also it has made me wary of people. As I said I get to a point now with people that I get uncomfortable and worried that I am uncomfortable so I sabotage it or back off a little bit. I am far more guarded now as a person compared to what I was in my early twenties.

Do you now act differently towards other gay men? If so why?

Reece- Not really. In my circle of friends I am just the same, if not I am more confident now. One of the things I experienced with my ex is I would not tend to socialise with anybody because I was not allowed to. But the friendships that have lasted through this experience, they have noticed that I am more happy and more confident. If you mean interaction with another gay man that I am interested in I tend to be as not as free flowing with information about myself. Giving personal

information I tend to be a bit more guarded. Not as much cold but a bit harder. I would say harder and less easier to get to know the real me.

Has the experiences affected your occupation, health, where you live, your outlook on life?

Reece- Where I live no, as I still live in the same area as my ex. We moved here to Gloucestershire as a last attempt to make it work and when I left him instead of going home back to my family which are about one hundred and fifty miles from here, I stayed in the area because I had a job. It has not really affected my job as such as I have worked in HR since my quite early twenties. I don't mind conflicts or shouting, I tend to instantly raise a shield and put up a guard and I was used to that being normal for me. Health wise, when I was with him I was extremely unhealthy all I wanted to do was eat or sleep, anything to avoid him. I would just spend entire weekends on the computer just to keep out of his way, simply because it meant that we couldn't argue. Since leaving him a lot healthier but with him I think I was about eighteen stone and for a guy my height '5/7' that's really unhealthy. Since I have left him my health has improved. I have been going out more and I think I am about twelve stone now I think. With him quite negatively, health was quite low but when I left him I was healthier and a lot happier.

What action by the police, criminal justice systems and Lesbian and Gay organisations should be taken to help those who suffer from domestic violence?

*Reece -*I think more awareness that it happens. One thing that I found when I was in that situation I felt like I was the only person in the world going through that type of situation. Even though I am a quite logical intelligent person, I know that it happens. For me I was the only person going through that. I think greater awareness, greater training that domestic abuse does happen and what you can do about it. I know it's very individual for every person because everyone's story is different and everyone's background is different. Maybe information about what's out there if you do need to leave your partner because their abusive. What steps to take, what is like an exit strategy for leaving somebody? So yeah I just think better support and better awareness that it does happen, a sympathetic voice, someone to speak to if you have gone through it or if you're currently going through it.

Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that they won't?

*Reece -*No I don't think a lot do. I speak openly about my experience now because that's two years behind me. So I have done sessions on it for a local gay group in the area. I natter and that with my friends about it but I don't think a lot of gay men and lesbian women do come forward about same sex domestic abuse. I think it can be quite a humiliating thing to say that the partner that you love is treating you like dog doo. And I think that a lot of people think that they are the only people stuck with it because it's foreseen as very much heterosexual. I don't think a lot of gay and lesbians have that courage in themselves to say 'well actually I am getting abused by my partner'.

Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well as advice on gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Reece -I think there is very little. And as I said I did some research on it and it took me about a month to get the basic training slides together for it. So I had to adapt a lot of the stuff I found on heterosexual abuse to gay and lesbian couples. There is very little out there, I think there is 'Broken Rainbow'. Fantastic source of information but that's about the only thing I have found in the last two years that provides any kind of information.

If such violence was further recognised by the public do you think that more people would seek help? Why?

Reece - I think if it was further recognised by the public more people would seek help. But I think again when you are going through that situation and you feel as if you are the only person on the planet going through it. I think by publicising people's stories or just literally making people more aware that it does happen and that it happens quite often, people would be able to come out about their own situations.

End of interview.

8.14- Appendix 14-Transcript-6 (Anonymous name Samuel)

What organisation/public body do you represent?

Samuel- Sandwell Homes

What is your role within your organization/public body?

Samuel- I am a housing officer

What does this role involve?

Samuel- Dealing with the public in all aspects of housing, including domestic violence or domestic abuse, which ever one you want to use.

What are your opinions, views and perceptions on the current issues of gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Samuel- My opinion is that it is out there. I know it goes on from the people that I have interviewed. I still think that a lot of people are frightened to come forward. For the simple reason that they don't think that they will be treated fairly.

Why is this?

