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**SEXUAL ABUSE OF
FEMALE ABORIGINAL CHILDREN:
HOW DO WE APPROACH THE ISSUE?
HOW DO WE HEAL THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY ABUSE?**

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Submitted as part of course requirement for:

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I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a degree to any other University or Institution.

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I express my love and gratitude to my father - who gave to me pride in Self, the ability to stand strong in the face of adversity, the understanding of humanity's essence, and who presented me with the most difficult but most worthwhile lessons of my life. To his father who taught me how to use my mind, the comprehension of the written word, and the uncompromising laws of diet and good health.

My mother - for my Aboriginal essence; for teaching me humility and the value of beauty and love; and who taught me who I am. Her mother - who gave the soft, warm wisdom of her being, and passed on the love, beauty and sorrow of being an Aborigine. My relations for love; for the natural expression of human emotion; for the constant renewal of Spirit.

My Ancestors for the gift of Aboriginality; for the honour of being chosen to carry their genes; for the traumas and grief visited upon me; for the courage to experience the pain, learn from it and continue my journey. My journey back to their wisdom and compassion. A spiritual journey of catharsis which is possibly necessary for all Aborigines. To truly know the beauty of our Selves, we must wash away the scars of abuse.

Weep - weep for our forebears, our Selves and our children, that we may walk forward in joy.

Weep - for our oppressors and wash away their burden of guilt, their ignorance and their arrogance.

Weep - for us all to unite and walk forward into a new dawning, a new Aboriginality, that takes into its embrace the beauty of the White way and imparts the beauty of ours.

Aborigines came into being on the First Day. White people arrived on the Second Day. On the Third Day will be a blending, which will result in a power that reaches to the heavens, encircles the globe, and ushers in the harmony of the technological, atomic age married to the ancient wisdom and spirituality of Aboriginality.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates theoretical bases and the therapeutic processes in healing Aboriginal child sexual abuse. Through a content analysis of the cross-cultural literature, key concepts are developed from which theoretical constructs are developed to answer research questions related to sexual abuse and the therapeutic healing process necessary to overcome it. Causes, indicators and outcomes of sexual abuse, are reviewed.

Abusive situations in which Aboriginal children and adolescents are placed, are considered in the context of the psychological, social, and cultural dysfunction caused by culture contact and conflict over the past 200 years. Concepts such as dispossession, protectionism, assimilation, cultural pluralism and separate development are reviewed in setting the context for sexual abuse within dysfunctional families.

Therapies in the context of Indigenous and Aboriginal societies and healing processes relevant to Aboriginal sexual abuse victims are explored and further research reviewed. Key concepts, propositional statements and theoretical constructs are developed and a therapeutic model is presented as a basis for health workers to address the causes of child sexual abuse within the Aboriginal social and cultural context.

Code words include sexual and transgenerational abuse; Aboriginal art and creative arts therapy; therapeutic processes; cultural conflict; and Christianity.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This research study is a review of child sexual abuse; specifically, abuse of Aboriginal female children (Beresford & Omaji, 1998; Pettman, 1992; Rintoul, 1993; Woolmington, 1988); with the view of developing a therapeutic health model. The research covers the extent of reported abuse, and examines concept validity in the content analysis. It is an area of sanction and taboo and it can be expected that silence, denial and fear of the issue exists (Rencken, 1989). The researcher investigated the role, attitudes and motives of researchers, counsellors and therapists (Mangen, 1997; Greaves, 1997), and explored appropriate ways of healing the psychological damage caused by child abuse in Aboriginal communities (Atkinson, 1994; Ellis, 1996). In this way the objective of identifying theoretical constructs with which to establish a model appropriate for further research was met.

1. Defining Concepts

Key concepts are operationally defined because of the wide range of connotations which apply to concepts in the area. They include:

1.1 Aboriginality

An Aboriginal person is of Aboriginal descent, identifies as an Aborigine, and is accepted by his or her community as an Aborigine (Abstudy Policy Manual, 1999).

1.2 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is socially inappropriate sexual behaviour perpetrated by an adult with a child who is too immature to make a rational decision to participate equally in the process (Cook & Cook, 1996).

Other defining concepts central to the study include culture and incest. Culture refers to '*... a system of rules for the guidance of behaviour ...*' (Brown, 1965:233). Culture is learned and consists of all the social and behavioural patterns of a people which is passed from one generation to the next (Cook, 1995). Incest is defined by Brown (1965:92) as '*... cohabitation between all members of the nuclear family except husband and wife ...*' Fathers represent the vast majority of perpetrators (Schaverian, 1995).

Other important concepts which help to define the study are reviewed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

2.1 The Research Questions

The research questions asked in this thesis are:

- 1.. Are the problems experienced by Aborigines, such as sexual abuse, the result of colonisation?
2. Is healing of the past a necessity for healing of the future?
3. For a culturally sensitive healing model, is it of importance for the healer to be an Aborigine?
4. Is creative art a form of self-healing for the creative artist?

2.2 Methodological Approach

A content analysis and critique of documentary evidence on the chosen topic, is used to identify key concepts from which propositions and theoretical concepts are developed (Unruh, 1975). This approach has been used by Cook (1989; 1995) in research on Aboriginal issues and has resulted in a model for policy change. Child sexual abuse, Aboriginal art, Satanic sexual abuse, recovered memory, false memory syndrome, hysteria and human behaviour were themes explored from the literature which resulted in core concepts being identified.

2.3 Sub-Textual Themes

Sub-textual themes to be identified include:

1. the motives behind child molestation and the values of those involved;
2. the motives which underlie alleged fantasy;
5. the attitudes prevailing when society remains silent about such a thing as sexual abuse of children.

2.4 Major Thematic Categories

Major thematic categories included:

a). Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse can be categorised as rational (for example, relative or family acquaintance) and irrational (for example, Satanic or alien abuse).

b). Therapist Based Issues

These issues include gender issues, financial rewards and mother complex.

c). Client Issues

Client issues include truth, loneliness, hysteria and autosuggestion.

d). Creative Arts Therapy

Visual arts, performing arts, literature and music are included in creative arts therapy.

2.5 Coding

Key words, used to identify concepts, include sexual and transgenerational abuse, Aboriginal and creative arts, therapeutic processes, cultural conflict and Christianity.

2.6 Outline of Strengths and Weaknesses of Content Analysis

The strengths of content analysis as an approach include:

- i) availability of data;
- ii) insignificant costs;
- iii) arguments already completed;
- iv) no emotional involvement;
- v) no necessity for relying on others;
- vi) reduction of research bias; and
- vii) can be used when researching remote communities.

b). Weaknesses

The weaknesses include:

- i) some personal documents may be unavailable (for example, letters and diaries);
- ii) making comparisons is more difficult;
- iii) unrecorded material cannot be used;
- iv) narrowed field due to small research population;
- v) possible coding bias; and
- vi) perhaps incomplete, unreliable data; may be biased.

The basic methodology used in this thesis is derived from the content analysis approach originally developed by Unruh (1975) and adapted by Cook (1989; 1995) in an Aboriginal context. Essentially, the literature is reviewed and key organising concepts identified. The reliability and validity of the concepts are verified through the content analysis of the literature and the frequency of occurrences of the concepts used as an indicator of relevance. That is, the research covered acts as a database of conceptual ideas. Key concepts are identified for validity across the literature and in their reliability of concept checked. Frequency of occurrence indicates a degree of power for the strength of the concept if used as an organising concept.

Key concepts are then categorised into propositional statements. These propositional statements are developed from the interrelationship of the concepts. A proposition, which can be tested, or used theoretically, is derived from the interrelationship of two or more concepts (Unruh, 1975; Cook, 1989; 1995).

These propositions are then clustered into theoretical constructs which can be used as a basis for model development and policy making. A construct is derived from the interrelationship of two or more propositions (Unruh, 1975; Cook, 1989; 1995). These constructs are then able to be used as the building blocks of policy development.

Steps in Methodology

The steps in the methodology are as follows:

1. Review appropriate literature.
2. Identify key concepts.
3. Verify validity and reliability of concepts as well as their frequency.
4. Two or more concepts are grouped, then developed into propositional statements.
5. Propositional statements are grouped into theoretical constructs consisting of two or more propositions.
6. Constructs are developed into the theoretical model.

Chapter 3

BACKGROUND AND CULTURAL CONTEXT HISTORICALLY

3.1 Cultural Heritage of Europeans

In the mid-16th century, Bacon promoted the idea that man had the divine right to bend all of creation to his will. During the 17th century, the great thinkers, Descartes and Newton placed man above all else, and religion put man, in the form of a god, at the top of creation (Lawlor, 1991). In the late-18th century, the European nations came to these shores (Clarke, 1981; Reynolds, 1982; Willmot, 1987). With them they brought notions of right and might which were endorsed by a thunderous god who strictly monitored all that these people did (Loos, 1988; Michener, 1965).

By the 19th century Darwin theorised that humans and apes evolved from a common ancestor, and the conqueror was the superior life form (Gardner, 1999). Galton created the study of eugenics which meant that 'superior' races should breed only with each other and 'inferior' races should be sterilised (Bulbeck, 1993). For most people eugenics is now socially and culturally unacceptable (Freeman, 1983). However, in the 19th century, these studies influenced colonial thinking regarding the treatment of indigenous peoples (Cook, 2000; Pearson, 1994).

Scientific based racism endeavoured to prove the superiority of the white Caucasian race. The measuring of skulls and the weighing of brains by Paul Broca, and the Binet-Simon Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.) test (Brown, 1965) all demonstrated the differences in I.Q. which can be measured with culturally inappropriate tests. Spencer attested that conquering, through aggression, was seen to prove superiority (Bulbeck, 1993). People adhered to the notion that black people were the descendants of Ham, the cast-out son of Noah (Brown, 1965; Russell & Schofield, 1986). Segal (1997) argues that promotion of blacks as bestial, evil and promiscuous was not only justification for plunder of

another's domain but was also projection of the white person's sexual fears and fantasies.

These beliefs did not bode well for indigenous peoples, for not only is their fate 'deserved,' it was also sanctioned by God. Christianity itself became a problem for indigenous Australians (Burrige, 1988). Missionaries, perceiving Aborigines as beyond redemption, decided to take and 'civilise' the children (Willey, 1979). Until 1969, thousands of children were removed from family, culture, and learning (Read, 1998). Many were sexually abused (Beresford & Omaji, 1998). Such thinking moulded the infancy of colonisation. The European was as alien to indigenous peoples as indigenes were to them (Willey, 1979). Xhosa poet, Krune Mqhayi declared that Europeans '*... are a strange people, full of greed and envy, who quarrel over plenty*' (cited in Mandela, 1994:40). Culture contact quickly led to culture conflict (Cook, 1995).

Aboriginal people were seen as backward children (Roberts, 1981) and 'non-human' (Sivanandan, 1994). They, and their land, were raped, stolen, and desecrated (Russell & Schofield, 1986). Even today, some Australians look upon Aborigines as worthless and deserving of all that the white man did. The cause is ignored and the effect is used against the advancement of Aborigines. Watson (1995:239), summed up the tragedy of humans abusing humans in the words:

'Human beings are a species splendid in their array of moral equipment, tragic in their propensity to misuse it, and pathetic in their constitutional ignorance of the misuse.'

The invaders of the Aboriginal continent also practiced war. '*Wars of conquest were unknown ...*' to Aborigines (Willey, 1979). With knowledge of having originated from the Ancestral Beings, who gave to each clan the land they loved and revered, there was no hunger for another's land. No other land was of value to them (Broome, 1985).

Aborigines had no interest in agriculture and settlement (Willey, 1979), which creates desire for more land, protection of those lands, and aggression towards those who occupy desired land (Lawlor, 1991). To the European, land was seen to be unoccupied if untilled (Broome, 1985). God's blessing, land hunger, Government policy, and beliefs of superiority supported the taking of Aboriginal land (Broome, 1985).

Warriors were exalted heroes. Vidal (1989) saw war as the highest expression of nationalistic fervour to the white Caucasians. With more men, murderous weapons, and a penchant for war, the invader was in a superior position (Willey, 1979). Australia was like a ripe peach, ready to be picked and eaten (Reynolds, 1982).

3.2 Cultural Heritage of Aborigines

Lawlor (1991:122) quotes the oral history of an Aboriginal Tribal Elder:

"We have been here since the time before time began. We have come directly out of the Dreamtime of the Creative Ancestors. We have lived and kept the earth as it was on the First Day'.

Culture is defined in the lore of the Dreaming. Aborigines speak of themselves, and all around them, as having been created by super beings who transformed formless substance into all that exists (Parbury, 1988). These Ancestral Beings taught Sacred Law and all aspects of life by enactment of the daily experiences of the people and their interaction with other species. In their travels they created the geography and gave knowledge of when, where, and how to find food and water (Bourke & Edwards, 1994).

Sites where the Spirit Beings first came to the earth, enacted ceremony, died and returned to where they came from, are sacred. These Ancestral Beings are said to be always present in landscape forms they created and are considered to be the ancestors of the people and all that surrounds them (Bourke & Edwards, 1994).

The relationship with all existence comes from the people, and everything associated with them, being of the same essence as the Ancestral Beings. To the Aborigine, the people are born of this land and have been since time began. There is no demarcation in time and no separation between spiritual and material existence (Bourke & Edwards, 1994). In contrast, European ideas are based largely on dichotomies (Bourke & Edwards, 1994). Everything is separated, categorised, analysed and boxed into neat packages.

3.3 Sexual behaviour of Aborigines

Sacred Law provided knowledge of sexual relations (Smith, 1991). Incest taboos and avoidance or restraint laws were in use for any male-female combination that may be tempted to practice illicit sex. Included in these laws were mothers-in-law (Berndt & Berndt, 1978), mother and adolescent son, brothers and sisters, males and pre-pubescent girl taboo. Avoidance and restraint laws ranged from specific language, to signs, to total silence (Lawlor, 1991). Bodily functions, including sexuality, were taboo conversation between the sexes (Bell, 1994; Edwards, 1988; Fesl, 1993). Sexual activity was culturally relevant and clearly defined (Howitt, 1996).

The sexual laws laid down by the Ancestral Beings took into account the full spectrum of human nature. Women were recognised as powerful, sexual beings with direct connection to the creative force. They knew sexual fulfilment from first menstruation to death (Willey, 1979), and were revered and considered sacred during pregnancy and menstruation (Lawlor, 1991).

Pubescent girls were married to older, influential men, but could have 'secret' romantic liaisons with whom they desired. These liaisons were condoned and encouraged, but still secret. (Cowan, 1992). When the older men died, the women married young men with whom they felt sexual attraction (Broome, 1985).

Older women taught the young girls about sex and 'uncles' initiated the bride into womanhood (Cowan, 1992). The fear of 'rape' was eliminated, and abuse of females was contained by a retaliation ritual. During the ritual, women could beat, as severely as required, any man with whom they had anger. All groups had different rules, but all understood the therapeutic value and the joy of sex, and all knew that no one person could possess another. Women understood and protected the male ego, so although women were informally in control, they submitted in many instances to man's authority (Lawlor, 1991).

Men, who were apart from the creative force, could not marry until they'd been through initiations of death, rebirth, and the severing of emotional attachment to parents. The initiations taught them about their life force, and how to connect with the Ancestors. Circumcision, for some groups, is stated to have dealt with the human fear of castration, and symbolised the cutting of the umbilical cord. The late marriage of males created a pool of marriageable girls for the older, initiated men, and limited youthful marriage based on lust. A lustful foundation does not foster harmony (Lawlor, 1991).

The powerful, undeniable sexual attraction between father and daughter was dealt with symbolically. The father would creep in upon his sleeping daughter during her first menstruation and penetrate with his spear the earth between her legs. He would then give the spear to the intended husband (Maddock, 1974). Symbolically, giving his daughter to another man.

Men were permitted many wives, provided they had the strength and skill to fulfil ritual, economic and sexual responsibilities. The age and wisdom of the husband excluded jealousy as a serious issue (Lawlor, 1991).

Children, who were taught the art of living from the first instance, observed sexuality, enjoyed sex-play with each other, and their genitals were fondled, tickled, admired and

joked about by adults and older children (Lawlor, 1991). As this was a dynamic part of the culture in which they grew, there was no psychological damage. Aboriginal societies knew stability, security and continuity (Smith, 1991), and sexuality was celebrated (Hunter, Fanon & Wilkes, 1998).

Sexual freedom within a balanced society creates a calm and balanced mind. Malinowski (1953) was amazed at the lack of perversion and neurosis in the Trobriand Islands. There, he attests, the children are permitted sexual play and adolescents enjoy sexual freedom before settling on a permanent basis. Today, the writings of early anthropologists is being questioned. Freeman (1983) points out the inconsistencies of Mead's work on Samoans in 1925. She wrote of them as a people without passion or aggression, apparently devoted to idle pleasure and love-making. Her work was influenced by the 'nature v. nurture' debate, and the opposition that many had to Galston's theory of eugenics. Mead spent only six weeks with the Samoans, and did not live amongst them. It appears that her work is idealistic and romantic, although Cattier (1971) considers patriarchy and ownership to be the causes of sexual repression.

3.4 Sexual Behaviour of the European:

Europeans came from a background of male supremacy, and the belief that celibacy, (and sometimes castration), was considered the way to reach spiritual ecstasy. Woman's creative power was controlled by religion, law and culture (Fraser, 1984). During menstruation, she was considered unclean, and therefore to be avoided (Greer, 1993). She was owned by man, and in accordance with the divine command to '*... Go forth and multiply*' (Genesis 1:28), she was perceived in a reproductive context. Her female power and beauty went uncelebrated and her body became worn out through repeated childbearing which allegedly redeemed her from Eve's original sin (Fraser, 1984).

Along with control of woman's sexuality came control of the natural order. Patriarchal society enjoyed the quick march of progress with science rapidly changing or destroying (Lawlor 1991).

Children were often subjugated, made to hide their bodies and emotions, beaten, repressed and controlled (Lawlor, 1991). Jung (1990:407) tells us that repression causes a destructive manner psychologically. '„, *neurosis conjure[s] up a force that cannot be dealt with by rational means*'. Repression has resulted in substance abuse, anger, mental illness and suicide in western and Aboriginal societies. Male supremacy may have created imbalance. Sexual dysfunction, abuse, impotency and infertility are common. Death occurs on a massive scale, caused by poverty, starvation, illness, genocide and war. The female essence is needed for nurturing, healing, and the celebration of life (Lawlor, 1991).

3.5 Christianity

“Vengeance is mine’ saith the Lord” (Romans, 12:19).

In ancient times there were small, numerous bands of hunter-gatherer societies in the Middle East. To ensure continuity and fruitful seasons, they practiced fertility ceremonies and were polytheistic. Christianity arose out of an earlier Judaic heritage. Small bands of Semitic people with herds of goats and sheep worshipped a supreme male god who exacted vengeance on all who did not accept him (Michener, 1965).

This band became known as the Hebrews, and their religion, Judaism. From them came the twelve Jewish tribes of Israel (Smith, 1991). Initially, they were nomadic goat-herders, and then agriculture developed. The growing of food led to the necessity for storage, development of buildings for permanent settlement, warriors to protect the settlement and wars to acquire more land. Those captured in war were necessary as slaves to erect buildings, roads, cities and churches for worship of God. Possessions,

power and prosperity were accumulated (Michener, 1965). This is essentially the story of the Old Testament (Smith, 1991) still accepted as the oral history basic to Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Cook, 2000).

The Old Testament includes stories of the desecration of land, murder and subjugation of people, and worship in enclosed architectural spaces. Hunter-gathers became village dwellers (Michener, 1965). These events were accomplished with zealous fervour, for the Jews were the chosen people of their God, and God directed the mass destruction. To appease God, animals and humans were submitted to ritual sacrifice (Michener, 1965).

The New Testament is the story of Christianity, which branched off from Judaism. Although still worshipping one God, he was now a trinity; God the Father, his son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost (McDannell & Lang, 1988). The same structures of Judaism were retained, as well as some aspects of the polytheistic cultures they assimilated (Lawlor, 1991). The mother of Christ was presented as a virgin impregnated by divine seed (McDannell & Lang, 1988). Christianity celebrated the after-life, rather than life itself.

Christianity spread through the Roman world, engulfed Europe, and spread across the world (McDannell & Lang, 1988). The written word replaced oral tradition which had been freely available to all (Smith, 1991). Knowledge and intellect created its own hierarchy. European Christians spread across the Old World in a search of gold, wealth and land. Ancient peoples fell before their unbridled greed. In 1788 they confronted Aboriginality (Willey, 1979; Willmot, 1987).