Samuel- I think because if we offer an interview to a homeless person, if they are of female we interview by female and if they are male we offer to be interviewed by a male. If somebody comes through and says 'that they are suffering same sex abuse' we very rarely offer someone from the gay community to interview them. Also I think because people are frightened to come forward.

In relation to your organisation/body, is there any awareness or recognition of gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Samuel- Yes.

Why do you believe this to be the case?

Samuel- One because I make it aware, if somebody comes in and they report domestic abuse form a gay or lesbian relationship. Then I make sure it is dealt with properly and fairly. I make sure my colleagues do exactly the same. If someone comes in and says 'I'm suffering from domestic abuse' I make sure that my colleagues don't assume that the person doing the abuse is the opposite sex. But as I am aware it isn't always the case, if someone assumes, they will immediately think, they don't believe what is going on, they are not happy with my sexuality and they will close up.

Within your role within your organisation/body, have you ever come across a situation that that involved the issue of gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Samuel-Yes

How did you respond?

Samuel- Well what we would do is sit, listen, and not judge the person whatsoever. Let the person them self get across what they want to get across. Do not interrupt at any time, put them at ease, advice them if they want to stop, they are well within their reason to stop. If they want to stop or just walk out we have no problem with that whatsoever.

How do you think they felt?

Samuel- I think to be honest, if we put them at ease to start with, I think a lot of the time they feel a lot happier then. More so, if they can be interviewed by someone who is gay or a lesbian then I think it just makes them feel that little bit more at ease. Then they are not as frightened then to open up or a lot of people feel that they won't be believed. So we would say to them 'we believe what you say and you can be honest with us'.

How do you feel?

Samuel- To be honest with you, I usually find and come across the feeling to break down many barriers. To say to them 'look if it helps I am gay too', 'whatever you say won't go out of these four walls', 'nobody needs to know what is going on, 'the only person that needs to know will be the decision maker'. And as far as I am concerned what ever they discuss will not go any further. Irrespective of what they are or who they are, we are here to listen to them, irrespective to what has gone on. And of course we believe what you say as well.

Is gay and lesbian domestic violence highly reported within your organisation/body?

Samuel- Not as much as I think that goes on, definitely not no.

Why do you believe this to be the case?

Samuel- I think again because people are frightened to come forward. They feel that they won't be listened to. As far as they are concerned, that it is something that they have to put up with. And I am saying 'no' I think a lot of it is that people look at an authority. They see us an authority figure that will not believe a thing that they say.

If there were an increase in reporting's and incidents of gay and lesbian domestic violence, would you organisation be equipped to handle this?

Samuel- Definitely yes.

What strategies would be taken?

Samuel- I think that they would look at employing somebody to take on the role. The board themselves would get involved, in which they are very very active at the moment within promoting lesbian and gay citizens. So I think that the organisation would want to be seen to be doing something. More so as well they are looking at becoming on of the Stonewall diverted charities. So anything that they could do or be seen to be helping someone in that situation is what I believe they would try and do.

What action by the police, criminal justice systems and lesbian and gay organisations should be taken to help those who suffer from such violence?

Samuel- I think they should be very open, very trusting, believe people and not be judgemental. Because I think that what people think or their beliefs are is that they are judgemental. They need to try and break that barrier down.

Do you think that domestic violence victims will come forward or do you think given your previous experiences that they won't?

Samuel- I think yes they will. If they feel that something will be done. Also that they will be believed and that they won't be judged.

Overall do you think that there is little help and support as well as advice on gay and lesbian domestic violence?

Samuel- Yes without a doubt because people don't believe it goes on. I can think of about seven or eight organisations within Sandwell where I live and work where they will deal with DV but won't deal with gay issues because I don't think they have any experience on it or don't know how to handle it. Yeah I think that there is little help and support if I have to be honest.

If such violence was further recognised by the public do you think that more people would seek help?

Samuel- Yeah

Why do you think this?

Samuel- Because I think if they realised that they are not the only ones that are suffering it. That they can feel more comfortable, that they will be believed. If there was more help out there I think they would be willing to make the decision to walk away and try and start again.

How do you think that same sex domestic violence incidents would be treated twenty, thirty or even forty years ago within society and the criminal justice system?