3.6 Aboriginality

For millennia, Aborigines lived peacefully with their Ancestral Spirits and Sacred Law. They worshipped no gods (Smith, 1991), but respected all creation. The Law was a

compound/complex structure containing instructions for existence (Alcorso, 1992). In European terminology, it could be classified as drawing on a combination of biblical history, cosmic science, human behaviour, physiology, psychology, sexology, dietary laws, healing, metaphysics, geography, history, conservation, and zoology. From an ecological perspective (Smith, 1991), they lived a balanced existence for thousands of years.

3.7 Cultural Contact and Clash

A male-oriented society coming from a power base of superiority and worshipping a god made in their own image came to the land of a female-oriented society who saw themselves as part of all creation, descended from great Spirit Beings who shaped and populated the land and gave to the people the Sacred Law. Men and women underwent initiations to learn and become caretakers of land and Law (Bourke & Edwards, 1994).

The Europeans, unable to see the validity of this culture, overtook Law, land and life, as part of their colonial expansionist policies (Markus, 1990). and their Christian mandate to convert the 'heathens' (Roberts, 1981). Aboriginal Australia subsequently lost her dignity, her children were destroyed, her body was raped, and her Law desecrated (The Catholic Weekly, 1985, *cited in* Parbury, 1988). She was denied sustenance, and was cast aside as worthless (Swain & Rose, 1988). She now suffers the symptoms of the abuse (Gilbert, 1978). Those symptoms include violence, destructive sexual expression, misuse of drugs and alcohol, suicide, imprisonment, poor self-esteem, and the growing issue of transgenerational abuse (Atkinson, 1997). Aboriginal activist and poet, Kevin Gilbert (1978:3) writes that:

'... Aboriginal Australia underwent a rape of the soul so profound that the blight continues in the minds of most blacks today This psychological blight is repeated down the generations.'

After more than two centuries the abuse continues, with the cycle of poverty, poor housing, poor education and unemployment (Henderson, 1975). In the late 20th century, Aborigines, their culture, and their language are still looked upon as being spawned by the devil (Tonkinson, 1988; Woolmington, 1988). Various cultural differences are often viewed by non-Aborigines in derogatory ways (Langton, 1994). Aborigines do not ask direct questions, do not look a person in the eye, and silence is used in a positive manner (Eades, 1982; Enemburu, 1989). The result is that Aboriginal people are considered to be dishonest, evil, lazy and 'no-good' (O'Shane, 1995). There is a need for this 'hopelessness' to be addressed. What is needed from the perpetrator is an apology and cessation of the abuse for the reconciliation process to commence (Gardiner-Garden, 1998-99).

Chapter 4

REVIEW OF FOUNDATION THEMES AND CONCEPTS

There are a number of basic concepts which need to be reviewed to set a theoretical context for the study. These include:

4.1 Aboriginality

The Aborigines are the Indigenous peoples of Australia, most of whom claim that they have been here since the first sunrise (Stockton, 1995). However, Aboriginal creation stories are often referred to as myths by non-Aboriginal people, implying they are invalid (Fesl, 1990), thus supporting an origins explanation that Aborigines are immigrants, therefore theft of Aboriginal land is justified.

4.2 Aboriginal Cultural and Lingual Diversity

There are over 250 Aboriginal languages and over 600 dialectic groups in Australia (Alcorso, 1992). Fesl (1993) states that Aboriginal languages are of the same generic family, and Edwards (1988) considers the language to be isolated from any other of the world's lingual systems. Research has not yet been able to directly link Aboriginal languages with other world languages (Fesl, 1993). What this does suggest is an extremely long period of separate development; possibly 120,000 years, and certainly in excess of 50,000 years (Broome, 1985).

4.3 Racial Origins

Wilson, an evolutionary geneticist, says that the ancestors of Australoids split from *Homo erectus* 400,000 years ago, and that Australia is where *Homo sapiens sapiens*, or Cro-Magnon people emerged (Lawlor, 1991). Other scientific evidence suggests that Aborigines migrated to Australia (Pinker, 1998), perhaps in three waves over tens of thousands of years (Cook, 1995). Pinker (1998) believes that *Homo sapiens sapiens*

originated 30-40,000 years ago and were the base stock from which the major racial groups in the world today originated.

4.4 Culture

To define culture is to recognise that any culture is learned (Edwards, 1988). Stockton (1995) defines culture as the way we think, behave, communicate, and deal with environment and society. He views culture as the environment in which we develop, and each person considers his or her culture to be the best way of living. Culture is acquired and is transgenerational (Cook, 1995).

4.5 Sexual and Sensual Behaviour

Sensuality is expressed differently by man and woman, for woman feels and man reasons (Yogananda, 1973). Development of hemispherical brain development supports this concept scientifically (Moir & Jessel, 1991). A sensual woman might dress, use perfume and groom herself to feel sexually powerful and to stir the senses of potential mates. She advertises her sexuality in a sense-pleasing manner. Expression of sensuality is acquired culturally and can constrain or free sexual expression (Masters, Johnson & Kolodny, 1994).

Male sensuality is expressed through a show of power which might be physical, or more specifically the power of wealth. A man advertises his sexual prowess through his clothing, the car he drives, and the food and beverages he consumes. He uses the power of money to gratify the senses of women.

Sensuality can be a graceful, exciting prelude to sexual gratification. It may be the mating dance for humans without which sex would be nothing but a mere animalistic release of tension for the male and the beginning of emotional problems for the woman (Masters, Johnson & Kolodny, 1994). In this manner sex may be a form of abuse in

which sexuality is simply self-gratification irrespective of the emotional needs of the woman.

4.6 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is an act of power and aggression over a weaker subject, and seriously inhibits natural mental growth of a young person. The child is forced to, and does, experience stimulation without the moral imprimatur of mature decision-making (Cook & Cook, 1996).

4.7 Female Child Sexual Abuse

The practice of child sexual abuse is corrupt, unnatural, and unjust to the child's mental development, for a child is not responsible and does not necessarily know if the sexual play/act is right or wrong (Cook & Cook, 1995). Although sexual behaviour is differently defined in all cultures, the defined rules and attitudes of the external culture attitudes may create guilt and shame. Adults are guides, teachers, and supporters of the child's integrity as it matures (Brown, 1965). Violation of this integrity can cause serious developmental problems (Rencken, 1989; Ryder, 1992; McCann & Pearlman, 1997).

4.8 Incest

Incest is sexual relationship with any member of the family other than the spouse (Brown, 1965). Incest is most often committed by fathers and stepfathers (Schaverian, 1995; Herman, 1981). Some fathers, when accused of incest, say the child is willing (Ward, 1984); a girl may say that she loves her father/'perpetrator' and enjoyed the sexuality (Willis, Dobrec & Sipes, 1992). Some fathers say that the child/ren belong to them (Ward, 1984). However, whether mutual or forced, it is declared abuse if it affects the natural development of the child either psychologically or physically.

Abuse in any form can become transgenerational. Parents are the centre of a child's universe. The child observes abusive interaction between the parents, is abused herself, and passes the legacy on to her own children (Atkinson, 1997) by becoming desensitised and more more accepting of the process of abuse; this allows the perpetration to continue (Ryder, 1992). Denial of the issue may be part of this process (Atkinson, 1994). Aboriginal child abuse is increasing, and with the abuse comes emotionally crippled people.

4.9 The Importance of Identifying and Treating Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse needs to be studied, not only in the context of the abused, but also that of the accused, whether the accusation be factual or false (Sakheim & Devine, 1997). The controversial question of fact or fantasy regarding sudden remembrances of sexual abuse remains unresolved and a point of debate since Freud (Showalter, 1997; Ward, 1984).

Although there appear to be large numbers of both actual and fantasised cases, many of the people involved, such as feminists, therapists, law enforcement officers, researchers and behavioural scientists are divided over belief and denial (Sakheim & Devine, 1997). To act appropriately, the therapist must be detached, and patiently listen. As memories of sexual abuse bring up feelings of grief and isolation, the therapist must remain self-aware and not identify with the pain of the client, for the identification negates healing (Robbins, 1994).

The issue of child abuse is complex, yet important in the Aboriginal healing process. It is possible to recognise and identify abuse through such things as inappropriate sexual behaviour, dissociation, substance abuse, fear, guilt, anger (Rencken, 1989), self-dislike and external locus-of-control (Cook, 1995). For Aboriginal people the matter is compounded by racism, dispossession, separatism, and the blaming of Aborigines for the problems foisted upon them (Markus, 1990)

Chapter 5

Part 1

THE LITERATURE ON SEXUAL ABUSE, SYMPTOMS AND ATTITUDES

5.1 Denial of Child Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse is an issue for which valid statistics are difficult to obtain (Segal, 1997). Societal denial, lack of correctly defined terminology, laws and penalties differing from area to area, secrecy and fear of outcomes, act as a deterrent on reportage (Rencken, 1989). The concept itself is ill defined. What is sexual? What is abuse? And what legally, morally, and socially, is a child?

Lanning (1997) considers the stranger-danger of the mid-twentieth century, to be a denial of child sexual abuse. Children were warned of strangers lurking in the bushes and to stay safely at home. This was believed to be a prevention of child sexual abuse because it was against the accepted concepts and values regarding the sanctity of the family, and the safety of those within it.

Ward (1984:5) points out that it '*... is one of the mindbinds of patriarchy ...*' no-one thinks of Daddy as the stranger to the other little girls. The blaming of abuse on the Stranger (Segal, 1997) is another factor in the disbelief of children's stories about father's abuse; it is known that the father protects the family from strangers (Ward, 1984).

Different variants of the Cinderella story give the warning not of stranger-danger, but to 'watch-widowed-Daddy'. In many versions, Mother dies and grieving Father wants to marry Daughter, (who is most like Mother). Daughter runs away, but there is no escape unless as in the story where untimely death claims her (Herman, 1981).

A consistent version retained in the Western world is the one where 'watch-widowed-Daddy' means that he will eventually remarry a cruel woman who wreaks misery upon Daughter. This is seen to be an early warning to girls that women will hurt them, and Daddy will protect them (Herman, 1981).

Father-daughter incest is the most frequently reported form of abuse (Herman, 1981; Schaverian, 1995). Pinker (1998) and Segal (1997) declare that the majority of known incest cases are between stepfather and stepdaughter, and most of the remaining cases between father and daughter. It is normally initiated by the male. In contrast, Watson (1995), from his studies of genes, deduces that those genetically linked do not have sexual desire for each other. He does consider that stepchildren have a highly significant chance of being abused. However, incest taboos do occur across cultures and this would suggest a common perceived problem.

Rencken (1989) blames society for creating a fertile environment for the continuation of abuse. He considers the following causal factors:

1. a patriarchal society which subtly places women and children as man's possessions;
2. children being placed in a powerless position where they can be exploited at will, and believed by almost no-one;
3. children being kept ignorant of sexuality, and therefore of abuse and prevention;
4. exploiting sexuality, as in advertising; and
5. blaming the victim not the perpetrator.

American research finds that brain damage may occur as a result of suffering extreme abuse as a child (Guilliatt, 1996). Slade (1998) consider that serial killers have suffered child sexual abuse. To cope with the trauma the child dissociates and creates multiple personalities. The dissociated thought pattern can overtake normal consciousness and

drive the person to murderous and/or sexual perversion then disappear from awareness. In the opinion of Rencken (1989) some victims of child sexual abuse dissociate and if untreated this will possibly lead to multiple personality disorders. He emphasises the need for rage reduction in treatment, for untreated rage can lead to psychosis.

Slade (1996:328) describe psychosis in regards to an abused child. The child, unable to cope mentally with the abuse, imprisons thoughts:

'... in the dungeon of its subconscious To return to consciousness jailed thoughts trick the jailer by disguising their origin in breaks with reality. Hallucinations, delusions, and obsessions are classic breaks. A psycho sees visions that don't exist, or hears phantom voices. A psycho becomes the zombielike puppet of supernatural forces. A psycho fixates on a fetish or symbol with links to the abuse.'

5.2 Hysteria

Showalter (1997) presents a case for many reports of child sexual abuse being hysteria. A hysteric is open to all suggestion, is willing and eager to imitate and totally believes everything that comes into the imagination. Knowledge of symptoms can reproduce those symptoms psychologically. Lanning (1997) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Behavioural Science Unit lists a number of contaminants of statements including communication among victims, intervenor communication with victims and each other, media, conferences, and Munchausen Syndrome, where the parent abuses the child to prove the abuse.

Young (1997) considers that dissociative patients being treated together can catch the same symptoms or mimic symptoms in an effort to belong. Kinscherff and Barnum (1997:93), forensic mental health evaluators, have observed children taking on the

behaviours expected of them by parents; they also have observed '*emotional contagion*' with lawyers, therapists, and other service providers.

With many contagion/contamination cases of sexual abuse being linked with hysteria - multiple personality disorder, chronic fatigue syndrome, post-traumatic stress disorder, abduction by aliens, satanic abuse and other possible causes (Showalter, 1997), some degree of cynicism is associated with the concept, although the phenomena does exist, and is a destructive process for the children concerned (Ward, 1984).

In 1896 Freud declared that all cases of hysteria were caused by childhood sexual experiences. He stated that the hysteria is caused by the perversion of the seducer who is most often the father. In 1897, he reversed this theory and stated that hysterical women were playing out their fantasies (Freud, 1984, *cited in* Showalter, 1997). By 1939, he said that most of his female clients reported recovered memory of sexual abuse by the father, but eventually he realised that it was a sign of hysteria caused by their own sexual fantasies regarding their fathers (Freud, 1939, *cited in* Herman, 1981).

Miller (1984) stated that Freud's reversal on recovered memory has caused society's denial of child sexual abuse. Freud's thinking has influenced the field of psychiatry and human behaviour for most of the twentieth century.

Freud is verbally castrated by Ward (1984) in *Father-Daughter Rape*. She accuses him of changing his belief of women's stories of incest for the sake of a male-supremacist society. She considers he turned their stories into fantasies of desire for the father and so perpetuated the powerlessness of women:

'Madness, non-orgiastic sexual life, distrust of each other, and silencing the truth about girl-child rape: these have been the legacy of the machinations of the doctor from Vienna' (Ward, 1984:118).

Girl-child abuse by the father does seem to be protected by silence. Kinsey, the internationally renowned sex expert brushed the matter aside. He publicly said:

It is difficult to understand why a child, except for cultural conditioning, should be disturbed at having its genitalia touched, ... or disturbed at even more specific sexual contacts ... the emotional reactions of the parents, ... and other adults may disturb the child more seriously than the sexual contacts'

(Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin & Gebhard, 1948:121 *cited in* Herman, 1981:16).

Crews (1993) in the *New York Book Review* considered Freud to be '*... willful and opportunistic*' (*cited in* Showalter, 1997:45). Webster (1995) stated that Freud was '*... a man with a Jewish Messiah complex who ruthlessly twisted the facts and sacrificed his patients*' (*cited in* Showalter, 1997:45). Incest causes great emotion as shown in these reviews. Great emotion often masks deep concern. It is a difficult concept to easily debate.

5.3 Incest: Fact or Fantasy?

In the 1970's, the women's movement brought to public notice that child sexual assault happens often (Segal, 1997). In almost all cases the victimisation was by the father, brother, grandfather, uncle, and stepfather; sometimes by an acquaintance of the family (Lanning, 1997). However, the occurrence of child sexual abuse appears to be an issue that the majority do not want to face. Those who report an incident are often not believed, and are made to feel that they are the guilty ones. Non-perpetrating mothers who have left the husband are sometimes labelled '*vindictive ex-spouses*' (Stone & Stone, 1997:181).

Society finds it difficult to accept incest in average families. In denial of this knowledge, society again promoted stranger danger in the 1980's (Lanning, 1997). *Michelle Remembers*, published in 1980, was a story of the childhood of a girl who claimed that

she was raised to be a fit bride for Satan (Katchen, 1997). This satisfied society's need for denial of father-daughter sexual abuse, and Satanism became the new stranger danger (Lanning, 1997). Satanic sexual abuse charges multiplied dramatically after the publication of this book, as multiple personality disorders had done after the 1973 movie, *Sybil* (Showalter, 1997). Hysteria is still thought by some investigators to be the real issue behind many of the sexual abuse memories (Showalter, 1997; Sakheim & Devine, 1997).

Rencken (1989) speaks of therapists of both genders who take on a mothering role when hearing of abuse. He considers that when this happens the therapist is no longer effective and is open to physical touching and '*offender-bashing*.' In his opinion the therapist's role is to listen to and support the client in a strong, caring, honest and emphatic manner. It is important that the counsellor listen with unconditional regard and without judgement (Mangen, 1997).

5.4 Retribution

To remain unobjective, or accepting, irrespective of empirical validity while treating the clients for that which is being presented, has been observed as creating a positive outcome (Greaves, 1997). Recently, however, these stories have been used in courts as testimony. According to Showalter (1997), even a fictional story is therapeutic, for any style of creativity effectively assists self-healing. She does caution however that accusations and retribution prevent the healing.

Rencken (1989) discusses the impact of retribution and the hardship suffered when the father, often the main or only means of financial support, is removed. In many instances the Child Protection Agency removes the child/ren. This for Aboriginal people represents the modern version of child removal, and for Aboriginal people, fear of sexual abuse is very much a part of the child's being removed.

Lanning (1997) lists a number of reasons that he sees as the answer to the accusations of abuse:

1. memory distortions through neurosis, psychosis or personality disorders;
2. Munchausen Syndrome where the child is harmed by the parent to fulfil the parent's need for attention;
3. pseudomemories which the person eventually believes;
4. distortion of memories through severe trauma;
5. telling the normal stories of childhood monster fantasies;
6. intervenor contagion where the therapist, parent, or authority, actually fills in the details for the child;
7. mass hysteria; and
8. the influence of the media.

The media today can quickly inform the world of symptoms and our minds can just as quickly make use of those symptoms (Watson, 1995). The mind is amazing and intricate. With the many studies that have been done, there is still much to be learned.

However, whether memories are true or not, a therapist still needs to look at the mental disturbance of the claimant. The therapist can take:

'...the opportunity to help ease the suffering of their bodies and so to soothe the anguish of their souls, first cousin and loyal friend to physical anguish'
(Zameenzad, 1990:49).

Psychiatrist Victor Frankl (1969) an inmate of Auschwitz, says that our beliefs affect our mental health; and that it is our interpretation of an event that creates the event and its outcome (*cited in Birch, 1999*).

Feminist critics argue that women are unable to be coherent about the abuse they've suffered because they lack power to speak against their male counterparts (Showalter, 1997). Herman (1992) agrees that silence about traumatic memory creates incoherence.

There are many aspects of this study of abuse including fantasy, hysteria, iatrogenic (intervenor creating memories) and sociogenic pressure, the situation of the family when the abusive father is confronted, the therapies involved, gender issues, ethnicity, cultural issues, et cetra., and also, the knowledge that there is truth in the midst of these issues. Sakheim and Devine (1997) consider that there is a polarity of views amongst sexual abuse professionals; believers utterly disclaiming against the non-believers and those who deem every client delusional claiming the believers are too gullible. Sakheim and Devine (1997:xiii) call for '*... scientific skepticism and clinical empathy*'.

5.5 Data on abuse of black women

Showalter (1997) states that it is mainly white women who experience recovered memory. Although there is little available information on childhood sexual abuse of black women, a few literary works deal with the subject. According to these works the abuse is extensive, but the black women remain quiet, not through forgetting, but through shame.

Unlike the broader society, Aborigines want solutions not retribution. Aboriginal women consider that the police will be more brutal to their men if the woman reports violence (Saulnier, 1996). The fear of imprisonment for their men, and avoidance of more State intervention, prevents their speaking out. The women also fear that the reporting of violence will strengthen racism. Reportage presents too many problems for Aborigines (Pettman, 1992, *cited in* Attwood & Arnold, 1992). This research concentrates on the therapeutic value of healing in the process.

There is little documentation concerning the childhood sexual abuse of Aboriginal people. Following is the story of Mary, an Aboriginal girl, and her twin sister, Lisa, who were stolen from their mother at the age of six weeks. They are now 32 years of age.

Mary grew in various homes, foster homes and institutions. She considers that in one foster family she was simply a toy for the father. He would use her sexually and make her sister watch. She blames this abuse for her sister's being diagnosed schizophrenic (Duncan, 2000).