Samuel- very, very badly, I mean if it was recognised forty years ago and you told somebody they would turn round and say 'well it serves you right you shouldn't be with someone of your own sex'. You know 'you got what you deserve'; you would not have been believed at all. I think people would be made to feel very very inadequate.

End of interview.



ETHICS CHECK FORM

This checklist must be completed for every project. It is used to identify whether there are any ethical issues associated with your project and if a full application for ethics approval is required. If a full application is required, you will need to complete the ‘Application for Ethical Approval’ form and submit it to the relevant Faculty Academic Ethics Committee, or, if your research falls within the NHS, you will need to obtain the required application form from the National Research Ethics Service available at www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/ and submit it to a local NHS REC.

Before completing this form, please refer to the University’s Academic Ethical Framework (www.rdu.mmu.ac.uk/ethics/mmuframework) and the University’s Guidelines on Good Research Practice (www.rdu.mmu.ac.uk/rdegrees/goodpractice.doc).

Project and Applicant Details

Name of applicant (Principal Investigator):	
Telephone Number:	
Email address:	
Status: (please circle as appropriate)	Undergraduate Student Postgraduate Student (Taught or Research) Staff
Department/School/Other Unit:	
Programme of study (if applicable):	
Name of supervisor (if applicable):	
Project Title:	
Does the project require NHS Trust approval? If yes, has approval been granted by the Trust? Attach copy of letter of approval.	YES/NO

Ethics Checklist (Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box)

	Yes	No	N/A
1. Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS, or involve NHS resources? If yes, you may need full ethical approval from the NHS.			
2. Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities, your own students)?			
3. Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited (e.g. students at school, members of self-help group, nursing home residents)?			
4. Will the study involve the use of participants’ images or sensitive data (e.g. participants personal details stored electronically, image capture techniques)?			
5. Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)?			
6. Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?			

7. Will blood or tissue samples be obtained from participants?			
8. Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?			
9. Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?			
10. Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?			
	Yes	No	N/A
11. Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and informed consent at the time (e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places)?			
12. Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?			
13. Is there any possible risk to the researcher (e.g. working alone with participants, interviewing in secluded or dangerous)?			
14. Has appropriate assessment of risk been undertaken in relation to this project?			
15. Does any relationship exist between the researcher(s) and the participant(s), other than that required by the activities associated with the project (e.g., fellow students, staff, etc)?			
16. Faculty specific question, e.g., will the study sample group exceed the minimum effective size?			

If you have ticked 'no' or 'n/a' to all questions, attach the completed and signed form to your project approval form, or equivalent. Undergraduate and taught higher degree students should retain a copy of the form and submit it with their research report or dissertation (bound in at the end). MPhil/PhD, and other higher degree by research, students should submit a copy to the Faculty Research Degrees Sub-Committee with their application for registration (RD1) and forward a copy to their Faculty Academic Ethics Committee. Members of staff should send a copy to their Faculty Academic Ethics Committee before commencement of the project.

If you have ticked 'yes' to *any* of the questions, please describe the ethical issues raised on a separate page. You will need to submit your plans for addressing the ethical issues raised by your proposal using the 'Application for Ethical Approval' form which should be submitted to the relevant Faculty Academic Ethics Committee. This can be obtained from the University website (<http://www.rdu.mmu.ac.uk/ethics/index.php>).

If you answered 'yes' to question 1, you may also need to submit an application to the appropriate external health authority ethics committee, via the National Research Ethics Service (NRES), found at <http://www.nres.npsa.nhs.uk/>, and send a copy to the Faculty Academic Ethics Committee for their records.

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University's Guidelines on Good Research Practice and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. **This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.** Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research should be notified to the relevant committee (either Faculty Academic Ethics Committee or Local Research Ethics Committee if an NHS-related project) and may require a new application for ethics approval.

Approval for the above named proposal is granted

<p>I confirm that there are no ethical issues requiring further consideration. (Any subsequent changes to the nature of the project will require a review of the ethical consideration(s).) Signature of Supervisor (for students), or Manager (for staff): _____ Date: _____</p>

Approval for the above named proposal is not granted

I confirm that there are ethical issues requiring further consideration and will refer the project proposal to the Faculty Academic Ethics Committee.
Signature of Supervisor (for students), or Manager (for staff): _____
Date: _____

Separate page for ethical issues:-

9.0- Bibliography.

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