Rencken (1989:123) comments on the loss of '*... a part of childhood ...*' for sexually abused children. It would seem that children taken from their families and sexually abused, would experience a compounding psychological effect. The survivor would feel grief and anger, the two most destructive emotions of today's Aborigines with memories of continuous and varied abuse to self and others. Bob Randall, a 'stolen child', comments in the video, *Bringing Them Home* (1997), that he '*... lost the permanency of the purpose [he] came down here for*' (Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission, HREOC 1997). Schaverian (1995) confirms that the environment shapes our psychological growth; the internal is a reflection of the external.

Slade (1998:143) covers the sexual abuse of native Canadian children when put into the Christian schools and the long-term effects of both abuse and separation from families. These effects were dubbed '*Residential School Syndrome*' by the Canadian Royal Commission. The effects appear to be the same amongst Aboriginal peoples who were abused, separated from their families, and placed in Christian homes and missions (Read, 1998). Aborigines also suffer drug and alcohol abuse, low self-esteem through being taught that they are inferior to white people, the lack of parenting skills, suicide, and transgenerational abuse (HREOC, 1997). Ryder (1992) agrees that transgenerational abuse is caused by the loss of empowerment for the child, who conceives that he/she is helpless before an adult. This is a process of desensitisation.

Ted Wilkes, director of the Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) in Perth, tells us that his father and grandfather were raised at Mogumber, where 'white' staff used the Aboriginal girls sexually (Rintoul, 1993). Clearly this is an issue for Aboriginal society, now seeking answers to the issue, which has become transgenerational.

Gertie Sambo of Kalgoorlie was raised on a mission and remembers with anger that the missionaries spoke of doing the work of God, but sexually abused the girls. She speaks with sadness of her friend, 9 years old, being singled out. The missionary, married with children, would take a number of girls to town, and drop off all but this one girl who would then be taken into the bush for sexual purposes (Rintoul, 1993). Such practices have left a legacy of grief and anger within Aboriginal society.

Evans, an Aboriginal inmate at Cherbourg mission, states that the Aboriginal female domestics were used sexually. In 1934 it was reported that possibly 95% of these females became pregnant to a white man (Pettman, 1992).

Rose Wanganeen (1994) removed from family and culture, fostered and abused, exhorts us to know who we are and where we come from. We must look at the abuses visited upon us as Aborigines then make the choice of rejecting or accepting the false persona foisted upon us. When the mind and body are cleansed we can once more know our spiritual connections.

Appleton & Dykeman (1996) report that a concern for native Americans regarding counselling, is that they may pollute their own cultural values. Like the Aborigine, each group has varying philosophies, but the worldview is holistic, and spirituality with its art and beauty is of great importance. It is the pursuit of spirit that has allowed survival of the impact of colonialism.

Sexual abuse is a stripping away of identity, a rape of one's essence. Rape of the Aboriginal land is rape of communal essence (Wright, 1981). Aborigines have suffered rape of land, culture, and person (Russel & Schofield, 1986). The spirit is strong, but can be broken, leaving broken forms shuffling through the gutters of white man's civilisation (Wright, 1981). Until our nations experience a healing of spirit, the abuse lengthens and broadens, as the abused becomes the abuser. Transgenerational abuse comes into being (Atkinson, 1997).

Transgenerational abuse has been well documented; it is a fact in every culture that has known trauma. Some examples are, the veterans of the Vietnam War (Junge, 1999), the Jews of the holocaust (Moreno, 1999), and indigenous peoples (Appleton & Dykeman, 1996). Studies show that victims of trauma and violence take it home, and that it travels down the generations (Atkinson, 1997). Aboriginal people are working hard to overcome the effects of over two centuries of trauma (Wanganeen, 1994; Ellis, 1996).

Chapter 5

Part 2

THE LITERATURE ON ABUSE

5.6 Effects of Abuse

Abused persons will fall prey to the compulsion to search for people similar to the person who has harmed them, unconsciously seeking the self-empowerment to overcome abuse (Freud, 1974; Ryder, 1992). According to McCann and Pearlman (1997) the effects of trauma on a person's identity, world view and life schemas are: the feeling of being isolated and different; avoidance of painful memories due to desire for independence; seeing as dangerous anyone who is the same as the perpetrator; low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, phobias, suicidal feelings, powerlessness, and helplessness; lack of trust; fear anger and grief; and mental ill-health. Clearly, sexual abuse can be very traumatic.

According to Slade (1998), the perversions have always happened. Katchen (1997) reports that Roman Catholic priests have allegedly been prone to corrupt and perverted practices since the 14th century. The difference now is that they are being reported. The newspapers continually carry reports of children being sexually abused by priests, parents, pedophiles, carers, and teachers; of repressed memory and of the violence displayed by children towards children (Slade, 1998). These reports brings forth in harsh reality a phenomena society disapproves of, but finds difficult to manage.

5.7 The Mother

The mother is quite often the focus of anger with sexually abused children. According to Rencken (1989) the child perceives the mother as being derelict in her duty by not giving protection. This appears to the child as though the mother condones the abuse.

The mother is also a victim. She will suffer anger, guilt, depression and helplessness. She has too, to consider any other children in her care. According to the research done in the field of genetics, the mother will sacrifice a child to protect the future of the others, as in infanticide, and it is genetically logical to sacrifice the youngest child (Pinker, 1998). One of the important steps in counselling is to create for the child a feeling of protection with the mother and a bonding with the mother. When possible the therapy leads to reunification of the whole family (Rencken, 1989).

5.8 Recovered Memory

Slade (1998:231) states that the Canadian Psychiatric Association warns about the prevalence, and controversy of '*Repressed Memory Syndrome*.' Hysteria regarding abuse has run rampant and a number of therapists have created an ideology of sexual abuse causing all psychological distress. It is thought that some therapists use hypnotism and drugs as aids to release memories of abuse. The client, being vulnerable, can then have false memories, which are sometimes iatrogenic; the therapist's belief can create the story.

Greaves (1997) comments that far too many intervenors use the leading questions approach. He says that it is heard not only from lay people such as reporters, lawyers, police and clergy, but also from therapists and psychiatrists. Similarly, Lanning (1997:111) professes concern regarding the publications by therapists '*... of unsubstantiated allegations of bizarre sexual abuse*'. He foresees public hysteria and intervenor/victim contagion resulting from these works. He calls for assessment and evaluation by professionals in other fields, such as anthropologists and socialists, to validate abuse statements.

Herman (1992) states that she will carefully and directly question patients who do not recall abuse. Showalter (1997), refers to Freud as stating, in *The Aetiology of Hysteria*,

that when his clients did not recall these events he encouraged them to discover the story he wanted

Memories create the self we believe ourself to be with real and fantasised happenings to prove it. Although memories may seem clear, we are continually in the process of changing them; they do not remain as they were originally (Rupp, 1998). Ideas are transmitted by memes. Memes are contagious jingles, crazes such as pet rocks, mind-catching ideas that sweep the world (Watson, 1995). Studies have proven that people can take on memories of things they have heard but that have never occurred in their lives (Rupp, 1998).

Children who have suffered trauma normally repress memory, the recovery of which is now '*... having a field day in court*' (Rupp, 1998:151). Interpretation of life's events can be influenced by memory. Therapists are easily able to communicate false memories whilst the highly suggestible brain is in a state of deep relaxation, as with hypnotherapy or visualisation. Almost 10,000 families, allegedly victims of false memory, have formed a society in Philadelphia, USA. They declare that the accusations are fantasy brought about by the zealousness of therapists (Rupp, 1998).

Researchers consider that traumatic events are more likely to be remembered than forgotten (Rupp, 1998). Guillatt (1996) reports that The Australian Psychological Association decided that research gives no support to the idea of repressed memory or its relationship to current trauma.

By 1994, the US psychotherapeutic field was swamped with hundreds of people remembering that they'd been sexually abused by extraterrestrials (Guillatt, 1996). Psychiatrist, Dr. Michael Nash, commented that it really doesn't matter if a story is true or not - clinicians are unable to differentiate between the two and both probably have the same structure. One of his clients who believed he'd been abducted by aliens was

happily well-adjusted within three months of psychiatric treatment, but he still believed he'd been abducted (Showalter, 1997). Young (1990:10) summarised the issue:

'If absolutely everything these patients tell us is false, we have stumbled onto a clinical phenomenon most worthy of study and we are honoured to study it; if anything these patients tell us is true, we have stumbled onto a phenomenon most horrible and are obliged to study it' (quoted by Greaves, 1997:50).

Nonetheless, false reportage does occur. Freud thought that neuroses lay in traumatic childhood sexual experiences. He eventually speculated that at least some of the memories of seduction were fantasy. He came '*... to regard neurosis as a conflict of interests*' (Yankelovich & Barrett, 1970:35).

Chapter 5

Part 3

THE LITERATURE ON ART AS A THERAPEUTIC TOOL

5.9 Visual Arts Therapy

Visual arts therapy with its symbolism may assist in eradicating trauma and returning an affected person to reality, for according to Schaverian (1995), symbolics gives us understanding of who and what we are. In the opinion of Meekums (1999) creativity brings out the inner world and blends it with the outer.

Sexual abuse survivors suffer many personal problems, including eating disorders. These take the form of excessive under or over eating, and seeing the body non-realistically (Rencken, 1989). Robbins (1994) considers that the nature of eating disorders appear dissociative, for patients draw the disorder as an external evil. He believes that many of those with eating disorders have suffered sexual, emotional and physical abuse.

Schaverian (1995) thinks that art can replace the anorexic's obsession regarding food, by rechanneling desire through pictures. Just as new structures are built upon the foundations of the old, so too with the memories or fantasies depicted in art. Once memories are exposed, a new persona is constructed (Kofman 1988). This is the process of destruction and reconstruction.

Art in the form of sandtrays is used for children's therapy (Young, 1997). To the child, the sandtray seems a safe way to depict a story that they have been forbidden to tell. Art is thought to bypass the threat of punishment to the child for speaking out (Ryder, 1992).

Art therapy may both reveal and heal the circumstances of child sexual abuse, but perhaps cannot divide truth from fantasy, for if the mind believes something, the mind may also produce that belief in art. The mind's belief may also be able to produce the physical symptoms to bolster that belief. Freud connects hysterics with art; he thinks that the hysteric is an artist of great imagination who 'echoes' poets (Kofman 1988:144). As poetry is created from imagination, so too the hysteric's fantasy is created from imaginary events. Perhaps the collective unconscious is a source of events, for as Freud puts it, the unconscious is universally the property of all humanity (Freud, 1974).

There is still much study to be done in this field. As already mentioned the mind can alter reality. Unfortunately too, as abuse in all its forms is publicized, there are not only those who mimic the results, but also those who mimic the action. The fantasy is made real.

5.10 Indigenous Art Therapy

Art has been seen as a healing modality for Indigenous victims of child sexual abuse. Art includes such things as crafts, dance, theatre, music, literature, visual arts, and other forms of creative expression. These art forms, when used therapeutically, are referred to as creative arts therapy (Meekums, 1999).

Creative art forms help us to view our problems. Art can take a person deep within to express what may be difficult to put into words. It is useful for those who are unable to relate fully or clearly in the dominant language, are too young to know the appropriate words, and for those who have no conscious recognition of what is hurting them (Meekums, 1999). Once expressed in an artistic process, the problem can be transformed and reintegrated into the self (Johnson, 1998).

Colleen Brown, an Aboriginal Health Education Officer, became an art therapist through working with stolen children. One girl, Eileen, when released from the institution, became lost because her parents were dead, and she was unable to fulfil the dream she had for their lives together (Ellis1996).

The dream was a picture carried within. Brown told her to paint the picture then watched the healing develop with the artwork. Brown met Eileen in the Bombaderry institution in 1982; since working with Eileen, she has used art therapy with other problems with which Aboriginal people have to cope (Ellis1996).

Simonds (1994) stated that artistic endeavours are a bridge connecting hidden and unconscious memory (*cited in Meekums, 1999*). Reynolds (1999) considers that creative pursuits empower by permitting expression of self unhampered by poor self-image.

5.11 Creative Arts Therapy (CATs)

Following is an outline of some examples of CATs. These therapies are reviewed to demonstrate their value in assisting Indigenous victims of child abuse.

1. Performing Arts

i) Drama/Theatre

The therapeutic value of drama lies in placing one's identity in perspective without the burden of victimisation (Johnson, 1998). This deliberate separating of past and present loosens the ties that bind a person to the past.

Aboriginal plays dramatise the recent history of Aboriginal people. Jimmy Chi's *Bran Nue Day* presented it with song, dance and comedy. Chi used laughter to make light of the dark times. Granich (1990) reports that humour and compassion have a greater effect than the heaviness of preaching. Kofman (1988) considers that the artist is looked up to as a person who can magically return one to idealised childhood. The artistry of comedy

restores the joy that is difficult to achieve when we no longer play as children, and helps us to overcome the seriousness of life.

Indigenous people are noted for laughter and making jokes; it is a part of the game of survival. Underneath that laughter though is a great deal of grief. Sometimes grief needs to be confronted and the tears wept for healing. *The Seven Stages of Grieving* (Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman, 1999) take what appears to be a therapeutic approach to grief. The following text is a powerful expression of grief:

*"You know there has always been this grieving,
Grieving for our Land, our families.
Our cultures have been denied us.
But we have been taught to cry quietly
Where only our eyes betray us with tears.
But now, we can no longer wait,
I am scared my heart is hardening,
I fear I can no longer grieve
I am so full and know my capacity for grief.
What can I do ... but perform"*

(Wesley & Mailman, 1999, cited in Diamantis, 1999:16).

Stolen, by Jane Harrison, brings to the stage, the story of the thousands of Aboriginal children who were removed from their families. At the end of the show, fiction is blended with reality as those of the cast who were stolen tell their personal stories.

*"The dignity of the actors is moving they are bearing witness
for generations of displaced children and it's a solemn and sacred duty"*
(Kablean, 2000:118).

ii) Dance and Movement Therapy

Dance and movement, used therapeutically, is designed to express, accept and to be aware of, the body. It is used for integration of body, mind and spirit thereby bringing healing to the whole being (Dibble-Hope, 2000).

Bangarra Dance Company and the Aboriginal Islander Dance Theatre have produced a number of shows in recent years, with the aim of creating harmony between traditional Aboriginal, and modern, dance (Artlink, 1990). Some of these performances have had the audience experiencing a range of emotions from silent tears to roaring laughter. It seemed to be therapeutic for the audience and possibly had the same effect on the performers (Kofman, 1988; Freud, 1974).

"Bangarra" from the Wiradjuri language, means *'to make fire'* (Artlink, 1990:116). They certainly did make a fire of enthusiasm for their work, which combines traditional culture and contemporary dance. They now perform on an international scene and are continuously working. There are strong political and social messages in the shows, but Johnson (1990) stated that strong social messages are unavoidable, for Aboriginality in a white-dominated society is political.

In 1992, a performance choreographed by Aboriginal dancers, Watson and Page, depicted Aboriginal life from pre-colonial days to the 1990's. It began softly with people eating round the campfire, and proceeded through the disruptions of white civilisation. It wound its way into the 1960's with a joyous rock and roll scene and finished with the excitement of the wardrums of the Torres Strait Islanders (Sydney Morning Herald, 1992).

The sorrows of disruption and dispossession were exposed in a public and artistic manner. With these matters being brought to the surface, many tears were shed as people experienced their grief (Performance witnessed by researcher, 1992). The

process of therapy was gradually taken through to the joy and excitement of the rock and roll scene, and the drumming at the end. This brings the realisation that grief can be transformed to joy; the success seems to lie in the exposure, or reliving, of the trauma. Kofman (1988) thinks that identifying with the play is what creates catharsis. Freud (1974) stated that the return of past memories has a strong influence on the masses - whether it be real or fictional!

iii) Authentic Movement

Authentic movement is a form of dance therapy which helps to create a loving relationship with one's own body, therefore a good body image (Dibble-Hope, 2000). During this therapy, the eyes are closed, attention goes within, the body expresses the pain, the groaning, the grief, whilst the inner ear listens to the tale of woe. The mind then accepts and releases the negative self-feelings.

In a study to determine if dance/movement had a psychotherapeutic effect on women with breast cancer, Authentic Movement appeared to be the most beneficial. This choice was based on the freedom of Authentic Movement. The individual chooses movement, pace and her own limitations of the feelings of ease (Dibble-Hope, 2000).

2. Music Therapy

Music strikes a responsive chord deep within. Music is the language of the soul: Karen Brien, a music therapist at the Westmead Children's Hospital, thinks of music as soul food (Parsons, 2000). Tompkins & Bird (1991) inform us that music can make plants grow. This is first recorded in India, with the Lord Krishna playing music to create beautiful scenery. In the 1960's a number of people studied the effect of music on plants; it was noted that Indian music had the most beneficial effect. Almost as beneficial were the classics, then jazz; folk and country produced no effect and rock killed the plants. It was explained in ancient China thus:

'... music, being intimately connected with the essential relations of beings and the vital spirits of men, is tuned to the tone of heaven and earth, and thus expresses all the frequencies of heaven and earth' (Tompkins & Bird 1991:143).

Music as therapy has been used for the soothing of many of humanity's ills; it is a solvent of trauma. Music can play its part in causing forgetfulness of the present horror, or reviving memories of the past (Moreno, 1999), in order to step more freely into the future.

Hodson (2000) tells people to listen to the radio, 'as studies reveal that listening to music you find pleasant will enhance the immune system, and excite the brain to release endorphins which help to overcome depression and keep people smiling. Cyril Meir Scott, English composer and theosophist, says the composers of modern music use many '*... dissonant chords*' and dissonance in music breaks '*... established thought forms. Discord can only be destroyed by discord*' (Tompkins & Bird, 1991:143-144).

Studies indicate that music can be used to enhance learning. Music has been used effectively to awaken children's problem-solving potentiality, and to improve basic learning (Ulsfardottir & Erwin, 1999). Music is poignant, relaxing, and has a strong and lasting association with past events (Moreno, 1999:1).

Music is thought to have been the first of the creative arts to be used therapeutically (Ulfarsdottir & Erwin, 1999). Parsons (2000) states that music has been used therapeutically for the elderly, the sick and the disabled for centuries. She goes on to say that in the last decade the therapeutic value of music is receiving broader recognition.

Parsons (2000) reports that Karen Brien works with children up to 16 years of age; she works mostly with children suffering cancer or in rehabilitation. Brien states that the music '*... can result in anything from a giggle to a speedy recovery*' (p 1). Moreno

(1999:13) reports that music has been used effectively to assist survivors of the Holocaust of World War 11 in coping with '*... fear, grief, guilt at having survived ... loss of trust ... [and] ... confidence*' (p 13). As survivors of child abuse would likely suffer the same results of their trauma, music would appear to be a worthwhile therapy. Rencken (1989) adds depression, anger, hostility, lack of control over life, abnormal development, powerlessness, and helplessness, to the issues for which child abuse victims need treatment.

Music, song and dance have always played a dominant role in Aboriginal society. Whereas life was once celebrated in singing and dancing' (Roach, 1997, in *Bringing Them Home* video, 1997), many of the songs are now sad and sentimental. If music were consciously used as therapy, perhaps the joy of life would once more be expressed in music, song and dance.

The Survival concert of 1992, the dreamchild of Rosalie Graham, was a major event in the lives of Aboriginal people across the nation (Lyster, 1992). It was an event of joy for all who participated. The older women felt useful and a part of things larger than home and immediate family. The LaPerouse community was overwhelmed with pride. This concert was produced by a LaPerouse woman, Rosalie Graham, and it was performed at LaPerouse. (The Daily Telegraph Mirror, 1992).

3. Visual Arts Therapy

Visual arts therapy articulates traumatic, complex experiences that are often difficult to express verbally (Meekums, 1999). With pictorial presentation, the conscious mind moves aside and allows the deep, hidden images to emerge. Schaverian (1995) says the external environment produces the inner world, and develops the psychological processes. She sees art as leading us to the symbolic, for through art we stand between the conscious and the unconscious, and often between reality and non-reality. Kofman

(1988) considers art reveals symbolically and symptomatically, that which the artist has repressed.

Symbolics came into recognition in the late eighteenth century when the importance of emotions came into being in the form of Romanticism. From Romanticism came the idea that we use symbolics to creatively transform reality (Katchen, 1997). According to Schaverian (1995) symbolics gives meaning to our existence, shows us where we fit into the scheme of things, and preserves our sanity. She states that without symbolics we would suffer psychosis.

Symbolism is used in Aboriginal art to express political and personal issues in a public forum. The art speaks symbolically of deaths in custody, the stolen generations, the injustice of the legal system, the ill health, the violence and the drug and alcohol abuse. Everything that is adversely affecting the Aboriginal nations is displayed on posters, book-covers, T-shirts and in art galleries. In NSW, Boomalli Aboriginal Art Gallery, and Black Books at Glebe, sell 100% Aboriginal products.

Victorian artist, Les Griggs (1990) paints his anger of white institutions, saying visually to a receptive audience what he cannot verbalise. He portrays the prison system, drug and alcohol problems, and the issues that concern Aboriginal society. *'The work of art, like religion, implies the return of something universally repressed'* (Freud cited in Kofman, 1988:15).

The works of art are gazed upon, discussed, and bought to adorn walls. The eyes see what the ears don't want to hear. Once again, there is the situation of exposing the traumatic events so that they can be dealt with and transformed - for the betterment of the whole country. The artist's works can manipulate the viewer's emotions (Freud in Leonardo, 11:107, cited by Kofman, 1988).

4. Literature Therapy

Literature therapy is a potent therapy for the understanding and release of grief. A magic formula for others to read, weep over, and learn from. With cognition, it is easier to come to terms with pain, easier to relegate it to the past, where memories belong, and prevent its impinging on the present (Meekums, 1999).

The art of storytelling is a way of giving reason to the unreasoning suffering of life. It is a tool of knowledge, education and comprehension. With no comprehension, the blows of life are endless. The storytelling can be verbal or written. Poems, particularly, pour straight from the soul, in a poignant language that is unsuitable for everyday usage (Yogananda, 1973).

Freud sees in poetry the present, (an incident that provokes memory); the past, (earlier experience); and the future, (fulfilment of a wish regarding the memory) (Kofman, 1988). He claims that poets and writers have more knowledge of the psyche than psychiatrists and psychologists do

5.12 Aboriginal Writers and Poets

Aboriginal playwright, Raymond Kelly's (1990) first play, based on his childhood, speaks of the conflict with religion and the education system. He feels that young Aboriginal men have to deal with the question of what is a real man because of these influences. In the battle to remain strong in his own heritage, he is sustained by his grandmother's love. The answer to the problems the boy faces is that his power lies simply in being true to his own self.

Writers, storytellers and poets abound in the Aboriginal world. It is interesting to observe the unfolding drama from first writing onwards. For many, the works begin with grief, anger, and sometimes violence. As the works move on, so too, it would

seem, does the self-therapy. The harshness of the first works softens; the context becomes more peaceful and loving.

Lionel Fogarty, is regarded as a “*matchless*” poet, who writes “*guerilla poetry*” (Narrogin, *introducing Fogarty* 1992:xi). Fogarty appears to be a poet of passion, genius, anger and violence. The emotions seem somewhat diminished in some later poems, as evidenced in the following portion of the 1994 work:

*Little Murri boy I hear you say
I'm proud to be an Aborigine
Little Murri boy we know you
have a miggrou mate who is proud
to be an Australian
Well little Murri boy give the
love of your culture to all
But never let dem buy your spirit
never let dem sell your sensitive land
For you little Murri are
one to unite the lost white child of Australia*
(Fogarty, 1995:42).

5.13 Therapeutic Choice

Although one of these therapies may be favoured above others, often more are utilised to give a greater freedom and insight (Dibble-Hope, 2000). Robbins (1994) thinks that any creativity will deeply touch the psyche, in the way a song, for example, will affect us. It is not unusual to include meditation, transpersonal psychology and spirituality (Meekums, 1999).

A current movie *War Zone* is directed by Tom Roth, who was himself a sexually abused child. He states that he was conscious of the pain of incest victims, and depicted it honestly (Vognar, 2000). He considers that all creative art forms have to show the pain as well as the beauty of the world (Vognar, 2000) and can reveal child sexual assault. Abuse and incest are powerfully portrayed in the movie. Roth confirmed that directing this movie was cathartic (Williams, 2000) and therapeutic. He'd kept the matter of his own abuse secret until the movie, but advises people to speak, in order to recover (Bodey, 2000).

Perhaps CATS can be a beneficial tool in helping Indigenous communities come to terms with the results of abuse. On the whole, Indigenous peoples are creative in most artforms.

It would seem that all artforms have therapeutic value. Music therapist, Ruth Bright (1986:7) states:

'... when music is played all the feelings from the past, the guilts and disappointments also the present loneliness, are brought to the surface, and this can provide comfort and catharsis'.

Ulfarsdottir & Erwin (1999) have described music as breaking the barriers between our observable selves and the inner self. With music, the inner and outer worlds merge. Russian composer, Alexander Scriabin, combined music, colour and fragrance to create '*... ecstatic visions ...*' for his audience, thereby releasing them from their '*... physical encasements ...*' (Tompkins & Bird, 1991:144).

During the holocaust of World War 11, Jews in Theresienstadt wrote *Brundibar*, a children's opera. Through the story, the children symbolised a brighter future and the

triumphant battle between good and evil (Moreno, 1999). Although many of the prisoners died in the camp, this opera lifted their spirits for awhile.

5.14 Metaphor

Weishaar (1999) informs us that Western scientists have recently begun to explore the role of metaphor. Metaphor is the use of imagery to ascribe new meaning to experience, for example, metaphor combined with memory helps a person resolve past issues and change the context of those events. In Meekum's view, art allows expression and exploration of otherwise complex issues. Art took on an '*... inspiring, consoling and transcendent role ...*' in regards to the AIDS crisis (Showalter 1991:201).

Metaphor is used in the Aboriginal Dreaming stories as a learning/teaching device. In Artlink (1990), Moon reports how visual art is used to educate the young and keep traditional values strong. As landscape is the essence of spirituality, imagery maintains history, keeping it integral to people's lives.

Metaphor has also been used for millennia to explain religious traditions. As metaphor '*... includes intuitive comprehension ...*' (Weishaar, 1999:174) it can be used to reinvent an experience for the purpose of transformation.

Aboriginal art is rich in metaphor. There is a story in the lines, the colour, the figures, and the placement of those figures. '*The vision of the natural world is also a screen for the mythological world*' (Arnold, Philip & Burrarawarna, 1990:8). These same visions could possibly be used as a screen for the psychological world.

Dance, song and drama also are a metaphorical way of telling the stories of life. These stories take in daily events of the Aboriginal community, for example, the old Captain Cook is depicted in Arnhem Land, not as an Ancestral Being, but as one of the first people, who built himself a boat, and brought axes and steel to Australia. He also

vanquished the devil and hid him under the Cahill Expressway. The new Captain Cooks shot the Aborigines, stole the women, and took the land (Mackinolty & Wainburranga, 1988) The only recompense has been welfare handouts (Miller, 1985).

Whereas traditionally the art, the dancing, the songs, the stories, portray communal life, it is necessary, for therapeutic purposes, to have persons portray individual experience. In today's society this would not be so difficult, especially for the urban Aborigine. In fact, a close look at urban Aboriginal art reveals pain, loss and anger. Many a political statement is made through urban Aboriginal art. Personal statements also are strong in these works of art.

5.15 Contemporary Aboriginal Artists

Contemporary Aboriginal artists portray personal and political suffering. "Radical" artist, Richard Bell, exposes the sterilisation, sanitatisation, and whitewashing of Aboriginal history. Also Rhea Saunders with works of female domestic slavery and resistance, and Harry Wedge who gained enormous popularity with his portrayal of childish nightmare (Chambers, INIVA & Boomalli Aboriginal Artist's Co-operative, 1994),

We read the books and poems, hear the songs, see the dancing and the art of contemporary Aborigines. Strong within it all is the yearning for the way things were, the grief and anger at the way things are, and sometimes a joy, for the way things can be. This is the process of therapy, and could be applied not only to abuse, but to all the sorrows that afflict Indigenous people. There has been varied abuse of Indigenes and today the Aboriginal people are working hard to come to terms with the abusive situations with which they are still dealing are, such as:

1. the theft of children from the parents;
2. the theft of the land/mother from her children;

3. the destruction of Law, culture, language, identity; and
4. the dysfunctional lives caused by more than two centuries of abuse.

Young (1997) considers that art therapy is valuable in the treatment of abuse. The client can remain objective by expressing the trauma externally and is then better able to cope with the trauma. Art can create security by reflecting the inner turmoil through '*... form, content, color, intensity and organization ...*' (p 264). Robbins (1994) thinks that art expression adapts to individual needs, and cares that the client finds self-affirmation and adaptation in creative art expression.

CATs may also be beneficial for abused children. Children are masters of depiction and play, and this is a natural way for them to bring into the open things that fill them with fear and shame; things that are an unspoken secret. Schaverian (1995) theorises that art therapy has similarity to a child's book; the pictures tell a clear story without explanation. The work of the artist is '*... the expression of unconscious intentions*' (Freud *cited in* Kofman 1988:12)

Chapter 6

KEY CONCEPTS IDENTIFIED

Through a process of content analysis, key concepts were identified and labelled in the literature. Frequency of occurrence in similar categories by different authors was used to identify these concepts. When identified the key concepts were then clustered in related categories and labelled. Propositional statements can be developed from these concepts, then constructs developed from the interrelationships of the propositions.

Key concepts identified in the literature through the process of content analysis are coded, for example, 'C1- Colonisation,' where colonisation has repeatedly occurred in a category across several orders. Two or more concepts are then used to form propositional statements (coded, for example, 'P1') with a logical, deductive validity. They can also be tested inductively. Two or more propositions can then be formed into theoretical constructs from which a model can be developed for implementation from a policy.

Concepts and Propositions Identified

The propositions identified, and the concepts from which they are derived, are outlined below:

Cluster 1 concepts include:

C1 - Colonisation

C2 - Christianity

C3 - Cultures in Conflict

The following proposition was derived from Cluster 1.

P1: Christianity, Colonisation and Conflict.

The indigenous peoples of Australia, isolated for millennia, were confronted by a technologically advanced society in the late eighteenth century and colonised. The colonisers were determined to Christianise, assimilate and civilise the 'heathens', whose every aspect of culture was '*... constantly shocking ... [the] ... Christian ideas of decency and propriety ...*' (Markus, 1990). A cultural conflict began and has not yet ended. This conflict dispossessed Aboriginal society, causing psychological and social disadvantage (Parbury, 1988).

Cluster 2 concepts included:

C4 - Traditional Aborigines

C5 - Sacred Law and Religion

C6 - Sexual Mores

Proposition 2 was derived from the concepts of Cluster 2.

P2: Traditional sexual mores, values and behaviour

In the traditional Aboriginal world, Law was laid down by Ancestral Beings, who dealt with the same passions, negative and positive, with which humans had to deal. The Beings were not worshipped nor was supplication made to them (Smith, 1991). Sexuality was controlled by Law and was a major part of ritual through which humanity transcended the Earthly realm. In contrast, the colonisers adhered to man-made law. God, in the image of the white man, was worshipped and appeased, and sexuality was suppressed.

Cluster 3 concepts included:

C7 - Sexual Abuse

C8 - Transgenerational Trauma

C9 - Psychological Damage

From these concepts, P3 was derived.

P3: Sexual and Transgenerational Abuse

At point of contact, Aborigines walked naked, sexuality was both open and ritualised and they were categorised as bestial (Pettman, 1992). Daisy Bates, considered to be the foremost authority on Aborigines in the early 20th century, described their ceremonies as '*... a sacrament of sex, ... and a Black Mass of witchcraft and savagery ...*' (Markus, 1990). To a sexually suppressed society, such misunderstandings could be rationalised as justification for sexual abuse, and cultural disintegration. As there has been no healing of the psychological damage, the abuse is carried transgenerationally.

Cluster 4 concepts include:

C10 - Denial, fear, silence and secrecy

C11 - Retribution

P4 is derived from the above concepts.

P4: Denial, Silence, Fear

The whole issue of sexual abuse is one shrouded in denial, fear and silence. Most Aboriginal women remain silent for fear of retribution, in the form of State intervention and imprisonment for their men. Abuse can be healed therapeutically.

Cluster 5 concepts include:

C14 - Memory and Neurosis

C15 - Hysteria and Fantasy

C16 - Contamination and Contagion

P5 is derived from Cluster 5.

P5: Psychological Damage

A child may hide a painful memory and suffer substance abuse and psychological damage in later life. The damage can result in dissociation, multiple personality disorder, psychosis, a self-destructive lifestyle and not achieving full potential.

Recovered memories may be created by actual event, fantasy, hysteria, and contagion. Many people, in a desire to be loved, want to be like others of whom they hear, or simply want to be the center of attention. Whether or not stories are authentic, therapy is needed.

Cluster 6 concepts include:

C17 - Symptoms

C18 - Therapy and Therapists

C19 - Feminism and Child Protection

From Cluster 6, P6 was derived.

P6: Symptoms, Therapy

Sexual abuse symptoms are indicated by sexual dysfunction, substance abuse, obsessive behaviour, suicidal tendencies and other such factors that prevent one reaching his/her full potential. Therapy is required, by therapists with culturally relevant skills, and who are not themselves abusive. Feminists have been effective in publicising the issue of child abuse and consider that sex education is a prime cause for abuse prevention.

CONSTRUCTS

The above propositions can be grouped so that theoretical constructs can be derived from which a model for policy implementation developed.

Construct 1 - Cultural Contact Derived Sexual Abuse

Conflicting inter-culture values and behaviours cause family dysfunction and sexual abuse which needs culturally relevant therapeutic treatment.

Construct 2 - Effect of Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse causes psychological trauma, which must be treated in a culturally relevant context.

Construct 3 - A Healing Therapy

A culturally appropriate method of healing is required for sexual abuse of Aboriginal people. Although some deem it racist to use modalities from other cultures, there has not been enough transgenerational knowledge passed on to keep the method 100% Aboriginal-based.

It would seem necessary that the healer be Aborigine, or have a thorough understanding of Aboriginal thought processes, and a comprehension of the true suffering since colonisation. Also, knowledge and compassion regarding the effects of abuse are necessary.

Therapy for sexual abuse victims needs to be culturally sensitive, accepted, and provided in a caring environment with which the victim can identify. The client needs to know that someone cares, needs to act out the anger and grief, and needs to feel worthwhile. The process can be fast or slow, as the client not only lives through the past trauma, but also recreates a new person on the old foundations.

Chapter 7

MODEL:

THE PATHWAY TO MY DREAMING:

Towards a Theoretical Model of Therapy

A theoretical model of therapy or curriculum is needed which includes knowledge, feeling, experience and values components. This model, based on the constructs identified, outlines such a healing curriculum model. The constructs are identified below with the knowledge, emotional development, experience and values components which need to be addressed in any therapeutic program.

Construct 1 - Cultural Contact Derived Sexual Abuse

1. Knowledge Required: Aboriginal Cultural Studies

The history of the Aboriginal people and of colonisation needs to be understood. It is necessary for everyone to know that Aborigines had pride and beauty in their existence. Knowledge of the reasoning underlying the values of each culture is a way of creating respect for both. To understand is to accept.

2. Emotional Development Component

The victim needs to deal with feelings of anger, grief, hatred, fear and contempt. An understanding of their personal views on sexuality, love, friendship, marriage and racism brings about compassion and acceptance.

3. Experiences Needed

Life experiences show where we need healing, for we play the same dramas repeatedly. The actors may change, but the director, the star, and the plot remain the same. To analyse the experiences gives the ability to rewrite the script.

4. Values Identified

Each person must qualify his/her values. Is there a value on one's life, body, liking of self and others, the liking of others for one's self? How do you view people? We can see in others only that which is in ourselves, therefore that which we most dislike in others, is that which we most dislike in ourselves.

Construct 2 - The Effects and Healing of Sexual Abuse

1. Knowledge Required

As well as understanding the recent history of Australia, we need to understand our own history and culture. Our identity comes from family, school, peer group, work colleagues, and social cultures. We need to know whether or not all these people place a value upon us; indeed, if we place value on our own selves.

2. Emotional Development Component

Love and affection are possibly the overriding emotions of humanity. If a person feels hated, especially by those who are close, life cannot be fulfilling. When a person is disturbed, sex is bartered for love; sadly, this person rarely experiences, or feels, the reward of love, and the harming of self continues. Self-harm manifests in promiscuity, substance abuse, suicidal tendencies, fear, anger, hatred, self-sacrifice, religious fanaticism, and/or the harming of self through others.

3. Experiences Needed

The first thing a self-destructive person requires is love, or the knowing of being cared for. This can be achieved during the healing process by the tender touch of massage, listening without judgement, teaching relaxation techniques, encouraging thoughts of goodness in regards to the tormented person, and encouraging creative therapy such as writing, painting, role-playing, drama; any form of creativity in which they can express their own feelings. Allow the person to own his/her story.

4. Values Identified

A new set of values can be reinforced. With tenderness and caring, a person may very quickly discover self-love and the thought of a brighter future. Self-esteem flowers with optimism and knowledge of self and past negativity's disappear as though they never existed. People who have achieved this state would harm neither themselves nor their children. Healing stops abuse.

It is possible that the stories are fantasy, the way to deal with violence from a father. Fact lies in the creation of healing. In any drama, each player is involved. No player is good or bad. It is difficult to accept the truth of our "badness," but goodness is a learned trait of humanity. Humans are genetically programmed for selfishness and survival. Genetically, we are still in the jungle.

Geneticists such as Pinker (1998), wonder how humans can cling to something so nebulous as God, but do they understand human suffering? When humans are pushed to the lowest stratum, there are really only two choices - a superior being or beings who will alleviate the torment, or a life of self-destruction.

Summary

In response to the research questions, the following conclusions have been justified as expressed in the model derived:

1. Sexual abuse in Aboriginal society appears to be an outcome of colonisation.
Culture contact and conflict have brought about a degree of family dysfunction which can result in child sexual abuse.
2. Healing of the psychological outcomes of past cultural conflict is important in healing dysfunction in contemporary Aboriginal society.
3. Aboriginal input, involvement and art expression are required for a culturally sensitive healing model.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

Healing of abuse is necessary for Aborigines, especially sexual abuse. One facet of racism is to judge native peoples as immoral, sexually indiscriminate, and outside the limits of "virtuous" behaviour. Such judgement takes away personal worth, lowers self-esteem, and becomes a "self-fulfilling prophecy." This, in combination with other derogatory ideas, leaves the Aborigine prey to a destructive, hopeless lifestyle.

Kindness is an absolute in the healing of such battered people. Non- Aboriginal people need to be aware of the personal, familial and national suffering that Aborigines experience. Once we were isolated from the rest of humanity. The experience of meeting with them has not yet been beneficial to us, and now we are isolated from Land, Law, Dreaming and reason for being. The loss is aggravated by being given no replacement. Education, acceptance, respect, love, and personal and financial worth have been withheld. We suffer alienation.

Until we heal the past, we have no future, and are unable to live in the now. It appears reasonable to concentrate on the healing of young girls, for females hold the future within their hands. When they grow in self-worth, they can bring healing to their men, and teach the children, who are the future of any nation. In one respect, men suffer more from oppressors, for their manhood is stripped away with their authority as they helplessly witness the rape and murder of women and children. A woman can grow stronger; her nurturing instincts come into full play as she soothes her man and 'grows up' her children.

Aborigines are in need of a little kindness, for our development has been arrested. In our search for meaning and identity, we cling to our perception of Aboriginal culture.

Perhaps we are naive or romantic about the beauty of those ways, but to grow, we need a foundation. At this stage, we are abused children, growing into the beginning of our adulthood, and we suffer the fear of stepping out into that world. Regardless of scientific premise, we are the first-born, we have been here since the time before time began, our culture and our ancestors were as perfect as humanity can be, and it is no kindness to tell us all the time that white superiority has proven that we are immigrants and are no different to the oppressor.

For the Aborigine, with practically no education, white or black, the struggle is to learn the material values of life (Swain & Rose, 1988) whilst maintaining spirituality and retaining the virtues of our own culture. In final analysis, after healing takes place, perhaps we are better off, for originally we did come from love, and to love we will return.

Every story of abuse, whether involving only white male dominance, or including black female betrayal, is a microscopic story of colonisation. Heal the abuse, and the horrors of invasion are healed. With healing, it is possible to recognise the hatred, anger and fear of the white, and the over-idealisation of the black; or vice-versa (Smith, 1991).

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